

The Etymology of Ugaritic *ypḥ* and Hebrew *yāpīaḥ*, “Witness”

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Abstract

As yet there is no satisfactory derivation for Ugaritic *ypḥ* and Hebrew *yp(y)ḥ*, both meaning “witness”. Here arguments are provided for an etymology, already proposed in the 19th century by Barth, i.e. Arabic *bwh*, “to disclose etc.”, which now finds further support from Ge’ez. As additional corroboration, the nominal form /yqtl/ is also discussed, as well as the interchange of /b/ and /p/ in Semitic. This has resulted in several new examples being identified, in Ugaritic, for both sets. Furthermore, new meanings have been found for three Ugaritic words: *hpn*, “inactivity”, *hp*, “a grain” and *stp*, “lid”. Also, new cognates have been proposed for *āpq*, *gp*, *pālt*, *pdd*, *pltt*, *prs*, *pzg*, *šrp*, *y/np*, *yrdt* and *yṣḥ*, and additional cognates have been provided for *spṛt* and *yṣr*.

Keywords

Akkadian, Arabic, /b/~p/ interchange, Chadic, cognates, Ethiopic (Ge’ez), Hebrew, Ugaritic, /yqtl/ nominal form.

1. The meaning of Ugaritic *ypḥ*

It is now quite certain that Ugaritic *ypḥ*, a word that occurs no fewer than nineteen times, although only in the legal and economic texts¹, means “witness”². In fact, in Ugaritian Akkadian it corresponds to Akk. (LÚ) IGI, i.e. *šību(m)*, “old (person), elder; witness” (*CDA*, 370b) and to LÚ.MEŠ *ši-bu-ti*, “men of testimony” (e. g. *PRU* 6, 37 [RS 17.88]:2)³. As first recognised by Dahood⁴ the only Semitic cognate is Heb. *yāpēʿḥ*,

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¹ Legal texts: *KTU* 3.6:2; 3.8:17, 19, 21; 3.9:18; 3.15 [formerly 4.248]:10; 3.16 [formerly 4.258]:5; 3.23 [formerly 4.632]:22; 3.28 [formerly 4.778]:3, 11, 19; 3.29 [formerly 4.782]:5, 18, 27; 3.35 [formerly 4.659]:6; economic texts: *KTU* 4.31:9; 4.754:4 and 4.817 [formerly 9.428]:17, 18. On the reading in *KTU* 3.6:2 see MÁRQUEZ ROWE 1999: 416, n. 27. Note the isolated orthographic variant *ypḥ* for *ypḥ* in *KTU* 4.31:9 (on which see VIROLLEAUD 1960: 88).

² The first scholar to identify this word was VIROLLEAUD (1956: 86): “Par analogie avec les contrats accadiens, *ypḥ* doit signifier témoin, mais l’étymologie est incertaine”. Besides *DUL*, 959 (“witness”), see for example “Zeuge” in TROPPEL 2008: 140 (as /yāpīhu/ or /yapīhu/) and “witness” in MCGEOUGH – SMITH 2011: 170, 354, 385, 449, 500, 594, 595 (but with no comments).

³ More syllabic texts cited in *DUL*, 959 and cf. MÁRQUEZ ROWE 2006: 206. Note that Ug. *šb* simply means “old man, elderly man” (*DUL*, 789-790).

⁴ DAHOOD 1958: 47-48, n. 21; see also LOEWENSTAMM 1962-1963; 1975: 104; GORDON 1965: 412 (§19.1129), DAHOOD 1965b: 62; BERGER 1970: 15-16 and later, MILLER 1972: 42 (and n. 1); see also PARDEE 1978 and MILLER 1979. LOEWENSTAMM (1975: 104) provides the history of pre-Ugaritic philological analysis going right back to A. B. EHRlich in 1901.

“witness” (*HALOT*, 424a)⁵, which as yet has no accepted etymology⁶. Here, an etymology proposed earlier is discussed and supported by further evidence⁷ seem to have taken place predominantly, though not exclusively, within the family and inside the household.

