

SEMANTIC VALUES OF DERIVATIVES OF THE HEBREW ROOT ŠR

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The intensely theological remnant motif of the OT comes to expression primarily by verbal and nominal derivatives of the Hebrew root Šr. Modern scholars have investigated the remnant motif for over seven decades with contradictory results.¹ The late R. de Vaux, however, has the credit of taking as his point of departure etymological considerations in an essay on the prophetic concept of the remnant.² He has concluded that the root Šr "expresses the fact that a part remains out of a large quantity which has been divided up, consumed or destroyed."³ Later the articles by G. Schrenk and V. Hertrich appeared⁴ without contributing materially to the semantics of derivatives of Šr. Renewed attention was given to the root Šr by E. W. Heaton.⁵ His methodology has limited his investigation of the

¹ The pioneering study on "the origin, meaning, and history" of the idea of the holy remnant since the rise of critical biblical scholarship has been undertaken by J. Meinhold, *Studien zur israelitischen Religionsgeschichte*. Band I: *Der heilige Rest*. Teil I: *Elias Amos Hosea Jesaja* (Bonn, 1903). For a complete history of research on the remnant motif, see Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant* (AUM, V; Berrien Springs, Mich., 1972), pp. 1-44.

² R. de Vaux, "Le 'reste d'Israël' d'après les prophètes," *RB*, 42 (1933), 526-539; reprinted in de Vaux, *Bible et Orient* (Paris, 1967), pp. 25-39, and translated in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Garden City, N.Y., 1971), pp. 15-30.

³ De Vaux, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, pp. 15f.

⁴ G. Schrenk, "leimma ktl. A. Der griechische Sprachgebrauch," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT*, 4 (1938), 198-200, now in *Theological Dictionary of the NT* (hereinafter cited as *TDNT*), 4 (1967), 194-196; V. Hertrich, "leimma ktl. B. Der 'Rest' im AT," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT*, 4 (1938), 200-215, now in *TDNT*, 4 (1967), 196-209. These articles give no evidence of acquaintance with the essay by de Vaux.

⁵ E. W. Heaton, "The Root Šr and the Doctrine of the Remnant," *JTS*, 3 (1952), 27-39. The dissertation by W. E. Müller, *Die Vorstellung vom Rest im Alten Testament* (Borsdorf-Leipzig, 1939) did not concern itself at all with the Hebrew remnant terminology as such. Terminological considerations are done away with in five short pages by S. Garofalo, *La nozione profetica del 'Resto d'Israele'* (Roma, 1942), pp. 197-202. The root Šr is treated

derivatives of Š'r, because of a total neglect to study the contextual word-combinations and sentence-combinations as well as complementary remnant terminology derived from the Hebrew roots *pl̄t*, *ytr*, and *šrd*.⁶ Heaton postulated that "the basic meaning of the root Š'r is to remain over or be left from a larger number or quantity which has in some way been disposed of."⁷ He has suggested that Š'r has a "general bias" which is to make us "aware that Š'r primarily directs attention, not forwards to the residue, but *backwards* to the whole of which it had been a part and to the devastation and loss by which it had been brought into being."⁸ The overwhelming majority of instances supposedly imply that "the residual part is less important than the part from which it has been distinguished."⁹ These claims regarding a retrospective emphasis seem to rest on firm grounds, for Heaton states that "other Semitic languages appear to confirm this fundamental sense."¹⁰ In direct opposition to these views are the conclusions of de Vaux who suggests that the stress of the remnant falls mainly on the aspects of promise and hope and of D. M. Warne who maintains that the root Š'r contains a dual polarity looking backward to the loss *and* forward to the renewal.¹¹

This brief survey of major investigations of derivatives of the root Š'r has indicated that scholars have reached contradictory conclusions. This fact alone warrants a reinvestigation. From the perspective of modern linguistics, which has come to recognize that the basic unit of oral and written communication is not the word but the sentence, a renewed study is mandatory. The ex-

briefly also by O. Schilling, "Rest' in der Prophetie des Alten Testaments" (unpubl. "Inaugural dissertation," University of Münster, 1942), pp. 7-16.

⁶ For a detailed study of these roots and their derivatives with due consideration of their Semitic cognates, see Hasel, "The Origin and Early History of the Remnant Motif in Ancient Israel" (unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1970), pp. 171-203.

⁷ Heaton, *JTS*, 3 (1952), 28.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 29 (*italics his*).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ De Vaux, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, pp. 17f.; D. M. Warne, "The Origin, Development and Significance of the Concept of the Remnant in the Old Testament" (unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1958), pp. 8-14.

cessive stress laid upon "the basic meaning of the root"¹² is from the vantage point of modern semantics inadmissible inasmuch as it sacrifices the autonomous contextual meaning of each derivative. The studies referred to above generally tend to fall short in what has been called "root fallacy" and "etymologizing."¹³ Furthermore, modern methods of research along the line of the history of the transmission of tradition and form-critical analysis have often challenged what has been considered an "early" and "late" usage. These considerations force us to investigate the various derivatives of the root šr (1) by providing a statistical overview of the verbal and nominal forms in the OT, (2) by giving a concise description of pertinent usages of cognate forms in Semitic languages, and (3) by investigating the various individual semantic ranges under due consideration of the principles of linguistic semantics.

Statistics of Derivatives of šr

The chart on p. 155 provides the statistical information of the 223 usages¹⁴ of derivatives of šr according to Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*. The name of Isaiah's oldest son *Shear-Jashub*¹⁵ is omitted from this count.

