

Hebrew Poetry and the Appositive Style: Parallelism, *Requiescat in pace*

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Abstract

Michael O'Connor (whose 1980 opus, *Hebrew Verse Structure*, provides a compelling linguistically grounded description of the poetic line) has called the endurance of Lowthian parallelism a “horror” that wreaks havoc on lexical semantics and “is beyond the comprehension of any sensitive student of language.” Why does a model known to be a descriptive failure for a century persist in teaching resources and commentaries? It is because nothing compelling has risen to replace it. O'Connor's linguistic analysis of the line offered the first piece to replacing the traditional model, but O'Connor's model was more compelling for the structure of the poetic line than for the relationship of lines. In this study I take up interlineal syntax and offer an analysis that complements and completes O'Connor's approach, allowing us to provide a proper burial for the admirable but ultimately unworkable Lowthian parallelism.

Keywords

apposition – Linguistics – poetry – biblical hebrew – parallelism

Apposition of words, phrases, and clauses is so ubiquitous in Old English poetry that scholars have tended to classify it as a standard component of the traditional stylistic apparatus ... [A]pposition, by its very nature, conditions readers to read [Beowulf] in a certain way. It is a retarding device and thus forces us to read reflectively, pausing to consider an object or action from more than one perspective as the poet supplies alternate phrasings for the same general referent.

ROBINSON, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style*, 60

1 Introduction

What identifies a particular biblical text as poetry is, of course, an enduring question. It and the attendant tasks of identifying and describing the operative principle or principles of BH poetry have proven to be simultaneously seductive and elusive since Robert Lowth's influential eighteenth-century century works (Lowth 1753, 1778, 1787). Lowth famously identified as the constitutive feature of BH poetry what he called "parallelism": "the poetical conformation of the sentences consists chiefly in a certain equality, resemblance, or parallelism between the members of each period" (1778: 157, *Lecture XIX*; see also 1787: ix).¹ He identified the typical manifestation of this parallelism as two lines set in three essential relationships, which he called synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic.

Lowth's poetic sensitivity notwithstanding (his scholarship was not limited to biblical poetry), it is nonetheless disheartening that after nearly three centuries of study, the analysis of BH poetry as essentially couplet verse, arranged around three semantic "parallelisms" remains configurational.² Though most scholars have long recognized that examples of verse in non-couplet form exist and that the three types of parallelism are descriptively inadequate, the dead hand of Lowth's "parallelism" continues to guide scholars and students alike.³

1 Dobbs-Allsopp (2015) helpfully excavates Lowth's analysis from the tradition that grew around it in subsequent generations. Among other things, Dobbs-Allsopp points out that Lowth himself recognized that his analysis did not account for all the poetic variation in biblical poetry (e.g., single line verses exists and "parallelism" occasionally covers multiple verses, not just two).

2 The thesis by Cooper (1976) and the monographs by Geller (1979), Sappan (1981), Krašovec (1984), Berlin (1985), Pardee (1988), Petersen and Richards (1992), Fokkelman (2001), Reymond (2011), and Couey (2015), as well as almost all introductory or poetry-related essays (see, among myriad others, the collection of essays in Follis 1987, Polak 1996, Greenstein 2012) attest to the continued primacy of parallelism in the description of BH poetry. Geller's 1993 summary regarding Hebrew prosody and poetics is representative:

"Parallelism is commonly included in discussions of biblical pros. because of the constitutive role it clearly plays in the rhythm of biblical verse.... The basic unit of parallelistic verse is the couplet, with its A and B lines (a triplet adds a C line, a quatrain a D line)." (1993: 509).

Beyond specialized studies of biblical poetry, the fact that parallelism remains embedded as the interpretative framework in the wider field of biblical studies is amply illustrated by surveying textbooks introducing the Hebrew Bible. For example, all four recent textbooks I examined present some variation of Lowthian parallelism (see, e.g., Collins 2014: 491-92; Stanley 2010: 38; Coogan 2011: 452) with the exception of Carr 2010, in which parallelism is defined but Alter's "seconding" is advocated (69, 270).

3 Synthetic parallelism has long been recognized as a catch-all category for whatever instances that do not clearly fit into synonymous or antithetic parallelism; see Gray

It is long past time to face the implications of couplet-parallelism's shortcomings and position it in the history of the discipline as an admirable eighteenth-century idea that ultimately proved to be inadequate. Michael O'Connor began this task in earnest in his tour de force, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (1980 [1997]), in which he set out a compelling analysis of the principles constraining the formation of BH verse.⁴ By dovetailing with O'Connor's analysis of verse structure, I offer in this study a linguistic proposal for the relationship of poetic lines, and so intend to finish the wholesale replacement of parallelism that O'Connor initiated.

2 The Study of BH Poetic Verse: What is Achievable?

To fully answer *the* question of *why* any given example of BH is poetic verse or prose remains, I think, beyond our grasp. Though it is a common refrain that even a beginning student of Hebrew can typically identify a poetic passage from a prose passage, such appeals to intuition confuse delimitation with definition. That is, intuition may address the "what" (i.e., Is this text a poem?) but not the "why" or "how" (i.e., Why is it poetic, or how is it a poem?). The situation is analogous to linguistic analysis: while native speaker judgments aid the linguist in delimiting grammatical from ungrammatical, native speakers are not intuitively able to *analyze scientifically* how or why a given example is grammatical or not.⁵ So, too, with poetry, the fact that its existence can be discerned does not by itself provide insight into identifying the constitutive features of verse over against prose.

1915:49-52. For movement beyond Lowth, see most critically O'Connor 1980 [1997] and recently Dobbs-Allsopp 2015 (note in particular that both authors express deep appreciation for Lowth's insights for his time, but creatively move us beyond Lowth's eighteenth-century description).

4 O'Connor's analysis results in six "constraints":

1. *On clause predicators*. No line contains more than three.
2. *On constituents*. No line contains fewer than one or more than four.
3. *On units*. No line contains fewer than two or more than five.
4. *On the units of constituents*. No constituent contains more than four units. Constituents of four units occur only in lines with no clause predicator. Constituents of three units occur either alone in lines with no clause predicator; or as one of two constituents in 1-clause lines.
5. *On the constituents of clauses*. No line of three clause predicators contains any dependent nominal phrases. In lines with two clause predicators, only one had dependent nominal phrases.
6. *On the integrity of lines*. If a line contains one or more clause predicators, it contains only nominal phrases dependent on them. (1980:87).

5 This is fundamentally related to Chomsky's formulation of the competence-performance distinction. See Smith and Allott 2016: 138-46, 220-223.

We should bear in mind that all the discernible features used in poetry exist for prose, whether phonological (e.g., assonance, alliteration), syntactic (e.g., inverted word order), or literary devices (e.g., metaphor, hyperbole). What no doubt distinguished poetic verse from prose was a combination of constraints on multiple language levels leading to a *poetic convention*.⁶ Moreover, if BH poetic verse was like that of most cultures, a particular performance style was a critical component of the poetic convention—an oral performance constraint, if you will, that was minimally associated with a particular prosody. And for the audience, especially in a largely oral culture, it was the performance feature of an expressed poem that initially invoked the convention and established the expectations for the presence of the remaining poetic elements. It stands to reason that the initial performance of Ps 1:1 established the genre and thus the audience expectations for the remaining verses of that Psalm. But what about an example like (1)?

- (1) וַיְהוָה פָּקַד אֶת־שָׂרָה בְּאִשֶּׁר אָמַר וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה לְשָׂרָה כְּאִשֶּׁר דִּבֶּר:
 ‘Yhwh visited Sarah, just as he said; Yhwh acted for Sarah, just as he spoke’ (Gen 21:1)

This verse begins a narrative pericope and exists within a larger narrative discourse. There can hardly be any audience expectation for the story-teller to break out in poetry. This has led many modern scholars to suggest the combination of two sources in this verse (see, e.g., Skinner 1910: 320-21; Speiser 1964: 154); in contrast, a few scholars take the symmetry and overlap of clauses to be signs of the verse’s poetic nature, taking the “duplication” of propositions to give “the announcement of Sarah’s conception a festive poetic flavor because of its use of synonymous parallelism” (Wenham 1994: 79; see also Westermann 1985: 332; Hamilton 1995: 73). Whatever one thinks of the verse’s “poetic flavor,” such an explanation does not address the syntactic relationship between the

6 John Hobbs takes a similar position: “It is nonetheless probable that constraints at more than one level determine the way ancient Hebrew verse is constructed. This follows from the fact that language in general and poetry in particular instantiate redundant structures on multiple levels simultaneously.” (n.d.: 12). Note also that this proposal that a convention existed consisting of combined constructions fundamentally differs from Kugel’s argument that there is no dividing line between prose and verse (1981). My emphasis on “convention” follows from long-held views on the distinction between the *grammar* of language and the *use* of language, and also finds recent support in Dobbs-Allsopp’s discussion of the poetic line: “[Perloff] notes that if lineation may be rightly said to distinguish prose and verse, it does not so distinguish prose and poetry. Perloff, mindful of the need to account for nonlineated kinds of poetry (such as the modern “prose poem”), goes on to argue that what counts as poetry is always a configuration of historical, cultural, and ideological factors” (2015:18).

clauses: except for the subject-verb to verb-subject change, both verses exhibit similar types of constituents and a similar linear pattern; moreover, the clauses clearly do not present a temporal succession, the use of the narrative *wayyiqtol* in the second clause notwithstanding. Is this verse a poetic line pair? The simple fact is that we will never have access to the critical performance aspect, and therefore our judgment of the poetic nature of a verse in the middle of a long narrative discourse, as in (1), must always be tentative.