2. Previous proposals for an etymology

The etymology from an assumed verb *pḥ or *nḥ (“to blow”) that has been proposed for Ug. *yph* is impossible for two reasons: (a) the guttural in *yph* is /h/ not /ḥ/, as in Ug. *mḥm*, “bellows” – which does derive from *(n)ḥ (cf. *DUL*, 559)⁸ – and (b) the forced semantic shift from “to blow” to “to witness” is clearly unacceptable⁹. Similarly, for Hebrew, a suggested derivation from the verb *yph*, “to breathe”, as in Jer. 4:31 (hitp. “to gasp for breath”)¹⁰ – if that is the correct meaning there – must be rejected, since “to breathe” cannot be stretched semantically to mean “to (bear) witness, to give testimony”¹¹. In addition, Colin had suggested Arab. *pwh* [sic!], “to divulge, proclaim” as a possible cognate¹², but in fact that verb is Arab. *faja*’, “it (a thing) became revealed, disclosed, divulged” (*AEL*, 2422), “to disclose, lay a. th. [anything] bare” (*AED*, 550) or else perhaps Arab. *fāha*, “to diffuse an aroma... to spread, diffuse, emanate (fragrance)” (*DMWA*, 731), and must therefore be excluded¹³.

Instead, of any of these, some 125 years ago, while discussing Hebrew words with initial /p/ that corresponds to /b/ in other Semitic languages, Barth mentioned Heb. *pyh* or *pwh* (as the presumed root of *ypyh*) as equivalent to Arab. حبا “to disclose etc.”, noting that whereas the verb is transitive in Hebrew, in Arabic it requires the preposition *b*¹⁴.

⁵ Occurring only in Pss 12:6; 27:12; Prov. 6:19; 12:5, 17; 14:5, 25; 19:5, 9 and Hab 2:3 – ten times in total, in a very restricted range of genres, much as in Ugaritic.

⁶ As DAHOOD 1958, 47, n. 21 noted, “the root of *yāpēah* is not at all certain, since it might be either *pwh*, *yph*, or *nph*”.

⁷ My thanks go especially to Manfred Kropp and Juan Pablo Vita for their detailed (and positive) critique and evaluations as well as to Vasile Condrea, Lester Grabbe, Gert Prinsloo, Rainer Voigt and Nicolas Wyatt for their comments and/or help with otherwise very elusive references.

⁸ As pointed out by DAHOOD 1965: 319-320. Note also his comment: “Ugar. *yph*, “witness, testifier,” shows that Heb. *yāpēah* does not derive from *nph* or *pwh*; were this the case, the Ugaritic substantive would be written *yph*, with the velar fricative, since the Ugaritic correspondents of Heb. *nph* and *pwh* are *nḥ* (attested) and *pḥ* (unattested)” (DAHOOD 1966: 169). The same applies to corresponding derivations for Heb. *yp(y)h*, e. g. most recently, REYMOND 2018: 40 (with n. 75), 236.

⁹ For details see the comprehensive but inconclusive survey in *HALOT*, 916-917. See also *KAHAL*, 221a, 441a. Akk. *munappihu*, “rumour-monger” (*CDA*, 217a), may not be relevant.

¹⁰ As given in *DCH* IV, 251b, but see *HALOT*, 424a.

¹¹ Or even “(to) breathe out, utter”, as proposed by JANZEN 1980: 55.

¹² In VIROLLEAUD’S paper (1954-1957: 87) G. S. COLIN made the following comment: “*yph*: peut être rapproché de la racine arabe *pwh* « divulguer, proclamer ». Le sens de « témoin » peut en être tiré”. This was cited by DAHOOD 1965a: 320; 1966: 169, but otherwise has been totally ignored.

¹³ Vasile Condrea suggested (p.c. 16th October, 2018) that this may be a mistake in transcription or printing, otherwise one of the scholars present at the “Séance du 28 Novembre 1956” (*GLECS* 7, 1956-1957) would have objected. Curiously, there was a similar typographical error, this time in the Arabic script, in the paper by LOEWENSTAMM 1962-1963: 206.