Derivatives of šr appear in heavy concentrations in the Pentateuch (30 times), Jos-2 Ki (54 times), and in the works of the Chronicler (26 times plus six times in the Aramaic part). Their usage, however, is most pronounced in the prophetic writings (106 times), but almost completely lacking in the wisdom literature (once in Job). This means that the root šr

¹² This phrase is used by Heaton (*JTS*, 3 [1952], 28) and is almost identical to phrases used by other scholars (cf. de Vaux, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, p. 15; etc.).

¹³ J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London, 1961), pp. 100-106, 111-157. Barr, of course, has made a most valuable critique, but he has failed to provide a constructive methodology.

¹⁴ This count disagrees with that of Hertrich (*TDNT*, 4 [1967], 196) who counts 220 and is followed by Warne. Mandelkern's *Concordantiae* (pp. 1137f.) lists 221 examples. Schilling, "Rest," p. 7, speaks of 222 examples. Lisowsky's *Konkordanz zum hebräischen Alten Testament*, pp. 1393-95, lists 223 examples.

¹⁵ On the translation and meaning of this widely debated symbolic name, see Hasel, *AUSS*, 9 (1971), 36-46.

Statistical Chart

	Qal	Š'r Niph	Hiph	Š'e'ār	Š'e'ērit	Totals
Gn		5			1	6
Ex		7	1			8
Lev		4				4
Num		1	2			3
Dt		5	4			9
Jos		8	9			17
Jugs		2	1			3
1-2 Sa	1	5	2		1	9
1-2 Ki		12	9		3	24
Is		7		12	6	25
Jer		15	4		24	43
Eze		4			7	11
Joel			1			1
Amos			1		3	4
Ob			1			1
Mic					5	5
Zep				1		1
Hag		1			6	7
Zec		3	1		3	7
Mal				1		1
Ps					1	1
Job		1				1
Ruth		2				2
Est				2		2
Dan		2				2
Ezr		2	1	3	1	7
Neh		2		3	1	6
1-2 Chr		5		4	4	13
OT	1	93	37	26	66	223

is at home in legal, prophetic, and historical parts of the OT. The masculine noun *Š'e'ār* and the feminine noun *Š'e'ērit* hold a most prominent place in the prophetic tradition with 14 and 55 usages respectively (80% of the usages of the nominal forms).

The Niphal participle appears 40 times, usually as a substantive similar to the other two nominal forms.

In Biblical Aramaic the noun $\text{š}^{\text{e}}\text{ār}$ appears several times (Dan 2:18; 7:7, 12, 19; Ezr 4:9, 10, 17; 6:16; 7:18, 20)¹⁶ and is attested also in Imperial (Official) Aramaic, as will be shown below.

Semitic Cognates of š^r

A number of Semitic languages employ various cognate terms whose roots seem to have a common origin with the Hebrew root š^{r} . In Ugaritic the noun š^{r} (š^{r}) is attested in a number of texts from Ras Shamra.¹⁷ The meaning of "remnant/remainder" is virtually certain in a text dealing with "land registry" (1079:5-14), in which the noun š^{r} occurs seven times in such phrases as "the remnant/remainder of the field" (Text 1079:5, 7: $\text{š}^{\text{r}}\text{m } \text{š}^{\text{d}}$; 1079:10: $\text{š}^{\text{r}} \text{š}^{\text{d}}$), "the remnant/remainder of the vineyard" (1079:8, 12: $\text{š}^{\text{r}} \text{š}^{\text{d}} \text{ krm}$), and the "rest (remnant/remainder) of the field's acre" (1079:14: $\text{š}^{\text{r}} \text{ [š}^{\text{d}} \text{ mlth}]$).¹⁸ In Text 1001:9 the term š^{r} appears again in connection with a vineyard.¹⁹

Aside from these usages in economic texts the noun š^{r} appears also in Ugaritic literary texts. The mythological Baal and Anath Cycle contains the term š^{r} a number of times:

49:II:35 tdr'nn š^rrh . ltkl Birds may not²⁰ devour his
remnants,

36 'š^rm mnth . ltkly the sparrow may not consume
his portions,

¹⁶ L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden, 1958), p. 1128; W. L. Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1971), p. 422.

¹⁷ The same Ugaritic form š^{r} can designate either "flesh" (š^{r} , Heb. $\text{š}^{\text{e}}\text{er}$) or "remnant/remainder" (š^{r} , Heb. $\text{š}^{\text{e}}\text{ār}$). The former meaning is certain in RS 22.225:3-5:

"She eats his flesh ($\text{š}^{\text{r}}\text{h}$) without a knife.
she drinks his blood without a cup."

Cf. C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome, 1965), p. 487, No. 2372 (hereinafter cited as *UT*).

¹⁸ *UT*, pp. 229f.: Text 1079:5-14.

¹⁹ *UT*, p. 214.

²⁰ On the problem of the translation of "l," see Hasel, *The Remnant*, p. 113.

37 npr [š]ir . lšir . yšh flittering from remnant to remnant.²¹

The term "remnant" (š'ir) refers in this passage to the remaining pieces of the god Mot who was slaughtered by goddess Anath. These pieces are not to be consumed by wild birds because new life is to spring forth again. These remnant pieces presumably were the seed from which Mot again arises to life. The connection of the remnant terminology with the life-and-death problem is here of importance as well as the future potential inherent in the remnant.

