possible that these seeming variants are identical, the \(w\) being assimilated to the \(y\), when they are not separated by a vowel" (UT, § 9.54). This is exactly the case in the historical spelling preserved in the Hebrew *liwyāṭān*.

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### A NOTE ON STAIRCASE PARALLELISM

Staircase parallelism is a well-known and well-attested poetic pattern in Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry. Curiously, it appears to occur in prose as well as this brief note will attempt to demonstrate. Before that is done, though, it has to be pointed out that the staircase pattern does not occur in Akkadian verse, in spite of one or two approximations. The most convincing belongs to a ritual where milk is addressed.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ṣizbi enzī arqāṭī ša ina } & \text{tarbašī elli ša } \text{rēʔī Dumuzi } \text{īʔaldu} \\
\text{ṣizbi enzī rēʔū ina } & \text{qāṭēšu ellīti liddinka} \\
\text{O Milk of yellow goat(s), born in the pure fold of Shepherd Dumuzi,} \\
\text{O Milk of a goat, may the Shepherd give you with his pure hands!}
\end{align*}
\]

There are other examples but none as clear as this, and it is probable, therefore, that the pattern is primarily West Semitic in character.

The Hebrew texts to be considered were collected and examined in a different context by H.-W. Jüngling; they are Judg. iv 18, xix 23; 2 Sam. xiii 12, 25 and 2 Kgs iv 16. The first passage is Judg. iv 18, where Jael says to Sisera:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sūrā} & \text{ حتياج} \text{ шая,} \\
\text{sūrā} & \text{ lahoma} \\
\text{ṣal-tirā} & \text{ don’t be afraid!}
\end{align*}
\]

Strictly speaking, there is no parallelism, but in view of the other passages cited below the lay-out proposed seems valid. The example in Judg. xix 23 is not so clear; it runs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{'al-ʔahay} \\
\text{'al-tārēʔū } & \text{nā } \text{ʔerē } \text{ʔeṣer-bā } \text{ḥāʔīt hazze } \text{ʔel-bēti} \\
\text{'al-ʔaṣšū } & \text{ʔet-hannʕalā } \text{hazzōʔt}
\end{align*}
\]

Do not, my brothers,
do not commit evil, since this man has come into my house!
Do not do this senseless thing.

There is a degree of parallelism and the triple anaphoric repetition of 'al to mark these lines as poetry, an effect offset by the extreme length of the second line. 2 Sam. xiii 12 is similar in form and content:

'āl-‘āhī
Do not, my brother,
'al-t‘annēnī
do not force me,
ki lō? ye‘āšē kēn b’yishrā‘ēl
for such was never done in Israel.
'al-tā‘āsē hānn‘balā hazzōt Do not do this senseless thing.

In v. 25 of the same chapter, king David's words to Absalom are:

'al-b‘nī
No, my son,
'al-nā‘ nēlēk kullānū
not all of us should go,
w‘ālō? nikbad ‘ālekā
in case we burden you.7

This is a polite way of declining an invitation,8 which indicates that the pattern adopted is not of itself tantamount to a strong prohibition. Finally comes 2 Kgs iv 16:

'al-‘adīnī ‘īs hā‘ēlohim
Do not, sir, man of God,
'al-t‘kazzēb b‘ēṣiphātekā
do not delude your maidservant.

The expression "man of God" is omitted in Codex Vaticanus of the LXX, which would fit the pattern set by all the other passages quoted.9

All these texts are in direct speech and therefore probably reflect colloquial language, though due allowance must be made for literary style. Although four of the five passages are negative in character, Judg. iv 18 is not, which points to a more general underlying formula than that posited by Jüngling (p. 212), namely, the repetitive form found also in poetry as staircase parallelism. The implication seems to be that the origin of this form of parallelism lies in actual speech. A high proportion of recognized instances of staircase parallelism in verse is couched in direct speech (Pss. xcii 10, xciv 3; Song of Songs iv 1, 8, 9, 10, etc.), which also points in the same direction. It is perhaps only an accident that so few instances survive in OT Hebrew prose. Perhaps more remain to be identified by discerning readers.10

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1 For collected examples, discussion and bibliography, see chapter 6, section 5 in my forthcoming book on Hebrew poetry.