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How to Kill a Dragon in Northwest Semitic: Three Linguistic Observations regarding Ugaritic *ltn* and Hebrew *liwyātān*

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Abstract

Although scholars have generally treated Ugaritic *ltn* as a cognate of Hebrew *liwyātān*, the vocalization of this word and its relationship to the Hebrew form remain debated. In this article, we will argue that *ltn* should be vocalized /lītan-/ and that Ugaritic *ltn* and Hebrew *liwyātān* derive from Proto-Northwest Semitic **lawīy-(a)t-an-* through a series of attested sound changes. We will also discuss the morphology of **lawīy-(a)t-an-* and the syntax of the Northwest Semitic formula **lawīy(a)tanu baṭnu bariḥu ... baṭnu Ṣaqqallātānu* “Leviathan, the fleeing serpent ... the twisting serpent” found in *KTU* 1.5 i 1–3 and Isa 27:1.

Keywords

Leviathan – Hebrew noun patterns – Ugaritic noun patterns – inherited poetic formula

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In memory of Calvert Watkins

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Since the Ugaritic word *ltn* was first discovered, scholars have generally treated it as a cognate of Hebrew *liwyātān*.¹ But the vocalization of the Ugaritic word and its relationship to the Hebrew form remain debated. In this article, we will argue that *ltn* should be vocalized /litan-/ and that Ugaritic *ltn* and Hebrew *liwyātān* derive from Proto-Northwest Semitic **lawiy-(a)t-an*- “the great twisting one” through a series of attested sound changes. We will also discuss the morphology of *ltn/liwyātān* and the syntax of the inherited Northwest Semitic formula **lawiy(a)tanu batnu barihu ... batnu ſaqallātānu* “Leviathan, the fleeing serpent ... the twisting serpent” found in *KTU* 1.5 i 1–3 and Isa 27:1.

1 The Data

Ugaritic *ltn* occurs only in the following passage:

<i>ktmḥṣ . ltn . bṭn . brḥ</i>	When you struck <i>ltn</i> the fleeing serpent,
<i>tkly . bṭn . ſqltn «š»</i>	destroyed the twisting serpent,
<i>šlyt . d . šbṣt . rāšm</i>	the powerful one of seven heads
<i>KTU</i> 1.5 i 1–3 ²	

Hebrew *liwyātān* appears in a strikingly similar context:

<i>bay-yôm ha-hû? yipqōd</i>	On that day Yahweh will inflict punishment
<i>Yhwh</i>	
<i>bə-ḥarb-ô haq-qāšâ wə-hag-</i>	with his hard, great, and strong sword
<i>gəḏôlâ wə-ha-ḥāzāqâ</i>	
<i>ſal liwyātān nāḥāš bārîaḥ</i>	upon <i>liwyātān</i> , the fleeing snake,
<i>wə-ſal liwyātān nāḥāš</i>	upon <i>liwyātān</i> , the twisting snake,
<i>ſaqallātôn</i>	

1 So already Virolleaud in the *editio princeps* (“Mort de Baal”) and in an even earlier note (Virolleaud, “Note,” 356–357).

2 Presumably also in the parallel lines *KTU* 1.5 i 27–30, where *ltn* is lost in a lacuna.

wə-hārag ʔet-hat-tannîn and will kill the tannîn in the sea.
 ʔāšer ba y-yām

Isa 27:1

Wilson-Wright has argued that these two passages preserve reflexes of the same inherited Northwest Semitic formula: *lawiy(a)tanu baṭnu barīḥu ... baṭnu ʕaqallātānu “Leviathan, the fleeing serpent ... the twisting serpent.”³ They employ a series of cognate terms (*ltn* ~ *liwy-āt-ān*, *brḥ* ~ *bārīaḥ*, *ʕqltn* ~ *ʕāqallātōn*) to describe a serpentine monster with only two minor differences: the Hebrew reflex uses *nāḥāš* in place of the semantically similar Ugaritic term *bṭn* and repeats the word *liwyātān* in the second half of the formula. The first difference provides an example of what Calvert Watkins calls “lexical replacement” under conditions of semantic similarity.⁴ Because Biblical Hebrew does not preserve an indigenous cognate of *bṭn*—*peten* is a loanword from Aramaic—*nāḥāš* provides an appropriate substitute.⁵ The second difference will be discussed in section 4 below.