Another part of the Baal and Anath Cycle (Text 7b: I: 14ff.) again refers to the "remnant" (š'ir).²² In this case the "remnant" is equated with the remainder of the "peoples" on earth which have survived the deadly drought²³ and will experience the life-giving rain from Baal, the Rider of the Clouds. The "remnant" are the survivors by whom the continued existence of mankind is assured after the catastrophe.

Verbal and nominal forms of the Aramaic root š'r are attested in Imperial Aramaic. An example from a "contract for a loan," dating from 455 B.C.,²⁴ contains the phrase: ". . . and the interest on it which is remaining [yšt'r] against me, . . ." ²⁵ The same verbal form (Hithpeel) appears in another economic text from 402 B.C.: ". . . that there does not remain [š't'r] to us against you any part of the price."²⁶ The Aramaic noun š'ār ap-

²¹ The present writer follows the growing consensus of translating š'ir as "remnant" with G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1956), p. 111, n. 13; J. Aistleitner, *Die mythologischen und kultischen Texte aus Ras Schamra* (2nd ed.; Budapest, 1964), p. 20; idem, *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin, 1963), p. 299, No. 2569. A. Yirku, *Kanaanäische Mythen und Epen* (Gütersloh, 1962), pp. 69f.; T. H. Gaster, *Thespis* (3rd ed.; New York, 1966), p. 221; Ginsberg, *ANET*, p. 140. This is against Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature* (Rome, 1949), p. 45, who in *UT*, p. 425, No. 1338, now leaves the matter open by rendering for this passage "remains/flesh."

²² For a full discussion, see Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 114, 115.

²³ Text 76:I:10, 19 indicates that "men die" of the drought (cf. Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature*, p. 49; Driver, *Canaanite Myths*, p. 117).

²⁴ A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1923), p. 32.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33; cf. C. F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer, *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest* (Leiden, 1965), p. 287 (hereinafter cited as *DISO*).

²⁶ E. G. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 270, 271; cf. *DISO*, p. 287.

appears on a 5th cent. ostrakon from Elephantine: "Now (but) if you sell ornaments of all kinds, then the children shall eat. Behold, no small remnant [šr] (will remain)."²⁷ These sentences are part of a dream and its interpretation.²⁸ The "remnant" seems to refer to ornamental items which can be sold so that the children may no longer suffer hunger. The idea is that once some are sold there are still plenty of them left. The noun šr appears eight times in an "account of produce" from ca. 300 B.C.²⁹ with the meaning of designating the value of the amount of produce left over from a larger whole which was disposed of.³⁰ The noun šry (Heb. שְׂרִית) occurs three times in a marriage contract from 420 B.C.,³¹ which provides that the "remainder/rest"³² of the goods of the bride's permanent property are rightfully hers in case of separation in contrast to the other goods. A letter written in the first decade of the 5th cent. by the Jews of Elephantine to the Persian governor Bagoas in Jerusalem employs the word šryt rendered as "rest/remainder"³³ with reference to the remainder of the furnishings or objects of the temple at Elephantine.

In Palmyrene the noun šr is attested in a tomb inscription dated to 213 B.C. and refers to the "remainder/rest" of the undefiled chamber which has been ceded to a certain individual.³⁴

The noun šryt appears a number of times in Nabatean.³⁵ A tomb inscription from Petra dated to about 1st cent. A.D.³⁶ speaks of the "remainder" of property as that part of the whole which

²⁷ H. Donner und W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften* (Wiesbaden, 1962-64), I, 52, No. 270 B 5; II, 321, No. 270 B (hereinafter cited as *KAI*).

²⁸ *KAI*, II, 323.

²⁹ Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, p. 191.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 193ff., No. 81:61-63, 77, 106, 118, 131, 132.

³¹ Kraeling, *Aramaic Papyri*, p. 201.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 204-207, No. 7:23, 26, 27; cf. *DISO*, p. 288.

³³ Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, p. 112, No. 30:11.

³⁴ H. Ingholt, *Berytus*, 2 (1935), 96. J. Cantineau, *Grammaire du Palmyrénien épigraphique* (Le Chair, 1935), p. 103, points to another example in the construct state (šwr) in an unpublished text. Cf. *DISO*, p. 287.

³⁵ *DISO*, p. 288, cites only two examples but others are known.

³⁶ G. A. Cooke, *A Text-book of North-Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1903), p. 241.

is left over and is to be dedicated to the god Dushara.³⁷ Another text refers to "the rest of their noblemen"³⁸ and indicates that the "remnant" designates the larger part of the group, without implying that the other part has been disposed of.

In Arabic we find the verbal forms *sa'ara* with the meaning "to leave a remainder" of food or drink in a vessel and *sa'ira* which means "to be left over."³⁹ The shades of meaning of the Syriac *syara'* are "waste, scrap, what is left over."⁴⁰

This evidence demonstrates that according to present information the root š'r is limited to the West Semitic languages. The idea of the remnant comes to expression in Akkadian literature by such terms as *rihtu* = "remnant," *sittu* = "remnant," *sātu* = "to remain over," *ezēbu* = "to leave," and *balātu* = "to save, survive" (Heb. *pl̄t*).⁴¹ On the basis of attestations of forms of š'r in Ugaritic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Palmyrene, Nabatean, Arabic, and Syriac it may be concluded that the root š'r is of common West Semitic origin. In the West Semitic languages, other than Hebrew, there is so far no suggestion that a remnant is left over after destruction by war.⁴² The remnant terminology appears in connection with material objects and human entities. Heaton's claim that the "other Semitic languages . . . confirm" the basic meaning of the Hebrew root š'r as "to remain or be left over from a larger number of quantity which has in some way been disposed of"⁴³ is not supported. In one instance the remainder is clearly the larger number or quantity. In the majority of instances there is no evidence that the remaining

³⁷ Ibid.; cf. M. Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik* (Weimar, 1898), p. 451.

