

Artikel

Affectedness, Aspect, and Biblical ^ʔet¹

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1. When it is associated with a transitive verb, Biblical Hebrew ^ʔet plays unambiguous² semantic and grammatical roles.

wattēd ʔet-qayin 'and she gave birth to Cain' (Gen 4:1)

wayyak ʔet-pəlištīm 'he struck down the Philistines' (2 Sam 23:12)

In its grammatical role, ^ʔet marks the direct object, provided that the object is individuated.³ In its semantic role, ^ʔet marks the patient.⁴ It is the entity which is

¹ I thank those scholars who kindly read an earlier draft of this paper and offered constructive criticism: Baruch Halpern, Robert Hetzron, Laura Kalman, Marianne Mithun, Gary Rendsburg, and Sandra Thompson. I also thank Bernard Comrie and Richard Steiner for their advice. Michael Covington deserves a special word of thanks, whose unpublished paper „Grammatical Relations and Biblical Hebrew ^ʔet“ stimulated the present essay. The transliteration system follows the seven-color interpretation of the Biblical Hebrew vowel system. Circumflexes represent *matres lectionis*, and spirantization is not indicated. Finally, this study will use several *termini technici* as follows:

object – a grammatical term denoting the nonsubject, core argument of a two- or three-place predicate

direct object – an object either unmarked or marked with ^ʔet

oblique object – an object marked with a preposition other than ^ʔet.

² The hypothesis that ^ʔet differentiates (*disambiguates*) object from subject (e.g., Francis I. Andersen, *Passive and Ergative in Hebrew*, in: [ed.] Hans Goedicke, *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, Baltimore/London 1971, 14; and Joshua Blau, *Short Philological Notes on the Inscription of Meša^c*, *Maarav* 2, 1980, 157) cannot be sustained cross-linguistically. See Edith A. Moravcsik, *On the limits of subject-object ambiguity tolerance*, *Papers in Linguistics* 11, 1978, 255-259.

³ Since ^ʔet can accompany both definite and indefinite direct objects, the grammatical definiteness of the object does not fully account for ^ʔet (G. A. Khan, *Object Markers and Agreement Pronouns in Semitic Languages*, *BSO[AJS]* 47, 1984, 469). Rather, ^ʔet is sensitive to the individuation of the object (*ibid.*, 471; and Hans-Peter Müller, *Die Konstruktionen mit hinnē „siehe“ und ihr sprachgeschichtlicher Hintergrund*, *ZAH* 2, 1989, 55 with n. 55. See already Giuseppe Furlani, *La nota accusativi nš in ebraico*, *RSO* 8, 1919, 214, 222), „the degree to which the [object] is characterized as a distinct entity or individual“ (Alan Timberlake, *Hierarchies in the Genitive of Negation*, *Slavic and East European Journal* 19, 1975, 124), especially its distinctiveness from the subject (agent) and its own background (Paul J. Hopper and Sandra A. Thompson, *Transitivity in grammar and discourse*, *Language* 56, 1980, 253).

For the hierarchy of features, see *ibid.*, in conjunction with Khan, *Object Markers*, 470, and *idem*, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, *London Oriental Series* 38, 1988, xxxvi-xxxix. And for a brief application to Biblical Hebrew ^ʔet, see *idem*, *Object Markers*, 471-472.

either effected or affected by the action of the verb; it „receives“ this action,⁵ undergoes some sort of change,⁶ and often shows the (lasting) effect of the action and change.⁷

While it serves these semantic and grammatical functions in transitive constructions,⁸ ^ʔ*et* is not always associated with a fully transitive verb. ^ʔ*et* often follows verbs of motion, as for example **rdp* ‘go after, pursue’ and **yš* ‘go out, leave’. ^ʔ*et* may also follow other, patently intransitive verbs, as for example **hʒq* ‘be strong’ and **hlh* ‘be sick’.

In each of these cases, however, the object of the verb can be either direct or oblique. For example, the grammatical object of **hlh* is preceded by ^ʔ*et* or *bə*. Yet in either case, the object is the entity affected by the verb (patient).⁹

⁴ See Müller, *Ergativelemente im akkadischen und althebräischen Verbalsystem*, Bibl 66, 1985, 390, 403; and idem, *Die Konstruktionen mit hinnē*, 55. See also J. Hoftijzer, *Remarks Concerning the Use of the Particle ʔt in Classical Hebrew*, OTS 14, 1965, 23-24, 27, 44.

⁵ Hopper and Thompson, *Transitivity*, 252 n. 1.

⁶ Robert Hetzron, *Toward an Amharic Case-Grammar*, *Studies in African Linguistics* 1, 1970, 330-331.

⁷ Christopher Beedham, *The Passive Aspect in English, German and Russian*, *Tübinger Beiträge zur Linguistik* 186, 1982, 24. See also Marianne Mithun, *Historical Linguistics and Linguistic Theory: Reducing the Arbitrary and Constraining Explanation*, in: (edd.) Kira Hall, Michael Meecham, and Richard Shapiro, *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society*, 1989, 404.

⁸ In many instances, ^ʔ*et* does not serve both functions but only that of the patient. In this case ^ʔ*et* appears with the core argument of a variety of predicates: personal passives (for impersonal passives, see n. 21), nonvolitional intransitives, statives, existential/nonexistential verbs and particles, as well as adjectival predicates. This argument involves „him who or that which is, or gets to be, in a certain state, aside from his (or its) own will and without his (or its) own participation, whether under the influence of a stronger person or thing or as if it were of himself (or itself)“ (E. Sapir, [Review of Uhlenbeck, *Het Passieve Karakter*], *International Journal of American Linguistics* 1, 1917-1920, 82); this argument is the patient, widely defined (see Müller, *Ergativelemente*, 403).

Biblical Hebrew is here functioning as an agent/patient language (cf. Khan, *Object Markers*, 496-497), since its morphology directly encodes a particular *semantic* role. It is not functioning as an ergative language (cf. Müller, *Ergativelemente*, 404-409; and idem, *Die Konstruktionen mit hinnē*, 55-56). Ergative languages encode the *discourse* role of significant new information (Mithun, *Disagreement: The Case of Pronominal Affixes and Nouns*, in: [edd.] Deborah Tannen and James E. Alatis, *Languages and Linguistics: The Interdependence of Theory, Data, and Application*, Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1985, 1986, 57-59, 61), which is not the case for Biblical Hebrew.

Even though ^ʔ*et* marks the patient, the patient is occasionally the grammatical subject as well. It may, for example, govern a predicate with which it agrees in person, number, and gender (e.g., see Khan, *Object Markers*, 497). But such subject coding properties are secondary (see Peter Cole and Janice L. Jake, *Accusative Subjects in Imbabura Quechua*, *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 8/1, 1978, 89; and, in greater detail, Cole et al., *The acquisition of subjecthood*, *Language* 56, 1980, 719-743) and represent a certain topicalization of the patient (topic grammaticalization also underlies nominative/accusative, or subject/object, languages generally [Mithun, *Disagreement*, 56-57, 61]). Biblical Hebrew, then, functions as an agent/patient language in these instances, whose individualized patient is marked with ^ʔ*et*.

