CHAPTER 20

THE CANAANITE LANGUAGES

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Canaanite languages include Ammonite, Amarna Canaanite, Edomite, Hebrew, Moabite, Phoenician and the language of the Deir ʕAllā plaster text (from here on, simply Deir ʕAllā) (Pat-El and Wilson-Wright 2015, 2016). Together with Aramaic, they form the Aramaeo-Canaanite subgroup of Northwest Semitic (Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, forthc.). As a family, the Canaanite languages are attested from roughly 1360 BCE to 400 CE with Proto-Canaanite dating no earlier than 1550 BCE (Wilson-Wright, forthc.). The Canaanite languages were originally attested in what is today Israel (Hebrew), Western Jordan (Ammonite, Deir ʕAllā, Edomite and Moabite) and the coast of Lebanon (Phoenician). Beginning around 1000 BCE, Phoenician seafarers, traders and colonists spread their language across the Mediterranean basin, to sites in Cyprus, North Africa and Spain. With the exception of Phoenician, speakers of Canaanite languages never wielded much political power, and their languages only ever assumed regional importance. Phoenician, by contrast, was the language of the Carthaginian Empire and continued to serve as a *lingua franca* in North Africa after the fall of Carthage in 146 BCE. Because Hebrew is treated separately in Chapters 21 and 22, this chapter will focus on the other six Canaanite languages with occasional references to Hebrew when necessary.

Texts in the Canaanite languages represent a variety of genres, including monumental, votive and dedicatory inscriptions as well as narratives, epitaphs, financial documents and letters. Edomite is attested in a single late 7th- or early 6th-century BCE letter. Moabite is known primarily from three 9th-century BCE monumental inscriptions and possibly a legal document and a dedicatory inscription. Texts in Ammonite span the 9th to 6th centuries BCE and include two monumental inscriptions, several financial documents, a letter and an inscribed bronze bottle. Deir ʕAllā is recorded in a single early 7th-century BCE narrative text, while Amarna Canaanite is known only through glosses and hybrid verbal forms employed in Akkadian letters sent to Egypt during the 14th century BCE (Izre’el 2012: 171–2). Texts in Phoenician include monumental, votive and dedicatory inscriptions, epitaphs and a passage in the Roman-era play *Poenulus* by Plautus.

Because most of the Canaanite languages are attested for only a brief period of time and in only a handful of texts, it is hard to detect diachronic and dialectal variation. The only exception to this rule is Phoenician, which is attested over a long period of time – almost 1500 years – and across the Mediterranean basin. The earliest Phoenician inscriptions (Map 20.1) stem from late 11th or early 10th century BCE Byblos and are written in the Byblian dialect, which differs in several significant ways from the Standard
Phoenician used elsewhere in the Levant. Byblian and Standard Phoenician, in turn, differ from the Phoenician used in the Mediterranean basin, which is called Punic after the Latin word for the Phoenicians. Punic used after the fall of Carthage in 146 BCE is known as Late Punic.

Despite the poor attestation of several of the Canaanite languages, the unity of the Canaanite family is well established. Six innovative features distinguish the Canaanite languages from Aramaic and the rest of Northwest Semitic more generally: (a) the shift of \( aː \) to \( oː \), which triggered (b) the shift of the 1sg independent pronoun from \( \text{ʔanaːkuː} \) to \( \text{ʔanoːkiː} \) and the 1sg perfective suffix from \( -\text{tuː} \) to \( -\text{tiː} \); (c) the generalization of \( -\text{nuː} \) as the 1pl suffix to both nominative and oblique positions; (d) the shift of the D stem perfective base from \( \text{kattib} \) to \( \text{kittib} \) and the C stem perfective base from \( \text{haktib} \) to \( \text{hiktib} \); (e) a systematic morphosyntactic distinction between two different infinitives (the ‘infinitive absolute’ and the ‘infinitive construct’) in the G stem; and (f) a relative marker derived from the noun *\( \text{ʔaθr}- \) ‘place’ (Huehnergard 1991a, 2006, Pat-El and Wilson-Wright 2016).

Although the place of Canaanite within the Semitic family is well established, the internal subgrouping of the Canaanite languages remains murky due to two factors. First, most of the Canaanite languages are poorly attested, making it difficult to know when morphosyntactic innovations are shared among languages. In Standard Phoenician, for example, the C stem suffix conjugation takes the form \( \text{yktb} \), which differs from the form \( \text{hktb} \) found in Amarna Canaanite, Deir ŠAllā, Edomite and Hebrew. At first glance, this form seems to be a good diagnostic feature of Phoenician. Yet the C stem suffix

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**MAP 20.1 THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CANAANITE INSCRIPTIONS**
conjugation is currently unattested in Ammonite, Moabite and Byblian Phoenician, which means that this feature may not go back to Proto-Phoenician and may have been shared with Ammonite and Moabite. Second, most of the Canaanite languages are recorded in a purely consonantal script (see §2), which makes it difficult to detect morphosyntactic changes that affected only vowels.

Finally, it is important to note that Amarna Canaanite does not seem to be a direct ancestor of any of the other Canaanite languages, even though it is attested 300 or more years before these other languages. It possesses several distinctive features, such as a 3mpl verbal prefix in $tV^-$, that mark it as a separate language.

2 WRITING SYSTEM

With the exception of Amarna Canaanite, all of the Canaanite languages are recorded in a variant of the Phoenician alphabet, a script that first emerged in the late 11th or early 10th century BCE. Over time, the Phoenician alphabet gave rise to two daughter scripts: Old Hebrew in the 9th century and Aramaic in the late 8th century BCE, which are named after the languages that they recorded (note that Northwest Semitic script typology does not replicate the subgrouping of Northwest Semitic). The Aramaic script, in turn, gave rise to the Transjordanian scripts used to write Ammonite and Edomite. Not every Canaanite language developed its own script, however: Moabite was written in the Old Hebrew script for all of its recorded history, while the Deir ʕAllā plaster texts were written in a variant of the Ammonite script (Rollston 2010: 19–46). Figure 20.1 contains examples of some of the alphabetic scripts used to write the Canaanite languages.