³⁸ Jaussen and Savignac, *Mission archéologique en Arabie* (Paris, 1909), p. 213, No. 57:1.

³⁹ De Vaux, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, p. 15, n. 1.

⁴⁰ De Vaux, *RB*, 42 (1933), 525; *Bible et Orient*, p. 26.

⁴¹ See Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 64-100.

⁴² This is often a dominant semantic value in Assyrian annalistic literature. Müller, *Die Vorstellung vom Rest*, pp. 8-18, had been misled by his limited investigation of the extra-biblical remnant motif into suggesting that the biblical remnant motif arose from the politico-military sphere. This hypothesis has been accepted by G. von Rad, L. Ruppert, H. W. Wolff, H. Wildberger, O. H. Steck, U. Stegemann, and others, but must be given up on the basis of extra-biblical and biblical evidence. Cf. Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 382ff.

⁴³ Heaton, *JTS*, 3 (1952), 28.

balance is disposed of. In a few examples the remnant designates that part which is totally destroyed. Thus the semantic values may express a tendency to emphasize the residual part, either its future potential or meaninglessness, or may emphasize the idea of total destruction. There is a dual polarity with the possibility of both positive and negative aspects in each. Derivatives of the common West Semitic root $\text{š}^{\prime}r$ can express the notion of the larger or smaller balance of a divided whole with the tendencies to emphasize either the future potential or lack of potential of the residual quantity, or the idea of total destruction.

Semantic Values of Derivatives of $\text{š}^{\prime}r$

A review of the verbal forms of derivatives of the Hebrew root $\text{š}^{\prime}r$ reveals that they are employed in connection with a wide variety of inanimate objects, non-human entities and abstract concepts: stones remain over after a city is sacked (2 Ki 3:25); some wood remains after an idol is carved (Is 44:17, 19); only the trunk of an image is left when head and arms are severed (1 Sa 5:4); gleanings remained over to be gathered up (Is 17:6; Jer 49:9) or were left over (Ob 5); some cities are left untouched while others were conquered (Jer 34:7). The plague tradition tells of frogs left in the river (Ex 8:9, 11) while flies did not remain (8:31). Hail left some produce (10:5) while locusts devoured it but were themselves not left over (10:19). Cattle were not left behind (10:25). Horses survived a siege (2 Ki 7:13). Blood was left over in a sacrifice (Lev 5:9). A part of the land of Canaan remains to be taken (Jos 13:1). A blessing will be left behind (Joel 2:14). Strength and breath did not remain (Dan 10:8, 17). Answers remain false (Job 21:34).

The masculine noun $\text{š}^{\prime}\bar{a}r$ can refer to the "remainder" of trees in a forest (Is 10:9), the "rest" of other provinces (Est 9:12), the "balance" of money (2 Chr 24:14), the "rest" of the acts of Solomon (9:29), of a city (1 Chr 11:18), and the "remnant" of the Spirit (Mal 2:15). The feminine noun $\text{š}^{\prime}er\dot{a}t$ is used only once each with an inanimate object and an abstract idea, i.e., the "remainder" of wood from which an idol is carved (Is 44:17) and the "remnant" of wrath (Ps 76:10).

It is now our task to investigate the semantic ranges of both

the verbal and nominal derivatives of š'r as they refer to human entities. The earliest appearance of a verbal form is found in the Hebrew flood story in connection with the survival of Noah and his family (Gn 7:33) from destruction by water.⁴⁴ Some Sodomites survived and escaped from their enemies (14:10). Benjamin is the only son left of Rachel (42:38). Og is the sole survivor of the Rephaim (Dt 3:11; Jos 13:12), the son of the woman of Tekoah of her family (2 Sa 14:7), and Naomi of hers (Ruth 1:3). Verbal forms designate the following as the ones left over: two men (Nu 11:26), a mother with her sons (Ruth 1:3), sons (1 Sa 16:11), brethren (1 Chr 13:2), few men (Is 24:6), the poor (2 Ki 25:12), a tribe (2 Ki 17:18), an army (Ex 14:28; 2 Ki 13:7), 10,000 men (Jugs 7:3), inhabitants of a city (Amos 5:3; Jer 39:9; 2 Ki 25:1f.), and a land (Jer 40:6). No Anakim were left in the Conquest (Jos 11:22). The Ammonites were so utterly destroyed that not even two men were left together (1 Sa 11:11); conversely, some nations were left in Canaan (Jos 23:4, 7, 12) and remained there after Israel's restoration (Eze 36:36).