In addition to Isa 27:1, Hebrew *liwyātān* also appears in Ps 74:14; 104:26, and Job 3:8; 40:25 (Eng. 41:1).⁶ The form *liwyātān* almost certainly derives from the common Semitic root *lwy* “to turn (around), wind, circle, twist,” as is usually suggested.⁷

3 See Wilson-Wright, “Love Conquers,” 337. For a discussion of inherited formulae in general, see the magisterial work of Calvert Watkins (*How to Kill a Dragon*, 12–16); for more on inherited formulae in the Semitic languages, see Wilson-Wright, *Athtart*, 128–138; Kaplan and Wilson-Wright, “Song of Songs,” 337–344.

4 Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 10, 15.

5 Hebrew *nāḥāš* may have originated as a taboo substitute for earlier **baṭn*. According to Leonid Kogan (Militarev and Kogan, *Animal Names*, 210–211; Kogan, *Classification*, 300–301), Hebrew *nāḥāš* and Akkadian *nēšu* “lion” both go back to a Proto-Semitic noun simply meaning “wild animal,” which was subsequently repurposed to designate different dangerous creatures. Militarev and others, however, have suggested different cognates for *nāḥāš* (see Militarev and Kogan, *Animal Names*, 210–211).

6 Also in a Qumran fragment, 4Q380 3: 1; see Schuller, *Psalms*, 260. For various suggestions as to the identity of *liwyātān*, see, e.g., HALOT 524; GMD 602; Lipiński, “Liwyātān”; Barker, “New Translation”; Seow, *Job*, 325–326.

7 A similar form also appears in Aramaic texts, where it is presumably borrowed from Hebrew: in Aramaic incantation bowls, as *lywyt(w)n tynn?* “L. the tannin” (see Isbell, *Corpus*, texts 2:4; 6:8; and 7:7, 9; on the writing *lywytwn*, see n. 22 below); Jewish Aramaic (see CAL), e.g., Lev. Rabbā 278:1(3): *bəzaʕ l-eh l-lwytn* “he split the L.,” Targ. Song 8:2: *səʕodtā d-lwytn* “a meal of L.”; Syriac *lwyātān*, *lwyātān* (see Payne Smith, *Thesaurus*, 2.1902–1903); Mandaic *liuiatan*/*lʕiuiatan* (see Drower and Macuch, *Dictionary*, 236a). See also below, n. 17, on the Ethiopic borrowing of the form.

2 The Vocalization of Ugaritic *ltn* and Its Relationship to Hebrew *liwyātān*

The most common vocalization of the Ugaritic form found in the scholarly literature is /lôtān-/, which seems to have been proposed first by W. F. Albright: “The Hebrew *Liwyātān* stands for *Lawyatān*, while the Canaanite [i.e., Ugaritic] *Lôtān* stands for *Lawtān*. Which form is more original we cannot say.”⁸ In his monumental *Ugaritische Grammatik*, Josef Tropper tentatively suggests a different vocalization: “/lâtān-/ < *lawâtān < *lawayatān(?)”⁹

In an article published in 1982, however, J. A. Emerton argued for vocalizing the Ugaritic word as /lītān-/.¹⁰ Rejecting claims by some scholars that the Hebrew form reflects a later folk-etymology,¹¹ he noted that “It seems desirable ... to begin with the traditional Hebrew form *liwyātān* and to work backwards using it as a clue.” He proposed that **liwyātānu* developed in Ugaritic first into **liwyitānu*, via assimilation of the second vowel to the first; then to an “intermediate stage,”¹² **liyitānu*, with assimilation of *w* to the following *y* and compensatory lengthening; and finally to **lītānu* with the collapse of the triphthong *iyī*. Unfortunately, there is no certain evidence in Ugaritic phonology for either the first stage of Emerton’s proposed development, progressive assimilation,¹³ or his third stage, the change of *-īyi-* to *-ī*.¹⁴

