

The Third Masculine Plural of the Prefixed Form of the Verb in Ugaritic

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Grammars¹ agree that the 3rd masculine plural prefix of the Ugaritic verb varies between *t* and *y*.² It does seem odd, though, that the 3rd masculine plural should have alternating prefixes when all other verbal forms, except the dual, have only one. I shall challenge this accepted view and, by surveying the poetic texts anew, show that the basis for a 3rd masculine plural prefix with *y* cannot be established with any certainty. In the poetic texts I have examined there are at least 50 clear instances of a 3rd masculine plural form of the verb with preformative *t*.³ A brief sampling follows:⁴

1 C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome, 1965) [= *UT*], §9.15; E. Hammershaimb, *Das Verbum im Dialekt von Ras Schamra* (Kopenhagen, 1941), 122; and S. Moscati, *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* (Wiesbaden, 1969), §16.54.

2 Exceptions to this opinion are taken by A. Goetze, *The Tenses of Ugaritic*, *JAOS* 58 (1938), 290, n. 128, and Z. Harris, *Development of the Canaanite Dialects*, *AOS* 16 (1939), 12. Goetze writes: "As to the prefix *t* - it should be added that *taqtulāni* seems to be the normal form of the 3rd pl. . . ." But in his list of prefixed verbs he cites two examples of plurals with preformative *y*: *ymru* in II AB VII: 50 and *ytk* in I D: 82. An examination of each of these cases provides alternative explanations. *ymru* can be explained as a singular in accordance with the translations of J. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1977), 66 and A. Caquot, M. Sznycer and A. Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques* v. 1 (Paris, 1974), 219. They all take *ilm wnšm* as the object and either Baal or Mot, depending on who is speaking, as the subject. And *ytk* can be explained as a dual if we accept Ginsberg's reading, [*d*][*m*][*h*], in *Legend of King Keret* (New Haven, 1946), 34. *dm^h* of this passage can be related to the Akkadian dual form *dīmān* while *udm^t* followed by the feminine plural verb *tnkkn* of the parallel passage (I K: 28, 29) can be related to the Hebrew feminine plural form *d^hmā'ōt*. Harris, while conjecturing about the origin of the 3rd masculine plural preformative *t*, implies that those dialects which use the *t* preformative do so to the exclusion of any other preformative for the 3rd masculine plural.

3 Some additional cases are III D IV: 20, 21; I D: 32; I D: 109, 115; I D: 150, 151; I K: 192, 103; I K: 194; III K V: 12, 14; II K: 22, 105; III AB B: 26; III AB B: 29; II AB V: 77, 93; II AB VI: 55-59; I Rp. A: 1; I Rp. A: 6; III Rp. B: 21, 23.

4 The text edition is A. Herdner, *Corpus des Tablettes en Cuneiformes Alphabetiques, Mission de Ras Shamra* 10 (Paris, 1963). The verse divisions are my own. The translations are taken from K.-H. Bernhardt, in W. Beyerlin, ed., *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (London, 1978); A. Caquot, M. Sznycer and A. Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques*; M. D. Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan* (Phila., 1978); G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1956); T. H. Gaster, *Thespis* (New York, 1961); J. C. L. Gibson and G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1978) [= *CML*]; H. L. Ginsberg in J. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, 1969); S.