The Phoenician script and its descendants originally distinguished 22 consonantal letters but lacked a way to mark vowels. Starting around 900 BCE, however, three letters were co-opted to denote word-final long vowels in the Aramaic and Old Hebrew scripts: <h> marked final $aː$ and $oː$, <y> marked final $iː$, and <w> marked final $uː$. Over time, the letters <y> and <w> were used to mark internal long vowels as well. Unlike its daughter

Phoenician 10th c.  xwqfz0f3s6v2zbhvδyɔv6k  
Moabite 9th c.  xwpfj0f6y3h6y3a6gk  
Ammonite 8th c.  xwq f6v3z6v3r6  
Deir ʕAllā 7th c.  fωk60f3j6y6y6a6  
Edomite 6th c.  xwp6096ω96  
Hebrew 6th c.  xwpb6096ω96  

FIGURE 20.1 SOME OF THE ALPHABETIC SCRIPTS USED TO WRITE THE CANAANITE LANGUAGES

Drawing by author.
scripts, the Phoenician script remained purely consonantal until the 3rd century BCE, when <ʔ> was sporadically used to represent any final vowel and <y> came to represent final iː. Later still in the late 2nd century BCE the letters <ʔ>, <ʕ>, <ḥ> and <h> were co-opted to represent additional vowels after the phonemes represented by these letters were lost (Jongeling and Kerr 2005: 7–8):

<ʔ> /o/ /e/ /u/
<h> /a/
<ḥ> /a/
<ʕ> /a/

FIGURE 20.2 A 10TH-CENTURY BCE PHOENICIAN ROYAL INSCRIPTION. THE ELIBAAAL INSCRIPTION (KAI 6) PICTURED HERE IS INSCRIBED ON A BUST OF PHARAOH OSORKON I, WHO RULED OVER EGYPT FROM 924 TO 889 BCE

Open source: Wikimedia.
The use of these letters as vowels gives Late Punic inscriptions a somewhat alien look, with non-etymological “consonants” appearing in the middle of words, e.g., $mʕqʔm$ ‘place’ ($KA1$ 124: 2) for earlier $mqm$.

The Canaanite languages are occasionally attested in other writing systems. Amarna Canaanite was written in cuneiform, and after the fall of Carthage in 146 BCE, Punic was occasionally written in Greek or Latin script due to the loss of scribal facility in the Neo-Punic script.

3 PHONOLOGY

The consonantal phonology of the Canaanite languages differs from language to language. Standard Phoenician (Table 20.1) distinguished 22 consonantal phonemes, reflecting the following mergers from the point of view of Proto-Aramaeo-Canaanite:

*$_s$, *$_\theta$, *$_l > s$
*$_c$, *$_\sigma > \acute{c}$
*$_\zeta$, *$_\gamma > \zeta$
*$_h$, *$_x > h$
*$_k'$, *$_\theta'$, *$_l' > s'$

Other languages, by contrast, preserve a more archaic phonemic repertoire. Greek transcriptions of Hebrew, for example, show that Hebrew maintained the distinction between *$_\gamma$ and *$_\zeta$ and between *$_x$ and *$_h$ until the 1st or 2nd century CE (Steiner 2005: 266).1 Hebrew also maintained the voiceless lateral fricative *$_l$, which is distinguished from *$_s > f$ in the orthography of the Hebrew Bible by the use of diacritics ($\varphi = [\j]$ and \varphi $= [\i]$). A Neo-Assyrian transcription of the Moabite personal name $<kmš-ʕšh>$ as $ka-ma-aš-ḫal-ta$ suggests that Moabite also preserved *$_l'$ in the Deir $ʕAllā$ inscription, the ejective lateral fricative *$_l'$ is represented with $<q>$, which suggests that *$_l'$ had either merged with *$_k'$ or shifted to a phoneme similar enough to $k'$ (‘$\chi'$?) that it could be represented with the letter for $k'$. In the other Canaanite languages, by contrast, *$_l'$ merges with *$_s'$ and *$_\theta'$. Based on these survivals, Proto-Canaanite can be reconstructed with 26 consonantal phonemes, which are summarized in Table 20.2.

Even though most of the Canaanite languages were written in consonantal orthography, we can glean information about the vocalic systems of the Canaanite languages using the comparative method, orthographic anomalies and transcriptions of some Canaanite

### Table 20.1 THE CONSONANTAL PHONEMES OF STANDARD PHOENICIAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANNER</th>
<th>BILABIAL</th>
<th>DENTAL</th>
<th>LATERAL</th>
<th>PALATAL</th>
<th>ALVEOLAR-PALATAL</th>
<th>VELAR</th>
<th>PHARYNGEAL</th>
<th>GLOTTAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>p b t d t'</td>
<td>k g k'</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>h $\zeta$</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td>$r s \acute{c} s'$</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>l</td>
<td>j</td>
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<td>Approximants</td>
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<td>l</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
languages in cuneiform, Greek and Latin. The Canaanite family’s immediate ancestor, Proto-Aramaeo-Canaanite, possessed six vocalic phonemes — *a, *i, *u and their long counterparts aː, iː, uː — and two diphthongs, *aj and *aw. In Proto-Canaanite, however, the phonemic opposition between long and short vowels began to disintegrate with the shift of *aː > oː. Although this type of shift is typologically common and even occurred in the history of English, Semitists refer to this change as the Canaanite shift. Amarna Canaanite seems to preserve the inherited Canaanite system of vowels. In other languages, by contrast, one or both of the diphthongs contracted. In Edomite, the contraction of aw to oː occurred in the historical period, sometime between the 7th and 6th centuries BCE, and in Moabite, the diphthongs were in the process of collapsing during the 9th century (compare ⟨beːt⟩ ‘house’ in KAI 181:7, 23 with ⟨byt⟩ ‘house’ in KAI 181:25).

Table 20.3 summarizes the outcome of the diphthongs in the Canaanite languages where attested.

Only in the case of Phoenician do we possess adequate data to detect significant diachronic changes in phonology. These data show that the already diminished Phoenician consonantal system underwent further reductions and modifications in the last centuries of the first millennium BCE. In the 2nd century BCE, Punic lost ɭ, ɣ and h. Around the same time the voiceless stops p, t and k underwent spirantization to f, θ and x; w shifted to v and b shifted to w; and θ was lost in the word-final position. In contrast to the upheaval in the inventory of “gutturals” and stops, the affricates ʦ, ʣ and ʦ’ remained stable, at least in the Late Punic spoken in North Africa. The use of the Greek letter ς to write ʣ and a ligature of T and S to write ʦ’ in Latin transcription suggests that these consonants retained their affricated pronunciation. This state of affairs stands in contrast to Hebrew, where the affricate ʦ shifted to s during the 7th century BCE (Wilson-Wright, forthcoming).

