Preface

Hofstadter’s Law: It always takes longer than you expect, even when you take into account Hofstadter’s Law.

Douglas R. Hofstadter, Gödel, Escher, Bach

Back in 2005, my wife Annemarieke defended her dissertation. Reinder, our oldest son, an eight-year-old at the time, remarked in awe: ‘Mom, you have been working on that book for my entire life!’ Fourteen years later I realize with some embarrassment that his observation is just as true for the book that now lies before you. To be sure, I can not claim to actually have been working on it for all that time. The advent of Reinder and his siblings Hanna and Willem has shifted my priorities considerably for quite some time. For this I am not apologetic: When I think of our life as a family, and when I see what fine people our children have become, the detour has been more than worth it.

Before, and alongside, this family, I have had several other families, which all have brought me to where I am, and who I mention with gratitude. First of all my dear parents, Jan Bosman and Tineke Bosman-de Moor, and my brothers, Jan-Willem, Johannes, Merijn and Joost, a great gang. I thank my parents for their unfailing love, care and encouragement, throughout my life and up to the end of theirs. At times like this I miss them more than ever. My second family is that of my parents in-law, Æbele van der Woude and Hansje van der Woude - Wiggers, who have always welcomed me with open arms.

In Amsterdam, the Talstra family quickly became a second home. What started as a babysitting job quickly developed into a warm and lasting friendship. It is so sad that Lies is no longer with us. She would have loved the celebrations. That Eep, Harmen and Arendjan are stil very much a part of my life means a lot to me. Eep Talstra went on to be my promotor, and I thank him for his invaluable teaching, guidance and most of all for his friendship. I am grateful for the trust he placed in me, and it gives me great joy that I have finally been able to make true on it by presenting him with this book.

I thank Wido van Peursen, my second promotor, for his generous support and hospitality at the ETCBC during the last couple of years. I know how busy
Eep and Wido are, yet they always found time to read and discuss my work, give me valuable advice and help me plan next steps.

Eep, of course, has introduced me to yet another family, the *Werkgroep Informatica* at the VU (now the ETCBC). For more than a decade, those two rooms centered around a coffee machine, and their inhabitants: Eep, Janet Dyk, Ferenc Postma, Peter Crom, Arian Verheij, Constantijn Sikkel, Saskia Leene, Reinoud Oosting, and countless guests have truly been home to me.

Special thanks to Constantijn Sikkel, my sys-admin, colleague and friend of many years, for his cooperation and support, for his patience in teaching me all things Unix, and for the good times we have had—and hopefully will have—on the work floor. I thank Ulrik Sandberg - Petersen for his untiring work on Emdros, his prompt and helpful reactions to all my bug reports, feature requests and dumb questions, and for his general kindness.

From the family of the *Jesaja Werkplaats*, who have always been supportive and encouraging, even though my research subject wasn’t even Isaiah, I have to name two people:

I fondly remember Henk Leene, who has been my copromotor until this was no longer possible. He has kindled in me the first fascination with exegesis and Hebrew poetry. His broad knowledge, his thoughtfulness and common sense have been an example; his sensitivity for the beauty of the texts, his humor and his kindness were an inspiration.

To Harm van Grol I am grateful for his interest in my research, and for the inspiring and enjoyable talks we have had about syntax and prosody in Biblical Hebrew poetry. These talks have helped me greatly in formulating my own views more precisely, and have taught me a lot on the prosodic aspects of Hebrew poetry. I hope we will continue to have them.

All metaphors eventually break down. All those many people around me that have supported me by their personal interest, can not plausibly be called a family. Yet, I owe them all: my friend Martin van der Galiën for his piercing questions and for putting me on the trail to Lamentations, many years ago; my cousin Henry Bosman for pushing me to write formally strict poems of my own; and many, many others.

Now that the book is finished, I can return to my own family for awhile, to make up for the proverbial neglect the last stages of writing a dissertation appear to bring with them. However, I do hope to be able to continue working on the puzzle of Hebrew poetry and syntax. This book is, after all, just a first step and leaves much to be discovered. And I wouldn’t want to miss the family visits.

Nijmegen, March 2019
Terminology

- In this study, the terms **syntax** and **syntactic** also include the meanings **text-syntactic** and **text-syntax**: Inclusive terms, like ‘(text-)syntactic’, or even ‘syntactic and text-syntactic’ would make for very tedious reading.

- The terms **prosody** and **prosodic** are used in their general meaning of **(concerning) versification**,¹ rather than in the narrower sense of ‘concerning intonation and rhythm’, although the latter is obviously included. My use of the terms also includes higher level poetic units, like strophes and stanzas.

  I make this choice because the alternative term ‘poetic’ is too broad and also refers to the many non-formal and non-structural aspects of poetry, such as the use of imagery.²

- I use impersonal ‘they’ to refer to singular persons of unspecified gender, rather than the cumbersome ‘he or she’.³

Notation of verses and clauses in Biblical references

References to Masoretic verses:

- Lam 5.22: Masoretic verse 22 of Lam 5. Note the comma.
- vs 22: verse 22 (if the chapter is clear).

References to lines / clauses (see displays on pages 112ff.):

- 42 (just a number): line 42 (if the chapter is clear).
- 2.42 and 4.12: Lam 2, line 42 and Lam 4, line 12. Note the period, rather than a comma.

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¹www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prosody
²See also van Grol 2015, 1.3.
³en.oxforddictionaries.com/usage/he-or-she-versus-they
Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Textual structure: two points of view

That literary texts—or any texts for that matter—exhibit structure, is of course a truism, even more so for poetic texts. Structural analysis therefore takes its obvious and rightful place in the study and interpretation of Biblical Hebrew poetry. However, it is also obvious that textual structure can be described from two points of view: a literary and a grammatical / syntactic one. I will discuss both points of view in some detail further on (Part I). For now, two short characterizations will suffice.

**Literary point of view**  Ever since in 1753 Robert Lowth published his iconic description of Biblical Hebrew poetry, the prosodic structure of this poetry has been an explicit and central part of its interpretation. The insight that Biblical Hebrew poetry can be segmented into prosodic units like verselines and strophes is, of course, much older than that. Even the Masoretic accentuation delimits units which in poetry could roughly be equated with verselines, strophes and stanzas. In commentaries, dividing a poetic text into its constituent units and noting parallelisms between cola has become standard procedure, even though there is little consensus on procedures and terminology. Some commentaries delimit cola, verselines, strophes and higher units according to an explicit prosodic theory, while others divide the text more or less by intuition and their understanding of the subject matter.

In the field of explicit prosodic theory, much research has been done, which has resulted in a certain level of practical consensus on certain issues. How-

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1 The history of this type of research has been surveyed by, among others, van der Lugt 1980; Kalkman 2015a, Section 1.2.
2 Korpel and de Moor 1998, 10–16.
3 Renkema 1998; Berges 2002.
4 Kraus 1983; Berlin 2002.
5 More or less undisputed are: the existence of units like cola, verselines and strophes, their
ever, there is still much debate on fundamental issues like the nature of the prosodic ‘rules’, the nature of the rhythmic / metric constraints, the criteria and procedures to arrive at a correct delimitation and, therefore, on the precise delimitation of pretty much every poem in the Hebrew Bible. As an example of the ‘state of the art’ in literary / prosodic research, I can refer to two recent publications by Harm van Grol, who presents us with a concise prosodic theory, which summarizes and further specifies a number of generally acknowledged observations. Especially interesting about Van Grol’s work is his explicit attempt to incorporate the syntactic point of view into his literary method.

Syntactic point of view  Compared to the research into prosodic structure, the research into the syntactic structure of Biblical Hebrew poetry is relatively young. The study of syntax and discourse linguistics of narrative Hebrew has been around ever since the seventies of the last century, but the application to poetic texts is still in a rather tentative stage, even though the first attempts date back to the beginning of general text-syntactic research. One of the obstacles it encounters is that linguistic models and procedures established for narrative prose turn out to work only partially for poetic texts. So much so, in fact, that some scholars have suggested that Biblical Hebrew poetry has a grammar and syntax all of its own; some have even doubted whether Biblical Hebrew poetry has any syntax at all, or whether it is perhaps governed entirely by prosodic rules. The overall opinion, however, is that the lack of insight can in principle be overcome by more meticulous syntactic research. The recent PhD thesis by Gino Kalkman is a good example of the current state of research into Biblical Hebrew poetry from a syntactic point of view. Kalkman searches for formal syntactic criteria with which to identify the discourse functions (and thus the meaning) of verb forms in the Hebrew Psalms.
1.2 Tension between prosody and syntax

In my own work at the ETCBC, done from a decidedly syntactic point of view, I have long experienced that for poetic texts the very existence of the two points of view indicates a very real tension. Like any text, a poem of course has its ‘normal’, syntactic structure, otherwise it would not be intelligible. On the other hand, poetry by its very nature molds language into artificial shapes, which may or may not conform to the syntax, as the case may be. This is not just a tension between theories; it can be observed in real texts. Consider the first quatrain from Shakespeare’s Sonnet 116:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
That alters when it alteration finds
Or bends with the remover to remove.

The prosodic structure is obvious: four iambic pentameters, with an abab end-rhyme pattern. The syntactic structure is equally clear: Two full sentences, the second one consisting of a main clause (‘Love is not love’) with a dependent clause, which itself consists of two coordinated dependent clauses:

- Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments.
- Love is not love
  - that alters when it alteration finds
  - or bends with the remover to remove.

However, it is equally obvious that the two structures do not concur, and even appear to disrupt each other.

The latter happens with the constituent order in l. 3: ‘That alters when it alteration finds’. In prose, the emphasized portion would be considered ungrammatical and should read: ‘when it finds alteration’. The reason for the inversion appears to lie in the prosodic structure: The alternative fits into the iambic meter and provides the required end-rhyme.

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13The Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and Computer at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, formerly known as the Werkgroep Informatica (WIVU).

14Some modern poetry may indeed dispense with grammar and syntax (e.g. Gertrude Stein’s Sacred Emily and Paul van Ostaijen’s Boem paukeslag), effectively turning the language into fragmentary thought snippets or a kind of spoken music, but on the scale of the history of literature this is a very recent and rare development; it is certainly unknown in Biblical Hebrew poetry, which is written in well-formed Hebrew sentences.

15Note, however, that the meter is not consistently iambic: The natural stress pattern of the sentences causes divergences in every line of this quatrain, but especially in lines 1 and 2.
Much more conspicuous are the mismatches between syntactic clauses and prosodic lines. A performer reciting this sonnet is faced with a dilemma: Are they to read the prosodic lines, accentuating the iambic feet and pausing after every line? That will make the meter and end-rhymes stand out very clearly, but will also cut up the sentences, almost beyond understanding. Are they, then, to read the sentences as if the text were prose? That will make the sentences much easier to follow, but will turn the text into actual prose and obscure all its prosodic features. Of course, the performer can compromise, ending each prosodic line on a slight hesitation, long enough to mark the prosodic boundary but short enough to preserve syntactic coherence. But that is not the point: The very existence of this dilemma demonstrates, that prosodic and syntactic structure can not always easily be reduced one to the other.

1.3 Research questions

For the study of Biblical Hebrew poetry this state of affair raises an important question:

To the interpretation of Biblical Hebrew poetry, what is the most fundamental structure?

- Is it the syntactic structure, in which the poet has, largely unconsciously but inevitably, presented their thoughts as well-formed language and intelligible discourse?
- Is it the prosodic structure, which the poet has consciously applied to their text and which therefore presumably closely reflects their own intentions?

It is this question which lies at the core of the present study. However, even though I will reflect on it (Section 5.2), I do intend to shed more light on the complexities involved in the interaction between prosody and syntax in actual texts. If, in the end, my reader takes away the simple message that ‘it’s complicated’, I will consider an important point of my study made. As I see it, this is the kind of question of which the act of asking may be at least as important as the actual answer.

A practical goal  The questions I do hope to answer in this study are much more specific. I can not hope to cover both the area of prosodic theory as well as syntactic, and will have to focus on the latter. Approaching the problem from the side of syntactic analysis, I will investigate where this type of research

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\[16\]In this respect, note also the prosodic convention to start every verseline with a capital letter, even when it does not start a syntactic sentence.
hits on its limits when applied to poetic texts, and how it could be adapted to move these limits a bit further.

My actual research questions, then, are practical and quite limited in scope. Yet they are deeply related to the more fundamental question raised above: They reflect the complicated relationship between syntax and prosody, seen from the point of view of practical syntactic research.

To what extent, and in what way, should a (text-)syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry account for prosodic influence on (text-)syntactic structure, in order to do justice to the linguistic reality in these texts?

1. What **prosodic observations** need to be included?

2. What adjustments to **analytical procedures** are required?

### 1.4 Outline of the book

This study is structured as follows:

- **In Part I**, I will position myself within the field of research, by discussing a selection of literary and syntactic studies.

- As a preparation for **Part II**, I have made, and annotated, a syntactic analysis of Lamentations, using the standard **ETCBC** tools. This process has yielded insights into the types of complications that research in this line may encounter when being applied to poetry. In this part of the book, a selection of these are discussed, organized into a number of topical chapters.

- **In Part III**, I will present a methodological proposal which follows from the conclusions of Part II. In Chapter 14 of this part, I will cite some examples of what a comprehensive syntactic / prosodic approach could mean for the interpretation of an actual poetic text.

- **In Appendix A**, I will discuss my enriched version of the **ETCBC** database and the programs used to make it, as a pilot project of my proposals, which has already been instrumental in the syntactic analyses of Part II.

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17Not included in the book, but accessible online, see p. 306.
Part I

Positioning in the Field of Research
Introduction

In this chapter, I will position my study within the field of research, by discussing a selection of publications in the fields of literary and syntactic studies, as well as some publications which expressly attempt to combine a literary and a syntactic point of view. It is not my intention to give a comprehensive survey. I will limit myself to a number of studies which are of direct relevance to my own research context, which can be characterized as the border area between

- **syntactic** research along the lines of the ETCBC and
- **prosodic** research along various but related lines developed in the Dutch context, most notably by the Kampen School and Van Grol.

**Leading questions**  In order to get a better view on the issues that are at play, I will structure my discussions according to a number of leading questions:

1. What exegetical, literary or linguistic **goals** do the approaches pursue?
2. What view, if any, do the approaches hold on the relation between **syntax and prosody**?
3. What **text model**, if any, do the approaches propose or imply?
4. What **type(s) of observations and arguments** do the approaches use?
5. In relation to **my own research aims**, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the various approaches?

Not surprisingly, my evaluation of a particular approach will depend largely on the degree to which its observations and analytical procedures can be expressed in terms of formally observable text patterns. These evaluations will therefore tend to be somewhat onesided, and should not be construed as general appraisals or rejections of an approach *per se*.

**Positioning**  At the end of this part, I will summarize the points I have gathered from the survey, and position myself within the broader field of prosodic and syntactic approaches.
Chapter 2

Literary Approaches

2.1 Wilfred Watson, Jan Fokkelman

As a first representative of the literary approaches, let me discuss Watson’s *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*.\(^1\) As this work aims to be a broad guide to the literary analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry, it would seem to be a good starting point to give an impression of the literary approaches in general.

Goals

Watson’s *Guide* intends to be a reference book of literary phenomena,\(^2\) which indeed it is: It lists a broad spectrum of these, in a somewhat random order. It does not appear to present a systematic theory or methodology. As far as his subject matter is concerned, however, he aims for the same target as most other scholars in this section: The description of Biblical Hebrew poetry in terms of prosodic units and literary techniques.

Watson is a typical representative of a general literary and stylistic approach to Biblical Hebrew poetry. He takes his point of departure in the artistic skill and freedom of the individual poet, a freedom which is considerable, as Watson assumes an oral and improvised origin for most of Biblical Hebrew poetry.\(^3\)

Syntax and Literary Structure

Even though the body of Watson’s book is not concerned with syntax very much, its introduction explicitly addresses the relation between literary criticism, linguistics ans stylistics. Citing H. G. Widdowson, Watson states:

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\(^1\) Watson 1986.
\(^2\) Watson 1986, ix.
\(^3\) Watson 1986, 77–78.
Linguistics treats literature as text, a specimen of the language.

Literary criticism treats literature as literary communication, as artistic messages.

Stylistics treats literature as discourse: “Between these two [linguistics and literary criticism, HJB] is an approach to literature which attempts to show specifically how elements of a linguistic text combine to create messages, how, in other words, pieces of literary writing function as a form of communication.”

What is interesting is, that Watson locates the ‘messages’ and the communication of a poem in its literary form, apparently on the premiss that it is the direct product of ‘the essential artistic vision that the poem embodies’, the ‘messages’.

However, it is the integral study of both (called ‘stylistics’ by Watson), which arrives at a complete view on the communication within a poem. Watson, then, does reckon with the interaction between syntax and literary form, and suggests that both must eventually be studied in combination. This being said, Watson immediately states, true to fact, that the chief interest in his book will be the style of Hebrew verse, rather than its linguistics.

Text model

In broad terms, Watson’s text model is structurally identical to that of the other literary approaches discussed here. However, he changes the customary terminology, by calling couplets and triplets of cola ‘strophes’ rather than ‘verse-lines’. This change is unfortunate, as it adds to the confusion he sets out to resolve. It skewers the entire text model above colon level (see Table 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watson</th>
<th>v.d. Lugt (diss.)</th>
<th>Kampen School</th>
<th>v. Grol</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>colon</td>
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<tr>
<td>strophe</td>
<td>verseline</td>
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<td>stanza</td>
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<td>canticle</td>
<td>stanza</td>
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<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>substanza</td>
<td>subcanto</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>stanza</td>
<td>canto</td>
<td>section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Diverging terminologies above verseline level

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4Widdowson 1975, 6, as cited by Watson 1986, 3.
5Watson 1986, 3.
6Watson 1986, ix.
7See also Fokkelman 2000, 51.
2.1. WILFRED WATSON, JAN FOKKELMAN

Types of observations

Procedure As a consequence of his insistence on artistic skill and freedom, Watson does not present a strict and coherent set of versification rules, let alone a recommended analytical strategy. Instead, he offers the inventory of a toolkit of individual literary techniques, from which the poet could presumably choose at will, following their own artistic judgment. This has its repercussions for the analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry, which in Watson’s description appears to be almost as much an art as writing this poetry must have been:

No single, uniform method of analysis applicable to every poem can, in fact, be proposed. It is more realistic to describe a variety of approaches which can be used either singly or in combination. Ultimately, of course, the poem is an individual entity which cannot be fitted into the straightjacket of rigid classification. (No poem worthy of the name ‘follows the rules’.) One’s choice of analytical procedure, therefore, must take all this into account.8

In other words: The scholar is required to have a firm grasp of the various techniques a poet could choose to employ, as well as an intuitive feeling for the poet’s artistic freedom, which could prompt them to diverge from the rules.

Metre Watson opts for an accentual theory of meter: The number of word-stresses in a colon is counted, unstressed syllables are ignored. However, Watson notes a lack of regular meter: metrical patterns only subsist for a limited amount of lines.9 There is a tendency to balance between cola within the same couplet or triplet, but slight imbalances occur regularly.

As far as syntax is concerned: Watson rejects the attempts by Collins and O’Connor to find a syntactic base for the formation of cola, mainly because of the mixing of levels that this involves,10 and puts forward his own ideas about meter in literary categories only.

Parallellism Watson offers a broad taxonomy of types of parallels, both in terms of mathematical patterns11 as in terms of the elements included (gender-matching, word-pairs (synonymous, antonymic, correlative, augmented, epithetic, identical/repetitive, fixed + variant, distant, reversed, numerical), and form (simple anaphora, pivot, staircase, terrace, aba-monocolon; ellipsis and variation, noun-verb, Janus)).

8 Watson 1986, 16.
9 Watson 1986, 97–98.
In fact, Watson’s list of categories is so large, that one is apt to wonder, whether these are distinct categories at all, or whether it would not be more adequate to simply define Biblical Hebrew parallelism as ‘varying repetition’,\textsuperscript{12} which can happen in many different ways, with many different elements and on many different linguistic levels.

From the point of view of my study, it is remarkable that, by and large, Watson describes parallelism exclusively in semantic and positional terms; syntax appears to be absent from the considerations.

Other literary techniques Except from the common prosodic terrains of meter, parallelism and strophic structure, Watson discusses a wide range of literary techniques, such as the use of sound (including wordplay),\textsuperscript{13} imagery,\textsuperscript{14} and an entire chapter of miscellaneous items,\textsuperscript{15} such as: repetition, envelope figure, keywords, refrain, extra-textual allusion, ellipsis, irony, oxymoron, and many others, in no particular order. The phenomena described often derive from semantics, phonology and prosody understood in terms of abstract balance only. A syntactic phenomenon like ellipsis is described in terms of missing words, rather than the ellipsis of syntactic constituents from an expected clause pattern;\textsuperscript{16} even enjambment is treated in literary terms only.\textsuperscript{17}

Jan Fokkelman

Goals

Like Watson, Fokkelman’s main goal is to uncover the poetic artistry of a Biblical Hebrew poem. Even more emphatically than Watson, Fokkelman sees a poem as a unique work of art, composed by a highly skilled poet. This emphasis has profound impact on his theory and method: Where Watson offers a toolkit of literary techniques, Fokkelman actually rejects such categorizations.\textsuperscript{18} He mainly describes individual phenomena in individual texts, almost as if the poet had invented the techniques themselves, for this particular poem. In his analysis, Fokkelman aims to find the prosodic structure that the poet has put into this poem, in all its complexity and richness.

\textsuperscript{12} van Grol 2015, 42.
\textsuperscript{13} Watson 1986, Ch. 9.
\textsuperscript{14} Watson 1986, Ch. 10.
\textsuperscript{15} Watson 1986, Ch. 11.
\textsuperscript{16} Watson 1986, 11.07.
\textsuperscript{17} Watson 1986, 11.15.
\textsuperscript{18} “... a full-fledged poetics is not the same as an inventory of poetic tools, or a \textit{summum bonum} of the poet’s tricks.” (Fokkelman 1998, 22)
Text Model

Fokkelman’s insistence on poetic freedom does not mean that he denies the existence of poetic conventions and even rules in Biblical Hebrew poetry. If anything, he sometimes appears to overstate the difficulties involved in these rules to emphasize the poet’s great skill: “The poet is under tremendous coercion of more than one kind: he must obey different sets of rules or conventions regarding language, style, and structure.” Fokkelman’s text model for Biblical Hebrew poetry is shown in Figure 2.1.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{texture} & \text{composition} \\
\text{(higher units)} & \\
6. verses & 11. poem \\
5. cola & 10. sections \\
4. phrases & 9. stanzas \\
3. words & 8. substanzas \\
2. syllables & 7. strophes \\
1. sounds & \\
\end{array}
\]

Figure 2.1: Fokkelman, linguistic levels in poetry

Structurally, this model is equivalent to that of the other approaches discussed here: a hierarchy of feet, cola, verselines, strophes and stanzas. Also, the numbers on the average lengths of the various units largely conforms to communis opinio. However, Fokkelman arrives at his structural units and their lengths via a somewhat different route. What is patently different in Fokkelman’s approach is his treatment of syllables. He not only uses these as length constraints on verselines, but he sees patterns of syllable counts play a crucial role in the overall structure of a poem (see my discussion below).

Syntax and Literary Structure

It is noteworthy that Fokkelman’s text hierarchy is a mixture of phonological, syntactic and literary categories: “The text [the poet] creates is an ingenious fusion of language and art. He takes the maximum advantage of linguistic

\footnote{Fokkelman 1998, 8. Concerning the construction of cola, verselines and strophes, this statement is clearly exaggerated. In even moderately trained poets, the rules of language and meter get internalized quickly, so that the production of well-formed verselines with an acceptable syntax become semi-automatic. The construction of larger structural units largely involves repetitions and connections between individual text elements, which are not difficult to include either. The only rules which would indeed pose almost insurmountable difficulties, are presented by Fokkelman’s ideas about average syllable counts (see note 28 on page 27 below).}

\footnote{Fokkelman 1998, 4.}

\footnote{See, e.g., van der Lugt 2006, 53; van Grol 2015, 15.}
This reflects Fokkelman’s fundamental view on the relation between syntax and prosody: For Fokkelman, the two can not be separated, and are in fact two sides of the same coin. In the actual analyses, however, syntactic structure is almost entirely ignored: if syntactic phenomena play any role in the argumentation, they are treated as literary patterns.

**Procedures** For Fokkelman, analyzing and interpreting a piece of Biblical Hebrew poetry can not be captured in a single method, but is an art form in itself:

The number of possibilities is so large that any attempt at categorisation seems futile. As stated before, there is no recipe, but it is possible to formulate a guideline, which a good reader will never lose sight of: to develop and use a great sensitivity to all phenomena of similarity and difference which we can observe in the poet’s language.23

In practice, Fokkelman’s analysis has two main components:24

- ‘Structural analysis’: the formation of strophes, stanzas and poems.
- ‘Prosodic analysis’: cola, verselines and the number of syllables they contain.

**Observations** Many of Fokkelman’s observations involve patterns, of many different types (phonological, semantic, lexical, morphological and syntactical) and on every level of the text: 25

- Word-based patterns usually involve some kind of repetition of individual word features (verbatim repetition, repetition of the lexeme or grammatical form, assonance and rhyme).

- Numerical patterns involve the numbers of syllables, cola, verselines and strophes in structural units on the next higher level. What constitutes a pattern is not defined explicitly; it appears to involve series of identical numbers, ascending or descending series, or series that show some kind of symmetry.

23Fokkelman 1998, 9; see also Fokkelman 2000, 24: “… for a long time yet it will be necessary to dissociate oneself from any method hailed as the one and only, and to keep an open mind when hearing and reading verses, with a great love for the individual and its surprises.”  
24Fokkelman 2000, 7.  
25An example: In Deut 32,1, the fronting of the hif’il imperative הָעַזֵּין (ha’azinu, ‘lend your ear!’) creates a chiasm with הָעַזְיָן (wetišına’, ‘and listen!’), a semantic parallel on verse level, while also creating an inclusion on poem level with הָנֹורִין (harninu, ‘sing!’), another hif’il imperative. (Fokkelman 1998, 6–7).
These patterns can become impressively and sometimes even discouragingly complex; the numerical patterns especially are sometimes bewildering. It is not always clear what meaning, if any beside their beauty, these various patterns are supposed to convey.26

Relation to my research

Even though Watson and Fokkelman must be commended for their fine eye for detail and feel for the literary qualities of the text, the sheer number and diversity of phenomena they observe,27 and above all, their reluctance to offer any methodology or formal criteria, make it very difficult for me to incorporate much of their work into my own research.

Many of Watson’s and Fokkelman’s observations rely on semantics, an understanding of the contents or a view on the structure of the poem as a whole; where Fokkelman’s observations try to be more formal (such as in the syllable counts), they still produce rather *ad hoc* ‘patterns’. Finally, Fokkelman’s statistics on the average number of syllables per line—which he claims is an exact integer for the majority of Psalms—have serious issues.28 More importantly at this moment, it is not clear how this type of observation would have to function within a syntactic analysis.

2.2 The Kampen School, Johan Renkema

The ‘Kampen School’ approach to the (structural) analysis of Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry has been developed at Kampen Theological University.29 Its driving force has been Johannes C. de Moor—often co-publishing

26See, e.g., Fokkelman 1998, 60, where he mentions that 69 of the cola in Deut 32 are attributed to Moses and 69 to God, on a total of 69 verselines. What the number 69 would mean, remains unexplained. However, because of the occurrence of two tricola, the total number of cola in the poem is not 138 (2×69) but 140, ‘a number we should probably interpret as twice the beautiful number 70.’

27In fact, the way in which these scholars tend to assign meaning to every detail they perceive, leaves one to wonder whether there can be such a thing as *too much* veneration for the poet’s skills. Not every structure in a poem needs to be intentional and thus meaningful; not every poet needs to be a great poet, and even great poets can occasionally struggle with prosodic demands and deliver less than perfect lines.

28The *average* number of syllables per line is a statistical entity, and can only be calculated, not experienced directly by an audience. It would also be impossible to reach while writing, since the relative weight of each line decreases with the length of the poem. Even more seriously, the text of a substantial number of Psalms was emended ‘in order to fit into categories A2 or B’ (Fokkelman 2000, 530, my emphasis), which renders the exactness of the average meaningless in these cases.

29Presently merged into the Protestant Theological University, Amsterdam and Groningen.
CHAPTER 2. LITERARY APPROACHES

### Table 2.2: Prosodic units, Korpel and De Moor 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building-block</th>
<th>Smallest</th>
<th>Expandable</th>
<th>Largest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foot</td>
<td>1 syllable</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8 syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>1 foot</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse</td>
<td>1 colon</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9 cola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe</td>
<td>1 verse</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canticle</td>
<td>1 strophe</td>
<td>No?</td>
<td>5 strophes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sub-)canto</td>
<td>1 canticle</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with Marjo C. A. Korpel\(^{30}\). Its first major publication was the dissertation of Pieter van der Lugt.\(^{31}\) The method has inspired many studies of Biblical Hebrew poetry, both within and without the Kampen Theological University.

**Goals**

Adherents of the Kampen School are primarily concerned with finding criteria for the correct delimitation of prosodic units in the texts. They do make other literary and stylistic observations, but these primarily serve the purpose of finding the prosodic units.

**Text Model**

The text model of the Kampen School is structurally comparable to that of Watson and Fokkelman:\(^{32}\) A hierarchy of prosodic units, from the metric foot up to the colon, the verseline, the strophe, the (sub)canto and finally the poem as a whole. See Table 2.2 for the units and their possible sizes.\(^{33}\)

**Syntax and Literary Structure**

To Korpel and de Moor (1988), syntax serves as a literary argument, in the sense that sentences running on across prosodic borders are evidence for the existence of verselining, strophes and canticles: Since there are sentences running on between cola / verselines / strophes, this means that these units must have been grouped into larger units: verselines, strophes and canticles, respectively.\(^{34}\)

\(^{30}\)See de Moor 1978; Korpel and de Moor 1988; Korpel and de Moor 1998 for the structure of Ancient North-West Semitic poetry. Korpel and De Moor have also co-published on a number of topics relating to Biblical theology and Biblical archeology.

\(^{31}\)van der Lugt 1980.

\(^{32}\)See Sections 2.1 and 2.1.

\(^{33}\)Korpel and de Moor 1988, 60.

\(^{34}\)Korpel and de Moor 1988, 14, 29, 38.
A remarkable statement by Korpel and De Moor demonstrates that in this approach, syntax is deemed to be of secondary significance, to the scholar as well as to the poet and their audience:

Especially the deliberate changing of the syntactic order of words common in normal prose appears to be an important structuring force on the level of the strophe. Often it is quite obvious that no real emphasis can have been intended. It is our contention that in poetry the changing of word-order has no other function than to mark the boundaries of strophes.\textsuperscript{35}

**Observations and Procedures**

On the whole, the Kampen School is much more systematic than Fokkelman and Watson, both in their method (which is almost always presented as a bottom-up analysis)\textsuperscript{36} and in their categorizations of criteria.

The Kampen School holds, that on every prosodic level, formally observable markers and signals can be found by which units can be delimitied with a fair amount of confidence. As to the exact criteria used, the emphasis has shown some shifts over time and between scholars. Overall, however, the following elements are the most consistently present in Kampen style analysis:

- **Contents and subject matter** as a global indicator of unit boundaries.
- **Constrictions on the length** of cola, strophes and cantos: These can be of quite flexible lengths, but within certain clear limits.\textsuperscript{37} Some scholars emphasize flexibility, others emphasize the limits.
- **Transition markers**: words or constructions indicative of the beginnings of endings of prosodic units (esp. strophes and beyond). Some scholars list specific markers;\textsuperscript{38} others define them more loosely, e.g., as ‘particles and constructions which lend emphasis’.\textsuperscript{39}
- **External parallelism**: verbatim repetitions between units on verseline level and higher. Sometimes expanded to include fixed word pairs.

The Kampen School distinguishes **responses** (correspondences on parallel positions in different units: \textit{Axxxx/AXxxx; xxxxAX/xxxxA}; etc.) from **inclusions** (correspondences between the first and last line of the same unit: \textit{AxxxxA}).\textsuperscript{40}


\textsuperscript{36}Korpel and de Moor 1998, 10, 1.2.1, but cf. van der Lugt 1995, 34–35.

\textsuperscript{37}Korpel and de Moor 1988, 2.

\textsuperscript{38}van der Lugt 2010b, 3–4, see Tables 2.3 and 2.4 on page 31.

\textsuperscript{39}Korpel and de Moor 1998, 14.

\textsuperscript{40}The patterns can occur in combinations as well. See Renkema 1998, 77 for an overview.
• **Patterns, symmetries and regularities**, especially in the arrangements of strophes and (sub)cantos.

• Special functions of the **monocolon, tricolon** and **one-verse strophes** (often at the beginning or end of a poem or stanza).\(^{41}\)

• Comparison with other **ancient traditions**, scribal or poetic: Ugaritic poetry,\(^{42}\) Masoretic pointing and delimitation systems in ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible and its early translations.\(^{43}\)

Whereas the arguments just mentioned have always been part of the standard Kampen toolkit, emphasis has changed over the years and between authors. Below, I discuss some of these developments, but only inasmuch they differ from the general picture.

**Pieter van der Lugt**

In his dissertation,\(^{44}\) Van der Lugt lays down the general principles outlined above, taking up cues from De Moor,\(^{45}\) as well as from a broad survey of scholarly literature, and presents a strophic analysis of the entire book of Psalms. Points to note are:

• Van der Lugt does not use Ugaritic parallels, or even inter-biblical parallels. He focuses on the Hebrew text of each Psalm separately.

• The emphasis of Van der Lugt’s analysis is on transition markers (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4 on the next page) and external parallelism.

• As to **transition markers**, these can occasionally have a ‘secondary’ function\(^{46}\) in a higher unit (substanza, stanza or poem) or in a three-line strophe: In that case, a begin marker appears at the end of the larger unit and vice versa.

  Van der Lugt does not address the status of these markers. Are they actual markers, used consciously in order to demarcate units, or are they words which simply ‘work’ at the beginning or end of a unit of text, and therefore tend to appear at those positions more often than elsewhere?

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\(^{41}\)van der Lugt 2006, Ch. 6, esp. 532.

\(^{42}\)Korpel and de Moor 1988.

\(^{43}\)Korpel and de Moor 1998.

\(^{44}\)van der Lugt 1980. In van der Lugt 1995, essentially the same method is used.

\(^{45}\)de Moor 1978.

### Table 2.3: Begin markers (Van der Lugt, *Cantos and Strophes III*, 3–4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>marker</th>
<th>examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vocatives</td>
<td>esp. vocatives for God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interrog. particles</td>
<td>-ד (‘how long?’), interrogative -ד (‘what?’), מ (‘why?’), מ (‘who?’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific ‘emphatic’ particles</td>
<td>-א (‘then’), זה (‘certainly’), -מ (‘behold’), -ל (‘therefore’), ל (‘if not’), - (‘now’), - (‘now’), verseline-initial -מ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific dem. pronouns</td>
<td>אלה (‘these’), אתה (‘this’), הוא (‘this’), אתה (‘I’), אתה (‘you’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verseline-initial</td>
<td>אשיר (‘happiness’) / טוב (‘good’).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verb forms with imp. meaning</td>
<td>imperatives, cohortatives, jussives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific verb forms</td>
<td>יוה (‘I say’), ידע (‘I know’), אמרתי (‘I say’), בור (‘blessed be YHWH’),aira, ia, ia, ia (‘fear’).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2.4: End markers (Van der Lugt, *Cantos and Strophes III*, 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>marker</th>
<th>examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>specific ‘emphatic’ particles</td>
<td>-א (‘more’/‘even’), -ב (‘also’/‘yet’), -ל (‘very’), מ (‘on account of’), ל (‘more’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some pers. pronouns</td>
<td>הוא (‘we’), אנכי (‘I’), אתה (‘he’), אתה (‘she’), אתה/Ana (‘they’), dem. pron. אתה (‘this’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words that point to a very long time, ‘eternity’</td>
<td>다 (‘generation and generation’), נ正しい (‘all day’), ר (‘eternity’), 통해 (‘duration’ / ‘eternity’), תמיד (‘always’).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>סelah (‘selah’)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 2. LITERARY APPROACHES

- As to external parallelism, note that this is a fairly formal criterium: Rather than internal parallelism, which also works with semantic connections, it consists of verbatim repetitions (or at least repetition of the lexeme). Apart from this, the occasional ‘fixed word pair’ appears to be acceptable.

- Van der Lugt is mainly interested in strophes and higher units; consequently, he does not note information on feet and cola in his analyses, nor offer any theory on prosodic rules on these levels.

- In practice, Van der Lugt’s strophes tend to be rather regular in size: Generally 2–3 lines per strophe, organized in straight series of equally proportioned lines or strophes, or in parallel or symmetrical patterns; often, one-line strophes occur at the very beginning or end of a poem or stanza. Regularity and symmetry are strongest at the strophe and canto levels.

- In *Cantos*, Van der Lugt has made slight alterations in his delimitations of many Psalms. These changes appear to move toward increasingly regular strophe lengths and reduction of one-verse strophes.

- From *Cantos* on, Van der Lugt adds quantitative structural analysis to his method. This approach, which is inspired by the work of C. J. Labuschagne, who in turn has been inspired by traditional Jewish gematria, counts words, cola and strophes in a poem, looking for meaningful numbers and the ‘rhetorical center’. This element is specific to Van der

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47van der Lugt 1980, 218–219; see also van der Lugt 2010b, 5.

48van der Lugt uses the term ‘(sub)stanza’ rather than ‘canticle’ and ‘(sub)canto’. The reason for the later change in terminology is motivated by Korpel and de Moor (1988, 41 n. 61) with reference to the concentric structure of the latter; Korpel and de Moor (1998, 3 n. 6) refer to the flexible length of canticles, which stanzas apparently do not have.

50Cf. (van der Lugt 1980, 472–478) and van der Lugt 2010b, 590–596. For 106 Psalms, strophe divisions differ from the dissertation (70, when uncertain of absent analyses (in parentheses) are not counted): 1, 2, 3, (4), 5, (7B), 8, (9–10), 11, 12, 13, 14, (15), 16, (17), 18, 19, (20), (22), 24, 25, (26), (27), 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, (35), 36, (37), (38), 39, (40), (42–43), (45), (46), 47, 48, (49), 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, (55), (56), 57, (58), 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, (68), (69), (71), (73), 74, (78), 79, 81, 82, (84), 85, (86), (87), 88, 89, 90, 92, (93), (95), 96, 99, 103, 104, 106, 108, 109, (110), 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, (123), 124, 125, 126, 129, (133), 134, 135, 136, 137, (138), 139, (141), 142, 143, 144, (145), 146, 147, 150.

For 42 Psalms, the strophe divisions have not changed (27 if cases with changes in canticles (superscript c) are not counted): 6, 7A, 21, 23, 32, 34 41, 44, 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 75, 76, 77, 80, 83, 91, 94, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 105, 107, 111, 112, 113, 114, 117, 121, 122, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 140, 148, 149.

51van der Lugt 2010b, 7.

52Labuschagne 2000 and other publications.

53van der Lugt 2010b, 6–8. Especially (multiples of) the numbers 17 and 26 (representing the name YHWH), 7, 11, and 13 are thought to bear special significance.
Lugt; it is not adopted by other adherents of the Kampen School. Van der Lugt is aware that the results of his numerical analyses regularly do not match those of his other approaches, but apparently, he does not consider this to be an objection.

Marjo Korpel and Johannes de Moor

As noted above, the driving force behind the Kampen School has been Johannes de Moor. His early articles have provided some of the first insights on which the methodology was built. De Moor and Korpel’s article *Fundamentals of Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetry*, offers a fundamental description of the Kampen text model (summarized in Table 2.2 on page 28), but does not describe much in the way of criteria and methods to recognize the various units in actual texts. Their integral analysis of Isa 40–55 does offer such criteria (Table 2.5), which are to be applied in a bottom-up procedure, moving from feet to cola to verselines etc. In broad terms, Korpel and De Moor follow the general lines of the Kampen School, but they do place some different accents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ancient divisions</th>
<th>prosodic observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>always separating</td>
<td>separating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colon</td>
<td>- MT: <em>silluq, atnah, zaqef q.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verse</td>
<td>- MT: arrangement of <em>silluq, atnah, zaqef q.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strophe</td>
<td>- major division markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- MT: <em>sof pasuq</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canticle</td>
<td>- major division markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- MT: <em>petuha, setuma</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5: Observations by Korpel and De Moor, *Isaiah 40-55* (1998)

Points to note are:

54 “Occasionally this approach supports the overall structure of the poem” (van der Lugt 2010a, 7, my emphasis). In his third volume, Van der Lugt appears more optimistic, but still notes that the rhetorical centers ‘do not necessarily have relations with the structure of the psalm in terms of cantos and strophes’ (van der Lugt 2010b, 7–8).

55 Especially de Moor 1978.

56 Korpel and de Moor 1988.

57 Korpel and de Moor 1998.

58 Korpel and de Moor 1998, 10, 1.2.1.
In *Fundamentals* especially, Korpel and De Moor emphasize the flexible lengths of the prosodic units: “Within certain limits every structural unit could be expanded or contracted as the singers saw fit.”\(^{59}\) Thus, even though there are certain preferred lengths (2 or 3 cola to a verse; 2 or 3 verses to a strophe, etc.), in principle, a canticle could in the most extreme case consist of a single colon; conversely, a colon could be expanded to the size of a full-blown canticle.

- Also in *Fundamentals*, Korpel and De Moor make extensive use of parallels between Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry, which they view as an unbroken tradition, governed by essentially the same laws.\(^{60}\)

- From *Isaiah 40–55*, this intertextual aspect is missing; it is replaced by evidence from the Masoretic accentuation, which Korpel and De Moor hold to go back to ancient traditions and thus to be much more reliable than generally assumed,\(^{61}\) and ancient translations. These ancient divisions have actually gained great prominence in the method since *Fundamentals*:

  If more than one of the ancient witnesses testifies to a divider, especially if these witnesses belong to different traditions (Q, \(\text{M} \), \(\text{S} \)), it should be taken very seriously. If one wants to diverge from such a combined testimony, he has to argue the case convincingly, just as one customarily does if one proposes an emendation of the Hebrew text.\(^{62}\)

In *Isaiah 40–55*, ancient divisions are always listed as the first, and most important, argument. The other, ‘Kampen’-style, arguments are called ‘additional tools’, which ‘may be used to critically evaluate the traditions with regard to text division.’\(^{63}\)

This last qualification is, of course, crucial. Korpel and De Moor fully acknowledge that the ancient divisions, including that of MT, are sometimes simply wrong.\(^{64}\) It seems to me that the critical evaluation of the ancient divisions shifts the ultimate authority to the ‘additional tools’, at least in those cases where they appear particularly strong.

\(^{59}\)Korpel and de Moor 1988, 2.

\(^{60}\)Korpel and de Moor 1988, 1.

\(^{61}\)Korpel and de Moor 1998, 3, 11. Cf. van Grol (1983a), who starts from the opposite premiss that the original prosodic structure of Biblical Hebrew poetry has largely been lost in the Masoretic tradition, and needs to be restored by the modern scholar, based on text-internal observations.

\(^{62}\)Korpel and de Moor 1998, 9.

\(^{63}\)Korpel and de Moor 1998, 9–10.

\(^{64}\)Korpel and de Moor 1998, 3, 4, 9.
• Korpel and De Moor note transition markers, but their terminology appears to reflect a different perspective: Rather than calling them ‘markers’—implying a conscious literary device—they speak of ‘particles and syntactic constructions which lend “emphasis”’, 65 which moves towards linguistics and syntax. However, on closer inspection, Korpel and De Moor do envision actual prosodic markers, in their remark cited above (p. 29) about ‘the deliberate changing of the syntactic order of words common in normal prose’ being ‘an important structuring force on the level of the strophe’.66

Johan Renkema

Within the Kampen School, Renkema has specialized in the book of Lamentations. In his dissertation,67 he outlines the historical and theological setting of the book as one of total bewilderment after the fall of Jerusalem in 587/6 BCE. This bewilderment was exacerbated by the obvious falsification of the popular priestly doctrine, that Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty were invulnerable.

In his contributions to The Structural Analysis of Biblical and Canaanite Poetry,68 followed by his commentary on Lamentations,69 he presents a detailed prosodic analysis of the book according to the method introduced by Van der Lugt.70 In comparison to the general ‘Kampen’ line, the following observations can be made about Renkema’s method:

• Renkema hardly ever makes use of transition markers. The vast majority of his arguments involve external parallelism.

• Renkema’s definition of external parallelism is much broader than Van der Lugt’s. He not only allows verbal repetition and well-known word pairs, but also list words synonyms, antonyms, words belonging to the same semantic field, 71 or words that can be associated within the historical situation.72

• Renkema’s prosodic structures are not only very regular, 73 but, especially on higher levels, also quite complicated: concentric, parallel and

65Korpel and de Moor 1998, 14. See also: Lunn 2006 (discussed in Section 3.3 on page 49 ff.).
66Korpel and de Moor 1998, 14.
67Renkema 1983.
70van der Lugt 1980.
72Renkema 1988, 350 n. 9: That grinding meal was women’s work connects נשים למדת (Lam 5,11a) and נשים למדת (vs 13a); Renkema 1988, 352 n. 16: Waterrights (מדים:ים Lam 5,4a) have been lost together with the land (מדים:ים vs 2a).
73To be sure, the delimitations of verses and strophes in Lam 1–4 are obvious and undis-
3+2 patterns\textsuperscript{74} all occur simultaneously and in combination, in cantos, poems and the book as a whole. Like Fokkelman and Van der Lugt (\textit{Cantos}), Renkema interprets concentric structures as having their most central thought or message in their center.

I will not discuss Renkema’s actual analyses in detail here; they will come up where they are relevant to my own analyses later on in this study.

\textbf{Relation to my research}

The basic tenets of the Kampen School are convincing enough; that Biblical Hebrew poetry has cola, verselines, strophes and groups of strophes, which are bound by diverse forms of internal and external parallelism, has become widely accepted. The method has the advantage that it argues from formal, or at least observable, criteria as much as possible. This makes comparison and integration with a formal syntactic method quite promising. That applying the approach to actual texts can raise procedural puzzles,\textsuperscript{75} is only natural, as these prosodic rules are by no means mathematical laws and allow for a fair bit of variation. Presumably, the practical procedure for this kind of analysis will be an iterative process, similar to that of the text-syntactic analysis (see below, p. 106ff.).

One of the major advantages of the Kampen School method is that it results in a hierarchy of textual units which is quite suitable for inclusion in a database that is built on the principle of textual hierarchies. Renkema’s analysis, in particular, has the obvious advantage of being a complete and well-documented prosodic analysis of the entire book of Lamentations.

Because the focus of my study lies on the syntactic analysis rather than on the prosodic one, I will use Renkema’s analysis, rather than making a proposal of my own. This does not mean that all his choices are undisputed. Some of his colon divisions diverge from those of other authors, and even some of his verseline divisions have been criticized.\textsuperscript{76} In general, however, his divisions are convincing, especially up to and including strophe level, which is the highest level I will systematically explore.

\textsuperscript{74}Renkema associates 3+2 patterns with the so-called \textit{qinah} meter, see Renkema 1988, 333,359.

\textsuperscript{75}Such as: How can responses be distinguished from inclusions (see p. 29)? How can the secondary function of transition markers (see p. 30) be recognized? See also Cheney 1994, 103–104.