⁹ Alternatively, the entity may be analyzed as an experiencer (for the distinction between experiencer and patient, see Bernard Comrie, *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*,

hōlô ²εt-*raglôw* (1 Kgs 15:23)
wayyeħēlē ²osô ... *bəraglôw* (2 Chr 16:12)

Similarly with *y², the place from which motion emanates (source) is marked with ²et or *min*.

hem yōšə ²ū ²εt-*hō* ^c*îr* (Gen 44:4)
wayyešə ²ū ... *min-hō* ^c*îr* (Jer 39:4)

Or, the individuated object of *rdp – the entity which is the endpoint of the motion (goal) – is marked with ²et or ^ah^arê.

bōroq rodep ²εt-*sîsəro* ² (Jud 4:22)
wə ²onokî *rodep* ^ah^arê *zəbah wəšalmunno* ^c (Jud 8:5)

These verbs therefore take direct and oblique objects, apparently in free variation, and apparently with the same sense.¹⁰

This paper investigates the alternation between direct and oblique objects with verbs of motion and intransitive verbs,¹¹ and it describes the function of ²et in these circumstances.¹² It shows that, in addition to grammatical factors, ²et in these instances marks the affectedness of the object, as well as the semantic aspect of the situation.

2. AFFECTEDNESS. A patient may be affected by the verb to different degrees.

wayyo ²kəlū *lēħem* 'they ate bread' (Gen 31:54)
lah ^amū *bəlah* ^amî 'eat some of my bread!' (Prov 9:5)
kî- ²əkolū ²εt-*happesah* 'yet they ate the passover' (2 Chr 30:18)

In Gen 31:54, the undetermined patient is affected by the action of the verb, though the extent of affectedness is not specified; the object is unmarked. The patient in

Chicago/Oxford ²1989, 61). But since both patients and experiencers may be marked with ²et in Biblical Hebrew, the distinction between these two semantic roles is not relevant in the present context. See also Sapir, quoted in n. 8.

¹⁰ See Naphtali Kinberg, Notes on the Shift from Accusative Constructions to Prepositional Phrases in Hebrew and Arabic, BSO(A)S 44, 1981, 8-14.

¹¹ Verbs of motions used figuratively as verbs of abundance (see Joüon § 125d) are excluded. In these cases, the material (content) is the semantic patient and, when individuated, is marked with ²et. See Charles J. Fillmore, The Case for Case Reopened, in: (edd.) Peter Cole and Jerrold M. Sadock, Grammatical Relations, Syntax and Semantics 8, 1977, 78. Cf. Chaim Rabin, חכביר לשון המקרא, Jerusalem 1964, 51; and, differently, Menahem Z. Kaddari, פרשיוח המקרא, Ramat-Gan 1976, 87-93; and Müller, Ergativelemente, 410.

¹² The alternation between oblique objects and objective pronominal suffixes (see T. Muraoka, On verb complementation in Biblical Hebrew, VT 39, 1979, 425-435) is a different phenomenon and reflects a regular morphological replacement. When an object – whether direct or oblique, regardless of the preposition governing it – is pronominalized and affixed to the verb, the pronominal suffix takes a single form, that of the objective pronominal suffix (Rabin, חכביר, 50). In this process, then, the different objects merge into a single form.

Prov 9:5 will also be affected, though only in part;¹³ it is marked as an oblique object. In 2 Chr 30:18, however, the patient is affected to its full extent by the verbal action.¹⁴ The transfer of action is complete, and the patient undergoes a complete change; this individuated object is marked with ^ʔ*et*.¹⁵ Thus the different degrees of object affectedness – unspecified, partial, and complete – are grammatically distinguished in Biblical Hebrew.¹⁶

2.1. These distinctions also recur outside of the fully transitive clause. For example, the nominal object of **hʒq* ‘be strong’ is marked once with *min* and once with ^ʔ*et*.¹⁷

wayyeh^ʔzāq dōwid min-happəlištî baqqela^ʕ ūbō^ʔēben wayyak^ʔ et-happəlištî waymîtehū wəhēreb^ʔ ēn bəyad-dōwid ‘David was stronger than the Philistine with sling and stone; he struck the Philistine and killed him, though there was no sword in David’s hand.’ (1 Sam 17:50)

wayyeh^ʔzāq hō^ʕom^ʔ šer^ʔ ah^ʔrê^ʕ omrî^ʔ et-hō^ʕom^ʔ šer^ʔ ah^ʔrê^ʕ tibnî ben-gînat wayyomōt tibnî wayyimlok^ʕ omrî ‘The people who followed Omri overpowered the people who followed Tibni ben Ginath. Then Tibni died, and Omri became king.’ (1 Kgs 16:22)

1 Sam 17:50a is a simple descriptive statement, in which David’s superiority over the Philistine is followed by two verbs detailing how this superiority was actuated (v. 50b). The first clause presents David’s state *vis-à-vis* the Philistine, and in this clause the Philistine does not undergo a change. In 1 Sam 17:50a, the object is not affected either by David or his strength.

In 1 Kgs 16:22, however, the object is affected. The strength of Omri’s people so affected Tibni’s people that the latter underwent a change of state.¹⁸ In this case, the once-stative verb **hʒq* becomes a dynamic verb, and its effect on the object is marked with ^ʔ*et*. The dynamic verb, then, prompts direct object marking,¹⁹ and the stative verb shows oblique object marking.²⁰

¹³ For the partitive *bə*, see GKC § 119m; and BDB 88.

¹⁴ See Rabin, תחביר, 49.

¹⁵ For the connection between object determination and complete affectedness of the object, see Hopper and Thompson, Transitivity, 253; and Mithun, Disagreement, 63 n. 2. This connection is supported by the high percentage of marked direct objects following causative verbs, which denote complete affectedness; see Hopper and Thompson, Transitivity, 264, 261; and, somewhat differently, Y. Lerner, להפחחוח השימוש ב “אח”, בעבריה המקרא, Leshonenu 52, 1988, 83-93.

¹⁶ See Moravcsik, On the Case Marking of Objects, in: (ed.) Joseph H. Greenberg, Universals of Human Language, Stanford (California) 1978, 4, 259.

¹⁷ Cf. the metaphorical **hʒq* ^ʕ*al* ‘urge’ in Ex 12:33. For **hʒq* ^ʕ*al* in the Chronicler, see n. 20.