Despite the unlikely development suggested by Emerton, we agree that the Ugaritic form was indeed pronounced /lītān-/. But we argue that this pronunciation developed via a different set of phonological processes, each of which can be documented elsewhere in Ugaritic. Like Emerton, we suggest that Hebrew *liwyātān* and Ugaritic *ltn* derive from a common ancestral form—consistent

8 Albright, “New Light,” 19 n. 18. Note also Virolleaud, “Mort de Baal,” 308: “*Ltn*, qu’on prononçait sans doute *Lôtan*.”

9 Tropper, *Grammatik*, 272 §51.46e; in his *Wörterbuch*, 66, however, Tropper vocalizes *ltn* as /lôtānu/.

10 Emerton, “Leviathan and *Ltn*.” Emerton’s vocalization is followed by, inter alios, Barker, “New Translation”; Smith and Pitard, *Introduction*, 252; Seow, *Job*, 325; GMD 602.

11 E.g., Virolleaud, “Mort de Baal,” 308.

12 Emerton, “Leviathan and *Ltn*,” 330.

13 The divine name *līb*, noted by Emerton, may be such an example, but the assimilation presumably has more to do with the intervening /ʔ/. The examples of regressive assimilation noted by Emerton, /ʔibbīr-/ and /ʔullūp-/, occur only in a narrow phonetic environment, for which see Huehnergard, *Vocabulary*, 269–270, 401.

14 See Whitney, *Beasts*, 8–9, n. 53; Huehnergard, *Vocabulary*, 292; Tropper, *Grammatik*, 197 offers some possible examples, but none is secure. There is some limited evidence for the second development proposed by Emerton, viz., *-īwy-* > *-īy-* (or, perhaps better, > *-īyy-*), in the form *lyt*, now tentatively glossed “retinue(?)” in *DUL*³ 503, which, if correct, presumably reflects /liyyat-/ < **liwyat-* (cf. Syriac *lewyā* “retinue”). Others gloss *lyt* as “wreath,” and thus cognate with Hebrew *liwyā*; see, e.g., Tropper, *Grammatik*, 196, 199.

with their appearance in an inherited Northwest Semitic formula. But we believe that form to have been **lawiy-(a)t-an*, a feminine verbal adjective from the root *lwy* “to turn (around), wind, circle, twist” with the suffix *-an* (discussed in section 3 below). The meaning would thus be “the winding one” or “the twisting one,”¹⁵ as is generally believed.¹⁶ After the loss of final case vowels and the attendant shift of stress, the Hebrew form developed as follows: **lawiyatán* became **lawāyatán* and then **līwyatán* via propretonic vowel reduction and the rule of *shwa*, and finally the attested *līwyātān*;¹⁷ compare, for example, *niblātō* “his corpse” < **nabilatūh*.¹⁸ The Ugaritic form, by contrast, bore the short allomorph of the feminine morpheme, *-t*; examples of this variation are forms such as Ugaritic *mlīt* /*maliʔt-*/ “full” vs. Hebrew *mālēʔā* < **maliʔat-*, *ḥmt* /*ḥāmīt-*/ < **ḥāmiyt-* “wall” vs. Hebrew *ḥômā* < **ḥāmiyat-*. Ugaritic **lawiytan-* developed as follows: **lawiytan-* > **lawītan-*, with the contraction of *iy* to *ī* as in *ḥmt*, and then **lawītan-* > *lītan-*, with the collapse of the triphthong *awī* to *ī*.¹⁹