¹⁴ LOEWENSTAMM 1962-1963: 206, mentions this etymology, but rejects it “because so far we have found in Ugaritic neither the verb *pwh* nor a participle with the first letter *yodh* added”. Here I must express

3. The etymology of Ugaritic *ypḥ* and Hebrew *yāpīaḥ*

As proposed by Barth, Heb. *yāpīaḥ* is cognate with Arab. *بأح* (*bāḥa/bwḥ*), “to become known, be revealed, be divulged leak out (secret); to reveal, disclose, divulge a secret” (*DMWA*, 81); “it (a secret, a thing) became apparent, manifest; he revealed, disclosed it (a secret)” (*AEL*, 273); “to disclose a secret to a. o. [anyone]” (*AED*, 40). To this, now, can be added Ge’ez *bwḥ* (*boḥa*), “(to) be seen, be revealed, be clear”¹⁵ and Amharic *bāha*, “be visible, be seen” (from Ge’ez) as well as Amharic *buh*, “that which is seen” (*CDG*, 115a)¹⁶. See also Common Semitic *bāḥa*, “paraître, se manifester, être divulgué (secret)”¹⁷. The same etymology would also apply to Ug. *ypḥ*, a word which, of course, was unknown to Barth. For this to be correct, two factors need to be established: (i) the posited interchange between /b/ and /p/ and, less crucially, (ii) the proposed nominal form (/yqtl/). These are discussed here in turn (§4 and §5).

4. The interchange of /b/ and /p/

There is no problem in Ugaritic /p/ corresponding to /b/ in another Semitic language (and vice versa)¹⁸ in a number of cases¹⁹ and to a lesser extent the same applies to Hebrew²⁰. Here, two sets of words with this equivalence are provided: in Ugaritic (§4.1) and in both Ugaritic and Hebrew (§4.2)²¹.

4.1. Ugaritic /p/ = /b/ in (at least) one other Semitic language

(a) Ug. *gp*, “shore, hillside etc.” (*DUL*, 300) – but Syr. *gb*, “side” (*SL*, 198b) and Aram. *gb*, “side” (*DJPA*, 118a)²².

(b) Ug. *gpr*, “opponent” (*DUL*, 302) – but Heb. *geber*, “young (strong) man” (*HALOT*, 175-176), Heb. *gibbôr*, “manly; hero” (*HALOT*, 172) and Akk. *gabarû* or *gabrû*, “opponent” (*CDA*, 87a)²³.

(c) Ug. *ḡpy*, “to espy” (*DUL*, 319) – but Akk. *ṣubbû(m)*, “to observe (from a distance), etc.” (*CDA*, 340a)²⁴.

my thanks to John F. A. Sawyer for very rapidly providing a translation of this section of Loewenstamm’s paper. See also LOEWENSTAMM 1963-1964.

¹⁵ Also: “i[dem] q[uod] (Arab.) *bāḥa*: *apparuit, manifestus fuit; manifestavit* etc.” (DILLMANN 1875: 523-524). BARTH made no mention of this cognate.

¹⁶ Apparently, the form *yābāḥ* cited there is incorrect (p.c. Manfred Kropp, 24th and 25th July 2018).

¹⁷ *DRS*, fascicule 2, 51, although the entry is rather confused.

¹⁸ Note also the inner-Ugaritic interchange of these two phonemes, on which cf. *UG*, 137-139 §33.112.3.

¹⁹ For Ugaritic see FRONZAROLI 1955: 52-54; GARR 1986; GRABBE 1979; VOIGT 1991: 1619 and 1630; *UG*, 137-139, §33.112.3; §33.112.31; §33.112.35 and SPENCER 2004. For Hebrew see GRABBE 1977: 96-98 and more generally, see BARTH 1893: 23-29 §8, and the provisos listed by GRABBE 1979: 313, and by VOIGT 1991.

²⁰ E. g. Heb. *pšṭ*, “to spread out” (*HALOT*, 980) – but Arab. *basata*, “to spread out” (*DMWA*, 57b). For other examples see GARTI – WASSERMANN 2017: 77.

²¹ Here, uncertain examples are given in footnotes. The listing given here is not exhaustive.

²² Different cognates for Ug. *gp* are listed in *DUL*, 300.

²³ For Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) see Chadic **gVbVr-*, “man” (*CED*, 119, No. 193).