¹⁸ See I. Benzinger, Die Bücher der Könige, KHC 9, 1899, 103; and Martin Noth, Könige, BK 9/1, ²1983, 350.

¹⁹ **ykl* ^ʔ*et* may reflect the same phenomenon in Ps 101:5. For **ykl* ^ʔ*et* in Jer 38:5, however, see Wilhelm Rudolph, Jeremia, HAT I 12, ³1968, 240.

²⁰ **hʒq* ^ʕ*al* ‘prevail over, against’ (2 Chr 8:3, 27:5) is a marked construction, in which the (variable) affect on the object is explicitly represented as hostile (see GKC § 119dd). Whether this idiom appears in 1 Chr 21:4 (so, e.g., RSV) is uncertain (see NJPS, and 2 Sam 24:4).

These correlations reappear with personal²¹ passive verb forms and their accompanying patient.

hinnē yomîm bə ʔîm nə ʔum-yhwh ûpoqadî ʕal-koḷ-mûl bə ʕorlô ‘Look, days are coming – the oracle of the Lord – when I will take note of everyone circumcised in the foreskin.’ (Jer 9:24)

ûnmaltem ʔet bəšar ʕorlatkem wəhojô lə ʔôt bərît bēnî ûbēnêkem ‘You will be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and you.’ (Gen 17:11)

In Jer 9:24, the passive participle describes the type of person Yahweh will notice. There is no transfer of action, no change of state. Rather, the phrase *mûl bə ʕorlô* contains an adjective descriptive of a particular quality, and the location where this quality is found.²² This place is marked as an oblique object.

Whereas *mûl* describes a state in Jer 9:24, *ûnmaltem* portrays a dynamic event in Gen 17:11. God tells Abraham that he, his household, and his servants are to undergo a circumcision. God also states that the change will have an everlasting effect (v. 13). In this dynamic context, where circumcision is something that happens to someone, the specific²³ body part affected (patient) is marked as a direct object.

²¹ ²*et* may accompany the patient in impersonal passive constructions (see, e.g., GKC §§ 121a-b; and Joüon § 128b). In impersonal passive constructions, the grammatical relations of the corresponding active phrase are retained, except that (i) the active subject is deleted or demoted (to an oblique), and (ii) the verb appears in the unmarked passive (i.e., third person ms. sg.) (Comrie, In Defense of Spontaneous Demotion: The Impersonal Passive, in: Grammatical Relations, 47-58). The objects, then, „remain just as in the ordinary active sentence“ (idem, Language Universals 14) – the individuated direct object keeps its ²*et* (e.g., Friedrich Eduard König, Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebräischen Sprache, Leipzig 1881-1897 [= Hildesheim/New York 1979], 2/2, § 108; A. B. Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, Edinburgh ³1901, § 79; and Blau, על הסביל הסחמי במקרא [ריון משווה על רקע הסביל הסחמי], in: בעברית הקלאסית, in: [edd.] Yitschak Avishur and Joshua Blau, Studies in Bible and the Ancient Near East Presented to Samuel E. Loewenstamm, Jerusalem 1978, 86-90; cf., among others, Gary Rendsburg, Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of „P“, JANES 12, 1980, 66; and P. C. H. Wernberg-Møller, The Old Accusative Case Ending in Biblical Hebrew: Observations on הַפְּתוּחָה in Ps. 116:15, JSS 33, 1988, 160). As in other languages, then, Biblical Hebrew impersonal passive constructions retain the direct object of the active construction (C. Brockelmann, Die Objektkonstruktion der Passiva im Hebräischen, ZAW 49, 1931, 148-149; cf. Andersen, Passive and Ergative in Hebrew, 1-15; and Müller, Die Konstruktionen mit *hinnē*, 55).

For the pragmatic motivation to these constructions, see T. Givón, Typology and Functional Domains, Studies in Language 5, 1981, 163-193.

²² See, e.g., Rudolph, Jeremia, 69-70. Cf. F. Giesebrecht, Das Buch Jeremia, HKAT 3/2/1, ²1907, 62.

²³ Accordingly, this object is called the „accusative of specification“ (Alfred M. Wilson, The Particle נָשׁ in Hebrew. II, Hebraica 6, 1890, 223), the „accusative of limitation“ (BDB 85a; Joüon § 126; and Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax, Winona Lake [Indiana] 1990, § 10.3.1c), and the „accusative of restriction“ (Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, § 72, Rem. 3[c]; cf. *ibid.*, § 71); see also the „accusative of sphere“ (Der

2.2. According to the evidence presented thus far, ²*et* signals that an individuated object is affected by a dynamic situation, that it undergoes something happening to it.²⁴ But, as the remaining passages relating to circumcision suggest, ²*et* may also signal the extent to which the object is affected.

wə^corel zoqor^a šer lo⁻yimmôl² ʔet-bəšar^c ʔqlotô wənikrətô hannepēš hahiw² me^cammēhō ʔet-bərîî he par ‘Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin – that person will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.’ (Gen 17:14)

wəyišmō^e l bənô ben-šəloš^c ʔsrê šonô bəhimmolô² ʔet bəšar^c ʔqlotô ‘And Ishmael, his son, was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.’ (Gen 17:25)

It is the very nature of the action which dictates the extent to which the patient is affected. The body part is completely affected in the circumcision, and it is marked as a direct object.²⁵

Object affectedness need not originate in an action, but the object may be affected by a condition. This is the situation with the verb **hlh* ‘be sick’ whose object²⁶ is marked once with *bə* and twice with ²*et*.

wayyeh^ll^e ʔosō² bišnat šəlōšîm wəteša^c ləmal-kûtô bəraglōw^c ad-ləma^c lō hōlyô wəgam-bəhōlyô lo⁻doraš² ʔet-yhwh kî-bəropə² ʔîm ‘Asa was sick in his feet in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, and his sickness became severe. But though ill, he did not seek the Lord but, instead, physicians.’ (2 Chr 16:12)

wəyeter kol-dibrê-ʔosō² wəkol-gəbūrōtô wəkol-^ašer^c ʔšô wəhe^c ʔrîm² šer bənô h^alo⁻hemmô kətûbîm^c al-seper dibrê hayyomîm ləmal-kê yəhūdô raq lə^cet ziqnōtô hōlô² ʔet-raglōw ‘And the rest of all the matters of Asa – all his might, all he did, and the cities which he built – are they

Akkusativ als Bestimmung des Bereiches) (Brockelmann, Synt. § 102; cf. idem, VG, 2, § 229c), and the „accusative of relation“ (König, Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude, 2/2, § 288k).

²⁴ See also **šwb* ‘return’ (intransitive) and its transitive counterpart **šwb* (²*et*) ‘restore’ (cf. Kaddari, פירוש, 64 n. 25, 88. For its idiomatic use, see S. David Sperling, Biblical *rhm* I and *rhm* II, JANES 19, 1989, 156-157).