3 The Morphology of Proto-Northwest Semitic **lawiy-(a)t-an*

“Begin[ning] with the traditional Hebrew form and work[ing] backwards,”²⁰ in Emerton’s apt formulation, also requires grappling with a perennial bugbear

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- 15 Note that the parallel Ugaritic term *tnn* “serpent,” vocalized /*tunnan-*/, is also, formally, a verbal adjective, albeit from the D stem; see Huehnergard, *Vocabulary*, 72.
- 16 See Tropper, *Grammatik*, 272: “die Gewundene”; GMD 602a: “d. sich Windende.” Bauer and Leander (*Grammatik*, 500 §61rθ) note the interesting fact that the endings *-ān* and *-ōn* following the feminine ending, while common in Aramaic, are attested in Biblical Hebrew only in words for snakes (*šāqallātōn* and *nəḥuštān* in addition to *līwyātān*). Wagner’s suggestion (*Aramaismen*, 127; see also Gross, *Nominal Patterns*, 211) that *-ān* may mark *līwyātān* as an Aramaism is unlikely since the Aramaic forms *lēwyātān*, *liuiatan*, etc. are, rather, most likely borrowed from Hebrew and *līwyātān* appears as part of an inherited Northwest Semitic formula in Isa 27:1.
- 17 The medial radical *w* is preserved in this root throughout Semitic (e.g., Old Babylonian Akkadian *lawi* “it goes around”). Normally, intervocalic *y* is elided in Hebrew, as in *dāwā* “ill (fem.)” < **dawiyat-* (Lev 15:33); there are, however, instances in which the original triphthong is preserved, such as *ḥāsāyā* “it (fem.) has taken refuge” < **ḥašayat* (Ps 57:2), *yibkāyūn* “they weep” < **yibkayūn* (earlier **yabkiyūna*; Isa 33:7). At least some of the latter are archaic forms, and the preservation of *y* in *līwyātān* is also likely due to its occurrence in an ancient poetic formula. Evidence for an intermediate stage of this development may be reflected in the Classical Ethiopic form of the word borrowed from Hebrew, viz., *lewiyātān*. Both Classical Ethiopic and Amharic also exhibit a variant form *lewātā(n)*; see Leslau, *Dictionary*, 321–322.
- 18 See Huehnergard, “Nominal Patterns,” 43. The Hebrew noun *līwā* “wreath” (Prov 1:9; 4:9), on the other hand, presumably reflects a *qīl-at* form.
- 19 See Huehnergard, *Vocabulary*, 289–290; Tropper, *Grammatik*, 198.
- 20 Emerton, “Leviathan and Ltn,” 329.

of Hebrew phonology and morphology: the Canaanite shift of $*\bar{a} > \bar{o}$. Emerton and others reconstruct the last syllable of *ltn/liwyātān* as a reflex of the Proto-Semitic substantivizing suffix $*-\bar{a}n$, but this reconstruction leads to a problem.²¹ Normally, the suffix $*-\bar{a}n$ becomes $-\bar{o}n$ in Biblical Hebrew with the operation of the Canaanite shift (e.g., $*\text{?abyān-} > \text{?ebyōn}$ “poor”). But *liwyātān* appears to have escaped this sound change.²²

Two explanations have been advanced to account for the apparent retention of $*-\bar{a}n$ in *liwyātān* and other forms. Some scholars have suggested that the Canaanite shift was conditioned.²³ The inherited Proto-Northwest Semitic formula in Isa 27:1 does not bear this hypothesis out, however.²⁴ If the inherited words *šāqallātōn* and *liwyātān* both bore the suffix $*-\bar{a}n$, it is unclear why *šāqallātōn* was subject to the Canaanite shift and *liwyātān* was not. There are no obvious conditioning factors that could explain the different outcomes. In both words, the suffix $-\bar{a}n$ appears at the end of the word after the long form of the feminine morpheme. Jacob Barth by contrast proposed two criteria to account for the retention of $*-\bar{a}n$ in Hebrew: (1) in words like *šulḥān* “table,” the presence of an *u* vowel blocked the operation of the Canaanite shift; (2) while, in the remaining words, the retention of $*-\bar{a}n$ was an Aramaism.²⁵ These two criteria account for most of the data. Of the seventeen words in Biblical Hebrew that bear the suffix $-\bar{a}n$, four (*dorbān* “cattle goad,” *nəḥuštān* “DN,” *qorbān* “offering,” *šulḥān* “table”) contain an *u* vowel and an additional nine most likely represent Aramaic loanwords into Hebrew (*?abdān* “destruction,” *?obdān* “destruction,” *binyān* “building,” *bīrānīyyōt* “fortresses,” *miqdānōt*