What, then, *is* achievable? We can identify and describe the principles exhibited by the data available to us via the chirographic witness of the manuscripts.⁷ But this is quite different from detailing the various techniques used throughout BH poetry. For example, after listing nineteen indicators in his guide to help determine poetry versus prose (1986:44-57),⁸ Watson admits in conclusion that, “The mere listing of several mechanical and structural poetic elements in [a given set of] lines is not conclusive proof that they are poetry. Such a judgment can only come after several careful readings and long reflections” (57). The taxonomic approach taken in Watson’s guide does little for identifying the core principles of poetic verse; rather, it encourages the reader to lose the proverbial forest for the trees.⁹

7 On the written versus the oral aspect of poetic analysis, see Dobbs-Allsopp 2015: 20-57.

8 Line-forms (following Collins 1978), ellipsis, unusual vocabulary, conciseness, unusual word order, archaisms, use of metre, regularity and symmetry, parallelism, word-pairs, chiasmic patterns, envelope figure, break-up of stereotype phrases, repetition of various forms, gender-matched parallelism, tricolon, rhyme, other sound patterns, and absence of prose elements.

9 Kuntz also observes that Watson’s “preoccupation with taxonomy can be obsessive” and that “[h]is discussions, while suggestive, stop short of providing definitive answers” (1993:324). This is the inherent shortcoming of purely taxonomic work, a criticism that Naudé insightfully develops with regard to linguistic analysis—approaches that analyze only surface-level phenomena are incapable of sorting in a principled way the relevant features of the data from the irrelevant and so are unable to draw insightful generalizations based on similarities of structures below the surface level that allow one to isolate the (reduced number of) relevant categories or principles (1990:118-120). My invocation of surface versus deep structure in this principled approach to scientific investigation should not be taken as an endorsement of the transformational-generative approach described by Greenstein (1974, 1983; see also O’Connor and Greenstein 2012:998), in which the parallelism of two lines may be described not just in terms of their surface syntactic structure but also by their deep syntactic structure. Even though I adopt the generative linguistic theory in my analysis of BH syntax, I am not convinced that appealing to deep structure is useful in relating lines in poetry. In generative theory, the deep structure of a given clause is not something consciously perceived by a native speaker, but only subconsciously by his or her mental “faculty of language”; this follows from the modularity of the mind (see, e.g., Fodor 1983; Batterink and Neville 2013; see also Smith and Allott 2016:7-53). For the poet and the audience, the fact that

The area where the most gains have been made in identifying a discrete set of principles that move towards defining poetic verse is *syntax*. As Dobbs-Allsopp observes in his recent monograph, “A crucial part of any verse prosody turns on the relation of line and syntax—how the syntax of a poem’s sentences moves and plays across its lines, how line and syntax converge to shape thought and shade meanings, what happens to the syntax at the ends of lines.” There are many features in Dobbs-Allsopp’s rich study that deserve attention, but in this essay I will focus on his stance concerning the line or verse as the definitive feature of BH poetry (2015:19, 67-94).

Dobbs-Allsopp’s argument includes a provocative stance that dovetails with O’Connor’s earlier work, a stance I consider quite insightful—that the poetic line is a “structural modality” of BH verse (2015:17, 67) and that the line is, above all, a syntactic phenomenon (73). Within the far-ranging discussion of the first chapter of Dobbs-Allsopp’s book, two further points emerge as critically relevant: while the syntactic *line* is definitive, the couplet and parallelism are *not*.¹⁰ Once again, Dobbs-Allsopp’s argument stands in line with O’Connor’s thesis, which the latter restates in his 1997 “Afterword” to his 1980 *Hebrew Verse Structure*: the “Standard Description” stemming from Lowth’s work fails due to a misguided focus on “a unit smaller than the poem,” the problem of “absolutizing the couplet,” and a misleading semantic definition of “parallelism” (1980 [1997]:88-96, 640; see Dobbs-Allsopp 2015:56, 69, 88).¹¹

two lines may be related by their deep structure is irrelevant; for poetic effect, it is only and always surface structure that matters.

- 10 Dobbs-Allsopp states it succinctly: “[Taking the couplet to be central] is mistaken insofar as it misjudges or obscures the central force of the iteration of the singular that is made manifest, as Lowth knew well, in the fact that parallelism occurs not only in pairs but also in threes, fours, and fives. Indeed, the higher reaches of iteration’s additive horizon are mostly left unrealized in biblical forms of poetic parallelism” (2015:69). See also Landy 1984:64.
- 11 O’Connor identified six “parallelistic” syntactic relations, what he called “tropes,” that occur regularly in Hebrew verse (1980 [1997]: 87-132): repetition (on the word level), coloration (word-level), gapping (line-level), matching (line-level), mixing (supralinear-level), and dependency (supralinear-level). What is deeply surprising about these “tropes” in O’Connor’s otherwise brilliant work is that of the six, only two, *gapping* and *dependency*, are recognized syntactic phenomena. *Repetition*, which operates between phrases of all levels, not just words, is a general non-linguistic term; syntactically, apposition is the operation that produces repetition. *Coloration* is essentially a variation on repetition, in which two non-identical words are related by virtue of the interlineal relationship and combine to reference an entity or quality that is either equal to or greater than the sum of the parts. Once again, the syntactic phenomenon that captures the relationships O’Connor describes under coloration is apposition, though with a twist that I will elaborate below. My discussion of apposition will also demonstrate how the *matching* of lines may also be syntactically analyzed. As for *mixing*, in which two successive independent clauses/

It is concerning this third and last issue that I will offer my own piece to moving the study of BH poetry forward—a syntactic reorientation for the deficient notion of line “parallelism” as it has been applied to BH verse.¹² Taking O’Connor’s (1980 [1997]) analysis to be the most linguistically sound and sufficiently accurate description of the BH poetic line offered, I will add that it is not just the line that is central to defining poetic verse, but constraints upon *the relationship of the lines* reflecting a *binary syntactic choice*.¹³ More specifically, I have developed a working hypothesis that interlineal syntax in BH poetry can be reduced to a choice between apposition and non-apposition and that this binary choice has been misunderstood and so mischaracterized as “parallelism.”¹⁴

lines are followed by two subordinate clauses that O’Connor claims “depend on both independent clauses,” I confess I consider this to be a misguided notion and that there is no reason to link the subordinate clauses with anything but the immediately preceding clause.

Grosser (2013, 18 n. 47) notes that O’Connor claims verb-gapping to be a device entirely constrained to poetic verse (1980: 124) and proceeds to assert that verb gapping actually does occur in prose. She is technically correct, though verb-gapping in prose is so rare that O’Connor’s assertion is accurate if one simply downgrades it from an absolute principle to very strong tendency.

- 12 O’Connor eloquently summarizes the problem in his 1997 afterword to his *Hebrew Verse Structure*, “The definition of parallelism as a narrowly semantic phenomenon is a wonder of insight for eighteenth-century and earlier thought, but its endurance to the present day is a horror. Central to the definition is a notion of synonymy that has played havoc with the Biblical Hebrew lexicon and is beyond the comprehension of any sensitive student of language, coupled with a notion of antonymy that is barely a notion. As the study of verse in many other languages has suggested, the primary force in parallelism is syntax, not lexicon.” (1980 [1997]:640).
- 13 Note that my syntactic argument is not about syntactic variety (e.g., word order) *within* the poetic line, but about the basic syntactic relationships *between* lines that are essential characteristics of BH poetry. This, to my knowledge, has not been a previous point of focus in studies on BH poetry (for example, Cooper’s 1976 analysis contains a great deal about word order variation within the poetic line and even word order matching between lines, but nothing about determinative patterns of interlineal relationships beyond accepting the traditional model of parallelism). Perhaps the closest that a previous study comes to my argument is in the second chapter of Dobbs-Allsopp’s excellent 2015 monograph; indeed, my argument could conceivably be understood as extending much of what Dobbs-Allsopp describes there by linguistically formalizing the description.
- 14 It is interesting that both Cooper (1976: 65, citing Roman Jakobson) and Dobbs-Allsopp (2015: 143-149, citing Ellen Voigt and Marcel Jousse) tie “parallelism” to the strong human tendency towards binarity or bilateralism. The problem with this, as Dobbs-Allsopp so convincingly argues, is that the couplet is not definitive in BH poetry, which implies that there is nothing inherently binary or bilateral about parallelism. I suggest that the binarity underlying BH poetry relates, like most deep features of human language, to the choice between two options in the generation of the poetic syntax.

3 Apposition in Biblical Hebrew

Apposition is typically defined as the modification of one noun phrase (NP₁) by a second noun phrase (NP₂), without any specific morphological or syntactic signal and such that the two NPs could be reformulated into a well-formed equative predication, i.e., NP₁ *is* NP₂ (Holmstedt and Jones 2017). Unfortunately, this definition does not fully account for the syntactic and semantic variety of appositive relationships.

Appositions fall into two general categories, which have both syntactic and semantic implications: restrictive (or attributive) apposition and nonrestrictive apposition.¹⁵ Syntactically, the difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive apposition concerns the appositive's position with regard to its anchor. A restrictive appositive is situated somewhere *within* the phrase structure of the anchor, similar to other attributive modifiers, such as adjectives. An apposition positioned phrase-internally produces restrictive semantics, such that the appositive critically participates in the correct identification of the anchor, as in (2).

- (2) וַיֵּלֶד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּנִים אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת׃
 'and Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth' (Gen 6:10)

A restrictive appositive cannot be removed without interfering with the semantic processing of the anchor. Consistent with this is the necessity of the appositive בָּנִים in (2) in order for the the counted entity indicated by the numeral שְׁלֹשָׁה to be identified.¹⁶ Restrictive apposition in BH is both highly constrained and frequently used. It seems constrained almost entirely to number phrases: the most common manifestation exhibits a free-form numeral as the anchor and a NP as the appositive, as in (2).

In contrast, nonrestrictive apposition does not define the particular referent of the anchor. A simple test for nonrestrictive apposition is whether, in any given example, either the anchor or the appositive can be omitted without

15 This mirrors the restrictive/nonrestrictive distinction in BH relative clauses; see Holmstedt 2016: 196–203.

16 There are, of course, examples of numerals without a following NP. In the vast majority of BH cases, the numeral is clearly quantifying a null count noun assumed from the previous discourse (e.g., “How many students are in your course? I have ten Ø[students] this term.”). Numerals used as quantifiers, whether an appositive is present or null, are not, in my view, referential; the only referential use of numerals is as names (e.g., “Point to the two on the number chart” and “Two and two is four”). For recent discussion of the complexity of numerals, see Weiner 2007 and Moltmann 2017.

affecting the identification of the reference (see Huddleston & Pullam 2002: 447). Syntactically, nonrestrictive apposition is a type of nonsubordination that is parallel and similar to coordination; as such the appositive is adjoined to the highest phrase structure level of the anchor. The nonrestrictive semantics accord with nonsubordinate syntax: a nonrestrictive appositive does not provide information critical to the identification of its anchor; rather, it provides an additional or alternative description of the anchor.

The nonsubordinate nature of nonrestrictive apposition is most clearly signaled in BH by the optional use of the conjunction ׀ on the front of an appositive, as in (3).¹⁷

- (3) והגלה את־כָּל־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת־כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים וְאֶת־כָּל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחֵיָל עֲשָׂרָה אֲלָפִים
 גֹּזְלָה וְכָל־הַחֲרָשׁ וְהַמִּסְגָּר לֹא נִשְׁאַר זֹלָתָ דִּלְתָ עַם־הָאָרֶץ:
 ‘and he deported all Jerusalem, [and] all the officials and all the war-
riors (men of power)—ten (Kt) thousand captives—and all the ar-
tisans and all the metalworkers. Nothing remained except the poor
 of the people of the land’ (2 Kgs 24:14)¹⁸

Interestingly, the NRSV leaves out all but the last conjunction (indicated by the added italics): “He carried away all Jerusalem, all the officials, all the warriors, ten thousand captives, all the artisans *and* the smiths ...” Lest we assume that the 2 Kings translator used a comma in (3) to indicate apposition, elsewhere a colon appears to make explicit a compound appositive, such as in 2 Kgs 4:42: “A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack.” By ignoring the ׀ on the first NP in the complement, וְאֶת־כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים, the NRSV translation

17 Insertion of optional conjunctions before appositives occurs in diverse other languages as well; see, e.g., English *or* and Dutch *of((te)wel* and *en wel*; de Vries 2002: 213. The optionality of an overt conjunction indicates that it is structurally irrelevant; with that said, it may have a pragmatic function, such as alerting the listener/reader to the nonrestrictive nature of the apposition (see Miller-Naudé 2007b for a similar view of the optionality of ׀ between poetic lines that exhibit verb gapping). For my view of the syntax and semantics of ׀ in BH, see Holmstedt 2013 and 2014:142–43. In a nutshell, while ׀ is often used for prototypical coordination, it is also often used in contexts that clearly deviate from coordination but are still clearly not subordinate; it is in these contexts that I suggest we see the more general “nonsubordinator” use of the ׀. Whether the ׀ is used as a coordinating or nonsubordinating conjunction must be determined based on what is most felicitous in the discourse.

18 This clause also appears to contain an appositive nested within its anchor, although what anchor is intended for the phrase *ten thousand captives* is unclear. It may apply only to the warriors, but if it applies to all of the captives, it is nested within its anchor.

implies that the complement of הַגִּלָּה is a compound (and rather complex) NP of which “all Jerusalem” is simply the first conjunct. But this makes little sense of the referent of כָּל־יְרוּשָׁלַם and its relationship to the following items. It is much more likely that כָּל־יְרוּשָׁלַם is used figuratively in a case of synecdoche and the intended non-figurative constituents are clarified by the subsequent compound NP in apposition.

How, then, does כָּל־יְרוּשָׁלַם relate to the subsequent phrases? The grammatically simplest and contextually most felicitous answer is that כָּל־יְרוּשָׁלַם is the anchor for a nonrestrictive appositive, which is the entire compound NP וְאֶת־כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים וְאֶת כָּל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחֵיל עֲשֶׂרָה אֲלָפִים גִּזְלָה וְכָל־הַחֲרָשׁ וְהַמִּסְגָּר. The nature of the additional or alternative description provided by a nonrestrictive appositive is formally speaking a subset relationship: the second is semantically a logical subset of the first (X_1 , “that is,” X_2).¹⁹ In less formal terms, this means that the nonrestrictive appositive can be described as *naming, designating, reformulating, describing, exemplifying*, or providing a *particular instance* of its anchor.

The nonsubordinate nature of nonrestrictive apposition is further illustrated by examples like those in (4) and (5), both of which exhibit a conjunctive ו on the appositive.

- (4) וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲזַאֵל לִקְרֹאתוֹ וַיִּקַּח מִנְחָה בְּיָדוֹ וְכָל־טוֹב דְּמִשְׁק מִשָּׂא אַרְבָּעִים גָּמַל
 ‘and Hazael went to meet him, and he took a gift in his hand—
 [that is,] all the best things of Damascus, a load of forty camels’
 (2 Kgs 8:9)

19 In earlier work, de Vries summarizes *conjunction*-coordination (“and”) as the combination of two phrases for which the truth-conditional status is such that the conjunction is true only if both conjuncts are true, resulting in a relationship that ranges from addition to consequence. In contrast, *disjunction*-coordination (“or”) provides an alternative or negative condition that is true if one or more of the conjuncts are true (2002: 213–214; see Quirk et al 1985: 930–34). *Specifying*-coordination [which de Vries now identifies as a type of parenthesis; personal communication], in which the second phrase specifies the first, means that the second phrase is a logical subset of the first; this relationship requires that both parts be true for the coordination to be true.

In the spirit of de Vries (2007) but in light of subsequent research (see de Vries 2012) and in light of personal communication with Dr. de Vries, I take apposition to be the anchored variety of general parenthesis (formal parenthesis being anchor-less), which stands as the sister of coordination within the larger category of nonsubordination. The semantics of nonrestrictive apposition may still be described as *specifying*, though it is not a type of coordination. For further discussion of parenthesis in BH, see Holmstedt in press.

- (5) וַיִּקַּח מִקְלָיו בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּבְחַר-לּוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה חֲלָקֵי-אֲבָנִים | מִזֶּה-הַחֹל וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָם בְּכָלִי
 הָרָעִים אֲשֶׁר-לּוֹ וּבִלְקוֹט
 ‘and he took his staff in his hand, and he chose for himself five
 smooth stones from the wadi, and he put them in the shepherds’
bag that was his, [and] in the shepherd’s pouch’ (1 Sam 17:40)²⁰

In (4) the appositive גִּמְלֵי מִשָּׂא אֲרָבָעִים describes the concrete contents of the anchor, מִנְחָה. And in (5), the prepositional phrase (PP) appositive וּבִלְקוֹט appears to reformulate the anchor בְּכָלִי by specifying the bag as a particular kind (presumably, one known to have been used by shepherds). Both appositives are also extraposed, that is, not immediately adjacent to their anchors. This suggests a correlation between nonrestrictiveness and extraposition, which is supported by the same correlation in BH relative clauses (see Holmstedt 2016: 186-87).²¹

Apposition is typically considered a structure for modifying or reformulating NPs, as in (6). And certainly, this seems to be the most common use of apposition in BH; however, there are also clear examples of apposition involving other types of phrases, such as the PP apposition in (7).

- (6) וַעֲשֵׂה-חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם
 ‘and show faithfulness to my lord Abraham’ (Gen 24:12)

20 The noun לְקוֹט is a *hapax legomenon*. The phrase וּבִלְקוֹט is not represented in the Vulgate; it is glossed in the Septuagint as εἰς συλλογήν ‘in a gathering, collecting’ (Liddell and Scott 1901: 1455), and in the Peshitta as כְּסִימָלָה ‘in his scrip’ (Payne Smith 1903: 621). Notably, both the Septuagint and Peshitta omit the ו that exists in the MT וּבִלְקוֹט. McCarter, for example, accepts the lack of ו as the preferred text and also follows earlier commentators and suggests that it is “quite likely that *bkly hr’yim šr lw* arose as a gloss to the unique *hylqwt*” (1974: 288; so also Klein, who also calls the gloss a “parenthesis”; 1983: 172, 179). There is neither any need to ignore or delete the ו, nor any good argument for suggesting that a scribal gloss was placed before the word it was intended to clarify.

21 On the syntax and pragmatics of extraposition in BH, see Holmstedt 2014. Extraposition of the appositive (or, conversely, the topic or focus-induced raising of the anchor) also provides a simpler explanation for the relationship of the lines in Isa 14:8a: גִּם-צִרְוִשִׁים לְבָנוֹן שִׂמְחוּ לְךָ אֲרִיזֵי לְבָנוֹן ‘Indeed, the cypresses rejoice over you, the cedars of Lebanon’. Greenstein (1983:46-52) dismisses the appositional analysis and argues for an ellipsis analysis. Ellipsis is certainly used throughout BH poetry, but Greenstein’s reasons for rejecting the simpler appositional analysis is that poetic lines comprise complete clauses. Studies have shown enjambment, the non-appositional continuation of a clause from one poetic line into a second, to be more common than often supposed (see O’Connor 1980 [1997]: 409; Hobbins 2007:573-76; Dobbs-Allsopp 2001a,b; 2015:137-48). Also, Greenstein does not incorporate the possibility of *extraposed* apposition, which is a simpler, more compelling analysis.

- (7) ועתה התערב נָא אֶת־אֲדֹנִי אֶת־מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר
'and now make a wager with my lord, with the king of Assyria' (2 Kgs 18:23)

The near minimal pair in (6) and (7) nicely illustrates the difference between NP and PP apposition. In (6) the nonrestrictive appositive is the NP אֲבִרָהֶם, which names the referent indicated by the phrase אֲדֹנִי; in contrast, the appositive in (7) is the PP אֶת־מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, which is clearly related to the preceding PP אֶת־אֲדֹנִי.²² Critically, the presence of PP apposition in examples like (7) establish that apposition in BH was not limited to NPs, but was open to other types of phrases, including verb phrases (VPs). For example, it is plausible that the second and third juxtaposed VPs in (8) and the second VP in (9) are appositives:

- (8) וּמִבְצָר מְשֻׁגָּב חֹמֹתָיִךְ הַשָּׁחַ הַשְּׁפִיל הִגִּיעַ לָאָרֶץ עַד־עֶפְרוֹ: ס
'and the fortress of the stronghold of your walls he has thrown down, brought low, thrown to the ground, to the dirt' (Isa 25:12)
- (9) בָּזָה לָךְ לַעֲגָה לְךָ בְּתוּלַת בֵּת־צִיּוֹן
'Virgin daughter Zion despises you, derides you' (2 Kgs 19:21)

While VP apposition appears to be rare, at least with verbs other than participles,²³ it is, as I will argue, relatively frequent with entire clauses (CPs), as in (10).

- (10) וַיְהִי וַיִּבְרַח אֶת־שָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה לְשָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר:
'Yhwh visited Sarah, just as he said; Yhwh acted for Sarah, just as he spoke' (Gen 21:1)²⁴

Given how commonly nonsubordinate clauses begin with a ו in BH, it should come as no surprise that use of the ו at the front of a clausal appositive is very common. In previous scholarship, examples like (11)–(13) were described under coordination, but without mention of apposition.²⁵

22 Rather than view examples like (6) as PP apposition, previous scholarship almost exclusively concerned itself with determining why the preposition was repeated or omitted on the appositive (see Holmstedt *forthcoming a*).

23 To this point, I have only identified two other examples, the sequence of perfect verbs in Isa 33:9 and the repetition of the imperative in Prov 30:15.

24 See the discussion above concerning this verse, also given in (1).

25 Excepting, as far as I know, only the views of Andersen 1974, in which a very broad and highly idiosyncratic view of apposition is promoted.

- (11) כִּי־גוֹי אֲבָד עֲצוֹת הָמָּה וְאִין בְּהֵם תְּבוּנָה:
 ‘indeed, they are a nation lacking sense, [and/that is to say,] there is no understanding in them’ (Deut 32:28)
- (12) הִנֵּה שְׂכָרֹךָ אִתּוֹ וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ לְפָנָיו:
 ‘look, his wages are with him, [and/in other words,] his reward is before him’ (Isa 40:10b)
- (13) הֲלֹא־הִגַּד לְאָדֹנִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי בַּהֲרֹג אֶיִזְבֶּל אֶת נְבִיאֵי יְהוָה וְאֶחָבָא מִנְּבִיאֵי
 יְהוָה מֵאָה אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ בְּמַעְרָה וְאֶכְלֵכֶלֶם לֶחֶם וּמַיִם:
 ‘was it not told to my master what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of Yhwh [and/that is to say,] I hid 150 of the prophets of Yhwh, fifty in a cave, and I provided them (with) bread and water?’
 (1 Kgs 18:13)

Waltke and O'Connor describe use of the 1 in examples like (11)-(13), in which it conjoins phrases or clauses that exhibit significant overlap in their semantic content, as “epexegetical” (1990: §39.2.4, §33.2.2).²⁶ Waltke and O'Connor assert that the function of this use of the 1 was to “stand before clauses which serve to *clarify* or *specify* the sense of the preceding clause” [emphases added]. However, “clarifying” and “specifying” are not semantic features associated with coordination. Instead, they represent the core semantics of nonrestrictive apposition (see de Vries 2002: 213-14; 2006). While Waltke and O'Connor (and any others before or since who have appealed to the “1 explicativum”) misidentify the syntax of the conjoined phrases or clauses like (11)-(13), they correctly identify the semantics.

Nonrestrictive apposition, whether clausal or sub-clausal, is at its core a *re-formulating strategy*. In reformulation, the appositive rewords the anchor. The reformulation may be based on linguistic information, such as providing a synonym for the anchor: *You should have consulted an ophthalmologist, that is (to say) an eye doctor* (Quirk et al. 1985:1313). Or it may be based on factual knowledge from the world of the speaker and/or listener: *Jorge Mario Bergoglio, aka Pope Francis, recently wrote his second encyclical*. Reformulation may also be used to provide more precise information relating to the anchor (e.g., *The Bible, the Jewish Bible, has twenty-four books*) as well as to revise of the anchor by the appositive, some of which may represent correction, such as *Enrollment at the university has leveled off; that is, last year saw no increase in students enrolling*

26 See also Baker (1980, 2013) who also briefly traces the notion of the “explicative” 1 through nineteenth and twentieth century scholarship.

at the University of Toronto. Notably, the specifying information provided by a reformulation appositive may extend or complete the intended reference of the anchor, such as *All families, or families that can afford to, will be going away for their holiday.*

4 Biblical Hebrew Poetic Syntax = Apposition : Non-Apposition

It has generally been recognized since Lowth that defining the poetic line results in only a partial description of BH poetry. Whether the rest of analysis is articulated in terms of Lowthian parallelism or more recent articulations, such as “focusing” or “heightening” (Alter 1985) or “A, and what’s more, B” (Kugel 1981), the relationship of poetic lines remains as critical to understanding the convention of BH poetry as the line itself. O’Connor’s (1980) constraints certainly do not exclude the appearance of a clause in prose that also fits this description. It is, rather, the combination of the line *and* line-relationships that represents the discernible convention of BH poetry. But neither parallelism, which is arguably an epiphenomenon of poetic syntax, nor any other current articulation adequately accounts for interlineal syntax. Dobbs-Allsopp is right to dismiss parallelism as constitutive of BH poetry, but what is, then, the principle(s) of poetic syntax? What is the grammar behind Dobbs-Allsopp’s elegant but impressionistic description?

A clausal or sentential whole (frame) is articulated and then reiterated once or twice over, producing (optimally) a halting or pulsing series of progressions—one step forward, iteration, and then another step forward, reiteration, and sometimes twice over (in the case of triplets), and so on.”²⁷

DOBBS-ALLSOPP 2015:45

What Dobbs-Allsopp describes can be fully accounted for syntactically by the binary choice of apposition: non-apposition.²⁸ We might imagine that, after

27 Similarly, Greenstein 2012: “It is typical of biblical poetry, however, to advance the message in steps, adding a point or a nuance here, burnishing or refining an image there” (603).

28 My proposal that BH poetic syntax engages a binary choice is based on both the principle of parsimony (that is, if we can reduce the syntactic options to two and maintain explanatory adequacy, we should not seek more) and the information flow that seems native to BH poetry, the image to image progression described above. That is, the syntactic choice between apposition and non-apposition mirrors the discourse choice between elaborating an exiting image and introducing a new image.

artfully devising a poetic line, the Hebrew poet is constrained by the poetic convention to proceed in one of two ways, either by pausing to elaborate, refine, or reformulate the image introduced in the first line (= apposition), or by moving on with the addition of new features about the current image or a transition to a subsequent image (= non-apposition).²⁹ Why is apposition critical to Hebrew poetry? Apposition is, to put it non-theoretically, a device of repetition and directly contributes to information “chunking,” both of which are at the heart of image construction in poetry (Dobbs-Allsopp 2015: 109-11, 130-40). The reformulative and exemplifying functions of nonrestrictive apposition are a grammatical means in poetic verse to allow the brain to pause and process the poetic image (see Dobbs-Allsopp 2015: 44). Or, as Robinson argued over thirty years ago in his seminal study of the style of *Beowulf*, apposition is a “retarding device” used to force the audience to pause and “consider an object or action from more than one perspective” (1985:60). Once the poet has determined that the image is sufficiently elaborate, he moves to the next image by non-appositional syntactic means.³⁰

Identifying the core operation of BH interlineal syntax as appositionally-centered does not exclude the use of other language strategies, such as alliteration (Ps 147:13b), rhyme (Isa 33:22), and word order variation such as focus-fronting (Ps 2:5b) or chiasm (Ps 7:17). In the creation of a poem, the choice of lexical items for each line, the syntactic relationship between lines, and any other poetic features employed must interact with each other in a recursive manner. And yet, it is only the constraints on the formation of a line

29 Note that I tentatively use “image” to represent the major stages of the poem’s progression, however it develops. Although the following is entirely beyond the current grammatical concern, I find Landy’s observations provocative and keep them in mind as I contemplate the nature of BH poetry: “prose presupposes sequential time ...; poetry concerns timelessness,” “prose preserves an often ironic objective distance between the writer, his audience, and his subject-matter.... In poetry, there is a communion between the singer and the audience,” “Prose accordingly represents everyday life, activities, and speech ... poetry is the language of liminal situations,” and “Prose perceives the world through relations of contiguity, temporal and spatial, i.e., metonymy; poetry expresses it metaphorically, through relations of likeness and difference” (1984:71-72).

30 Note that exact repetitive apposition, which serves to halt the image and emphasize whatever has been repeated, is rare and limited to nominal apposition. Apposition in general, and especially clausal apposition, overwhelmingly advances the image, albeit slowly, by clarification or reformulation. Also, the binary syntactic choice facing the poet for relating successive poetic lines does not necessarily match the literary development or progression in a one-to-one manner. The most obvious example of this is enjambment, which is clearly non-appositional yet does not move to the next poetic image in the development of the poem but adds non-appositional information about the existing image.

(à la O'Connor 1980 [1997]) and the apposition-based binarity for relating lines that defines BH poetry; the other devices, though artful ornamentation, are nonessential.

Within this appositive-centered analysis we can also better address two common features of poetry: word-pairs and ellipsis. Investigating word-pairs, especially the notion of "fixed" word-pairs, has been a significant component of BH and Ugaritic poetic studies since the mid-twentieth century. Behind this investigation is the assumption that poets would build the parallel lines around a stock of fixed word pairs (Berlin 1985: 65-66). However, O'Connor (followed to a certain extent by Berlin) argues vehemently that this is an egregious case of putting the cart before the horse.

The definition of parallelism as a narrowly semantic phenomenon is a wonder of insight for eighteenth-century and earlier thought, but its endurance to the present day is a horror. Central to the definition is a notion of synonymy that has played havoc with the Biblical Hebrew lexicon and is beyond the comprehension of any sensitive student of language, coupled with a notion of antonymy that is barely a notion. As the study of verse in many other languages has suggested, the primary force in parallelism is syntax, not lexicon. The shape of one line answering another is more important and more basic than the words filling out the shape. The answerings among words exist in the matrix of the syntax.

O'CONNOR 1980 [1997]:640-41

The central point of O'Connor's sharp criticism is that word-pairs in poetry are an effect, not a cause, of the syntactic relating of poetic lines. Berlin addresses the generation of word associations from a psycholinguistic and semantic background and concludes that "It is not word pairs that create parallelism. It is parallelism that activates word pairs" (1985:79). But Berlin's approach remains fundamentally semantic in orientation; she does not identify syntax as the generating mechanism of line relations, which in turn enables word associations.³¹ I would modify and extend this idea (and more in agreement

31 Syntax as the generative or driving mechanism of language engages the "autonomy of syntax" debate in linguistics, which is accessibly described by Hornstein (2011):

Generative Syntax endorses the autonomy of syntax thesis (AOS). Though AOS has often been misunderstood to assert that there is no relation between the grammar and meaning, it actually means that the primitives and operations of the grammar are independent of the contents of what they are used to express. In particular, syntactic categories, principles and operations do not reduce to semantic ones.... Precisely because the syntax is autonomous it is able to combine information from different

with O'Connor's argument; see 1980:115), that it is not about "activating" existing word pairs. Rather, nonrestrictive apposition *creates* the association between words such that the poet forces the linked terms to be interpreted in light of each other. Consider two examples from O'Connor's work, the first of which is also cited by Berlin (1985:149):

- (14) אֶל־תִּגִּידוּ בְּגַת אֶל־תְּבַשְׂרוּ בַּחוּצַת אֲשֶׁקְלוֹן פֶּן־תִּשְׂמַחְנָה בְּנוֹת פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי
תַעֲלִיזְנָה בְּנוֹת הָעַרְלִים
'Do not proclaim in Gath,
do not give news in the streets of Askelon,
lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult' (2 Sam 1:20)³²

- (15) כִּי יִזְרִים | קָמוּ עָלַי וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי לֹא שָׁמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנִגְדָם סָלָה:
'Strangers stand against me.
The arrogant seek my life.
They do not set God before them.' (Ps 54:5, trans. O'Connor 1980
[1997]: 646)³³

encapsulated modules. In other words, autonomy is just the flip side of not being modularly restricted. The intra modular primitives and operations cannot do this, which is what makes it impossible for rats, young kids and linguistically distracted adults to combine different kinds of information (i.e. predicates from different modules). From the present perspective, a more revealing term for the autonomy of syntax might be the inter-modularity of syntax, autonomy being precisely the property we want in a tool required to combine diverse types of thoughts and concepts, ones otherwise confined to specialized cognitively encapsulated modules.

32 In 2 Sam 1:20, the first appositive line clarifies that it is not just the Gathites in view, but all Philistines; moreover, the reformulation of הַגִּיד to the verb בַּשֵּׂר specifies the context of prohibited utterance to be one of victory news. Since the second line is a reformulation of the first, using clausal apposition, the first subordinate כִּי clause should be associated not with the closer verb in the appositive clause, תְּבַשְׂרוּ but with the more distant the main clause verb תִּגִּידוּ. In the second half of 2 Sam 1:20, the appositive clause uses the verb עָלַי to heighten the sense of rejoicing indicated by שָׂמוּ, and the substantival adjective הָעַרְלִים is used derogatorily to reinforce the unseemliness of a religiously unfitting people rejoicing over the death of Yhwh's first chosen king, Saul.

33 In Ps 54:5, the first line introduces the כִּי motive clause (subordinate to v. 4). The first reason the poet gives for God to hear his prayer (v. 4) is that strangers have risen against him, קָמוּ עָלַי. This is followed by an appositional clause that clarifies by reformulation the form of this oppression—arrogant people have sought to kill him, וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי. It is a feature of the semantics of apposition that the elements of the appositive are directly related to the elements of the anchor, allowing the interlaced image to be more fully representative. As such, עָרִיצִים is constrained by its counterpart יִזְרִים, resulting in a reference not just to strangers in the first clause nor arrogant people in the second clause,

In both examples, O'Connor identifies the sets *פְּלִשְׁתִּים-הָעֶרְלִים* and *זָרִים עֲרִיצִים*—as stereotype phrases that are split apart and situated in the linked poetic lines (112-15, 647-49). This is the interlinear trope he labels *coloration: combination*.

Neither Berlin's semantic rules (1985:72-80) or O'Connor's creative trope are needed for analyzing the grammar and literary effect of the examples in (14)-(15). In both, the term in the anchor clause (*פְּלִשְׁתִּים* and *זָרִים*, respectively) is further specified by a characteristic feature (*הָעֶרְלִים* and *עֲרִיצִים*, respectively). The sets do not represent word pairs, per se, but words associated by the syntactic relation of apposition so that the poet is able to produce a more complete view of his object. The addition of "uncircumcised" to "Philistine" serves to keep their pagan status front and center; similarly, the addition of "arrogant" to "strangers" clarifies that it is not all unknown people but a specific type that seek harm to the poet. To borrow and modify Kugel's formula for BH poetry, it is not *A, what's more B*, but *A, what's more A'*.

As with word pairs, the extensive use of ellipsis and gapping in poetry requires an explanation vis-à-vis apposition. The example in (16) illustrates ellipsis.

- (16) יָדַע שׁוֹר קָנָהוּ וְחִמּוֹר אָבוֹס בְּעֵלָיו יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָדַע עַמִּי לֹא הִתְבּוֹנֵן;
 'the ox knows₁ its owner₂,
 [and/that is,] the ass [knows₁] the trough of its master;
 Israel does not know [its owner₂],
 my people does not consider [its owner₂]!' (Isa 1:3)

Prototypical cases of the first example of ellipsis, a type known as "verb-gapping," involve conjoined clauses (like 1:3a-b) with similar structures (e.g., subject, object) except that the second conjunct (1:3b) lacks an overt form of the verb. This covert verb is recovered and interpreted by assuming a copy of the verb from the first conjunct, which in (16) is *יָדַע* 'knows' (see Miller-Naudé 2007a, 2013).

The lack of overt complements for the bivalent verbs *יָדַע* and *הִתְבּוֹנֵן* in 1:3c-d raises the possibility of another case of ellipsis in this verse.³⁴ The analytical

but to the combination of both, "arrogant strangers." The third and last clause of Ps 54:5 is non-appositional and presents new information about the oppressors that offers explanation for their actions—they do not share the poet's devotion.

34 Previous scholarship appears at odds on whether the verbs *יָדַע* in 1:3c and *הִתְבּוֹנֵן* in 1:3d are bivalent (i.e., requiring a complement; see, e.g., Gray 1912: 6-10) or monovalent (i.e., intransitive; see, e.g., Wildberger 1991: 15-16; Blenkinsopp 2000: 177; cf. also HALOT, s.v., DCH, s.v.). The overwhelming use of *יָדַע* as a bivalent verb and the clear cases of *הִתְבּוֹנֵן*

puzzle in this case centers on determining syntactically available antecedents for the ellipsis. The only constituents in the clause that make semantic sense are the closer בְּעָלָיו in 1:3b and the more distant קָנָה in 1:3a. The closer בְּעָלָיו can be eliminated by virtue of being embedded within a bound phrase; this type of embeddedness functions as an “island” for movement as well as ellipsis.³⁵ This seems to leave קָנָה in 1:3a as the sole candidate for ellipsis in both 1:3c and 1:3d. But קָנָה appears to be separated from the יָדַע in 1:3c and the הִתְבוֹנֵן in 1:3d by a full main clause, 1:3b: וַיְהִימוֹר אָבוֹס בְּעָלָיו 3b. A full main clause intervening between an elided constituent and its antecedent would violate the locality condition on ellipsis.³⁶ The solution to this puzzle is clausal apposition—the clause in 1:3b is not a main clause, per se, but an appositive to the clause in 1:3a. As an appositive, it does not constitute an island for antecedent relationships between an antecedent in the appositive anchor and the elided constituent in subsequent material. This, then, explains how the ellipsis of קָנָה can be licensed for 1:3c and also, by virtue of the constituent chain, for 1:3d. Without the appositive analysis of 1:3b, the ellipsis interpretation for fulfilling the verbal valency in 1:3c-d would not be possible.

Both the issue of word-pairs and ellipsis arise in Job 3:3 (17), which illustrates the flexibility of clausal apposition used within poetry:

- (17) יָאבֵד יוֹם אֲוֹלָד בּוֹ וְהָלִילָה אָמַר הָרָה גְּבֵר:
 ‘let perish the day (that) I was born on it;
more than that, [let perish] the night (that) one said: A male has
 been conceived.’ (Job 3:3)

as bivalent (see, e.g., Isa 43:18; 52:15) place the burden of proof on those two take these specific cases as monovalent/intransitive.

35 The is related to the “complex noun phrase constraint” in generative linguistics (see Ross 1967: 118-157). For studies specifically focusing on ellipsis and locality constraints, see, among many others, Murguía 2004, Goldberg 2005, and Merchant 2018.

36 See previous note and also Miller-Naudé 2007a: 175-77. Miller-Naudé suggests non-local ellipsis as an option for Zech 9:5 and Isa 45:13 and lists Ps 18:42 and Num 23:19 as two clear examples of non-local ellipsis: Ps 18:42 יִשְׁוְעוּ וְאִין־מוֹשִׁיעַ וְלֹא עָנָם: יִשְׁוְעוּ וְאִין־מוֹשִׁיעַ and Num 23:19 וְדַבֵּר וְלֹא יְקִימֶנָה: לֹא אִישׁ אֶל וְיִכָּזֵב וּבֶן־אָדָם וְיִתְנַחֵם הֵהוּא אָמַר וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה. I do not consider the intervening clauses (וְאִין־מוֹשִׁיעַ and וְיִכָּזֵב, respectively) to be coordinated clauses on the same syntactic level as the clauses that precede them; rather, the second clauses are parenthetical. This is particularly evident for Num 23:19, for which a simple coordinate clause analysis results in nonsense: *‘God is not man and he lies’. To make any sense, the negative from the first clause must be assumed in the second (‘God is not man and he does not lie’) or the second clause is an unmarked and extraposed relative clause anchored to אִישׁ (‘God is not man [who] lies’). “For more on ellipsis in BH, see Holmstedt forthcoming b.”

The relationship between the lines seems clear enough: Job wishes he had neither been conceived or born. As Pope suggests, “The day of birth and the night of conception are distinct events, yet treated, for purposes of poetic parallelism, as one and the same. The fact that they are mentioned in reverse of the normal order is enough to show that one ought not to press the details too hard” (1965:28). Of course, Pope’s suggested parallelism, which essentially flattens the semantics of “day of birth” and “night of conception” so that they may be synonymous, perfectly illustrates O’Connor’s point about the incomprehensible lexical gymnastics scholars have used to preserve a sense of parallelism. Clines avoids this pitfall and suggests that the order of lines reflects “Job’s mind ... working backwards from his own present state to the moment of his birth and then beyond that to the moment of his conception” (1989:82). But backwards temporality does not explain the how the lines are “parallel.” True, day and night might be used to form a merism, as they are elsewhere (e.g., Gen 1:5; Job 2:13; 17:12; Ps 19:3), but Clines argues that “here they are not on the same footing; for the day of his birth must be a day of 24 hours, the night of his conception a mere night” (81). If Clines is correct, the use day and night does not provide any formal help in relating the two lines, and similarly, neither does “birth” and “conception.” Moreover, it is not word-pairs that activate line relations, but vice versa (see above).

The use of ellipsis in the second line of Job 3:3 suggests that the two lines are syntactically related, as a type of coordination. And yet, the semantic relationship of the two lines remains to be addressed. If the two lines are appositional, what is the propositional overlap? It is Job’s wish for non-existence. And the semantics of the appositive are an ingenious rhetorical use of reformulative correction. Job starts with the wish that the day of his birth would be undone, but then corrects to the more extreme wish that his conception itself would not have happened.

Finally, to see how this works out on a whole poem, I will analyze the entirety of two Psalms, beginning with Psalm 1, provided in (18). As my running linguistic notes in the middle column of (18) indicate, out of the sixteen poetic lines in this poem, nine represent clausal apposition, while seven are non-appositional. The non-appositional lines vary in their syntactic relationship, from the initial clause (1a) and the enjambment of subordination (the *אשר* relatives in 1b, 3b and the *כי* motive clause in 6a) to conjunctive clauses used both contrastively (4a) and non-contrastively (3a) and an independent statement of results (5a). The appositional clauses reformulate (or exemplify in 2b) their anchor clauses. For instance, the appositive clauses in 1c and 1d provide variations of the same essential proposition as the anchor clause. The appositive clause in 2b provides a concrete example of what it means that this

(18) Interlineal Syntax in Psalm 1

אֲשֶׁר־יְהִי־אֵשׁ	1a	Non-App (initial image)— <i>image #1</i>	Happy is the man
לֹא אֲשֶׁר יֵלֵךְ בַּעֲצַת רָשָׁעִים	1b	Non-App (enjambment, relative)	who does not walk in the counsel of wicked,
וּבַדְרֹךְ הַטָּעִים לֹא עָמֹד	1c	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>reformulating</i>	<i>that is</i> , he does not stand on the path of sinners,
וּבִמְנוּשֵׁב לָעִים לֹא יֵשֵׁב:	1d	App (clausal, to 1c)— <i>reformulating</i>	<i>that is</i> , he does not sit in the seat of mockers,
כִּי אֵם בְּחוֹרֶת יְהוָה הִנֵּה הִפְצֹן	2a	App (clausal, to 1d)— <i>reformulating (reverse polarity)</i>	but ^a in the teaching of Yhwh is his delight,
וּבְהוֹרֶתוֹ יִהְיֶה שְׂמֹחַ עַל־יְלֵלָיו:	2b	App (clausal, to 2a)— <i>exemplifying</i>	<i>for example</i> , on his teaching he mutters day and night;
וְהוֹלֵךְ בְּעֵץ שָׁחַל עַל־יְלֵלָיו כִּים	3a	Non-App (non-contrastive image)— <i>image #1'</i>	he is like a tree planted by streams of water,
אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ יִתֵּן בְּעֵתוֹ	3b	Non-App (enjambment, relative)	which gives its fruit in its season,
וְעֵלְיוֹ לֹא־יִבֹּל	3c	App (clausal, to 3b)— <i>reformulating</i>	<i>that is</i> , its foliage does not fail,
וְכֵן אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה יִצְלִי:	3d	App (clausal, to 3c)— <i>reformulating</i>	<i>that is to say</i> , all that he does he causes to prosper.
לֹא־כֵן הָרָשָׁעִים	4a	Non-App (contrastive image)— <i>new image #2</i>	Not so are the wicked,
כִּי אִם־כַּפֹּץ אֲשֶׁר־תִּהְיֶה רֹחַ:	4b	App (clausal, to 4a)— <i>reformulating (reverse polarity)</i>	but (they are) like the chaff that the wind drives away.
עַל־כֵּן לֹא־יִקְמוּ רַשָּׁעִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט	5a	Non-App (non-contrastive image)— <i>image #2'</i>	As a result, the wicked will not stand in judgment,
וְהַטָּעִים בְּעֵדֹת צִדִּיקִים:	5b	App (clausal, to 5a; ellipsis)— <i>reformulating</i>	<i>that is</i> , sinners (will not stand) in the congregation of the righteous,
כִּי־יִזְכֹּר יְהוָה צִדִּיקִים	6a	Non-App (enjambment, motive)— <i>image #2"</i>	because Yhwh knows the path of the righteous,
וְהוֹלֵךְ רַשָּׁעִים תֵּאֵבֵד:	6b	App (clausal, to 6a)— <i>reformulating (reverse polarity)</i>	<i>that is to say</i> , the path of the wicked will perish.

a Quirk et al (1985:935) note two types of contrast typically indicated by English “but,” both of which seem descriptively accurate for BH אִם־כִּי: 1) a contrast signaling unexpectedness or 2) a contrast signaling “a repudiation in positive terms of what has been said or implied by negation in the first conjoin.” I take the contrasts in 2a and 4b to be examples of the second type.

man's delight is in Yhwh's teaching. In 3c, the appositive clause reformulates the description of the productive tree by moving the image from its fruit to its enduring foliage. The appositive clause in 3d reformulates the negative statement (what his foliage *does not* do) by providing the metaphor with the corresponding positive statement (what the man *does* do). Similarly, the appositive clauses in 2a, 4b, and 6b reverse the polarity of their anchors: in 2a and 4b the negatives in the clauses preceding the appositive are reformulated in the positive, in 6b the appositive provides the negative inverse of the negative anchor.

The second full poem that illustrates the power of the appositional-centered analysis of poetry is Psalm 23, given in (19). Of the seventeen lines of poetry (excluding the title), twelve are appositional and five are non-appositional. Of these non-appositives, the first line is the anchor (1b), and the other four are cases of enjambment, with 6b and 6d following the main clause while 4b and 4d present the main clause following a poetic line containing a clausal adjunct. Particularly interesting about the structure of Psalm 23 is that all the appositives share the same anchor. This differs from the use of apposition in Psalm 1, where the successive appositives in 1:1c–2b and 1:3c–d do not share the same anchor but are successively embedded. For example, the clause in 1:3b is the anchor for the appositive in 1:3c, which itself serves as the anchor for the appositive clause in 1:3d.

The phenomenon illustrated in Psalm 23 is known as “stacking.” The linking of successive modifier to the same anchor can occur with a wide variety of modifiers, from appositives, relative clauses, and even adjectives (e.g., “he was a tall, dark, handsome, and mysterious professor”), to temporal phrases used with verbs (e.g., “At that time, at noon, on a Wednesday, in the first week of December, three years ago ...”). In Psalm 23, each appositive clause is connected to the same anchor, the initial clause, of the poem (1b) יְהוָה רֹעִי. Each appositive exemplifies what the proposition יְהוָה רֹעִי means. Structurally, then, Psalm 23 presents a single idea, or image, which is elaborated by concrete examples in each appositional clause, from line 1c to line 6c.³⁷ Each of the

37 A reader of a draft of this study suggested that the relationship between 1b and 1c is resultative, that is, the lack of wanting is the result of Yhwh being one's shepherd. Of course, there is a long tradition of noting that BH poetry lacks many explicit subordinating words, such as כִּי, אֲשֶׁר, and לָכֵן (Andersen and Forbes 1983); this presumably results in the kind of ambiguity between lines that may be filled with whatever semantic relationship one finds most attractive. This has produced gross misreadings of BH poetry, in my opinion (indeed, Andersen and Forbes, who performed a statistical study on the “prose particles,” explicitly warn against jumping to this conclusion; 1983:166). The simpler explanation for the lack of an abundance of “prose particles” in BH poetry is that they are not needed due to the dominance of apposition and non-appositive coordination. Even in prose, unmarked subordinate clauses can only be identified by a lack of any other clear connection to

(19) Interlineal Syntax in Psalm 23

	Title	A Psalm of David.
מִקְוֹר לְדָוִד 1a	Non-App (initial image)— <i>image #1</i>	Yhwh is my shepherd:
יְהוָה יָרְבִּיעַ 1b	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	<i>which means</i> , I do not lack;
לֹא אֶחָסֵר: 1c	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or in green pastures he makes me to lie down;
בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיעַנִי 2a	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or beside still waters he leads me;
עַל כֵּי מִנְחוֹת יִהְיֶה לִּי: 2b	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or my soul he restores;
נַפְשִׁי יִשְׁׁבֵב 3a	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or he guides me in right paths for the sake of his name;
יִנְחֵנִי בַּמַּעְגָּלִי צֶדֶק לִמְעַן שְׁמוֹ: 3b	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or even if I walked through the valley of the shadow of death,
גַּם כִּי־אֶלֶךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמוֹת 4a	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	I would not fear evil;
לֹא־אֶיֶרָא נָע 4b	Non-App (enjambment/main clause to 4a)	or because you are with me,
כִּי־אֶתָּה עִמָּדִי 4c	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	your rod and your staff—they comfort me;
שִׁבְכֶךָ וּמַשְׁעֲנֶיךָ הִמָּוֶה יִנְחֵמֵנִי: 4d	Non-App (enjambment/main clause to 4c)	or you prepare before me a table before my enemies;
תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן גִּגְדִּי צָרִי 5a	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or you have anointed with oil my head;
דְּשֹׁנָה בְשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי 5b	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or my cup runs over;
כּוֹסִי רוֹנֵה: 5c	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	or surely goodness and lovingkindness shall pursue me
אֵל טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדּוּפוּנִי 6a	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	all the days of my life;
כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי 6b	Non-App (enjambment to 6a)	or I shall return ^a into the house of Yhwh
וְשִׁבְכְּתִי בִּבְיַת־יְהוָה 6c	App (clausal, to 1b)— <i>exemplification</i>	for the length of (my) days.
יָמֵי: 6d	Non-App (enjambment to 6c)	

a The versions (Lxx *xaroxeivn*, Vulgate *habitabo*, and Peshitta *אֶחְבֹּד*) suggest that *וְשִׁבְכְּתִי* represents a form of *יָשׁוּב*, not *יָשׁוּב*. For keeping the *יָשׁוּב* of the MT, see Clines 2007:79. For a cogent summary of the typical argument for reading a form of *יָשׁוּב*, see Tappy 1995: 262, n. 15.

appositional lines is technically an alternative to the other appositives, and they present varying shades on what *יְהוָה רֵעִי* means.

Crucially, whereas my appositive analysis provides an explanation for the interlineal relationships in Psalm 23, Lowthian parallelism fails to do so by any sensible assessment. Take, for example, verse 2: *נָאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיעֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנוּחֹת: יְנַהֲלֵנִי*. The verse breaks neatly into two poetic lines, but no type of parallelism explains how they work together. Synonymous parallelism does not apply, since “green pastures” and “still waters” are clearly not synonymous in a strict sense, nor are the verbs “to make lie down” and “to lead.” Taking any of these as examples of synonymy leads to a severe bleaching of what synonymy means (and so the “horror” that O’Connor mentions; 1980 [1997]:640; see above, n. 12). Antithetic parallelism also fails to relate the lines, since they are not contrastive actions—both are positive, beneficial activities characteristic of a caring, responsible shepherd. Synthetic parallelism is likely the label that would be given to these two lines within a Lowthian paradigm, though such a label elucidates the relationship none at all. Moreover, while I do not disagree that the second line often “focuses,” “heightens,” or “furthers” the first line, or that in some way the notion *A, what’s more B* (or, as I prefer, *A, what’s more A’*) is a reasonable non-theoretical approximation for some of the interlineal relationships, these are fuzzy concepts lacking an anchor in formal poetics or linguistics. In contrast, apposition provides both a syntactic and semantic solution that in and of itself is not unique to poetry.³⁸

the larger syntactic context. Since I have proposed a linguistically-grounded model for poetic interlineal relationships that also now explains the typical lack of subordinating particles in poetry, the burden for demonstrating unmarked causal, resultative, purpose, etc., relationships between poetic lines rests on those who propose them.

- 38 Identifying clausal apposition at the core of poetic syntax invites a brief comparison between poetry and narrative. In BH narrative, phrases and clauses are often linked by *conjunction*-coordination, which has additive semantics, or subordination. In narrative coordinated clauses there may be overlap in actors or actions/events (including time setting), but whether there is, for instance, continuity of the subject or the time of the two events is simultaneous, some major component in these linked narrative clauses must differ to achieve the purpose of narrative progression. In verse, the nonsubordinative nonrestrictive apposition, in which the second conjunct is a logical subset of the first, differs from the coordination and subordination typical of narrative precisely in that the actors and events of the poetic anchor and appositive overlap (in the case of repetitive apposition, the overlap is complete). The syntactic arguments of the anchor and appositive clauses share the same references, with the information of the appositive fundamentally provided to reformulate or exemplify the referential, descriptive, or propositional nature of the anchor. That this general overlap exists in nonrestrictive apposition explains why any new information in the appositive can be directly applied to the anchor without

5 Conclusion

Identifying the presence of apposition in poetry is certainly not a novel idea. Apposition is mentioned by, among others, Collins (1973), O'Connor (1980 [1997]), Landy (1984), and Dobbs-Allsopp (2015). Indeed, some of these authors use apposition throughout their descriptions of BH poetic verse. But so far none have recognized either the extent to which apposition is used in poetry or its constitutive role. My study indicates that a binary choice between apposition and non-apposition better explains the data and so offers us a model to investigate further in the hopes of finally displacing the troubled "parallelism" model of BH poetic syntax.

The benefits of the appositional-centered approach to BH poetic syntax are many, but I will briefly mention two. First, it connects the study of verse to the study of the rest of the discourse types found in the Hebrew Bible. A poem is thus the product of a poetic convention, a set of constraints drawn from the same set of grammatical phenomena used to create the conventions of narrative, proverb, speech, letter, etc. And what defines the poetic convention is the structure of the line (à la O'Connor 1980 [1997]) and its heavy use of clausal apposition for relating those lines. Second, an appositional-centered approach grounds the semantics of poetry in the general study of the language, as well as any of the non-appositional relationships used to link poetic lines.³⁹ This approach therefore avoids the pitfalls of parallelism, with its syntactic deficiencies and subjective semantics.

By connecting the dots from previous insights made by scholars such as O'Connor, Greenstein, Miller, and Dobbs-Allsopp, I have made the case that the notion of "parallelism" can be replaced with the binary opposition of apposition : non-apposition, which the poet applies at the end of each line.⁴⁰ Working through BH poetry with this framework shows that both may be applied recursively, nearly without limit, though for reasons of memory and processing, the application of apposition does not often surpass three before a non-appositive choice is made and a new image is submitted. The semantic functions of apposition correspond closely to the terms that Dobbs-Allsopp repeats often in his description of BH verse: "iteration," "reiteration," "redundancy," "recursion,"

altering the essential nature of the proposition, and vice versa, any information in the anchor left out in the appositive can be appropriately applied to the appositive.

39 Talstra (1999) makes a similar general point about the study of BH poetry, that poetry "differs from prose texts in its selections [of grammatical forms], but not in its grammatical system" (125).

40 Apposition is also used *within* poetic lines, of course, but such NP, PP, etc., apposition is not central to the poetic convention.

“recurrence,” and so on. The poetic use of apposition, from nominal to verbal to clausal, makes sense in light of the literary nature of poetry, which, according to Greenstein, “advance[s] the message in steps, adding a point or a nuance here, burnishing or refining an image there” (Greenstein 2012: 603).

The use of apposition in poetry, particularly with reformulating or exemplifying semantics, allows the poet to clarify or emphasize the anchor referent before moving on to the next. This provides grammatical justification for Alter’s (1985) sense that BH poetry engages a “focusing” or “heightening” structure or Kugel’s (1981) formula, which I have suggested modifying to *A, and what’s more, A’*. Alternatively, from an audience-centered perspective, the ancient Hebrew poet seemed sensitive to the need to pause and answer the anticipated question, “What do you mean by that?” or “Say that again?” In answer to this presumed question, apposition restates the point, often using near synonyms, overlapping imagery, sometimes extending the image, or even shifts from metaphorical to concrete, as the prophet Isaiah does in (20):

- (20) וְנוֹתָרָה בִּתְצִיּוֹן כְּסֻכָּה בְּכַרְם כְּמִלּוּנָה בְּמִקְשָׁה כְּעִיר נְצוּרָה:
 ‘and Daughter Zion shall remain like a booth in a vineyard,
 like a hut in a cucumber field,
 like a city that is watched’ (Isa 1:8)

Perhaps the switch from metaphorical to concrete reflects the prophet’s desire that his audience have no excuse to misunderstand his message. However we interpret the intent and impact of the poetic verses, identifying the role of apposition in poetry gives us a grammatical footing to identify and understand the relationship of the lines in a way that parallelism never could. It is only by recognizing the fundamental role of clausal apposition in the BH convention of poetry that we are able to complete the replacement of “parallelism” begun in O’Connor’s linguistically grounded analysis of BH verse structure.⁴¹

Parallelism
Requiescat in pace!

41 The essential apposition : non-apposition binarity is also operative in Ugaritic; see Holmstedt *forthcoming c*, in which I analyze the appositive style of KTU 1.3.I.

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