Phoenician vowels also underwent radical changes from the perspective of Proto-Canaanite. Already in the earliest inscriptions, the diphthongs *aj and *aw contracted to eː and oː respectively, and the latter vowel merged with the oː produced by the Canaanite shift. By the Hellenistic period, the product of this merger was raised to uː: χουσωρ [kuːsor] < *kawθar (PE 1.10.11). Around the 8th century BCE short, accented a shifted to o in originally open syllables, a sound change that Semitists refer to as the
Phoenician shift: ḫi-ru-um-mu [hi:rom] < *ʔahiːrám (Annals of Tiglath-Pileser 27, ln. 2, Fox 1996: 38–41). Similarly, short, accented i shifted to e in originally open syllables during the Hellenistic period (βαλσιλληχ [baʕl-silleːk] < *baʕl-sillík ‘Baal has sent’ [CIL VIII 16]), while unaccented i shifted to e in originally open syllables (Γεραστρατος [ger-ʕaštart] < *gir-ʕaštart ‘client of Astarte’ [Contra Apion 1, 157]). In all other positions, short i was retained. By the Hellenistic period, Phoenician distinguished the following vowels: a, eː, i, iː, o, u and uː.

Ultimately, these changes disrupted the inherited opposition between long and short vowels, and, eventually, vowel length ceased to be phonemic in Punic (Kerr 2010: 106). Instead, vowel length came to be conditioned by stress: stressed vowels were long (even if they were historically short), while unstressed vowels were short (even if they were historically long), and tended to reduce to schwa. These developments can be especially clearly in the inherited 1st person independent pronoun *ʔanoːkiː, which is written anech [anəx] in the Poenulus. The historically short a vowel in the first syllable was accented and therefore retained, while the historically long vowels oː and iː reduced to schwa and, in the case of iː, disappeared entirely.

Syllables in the Canaanite languages could take the form CV, CVC and CVː. According to the available data, this restriction on syllable type remained historically stable in all of the Canaanite languages.

4 MORPHOLOGY

4.1 Pronouns

The Canaanite languages employed two series of personal pronouns: independent and suffixed. The independent forms were primarily used for the nominative and occasionally to topicalize suffixed forms, while the suffixed forms marked nominal possession and served as the object of finite verbs. The suffixed forms could also act as the subject of an infinitive as in the following example from Moabite:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b-hltḥm-h} & \quad \text{b-y} \\
\text{in-fight.REFL. INF.CST-3MSG} & \quad \text{in-1SG} \\
\text{‘when he was fighting me’ (KAI 181:9)}
\end{align*}
\]

Only the 1SG suffix pronoun distinguished between post-verbal (i.e., accusative) and post-nominal (i.e., genitive) forms. Tables 20.4, 20.5 and 20.6 summarize the personal pronouns in the Canaanite languages.

Most of the suffixed pronouns remained relatively stable across languages. The 3SG suffix pronouns, however, underwent several ad hoc changes in different languages and dialects. Interestingly, these changes often presume different phonetic environments, reflecting different relics of the Northwest Semitic case system. The Byblian 3MSG forms <-w> and <-a> reflect syncope of original -huː before the a vowel of the accusative (-ahuː > -aw > -oː) as do Standard Phoenician <-a>, Punic <-ʔ> and Late Punic [-oː]. The 3FSG forms <-ʔ>, <-ʔ> and [-ʔ] probably derive from a similar sound change. Standard Phoenician 3MSG and 3FSG <-ʔ> reflects palatalization of h following the i vowel of the genitive: -ihuː > -ijuː and -ihaː > -ifaː (Huehnergard 1991b: 187). And the Late Punic 3MSG suffix <-m> has been explained in several ways. Huehnergard (1991b: 189–90) sees it as a rendering of [-iw], which would have been phonologically similar to [-im]
### TABLE 20.4 THE INDEPENDENT PRONOUNS IN THE CANAANITE LANGUAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Byblian Phoenician</th>
<th>Standard Phoenician</th>
<th>Late Punic</th>
<th>Moabite</th>
<th>Deir 'Allā</th>
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<td>[u]</td>
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### TABLE 20.5 THE SUFFIXED PRONOUNS IN PHOENICIAN

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### TABLE 20.6 THE SUFFIXED PRONOUNS IN THE REST OF THE CANAANITE LANGUAGES

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amanar Canaanite</th>
<th>Ammonite</th>
<th>Deir 'Allā</th>
<th>Edomite</th>
<th>Moabite</th>
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<td>on verbs</td>
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</table>
in Late Punic and would reflect *hyncope before the genitive: -ihuː > -iuː > -iw. Kerr (2010: 141), by contrast, relates it to the obscure 3sg pronoun *mo: occasionally found in Hebrew (e.g., Genesis 9:26, Deuteronomy 33:2).

The 3MSG suffix also exhibits several idiosyncrasies when attached to masculine plural nouns. In Deir ʕAllā, the masculine plural bound morpheme -aj undergoes partial assimilation to the vowel of the 3MSG suffix, leading to -awhuː, written <-wh>. In Standard Phoenician, by contrast, the h of the 3SG suffixes assimilates to the eː of the construct morpheme: -eːhuː > -eːjuː and -eːhaː > -eːjaː. Byblian <-w> probably reflects partial assimilation of the bound morpheme to the vowel of the suffix, followed by syncope of the h: -ajhuː > -awhuː > -awuː.

The Phoenician 3M pronouns exhibit several other quirks. The Byblian 3MSG independent pronoun hʔt and the Standard Phoenician 3MPL and 3FPL independent pronouns hmt reflect oblique forms of the 3M independent pronouns inherited from Proto-Semitic. The origin of the distinctive Standard Phoenician, Punic and Late Punic 3MPL suffix pronoun -noːm is debated. Huehnergard (1991b: 191–4) derives the unexpected nasal element of this suffix from the old 3MPL indicative prefix ending -uːnaː: *yaktubuːna-hum > *yaktubuːnawm > yaktubuːnoːm, which was then reanalyzed as yaktubuː-noːm by comparison with the usual 3MPL prefix form yaktuː. Kerr (2010: 143), on the other hand, derives -noːm from -Vn-humu, where -Vn- is the nasal infix occasionally used with prepositions.

