The Relations expressed by the Genitive in Hebrew.

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The annexion of a noun in Hebrew is used to express any conceivable relation between the word in the construct state and the annexed noun. Although Hebrew prose does not warrant this statement, lyric passages and impassioned oratory justify one in saying that any sort of modification which occurs to a speaker or writer may be expressed by an annexed noun. The fact that not only nouns and adjectives, but participles and infinitives, take Genitives after them gives the writers somewhat more liberty; but the most remarkable expressions are made by the grouping of nouns alone.

The reader, therefore, is left to analyze the phrases composed of the construct state and the annexed noun, and to master their meaning. This is a much greater tax upon his power of discrimination than arises from the various uses of 1. It may be that we are sometimes more exacting of the original language than would have seemed justifiable to the author; but he surely meant something by his language, and it is not unreasonable for us to wish to know as nearly as possible what was in his thought.

The grammatical classification of Genitives seems dry to a student; and he is tempted to ask a teacher who seeks exact discrimination, "Why do you wish us to define these Genitives?" If we can master the relations of thought, we are increasing our power to comprehend a work of literature. The best exegetes often paraphrase the more difficult annexional phrases, thus indicating their conception of the relation of the annexed word; but they rarely define the relation.

It is true that the relations are so varied that a perfectly satisfactory classification of them is probably impossible. A tolerably effective working classification is the best that can be hoped. For some time past I have noted with interest the varied uses of the Genitive, and
in consequence have formulated an analysis of these uses which may be serviceable to others. I hope that it will provoke somebody with more leisure than I have to give the subject a complete investigation.

I.

The relation of cause in a broad sense is expressed by annexion.

1. There is a Genitive of Cause in the strict sense: e.g. נָּמוֹד (Isa. 10:i), “rod (used) because of my anger”; חֲלֵיתָה (Cant. 2:v), “sick because of love”; מַלְאָם (Isa. 22:v), “dead because of war.”

2. There is a Genitive of Author. The annexed noun designates the author or originator of that to which it is annexed: לֵאמֶת (Ex. 13:v), “law of Yahwe,” so often, not only with הָאָרֶץ, but with רָאָם, רָאוּ, רֹאֶה, מְשָׁמֶשׁ, מְשָׁמֶשׁ, רֹאֶה, רָאוּ, רָאָם. Ample illustration is found in Ps. 119; מֶשֶלָּה (Prov. 1:25), “Proverbs of Solomon”; מִשְׁפָּט (Ps. 22:i), “reproach of men.”

3. The Subjective Genitive in a strict sense denotes the actor after a word denoting the action. Cf. יִרְאֵתָה (1 Ki. 10:i), “love shown by Yahwe”; מַעֲבַדְתֵּנִי (Isa. 11:2), “jealousy felt by Ephraim”; רָאָם (Prov. 9:v), “those who were invited by her.”

4. The Genitive of Instrument denotes the instrument, the thing by which an act is accomplished. Cf. מְסַחֲתָּה (Ex. 12:vii), “possession bought with silver”; חֲלֵיתָה (Isa. 22:v), “slain with the sword”; מִשְׁפָּט (Dt. 32:vii), “consumed by pestilence.”


II.

The relation of possession or ownership is sometimes assigned to the Genitive Subjective, but there is a noteworthy difference. Although the possessor often is active in gaining possession, many illustrations of the Genitive Possessive exclude all reference to the active acquirement of the thing possessed.

1. The Genitive Possessive may denote strict ownership of objects inseparably attached to the owner: thus, ל bal (Prov. 21\(^1\)), "heart of a king"; so also any part of the body, as י ב and the like; likewise שנים and מ₪ זółr followed by noun or pronoun designating the person; similarly דיי זש (1 Sam. 17\(^6\)), "name of Yahwe."

2. The Genitive of Possession denotes the ownership of objects which are not inseparable from the owner: לובוסוקס (Isa. 10\(^6\)), "their images"; לובוסה (Isa. 10\(^4\)), "treasures belonging to the peoples"; תיוז (Isa. 53\(^8\) Jer. 11\(^19\) Ps. 27\(^10\)), "land of the living," contrasted with לובוסא, the land of the dead; so often a Genitive after לובוסא, לובוסא, לובוסא, לובוסא, et sim.

3. The Genitive of Possession is used with qualities not inseparably attached to the owner: לובוסא (Isa. 10\(^8\)), "might of my hand"; לובוסא (Prov. 19\(^1\)), "in his integrity"; לובוסא (Prov. 14\(^7\)), "in his uprightness."

4. This relation may also imply advantage to the possessor. לובוסא (Isa. 10\(^7\)), "light of Israel"; לובוסא (Ps. 18\(^9\)), "my strength." Note also several designations of God in the following verse.

5. The idea of possession is sometimes accompanied with that of peculiar and affectionate relationship.

The relationship may be natural: לובוסא (Dt. 13\(^7\) et al.), "thy brother"; לובוסא (Dt. 13\(^7\) et al.), "thy mother"; לובוסא (Dt. 13\(^7\)), "thy fathers."

