The Word שָׁמַע in the Old Testament

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According to the prevalent view, there are two Hebrew nouns שָׁמַע: one meaning horse, of the form שָׁמָע, the plural of which should, according to rule, be שָׁמָע; the other meaning horseman, of the form שָׁמָע, plural שָׁמָע. The traditional vocalization of the plural is, however, uniformly שָׁמָע; in other words, it knows only one word שָׁמָע, and that with constant a in the first syllable. Partly on this ground, doubtless, Schwally has questioned that שָׁמָע ever has the meaning horse in Hebrew, casting doubt upon the integrity of the text of such Old Testament passages as have been held to establish that fact.

The true state of the case would seem to be exactly the opposite of that assumed by Schwally. There is only one word שָׁמַע in Hebrew, but the meaning is properly horse, not horseman.

It is customary to adduce in support of the conventional view the two Arabic words فَرَس horse and فَارِص horseman. فَارِص, however, is of course not a participial formation from a verb فُرَس to ride, but, on the contrary, (like Hebrew פָּרַש from פָּרַש) denominative from פָּרַש. Nor can there be any talk of coordinate formations of the types פָּרַש and פָּרַש coinciding in the Hebrew in the singular שָׁמַע, for there is no known Semitic root from which they can be derived; cf. Nöldeke, ZDMG, xl. p. 787 (against Delitzsch, Prolegomena, p. 95), and Fränkel, Fremdwörter, p. 99. It follows

1 On Jer. 46, ZATW, viii. p. 191, "Die Bedeutung 'Pferd' für שָׁמַע ist nicht hinhänglich gesichert."
that if there be two words שְׁבַע in Hebrew, one must be
denominative from the other (as Gesenius, Lehrgebäude, p. 512). But that the Hebrews would have derived one
group from another in such fashion that the denominative
could only with the greatest difficulty be distinguished from
its base, is in the last degree improbable. And even ad-
mmitting that the א had not then been gutturalized, the Old
Testament offers no instance, so far as I am aware, of a
denominative תָּבִיק from a form תָּבִיק. Denominatives of the
form תָּבִיק are תָּבִיק from תָּבִיק, תָּבִיק from
תָּבִיק, תָּבִיק from תָּבִיק, תָּבִיק from תָּבִיק, תָּבִיק from תָּבִיק; תָּבִיק caravaneer\textsuperscript{2} is not an Aramaizing formation, but an

\textsuperscript{2} Such, and not more, is the meaning of שְׁבַע. Cf. Syriac וּפִּית מְשַׁיֵּר "pastor
vel possessor gregis" from וּפִּית "greges equorum [i.e., of course, the drove
of a horse-caravan]"; per extens. greges quinquaginta," Brun, Dict. Syr.-Lat.
p. 646 (where "heb. תָּבִיק" should be corrected to שְׁבַע). See also Nöldeke,
s.v. מְשַׁיֵּר is the Persian מָשַר, which has been Arabized as מָשַר; so that
König's מְשַׁיֵּר ramakatun מֶשַׁיֵּר, Lehrgebäude, II. 1, p. 410 c, is doubly
erroneous. Is there, I wonder, any better ground for the qattal vocalization
of מָשַר and מָשַר (some kind of a mule) of the Talmud than the
misinterpretation of the word for caravaneer or muleteer in Esther, with
its correctly transmitted vocalization? The expression מָשַר בִּי רֵכָּה מִלְפָּה the
caravaneers as a class, just as מָשַר הבָּיִוּהְךָ = the prophets as a class. In
Esth. \textsuperscript{30} the author labored to say that the despatches were transmitted by
means of the convoys of the official transports, (in apposition :) the carav-
aneers: רְכָּה רְכָּה רְכָּה רְכָּה רְכָּה רְכָּה, literally, by the hand of the
official riders of the transport, the sons of the caravaneers. שְׁבַע is generic
for pack-animal(s); so 1 K. \textsuperscript{6} (where the term מִלְפָּה covers all war-horses,
whether of cavalry or chariots); in Mic. \textsuperscript{12} מֶשַּׁרבָּה carriage refers of course
to a litter: מֶשַּׁרבָּה לָכֵּץ לָכֵּץ לָכֵּץ, Strap the litter to the mule of
the inhabitress of Lachish, where the current interpretations would require
instead of מִלְפָּה (with which compare the Arabic מִלְפָּה, mnemonic
thread wound around the finger) and מֶשַּׁרבָּה instead of מֶשַּׁרבָּה
לָכֵּץ. The clause מֶשַּׁרבָּה לָכֵּץ (Esth. \textsuperscript{30}) is an erroneous gloss based
on מֶשַּׁרבָּה לָכֵּץ (Esth. \textsuperscript{30}), as is also מֶשַּׁרבָּה of \textsuperscript{8}4. All that is proved regarding the word
רְכָּה (which transfers the word מֶשַּׁר from the Hebrew text and supplements it
with an impossible definition), is that the word was both unfamiliar and
unintelligible to the translators. For the rest, cf. Wellhausen, Göttingische
gelhrte Anzeigen, February, 1902, p. 139.
Aramaic loan-word. Had the Hebrew formed a word for *horse* from *אָרָב* horse, it would doubtless have been, like Arabic سُلَك, of the form נֵלָה.