\textsuperscript{76}de Hoop 2000, 77–79; see also my remarks on p. 164. To be sure, De Hoop criticizes the entire exegetical tradition for by and large assuming that Lamentations has regular strophes and \textit{qinah} meter throughout. In effect, Renkema does not assume this; in other passages than the ones mentioned by De Hoop, he does allow for tricola and four-line strophes.
Chapter 3

Mixed Approaches

In this chapter, I will discuss a number of authors who have made an attempt to combine prosodic and syntactic observations, each one with their very own way of going about this. In the end, these authors work from a literary point of view. Their main interest lies in Biblical Hebrew poetic forms, more than in Biblical Hebrew syntax for its own sake. This is by no means meant as a reproach, but it does pose a difference with the studies discussed in Chapter 4.

I realize that, in this section, I could have included other influential studies which include syntactic observations into their literary analysis: Kugel 1981, Greenstein 1982 and Berlin 2008 come to mind. However, these studies have concerned themselves mainly with a description and definition of line parallelism per se, a subject which I can and need not enter into within the confines of this study. For me, it is sufficient to note that two or more clauses are involved in a parallel verseline; I do not have to describe exactly how this parallelism is realized. In that sense, parallelism is as instrumental to my research as syntax is to literary scholars.

While Collins, O’Connor, Lunn and Van Grol offer insights into syntactic structures for their own sakes, Berlin, Greenstein and Kugel in my estimation do not. I have therefore chosen to omit these authors from my discussion. For the same reason I have refrained from discussing Van Grol’s chapter on line parallelism.¹

3.1 Terence Collins

Goals

In his pioneering study,² Collins sets out to add a third alternative to the—in his eyes—stagnant debate about whether ‘stress patterns’ (a phonetic concept)

¹van Grol 2015, Ch. 4.
²Collins 1978.
or ‘parallellism’ (a semantic concept) form the guiding principle of Biblical Hebrew poetry. His alternative consists of a description and classification of verselines in terms of grammatical structures. Collins’ goals are decidedly literary: He repeatedly states that, in this study, he is interested in an adequate stylistic description of the verseline, not in the linguistics of Biblical Hebrew poetry per se. Note, however, that Collins stresses that the ultimate goal must be a comprehensive approach, combining investigation into the syntactic, semantic, phonetic and rhythmic layers of a poetic text.

Text model

Collins models poetic text as consisting of two types of units: Grammatical sentences and poetic lines.

Grammatical sentences  Sentences are classified into four abstract ‘Basic Sentences’, according to the presence of a subject (NP¹), object (NP²), verb (V) and modifier of the verb (M).

\[
\begin{align*}
A & \quad NP^1 \quad V \\
B & \quad NP^1 \quad V \quad M \\
C & \quad NP^1 \quad V \quad NP^2 \\
D & \quad NP^1 \quad V \quad NP^2 \quad M
\end{align*}
\]

The Basic Sentence is abstract, because it represents the deep structure of the sentence within Collins’ version of the Generative Grammar theory. However, since Collins simplifies Generative Grammar to the point where the only relevant transition rules are Permutation and NP¹ deletion, and since he defines NP, V and M in rather distributional terms, the Basic Sentence actually is a lot less abstract than Collins asserts. In fact, the point can be made that for all practical purposes, the Basic Sentence is a distributional clause pattern in which the subject is optional and the order of the constituents is free. The only exception to this are complex sentences, in which one of the NP or M constituents is itself a sentence.

\[\text{Collins 1978, 5–7.}\]
\[\text{Collins 1978, 33, 38, 191.}\]
\[\text{Collins 1978, 191.}\]
\[\text{Collins 1978, 22–23. Note that Collins only takes verbal sentences into account. Van Grol observes that Collins’ sentences are actually simple clauses (2015, 89), which is correct in most cases; however, Collins allows for ‘noun clauses’ as realizations of the subject or the object. If this category includes verbal subject and object clauses, then these cases are complex sentences. Collins is not very explicit on this point.}\]
\[\text{Collins 1978, 33, 35.}\]
\[\text{Collins 1978, 38. Collins himself notes that the Passivisation rule does not effect his classification, Collins 1978, 43.}\]
Poetic lines Poetic lines are classified in a number of steps: 9

1. **General Line-Types**, according to the number and types of Basic Sentences they contain:10
   
   I  One Basic Sentence.
   II  Two Basic Sentences of the same kind, all constituents in the first half-line repeated in the second (not necessarily in the same order).
   III  Two Basic Sentences of the same kind; only some constituents in the first half-line repeated in the second.
   IV  Two different Basic Sentences.

2. **Specific Line-Types**, according to their general line-type (I-IV) in combination with the Basic Sentence(s) (A-D) involved in them,11 subdivided by whether or not the subject appears in them,12

3. Individual **Line-Forms**, according to the Specific Line-Types in combination with the actual constituent order.

**Observations**

Collins’ model is abstract in the sense that it has been designed of a priori; his categories simply cover all logically possible combinations of his parameters, without consideration of their occurrence in actual texts.13

**Occurrences of line-types** The second part of his study, however, is devoted to listing these actual occurrences in the test corpus, which presumably comprises the poetic portions of the First, Second and Third Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Prophets except Malachi.14

Just like his grammatical categories, Collins’ observations are in fact more distributional than his generative approach would seem to imply. As he himself states, ‘… the grouping of examples into line-forms is dependent entirely upon similarity of grammatical surface structures.’15

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9Collins 1978, 22.
10Collins 1978, 23–24. Collins only takes verselines with two cola (which he calls half-lines or hemistichs) into account.
11The full list of Specific Line-Types is listed on Collins 1978, 25.
12Collins 1978, 27.
14As far as I can see, Collins does not explicitly define his test corpus. My list is derived from Collins 1978, 55 and 195.
15Collins 1978, 54.
Stylistic conclusions  In his third part, Collins moves on into the realm of stylistics, based on, and expanding from, the statistics on the actual occurrences of line-types.

From these statistics, he sees a ‘poetic tradition’, an ‘established style, emerging,’ while at the same time stylistic variation can be shown between the various books. Some of Collins’ concrete conclusions are:

- Type II lines, with their neat parallelism, are by no means the ‘standard’ form of the Hebrew verse-line; they only make up a quarter of the lines.

- Certain books have decided preferences for certain line-types; this constitutes part of their ‘style’.

- Constituent order (of V, S and M) shows greater freedom than in prose, and also appears to be bound to stylistic preference between books.

- Constituent order in the second hemistich of parallel (type II) lines appears to have a correlation to the pattern in the first; at any rate, the preferred order in the second differs from that in the first.

Extension of the system  Collins extends his system of classification with nominal sentences, sentences involving הָנַךְ (‘to be / become’), standard techniques of variation (inclusion of extra verbs in a hemistich, tripartite lines, and concatenated lines without any V.

Structures and meanings  Collins further attempts to illustrate the interplay between grammatical structures and semantic and prosodic layers, such as parallelism (which Collins apparently sees as primarily semantic), emphasis, semantic sets, and rhythms.
3.1. TERENCE COLLINS

Relation to my research

Collins has been one of the first to systematically investigate the complicated relations between syntax and prosodic structure. Whereas his point of departure in Generative Grammar would appear to make his approach rather incompatible with a form-to-function text-syntactic approach, his actual categories and observations are surprisingly distributional: Collins in fact categorizes surface structure clause patterns and verseline patterns. It is not a stretch to imagine how Collins’ sentence categories and line categories could be described in terms of lists of distributional patterns, rather than as generative transformation rules on deep structures. This is, in fact, the direction in which I think formal (text)syntactic research of Biblical Hebrew poetry should move.

Another point to take away from Collins is his recognition that in order to describe what happens in Biblical Hebrew verselines, analysis above sentence level is needed.27 Also, he has realized, long before studies like that of Lunn, that there is a correlation between the position of a clause within a verseline and its syntax. This means that any syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry will at least have to reckon with this position.

All this being said, Collins’ method can only be of indirect use to my own research, because of a number of limitations:

- Collins focuses on the stylistics of the verseline, not on the syntax, let alone text-syntax, of the clause.

- As a consequence, his sentence types are based on a deep structure that is too simple for text-syntactic research. Next to verb, subject and object, many other factors play a role in shaping the syntactic structure and position of a clause: conjunctions, verbal conjugations, pronominal references and others. I will have to include these factors in my analysis.

- Even though Collins recognizes that structures above sentence level are needed, these structures are in fact prosodic verselines, not text-syntactic units. Also, these structures can only comprise a very small number of clauses, the text-syntactic relations between which fall outside his scope.

In the end, a dedicated and more sophisticated system of descriptions is needed to do justice to the syntactic structure of poetic texts.

Collins considers it more fruitful to concentrate on the convergence of and interplay between meter and line-forms.

27 Collins 1978, 36.
3.2 Michael O’Connor, Waldemar Cloete

Goals

In his voluminous and often-cited work *Hebrew Verse Structure*, O’Connor attempts to replace what he calls the Standard Description of Biblical Hebrew poetry, which he deems inadequate, with a new approach. This approach describes regularity of line lengths in terms of syntax rather than meter, and describes the connections between lines (by which O’Connor means cola) in terms of tropes rather than parallelism.

According to O’Connor, the Standard Description of Biblical Hebrew verse (henceforth SD), has two bases simultaneously:

- **Parallelism**: related to features of contiguous lines.
- **Meter**: related to features of lines in themselves.

O’Connor criticizes this double base: “[The SD] remains an attempt to solve one mystery (Hebrew poetic structure) by splitting it into two mysteries, one more obscure than the first (meter), the other only slightly less so (parallelism).”

Most importantly, O’Connor claims, meter is not treated satisfactorily. No proposal (accentual, syllabic, emendation, reference to music / orality) has demonstrated regular meter. However, a certain regularity can be described, so approaches which eliminate meter from the description altogether are not adequate either.

As for parallelism, O’Connor objects that the categories synonymous, antithetical and synthetical are defined in relation to ‘non-verbal realities’ (ideas and thought units), not on the constructs of words of which a poem is made up. Subsequent attempts to remedy this, adding new phenomena, have expanded the definition to the point that it has become undefinable, while the adherence to the three non-verbal categories has led to erroneous interpretations of parallel lines.

Text Model

As an alternative, O’Connor presents his own approach, which changes perspective on a number of commonly accepted notions about Biblical Hebrew poetry:

- The line (= colon) is the basic unit, not the bicolon or tricolon.

---

28 O’Connor 1980.
29 O’Connor 1980, 32.
Biblical Hebrew poetry has no meter, in the true sense of the word.\textsuperscript{32} There are limits to line lengths, but these are syntactic constraints.

Bicola and tricola are not fundamental: They are a secondary byproduct of a more fundamental mechanism,\textsuperscript{33} troping: parallelistic phenomena which occur regularly and serve as part of the verse structure.\textsuperscript{34} In other words: A poet tends to connect subsequent lines into larger groups, often, but not necessarily of two lines by parallelistic phenomena which occur often enough to become a convention.\textsuperscript{35} The tropes, like meter, are defined in terms of textual patterns, rather than semantics.

Observations

Syntactic constraints O’Connor states that, since Biblical Hebrew poetry does not have an actual meter, the constraints on the line lengths must come from their syntactic structure: the number and combinations of syntactic units, clause constituents and clause predicates that can occur within a line.\textsuperscript{36}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unit</th>
<th>definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unit</td>
<td>each individual verb or noun, along with the particles dependent on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constituent</td>
<td>each verb or nominal phrase, along with the particles dependent on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause</td>
<td>either verbal or verbless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause predicate</td>
<td>the verb in a verbal clause or (\theta)-predicate in a verbless clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: O’Connor: units involved in syntactic constraints

After an inventarisation of line patterns, O’Connor formulates his syntactic constraints as listed in Table 3.2 on the following page.\textsuperscript{37} Some of the constraints simply dictate the number of elements a line or a constituent may have, while others are concerned with the combinations in which these elements may occur.

Troping In O’Connor’s text model, just as in the SD, a poetic text consists not only of lines. Subsequent groups of lines are combined, usually by trop-

\textsuperscript{32}O’Connor 1980, 138.


\textsuperscript{34}O’Connor 1980, 87.

\textsuperscript{35}O’Connor 1980, 87.

\textsuperscript{36}For O’Connor’s definitions of these terms, see Table 3.1.

\textsuperscript{37}O’Connor 1980, 87.
CHAPTER 3. MIXED APPROACHES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>in a line</th>
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<tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>in a constituent</th>
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<tr>
<td>units</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

**Additional constraints**

- 4-unit constituents: only in lines with no clause predicator.
- 3-unit constituents: either
  - alone in lines without predicator, or
  - as one of two constituents in 1-clause lines.
- 3-predicator lines have no dependent nominal phrases.
- 2-predicator lines: only one predicator has dependent nominal phrases.
- Lines with clause predicators: no nominal phrases not dependent on these.
- Dominant line form: 1 clause, 2 or 3 constituents of 2 or 3 units.

Table 3.2: O’Connor: syntactic constraints
3.2. MICHAEL O’CONNOR, WALDEMAR CLOETE

ing, into larger units. To O’Connor, troping is the primary phenomenon. Since it is very common in two-line or three-line ranges, troping will lead to bicolon and tricola, but these are in fact secondary byproducts, not a fundamental constituent of Hebrew prosody.\(^{38}\) He does, however grant the bicolon some status as a ‘superficial target structure’.

**Tropes and their categorization** O’Connor recognizes that many different types of text features play a role in parallelistic poetry: phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic.\(^{39}\) As the SD has generally focused on ideas and thought units, it confuses structural and non-structural features of parallelism. Rethinking parallelism is therefore needed.

As a first attempt in this direction, O’Connor recognizes the following types of tropes (which, incidentally, can occur in combination):\(^{40}\)

**Word level tropes:** These tropes connect pairs of individual words, usually divided over two consecutive lines, but larger distances are sometimes possible. O’Connor lists two main types: verbatim repetition in two lines,\(^{41}\) and coloration (the splitting up of a single phrase over two lines).\(^{42}\)

**Line level tropes:** These tropes do not connect individual words, but entire lines (cola). O’Connor mentions the following types:

- **Matching:** Lines match if their syntactic structures are identical: that it, if they are embedded to the same degree and they contain the same constituents\(^{43}\) (not counting any gapped items, see below).\(^{44}\)

- **Gapping:** Matching in which the general linguistic mechanism of simplification\(^{45}\) is active: one or more constituents of the first line (especially the verb) are missing in the second. Which elements can be elided, is language-dependent. O’Connor states that for Hebrew, verb gapping only occurs in poetry.\(^{46}\) Most cases are rightward gapping over two lines, other types occur but are rare.\(^{47}\)

\(^{38}\)See note 33 above.

\(^{39}\)O’Connor 1980, 89.

\(^{40}\)O’Connor 1980, 96.

\(^{41}\)O’Connor 1980, 110; see also van der Lugt 2010b, 5 (see above, p. 32), whose ‘external parallelism’, consists of *verbatim* word repetition over larger distances.

\(^{42}\)O’Connor 1980, 112.

\(^{43}\)O’Connor 1980, 119.

\(^{44}\)O’Connor 1980, 128.

\(^{45}\)O’Connor 1980, 119.

\(^{46}\)O’Connor 1980, 124.

\(^{47}\)O’Connor 1980, 129.
Supralinear level tropes:

- **syntactic dependency**: This trope connects an independent clause line and any lines dependent on it.\(^{48}\)

- **mixing**: A subset of dependency, in which two dependent and two independent lines occur in sequence,\(^{49}\) in which both dependent lines depend on both independent clauses.\(^{50}\)

Relation to my research

O’Connor’s book is most known for its syntax-based metric theory. However, for my purposes, this is not its most interesting part, since it is limited to the colon and thus brings up little or no text-syntactic aspects.

O’Connor’s remarks on troping are of more direct relevance to my research. His line level tropes of matching and gapping emphasize that verseline parallelism in Biblical Hebrew poetry often (if not always) has a syntactic component, which can be described in syntactic terms. His supra-linear trope of dependency further emphasizes that syntactic connections play a role in prosodic structure: If prosodic units have a syntactic (inter)dependency, they belong together prosodically as well.

Syntax or Prosody?

O’Connor’s attempt to relate prosodic structures to more general linguistic and syntactic features adds a valuable nuance to approaches which place too much emphasis on semantics and poetic creativity on the one hand, and to approaches which place too much emphasis on a rigid versification system on the other.\(^{51}\)

On the whole, however, O’Connor’s approach is not sufficiently different from the SD to justify a complete overhaul of the latter and its customary terminology. As others have also pointed out,\(^{52}\) O’Connor essentially retains the bi-partite approach of the SD, based in both intra-colon and inter-colon phenomena. The change is in the definitions: line length is described in terms of syntactic constraints rather than meter, while tropes are defined as a limited but diverse set of phenomena, of other than just a semantic nature.

\(^{48}\)O’Connor 1980, 129.

\(^{49}\)In the pattern: Ind - Ind - dep - dep [HJB].

\(^{50}\)O’Connor 1980, 132.

\(^{51}\)To be sure, even proponents of a prosodic system (Kampen School, Van Grol) readily admit that Biblical Hebrew versification rules are much more flexible than, say, the rules governing a Petrarcan sonnet.

\(^{52}\)A.o.: Berlin 1982; van Grol 2015, 91.
In the end, however, the constraints and tropes produce roughly the same structures as meter and parallelism, with a certain fluidity added: Van Grol rightly observes that O’Connor’s syntactic constraints are ultimately aimed at constraining the length of a colon / line, not its internal composition. As for troping: The trope of matching clearly equals syntactic parallelism, while the trope of gapping equals syntactic ellipsis.

The same questions can be asked as could be asked about Collins (see note 26 on page 40): Does regularity in word stresses arise because only certain clause types are permitted, or have these clause types been selected because they fit the required number of word stresses? Or, by the same token: Are bicola a byproduct of troping, or is troping one of the ways to group two or three cola into a proper verseline? There is even a third possibility: A practiced poet can develop a ‘feel’ for meter as well as for suitable clause types, and will produce lines that ‘work’, without consciously counting stresses or considering clause types. This possibility would render the entire question moot.

O’Connor’s mistake may well have been his attempt to replace prosodic rules with syntactic ones, claiming that these are the ‘real’ rules. His main, and lasting, contributions lie in the distinction between a syntactic and a literary description of Biblical Hebrew poetry, and in the realization that many prosodic features have a syntactic component, which can and should be described in syntactic terms.

Woldemar T. Cloete

In his dissertation, Cloete proposes a number of refinements and adjustments to O’Connor’s model. Cloete only concentrates on the line and effectively reduces O’Connor’s model to the numerical syntactic constraints on colon length. He summarizes these constraints by quoting the matrix presented by O’Connor (see Table 3.3): Cloete accepts this matrix, with the following adaptations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>clause predicators</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Syntactic Constraints according to O’Connor

1. He refines, and in some cases changes, O’Connor’s definitions of the various linguistic units. In particular, Cloete offers a more precise definition.

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53 Van Grol 2015, 92.
55 O’Connor 1980, 75 and 138; Cloete 1989, 82.
of the semantic ‘unit’, by specifying which types of words do and do not count as a unit.

2. He adds another constraint, one that is not syntactical, but phonological: a colon can not have less than one, or more than four, main stresses.

Relation to my research

Cloete’s approach has the unmistakable advantage over O’Connor’s of being much less complicated and using terminology more familiar to the field of Biblical Hebrew poetry. His constraints, especially the redefined units, appear reasonably clear and formal and could, in principle, be checked against my electronic database of Lamentations. That being said, it must be noted that Cloete’s approach shows the same limitations of O’Connor’s model and even adds to these.

- By eliminating parallelisms / tropes from the description, Cloete seriously truncates O’Connor’s approach. This is more serious than limiting the scope of the analysis to the intra-colon level: Often, parallelisms / tropes cause substantial syntactic changes in the cola they connect. This can not simply be ignored, not even when studying individual cola.

- Adding a new type of constraints, that of word stresses, is a fatal flaw in Cloete’s method, which all the more demonstrates that a purely syntactic approach to cola is based on a misconception. By his addition, Cloete implicitly admits that line length is not syntactic in nature, but is ultimately independent of syntax. The syntactic constraints merely provide a rough estimate of how many syntactic units a poet can ‘squeeze into’ a colon, the length of which is actually determined by its stress pattern.

- Cloete’s definitions of syntactic units are clearer and more precise than O’Connor’s. Yet, on closer inspection, they still suffer from the same problems. Especially the question of which particles count as a ‘unit’ and which don’t, is only answered in a rather casuistic way. Consider the following examples (Cloete 1989, 202):

```
4 3 2 3
Jer 15,17a

5 4 1 4
Jer 2,5a
```

Apparently, a suffixed preposition (ב) does count as a unit, whereas negations appear not to be counted, even though they contribute greatly to the semantics of the clause.

All in all, then, even though Cloete’s constraints could more readily be checked against my ETCBC database of Lamentations, his approach is too limited in scope and modeling to be of much use to my research.
3.3 Nicholas Lunn

Nicholas Lunn studies word order variations in lines of Biblical Hebrew poetry which contain at least one (finite) verb form. His findings present an interesting view on the interaction between syntax and poetic form in Biblical Hebrew poetry. Lunn’s central thesis is, that in Biblical Hebrew poetry fronting—a syntactic phenomenon—may under certain conditions occur for purely prosodic reasons.

As his point of departure, Lunn postulates that an unmarked, or canonical, Biblical Hebrew verbal clause will have the verb in initial position, optionally followed by first a subject, then an object (V-S-O). In prose, deviation from this canonical order (fronting of S and/or O) is linguistically marked, serving some pragmatic purpose. In poetry, fronting usually follows the same mechanisms as in prose, and thus can have the usual pragmatic functions. In that sense, poetic Hebrew does not differ from prose.

However, Lunn finds many cases of non-canonical Biblical Hebrew poetic clauses which can not plausibly be explained by syntactic / pragmatic marking. In these cases, poetic and esthetic rules must be at play. Lunn’s claim is, that in these cases, defamiliarization occurs: a deliberate attempt by the poet to make the language sound strange or unusual. The purpose of this, Lunn states, is to make understanding more difficult and thus slower, and to ‘impress the reader/listener as an art form’. Lunn finds, that prosodic fronting primarily occurs in non-initial cola (the B-cola) of parallel verselines, and that the syntactic form and pragmatic functions of the initial cola (the A-cola) determine whether prosodic fronting may be assumed. I will list Lunn’s rules in more details below.

Conditions for Pragmatic Fronting

Lunn’s first rule is, that prosodic fronting can only be assumed if no pragmatic fronting can be found. From the point of view of syntactic analysis, this is a sound principle: If a syntactic meaning can be found, this is sufficient; prosodic fronting is only meant as a backup explanation when syntactic explanations fail.

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56 A more precise term would be ‘constituent order’, as Lunn is concerned with the order in which (verbal) predicate, subject and object appear in a clause.
57 Lunn 2006.
58 Lunn 2006, 94.
59 Lunn 2006, 2.
Pragmatic function, in Lunn’s theory, describes topic\textsuperscript{60} and focus\textsuperscript{61} of a proposition. Following Lambrecht, Lunn distinguishes three types of focus a proposition may have:

**Predicate focus**: the subject of the clause is somehow known or expected to the addressee,\textsuperscript{62} it is the predicate that contains the new information (Lunn 2006, 36–37).\textsuperscript{63}

**Argument focus**: the predicate is already known or presupposed, it is one of the arguments which contains the new or unexpected information (Lunn 2006, 38–39).\textsuperscript{64}

**Sentence focus**: There is no known or assumed element at all, the intent of the proposition is to report an event.\textsuperscript{65} In such cases, the focus covers the whole proposition (Lunn 2006, 39).

It is clear from Lunn’s definitions and examples that the contents and the context will often play an important role in recognizing the various types of focus. He also lists, however, some markers which automatically give focus while at the same time defining the type of focus as well (Lunn 2006, 47, see Table 3.4). Lunn’s taxonomy of topic and focus is actually more elaborate: He further

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>בֵּן</th>
<th>raq</th>
<th>restrictive: ‘only …’</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ד</td>
<td>‘ak</td>
<td>restrictive: ‘only …’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נָו</td>
<td>קִי</td>
<td>replacing: ‘[not …], but …’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נָו</td>
<td>gam</td>
<td>expanding: ‘also …’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נָו</td>
<td>‘af</td>
<td>expanding: ‘also …’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4: BH Focus markers and their pragmatic meaning (Lunn 2006)

\textsuperscript{60}A referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if in a given situation the proposition is construed as being about this referent, i.e., as expressing information which is relevant to and which increases the addressee’s knowledge of this referent.” (Lambrecht 1994, as cited by Lunn, 33). Often, this is the grammatical subject, but this need not be the case.

\textsuperscript{61}The focus of a proposition is that element which contains the information that the addressee is supposed to learn about the topic. It only becomes informative because it differs from what the addressee already knows or presupposes about the topic (Lunn 2006, 32–33).

\textsuperscript{62}In terms of the theory: the topic has been activated in the minds of the interlocutors, either by the previous conversation or by the circumstances in which the proposition was uttered (Lunn 2006, 37).

\textsuperscript{63}Lunn’s example: If the clause “The children went to school.” answers a question like: ‘what did the children do next?”, it has predicative focus.

\textsuperscript{64}If the clause “The children went to school.” answers a question like: “Who went to school?”, it has argument focus. The question, or the preceding discourse, already implies that somebody did in fact go to school, so this element is known.

\textsuperscript{65}If the clause “The children went to school.” answers a question like: “What happened next?”, it has sentence focus.
classifies argument focus in the following categories:

**Contrasting focus:** ‘X did A [but not B]’; ‘X did A [but] Y did B’.

**Parallel focus:** ‘X did A, [and / while] Y did A’.

**Replacing focus:** ‘not X but Y’. Sometimes marked by אנה ו... כל

**Restricting focus:** ‘only / except X’. Sometimes marked by כל or כל.

**Expanding focus:** ‘also X (besides Y)’. Sometimes marked by כל or כל. can also mean ‘even’, indicating that ‘the added item is one that was outside the parameters of reasonable expectation considering the context’. I have found in Lamentations that this type of contrast to the addressee’s expectations can also occur without כל: ‘X, [of all people,] ... ’; perhaps, this can be classified as selective focus, since it is the identity of the subject that is the focus of the sentence.

**Selecting focus:** ‘X [from a larger set]’.

**Specifying focus:** itemizing or listing, e.g., a set of instructions.

**Presentational clauses:** In narrative, fronting of a new participant at the start of a new section, to mark this participant as the topic of that section.

**Conditions for Prosodic Fronting**

First and foremost, it is important to restate, that Lunn only investigates verbal clauses in Biblical Hebrew poetry. Nominal and other non-verbal clauses are not considered. Among these verbal clauses, Lunn distinguishes three types:

**unmarked clauses:** VSO clauses. Also called ‘canonical’ (CAN) clauses. All other verbal clauses are called ‘non-canonical’ (NON-CAN).

**marked clauses:** Clauses with fronting for regular, pragmatic reasons are labeled ‘marked’ (MKD).

**defamiliarized clauses:** Clauses with fronting for prosodic reasons are labeled ‘defamiliarized’ (DEF).

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67Lunn 2006, 52, my emphasis.
68This category is not listed with the other ones, Lunn 2006, 82. For the function, see also Schneider 1985, 54.1.5.
As the last two types result in the same clause forms, a crucial question is, of course, how to tell the two apart in actual texts. In Lunn’s terminology: How can we distinguish a MKD clause from a DEF clause? Lunn has found the following general rules:

1. Fronting in the A-line is always MKD (pragmatic). Prosodic fronting (DEF) only happens in the B-line.

2. In the B-line, there is free constituent order. Fronting, if it happens, is DEF (prosodic).

3. DEF can only be identified in a synonymous parallelism. In all other cases, a NON-CAN B-line must be labeled MKD (pragmatic).

4. When the A-line is MKD, the B-line will usually also be MKD, in the same way as the A-line.

5. When the A-line is CAN, gapping may occur of any constituent from the B-line. Gapping from the A-line is very rare.

6. When the A-line is marked, the fronted constituent(s) can not be gapped from the B-line.

7. Any departure from these rules is a deliberate literary device which signals some higher text-level function, i.e., aperture, closure, or climax.

Relation to my research

Lunn’s research is obviously limited in scope in that it only examines the verse-line level. Yet, his findings may be relevant to my own research in a number of ways. First of all, it would confirm my thesis that prosodic structure in Biblical Hebrew poetry should be taken into account when doing syntactic analysis, especially of short-range clause connections. If Lunn’s claim is correct, poetic form can overrule regular linguistic mechanisms, which has important repercussions for the syntactic analysis.

1. Prosodic position (A-colon or B-colon) can influence the syntactic interpretation of a marked clause, as well as its place within the textual hierarchy: A B-line clause with prosodic fronting should be treated as equivalent to, or even dependent on, the unmarked clause in the preceding A-line.

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69 Lunn 2006, 121.
70 Lunn 2006, 275–276, numbering is mine.
2. The syntactic interpretation of a marked clause, as well as its place within the textual hierarchy, needs to be determined even more syntagmatically than most linguists would assume: Syntactic / pragmatic fronting will have to be positively demonstrated rather than be derived from the fronting itself. For this, the context needs to be taken into account.

The latter point poses a bit of a problem to a formal analytical approach, since the criteria for syntactic / pragmatic fronting are not all tied to formally observable elements in the text, while the ones that are, often still rely on contents and semantics to be recognized. Still, when the analyst is aware of the problem, they can incorporate this type of non-formal observations in their decisions, in the hope that later formal analysis of these decisions will uncover more formal parameters underlying them.

3.4 Harm van Grol

Harm van Grol is a Dutch specialist on Biblical Hebrew versification. He pairs a sound intuition for the esthetic power of poetry to a keen interest into its formal aspects, both prosodic and syntactic. Because many of his key publications are in Dutch, and because his position will be helpful in the formulation of my own, my survey of his work will be somewhat more elaborate than those of other studies in this field. My focus will be on Van Grol’s ideas on the relation between syntax and versification, both theoretically and procedurally, but I will also mention his versification theory proper.

Goals

General principle In principle, Van Grol’s interest does not lie with either prosodic or syntactic structure of Biblical Hebrew poetry, but with reading the text as it is meant to be read, i.e., as a unique work of poetry: “Wie heeft het voor het zeggen in de Bijbelse poëzie? Is het de taal of juist de stijl? De dichter, sukkel!”

At first, a quote like this would indicate an attitude towards Biblical Hebrew poetry akin to that of Watson and Fokkelman: The artist, and the unique work of art they have created, are the ultimate authority. However, for Van Grol 1983a; van Grol 1983b; van Grol 1986; van Grol 2015; van Grol 2017. English publications include van Grol 1988, van Grol 1992 and van Grol 2000.

van Grol 2017, back cover. NB: The English translations from Van Grol’s work are my own. In case of misrepresentation on my side, the Dutch original is authoritative.
Grol, the rule of artistic freedom is not absolute. In his view, the prosodic constraints and rules form itself a system, next to the syntactic system.\(^{74}\)

The two systems influence each other. Therefore, both prosody and syntax need to be studied seriously. A monistic approach will not do, Van Grol has always been clear on this point.\(^{75}\) In principle, then, Van Grol’s research operates in the realms of prosodic as well as syntactic analysis.

Focus on prosodic structure Yet, in his actual research, Van Grol has set as his main goal the restoration of the prosodic structure, which he claims has largely been lost in the Masoretic tradition of the texts.\(^{76}\)

To this end, he has devised a metric\(^{77}\) and prosodic theory.\(^{78}\) This theory is akin to those of Watson\(^{79}\) and the Kampen School,\(^{80}\) but is stricter and more systematic than these. I will discuss it in more detail below.

Syntax and prosody: ambivalence At this point, it is interesting to note a certain ambivalence in Van Grol’s thinking about the relation between syntax and prosodic structure. In his early publications, Van Grol emphatically advocates a comprehensive approach, in which meter, syntax and pragmatics are all taken into account simultaneously.\(^{81}\) In a further publication, he actually proposes a procedure with strict, formal and quantitative rules to delimit cola, verselines and strophes, based on combined metrical and syntactic observations.\(^{82}\) The underlying thought appears to be that syntactic and prosodic structure will usually converge, since they together make up the stuff poems are made of: poetic language.

However, in his most recent publications Van Grol, although still advocating a comprehensive approach,\(^{83}\) sees syntactic and prosodic structure as two separate structures, each of which can, and should, be studied on its own terms, even though they influence each other.\(^{84}\) Moreover, where Van Grol initially reckoned with syntax as a fundamental constituent in prosodic rules for

\(^{74}\)Van Grol 2017, 15 point 5; 23.
\(^{76}\)Van Grol (1983a, 234, 238); see also van Grol (2015, 18–19).
\(^{78}\)Van Grol 1992, Section 2; van Grol 2015, Section 1.4.
\(^{79}\)Watson 1986.
\(^{80}\)Among others: van der Lught 1980; Korpel and de Moor 1988.
\(^{81}\)Van Grol 1983a.
\(^{83}\)Van Grol 2017, 15 prop. 1.
\(^{84}\)Van Grol 2017, 16 prop. 6.
cola and verselines, he has now abandoned this notion. His prosodic rules are exclusively based on metrical and prosodic observations, with only a very limited role for syntax. On the whole, Van Grol appears to acknowledge more prosodic influence on syntax than the other way around.

Theoretically, then, Van Grol appears to have shifted from his comprehensive principles towards a view which puts more weight on prosody. Sometimes he even asserts the *fundamental* priority of the prosodic structure, in rather apodictic statements:

- Heel kort door de bocht, er is maar één structuur en dat is de prosodische structuur . . . Er is maar één structuur, de prosodische structuur, en er is maar één correcte weergave.

- . . . , dienen we te beseffen dat de dichter zijn klassiek Hebreuws gedicht niet schreef in zinnen, volzinnen, alinea’s en paragrafen, maar in cola, versregels, strofen en stanzas.

Van Grol’s critical remarks on an article by Talstra (see Section 5.2) also breathe the conviction that the prosodic structure of a poem is more fundamental to the interpretation than its syntax.

In practice, however, Van Grol’s actual position is more nuanced and comprehensive. For a start, his two most recent monographs both carry the subtitle ‘Verkenningen in het grensgebied van versbouw en tekstsyntaxis’, and their worked examples make an emphatic effort to incorporate (text)syntax as the first step in the analytic procedures.

Van Grol acknowledges that there are in fact two (and probably more) structures in Biblical Hebrew poetry, both of which can and should be studied on their own terms. He states, that in a work of Biblical Hebrew poetry, there are two types of code: The primary code, which is the natural language and its grammatical / syntactic rules, and a secondary code, which is the poetic use of language: language used in such a way that its form generates meaning.

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85van Grol 2015, 96.
86van Grol 2015, 97: The only syntactic constraint Van Grol appears to acknowledge is that syntactic phrases can not be split up across multiple cola.
87van Grol 2017, 16 prop. 7.
88Put very tersely, there is only one structure: the prosodic structure . . . There is only one structure, the prosodic structure, and there is only one correct representation. van Grol 2015, 19.
89. . . , we need to realize that the poet did not write his classical Hebrew poem in clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections, but in cola, verselines, strophes and stanzas. van Grol 2017, 15 prop. 2. ‘To be fair, ‘…’ represents a conditional clause asserting the procedural priority of syntactic analysis. Nevertheless, the quoted portion is the core of the proposition.
90‘Explorations into the border area of versification and text syntax,’ van Grol 2015; van Grol 2017.
91E.g., van Grol 2017, 5.2.4.
92van Grol 2017, 15 prop. 1 and 5.
In this process, the two do influence each other, for example:

- The structure of cola and verselines will force the use of relatively short and syntactically simple sentences; also, specific prosodic positions (e.g., in non-initial cola) may call for different syntax.\(^94\)

- There are syntactic constraints on the formation of cola and verselines. Enjambment is rare, and there are clear rules on how a clause may or may not be split over multiple cola or verselines.\(^95\)

All this suggests, that Van Grol does grant syntax an important role in the interpretation of Biblical Hebrew poetry.

### Metrical and Prosodic Theory

Van Grol labels his versification theory of Biblical Hebrew poetry as a ‘strong theory’,\(^96\) meaning that the theory knows strict, formal rules, and does not allow for much variation in length and composition of prosodic units. In this respect, Van Grol’s theory differs from those of, e.g., Watson, and Korpe and De Moor, who allow for a fair amount of variation in the length of cola, verselines, strophes and stanzas.\(^97\) Van Grol explains, that a strong theory is more systematic than a weaker one. Digressions from its rules can be described more precisely. Moreover, he claims that his strict rules simply fit the data.\(^98\) The rules themselves are simple and are conveniently listed on just a couple of pages.\(^99\) I have summarized them in Tables 3.5 and 3.6 on the facing page.

### Additional criteria

The tables are only a summary. The rules contained in them can not be applied mechanically, but require additional criteria:

1. The underlying premiss of Van Grol’s theory is that Biblical Hebrew poetry is based on balance, on all prosodic levels.\(^100\) This balance can occur in phonetic, syntactic, rhythmic or semantic forms, or, as is usually the case, in combinations of these.\(^101\) Other things being equal, a division with balanced units of equal length is preferred over a division with irregular units. Balance does not equal repetition: in Biblical Hebrew po-

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\(^94\)See, e.g., van Grol 2015, 96.
\(^95\)van Grol 1992, 77–78; van Grol 2015, 96.
\(^96\)van Grol 2015, 23.
\(^97\)Cf. van Grol 2015, 23; Watson 1986; Korpel and de Moor 1988, 60.
\(^98\)van Grol 2015, 24–25.
\(^100\)van Grol 1983a, 240.
\(^101\)van Grol 1983a, 241; van Grol 2015, 42.
3.4. HARM VAN GROL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unit</th>
<th>consists of</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stanza</td>
<td>1 strophe</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 strophes</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 strophes</td>
<td>frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 strophes</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strophe</td>
<td>1 verseline</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 verselines</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 verselines</td>
<td>frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verseline</td>
<td>1 colon</td>
<td>very seldom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 cola</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 cola</td>
<td>frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verseline</td>
<td>2 metrical units</td>
<td>frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 metrical units</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 metrical units</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: Van Grol: prosodic units

**base rule:** Every word accent counts as a metrical unit.

**secondary accent rule:** The first secondary accent rule of a word with two secondary accents counts as a metrical unit.

**word complex rule:** a word complex counts as one metrical unit.

- A **particle** forms a word complex with the noun, verb or particle following it, if at least one of the two is monosyllabic.

- A **construct chain** or **adjectival construction** forms a word complex if:
  - the first word is monosyllabic and the construction as a whole has no more than four syllables, or
  - the second word is monosyllabic and the construction as a whole has no more than three syllables.

- A **verb with following complement** forms a word complex, if at least one of the words is monosyllabic and the construction as a whole has no more than three syllables.

Table 3.6: Van Grol: metrical units
etry, parallellism / balance (on any textual level) usually shows a combination of repetition of one element and variation of another.\textsuperscript{102}

2. The metrical rules are more elaborate than the table shows. They know exceptions for specific cases, such as words with penultimate stress (last syllable not counted), colliding stresses in subsequent words (cancels one stress), multiple applications of the word complex rule on the same word (not allowed) and emphasis (can overrule the word complex rule).\textsuperscript{103}

3. As mentioned earlier, there are some syntactic rules: Syntactic phrases may not be split over multiple cola, and there are some limitations on the types of clause constituents which may be separated from the main verb into another colon.\textsuperscript{104}

4. On higher textual levels, Van Grol notes another type of patterns, which he calls ‘metrical themes’. In his earlier publications, he presents the presence of such themes as a full-blown prosodic rule: “The rhythmic line patterns of a strophe must be positionally regular realizations of the same metrical theme, while the cola of the strophe may not differ by more than one metrical unit [from this theme, HJB].”\textsuperscript{105} In other words: Every strophe has its own metrical theme (e.g. 3+3). Most of its verselines will conform to this theme, but variations involving one metrical unit (e.g. 3+2 or 3+4) are acceptable.

In Inleiding, Van Grol appears to be more cautious, and speaks of an inkling (‘vermoeden’) that ‘certain rules’ can be established; he describes metrical themes as a phenomenon that can be found ‘regularly’.\textsuperscript{106}

5. Van Grol concludes his exposition of metrical rules with an important caveat: “Ten slotte, we raden een ieder af een metrisch systeem als enig criterium te nemen voor de afbakening van de prosodische structuur. Indien ritmische regelmaat (of andersoortige regelmaat!) het doel van de analyse wordt, delven de gedichten vroeg of laat het onderspit.”\textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{102}See Van Grol’s definition of parallellism as ‘varying repetition of layered (‘gelede’) units’ (van Grol 2015, 42).
\textsuperscript{103}van Grol 2015, 16–17.
\textsuperscript{104}van Grol 2015, 97.
\textsuperscript{105}van Grol 1992, 85; also van Grol 1986, 251.
\textsuperscript{106}van Grol 2015, 40.
\textsuperscript{107}“Finally, we discourage everyone from taking a metrical system as sole criterion for the delimitation of prosodic structure. If rhythmic regularity (or any other sort of regularity!) becomes the target of the analysis, the poems will sooner or later be on the losing end.” van Grol 2015, 40.
Practical Procedures

In *Inleiding*, Van Grol analyzes Ps 130 as a practical demonstration of his theory and practical procedures.\(^{108}\) He takes the following steps (the numbering is mine):

1. Delimit cola
   
   (a) Delimit *metrical units*, following the rules in Table 3.6.
   
   (b) Delimit *clauses* and note their *syntactic constituents*.
   
   (c) Count *metrical units per clause*.
   
   (d) Per clause, apply *metrical constraints on cola* and *syntactic constraints on splitting phrases* to determine whether the clause fits as either part of a colon, a single colon or two cola.

2. Delimit verselines
   
   (a) Determine *syntactic cohesion* between subsequent clauses. This implies a full *clause hierarchy*. Van Grol uses a slightly adapted version of the *ETCBC* text hierarchy,\(^ {109}\) but does not present it until step 3.
   
   (b) Apply *syntactic rules*\(^ {110}\) and *parallellism* to determine which cola combine into verselines. The *quantitative constraints on verselines* (Table 3.5) safeguard against unacceptable verselines.\(^ {111}\)

3. Delimit strophes
   
   (a) Use *numerical constraints on strophes* (Table 3.5) to make a first hypothetical division.

\(^{108}\)van Grol 2015, Ch. 7. In van Grol 2017, 205–228, more worked examples are presented, but these do not focus on demonstrating the procedure, but mainly serve as an account of the prosodic analyses. I will not discuss them here.

\(^{109}\)Taken from SHEBANQ 2014, with small corrections of his own.

\(^{110}\)“De syntactische samenhang is bepalend.” (“The syntactic cohesion is decisive.”) van Grol 2015, 103.

\(^{111}\)van Grol (2015, 103) has a list of rules here. He does not state whether it is exhaustive; I would assume it is not.

- 2 cola which together are a clause, form a verseline.
- 2 clauses of a single sentence can form a verseline.
- a sentence with simple subordination (main clause - subordinated clause) can form a verseline.
- parallellism constitutes verselines. In these cases, the cola are syntactically parallel, entirely or in part.
(b) Use **text-syntactic cohesion** between small sequences of clauses to refine or correct the hypothesis (e.g., change of participant pattern or speaker/addresssee pattern).

(c) **Lexical repetition** and **thematic change** (change in the semantic word fields) play a role on this level as well.

4. Delimit stanzas

(a) Use **numerical constraints on strophes** (Table 3.5) to form a first hypothesis.

(b) **Text-syntax, patterns of lexical repetition** and **themes** play a role in testing the hypothesis, but it is as yet unclear in what way.

**Relation to my research**

**Theoretical framework** There is a certain ambivalence in Van Grol’s theoretical exposee on the relation between syntax and prosody. On the one hand, he explicitly abandons the idea that syntax is a prosodic constituent, and formulates his prosodic rules exclusively in terms of prosodic constituents proper: rhythm and balance. On the other hand, Van Grol maintains that syntax must be studied ’hand in hand’ alongside prosodic structure, and that a monistic approach, be it syntactic or prosodic, will not do. This ambivalence is aptly demonstrated in his proposition 2:

Indien\textsuperscript{112} we in het onderzoek prioriteit geven aan de (tekst)syntaxis boven de versbouw, dienen we te beseffen dat de dichter zijn klassiek Hebreeuwse gedicht niet schreef in zinnen, volzinnen, alinea’s en paragrafen, maar in cola, versregels, strofen en stanza’s.

(When, in the research, we grant priority to (text) syntax over versification, we need to realize that the poet did not write his classical Hebrew poem in clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections, but in cola, verselines, strophes and stanzas.)\textsuperscript{113}

I would be inclined to object, that it is one or the other: Either syntax needs to come first in the study of poetry, but then the claim that the poets only wrote in prosodic units can not be true; or the latter is true, but in that case it would make little sense to consider syntax at all, let alone prioritize it.

\textsuperscript{112}At face value, Dutch ‘indien’ means ‘if’, but it can also be a somewhat formal synonym of ‘wanneer’ (‘when’). ‘If’ causes the proposition to advise against syntactic study as misguided, whereas ‘wanneer’ merely adds a caveat to the approach which is in fact chosen. In personal communication, Van Grol has assured me that the latter is intended, although the caveat does mirror a certain ambivalence.

\textsuperscript{113}van Grol 2017, 15 prop. 2.
This ambivalence is only natural, and arises from the fact that, of course, the poets actually wrote their poems both in clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections and in cola, verselines, strophes and stanzas.\textsuperscript{114} This makes prioritizing one type of structure over the other, as Van Grol appears to do, problematic and to a certain extent artificial.

Analytical procedure In view of his theoretical framework, Van Grol’s worked example of Ps 130 shows a remarkably comprehensive approach. All steps include syntactic constraints as an integral, and often decisive, part of the argumentation. Yet, the procedure by and large avoids mixing of categories.

Prior to the prosodic analysis, clauses are delimited and placed in a hierarchy, on syntactic grounds. Prosodic units are primarily formed based on quantitative prosodic rules. The link between clauses and cola / verselines is made by ‘translating’ clauses into metrical units. This is an elegant way to explain and implement the often complicated and convoluted theories and taxonomies of Collins, O’Connor and Cloete.

The only area where rules from syntax and prosody do interfere, is in the recognition of internal cohesion and balance within prosodic units. This is only natural, as balance and parnellism can by their nature take many forms: phonological, semantic, prosodic, but also syntactic. The way in which syntactic cohesion is connected to prosodic delimitation, i.e. as evaluation of a preliminary prosodic ordering, is again rather elegant.

Irrespective of its theoretical framework, Van Grol’s practical approach looks very promising for the prosodic step of the process. Its elegant way of linking syntactic structures to prosodic ones without mixing categories may prove a powerful addition to my own analytical procedures.

Interaction of prosodic and syntactic structures In my own analyses, however, I hope to be able to make one additional step. Van Grol’s worked examples in Inleiding and Syntagma tend to concentrate exclusively on unraveling the prosodic structure.\textsuperscript{115} There is no discussion of how the prosodic structure interacts with the syntactic discourse of the text to shape the overall communication. This is understandable in a book on versification, but can easily raise the suspicion that this is yet another case of syntax being treated as an instrument for prosodic analysis,\textsuperscript{116} rather than as an independent component of the

\textsuperscript{114}Perhaps we could even say: neither in syntactic units nor in prosodic units, but in poetic language, which involves an organic, simultaneous and largely intuitive, application of the two rule sets, except perhaps in cases where the two conflict.

\textsuperscript{115}van Grol 2015, 115 literally ends on the words: “We zullen de interpretatie van de geobserveerde verbanden hier laten rusten. Over de prosodische structuur is immers alles gezegd.” (“We will let the interpretation of the observed relations rest here. About the prosodic structure, after all, all has been said.”).

\textsuperscript{116}See note 70 on page 83.
text with its own contribution to the communicational process.