- tbrk:* tbrk ilm tity (III K III: 17-19)
tity: tity ilm lahlhm
 dr il lmsknthm
 The gods bless and proceed
 the gods proceed to their tents
 the family of El to their habitations (Ginsberg)
- tpghm:* hlm ilm tphhm (III AB B: 21-23)
tgly: tphn mlak ym
 t^cdt tpt [nhr]
 t[^g]ly il^lm rišthm . . .
 As soon as the gods espy them,
 they espy the messengers of Yam
 the envoys of Judge [Nahar]
 the gods do drop their heads . . . (Ginsberg)
- tmṛn:* šmm šmn tmṛn (I AB III: 12, 13)
tlk: nḥlm tk nbtm
 The heavens fat did rain
 the wadis flow with honey (Ginsberg)
- td^c:* abn brq dl td^c šmm (V AB C: 23-25)
tbn: rgm ltd^c nšm
 wltbn hmlt arš
 I understand the lightning which the heavens do not know
 the word which men do not know
 and earth's masses cannot understand (Coogan)
- tšmd:* asr sswn (I Rp. B: 3-5)
t^cln: tšmd dg[]
tity: t^cln lmrkbthm
tlkn: t[ty] l^crh[m]
 tlkn ym wṭn!
 They tied their horses
 they harnessed []
 they climbed on their chariots
 they ar[rived in their city]
 they travelled a day and a second (Caquot, Szyner & Herdner)
- tlḥmn:* tlḥmn ilm wtštn⁵ (RS 24.258: 2, 3)
tštn:
 The gods eat and drink (Loewenstamm)

Loewenstamm, *UF* 1 (1969), 71-77; J. C. de Moor, *UF* 1 (1969), 168-175; D. Tsumura, *The Ugaritic Drama of the Good Gods—A Philological Study*, unpublished Brandeis Dissertation (1973).

5 Viroilleaud, *Ugaritica V, Mission de Ras Shamra* 16 (Paris, 1968), 547 translates this as an imperative and reads it with the preceding clause. He bases his reading on the phrase in III K IV: 27; |llḥ|m lšty šhtkm. J. de Moor, *UF* 1 (1969), 168 and H. P. Rüger, *UF* 1 (1969), 203 also translate this phrase in the imperative. Loewenstamm, *UF* 1 (1969), 73; A. Rainey, *JAOS* 94 (1974), 185; M. Pope in J. M. Efrid, ed., *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays. Studies in Honor of W. F. Stinespring* (Durham, 1972), 172 and B. Margalit, *Maarav* 2/1 (1979), 80 take these verbs as indicatives.

- tbun:* bt krt tbun (III K IV: 20)
 Into the house of Keret they come (Ginsberg)
- tlkn:* šb^c šnt tmt (SS: 66-68)
tšdn: tmn nqpt^c
 ilm n^cmm⁶ tlkn šd
 tšdn pat mđbr
 Seven years did come to an end,
 eight revolutions of time,
 (as) the gracious gods went about the field(s)
 (and) hunted on the fringe of the desert. (Gibson)

We must exclude from consideration those instances of preformative *t* which may be interpreted as 3rd masculine dual. Such cases are:

- tmğyn:* ... tmğyn tša gh|m wtšhn⁷ (I D: 89)
tša:
tšhn:
 ... they come. They lift up their voice and cry (Ginsberg)
- tlakn:* wtb lmspr ... (II AB IV-V:
 104, 5)
 ktlakn⁸ ġlmm
 Now turn to the account
 of the sending of the lads (Ginsberg)
- ttb^c:* ttb^c mlakm lytb (I K: 300-304)
tšan: idk pnm lytn^c mm pbl mlk
tšhn: tšan ghm wtšhn⁹
 The messengers twain depart, they tarry not there,
 they are off on their way towards King Pabel.
 They raise their voices and cry (Ginsberg)

6 Ginsberg, *JRAS* (1935), 72 and D. Tsumura, *The Ugaritic Drama of the Good Gods—A Philological Study* (unpublished Brandeis dissertation, 1973), 21-25, 73, 74, both deny the equation of *ilm n^cmm* = *šhr wšlm*. *šhr* and *šlm* were dual gods created first and the *ilm n^cmm* were a group of gods created in a second divine birth account. Therefore the verbs *tlkn* and *tšdn* are 3rd masculine plurals rather than duals.

7 Ginsberg, *ANET*³, 154; Gaster, *Thespis*, 361 and Gibson, *CML*, 116, 117 explicitly state in their translations that two people are involved. J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch der Ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin, 1965) [= *WUS*], 214 lists *tša* as a masculine dual verb.