The noun š'ār never occurs as a designation for an individual, but is employed for a group (1 Chr 16:41; Est 9:16; Eze 3:8; 4:3, 7).⁴⁵ In the book of Isaiah it can designate the "remnant" of Israel (Is 10:20), "his people" (11:11, 16; 28:5), and Jacob (10:21), as well as Babylon (14:22), Moab (16:14), Aram (17:3), and Arabia (21:17).⁴⁶

The noun š'ērîṭ is used only twice for a group (Jer 39:3; Neh 7:72). Nine times it is employed to designate a part of a foreign nation or its territory, such as the "remnant" of the Amalekites (1 Chr 4:43), Philistines (Amos 1:8), Edom (9:12), Moab (Is 15:9), Ashdod (Jer 25:20), nations (Eze 36:3ff.), the

⁴⁴ It is very significant that the remnant motif in extra-biblical literature is also deeply embedded in the Sumer-Babylonian flood traditions which go back to before 2000 B.C. Cf. Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 51-58, 67-87.

⁴⁵ H. C. M. Vogt, *Studie zur nachexilischen Gemeinde in Esra-Nehemia* (Werl, 1966), pp. 103-105, on the remnant in Eze.

⁴⁶ On the meaning of š'ār in the book of Isaiah, see Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 216-372, and on a much more limited scale U. Stegemann, *BZ*, 13 (1969), 161-186, whose study suffers from an artificial distinction of a "secular-profane" and a "theological" remnant motif in Isaiah which leads her astray in assessing the Isaianic remnant motif.

coastlands of Caphtor (Jer 47:4), and the sea coast (Eze 25:16). In these passages the foreign nation or territory is always doomed to destruction. Conversely, when *š'ērīt* designates the "remnant" of ancient Israel, it always expresses the positive aspect of the salvation of God's people and appears in the following genitive constructions: the "remnant" of Israel (Mic 2:12; Jer 31:7; Eze 9:7; Zep 3:13), of the house of Israel (Is 46:3), of Judah (Jer 40:11, 15; 42:15, 19; 43:5), of the house of Judah (Zep 2:7), of Joseph (Amos 5:15), of Jacob (Mic 5:7f.), of Jerusalem (Is 37:4=2 Ki 19:4), of Yahweh's inheritance (Mic 7:18; cf. 2 Ki 21:14), of his people (Zep 2:9), of his sheep (Jer 23:3). It is also a designation of the returnees from exile (Hag 1:12, 14; 2:2; Zec 8:6, 11, 12).

The statistical analysis of pp. 154-156 has indicated that both nominal forms are predominantly used by the writing prophets. The noun *š'ērīt* is a major term in the prophetic proclamation of judgment and salvation, expressing the idea that the remnant of a foreign city or country which survived a prior catastrophe is doomed to total annihilation. Contrariwise, the remnant of God's elect people may expect preservation and survival in a future catastrophe. With regard to the noun *š'ār* no such clear-cut prophetic usage can be detected.

Our attention needs to turn now to the variety of threats to human entities with which derivatives of *š'r* appear. The first scholar who attempted to pay attention to this semantic connection was W. E. Müller who suggested on insufficient grounds⁴⁷ that the unique threat from which the biblical remnant motif arose was a politico-military one, i.e., the (Assyrian) practice of complete annihilation.⁴⁸ This is supported neither from ancient Near Eastern texts nor from the more recent understanding of Israelite traditions. One of the most ancient memories contained in the OT concerns itself with the cataclysmic threat to mankind's existence in the form of a flood. Here is the earliest appearance of the remnant terminology (Gn 7:23).⁴⁹ For the moment this survived remnant of the flood was woefully small,

⁴⁷ See Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 50-134.

⁴⁸ Müller, *Die Vorstellung vom Rest*, pp. 18, 27. Cf. *supra*, n. 42.

⁴⁹ See Hasel, *AUSS*, 8 (1970), 182-188.

but in it were preserved the "seeds of life for the future"⁵⁰ as well as civilization.⁵¹ In the surviving remnant is latent an enormous potentiality for mankind's future existence.

In Genesis are found other ancient traditions which know of a remnant. From the 19th-18th cent. B.C. comes the experience of the struggle between several city-states. The "remainder" of the Sodomite force which survived the battle and the succeeding misfortune (Gn 14:10) was able to save itself. The cataclysmic threat to the cities of the plain in the form of "brimstone and fire" (Gn 19:26) annihilated the total population with the exception of the rescued remnant of a father with his two daughters (vs. 31).

The Esau-Jacob narrative tells of Jacob dividing his household into two camps in hope that "the company which is left (*hanniš'ār*) will escape" (Gn 32:9). The threat here is a family feud. The anticipated remnant of Jacob's household is one half of the total clan, which is expected to preserve posterity. The positive forward-looking aspect of the remnant motif is here undeniable. Benjamin is "alone left" (Gn 42:38) of the two sons of Rachel while the other is believed to have been a victim of a wild animal (Gn 37:33). Jacob protects this survivor in order to preserve for himself progeny through this son (Gn 42:36ff.). The future potential inherent in this sole survivor is immense. In the Joseph narrative the threat which endangers the life and continued existence of the clan of Jacob is famine (Gn 45:6). In the touching scene of recognition, Joseph confronts his fearful brothers by saying that God sent him "to preserve for you a remnant (*š'ērīt*) on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors (*p'letāh*)" (Gn 45:7).⁵² This passage contains a remarkable relationship between the ideas of preserving a "remnant," the keeping alive of many "survivors" and life as such. The intricate connection between the remnant motif and the question of continued human existence and preservation of life is here demonstrated in its positive forward-looking emphasis.

⁵⁰ U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem, 1964), II, 97.

⁵¹ W. Harrelson, *Interpreting the OT* (New York, 1964), p. 54.