In Phoenician, the 1SG and 3PL suffixed pronouns have two allomorphs whose usage is conditioned by phonetic environment. The forms <-ø> and <-m> appear after a consonant, while the forms <-y> and <-nm> appear after a vowel. This distinction demonstrates that a reduced case system was still operative in Phoenician: nouns in the genitive take the prevocalic forms, while nouns in the nominative and accusative bear the preconsonantal forms, which indicates that genitive nouns in Phoenician still ended with an -i.

The Late Punic 2MPL possessive suffix takes the form [-ʔom] following the spirantization of the velar stop and the loss of the voiceless velar fricative, e.g., *-kumu > *-xum > [-ʔom].

### 4.2 Demonstratives

The Canaanite languages possessed two series of demonstrative pronouns, proximal and distal. The proximal series followed a suppletive paradigm, employing a z base in the singular and an ʔl base in the plural, and only distinguished gender in the singular. In Late Punic, the feminine singular proximal demonstratives underwent devoicing, most likely due to the presence of the final -t. This devoicing then spread to the masculine forms. For the most part, the distal pronouns are identical to the 3rd person independent pronouns. Table 20.7 summarizes the various proximal demonstratives attested in Phoenician, the

### Table 20.7 The Proximal Demonstratives in the Various Dialects of Phoenician

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Byblian Phoenician</strong></th>
<th><strong>Standard Phoenician</strong></th>
<th><strong>Punic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Late Punic</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSG</td>
<td>zn, z</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>z, s, st</td>
<td>[sɔ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSG</td>
<td>zʔt, zʔ</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>zt, st</td>
<td>[sɔθ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>ʔl</td>
<td>ʔl</td>
<td>ʔʔ</td>
<td>[ilɛ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
only Canaanite language other than Hebrew to preserve the full paradigm. Outside of Phoenician, Moabite attests to the fsg proximal demonstrative zʔt (KAI 181:3).

4.3 Interrogatives

In contrast to the rest of the pronominal system, the interrogative pronouns were marked for animacy (animate vs. inanimate) rather than person-gender-number. The animate interrogative appears in Punic as mi [mi:] ‘who?’ (Poen. 1010) and in Amarna Canaanite as mi-ya [mija] ‘who?’ (EA 85:63; 94:12; 116:67). Amarna Canaanite also possessed an oblique form of the animate interrogative in [mijati:] (EA 220:11). The final -atiː on this form is most likely the oblique morpheme -t found on the Byblian 3MSG independent pronoun hʔt and the Standard Phoenician 3MPL independent pronoun hmt. The inanimate interrogative *mah ‘what?’ appears in Deir ʕAllā (I, 5), Hebrew (Genesis 2:9 inter alia) and Punic (Poen. 1010) and came to be employed as a relative particle in Late Punic. Deir ʕAllā also possessed a compound interrogative l-m ‘why’ (literally ‘for what?’). In Standard Phoenician, both interrogatives could serve as indefinite pronouns, e.g., w-my yšḥt h-spr z ‘and whoever destroys this inscription’ (KAI 24:14), mʔš pʕlt ‘whatever I did’ (KAI 24:4).

4.4 Relative

Although both Byblian Phoenician, Late Punic and Archaic Hebrew preserve vestiges of the inherited Northwest Semitic relative pronoun *zVː, all of the Canaanite languages use a grammaticalized form of the noun *ʔaθr ‘place’ as a relative particle (Pat-El and Wilson-Wright 2016: 44–7). This particle grammaticalized differently in the various languages. In some, it retained its full morphological form; in others, it reduced to ʔš or even to a clitic š with gemination in the following consonant (Huehnergard 2006: 124–5). In addition to forms derived from *ʔaθar and *zVː, Late Punic also possessed a third relative marker, mu, derived from the inanimate interrogative pronoun *mah ‘what?’.

Table 20.8 summarizes the different forms of the relative marker in the Canaanite languages.

4.5 Nouns and adjectives

Nouns and adjectives in the Canaanite languages were declined for gender (masculine and feminine), number (singular, plural and rarely dual), state (bound or nonbound)
and in some instances, case (nominative or oblique). As in Semitic in general, nouns in the Canaanite languages could be bound (i.e., dependent on a following nominal, verbal clause or prepositional phrase) or nonbound (i.e., independent). Bound and non-bound nouns took the same form in the singular in the Canaanite languages, but the plural employed different morphemes to distinguish bound and nonbound forms. Some Canaanite languages preserved vestiges of the Northwest Semitic case system, which distinguished nominative, genitive and accusative cases in the singular and nominative and oblique cases in the plural. Phoenician preserved a distinction between the nominative and oblique case in the singular before the 1sg and 3rd person suffixes, while Amarna Canaanite preserved a general distinction between the nominative and oblique cases in the plural: mar-ia-nu-ma [maryanu:ma] ‘chariot warriors (nom)’ (EA 107:43) and li-mi-ma [liʔmi:ma] ‘peoples (obl)’ (EA 205:6). Table 20.9 summarizes the nominal declensions of the various Canaanite languages.

With the exception of Amarna Canaanite and Deir ʿAllā, all of the Canaanite languages feature a prefixed definite article derived from the presentative particle *han-: Ammonite h-krm ‘the vineyard’ (KAI 308:4); Edomite h-ʔkl ‘the food’ (Ḥorvat Uza ln. 3); Moabite h-ʔṛṣ ‘the land’ (KAI 181:29); Phoenician h-btm ‘the houses’ (KAI 4:2). In most cases, the n of the definite article assimilated to the following consonant. The resulting doubling usually remains undetectable in the purely consonantal orthography of the Canaanite languages, but several unusual Punic spellings confirm its presence, e.g., ʿm-mqm [am-maquːm] ‘the place’ (KAI 173:5), as does the vocalization of the Hebrew Bible, [ham-mɔjim] ‘the water’ (Genesis 1:2).

### 4.6 Numerals

Apart from Hebrew, Phoenician preserves the best evidence for the numerals, which were arranged in a decimal system. The units were nouns and declined for gender, with feminine forms invariably taking a final -t (Table 20.10). The tens were formed by adding the plural morpheme to the corresponding unit, with the exception of ‘twenty’, which was the plural of ‘ten’. Separate words for ‘hundred’ (mʔt) and ‘thousand’ (ʔlp) are also attested. Composed numbers took the form hundreds and tens and ones, e.g., ṭrḥtnm ‘the four of them’ (IPT 79:5). The existence of this construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 20.9 THE NOMINAL DECLENSIONS OF THE CANAANITE LANGUAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMARNA CANAANITE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBNND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
suggests that numerals stood in construct with the noun that they modified. Ordinal numbers were formed in Phoenician with the addition of a final -y (e.g., ḥrbʾy ‘fourth’ in KAI 76B:1), which can probably be vocalized [iːj] on the basis of Hebrew.