8 Translate this verb as a *qal*-passive dual, see D. Marcus, *JANES* 3 (1970-71), 110. We assume that this section is referring to the sending of Baal's two messengers. For the duality of these messengers, see H. L. Ginsberg, *BASOR* 95 (1944), 25-30.

9 We assume that Keret sent two messengers as did Baal. Herdner draws this same conclusion in *RÉS* (1938), 81. Aistleitner in *WUS* lists *tšan*, 214 and *tšhn*, 266 as 3rd masculine duals. For a discussion of the idea that messengers come in pairs, see Gaster, *Thespis*, 157-58.

<i>tmḡyn:</i>	ahr tmḡyn mlak ym	(III AB B: 30, 31)
<i>tpl:</i>	t ^ḏ dt tḡt nhr ¹⁰	
<i>ištḥwy:</i>	lp ⁿ il [lt]pl ltštḥwy pḥr m ^ḏ	
	Then come the messengers of Yam the envoys of Judge Nahar At El's feet they do not fall down Prostrate them not to the Assembled Body (Ginsberg)	
<i>tⁿnyn:</i>	wt ⁿ nyn ḡlm b ^ḡ	(IV AB II: 3)
	The lads of Baal (Gapn and Ugar) make answer (Ginsberg)	
<i>tmgnn:</i>	tmgnn rbt [a]trt ym	(II AB III: 25, 26)
<i>tḡzyn:</i>	tḡzyn qnyt ilm ¹¹	
	As they (Baal and Anat) do homage to Lady Asherah of the Sea, Obeisance to the Progenitress of the Gods (Ginsberg)	
<i>tša:</i>	tša ghm wtšḥ	(I* AB II: 16, 17)
<i>tšḥ:</i>		
	They (Gapn and Ugar) lift up their voices and cry (Ginsberg)	

With respect to the 3rd masculine dual prefix, we find clear cases of preformative *y* as well as *t*.¹² Consider the following passages:

10 See n. 9 for the idea of messengers coming in pairs. Aistleitner, *WUS*, 191, 210, 101 lists the three verbs as 3rd masculine duals. Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 86 assumes two and states this explicitly in his translation: "Sea sent two messengers" (III AB B: 11). Gibson, *CML*, 41, n. 5 makes the same assumption.

11 Gordon places this text in his list of 3rd masculine plurals. But I prefer to place it with the dual forms because of the number of supplicants. Herdner, *RÉS* (1938), 82 also lists it as a dual.

12 The 3rd masculine dual construction seems to use both *t* and *y* preformatives, but the formation of the 3rd feminine dual is less certain. I found only two examples of 3rd feminine dual with *y* preformatives and both were in difficult contexts. The first example is RS 24.258: 9: *ḡtrt wⁿt ymḡy*. Rainey in *JAOS* 94 (1974), 186 translates "He (Yarih) comes to Aḡtrt and Anat (for food)." Margalit in *Maarav* 2/1 (1979), 72 translates "At the call of Astarte and Anat, he [= Yarih] came nigh." Both of these translations attempt to avoid the use of *ymḡy* with feminine subjects. Virolleaud, *Ugaritica* V, 550; Loewenstamm, *UF* 1 (1969), 74; and de Moor, *UF* 1 (1969), 171 translate "Aḡtarte and Anat arrive." But none of these scholars is totally comfortable with the form of the verb used for these two female goddesses. Virolleaud comments that *t* preformative is expected as in l. 23: *ḡnt wⁿḡtrt tšdn*. Loewenstamm cites this example as the first proof for *yql* 3rd feminine dual. And de Moor states that the form is surprising and suggests that maybe it reflects the bisexual nature of the goddesses. Gordon, however, is not bothered by the form because he does not recognize separate masculine and feminine dual forms. He claims that the dual is common. In *UT* §9.15, he states that the *y* and *t* are the preformatives for the 3rd common dual.

