CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to test the hypothesis that enjoys a certain popularity among Semitists, that Semitic proper names, and in particular the group studied here, viz., Canaanite PNN, contain archaic morphological features. From a preliminary study of Canaanite PNN, it became apparent that morphology would be the most profitable area for investigation. Accordingly the inquiry was limited to a particular set of archaic morphological features, and a close examination of all putative examples has shown that a significant number of probable cases of each archaic feature exist.

The study was purposely conducted in such a way as to organize the putative examples of each feature into categories of probable and dubious cases; only with the morphological archaism of the *ḥireq compaginis* was a third category deemed necessary, ambiguous cases. A total of eighty-four putative examples were considered, and those names that could be classified as Canaanite were sorted into one of the three above-mentioned categories.[1] The approach may be characterized as "minimalist," and it is possible, therefore, that the resultant lists of probable examples of each feature will be expanded in the course of future research.

Thus the primary accomplishment of this inquiry has been to place the study of archaism of Canaanite PNN in the Hebrew Bible on a firm foundation of detailed examination of all the evidence. It has been demonstrated that Canaanite PNN do retain the following archaic morphological features: 1) the nominative case vowel *-u*; 2) the *ḥireq compaginis*; 3) enclitic *-m*; and 4) the feminine morpheme *-at* in the absolute state. While the net yield of the morphological features contained in this 'mini-grammar' is meager, a proper perspective ensures the importance of this inquiry. In the reconstruction of the older stages of Northwest Semitic, piecemeal evidence from a variety of

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[1]The net yield of non-Canaanite PN is as follows: a) Aram.: 1. ʾAhumay (probable example of the nominative case vowel); 2. Zabdiʾel (probable example of the h.c.); 3. Zabdi (ambiguous example of the h.c.); b) Arabian: 1. ʾAbimaʾel and 2. Lemoʾel (probable examples of enclitic *-m*); 3. ʾAlmodad (dubious example of enclitic *-m*).

different sources must be synthesized to obtain as full a picture as possible. The retention of these archaic morphological features in Canaanite PNN is another important piece of evidence.

A secondary accomplishment of this study is the analysis and interpretation of an important sector within the Canaanite onomasticon of the Hebrew Bible. Many of these names, borne by individuals marginal to the flow of the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, were poorly understood until now; as a result of this study, new interpretations have been proffered for some of the names.

The results obtained in this study may be compared with archaic morphological features preserved in ABH. Whereas ABH and Canaanite PNN both attest the nominative (singular) case ending -u, the *ḥireq compaginis*, enclitic -m, and the feminine morpheme -at in the absolute state, only PNN preserve a morphological feature not found in ABH: the nominative plural case vowel -$\bar{u}$.[2] Our final task is to study each group of these names containing morphological archaisms to see whether any patterns emerge, and then to synthesize the results for each group of names as a whole.

The best way to get an overview of each group of names is to list them and to note their distribution in the books of the Hebrew Bible. Many of these PNN are found in Chronicles, and for chronological purposes, it is pertinent to note in which portion of Chronicles they are to be found: 1 Chr 1-9--from Adam to David; 1 Chr 10-29--time of David; 2 Chr 1-9--time of Solomon; and 2 Chr 10-36--kings of Judah, ending with Cyrus, king of Persia.

I. The Nominative Case Vowel -u

Name	Biblical books			
	Torah	F Prophets	L Prophets	Writings
1. Betuʾel	Gen			
2. Hadoram				1 Chr 10-29; 2 Chr 10-36
3. Huram				1 Chr 1-9, 10-29; 2 Chr 1-9
4. Hamutal		2 Kgs	Jer	

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[2]See s.v. "pĕnûʾēl," pp. 74-76.