The *Waw*-Consecutive at Qumran

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The discussion of the *waw*-consecutive at Qumran will begin with Miqṣat Maʿaśeh ha-Torah (or 4QMMT = 4Q394-399), a sectarian text over one hundred and twenty lines in length, conjectured by its editors to be a letter from the Teacher of Righteousness to the High Priest in Jerusalem[1]. Whatever its precise background, the text presents a rare specimen of extended direct discourse in a sectarian document. The document generally uses freestanding forms (without prefixed *waw*), primarily participles, and less frequently freestanding perfects and imperfects.

There are three instances of the converted perfect in 4QMMT, apart from one case in a biblical quotation (in C 13-14):

1. *šm ᶜt šyglḥ wkbs*, „You have heard that '(after) he will shave and wash...'" (B 66)
2. *wbqš ml pnw šytqn ... whrḥyq mmk ... wnhšbh lk lṣdqh*, „and ask from him that he confirm ... and he will remove from you ... and it will accounted for you as righteousness" (C 28-31)

It may be noted that the first of these passages occurs in a biblical paraphrase, and the second passage belongs to the archaising language of the homily of section C. The first passage contains the converted perfect, *wkbs*. The second passage provides two possible converted forms: one clearly converted perfect, *whrḥyq*; and *wnhšbh*, either a G-stem unconverted imperfect 1c.pl. (with suffix) or N-stem converted perfect 3f.sg.

There is no clear case of the consecutive imperfect. This might partly be explained by the prescriptive, and therefore non-narrative, nature of the work, but section C contains sequences of narrative verbs where the converted imperfect might have been expected.

The various sectarian QL works reflect some distinctive distributions of verbal forms, as indicated by the following chart[2]:

	future time		past time	
	converted perfect	unconverted imperfect	converted imperfect	unconverted perfect
CD	8	12	37	1(?)
Pesharim	11	no clear cases	10	ZERO
1QS, 1QSa and 1QSb	23	4	at least 5	ZERO
War Scroll	57	at least 1	3	ZERO
Temple Scroll	136	44	ZERO	ZERO
4QMMT	2 or 3	ZERO	ZERO	ZERO

The outstanding feature of this chart appears at first glance to be the great number of converted forms and the relative rarity of unconverted forms. In order to understand properly this distribution, it is important to contrast forms for the same time-frame, namely unconverted perfects and converted imperfects for past time, and converted perfects and unconverted imperfects for future time.

To express past time, the Qumranic literature (henceforth QL) lacks unconverted perfects, but it uses the converted imperfect. The absence of unconverted perfects is in part a matter of genre and in part a matter of style. The extant QL is mostly prescriptive in character and therefore does not call for past *wqtl which was might be expected in historical texts.

Unfortunately, historical texts are not a genre attested in the QL corpus. The attestation of converted imperfects, however, is perhaps a stylistic imitation of biblical converted forms in order to meet the occasional need for a verbal form to express a past time-frame. In general, it is plausible to call QL converted forms „archaic" or „imitative" of biblical style, since biblical style appears strongly in QL. In some cases, the biblical influence seems direct. Yadin speaks of *wyqr*ʾ, a converted imperfect in 1QM 14:5 (parallel to the perfect ʾsp in the same line), as influenced by biblical usage[3]. Similary, the form *whyh*, „and it shall be," in 4QpIsa[b] (4Q162) 2:1 appears to imitate the biblical form, *whyh* quoted in line 3 of the same passage. Whether one argues that converted forms are merely „lingering,"[4] or

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[3] Y. Yadin, The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness (trans. B. and C. Rabin), Oxford 1962, 326.

[4] G.R. Driver, The Judaean Scrolls. The Problem and a Solution, Oxford 1965, 437.

merely „unnatural" or „imitative,"[5] the fact remains that converted forms are prevalent in literary QL.