The second text is III AB B: 32, 33: *išt išt m yitmr ḥrb lšt []nhm*. Bernhardt in Beyerlin, ed., *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 204 translates "One fire, two fires burn." Caquot, Szyner and Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques*, 131 also take *išt m* as the subject but translate "One fire, two fires appear." Aistleitner, *WUS*, 25 classifies *yitmr* as a 3rd singular or 3rd dual. If *išt m* is the subject of *yitmr* then this is an example of *y* preformative with 3rd feminine dual. But if the subject is the messengers as

- yʿn:* yʿn kgmrm (I AB VI: 16-22)
yngḥm: mt ʿz bʿl ʿz
ynʿkn: yngḥn krumm
ymṣḥn: mt ʿz bʿl ʿz
 ynʿkn kbʿnm
 mt ʿz bʿl ʿz
 ymṣḥn klsmm
 mt ql bʿl ql
 They (Baal & Mot) . . . like camels
 Mot's firm, Baal's firm
 They gore like buffaloes
 Mot's firm, Baal's firm
 They bite like snakes
 Mot's firm, Baal's firm
 They kick like chargers
 Mot falls, Baal falls (Ginsberg)
- yʿmsn:* yʿmsn . nn ʿknm wšnm¹³ (RS 24.258:
 18, 19)
 ʿknm and šnm carry him (de Moor)
- yʿnyn:* [w]ʿn ḡlmm yʿnyn (V AB D: 49)
 Answer the lads twain make (Ginsberg)
- yʿtqn:* ym ymm yʿtqn (I AB II: 26)
 a day, two days pass¹⁴ (Bernhardt)
- yʿb:* tbʿ wl yʿb ilm idk l ytn pnm (I* AB I: 9-11)
ytn: ʿm bʿl mrym špn¹⁵
yʿn: wyʿn¹⁶ gpn wgr . . .
 There, they are off on their way
 to Baal of the Summit of Zaphon
 Then Gapn and Ugar declare: (Ginsberg)

Gaster and Coogan translate, then we have a normal *y* preformative for a masculine dual subject. Gaster, *Thespis*, 158 translates "They twain flashed looks of fire, [in their e]yes was a burnished sword." And Coogan, *Stories From Ancient Canaan*, 87 translates "They seemed like one fire, or two; their tongues were sharpened swords."

13 De Moor in *UF* 1 (1969), 173 assumes that these are a pair of gods. He leans toward the identification of these gods with the Kassite gods Šuqamuna and Sumaliya. Loewenstamm, *UF* 1 (1969), 76 assumes one god in which case the verb would be masculine singular.

14 Most translators translate "a day, days pass" implying a plural form for *yʿtqn*. But Aistleitner, *WUS*, 245 and Gordon, *UT*, §9.15 list it as a dual. For expressing the passage of two days we would not expect the terminology of the counting formula, *hn ym wʿtn*, which is never used with the root *ʿtq* and which never precedes the verb when one is used. Since *ymm* is both the dual and plural form of *ym* either explanation of the verse is possible.

15 There are twenty-six cases of the departing formula in these texts. Of the ten which use *y* preformatives for the verbs *ytn* and *yʿb*, two are reconstructed and four are examples of masculine singular. The remaining four all involve messengers sent by the major characters and are therefore classified as dual. See n. 9.