That the literal meaning of *אָרָב* in the text of the Old Testament is everywhere *horse*, a brief survey of the usage will, I think, conclusively show.

*אָרָב* occurs in the singular three times, in each case with unmistakable meaning *horse*. Ez. 26:10: מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל רִבְבָּה רַעְשָׁת וַעֲצָרִי, Thy walls shall shake with the thunder of steed and wheel and chariot, that is, with the clatter (and snorting and neighing?) of horses, the rattle of wheels, and the clang of chariot metal; cf. Jer. 47:8; 2 K. 7. Cornill's excision of מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל is not merely unwarranted, but detracts materially from the force of the original. It is the same stock rhetorical phrase that we have in Jer. 4:20: מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל מְרַשְּת הַמַּעֲשָׁה חָשָׁת כָּל הָזִי, where in spite of the absence of the preposition before מְרַשְּת הַמַּעֲשָׁה כָּל הָזִי, this last is better construed as coordinate with the entire phrase מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל, rather than as dependent on the word מֶשֶׁת כָּל הָזִי, for מֶשֶׁת כָּל הָזִי would give no very good sense. The correct interpretation is, *All the land* (reading with the Greek πᾶς ὅπως for πᾶς οὐδὲν) is in flight before (a) the sound of the war-horse and (b) the bowman's dart. Lastly, the singular מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל occurs in Nah. 3:3, where מְרַשְּת הַמַּעֲשָׁה מְשִׁלְתָּה when restored to its proper place, is parallel to מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת and is correctly interpreted *rearing steed*.8

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8 According to Cornill (Ezechiel, p. 340 f.), besides disturbing the parallelism, the words מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל "sind auch sachlich anstößig; die נֵלָה geht nicht von den Reitern aus, sondern von den Wagen." So Cornill excludes the words because on the interpretation 'Reiter' they yield no satisfactory sense, and then Schwally (l.c.) disallows the meaning 'Pferd' because the integrity of this passage has been questioned by Cornill.

4 מַכְּלָה מֶשֶׁת דָּלִיל, both here and in Jud. 6:2, is not to *gallop*, but to *fall heels over head*. The original of Nah. 3:3 is as follows:

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The plural פּוּלֶם is used in twofold fashion:

(1) With primary sense, as a simple distributive or collective plural of פּוּלֶם = horses. So 1 S. 8:11: "The king whom the children of Israel choose shall take their sons and set them upon his chariot (בָּנָיו), and upon his horses (בָּנָיו), and others of them shall run before his chariot; the reference here is to the personal equipage and retinue of the king. 1 K. 5:5 ( = 2 Chron. 9:25): Solomon had four thousand (read so with the Chronicler for M's erroneous forty thousand) head of horses for his chariots (רֹבִי; לֶחָשֵׁב is good old Hebrew nomen generis, of which רֹבִי is nomen unitatis) and twelve thousand cavalry-horses (סְפֹּר). 1 K. 10:25 ( = 2 Chron. 1:14): Solomon collected chariotry and cavalry (רֹבִי, see below), and he had fourteen hundred chariots (רֹבִי) and twelve thousand cavalry-horses (סְפֹּר). This passage harmonizes very well with the one just referred to, 1 K. 5:5, and would seem to establish the meaning of פּוּלֶם as head and not span; four thousand is just about the requisite number of horses for the maintenance of an efficient force of fourteen hundred chariots: 4000 + 1400 = 24.

The comparison of the incorrect רֹבִי of Chronicles with the correct לֶחָשֵׁב of Kings is sufficient to show that 2 Chron. 9:25 is derived from 1 K. 5:5, and is not a later doublet of 2 Chron. 1:14, on the basis of which doublet in turn, 1 K. 5:5 was inserted in the Book of Kings (as Kittel). Only, the

The crack of the lash, and the thunder of wheels!
Bearing steed, and tumbling horse,
And bounding chariot!

And gleam of sword, and flash of spear,
And host of bleeding, and mass of corpses,
And no end to the bodies of the dead!

I hope to return to the subject of the root רָדֵד in another place.
ARNOLD: THE WORD ו, IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1 K. 20: Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, escapes because of his chariot- and cavalry-horses ((Unknown) and (Unknown) must be given the same construction if we abide by the text.6 Observe that the genus is ו, (singular), but ו, (plural). Ez. 27: The Tyrians buy from Togarmah ו, (chariot-) horses and riding-horses and (pack-) mules. Ez. 38: ו, (chariot-horses and cavalry-horses. Hos. 1: I will not deliver them with bow and with sword and with battle, with chariot-horses and with cavalry-horses ((Unknown)). With the same meaning ו, and ו, are coupled in Joel 24. Hab. 18 and Jer. 46: כארב ו, (chariot- and cavalry-) steeds! the entire verse refers to preparations in situ, and Get up, ye “horsemen”! would be ו, Several passages, owing to the fragmentary and to some extent corrupt condition of the context, are exceedingly difficult of interpretation. Yet such as it is, the context leaves no doubt as to the meaning of ו, Is. 23: The sensible man has a care to (cf. ו, the wheel of his wagon, and his riding-horses are not injured in the hoof (read ו,)); the original of the preceding part of the verse was probably to the effect that he does not overwork his threshing-animals (préparatifs pour l'entrepôt?); ולומ ידיק ו, would then be a glossator’s erroneous caption. Is. 216: For thus said my lord unto me, “Go set the watchman, let him report what he sees; and if he descrie one riding (point ו, a לומ ו, or riding an ass, or riding a camel, let him give strict atten-

number four thousand of 1 K. 6 will have been raised to forty thousand since the Chronicler employed that book, or in manuscripts which did not influence the text he used. Deliberate tampering with the text of the older historical books since their employment by the Chronicler can, of course, be shown elsewhere.