Outside of Phoenician the evidence for the number system is slim: ‘one’ (ḥd) appears once in Deir ʿAllā (II, 10), ‘seven’ (ši-bi or ši-bi-i/e) occurs several times in Amarna Canaanite (EA 196:4, 211:4, 215:6), and the numbers ‘30’ (šlšn), ‘40’ (ḥmršn), ‘100’ (mʔt), ‘200’ (mʔtn) and ‘7,000’ (šbʕt šlpn) show up once each in Moabite (KAI 181:2, 8, 16, 20, 29); the texts in Ammonite and Edomite do not contain any numerals.

4.7 Verbs

Verbal morphology in the Canaanite languages, as in the Semitic languages in general, was particularly rich. Verbal roots occurred in two finite conjugations – prefix and suffix – and a variety of stems, which altered the semantics of the underlying root. Each stem also possessed its own infinitive, participle and imperative forms. In Proto-Canaanite at least, the basic stem distinguished between two morphologically and syntactically distinct infinitives.

The Canaanite languages inherited a complex TAM system from Central Semitic that distinguished between three prefix conjugations: an imperfective yaktubu ~ yaktubu-na form, a preterite/jussive yaktub ~ yaktubu: form, and a cohortative yaktuba ~ yaktubu: form. Any of the three prefix conjugations could be marked additionally with the suffix -(n)na (the so-called energetic suffix), whose function is still poorly understood. Amarna Canaanite still retains this system largely intact, which is summarized using a G stem verb in Table 20.11. In the remaining languages, however, the morphological distinction between the three forms collapsed due to the loss of final short vowels: *yaktub, *yaktubu, *yaktuba > yaktub. The loss of distinctiveness in the singular, in turn, led to leveling in the plural form: Standard Phoenician and Deir ʿAllā leveled the jussive form, while Ammonite probably leveled the imperfective form. Despite this loss of morphological distinctiveness, the later Canaanite languages still preserved a regular semantic distinction between the imperfective and jussive forms. The prefixed preterite form, however, was restricted to certain syntactic environments, with the suffix conjugation being
the preferred means of expressing the past tense. Hebrew, Moabite and Deir ʕAllā preserve the preterite form as a narrative tense to describe consecutive actions. Interestingly, Amarna Canaanite differs from Phoenician, Hebrew, Moabite and Ammonite in using \( tV \) as the 3mpl prefix. The 3mpl prefix form is unattested in Edomite.

The suffix conjugation is far simpler than its prefix counterpart. Historically, it derives from the Proto-Semitic stative, a verbal adjective marked with enclitic pronouns, which developed into a perfective conjugation in West Semitic (see Chapter 3, §3.5.4). In the Canaanite languages, it acts as perfective form and, with certain roots, can have a stative meaning. Table 20.12 summarizes the forms of the G stem suffix conjugation in Amarna Canaanite, Standard Phoenician and Late Punic, the three languages where it is best attested.

In addition to the conjugation system, the Canaanite languages distinguished at least four verbal stems (G, D, C, N), which rang morphological and semantic changes on the

### Table 20.11 The Three Prefix Conjugations of Amarna Canaanite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicative/Imperfect</th>
<th>Jussive/Preterite</th>
<th>Cohortative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>( ?VktVbu )</td>
<td>( ?VktVb )</td>
<td>( ?VktVba )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2msg</td>
<td>( tVktVbu )</td>
<td>( tVktVb )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2fsg</td>
<td>( yVktVbu )</td>
<td>( yVktVb )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3msg</td>
<td>( tVktVbu )</td>
<td>( tVktVb )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>( nVktVbu )</td>
<td>( nVktVb )</td>
<td>( nVktVba )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2mpl</td>
<td>( tVktVbu:na )</td>
<td>( tVktVbu: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3mpl</td>
<td>( tVktVbu:na )</td>
<td>( tVktVbu: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3fpl</td>
<td>( tVktVbu:na )</td>
<td>( tVktVbu: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3mdu</td>
<td>( tVktVbu:na )</td>
<td>( tVktVbu: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 20.12 The Suffix Conjugation in Amarna Canaanite, Standard Phoenician and Late Punic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amarna Canaanite</th>
<th>Standard Phoenician</th>
<th>Late Punic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>[katabti:]</td>
<td>ktbt</td>
<td>[katabθi]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2msg</td>
<td>[katabta()]</td>
<td>ktbt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2fsg</td>
<td>[katab:]</td>
<td>ktbt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3msg</td>
<td>[kataba]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td>[katob]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3fsg</td>
<td>[katabat]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td>[kataba]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>[katabnu:]</td>
<td>ktn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2mpl</td>
<td>[kataltunu]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2fpl</td>
<td>[katabu:]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td>[katabu]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3mpl</td>
<td>[katabu:]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td>[katabu]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3fpl</td>
<td>[katabu:]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3mdu</td>
<td>[kataba:]</td>
<td>ktb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Ground stem (G), whose finite forms are summarized above, was the basic form of the verb. The Doubled stem (D) was marked by doubling of the middle radical of the verbal root in all derived forms (kittib ~ yukattib). The semantic effect of this stem is hard to quantify. In general, it tends to raise the valence of the verbal root by one and, therefore, is often referred to as a factitive stem. It is also used to form denominal verbs. The Causative stem (C) is marked by a prefixed hV-, which elided in the prefix conjugation (hiktib ~ yaktib). In Standard Phoenician, this prefix palatalizes to yi-, making it difficult to distinguish between suffix yiktib and prefix yaktib in purely consonantal orthography. True to its name, the C stem imparts a causative meaning to the verbal root. The N stem is marked by a prefixed nV-, which regularly assimilated to the following consonant, including the first root consonant of the prefix conjugation (naktab ~ yakkatib). It has a medio-passive or reflexive meaning.