**ns^c* ‘travel’ is also used as a transitive and intransitive verb (see Kaddari, פירוש, 91). But its intransitive meaning is secondary and probably reflects a generalized antipassive construction (see BDB 652). See also **nh*.

²⁵ In *bəhimmolô bəšar^c ʔqlotô* ‘when he circumcised himself in the flesh of his foreskin’ (Gen 17:24), ²*et* does not appear because the agent and patient are identical (see H. Holzinger, Genesis, KHC 1, 1898, 129, in conjunction with n. 3 above); cf. Gen 17:25, where agent and patient are different.

²*et* also does not appear in *yimmôl bəšar^c ʔqlotô* ‘the flesh of his foreskin will be circumcised’ (Lev 12:3), because the patient is the grammatical subject.

²⁶ Cf. Harald Schweizer, Was ist ein Akkusativ? – Ein Beitrag zur Grammatiktheorie, ZAW 87, 1975, 134.

not written in the records of the kings of Judah? Yet at the time of his old age, he was sick in his feet.’ (1 Kgs 15:23)

וַעֲלִישׁוֹ ^ʔhōlō ^ʔet-hōlyō ^ʔšer yomūt bō wayyered ^ʔelōw yō ^ʔoš mēlek-yišro ^ʔel wayyebk ^ʔal-ponōw wayyo ^ʔmar ^ʔobî ^ʔobî rēkeb yišro ^ʔel ūpōrošōw ‘Elisha was sick with the illness of which he would die. King Joash of Israel went down to him, wept over him, and said: „Father, father, chariots of Israel and horsemen.” (2 Kgs 13:14)

According to 2 Chr 16:12, in his thirty-ninth regnal year, Asa had an illness in his feet.²⁷ But though the illness worsened, Asa did not die until two years later (v. 13). In 1 Kgs 15:23, Asa simply gets sick and dies (v. 24); the text does not describe any lapse between falling ill and dying. In other words, the parallel texts differ on the extent of Asa’s illness. 2 Chr 16:12 describes the (lingering)²⁸ illness and its location, which is marked as an oblique object. 1 Kgs 15:23, like 2 Kgs 13:14, portrays a life-threatening illness;²⁹ its source is marked as a direct object. Therefore, object marking in these passages correlates with patient affectedness: less affected patients surface as oblique objects, and more affected patients as direct objects.³⁰

Object marking in these passages may also signal the change or lack of change in the patient.³¹ Attention in this instance focuses on the meaning of **hlh*. On the one hand, **hlh* is a stative verb (‘be sick’), one in which there is no change between different phases of its duration. On the other hand, **hlh* is also dynamic and may refer to the inception of the state as either inchoative (‘become sick’) or punctual (‘fall, get sick’).³² **hlh*, then, is a verb of state and change.

²⁷ The nature of Asa’s illness is uncertain (Noth, Könige, 342; cf. J. V. Kinnier Wilson, *Medicine in the Land and Times of the Old Testament*, in: [ed.] Tomoo Ishida, *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays*, Winona Lake [Indiana] 1982, 364 [reference courtesy of Peter Machinist]).

²⁸ G. R. Driver, *Ancient Lore and Modern Knowledge*, in: *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer*, Paris 1971, 283.

²⁹ In 2 Kgs 13:14, though, Elisha does not die immediately.

³⁰ For other examples, see: (i) *hšh^odaltî ʔet-dišnî* ‘have I completely ceased in my fatness?’ (Jud 9:9; see also vv. 11.13) (cf., e.g., George F. Moore, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges*, ICC, 1895, 249; and, differently, Jan Joosten, *הַחֲרָלָה forma mixta?*, ZAW 102, 1990, 96-97. For the syntax, see Gen 17:11.14.25); and (ii) *kî-nit^ʔab dābar-hammēlek ʔet-yō^ʔob* ‘because the king’s command was completely repugnant to Joab’ (1 Chr 21:6) (see Arnold B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel*, Leipzig 1908-1914 [= Hildesheim 1968], 7, 347). See also, perhaps, *nib^ʔaš ʔet* ‘be completely odious to’ (2 Sam 16:21) (see Henry Preserved Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, ICC, 1899, 350), which evolved into an idiom of political challenge (see *ibid.*, 96; and, more fully, Matitahu Tsevat, *Marriage and Monarchical Legitimacy in Ugarit and Israel*, JSS 3, 1958, 242-243).

³¹ Hetzron (p.c.). See also Fillmore, *The Case for Case Reopened*, 78.

³² See, generally, Comrie, *Aspect: An Introduction to the Study of Verbal Aspect and Related Problems*, Cambridge 1976, 48-50; cf. Wallace L. Chafe, *Meaning and the Structure of Language*, Chicago/London 1970, 99-101.

1 Kgs 15:23 suggests that Asa's illness was not a preexisting condition but a new development.³³ The asseverative-limitative *raq* marks a contrast between its own clause and the preceding clause.³⁴ Further, the temporal clause *lə^cet ziqnotô* registers the time when this change took place. Together they suggest that Asa underwent a change at this time, and that his health declined. The body part which succumbed to the disease (changed) is marked as a direct object. By way of contrast, 2 Chr 16:12 – where the patient is an oblique object – is a simple description of Asa's health at a certain point in time.³⁵

2.3. Like transitive verbs, intransitive and personal passive verbs may take a direct object which, when individuated, is marked with ^c*et*. ^c*et* may signal that an otherwise stative verb is dynamic, whose action carries over to the patient (§ 2.1). It may also indicate that a patient is completely affected or changed by a dynamic situation or condition (§ 2.2). In these cases, ^c*et* highlights the change that a patient undergoes and its resultant effect.

3. PERFECTIVITY/IMPERFECTIVITY. Dynamic situations can be presented in different ways, one of which focuses upon „internal temporal constituency.“³⁶ A situation may be presented without internal constituency, in its entirety, complete in itself, „with beginning, middle, and end rolled into one.“³⁷ In this case, the situation is perfective. An imperfective situation, however, is viewed from within and has internal temporal constituency.³⁸ Whereas a perfective situation is presented as a complete whole, an imperfective situation is presented with an internal structure at any point during which the action is taking place.³⁹

The presentation of a dynamic situation – whether perfective or imperfective – may affect object marking.⁴⁰

wayyityaššeb bətok-haḥelqô wayyaššîleḥo wayyak ^cet-pəlištîm wayya^cas yhwḥ təšû^cô gəḏôlô ‘But he took his stand in the middle of the plot and defended it, and struck down the Philistines. The Lord thus wrought a great victory.’ (2 Sam 23:12)

hû^c qom wayyak bappəlištîm^c ad kî-yogə^cô yodô wattidbaq yodô ^cel-haḥereb wayya^cas yhwḥ təšû^cô gəḏôlô bayyôm hahû^c wəḥo^c qom yoxubû^c aḥ^arôw^c ak-ləpaššet ‘But he got up. He kept striking down the

³³ See also M. M. Bravmann, The Idea of „Possession“ in Linguistic Expression, in: idem, Studies in Semitic Philology, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 6, 1977, 367 (on 2 Kgs 13:14).