⁵² On these passages from Genesis, see Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 135-159.

Other threats to human entities, aside from war, are earthquake (Is 24:1-6), natural death (Ruth 1:3, 5), and divine anger which can punish by sword and famine (Jer 44:7, 12) or unspecified means (Eze 9:8; Zep 3:11f.).

The final category of threats to be treated is that of war. H. Wildberger has proposed that "the derivatives of the root $\text{š}r$ belong to the typical semantic ranges of Holy War."⁵³ This claim can hardly be supported on the basis of the 223 occurrences of derivatives of the root $\text{š}r$. The masculine nominal derivative $\text{š}r\bar{u}r$ never occurs in such connections. Of the 66 occurrences of the feminine noun $\text{š}r\bar{e}r\bar{u}t$ there is only a single instance in which it is used in a Holy War context (1 Chr 4:43). Verbal derivatives appear only 17 times in connection with the "wars of Yahweh"⁵⁴ from the Red Sea miracle to the establishment of the monarchy⁵⁵ out of a total of 131. All of the 17 occurrences of the verb come from the time of the Conquest except one (Jugs 4:6) that belongs to the period of the judges, which some consider the period of "genuine holy wars."⁵⁶ In the early period there is no consistent application of the ban, for at times there were survivors (Jos 8:22; 11:22). We must note the radical distinction between the OT motif of total destruction and that of Assyrian warfare.⁵⁷ The great variety of threats, such as flood, fire, famine, natural death, and family feud, which all antedate the limited appearance of certain derivatives of $\text{š}r$

⁵³ H. Wildberger, *Jesaja* (Biblischer Kommentar AT, X/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1972), I, 155.

⁵⁴ This phrase is taken from Nu 21:24; 1 Sa 18:17; 25:8. On the problem of whether or not such a sacral institution existed in ancient Israel, see H. Ringgren, *Israelite Religion* (Philadelphia, 1966), pp. 53f., and especially G. Fohrer, *Geschichte der israelitischen Religion* (Berlin, 1969), p. 109, and H. D. Preuss, *Jahweglaube und Zukunftserwartung* (Stuttgart, 1968), pp. 42-45.

⁵⁵ Ex 14:28; Nu 21:35; Dt 2:34; 3:3, 11; Jos 8:22; 10:28, 30, 37, 39f.; 11:8, 14, 22; 13:12; Jugs 4:6.

⁵⁶ R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (London, 1961), p. 261.

⁵⁷ Against Müller, *Die Vorstellung vom Rest*, pp. 18-21. It is now recognized that total warfare in Assyria was largely for psychological purposes. Its purpose was to inspire fear, to intimidate Assyria's enemies, and to break political independence, while its aim was complete subordination of Assyria's enemy. Cf. H. W. F. Saggs, "Assyrian Warfare in the Sargonid Period," *Iraq*, 25 (1963), 145-154; W. von Soden, "Der Assyrer und der Krieg," *Iraq*, 25 (1963), 131-144; Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 98-100.

with the Yahweh Wars, makes it impossible to connect the root š'r in a special way with the "semantic ranges of Holy War" (*pace* Wildberger) or for that matter with any single threat. The synonymous or parallel usage of derivatives of š'r with *p^elētāh*,⁵⁸ which appear frequently as designations of the "escapees" which survived in war⁵⁹ but have no connection at all with the Yahweh Wars, illustrates further that the derivatives of the root š'r must not be tied to a single threat or concept.

The remnant terminology appears also with wars during the time of the united monarchy (1 Sa 11:11; 14:36). Rather frequent reference is made to nations of the nearer⁶⁰ or more distant⁶¹ periphery of Israel whose remnant is spoken of without revealing the means that caused or will cause the decimation.

The large variety of threats to human entities in the natural, social, political, and religious spheres—flood, famine, drought, earthquake, fire, family feud, natural death, war, and divine wrath—indicates the manifold relations of the remnant motif. It is likewise not limited to a single genre of literature. It appears in historical narrative, oracle, annals, etc. These manifold connections and multiple relations in connection with human entities, such as an individual, a family, clan, tribe, army, city, nation, and even mankind as a whole, indicates that its origin is to be found in the common denominator which binds everything together: the life-and-death problem or the tension of continued human existence in the face of a threat to life.

It remains for us to investigate whether the derivatives of š'r are primarily "backward-looking"⁶² or stress mainly the idea of

⁵⁸ Gn 32:9; 45:7; Ex 10:5; Is 4:2f.; 10:20; 15:9; 37:31=2 Ki 19:30; 1 Chr 4:43; Ezr 9:14; Neh 1:2f.

⁵⁹ Gn 32:9; 2 Sa 15:14; Is 15:9; Jer 25:35; 50:29; cf. Is 45:20; 66:19; 2 Ki 9:5; Lam 2:22; etc. Hasel, "The Origin and Early History of the Remnant Motif," pp. 176-180.

⁶⁰ The following must be mentioned: Philistines, Amos 1:8; Is 14:30; Jer 25:20; 47:4-5; Eze 25:15-17; Edomites, Nu 24:19; Is 15:9; Jer 49:9; Amos 9:12; Ob 5; Moabites, Is 15:9; Jer 48:12; Dan 11:41; 2 Chr 20:24; Ammonites, 1 Sa 11:11; Jer 49:5; Eze 21:37; Arameans, 1 Ki 20:20, 30-32, 40; Tyre, Is 21:27; Jer 49:32.