²⁴ For Ug. /ḡ/ as corresponding to /ṣ/ see generally *UG*, 94, §32.123.23 and 125, §32.146.312, although this example is not listed there.

(d) Ug. *hpn*, “inactivity, incompetence” (*KTU* 1.16 vi 58)²⁵ – but Syr. *ḥbnn*’, “lazy, incompetent” (*SL*, 408b), Syr. *ḥbn*, Etpa. “to be lazy”; Etpa. “to cease, desist” (*SL*, 408b)²⁶. The usual translation of Ug. *hpn* is “greed”, lit. “empty hand” or, as a verb, “to take with both hands” (see *DUL*, 362; *RTU*, 57, n. 93). A list of Kirta’s failures is given in the previous passage (*KTU* 1.16 vi 45-50; also 32-34), and summarised (as *hpnk*) in the last line of the curse: *tqln. bgbl šntk. bhpnk. wt’n*, “May you fall at the height of your years, for your incompetence, and be humiliated!”. This version seems to fit the context better than “(for your) greed” and is a completely new suggestion.

(e) Ug. *hp*, “a grain”, as *hp ksp*, “a grain of silver” (*KTU* 4.867:8)²⁷ – but Syr. *ḥb*’, “grain, ¼ carob” (*SL*, 403b), Mand. *haba*, “grain” (*MD*, 115a) and Arab. *ḥabb*, “grain” (*DMWA*, 152b)²⁸. This proposal is new.

(f) Ug. *hrsp/hrzp*, “ankle, joint” (*DUL*, 403) – but Heb. *ḥarṣubôt*, “bonds” (*HALOT*, 356).

(g) Ug. *kpt*, “floor” (*DUL*, 448-449) – but Akk. *kibsu(m)*, “track” (*CDA*, 156)²⁹ and Aram. *kbš*, “trodden down area, path” (*DJBA*, 574b)³⁰.

(h) Ug. *pält*, “fallow ground, waste land” (*DUL*, 648)³¹ – but Aram. *b’l*’ (*bl*’), “rural/open area” (*DJBA*, 220b) and Mand. *bala* (= *bālā*’, *bā’lā*’), “prairie, land outside towns, uncultivated ground” (*MD*, 48a)³². These cognates had been overlooked. The Ugaritic text in question is as follows:

āhl. ān. bš[ql] ynp^c. bpält. “If only the ear of corn would grow in the *fallow ground*,
bšql. ynp^c. byglm (if only) the ear of corn would grow in the
untilled land!”³³

For the verb *ynp^c*, “to grow, sprout”, see the discussion in 4.2 (f) below.

(i) Ug. *pdd*, “to fall to pieces, wear out” – but Eth. *btt*, “(to) wear out, become old and worn-out” (*CDG*, 113a). Semantically, this is closer than Eth. *fatata*, “(to) break off a piece, fracture, etc.” (*CDG*, 171), as cited in *DUL*, 651 – unless Ug. *pdd* is from **pwd*: cf. Arab. *fwd*, “it went away, passed away” (*AEL*, 2456), Syr. *pdd*, “to fail, vanish etc.” (*SL*, 1156), as proposed by Tropper – Vita 2013: 240.

²⁵ The same curse (with *hpn*) is possibly to be restored in *KTU* 1.2 i 7-9, where it must have been used merely mechanically; see the comments in *RTU*, 241, n. 297 and more generally, WYATT 2006.

²⁶ Note Eth. *ḥby*, “(to) disregard, ignore, be reluctant to do something” (*CDG*, 225a) as a possible cognate.

²⁷ This is more specific than “a measure” / “object” (?) as in *DUL*, 395.

²⁸ Where Ug. /*h*/ may correspond to Arab. /*ḥ*/, on which cf. *UG*, 122-124, esp. §32.146.23, although this is a new example not mentioned there.

²⁹ And Akk. *kibšu*, “road” (cf. LEVAVI 2018: 542).

³⁰ And cf. Heb. *kebeš*, “stool” (*HALOT*, 460b). Alternatively (but probably only in *KTU* 1.108:8), Ug. *kpt* may mean “turban”, cognate with or a loan from Akk. *kubšu(m)*, “headcloth, turban” (*CDA*, 164); cf. *UG*, 130.