To be fair: For Ps 130 Van Grol does offer such a broader communicational interpretation in an earlier publication,\(^{117}\) in which, at least implicitly, syntactic and prosodic factors are described in their interaction. Van Grol convincingly demonstrates that even though the psalm appears to start out as an individual lament addressed to YHWH, its communicational flow reveals its actual intent: It is a call for confidence, directed to the people people of Israel.

**Practical Takeaways from Syntagma** Apart from the methodological discussion, Van Grol’s case studies are of direct practical interest to my own research on the following points:

- To a certain extent, Van Grol confirms Lunn’s thesis of poetic fronting.
- Van Grol’s hypothesis of prosodic \(^{118}\) can be considered an extension of Lunn’s thesis of syntactic variation in B- and C-cola.
- Van Grol’s ideas about strophe aperture and closure\(^{119}\) deserve further research. This is already on my own list of themes to be explored in Lamentations.
- The same is true for the correspondence between reference patterns and prosodic units.\(^{120}\)
- I will have to pay explicit attention to the interaction between syntactic and prosodic structure, and its function in the communication process.

**Prosodic Analysis of Lamentations**

Van Grol has published a prosodic analysis of Lamentations.\(^{121}\) It would seem natural, given the practical possibilities sketched above, to take this analysis as the standard for my prosodic data. However, Van Grol does not supply a colon delimitation. Since I only intend to consider prosodic units up to and including the strophe, this leaves the verseline and the strophe as the only relevant units. As it happens, these units are virtually undisputed, at least in Lam 1–4. I have therefore opted for the analysis by Renkema,\(^{122}\) which does cover the colon level.

\(^{117}\) van Grol 2004, 51–53, referenced with the above quotation in van Grol 2015, 115 n. 207.
\(^{118}\) van Grol 2017, Ch. 4.
\(^{119}\) van Grol 2017, Ch. 5.
\(^{120}\) van Grol 2017, Ch. 6.
\(^{121}\) van Grol 2003.
\(^{122}\) Renkema 1998.
Chapter 4

Syntactic Approaches

4.1 Eep Talstra

Goals

Talstra’s most visible contributions lie in his methodological work on the text-syntax of Biblical Hebrew and on computer-assisted linguistic analysis. In the field of linguistics, he has refined the theories of Weinrich and Schneider into a more stringent and consistent form-to-function methodology.

His work in computer-assisted research has resulted in the ETCBC database, arguably the most complete and all-round linguistic database of the Hebrew Bible presently in existence, made accessible in a variety of proprietary research tools,\(^1\) as well as public domain research tools.\(^2\) The database has been at the basis of quite diverse linguistic and exegetical studies over the years.\(^3\)

However, Talstra’s contributions reach beyond linguistic analysis and the practical tool of the ETCBC database. Being an exegete and a theologian as much as a linguist, he brings together synchronic linguistic analysis, diachronic redaction-critical research and Biblical theology into a comprehensive model for Biblical exegesis.\(^4\) To Talstra, the results of analytical procedures are not just useful data or interesting linguistic theory (although they are that as well): They are an integral part of the communication from the text to the reader, the ancient reader as well as the present-day one.\(^5\) For the scope of the present study, concentration on Talstra’s linguistic computational work is called for. Nevertheless, it is good to realize that it stands in a broader, theological, con-

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\(^1\)Quest/ECA 1992; SESB 2004.
\(^2\)Sandborg-Petersen 2002; SHEBANQ 2014; Roorda 2016.
\(^4\)Talstra 1993; Talstra 2002b; Talstra 2012.
\(^5\)For an example, see Talstra 2001, 312–313.
Text Model

In the ETCBC database, Talstra models the text as a hierarchy of linguistic units on different linguistic levels:

**graphemes:** The consonants and spaces of the Masoretic text.\(^6\)

**morphemes:** Physical segments of strings of graphemes. Strings of graphemes between two spaces are segmented into words and morphemes by markers, e.g. the form יֵשׁוֹבָהּ is segmented as יֵשׁוֹבָהּ.\(^7\)

**words:** Grammatical words, with a lexeme and grammatical functions (part of speech, verbal tense, person, number, gender, etc.). These are calculated from the combination of morphemes; lexically determined functions are read from an electronic lexicon.

**phrase atoms:** Strings of contiguous words which form the building blocks of grammatical phrases and subphrases. Phrase atoms result from embedding one phrase within another: the embedding phrase will be split by the embedded phrase into two physical segments. Phrase atoms are calculated based on patterns in word sequences.

**subphrases:** Grammatical parts of complex or compound phrases. These are calculated from the internal structure of the phrases.\(^8\)

**phrases:** Grammatical phrases, with a phrase type (calculated from its internal structure) and grammatical function (calculated from its position within the clause).\(^9\)

**clause atoms:** Analogous to phrase atoms on clause level, with the added rule that a clause atom may contain at most one predicate. Many clause atoms

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\(^6\)Originally derived from the Michigan / Claremont / Westminster computer text of the Hebrew Bible (on the production of this text, see Groves 1989), but no longer identical to it due to corrections. Vowels and Masoretic accents are stored as well, but do not play a direct part in the grammatical / syntactic analyses. They are used for presentation of the texts and for consistency checks.

\(^7\)To convenience computer processing, Hebrew consonants are transliterated. Each marker has its own meaning: – separates grammatical words, ! marks an inflexional verbal prefix, [ ] marks verbal ending.

\(^8\)Subphrases are a good example of the iterative nature of Talstra’s method: They can only be calculated once a first step at the next higher level has been completed. In this case, the combination of phrase atoms into phrases.

\(^9\)As subphrases, grammatical functions can only be determined after a first step at the next higher level, in this case: the combination of clause atoms into clauses (see below), has been completed.
will also be clauses (see below), but embedding splits a clause into two clause atoms, a main clause atom (containing the predicate) and a defective one (without predicate).

**clauses:** Simple clauses, containing a single predicate, to which a clause type is attributed. Clauses consisting of more than one clause atom are derived from the clause atom hierarchy, see below.

**sentence atoms:** Analogous to clause atoms, on sentence level. Sentence atoms are derived from the clause hierarchy, see below.

**sentences:** Either simple clauses or groups of clauses in which some clauses have constituent status within a main clause.

**clause atom hierarchy:** Talstra’s most central model of the text syntax. Each clause atom is connected to a clause atom in its (usually preceding) context, on which it depends syntactically in some way. This results in a hierarchic, tree-like, representation of the textual structure, which at the same time implies a hierarchy of syntactic units. The clause atom hierarchy is determined based on a wide variety of syntactic parameters.

**Linguistic Framework**

Much of the linguistic framework behind Talstra’s text model is inspired by the theories of Harald Weinrich, as applied to Biblical Hebrew by Wolfgang Schneider.\textsuperscript{10} To summarize the work of Schneider in a few bullet points can not do justice to it. Within the confines of this study, however, this will have to suffice. The major points of his linguistic approach are the following:

- **Form to Function:** Although he does not state this explicitly, Schneider consistently ties his syntactic theories to observable linguistic signals, such as the position of the verb within a clause\textsuperscript{11} and referencing signals.\textsuperscript{12}

- **Textsyntax:** Grammatical forms and clauses do not stand on their own, but are part of larger textual structures.\textsuperscript{13} Verb forms or clause types, therefore, do not in themselves carry unambiguous syntactic or pragmatic functions. These are largely determined by their text-syntactic context.

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\textsuperscript{10}Weinrich 1985; Schneider 1985.
\textsuperscript{11}Schneider 1985, 44.1.2.
\textsuperscript{12}Schneider 1985, 51.1.3.
\textsuperscript{13}Schneider 1985, 52.1.
CHAPTER 4. SYNTACTIC APPROACHES

- **Linguistic Stance**: Verbal tenses do not so much indicate temporal perspective (past - present - future), as modes of communication:\[^{14}\]
  - **Discursive speech**: The listener is addressed directly; what is being said is presented as of direct concern to the listener. Typically, direct speech and first and second person forms are used.
  - **Narrative speech**: Events are reported, in a detached mode of speaking. The listener is not addressed or engaged directly. Typically the text has an anonymous narrator and uses third person forms.

- **Relief**: In both linguistic stances, there is foregrounded (main line) material and backgrounded (secondary line) material:\[^{15}\]

- In **Biblical Hebrew**, the main, foregrounded, ‘tense’ in narrative texts is wayyiqtol; for discursive texts, it is yiqtol and the volitive forms. In both linguistic stances, qatal mainly serves to add extra, backgrounded, information.

Talstra adopts the principles by Weinrich and Schneider, but moves beyond them in a number of aspects. In comparison to Weinrich and Schneider, Talstra’s approach can be characterized as:

- more consistently text-syntactic,
- more strictly form-to-function, and
- more systematically ascendant.

**Textsyntax** Talstra takes the text-syntactic principles very seriously. In principle, the functions of paradigmatic forms are primarily derived from the combination of these forms with their position in, and relations to, their syntactic context, not by the forms themselves:\[^{16}\]. Thus, individual clause types or verb forms in themselves can not be assigned a fixed syntactic function. It is only in the syntagma (the position in, and relations to, their syntactic context) that functions of linguistic phenomena can be determined:\[^{17}\].

**Formal Approach** Talstra strives to keep his procedures as formal as possible in the actual analysis of texts. His linguistic and methodological principles can be summarized as follows:

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[^14]: Schneider 1985, 48.1.3.
[^15]: Schneider 1985, 48.2.1, 48.2.2.2, 48.3.1.1.
[^16]: Talstra 1995a, 170, 178.
• Synchronic analysis comes before diachronic analysis.\textsuperscript{18}
  Descriptive linguistic analysis comes before literary analysis.\textsuperscript{19}

• The analysis follows a moderate form-to-function approach, in the form of computer-assisted analysis. The approach is formal, in that textual units and their linguistic features are derived as much as possible from observable patterns in the text, as is evident from the text model. It is moderate, in that it is not entirely automated: User and computer program interact (See Figure 4.1 on the following page):
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Computer-generated proposals are evaluated by the user, who ultimately has the right of decision.
    \item Human decisions are stored, so that the programs can ‘learn’ to make better proposals on future runs.
    \item Human decisions are mostly based on formal parameters, but linguistic insights,\textsuperscript{20} semantics, pragmatics and even exegetical insights can play a heuristic role at times.
  \end{itemize}
  The programs nevertheless describe the texts in terms of formal text patterns only.\textsuperscript{21}

• The approach involves simultaneous registration of a wide variety of linguistic parameters.

• Text syntax is included in the form of a hierarchy of clauses (See above, under ‘text model’).

\textsuperscript{18}Talstra 1993, 83–84; 257. Note that Talstra is by no means opposed to diachronic research. He sees synchronic and diachronic research as complementary, and both must be performed if the exegesis of a text is to be complete. Talstra’s point is a procedural one: the two analyses should be performed in a specific order. Synchronic analysis should be performed before diachronic analysis (Talstra 1993, 257).


\textsuperscript{20}E.g., Schneider’s theory on linguistic stance in Biblical Hebrew.

\textsuperscript{21}The term ‘text pattern’ can mean a number of things, depending on the linguistic level of the analysis. For the analysis of phrase atom boundaries, the resulting patterns will be sequences of words which have been accepted by the user as correct phrase atoms. For clause atom boundaries, they will be sequences of phrases which have been accepted as clause atoms. For the analysis of hierarchic clause relations, the resulting patterns will be pairs of clause atoms which the user has accepted as having a syntactic relation. In all cases, the patterns are specified according to a number of linguistic parameters, such as parts of speech, phrase types, clause types and (dis)agreement of person, number and gender.
text (not analyzed)

program

proposal

human knowledge

user

decision

program

analyzed text

analysis on higher linguistic level

Figure 4.1: Interaction of user and computer program
Observations

The types of formal observations Talstra makes on the various linguistic levels are summarized in Table 4.1 on the next page. It is important to realize, that these are the formal observations made by the programs. The researcher’s linguistic knowledge and intuitions, which need not be formalizable, also play a role in the analytical process.

In Talstra’s approach, interaction between the human researcher and a computer program (outlined in Figure 4.1 on the facing page) typically lets the program calculate an analysis of a stretch of text, which is presented to the user as a proposal. It is then up to the user to either accept this proposal or to reject and correct it. If the user corrects the proposal, the correct textual pattern is added to the list of accepted patterns.

In this way, the program can, at least in principle, ‘learn’ to recognize this new pattern, and the decision associated with it, on future runs. However, unexpected proposals by the computer program may also prompt the user to rethink their decisions in previously analyzed texts, or even their linguistic insights.

Although the user can at times make use of semantic and pragmatic information to evaluate the program’s proposals, the program itself describes and stores the textual structures in terms of formal patterns only.

Observations on clause hierarchy level  My own study will primarily be concerned with the text-syntactic level. In Talstra’s model, this will be the level of the clause hierarchy. This hierarchy is established with the help of the program syn04types, which follows the interactive approach outlined above. The program registers a broad range of linguistic signals, the most important of which are listed in the last row of Table 4.1 on the next page. For more on syn04types, see Section A and the introduction to Chapter II.

The textual hierarchy is typically expressed in terms of syntactic relations between pairs of clauses, which can be represented as a tree structure with clause atoms as nodes. Talstra’s procedures attempt to imitate the reading process, assuming that a text is read linearly, from start to end, and clause by clause. In this process, every new clause is connected to one clause in its preceding context ‘to which is can be matched best according to the parameters

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23In practice, this happens in different ways: Not all programs have been written as ‘self-learning’ programs; some require manual updating of the list by the researcher.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>level</th>
<th>information sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>morphemes (delimitation)</td>
<td>printed lexicon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>analytical lexicon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words (functional)</td>
<td>morpheme sequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>word grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrase atoms (delimitation)</td>
<td>word sequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phrase pattern list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrases (functional)</td>
<td>paradigmatic features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>position within clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause atoms (delimitation)</td>
<td>phrase sequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clause pattern list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clauses</td>
<td>clause atom sequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paradigmatic features of the clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>position within clause hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause hierarchy</td>
<td>- clause types of mother (M) and daughter (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- presence / absence of explicit subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- (in)congruence (p/n/g) of the predicates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- (in)congruence (p/n/g) of other elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- presence / absence of clause level conjunctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- markers for constituent relation between M and D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(such as ꙮ, inf.cstr. a.o.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- markers for communicational domains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(quotation verbs, discursive markers, macro-syntactic signals, a.o.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- specific patterns: ellipsis, idiom a.o.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Talstra: Formal observations
4.1. EEP TALSTRA

listed’.\(^{24}\)

The program stores the clause relations thus established, to be used in the calculations in future runs. The relation types are stored by numerical codes.\(^{25}\) Next to the clause relations, more information is calculated and stored, such as embedded communicational domains (direct speeches within narratives and vice versa) and compound and / or complex sentences.

Syntax and Literary Structure

Talstra’s treatment of poetic texts is basically the same as that of prose. The same programs and the same pattern lists are used, producing the same data structures: hierarchies of grammatical and syntactic units. This is in line with some of Talstra’s linguistic and exegetical notions:

- Syntax is to be analyzed before literary structure.\(^{26}\)
- There is only one grammatic/syntactic language system; in principle, different text types simply make different preferred selections from the range of possibilities offered by the general grammar / syntax of the language.
- The syntactic structure conveys the flow of the communication; literary structure is primarily a matter of the presentation and performance of the text.\(^{27}\)

Criticism on literary approaches

In a 1999 article: *Reading Biblical Hebrew poetry. Linguistic structure or rhetorical device?*, Talstra is critical of ‘interpretations of a more general stylistic type, based on word-level semantics, inclusions or chiasms’. Approaches of this type tend to emphasize the skillful, creative use of poetic devices in the individual poem, thus describing literary ‘techniques’ like assonance, lexical or semantic repetitions, in parallel lines, inclusions or chiasms as a kind of toolbox, from which the poet can choose at will. This view reduces literary form to rather local and *ad hoc* phenomena. What is more, Talstra states, a prosodic analysis does not contribute to an understanding of the


\(^{25}\)Descriptions of the relation codes can be found in various publications, such as Groves, Bosman, Harmsen, and Talstra 1992, 124–128; Talstra and van Wieringen 1992a, 14–16; Winther-Nielsen 1995, 102; Winther-Nielsen and Talstra 1995, 12.

\(^{26}\)Talstra 1996.

\(^{27}\)Talstra 1999, 122.
discourse of the text; it is a matter of presentation. Although Talstra does not mention names, it seems clear that the approaches of Watson and Fokkelman can serve as examples. Note that stricter and more formal literary approaches, like that of the Kampen School and Van Grol, explicitly fall outside of this criticism.

Procedural priority In later publications, Talstra takes a more nuanced stance toward prosodic phenomena and their relevance for the interpretation, striving for a comprehensive approach:

The fact that poetry is very selective in the clause types it uses and is also very effective in the clause types it combines to create poetic lines (cola) makes it a promising field for further text syntactic research. Can one further integrate text grammar, analysis of clause types, the marking of participants and the hierarchy of communicative domains with the study of poetic features used for effective public performance, such as assonance, lexical repetition, limited clause length?

Talstra basically sees the issue as a problem of procedural order, for which he proposes:

1. Syntactic:
   (a) Tenses, clause types and clause connections
   (b) The (changing) patterns of actors in the text

2. Lexical:
   (a) Newly introduced words or sets of words
   (b) Repetition of words

3. Rhetorical:
   (a) Repetition of similar expressions
   (b) Refrains
   (c) Parallel colons

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28Talstra 1999, 113, 122; more comprehensive Talstra 2011, 352, see below.
29Talstra 1999, 121.
31Talstra 2011, 352.
32Talstra 1996.
Relation to my research

Talstra’s linguistic theory and practical methods form the obvious point of departure for the syntactic part of my study, for more than only practical reasons. His distributional and form-to-functional principles, its broad range of observations and his interactive practical approach, make for a sound, reliable framework for syntactic analysis.

As to the specific point of Talstra’s treatment of poetry, I do think some adaptations are called for. In fact, this assertion has been the central point of starting the present study. The adaptations I envision can be summarized as follows:

1. In general, Talstra is correct in treating poetry as equal to prose in the syntactic analysis. By and large, no separate syntax of poetry is needed, although I would maintain that some allowance should be made for peculiarities in one text type that would not be permissible in other types.33

2. Talstra’s reservations about prosodic structure may be overstated when he exclusively locates the flow of discourse in syntax, while referring to prosodic structure as presentation. Prosodic structure, even though it does not itself carry semantic meaning, can be an essential and integral part of the communicational dynamics of the discourse:
   - Talstra’s distinction between ‘syntactic system’34 and ‘poetic freedom’,35 a recurring notion in many ETCBC publications,36 is overstated where strongly ruled prosodic theories are concerned: There is much more ‘system’ to Biblical Hebrew prosody than Talstra appears to allow for.37
   - Being balanced or symmetrical does not mean being static. A poem is not a painting or sculpture, but moves through time when read. Concentric structures, for instance, are not perceived statically, in one glance,38 but as an increasingly more recognizable reprisal of text elements from the preceding context. Also, a strophic division can present the discourse in a series of separate images, like modern

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33See my discussion of this point below, Section 4.2 on page 80.
34Talstra also uses the terms ‘grammatical system’ or ‘linguistic system’.
35For ‘poetic’, the alternatives ‘artistic’ and ‘rhetorical’ are used; for ‘freedom’, alternatives are ‘selection’, ‘devices’, and ‘design’.
38In that sense, Talstra’s criticism does apply to the printed representations of many rhetorical analyses: These are, of necessity, symmetrical pictures, which can easily be confused with the dynamics of reading or hearing the poem.
day camera cuts, drawing the reader’s attention this way and that, rather than in an orderly line of thoughts. These things shape the dynamics of the communication in a fundamental way.

- Effects like these are not unfortunate distractions from the discourse: They are the very point of writing a poem rather than, say, a judicial or theological argument; the form is integral to the text. A separation between the (syntactic) discourse of a text and its (prosodic) presentation is therefore artificial.

- This is also an answer to Talstra’s notion that prosodic structure is a matter of shaping the discourse to make it suitable for performance. This may be true for mediocre poetry and/or texts which are in verse only because the occasion or convention requires this. Here, prosody is indeed largely ornamental, although it does have its communicational effects (attract attention; division of the text into discrete units). The default assumption, however, should be that a poem is written by an able poet who has chosen this particular form to communicate.

3. Syntax and prosody are two different disciplines, each with its own subject matter, categories and rules. In principle, doing syntax on syntactic grounds first, and prosodic analysis on prosodic (and syntactic?) grounds later, seems a sound point of departure.

4. However, the problem is, that in practice this separation of tasks does not always work, as both systems bleed into each other. Prosodic analysis appears to have syntactic constraints, while syntax can be influenced by prosody. Points where this happens form a real challenge for the methodology, both on the side of syntax and on the side of prosody.

5. My present study will primarily explore one side of this challenge: cases where the syntactic analysis needs to take prosodic structure into account.

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39Such as: advertizing slogans (‘Onze haring is een openbaring’), songs or poems written for wedding parties and Dutch Saint Nicholas celebrations, etc.

40See my discussion of Van Grol, p. 61.
4.2 Alviero Niccacci

Goals

In his work on Biblical Hebrew syntax, Alviero Niccacci has aimed at a description of the (text)syntactic system of Biblical Hebrew.\(^{41}\) He explicitly builds on the work of Schneider and Talstra,\(^ {42}\) and confesses himself to a moderate form-to-functional approach:

> In fact, grammatical description should be based on units longer than single sentences. A description of syntax should take into account the various linguistic forms which accompany the process of information. A description of syntax (i.e. the function of the form of the text) should take precedence over semantic description (the meaning of the actual form).\(^ {43}\)

On the other hand, semantics must also play a role in the analysis, albeit in second place to morphology and syntax.\(^ {44}\)

Text Model

Niccacci is indeed more consistently formal than Schneider. Niccacci adopts the basic dichotomy of narrative versus discursive text, but categorizes the verb forms and grammatical constructions according to form only. His conclusions are based on morphology and (text)syntax: the function of a form or construction is related to other forms or constructions that appear before or after it, and not attributed to the ‘naked’ form.\(^ {45}\)

Niccacci’s study results in an overview of the functions of the various verb forms and constructions in their various contexts, listed in terms of

- linguistic attitude (narrative or discursive),
- prominence (foreground or background) and
- linguistic perspective (degree zero, anticipated or recovered information).\(^ {46}\)

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\(^{41}\)During the completion of this manuscript, I heard the sad news that Alviero Niccacci passed away on August 3, 2018. Although it feels awkward, so soon after that date, I will henceforth adhere to the scholarly convention of referring to him and his work in present tense.

\(^{42}\)Niccacci 1990, 22.

\(^{43}\)Niccacci 1990, 21.

\(^{44}\)Niccacci 1990, 163.

\(^{45}\)Niccacci 1990, 164.

\(^{46}\)Niccacci 1990, 168–69.
Also noted is mode of action, which seems to partly overlap linguistic perspective (simultaneous or prior, single or repeated; emphasis.47)

Of these functions, the linguistic perspective results in a dichotomy in the model: Niccacci, like Schneider, has different sets of rules for narrative and discursive texts.

Observations

According to Niccacci, the linguistic functions of a clause are coded in two ways:

- The position of the verb within the clause (initial / non-initial). This criterion leads to a paradigm of clause types.
- The position of the clause within its context. Context is defined as:
  - The linguistic attitude and relief of the wider context: historical narrative or direct speech and foreground or background.
  - The preceding clause which is continued by the clause (the ‘mother clause’, in ETCBC parlance), and the clause(s) by which the clause is continued (‘daughter clause’).

For prose, Niccacci offers a matrix for the main clause types, in narrative and discursive texts, as summarized in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 on the next page.48

On closer inspection, Niccacci’s observations oscillate between paradigmatic and syntagmatic ones. His insistence that the functions of verb forms depend on their position within the clause is, of course, syntagmatic. Thus, a yiqtol form is volitive / jussive when clause-initial, but indicative when there are preverbal elements.

However, the positions of verbs in clauses leads Niccacci to a list of clause types which itself amounts to a paradigm. For some functions, this paradigm of clause types, or indeed even the word level paradigms, appears sufficient to assign clause functions:

- Qatal and wayyiqtol are to be translated as simple past tense.
- Indicative x-yiqtol and wqatal are to be translated as future.49
- Volitive forms are on the axis of the future, more or less by definition.

For other functions, the text-syntactic context does matter, e.g.:50

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47 Niccacci 1990, 165.
48 Taken from Niccacci 2001, 56, 58.
49 Niccacci 2006, 266.
50 See Table 4.3 on the facing page.
### Table 4.2: Niccacci: Clause types in narrative text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Axis</th>
<th>Main Level (FOREGROUND)</th>
<th>Secondary Level (BACKGROUND)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>(x-)qatal → continuation wayy. (coordinated, in a sequence, main level)</td>
<td>→ x-qatal, non-verbal sent., x-yiqtol, or wʾ-qatal (background)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Non-verbal sentence (with or without participle)</td>
<td>→ non-verbal sent. with/without participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Indicative</td>
<td>Non-verbal sentence (esp. with participle) → continuation wʾ-qatal (in a sequence)</td>
<td>→ x-yiqtol (background)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or: Initial x-yiqtol → continuation wʾ-qatal (in a sequence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Volitive</td>
<td>Imperative → wʾ-yiqtol (foreground)</td>
<td>→ x-imperative (background)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(x-)yiqtol cohortative/jussive → wʾ-yiqtol (foreground)</td>
<td>→ x-yiqtol (background)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:*
- Imperative → volitive wʾ-yiqtol = purpose (‘in order to’)
- Imperative → indicative wʾ-qatal = consequence (‘therefore’)

Table 4.3: Niccacci: Clause types in discursive text
• *w qatal* denotes past background when it continues past *qatal* or *way-yiqtol*, but future foreground indicative when it continues future participial or *x-yiqtol* clauses.

• Non-verbal sentences denote past or present background, but when continued by *w qatal*, they denote future foreground.

• *x-yiqtol* denotes past background when it follows an embedded narrative (*w-*qatal) continued by *wayyiqtol*; when followed by a *w qatal* chain, it denotes future indicative foreground; when followed by *w yiqtol*, it denotes future volitive foreground.

• When *x-yiqtol/w qatal* and *qatal/wayyiqtol* alternate (with past reference),\(^51\)
  - the *x-yiqtol/w qatal* denotes repeated / habitual / explicatory / descriptive information (background).
  - the *qatal/wayyiqtol* denotes punctual / single information (foreground).

**Syntax and Literary Structure**

Poetic texts, according to Niccacci, can by and large be modeled in the same way as direct speech in prose; the functions of the verb forms are basically the same.\(^52\) On the differences between the two, he states:

The main difference is that direct speech, as prose in general, consists of pieces of information conveyed in a sequence, while poetry communicates segments of information in parallelism. The result is linear vs. segmental communication. As a consequence, poetry is able to switch from one temporal axis to another even more freely than direct speech. This results in a greater variety of, and more abrupt transition from one verbal form to another.\(^53\)

This is an important remark: Niccacci does acknowledge a certain ‘strangeness’ in poetic texts, but locates this in unexpected shifts in temporal perspective, rather than in atypical use of linguistic forms as most scholars are inclined to do. A good example is his treatment of Ps 8,6–7: \(^54\)

\(^{51}\)Niccacci 2006, 266.

\(^{52}\)Niccacci 2006, 247; Niccacci 2001, 59.

\(^{53}\)Niccacci 2006, 248.

\(^{54}\)Niccacci 2006, 254; cf. my discussion of this text with Kalkman, p. 91.
You have made him little less than God, and with glory and honor you will crown him—

You shall give him dominion over the works of thy hands;

everything you have put under his feet.

The translations of the yiqtol clauses are remarkable, as they appear to introduce an almost eschatological notion into the poem: God will, at some point in the future, crown humankind with glory and give them dominion over the works of his hands. However, most exegetes would say that this glory and dominion have already been given; these verselines consist of parallel cola which describe the same actions twice and must therefore have the same time reference.\textsuperscript{55} Another example, this time involving Niccacci’s claim that past qatal denotes punctual foreground while past yiqtol denotes repetitive / durative background, is Ps 2,1–2:\textsuperscript{56}

\begin{itemize}
\item[(1a)] Why did the nations conspire,
\item[(1b)] while the peoples were plotting in vain?
\item[(2a)] [Why] were the kings of the earth setting themselves,
\item[(2b)] while the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed?
\end{itemize}

Niccacci explains his translation as follows: “Initial יְלַמְּדָה modifies not only the qatal immediately following but also the yiqtol of v. 2a, while the x-yiqtol in v. 1b and the x-qatal in v. 2b are circumstantial constructions (background) linked each to its preceding verbal form (foreground) . . . The yiqtol constructions convey repetition / habit / explication / description and do not stand on the same level with the qatal constructions, which convey single information.”\textsuperscript{57} Most exegetes would assume the same aspect in all four lines, and, incidentally, would not assume a past but rather a present time frame for these clauses.

Relation to my research

Niccacci has contributed some valuable insights to the syntactic study of Biblical Hebrew in general and of Biblical Hebrew poetry in particular. He has

\textsuperscript{55}A certain difference in time reference can perhaps be maintained with a different translation: “You have made him little less than God; with glory and honor you [continue to] crown him; you [continue to] give him domain over the works of thy hands: [Yes,] everything you have put under his hands,” although I doubt whether ‘to crown’ can be durative; moreover, I have some general objections to this solution to the qatal-yiqtol issue (see p. 82).

\textsuperscript{56}Niccacci 2006, 254; see my discussion of this passage with Kalkman, p. 92.

\textsuperscript{57}Niccacci 2006, 259.
made Schneider’s approach more formal and systematic, by introducing the clause types, and by drawing up clear sets of rules for narrative and discursive texts, based on the sequences of these clause types.

His views on syntax in poetry, furthermore, provide an interesting starting point for discussion. The claim that in poetry syntax basically behaves like direct speech in prose is an important one, as is the underlying premiss, that prose an poetry in general must share a single linguistic system in order to be understood at all. In general terms, I agree with both these claims. There is no entirely different ‘syntax of poetry’, nor a complete ‘anything goes’ attitude in using grammatical forms. In that respect, a syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry should take its starting points in the general syntactic principles of Biblical Hebrew. For poetry, the syntax of direct speech would indeed be the most natural point of reference.

That being said, I do have some issues with Niccacci’s model and theories. On a practical level, I think his matrices are incomplete and, possibly therefore, too simple. The list of Biblical Hebrew clause types, and thus of clause type sequences is much larger than that provided by Niccacci. Moreover, I doubt the clause types by themselves are sufficient to decide on syntactic functions like temporal perspective, durational aspect, and relief, even when they are viewed in combination with the clause types they are connected to. Other elements (specific conjunctions and adjuncts, semantics of the verbs, the logic of the situation, etc.) also, and perhaps even primarily, contribute to these functions. On a more fundamental level, I think Niccacci may take his principle of syntactic unity in prose and poetry too far.

**One syntactic system for prose and poetry** Even though all Biblical Hebrew texts obviously share the same language, and thus the bulk of its syntactic system, Niccacci takes this principle too far when he maintains that poetry should always be analyzed with exactly the same rules as direct speech in prose. This claim, to my mind, presupposes what still needs to be proven. After all, differing linguistic conventions in different text types or genres are a normal linguistic phenomenon. The difference between narrative and discursive language is a case in point: When telling a story, one uses different linguistic constructions than when expressing a wish, emotion or thought. Similar text-type dependent (or context dependent) differences in syntactic rules occur in modern languages as well:

**Example 4.1** *(newspaper headline)*
Before elections, eyes on students
Before [the upcoming] elections, [politicians have their] eyes on students.

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Example 4.2  (roadway sign)
Schapen op de dijk / Honden aan de lijn
[When there are] sheep on the dike, dogs [must be kept] on a leash.59

Example 4.3  (poetry)
Deep into that darkness peering, / long I stood there wondering, fearing.
I stood there long, wondering [and] fearing [while] peering deep into that darkness.60

Even though these examples presuppose the general syntax of the language, they allow for constructions which outside these contexts would be unacceptable. Biblical poetry may also very well be a text type with some rules of its own.

First of all, its prosodic constraints appear to target certain preferred lengths of cola and verses, which will force the poet to construct their clauses in such a way that they ‘fit’,61 sometimes leading to compressed and complex sentences which in prose would not be produced.62

In general, if other artistic conventions have demonstrably become commonplace, such as a relative freedom of constituent order and / or verbal form in the second colon of a parallelistic verse, they would be understood within their proper artistic context and would strongly limit the force of the ‘normal’ discourse functions.63

Finally, since much Biblical poetry stems from liturgical use, which usually contains many traditional elements, we can not rule out archaic constructions and word functions a priori. To an experienced audience, these would be understood within the context of the liturgy, even though they would not use them in everyday language.64

All this is not to say that poetry has a separate syntax; poetic Hebrew is still Hebrew and by and large follows the syntactic rules of that language. We can not, however, rule out a priori that it has some text-type specific exceptions to the rules of ‘normal’ syntax which can not be ignored without misinterpreting the text.65

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59I thank Eep Talstra for relating this example, which he found on a fence on the isle of Terschelling.
60Edgar Allan Poe, The Raven.
62See Hab 3,8a: “Is kindled against the rivers, YHWH, or against the rivers, your anger, or against the sea your wrath?”
63Lunn 2006; see also the remark by Korpel and de Moor 1998, 14.
64E.g., Dutch genitive case is considered awkward or even incorrect in everyday language but is readily accepted and understood within a liturgical context: ‘des Heren koninklijk domein’ (Psalm 24, sung version), → ‘het koninklijk domein van de Heer’.
65Longacre’s concept of a ‘discourse-modular grammar’ (Longacre 1995), even though stemming from entirely different linguistic principles, may be interesting as an abstract model: A
**Foreground and background** Niccacci maintains an even stricter dichotomy of foreground and background than Schneider does. In fact, the dichotomy of foreground and background appears to be Niccacci’s version of dealing with textual hierarchy: He appears to assume a single main line of the discourse, interrupted by backgrounded information. This dichotomy grossly simplifies the phenomenon of textual hierarchy, even for narrative prose. In fact, any text can have several layers of prominence and several lines of discourse. At the very least, then, foreground and background should be relative and recursive concepts: A clause can be backgrounded with respect to another clause, while it may itself have backgrounded clauses as well, to which it would function as foreground or main line.

**Temporal perspective** My largest issue with Niccacci’s theory is his (re-)introduction of temporal perspective and aspect as part of the verbal system. His categories (zero, anticipated and recovered) are rather schematic and oversimplify the complex matter of time reference in Biblical Hebrew.

What is more, the introduction of perspective (‘tense’) and aspect into a theory based on Weinrich and Schneider leads to inconsistency. The whole point of Weinrich and Schneider is, that in the analyzed languages, the tense forms do not primarily express tense, but first of all linguistic attitude, precisely because there does not appear to be a necessary connection between a tense form and the time frame it refers to. To be sure, Schneider does attribute past reference to qatal forms, both in narrative and in direct speech. However, to Schneider this appears to be a marginal observation, whereas to Niccacci, time reference, and to a lesser degree, aspect, have become core elements of the theory, and are assigned to the other verb forms / clause types as well.

Many of Niccacci’s examples, especially the ones for qatal-yiqtol alternation, show the problem with this: They give the impression of being based on application of the ‘normal’ syntax rules, rather than on observable clues other than the verb forms. The examples of Ps 8,6–7 and Ps 2,1–2 mentioned above are a case in point: Niccacci’s translations stem from his rules, not from any corroborating observations in the text. In fact, with respect to the temporal axis single base grammar for a language, with separate modules listing exceptions for the various discourse types.

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66Weinrich 1985, 41.44; Schneider 1985, 48.1.3.1 n. 3.
67Schneider 1985, 48.2.2.3; 48.3.2.1.
68Niccacci states: “However, as a norm one should assign to the various verb forms their usual function(s) and interpret the text accordingly, rather than to make the analysis of the various verb forms dependent on one’s own interpretation. It is only reasonable to assume that if a writer uses different verb forms, he has in mind different temporal or aspectual references. Our task is to interpret his mind on the basis of the verb forms he uses.” Niccacci 2001, 59.

This is a valid position, although one may ask how the ‘usual’ functions are to be discerned in texts of a different genre.
of Ps 2,1–2, I would maintain that the direct speech (without introductory formula) in vs 3 and the direct admonition to the kings in vs 10 strongly suggest that the rebellion is very much ongoing, rather than an event in the past.

4.3 Gino Kalkman

Goals

In his dissertation and accompanying website, Kalkman aims to counter what he sees as a fatal shortcoming in all mainstream exegesis of Biblical Hebrew poetry: A complete neglect of grammar and syntax, and an exclusive concentration on literary and rhetorical features, which has lead to chaos in the treatment of verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew poetry.

To remedy this, Kalkman makes the bold attempt to provide a comprehensive theory of the functions of Hebrew verb forms in Biblical Hebrew poetry. He does so by expanding on the ideas of Niccacci and Talstra and analyzing the entire book of Psalms according to his theories.

Syntax and Literary Structure

Kalkman chides mainstream interpretation of Biblical Hebrew poetry for focusing almost exclusively on the literary and rhetorical aspects of these texts, emphasizing the poetic freedom and skills of the poet, while either ignoring grammar and syntax, or studying it as instrumental to literary analysis only. A poem is perceived as a beautiful, symmetrical, but static work of art, rather than as a dynamic discourse.

Collateral to this, Kalkman observes a general tendency to assume that the syntax of Biblical Hebrew poetry differs vastly from that of prose, or even to claim that in poetry, the use of verbal forms knows no syntactic rules at all.

Kalkman counters these tendencies by emphatically posing the theoretical foundation for his study, which are in line with Talstra and especially Niccacci:

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69 Kalkman 2015a; Kalkman 2015b. The printed version of Kalkman’s dissertation provides a broad history of research and a detailed account of the principles, procedures and rules, but it understandably presents examples only. Access to all text hierarchies and analyses for the book of Psalms is provided online, in Kalkman 2015b. The site also offers a concordance of clause pairs and a summary of Kalkman’s principles, methods and rules.

70 Kalkman (2015a, 13–16, 18) mentions Collins 1978, O’Connor 1980 Cloete 1989 and Korpel and de Moor 1988, who, he claims, ultimately only analyze the syntax of Biblical Hebrew poetry in order to better define well-formed cola or verse lines.

71 Kalkman 2015a, 1.

72 Kalkman mentions Watson and especially Fokkelman (Kalkman 2015a, 17–18).

73 Kalkman 2015a, 39, citing Bergsträsser 1986, 29.

74 Kalkman 2015a, 71.
1. Biblical Hebrew has **only one verbal system** regulating the functioning of verbal forms in both prosaic and poetic texts. This implies that the syntax of Biblical Hebrew poetry can be studied as if it were prose, without taking prosodic structure into account. This is in fact the approach Kalkman takes in his research.

2. A **text-linguistic approach** is called for, as the function of a verb in Biblical Hebrew can only be fully determined by its position within a clause and by the position of this clause within its broader context.\(^75\)

3. The **form-to-function** and **text-linguistic** approaches of Weinrich, Schneider and Niccacci provide a better frame of reference than traditional theories based on Indo-European categories like tense, mood and aspect. The expansion to these approaches by Talstra, as applied in the *ETCBC* database, provide the suitable research instrument.\(^76\)

**Text Model**

Kalkman’s text model has the following elements:

- **Discourse functions** are the target of the analysis.
- **Mother-daughter clause pairs** are the carriers of these discourse functions.
- Various types of **text domains** can prevent or modify the functions.

I will discuss these elements in some more detail.

**Discourse functions**  In line with Niccacci, Kalkman distinguishes three discourse functions of verb forms and clause types:\(^77\)

1. **Mode of communication**:\(^78\) narrative vs. discursive text.
2. **Level of communication**:\(^79\) foreground vs. background, or main line vs. secondary line.
3. **(Temporal) perspective**: retrospective (recovered), zero (simultaneous) or prospective (anticipated) information.\(^{80}\)

As a pilot research, Kalkman also extensively examines modality, especially deontic / volitive modality, as expressed by *yiqtol* and prospective *weqatal* clauses, using morphological, clause-syntactic and syntactic criteria.\(^{81}\)

**Clause hierarchy**  In line with Talstra’s computer-assisted approach, Kalkman models the text as a hierarchy of clauses of different clause types.\(^{82}\) As a basic characteristic of this hierarchy, every clause in a text is connected to a single ‘mother’ clause, usually in its preceding context, on which it is thought to depend in some way as its ‘daughter’.

Kalkman has not copied the hierarchies present in the *ETCBC* database, but has generated his own text hierarchies, to thus ‘critically (re)evaluate’ the clause connections in the original data.\(^{83}\) In his subsequent research, Kalkman treats his (revised) clause hierarchies as a given. He does not discuss the criteria for his revision in great detail,\(^{84}\) and does not account for individual clause connections.

**Mother-daughter pairs**  The *ETCBC* clause hierarchy is usually visualized as a tree-like hierarchy in which clauses form the nodes. Kalkman takes a slightly different approach: He models the text as a set of mother-daughter pairs. This is possible because every daughter clause has precisely one mother. For all intents and purposes, these mother-daughter pairs form the text-syntactic context within which Kalkman’s research is conducted.\(^{85}\)

**Domains**  Apart from the mother-daughter model, Kalkman also assumes various discursive and linguistic domains in the text, which can influence the analysis.\(^{86}\) Kalkman distinguishes the following types of domains:\(^{87}\)

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\(^{80}\)This function is introduced by Niccacci, who refers to it as ‘temporal axis’, indicating that it does not denote absolute tense, but rather temporal perspective as seen from the active discourse domain.

\(^{81}\)Weinrich, Schneider and Talstra do occasionally allow for temporal perspective, but it is not an integral part of their theory.

\(^{82}\)Kalkman 2015a, 118 n. 307.

\(^{83}\)Kalkman 2015a, 118.

\(^{84}\)Kalkman 2015a, 106–107 and Kalkman 2015a, 118 n. 307 do mention the most important criteria, but not how they are to be applied exactly, see my remarks in Section 6.1 on page 106.

\(^{85}\)Kalkman 2015a, 254: “A good environment for studying the type of discourse functionality executed by Hebrew’s verbal forms and clause types is that of the pattern of mother and daughter clause.” Thus, Kalkman in effect specifies Niccacci’s rather vague term ‘follows . . . ’ as ‘is a daughter clause of . . . ’.

\(^{86}\)Kalkman 2015a, 255.

\(^{87}\)Kalkman 2015a, 253–254 n. 507.
Communicative domains / domains of communication are domains with ‘continuation in the type of communication’ (narrative vs. discursive) or in the level and perspective of communication (e.g. secondary-line retrospective domain vs. mainline zero-perspective domain). This, presumably, includes the domains formed by who is speaking to whom. These domains are present in the ETCBC data, produced by syn04types.

Domains of discourse / discursive domains are textual domains with ‘a certain level of continuity in the temporal and situational setting and in the set of participants playing a role’. This also includes the parameter of ‘agent/subject continuity’. These domains are not present in the ETCBC data as yet; his programs will have to calculate them.

Linguistic domains are ‘chains of clauses and clause atoms’ belonging to the same linguistic level’, such as chains of coordinated attributive clause atoms governed by a single relative pronoun, or chains of clause atoms governed by a subordinating conjunction like 見. This type of domain amounts to the ‘branch’ of the clausal hierarchy at a given point in the text.

It is primarily the communicative and discursive domains that influence the function of mother-daughter pairs; linguistic domains play a role in that ‘long distances between mother and daughter clauses (measured in terms of the number of intermediate (daughter) clauses) may also prevent a specific combination of mother and daughter clause from being functional’ and in that multiple-duty (or: inherited) modifiers have a different impact depending on whether they govern an independent or a dependent clause chain.

Observations

In the following section, I will limit my discussion to Kalkman’s investigation of the discourse-level functions of clauses (his Chapter 6). The investigation of volitivity in yiqtol forms (his Chapters 4 and 5) is interesting, but within Kalkman’s overall theory, and for my own research, volitivity is ultimately a detail. The main takeaway from these chapters is Kalkman’s general procedure, which consists of three steps:

1. A default function is assigned to every verb form and clause type.

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88Kalkman 2015a, 256.
89Research in this area is presently being conducted, e.g.: Talstra 2016; Erwich and Talstra 2017.
90Kalkman 2015a, 256.
91Kalkman 2015a, 256–257.
2. Each specific combination of mother and daughter clause (‘clause pattern’) also receives a default function.

3. The actualized function is determined by searching the context for linguistic patterns which cause blocking of the default function or inheritance of a function from a preceding clause. This includes an analysis of whether or not mother and daughter are within the same communicational or linguistic domain.

The set of rules by which parameters are weighed in order to arrive at a discourse function inevitably turns out to be rather casuistic, as virtually every combination of these parameters can lead to a different outcome. In his Chapter 6, Kalkman presents a meticulous discussion of the discourse functions of the different clause patterns, conveniently summarized in a cross-table.\(^92\)

Although this cross-table allows the reader to apply the most important rules ‘by hand’, this type of argumentation is, of course, much more suited to be applied by a computer algorithm. Kalkman has written a computer program to this end, which operates almost entirely automatically.\(^93\) The discourse functions and automatic translations presented on the website\(^94\) are the product of this program.

I will now discuss the three steps in some more detail.

**Step 1: Default functions** In assigning default functions to clause types, Kalkman largely follows Niccacci (Table 4.4).\(^95\) The step is rather straightforward, as it relies on paradigmatic information (clause level) and the presence of interrogatives, interjections and other linguistic signals.\(^96\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Mode of Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>QATAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>WAYYIQTOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(\textbf{bold} = foreground, regular = background)

Table 4.4: Kalkman: default discourse functions

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\(^{92}\)Kalkman 2015a, 316. The complete list of functions which Kalkman distinguishes is actually much more fine-grained than the cross-table suggests. The full list is presented on the website (Kalkman 2015b), under ‘Final Discourse Functions of Clause Types’.

\(^{93}\)Some non-formal information must occasionally be supplied by the researcher, mainly with respect to participant references and semantic correspondences between clauses (Kalkman 2015a, 119 n. 309).

\(^{94}\)Kalkman 2015b.

\(^{95}\)Kalkman 2015a, 114.

\(^{96}\)Kalkman 2015b, under ‘Default Discourse Functions of Clause Types’.
Step 2: Specific combinations of mother and daughter clauses  Kalkman sets out to study the text-syntactic context by examining the patterns of mother and daughter clauses in the ETCBC clause hierarchies. This essentially results in a matrix, in which the default function of a clause is determined by its own clause type in combination with that of its mother. Kalkman cautions, that the embedding of clause patterns and communicative domains is a recursive procedure. This means that a correct identification of communicative and discursive domains and subdomains is essential to an adequate analysis of the discourse functionalities. This happens in the third step.

Step 3: Continuity and discontinuity of domains  Kalkman notes, that ‘if the daughter clause marks a shift to another discursive or linguistic domain, the process of functional interaction between mother and daughter clause, which is responsible for the pattern-specific concretization of the clauses’ default discourse functions, is usually deactivated.’ Kalkman identifies the following parameters to recognize domain continuity or discontinuity:

1. (Dis)continuity in the participants set.
2. Distance between mother and daughter (in terms of the number of intermediate clauses): at long distances, the influence of the specific mother-daughter pattern diminishes.
3. Agent / subject (dis)continuity.
4. Multiple-duty modifiers: when introduced in a daughter clause, these tend to open a linguistic (sub)domain.
5. Macro-syntactic signals e.g., (we’attah, ‘Now then’), starts of direct speech, vocatives.