21 This suffix was used to derive nouns from other nominal forms. See Streck, “Simply a Seller”; Huehnergard, “Ashkelon,” 92*.

22 The only possible exception is Aramaic *lywytwn*, which may ultimately go back to Hebrew *liwyātōn*. As noted by Lipiński (“*Liwyātān*,” 19), the spelling $-wn$ presumably indicates $-\bar{o}n$. We argue, however, that this form represents a later “Hebraification” of earlier *liwyātān* in which a bilingual Hebrew-Aramaic speaker, knowing the word to be Hebrew, replaced the rarer, Aramaic-looking ending $-\bar{a}n$ with its Hebrew equivalent $-\bar{o}n$. Compare the spelling *nšmwnym* in 1QIsa^a 17:11 for MT *našāmānīm* “pleasantness” and the alternation between *dorbān* “ox-goad” in 1 Sam 13:21 and *dorbōnōt* in Eccl 12:11 (on this second form, see also Suchard, *Development*, 76).

23 See, e.g., Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik*, 192; Blau, *Phonology and Morphology*, 48.

24 Rabin, “Hebrew Development,” makes a very strong case that $*\bar{a} > \bar{o}$ in Hebrew was an unconditioned change. See also Suchard, *Development*, 83–84, who argues that the Canaanite shift was unconditioned, but was blocked in a handful of words by a preceding *u* or *w*.

25 See Barth, *Nominalbildung*, 318. Barth’s proposal has been followed by Brockelmann, *Laut- und Formenlehre*, 395–396; Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik*, 215; Gross, *Nominal Patterns*, 215–216; and, in a modified form, Suchard, *Development*, 83–84.

“precious goods,” *niššanîm* “blossoms,” *šinyān* “business,” *qinyān* “property,” *raḥmāniyyôt* “compassionate”).²⁶ But the remaining three forms—*kibšān* “kiln,” *našmānîm* “pleasantness,” *šinʔān* “?”—do not meet Barth’s criteria.²⁷ None of them contain a *u* vowel and none of them are likely to be Aramaic loanwords into Hebrew since they lack Aramaic parallels and appear primarily in early biblical texts.²⁸

In light of these issues, we propose an alternative explanation that better accounts for the data: *liwyātān*, *šulḥān*, *kibšān*, etc., do not bear the common Semitic substantivizing suffix **-ān*, but instead preserve a reflex of a Semitic suffix **-an*. The latter suffix appears in Classical Arabic in addition to Hebrew and is therefore reconstructible to Proto-Central Semitic at least. In Classical Arabic, this suffix appears on adjectives and the occasional substantive, e.g., *raššan-un* “shivering” and *jawšān-un* “breast.”²⁹ We believe that the same ending appears in Hebrew on the substantivized adjective **lawiy(a)t-* and substantives such as *šulḥān*.

Hebrew *liwyātān* exhibits another morphological peculiarity. Although it contains a reflex of the feminine morpheme, it consistently takes masculine agreement in Biblical Hebrew, e.g.,

ʔattā riššaštā rā(ʔ)šē liwyātān tittān-ennû maʔākāl lā-šām lā-šiyyîm

You crushed the head of Leviathan, You gave him as food for the people of the wilderness ...