³¹ AISTLEITNER WUS, 252 §2184, who translates Ug. *pält* as “kümmerlich bewachsenes Feld?”, refers to Arab. *ba ṭl*, “schwächlich, verkümmert”; for discussion see VOIGT 1991: 1621.

³² Further support comes from Chadic **bVI-*, “field”, as *bábâl*, “field” and *bela*, “champ” (*CED*, 55, No. 16, but with no reference to Ugaritic), newly identified as a distant cognate. For a survey of other opinions on Ug. *pält* see WATSON 2007: 53-54 and *DUL*, 648.

³³ *KTU* 1.19 ii 15-16; the word *pält* also occurs with the same meaning in line 12; for more detail see WATSON 2018.

(j) Ug. *pltt* in the expression ‘*pr pltt*, “dust of grovelling” (KTU 1.5 vi 15), Heb. *hitpaleš, “to roll about (in the dust)” (HALOT, 935b) – but Mehri *bl’ṭ*: *abálat*, “to roll in the soil” (ML, 48).

(k) Ug. *prš*, “breach, opening” (DUL, 672), Heb. *pereš*, “breach, gap” (HALOT, 972-973), Arab. *furḍat*, “gap, opening” (AEL, 2374) and Aram. *piršā*’, “perforation, hole” (DJBA, 906a) – but Aram. *brš*’, “hole” (DJBA, 206a)³⁴.

(l) Ug. *pžg*, “to lacerate” (DUL, 679) – but Aram. *bz*’, “to tear, rend” (DNWSI, 149), Aram. *bz*’, “to pierce, split” (DJBA, 194-195), “to rend, split” (DJPA, 90a), “to tear (clothes)” (DSA I, 90) and Syr. *bz*’, “to split, tear, cleave, make a hole in” (SL, 133-134). Note especially Syr. *bwz*’, “tear, laceration” (SL, 125a)³⁵.

(m) Ug. *sprt*, “instruction, message” (DUL, 758), Akk. *šipirtu(m)*, “message, letter, instruction” (CDA, 375b) – but Syr. *sbrt*’, “message” (SL, 965-966), a cognate that has not previously been mentioned³⁶.

4.2 Ugaritic and Hebrew /p/ = /b/ in another Semitic language

(a) Ug. ‘*prt*, “lead” (DUL, 172), Heb. ‘*operet*, “lead” (HALOT, 863) and Pun. ‘*prh*, “plumb [sic! i.e. “lead”]” (DNWSI, 879) – but Akk. *abāru(m)*, “(the metal) lead” (CDA, 2a)³⁷.

(b) Ug. *hpk*, “to overturn, etc.” (DUL, 340-341), Heb. *hāpak*, “to turn, change etc.” (HALOT, 253-254), Syr. *hpk*, “to roll, overturn, transpose etc.” (SL, 349-351), Aram. *hpk*, “to overturn, interchange etc.” (DJBA, 388-389), Aram. ‘*pk*, “to turn over” (DJBA, 156) and Arab. ‘*afaka*, “to change the manner of being” (AEL, 69) – but Akk. *abāku*, “to overturn, to upset” (CDA, 1b).

(c) Ug. *p*, “here” (DUL, 647), Heb. *ph*, “here” (HALOT, 916) – but Mehri *bō*, “here” (ML, 58).

(d) Ug. *plṭ*, “to be safe”; D: “to save, rescue” (DUL, 662), Heb. *plṭ*, “to escape”, pi. “to save” (HALOT, 930-931), Old Aram. *plṭ*, pa. “to deliver, save” (DNWSI, 915), Syr. *plṭ*, “to escape, flee”; pa. “to allow to escape” (SL, 1198-1199) and Arab. *falata*, ‘*aflata*, “to escape, get away” (AEL, 2435-2436) – but Akk. *balātu*, “to live; D: bring back to life, revive etc.” (CDA, 36-37).