The relationship may be personal: לובוסא (Dt. 13\(^7\)), "thy neighbor"; לובוסא (Prov. 1\(^8\)), "my son"; לובוסא (Ps. 18\(^9\)), "his anointed"; לובוסא (Ps. 127\(^1\)), "his beloved."

The relationship may be social: לובוסא (Dt. 15\(^11\)), "thy poor"; לובוסא (Dt. 15\(^11\)), "thy afflicted ones."

III.

There is a relation between the annexed noun and that in the construct state, which has some likeness to that given above in II. 5,
and differs in the fact that there is no suggestion of ownership. In
default of any better term it may be called the Genitive of Relation.

1. The relation is necessary. The existence of the annexed noun
is necessary to constitute the construct state what it is: e.g. "יסור
מישון" (Isa. 11), "isles (coast lands) of the sea"; מֶשֶׁנְה מַרְדֹּק (2 Ch. 28),
"subordinate of the king"; מְשָׁנֹה (1 Sam. 17), "his second"
(younger brother).

2. The annexed noun as Genitive of Reference indicates the scope
in which the construct state is to be regarded: e.g. "אשר الدفاع רעב
(Deut. 15), "wages proper to a hireling"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Isa. 10),
"arrogance of heart"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Ps. 45, Isa. 61), "oil proper to
a festival."

3. The annexed noun may be a Genitive of the The Sphere in which
the governing noun exists or acts: e.g. "בָּלַיּ הַלֶּחֶם" (Gen. 37),
"master in dreams"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Isa. 44), "workman in iron";
מלְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל (Prov. 1), "king of Israel."

4. The Genitive of Definition designates one out of many similar
objects: e.g. מֶשֶׁנוֹת האָסָמִים (Deut. 15), "year of release"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק
(Isa. 11), "sea of Egypt."

5. The Genitive of Specification designates the point in which the
construct state holds good. This is used freely with adjectives, and
in great variety of detail, giving richness of expression. Cf. מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק
(Ps. 24), "clean as regards hands"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (2 Sam. 9),
"smitten in feet"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Job 39), "bitterness in soul"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק
(Isa. 53), "experienced in sickness"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Ps. 32),
"forgiven in respect of transgression"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Ex. 34, Nah. 1),
"long in respect of wrath."

IV.

The annexed noun may stand in a recipient relation to the con­
struct state. The variety of this relation affords great wealth of
expression.

1. Annexed to a noun of action we have the Genitive Objective in
the strict sense. This is very common: e.g. מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Prov. 17),
"fear of Yahwe"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Ps. 44), "complete deliverance
of Jacob"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Hos. 13), "sacrificers of men"; מְשָׁנֹה
(Ps. 18), "my deliverer"; מְשָׁנֹה מַרְדֹּק (Job 37), "poisings of
clouds."

2. The annexed noun is an indirect object, sometimes correspond­
ing to a Greek Dative used as indirect object, sometimes standing
where a noun depending upon ב, ל, or ב might have been expected.
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Cf. דָּרוּב (Job 38:9), “paths to his house”; רָדָב (Job 28:3), “way to it”; בִּלְדוֹלָה (Ps. 102:2), “those mad against me”; יִרְבָּאִים (Gen. 23:18), “those who enter the gate of his city”; בַּלְדוֹלָה (Isa. 38:15), “those who go down to the pit (grave)”; יִרְבָּאִים (Ex. 15:1), “they that rise up against thee”; רוֹחֵר (Isa. 25:4), “storm against a wall”; יֵרְבָּאִים (Isa. 26:9), “they that dwell on high”; יִרְבָּאִים (Ps. 88:10), “they that lie in the grave”; יֵרְבָּאִים (Isa. 26:9), “they that lie in the grave”; יֵרְבָּאִים (1 Ki. 27), “they that eat at thy table”; יֵרְבָּאִים (or יֵרְבָּאִים) (2 Ki. 11:7-8), “those that enter (go out) on the Sabbath”; יֵרְבָּאִים (Prov. 27), “those who walk in integrity.”

3. The annexed noun designates an object which receives benefit, a Genitive of Advantage. Cf. בְּלַדוֹלָה (Ps. 1:1 et al.), “happiness of (for) the man”; מַטָּר אֱלֹהִים (Isa. 30:23), “rain for thy seed”; יִרְבָּאִים (Isa. 42:4; 49:8), “light for [the] nations”; יִרְבָּאִים (Isa. 42:4; 49:8), “covenant for (i.e. with) a people”; thus יִרְבָּאִים followed by a Genitive (Dt. 4:29 Ezek. 16:1 Mal. 2:10 Ps. 89:6 Neh. 13:5); יִרְבָּאִים (Isa. 26:4), “jealousy for a people.”


5. The annexed noun denotes that toward which the construct state is directed as its natural or proper outcome. יִרְבָּאִים (Ezek. 35:5), “iniquity which brings an end”; יִרְבָּאִים (Gen. 3:25), “tree which secures life”; יִרְבָּאִים (Prov. 15:8), “discipline which tends to wisdom”; יִרְבָּאִים (Isa. 53:4), “chastisement securing our peace”; יִרְבָּאִים (Ps. 18:60), “shield securing my deliverance.”