Other parameters regulating the discourse functions of clauses include:

6. ‘Mainline markers’ or ‘mainline anchors’: interrogatives and some deictic particles (see’; surely’), elements that force mainline relief, even for verb forms with background as their default function.

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97 Kalkman 2015a, 254.
98 Kalkman 2015a, 316.
99 Kalkman 2015a, 255.
100 Kalkman 2015a, 256.
101 Kalkman 2015a, 257.
102 Kalkman 2015a, 257–258.
103 Kalkman 2015a, 259.
7. The order of mother and daughter clause.\textsuperscript{104}

8. Volitity and non-volitity yield different discourse functions for the same clause types. This parameter (including inheritance and blocking) must therefore be assessed correctly.\textsuperscript{105}

9. Inheritance: If a mother clause and a daughter clause are more than one clause apart, the discourse function calculated for the mother clause is also inherited by the intermediate clauses. This usually requires recalculation of the functions of the intermediate clauses. According to Kalkman, his analytical program does make such recalculations.\textsuperscript{106}

10. The presence of a negation is of importance in a small number of patterns.\textsuperscript{107}

11. The person marking of the subject: 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} person qatal clauses can have a different function (‘now that…’) than 3\textsuperscript{rd} person qatal (‘when…’).

It will be clear that this list of rather diverse parameters, when applied to the matrix of mother-daughter combinations, can theoretically yield an enormous amount of possible patterns. Kalkman, true to his distributionalist principles, limits this set to the patterns that actually occur, but even this set is impressively large. The remainder of Kalkman’s Chapter 6 is devoted to a discussion of these patterns, organized by the type of discourse shift they do or do not mark.\textsuperscript{108}

1. Patterns with out shifts in type, level or perspective of communication;

2. Patterns with shifts in level and perspective of communication;

3. Patterns with shifts in type of communication;

4. Patterns consisting of participle or nominal clauses.

Each (sub)category is preceded by a list of the pattern numbers belonging to it, corresponding to the concordance of clause pair patterns on the website.\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{104}E.g.: when the mother is a background retrospective qatal clause and the daughter a non-volitive mainline clause, the qatal clause frequently introduces given information (translated by Kalkman as ‘Now that’ or ‘Given that’), while if the qatal clause is the daughter, additional conjunctions and other particles are needed to activate this function, Kalkman 2015a, 260–261.

\textsuperscript{105}Kalkman 2015a, 261. Kalkman extensively investigates parameters determining volitity or non-volitity of yiqtol forms in his Chapters 4 and 5.

\textsuperscript{106}Kalkman 2015a, 261–262.

\textsuperscript{107}Kalkman 2015a, 262.

\textsuperscript{108}Kalkman 2015a, 264–265.

\textsuperscript{109}Kalkman 2015b, under ‘The Concordance of Patterns’.
CHAPTER 4. SYNTACTIC APPROACHES

Relation to my research

Kalkman has taken on a daunting task. Examining all clauses of all 150 Psalms in their unique text-syntactic contexts inevitably produces a plethora of possible clause combinations. Each of these must be evaluated and interpreted to form a single, coherent text-syntactic theory, while it is clear from the outset that such a theory can not be clear-cut and obvious, or it would have been discovered long ago. That Kalkman has been able to combine all his observations into a coherent system is admirable and speaks to his determination, analytical skill and eye for detail as well as system.

As to his methodology, Kalkman’s insistence on doing syntactic analysis first, prior to prosodic and literary analysis, is a sound point of departure, just like his assumption that the Hebrew of Biblical poetry can not differ substantially from that of Biblical prose. His application of Niccacci’s theories appear to prove him right on this count, at least in a good number of cases.

His consistent adherence to a formal-distributional text-linguistic approach is helpful in terms of verification and discussion, and has been a solid point of departure for analytical work at the ETCBC from the very start. Using the ETCBC clause hierarchies as the basis of this approach is appropriate to the goals, some caveats notwithstanding. It is a powerful tool to do study and represent the syntactic of a Biblical Hebrew text.

The inclusion of communicational and discourse domains in the analysis is another strong point of Kalkman’s approach. It is my experience that in Biblical Hebrew poetry shifts in the sets of participant references can be at least as important in determining the syntactic structure as the verb forms and clause types.

On a practical note, Kalkman’s starting from paradigmatically determined default functions, which can be overruled by the text-syntactic context in a second analytical step, looks sensible enough.

However, I do see some points in his approach that need improvement:

1. Kalkman’s mother-daughter model, although usually sufficient for short-range clause relations, often fails when clauses are connected over distances longer than one clause. An approach is needed that takes seriously the convention that clause relations in the ETCBC data should also be read as unit relations (see p. 107).

2. The inclusion of domains in the model does remedy this to a certain extent, but it is unclear how Kalkman envisions to define, determine and

To be fair, Kalkman does mention that his analytical program takes larges contexts into account, e.g., to identify blocking and inheritance (Kalkman 2015a, 261–262), but it is not clear how the program does this, because its algorithm has not been published. Also, Kalkman’s cross-table (Kalkman 2015a, 316) and clause pattern concordance (Kalkman 2015b) strongly suggest that the mother-daughter relation is the defining parameter for the discourse functions.
store these domains. This will have to be improved, so that the domains can actually be in the database in some form.

3. Kalkman’s insistence on a single syntactic system for all Biblical Hebrew, and his subsequent neglect of prosodic structure altogether, sometimes leads to forced and frankly incorrect, interpretations, which actually demonstrate that the principle is not tenable in its absolute form.

4. Kalkman’s hierarchies are sometimes debatable. This is only natural, given their hypothetical status, but an explanation of at least the less obvious cases is called for.

5. The (re)introduction of the discourse functions of temporal perspective and punctual or durative aspect in the heart of the theory meets with the same objections as it did with Niccacci. Moreover, it again leads to forced interpretations.

Let me illustrate these points with two worked examples: In Ps 8.4–7, Kalkman connects vs 6.1 to the immediately preceding vs 5.4. This results in two coordinated clauses, which can be translated as: “What is a human, that you look after him and make him little less than a god?”

Now it is true that wayyiqtol can often play such a coordinating role, especially in poetry, where long narrative wayyiqtol chains are rare. Yet, in this particular context, this analysis does not fit. It seems awkward to coordinate /A0/CT/A0/D4/A3/DC/A7/DB/A7/D8/A5/DE (‘you look after him’) and ‘you make him little less than a god’, as these things are by no means semantically similar, while ‘you look after him’ already has been coupled with /A0/CT/A0/D4/A3/DE (‘you think of him’) in vs 5.1. Moreover, it is obvious from various points of view, that vs 4–5 form a single unit of which vs 6a is not a part: From the point of view of syntax, vs 4–5 form a single complex sentence, expressing a single thought (“When I look at the heavens..., what then is a human that you would think of him?”). The wayyiqtol clause vs 6.1 opens a new sentence, containing a new thought that surpasses the others and has daughter clauses of its own. This new sentence as a whole is connected to the preceding sentence as a whole. Finally: From a prosodic point of view, vs 4–5 form a strophe; vs 6.1 opens a new strophe. It is therefore unlikely that it is an expansion of the preceding qatal clause.

I would therefore argue for a different hierarchy of the verses vs 4–7.1 (see Table 4.5 on the next page).

In my proposal, the role of the wayyiqtol clause vs 6.1 may be somewhat unusual, in that it starts off a new unit and is immediately followed by yiqtol forms. A tentative explanation, which would even fit Kalkman’s theory,

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111See the Introduction to Part II.
112Cf. my discussion of these two examples with Niccacci, p. 79.
113Kalkman 2015a.
might be that the *wayyiqtol* secures a narrative (retrospective) context for the following verses, even though these consist largely of *yiqtol* clauses. This narrative context blocks the volitive function of the *0-yiqtol* clause.\(^\text{114}\) Without the *wayyiqtol*, vs 6–9 would naturally be interpreted as being on the same line as vs 4–5.

There is another issue with the hierarchy of this passage: I am not certain about the position of vs 7.1, as I see more than one candidate for its mother clause. In my proposal, I have connected it to vs 6.1, because of the formal correspondences, but it could also be connected to vs 4.1, starting a new unit, because of its asyndetic start and its long ‘tail’ of dependent clauses. This type of uncertainty occurs regularly when determining the clause hierarchy of non-narrative text. This is inevitable and does not invalidate the method as such. It does, however, impact the status of the clause hierarchies: These can not yet be used as given data without further documentation (see Section 6.1 on page 106).

In another example, Ps 2,1–2, Kalkman argues that the occurrence and subsequent inheritance of the mainline marker לַעֲמֹד (‘why?’) causes the two *qatal* clauses to denote retrospective perspective.\(^\text{115}\) His translation concurs with this analysis:

1. Why have the nations been conspiring, and (why) do the peoples plot in vain?
2. (why) do the kings of the earth set themselves and (why) have the rulers taken counsel . . .

I do not see what shifting back and forth between present and past perspective could possibly mean in these verses. Would the *qatal* forms really try to

\(^\text{114}\)Kalkman 2015a, 212.

\(^\text{115}\)Kalkman 2015a, 259. Note that Niccacci translated this entire passage in past tense, see p. 79.

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**Table 4.5: Ps 8,4–7.1, alternative hierarchies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kalkman’s proposal</th>
<th>my proposal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>המ אונש</td>
<td>המ אונש</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>כי תדרכו</td>
<td>כי תדרכו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ובראך</td>
<td>ובראך</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>כי ת_POSTFIELDS</td>
<td>כי ת_POSTFIELDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תחפשתו מטע מאמורות</td>
<td>תחפשתו מטע מאמורות</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בכורות ורור תстроен</td>
<td>בכורות ורור תстроен</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ומישלהו בצופי ידר</td>
<td>ומישלהו בצופי ידר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
convey specifically that the conspiring of the nations predates the plotting of the peoples, and that the counsel of the rulers has taken place before the kings set themselves against YHWH?

The poetic parallelism simply prevents such a mechanical application of the syntactic rules: All actions in these verses obviously happen within the same temporal perspective—which I would say is the present, since in vs 10 the kings are addressed directly, which implies that the conspiring is still going on.

If the shift of verbal forms has any function, other than poetic variation, it appears to denote something else than perspective, for instance linguistic salience, perhaps creating a kind of crescendo - decrescendo effect within these two verselines. Other examples of unconvincing shifts in temporal perspectives are Ps 11,5.2 and Ps 11,7.2.

For my own research, the takeaway from Kalkman’s approach is, that the ETCBC approach and tools make a good starting point for poetic texts also. However, I will have to account for the hierarchies explicitly, at least for the less obvious cases. Also, I will have to expand the model beyond the mother-daughter pairs. Kalkman’s domains may be a good starting point, if they can be described more strictly. Also, I will have to be more aware of interactions between syntactic and prosodic structures. As far as Kalkman’s discourse functions are concerned, I am hesitant as to their use. Time will have to tell whether it is possible to ascribe time reference and / or aspect to clause types in a consistent way, or whether other explanations will have to be found.

\[116\] Cf. van Grol 2017, 135–136 who investigates ‘suitable’ syntax for the opening and closing of strophes. Note, however, that Ps 2,1–2 do not form a strophe on their own: They are followed by vs 3. This is remarkable, as vs 1–2 by themselves show many features of a classical strophe.
Chapter 5

Positioning

5.1 Summary

As the surveys in the previous chapters have demonstrated, a number of important issues concerning the analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry circle around the undeniable fact that poetic texts exhibit two structures simultaneously: syntax and prosodic structure. The two are separate in terms of their units, categories and rules, yet to a certain extent they are clearly connected. The various approaches have dealt with this state of affairs in different ways:

- Some literary approaches focus primarily on the literary structure and largely ignore syntax (Watson, Fokkelman).
- Some literary approaches leave room for syntax, but treat it as one of the tools for prosodic analysis (Korpel-de Moor, Van der Lugt, Renkema).
- Some literary approaches explicitly try to connect syntax and prosodic structure, in various ways (Collins, O’Connor, Van Grol).
- The linguistic approaches discussed here primarily focus on the syntax, and do not see prosodic structure as a syntactic factor (Talstra, Niccacci, Kalkman).

The directions taken here are obviously closely connected to the field of research in which the various scholars are engaged. As remarked earlier, my study will mainly focus on the syntactic side of the analytical process, yet aims to adequately account for the interaction between the two systems in doing so. This has lead to the practical research questions I have already formulated on p. 15:
To what extent, and in what way, should a (text-)syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry account for prosodic influence on (text-)syntactic structure, in order to do justice to the linguistic reality in these texts?

1. What **prosodic observations** need to be included?

2. What adjustments to **analytical procedures** are required?

To clarify my own position vis-à-vis this question, it is helpful to discuss here a recent dispute on the roles of syntactic and prosodic structure in the analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry.

### 5.2 Syntax and prosody in the analysis

In the second chapter of *Een parallel syntagma*,¹ Van Grol gives a highly critical response to the article *Reading Biblical Hebrew Poetry. Linguistic System or Rhetorical Device?* by Eep Talstra.² The article by Talstra expresses scepticism about the methodological validity and exegetical usefulness of rhetorical and literary approaches to Biblical Hebrew poetry.

For good measure, I must start by emphasizing, that Van Grol does not dispute Talstra’s **syntactic** merits in any way. On the contrary: He begins his exposition by giving Talstra great credit for his sound theories and procedures, as well as for his valuable work on tools and data, which form the basis of Van Grol’s own syntactic analyses throughout his book.³

Concerning Talstra’s views on poetry, however, Van Grol uses remarkably harsh words: Talstra suggests that, in the study of poetry, syntactic analysis should not only have the first word—to which Van Grol agrees—but also the last. Furthermore, Talstra’s view on Biblical Hebrew poetry is below par and obstructs a fruitful study of poetry.⁴ Van Grol characterizes Talstra’s view, and that of some of his pupils,⁵ as posing a dichotomy: ‘linguistic system’, which is qualified as systematic, intentional⁶ and basic, is contrasted favorably to

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¹van Grol 2017.
²Talstra 1999, with some references to Talstra 2011.
³van Grol 2017, 23–24. Van Grol takes his text-syntactic hierarchies from SHEBANQ, the publicly accessible online version of the ETCBC data, with a few minor moderations, see van Grol 2017, 115
⁴van Grol 2017, 24.
⁵Van Grol refers to Oosting 2011, 19.
⁶Dutch ‘doelgericht’, lit. ‘aimed at a target’. May also convey ‘efficient’, ‘suitable for the task’.

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‘rhetorical devices’, which are disqualified as vague, suspect and superficial.⁷ Again according to Van Grol, Talstra considers poetic form as essentially ornamental and tangential to the interpretation of a poem, a matter of presentation and performance which does not contribute to the understanding of the proceeding discourse. For the latter, the syntactic analysis is the appropriate tool.⁸

If this is indeed the long and short of Talstra’s view on poetry, Van Grol’s criticism is understandable. And to be sure: Talstra does at times make statements that appear to border on dismissing literary and rhetorical criticism in general. In my discussion of Talstra’s work, I have already discussed his notion that prosodic structure is static and largely a matter of performance, while only syntax carries the flow of the discourse and thus the communicational process.⁹ Here Van Grol may have a point.

However, on closer inspection, Van Grol’s criticism overlooks that Talstra, in Reading Biblical Hebrew poetry and later publications, does not speak about strong-ruled prosodic analyses like his own, but about more general stylistic-rhetorical approaches which emphasize the artistic skills of the poet while ignoring, or even dismissing, the role of syntactic structure (see pages 71 ff.). Van Grol actually shares Talstra’s criticism on this count.¹⁰ Talstra, then, does not oppose literary analysis per se.¹¹ In fact, in Reading Biblical Hebrew poetry, Talstra explicitly makes an exception for colometric research:

In my view it is important to distinguish carefully between a discussion of a colometrical presentation of a poetic text and one of a more general stylistic-rhetorical interpretation of a poetic text. In the first case it is fruitful to discuss interpretation on the basis of a registration of linguistic data, whereas with interpretations of a more general stylistic type, based on word-level semantics, inclusions or chiasms, it is hardly possible to agree upon a common linguistic ground needed for the discussion.¹²

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⁹See p. 73.
¹⁰“Talstra prioriteert het (tekst)syntactische onderzoek boven retorische en semantische analyses, omdat deze nog al eens voorbijgaan aan de (tekst)syntactische structuren van deze poëzie en het zicht hierop belemmeren. Dit lijkt me terecht, voor zover het laatste het geval is.” (“Talstra prioritizes syntactic research over rhetorical and semantic analyses, because these often ignore the syntactic structures of this poetry and obscure the view on them. This seems justified to me, inasmuch as the latter is the case.” van Grol 2017, 24)
¹¹See also Oosting 2011, 19, quoted in part by van Grol 2017, 24. The complete quote runs: “This example makes clear that, although linguistic and literary regularities in biblical Hebrew poetry do not always coincide, they often cooperate. In order to understand this cooperation, it is necessary to examine the characteristic features of both of them. Attention must be paid not only to the literary presentation, but also to the underlying linguistic system.”
¹²Talstra 1999, 121. See also Talstra 1999, 106: “Clearly, it is not a matter of either ‘linguistic system’ or ‘rhetorical skills’, of either text grammar or literary art. It is a matter of ordering:
There is another point on which Van Grol appears to be speaking at cross-purposes with Talstra. Van Grol describes the production process of Biblical Hebrew poetry: In his view, the Hebrew poet, when writing a poem, was consciously aware of the rules and constraints that this involved, and adapted the syntactic constructions accordingly. Therefore, prosody is the structure in which the poet actively molded the text. Talstra, however, is concerned with studying the reading process. Talstra’s insistence on the priority of (formal and distributional) syntactic research starts with the circumstance that we are dealing with a relatively small text corpus in a dead language. The challenge is, to get to understand the extant texts, not to reproduce their writing process. Thus, Talstra’s methods are essentially heuristic. They chart linguistic signals which can guide the reader, more specifically the modern, non-native speaking reader, through the complex structure of the text. To this end, all signals are important, syntactic as much as prosodic ones. In this context, the awareness of the poet becomes a moot point.

To be sure: By the same token, prosodic structures should probably play a larger role in the heuristic process than Talstra appears to grant them. The rhythm of cola, verselines and strophes, as well as the ‘varying repetitions’ of parallelisms, also constitute an important linguistic guiding system, which sometimes can take over syntactic functions even when these are not syntactically marked.

A final point on which both scholars appear to be speaking at cross-purposes is the distinction between ‘syntactic system’ and ‘poetic freedom’. For Talstra, this distinction lies at the core of his critical remarks on literary analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry (see pages 71 f.). For Van Grol, it lies at the core of his criticism of Talstra.

As far as I can see, however, this distinction does not apply in this discussion. Not only because Talstra does not target Van Grol’s approach, as we have seen, but also because Van Grol does not describe prosodic structure as a matter of artistic freedom at all: It too is a system, in much the same way that the grammatical / syntactic system is. The shaping of a poem in cola, verselines and strophes is guided by a strict and consistent set of rules, to which the poet must comply to produce well-formed poetry.

In this debate, then, there is no distinction between ‘system’ or ‘freedom’, which comes first, and which comes later within the process of analysis.”

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Note that Van Grol proposes a ‘strong’ versification theory: Its rules are strict and form a system, to which the poet must comply to create well-formed poetry (see page 56).


E.g.: The start of a new strophe raises expectations of a new syntactic section as well, even if there are no explicit syntactic signals to mark this.

van Grol 2015, 33, and especially van Grol 2017, 23: “Dat wat de selectie uit het tekstsyntactische systeem bepaalt, is zelf een systeem.” (“That which determines the selection from the text-syntactic system, is itself a system.”)
but between ‘syntactic system’ and ‘prosodic system.’ Put this way, it is obvious that the distinction can not be an ‘either/or’ dichotomy. Each system has its own set of rules, both of which can and should be studied systematically. The only relevant question is: In what way can the two be combined into a consistent methodology?

5.3 A practical position

Their theoretical differences and preferences notwithstanding, the practical principles of Talstra and Van Grol are actually closely related. It seems to me, that a few adjustments should suffice to reconcile the positions into a more constructive and unified approach. The authors agree on an impressive list of rather crucial points:

- Biblical Hebrew poetry has (at least) two structures: syntax and prosody. The two should be studied independently and on their own terms, even though they will sometimes influence each other.

- Both syntactic and prosodic analysis have their legitimate place in the interpretation. In practice, of course, both Talstra and Van Grol tend to concentrate on their own discipline and to present the results of these as end products of their analysis.

- Syntactic analysis takes procedural priority over prosodic and literary analysis.

- Text-syntactic analysis should, as much as possible, be based on observable grammatical markers, lexical markers of discourse segments, shift of actors, semantic changes and pragmatic effects.

- Prosodic analysis should, as much as possible, be based on clearly defined rules and formal observations. Rhetorical and semantic analyses of Biblical Hebrew poetry should be criticized inasmuch as they gloss over syntactic structure too easily.

- Poetry and prose differ in their preferred selections from the possibilities of a single grammatical system. While Talstra appears to accept this as a given, Van Grol asks, which mechanisms drive this selection, and finds the answer in the prosodic rule system.

- Syntax tends to convey the progress of the discourse, while prosodic structure is geared towards balance, symmetry and repetition.

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17 van Grol 2017, 23–24.
19 van Grol 2017, 21; Talstra 1996.
evaluation of this observation is, of course, a point of difference between Talstra and Van Grol.

- It would be interesting to study where syntax and prosody converge and where they conflict.

Given this list, the obvious solution presents itself: Both syntactic and prosodic structure should be taken entirely seriously. They are complementary and interwoven and should be studied as such, each one on its own terms, as well as the two of them in their interactions. Only then will the communicational process of the poetic text be fully grasped. This is, of course, a truism, which nobody—and certainly not Talstra\textsuperscript{20} or Van Grol\textsuperscript{21}—would deny. Nevertheless, it appears to be challenging to design a procedure which, on the one hand, takes seriously the categorical distinctions between syntactic and prosodic units and rules while, on the other hand, doing justice to the interwovenness of the two systems.

### 5.4 Outline of the research in this study

It appears, then, that I will need to find a procedure which starts from the customary syntactic \textit{ETCBC} line of analysis, but which leaves room for the observation of prosodic phenomena that are relevant to the syntactic analysis. I propose to go about this in the following way:

1. With the help of \textit{syn04types}, I will make a revised clause hierarchy of Lamentations. This hierarchy will differ from the customary hierarchies in some ways:
   - Whenever prosodic structure obviously suggests a different grouping from the one suggested by the clause types only, I will connect the clauses according to the obvious grouping.
   - Whenever a clause is actually connected to a group of clauses rather than to an individual clause, I will connect the clause to the first clause of that group. In itself, this is common \textit{ETCBC} practice, but because of the first bullet point, these units will sometimes be prosodic (verseline, strophe) rather than syntactic ones (paragraphs).

\textsuperscript{20}See Talstra 1996, closing sentence, who wants to contribute to “... the cooperation of syntactical, semantical and rhetorical observations in the readers reconstruction of the world of the text. I consider this crucial for a further development of linguistic and literary methods of reading biblical poetry.”.

\textsuperscript{21}“Kortom, er zijn twee systemen, de versbouw en de (tekst)syntaxis, en beide sturen de opbouw van de poëtische tekst. Beide systemen moeten we voluit serieus nemen, op zoek naar de vigerende regels.” (“In short, there are two systems, versification and syntax, and both influence the buildup of the text. Both systems are to be taken completely seriously, in search of the rules in effect.” van Grol 2017, 28).
In a way, one might call the resulting hierarchy a hybrid, because it will contain a mix of syntactic and prosodic units. However, I would maintain that for these poetic texts, the distinction between syntactic and prosodic units is primarily an analytical one, which would have little or no significance to the poet and their audience.

The process of making these hierarchies will yield first insights into the relevant prosodic parameters.

2. I will make annotations of the hierarchies, in which I will account for all cases in which I have disagreed with the proposals by syn04types. These annotations are too voluminous to present in printed form. I will therefore provide them online.\(^{22}\) These annotations also contain formal, automated descriptions of the clause connections, based on external lists of text patterns I have compiled myself during the run of syn04types and the annotation process.

3. In Part II, I will present a thematically organized selection of my observations.

4. In Part III, I will propose a number of adjustments to the procedures, in order to improve syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry.

5. In the Appendix, I will present an implementation of my recommendations as a pilot project, in the form of a downloadable MQL database of Lamentations,\(^{23}\) and some programs to interact with it.\(^{24}\)

\(^{22}\)ftp://ftp.wi.th.vu.nl/pub/hjb/PhD/annotations.pdf
\(^{23}\)ftp://ftp.wi.th.vu.nl/pub/hjb/PhD/threni_hjb.tar.gz
\(^{24}\)ftp://ftp.wi.th.vu.nl/pub/hjb/PhD/programs/
Part II

Research
Chapter 6
Method of the Research

As I have already stated, my research takes the syntactic analysis in the ETCBC database as its point of departure.

The main research question is: Which prosodic phenomena must a syntactic analysis take into account to do justice to the language of the text? Note that this is a syntactic question. My assumption is, that if prosodic structuring can be demonstrated to alter the syntax from what it would be in prose, this is syntactically relevant information. Note also, that even though my research takes the ETCBC database as its point of departure, it is my hope that its observations will be relevant to all manner of syntactic research.

6.1 ETCBC clause hierarchies

To gain insight into possible prosodic influence on syntax, I start by revising the clause hierarchies of the book of Lamentations, using the program syn04types (see Appendix A, p. 277). An obvious first goal for this operation is, to arrive at a more balanced text hierarchy, one in which prosodic influences as I have found them have been taken into account. Such a revision is a normal, and indeed, necessary procedure for the ETCBC hierarchies.¹ As I will explain below, it is in keeping with the fundamentally hypothetical nature of the clause hierarchies, and the iterative nature of this type of analysis.

From the official data, and from the proposals made by syn04types, I have concluded that the analysis needs more information, especially prosodic information. Redoing the hierarchies guided by this conclusion allows me to determine which information would have to be, and to note where a formal and strictly syntactic approach to a poetic text like Lamentations meets with complications.

¹See also Kalkman 2015a, 118, who uses his revision of the clause hierarchies of Psalms as the basis for his research.
Thus, the process of going through the analytical process is equally, if not more, important than arriving at better data per se.

**Syn04types as a laboratory tool**

In order to prevent any misconceptions, I must first make a few crucial remarks on working with *syn04types*. One very important point concerns the status of the *ETCBC* clause hierarchies as presented in this study.

In essence, *syn04types* is a **laboratory tool**, rather than a production tool for definitive data. The hierarchies it produces are to be seen as **research hypotheses** in the search for parameters that determine the textual hierarchy. They are not meant as definitive textual data, but provide the material to test hypotheses, and are subject to scrutiny and correction. Working with *syn04types*, is part of an **iterative process**:²

1. The researcher uses *syn04types* to make a first clause hierarchy of a text corpus.
2. This hierarchy is studied, usually by other research tools than *syn04types* itself.
3. This research can lead to new insights into relevant parameters.
4. With these insights, better hierarchies can be made for further research, etc.

This point has always been well-understood within the *ETCBC* and its affiliates, but with the opening up of the *ETCBC* database to the scholarly community at large, it has become all too easy not to realize this, and to assume that all annotations in the *ETCBC* database represent definitive, given data.

This is correct for the levels of word, phrase, clause and sentence. The clause hierarchies, however, are a different matter. These data only reflect the most recent state of the ongoing research.

When *syn04types* calculates proposals for clause hierarchies, it takes into account a wide range of parameters, from quite different realms of syntax: morphological congruence, *syndesis* / *asyndesis*, (combinations of) clause types, patterns of participant references, lexical repetitions, distance, etc. How exactly all these parameters should be weighed, either by themselves or in combination, is actually one of the core research questions *syn04types* is supposed to help answer.

This research is still very much ongoing, all the more so for poetic texts, in which there tends to be less uniformity and consistency in the functioning

of syntactic parameters, so that the proposals by syn04types will tend to be
incorrect more often.\(^3\)

The hierarchies I present in the following sections should be seen in this
light. They represent my hypotheses about what linguistic parameters influence
the textual structure of the book of Lamentations. In these hypotheses, I
will weigh some of the existing parameters differently than syn04types pro-
poses, while some new parameters, having to do with the poetic and dramatic
nature of the texts, will have to be added into the mix.

I expect that when working with poetry, more proposals by syn04types
will need correction by the user than with prose. On the other hand, the num-
ber of proposals that do concur with my ideas on the hierarchy are a measure
of the degree to which Biblical Hebrew poetry and prose share the same syn-
tactic system.\(^4\) Accepted proposals, generally speaking, can be taken as an
indication of ‘normal’ syntax in action.

There is a caveat, however. Since syn04types is itself still under devel-
opment, as explained above, not every correction (nor even every accepted
proposal) is indicative of a difference between prose and poetry; it can be an
‘oversight’ by the program, which has insufficient information to solve the case
in question.

**Clause hierarchies and textual units**

Another technicality needs to be pointed out here: As I have stated on p. 90
(point 1), clause hierarchies should not only be seen as relations between pairs
of individual clauses,\(^5\) but also as a hierarchy of textual units. Whenever a
mother and a daughter clause are connected, it is assumed that two units are
also connected:\(^6\)

- The mother together with all its ‘offspring’ *up to* the daughter;
- The daughter together with all its ‘offspring’.\(^7\)

In many cases, this does not make much difference, since the relation between
two units is often determined by the clause type and constituents of their first
clauses. At times, however, linguistic signals need to be taken into account

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\(^3\)Even though ‘success rates’ of the proposals can not be tied to genre: The chapter with
the highest ‘success rate’ in the *Tenach* is Ps 150, precisely because of its highly stylized and
un-proselike character.


\(^5\)In itself, this is a valid way of looking at hierarchies, see van Wieringen 1998, 9.

\(^6\)The displays on the following pages visualize this: The Hebrew texts show clause rela-
tions, while the English texts show units.

\(^7\)This is more straightforward than it sounds: The displays in Chapter 7 show how clause
relations (Hebrew pages) correlate to units (English pages).
that appear in the intervening clauses between mother and daughter, or in the ‘offspring’ of the daughter.\footnote{E.g., presence of absence of vocatives: As a matter of policy, vocatives are split off as separate clause atoms in the \textit{ETCBC} data. Thus, they do not ‘show up’ when their main clauses are connected.}

6.2 An iterative process

The iterative character of this type of research also shows in this study. As mentioned above, I have used the results of \textit{syn04types} (in casu: the clause relations it produces) as input to a series of descriptonal tools I have developed for this goal.\footnote{See Appendix A for a description of these tools.} These tools describe all clause connections that have been considered by \textit{syn04types}\footnote{The program keeps a record of this. It stores proposals by \textit{syn04types} which were \textbf{accepted} by the researcher, proposals which prompted \textbf{correction} by the researcher and proposals which were \textbf{rejected} by program and researcher alike.} in terms of formal syntactic parameters, prosodic parameters and parameters associated with participant references and communicational domains. The tools allow for adding and tweaking these parameters by the user, which results in the following process:

1. Run \textit{syn04types} and produce a clause hierarchy.

2. Let the tools describe the hierarchy (all possible clause relations, the rejected ones as well as the accepted ones) with the descriptonal tools, according to the current state of the formal parameters.

3. Annotate the clause hierarchy.\footnote{These annotations are too voluminous to be printed or read in full. For those interested, they are accessible online, see p. 306. They are provided as background material, and do not belong to the dissertation proper.} For every disagreement with a \textit{syn04types} proposal:

   (a) Account for the corrections made, if possible in terms of the formal parameters; if not, in free form text.

   (b) If any parameters appear inadequate to deal with this case, adapt them, if possible. Redo the description to test this.

   (c) If the parameters (or changing insight) indicate that the hierarchy itself is incorrect, go to step 1.

Ideally, when this process is complete, the formal descriptions made in step 2 can be analysed to discern which (combinations of) parameters tend to lead to which decisions, so that real rules can be formulated. In practice, this last step has had to remain outside of my research, mostly because of time limitations,
but also because this type of analysis requires other investigative skills than I
myself can presently provide.
Such an analysis will quite likely unearth redundant, contradictory or oth-
erwise inadequate parameters. In that case, the entire process will have to
reiterate. It is the expectation, however, that a process like this will eventually
stabilize. This may take quite some time, but in the meantime, each iteration
will already lead to increased consistency and a growing insight in the linguist-
ic mechanisms at work.

6.3 Rules of thumb for the hierarchies

During the iterative process of making the clause hierarchies for Lamentations,
some first rules of thumb have already emerged. Even though these rules in
a way belong to the conclusions, I list them here, as a reading guide to the
hierarchies in the next chapter. Keep in mind that they are rules of thumb
only: They are by no means complete, they all know exceptions, and weighing
and applying them is not always straightforward. Nevertheless, they provide
a first ordering principle to the phenomena in play.

General conventions

1. In general, a clause is connected to another clause, to which it is linguis-
tically dependent in some way, or which it in some way continues.
2. Whenever a clause is connected to a unit of text, rather than to an indi-
vidual clause, it is connected to the first clause of that unit.
3. A clause that closes a larger unit of text, usually by way of some variation
to the preceding clauses, is connected to that unit as a whole, as explained
in point 2. An example is found in Lam 1,1c.
4. When an independent unit of text is embedded within another unit of
text, it is ‘moved out of the way’ by giving it the highest indentation. Its
first clause is a root clause (clause without a mother clause) so that there
is no connection with the embedding context. An example is found in
Lam 1,9c.

Syntactic rules

1. A clause that forms a constituent of another clause (object, subject, ad-
ject, etc.), is connected to that clause.
2. A clause with clause-level conjunctions is connected to the clause which
it continues.
3. An **asynthetic** clause tends to connect to another asynthetic clause, only rarely to a clause with conjunction.

4. The **clause type**, and the associated degree of **discursiveness / salience** plays a role. Clauses with the same discursiveness tend to form larger units. Shifts to more discursive speech will often indicate closure or a new start; the reverse can indicate an elaboration on, or introduction to, a discursive main clause. General rules can not be given, as the discourse function of these shifts is highly syntagmatic and often depends on the discourse structure as a whole.

**Rules for participant references**

1. The (re)introduction of a participant as the **subject** of a clause indicates the start of a new unit. A personal pronoun also counts as a reintroduction, but on a slightly lower level.

2. A clause with **pronominal references** is connected to the clause containing the antecedent or a clause with the same references.

3. Combination of points 1 and 2 produces a **secondary participant**, which starts a referential subdomain, but remains tied to the main participant. An example is Lam 1,4b-cA, in which all participants are defined in relation to Zion by 3 f.sg suffixes.

4. When matching references and antecedents, the **entire units** formed by mother and daughter clause are taken into account.

**Prosodic rules**

1. The rhythm of **two-colon verselines** is strong: Clauses in the A-colon of a verseline tend to connect to a preceding verseline as a whole, only rarely to a clause in a B-colon.

2. Strophe boundaries quite often indicate a syntactic break. Enjambments occur, but are rare and will usually involve sentences and paragraphs, not clauses.

3. Where the acrostic appears to have complicated the text-syntactic structure, the force of text-syntactic arguments can be reduced while prosodic structure has increased force. This is especially true for the ʔ-strophes.
Chapter 7

Display of the Clause Hierarchies

Legenda for the displays

Hebrew text: clause hierarchies

- In principle, the mother of every clause is the nearest preceding clause with equal or smaller indentation. Thus: lines 2–5 (Lam 1,1–2a) all have line 1 as their mother; the mother of line 7 is line 5.

- A daughter clause only has one mother; a mother can have multiple daughters.

- A downward double arrow (↓) indicates a preceding daughter. In this case, the mother clause is the nearest following clause with equal or smaller indentation.

- Root clauses (clauses without a mother clause) are marked by (R).

- Strophe boundaries are marked by long horizontal lines.

- Verseline boundaries are marked by short horizontal lines.

- Ketiv / Qere is marked by an asterisk (*).

English text: units

- Direct speeches are marked by double brackets.

- I use English tenses to the best of my estimation, based on the text-syntactic positions and the contents of the clauses. However, temporal perspective has not been part of my research. The translations were added for convenience, and do not claim correctness on this point in every case.

\[1\text{And see my remarks on pp. 80, 82 and 91, and note 6 on page 238.}\]
### 7.1 Lamentations 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ref</th>
<th>lnr</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><a href="R">ref</a> How she sits alone, the city once full of people!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>How like a widow she has become, once great among the nations!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Once a princess among the states, she has become a slave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>[ref] Bitterly she weeps at night, tears on her cheeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>There is no one to comfort her among all her lovers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>All her friends have betrayed her, they have become her enemies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[ref] Judah has gone into exile, after suffering and harsh labor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>She dwells among the nations, she finds no rest.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>All her pursuers corner her in narrow places.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>[ref] The ways to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the feasts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>All her gates are desolate, her priests groan, her young women grieve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>And as for herself: It is bitter for her!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>[ref] Her foes have become masters, her enemies are at ease, for YHWH made her suffer because of her many sins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Her little ones have gone into exile as prisoners before the foe.</td>
</tr>
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### Lamentations 1

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</table>
All splendor has left Daughter Zion.

Her princes have become like deer

that find no pasture,

and fled, for lack of strength, before the pursuer.

Jerusalem remembered, in the days of her misery and wandering, all the treasures that have been there from days of old;

(in the days) that her people fell into enemy hands

and there was no one to help her.

The foes saw her,

they laughed at her destruction.

Jerusalem has sinned greatly,

therefore she has become unclean.

All who respected her despise her,

for they see her naked.

She herself groans

and turns back,

her filthiness on her skirts.

She had not considered her future

and fell amazingly,

with no one to comfort her.

“See,

YHWH,

my misery,

for the enemy triumphs!”

The foe laid hands on all her treasures.

She even saw foreign peoples enter her sanctuary, of whom you had ordered:

“They are not to enter your assembly!”
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</table>
All her people groan, looking for bread; they give their treasures for food to restore themselves.

"See, YHWH, and take notice, how despicable I have become."

Does it not concern you, all you passing by on the way? Take notice and see: Is any pain like pain that he caused to me, which YHWH made me suffer on the day of his burning anger?

From on high he sent fire into my bones, sent it down. He spread a net for my feet, he made me turn back; he made me desolate, sick, all day long.

The yoke of my sins was bound together, by his hands they are woven! They were hung on my neck, he sapped my strength.

Adonay has given me into the hands of those I cannot withstand.
7.1. LAMENTATIONS 1

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</table>
Adonay tossed aside all warriors in my midst;
he summoned an army against me
to crush my young men.
In the winepress Adonay trod on Dear Daughter Judah.

Over these things I weep,
my eyes, my eyes run with tears:
Because far away is any one to comfort me,
to restore my life.
My children have become desolate
because the enemy has prevailed…”

“Zion stretches out her hands,
but there is no one to comfort her.
YHWH has commanded foes for Jacob, all around him;
Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them.”

…it, YHWH is in the right,
for I have rebelled against his mouth.
Listen,
all you peoples,
and see my pain.
My young women and young men have gone into captivity.

I called to my lovers,
but they betrayed me.
My priests and my elders perished in the city
while they searched for food
to restore themselves.
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</table>
See, YHWH, that I am distressed, [that] my bowels churn!

My heart turns within me for I have rebelled greatly.

Outside the sword bereaved inside [it was] death.

They hear how I groan, with no one to comfort me.

All my enemies hear of my distress; they rejoice because you have done this.

May you bring the day you have announced so they may become like me!

Let all their wickedness come before you and cause to them what you have caused to me for all my sins,
because many are my groans and my heart is sick.”
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</table>
How Adonay has clouded Daughter Zion with his anger!

He flung down Israel’s splendor from heaven to earth

and did not remember his footstool on the day of his anger.

Adonay swallowed up,

without mercy,

all the dwellings of Jacob.

He tore down in his wrath the strongholds of Daughter Judah.

He brought to the ground,

humiliated her kingdom and its princes.

He cut off, in burning anger, every horn of Israel.

He turned back his right hand before the enemy.

And he burned in Jacob like a flaming fire,

consuming all around.

He strung his bow like an enemy,

his right hand ready, like a foe,

and killed all those pleasant to the eye.

On the tent of Daughter Zion he poured out his wrath like fire.

Adonay has become like an enemy,

has swallowed up Israel;

he has swallowed up all her citadels,

has destroyed his strongholds.

And he multiplied for Daughter Judah moaning and mourning.
### Lamentations 2

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<td>2,6</td>
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<td>He laid waste his hut like a garden.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>he destroyed his place of feast.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>YHWH made feast and sabbath be forgotten in Zion</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>and spurned in his fierce anger both king and priest.</td>
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<td>Adonay rejected his altar and disowned his sanctuary.</td>
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<td>He handed over the walls of her citadels to the enemy.</td>
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<td>They raised their voice in the house of YHWH as on the day of a feast.</td>
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<td>YHWH has determined to tear down the wall of Daughter Zion.</td>
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<td>He has stretched out a measuring line,</td>
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<td>has not turned back his hand from destroying.</td>
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<td>And he made ramparts and walls mourn,</td>
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<td>together they have wasted away.</td>
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<td>Her gates have sunk into the ground; their bars he has broken and destroyed.</td>
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<td>Her king and her princes are among the nations, there is no instruction.</td>
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<td>Even her prophets do not find visions from YHWH.</td>
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7.2. LAMENTATIONS 2
They sit on the ground, the elders of Daughter Zion; they have sprinkled dust on their heads and put on sackcloth. They have bowed their heads to the ground, the young women of Jerusalem.

My eyes are worn out with tears, my bowels churn. My liver is poured out on the ground because of the breaking of my Dear People, as little one and baby faint in the town squares.

They say to their mothers, “Where is grain and wine?” as they faint like wounded in the streets of the city, as their lives flow away in their mothers’ lap.

What can I testify for you, with what compare you, Daughter Jerusalem? To what can I liken you that I may comfort you, Dear Daughter Zion? For vast as the sea is your breaking, who could ever heal you?

Your prophets gave you empty whitewash for visions, and did not expose your wickedness in order to turn your fate around. They gave you empty and misleading messages.
7.2. LAMENTATIONS 2

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All those passing on the way clap their hands at you,
they whistle
and shake their heads at Daughter Jerusalem:

“Is this the city that is called
the perfection of beauty,
the joy of all the earth?”

All your enemies open their mouths wide against you,
they whistle
and gnash their teeth,
they say:
“We have swallowed her up!
Ah, this is the day we have waited for;
now we have found it, seen it.”

YHWH has done what he had planned,
has fulfilled his word;
(has done) what he decreed long ago:
He has destroyed without mercy.
And he made the enemy joyful about you,
exalted the horn of your foes.

Their hearts cry out to Adonay,
you walls of Daughter Zion!
let your tears flow like a river day and night;
give yourself no pause,
your eye no rest.
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<td>2,19</td>
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<td>Arise, cry out at night, at the start of every watch;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>pour out your heart like water before Adonay.</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your little ones,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>101</td>
<td>who faint from hunger at every street corner.</td>
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<td>2,20</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>“Look, YHWH, and consider to whom you have caused this:</td>
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<td>Should women eat their offspring, the little ones they cared for?</td>
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<td>Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of Adonay?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>On the ground in the streets lie young and old;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>my young women and young men have fallen by the sword.</td>
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<td>You have killed them on the day of your anger,</td>
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<td>you have butchered them without mercy.</td>
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<td>You called, as if on a feast day, my terrors from all around,</td>
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<td>113</td>
<td>and on the day of YHWH’s anger no one escaped or survived.</td>
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<td>Those I cared for and reared my enemy has finished off.”</td>
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7.2. LAMENTATIONS 2

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7.3 Lamentations 3

ref | lnr | I am the man who has seen misery by the rod of his wrath.
---|----|---
3,1 | 1 (R) | 2
3,2 | 3 | Me he has driven away and has made me walk in darkness instead of light.
3,3 | 5 | Yes, against me, again and again, he turns his hand, all day long.
3,4 | 7 | He has worn away my flesh and my skin, he has broken my bones.
3,5 | 9 | He has built against me, and surrounded me with, bitterness and hardship.
3,6 | 11 | In darkness he has made me stay, like those long dead.
3,7 | 12 | He has hemmed me in so I cannot escape, he has weighed me down with chains.
3,8 | 15 | Even when I call out and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer.
3,9 | 18 | He has hemmed in my ways with stones; he has twisted my paths.
3,10 | 20 | A lurking bear he is to me, a lion in hiding.
3,11 | 22 | he dragged me from my ways and mangled me; he left me desolate.
3,12 | 25 | He drew his bow and made me a target for his arrow.
### לAMENTATIONS 3

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He shot into my kidneys the arrows from his quiver.

I became a joke to all my people, they taunt me in song all day long.

He filled me with bitterness, he sated me with wormwood.

He broke my teeth on gravel, trampled me in the dust.

My Self despaired of peace; I forgot everything good.

I said: “Gone are my future and my hope in YHWH.”

Remember my misery and wandering, the wormwood and bitterness!

She remembers full well, my Self, and is downcast within me.

Yet this I call to mind, for this I have hope:

It is YHWH’s mercy that we are not finished, that his compassions never fail.

They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness!

“YHWH is my portion”, says my Self; “therefore I hope on him.”
7.3. LAMENTATIONS 3

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<td>It is good to wait in silence for YHWH’s salvation.</td>
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<td>3,26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>It is good for a man to bear yoke in his youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,27</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,28</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Let him put his mouth in the dust: perhaps there is hope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,29</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Let him offer his cheek to who strikes him,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,30</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Let him be filled with disgrace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,31</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>For Adonay does not reject forever, but causes grief and then shows compassion in the greatness of his mercy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,32</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>For not wholeheartedly does he cause misery or grief to any one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,33</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Crushing underfoot all prisoners in the land;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,34</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>denying a man his justice before the Most High,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,35</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>thwarting a person in his case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,36</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Adonay does not see to it!</td>
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7.3. LAMENTATIONS 3

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<tr>
<td>XQt0</td>
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Who then has spoken and made this happen? Adonay does not decree it!
The mouth of the Most High does not utter bad as well as good.
How can a person still alive complain, a man about his punishment?
Let us examine our ways and test them and let us return to YHWH.
Let us lift up our hearts on our hands, to God in heaven!
“We have sinned and rebelled; you have not forgiven.
You have covered yourself with anger and pursued us; you have killed without mercy.
You have covered yourself with a cloud so no prayer can get through.
You made us filth and garbage among the nations!
All our enemies open their mouths against us.
Panic and pit have come over us, the ruin and the breaking . . . ”
Streams of water flow from my eye about the breaking of my Dear People.
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My eye flows and will not stop, without pause, until he looks and sees, YHWH, from heaven.
My eye brings grief to my Self for all the daughters of my city.

They hunted me like a bird, my enemies for no reason;
They smothered my life in a pit and threw stones at me;
The waters closed over my head.
I said: “I am cut off!”

I call your name, YHWH, from the depths of the pit.
Hear my voice, do not close your ears to my cry for relief.
Come near on the day that I call you, say: ‘Do not fear.”
Take up, Adonay, the case of my Self; redeem my life.
See, YHWH, the wrong done to me.
grant me my justice!
See all their vengeance, all their plans against me.
7.3. LAMENTATIONS 3

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Hear their insults, YHWH,
all their plans against me,
my adversaries’ whispers over me and
their muttering all day long.

Take notice of their sitting and
standing,
I am their taunting tune.