6 Kittel’s "[entkam] mit (eigenen) Berittenen auf einem Wagenpferd" is no sort of a translation of ו, Benzinger thinks ו, was added by a reader who desired to save some cavalry-men besides the king. An apostate reader! Klostermann alters to ו, Benzinger holds that "ו, must be thought to be loosely connected to ו, by the ו, as forming a concomitant factor to the king’s escape. . . . But the text would be greatly improved by the addition of ו, after ו,.”
tion.” And the lookout (read יָדָא for יָדוּא) cried “Upon the watchtower (יָדָא מֶלֶךְ cs.) of my lord I remained throughout the day, and at my post I stood all night long; and behold there came one riding a לֶבֶן אַרְשִׁים, and he spoke and said, Fallen, fallen is Babylon, and all the statues of her gods are crushed to the ground!” — My dearly beloved, that (the above oracular parable) which I have heard from Jahweh Sebaoth, the God of Israel, I have told you.-flash a man of v.⁹ is a gloss (lacking in the Greek) correctly indicating that the vocalization of לֶבֶן רַבֵּךְ, just as in 22³ the vocalization is indicated by means of the generic בְּרָיו people. That the correct vocalization in v.⁹ is לֶבֶן, and that only one rider is seen approaching, appears from the number of יִתְנָה רָאָם, which must be referred to לֶבֶן as antecedent. And if this is the proper vocalization in v.⁹, it must be the same in v.⁷; a single courier is awaited with news of Babylon, who may come on horse-back, donkey-back, or camel-back. It follows that unless the reading be corrupt in both v.⁷ and v.⁹ (which there is no reason for supposing and, in view of 2 K. 92⁶, strong reason for denying), לֶבֶן מַרְשִׁים is the designation of a single specimen of the genus עֵינִי עַרְשִׁים; in other words, it is a compound like עֵינִי עַרְשִׁים. The question thus narrowed down is not difficult to answer.-flash in this connection must be a she, and לֶבֶן מַרְשִׁים a (riding-) mare. This gives us the only satisfactory explanation of the text of 2 K. 92⁶: כִּי יִרְאֶה אֵלֶּה אֲנָהוּ רְבִיבָם עָבִדֵי אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה. For call to mind myself and thyself riding mare-back behind Ahab, his father, when Jahweh etc. It is, of course, not to be imagined that the sex of the animal is consciously emphasized in either of these passages; the Arab speaks of ‘his mare’ as we speak of a ‘horse.’ Is. 22³: רִבּוֹת אַרְשִׁים; as pointed out above, יָדוּא is a gloss indicating the vocalization לֶבֶן, which, if the text be unimpaired, is quite correct; לֶבֶן מַרְשִׁים would be riders (collective, ‘Reiterei’) of horses; cf. 2 K. 71⁸, שֵׁנִי רְבִּיבָם עָבִדֵי, two horsemen. But perhaps we should read רְבֶּן מַרְשִׁים; see the following verse.

(2) The generic מַרְשִׁים horses is used tropically as the technical term for cavalry, just as the generic בְּרָיו chariots
is used for chariotry, and the generic סוס horse for the entire mounted force, and precisely as in English we speak of 'horse and foot.' סוס is the name of the animal as such; employed as a riding-horse, he becomes סוס. Accordingly, the two kinds of סוס 'horse' are חרב סוס chariot- 'horse' and סוס Defence cavalry, Ex. 14; no writer in his senses would speak of a mounted force as consisting of chariot-horses and cavalry-men, and if סוס be tropical for chariotry, why not סוס tropical for cavalry? Ex. 14: Pharaoh's סוס consists of חרב his charioty and his cavalry. So, in spite of the construction, we must interpret in the editorial verse 15. Observe also the parallelism in Is. 31: on the one side סוס, on the other חרב and סוס. In Ez. 26 it is difficult to determine whether we should render with chariot-horses and chariots and cavalry-horses, or, pleonastically, with horse and with chariotry and with cavalry. 1 S. 13: the Philistines fight against Israel with thirty thousand chariotry and six thousand cavalry; as in the one case the unit is the chariot, so in the other it is the horse. 2 S. 8 ( = 1 Chron. 18): And David took from him one thousand chariotry and seven thousand cavalry (read so, with the Chronicler and the Greek, to make the latter half of the verse intelligible) and twenty thousand infantry, and David demolished all the chariots but one hundred, which he retained. In 2 S. 10 we must read with the Chronicler (1 Chron. 19), David slew of Aram seven thousand chariotry (here of course = charioteers) and forty thousand foot; the number forty thousand of itself favors the Chronicler's text, and the infantry must in any event be accounted for. סוס = cavalry (but not horsemen): coupled with חרב, Gen. 50 Ex. 1417, 18, 26-28 Josh. 24 1 K. 15 919 = 2 Chron. 8 1 K. 922 = 2 Chron. 8 2 K. 22 137-14 1824 = Is. 869 Is. 227 Dan. 1140 (chariots, horse, and ships), 1 Chron. 192 2 Chron. 123 163; without חרב, Ezra 829 Neh. 2. Of course the word is the same in all these passages. But of 2 K. 213 and 134 establishes the point that סוס in these

7 On יָשִּׁף cf. Neo-Hebrew and Aramaic; it cannot here mean to hough, for חרב is never the animal.
connections is a merely formal plural with secondary, collective sense: *My father, my father, the chariots (or chariot) of Israel and the horsemen thereof!* spoken of Elijah and of Elisha, is absurd; *the chariotry of Israel and the cavalry thereof,** unexceptionable.