6. Closely akin to the last is the Genitive indicating the object which it is the nature of a person to secure. Cf. אֱלֹהִים (Ps. 18:9 et al.), “God who secures my deliverance”; quite often after the name of God, cf. ב- Θεός τῆς ζωῆς (Phil. 4:4) and similar expressions in the New Testament; יִרְבָּאִים (Ps. 59:11), “God who shows goodness to me”; יִרְבָּאִים (Ps. 42:9), “God who gives me life”; יִרְבָּאִים (Ps. 44:9), “God who is the source of my righteousness,” cf. Hupfeld in loc.; יִרְבָּאִים (Dt. 19:10 Ps. 35:11), “witness accomplishing violence.”

V.

As the language had not developed the general use of adjectives, the various qualities were largely expressed by nouns in annexion. The Genitive Attributive expresses:

...
1. A simple quality. Cf. אָבָּס (Prov. 26:1), "a contentious man"; הבַּעַד (Gen. 17:4), "an everlasting possession"; בַּעַד (Ex. 28:2), "holy garments."

2. The attribute involves a relation somewhat complex. מַתַּח (Isa. 51:20), "antelope captured by means of a net," or, "a netted antelope"; מַתַּח (Isa. 34:3), "people cursed by me," or, "people under my curse"; מַתַּח (Ob). מַתַּח (J. Jer. 20:10, 38:2, Ps. 41:10), "thy confederates," "men at peace with thee."

3. The Genitive of Characteristic expresses some feature or event which specially marks the noun in the construct state. cf. מְדַמְּרֵי (Ps. 5:7), "man noted for bloody deeds"; מְדַמְּרֵי (Isa. 22:1), "valley distinguished by visions"; מְדַמְּרֵי (Gen. 11), "tree distinguished by fruit."

4. Genitive of Material: מַחָּל (Lev. 11:28), "wooden vessels," מַחָּל (Ex. 12:38), "jewels of gold"; מַחָּל (Cant. 4:1), "flock of goats."

5. Genitive of Measure: מֶלֶן (Jon. 3:9), "three days' journey"; מֶלֶן (Ex. 16:29), "two days' food."

6. The metaphorical phrases noted above under I. 5, in which מַחָּל and מֶלֶן are used, really convey an idea which belongs to the Genitive Attributive: מַחָּל (Dt. 25:1), "worthy to be beaten"; מֶלֶן (1 Sam. 26:18), "worthy of death"; מֶלֶן (Nu. 17:20), "rebels."

VI.

The annexed noun may denote the same thing as the construct, and is equivalent to an Appositive. The Genitive of Apposition may denote:

1. The name. מִדְּרָס (Gen. 15:18), "the river Euphrates"; מִדְּרָס (Isa. 10:28), "the daughter of Zion"; מִדְּרָס (Isa. 10:28), "hill of Jerusalem."

2. A person or thing is annexed to his attribute: מִדְּרָס (Gen. 16:11), "wild ass of a man"; מִדְּרָס (Jon. 1:8), "chief pilot"; מִדְּרָס (Isa. 9:5), "wonder of a counsellor."

3. The whole is put in apposition to its parts: מִדְּרָס (Isa. 9:10, 10:4), "thickets of the forest"; מִדְּרָס (Dt. 16:9), "days of thy life."

VII.

The Genitive Partitive designates:

1. The whole of which a part is taken: מִדְּרָס (Dt. 13:28),
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one of thy cities,” so often after a numeral; שאר ישראלי (Isa. 1010),
“remnant of Israel”; כלים (Isa. 111), “tongue of the sea”; נוכרי אפור (Mic. 54), “the anointed among men”; ראשה חכמה (Ps. 11116), “the chief part of wisdom.”

2. The superlative degree is often expressed by the Genitive Partitive. לאobili (Isa. 2910), “the poorest of men”; מוכות (Mic. 74), “the best of them.”

3. The Partitive Genitive is used of place. כנה מלשון (Isa. 1114), “shoulder (side) of the Philistines” (open to invasion); נחל ואורים (Dt. 13), “end of the earth”; הגדול (Dt. 1317), “its broad place.”

VIII.

There are very many combinations of two or more Genitives in a series which seem at times to be complex and not at once to be analyzed. A very common type is כנהMAL שלמה (Ezek. 178), “Israel’s high mountain,” in which the Genitive belongs to the phrase, as the pronominal suffix does in ביהת שלמה (Isa. 5410), “my covenant securing peace,” and מילה כרחי (Psa. 28), “my holy mountain.”

Another grouping is seen in נחל נהרי רבש (Job 2017), “streams of brooks of honey,” and מבצר משبوابة (Isa. 2512), “fortification of height of thy walls.” In the former a Genitive of Apposition is followed by a Genitive of Material which modifies the whole phrase. In the latter a Genitive Attributive is followed by a Genitive of Material which qualifies the whole phrase.