(e) The Ug. divine name *ršp* (Heb. *rešep*): “Etymologisch mag man den Namen ... mit der in akkadisch *rašābu(m)* “schauer-, ehrfurchterregend sein” und *rašbu(m)* “ehrfurchtgebietend” bezeugten Wurzel in Verbindung bringen”³⁸.

(f) Ug. *špr*, “bird” (DUL, 777-778), Heb. *šippôr*, “bird” (HALOT, 1047) and Aram. *šypr*’, “bird, fowl” (DJBA, 962) – but Akk. *šibāru(m)*, “sparrow” (CDA, 337a)³⁹.

³⁴ See also Aram. *brš*, “to bore” (DJBA, 247a) and Syr. *brš*, “to penetrate” (SL, 191b). These cognates have gone unnoticed.

³⁵ Different cognates for Ug. *pžg* are mentioned in DUL, 679.

³⁶ Note also perhaps Ug. *āpq*, “to adhere” (KTU 1.169:12), said of the tongue and reminiscent of “let my tongue stick to my palate” (Ps 137:6) – but Aram. ‘*bq*, “to attach, cling, embrace” (DJBA, 76a). This is a new suggestion; for other proposals on Ug. *āpq* see DUL, 87.

³⁷ Borrowed as Aram. ‘*bārā*’ (etc.), “lead” (DJBA, 76a), Syr. ‘*br*’, “lead” (SL, 5a), etc.

³⁸ MÜLLER 1980, 10. Cf. also Akk. *rašbu(m)*, “terrifying”, of a deity (CDA, 300a).

³⁹ Also perhaps Ug. *štp*, “lid” (KTU 4.150:1) – but Eth. *suṭāb*, “lid of basket” (CDG, 518b); for other solutions see DUL, 840. As another new proposal, it is possible that Ug. *šrp*, “to burn” (DUL, 831), Heb. *šrp*, “to burn completely etc.” (HALOT, 1358-1359), Akk. *šarāpu*, “to burn (away)” (CDA, 360a),

(g) Ug. *yp*´, “to appear; to sprout” (*DUL*, 958), Heb. **yp*´, “to grow” (*HALOT*, 424b), Arab. *yp*´, “to be grown up” (*AED*, 903b), Arab. *yafa*´a, “to reach adolescence” (*DMWA*, 1108a), OSA *yf*´, “to go up to; to rise up, oppose” (*SD*, 168)⁴⁰ – but Syr. *nb*´, “to shoot up, to sprout” (*SL*, 885); “to spring up, to flow; metaphorically: to spring up, come to light, burst forth” (*CSD*, 326)⁴¹. The Syriac cognate seems to have been overlooked completely.

5. The nominal form /yqtl/

It is proposed here that in both Ugaritic and Hebrew, the form *yp(y)h* may be a nominal form from the undocumented verb **bwh*, “to reveal a secret” (as *pVh*), with a prefixed *y*- (as *yqtl*)⁴². This is not unlike Arab. *ibāha*, “divulgence, disclosure (of a secret)” (*AEL*, 273). Other examples of this nominal form, derived from a range of verbs, can be found in Ugaritic and Hebrew, as shown next, although the list is not exhaustive.

5.1. Examples of the nominal form /yqtl/ in Ugaritic

The only example in this class mentioned by Tropper (*UG*, 266 §51.45 d) is Ug. *yhmr* (see 5.1.(d) below), but there are several additional instances:

(a) Ug. *y*´l, “mountain goat (*Capra Nubiana*)” (*DUL*, 933), Heb. *yā*´ēl, “ibex, mountain goat” (*HALOT*, 420), Syr. *ya*´lā´, “ibex” (*SL*, 578a), Arab. *wa*´il, “mountain-goat” (*AEL*, 3056) and Eth. *wə*´ālā, “kind of antelope, mountain goat” (*CDG*, 603) all derive from Common Semitic *ly*, “to go up, climb”.

(b) Ug. *ybl*, “produce” (*DUL*, 936), Heb. *y*´būl, “yield of soil” (*HALOT*, 382b), but Akk. *biltu(m)*, “load, yield, tribute etc.” (*CDA*, 44)⁴³, from Semitic *y/wbl*, “to carry, bring”⁴⁴.