Some stems possessed corresponding passive and reflexive forms. The passive forms of the various stems were marked by a change in vowel melody. G active kataba ~ y’ktVb, for example, becomes katiba ~ yuktab in the passive, e.g., Amarna Canaanite la-qí-ḫu [lak’ihu:] ‘they (m) were taken’ (EA 287:56); yu-pa-šu [yupaʃu] ‘it is done’ (EA 114:42). The reflexive forms, on the other hand, were marked by a prefixed or infixed t in both the prefix and suffix conjugations, e.g., Moabite w-ʔltḥm ‘and I battled’ (KAI 181:11). As usual, the purely consonantal orthography employed to write most of the Canaanite languages makes it difficult to detect most of the stems and their passive and reflexive variants. Only the suffix conjugation of the C and N stems and the reflexive variants of the four stems can be easily recognized. The following examples illustrate the distinctive morphology of these forms:

Deir ʕAllā

hqrqt C ‘it causes to flee’ (I, 16)

nṣbw N ‘they stood’ (I, 6)

ytmkl tD ‘he will take council’ (II, 9)

Amarna Canaanite

hi-iḫ-bi-e [hixbi?] C ‘he hid’ (EA 256:7)

na-aq-ṣa-pu [nak’s’apu:] N ‘they were angry’ (EA 82:51)

Edomite

hbrktk C ‘I blessed you’ (Horvat ‘Uza ln. 2)

Moabite

hšʕny C ‘he saved me’ (KAI 181:4)

w-ʔltḥm Gt ‘and I fought’ (KAI 181:11)

Phoenician

yqdš D ‘he sanctified’ (KAI 42:4)

npʕl N ‘it was done’ (RES 1204:1)

thtpk Gt ‘let it be overturned’ (KAI 1:2)

The Canaanite languages distinguish morphosyntactically between two different infinitive forms, at least in the G stem: the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct; this distinction is one of the innovative features of the Canaanite branch of Aramaeo-Canaanite (Pat-El and Wilson-Wright 2016: 47–52). When paired with the appropriate independent pronoun, the infinitive absolute can take the place of a finite verb as in the following Phoenician example:

w-qrʔ ʔnk
and-call.inf.absl 1SG
‘and I called’ (KAI 10:2)
It can also serve as an argument of a finite verb from the same root as in the following example from Moabite:

\[
\text{w-yšrʔl } \text{ʔbd } \text{yʔbd}
\]

and-Israel perish-INF.ABSL perish.IPfv.3MSG

‘and Israel will surely perish’ (KAI 181:7)

The infinitive construct, by contrast, is used as the object of prepositions and with pronominal suffixes:

\[
b-hltḥm-h \quad b-y
\]

in-fight.REFL.INF.CST-3MSG in-1SG

‘when he was fighting me’ (KAI 181:19)

The infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct also differ in their morphology. The infinitive absolute reflects a Proto-Semitic *kataːb (Proto-Canaanite *katoːb) pattern, while the infinitive construct reflects a variety of patterns. Strong roots favor a *kutub pattern, while I–y roots and the verb ntn ‘to give’ usually occur in a *tib-t pattern. III–y roots tend to take a *kitaːt pattern.

Each stem had a corresponding participle, which declined for number and gender like a noun. The active G stem participle in Canaanite took the form koːtib as in Amarna Canaanite su-ki-ni [so:kin-] ‘commissioner’ (EA 256:9) and Late Punic dvber [duber] < *doːbir ‘speaking’ (Poen. 944). The G passive participle had the form katuːb, e.g., ha-mu-du [hamu:du] ‘desired’ (EA 138:126). Vocalized examples of the D and C stem participles are not attested, but they can be distinguished in consonantal orthography by the presence of a prefixed m-, e.g., Ammonite mʕrb ‘the one who causes to enter (C)’ (KAI 307:3). N stem participles are marked by an n- prefix as in Phoenician nštʕm ‘those who are feared’ (KAI 26A II:4).

Each stem also had a corresponding imperative, which expressed 2nd person commands. Vocalized examples of the imperative are rare outside of Biblical Hebrew, but they suggest that the imperative took the form qutul or qital for strong verbs (Bjørn, forthc.), e.g., nu-pu-ul [nupul] ‘fall!’ (EA 252:25) and [ləbaʃ] ‘put on!’ (1 Kings 22:30). Some middle weak roots reflect a qitil pattern in the imperative, e.g., [ɬiːm] < *ɬiyim (Genesis 31:37). Negative imperatives were formed by using the non-indicative negative particle ʔl in conjunction with the corresponding jussive prefix conjugation as in the following example from Deir ʕAllā:

\[
ʔl \quad t-hgy
\]

NEG 2FSG-remove.JUSS

‘do not remove (it)’ (I, 7)

Commands in the 3rd and 1st person were expressed using the jussive and cohortative prefix conjugations respectively, e.g., Deir ʕAllā thby ‘let her place’ (I, 7) and Biblical Hebrew [ʔeʃmoːrɔ] ‘I shall guard’ (Psalms 59:10).

### 4.8 Prepositions and conjunctions

Three short proclitic prepositions, b- ‘in, among’, l- ‘to, for’, and k- ‘like, as’, did most of the heavy lifting in the Canaanite languages. Nevertheless, all of the Canaanite languages
possess longer, free-standing prepositions, many of which derive from bound nouns. The most conspicuous example is boːd ‘through’, which is attested in Phoenician and Amarna Canaanite and represents a contraction of *bi-yadi ‘in the hand of’. Other examples include ʾl ‘upon’ (Ammonite, Edomite, Deir ʾAllā, Phoenician), ʾht ‘under’ (Amarna Canaanite, Deir ʾAllā), mn ‘from’ (Ammonite, Deir ʾAllā, Phoenician), ʔhr ‘after’ (Amarna Canaanite, Deir ʾAllā), ʾlpn ‘before’ (Phoenician) and ʾmd ‘with’ (Edomite). In addition to prepositions, Amarna Canaanite and Phoenician possessed post-positive locative markers in either -um(m)a or *-ah > aː: ba-aṭ-nu-ma [bat’nu(m)-ma] ‘on the belly’ (EA 232:10) and mflʔ [miʃ-ʃal-aː] ‘above’ (KAI 145:14).