³⁴ See BDB 956b. Cf. B. Jongeling, La particule *q*, OTS 18, 1973, 103.

³⁵ Davidson (Hebrew Syntax, § 71, Rem. 3) compares the oblique object in this passage to that of 2 Sam 2:18 and Am 2:15 (*wəqal bəraglôw* ‘(and) swift of foot’).

³⁶ Comrie, Aspect, 3.

³⁷ Ibid., 12, 5, 21, 3.

³⁸ Ibid., 24.

³⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁰ See, in general, Hopper and Thompson, Transitivity, 270-276; and, differently, R. M. W. Dixon, Ergativity, Language 55, 1979, 94-95.

Philistines until his arm got tired and his hand stuck to his sword; the Lord thus wrought a great victory on that day. Then the troops came back to him, but only to strip (them).’ (2 Sam 23:10)

In 2 Sam 23:12, Shammah is portrayed as having defeated the Philistines. There is no internal complexity to this event and no indication of its duration. It is viewed as a complete whole, whose patient is marked as a direct object.

In v. 10, however, the battle lasted until Eleazar’s hand failed. During that period of time, he continued his assault on the Philistines, presumably winning an incremental victory. The situation therefore has both duration and internal temporal constituency. In this case, the patient is an oblique object.⁴¹ Thus in transitive verbs, direct object marking correlates with perfectivity, and oblique marking with imperfectivity.

3.1. Similar patterns can be observed in verbs of motion. In *yš², for example, the semantic source is generally marked with *min*, but in four⁴² instances it is marked with ²et.

wayhî ka^{2a}šer rō²om šidqiyyohû melek-yəhūdô wəkol² anšê hammilhomô wayyibrəhû wayyēsə²û laylô min-hō^cir derek gan hammelek bəša^car bēn haḥomotōyim wayyēšə² derek hō^{ca}roḇô ‘When Zedekiah, king of Judah saw them, he and all the men of war fled; they went out of the city at night, by way of the king’s garden, through the gate between the double walls. Then he went out toward the Arabah.’ (Jer 39:4)

wayyēšə² ya^{ca}qob mibbə²er šoba^c wayyēlek ḥorōnô ‘Jacob left Beer-Sheba, and he went to Haran.’ (Gen 28:10)

hem yosə²û² ʔet-hō^cir lo² hirhîqū wəyōsep² ʔomar la^{2a}šer ʔal-bêtô qûm rədoḇ² ʔah^arê hō^{2a}nošîm wəhiššagtōm wəʔomartō^{2a} lehem lōmmô šillamtem rō^cô taḥat tōḇô ‘They left the city, they had not gone far, when Joseph said to his steward, „Go chase after the men, overtake them, and say to them, ‘Why did you repay evil for good?’” (Gen 44:4)

The distribution of oblique object marking in the first two passages is curious. On the one hand, *wayyēsə²û* in Jer 39:4 lies in apposition to the verb of motion, *wayyibrəhû*. *wayyēsə²û* is also accompanied by details about the time of departure (‘at night’) and the path taken (‘by way of the king’s garden, through the gate between the double walls’). The situation is therefore imperfective, for Jer 39:4 presents the departure from within the activity, as an unfolding of its component parts: motion, time, and path.

⁴¹ *hikkô bə* occurs elsewhere too, and for a variety of reasons: e.g., 1 Sam 14:31 (incomplete affectedness), 18:7 (coreferentiality of subject and object possessor), 23:2.2 (irrealis mode), and 2 Sam 5:24 (nonfinite predicate).

⁴² For the idiomatic use of *yš² in *kî-yəre² ʔelohîm yešə² ʔet-kullōm* ‘for he who fears God will do his duty to both’ (Qoh 7:18), see Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 7, 84; and Robert Gordis, *Koheleth – The Man and His World: A Study of Ecclesiastes*, New York³1968, 277-278.

On the other hand, the situation in Gen 28:10 is presented differently. It is presented as a whole, without any distinctions of internal structure, phases, or constituency.⁴³ The situation, then, is perfective. That is, the oblique object marking with *yš^ʔ occurs in both imperfective and perfective descriptions. This oblique object is therefore unmarked for perfectivity or imperfectivity.

In Gen 44:4, the semantic source is a direct object. In this verse, the presentation of action does not focus upon the internal temporal structure of the departure but presents it as „a single unanalysable whole.“⁴⁴ Separate phases of the departure itself are not distinguished. The situation is presented in its entirety, the whole of which is qualified by the repair *lo^ʔ hirhîqû*. Thus the situation in Gen 44:4 is perfective; ‘the city’ is marked as a direct object.

The association between perfectivity and direct object marking recurs elsewhere with *yš^ʔ.

bəše^ʔt yišrō^ʔel mimmisroyim bêṯ ya^ʔqob me^ʕam lo^ʕez^ʔhoyətô yəhûdô ləqodšô yišrō^ʔel mamšəlôtôw ‘When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a foreign-speaking people, Judah became His sanctuary, Israel His dominion.’ (Ps 114:1-2)

wayyo^ʔmēr^ʔelôw mošē^ʕ kəše^ʔtî^ʔet-ho^ʕîr^ʔεpros^ʔet-kappay^ʔel-yhwh haqqolôt yəhđolûn wəhabborôd lo^ʔyihyē^ʕ-ôd ləma^ʕan teda^ʕkî layhwh ho^ʔqres^ʔ ‘Moses said to him, „As soon as I have left the city, I shall stretch out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease, and the hail will be no more, in order that you know that the land belongs to the Lord.“’ (Ex 9:29)

In Ps 114:1-2, the departure from Egypt is the situation *within which* the main clause takes place. The departure frames the following description, has internal structure, and is therefore presented as an imperfective situation. The semantic source in this case is a grammatical oblique object.

Ex 9:29, though, presents a series of discrete situations. Each is a single, self-contained whole, the first of which is departing the city. In this perfective situation, the source is marked as a direct object (as also in v. 33).⁴⁵

3.2. In addition to indexing perfectivity, direct object marking may also index the completion of a dynamic situation.⁴⁶ Ps 114:1-2 and Ex 9:29 illustrate this point as well. In Ps 114:1-2, the infinitival phrase is headed by *bə*; *bə* + infinitive construct generally⁴⁷ signifies that the principal action takes place *within* its temporal scope.⁴⁸ The infinitival phrase in Ex 9:29, however, is governed by *kə*; *kə* + infinitive construct implies that the scope of the phrase is bounded or delimited, and that the

⁴³ See Comrie, *Aspect*, 16.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁵ See also *wə^ʕibrû məherô^ʔet-hammayim* ‘and cross the water quickly!’ (2 Sam 17:21) vs. *kî-ta^ʕbor hammayim* ‘when you cross the water’ (Is 43:2), whose object markings conform to the same aspectual factors. Cf. n. 61.

