

The Meaning and the Function of *He locale*

There is a discussion among the linguists about the meaning and the function of so called *He locale*. In this short paper we would like to present the origin of this vowel in old Semitic languages (1), its meaning (2), changes it provokes in vocalization (3) and stress in words where it appears (4). We'll support our presentation with biblical examples.

1. Background.

Sometimes in Hebrew language we can find so-called paragogic vowels. There are vowels added to the nouns. The most frequent paragogic vowel we can find is unstressed *h-*. Sometimes the nouns join also *i, o, u* (the last two very rare)¹. We have to distinguish the unstressed paragogic *He* from the stressed paragogic *He* which is the vowel of the cohortative².

The origin of these vowels are in the old Semitic declension. The added vowel *u, i, a* were found in the Canaanite glosses of Tell El Amarna, and also in Ugaritic, Early Phoenician and Akkadian languages. They must have existed, at some stage, in Hebrew, and still exist in Classical Arabic. The old Semitic declension in its complete form had three cases. These cases were corresponding to the Latin nominative, genitive and accusative. To the case vowel of the indeterminate noun, *m* was added. This phenomenon is known as a *mimation*. It probably did not exist in Early Hebrew, because is not evidenced nor in Al Amarna glosses, nor in Ugaritic. In Arabic this added *m* became *n* (*nunation*).

For example the declension of the word *yawm (jom) - day* was following³:

	Determinate	Indeterminate
Nominative	<i>yawmu</i>	<i>yawmum</i>
Genitive	<i>yawmi</i>	<i>yawmim</i>
Accusative	<i>yawma</i>	<i>yawmam</i>

In the words like *`ab* "father", *`ah* "brother", *ham* "husband's father", which belonged to the nouns of kinship, the declension in the construct state and before the suffixes had a long vowel (e.g.: Nominative - *`abu*, Genitive - *`abi*, Accusative - *`aba*).

Earlier the unstressed paragogic vowel *He* was considered as a vestige of the old determinate accusative. However, in the light of Ugaritic language, we know that in the form *arsh* ("to the ground") the final letter is not *mater lectionis*, but a consonant. Akkadian morpheme *s* assures that *h* had originally consonantal

character. Akkadian *s* often corresponds to Canaanite *h*. The letter *h* begun losing its consonantal value in Ugaritic. So now it is certain that *He* "is not a survival of the accusative, but a distinct adverbial suffix"⁴.

The history of the Hebrew language gives us some evidence, that *He locale* was originally marked with *mappiq*⁵.

2. Meaning.

The suffix *-ah* added to a noun or to a directional adverb indicates motion toward or destination. This is why we call it *He locale* or *He directive*. *He locale* corresponds in its meaning with Latin *ad* (in) with accusative. The most frequent *He locale* is joined to the determinate noun. The noun can be determined by virtue of the article attached to it or by itself. When it is added to the feminine singular noun with the ending *-ah*, the primitive *taw* reappears⁶.

Although the mainly meaning of *He locale* is to demonstrate a direction or motion towards, sometimes the notion of this can become weaker or can even disappear⁷, e.g.:

hx'Bez>Mih; T'r>j;q.hiw>~d'Y"mi ~t'ao

T'x.q;l'w> Ex 29:25

`hw"hyl; aWh hV,ai hw"hy> ynEp.li x;AxynI

x;yrel. hl'[oh'-l[

In Jer 29:15 the expression means: *in Babylon* - without motion:

s `hl'b,B' ~yaibin> hw"hy>Wnl' ~yqihe

~T,r>m;a]

Sometimes "indicates the direction away from which an action is directed"⁸:

hl'b,B'mi ~ybiv'Wm hw"hy>-tybe ylek. hNEhi Jer

27:16

It can also mark forward progression through time⁹:

Hd'[]Aml. taZOh; hQ'xuh;-ta, T'r>m;v'w> Ex 13:10

s `hm'ydiy" ~ymiY"m

Sometimes we can find *He locale* "after prepositions which already express the idea of motion *towards*":

hnwpc h la *towards the north*

hlwavl to Sheol

This suffix can be added both to a proper nouns and common nouns, the latter with or without the article. Sometimes it is also added to directional adverbs.

a. *He locale* with nouns.

- without article, e.g.:

hr'B;d>mi ^K.r>d;l. bWv %le wyl'ae hw"hy>

rm,aYOw: 1 Kings 19:15

`~r'a]-l[; %l,m,l. laez"x]-ta, T'x.v;m'W t'ab'W

qf,M'd;

- with geographical names (e.g. Carmel):

~yrI['N>l; dwID' rm,aYOw:~yrI['n> hr'f[]

dwID' xl;v.YIW: 1 Sam. 25:5

`~Alv'l. ymiv.bi Al-~T,l.a,v.W lb'n"-la, ~t,ab'W

hl'm,r>k; WI[]

With the name of cities *He locale* sometimes become a part of the word. Because of frequent use of the accusative of direction we can observe the same phenomenon in Greek: the name of the city comes from the form of accusative of direction (*Stambul- eij thn polin, Isnik- eij Nikaia, Stanco- eij thn Kw*)¹⁰.

- with an article, for example¹¹:

hrhh *to the mountain*

hcwxh *towards the outside*

hmyh *towards the sea*

htybh *(in) to the house*

- with plural form of the nouns (*towards the Chaldeans*)

ynlaeybiT.w: ynlt.a;f'n> x;Wrw> Ez 11:24

x;WrB. ha,r>M;B; hl'AGh;-la, hm'yDIIf.k;

`ytiyair' rv,a] ha,r>M;h; yl;['me l[;Y:w: ~yhil {a/
- with the construct form of the nouns (to the house of Joseph)

vyaih' abeY"w: @seAyrm;a' rv,a]K; vyaih'
f[;Y:w: Gen 43:17

`@seAy ht'yBe ~yvin"a]h'-ta,

In this case, when *He locale* intrudes between the construct and the genitive, the result is called a broken construct claim¹².

