CHAPTER VIII

NUMERALS AND NUMERICAL NOUNS

The corpus of EA letters from Canaan has a limited number of numerical expressions. The numerals themselves are used sparingly inasmuch as the texts contain very few lists of commodities. When there are such lists, the numerals are written logographically as is customary in cuneiform writing. The ordinals and fractions are barely attested. Of special interest for the study of the WS influences in the interlanguage employed are the syntactic usages of some of the numeric vocables, especially the words for "every, all."

CARDINAL NUMBERS

The actual numbers are rarely employed in syllabic spellings or even with phonetic complements on their respective logograms. The following citations will illustrate the use of the cardinal numerals in these texts.

*ištēn.* The numeral "one" is always written DIŠ, often with a phonetic complement, conventionally transcribed here 1-en. It is never inflected for case, i.e. it is always in status absolutus. The normal attributive position is before the thing being counted, as in a list of items: 1-en GIMIR-ŠU "one bed" (EA 34:20). This format is reflected in the highly rhetorical passage from Shuwardata:

\[\text{šum-ma el-teg-qē LÚ / ū šum-ma 1-en GU₄ / ū šum-ma ANŠE iš-tu / mu-ḫi-šu "If I have taken a man or even one ox or a donkey from him!" (EA 280:26-29).}\]

On the other hand, the placement of the numeral after the item being counted, done for emphasis in normal Akkadian, is attested several times in the letters:
ù mi-ia-mi a-na-ku / UR.GI7 1-en ù / la-a il-la-ku "But who am I, some dog, that I would not go?" (EA 201:14-16; and also EA 202:12-14; 247:14-16); ù ra-as-pa-ti7 \ b[a-n]i-t[i] / É 1-en ÚRÚMa-an-ха-ti7 šum-šu "and I have rebuilt a certain place, Manhātatu by name" (EA 292:29-30; Izre’el 1978b:28, §4.1.1); LÚ 1-en da-a-kà / ù LÚ enl(sic!) la[-qa] "One man he has killed, and another man he has cap[tured]" (EA 154:19-20).

Note the variation in the placement of the numerals "one" and "twelve" in the following narrative passage:


The predicative use of ištēn with the stative of the verb "to be" is especially noteworthy:

a-na-ku 1-en i-ba-аš-ša-ti "I am alone" (EA 282:9; 283:21; 284:8-9); or "I alone remain."

šina. The use of the logogram for "two" MIN as the dual marker has been discussed in the previous chapter (cf. infra, pp. 136-139). Unlike normal Akkadian the MIN always precedes the thing being marked as dual. The function of MIN as a cardinal or as a unit in higher numbers such as 12 (EA 265:13) or 42 (EA 34:22) is in standard form.

Note the following entries in a list of items sent from Alashia:


One possible example of the numeral spelled syllabically is in the following difficult text: