APPENDIX I

UGARITIC AND HEBREW POETRY: PARALLELISM

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In this communication I wish to continue my overview of Northwest Semitic poetry1 with a brief look at parallelism. To some extent this communication constitutes a response to my own call for increased study of parallelism as the principal structural device in Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry.2 In my previous study I claimed that meter, in the strictest sense of the term at least, was not the constitutive feature of Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry. Rather, it was claimed, parallelism is the constitutive feature of Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry, with the parallelism expected to fit into certain quantitative bounds too loosely defined to merit the appellation 'meter'. Thus I considered Bishop Lowth to be correct when, well over two centuries ago now, he claimed that parallelismus membrorum was the principal feature of Hebrew poetry3 and, in my opinion, attempts since that time to discover a metrical system within Hebrew have all been in vain.

Until relatively recently, Lowth's main categories of parallelism (synonymous, antithetic, synthetic4) were accepted as a sufficient catalogue of forms. The third category, synthetic, was often felt to be too all-embracing,5 but the overall approach was considered satisfactory, especially when the varieties of formal distribution of the parallel elements were explored.6 In the last fifty years, however, two other types of parallelism have received increased recognition and more refined distinctions have been proposed for analyzing the previously recognized forms of parallelism.

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2 See the conclusion to the article just cited (n. 1).
5 Gray, ibid., pp. 49-52.
The first of these other facets of parallelism to receive recognition as a major constitutive feature of (at least early) Northwest Semitic poetry was repetitive parallelism. In the broad sense of the term, all parallelism is a form of repetition, at least in the cases of synonymous and antithetic parallelism\(^7\) (for parallelistic devices used to strengthen ‘‘synthetic’’ parallelism, see below at ‘‘Distribution of Parallelisms’’). In its narrow sense, however, the phrase ‘‘repetitive parallelism’’ is used to refer to the verbatim repetition of the same word, though even here problems of definition arise as to the relationship between repetitive parallelism and paronomasia. W. F. Albright claimed to have first emphasized the importance of repetitive parallelism in Ugaritic poetry\(^8\) and in his major work on Canaanite-Hebrew relationships he uses repetitive parallelism as a typological device for dating Hebrew poetry.\(^9\) M. Dahood included repetitive parallelisms in his catalogue of parallel pairs found in both Ugaritic and Hebrew,\(^10\) though in his introductory remarks on method he attempts no defense of this inclusion beyond empirics and polemics.\(^11\)

Two remarks are necessary to place the use of repetitive parallelism in the broader context of parallelism as a structural device. First, repetitive parallelism is not a monolithic device including only absolutely verbatim repetition. It, like any other poetic device, may be varied so as to appear in different lights. The least controversial form of variation occurs when the basic grammatical form of the word to be repeated is maintained, with change provided, for example, by the distribution of a prefixed preposition, an added pronominal suffix, or a different mood in the verb


\(^8\) *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969 [Anchor Edition]) 5, n. 10. Here he refers to a pre-Ugaritic article of his (‘‘The Earliest Forms of Hebrew Verse,’’ *JPOS* 2 [1922] 69-86) but gives no reference supporting his antecedence over Ginsberg in recognizing repetitive parallelism in Ugaritic.

\(^9\) For Albright as a typologist, see Frank Moore Cross, Jr., ‘‘William Foxwell Albright: Orientalist,’’ *BASOR* 200 (1970) 7-10, esp. pp. 9-10. The existence of the phenomenon of repetitive parallelism must, of course, be kept rigorously separate from use of the phenomenon as a typological dating device. The existence of the phenomenon is proven without doubt by the Ugaritic poetic corpus, but, to my knowledge, only Albright has attempted to turn the device into a dating technique (though his conclusions are accepted to various degrees by his students). It should be noted that his sampling of Hebrew poetry was small and, in part at least, predetermined by other considerations.


\(^11\) *RSP I* (1972) 79-80.