Give them back what they deserve, YHWH,
for what their hands have done;

put a hardness on their hearts,
may your curse be on them;
pursue them in anger
and destroy them from under the heavens
of YHWH.
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### 7.4 Lamentations 4

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<td>The sacred stones lie scattered at every street corner.</td>
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<td>The precious children of Zion, once worth their weight in fine gold, how they are valued as pots of clay, work of a potter’s hands!</td>
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<td>Even jackals offer a breast, they nurse their young; but my Dear People is heartless like ostriches in the desert.</td>
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<td>The baby’s tongue sticks to its palate for thirst; the little ones ask for bread, but no one gives it to them.</td>
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<td>Those who once ate delicacies are destitute in the streets.</td>
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<td>Those brought up in purple now clinging to garbage heaps.</td>
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<td>4,6</td>
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<td>The punishment of my Dear People is greater than that of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment while no hands were raised to her.</td>
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<td>Her nobles once were brighter than snow, whiter than milk, their bodies were ruddier than coral, sapphire their appearance.</td>
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But now they are blacker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets.

Their skin has shriveled on their bones; it has become as dry as wood.

Those killed by the sword were better off than those who die of famine, for these bleed out, pierced by lack of food from the field.

The hands of compassionate women cook their own children; they become their food at the breaking of my Dear People.

YHWH has made his wrath complete, he has poured out his burning anger, and kindled a fire in Zion that consumed its foundations.

The earth’s kings did not believe, nor any of the world’s dwellers, that foe and enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

It was because of the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her priests, who shed within her the blood of the righteous.

Now they wander blind in the streets. They are so defiled with blood that no one is permitted to touch their clothes.
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<td>“Go away! Unclean!”</td>
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<td>they cry to them,</td>
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<td>“Away!”</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Away!</td>
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<td>Don’t touch!”</td>
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<td>When they go away</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>and wander,</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>they say among the nations:</td>
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<td>“No longer can they</td>
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<td>stay here!”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>The face of YHWH has scattered them;</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>he no longer</td>
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<td>takes notice of them.</td>
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<td>The priests are not respected,</td>
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<td>the elders are not favored.</td>
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<td>4,16</td>
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<td>“All the while,</td>
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<td>our eyes wore out looking for help, in vain;</td>
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<td>in our watchtowers we watched for a nation</td>
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<td>that would not save us.</td>
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<td>4,17</td>
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<td>They stalked us in our steps</td>
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<td>so we could not walk on our squares.</td>
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<td>Our end was near,</td>
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<td>our days were numbered;</td>
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<td>Yes, our end had come.</td>
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<td>4,18</td>
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<td>Faster were our pursuers than eagles in the</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>sky.</td>
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<td>On the mountains they chased us,</td>
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<td>in the desert they ambushed us.</td>
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<td>The breath of our nostrils, YHWH’s anointed, was</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>caught in their traps.</td>
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<td>The one of whom we had said:</td>
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<td>‘In his shadow we will stay alive among the</td>
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<td>nations.’’</td>
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<td>76 (R)</td>
<td>“Rejoice and be joyful, Daughter Edom, you who live in the land of Uz.”</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>To you also the cup will come round; you will get drunk and strip naked.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4,22</td>
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<td>“Your punishment is complete, Daughter Zion; he will not again bring you into exile.”</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>“He will punish your wickedness, Daughter Edom, he will expose your sins.”</td>
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7.5. LAMENTATIONS 5

**Lamentations 5**
Women are raped in Zion,
young women in the cities of Judah.

Princes are hung up by their hands,
edgers are not respected.

Young men take up the millstone;
and boys stagger under loads of wood.

Elders have left the city gate,
young men their music.

Joy has left our hearts;
our dancing has turned to mourning.

The crown has fallen from our head.

Woe to us,
for we have sinned!

Because of this our hearts are sick,
because of these things our eyes grow
dim:

Because of Mount Zion,
that lies desolate,
with jackals prowling over it.

You, YHWH, reign forever;
your throne endures from generation to
generation.

Why would you always forget us?

Why would you forsake us for all that time?

Return us
YHWH,
to you,
and we will return,
renew our days as of old;

for let it not be true that you completely
reject us,
are angry with us beyond measure.
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<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellp</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AjCl</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XQtl</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XYqt</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NmCl</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xYq0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellp</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIm0</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5,21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voct</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYq0</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIm0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQt0</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5,22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZQtl</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5. LAMENTATIONS 5
Chapter 8

Prosodic Boundaries and Syntax

Clause relations at short distances (spanning no more than, say, three or four clauses) are the ones most likely to be based on formal morphologic and syntactic coherence: subordination, coordination, corresponding clause types, congruent pronominal and verbal references, etc. A formal, ascendent syntactic analysis will initially tend to focus on these short-range clause connections, especially because they are the most readily observable and form a suitable basis for the analysis of connections at larger distances (between larger textual units). This is a very sensible and fruitful approach. However, when analyzing poetry on syntactic observations only, it may ignore a complicating factor.

In a poetic text, the segmentation into cola, verselines and strophes produces a certain rhythm. It divides the text into readily recognizable units, for an important part by phonological means. In poetry with a sufficiently regular prosodic structure, such as Lamentations, cola, verselines and strophes can generally be recognized directly by the audience, simply by the predictable number of cola per verseline and verselines per strophe.\(^1\) Probably, these clues were accompanied by other phonological markers that are now lost to us, like a change in tone, a pause, or the end of a musical motif at the end of a prosodic unit.

A crucial point to make here, is that these phonological markers are in essence the same as those used in spoken language to delimit syntactic units. Also, verselines and strophes tend to be roughly comparable in size to syntactic clauses and paragraphs. In fact, as is of course widely recognized, they converge with these units as a rule. This causes the two types of units to be closely associated.

\(^1\)I doubt whether the same holds true for larger units, such as canticles (stanzas) and cantos. My estimation is, that these are too large and not predictable enough to be recognized purely by phonological means. This does, of course, not preclude their being recognized in other ways by a trained audience, cf. Korpel and de Moor 1988, 60–61.
8.1 Prosodic rhythm and syntactic expectations

In this way, the segmentation of a text into cola, verselines and strophes has an important syntactic effect as well: It raises *prima facie* expectations of convergence between these prosodic units and the stuff they are inevitably made of, the syntactic units. This syntactic expectation is twofold:

1. **coherence** between syntactic units within the same prosodic unit.

2. **separation** between different prosodic units.

Of course, different prosodic levels raise different syntactic expectations: Multiple clauses within a colon are expected to be subordinated or very tightly coordinated; clauses and phrases within a verseline are expected to form sentences; clauses within a strophe are expected to form full sentences or paragraphs.

To be sure, the expected correspondence between prosodic and syntactic structures can take many different forms, and is by no means always realized. However, the fact remains that the prosodic segmentation does suggest a default syntactic segmentation as well.

This default segmentation can suggest caesuras in a text where the purely syntactic signals would appear to indicate continuity, or it can group two or more clauses in other ways than the syntactic signals would at first sight seem to indicate. This can not always be dismissed as enjambment: If an alternative segmentation suggested by prosody makes syntactic and semantic sense as well, this can be an indication that the syntactic analysis may need to be reconsidered. In the following sections, I will list cases in which, in my estimation, prosodic structure has repercussions for the syntactic analysis.

8.2 Colon level

8.2.1 Phrases in cola

Van Grol’s claim that a syntactic phrase can not be broken up across two cola, can largely be corroborated in Lamentations, with the qualification, that breaking up constituents of a **compound phrase** appears to be possible: In Lamentations, I have found some phrases which do extend across a colon boundary (Table 8.1 on the facing page).

Two of these cases are of interest to the syntactic analysis, because they may have repercussions for the syntactic analysis:

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2Van Grol 2015, 97.

3These cases have been found with MQL query 8.1 on the next page. This query assumes the presence of [colon] objects and the feature `last_monad`, both of which are not included in the official *ETCBC* data, see pp. 253 below.
after affliction and hard labor
visions, false and misleading
their offspring, cared-for children
my affliction and trouble, bitterness and gall
my assailants’ whisper and their muttering over me
as pots of clay, work of a potter’s hands
the earth’s kings and all the world’s dwellers
from the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests
Our life breath, YHWH's anointed

Table 8.1: Phrases broken across colon boundaries

```
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[colon AS c1
  [phrase FOCUS OVERLAP(SUBSTRATE)
    last_monad > c1.last_monad
  ]
]
GO
```

MQL query 8.1: Phrase broken across a colon boundary

Lam 1,3
Lam 2,14
Lam 2,20
Lam 3,19
Lam 3,62
Lam 4,2
Lam 4,12
Lam 4,13
Lam 4,20
1. In Lam 2,14, the most obvious colon boundary falls between the words 'visions' and [falsehood and] deceptive [things], creating a 3+2 verseline. In this segmentation, there is no other option than to take 'visions' as a compound specification to ‘visions, [which are] falsehood and/deceptive [things]’.

Yet, the most obvious syntactic division would combine 'visions' and 'falsehood and deceptive things', and start a new subphrase at - . Some scholars even state that this is inevitable, because 'visions' is pointed as in construct state. However, this is uncertain at best: There are no actual instances of the assumed absolute pointing in the Hebrew Bible, while does occur in absolute state in Gen 43,34.

This syntactic division forces a different colon segmentation because construct phrases may not be broken across cola, either leading to a 4+1 or 2+3 verseline.

The morphological uncertainty makes it difficult to decide here. At any rate, and this is my reason for bringing it up, a syntactic analysis will have to address this prosodic question at some point, because prosodic and syntactic analysis mutually determine each other. This does not necessarily mean that the syntactic analyst must grapple with these questions from the very start. An iterative process can help here:

(a) Both syntactic and prosodic analysis are provisionally performed, each on its own terms.

(b) When both are accessible in the database, queries can be run to find conflicts like the present one.

(c) The search results can lead to correction of one of the two analyses, or to a modification of the theory about syntactic constraints on the colon, or to a modification of syntactic ideas about this type of list-like series.

2. In Lam 3,19, the question may well be raised whether should not be parsed as a separate, elliptic clause. Again, my point is not that prosody should correct the syntactic analysis here—although in this case, this indeed seems to be the case—but that the syntactic analysis can not ignore the prosodic analysis altogether.

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6van Grol 2017, 97.
7Berlin 2002, 64.
8Berges 2002, 127.
8.2. COLON LEVEL

8.2.2 Clauses in cola

Multiple clauses in a single colon

In Lamentations, whenever two verbal clause atoms completely fit within a single colon, they always form a single complex clause or a tightly coordinated pair of clauses; other units connect to such a pair as a whole. On closer inspection, these clause atom pairs can be divided into two general types:

1. Clause atom pairs involving a constituent relation:

   Example 8.1 (infinitive relation)
   \[
   xYq^0 - InfC \\
   (Lam 4,15) \\
   54. (Lam 4,15) \\
   55. (Lam 4,15) \\
   "No longer can they stay here!"
   \]

   Example 8.2 (attributive relation)
   \[
   0Qt^0 -- 0Qt^0 \\
   (Lam 1,21) \\
   120. (Lam 1,21) \\
   121. (Lam 1,21) \\
   May you bring the day you have announced
   \]

   Example 8.3 (object relation)
   \[
   0Qt^0 - Ptcp \\
   (Lam 1,21) \\
   114. (Lam 1,21) \\
   115. (Lam 1,21) \\
   They hear how I groan,
   \]

2. Clause atom pairs of two independent clauses:

---

9 Also 1.79–80, 4.57–58, 4.85–86.
10 Also 2.85–86, 3.115–116.
Example 8.4 (clause-level conjunction)\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{align*}
&\text{76. (Lam 4,21)} \\
&\text{“Rejoice} \\
&\text{and be joyful, } 77.
\end{align*}

Example 8.5 (independent, asyndetic)\textsuperscript{13}

\begin{align*}
&\text{83. (Lam 2,16)} \\
&\text{“...now we have found it,} \\
&\text{seen it.” 84.}
\end{align*}

Real enjambments

The syntactic and prosodic position of \textit{יִרְאָה} (Lam 1,21, ‘they rejoice’) is contested. The obvious syntactic division is to read it as a separate clause heading the \textit{אֲדֹנָי} -clause:

\begin{align*}
&\text{117. (Lam 1,21)} \\
&\text{118.} \\
&\text{119.}
\end{align*}

All my enemies hear of my distress; 117. (Lam 1,21)

they rejoice 118.

because you have done this. 119.

Renkema, however, assumes a rather striking enjambment:\textsuperscript{14} He pulls \textit{יִרְאָה} (‘they rejoice’) into the first colon and translates:

“All my enemies \textbf{delight to hear} of my misfortune, and it is you who brings it (upon me).”

His arguments are twofold:

1. The Masoretes have placed a \textit{zaqef qaton} after \textit{יִרְאָה}, thereby including it in the first colon and connecting it syntactically to ‘All my enemies hear of my misfortune’.

\textsuperscript{13}Also 2.57–58, 2.112–113, 3.89–90, 4.48–50.
\textsuperscript{14}Renkema 1998, 193–194.
2. The syntactically more obvious division implies that the enemies recognize YHWH as the cause of their victory, which does not fit the historical theological context, in which the defeat of a people also meant the defeat of its gods.

If Renkema is right, 119 actually comments on the entire preceding unit and should probably be connected to 114.

They hear 114. (Lam 1,21)

All my enemies delight ... 117.
... to hear my distress. 118.
Yes, it is you who 119.

brings it (upon me).

However, as Berges remarks,\textsuperscript{15} the Masoretes appear to have placed the \textit{zaqef} precisely to prevent an idea that they considered improper. The very fact that they deemed this intervention necessary shows that they, too, recognized that this apparently unwanted reading is in fact the most natural one.\textsuperscript{16} In the end, then, this is a case in which the syntactic structure has corrective force towards a prosodic proposal.

\textbf{Syntactic relevance}

Apparently, the primary relevance of this observation is prosodic, as it appears to get at a syntactic constraint on the colon: When two or more complete clauses are combined into a single colon, they must be quite closely related syntactically.

For syntactic analysis, the observation is of limited use, because the close relation can already be established without recourse to colon boundaries. It can, however, be relevant for the treatment of slightly more complicated cases of multi-clause cola, see below.

\textbf{Run-on clauses across colon boundaries}

\textbf{First clause atom runs on:} A clause, or even a clause atom, is obviously not always confined to a colon. Many clauses start at the first word of an A-colon but also include the B-colon or even the C-colon.\textsuperscript{17} Note that this does not happen with clauses other than the A-colon, except for Lam 2,4 (see below).\textsuperscript{18}

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\textsuperscript{15}Berges 2002, 90.
\textsuperscript{16}But cf. Ezek 36,20.
\textsuperscript{17}MQL query 8.2 on page 165 has 85 solutions for Lamentations.
\textsuperscript{18}MQL query 8.4 on page 168 has only one solution for Lamentations.
Second clause atom runs on: There are also clause atoms that start in a colon with multiple verbs but nevertheless extend into the next colon. This creates a specific form of enjambment:\textsuperscript{19}

- The A-colon starts with a short but full verbal clause atom, followed by the start of a second verbal clause atom.
- This second clause atom runs on into the next colon:

Example 8.6
Enemies see her, laugh / at her collapse \(\text{ץירם שמחה / על משמחתה}\) 1.32–33

Example 8.7
Sit on the ground, are silent / the elders of Daughter Zion \(\text{לשבת אלים יחזקא / וקניא החצ"ך}\) 2.44–45

Syntactic relevance
Most cases of clause atoms running into a next colon do not have much impact on the syntactic analysis. In the majority of cases, this is simply a matter of a clause spanning two or more complete cola.

However, many of the cases last listed are quite significant: They raise the question, whether the complements in the B-colon do not in fact belong to both clauses, in which case the clause atom segmentation and clause hierarchy should be altered. Again, my point is not that this should happen in all these cases, but that the prosodic structure must be addressed at some point in the analysis.

Verseline level enjambment
Lam 2,4 (15–16), in the prosodic division by Renkema,\textsuperscript{20} is a case of its own:

\[
\ldots, \text{his right hand in the assault} \quad \text{מעב ימה פצרא} \quad \text{Lam 2,4aB}
\]

like and adversary. He has killed \ldots \quad \text{מרח בחלומא} \quad \text{Lam 2,4bA}

\textsuperscript{19}MQL query 8.3 on the facing page. Other cases besides the two examples listed: 1.49–50, 2.8–9, 2.31–32, 2.33–35, 2.70–71, 2.98–99, 3.1–2, 3.3–4, 3.5–6, 3.9–10, 3.25–26, 3.40–41, 3.56–57, 3.66–67, 3.101–102, 3.113–114, 3.140–141.

\textsuperscript{20}Renkema 1998, 232; so also BHK, BHS.
8.2. COLON LEVEL

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[colon as colon1
    [clause_atom OVERLAP (SUBSTRATE)
        first_monad = colon1.first_monad
        AND last_monad > colon1.last_monad
    ]
]}
GO

MQL query 8.2 : Clause spanning multiple cola

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[colon AS colon
    [clause_atom OVERLAP (SUBSTRATE)
        first_monad > colon1.first_monad
        AND last_monad > colon1.last_monad
    ]
]}
GO

MQL query 8.3 : Colon level enjambment
It is the only instance in Lamentations where a clause atom crosses a verseline boundary from the B-colon of a verseline, into the A-colon of the next one.\footnote{Found in my database with MQL query 8.4 on page 168.} Renkema is probably correct that, if his division is the correct one, enjambment is the only explanation of MT as it stands.\footnote{Renkema accepts MT’s decision to keep לְדָע (‘like a foe’) with 2.15 as a syntactic one, while at the same time moving it into the next prosodic verseline, Renkema 1998, 232.}

However, an enjambment of this kind is so uncommon in Biblical Hebrew poetry, that several proposals for emendation have been made.\footnote{Kraus 1983, 37; Albrektson 1963, 92; Hillers 1992, 98.} Also, Renkema fails to provide a reason for this remarkable exception. In fact, the syntactic structure here would seem to plead for a different prosodic division. This is corroborated by other arguments as well. De Hoop,\footnote{de Hoop 2000, 77–79.} arguing from the Masoretic accents, suggests to read a tricolon here. This solves the ‘problem’ quite satisfactorily, both prosodically and syntactically.

Paradoxically, if Renkema would have been right, this case would not have been of direct relevance to the syntactic analysis. Enjambment by definition presupposes that both the syntactic structure and the prosodic structures are clear; the analyst simply agrees to let them disagree. This may pose a question for the exegete further down the line, who has to explain what, if anything, the function of the enjambment may be, but the syntactic analyst can leave their analyses as they are.\footnote{The prosodic analyst, on the other hand, does have to take notice of the enjambment from the start, unless they were to employ a strictly metrical approach to prosodic analysis. The latter, of course, never happens for Biblical Hebrew poetry, since its versification is quite obviously not built on strict, unchanging meter such as much classical Western poetry.}

\section*{8.3 Verseline level}

On verseline level and above, the observations move beyond individual clauses. They are mainly concerned with syntactic connections between (groups of) clauses at short range.

As mentioned earlier, the verseline and strophe divisions will sometimes group these clauses in a different manner than a strictly formal syntactic analysis, such as the one performed by syn04types, would propose.
8.3. VERSELINE LEVEL

8.3.1 Verselines as possible corrective

Example 8.8

Her foes have become masters, 20. (Lam 1,5)
hers enemies are at ease, 21. (Lam 1,5)
for YHWH made her suffer because of her many sins. 22.

By itself, a connection of the יפ clause to 21, as syn04types suggests, is conceivable: “Her enemies are at ease, because YHWH has brought her grief . . . .” However, since 20–21 form a tightly knit verseline, with synonymous subjects, יפ (‘because’) actually connects the clause to this verseline as a whole.

Example 8.9

Jerusalem remembered, in the days of her misery and wandering, all the treasures that have been there from days of old; 28. (Lam 1,7)

The infinitive construct clause 30 is an adjunct to 28–29 as a whole, rather than to 29 only. Syntactically, יפ continued by infinitive construct is rare, but does occur.26 It is the semantics of the verse which make evident that it is not correct here: The meaning can only be, that Jerusalem remembers her treasures ‘when

26The construction occurs 48x in ETCBC (MQL query 8.5 on the following page), e.g. Lev 16,23; Deut 4,45; 2 Chr 10,6.
MQL query 8.4: Colon level enjambment across verseline boundary

MQL query 8.5: יָני-clause continued by ל-inf. cstr.
The verseline structure makes this clear: 28–29 form a verseline as well as a single clause, as do 30–31.

**Example 8.10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Corrected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>לֵא וְכֹה אָתְרָהְתָּ 41. (Lam 1,9)</td>
<td>יָשָׁר בְּפַלִּיאָתָ 42. (Lam 1,9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... 43.</td>
<td>... 43.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She had not considered her future 41. (Lam 1,9)</td>
<td>and fell amazingly, 42. (Lam 1,9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with no one to comfort her. 43.</td>
<td>with no one to comfort her. 43.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Syn04types_ suggests a connection of 43 with 41, presumably because both are negative clauses, and because 42 starts with -W. However, the verseline rhythm binds 43 to 42, almost as an adjunct: “and [she] fell amazingly, with no one to comfort her.”

**Example 8.11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Corrected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>בְּכַפֵּסָה לָהּ 54. (Lam 1,11)</td>
<td>בְּכַפֵּסָה לָהּ 54. (Lam 1,11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תְּנוּ הַמַּחְטָרִים בְּאֲנָלָל 55.</td>
<td>looking for bread; 54. (Lam 1,11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they give their treasures for food 55.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

27Possibly, the use of -ב rather than -כ may play a modest, if not decisive role: Gropp 1995, 202 posits a difference between ב + inf. c. (backreference) and כ + inf. c., which may among others be used to resume a narrative strand that has been interrupted, or to narrate an action ‘which globally characterizes an a whole episode, in the compass of which a particular event narrated by the following verb takes place.’ This would actually seem to plead for a connection _forward_ (cf. NIV: “When her people fell into enemy hands, there was no one to help her.”). In note 32, however, Gropp cites Gen 35,7 and Gen 35,9 as examples of כ + inf. c. is subordinated to a _preceding_ clause.
In isolation, the proposal by syn04types makes sense, but the broader context needs to be taken into account. 53–54 belong together syntactically as well as prosodically; 54 (‘looking for bread’) is an adjunct clause to 53 (‘All her people groan, . . . ’). 55 is connected to them as a whole.

Example 8.12

The question here is, whether הָיָה (‘that’) connects this clause to 59 alone, or to both 57 and 59. Syn04types opts for the former, which is in agreement with Berlin’s translation: “Look, LORD, and see what a beggar I have become.” Hillers chooses the latter (“O LORD, look and consider / how worthless I have become!”, as does Renkema: “Look, YHWH, and observe, how worthless I have become!” The fact that both √ ראה and √ נבש (hi.) usually have a complement, in combination with the fact that the two are placed within a

28Berlin 2002, 43.
8.3. VERSELINE LEVEL

single colon, suggests that they are in fact coordinated. The יִּכְּלָֽשׁ clause is to be connected to the two as a whole.

Example 8.13

proposed

מַגָּשֵׂר שָׁלַלִּֽתּ לָֽךְ פֶּלַסְּפֶשֶֽׁתּ
פֶּרֶשֶֽׁתּ אֲנָחָֽתיּ

what you have caused to me for all my sins,

125. (Lam 1,22)

because many are my groans

126.

corrected

חָבַֽא כַּלְִֹרְשָֽׁם לֵֽבְּךָא
פְּרֶשֶֽׁתּ אֲנָחָֽתיּ

Let all their wickedness come before you

123. (Lam 1,22)

because many are my groans

126.

The יִּכְּלָֽשׁ-clauses 126–127 ("for many are my groans and my heart is sick") obviously do not give the reason for 125 ("as you did do me for all my sins"), but to the combined volitives in 123 and 124. A syntactic indication for this could be the coherence of 123–125 by way of the conjunctions, but this is not very strong. A יִּכְּלָֽשׁ-clause especially can when by itself, be expanded with a יִּכְּלָֽשׁ-clause without problem. The rhythm of the verselines would seem to be the strongest signal here. It is hard to see how these clauses could be grouped differently than the verseline structure suggests.

Example 8.14

.proposed

נָרָֽמֵר מַמְּצֵֽרִי
הָסִפֵּֽר יַֽיְּבָֽא אַחֲוִֽי הָוֶֽתְּךָ אָרְמְנוֹנָֽתי

and disowned his sanctuary.

28. (Lam 2,7)

He handed over the walls of her citadels to the enemy.

29.
CHAPTER 8. PROSODIC BOUNDARIES AND SYNTAX

Adonay rejected his altar 27. (Lam 2,7) and disowned his sanctuary. 28. (Lam 2,7)
He handed over the walls of her citadels to the enemy. 29. (Lam 2,11)

The clause types (0QtX) suggest that 29 continues 28. However, the start of a new verseline, in combination with the unmatched suffix on her citadels (‘her citadels’) indicate a new start.

Example 8.15

In this case, it is difficult to determine the syntactic structure. There are all manner of linguistic signals, but they point to different solutions and it is not entirely clear which signals can be called syntactic and which are prosodic in nature:

- the continuation of the clause type (0QtX) places 51 in a chain with 49 and 50, so that a connection to 50 would seem appropriate.
- The semantics of these clauses support this: They all report emotional reactions of the speaker’s body parts.
- However, 51–52 stands out from the other two in that its subject and verb
are singular, rather than plural. This is, of course, a very subtle change which by itself would probably not count as the start of a new unit.

- A more visible syntactic difference is that 51 is longer and has a more complex syntax than 49–50: 51 has two extra adjuncts: (‘because of the breaking of my Dear People’) and 52, which is an adjunct clause (‘as little one and baby faint in the town squares’).

- Prosodically, 51–52 form the second and third verseline of the strophe. The rhythm of the cola and verseline thus separates 51 from 49–50. This is the most readily visible, and thus the most prominent, argument.

All in all, the arguments for a new start are stronger than the arguments for straightforward continuation of the line. However, the clause types obviously bind the clauses in this strophe together very strongly.

Example 8.16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Corrected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>בָּעֵל אָמָרָהּ בְּשָׁמְאֵי</td>
<td>יִשְׁתַּחֵזׁ יִתְּרוּ בָּשָׁמֶיהָ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אָשֶׁר צָאַח מַמְרֵי</td>
<td>אָשֶׁר צָאַח מַמְרֵי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בַּעַשֵׁי</td>
<td>בַּעַשֵׁי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אָשֶׁר צָאַח מַמְרֵי</td>
<td>אָשֶׁר צָאַח מַמְרֵי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has fulfilled his word;</td>
<td>(has done) what he decreed long ago:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87. (Lam 2,17)</td>
<td>88. (Lam 2,17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.</td>
<td>88.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the most obvious syntactic analysis of this clause, the prosodic analysis runs counter to the syntactic one, as is immediately clear from the layout in Berlin’s translation:31

The LORD did what he planned, he carried out his word, as he ordained long ago.

He destroyed and showed no mercy.

---

31 Berlin 2002, 64.
And he made the enemy rejoice over you,  
he raised the horn of your enemy.

This would seem to be a double case of enjambment: Both the second and the  
third verseline start on a clause level conjunction (וַיַּחֲנָהּ and וַיַּזְמֹנֶה), while the B-cola  
in these verses are asyndetic main clauses.

Even though enjambments between verselines are by no means unheard of  
in Biblical Hebrew poetry, they are rare. This double enjambment begs the  
question, whether the syntax should be construed differently. when prosodic  
balance and syntactic structure are combined, 88 could perhaps be read as an  
ellipsis of 85:

The L ORD did what he planned,  
he carried out his word.  
[He did] as he ordained long ago:  
he destroyed and showed no mercy.

And he made the enemy rejoice over you,  
he raised the horn of your enemy.

This option seems to be the most satisfactory one, at least for 88.

Example 8.17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proposed</th>
<th>corrected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. (Lam 3,11)</td>
<td>25. (Lam 3,12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. (Lam 3,12)</td>
<td>26. (Lam 3,12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and made me a target for his arrow.  
and made me a target for his arrow.

Syn04types proposes a connection to 24, presumably because of the repetition  
of the 1 sg suffix, where 25 only has 3 m.sg references.

However, it is quite clear what the correct connection is. This is based on  
semantics (the two clauses describe the single act of shooting an arrow) and on

prosodic structure (the two clauses start in the same colon; the second clause is divided over the A-colon and B-colon.

Example 8.18

proposed

הרותי להנה: ס 31. (Lam 3,15)

הכיסא יפר עלמא: 33. (Lam 3,16)

he sated me with wormwood. 31. (Lam 3,15)

trampled me in the dust. 33. (Lam 3,16)

corrected

והרסו אתऽ מענוי: 32. (Lam 3,16)

והכיסא יפר עלמא: 33.

He broke my teeth on gravel, 32. (Lam 3,16)

trampled me in the dust. 33.

As in Lam 1 and 2, the 6-strophe has forced a *wayyiqtol* clause to be the start of a syntactic unit (see Example 10.31 on page 233). The 0-*qatal* clauses in this strophe are connected to the *wayyiqtol* clauses, not the other way around. It is the rhythm of the verselines that dictates this: It would be very awkward indeed to connect 33 to, e.g., 31, as this would require skipping over the preceding A-colon as well as crossing a strophe boundary.

Example 8.19

proposed

גנשה משבה: 35. (Lam 3,17)

ראפר: 36. (Lam 3,18)

I forgot everything good. 35. (Lam 3,17)

I said: 36. (Lam 3,18)

corrected

והכותו מתחלמ נפשי 34. (Lam 3,17)

גנשה משבה: 35.

ראפר. 36. (Lam 3,18)

My Self despaired of peace; 34. (Lam 3,17)

I forgot everything good. 35.

I said: 36. (Lam 3,18)
At first sight, the syntactic analysis would view the wayyiqtol clause 36 as a coordinated continuation of 35 (“I forgot goodness and said:’): qatal - wayyiqtol with continuous subject; no other 1 sg subjects are found in the context. Understandably, this is the connection syn04types proposes. However, the rhythm of the verselines in this strophe, amplified by the threefold acrostic, makes clear that, in fact, another syntactic connection must be made: The wayyiqtol clauses in Lam 3,16–18 form a single narrative chain.

Example 8.20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>126.</td>
<td>(Lam 3,59)</td>
<td>grant me my justice!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127.</td>
<td>(Lam 3,60)</td>
<td>See all their vengeance,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By itself, a qatal following an imperative with the same subject would be connected to that imperative, especially when the qatal is to be interpreted as preceptive. However, it is my contention that the verseline structure overrules this and calls for a break here. The shift from qatal to imperative has a closing function, after which the new verseline returns to the qatal line.
8.3. VERSELINE LEVEL

Example 8.21

proposed

7. (Lam 4,3)

שְּלָלִים שְׁאָלוּ לְהֹם

11. (Lam 4,4)

Even jackals offer a breast,

7. (Lam 4,3)

7. (Lam 4,3)

the little ones ask for bread,

11. (Lam 4,4)

11. (Lam 4,4)

The baby’s tongue sticks to its palate for thirst;

10. (Lam 4,4)

the little ones ask for bread,

11. (Lam 4,4)

The fronting of שְּלָלִים (‘little ones’) seems to have prompted syn04types to propose a connection all the way back to 7, which is also an XQtl1 clause. The prosodic divisions and their semantic parallels, however, preclude this: 11–12 is clearly a parallel verseline to 10, and does not refer back to the start of the preceding strophe.

Example 8.22

proposed

52. (Lam 5,21)

תַּחַרְשׁ בַּמְנוֹת פְּכוּדָה

53. (Lam 5,22)

פִּי אֲשֶׁר אֲמַסִּית מְאָסַתְנָה

renew our days as of old;

52. (Lam 5,21)

for let it not be true that you completely reject us,

53. (Lam 5,22)
In itself, Lam 5,21–22 could be parsed as two sentences, each one consisting of an imperative with a dependent clause connected by a conjunction:

Restore us, YHWH, to yourself,  
and we will return,  
renew our days as of old,  
for let it not be true that you completely reject us,

In the following examples, the syntactic signals are too few, too subtle or too ambiguous to allow for an obvious parsing of the clause connections. In these cases, the prosodic signals take over.

8.3.2 Verseline boundaries clarifying unclear syntax

In the following examples, the syntactic signals are too few, too subtle or too ambiguous to allow for an obvious parsing of the clause connections. In these cases, the prosodic signals take over.
8.3. VERSELINE LEVEL

Example 8.23

My young women and young men have gone into captivity.

100 is asyndetic, and does not give any explicit clues as to how the clause is connected to its context. There are no second person references, nor any references to YHWH in any form, so there are no clues from participant references either. Thus, there are multiple options to connect this clause:

- To the immediately preceding clause, as a kind of specification of מְעַלָּבִי (‘my pain’): “... and see my pain: My maidens and youths have gone into captivity.”

- To 97–99 as a whole, taking שְׁמַעְתֶּנָּא as coordinated, because of the parallelism: “hear and see my pain, all you people: My maidens ...”

- To 95, as resuming the discourse after a short outburst:

YHWH is in the right, for I have rebelled against his mouth.
—hear and see my pain, all you people!—
My maidens and youths have gone into captivity.

The main arguments for my proposal come from the coordinated nature of 99–100, the contents, and the verseline structure. That the maidens and youths are captured makes more sense as a presentation of the pain that all peoples should hear and see, than as a continuation of the confession that YHWH is in the right. As the calls to hear and see are combined into a coordinated verseline, and the line about the youths is syntactically rather independent of it, it seems best to connect the latter to 97–99 as a whole. The other options can, however, not be ruled out definitively.
Example 8.24

proposed

תעתי המתרמה 109. (Lam 1,20)
נפחת עליפ בקרפי 110.

[that] my bowels churn! 109. (Lam 1,20)
My heart turns within me 110.

corrected

ראה 106. (Lam 1,20)

See, 106. (Lam 1,20)

My heart turns within me 110.

The structure of Lam 1,20 is difficult, as there are unclear signals. When only the clause types are considered, the hierarchy would seem to be:

(Lam 1,20)

See, YHWH, that I am distressed, my bowels churn, my heart turns within me— [see] that I have rebelled badly.

However, the prosodic rhythm of these clauses strongly suggest a grouping into two chiastically structured sentences.

20a1. See, YHWH, that (ך) I am distressed, 20a2. [that] my bowels churn.
20b1. My heart turns over within me, 20b2. for (ך) I have rebelled badly.

This translates to:
8.3. VERSELINE LEVEL

106. (Lam 1,20)

רֲאָה 106. (Lam 1,20)

יֵהוָה 107.

כְּפַיְרָבָּל 108.

מַטְשֵׁי הָנָּר 109.

נַפֶּשׁ לְפָדְתֶּם 110.

פֶּרֶץ הָרִיתָן 111.

See, 106. (Lam 1,20)

YHWH, 107.

that I am distressed, 108.


My heart turns within me 110.

for I have rebelled greatly. 111.

This to me is an example in which the prosodic form guides the syntactic interpretation. Even if prosody would primarily be a matter of performance, which I do not believe, the recitation of these lines as poetry leaves the audience no other option than the second division.

Example 8.25

proposed

כֵי מַרְוָה מְרָתִי 111. (Lam 1,20)

מַחְצֵי שֵׁפָלַת מְרָתָה 112.

for I have rebelled greatly. 111. (Lam 1,20)

Outside the sword bereaved 112.

corrected

רֲאָה 106. (Lam 1,20)

מַחְצֵי שֵׁפָלַת מְרָתָה 112.

See, 106. (Lam 1,20)

Outside the sword bereaved 112.

Syntactically, the last two clauses of Lam 1,20 stand apart from the others in that they no longer have 1 sg suffixes. This gives them a more general scope than the very personal account of the speaker’s personal and physical distress. It also makes them difficult to place in the hierarchy, because they have no syntactic ties to their surroundings.

34See pp. 71 and pp. 74.
Prosodically, the clauses stand apart as the third and final verseline of the strophe, following two verselines that do have syntactic cohesion. I have therefore not connected them to the immediately preceding clause, as syn04types suggests, but to the first clause of the larger unit.

Example 8.26

proposed

Great is your faithfulness! 48. (Lam 3,23)
“YHWH is my portion”, 49. (Lam 3,24)

corrected

Yet this I call to mind, 42. (Lam 3,21)
for this I have hope: 43.
It is YHWH’s mercy 44. (Lam 3,22)
that we are not finished, 45.
that his compassions never fail. 46.
They are new every morning— 47. (Lam 3,23)
Great is your faithfulness! 48.
“YHWH is my portion”, 49. (Lam 3,24)
says my Self; 50.
“therefore I hope on him.” 51.

These verses are complicated: They contain three direct speeches that are not delimited very clearly:
8.4. Strophe level

To a certain extent, strophe boundaries have an effect on short-range clause atom connections similar to that of verseline boundaries. A strophe boundary, after all, is always a verseline boundary as well.

Thus, a strophe boundary raises a strong expectation of a syntactic break of some sort. As with verselines, this break can take many shapes: the start of a new paragraph, a shift in the participants pattern, the speech situation, the linguistic stance, etc. Again, as with verseline, this expectation can influence the syntactic analysis, either by suggesting an alternative to what a strictly syntactic approach would come up with.

A difference with verseline-level syntax is that sometimes the end of a strophe is marked by setting the clauses in the last verseline apart from the rest of the strophe, in terms of contents, but often in terms of syntax as well. In those cases, there is some deviation from a syntactic pattern appearing throughout the strophe.

8.4.1 Strophe boundaries as a possible corrective

Example 8.27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lines</th>
<th>speaker</th>
<th>addressee</th>
<th>marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44–47</td>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>‘my heart’</td>
<td>‘This I will return to my heart:’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>no marking; or could it belong to 49?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49, 51</td>
<td>‘my nefes’</td>
<td>unspecified</td>
<td>no initial marking;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...quotation verb in 50...

Syntactically, it makes sense to take 48–49 together as a direct speech, either by the ‘I’ or by the nefes. However, the verseline structure makes clear that this can not be correct. The new verseline, clearly marked by the acrostic ב in 49, separates the two.

122. (Lam 1,21) Let all their wickedness come before you 123. (Lam 1,22) so they may become like me!
May you bring the day you have announced so they may become like me! Let all their wickedness come before you

Syn04types proposes to connect the clause 123 to the directly preceding clause. In terms of verb forms this makes sense, as 122 is the only other clause with a (volitive) yiqtol form in the context. The only objection would be, that it is somewhat awkward to connect an asyndetic clause to a -clause, and that there is a change from 3 m.pl to 2 m.sg, but neither is impossible.

Of crucial importance here is the start of the new strophe, which makes breaking up the two yiqtol clauses inescapable.

Example 8.28

and spurned in his fierce anger both king and priest. 

Adonay rejected his altar
Adonay has become like an enemy,
has swallowed up Israel;
he has swallowed up all her citadels,
has destroyed his strongholds.
And he multiplied for Daughter Judah moaning and mourning.

He laid waste his hut like a garden.
he destroyed his place of feast.

YHWH made feast and sabbath be forgotten in Zion
and spurned in his fierce anger both king and priest.

Adonay rejected his altar

The explicit subject Adonay in 27 already seems to preclude a connection with 26, which has no subject. This, then, is a ‘ordinary’ oversight by syn04types. However, when looking for an alternative connection, the prosodic structure (as well as a possible stylistic choice) plays a role:

At first sight, a connection to 25–26 would seem quite plausible: both are 0QTX clauses with referentially identical proper noun subjects (YHWH and Adonay). However, the start of the new strophe (marked by the acrostic 1) suggests a larger break, which is confirmed when the broader context is considered: The 0QTX clause 18 also starts a strophe, and has Adonay, rather than YHWH, as its subject. This, then, is the better candidate.

Although it is difficult to be certain, the name YHWH in 25 gives the impression of having been chosen to avoid the name Adonay, which is reserved for the opening of two strophes (or possibly canticles) here. This is obviously a stylistic choice: the only prosodic conventions which are followed here, are responsion35 and the renominalization of a participant.36 That the name Adonay

has apparently been used for this combined purpose, is the choice of the poet. Still, this choice does structure the text in a way which a syntactic analysis without consideration for prosodic structure would not have come up with.

Example 8.29

proposed

In darkness he has made me stay, like those long dead. 11. (Lam 3,6)
He has hemmed me in 12. (Lam 3,7)

corrected

He has worn away my flesh and my skin, 7. (Lam 3,4)

Connecting to the preceding clause (11) appears to make sense: \( xQ\text{-}t \) followed by a \( 0Q\text{-}t \) clause is by all means a possible connection. Moreover, the set of participants remains unchanged from 11 to 12: The geber reports about what 'he' has done to 'me'. The strophic boundary is the decisive signal to start a new unit.

This new strophe is, of course, marked by the acrostic, which in Lam 3 is much more conspicuous than in the rest of Lamentations, and by the return of initial qatal after the preceding strophe has ended on an \( xQ\text{-}t \) clause. The latter is, of course, a syntactic observation. Yet, the strophic division is needed to identify 11 as closing a unit, instead of opening a new one.

Example 8.30

proposed

but no one gives it to them. 12. (Lam 4,4)
Those who once ate delicacies 13. (Lam 4,5)
8.4. STROPHE LEVEL

The proposal by syn04types, a connection to 12, makes good sense if the analysis is strictly based on formal syntactic observations: It would appear all too obvious that the 13 is attributive to the 3 m.pl suffix: “no one gives [it] to them, [to] the ones once eating delicacies.”

However, the start of a new strophe makes clear that the clause is to be connected downward, as a fronted subject clause.

Example 8.31

From a strictly formal point of view, connecting 24 to 23, as syn04types proposes, seems to make much sense:

The two clauses have parallel constituent orders, have the same suffixes, and are quite close together. However, semantically this can not be right: (‘grow dark’) stands in stark contrast with (‘sapphire’) and all other words in Lam 4,7 describing bright, healthy and shiny colors. This contrast is in no way marked syntactically. It is here that prosodic signals take over. At verse-line level, the bicolic rhythm raises the expectation that a B-colon is connected to the preceding A-colon, and that the next A-colon starts a new unit. This expectation makes connections of an A-colon to its preceding B-colon somewhat unusual.

In this case, it is the strophic structure that provides the strongest clue for
a separation: The pause between 23 and 24 is clearly recognizable as a pause between strophes, because of the acrostic and the regular strophe lengths. The start of the new strophe raises the expectation that there will be a change of sorts. To be sure, this change can take many shapes, but stark contrast is certainly one of the possibilities.

Strophe boundaries as possible corrective: other cases

In most of these cases, a connection with the immediately preceding clause makes syntactic sense, but is prevented because the daughter clause starts a new strophe. I will list the proposals by syn04types, rather than my corrections of them, because they are more illustrative of the short-range alternatives. 1.9–10, 1.27–28, 1.67–68, 2.9–10, 2.37–38, 1.19–20, 3.6–7, 3.11–12, 3.64–65, 3.103–104, 3.134–135, 4.6–7, 4.9–10, 4.19–20, 4.38–39, 4.69–70.

8.4.2 Strophe level ‘enjambment’

Not all strophe boundaries result in a syntactic break. In a number of cases, two clauses should be connected, even though the mother is one of the last clauses in a strophe and the daughter is the first clause of a next strophe. This amounts to a larger syntactic unit running on across a strophe boundary, an enjambment of sorts. 37

Example 8.32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proposed</th>
<th>corrected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ספיה נאתה</td>
<td>חתה גורז</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נאתה בשלום</td>
<td>גורז져ו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She herself groans</td>
<td>her filthiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her filthiness</td>
<td>on her skirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on her skirts</td>
<td>and turns back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37Strictly speaking, the term ‘enjambment’ applies to clauses or sentences. The units involved here can also be larger syntactic units, such as paragraphs, participants domains or communicational domains.
Nominal clauses are generally difficult to place into a textual hierarchy, because they can have many different syntactic and pragmatic functions. In this case, multiple connections are possible:

- As a fronted setting clause, or even circumstantial adjunct, to 41: ‘With her filthiness [showing] on her skirts, she no longer cares about her end.’
- As backgrounded circumstantial clause to 39: ‘...and backs away, her filthiness [showing] on her skirts.’
- As a continuation of 38–39 as a whole: ‘As for her: she moans and backs away, her filthiness [showing] on her skirts.’

The first option would fit the prosodic structure: 40 is the start of the Ἱ-strophe. However, the contents of the clause fit much better into 34–39, which form a strophe about Jerusalem’s public humiliation.

The choice between the second and third option is very difficult. I have opted, tentatively, for the second one, because semantically the filth showing on her skirt is more directly related to Jerusalem’s backing away in shame than to her groaning.

Another reason for this choice is that the same sequence of clauses (qatal - ῥῆμα - nominal clause) occurs in the immediately following clauses 41–43. In these clauses, the verselines bind the ῥῆμα and the nominal clause into a unit.

My choice has a remarkable prosodic consequence: It creates a kind of syntactic enjambment, as the sentence starting on 38 (_remote) runs on into the next strophe. The reason for this may have to do with the demands of the acrostic.

Example 8.33

### proposed

לָאֵמָהּ לָאֵמָהּ 53. (Lam 2,12)

אֲדֹנָי יִהְיֶה 54. (Lam 2,12)

They say to their mothers, 53. (Lam 2,12)

“Where is grain and wine?” 54.

### corrected

מַעֲנוּתָם שִׁילָל רַחֵטֶם בְּרַחֵטֶם כְּרִיָּה: 52. (Lam 2,11)

לָאֵמָהּ לָאֵמָהּ 53. (Lam 2,12)

as little one and baby faint in the town squares. 52. (Lam 2,11)

They say to their mothers, 53. (Lam 2,12)

The syntactic situation is somewhat unusual, as there is a continuation of a subordinated infinitive construct clause. In such cases, the usual connection would be to the sentence as a whole (51–52). Prosodically, this connection
CHAPTER 8. PROSODIC BOUNDARIES AND SYNTAX

crosses a strophe boundary, which is also somewhat unusual. However, since 52 is a long clause, complete with adjunct, and since the referent ‘child and baby’ occurs only in this clause, there is no other option. This is one of the cases in which a participant is introduced at the very end of a strophe, to be referred to pronominally in the next strophe (see Section 9.4, p. 206).

Strophe-level enjambment: other cases

In some of these cases, major syntactic breaks take place within a strophe, such as the start of a new participant (sub)domain (1.63–78), a new communicational domain (1.61–97, 3.80–97). In other cases, closure of a larger textual unit appears to be involved (1.106–120, 2.10–17, 2.18–25, 3.65–73, 4.41–51).

In the cases of 1.120–126 and 3.42–50, the first clause of a strophe is connected to a non-initial clause in a preceding strophe. This has the effect of a run-on syntactic unit, which binds the two strophes concerned into a larger unit.

8.4.3 Syntactic variation at strophe closure

Another strophe-internal phenomenon that I have observed with some frequency in Lamentations, is that the clauses in the closing verse of a strophe somehow stand apart from the other clauses in the strophe, usually by breaking a syntactic pattern dominant in that strophe. This can take many shapes: a change of verbal conjugation and/or person, a change in constituent order, the introduction or renominalization of a participant, and others.

Example 8.34

How like a widow she has become, once great among the nations!
Once a princess among the states, she has become a slave.

proposed
3. (Lam 1,1)
4.
3. (Lam 1,1)
4.
How she sits alone, the city once full of people! 1. (Lam 1,1)
How like a widow she has become, once great among the nations! 2.
Once a princess among the states, she has become a slave. 3.

4 has a different constituent order than 1–2 and 3, but apart from that, it is built up from exactly the same elements; the subjects, even though employing widely differing images, all have the same referent: The city of Jerusalem. There is no reason to assume that שחרית is somehow emphasized or contrasted to the other two eponyms, so the fronting is probably prosodically motivated: It closes the strophe, by varying the dominant Pred-Subj pattern. This clause, then, is not connected to the immediately preceding clause only, but to the unit 1–3 as a whole.