⁶¹ The following must be mentioned: Assyria, Is 10:19; Babylon, Is 14:22; Jer 50:3, 28; 51:43; Elam, Jer 49:36; Egypt, Ex 14:28; Eze 29:8f., 13-16; 30:26; 32:15.

⁶² So Heaton, *JTS*, 3 (1952), 29.

"promise"⁶³ or whether other notions come to expression. We have already observed that many of the early usages of the remnant terminology derived from $\text{š}r$ contain the undeniable positive, forward-looking aspect with the immense future potentiality for life and continued existence inherent in the remnant. At the same time it is true that there are clear instances of the negative aspect. Verbal forms are at times employed in a sense in which the sifting process with the idea of separation places great emphasis upon the smallness or meaninglessness of that which remained (Ex 10:5; Dt 27:57, 62; 1 Sa 5:4). With regard to human entities verbal forms may stress the insignificance of the sole person who remained,⁶⁴ the smallness of the people who are left,⁶⁵ and the total destruction of even those who remained (Dt 7:20; 1 Ki 22:47). At times the negative particle is used with verbal forms to express the idea of total loss and meaninglessness.⁶⁶ This negative aspect can come to expression also with the nouns $\text{š}^e\text{-}ar$ ⁶⁷ and $\text{š}^e\text{-}erit$.⁶⁸ To place primary or exclusive emphasis on the negative aspect⁶⁹ for all usages of derivatives of the root $\text{š}r$ is to fall into the trap of "etymologizing," i.e., transferring one particular semantic value to all appearances without paying proper attention to the individual semantic value of each usage in its own context.

There are many passages which contain undeniably positive semantic values⁷⁰ which emphasize the inherent potentiality in

⁶³ So de Vaux, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, p. 17.

⁶⁴ Dt 3:11; Jos 3:12; Ruth 1:3, 5; Dan 10:8.

⁶⁵ Dt 4:27; 2 Ki 24:14; 25:11, 22; Is 17:6; 24:6; Jer 8:3; 37:10; Amos 5:3.

⁶⁶ Gn 47:18; Ex 8:31; 10:19, 26; 14:28; Nu 9:12; 21:35; Dt. 2:34; 3:3; 28:51, 55; Jos 8:17, 22; 10:28, 30, 33, 37, 39, 40; 11:8, 14; Jugs 4:16; 6:4; 1 Sa 11:11; 14:36; 2 Sa 14:7; 1 Ki 15:29; 16:11; 2 Ki 10:11, 14, 17, 21; Dan 10:8, 17; Ezz 9:14.

⁶⁷ Is 10:19, 21, 22; 14:22; 16:14; 17:3; 21:17; Zep 1:4; Dan 7:7, 19; Mal 2:15.

⁶⁸ Amos 1:8; Is 14:30; 15:9; Jer 8:3; 14:22; 47:4; 2 Ki 21:14; Eze 5:10; 9:8; 11:13; 25:16. On the remnant motif in the book of Ezekiel, see Y. Hattori, "The Prophet Ezekiel and His Idea of the Remnant" (unpubl. Th.D. dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1968).

⁶⁹ So Heaton, *JTS*, 3 (1952), 28ff.

⁷⁰ Gn 32:9; 45:7; Ex 8:11, 13; 10:12; Lev 26:36, 39; Nu 11:26; Jos 13:1, 2, 12; 23:4, 7, 12; Jugs 7:3; 1 Sa 9:29; 11:11; 16:11; 2 Sa 14:7; 1 Ki 7:13; 19:18; 2 Ki 10:11; 19:30; 25:11, 22; Is 4:3; 6:13; 7:3; 10:20; 11:16; 37:31; Jer 21:17; 24:8; 34:7; 38:4, 22; 39:9, 10; 40:6; 41:10; 42:2; 52:15, 16; Eze 6:12;

the surviving remnant whether it is small or large. The execution of the ban by ancient Israel indicates the future potentiality of even a remnant of the Canaanites.⁷¹ The positive, forward-looking aspect also comes to expression in the parallel usage of "remnant and name" (*šēm úš^eērít*⁷² or *šēm úš^eār*⁷³). When both remain life will continue in the offspring and progeny, even if the remnant is a last son (2 Sa 14:7). But if both "remnant and name" are uprooted all existence comes to an end (Is 14:22). "Name and remnant" are equal to "offspring and posterity" (*nīn wāneked*), as is demonstrated in Is 14:22.⁷⁴ These couplets express in the fullest manner the immense potentiality of future existence and continued life inherent in the remnant. The same concept is emphasized in the parallelism between "remnant" and "root" (*šores/š^eērít*) in Is 14:30.⁷⁵ As long as there is a "root" (=remnant) there is the full potentiality for growth and life.

The semantic values of forms of š'r are not adequately treated without making reference to forms of *ytr*, *šrd*, and *plt* with which they appear. Space does not permit a detailed treatment.

9:8; 17:21; 36:36; Amos 5:15; 9:11f.; Zep 3:12; Zec 9:7; 11:9; Hag 2:3; Joel 2:14; 2 Chr 30:6; Job 21:34.

⁷¹ The remnant of the Amalekites existed in the period of the Judges (Jugs 6:1-6) and posed a threat to Israel from the early monarchy (1 Sa 15; 30:17) until the turn of the 8th to the 7th cent. B.C. (1 Chr 4:43). The remnant of the Anakim left by Joshua (Jos 11:21, 22) were a major menace to Israel centuries later under Saul's kingship (1 Sa 17:4-58). Cf. Warne, "The Origin, Development, and Significance of the Remnant," pp. 10f.