The prepositions were subject to several ad hoc phonological changes, due no doubt to their frequent usage. In languages with a definite article, the h of the definite article underwent syncope after the three short, proclitic prepositions b-, l- and k-, e.g., *li-hap-path > lap-petah ‘at the door’ (Genesis 4:7). In Phoenician, prepositions could be extended through the addition of a prefixed ʔ (e.g., ʾb for b-) or a suffixed n or t (e.g., bn for b-, ʾlt for ʾl). The preposition mn could be used proclitically or as a freestanding preposition; the n of the proclitic variant usually assimilated to the first consonant of its nominal dependent, e.g., Ammonite m-ʔlt ‘from Elat’ (Heshbon 1:4).

The Canaanite languages inherited an object marker, *ʔayaːt, from Aramaeo-Canaanite, which in some languages came to mark the definite direct object of a verb (Wilson-Wright 2016: 7–15). This particle is attested in Edomite and Moabite as ʔt and in Standard Phoenician Punic as ʔyt and ʔt. The shorter form reflects vowel contraction and is transcribed as oθ in a Phoenician inscription in Greek script from Wasṭa Syria, reflecting perhaps ṣɔːt < *ʔayoːt < *ʔayaːt. In Late Punic, the object marker reduced to [ʊt] (written <yth> in Poen. 930, 932, 935, 936, 937 and 940 and Wadi Chanañes LP 1:1) and even [t-] (Zliten LP 1:1) following the loss of the “guttural” consonants and the realignment of the vocalic system in Late Punic.

The conjunction in the Canaanite languages was a simple wV-, which should probably be vocalized wa- based on Hebrew and comparative Semitic evidence. In Late Punic, the conjunction underwent reduction to [və].

4.9 Negation markers

According to the available evidence, the Canaanite languages inherited a system of three negation markers from Northwest Semitic – łaː, ʔal and bal – which served to negate different parts of speech. Northwest Semitic łaː > Canaanite lo: negated indicative verbs, ʔal negated non-indicative verbs, and bal negated nouns. This system remains intact in most of the Canaanite languages. In Phoenician, however, bal replaces lo: as the standard negation for indicative verbs (Pat-El 2013). In some Canaanite languages, such as Deir ʾAllā, the negative particle lo: was proclitic; in others, like Hebrew, it was a freestanding particle.

5 SYNTAX

The lack of long, non-formulaic texts makes it difficult to analyze the syntax of the Canaanite languages in detail. Nevertheless, certain general features can be distilled from the available data.
5.1 Word order

Because the subject of finite verbs in the Canaanite languages is encoded in the verbal morphology, word order tends to be VO as the following example from Moabite shows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{w-y-ʕnw} & \quad \text{ʔt} \quad mʔb \\
\text{and-3MSG-oppress.FACT OBJ GN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘and he oppressed Moab’ (KAI 181:5)

When an independent subject is expressed, it usually appears before the finite verb as in the following example from Moabite:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ˀnk} \quad bn-ty \quad ūrʕr \\
1\text{SG build.PFV-1SG GN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘I myself built Aroer’ (KAI 181:26)

Other phrases in the Canaanite languages follow head-dependent order:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PP} \quad ŭmd \quad ?hʔmh & \\
\text{with PN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘with Ahimo’ (Edomite; Ḥorvat ‘Uza ln. 4)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N-N} \quad k-mšʔ \quad ʔl \quad & \\
\text{like-oracle.CST DN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘like an oracle of El’ (Deir ŪAllā I, 2)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N-Adj} \quad istrates \quad rḥq-t \quad & \\
\text{year-FPL far-FPL}
\end{align*}
\]

‘years far off’ (Ammonite; KAI 308:9)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N-Rel} \quad ʔrn \quad z \quad pʕl \quad [ʔt]bʕl \quad & \\
\text{coffin REL make.PFV.3MSG PN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘the coffin that Ittobaal made’ (Byblian Phoenician; KAI 1:1)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N-Dem} \quad h-bmt \quad zʔt \quad & \\
\text{DEF-high.place DEM}
\end{align*}
\]

‘this high place’ (Moabite; KAI 181:3)

5.2 Predication

The Canaanite languages distinguish two types of predication, nominal and verbal. In verbal predication, the predicate is a finite verb, while in nominal predication the predicate is a noun, pronoun, adjective or prepositional phrase:

Verbal predication

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{w-y-ʔm} \quad blʕm & \\
\text{and-3MSG-rise.PFV PN}
\end{align*}
\]

‘and Balaam rose’ (Deir ŪAllā I, 3)
Nominal predication

ḥzh ṭlh-n ḥʔ
see.ptcp.msg god-mpl 3msg
‘he was a seer of the gods’ (Deir ʕAllā I, 1)

5.3 Definiteness

With the exception of Amarna Canaanite and Deir ʕAllā, definiteness is morphologically marked in the Canaanite languages. Ammonite, Edomite, Moabite and Phoenician all attest to a prefixed definite article in ḥ-. Interestingly, the Canaanite languages differ in terms of demonstrative agreement as it relates to definiteness. In Byblian Phoenician, the bare demonstrative modifies indefinite nouns, while in Standard Phoenician and Moabite, the bare demonstrative modifies definite nouns. In Hebrew, the demonstrative agrees with its head noun in terms of definiteness. Compare the following:

Byblian Phoenician ṭrn zn
coffin DEM
‘this coffin’ (KAI 1:2)

Moabite ḥ-bmt zʔt
def-high.place DEM
‘this high place’ (KAI 181:3)

Hebrew ḥ-ʕt ḥ-zh
def-time def-dem
‘this time’ (Lachish 6:2)

5.4 Analytics structures

The Canaanite languages are predominantly analytic in both their nominal and verbal systems. Dependency between a noun and a following noun, clause or prepositional phrase is expressed by assigning the construct state to the head noun as in the following example from Deir ʕAllā:

k-mšʔ ʔl
like-oracle.cst DN
‘like an oracle of El’ (I, 2)

The verbal system is also highly analytic, with both person-gender-number and TAM being encoded through verbal morphology. For the most part, pronominal objects are attached directly to both nouns and verbs. Late Punic, however, developed a synthetic genitive using a relative pronoun, the preposition l- and the suffixed pronouns:

*[ba-marov zə-lo-ʔom]*
in-protection rel-to-2mpl
‘in your protection’ (Poen. 933)*
\[w-rdm \text{ and-family REL-to-3MSG} \]
\[\text{‘and his family’ (Hr Maktar N 58:3)}\]