Example 8.35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>corrected</th>
<th>proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>איכה ישבה הפרה עיר 1. (Lam 1,1)</td>
<td>פָּתִחְלָתי נשת 17. (Lam 1,4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>רַבָּתָה עֵמִי 2.</td>
<td>קֵדְא 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>והנה אֶלְמָלַמהֶהֶּרְחִית בֵּעֲשָׂר 3.</td>
<td>מְרִילָתָה: ס 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שֶׁרְחִית בְּפַדְרָלֵתָהֶ להָּּּּּּּּ לַמוֹס: ס 4.</td>
<td>her young women grieve. 17. (Lam 1,4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How like a widow she has become, once great among the nations! 3.</td>
<td>And as for herself: 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a princess among the states, she has become a slave. 4.</td>
<td>It is bitter for her! 19.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
corrected

The ways to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the feasts.

All her gates are desolate, her priests groan, her young women grieve. And as for herself: It is bitter for her!

The return to the primary participant (‘and as for herself:’) breaks, and thereby, closes, the pattern of the preceding lines (15–17), which all have a clause-initial subject referring to secondary participants (‘her . . . ’). That this occurs in the last verse line of the strophe seems significant: The breaking of the pattern closes the strophe.

Example 8.36

proposed

The return to the primary participant (‘and as for herself:’) breaks, and thereby, closes, the pattern of the preceding lines (15–17), which all have a clause-initial subject referring to secondary participants (‘her . . . ’). That this occurs in the last verse line of the strophe seems significant: The breaking of the pattern closes the strophe.

Example 8.36
I am the man who has seen misery by the rod of his wrath. Me he has driven away and has made me walk in darkness instead of light. Yes, against me, again and again.

In the last verse of this strophe, the discourse shifts to more discursive language (*yiqtol* after *qatal*).

**Example 8.37**

In two-line strophes, the concept of closure through variation on a pattern is usually meaningless. However, in this case there is a pattern spanning two strophes.

The fronting of *עֲשֶׂרִים תָּנִךְ חֲלַצְתִּי לֶחֶם* (*little children*) seems to have prompted *syn04-types* to propose a connection all the way back to 7, which is also an *XQtl* clause. The prosodic divisions and their semantic parallels, however, preclude this: 11–12 is clearly a parallel verseline to 10, and does not refer back to the start of the preceding strophe.

Yet, the proposal by *syn04types* does register an interesting structural feature here: The chiastic clause structures in 10 and 11–12 have a strong closing
effect on the entire unit 7–12 (Lam 4.3–5, a distinct unit of two strophes describing the fate of the children):

7–8 Subj - Pred
9  Subj - Pred
10 Pred - Subj
11 Subj - Pred

This pattern is slightly different from that in which the last line of a unit diverges from a pattern in that unit. Here, the penultimate line diverges, after which the last line returns to the familiar pattern.38

Apparently, breaking a pattern does not exclusively happen at the very end of a unit. This stands to reason: Whereas, generally speaking, ending a unit by diverging from a pattern works well, this is by no means a syntactic or prosodic rule. It is a matter of style, which does lead to frequent selection, but it is not a syntactic rule.

Other cases

Other cases involve variation in the participants pattern (1.34–38, 1.106–112, 1.123–126, 2.10–12, 2.27–30, 2.44–48, 3.39–42, 3.104–108, ) and in the constituent order (3.7–11, 3.129–133).

3.129–133 and 5.34–37 involve a shift to more discursive / salient clause types.

Wayyiqtol as marker of strophe closure?

In Lamentations, 13 of all 29 wayyiqtol clauses appear in the last verseline of their strophe. In a good number of these cases, they are the only wayyiqtol in that strophe.39 This may have syntactic repercussions: If these wayyiqtol clauses are systematically used to close the strophe, by breaking a syntactic pattern, this would be an argument in favor of connecting them to the strophe as a whole. The pattern we are dealing with here can be described and found with MQL queries 8.6 , 8.7 and 8.8 on page 196; these queries are increasingly strict:40

- 8.6 describes wayyiqtol anywhere in the last verseline of a strophe;

38Similar closing patterns are also known outside Biblical Hebrew poetry, such as in the Persian rubʿi (a quatr

39As an example of this pattern, see below, Example 8.38 on page 197.

40The phrase OVERLAP (SUBSTRATE) signals that the clause must overlap with the colon in which it occurs, but that it may extend beyond it (see Appendix B). This is the case for Lam 2.5 and Lam 2.14, where the wayyiqtol clause takes up two entire cola.
8.4. STROPHE LEVEL

- 8.7 describes *wayyiqtol* in the last verseline of a strophe that does not contain any other *wayyiqtols* in its ‘body’;

- 8.8 describes the same as 8.7, with the added requirement that the *wayyiqtol* must be in the first colon of its verseline.41

The results of the three queries are listed in Table 8.2.42 The findings seem to confirm that for the two strictest patterns, there is a positive pattern here: For all of these cases, I could find additional indications that set the *wayyiqtol* clause apart from its immediately preceding strophe. Only when the *wayyiqtol* appears in the B-colon of the verseline, or when it is not the first *wayyiqtol* in the strophe, there does not appear to be a strophe level connection.43

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>query 8.6</th>
<th>query 8.7</th>
<th>query 8.8</th>
<th>remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,3</td>
<td>Lam 2,3</td>
<td>Lam 2,3</td>
<td>new proper name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,5</td>
<td>Lam 2,5</td>
<td>Lam 2,5</td>
<td>new name, whole verseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,8</td>
<td>Lam 2,8</td>
<td>Lam 2,8</td>
<td>new ‘participant’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,14</td>
<td>Lam 2,14</td>
<td>Lam 2,14</td>
<td>whole verseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,17</td>
<td>Lam 2,17</td>
<td>Lam 2,17</td>
<td>new participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 4,11</td>
<td>Lam 4,11</td>
<td>Lam 4,11</td>
<td>new participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 1,8</td>
<td>Lam 1,8</td>
<td></td>
<td>return to main participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,5</td>
<td>Lam 2,5</td>
<td></td>
<td>new proper name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 3,31</td>
<td>Lam 3,31</td>
<td></td>
<td>parallel with 1st clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 1,6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1st clause is <em>wayyiqtol</em> (t-strophe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 2,6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no strophe level connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 3,10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no strophe level connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lam 3,16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in <em>wayyiqtol</em> chain (t-strophe)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 13 | 8 | 6 |

Table 8.2: *Wayyiqtol* in strophe-final verselines

41The reason for this is, that a *wayyiqtol* in the second colon usually only connects to the clause in the A-colon, not to the strophe as a whole. Cf. Vegas Montaner 2002, 202, who observes that *wayyiqtol* in the A-colon is usually continued by another clause, while *wayyiqtol* in the B-colon is not. This implies that *wayyiqtol* in an A-colon stands on a higher level in the textual hierarchy.

42I list Masoretic verses because entire strophes (= verses) are involved.

43But note that in Lam 1,6, the first *wayyiqtol* appears to have been selected because of the acrostic (see Example 10.29).
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[strophe
  [verseline LAST
    [clause_atom typ in (Way0, WayX)]
  ]
]
GO

MQL query 8.6: Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[strophe
  [clause_atom FIRST NOT typ in (Way0, WayX)]
  [clause_atom NOT typ in (Way0, WayX)] *
  [verseline LAST
    [clause_atom typ in (Way0, WayX)]
  ]
]
GO

MQL query 8.7: Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[strophe
  [clause_atom FIRST NOT typ in (Way0, WayX)]
  [clause_atom NOT typ in (Way0, WayX)] *
  [verseline LAST
    [colon FOCUS FIRST
      [clause_atom OVERLAP(SUBSTRATE)
        typ in (Way0, WayX)
      ]
    ]
  ]
]
GO

MQL query 8.8: Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline
Example 8.38

The proposal, to connect a wayyiqtol clause to the immediately preceding qatal clause with the same subject, seems plausible at first. However, פָּתָחַת מֵבֶצֶרֶת of 21 (‘Daughter Judah’) reintroduces a participant by name (from 7), which has the effect of ending a (sub)domain by starting a new one.

Moreover, the prosodic position of 22 sets it apart from the preceding qatal clauses; also, it takes up an entire verseline, where all other clauses in the strophe are paired into parallel verselines. Its contents, finally, appear of a more abstract, summarizing character than those of the rest of the strophe.

This clause, then, appears to function as the closure of the strophe.44

Conclusion and caveat

Syntactic variation in strophe-final verselines, then, does seem to have the effect of closing the strophe. As always, however, we have to move cautiously. The syntactic and semantic bonds will always have to weigh in as well, as the following example shows:

44According to Renkema 1998, 238, this clause concludes and summarizes the canticle vs 4–5.
Example 8.39

How Adonay has clouded Daughter Zion with his anger!

This last line of the strophe stands apart from the first two, which show strong prosodic parallels between them. Moreover, there is some lexical correspondence between 1 and 3: בָּקָשׁ and אֲנָחַּה.

All this would seem to plead for a connection to 1, as the closure of the strophe. Syntactically, however, this can hardly be correct. The congruent qatal forms, as well as the conjunction בָּקָשׁ, would appear to bind 2–3 together, rather than 1–3.

This, then, is a case where the prosodic structure yields a different grouping from the syntactic one, while both are valid in their own right.

Still, Lamentations has turned up enough examples of the phenomenon to claim that syntactic analysis should at least reckon with its occurrence.

8.5 Conclusions

In a substantial amount of cases, prosodic and syntactic parameters converge toward the same clause connections. This means that, by and large, poetic Hebrew does not require an entirely separate text grammar.

However, the convergence is by no means absolute. When establishing short-range clause connections in a Biblical poetic text, the syntactic analysis is sometimes influenced by the prosodic divisions, by way of the syntactic expectations these tend to raise:

- A certain type of colon level enjambment (involving two clauses within...
8.5. CONCLUSIONS

a single colon, the second of which runs on into the next colon) has a bearing on the segmentation and internal hierarchies of the clauses involved.

- At times, the boundaries of verselines and strophes have a direct impact on the prima facie syntactic analysis. Sometimes, the presence of a boundary strongly suggests an alternative one. At other times, the prosodic structure may amplify syntactic clues when these are few, very subtle or ambiguous. If no solid clues appear to be present, the prosodic units can even take over the role of structuring the text.

This does not mean that prosody always trumps syntax. At the very least, an analysis suggested by prosodic arguments should make syntactic sense in order to be adopted. If this is not the case, a real enjambment must be assumed. On the whole, however, it would seem that a syntactic analysis that ignores prosodic boundaries altogether, will miss relevant information.

Of course, the same goes for the prosodic analysis, mutatis mutandis. This would seem to make the puzzle unsolvable. I believe, however, that a comprehensive and iterative approach may bring the procedure further: prosodic boundaries and rhythm may inform and at points correct syntactic analysis, while syntactic observations may in turn lead to revision of the prosodic boundaries. This back and forth will, I believe, in many a cases lead to a convergent combined analysis. That there will always remain cases where the two structures clash is to be expected. But exegetically, these cases may well turn out to be at least as interesting as the ‘regular’ ones, because those will be the places where something out of the ordinary, and possibly meaningful, is happening.
Participant References

The exposition in this chapter must remain rather sketchy. Even though participant references play an important role in establishing the syntactic structure of especially poetic texts (see below), I have not done extensive research into the linguistic mechanisms underlying them. I have limited myself to noting when and in what way I have had to take participant references into account while establishing the clause hierarchy of Lamentations. For more thorough and systematic research into this area, I refer to the ongoing work of Eep Talstra and Christiaan Erwich.¹

9.1 Participant references and syntactic units

Participant references and direct speeches can form domains and subdomains, which can be embedded within other domains which can become rather complicated.² Figure 9.1 on page 203 demonstrates this for Lam 4: In this case, there are even two options, depending on whether the ‘we’ is seen as separate from the ‘I’. I choose for the second one (see Example 9.12 on page 212), but the first one can not be ruled out altogether.

This complexity is, of course, by no means limited to poetic texts; it happens in prose just as well. Nevertheless, I will discuss some common complications, before moving to points that appear more specific to the poetry of Lamentations.

Participant references ‘hidden’ in larger units

The clause relation approach to text syntax works rather well when syntactic factors like clause types, verb forms and conjunctions are dominant in shaping

¹Talstra 2016; Erwich and Talstra 2017.
²For the concepts of domains and subdomains in Biblical Hebrew, see de Regt 1995; van Wieringen 1998.
coherence. Signals for these factors can often be found at the very start of a syntactic unit, so that connecting the first clauses of the units concerned makes sense.
Figure 9.1: Domains and subdomains in Lam 4
With participant references, this does not work as well. Explicit (re)introductions of participants do not always occur in the first clause of a syntactic unit. In cases like this, the mother clause itself only provides another pronominal reference, or no reference at all. The antecedent of the pronominal reference in the daughter clause is ‘hidden’ within the larger unit of which the mother clause is the start. Thus, a proper treatment of participant references will have to take these larger units into account while establishing clause relations. The phenomenon is rather frequent, but a few examples will suffice:

Example 9.1

**proposed**

37. (Lam 2,8) Her gates have sunk into the ground; 38. (Lam 2,9) together they have wasted away.

**corrected**

31. (Lam 2,8) Her gates have sunk into the ground; 38. (Lam 2,9) YHWH has determined <...>

The suffix on נִשְׁרִיהָ (‘her gates, 38) refers to בתְּיִשְׁרִי (‘Daughter Zion’, 32). Syn04types does not note this, because the latter is ‘hidden’ in the second clause atom of the sentence 31–32. Thus, the entire sentence must be taken into account here instead of just the mother and daughter clause.

Example 9.2

**proposed**

47. (Lam 2,10) and put on sackcloth. 48. (Lam 2,10) They have bowed their heads to the ground, the young women of Jerusalem.
They sit on the ground 44. (Lam 2,10)

48 introduces a new participant by name: מַהְתִּלְתָּה יְרוֹשֵׁלָמָה (‘the daughters of Jerusalem’). It therefore starts a new unit after 44–47, which also have an explicitly named subject: דִּקְנֵי בָּתָּיְתֵיהוֹן יִצְיָד (‘the elders of daughter Zion’, 45) as their subject. The latter is missed when 44 and 48 are viewed in isolation.

Example 9.3

The proposal by syn04types, to connect אָמַרְתִּי (‘I call’, 110) to אָמַרְתִּי (‘I say’, 108), at first sight makes a lot of sense. However, there is a change in addressee here: The speaker no longer speaks about YHWH (102) but to him (the vocative in 111). This can only be observed when the units formed by 98 (98–109 and 110–118) are taken into account.
Example 9.4

proposed

אֲנִי מָכַה לִל

and חֲלֵיר אֹבֶר שָׁמֶש רַעְשָׁה

with no one to comfort me.

116. (Lam 1,21)

All my enemies hear of my distress;

117.

corrected

שָׁמֶש

114. (Lam 1,21)

< ..... >

כֹּל אֲוַבֵּר שָׁמֶש רַעְשָׁה

They hear

114. (Lam 1,21)

< ..... >

All my enemies hear of my distress;

117.

When reading sequentially, the verb שָׁמֶש does not seem to have an antecedent in its preceding context. Only when arriving at 117, it turns out that its subject was not anonymous ‘they’, but בְּכָל אֲוַבֵּר (‘all my enemies’).

Participants introduced at strophe closure

Even though it is not of direct urgency to syntactic analysis, it is remarkable that, in Lamentations, participants are sometimes introduced in the very last verseline of a strophe, to be referred to pronominally in the next strophe. This creates a kind of ‘enjambment’ with the participant’s domain, which binds the two strophes together into a larger textual unit. This happens in the following cases:

- Lam 1,8 (1.38): אַיָּרָה, she herself.
- Lam 1,12: YHWH.
- Lam 2,11 (2.52): little one and baby.
- Lam 3,48 (3.97): יִתְנַשְּפָה.

Lam 3,18 (3.38) is a case on its own: YHWH has been present as the main participant from the very first clause of the poem. Yet, it is not until the very last word of the very last clause of this unit that he is mentioned by name. Remarkably, the following section of the poem (vs 19–41 mentions YHWH / Adonay by name very frequently, as if a ban has been lifted.
Participant references informing syntactic analysis

As remarked before, participant references are often part and parcel of the syntactic analysis in general. However, there are points in which the references appear to overrule other syntactic arguments, or to be the only arguments available, as these few examples will show:

Example 9.5

52. (Lam 2,11)
53. (Lam 2,12)
as little one and baby faint in the town squares. 52. (Lam 2,11)
They say to their mothers, 53. (Lam 2,12)

Usually, an infinitive construct clause is not continued by daughter clauses, because it is itself a constituent of another clause. Any daughters would be connected to the sentence as a whole (in this case: 51–52). However, since the referent ‘child and baby’ occurs only in this infinitive construct clause, there is no other option than to connect the x’yqo clause to it.

Example 9.6

16. (Lam 4,5)
17. (Lam 4,6)

now cling to garbage heaps. 16. (Lam 4,5)
The punishment of my Dear People is greater than that of Sodom,

7. (Lam 4,3)
17. (Lam 4,6)
<...>

Even jackals offer a breast, 7. (Lam 4,3)
The punishment of my Dear People is greater than that of Sodom,

Usually, a wayyiqtol clause continues a preceding clause. A close connection of 17 to the immediately preceding xQt sentence 15–16 would appear more obvious than the start of a new syntactic unit and a new strophe.
However, the clause does open a new participants domain: ‘my Dear People’ is renominalized. This makes her the main participant, to which ‘her nobles’, 20) is a secondary one.

I think that the *wayyiqtol* form has primarily been chosen to accommodate the acrostic, which necessitates a clause opening with the conjunction *‘a* (see p. 10.1.1). It may well be, that the renominalization of ‘my Dear People’ has been selected to counter the connecting force of the *wayyiqtol* to mark the start of a new unit nonetheless.

**Example 9.7**

Proposed

27. (Lam 4,8)

רבאָל שְׁחֶם מַחְלֵלָהּ רֶעֶב

it has become as dry as wood.

28. (Lam 4,9)

Those killed by the sword were better off than those who die of famine,

Corrected

17. (Lam 4,6)

רבאָל שְׁחֶם מַחְלֵלָהּ רֶעֶב

The punishment of my Dear People is greater than that of Sodom,

28. (Lam 4,9)

Those killed by the sword were better off than those who die of famine,

Some strophes are rather self-contained, also in terms of participants references. This makes them difficult to place in their syntactic context. The unit 4.28–30 / 31.32, and thus the placement of 4.28 in the hierarchy, is an example of this.

Other than the *qatal* verb form, there are no syntactic signals connecting 28–32 to the preceding context: There are no connecting conjunctions, and the 3 f.sg references to ‘my Dear People’ have stopped. The unit is probably best viewed as a concluding unit, seeing as in 33 (vs 11) a new main unit begins, with explicit mention of YHWH and Zion (in 35), but it is difficult to say precisely, which unit it concludes.

The preceding context is dominated by the participant ‘my Dear People’, but on closer inspection, there are actually two domains with this participant. This is marked by the renominalization:

\[3\] Note that the *wayyiqtol* does not signify subordination to the *qatal* clauses here: It seems to
There are two options: ll. 28–32 conclude the second unit only, simply because it is closest. However, it may be noted that vs 9 refers to the nobles (vs 7–8), while vs 10 takes up, chiastically, the children (vs 3–5). If this were to be taken into account, vs 9–10 would be a conclusion to vs 3–8 as a whole. This would mean that l. 28 would have to be connected as far back as l. 7. However, I do not believe that to be the case. L. 17, with its renominalization of and the new participant Sodom, clearly marks a new syntactic unit. Syntactically, we have here a simple sequence of qatal units. The thematic links are real, but they are probably better explained as part of the literary structure.

9.2 Participants in dramatic texts

Lamentations is a dramatic text, which means that it consists of stretches of direct speech which are not introduced by narrative text (“Then so-and-so said:…”), but simply follow, or even interrupt, each other, like in a theater play. This can complicate the analysis of communicational domains, and thereby of participant domains and syntactic units, as the following examples will show. I will simply list the examples, without offering suggestions as to how these cases may be dealt with in a formal analytic approach. Much more research is needed here, and it may be that a formal approach reaches its limits here. In the meantime, it is important to at least be aware of complications like these when dealing with a dramatic text.

Unmarked Changes of Speaker

At several points in the songs, the narrator is interrupted by Zion: 1.44–47, 1.57–60, 2.49 and onwards, 2.103 and onwards. Conversely, the narrator interrupts Zion and her inhabitants as well: 1.91–94, 2.57–103, 3.97 and onwards.

On the introduction of direct speech in narrative, see Miller 1994; Miller 1995.

To be sure: I do not imply that Lamentations was ever performed or even written as an actual play. I use the term in a linguistic sense, to describe the features of a certain type of texts. See Leene 1987, 30–37; van der Woude 2002, esp. 266.
CHAPTER 9. PARTICIPANT REFERENCES

Most of these changes are clearly recognizable, by vocatives, a sudden appearance of first and second person forms for participants that up to that point had been referred to in third person. The content matter also plays a large role. In a few passages, however, it is not entirely clear who is speaking to whom:

Example 9.8

פָּלַא בְּכֵם שָׁתָה יִשָּׂרָאֵל 49. (Lam 2,11)
My eyes are worn out with tears, 49. (Lam 2,11)

For the first time in Lam 2, a first person form appears. At the same time, the line of mainly initial qatal clauses of the preceding section appears to continue, the shift to 1 sg notwithstanding. The syntactic signs are confusing: Is the ‘I’ still the anonymous narrator, or does Daughter Jerusalem break in? Renkema opts for Jerusalem, based on content matter and structural arguments. Salters objects that this is impossible, because vs 13 addresses Zion, so she can not be the speaker of the speech, that starts at vs 11.

I hold that Renkema is correct here. As for one, the content matter (grief about the children; tears, physical reactions to emotion), as well as the sudden change to 1 sg speech, indeed strongly point toward an interruption by Jerusalem much like the ones in Lam 1.

Salters’ objection ignores the dramatic nature of the text. He assumes that the ‘I’ in Lam 2,11–13 must refer to the same person throughout. But in a dramatic text, this need to be the case. The vocatives in vs 13 in my view clearly indicate the start of a new speech may be addressed. Thus, there are two speeches here: An outburst by Zion, interrupting the report by the narrator, and a reaction by the narrator, addressed directly at Zion.

Example 9.9

הָנָּה תָּהָר 72. (Lam 2,15)
“Is this the city” 72. (Lam 2,15)

A direct speech starts in 72, presumably spoken by those who pass by the way (69). This is, however, not marked directly, e.g. by a quotation formula. Rather, the various clues of highly discursive language (asynopsis, deixis, interrogatives), combined with the contents, which fit the taunting gestures of whistling and shaking of the head, provide cumulative evidence for this.

This type of shift in speech situation is common in dramatic texts. To be sure, this case is slightly different in that, strictly speaking, the passers-by do not actually start to speak here, but are quoted by the ‘I’.

7Salters 2014, 146 n. 74.
9.2. *PARTICIPANTS IN DRAMATIC TEXTS*

Example 9.10

רָאָה 103. (Lam 2,20)
נַחַל 104.

“Look, 103. (Lam 2,20)
YHWH, 104.

It is assumed that Zion retakes the floor here, but this is not marked by any 1 sg references, until the very last sentence of the speech (116–118).

Example 9.11

כְּפַשְׁתָּה יָדְכֵיהֶם 80. (Lam 3,40)

<...>
נִתְנָה פִּנְסָעָה 84. (Lam 3,42)
Let us examine our ways 80. (Lam 3,40)

<...>
“We have sinned 84. (Lam 3,42)

The communicational domains in the 1 pl sections of this song are difficult, as a direct result of the dramatic character of the text: Without any surrounding narrative telling us who is speaking to whom. Several situations may be pictured:

1. In 3.80 (Lam 3,40), the *geber*’s audience responds to the conclusion of his sermon, in which he had encouraged them to find fault in themselves, not in God. They express the intention to pray; in 3.84 (vs 42), they start the actual prayer. There is a change in speaker in 80 but not in 84.

2. In 80, the *geber* directly addresses his audience, calling them to prayer, a prayer which he subsequently leads himself. There is no change in speaker or addressee in 80; there is a change of address between 83–84, but no change of speaker.

3. The *geber* calls his audience to prayer; they respond by starting a prayer themselves. There is a change of both address and speaker in 84.

The same uncertainty, but in reverse, occurs when the discourse reverts from 1 pl to 1 sg references in vs 48. My choice for the last option is based on my conception of the overall structure of the song.  

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8See Table 14.1 on page 259 and Bosman 1996.
Example 9.12

61. (Lam 4,17) שְׂרָדִיהָ
62. (Lam 4,17) חֲקָלוֹתֶהָ עַעֲתֵמֵי אֲלֵי עַעֲרִרָתָהּ חַבֶל

“All the while, 61. (Lam 4,17) our eyes wore out looking for help, in vain; 62.

In my clause hierarchy, I have set apart Lam 4,17–20, because of the switch from a 1 sg speaker (4.32, vs 10) to 1 pl. Of course, it is always very difficult to determine whether a switch from ‘I’ to ‘we’ also means a change of speaker: A single speaker can easily start using ‘we’ when representing their own group to an external party. However, if it is the case that in Lam 4,17–20, the people of Jerusalem are speaking, it is quite conceivable that they are also the ones uttering the threats to Edom, as most of their speech has centered on being abandoned and betrayed by other nations. In this interpretation, Lam 4,17–20 can be read, in Niccaccian fashion, as a backgrounded motivation to the curses and blessings in vs 21–22.

A change of speaker, then, can possibly (but not with certainty) be deduced from the switch to 1 pl forms, but apart from this ambiguous signal, the change is unmarked.

Unusual Introductions of Participants

Example 9.13

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה בַּּבַּר הַשֵּׁיַר 1. (Lam 1,1)

הָוֹדְעָה אֶתָּבָא מָאָפָא אֲלֵי אֲכֵפָיָה יָאָצֵחִי 1. (Lam 2,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

אֲפִיקָה לְשֵׁבָה רוֹב 1. (Lam 4,1)

Three of the five poems start without any indication of who is speaking. For most of their text, these sections describe situations or events, without any signal that they are spoken by, or addressed to, anyone in particular.

Yet, the narrator turns out to be a real participant. This is clear from subtle


10So explicitly Longman 2008, 385. Others are less certain: Renkema 1998, 546: “The poets are representing the hopes, fears and disappointments of the population.” which leaves both options open. Berlin 2002, 112 does this explicitly, as does Vlaardingerbroek 1999, 103. Salters (2014, 324, 326, 329, 330) appears to avoid the issue, retreating to the meta-level of what is said by ‘the verse’, ‘the passage’, ‘the poet’, etc.
discursive markers, which signal that the narrator parts are not anonymous reporting, but direct communications by one of the participants:

- The initial אָכְלָה in all three songs is highly discursive and reflects a real person’s emotions.
- Lam 2 and Lam 4 start on yiqtol clauses, which also indicate discursive and direct communication.
- In all three songs, the narrator parts contain at least one first person or second person reference, which also indicates direct communication.\(^\text{11}\)
- The narrator parts are interrupted by Zion and interrupts speeches by others (see above, Unmarked Changes of Speaker).

**Example 9.14**

"Gone are my future and my hope in YHWH.”

In Lam 3,1–18, there are only two participants: The geber, who speaks in the first person, and YHWH. The way in which the two are introduced is remarkable: The geber introduces himself in three fronted phrases with 1 sg reference, which appears to have a clear pragmatic motivation: it emphasizes that it is the geber, of all people, who has to endure YHWH’s hostility.

By contrast, YHWH, is not mentioned by name at all, even though he is the subject in the bulk of this section. He remains a ‘he’, until the very last word of this section.\(^\text{12}\)

Strictly speaking, the name does not even belong to the primary communicational domain: The geber only mentions YHWH indirectly, while citing himself, and even as a subject or object of a clause, but in an adjunct. It certainly appears that the ‘anonymity’ of YHWH is intentional here, although it is difficult to surmise what this intention might be.

It may have to do with the overall structure of the discourse, which moves from recounting YHWH’s total enmity to a tentative but growing realization that YHWH may not reject his people forever.\(^\text{13}\)

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\(^{11}\)1.51, 2.60 and onwards, 4.9, 4.17, 4.61 (Q), 4.62–75.

\(^{12}\)Vlaardingerbroek 1999, 83; Berlin 2002, 88; Berges 2002, 186; Salters 2014, 191, 217. Renkema 1998, 353 connects the 3 m.sg suffix in 3.2 to ]אֶכָּלָה in Lam 2,22 (2.115), but, as Vlaardingerbroek rightly observes, if a connection with Lam 2 were to be made at all, ]אֶכָּלָה (‘my enemy’ 2.118) would be the only feasible antecedent, which is not correct.

\(^{13}\)See Table 14.1 on page 259 and Bosman 1996.
first section is so dire, that it feels like the poet is reluctant to identify him. At any rate, the mention of the name YHWH in vs 18 is a pivotal point: From that point on, the tone is no longer entirely desperate.

In conventional narrative prose, it is usually clear who is speaking to whom. Surrounding narrative introductions like “Then x said to y:” usually make this clear. In dramatic texts, things are more like in real life conversations. A situation is assumed in which a number of participants is present ‘on stage’,14 even when they are not speaking or being spoken to. This means that these participants can start speaking out of nothing, but also, that they can be addressed without further notice. Usually, this will be accompanied by some form of marking, like a vocative, but this does not always happen. In Lamentations, the following examples can be mentioned:

Example 9.15

51. (Lam 1,10)
of whom you had ordered: 51. (Lam 1,10)

Lines 48–56 are very interesting. The 3 f.sg suffixes firmly return the discourse to the domain of the anonymous speaker talking about Jerusalem and YHWH, making the preceding speech by Zion (44–47) into a short, rather disconnected interruption. So short, in fact, that renominalization appears to be unnecessary. However, in 51, a 2 m.sg reference appears, which—according to content—can only refer to YHWH. Thus, where up to now YHWH had only been spoken about by this anonymous speaker, he is now spoken to.

Apparently, the participant YHWH is special, in that he is assumed to be ‘on stage’ permanently and can be addressed, without further notice, at all times.15 Another example of this is 3.48, as is 3.34, if the wayyiqtol form הָנָה is to be parsed as 2 m.sg, rather than 3 f.sg (which I personally do not believe).

**Crossing Participant References**

In prose, narrative introductions usually make clear who is speaking to whom.16 These introductions also have a structural effect: They divide the turns of a dialogue into stretches with a more or less uniform speech situation. Again, in dramatic texts, things are much more like real life conversation in this respect.

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14As pointed out in note 5 on page 209, I use the term ‘dramatic’ as a linguistic metaphor only. I do not imply that a book like Lamentations has ever been written or performed as an actual play.

15The participant YHWH is special in another way as well: In the book of Lamentations, he is often spoken to, but does not speak a single word himself.

16Alternatively, this can happen in direct speech by another participant, e.g., Gen 27,34–35: Esau’s vocative ‘o, father’, identifies the subject of the following ‘he said’; 2 Kgs 1,11: “O, man of God, the king says: ‘Come down!’”.
Speakers can interrupt each other, or they may change the addressee in mid-discourse, without marking this very explicitly. Also, speakers can take turns speaking, while essentially continuing where they left off in their previous turn. The latter factor especially can complicate the construction of a tree-like clause hierarchy, as the connections between the different segments of a speech would cross. The speeches in Lam 1 may serve as an example (see Figure 9.2).

9.3 Conclusions

It is clear, that participant references, the participants domains to which they give rise and the communicational domains with which they interact, are a crucial factor in the syntactic analysis of the text of Lamentations. Vis-à-vis the syntactic structure (in terms of clause hierarchy) and prosodic structure (especially strophes), the participant references play a curious role: Often, they converge with, and are even determinitive of, syntactic and prosodic structures. In other cases, however, they appear to function quite independently. It would be prudent, therefore, to chart the participants domains separately, instead of making it an integral and implicit part of the clause hierarchy. Obviously, the separation and independence from syntactic and prosodic analysis can in no
way be complete. As always, the process will have to be iterative. Having
structures of participant references as a separate category of data, however,
will clarify this complex procedure substantially.
Chapter 10

The Acrostic

In general, the difficulty of starting a verse line on a prescribed letter should not be exaggerated.\(^1\) However, it does pose an extra constraint to the poet, and it would stand to reason that a literary device like an alphabetic acrostic would influence the syntax of a poem, at least to a certain degree. Specifically, one would expect unusual constituent orders in clauses: When a poet is hard pressed for a clause-initial word starting on a specific letter, putting another word from that clause up front is a very obvious solution. The likelihood of unusual constituent order would seem to increase with the rarity (at clause-initial position) of the letter involved.

The issue is of direct relevance to my research question: If it can be demonstrated that the acrostic has led to unusual constituent orders in Lamentations, the phenomenon needs to be taken into account in the syntactic analysis, since in cases like this, constituent order can be expected to lose its usual pragmatic and syntactic functions.\(^2\)

My investigation will consist of two parts: A general survey of the relative difficulty of the different Hebrew letters and the frequency of fronting in Biblical Hebrew poetry and prose (Section 10.1) and a specific discussion of all acrostic lines in Lamentations with unusual syntactic (Section 10.2 and 10.3).

10.1 Some numbers on letters

As a preliminary investigation, I have researched three data sets within the ETCBC data:

\(^1\)“Ach, mijnheer Leene, zo moeilijk is zo’n acrostichon nu ook weer niet.” (N. H. Ridderbos, as quoted to me by Henk Leene, in personal communication). See also Bosman 2002.

\(^2\)As a matter of fact, it would also have to lead to an expansion of Lunn’s hypothesis: Lunn states, that non-canonical word order [clauses with pre-verbal elements, HJB] in an A-colon is always pragmatically motivated and must therefore be translated as giving focus, contrast, emphasis, etc. (Lunn 2006, 275 rule 4). Acrostic lines, which he has not researched systematically, may form an exception to this rule.
**acroistics:** The acrostic lines of all clear and (more or less) complete acrostics in the Hebrew Bible: Ps 9–10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145; Lam 1–4; Prov 31.

**poetry:** A collection of non-acrostic Biblical Hebrew poetry: The non-acrostic Psalms, Gen 49, Exod 15, Deut 32, Judg 2, Judg 5, 1 Sam 22 and vs 1–7, 2 Kgs 19, 21–28, 1 Chr 16, 8–36, Jonah 2, Job 3–42, Canticles.

**prose:** A collection of narrative prose chapters: Gen except ch. 49; Exod except ch. 15; Num ch. 11–17, 20, 25, 27, 31–32; Josh except ch. 15–21; Judg except ch. 5; Ruth; 1 Sam except ch. 2; 2 Sam except ch. 1, 22, 23; 1 Kgs; 2 Kgs except ch. 19; 1 Chr except ch. 16 and 25; 2 Chronicles; Esth; Job ch. 1–3 and 41 Ezra except ch. 2, 4–5, 6, 8 and 10; Neh except ch. 7 and 10–12.

### 10.1.1 ‘Difficult’ and ‘easy’ letters

The relative difficulty of a given letter for use in an acrostic would seem to be a function of two measurements:

1. The number of **any** verse-initial word starting with the letter. This is indicative of the ease with which the poet can find any verse-initial word on that letter, even if this would be the same word over and over again. A low number means that words starting on that letter are either rare or not very suitable for opening a clause or verseline.

2. The number of **unique** words starting with the letter. This is indicative of the number of different words a poet can choose from. A low number means that the poet has a limited amount of choices and may be forced to use the same word repeatedly.

Table 10.2 on page 220 shows the numbers for the three data sets.

The numbers for the acrostic lines are obviously quite different from those for the other data sets, but this is to be expected. In fact, theoretically one would expect the columns marked **all** to have the same values for every letter, as in an ideal acrostic, every letter of the alphabet would occur the same number of times. That this is not the case speaks to the fact that a) in some of the biblical acrostics, letters are missing, and that b) words involving ketiv/qere have been excluded from the counts. As a measure for the relative difficulty of certain letters, these numbers do not provide much useful information, as

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3Only the verselines that are actually part of the acrostic have been taken into consideration, all other lines have been excluded.

4For the acrostic lines, delimitation of poetic verselines is available in the data. For non-acrostic poetry and for prose, I have resorted to the Masoretic verses.

5K/Q has caused לַעְיִיתָהוּ (Lam 4, 17) to be ignored, contributing to the already low score for לַעְיִיתָהוּ.
acrostic lines already represent ‘solved’ cases. The numbers for non-acrostic poetry and for prose may be more helpful, as in those texts, the verse-initial letters have not been chosen deliberately. Their distributions will depend on the syntactic and lexicographic factors which ultimately determine whether a letter is difficult or not. The following observations can be made:

- Ṣ, Ọ, Ọ and Ṣ are relatively rare, both in overall and in unique counts. Apparently, these letters do not naturally appear at verse-line start, and can be considered more difficult than other letters.

- Ṣ has a very exceptional position: It occurs quite frequently, but it is always the same word, the conjunction -ṣ. In an acrostic, Ṣ is very easy to use, as long as the poet does not mind using the conjunction -ṣ. When they want to avoid it, however, the letter becomes extremely difficult, as it offers virtually no alternatives.

These conclusions do not put an exact measure on how difficult the various letters are. Whether or not this difficulty has pressured the poet to choose a certain syntactic construction, can not be determined on these numbers alone. They can, however, be used as additional argumentation whenever unexpected syntax is observed which can not be explained otherwise.

10.1.2 Fronting in acrostics and other text genres

That fronting is much more frequent in poetry than in prose, has already been established. The numbers in my data sets confirm this (Table 10.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dset</th>
<th>tot</th>
<th>fronting</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>no fronting</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acrostics</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poetry</td>
<td>3236</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prose</td>
<td>19277</td>
<td>3398</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>15879</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.1: Fronting vs. non-fronting in verse-initial clauses

That fronting turns out to be slightly more frequent in acrostic lines than in non-acrostic poetry would be an interesting observation, but the difference falls just short of being statistically significant. Even so, the numbers alone would not prove any real influence. Whether any acrostic lines actually go against regular (text)syntax, needs to be demonstrated in the actual instances.

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6Lunn 2006, 8.
Table 10.2: Verse-initial words, by initial letter
10.2 Acrostic lines with marked word order

When investigating this question, some caution is needed. A simple list of all acrostic lines with preverbal elements—the most conspicuous type of changes in the word order—will not suffice. After all, a preverbal element (fronting) also occurs for normal pragmatic reasons, to place particular emphasis on it for some reason (topicalization). Real influence of the acrostic can only be made plausible if there is a marked word order without apparent topicalization. In order to determine this, the level of the individual clauses is not sufficient; the wider context needs to be included.

Topicalization is essentially a text-syntactic phenomenon: It is often used to create some kind of contrast to another element in the text, which usually lies outside of the clause itself. When no such contrast can plausibly be found, the option of prosodic fronting must be considered.

As I will demonstrate in Section 10.3.2, unusual placement in the context is also true, to varying degrees, for the wayyiqtol clauses in the γ-strophes of all acrostics in Lamentations.

For the investigation of marked word order, I have collected all acrostic verbal clauses in Lamentations with non-obligatory fronting of subjects, objects, complements, modifiers or adjuncts. Obligatory fronting (such as of interrogative phrases, infinitive absolute used as modifier to finite verbs) is meaningless in this issue, so I have excluded it from the search. I have collected these clauses with Query 10.1 on the next page. When run, the query yields a list of 27 clauses. Below, I will discuss them all, grouping them into cases of pragmatically motivated fronting (topicalization) and cases with no apparent pragmatic reasons for fronting. In the latter cases, it seems reasonable to assume prosodic motivation (such as the demands of the acrostic and others). A small number of cases is undecided.

To consult the clauses in their text-syntactic context, see the displays in Chapter 7.

10.2.1 Pragmatically motivated fronting

I consider fronting as pragmatically motivated in the following cases:

1. When a contrast is expressed with some other element in the text.

2. When a contrast is expressed with the expectations of the reader or one of the participants.

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7 For Lamentations, this conveniently means: the first clause of every Masoretic verse.
8 See Lunn 2006, 7, point 2.
9 Note that the definition of the syntactic label fronting used in this query signifies preverbal elements only; it does not include verbless clauses.
10 My criteria for this are listed below, Section 10.2.1.
MQL query 10.1: Acrostic lines with fronting in Lamentations
3. When a new participant or new location is introduced.
4. When the fronted element is an item in a list.

According to these criteria, some form of pragmatically motivated fronting indeed appears plausible in many of the cases:

**Example 10.1**

מפורם שלחתי אש מעצמאתי 68. (Lam 1,13)

From on high he sent fire into my bones, 68. (Lam 1,13)

‘From up high’ contrasts with ‘it descends’ in the following colon. It also introduces a new location.

**Example 10.2**

ביוחי זה אתה ותאני 65. (Lam 2,14)

Your prophets gave you empty whitewash for visions, 65. (Lam 2,14)

The prophets are introduced as a new participant.

**Example 10.3**

אלהי נאם 3. (Lam 3,2)

Me he has driven away 3. (Lam 3,2)

אתו כי ישיב 5. (Lam 3,3)

Yes, against me, again and again, 5. (Lam 3,3)

These clauses present an interesting case, as it is difficult to say whether the fronting is pragmatical or not. At first sight, prosodic motivation for the fronting of אלהי and אתו seems likely, because of the need for triple מ and the apparent absence of contrast to any other ‘victim’ of ‘his’ wrath.

However, the option of ‘contrast to expectation’ actually fits the text very well: 3.3, אלהי נאם, then comes to mean: “It is me[ of all people,] whom he leads… “, and 3.5, ואתו כי ישיב: “Yes, it is at me that he turns… “. The geber, in this interpretation, is not primarily concerned with the wrath and adversity as such, let alone with the fact that YHWH is its source. All these things are mentioned matter-of-factly, in unmarked positions. What is really shocking is that they have befallen him.

**Example 10.4**

שמ כ.sess Expenses 15. (Lam 3,8)

Even when I call out 15. (Lam 3,8)
There is clear contrast with the reader’s expectations: “Even if I cry and call for help, he blocks out my prayer.”

Example 10.5

אוהי אליעזר אלי

Yet this I call to mind, 42. (Lam 3,21)

דה ‘these things’) most probably refers forward to the verses which follow (vs 22–24), which constitute a pivot in the train of the poem’s thought. The fronting can express contrast (“This, however, I will answer to my heart: …”), or the introduction of a new element, or both.

Example 10.6

נפשו עלילתי לא תצע הרשע והשלום:

The mouth of the Most High does not utter bad as well as good.

In Lam 3,34–36, Adonay stands in contrast with the perpetrators of the evil in vs 34–36a: they do terrible things, but YHWH, on his part, is not oblivious to their deeds. In this context, it stands to reason to assume that the focus in vs 38 is also on ‘Elyon: He is the one whose mouth does not utter good as well as evil (possibly in contrast to the evildoers).

Example 10.7

הון צאצא חכרים

The precious children of Zion, 4. (Lam 4,2)

אוהי נחום לняבל יזרעאל מ/user_name: המות ויר הון

how they are valued as pots of clay, work of a potter’s hands!

There is a stark contrast between the former high value of the children and their present low esteem.

Example 10.8

אומן ינבי חלבון שד

Even jackals offer a breast, 7. (Lam 4,3)
10.2. ACROSTIC LINES WITH MARKED WORD ORDER

(‘even’) expresses contrast with the reader’s expectation, as well as between jackals and human mothers: Who would have thought that beasts as unreliable as jackals take better care of their young than human mothers?

Example 10.9

The hands of compassionate women cook their own children;

Contrast with expectations: compassionate mothers are the last ones expected to cook their own children.\(^{11}\)

Example 10.10

The face of YHWH has scattered them;

Pragmatic fronting happens three times in this verse (56, 59, 60), all three expressing dismay at the fact that even priests, prophets and elders are no longer respected.

Example 10.11

The breath of our nostrils, YHWH’s anointed, was caught in their traps.

The fact that, of all people, YHWH’s anointed one has been captured, is entirely contrary to the speakers’ expectations.

10.2.2 Prosodically motivated fronting

In the following cases, I have not been able to find plausible pragmatic explanations for fronting. In these cases, I suggest that prosodic motivations have played a role. Often, this may simply have been the need for a word starting on the appropriate letter, especially when this is one of the ‘difficult’ letters (see Section 10.1) Sometimes, more intricate prosodic devices appear to have played a role, such as breaking a dominant pattern at the end of a strophe.

\(^{11}\)Cf. Deut 28,56–57, where the same unimaginable atrocity happens, while the mothers’ gentleness and sensitivity is emphasized ever stronger.
Example 10.12

Jerusalem has sinned greatly,

It is not entirely clear, how לַאֲמֹר is to be understood. If it is akin to an infinitive absolute, clause-initial position is obligatory and the clause is unmarked; if this is no such construction, its pragmatic meaning in this context is unclear, but can hardly be: “It is sin, which Jerusalem has sinned, [rather than some other transgression]”.

Example 10.13

The foe laid hands on all her treasures.

The fronting of יִדוּ, ‘his hand’, can not be explained as topicalization: “It is his hand, which the adversary has stretched out” does not appear to make much sense. If anything, the word רֵץ could be expected to be fronted, as it introduces a new participant. As it stands, then, the need for a word starting on י appears to have been a more prominent motivation.

Example 10.14

They say to their mothers,

I can find no convincing pragmatic explanation for the fronting of לַאֲמֹר? (‘To their mothers…’) . The mothers are more a prop than a participant here, which does not warrant their fronting as a newly introduced participant. Contrast (‘To their mothers, on the other hand,…’) does not seem to apply either. Nor is the mentioning of the mothers unexpected (‘To their mothers, of all people…’).

Example 10.15

In darkness he has made me stay, like those long dead.

In the context, there is no apparent reason to place ‘into darkness’ in clause-initial position, since it does not contrast with anything else or appear in a list. The motivation therefore appears to be prosodic. Fronting can very well have been used here to end the strophe on a word order that differs from that of the rest of the strophe, in which case the role of the acrostic would be secondary.
10.2. ACROSTIC LINES WITH MARKED WORD ORDER

Example 10.16

he dragged me from my ways \(22. \) (Lam 3,11)

I can see no pragmatic reason from the context why ‘my ways’ would have to be in clause-initial position. I therefore suspect that the fronting has been motivated by the acrostic. For what it is worth, \( \text{ד} \) apparently is not a very easy letter to use in an acrostic (see Section 10.1).

Example 10.17

We have sinned \(84. \) (Lam 3,42)

The start of the prayer, introducing the new participant ‘we’, could be the reason for fronting; however, \( \text{כ} \) is clearly connected to \( \text{תננ} \) (86), which draws \(84\) into a different textsyntactic context than, say, line 3.1. Real contrastive focus is also problematic, as it would produce a peculiar meaning: “We are the ones who have sinned, while you are the one who has not forgiven.” Another option, parallel focus,\(^{12}\) fails because there is contrast and the two actions are not similar.

I suspect that the need for acrostic \(\text{י} \) may have played an important role in starting the prayer with fronting.

Example 10.18

You made us filth and garbage among the nations! \(93. \) (Lam 3,45)

The fronted \( \text{כ} \) does not have a counterpart in the context, so contrast is not likely. If interpreted as pragmatic, the fronting would have the effect of drawing attention to the filth and garbage \(\text{YHWH} \) has made his people into, apparently in contrast to their expectations. Although this can not be discarded, it is not very compelling either: The entire strophe has emphasized the people’s sin and \(\text{YHWH} \)’s wrath, so this clause can hardly be a surprise.

The prosodic effect of the fronting appears more prominent: The strophe predominantly has \( \text{qatal} \) clauses. The last verse inverts this word order, thereby marking the end of the sequence. Also note that this last verse shifts from \( \text{qatal} \) to \( \text{yiqtol} \), making the clause more discursive, which adds to the effect of closure. Finally, the relative sparsity of words starting on \( \text{ד} \) may be noted (see Section 10.1).