Ps 74:14

26 These words occur primarily or exclusively in later Biblical texts and have clear Aramaic parallels (listed here with their respective earliest attestations): *ʔabdānā/ʔubdānā* “destruction” (Qumran), *benyānā* “building” (Imperial), *bīrānātā* “fortress” (Targumic), *magdā* “precious goods” (Targumic), *niššanîm* “blossoms” (Christian Palestinian), *šenyānā* “matter of concern” (Qumran), *qenyān* “property” (Imperial), *raḥmān* “merciful” (Old Aramaic).

27 Two other Hebrew words that do not meet Barth’s criteria are *širyān* (more often *širyôn*, also *siryôn*) “scale armor” and *bītān* “palace,” but both terms are loanwords into Hebrew (see Noonan, *Non-Semitic Loanwords*, 213–214; Mankowski, *Loanwords*, 47–48). We have also excluded the form *ḥelbānā* “galbanum” in Exod 30:24 from consideration because of its decidedly non-standard morphology. It appears to be an inner-Semitic loanword into Hebrew from earlier **ḥilbVnat-*.

28 The form *liwyātān* itself poses a similar problem for Barth’s explanation. As mentioned above in n. 7, the Aramaic forms of this word are most likely loanwords from Hebrew.

29 See, e.g., Barth, *Nominalbildung*, 344.

timšök liwyātān bə-ḥakkā ū-bə-ḥebel tašqāʿ lašōn-ô

Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook? Can you press down his tongue with a cord?

Job 41:30

It thus belongs to the rare class of words that bear the feminine morpheme, but have a masculine referent (e.g., *mōdaʿat* “kinsman” in Ruth 3:2, referring to Boaz; the name *qōhelet* passim in Ecclesiastes).³¹ In Classical Arabic, such words often connote greatness or distinction, e.g., *karīm-un* “noble,” *karīm-at-un* “best one, best part.”³² We can therefore translate *liwyātān* as “the great winding one.”

4 The Syntax of the Inherited Northwest Semitic Formula

The inherited Northwest Semitic formula in which Ugaritic *ltn* and Hebrew *liwyātān* appear displays strange syntax. The word for snake seems to switch genders between the two halves of the formula: in the first colon, it takes masculine agreement (*bṭn brḥ/nāḥāš bārīaḥ*), while in the second it appears to take feminine agreement (*bṭn ṣqltn/nāḥāš ṣāqallātôn*). To resolve this discrepancy, we suggest that *ṣqltn/ṣāqallātôn* is not an adjective modifying *bṭn/nāḥāš*, but rather a substantive standing in apposition to it.³³ Support for this interpretation comes from *KTU* 1.3 iii 38'–46':³⁴

[...] <i>lmḥšt . mdd</i>	... Truly I smote the beloved
<i>ūlym . lkl . nhr . ū . rbm</i>	of El, Yamm. Truly I finished off Nahar, the
	great god.
<i>lišṭbm . tnn . ištṁ dh¹</i>	Truly I muzzled Tunnan and bound it. ³⁵

30 Ugaritic *ltn* never appears in situations that call for gender agreement.

31 See GKC 463 §145h; Joüon 244 §89b.

32 See Fischer, *Grammar*, 46 §73a; see also Wright, *Grammar*, 1.139 § 233 remark c; WKAS, K, 146.

33 Another possible explanation is that *bṭn* and its Proto-Northwest Semitic or Proto-Semitic antecedent **baṭnu* were epicene nouns and that **lawīy(a)tanu baṭnu bārīḥu* and **baṭnu ṣāqallātānu* referred to two different serpents, one male and one female. The evidence for this theory is slim, however. Although Ugaritic *bṭn* takes masculine agreement once (*KTU* 1.5 i 1) and feminine agreement twice (*KTU* 1.5 i 2; 1.178:4 *šlk l tšl bṭn* “(so that) the snake does not jump upon you”), both Akkadian *bašmu* and Aramaic *patnā* consistently take masculine agreement. We cannot be certain therefore that **baṭnu* was epicene.