(c) Ug. *yrdt*, “step, stair” occurs in the phrase *yrdt [m]dbht*, “the steps of the altar” (*KTU* 1.39:20). This word could derive from the verb *yrd*, “to descend”, but, significantly, stairs are also used to go *upwards*. Instead, it is suggested here that Ug. *yrdt* is more probably from the (unattested) verb **rdy*, in the same way that Akk. *merdītu*, *merdētu*, *mardītu*, “(a stepladder)” (*CDA*, 207b), “(an implement for lifting or climbing)” (*CAD* M/2, 20b), is from *redū*, “to lead, drive, proceed” (*CDA*, 301a)⁴⁵.

may correspond to Aram. *šrb*, “heat” (*DJPA*, 566a), Syr. *šrb*´, “hot wind” (*SL*, 1600b) etc., although these two nouns may refer more to dry heat.

⁴⁰ Cf. *DUL*, 958 for this and other cognates. For other explanations cf. SMITH – PITARD 2009: 243-244.

⁴¹ The expression “my enemy suddenly appeared to me” (cited in *CSD*, 326b, accessed courtesy of CAL, 20.10.2018) matches Ug. *mn ib yp´ l b´l*, “which enemy has appeared against Baal?” (*KTU* 1.3 iii 37; cf. 1.3 iv 5). Furthermore, if the Ug. verb is *np*´ rather than *yp*´, the difficult (unassimilated?) form *ynp*´ (in *KTU* 1.5 iv 8 and 1.19 ii 16) would be explained. For a different explanation (as stylistic variation) see *UG*, 537.

⁴² For the rare /yqtl/ nominal form see BARTH 1894: 226-233 §§153-157: “Nomina mit Präfixj.” (although he considers Hebr. *yāpi*´h to be a secondary form [p. 333] by metathesis [p. 189]), and *UG*, 266 §51.45d.

⁴³ See also the Aram. loanword *blw*, “Tribut, Abgabe” (*HAWTTMI*, 279b).

⁴⁴ Another example of this nominal form may be Ug. *ydd*, “loved one” (*DUL*, 943) and Heb. *yādīd*, “beloved” (*HALOT*, 390a), both from *ydd*, “to love”, unless they are denominatives from Ug. *dd*, “loved one” (*DUL*, 262) / Heb. *dōd*, “beloved, lover” (*HALOT*, 215).

⁴⁵ The verb is Common Semitic, except for Ethiopic; cf. *AHW*, 965a. See also Eg. *rdw*, “Treppe” (*Wb* 2, 462.16); *rwd*, “Treppe; Stufe (zum Grabschaft)” (*Wb* 2, 409.9-15); *rwdw*, “stairway” (*FCD*, 148). In fact, Eg. *rd.w* ~ *rwd*, “stairway, steps (of throne etc.)”, derives from *rd*, “foot”.

(d) Ug. *ybn̄t*, “creature”, has a /yqtl/ pattern from the verb *bny*, “to build, construct” (*DUL*, 230-231, 938).

(e) Ug. *yḥmr*, “roebuck or antelope” (*DUL*, 947), Heb. *yaḥmûr*, “roebuck” (*HALOT*, 407), Arab. *yaḥmûr*, “deer, roe, roebuck” (*DMWA*, 205a), “wild ass, oryx” (*AEL*, 642), Syr. *yḥmwr*, “antelope; female deer” (*SL*, 572), Aram. *yḥmwr*, “antelope [sic!]” (*DJPA*, 239a) and Aram. *yaḥmûrtā*, “type of deer” (*DJBA*, 533b) all derive from Common Semitic *ḥmr*, “to be red” (cf. *HALOT*, 407a).

(f) Ug. *ygrš*, “Driver”, the name of a magic mace, is from Ug. *grš*, “to eject, drive out etc.” (*DUL*, 305-306)⁴⁶.

(g) Ug. *yqš*, “fowler, bird-catcher” (*DUL*, 961) is like Heb. *yāqûš*, “fowler” (*HALOT*, 430), which is from Heb. *qwsš*, “to trap with a snare” (*HALOT*, 1091b)⁴⁷.