\(^{12}\)Lunn 2006, 49: ‘focus or topic whereby two participants carry out two similar or … identical actions, possibly but not necessarily simultaneous, with no contrast being inferred.’
CHAPTER 10. THE ACROSTIC

Example 10.19

Panic and pit have come over us, 95. (Lam 3,47)

In prose, subject + התה us usually starts a new episode in a story or introduces a new participant. Neither of these factors appear to be in play here: The strophe has started a verseline earlier, and ‘fear and the pit’ do not constitute a real participant, they are only mentioned in passing. Therefore, prosodic motivation (the need for a פ) is more likely here.

Example 10.20

Streams of water flow from my eye about the breaking of my Dear People.

Many things happen here at the same time:

- This case could possibly be analyzed as pragmatic, if it would be assumed to heighten the hyperbole, emphasizing that ‘my eye’ does not merely cry, but cries ‘rivers of water’. This would then have to be categorized under contrast with the reader’s expectation, but this does not appear very compelling.

- Literary factors appear more prominent: Even though the strophe has not ended, this clause atom starts a new speech domain, in which a 1 sg speaker takes over from a 1 pl group. The marked word order may serve to signal this, although, if that were the case, one would expect the word with the 1 sg suffix (‘my eye’) to be fronted.

- The clause forms the closing verseline of the פ-strophe. Its clause type (XYq3) may have been chosen to differ from the qatal forms in the rest of the strophe.

Example 10.21

My eye flows 98. (Lam 3,49)

There is no apparent reason for this fronting, other than the acrostic and, perhaps, the start of a new strophe. The participant ‘my eye’ has just been introduced in the immediately preceding clause, and there is no contrast with elements in the context.

13See Table 14.1 on page 259 and Bosman 1996.
It is interesting to note, that of the 18 ע lines in the more or less complete acrostics in the Hebrew Bible, 6 use the word עין (‘ayin, ‘eye’), which of course is also the name of the letter. This appears to be a known pun, which may have contributed to fronting the word.

Example 10.22

My eye brings grief to my Self for all the daughters of my city.

Again, the acrostic and the closure of the strophe appear to be the main motivation for fronting עין here, unless this clause is to be interpreted as belonging to 3.101–102 (vs 50): “Until YHWH looks down, and sees from heaven, my eye will bring grief to my Self...”. In this case, the topicalization would mark the resumption of ‘my eye’ after two clauses in which YHWH has been the subject. However, this is not very likely: It would be peculiar to have a protasis of two yiqtol clauses with qatal as apodosis.¹⁴

Example 10.23

Hear my voice,

If topicalization would be the issue here, this clause should mean something like: “It is my voice you have heard,” or it might create contrast between שם (vs 51) and קול: “I have called your name, [in turn] you have heard my voice.” This would be even more likely if the qatal forms from vs 56 onward are to be read as volitional forms:¹⁵ “I have called your name, [in turn] you should hear my voice.”

Nevertheless, neither of these explanations appears convincing enough to discard the explanation that the acrostic simply asks for a word with שם here, for which, in a context of calling and hearing, קול is a very obvious candidate.

Example 10.24

Take notice of their sitting and standing.

There is a certain division between vs 61–62 and vs 63:

¹⁵See, among others, Hillers 1992, 118.
• vs 61–62 is governed by the word שמע (3.129, ‘you have heard’, possibly: ‘Hear!’), vs 63 by נבטי (3.133, ‘Take notice!’)

• 3.133 is the first complete clause after a list of items.

Even though the latter might suggest the introduction of a new element as a pragmatic reason for fronting here, this is not very compelling. The word order in 3.133 gives the distinct impression of having been chosen for mainly literary purposes:

• This clause ends the strophe, which is dominated by עג clauses; this pattern is broken here by עג (see Section 8.4.3).

• The acrostic asks for a נ.

Example 10.25

Those killed by the sword were better off than those who die of famine,

28. (Lam 4,9)

I see no apparent pragmatic reasons for fronting here. I therefore assume prosodic motivation; the start of a new strophe on נ, which is a difficult letter (see Section 10.1), provide sufficient reason.

Example 10.26

Faster were our pursuers than eagles in the sky.

70. (Lam 4,19)

This case is analogous to that of line 28 in the same chapter. Introduction of a new participant is out of the question, as that would have required the fronting of רכש; contrast is also not apparent. The start of the נ-strophe appears to be the main reason for fronting.

10.3 Unusual selection of verb-initial clauses

10.3.1 Initial yiqtol

Example 10.27

They sit on the ground in silence, the elders of Daughter Zion;

44. (Lam 2,10) 45. (Lam 2,10)
10.3. UNUSUAL SELECTION OF VERB-INITIAL CLAUSES

Example 10.28

You called, as if on a feast day, my terrors from all around.

Neither of these clauses can have a volitive meaning, yet their *yiqtol* verbs stand in first position. I can think of no other reason for this than that the acrostic asks for a *and a נ, which are quite easily provided by *yiqtol* forms.

10.3.2 *Wayyiqtol* in *נ*-strophes

*Wayyiqtol* clauses, by definition, do not exhibit fronting. Yet, their appearance in the *נ*-lines of the acrostics does merit closer inspection. However, as pointed out in Section 10.1, *n* at the beginning of a Biblical Hebrew word will inevitably have to be the conjunction ‘and’. That this limitation has had its influence becomes clear when the *wayyiqtol* clauses in the *נ*-strophes are seen in their text-syntactic context.

Example 10.29

All splendor has left Daughter Zion.

The *wayyiqtol* clause 1.24 occurs in a context dominated by asyndetic *qatal* clauses. In the poetry of Lamentations, a *wayyiqtol* clause usually continues the immediately preceding clause or closes a *qatal*-dominated unit; it is rarely continued by more than a single clause.

Thus, there is every reason to make 1.24 a direct continuation of the *חケット* clause 1.23. This would also fit the contents nicely, with both Zion’s children and its splendor leaving. However, the explicit mention of *Daughter Zion* makes this impossible. It starts a new chain of participant references, which runs until 27. Thus, the *wayyiqtol* clause must be understood as standing on the same line of discourse with the *qatal* clauses.

Apparently, this situation creates a tension. The acrostic requires a larger textual unit to start on a clause type that is not usually used in this way. This tension seems to have resulted in a somewhat ambiguous structure. As a result of this, different and conflicting connections exist at the same time:

---

16Interestingly, in Mic 2.9 the words נור and נְהָר are also closely associated, in a context in which the ‘women of my people’ are driven from their homes, and their children are robbed of ‘my everlasting splendor’. Whatever that expression may mean exactly, נְהָר can apparently be associated with something the children of Zion possess, and which can be taken away.
• An \(x\text{Q}\text{t}\) clause is directly followed by a \(\text{wayyiqtol}\) clause; their contents appear to be related. Both clauses, then, appear to be bound together tightly.

• 1.25 (ויהי יִרְאֵהּ לְאֵלָה) is parallel to 1.20 (יִרְאֵהּ יִרְאֵהּ), the first clause of the \(An\) strophe. So much so, in fact, that the audience could be tempted to interpret it as the actual start of the new strophe. If this delineation were to be followed, a more usual syntactic pattern would emerge: a main line of two \(x\text{Q}\text{t}\) clauses, with the \(\text{wayyiqtol}\) clause pushed back into its usual position of a one-clause continuation of the immediately preceding clause.

• At the same time, however, the explicit mention of \(אֱלֹהִים\) creates the start of a new chain of participant references, to which 1.25 (יִרְאֵהּ יִרְאֵהּ) is dependent because of the 3 f.sg reference to \(אֱלֹהִים\). This signal, then, marks a break between the \(\text{wayyiqtol}\) clause and the preceding clauses.

• The start of the \(An\) strophe further adds to the expectation of some kind of break with the preceding context.

In this case, then, the acrostic on \(-An\) has caused unusual text syntax, which can no longer be charted in a clear tree-like hierarchy.

Example 10.30

\[23. \text{ (Lam 2,6)} \]

He laid waste his hut like a garden. 23. (Lam 2,6)

Usually, two \(\text{wayyiqtol}\) forms following each other without change of subject should be connected, as the official \(ETCBC\) database has in fact chosen to do. However, the following considerations make me hesitant:

• The suffix on \(שָׁפָה\) (23, ‘his hut’) refers to Adonay himself, no longer to Judah.

• The \(\text{wayyiqtol}\) clause 22 mentions Daughter Judah by name. This binds it to 19, which also has a proper noun: Israel. This makes the change in references even stronger.

• 23 forms the opening of the \(An\)-strophe, poetically but also in terms of content: the \(An\)-strophe describes the breakdown of all cultic life, in which the temple (Adonay’s ‘hut’) is of course central. This is not the theme of the preceding strophe.
10.3. **UNUSUAL SELECTION OF VERB-INITIAL CLAUSES**

It is remarkable that, like in Lam 1,6, the acrostic appears to have created a certain tension. The strophes / verses 5–8 all have a 0Qtx clause in which Adonay and YHWH alternate as the subject. In verses 5, 7 and 8, these clauses form the initial clause of the verse; syntactically, they form their main lines. In vs 6, however, the 0Qtx appears in the second line. This is almost certainly due to the acrostic: The -1 has forced a WYq0 in first position and has moved the needed 0Qtx clause to the second verse line. Syntactically, this state of affairs can be accounted for in a number of ways:

- The strophe boundary is ignored and the four 0Qtx clauses are made the main line of these verses. All other clauses (including the wayyiqtol 23, which is then connected to the preceding wayyiqtol), are made subordinate to them. This creates some kind of enjambment, since the syntactic unit starting in vs 5 crosses over into vs 6. It also ignores the change in content matter (the destruction of the cultus).

- The strophe boundary is respected, and the first clause of vs 6, the WYq0 clause 23, is made the head of the verse, to which also the 0Qtx clause 25 is subordinated. This would create a peculiar sequence of clauses: 0Qtx - WYq0 - 0Qtx - 0Qtx.

Which option is to be preferred depends very much on the almost philosophical question of how to define ‘the structure of the text’. If syntactic structure is seen as the essential structure, option 1 is to be preferred. If the strophe division is seen as the most fundamental structure, option 2 would be the obvious choice.

I have tentatively chosen for the first option, as this seems to be the one closest to the syntactic structure. However, in this case the question of ‘the’ structure is not quite as clear-cut as all that. Syntactic and prosodic requirements have interfered with each other to produce a structure which is peculiar, both syntactically and prosodically.

**Example 10.31**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>בָּחַתְךָ בֵּיתֵךָ ברק</td>
<td>He broke my teeth on gravel, 32. (Lam 3,16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>חָרָם מַשָּׁלֶהָם נֶפֶשַׁי</td>
<td>My Self despaired of peace; 34. (Lam 3,17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>רָאֵם</td>
<td>I said: 36. (Lam 3,18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in Lam 1 and 2, the -strophe shows a divergence from the usual pattern, probably because of the demands of the acrostic. When treated purely on the
basis of the clause types, lines 3.33 and 3.35 could be placed on the same line as all other preceding qatal clauses. Lines 3.32, 3.34 and 3.36, being wayyiqtol clauses, would then be connected to their immediately preceding qatal clauses. This, however, runs contrary to the rhythm of the literary structure, which in these lines shows a neat division into bicola. The wayyiqtol clauses form the A-lines of these verselines. They thus form the main line, to which the qatal clauses 3.33 and 3.35 are backgrounded. This is affirmed by the contents of the lines: 3.32–33, and especially 3.34–35, are obviously paired.

This state of affairs can again be accounted for by the assumption that the acrostic has forced the poet to switch to wayyiqtol instead of qatal. In terms of discourse analysis, 3.32–36 can be described as a germinal narrative. In that sense, the clause types may be attributed to syntactic system rather than to poetic choice. However, in this case, the question as to why this particular choice was made, at this point in the text, appears to have a decidedly prosodic answer: This would appear to be not a case of poetic choice, but of poetic system.

Example 10.32

חוכית תוע הער מימים מחפשת סודים
The punishment of my Dear People is greater than that of Sodom,

Again, a wayyiqtol clause (4.17, a wayX to be precise) occurs in a slightly unusual position. It is entirely obvious that this clause opens a new section of text and does not continue the qatal clauses of the preceding verse:

- The start of a new strophe is clearly marked prosodically, by way of the acrostic, and by way of the rhythm of two verse lines to a strophe.
- Syntactically, there are also clear indications of a new start: the renomination of בת יועם (‘my dear people’), as well as the introduction of the new participant Sodom, the main referent of the following two clauses, clearly mark the start of a new section, rather than as the continuation of a preceding one.

Yet, when considering the usual behavior of qatal and wayyiqtol clauses, this is somewhat unexpected. The wayyiqtol clause has qatal clauses as its daughters. In itself, this can be expected in a germinal narrative (qatal indicating off-mainline material), but there is no germinal narrative here: The wayyiqtol is not followed by any other wayyiqtol clauses.

What we are left with, is a unit of text dominated by qatal forms, which clearly forms a section independent of its preceding context, but which nevertheless starts with a wayyiqtol. As with Lam 1–3, the most obvious explanation for this is the requirement of the acrostic.

17 ‘Sproßerzählung’, Schneider 1985, 48.4.5.1–2.
10.3. UNUSUAL SELECTION OF VERB-INITIAL CLAUSES

10.3.3 Other unusual clauses

A few acrostic lines in Lamentations are verb-initial, but still peculiar, either because the post-verbal syntax is unusual or because their text-syntactic position is unexpected.

Example 10.33

40. (Lam 1,9)

her filthiness on her skirts.

Syntactically, this nominal clause would appear to be a circumstantial clause to 1.39 (see p. 188). This creates a kind of enjambment across a strophe boundary. It is quite conceivable that the ‘difficult’ letter כ has played a role here.

Example 10.34

69. (Lam 2,15)

All those passing on the way clap their hands at you,

76. (Lam 2,16)

All your enemies open their mouths wide against you,

94. (Lam 3,46)

All our enemies open their mouths against us.

These clauses are unmarked, even though there is ample pragmatic justification to use fronting here, as these clauses open their strophe and introduce the grammatical subject of the entire strophe. Of course, it may be countered that ‘you’ (2 f.sg) is still the main participant, but I suspect that the need for vs 15 to start on כ, a relatively difficult letter (see above, Section 10.1), may also have played a role in the absence of fronting. Lam 2,16, which is remarkably parallel to vs 15 throughout, follows suit. In this case, then, the influence of the acrostic is indirect.

Lam 3,46 is the first line in its strophe, yet it is the only one without fronting. Of course, the line is virtually identical to the start of Lam 2,16. If this is intentional,\(^\text{18}\) the fact that it is a quote provides sufficient explanation. In this case, then, the influence of the acrostic is even more indirect.

Example 10.35

81. (Lam 1,15)

Adonay tossed aside all warriors in my midst;

\(^{18}\)So, among others, Renkema 1998, 438.
A similar case, also in an ṣ-line: The subject could have been fronted, yet it is placed all the way at the back, even after the object. Incidentally, the clauses in this and the previous example are the only ones in Lamentations with this V-O-S sequence.

Example 10.36

44. (Lam 2,10)

45.

They sit on the ground in silence, the elders of Daughter Zion;

This clause is verb-initial, yet the occurrence of initial-ｙiqtol clauses here is somewhat unexpected. The acrostic appears to have played an important role in placing the yiqtol form all the way up front. See my discussion of this verse under Example 10.27 on page 230.

10.4 Conclusions

While a majority of clauses with marked word order in Lamentations can be explained as normal topicalization, a non-negligible number of cases can be found in which this explanation does not suffice and prosodic factors appear to have played a role. Opening or closure of a strophe, combined with the demands of the acrostic are the most prominent of these.

Moreover, some verb-initial clauses were found in which precisely their unmarkedness is possibly connected to the acrostic.

In the ṣ-strophes, finally, prosodic influence on text-syntax is clearly visible. In all four cases, some kind of disruption of the overall text-syntactic line of the poem occurs, replacing expected qatal forms with wayyiqtol.

Even though these cases are few, their very existence means that an acrostic, when present, definitely needs to be taken into account in a syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry.
Chapter 11

Miscellaneous

Finally, the question should be raised whether Lamentations has examples of clause types and verb forms that appear to have been selected on prosodic grounds only. This is, of course, very difficult to determine. At the very least, these must be cases which cannot be explained on syntactic grounds. Also, some kind of prosodic effect must be demonstrable. In Chapter 10, I have already demonstrated that some unexpected selections of clause types could be linked to the acrostic. There are other cases, even though they are few.

11.1 Word order variation in the B-colon

Lunn, investigating parallelistic verselines containing a verb, concludes that in the B-cola, non-verbal elements can be fronted for no other apparent reason than poetic variation or ‘defamiliarization’.1

Remarkably, Lamentations shows very few examples of this type of fronting,2 but there are a few. MQL query 11.1 on page 239 finds 10 verselines with a ‘canonical’ A-colon and a ‘non-canonical’ B-colon.3 Five of these do not have parallelism or can be explained on pragmatic grounds; five can plausibly be associated with prosodic fronting:

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1Lunn 2006, passim. See also van Grol 2017, 3.4.2.
2The cases of fronting connected to the acrostic (see Section 10.2.2) are of a different category, since they involve the A-colon.
3Lam 1,5a, Lam 1,14a, Lam 1,19a, Lam 1,20a, Lam 2,8b, Lam 2,20a, Lam 2,22c, Lam 3,9, Lam 3,36, Lam 4,20b.
Even though it is rare, then, the phenomenon does seem to occur in Lamentations, and thus it needs to be reckoned with in a syntactic analysis.

11.2 Qatal- yiqtol shift between parallel cola

Lunn’s thesis deals with word order, but also variation in verbal conjugations, especially a qatal- yiqtol shift between parallel cola, is often associated with prosodic variation. If this is so, the phenomenon is rare in Lamentations. There are only 13 occurrences of qatal - yiqtol in parallel cola, but for virtually all of them there is some syntactic or pragmatic explanation (see Table 11.1 on the facing page): either they have some modal meaning, or they occur in quoted speech, in which a switch to discursive yiqtol is syntactically not remarkable.

I have found two possible examples of prosodic variation, but even these can be explained in syntactic or pragmatic terms, if one interprets them in terms of linguistic stance or salience:

Example 11.1

74. (Lam 1,14) The yoke of my sins was bound together, 75. (Lam 1,14) by his hands they are woven!

A difference in temporal perspective, is not plausible here, since both clauses essentially describe the same action.

Neither can the yiqtol clause be read as a return to the main line communication after a backgrounded qatal section: The main line of this part of the poem is formed by qatal clauses. If the yiqtol clause would really form the main line of the communication, it would be the only foreground clause in the context. What is more, the yiqtol clause specifies the qatal clause, not vice versa.

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5Found with MQL query 11.2 on the next page. Note that the [verseline] and [colon] objects are not part of the official ETCBC data.
6In general, I am somewhat hesitant to assign temporal perspective to clause types, especially for qatal clauses. See my remarks on Niccacci (p. 80) and Kalkman (point 5 on page 91 and the example on page 92); see also Schneider 1985, 185 n. 5; 189 n. 9.
7So, e.g., Kalkman 2015b, concordance of patterns, under 0QtX followed by xYq0.
11.2. QATAL-YIQTOL SHIFT BETWEEN PARALLEL COLA

MQL query 11.1: Verselines with CAN - non-CAN sequence (Lunn)

```sql
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[verseline
    [colon first syntactic_labels HAS CAN]
    [colon last syntactic_labels HAS non_CAN]
] GO
```

MQL query 11.2: Qatal-yiqtol shifts between cola in Lamentations

```
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[verseline
    [colon
        [clause_atom
            [word vt=perf]
        ]
    ]
    [colon
        [clause_atom
            [word vt=impf]
        ]
    ]
] GO
```

| Lam 1,10c | direct speech | Lam 4,15b | future (יָתַם) |
| Lam 1,14a | **prosodic?**  | Lam 4,16a | future (יָתַם)  |
| Lam 1,14c | modal ('can') | Lam 4,20b | dir. speech     |
| Lam 1,19c | modal ('can') | Lam 4,22a | fut. (יָתַם), dir. speech |
| Lam 1,21c | volitive (weyiqtol) | Lam 5,4b | **prosodic?**  |
| Lam 3,24  | dir. speech   |          |                |
| Lam 3,57a | conditional   |          |                |
| Lam 3,57b | dir. speech   |          |                |

Table 11.1: Qatal-yiqtol shifts between cola in Lamentations
The obvious function of this *yiqtol* line is to express shock at the fact that it has been *YHWH* who has made the yoke (see also the fronted יָדוֹ בְּרָעָה ('by his hands!')). That this also results in prosodic variation may be true, but since syntax can already account for the shift, it does not need this extra prosodic argument.

Example 11.2

49. (Lam 3,24) "YHWH is my portion", says my Self; 50.  
51. "therefore I hope on him.”

Example 11.3

We pay money for our drinking water, 11. (Lam 5,4) our wood comes at a price. 12.

Again, an interpretation in terms of relief or temporal reference is unlikely. Renkema apparently suggests a modal meaning of the *yiqtol* ('for our own wood we are forced to pay'), but this seems unlikely, because of the strong parallel to 12 which suggest the same modal function for both the *qatal* and the *yiqtol*.

I conjecture that here, the *yiqtol* has been chosen to end the strobbe on a slightly more salient note than the clauses before it. Its primary function appears to be to make a slight crescendo at the end of the strophe.

11.3 Precative *qatal*?

Example 11.4

106. (Lam 1,20) Hear my voice, 113. (Lam 3,56)

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8 Renkema 1998, 598, my emphasis.
11.3. PRECATIVE QATAL?

The question of whether ‘precative qatal’ exists in Biblical Hebrew, and if so, what its nature is, is a hotly contested one. Be that as it may, many commentators of Lamentations have remarked, that the hypothesis that these qatal clauses have volitive meaning is quite compelling. Especially the fact that the clause is followed by a $WYq_0$ clause, rather than by an asyndetic $0Yq_0$ clause, strongly suggests that it continues a volitive clause. The prosodic and syntactic boundaries also point in this direction: Having the shift to volitive discourse at the beginning of a strophe as well as on a main clause appears much more likely than starting it in a dependent clause in the last colon of a strophe, almost as an afterthought. Furthermore, this use of qatal forms have also been proposed for the end of Lam 3, for Lam 4,22 and for a number of Psalms.

A limited definition

It is not my intention to enter into the general discussion about precative qatal in any depth. For the passages that concern me directly, I can limit myself to a formal observation which, to my mind, describes one specific and well-defined context in which precative qatal is at least plausible.

It is remarkable, that the passages in Lam 1 and Lam 3 have a number of common traits. Moreover, some of the alleged cases of precative qatal in the book of Psalms show the same characteristics (see below). I propose these traits as a set of minimal requirements for the phenomenon:

1. The qatal clause must occur in poetry, or more specifically: in song.

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See Hillers 1992, 78 (who also interprets $\text{סְמַע}$ (114) as a 2 m.sg imperative) and Berlin 2002, 45; 61. Both read $\text{נְבָא}$ as a qatal form, but interpret it as having volitive / precative meaning.


See Buttenwieser 1969, 21; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 30.5.4d; I narrow down their requirements by specifically adding 2 m.sg reference and poetic context.
2. The *qatal* clause occurs in a direct speech addressed to YHWH. Consequently, the verb must be a 2 m.sg *qatal* form.

3. The *qatal* clause appears in a text-syntactic context with clause types that clearly are volitive, such as imperatives and jussives.

4. The *qatal* clause does not have constituent status (marked by conjunctions like רָשָׁא or רָשׁוֹן (object of sensory verb)).

5. An interpretation as expressing a wish seems to make at least as much sense, if not more, as the non-volitive interpretation, considering the situation presupposed in the poem.

The underlying rationale for this set of requirements is that this type of precautionary *qatal* is specific for liturgical, and probably sung, prayer.

As for the last point: This is especially valid for the *qatal* at the end of Lam 3. Up to that point, the *geber* and his audience have extensively argued that YHWH has not listened and helped. In this context, a plea for help makes much more sense than an a sudden and unspecified mention of past deliverance.\(^\text{13}\)

In the case of Lam 1,21, the matter depends on the interpretation of the phrase ‘the day you proclaimed’, and here may indeed lay a objection: In the rest of Lamentations, and even in Lam 1 itself, references to a day or time which YHWH has planned always refer to the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, not to a day of reckoning for her enemies.\(^\text{14}\) On the other hand, the Biblical notion of the ‘Day of YHWH’ is ambiguous to begin with (see, e.g., Amos 5,18–20). It may well be, that the poet plays with this ambiguity and lets Zion wish that the enemies may receive their own Day, just as she herself has. This would fit the wish ‘and may they be like me’.

As for the *qatal* forms in Lam 4,22: These fall outside the requirements, because they are not 2 m.sg forms directed at YHWH; they clearly do not appear in a context of prayer.

This use of *qatal* outside of Lamentations appears to be rare and by no means systematic.\(^\text{15}\) Yet, as mentioned above, there are some examples in the Psalms of *qatal* forms which do meet the specific requirements listed (specifically 2 m.sg *qatal* addressed to YHWH in a volitive context), and of which it is plausible, or at least conceivable, that they express a wish.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^\text{13}\) Cf. Buttenwieser 1969, 22: “But is it conceivable that any sane writer, when turning from the gloom of the present to the glory of the past, should fail to indicate the change of scene and leave it to the reader to divine what he means to say?”

\(^\text{14}\) Lam 1,12 and Lam 1,15; Lam 2,1, Lam 2,16–17 and Lam 2,21–22; see Berges 2002, 90.

\(^\text{15}\) Berges 2002, 220.

\(^\text{16}\) Cf. Dahood 1966, 414–417, who accepts many more and diverse cases than I do.
11.3. **Precative Qatal?**

- Plausible: Ps 3,8; Ps 4,2; Ps 7,7; Ps 22,22; Ps 27,9; Ps 35,22; Ps 60,6; Ps 85,2-4; Ps 119,21; Ps 119,65; Ps 140,8.

- Conceivable: Ps 30,12; Ps 71,3; Ps 119,118.

- With weqatal: Ps 25,11; Ps 143,12.

As stated above, I see this use of *qatal* forms as specifically occurring in liturgical, and probably sung, prayer. Even if precative *qatal* would not occur elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew, these cases could still be explained either as an archaic volitive form which has been misunderstood and erroneously pointed by the Masoretes, or as an archaic use of *qatal*. As I have pointed out above (p. 81), liturgical language has a tendency to retain archaic formulations, even if these have disappeared from everyday language.

By way of hypothesis, I have constructed the clausal hierarchies of Lam 1 and Lam 3 assuming that the forms mentioned are in fact precative / volitive.

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17 The presence of יַֽהֲנָם appears to violate the first condition. The contents, however, strongly suggest volitive meaning. Perhaps, in this case, יַֽהֲנָם is to be read as an emphatic particle, rather than as a conjunction.


19 See Hillers 1992, 6-8. Even if liturgical use of these poems as a whole were to be rejected (cf. Renkema 1998, 47), the sections in which these forms appear are clearly liturgical.
CHAPTER 11. MISCELLANEOUS
Chapter 12

Conclusions from Part II

Many more relations between syntax and prosody remain to be discussed and investigated, but for the purposes of this study, which has focused on syntax as described in terms of clause hierarchy, I have now collected sufficient information to draw my conclusions.

The chapters in Part II have presented a large amount of observations, on many different textual levels and in various linguistic disciplines. In order not to lose track of the purpose of these observations, it is time to repeat my central research question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent, and in what way, should a (text-)syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry account for prosodic influence on (text-)syntactic structure, in order to do justice to the linguistic reality in these texts?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What <strong>prosodic observations</strong> need to be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What adjustments to <strong>analytical procedures</strong> are required?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because there are actually two questions, the present study also has two products:

1. **A list of prosodic phenomena** that need to be taken into account when doing syntactic analysis on a poetic Biblical Hebrew text. After the preceding chapters, this is the relatively simple one of the questions; it will be presented shortly in this chapter.

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To mention a few: Temporal perspective and relief of clause types in their contexts (e.g. Kalkman 2015a); the relation between syntax and the ‘qinah’ meter (e.g. Garr 1983); the syntactic aspects of parallelism (e.g. Greenstein 1982; Berlin 2008; van Grol 2015); ellipsis (e.g. Miller 2003); text-syntax and prosodic units above strophe level, etc.
2. Proposals for **adjustments to the syntactic analytic method**. This issue is of a different character than the first one, although it follows from it. It will therefore be discussed in a separate part of the book (Part III).

### 12.1 Conclusions from the research

In Part II, the following observations were made:

- The boundaries of colon, verseline and strophe have a notable influence on short-range clause connections. Often, the prosodic boundaries group clauses differently than their syntax would suggest.

- Participant references form structures of their own, which often converge with syntactic ones, but not always.

- The acrostic sometimes leads to marked word order (fronting) without this having an obvious syntactic meaning.

- Purely prosodic word order variation in the B-colon is rare in Lamentations, but could be demonstrated.

- The acrostic was demonstrated to cause some syntactically unexplained word order variations. Especially the text-syntactic position of acrostic clauses in the \( \gamma \)-strophes is clearly affected.

- *Qatal-yiqtol* shift as prosodic variation is rare in Lamentations, but a few possible cases could be found.

- Some cases of precative *qatal* were recognized, strict formal conditions for its acceptance were proposed.

These observations mean, that at least the following prosodic elements need to be included in a syntactic analysis:

1. **Colon boundaries** and the **rhythm of A- and B-cola**.
   
   (a) Phrases broken across colon boundaries suggest reconsidering syntactic phrase boundaries.
   
   (b) Multiple clauses within one colon have a tight syntactic connection.
   
   (c) Enjambment from a B-colon into the next A-colon is an argument for a relative break in short-range clause relations.

2. **Verseline boundaries** and the **position of a verseline** within a strophe, especially closing verselines.
12.2. **PROCEDURAL PROPOSALS: A PREVIEW**

(a) Clauses are often connected more closely to clauses within the same verseline than to clauses outside of the verseline. This is a restatement of point 1c above.

(b) A clause in the final verseline of a strophe can have a relation to all clauses in that strophe as a unit, especially when that clause breaks a syntactic pattern present in those other clauses.

3. **Strophe boundaries and relations between strophes** (syntactic, prosodic and semantic).

(a) Strophe openings strongly suggest a syntactic break as well: No clauses are broken up over strophe boundaries. Enjambments, which are rare, only break up connections between complete clauses.

(b) This break does not have to be absolute: Strophes can depend syntactically on each other.

4. **Acrostics**, if present.

(a) Fronting of nominal elements without pragmatic meaning can be found in acrostic lines.

(b) Fronting of *yiqtol* forms without volitive meaning in acrostic lines has been found twice.

(c) The text-syntactic behavior of *wayyiqtol* in the 1-strophe of an acrostic clearly differs from that elsewhere in the poems. It is to be treated as on one line with the surrounding *qatal* clauses.

12.2 Procedural proposals: a preview

With this list, my first research question has been answered. Syntactic analysis of Biblical Hebrew poetry along the lines of general Hebrew syntax works well for most of the time. In that sense, Biblical Hebrew poetry by and large consists of ‘normal’ Hebrew. However, ‘by and large’ are the important words here. A significant number of clauses and clause relations was demonstrated to be influenced by the prosodic structure.

This fact alone warrants certain adjustments to the syntactic analytical procedures. In the next part of the book, I will present my proposals for such adjustments. What is more, I have done a pilot project, in which I have implemented my proposals for the ETSBC data on Lamentations. This implementation has been instrumental to my work on the clause hierarchies, in an iterative procedure as described in Section 6.2 on page 108. This pilot project is presented in Appendix A.
Part III

Towards a Comprehensive Approach
Chapter 13

Proposal for an Approach

The previous part concluded with a list of phenomena that a syntactic analysis needs to reckon with, in order to do justice to a poetic text. It is now time to go into the second research question: How should analytical procedures be adjusted, in order to make the observations that are necessary?

An important premiss of the issue is, that the parameters are still not entirely clear. My research has demonstrated that, e.g., verseline and strophe boundaries can influence syntactic structures, but the precise conditions under which this influence can be acknowledged or rejected, are still largely unknown. What is needed, then, is a method to experiment with a broad range of observations and parameters, which nevertheless remains manageable.

13.1 General Outline

In order to include the observations listed in the conclusions to Part II, the set of arguments with which the textual hierarchy is established will need to be expanded. Rather than suggesting changes to syn04types itself, I propose a separate set of procedures to produce an expandable list of parameters, with which the researcher can experiment, and which can inform them while they are adapting the hierarchies in subsequent runs of syn04types. In broad terms, my proposal amounts to the following points:

1. Organize the observations on syntax, participants and prosodic structure into three separate categories. This keeps them manageable and it allows for studying their interaction.

2. To this end, the syntactic and prosodic structures and the participants domains also need to be charted separately, each with its own set of linguistic descriptions. Technically, this translates into having three separate text hierarchies, of three different classes of linguistic units, within the same database.
3. The *ETCBC* clause hierarchy needs to be more directly accessible as a hierarchy of textual **units**. This will help find syntactic signals that are missed when only the mother and daughter clause are taken into account. It will also allow for a more straightforward comparison with prosodic units.

In the following sections, I will elaborate on these points.

### 13.2 Organize observations into categories

One of the drawbacks of a program like *syn04types* is that the arguments it presents to the user are a bit of a mixed bag. Syntactic arguments (verbal tenses, pronominal and inflectional references, conjunctions, etc.) are mixed with more literary ones (lexical repetition, parallel clause structure, etc.). While all of these phenomena can ultimately be called linguistic, it seems prudent to have some more differentiation here, especially when the examination of Lamentations has indicated that more prosodic observations should be taken into account. I propose to add the following categories of arguments to the text-syntactic analysis:

**syntactic arguments**: the reorganized and expanded set of syntactic arguments put forward by *syn04types*. These arguments involve syntactic units (clause atoms, clauses, sentences, paragraphs), and their features: verbal forms; presence or absence of conjunctions and modifiers, subjects and objects; constituent order, etc.

**arguments from participant references**: the set of arguments involving the patterns of participant references: These arguments involve sets of participant references and their relations: continuity or discontinuity of subjects and other constituents; congruence between verbs, (pro)nouns and suffixes; changes in communicational domains, etc.

**prosodic arguments**: the set of arguments involving prosodic units (colon, verseline and strophe), and the position of clause connections vis-à-vis the boundaries of cola, verselines and strophes; also parallelism, chiasm, lexical repetition, etc.

The distinctions are, of course, not absolute. Phenomena like parallelism and chiasm may be prosodic techniques as far as a poet is concerned, their patterns are often decidedly syntactic and can be described as such. This is not a problem: All three categories of arguments must be based on formally observable linguistic phenomena in the text, so in the end an argument like ‘parallelism’ will react to the same linguistic pattern, no matter into which category it has
been placed. If one strives for completeness, such an argument could be placed in more than one category, possibly under a slightly different name (e.g.: ‘SV-SV’ or ‘VS-VS’ as syntactic arguments, while taking the two together in a single prosodic argument ‘parallelism’).

13.3 Expand the database

Expanding the linguistic arguments with new categories also implies expanding the categories of the linguistic units and their features present in the database. This expansion should be open and flexible enough for researchers to conduct experiments with the data, creating and editing arguments as they go along.

Syntactic units  For syntactic arguments, most of the necessary data is already present in the ETCBC database.\(^1\) Clauses and sentences have already been delimited and a hierarchy of clauses is stored. However, this hierarchy, when interpreted properly, implies the existence of many textual units that are somewhere between clause, sentence and paragraph.\(^2\) Some of the observations required taking these intermediate units into account as well. It is therefore important to have them available as actual, retrievable objects in the database, not just as ‘virtual’ units that can be calculated from the clause relations.

Prosodic units  The need for proper prosodic units is obvious: In order to describe a clause connection in terms of its interaction with prosodic units, these must be accessible in the data. For syntactic purposes, at least colon, verseline and strophe need to be included.

Participant reference units  The structure of participant references in a text is highly entangled with the syntactic hierarchy, if only because it is an important factor in establishing this hierarchy. Nevertheless it is useful to have a separate data structure just for participant references and their connections, because these references do appear to give rise to structures (domains and subdomains), which often converge with syntactic and prosodic structures, but can also clash with them. As always in this type of research, the process is iterative: referential structures help to define the syntactic hierarchy, but—especially in the case of suffixes, verb inflexions etc.—this hierarchy is also

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\(^1\)For an overview, see Talstra 2002a, who outlines the data underlying SESB 2004 (still referenced by its working title Quest.2).

\(^2\)See my remarks on p. 107; see the displays in Chapter 7 (the English pages), for an example of what these units look like.
needed to trace all references to their antecedent. Storing the two structures separately helps to keep things from getting muddled.

Creation of the data structures  For this study, these three structures have been added to the database in three quite different ways: The *prosodic units* have been entered manually, copying one specific prosodic analysis. It would be interesting to see to what degree prosodic analysis can be done semi-automatically with the data and tools available at the moment, but this will have to be a point for further research. The *syntactic units* could be derived from the clause hierarchy automatically. For the creation of *participant structures*, I have only taken the most initial of steps. I have identified all elements in the text that can be attributed person, number and/or gender, on any textual level, and made them accessible as textual objects in the database. I have not attempted to identify domains, since this warrants an entire new research, which at the moment is already performed by others. I only use the newly defined reference units to identify congruencies and incongruencies between the clauses in clause relations.

13.4 Add linguistic features to the data

Simply delimiting new syntactic, prosodic and participants-related units in the text is not enough. Their linguistic features need to be known and accessible, if they are going to be used in meaningful research. These features must be based on formally observable phenomena in the data. In this section, I will outline a procedure to do just that. In Appendix A, I will describe the more technical aspects of this process. For a general grasp, the following summary will suffice:

1. The linguistic descriptions in my proposal are essentially sets of descriptive labels, which can be assigned to words, phrases, clauses, cola, verse-lines, etc., but also to clause relations. They are divided into syntactic, prosodic and participants-related labels.

2. The researcher draws up lists of meaningful (human-readable) labels. There are separate lists for every label category.

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3Renkema 1998.
4For the full procedure, see Talstra 2016; Erwich and Talstra 2017.
5Morpheme level (suffixes), word level (pronouns, verb forms, nouns referring to persons), subphrase and phrase level. All of these can have person, number and gender, as well as clause functions (subject, object, other).
6See note 4 above.
3. Under each label, the researcher lists the textual patterns to which that label is deemed to apply.
   
   - The patterns are described in terms of data already present in the database.
   - The patterns are expressed in a formal query language, that can be read by a computer program.\(^7\)

4. A computer program assigns the labels to textual objects in the database that match the patterns associated with the labels.

5. The newly assigned labels form a linguistic description of their textual objects, and can be retrieved just like any other linguistic feature.

Two further points need to be made here:

1. It is the researcher who draws up the lists of labels and patterns. These lists are the researcher’s hypotheses about linguistically relevant parameters. The researcher is free to add, delete or adapt labels and/or patterns, in order to test and adapt these hypotheses.

2. The patterns that define the labels should be able to include the wider context of the textual units they describe. Thus, it should be possible to label a colon in terms of its position in its verseline (e.g., in the A, B or C colon), or a clause in terms of whether or not the clause following it is a vocative. This way, context-dependent features can be assigned to the individual textual units.

13.5 From labels to linguistic rules

\texttt{Syn04types} already outputs a list of every clause connection it has considered, both the accepted and the rejected ones. From this list, valuable information can be gleaned.\(^8\)

   - The distance between the mother and daughter in the connection.
   - The descriptive labels \texttt{syn04types} has assigned to the connection.

\(^7\)The obvious choice for this is the language in which database searches are expressed in the researcher’s database management system, because it will be tailor-made to find textual patterns with that system, and because the user will already be familiar with it. In my project I use MQL, but in principle implementations could be built for other systems (Text-Fabric, SQL, XML, etc.) as well.

\(^8\)This feature of the program is an addition written by Constantijn Sikkel.
• The eventual status of the connection, which logically can be one of four: (1) Proposed by the program and accepted by the user; (2) proposed by the program but rejected by the user; (3) rejected by the program but chosen by the user; (4) rejected by both the user and the program.

This information is especially useful in a search for relevant linguistic parameters for clause connections. It shows, which labels and combinations of labels have led to the acceptance of a clause connection, and which (combinations of) labels have led to its rejection. The list can also compare rejected proposals by syn04types to the users’ correction in terms of the sets of descriptive labels. The ultimate goal of this list, then, is to provide data from which linguistic rules and arguments can be derived to improve the proposals by the program and, more importantly, to increase our insight into the mechanisms of Biblical Hebrew text syntax.

A limitation of the labels syn04types assigns, is that it is a limited and more or less fixed set, which appears to contain too little information to suit poetic texts. Following my proposed approach, therefore, I intend to expand this list of possible clause connections with labels from the three categories outlined above, while keeping the original syn04types labels. Thus, for every clause connection, accepted as well as rejected, there will be four categories of labels: (1) The original syn04types labels, (2) additional syntactic labels, (3) participants labels and (4) prosodic labels.

This allows for more sophisticated research than the present syn04types labels do. For a start, there are simply more labels, which can be specified and fine-tuned quite precisely by the researcher. Moreover, having labels of different categories allows for examining those categories separately or in various combinations with labels from one or more of the other categories. It is my conviction, that having this diverse information available will make the goal of deriving linguistic regularities and rules from the data, substantially more attainable.
Chapter 14

Syntax and Prosody: An Example

At this point, the two central research questions of this study have been dealt with: I have presented a list of prosodic phenomena relevant to the syntactic analysis, and I have outlined how these added observations could be added to the analytical procedures.

However, the underlying and much broader question of how to integrate both syntactic and prosodic analysis into a more comprehensive view on the discourse in poetic texts, must remain unanswered within the confines of this book. At the end of Part I, in Section 5.3, I suggested that in interpreting Biblical Hebrew poetry, the syntactic as well as the prosodic structure can, to a large extent, be studied on their own terms, but that the final step should be, to integrate both analyses in a comprehensive view on ‘what is going on’ in a Biblical poem.

Obviously, this is not the time nor place to go into this area in any depth. I would, however, consider my work incomplete if I did not at least show an example of what I envision, no matter how sketchy and anecdotal. I hope that the following examples may demonstrate that an integration of the two approaches can yield a more complete view of what the texts communicate, and how they do it.

Lamentations 3

At first sight, Lam 3 looks like a single monologue.\(^1\) However, the text-syntactic analysis shows that the communication is actually more complex than that:

\(^{1}\)This section is an elaboration of notions I have put forward in Bosman 1996.
There turn out to be three participants, although one of them, YHWH, is only spoken to or about, and—even though he is the grammatical subject of more than half of all clauses—acts only in reports or direct speeches by the other two.

The overall structure of the discourse is also complex. Various textual units function as introduction or motivation to other units (and are backgrounded relative to these), while they themselves are introduced by other units (relative to which they are foregrounded). Such complexity is in itself not uncommon; language, prose and in poetry alike, can be multi-layered. \(^2\)

I have charted this structure in Table 14.1 on the next page, but I will also follow its line in some more detail below.

**A litany** In this complex whole, the reader is guided by both the syntax and the strophic structure. To start with the latter: The tight structure, with three acrostic lines per strophe, can not escape even the casual listener. The effect of this is, that the seemingly endless litany of vs 1–18 gets divided into separate chunks, and prevents the listener from experiencing it as a single, undistinguishable flow.

This ‘reset’ every three verselines helps the listener not to lose track, but what is more: it makes every strophe into a separate image, each of which deserves and demands its own attention.

The syntax, in the meantime, is responsible for the image-like quality of these lines: The fate of the *geber* is reported in *qatal* clauses, detached from time (it is difficult to say which clauses refer to past or present events) and detached from the immediate situation.

All the while, a syntactic anomaly creates a lingering tension in the first eighteen verses: From the get go, the *geber* only mentions a ‘he’. Of course, everybody knows who this is, yet, the fact that he is never mentioned by name is syntactically highly unusual. Only the very last word of the very last clause of this unit mentions The Name. Prosodically, as well as syntactically, this marks the end of the litany. But it does more: This first mention of YHWH also

\(^2\)A well-known example is Deuteronomy, the bulk of which forms a single speech by Moses, but which contains numerous plots, subplots, etc. See also Talstra 2014, 554ff., and Talstra 1997, 101, on hierarchy and recursion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verses</th>
<th>relief</th>
<th>contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-24</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>the geber: Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-18</td>
<td>description, motivates 19-24</td>
<td>geber reports his hardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>fg. (conclusion) to 1-18, but intro to 25-39</td>
<td>Remember my hardship! So do I, but I have hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>the geber: ‘Sermon’, in three parts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39</td>
<td>foreground</td>
<td>a. Be silent, humble and trusting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>argument to 25-30</td>
<td>b. Because YHWH does not want to cause hardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-36</td>
<td>foreground (conclusion) to 25-36, but motivation for 40-41</td>
<td>c. We have ourselves to blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-39</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>the geber: Call to prayer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-41</td>
<td>foreground</td>
<td>Let us lift up our hearts to God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>the people: Start of a prayer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42-47</td>
<td>motivation to a prayer that does not come</td>
<td>We have sinned, you have not forgiven...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The geber takes over</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-54</td>
<td>discursive fg, but intro to 55-66</td>
<td>Report of hardship, but with hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-66</td>
<td>foreground</td>
<td>Prayer for deliverance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14.1: Communication and discourse in Lam 3
associates him with hope, even though it is dwindled hope here. This turns out to be a turning point in the poem.

An interior dialogue  Syntactically, the second part of the poem breaks away from the detached qatal clauses of the litany, by the imperative ‘Remember!’ It may be that this is directed to YHWH, as it unvariably is in the Psalms, but the syntax and the strophic divisions connect it to the following ‘interior dialogue’:

19. Remember my affliction and my wandering!
20. my nefes remembers it full well,
21. [yet] this I call to mind . . . : 

The repetition of וּלְשֹׁנָה דָּם and the emphatic infinitive absolute construction make clear that vs. 20 is a direct reaction to vs 19. The strophic rhythm makes sure that vs 21 is also connected to this reaction.

This causes a bit of a syntactic tension: vs 21 has a fronted and thus rather emphatic בָּשֵׂם ('this'), referring to what the geber will call to mind. Yet, the strophe is clearly finished. This, then, helps to read the next strophe as a direct speech, of the geber to his nefes. In the meantime, it has become clear that YHWH has not been the primary audience for a while: This interior dialogue actually serves to paint the premiss for the part that follows: the sermon.

A sermon  For the sake of brevity, I will glance over the verses 25–29. Its main structure is given in Table 14.1. Suffice it to say that in this ‘sermon’, the clauses are all discursive and aimed directly at the audience; also, the strophes and syntactic units strongly converge, which fashions this part into an orderly line of thought. This line of thought ends on the conclusion, that ultimately, the geber and his audience have only themselves to blame for their misfortune.

A communal prayer  The geber therefore calls his audience to prayer, in vs 40–41. It is at this point that things become somewhat chaotic. The people immediately respond, within the same strophe.4

They address YHWH, but without calling him by name; they state: “you have not forgiven.” This shocking statement gets extra attention because the strophe ends here. In the following strophes, the prayer continues, but it seems

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4Gottwald 1962, 103, has the people speak at the very first ‘we’ in vs 40. This solution makes the poem much more regular: It moves back the change of speaker to the start of the strophe. Also, it would create an inclusion of the entire speech Lam 3,1–39 by the word בָּשֵׂם. It would however, make this speech literally pointless.
to get bogged down in ever more desperate laments. These are mostly expressed in qatal clauses, as if presenting the motivation for the actual plea. But this plea never comes.