16 This may be a 3rd singular suffixed form. Compare Exod. 7:10 for an identical case in Biblical Hebrew. For bibliographic references on this point, see Marcus, *JANES* 1/2 (1969), 56, n. 4. Add *GKC* (Oxford, 1910), §146f.

tb ^c wl yṭb ilm idk lytn pn<m> ṣm bn ilm mt . . .	(I* AB II: 13, 14)
tb ^c ḡlmm lyṭb i[dk pnm] lytn tk ḡr ll ṣm phr mḏ . . .	(III AB B: 19, 20)
tbb ^c mlakm lyṭb idk pnm lytn ṣmm pbl mlk . . .	(I K: 300-302)

Although a 3rd masculine dual verb form did exist in Ugaritic, it is theoretically possible for a plural verb to have been used with a dual subject. Nevertheless, since *y* preformative verbs found in this situation could be duals rather than regular plurals, such cases cannot be used to support the claim of a 3rd masculine plural with preformative *y*. Once these instances of the 3rd masculine *dual* prefixes with *y* are excluded from consideration, only a few cases which could be analyzed as 3rd masculine *plural* remain. Let us now consider each of these in turn, trying to determine whether any need be interpreted as a 3rd masculine plural prefix in *y*.

<i>yblnn</i> : yblnn ḡrm mid ksp	(II AB V: 100)
The mountains did bring him much silver (Ginsberg)	

Based on the other two occurrences of this line, *tblk ḡrm mid ksp* (II AB V: 77, 93), we would expect *tblnn. yblnn*¹⁷ has generally been interpreted, along with *tblk*, as the 3rd masculine plural prefixed form of the root *ybl*. But this need not be the interpretation.¹⁸ In the consonantal script, the *qtl* form of the verb and the *y* preformative *yqtl* form of initial *y* verbs such as *ybl* are indistinguishable, thus rendering such verbal forms ambiguous as to "tense." Therefore both a 3rd masculine plural *qtl* and a 3rd masculine plural *yqtl* (assuming a 3rd masculine plural *y* preformative) interpretation are equally valid. A look at the suffix, 3rd masculine singular dative¹⁹ + energetic *nun*²⁰ does not tip the balance decisively in either direction. Therefore I conclude that this does not represent a clear case of 3rd masculine plural with preformative *y*.

17 I have not included *yblnn* of l. 102 and *yblk* of l. 79 because the meaning of the other words in those verses is so unclear. Though it is true that there has also been much discussion of the meaning of *ḡr*, its parallelism with *gb^c* in this case lends some certainty to its meaning.

18 Aistleitner, *WUS*, 22 takes this as a 3rd masculine plural suffixed form with 3rd masculine energetic.

19 See Gordon, *UT* §6.21; M. Dahood, *UF* 1 (1969), 16, 17.

20 Energetic *nun* has been the topic of much discussion and not much consensus. Scholars cannot agree as to which forms of the verb can properly affix energetic *nun*. De Moor, *JNES* 24 (1965), 358 states categorically that "energetic perfect is inconceivable." Moscati, *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*, §16.34 and A. Jirku, *JKF* 3 (1955-1959), 113f. are of the same opinion. R. Williams disagrees and in Wevers and Redford, ed., *Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World* (Toronto, 1972), 80 states that energetic *nun* does appear on suffixed forms though it is surprising. Others who note the same surprising and rare occurrence are Montgomery and Harris, *Ras Shamra Mythological Texts* (Phila., 1935), 22; GKC, §58i; Aistleitner, *AOrientHung* 7 (1957), 285; H. Gottlieb, *AcOr* 33 (1971), 47, 51; Marcus, *JANES* 1/2 (1969), 57f. and Gibson, *CML*, 69, 88. Unfortunately, these scholars do not agree as to which cases constitute examples of this phenomenon.

yṭb: ap ilm lKlḥ[m] yṭb
bn qdš ṭrm

(III AB B: 20, 21)

Now, the gods were sitting to [eat]
the holy ones for to dine (Ginsberg)

Now, the gods are . . . ing
the holy ones are sitting at their meal (Gaster)

Ginsberg, as well as most other translators, assumes that *yṭb* belongs in the first hemistich²¹ while Gaster places it in the second. The structure of *l* + infinitive + finite verb does not seem to restrict the “tense” of the finite verb. A *qtl* is used in III K IV: 27: [*llḥ*]m *lšty ṣḥtkm* and a *yqtl* in II K VI: 11, 12: *npšh llḥm tptḥ brlth ṭrm*. Since *yṭb* is an initial *y* verb, the form is ambiguous and gives no clues. A 3rd masculine plural suffixed form analysis of this verb provides a probable alternative to a 3rd masculine plural preformative *y* interpretation.

yzbrnn: mt wšr²² yṭb . . .