(h) Ug. *yšḥ*, “furbisher” (*DUL*, 971) is from **šḥḥ*: cf. Syr. *šḥḥ*, “to be hot, burning” (*SL*, 1282b) and Syr. *šwh*, “alloy of copper and lead” (*SL*, 1278b). These are newly proposed cognates.

(i) Ug. *yšr*, “potter” (*DUL*, 972), Heb. *yōšēr*, “potter, caster” (*HALOT*, 429), Pun. *yšr*, “potter” (*DNWSI*, 466)⁴⁸ are from a root cognate with Aram. *šwr*, “to fashion, draw, form” (*DJBA*, 956a), Syr. *šwr*, “to form, shape, fashion; to carve etc.” (*SL*, 1280-1281).

5.2 Examples of the nominal form /yqtl/ in Hebrew

These examples are in addition to those mentioned in the previous paragraph.⁴⁹

(a) Heb. *yāḥēp*, “barefoot” (*HALOT*, 407b): its cognates are Arab. *ḥāfin*, “walking barefoot, without sandal and without boot” (*AEL*, 605), “barefoot(ed)” (*DMWA*, 191a), Aram. *ḥpy*, “barefoot” (*DJPA*, 211b) and Syr. *ḥefyāy*, “barefoot” (*SL*, 481b).

(b) Heb. *yalqûṭ*, “shepherd’s pouch” (*HALOT*, 413b), is an inner-Hebrew form from *lqt*, “to gather” (*HALOT*, 535b).

(c) Heb. *yā’ēp*, “weary” (*HALOT*, 421b), is a /yqtl/ form based on √*yp*; cf. Syr. *’yp*, “weary, tired” (*SL*, 1096).

(d) Heb. *yārīb* (only as a plural), “opponent, adversary” (*DCH* IV, 297a; *HALOT*, 438b), derives from Heb. *rīb*, “to contend” (*HALOT*, 1224-1226); cf. also Syr. *rwb*, “to shout, make a noise, quarrel etc.” (*SL*, 1443a).

(e) Heb. *yārûm*, “exalted”, is from Heb. *rûm*, “to be exalted” (*DCH* IV, 292b; *HALOT*, 437a).

(f) Heb. *yīšhār*, “fresh oil”, is also an inner-Hebrew form, from *šāhar*, “to press out oil” (*DCH* IV, 266)⁵⁰.

⁴⁶ “The name *ygrš* may be a jussive of *grš*, ‘to drive forth, chase away’” (DE MOOR 1971: 136).

⁴⁷ Similarly, Ug. *yqš*, “game” (*DUL*, 961).

⁴⁸ Cf. also Akk. *ēširu*, “Bildhauer” (*AHw*, 253); “carver of reliefs” (*CAD* E, 350); “(stone) carver” (*CDA*, 81b).

⁴⁹ Cf. JOÜON 1947: 202 §88c; JOÜON – MURAOKA 1993: 256 §88Lc.

⁵⁰ Unless Heb. *šāhar* is a denominative verb from *yīšhār*, “oil”; cf. *HALOT*, 1008a.

6. Conclusions

It would now seem quite certain that Barth's proposal concerning Heb. *yp(y)h*, "witness", as derived from a root cognate with Arab. *بأ* *bāḥa* (*bwḥ*), "to reveal (a secret) etc.", is correct; furthermore, it is supported by Ge'ez *boḥa* (*bwḥ*), "to be seen". The same etymology applies to Ug. *yph*, which also means "witness". The /b/ ~ /p/ interchange involved is found in both sets of languages (Ugaritic and Hebrew), as is the nominal form /yqtl/, with supplementary corroboration from Arab. *'ibāḥa*, "divulgence, disclosure" (see above). All this evidence not only resolves a long-standing etymological enigma but also provides further confirmation of the meaning of this word in both Ugaritic and Hebrew, as already long accepted by scholars. In addition, the research required for this paper has provided new meanings, etymologies and/or cognates for the following Ugaritic words: *āpq*, *gp*, *hpn*, *hp*, *pālt*, *pltt*, *pdd*, *prš*, *pzḡ*, *sprt*, *stp*, *šrp*, *yp* ' (or *np* '), *ysh*, *yšr* and *yrdt*.

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