⁷² 2 Sa 14:7; K. Budde, *Die Bücher Samuel* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum AT, VIII; Tübingen, 1902), remarks on this text that since the parallel use of "name and remnant" is otherwise not found in the OT the term "remnant" must be deleted. There is no reason to accept this arbitrary procedure! In Is 14:22 and Zep 1:4 we find the parallelism of *šēm/š^eār* and the reading of IQIs^a in Is 14:22 is *šm wš^eryt*; cf. M. Burrows, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery* (New Haven, 1950), I, Plate XII. In view of the fact that the two co-ordinated terms *nīn wāneked* represent a hendiadys (R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax* [Toronto, 1967], p. 17), one may indeed wonder whether the co-ordinated terms *šm wš^er* are not also a hendiadys, i.e. express a single concept.

⁷³ Is 14:22; Zep 1:4.

⁷⁴ In this passage the four nouns "name and remnant" and "offspring and posterity" form two pairs of words in alliteration and express in the most general and all-embracing manner the idea of progeny. Cf. G. Fohrer, *Das Buch Jesaja* (2nd ed.; Zürich, 1966), I, 190, n. 21.

⁷⁵ See Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 353-356.

Nominal forms of *šr* appear in certain phrases⁷⁶ synonymously or interchangeably with *yeter*, "remainder, rest." There are instances in which verbal forms of *šr*, "to remain, be left over," are used synonymously with verbal forms of *ytr*, "to remain over, to be left over"⁷⁷ or the noun *yeter*, "remainder, rest."⁷⁸ This indicates that there is overlapping in certain semantic values of derivatives of the roots *šr* and *ytr*. While this is true, it must be emphasized that this does not provide any justification for reading an alleged root meaning of *ytr* into all usages of *šr*. At the same time there are a good number of instances which demonstrate that these terms contribute to the positive, future-directed semantic ranges of the remnant motif as it has come to expression in derivatives of both *šr* and *ytr*.

The noun *š'ērīt* and the substantival use of the Niphal participle of *šr* are used synonymously with the noun *šāriq*, "survivor" (Jer 47:4; 2 Ki 10:11). Derivatives of the root *šrd* appear primarily with the negative emphasis of destruction (24 of the total of 29 occurrences). But this shade of meaning is balanced by the positive nuance with the implicit potentiality of renewal and future existence inherent of the survivors.⁷⁹

Conclusions

This study has attempted to throw light upon the 223 occurrences of derivatives of *šr* which represent the major terminology of the OT remnant motif. It may be safely concluded on the basis of cognates in Ugaritic, Aramaic, Palmyrene, Nabatean, Arabic and Syriac that the Hebrew root *šr* is of common West Semitic origin. Our investigation into the semantics of *šr* has revealed that it designates the residual part which is left over or remains after the removal of the balance of a small part, half, or the larger whole. In some cases the remnant also designates

⁷⁶ The phrase "the rest (*š'ār*) of the people" in Neh 10:29; 11:1 as well as the phrase "the rest (*š'ērīt*) of the people" in Jer 41:10, 16; Neh 7:71(72); Hag 1:12, 14; 2:2 is synonymous with the phrase "the rest (*yeter*) of the people/nation" in 1 Ki 12:23; Jer 39:9; 52:15=1 Ki 25:11; Hab 2:8; Zep 2:9; Zec 14:2; Neh 4:14, 19.

⁷⁷ Ex 10:5, 15; Jos 11:11, 14; 1 Sa 25:22; Is 4:3; Jer 34:7.

⁷⁸ Dt 3:11; Jos 24:12; 13:12; 1 Ki 22:46; cf. Jer 44:7.

⁷⁹ Jos 10:20; Is 1:9; Jer 31:1; Joel 3:5; Job 18:19; 27:15.

the whole without the loss of any part. The semantics of derivatives of Š'r demonstrates its frequent usage (195 out of 223) with human entities, such as mankind as a whole, a people or nation, tribe or clan, group or family, and even a single individual. The great variety of threats in the natural, social, political, and religious spheres precludes a derivation or special connection of the root Š'r and its derivatives with any single threat, whether the politico-military practice of total warfare (so W. E. Müller) or the Yahweh Wars (so H. Wildberger). The variegated threats and manifold relations of derivatives of Š'r demonstrate that the remnant motif has its origin neither in eschatology (H. Gressmann), myth and cult (S. Mowinkel), election (O. Schilling), etc.,⁸⁰ but in the life-and-death problem, i.e., the fundamental question of human existence and its continuity.

Basic to the Hebrew root Š'r is a bi-polarity of negative and positive aspects: Negatively derivatives of Š'r can express total loss or painful decimation with emphasis on complete meaninglessness and utter insignificance; positively they can express the immense future potentiality inherent in the remnant, no matter what its size. To have a "remnant" (a "name" or "root") means to possess continued existence, guaranteeing life through perpetuation by progeny. This bi-polarity must not be understood or construed as mutually exclusive modes of thought. It interacts constantly by forming different emphases according to the particular semantic value of each individual context, sentence-combination and word-combination. In no case must any semantic value be blurred or obliterated by superimposing another semantic value from a different context.

⁸⁰ For details, see Hasel, *The Remnant*, pp. 2-40, 373ff.