34 The Ugaritic text follows Pardee, “Dragon.”

35 See Hutton, “Ugaritic */š/,” for this reading of line 40'.

<i>mḥšt . bṭn . ṣqltn</i>	I smote the serpent, <i>ṣqltn</i>
<i>šlyṭ . d . šbṣt . rāšm</i>	The powerful one with seven heads
<i>mḥšt . mdd . ṣlm . ʾarš¹</i>	I smote the beloved of El, <i>ʾarš</i>
<i>šmt . ṣgl . ṣl . ṣtk</i>	I struck the calf of El, The Bound One ³⁶
<i>mḥšt . klbt . ṣlm . ʾš¹t</i>	I smote the dog of El, Fire
<i>klt . bt . ṣl . ddbb . [...]</i>	I finished off the daughter of El, Flame ...

In this passage, *bṭn ṣqltn* appears in a list of divine monsters defeated by Anat, many of whom are identified through appositive titles. Such constructions occur frequently in Ugaritic (e.g., *bṭlt ṣnt* “the young woman Anat”) and, less commonly, in Biblical Hebrew (e.g., *han-nāḥār ʾahāwāʾ* “the river Ahava”) and are therefore reconstructible to Proto-Northwest Semitic.³⁷ The inclusion of *bṭn ṣqltn* in this list suggests that *bṭn*—like *mdd ṣlm*, *ṣgl ṣl*, *klbt ṣlm*, and *bt ṣl*—stood in apposition to its referent. If this interpretation proves correct, then the Proto-Northwest Semitic formula **lawiy(a)tanu baṭnu bariḥu ... baṭnu ṣaqallātānu* and its Ugaritic reflex should read “Leviathan, the fleeing serpent ... the serpent Aqallatan”—with Aqallatan serving as an alternative name for Leviathan. This conclusion is particularly appealing given the similar morphology and semantics of Proto-Northwest Semitic **lawiy(a)tanu* “the great winding one” and **ṣaqallātānu* “the great twisting one” and their Ugaritic and Hebrew reflexes.

Such an interpretation also helps explain the repetition of *liwyātān* in the Hebrew reflex of the formula. Because nominal apposition is rarer in Biblical Hebrew than in Ugaritic and is largely confined to definite nouns, Hebrew speakers may have analyzed *ṣāqallātōn* as an adjective modifying *nāḥāš* rather than a proper name. They may then have added the second *liwyātān* to make it clear that *nāḥāš bārīaḥ* and *nāḥāš ṣāqallātōn* referred to the same entity: “Leviathan the fleeing serpent ... Leviathan the twisting serpent” (*liwyātān nāḥāš bārīaḥ ... liwyātān nāḥāš ṣāqallātōn*).

5 Conclusion

In this article, we have advanced three arguments regarding Ugaritic *ltn* and Hebrew *liwyātān*: (1) *ltn* and *liwyātān* developed from Proto-Northwest Semitic **lawiy-(a)t-an* “the great coiling one” through a series of attested sound changes and, in keeping with this origin, the Ugaritic form should be vocalized as /lītan-/; (2) the proto-form of Leviathan and its reflexes did not bear

36 See Richey, “Monsters,” for this interpretation of *ṣtk*.

37 See Tropper, *Grammatik*, 839 § 91.12; GKC 425 § 131f; Joüon 450 § 131h, k.

the substantivizing suffix **-ān*, but rather the suffix *-an*; (3) the term *ʕqltn/ʕāqallātōn* found in connection with Leviathan in *KTU* 1.5 i 1–3 and Isa 27:1 is not an adjective modifying *bṭn/nāḥāš*, but rather a name standing in apposition to it. *KTU* 1.5 i 1–3 can thus be translated as “Leviathan, the fleeing serpent ... the serpent Aqallatan.”

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