⁴⁶ See Heinrich Ewald, *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Bundes*, Göttingen⁸1870, § 282a.1.

⁴⁷ For exceptions, see BDB 91a.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*; and Joüon § 166l.

principal action occurs *outside* of its parameter.⁴⁹ Accordingly, *kəʕe ʔt̄ ʔet-ho ʕr̄* relates not only a perfective situation, but also one which is completed before the next action takes place.

The remaining case of **ys̄*² *ʔet* conforms to the same pattern.

*wayya ʕal miššom bêt-ʔel wəhû ʔolē badderek ûn ʕorim qəʕannim
yoʕə ʔû min-ho ʕr̄ wayyitqalləsû-bô wayyo ʔmərû lô ʕalē qereah ʕalē
qereah* 'He went from there to Bethel. And as he was going up the road,
some little boys came out of the town and mocked him, saying, „Go baldy,
go baldy!“ (2 Kgs 2:23)

wayyese ʔ yônô min-ho ʕr̄ wayyeʕeb miqqeʕem lo ʕr̄ 'Jonah left the city
and sat down east of the city.' (Jon 4:5a)

*wə ʔim-yoʕo ʔese ʔ hoʕoseah ʔet-gəbûl ʕr̄ miqlotô ʔa ʕer yonûs ʕommô
ʔûmoʕo ʔotô go ʔel haddom miḥûš ligbûl ʕr̄ miqlotô wəroʕah go ʔel
haddom ʔet-hoʕoseah ʔên lô dom* 'But if the manslayer leaves the border
of the refuge city to which he has fled, and the blood-avenger finds him
outside the border of his refuge city, and the blood-avenger kills the
manslayer, he has no blood-guilt.' (Num 35:26-27)

Num 35:26-27 describes a tripartite dynamic situation: the manslayer leaving the city confines, the avenger finding him outside his place of refuge, and the avenger killing the manslayer. According to this verse, only after the manslayer has left the city can the avenger find and kill him. The first action must therefore be completed before any subsequent action can take place.⁵⁰ In this first, completed situation, the source of **ys̄*² is a direct object.⁵¹

The oblique object of **ys̄*² functions differently. In 2 Kgs 2:23, the boys' leaving the town was simultaneous with Elisha's journey.⁵² Further, and more importantly, the boys did not have to leave the city *before* beginning their abuse of Elisha. Rather, their departure provides the context *within which* the second situation is framed. The act of leaving the city is in progress, imperfective, and not completed.

⁴⁹ Hermann Schult, *Der Infinitiv mit b- und mit k- in der bibelhebräischen Prosa*, DBAT 7, 1974, 18-31. For a recent study of *kə* + infinitive construct, see Ernst Jenni, *Zur Semantik der hebräischen Vergleichssätze*, ZAH 2, 1989, 40-44.

⁵⁰ In addition to completion of action, this verse exhibits a highly topical object of **ys̄*²; see also *noʕabbû ʔet-habbayit* 'they gathered around the house' (Jud 19:22), in contrast to *noʕabbû ʕal-habbayit* 'they gathered around the house' (Gen 19:4). For the effect of topicality on object marking, see, in general, Moravcsik, *On the Case Marking of Objects*, 281-282; and Mithun, *The Implications of Ergativity for a Philippine Voice System*, in: (ed.) Paul Hopper, *Grammatical Voice: Its Form and Function*, Amsterdam (forthcoming), § 4.2.1 (on the absolutive). See also Khan, *Object Markers*, 487-489; and Thomas O. Lambdin, *The Junctural Origin of the West Semitic Definite Article*, in: *Near Eastern Studies ... Albright*, 324, on Biblical Hebrew ²*et*.

⁵¹ In two instances, the individuated source phrase of **ys̄*² is an unmarked direct object: Dt 14:22 (nonfinite predicate), and 2 Kgs 20:4 (*ktiv*) (negated, backgrounded clause).

⁵² For the syntax, see Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*, Toronto/Buffalo ²1976, § 494. See also n. 62.

In Jon 4:5a, however, the oblique object occurs in a perfective and completed situation. Jonah was able to sit down east of the city only if he had left the city beforehand. He was not in the process of departing but had departed, and the place he left is marked as an oblique object. The oblique object, then, occurs in both completed and noncompleted situations; it is unmarked for this aspect.

3.3. The examples of *yš^ʔ *ʔet* suggest that direct object marking is sensitive to the aspect of a situation. *ʔet* may signal that a dynamic situation is perfective (§ 3.1). It may also mark an action as completed prior to a subsequent event (§ 3.2). In contrast, the oblique object of *yš^ʔ is *unmarked* for either (im)perfectivity or (non)completion.

4. TELICITY/ATELICITY. Another aspectual property of dynamic situations concerns the presence or absence of an endpoint, when a situation naturally terminates. A telic situation involves such an endpoint, often built into the phrase, beyond which the situation cannot continue (e.g., *The cat drowned.*). An atelic situation does not involve an endpoint, and the situation may span an undefined or indefinite length of time (e.g., *Cats drown*, which is a generic, recurring event).⁵³ Telicity/atelicity may affect object marking.

ʔiš horagtî 'I have killed a man' (Gen 4:23)
lē ʔwîl yah^arog-kō^c aš 'Vexation kills a fool' (Job 5:2)

In Gen 4:23, the action is viewed from its endpoint, cannot continue beyond this point, and is presented as completed. In this case, the patient is a direct object. But in Job 5:2, the situation is presented as ongoing and without an endpoint. The patient is marked as an oblique object. Thus, with transitive verbs, direct objects are associated with telicity, and oblique objects with atelicity.⁵⁴

4.1. Similar patterns can be seen in verbs of motion. For example, the semantic goal of *rdp is usually marked with *ʔah^arê*, though it is marked with *ʔet* eight times.

pēn-yirdop go^ʔel haddom ʔah^arê hōroseah kî-yeham ləbōbō wəhiššîgō kî-yirbē hadderek wəhikkōhū nōpeš wəlō ʔēn mišpaṭ-mōwet kî lo^ʔ šone^ʔ hū^ʔ lō mittəmōl šilšōm 'Lest the blood-avenger pursue the manslayer in hot anger, and overtake him, for the way is long, and strike him dead. For him, there is no death penalty, because he had never been his enemy.' (Dt 19:6)

ūborōq rodap ʔah^arê hōrekēb wə ʔah^arê hammah^anē^ˆ ˆ^cad h^arošet haggōyim wayyipol kōl-mah^anē sîsəro^ʔ ləpî-ḥereb lo^ʔ niš^ʔar ˆ^cad-^ʔēhōd 'But Barak pursued the chariots and the soldiers as far as Haroshet-goiim. All of Sisera's soldiers fell by the sword; not a man was left.' (Jud 4:16)

⁵³ Comrie, *Aspect*, 45.