Indeed, in order to express future time, CD, the Pesharim, 1QM, 1QS, 1QSa and 1QSb regularly use converted perfects. Unconverted imperfects are relatively rare in the Pesharim, 1QS, 1QSa and 1QSb and 1QM. This distribution may be explained partially as an issue of genre: historical works which might utilize past *wqtl are rare within the QL corpus, whereas texts providing instructions for the future are common in the extant QL corpus, and these often follow the verbal patterns of biblical instruction.

The Temple Scroll differs from the Pesharim, 1QM, 1QS, 1QSa and 1QSb in its distribution of converted perfect and unconverted imperfect forms. More specifically, the Temple Scroll use many unconverted imperfexts. It might be argued that the issue is one of genre, that Temple Scroll exhibits unconverted imperfect forms because of its nature as a legal document; indeed, legal discourse requires verbs expressing the future. Such an approach would be misleading, however, because other choices lay before the author(s) of the Temple Scroll. Freestanding imperfects or converted perfects were options available to the author(s), as the use of these forms in other QL texts demonstrate. Indeed, the War Scroll largely consists of prescriptive material like the Temple Scroll, but the War Scroll predominantly employs the converted perfects in the sorts of clauses where the Temple Scroll uses the unconverted imperfect. This difference between the Temple Scroll and the three sectarian works might be adduced as a further criterion for assigning a different provenance to the Temple Scroll, a position taken by scholars on other grounds[6]. It may be reiterated that the distribution of converted forms within the Temple Scroll corresponds more closely to that of Ecclesiastes than to that of any of the major sectarian works. This fact illustrates the complex distribution of converted forms and the varying rates of replacement by unconverted forms during the post-exilic period.

The complexities of QL usages of verbal forms are evident in some passages treated above. For example, in some texts converted perfects appear in the sam sequences with unconverted imperfects. Thorion-Vardi observed this feature in CD 20:34[7]. The Temple Scroll likewise exhibits this feature in 45:15, 50:14, 51:3 and 61:15. Therefore the converted and unconverted forms were mixed in these texts. Similary, *waw*-converted forms rarely begin sequences. Rather, *waw*-converted forms usually follow a free-standing perfect or imperfect. The usage of converted tenses in QL more closely resembles that in a late biblical book such as Esther rather than Mishnaic Hebrew.

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[5] See E.Y. Kutscher, The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) (STDJ VI), Leiden 1974, 41-42.351-358.427.428.

[6] So H. Stegemann, „Das Land" in der Tempelrolle und in anderen Texten aus den Qumranfunden, in: Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit. Jerusalem-Symposion 1981 der Hebräischen Universität und der Georg-August-Universität (ed. G. Strecker), Göttingen 1983, 157.

[7] T. Thorion-Vardi, The Use of the Tenses in the Zadokite Documents, RQu 45 = 12/1, 1985, 65-88.

4QMMT is important for tracking the distribution of converted and unconverted verbal forms in the sectarian material from Qumran. 4QMMT represents a document addressed in the second person and referring to the speakers in the first person; the text would appear to reflect the style of contemporary direct discourse. In the case of *waw*-consecutives, the popular speech had employed freestanding forms as a matter of course since the pre-exilic period. In contrast to 4QMMT, more formal documents form Qumran evoke older legal and narrative material of the Bible in part by recourse to a more formal style which included extensive use of the *waw*-consecutive. Since converted forms seem to have passed from general non-literary usage beginning in the sixth century, fewer converted forms are to be expected in a QL specimen of direct discourse such as 4QMMT. Due to their complexity, the texts from Qumran exhibit great diversity in their verbal usage.

Abstract:

This article provides statistics for the frequency and distribution of converted verbal forms in the main Hebrew texts from Qumran. While most longer texts frequently use the *waw*-consecutive throughout their various sections, the Temple Scroll and 4QMMT display very different usages. The uneven distribution in the various sections of the Temple Scroll may be construed to support theories regarding its composite nature. The general absence of converted forms from 4QMMT reflects its character as a specimen of direct discourse, which would generally lack converted forms, at least in post-exilic Hebrew. The converted forms in the other texts reflect a literary usage.

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