The distinction which, in reducing the language to terms of our own thought, we are forced to draw between בָּדַר in its primary sense of *riding-horses* and in its secondary sense of *cavalry,* did not occur to the ancient writer, so that in particular cases (such as, e.g., 1 K. 10:26) it is not easy to determine whether the rendering should be the one or the other. However, that בָּדַר was never used by the writers of the Old Testament with conscious reference to the *horse-men,* appears certain from the positive evidence of 2 S. 1:6: the writer permits himself indeed to speak of the *charioteers* as בָּדַר, but the *cavalry-men* as distinguished from the *horse,* did not occur to the ancient writer, so that in particular cases (such as, e.g., 1 K. 10:26) it is not easy to determine whether the rendering should be the one or the other. However, that בָּדַר was never used by the writers of the Old Testament with conscious reference to the *horse-men,* appears certain from the positive evidence of 2 S. 1:6: the writer permits himself indeed to speak of the *charioteers* as בָּדַר, but the *cavalry-men* as distinguished from the *horse,* are בָּדַר! The phrase is thoroughly idiomatic, and there is not the slightest ground for dropping בָּדַר, as do Wellhausen, Driver, H. P. Smith, and Nowack, except the mistaken one that בָּדַר means *horsemen;* the Greek of ἱππάρχαι represents our Hebrew, otherwise it would have ἵππεις, only it mistranslated בָּדַר *commanders* instead of *men of.* Nor is it easy to see how the word בָּדַר could have crept into the text, whether on Wellhausen's improbable theory or in any other manner; for it runs directly counter to the traditional view of the meaning of בָּדַר; it is Hebrew against Aramaic.

The only Old Testament passages which seem to militate against the view above set forth are Ez. 23:1-12: מַרְשָׁסְרוֹ רְבֵינוֹ מֵאֶלֶת in both verses. That there is something wrong with these passages appears at a glance. If בָּדַר ever did mean *horseman* in Hebrew, it is not in the least likely that Ezekiel would have felt called upon to so inform his hearers. This is not a case of 'acerration of terms,' but of bald definition. One or the other of the two terms must be an interpolation; and in view of the parallel clauses of the context and the

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6 So also Budde in *SBOT,* in the later *KHC* he inclines to read בָּדַר.
phraseology of v. 28 and 38, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the interpolation is מַשְׂרַד. It is not disputed that the interpolator understood מַשְׂרַד as meaning horsemen. But what with מַשְׂרַד cavalry on the one hand, and Aramaic מֵשְׂרַד horseman on the other, the blunder is not to be wondered at.

There remains the question as to the form of the word מַשְׂרַד and the proper vocalization of the plural. Is the traditional vocalization correct, and have we here an animal-name of the form מֶשֶׁר, such as מְשָׁר hawk, מֶשֶׁר hart, מְשָׁר kite? In view of the Arabic ﺻَفَر horse, on the one side, and the Aramaic מְשָׁר horseman on the other, we must conclude that the Hebrew word is of the form מֶשֶׁר, and the traditional vocalization of the plural an error due to the influence of the Aramaic. The plural will therefore be מֶשֶׁר.

* The construct singular, if we had occasion for it, would naturally be מַשְׂרַד. For the rest, that the Masoretic pointing הַלּוֹלֶד מַשְׂרַד of Ex. 26 to intends the construct state (Ewald, § 339 a; Olshausen, § 183 a; Stade, § 217 a; Gea.-Kantzsch, §§ 84 b, 130 b; König, Syntax, p. 420) is extremely doubtful; cf. Büttcher, i. p. 304, and especially p. 625.