Sometimes we can find in the Bible the words which joined *He locale* with *segol*. There are very rare exceptions and we do not know the reason of this change. *He locale* with *segol* appears for example in¹³:

aWhw> ymidoa]h' gaeDo ![:Y:w: (towards Nob) 1 Sam
22:9

hb,nO aB' yv;yI-!B,-ta, ytiyair' rm;aYOW:
lWav'-ydeb.[;-l[:bC'nI
`bWjxia]-!B, %l,m,yxia]-la,
(anywhere) 1 Kings 2:36

Al rm,aYOW:y[im.vil. ar'q.YIW: %l,M,h;
xl;v.YIW:

> ~v' T'b.v;y"w> ~l;iv'WryBi tyIb; ^l.-hnEB.

`hn"a'w" hn<a' ~V'mi acete-al {w.
(towards Denan) Ez 25:13

ydIy" ytijin"w>hwIhy> yn"doa] rm;a' hKo !kel(
hm'heb.W ~d'a' hN"M,mi yTir;k.hiw> ~Ada/-l[;
!m'yTemi hB'r>x' h'yTit;n>W
`WlPoyI br,x,B; hn<d'd>W

b. *He locale* with directional adverbs.

^[[ymiv.a; hM'v'w>rceAYh; tyBe T'd>r;y''w>
 ~Wq Jer 18:2
 `yr'b'D>-ta,

3. The changes in vocalization.

The changes of vocalization when *He locale* is added to the word is very complex and cannot be explained in satisfactory way in this short paper. The general principle about these changes is that as far as possible, the vocalization of the word remains unchanged¹⁴.

4. Stress.

The *He locale* is unstressed. This is why we can distinguish *He locale* from *He* of the cohortative form. There are however a few exceptions in the Bible, where suffix *-ah* is stressed. In the first example *He* is stressed probably because of the pause in the noun "sun"¹⁵:

!Der>Y:h; rb,[eB. ~yrI['vl{v' hv,mo lyDIb.y: za'
 Deut 4:41
 `vm,v' hx'r>z>mi

In this case *He locale* is stressed in two proper nouns:

hT'[i rp,xe hT'GI hx'r'z>mi hm'd>qe rb;['
 ~V'miW Jos 19:13
 `h['NEh; ra'toM.h; !AMrI ac'y''w> !yciq'

¹ A.B.Davidson, J.Mauchline, *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar with Progressive Exercises in Reading, Writing and Pointing*, Edinburgh 1986, 68.

² P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1, Roma 1991, 277-278 and B.K.Waltke - M.O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Winoma Lake, Indiana 1990, 185.

³ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 278. In modern Arabic these endings almost disappeared. Sometimes they are used among the beduins but without regularity (W.Gesenius, E.Kautzsch, A.E.Cowley *Hebrew Grammar*, Oxford 1910, 249).

⁴ B.K.Waltke - M.O'Connor, *An Introduction*, cit., 185. According to W.Gesenius, E.Kautzsch, A.E.Cowley (*Hebrew Grammar*, cit., 248) it is not so certain. There is the possibility that *He locale* is can to be regarded as real remnants of case endings.

⁵ A.B.Davidson, J.Mauchline, *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, cit., 68.

⁶ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 278.

⁷ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 278-279.

⁸ B.K.Waltke - M.O'Connor, *An Introduction*, cit., 185 and W.Gesenius, E.Kautzsch, A.E.Cowley *Hebrew Grammar*, cit., 250.

⁹ A.B.Davidson, J.Mauchline, *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, cit., 68.

¹⁰ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 280.

¹¹ H.Bauer, P.Leander, *Historische Grammatik der Hebraischen Sprache des Alten Testaments*, vol. 1, Halle 1922, 528.

¹² B.K.Waltke - M.O'Connor, *An Introduction*, cit., 140.

¹³ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 279.

¹⁴ T.O.Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, Norwich 1996, 152.

¹⁵ P.Joüon - T.Muraoka, *A Grammar*, cit., 279.

Summary

Wśród lingwistów wciąż trwają badania co do pochodzenia i dokładnego znaczenia tzw. *He locale*, często pojawiającego się w hebrajskim biblijnym i niekiedy pozabiblijnym. Powyższa prezentacja przedstawia pokrótce pochodzenie *He locale* w języku hebrajskim, omawia jego podstawowe znaczenia oraz zmiany w wokalizacji i w akcencie słów, w których zjawisko to występuje. W dotychczasowych badaniach przekonywano, że zjawisko bierze początek w deklinacji niektórych nieokreślonych rzeczowników starożytnych języków semickich. Najnowsze analizy tekstów ugaryckich i akkadyjskich każą raczej skłaniać ku tezie, że *He locale* to pozostałość po przyrostku przysłówkowym. Podstawowe znaczenie *He locale* związane jest z określeniem kierunku ruchu; niekiedy jednak wskazuje na konkretne miejsce nie wiążąc go z ruchem. Może określać także postęp w czasie. Wokalizacja słów, w których zjawisko to się pojawia pozostaje niezmienną, na ile pozwalają na to ogólne zasady gramatyki. *He locale* z zasady pozostaje nieakcentowane.