Then, in vs 48, the geber steps in; the discourse returns to 1 sg references again. That this does not happen at a strophe boundary, seems significant: It is as if the geber interrupts the pointless laments by the people. To be sure, also the geber starts with lamenting his misfortune, but this time, these turn into a ‘proper’ prayer, which at last calls YHWH by name again.

An individual prayer The prayer by the geber is an individual prayer, as the 1 sg references show, but since it has interrupted the communal prayer, it is as if the geber takes over this prayer, possibly on behalf of, but certainly as an example for, the people. In Section 11.3, I have already explained why I opt to read preceptive qatal in vs 56–61. Now that the line of the discourse has become clear, this is all the more fitting: It seems clear, that, even though the geber gives his people an example of how to find new hope, the poem still ends on a prayer of lament. There is no reason for overconfidence; all the geber is able to do, is to move beyond the paralyzing despair and to take up a traditional prayer of lament again. In a situation of utter despondency, this may be more helpful than a triumphant account of YHWH’s past acts of deliverance.

The role of the geber The geber, then, acts as a substitute for, and example to, the people. He steps in where the people get bogged down in desperation, and accomplishes what they can not. In this respect, the character of the geber has similarities with the character of the Servant in Isa 40–55. As Leene powerfully puts it:

“... stel ik het me ongeveer zo voor: wij zijn niet meer in staat om te hopen, maar we zijn nog net in staat om het verhaal aan te horen van iemand die hoopt. Zelf zijn we niet meer in staat om op God te vertrouwen, maar we worden nog net bereikt door het relaas van iemand die vertrouwt. En op hetzelfde moment dat wij deze vreemde stem laten uitspreken, deze qâl ‘abdô, vertrouwen we toch feitelijk zelf weer, ook al vertrouwen we niet. Ons vertrouwen heeft de vorm aangenomen van het luisteren naar een verhaal. En zo wordt het verhaal onze redding.”


6Leene 1980, 27.

7“I image something like this. We are no longer able to hope, but we can just manage to hear the story of someone who hopes. We are no longer able to trust in God, but we are only just reached by the story of someone who trusts. And at the very moment we let this strange
In Lamentations, this appears to happen ‘on stage’, so to speak; this becomes clear when the reader moves on to Lam 5.

**Lamentations 5 as an answer**

In view of Lam 3, it appears that in Lam 5, the people finally get around to follow the lead of the geber. The song has the structure of a proper prayer of lament: It starts by painting YHWH a picture of the misery, mostly in qatal clauses, which ends in a prayer for forgiveness, or rather, for conversion. As in Lam 3, the combination of qatal clauses and the strophe boundaries serve to shape the description of misery into a gallery of separate images.

It would seem, then, that Lam 5 can be seen as the answer to the tension brought about by the interference of the geber. However, whether this will actually amount to anything, depends on the interpretation of the final verse of the chapter. Even though it falls outside of my research proper, I will therefore add one extra section to this chapter.

**ךי in Lam 5,22**

The meaning of the conjunction phraseךי in Lam 5,22, and that of the clauses 5.53–54, is hotly debated. The place of these clauses in the hierarchy of the passage has already been discussed in Example 8.22 on page 178. Apart from it being influenced by the verseline rhythm, it is in itself not remarkable. In terms of my research question, therefore, there is no need for further investigation. Whateverךי may mean, its ‘mechanical’ function, connecting two qatal clauses to two imperatives, is clear. However, since the meaning ofךי is of crucial importance to the message of the poem, and of the book as a whole, I do not wish to let the issue pass entirely.

**Positions**

Concerning the interpretation ofךי, there are roughly two positions:

1. Chronicle means ‘or’ or ‘unless’. This interpretation obviously keeps open the possibility of restoration. The differences can be subtle.

   ‘or’ + question: Kraus,Kraus 1983, 85, 91. many modern Bible translations.


   ‘Or do you prefer to reject us’: Renkema.⁸

voice, this qôl ‘abdô, speak out, we do trust after all, even though we do not trust. Our trust has taken the shape of listening to a story. And so the story becomes our salvation.”

⁸Renkema 1998, 630–632, my emphasis.
2. The הוהי means ‘but instead’. This interpretation is followed by Hillers\(^9\) and Berlin.\(^10\) It implies that the song ends with the affirmation that rejection is already complete, so there is no hope of restoration.

A variant, but with different outcome, is offered by Gordis,\(^11\) who does translate הוהי with ‘even though’, but reads the qatal as pluperfects: “even though you had despised us greatly and were very angry with us,” keeping open the possibility of reconciliation in the future.

**Evaluation**

Translating with ‘but’ is not as ‘natural and straightforward’ as Albrektson claims it to be.\(^12\) It is indeed a common use of the phrase, but so is ‘unless’ (following a negative clause). The problem with ‘but’ is not one of a psychological or religious barrier with the interpreter, as Albrektson implies, but a matter of internal consistency, both of the passage and of the book as a whole.\(^13\)

The whole point of Lamentations appears to be, to help the people overcome their initial despair and bewilderment, by recognizing their own responsibilities for the events, and humbly and cautiously turn to YHWH again, in hope of reconciliation. Ending the book by resigning to YHWH’s rejection again would undercut this completely. Even on the level of Lam 5,22 itself, it appears inconsistent to follow the imperatives asking YHWH for return and renewal by the affirmation that YHWH has already decided not to grant this.

I therefore contend that הוהי must express something in the line of ‘or’, or ‘unless’, giving an alternative possibility to the reconciliation asked for in the imperatives. Precisely how it does this, is difficult to know with certainty. A number of options appear to be defensible:

- The הוהי (‘why?’) questions at the end of the preceding strophe 46–47 have 44–45 as their introduction. As they contain yiqtol forms, they can be read as rhetorical questions with negative intent.\(^14\) The parallelism of the references to ‘a very long time’ further implies a logical connection between the two: “You, YHWH, are eternal . . . ; why would you want to spend all that time forgetting and abandoning us?” The implied answer is, of course, that he wouldn’t. This opens up a slim, but real possibility for a turn of events. This turn is anticipated upon in vs 21 by the imperatives, while vs 22 pushes back, again mentioning the equally real possibility of rejection.

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\(^12\)Albrektson 1963, 206.
\(^13\)Assuming, as I do, that Lamentations can be read as a sequence of poems.
\(^14\)Cf. Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 18.3c #22–25; on rhetorical questions as statements, see de Regt 1996, 52–53.
The syntactic objection that יְָּ֣שָׁ֣בָה יָּ֣שֶׁת only means ‘unless’ when following a negative clause\(^{15}\) can be countered by the rhetorical character of the ‘why’-questions: They suggest and imply a negative statement, which still hangs in the air when the יְָּ֣שָׁ֣בָה יָּ֣שֶׁת clause starts.

- Another solution is proposed by Linafelt, who separates יָּ֣שֶׁת (‘for’) from יְָּ֣שָׁ֣בָה (‘if’) and views the יְָּ֣שָׁ֣בָה-氯es as a protasis without an apodosis: “For if truly you have rejected us, raging bitterly against us—”\(^{16}\) Berlin rejects this interpretation flat out as being too modern for the ancient author,\(^{17}\) but she slightly misrepresents Linafelt’s argument by classifying the last verse as ‘unfinished’ and ‘trailing off’. To be fair, so does Linafelt himself, by calling the verse incomplete and a willful non-ending, ‘… opening out into the emptiness of God’s nonresponse.’\(^{18}\) This wording indeed is a rather modern way of interpreting the text.

The fact of the matter is, that Linafelt associates the verse with oath and curse formulas\(^{19}\) but fails to point out that these formulas are no longer incomplete or ‘trailing off’,\(^{20}\) but have grown into complete and well-understood expressions, which implore the addressee emphatically not to let something happen. When seen in this light, the verse could be translated (or rather: paraphrased) as: “For let it not be true that you have completely rejected us, are angry with us so very much.”

It is difficult to say exactly which explanation is the correct one, but at any rate it will have to be along the lines of ‘unless’: The people truly ask YHWH to lead them back to him. The thought that he might refuse them, is uttered as a terrible possibility, tempering the audacity of the imperatives. Yet, it expresses the fragile hope that this possibility will not become real.

---

\(^{15}\) Gesenius, Kautzsch, and Cowley 1990, 163; the point is repeated by virtually every author addressing the issue.

\(^{16}\) Linafelt 2001, 343.

\(^{17}\) Berlin 2002, 125f..

\(^{18}\) Linafelt 2001, 343.

\(^{19}\) Jouon and Muraoka 1991, 165f.

\(^{20}\) Although, etymologically, ellipsis of the protasis undoubtedly lies at the origin of the construction.
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Appendices
Appendix A

Test Implementation

As a pilot project for the adjustments proposed in Part III, I have implemented my proposals as an enriched version of the *ETCBC* data for Lamentations, with procedures and programs to achieve this enrichment. This Appendix will present some of the more technical details of how this was done. As explained in 6.2, this implementation has been instrumental in my analysis of the syntax of Lamentations.

Creating the clause hierarchies: *syn04types*

*ETCBC* data

My initial data have been taken from a personal copy of the *ETCBC* data on Lamentations. The data up to clause atom level have not been altered, except for one or two phrase parsings. The clause hierarchy (clause atom relations), however, is of my own making and will not match the official *ETCBC* data. I have made these hierarchies with the program *syn04types*, written by Eep Talstra and Constantijn Sikkel.

*Syn04types*

Over the years, the *ETCBC* has created a wide range of tools to annotate the Hebrew database and to analyze its contents. There are programs for annotation on various linguistic levels: morphology, morpho-syntax, clause delimitation, parsing of phrase functions, inter-clausal hierarchy and sentence delimitation. An overview of the entire line of programs is shown in Figure A.1 on the next page.

Figure A.1: ETCBC data production
As is apparent, syn04types stands all the way at the end of this pipeline, and considers all information of the previous steps as given. In broad terms, the program works as follows:

1. It is assumed that every clause\(^2\) in a text syntactically depends on another clause in its context, usually its preceding context. This clause is called its mother clause.

2. For every clause in the text, the program calculates which clause is most likely to be its mother, based on a wide range of syntactic parameters.

3. The program proposes this clause to the user, listing its arguments as a set of descriptive labels.

4. The user decides to either accept the proposal, or to choose a different mother clause.

Syn04types assumes that the following information is already present in the database:

- Word level information: morphemes, morphologically determined features, lexical information and part of speech.
- Phrase level information: delimitation of phrases, phrase types, phrase dependent word features (nominal state, phrase dependent part of speech).
- Clause level information: delimitation of clauses, clause types, functional parsing of the phrases.

For the texts under consideration, this information is indeed present in the data. However, at a small number of points I have discovered that some of this lower level information is, in my opinion, debatable or incorrect. This is to be expected, and has in fact been an integral part of the ETCBC coding strategy from the very start: errors or inconsistencies on lower linguistic levels will emerge during the analysis of higher levels and can then be corrected.

Conversion to Emdros / MQL Once the clause hierarchies have been added or adapted, the native ETCBC data files can be converted into an Emdros / MQL database with conversion tools at the ETCBC, written by Constantijn Sikkel.

\(^2\)Or, to be precise: every clause atom. A clause atom is either a simple clause (no more than one predicate), or a segment of a simple clause. The latter applies in cases of embedding, where the embedded clause physically splits the enveloping clause into two segments.
Emdros database

The *ETCBC* suite of programs, although powerful, has a drawback in that the programs are not easily ported to computer systems other than the Unix computers at the *ETCBC* offices. Thanks to the work of Ulrik Sandborg - Petersen, however, the *ETCBC* data can also be stored and analyzed in another, more accessible format. Sandborg-Petersen’s contributions have resulted in:

- A database design specifically designed to suit linguistic data.\(^3\)
- A powerful query language, called MQL.\(^4\)
- A suite of programs and programming interfaces (API), called Emdros.\(^5\)

The MQL Query Language

The user communicates with an Emdros database through the query language MQL.\(^6\) In this language, the user can issue *queries* and *commands*. *Queries* retrieve all occurrences of certain textual patterns in the database. Queries only look up information, they do not change it. *Commands*, on the other hand, do make changes to the data, by adding, removing or changing textual objects, their types and their linguistic features. The Emdros APIs allow any program to issue both queries and commands to the database. This, in turn, allows for the creation of programs which add new information to the database (through MQL commands), based on observed textual patterns (found through MQL queries).

Text-fabric

Recently, Text-fabric, another database management system and programming interface for *ETCBC* type databases, has been developed by Dirk Roorda of DANS labs in conjunction with the *ETCBC*.\(^7\) It is gaining popularity because of its ease of installation,\(^8\) the free availability of the *ETCBC* data in Text-fabric

\(^4\)Petersen 2017; Sandborg-Petersen 2018.
\(^5\)Emdros is publicly available: http://emdros.org (Sandborg-Petersen 2002), as is the *ETCBC* database in MQL format: https://github.com/ETCBC/bhsa/tree/master/source. An online Emdros / MQL-based version of the *ETCBC* database for end-users can be found as SHEBANQ: https://shebanq.ancient-data.org (SHEBANQ 2014).
\(^6\)For a very short introduction into MQL, see Appendix B. For more complete manuals, see Petersen 2017 and Sandborg-Petersen 2018.
\(^7\)https://dans-labs.github.io/text-fabric/
\(^8\)It is shipped as a Python3 module, which can simply be imported on any system running Python3.
format, its emphasis on ‘open science’, and its easy integration with statistical
and presentation programs (such as $R$, spreadsheets, etc.)

Since Text-fabric has a straightforward data file format, it should be possible
to make the added information from my programs available in Text-fabric
with a simple exporting module.

Expanding the database

From clause hierarchies to syntactic units: cp2unit

As I have pointed out in Section 6.1, the ETCBC clause hierarchies are to be
read not only as connections between pairs of individual clauses, but also as
connections between textual units. This idea is, of course, not new, and other
publications based on or akin to the work at the ETCBC have used display
layouts representing clause hierarchies in the form of nested units. However,
this has always remained a way of representing the data. My recommendation
is, to actually have these units in the data as retrievable objects, so that they
can be included in the linguistic descriptions and rules.

A makeshift solution

In my observations in Part II, which had to be based
on the mother-daughter relations to retain compatibility with the syn04types
results, I have solved this by using some standard MQL constructs that allow
for searching more context than just the mother and daughter clause. See, for
example, MQL query A.1 on page 283. This query looks for a $0Im0$ mother
clause with a $WIm0$ daughter clause, but requires that there is a vocative clause
in the gap between the two clause atoms. In Lamentations, it finds three
cases: 1.57–59 (Lam 1,11), 1.97–99 (Lam 1,18) and 2.103–105 (Lam 2,20).

A more fundamental solution

A more fundamental step, however, is to ac-
tually add these units to the data, as real data objects. One way to go about
this, without cutting the ties with the clause hierarchies altogether, is to con-
vert the one structure into the other. This can be done automatically by making
use of this rule:

- Every clause connection implies the existence of two units:

---

9Renamed BHSA (Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia Amstelodamensis).
11Note that in my database, a new object type [clause_atom_pair] had to be introduced. A
clause atom pair consists of exactly two clause atoms, one of which is the mother clause of the
other. For every clause connection in the ETCBC data, there is a corresponding clause atom
pair.
APPENDIX A. TEST IMPLEMENTATION

1. The mother clause together with all following clauses up to the daughter.
2. The daughter with all its offspring.

Note that both the mother unit and the daughter unit can consist of a single clause atom. This happens if, respectively, there are no intervening clause atoms or the daughter has no daughters of its own.

Note also that units so produced will be hierarchical, because a daughter clause can itself be a mother clause to other clauses. The rule converts a clause hierarchy into a hierarchy of nested units, as shown in Figures A.2 and A.3 on the next page. See also the displays in Chapter 7 (English pages).

The advantage of having units in the database, is that it is easier to look for features inside these units. This is particularly useful for participant references, which do not always occur in the first clause atom of a unit: See MQL query A.2 on page 284, which looks for a unit containing a vocative anywhere inside it. This construct may be used to reformulate query A.1 as query A.3 on page 284.

Programs

My program cp2unt applies the recursive rule to my Emdros database and creates the resulting text units as objects, also storing the mother unit of every unit. These units are unspecified as to their linguistic status: It is not known whether they represent clauses, sentences or paragraphs. In a sense, this is an advantage: Because of the recursive nature of these units, it is useful to simply have them accessible as ‘units’. To be sure, the ETCBC data already contains delimitations of clauses, sentences and, to a certain degree, paragraphs. These data can be used to add a feature typ to the units, so that they can be addressed more precisely when needed.\(^\text{12}\)

Entering prosodic units: unitman

The prosodic structures in the database have been added with the help of the program unitman. This program allows the user to create new objects within a text. These new objects are built from one or more objects which already exist in the database. In that sense, it resembles the chunking tool included in the Emdros suite of tools.

At present, unitman works in ‘free mode’ only: The user is free to create any objects they want, and arrange them into any hierarchical arrangement. The user can move through the text freely and make changes wherever this is wanted. As such, the program mainly serves as a convenience tool to enter

\(^{12}\text{Technically, this is done by the program labelman, see A.}\)
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
clause_atom_pair
clause_atom typ = ZIm0
[clause_atom typ = Voct]
clause_atom typ = WIm0
GO

MQL query A.1: Example of clause relation with ‘hidden’ vocative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>typ</th>
<th>lnr</th>
<th>ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(R)</td>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtl</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xYq0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xYq0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xYq0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xYq0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A.2: Lam 1,1–2 as hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>typ</th>
<th>lnr</th>
<th>ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(R)</td>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xQtX</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A.3: Lam 1,1–2 as units
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[unit
    [clause_atom typ=Voct]
] GO

MQL query A.2: Vocative anywhere in a syntactic unit

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[unit as ul
    [clause_atom FIRST typ = ZIm0]
    ..
    [clause_atom typ = Voct]
] ..
[unit mother = ul.self
    [clause_atom FIRST typ = WIm0]
] GO

MQL query A.3: Query A.1 rewritten as units
new hierarchies (such as the prosodic one) into the database. The program does, however, provide information and warnings to the user:

- The program assumes that, in principle, objects of the same type (e.g., cola) are combined into objects of the next higher level (in this case: verselines). A warning is issued when the user decides otherwise (e.g., by combining a colon and a verseline, by combining cola directly into strophes, etc.).

- The program lists all descriptive labels which apply to the resulting new object. If these labels present unexpected or overlooked information (e.g., very imbalanced colon lengths within a verseline, or unlike amounts of verselines in a strophe), the user can decide to cancel the creation of the new unit and make a different decision.

In order to be useful as a semi-interactive production tool, unitman should be expanded with another mode of operation, which would resemble the general algorithm of syn04types:

- The program moves through the text sequentially, in a number of rounds, each round creating only one extra level of objects. The user is presented with two adjacent objects in the text, and has to decide whether these objects should be combined into a larger object or not.

- A frequency list is maintained of the decisions thus made, and of the various labels which apply. This list provides information on which textual patterns have lead to which decisions, as well as the relative weight of these patterns.

- Based on the frequency list, the program proposes whether subsequent objects should be combined into a larger object or not.

- The user takes a decision, which is incorporated into the frequency list.

This mode of operation, however, presently falls outside the scope of my current research.

### Adding descriptive labels: labelman

The assignment of descriptive linguistic labels to the database, as described in Section 13.4, is done with the help of my program labelman (short for label manager). The program can run in a number of linguistic modes, the

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13It does this by creating the new object temporarily, and assigning labels to it through a call to the program labelman. For more on labels and labelman, see Section 13.4, and pp. 285ff.
most important of which are: syntactic, prosodic and participants. When running in a certain mode, it will only assign labels of the corresponding category. Some examples of such corresponding labels are:\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{syntactic labels}
\begin{itemize}
  \item asyn, coord, hasSubj (for clause atoms);
  \item asyn\_asyn, asyn\_conj, same\_clause\_type (for clause atom pairs);
  \item two\_clauses, enjambment\_clause (for verselines).
\end{itemize}

\textbf{prosodic labels}
\begin{itemize}
  \item A\_colon, B\_colon, C\_colon (for cola);
  \item bicolon, tricolon, strophe\_opening (for verselines).
\end{itemize}

\textbf{participants labels}
\begin{itemize}
  \item has\_nmpr (for clause atoms);
  \item cont\_Subj (for clause atom pairs).
\end{itemize}

The modes / categories can be expanded with relative ease. A few extra categories / modes have already been added to the three main ones, to provide information, especially on word level, that it useful to higher levels of analysis. The complete set of modes is listed in Table A.1 on page 288; the complete set of label definition files I have written for my work on Lamentations is available online for inspection.\textsuperscript{15}

Note that labels from a given category can be applied to textual units that would seem to belong to another category: There are syntactic colon labels, as well as prosodic clause labels. This is done to make observations like the number of predicates or other constituents in a colon,\textsuperscript{16} the position of a clause within a verseline,\textsuperscript{17} or whether or not a clause pair relation crosses a strophe boundary.

The label definitions for labelman are stored in user-serviceable external files, which are organized as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Labels are specific to a label category and an object type.
  \item There is a separate definitions file for every sensible combination of label category and object type. So there is a file for syntactic word labels, one for prosodic word labels, one for syntactic phrase labels, etc.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{14}Note that these are just examples from my own database; the researcher is free to give the labels any name they choose.

\textsuperscript{15}https://www.github.com/HendrikJanBosman/PhD, file lbl.zip

\textsuperscript{16}See O’Connor 1980; Cloete 1989.

\textsuperscript{17}See Lunn 2006.
A pattern defining a label is written as an MQL retrieval query, which describes exactly one object of the current object type. Thus, a pattern in a file for syntactic phrase labels must describe exactly one phrase.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mode</th>
<th>MQL notation</th>
<th>applied to</th>
<th>observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>graphical</td>
<td>graphical_labels</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>masoretic accents, maqqef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>verse</td>
<td>setumah, petucha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lexical</td>
<td>lexical_labels</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lexeme-based semantic or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>syntactic features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syntactic</td>
<td>syntactic_labels</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>syntactically relevant features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phrase atom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phrase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clause atom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clause</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clause pair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>colon</td>
<td>no. of clauses / predicates etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>verseline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prosodic</td>
<td>prosodic_labels</td>
<td>wordcluster</td>
<td>no. of stresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>colon</td>
<td>no. of stresses;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>verseline</td>
<td>position within verseline (A, B or C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>strophe</td>
<td>no. of cola; stress pattern;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>parallelism, chiasmus;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>position within strophe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no. of verselines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>position within verseline;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td>participants_labels</td>
<td>pPRef</td>
<td>person, number, gender;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clause atom</td>
<td>Subj, Objc,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clause atom pair</td>
<td>referential parent and / or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>unit</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.1: Linguistic modes of labelman
The procedure

Let’s say, a researcher is interested in fronting in the first clause of strophes, and therefore wants these strophes to be easily retrievable, for instance with a syntactic strophe label fronting_at_start, so that the strophes in question can be found with query A.4 on page 291. One way to go about this, is:

1. Define a syntactic clause label fronting and assign it to the clauses in the database.

2. Define a syntactic strophe label fronting_at_start, in which the clause label fronting can be used. Assign the label to the matching strophes in the database.

3. Queries like A.4 will now work.

Let us say, that the syntactic clause label fronting, applies to the following pattern:

- a verbal clause with a subject, object, complement or adjunct before the predicate.

This pattern can be associated with the label fronting by adding query A.5 on page 291 to the file of syntactic clause labels.

Note that this is an ordinary retrieval query: It can be run through the Emdros Query Tool or SHEBANQ without further ado, and will then retrieve all clauses with this pattern. Even the label itself is marked in a way that labelman will recognize (by the # sign), but which will be ignored by the search engine (in MQL, // marks comment, see p. 301).

Excursus: Technical procedure  When the file with syntactic clause labels is run through labelman, it performs these straightforward steps:

1. labelman reads this definition. It stores the label fronting and the associated query in an internal list.

2. For each label in this list, the program runs all associated queries through the Emdros search engine. The search engine returns a list of matching database objects, in this case: all clauses with preverbal elements.

3. For each retrieved object, labelman issues an UPDATE OBJECT command, which adds the label (in this case: fronting) to the list of syntactic clause labels the object already has.\(^{18}\)

\(^{18}\)MQL / Emdros allows for multiple-valued features. Regular linguistic features, (verbal tense, clause type etc.), can have only one value: a word cannot be a qatal form and a yiqtol form simultaneously. Some features, however, do have multiple values (semantic fields of a word; the list of daughter clauses of a clause, etc.). The descriptive labels also fall into this category.
Multiple patterns per label

As remarked earlier, the user can list more than one pattern under a label. These patterns are considered to be alternative realizations of the phenomenon the label is meant to describe. Suppose that in our example, we want to include fronted elements occurring before $\text{Exst}$ (‘the presence of’, parsed as Exst in ETCBC) and $\text{NCop}$ (‘the absence of’, parsed as NCop). This could be done as in query A.6 on the next page.

In this way, a broad range of textual patterns can be subsumed under a single label, which allows for broad, almost abstract, labels, which nevertheless are based on observable textual patterns. In our example, the label fronting now covers two quite distinct textual patterns, and can be expanded with any number of additional patterns.

Using labels in other label definitions

Once a label has been assigned to an object in the database, it immediately becomes available for use, also in other label definitions. In our example, once the label fronting has been assigned, it becomes possible to define a syntactic strophe label fronting at start as in MQL query A.7 on page 296.\(^\text{19}\)

This query describes a strophe starting on a clause labeled as fronting. As that label now includes both verbal clauses and $\text{Exst}$ / $\text{NCop}$ clauses, the new label will cover patterns with either pattern.

Once this query has been run through labelman, the new strophe label is now available, and query A.4 on the next page can now be run in the usual search program. For Lamentations, it will retrieve the following strophes: Lam 1,8; 1,10; 1,13; 2,12; 2,14; 3,49; 4,3; 4,9; 4,10; 4,16; 4,19; 4,20; 5,3; 5,5; 5,7; 5,9; 5,11; 5,13; 5,17; 5,19.

In this way, a wide range of new features can be added to the text, all the while depending on the formal information in the database. This information can be used in later research, e.g., in the evaluative analysis of the clause hierarchies.

Expanding descriptions of clause connections

Clause hierarchies: an evaluation

The point of departure of the syntactic analysis in this study has been the clause hierarchy in the ETCBC database. My observations have raised some points for improvement to the underlying linguistic arguments as well as some

\(^{19}\)Note that to test a multiple-valued feature, MQL uses $\text{HAS}$ rather than $=$.
MQL query A.4: Strophes with fronting at their start

```sql
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
  [strophe syntactic_labels HAS fronting_at_start]
GO
```

MQL query A.5: Example of a label definition

```sql
//@fronting
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
  [clause
    [phrase function in (Subj, Obj, Cmpl, Adju)]
    ..
    [phrase function = Pred]
  ]
GO
```

MQL query A.6: Example of multiple patterns per label

```sql
//@fronting
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
  [clause
    [phrase function in (Subj, Objc, Cmpl, Adju)]
    ..
    [phrase function = Pred]
  ]
GO
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
  [clause
    [phrase function in (Subj, Adju)]
    ..
    [phrase function in (Exst, NCop)]
  ]
GO
```
suggestions for an expansion of the database structures, in order to accommodate the complications encountered in poetic texts.

That being said, the system of clause hierarchies remains a good practical starting point for syntactic analysis, also for poetic texts: As long as the clause connections are consistently seen as connecting units rather than individual clauses, and a broader range of arguments can be used, they form a convenient and flexible way to code these units. The units and embeddings of these units could be derived from the hierarchies with relative ease for further research (see Appendix A, p. 281).

It would seem, that most of what is needed to adapt the clause hierarchies to work better with poetic texts, lies in the realm of the argumentation. The syntactic parameters provided by syn04types need to be expanded with arguments from prosodic structure; also, arguments from participant references need to be more sophisticated.

A first and obvious way to gather these extra arguments, is to run MQL queries making use of the added textual units and descriptive labels. The approach set out in these chapters greatly enhances the possibilities to look for intricate syntactic, prosodic and participants arguments, either by themselves or in combination. I do think, however, that the approach has potential for a more systematic investigation into the arguments for establishing the syntactic hierarchy. The next section will demonstrate a possible example of this.

From labels to linguistic rules

As I pointed out in Section 13.5, syn04types creates a list of all possible clause connections it has had to choose from, noting:

- The line numbers of mother and daughter, from which the distance between the two can be derived.
- The arguments the program has found for these connections.
- The instructions by the user, from which the user’s decision can be deduced (accept the proposal or make a different choice).
- five score numbers that syn04types has calculated for the connection.
- The descriptive labels that syn04types has assigned to the connection.

A snippet from the file klaagliederen2.arg, listing the options for connecting line 22 of Lam 2, is shown in Figure A.4 on page 297. The file shows that syn04types has considered five possible mother clauses for 2.22: lines 21, 18, 19, 1 and 23. The proposal by syn04types is always listed first, in this case:

20For readability, I have removed the score numbers.
a connection to 21, the immediately preceding clause. The decision taken by the user is marked by the + in the fourth column. In this case, the user (me) has opted to reject the proposal and connect line 22 to line 18:

Example A.1

proposed

21. (Lam 2,5)

22.

has destroyed his strongholds. 21. (Lam 2,5)

And he multiplied for Daughter Judah moaning and mourning.

corrected

18. (Lam 2,5)

19.

20.

21.

22.

Adonay has become like an enemy, 18. (Lam 2,5)

has swallowed up Israel; 19.

he has swallowed up all her citadels, 20.

has destroyed his strongholds. 21.

And he multiplied for Daughter Judah moaning and mourning.

I have explained my reasons for doing so in Example 8.38 on page 197: The wayyiqtol clause closes the strophe, which is marked by the occurrence of the wayyiqtol after a series of qatal\textquotesingle s, and by the proper name שָׁמָּה הַמָּכָבָרָה. When the arguments listed for the various alternatives are considered, however, none of my arguments are reflected in the *.arg file. Also, many of the labels that are assigned, appear both with the proposal by syn04types and with my correction, so they have little argumentative power here.

In Figure A.5 on page 298, the clause atom pair labels from my programs have been added to the descriptions. There are labels in four categories: the original syn04types labels and the three argument categories: syntactic, prosodic and participants-related. As will be apparent, a much broader set, containing much more detailed labels, has now become available. Moreover, the system is flexible: Labels can be added or adapted at will.

The aim of this type of description is the same as that of the original *.arg

To save space, I have left out the options rejected by both syn04types and myself.
file: to provide data from which eventually linguistic tendencies can be derived (see Section 13.5), by analyzing which (combinations of) labels tend to lead to acceptance of a given clause relation, and which ones to rejection.

Some caution is called for, however. For a start: individual labels are rarely useful on their own. It is primarily label combinations which can have argumentative power. An example:

- The prosodic label wayy_closure_strict only signifies that the daughter clause of the connection is a candidate for strophe closure (see Example 8.38 on page 197). This is true both for the proposed connection as for my correction, so by itself it does not have any argumentative force.

- The prosodic label end_to_start_of_strophe signifies that the last clause of a strophe is connected to the first one. However, this will always be true whenever a connection between the first and last clause of a strophe is evaluated, even when the connection is rejected. Taken by itself, then, the label is meaningless.

- In their combination, however, the two labels describe a real strophe closure, and form a strong argument to connect 22 to 18 rather than to 21.

There are some exceptions, such as the prosodic label B_colon_A_colon. From the expanded *.arg file can be gleaned that in Lamentations, this label is listed 20 times with accepted connections and 358 times with rejected ones. This suggests that it is an unusual connection, and can by itself be seen as an argument against a connection.

**Evaluation**

The expanded list of arguments presented in the last section provides a full formal report of all program proposals and user decisions that were made during the production clause hierarchies. In principle, this report can serve a number of purposes:

1. It can serve as a consistency check on the decisions by the researcher, and may give rise to reconsideration of certain clause relations, or of the labels with which they are described.

2. When sufficient confidence in the hierarchy and their description has been reached, the report can serve to finetune the set of labels themselves, by removing redundant or ineffective labels, correcting faulty ones or adding missing ones. If necessary, the process of revising, describing and annotating the clause hierarchy will have to be reiterated.

\[22\] Signifying that a daughter in an A-colon has a clause in the preceding B-colon as its mother.
3. When the set of labels is sufficiently stable, they can be used to search for linguistic tendencies and rules: Which combinations of labels usually lead to accepting a connection, which ones to rejecting it?

It must be stressed that my experiments with expanded \texttt{*.arg} files only represent a very tentative first step in this direction. Much more thought needs to be put into the labels: There is a fair bit of redundancy; a good number of labels do not appear to have much distinctive force even in combinations; labels may need to be defined more precisely, or new ones may need to be added. But the specific set of labels was not the point of the exercise.

That point has been, to demonstrate that it is possible to set up a syntactic analytic approach to Biblical Hebrew poetic texts which can provide and integrate a wide range of arguments, syntactic as well as prosodic, even if not all relevant parameters are fully known. The approach is open to revisiting, adapting and testing ones hypotheses about these parameters.

The role that the approach sketched in this chapter has had in my own procedures of revising and analyzing the clause hierarchy of Lamentations (Section 6.2) demonstrates its potential to be an important step in the iterative process that is syntactic analysis of Biblical texts.
#fronting_at_strophe_opening

SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[strophe
    [clause first syntactic_labels HAS fronting]
]
GO

MQL query A.7: Using labels in other label definitions
Figure A.4: Syn04 types arguments for 2.22 (Lam 2,5)
2.22-21 proposed [syn04types]  Way0<ZQt0 Cocj0 pngV<pngV pngV<Sfx 0<NPd2
2.22-21 proposed [syntactic]  asyn_conj diff_sentence diff_vt indep_indep
non_disc_non_disc parallel same_salience
2.22-21 proposed [participants]  cont_Subj new_nmpr_other no_Subj_no_Subj
same_verb_png verb_to_sfx
2.22-21 proposed [prosodic]  B_colon_A_colon diff_verseline end_of_strophe
in_same_strophe new_verseline_conc
wayy_closure_med wayy_closure_strict
whole_verseline

2.22-18 corrected [syn04types]  Way0<ZQtX Cocj0 pngV<pngV.pngV<NPd2 0<Subj
2.22-18 corrected [syntactic]  asyn_conj diff_sentence diff_vt indep_indep
no_fronting_no_fronting non_disc_non_disc
same_salience
2.22-18 corrected [participants]  cont_Subj new_nmpr_other no_Subj_no_Subj
same_verb_png verb_to_Subj
2.22-18 corrected [prosodic]  end_to_start_of_strophe new_verseline
end_of_strophe in_same_strophe
wayy_closure_med
wayy_closure_strict whole_verseline

Figure A.5: Expanded arguments for 2.22 (Lam 2.5)
Appendix B

Concise Introduction to MQL

Fundamentals

An MQL query essentially defines a text pattern, and asks the system to retrieve all instances in the database that match that pattern. The basic form of a query is:

- The search command: SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
- The topograph: the description of the text pattern.
- The command GO, which marks the end of the query.

The Topograph

Basic Structure

The topograph describes a textual pattern as a pattern of linguistic units. These units are visualized as blocks, by placing them in square brackets:

- [word] signifies a word, [clause][clause] signifies two clauses directly following each other.

Linguistic units can be embedded within other units:

- [clause [word]] signifies a clause with a word embedded within it.

---

1This appendix only covers the bare essentials of MQL, needed to understand the queries listed in this study. For more complete manuals, see Petersen (2017) and Sandborg-Petersen (2018).

Much embedding can make a topograph visually confusing. The convention is, to use line breaks and tabs to clarify the structure, placing brackets that belong together straight underneath each other. Thus, a pattern like:

```
[verse [clause [word] [word] ] ]
```

(two words within the same clause within a verse) can also be written as:

```
[verse
 [clause
 [word]
 [word]
 ] ]
```

Space allowed between two units is signified by .. (two periods):

- `[clause [word] .. [word]]` means: The two words must appear within the clause, but there may be other words between them.

Linguistic units are specified by features, so that only units with those features are retrieved:

- `[word gn = f]` means: the gender of the word is feminine.\(^3\)

- `[word lex ~ "MLK"]` means: the letter sequence מ-ל-ק is a substring of the lexeme of the word (מלק, מַלְקָ, etc. will all be found).

- `[clause syntactic_labels HAS asyndetic]` means: the label asyndetic is one of the (possibly multiple) syntactic labels assigned to the clause.\(^4\)

- `[word AS word_1][word gn = word1.gn]` means: The gender of the second word is equal to that of the word marked as word_1.

**Important Details**

- **FIRST** and **LAST** in a unit means that the unit must be the very first or last in its surrounding unit.

- **FOCUS** in a unit tells the system that the unit is the only unit in the topograph to be retrieved; the other units are discarded and only help to define the context of the unit.\(^5\)

---

\(^3\)For a list of all features, their possible values and their abbreviations in the ETCBC data, see the file https://www.github.com/HendrikJanBosman/PhD/file etcbc.abbr.pdf

\(^4\)For these labels, see Appendix A, p. 285ff.

\(^5\)Strictly speaking, **FOCUS** only means that the object is of special interest; it is up to the application to decide how it treats units. Some query applications will only emphasize them in the output; my programs use it to extract only the relevant objects from a query result.
• **OVERLAP (SUBSTRATE)** in a unit means that the unit overlaps with its surrounding unit (its ‘substrate’), but may extend beyond it:

\[
\text{[colon [clause OVERLAP (SUBSTRATE) ] ] means: the clause overlaps with the colon, but may run on into the next colon and/or from the previous colon.}
\]

• Anything following a double slash (//) until the end of a line is ignored by the system. This can be employed to add comments to a query.\(^6\)

---

\(^6\)For the use of the program labelman, see p. 289, under ‘An example’. 
Appendix C

Lists and Indexes

List of Figures

2.1 Fokkelman, linguistic levels in poetry .......................... 25
4.1 Interaction of user and computer program .................... 68
9.1 Domains and subdomains in Lam 4 .............................. 203
9.2 Crossing connections in Lam 1 ................................. 215
A.1 ETCBC data production ........................................... 278
A.2 Lam 1,1–2 as hierarchy ........................................... 283
A.3 Lam 1,1–2 as units ................................................. 283
A.4 Syn04types arguments for 2.22 (Lam 2,5) ................. 297
A.5 Expanded arguments for 2.22 (Lam 2,5) ................. 298

List of Tables

2.1 Diverging terminologies above verseline level ............... 22
2.2 Prosodic units, Korpel and De Moor 1988 ..................... 28
2.3 Begin markers (Van der Lugt, Cantos and Strophes III, 3–4) ... 31
2.4 End markers (Van der Lugt, Cantos and Strophes III, 4) ........ 31
2.5 Observations by Korpel and De Moor, Isaiah 40-55 (1998) ........ 33
3.1 O’Connor: units involved in syntactic constraints .......... 43
3.2 O’Connor: syntactic constraints ................................ 44
3.3 Syntactic Constraints according to O’Connor ................ 47
3.4 BH Focus markers and their pragmatic meaning (Lunn 2006) .... 50
3.5 Van Grol: prosodic units ......................................... 57

303
List of MQL queries

8.1 Phrase broken across a colon boundary .......................... 159
8.2 Clause spanning multiple cola .................................. 165
8.3 Colon level enjambment .......................................... 165
8.4 Colon level enjambment across verseline boundary .......... 168
8.5 נש-clause continued by כ-inf. cstr. ................................. 168
8.6 Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline .............................. 196
8.7 Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline .............................. 196
8.8 Wayyiqtol in strophe-final verseline .............................. 196
10.1 Acrostic lines with fronting in Lamentations .................. 222
11.1 Verselines with CAN - non-CAN sequence (Lunn) ........... 239
11.2 Qatal-yiqtol shifts between cola in Lamentations .......... 239
A.1 Example of clause relation with 'hidden' vocative .......... 283
A.2 Vocative anywhere in a syntactic unit .......................... 284
A.3 Query A.1 rewritten as units ................................... 284
A.4 Strophes with fronting at their start ............................ 291
A.5 Example of a label definition .................................... 291
A.6 Example of multiple patterns per label ......................... 291
A.7 Using labels in other label definitions ......................... 296
### List of clause type abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZQt0</td>
<td>Zero-qatal-null clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZQtX</td>
<td>Zero-qatal-X clause</td>
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<td>XQt1</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Ellipsis</td>
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<td>Reopening</td>
</tr>
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<td>Extraposition</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unkn</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Taken from Kingham 2017, with different sorting.
List of online material

On https://www.github.com/HendrikJanBosman/PhD, the following materials are available online:

annot.pdf My annotations / research notes on the clause hierarchies of the book of Lamentations. This file is meant to provide insight in the reasoning behind some of my syntactic decisions.

threni.zip My enriched version of the ETCBC database of Lamentations, in MQL format. Requires the Emdros database system (available at https://emdros.org).

lbl.zip The label definition files I have used for my analysis of Lamentations. These files are processed by my program labelman (see p. 285ff.), but they can also be read by readers who understand the MQL query language.

The source files of my programs, and the data files needed to run them on the book of Lamentations, are also available for download and experimentation:

source files:
https://www.github.com/HendrikJanBosman/emdrosapp_src

data files:
Index of authors

Albrektson, B. – 160, 166, 241, 263
Bosman, H. J. – 71, 211, 213, 217, 228, 257, 261, 281
Buttenwieser, M. – 241, 242
Cheney, M. – 36
Cloete, W. T. W. – 47, 48, 83, 286
Collins, T. – 12, 37, 83
Dahood, M. J. – 241, 242
de Hoop, R. – 36, 166
de Moor, J. C. – 28, 30, 33
de Regt, L. J. – 71, 201, 263
Doedens, C.-J. – 280, 299
Dyk, J. W. – 63
Erwich, C. and E. Talstra – 86, 201, 254
Fokkelman, J. P. – 12, 22, 24, 26, 27
Garr, W. R. – 245
Gesenius, W., E. Kautzsch, and A. E. Cowley – 241, 264
Gordis, R. – 263
Gottwald, N. K. – 260
Greenstein, E. – 37, 245
Gropp, D. M. – 169
Groves, J. A. – 64
Harmsen, J. H. – 63, 280
Hillers, D. R. – 160, 166, 170, 229, 241, 243, 263
Jouion, P. and T. Muraoka – 241, 264
Kalkman, G. J. – 11, 12, 73, 83, 87, 89, 90, 105, 107, 238, 245
Kingham, C. – 277
Korpel, M. C. A. and J. C. de Moor – 11, 12, 28, 32, 43, 54, 56, 81, 83, 157
Kraus, H. J. – 11, 160, 166, 212, 262
Kugel, J. L. – 37
Labuschange, C. J. – 32
Lambrecht, K. – 50
Leene, H. – 209, 261, 281
Linafelt, T. – 264
Longacre, R. E. – 81
Longman, T. – 212
Lunn, N. P. – 29, 35, 49, 81, 217, 219, 221, 227, 237, 286
Miller, C. L. – 209, 245
Nicacci, A. – 75, 76, 78, 79, 82, 229
O’Connor, M. – 12, 42, 43, 45, 83, 286
Oosting, R. – 63, 96, 97, 281
Petersen, U. – see Sandborg-Petersen
Provan, I. W. – 241
Quest/ECA – 63
Rogland, M. F. – 241
Roorda, D. – 63
Salters, R. B. – 210, 212, 213
Sandborg-Petersen, U. – 63, 280, 299
Schneider, W. – 51, 65, 66, 82, 234, 238
SESB – 63, 253
SHEBANQ – 59, 63, 96, 280
Talstra, E. and A. L. H. M. van Wieringen – 71
Talstra, E. – 63, 66, 67, 69, 71, 72, 86, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 106, 201, 253, 254, 258
Tull Willrey, P. – 261
van Grol, H. W. M. – 9, 12, 24, 25, 29, 34, 37, 38, 40, 46, 47, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 73, 81, 93, 96, 98, 158, 160, 174, 237, 238, 245
van Peursen, W. – 73
van Ruiten, J. T. A. G. M. – 54
van Wieringen, A. L. H. M. – 63, 107, 201, 281
van der Lugt, P. – 11, 12, 25, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 45, 54
van der Woude, A. – 209, 261
Vegas Montaner, L. – 195
Verheij, A. J. C. – 63
Vlaardingerbroek, J. – 212, 213
Waltke, B. K. and M. O’Connor – 241, 263
Watson, W. G. E. – 21, 27, 54, 56
Weinrich, H. – 65, 82
Westermann, C. – 212, 261
Widdowson, H. G. – 22
Winther-Nielsen, N. and E. Talstra – 71
Winther-Nielsen, N. – 63, 71
# Index of references to Biblical texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen</td>
<td>27,34–35 – 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35,7 – 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35,9 – 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43,34 – 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,10 – 83, 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,8 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,2 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7,7 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,4–5 – 91, 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,4–7 – 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,4 – 92</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,6–7 – 78, 82</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>11,7 – 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22,22 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25,11 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27,9 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30,12 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35,22 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60,6 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>71,3 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>85,2 – 243</td>
</tr>
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<td>119,21 – 243</td>
</tr>
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<td>119,65 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>119,118 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>140,8 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>143,12 – 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lev</td>
<td>16,23 – 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deut</td>
<td>4,45 – 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28,56–57 – 225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32,1 – 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sam</td>
<td>23,1–7 – 218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kgs</td>
<td>1,11 – 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19,21–28 – 218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa</td>
<td>65,13–25 – 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jer</td>
<td>2,5 – 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15,17 – 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezek</td>
<td>36,20 – 163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>5,18–20 – 242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mic</td>
<td>2,9 – 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hab</td>
<td>3,8 – 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps</td>
<td>2,1–2 – 79, 82, 83, 92, 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,3 – 83, 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,12 – 206, 242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,14 – 237, 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,15 – 242</td>
<td>3,46 – 235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,18 – 281</td>
<td>3,48–54 – 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,19 – 237–239</td>
<td>3,48 – 206, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,20 – 180, 181, 237, 238</td>
<td>3,50 – 229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,21 – 162, 239, 242</td>
<td>3,51 – 229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,22 – 238</td>
<td>3,55–66 – 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,1 – 242</td>
<td>3,56–61 – 261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,3 – 195</td>
<td>3,56 – 229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,4–5 – 197</td>
<td>3,57 – 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,5 – 194, 195, 233</td>
<td>3,63 – 229, 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,6 – 195, 233</td>
<td>4,3–5 – 194, 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,8 – 195, 237</td>
<td>4,3–8 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,11–13 – 210</td>
<td>4,3 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,11 – 206, 210</td>
<td>4,4 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,13 – 210</td>
<td>4,5 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,14 – 160, 194, 195</td>
<td>4,6 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,15 – 235</td>
<td>4,7–8 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,16–17 – 242</td>
<td>4,7 – 187, 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,16 – 235</td>
<td>4,8 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,17 – 195</td>
<td>4,9–10 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,20 – 237, 281</td>
<td>4,9 – 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,21–22 – 242</td>
<td>4,10 – 209, 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,22 – 213, 237</td>
<td>4,11 – 195, 208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,1–18 – 213, 258</td>
<td>4,12 – 206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,1–39 – 260</td>
<td>4,15 – 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,9 – 237, 238</td>
<td>4,16 – 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,10 – 195</td>
<td>4,17–20 – 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,16–18 – 176</td>
<td>4,17 – 218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,16 – 195</td>
<td>4,20 – 237, 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,18 – 206, 214</td>
<td>4,21–22 – 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,19–41 – 206</td>
<td>4,21 – 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,20–41 – 258</td>
<td>5,2 – 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,22–24 – 224</td>
<td>5,4 – 35, 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,24 – 239</td>
<td>5,5–6 – 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,31 – 195</td>
<td>5,11 – 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,36 – 237</td>
<td>5,21–22 – 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,38 – 224</td>
<td>5,22 – 9, 262, 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,40 – 211, 260</td>
<td>1 Chr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,42–47 – 258</td>
<td>16,8–36 – 218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>