⁵⁴ See Hopper and Thompson, *Transitivity*, 252. For other factors which may have contributed to the object marking in Job 5:2, see *ibid.*, 252-253.

wayyeṣə ʔû ʔanšê yišrə ʔel min-hammiṣpô wayyirdəpû ʔet-pəlištîm wayyakkûm ʕad-mittahat ləbêt kəp ‘The men of Israel went out of Mizpah, pursued the Philistines, and struck them to a place below Beth-car.’ (1 Sam 7:11)

In Dt 19:6, the action consists of three parts: pursuing, overtaking, and striking. A distinction is also drawn between the first two phases, pursuing and overtaking. That the pursuit leads up to the overtaking but does not include it implies that the goal is not attained by the pursuit alone. The situation is therefore atelic, and the unattained goal is marked as an oblique object in Dt 19:6.⁵⁵

The situation in Jud 4:16 is different. There, Barak’s chase resulted in the downfall of those chased. It would appear, then, that Barak’s pursuit was successful, and that he attained his goal. But in this case too, the object is oblique.⁵⁶ I.e., the oblique object of *rdp is unmarked for telicity or atelicity.

Direct object marking with *rdp, however, is not unambiguous but consistently appears in telic situations. For example, in 1 Sam 7:11, like Dt 19:6, the action consists of three components: going out, pursuing, and striking. Yet unlike Dt 19:6, where the pursuing and striking are bridged by the act of overtaking, the pursuit in 1 Sam 7:11 is followed immediately by the striking. The goal pursued in 1 Sam 7:11 appears to be attained (overtaken) in the pursuit.⁵⁷ And once the goal is attained, the action comes to an end; it is telic. *rdp ʔet, then, signals a telic situation, specifically one whose goal is attained⁵⁸ (see also Lev 26:7.36; Dt 1:44; 1 Sam 17:52; as well as Lev 26:17; and Job 13:25).⁵⁹

Similarly with ngš ‘come near,’ direct object marking appears in telic situations.

wayyiggaš ya ʕa qob ʔel-yiṣḥoq ʔobîw waymuššehû wayyo ʔmer haqqol qôl ya ʕa qob wəḥayyodayim yədê ʕešəw ‘So Jacob came near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and thought, „The voice is Jacob’s, but the hands are Esau’s.” (Gen 27:22)

wəzo ʔt ʕa šû lohem wəḥoyû wəlo ʔ yomutû bəgištom ʔet-qodeš haqq ʔdošîm ʔah ron ūbənəw yəbo ʔû wəšəmə ʔətom ʔiš ʔiš ʕal-ʕabodətô wə ʔel-maššə ʔô ‘Do this for them, that they may live and not die when they reach the most sacred things: let Aaron and his sons enter and assign each to his task and burden.’ (Num 4:19)

Gen 27:22 distinguishes between the act of approaching and that of touching. While movement towards Isaac is a necessary precondition for contact, contact is not made until Isaac feels his son.⁶⁰ In Num 4:19, however, the sacred objects are the

⁵⁵ See also Gen 44:4; Ex 14:9; Jos 2:5; 1 Sam 30:8; 2 Kgs 25:5; Jer 39:5, 52:8; as well as Gen 31:23; Jos 10:19; 2 Sam 2:19, 17:1; and 2 Chr 13:16. Cf. Ps 18:38.

⁵⁶ See also Jud 1:6, 8:12.

⁵⁷ See Sperling, Biblical *rhm* I and *rhm* II, 159 n. 101. Cf. Michael L. Barré, Amos 1:11 Reconsidered, CBQ 47, 1985, 422-423.

⁵⁸ Cf. Hos 2:9 (*piel*).

⁵⁹ See also Ps 143:3. Jud 7:25 may also belong in this category, if ʔel is emended to ʔet (e.g., Moore, Judges, 215).

⁶⁰ See Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, § 101, Rem. 1(b).

endpoint of motion. Though they are not to be touched (v. 15), the objects must be reached (attained) in order for the commands and prohibitions of vv. 19-20 to make sense. In this case, the attained goal is marked as a direct object.⁶¹

4.2. When a goal has been reached, the dynamic situation has naturally reached its endpoint. For example, in *wayyirdəpû* ^ʔετ-*pəlištîm* (1 Sam 7:11) the goal has been attained, and the situation is marked as telic. And, since the situation has reached its endpoint, it is also completed. Telicity therefore implies completion.

The final example of **rdp* ^ʔετ illustrates the completed aspect of a telic situation.

wayyo ^ʔmər lə ^ʔanšē *sukkôt tənû-nō* ^ʔkikkərôt *lēhem lə* ^ʔqm ^ʔašer *bəragloy kî-* ^ʔyaepîm *hem wə* ^ʔonokî *rodep* ^ʔaḥ^arê *zəbah wəšalmunno* ^ʔ*malkê midyon* 'He said to the men of Succoth, „Give loaves of bread to the people in my following, for they are famished. For my part, I am chasing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian.“ (Jud 8:5)

wəhinnê borəq rodep ^ʔετ-*sīsəro* ^ʔwattəšə ^ʔyō ^ʔel *liqrō* ^ʔtō *watto* ^ʔmər lō *lek wə* ^ʔar ^ʔεkkō ^ʔετ-*hō* ^ʔiš ^ʔašer-^ʔattō *məbaqqeš wayyobō* ^ʔelēhō *wəhinnê sīsəro* ^ʔnopel *met wəhəyyōted bəraqqōtō* 'Now Barak appeared in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. She said to him, „Go, and I shall show you the man whom you are seeking.“ He came to her, and there was Sisera fallen dead, the peg in his temple.' (Jud 4:22)

In Jud 8:5, Gideon is pictured in ongoing pursuit of the two Midianite kings.⁶² His pursuit, in fact, continues until he attacks their camp (v. 11). They flee, but Gideon chases after them (*wayyirdop* ^ʔaḥ^arêhem, v. 12a) and finally captures the two men (v. 12b). Thus, Jud 8:5 describes Gideon's pursuit as an atelic situation, whose goal is as yet unattained. The goal is marked as an oblique object.

Jud 4:22 would appear to represent a similar situation, that of Barak in hot pursuit of Sisera.⁶³ But it is not the case that both participants are in motion; Sisera had already been killed by Jael in the preceding verse. The dynamic situation has

⁶¹ Cf. König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude*, 2/2, § 211d; and, differently, Shlomo Izre'el, *המקראות* = אל בעברית המקראית, Shnaton 3, 1978, 209.