5.5 Subordination

Relative clauses are the main type of subordination attested in the Canaanite languages. Such clauses are marked with a relative particle, typically a reflex of *ʔaθr, but relatives in zVː and moː are attested in Phoenician and Hebrew. Relative clauses usually mark resumption of the head noun within the relative clause except when the head noun functions as the direct object within the relative clause:

\[\text{'I am Yahwimilk . . . whom the lady, Lady of Byblos made sovereign over Byblos’ (KAI 10:1–2)}\]

5.6 Negation

As mentioned previously, the Canaanite languages inherited three negation markers from Proto-Northwest Semitic: a nominal negation marker bal, an indicative negation marker laː (> loː with the Canaanite shift), and a non-indicative negation marker ?al. ?al negated the jussive prefix conjugation and, when used in conjunction with 2nd person prefix verbs, formed the negative imperative. This system is preserved in Hebrew and survives in altered form in Phoenician, with bal replacing loː as the negation marker for indicative verbs. Phoenician inscriptions from Cyprus and Sidon also attest a negative existential marker in ?y. The following examples illustrate the Phoenician system of negation:

\[\text{‘you will not walk’ (KAI 27:8)}\]

\[\text{‘not (in) my time’ (KAI 14:3)}\]

\[\text{‘and do not disturb me’ (KAI 13:4)}\]

\[\text{‘there is nothing in it there’ (KAI 14:5)}\]

It is unclear whether this system was retained unaltered in the other Canaanite languages, due to the lack of data. In Amarna Canaanite, [bali] or [balu] negates infinitives (e.g., \[EA 98:17–18\]), and [jaːnu(m)] and [ijjaːnu(m)] serve as negative existential
markers (e.g., *EA 362:49–50*). Deir ʕAllā preserves a single example of the indicative negation maker *lo:* (I, 9), while Moabite attests to a negative existential marker in ʔn (*KAI 181:24*).

6 LEXICON

The Canaanite languages preserved the inherited Semitic lexicon largely intact and – as far as the available evidence suggests – shared a significant amount of core vocabulary. Nevertheless, lexical differences do exist among the various languages (Kogan 2015: 372). Moabite, for example, uses the root ʕšy ‘to make’ where Phoenician tends to use pʕl.

Apart from Hebrew, only Phoenician is attested well enough for loan words to be detectable. This is not surprising. As Phoenician seafarers, traders and colonists spread across the Mediterranean basin, they borrowed words from the various speech communities they encountered. As a result, Punic contains words of Greek, Latin, Egyptian and Numidian origin including ʔksdr (< Greek ἐξέδρα ‘hall’), ʔmprʕṭr (< Latin imperator ‘emperor’), ʔnʔ (< Egyptian dnỉt ‘basket’) and myknd < Numidian (mnkd ‘head, chief’) (Watson 2013).

7 SAMPLE TEXT

The opening section of the Karatepe inscription

In this 8th-century Standard Phoenician text, the city ruler Azatiwadda enumerates his accomplishments and requests blessings from various deities. Azatiwadda ruled over the city of Karatepe in south central Turkey at the behest of Awariku, king of Adana. The text was discovered in 1946 and is published in *KAI* (Donner and Röllig I: 6–7, II: 35–43).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ʔnk} & \text{ ʔztwd} & \text{hb-brk-bʕl} & \text{ʔbd} & \text{bʕl} & \text{ʔs} & \text{ʔdr} \\
\text{PN} & & \text{DEF-bless,PTCP.PASS,MSG-DN} & \text{servant} & \text{DN} & \text{REL} & \text{be.strong,FAC,PFV,3MSG} \\
\text{ʔwrk} & \text{mlk} & \text{dnny-m} & \text{pʕl-n} & \text{bʕl} & \text{l-dnny-m} & \text{l-ʔb} \\
\text{PN} & & \text{king} & \text{Danunian-MPL} & \text{make,PFV,3MSG-1SG} & \text{DN} & \text{to-Danunian-MPL} & \text{to-father} \\
\text{w-l-ʔm} & \text{yhw} & \text{ʔnk} & \text{ʔyt} & \text{dnny-m} & \text{yrḥb} & \text{ʔnk} & \text{and-to-mother} & \text{live,CAUS,INF,ABSL} & \text{1SG} & \text{OBJ} & \text{Danunian-MPL} & \text{be.wide,CAUS,INF,ABSL} & \text{1SG} \\
\text{ʔɾṣ} & \text{ʔm} & \text{ʔdn} & \text{l-m-ʔṣʔ} & \text{ṣmš} & \text{w-ṣd} & \text{mbʔ-ʔy} & \text{w-kn} & \text{land} & \text{valley} & \text{GN} & \text{to-from-rising} & \text{sun} & \text{and-until} & \text{setting-3MSG} & \text{and-be,PFV,3MSG} \\
\text{b-ym-t-y} & \text{kl} & \text{nšm} & \text{l-dnny-m} & \text{w-šbʕ} & \text{w-ʔmšʔ} & \text{in-day-FPL-1SG} & \text{all} & \text{pleasantness} & \text{to-Danunian-MPL} & \text{and-satiety} & \text{and-abundance} \\
\text{w-mlʔ} & \text{ʔnk} & \text{ʔqɾ-t} & \text{pʃr} & \text{w-pʕl} & \text{ʔnk} & \text{ss} & \text{ʕl} & \text{wa-fill,FACT,INF,ABSL} & \text{1SG} & \text{sack-FPL} & \text{GN} & \text{and-make,INF,ABSL} & \text{1SG} & \text{horse} & \text{upon}
\end{align*}
\]
'I am Azatiwadda, blessed of Baal, servant of Baal, whom Awariku, king of the Danunians honored. Baal made me a father and a mother to the Danunians. I caused the Danunians to live. I enlarged the land of the valley of Adana from the rising of the sun to its setting. And there was in my day every pleasant thing for the Danunians, and satiety, and abundance. And I filled the grain sacks of Paara. And I made horse upon horse and shield upon shield, and army upon army for the sake of Baal and my patron deity. And I broke scoffers and I destroyed all of the evil which was in the land. And I set the house of my lord in good order. And I did a kindness for the offspring of my lord and I sat him on the throne of his father. And I made peace with every king.'

NOTES

1 For the possible preservation of *ɣ in Edomite, see Lipiński (2014: 374).
2 For some reason, Proto-Northwest Semitic *ʕaɬr ‘ten (m)’ is written ʕsr in Phoenician instead of the expected ᵃʃʳ.


GENERAL CANAANITE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Further reading


Texts


Grammars


Overview articles