For other examples see: (i) *wayyiggaš šō* ^ʔul ^ʔετ-šəmu^ʔel 'Saul met Samuel' (1 Sam 9:18; see also 30:21) (see Hermann Wiesmann, *Bemerkungen zum 1. Buche Samuels*, ZkTh 33, 1909, 387); (ii) *wə* ^ʔετ-*bêt yhw* ^ʔanî *holek* 'and I come to the house of the Lord' (Jud 19:18) (if *bêt yhw* and *habboṣyətō* are coreferential); see also **hlk* ^ʔετ 'cross' in Dt 1:19, 2:7 (e.g., S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, ICC, ³1902, 19); (iii) *wa* ^ʔlūem ^ʔετ-*həḥor* 'and ascend (enter?) the hill-country!' (Num 13:17) (see Comrie, *Aspect*, 47); and (iv) *ləbō* ^ʔ... ^ʔετ *rabbat bənē-ammôn wə* ^ʔετ-*yəhūdō* 'to reach Rabbath of the Ammonites and Judah' (Ez 21:25) (see Amos Cohen, *עומרים-יוצאים*, במקרא, BethM 28, 1966, 105).

**br* ^ʔετ often occurs in telic situations as well (e.g., Num 32:29; Dt 12:10; Jos 3:17, 4:1, 24:11; 2 Sam 2:29, 10:17, 24:5), though it is possible that **br* ^ʔετ is the unmarked construction (compare Dt 27:4 and Jos 4:7, or Dt 2:18 and 2:4 [for the syntax of Dt 2:18, see 1 Sam 7:16]).

⁶² The subject-participle syntax suggests ongoing action as well (see Joosten, *The Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew*, ZAH 2, 1989, 128-159).

⁶³ See C. F. Burney, *The Book of Judges*, London 1918 (= New York 1970), 94; and RSV. See also Joosten, *The Predicative Participle*, 135, for the syntax.

therefore come to an end. Barak, however, did not know that his chase had ended. The narrator did. By use of the direct object marker, the narrator is signaling that the pursuit is completed. Though the goal of the action is not attained, it is marked as a direct object in this completed situation.

4.3. The use of **rdp* ^ʔ*et* suggests that direct object marking is sensitive to the telicity of a dynamic situation. ^ʔ*et* may signal that a situation is telic, especially one whose goal is attained (§ 4.1). It may also mark a multi-participant situation as completed (§ 4.2; see also § 3.2). Thus, just as ^ʔ*et* highlights perfectivity with **yṣ*, it emphasizes telicity with **rdp*.

5. ^ʔ*et* serves a number of functions in Biblical Hebrew. In transitive clauses, it marks the individuated direct object. This entity is usually the semantic patient. It receives the action described by the verb, is effected or affected by it, undergoes a change, and often shows the (lasting) effect of this change.

^ʔ*et* also serves other functions related to this cardinal role. With intransitive and personal passive verbs, ^ʔ*et* signals that the object is indeed affected by the verb, especially to a complete extent. The patient, in these cases, has undergone a change (§ 2). With verbs of motion, ^ʔ*et* may signal that a dynamic situation is perfective or completed (§ 3). It may also mark a dynamic situation as telic, particularly one of attained goal. And in this case, too, ^ʔ*et* may signal the completion of a dynamic situation (§ 4). Biblical Hebrew ^ʔ*et*, then, is sensitive not only to the individuation of the object, but also to the degree to which the object is affected, as well as the aspect of the situation.

These findings conform to the predictions of the Transitivity Hypothesis.⁶⁴ This hypothesis claims that transitivity can be analyzed into a number of components, each of which involves the effectiveness with which the action is transferred to the patient. For example, when a patient is completely affected, the action is obviously transferred more effectively than when a patient is less or un-affected. Further, the Transitivity Hypothesis predicts that actions are more effectively transferred to the patient than states, and that perfective and telic situations transfer the action more effectively to the patient than imperfective and atelic situations. The use of Biblical Hebrew ^ʔ*et* conforms to prediction.

The Transitivity Hypothesis also claims that object marking is sensitive to other components, including punctuality, volitionality, and mode.⁶⁵ A punctual action, for example, is more effectively transferred than a nonpunctual action, since there is no interval between inception and completion of action.

lo ^ʔ *taqqipû* *pə* ^ʔ*at ro* *ʕəkem* ‘You shall not round off the side-growth of your head,’ (nonpunctual)

wəlo ^ʔ *tašhît* ^ʔ*et pə* ^ʔ*at zəqonekə* ‘or destroy the side-growth of your beard.’ (punctual) (Lev 19:27)⁶⁶

⁶⁴ For its exposition, see Hopper and Thompson, *Transitivity*, 251-299. See already Isaac Libni, לחקר כנויי הפעול וקביעת שמושם במחבר ובמפורר, *Leshonenu* 5, 1932, 221-230, on Hebrew.

⁶⁵ For additional factors, see Hopper and Thompson, *Transitivity*, 252-253, 280-295.

⁶⁶ Cf. Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 277d.2.

Volitional situations have greater effect on the patient than nonvolitional ones, because the subject (agent) is acting willfully on the patient.

wattiškah yhw ʿošeko 'you have forgotten the Lord, your maker' (nonvolitional) (Is 51:13)
wəhillū ʿet- yhw 'and praise the Lord!' (volitional) (Is 62:9)⁶⁷

Further, an action that actually occurred is more effectively transferred than one which did not (yet) occur.

mōḥor ya ʿāšē yhw haddobor hazzē bo ʿores 'tomorrow, the Lord will do this thing in the land' (Ex 9:5) (irrealis)
wayya ʿaš yhw ʿet- haddobor hazzē mimmoḥ^orot 'the Lord did this thing the next day' (Ex 9:6) (realis)

In other words, object marking in Biblical Hebrew generally conforms to the parameters described by the Transitivity Hypothesis, both with respect to affectedness, perfectivity, and telicity, as well as to the other components of transitivity.

Abstract:

This paper examines the alternation between direct and oblique objects of verbs of motion and intransitive verbs in Biblical Hebrew, focusing on the function of *ʿet*. It shows that *ʿet* indexes a patient which has undergone a change, especially one which is affected to a complete extent. *ʿet* also correlates with perfectivity, telicity, and the completion of a situation. The paper concludes that Biblical Hebrew *ʿet* is sensitive to the affectedness of the object as well as the aspect of the situation.

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⁶⁷ See also the example of reduced transitivity in *soḥ^a rû ʿel-ʿeres wəlo ʿ yodo ʿû* 'they roam the land, they know not (where)' (Jer 14:18), in contrast to **šr ʿet* in Gen 34:21, 42:34.