(SS: 8-10)

yšmdnn: yzbrnn zbrm gpn

yšql: yšmdnn šmdm gpn
yšql šdmth km gpn

šb'ḏ yrgm 'l 'ḏ w'rbm t'ny²³

Mot-and-Shar sat down . . .
The pruners of the vine pruned him
the binders of the vine bound him.
they felled (him) on the terrace like a vine

Seven times shall (this) be recited on the dais,
and the ministers shall make response (Gibson)

Death-and-Evil sits . . .
They prune him with the prunings of the vine.
They switch him with the switches of the vine.
They ruin (lit. “cause to fall”) his fields like a vine

Seven times it is recited according to custom and
the choristers respond: (Tsumura)

Caquot, Sznycer & Herdner²⁴ and Gibson²⁵ all understand *zbrm* and *šmdm* as the laborers who do the acts of pruning and binding. But *zbrm* and *šmdm* may not be the subjects of these verses. The text can be analyzed in the following way: *zbrm* and *šmdm* are the objects of the verbs and in construct with *gpn*.²⁶ The affirmative *m* on

21 III D: 29, 30 has the opposite order of finite verb + infinitive: *aqht km yṭb llḥ[m] // bn dnll ṭrm*. This verse seems to prove that Ginsberg's verse division is the more appropriate one.

22 Caquot, Sznycer and Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques*, 370 takes *mt wšr* as a compound name.

23 *t'ny* is a clear example of *t* preformative 3rd masculine plural.

24 Caquot, Sznycer and Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques*, 370.

25 Gibson, *CML*, 123.

26 For the use of enclitic *m* in the middle of a construct chain see Gordon, *UT* § 13.101, 11.8; H. D. Hummel, *JBL* 76 (1957), 97-99; and Aartun, *AOAT* 21/1, 52, 53.

zbr and *šmd* is adverbial²⁷ with an instrumental²⁸ use. The translation would then agree with Gordon²⁹ and Tsumura³⁰ except in the number of the subject. Both Gordon and Tsumura assume plural subjects though the subject is never explicitly stated in the text. The only indication of subject is the three *y* preformative verbs, *yžbrnn*, *yšmdnn* and *yšql*. The form of the verbs gives us the choice of a 3rd masculine singular, 3rd masculine dual or 3rd masculine plural subject. One scholar, J. Février³¹ opts for the 3rd masculine singular option and identifies El as the subject. Tsumura³² states that it must be a group of people but does not support his claim. Since nothing in the text indicates the number of the subject, there is no compelling reason to analyze the verbs as *y* preformative 3rd masculine plurals.

yłbš: blsm^{t33} łm yłbš šm il mtm (III Rp. B: 6, 7)
yčbš: yčbš brkn šm il ġzrm

Then, the name of El . . . some men with speed
 the name of El . . . some heroes . . .

(Caquot, Szyner & Herdner)

with alacrity; there (mortal) men will laud(?)
 heroes will extoll the name of El with blessings (Driver)

Driver³⁴ assumes two plural subjects, *mtm* and *ġzrm* and two plural verbs, *yłbš* and *yčbš*. Caquot, Szyner & Herdner³⁵ reverse the syntax and take *šm il* as the singular subject and *mtm* and *ġzrm* as the plural objects. Though they do not venture a guess as to the meaning of the verbs, we must assume that they understand them as *y* preformative 3rd masculine singulars to agree with the subject *šm il*. Dietrich and Loretz³⁶ also understand *šm il* as the subject. They read *yłbš* in the first colon and

27 There is a lack of agreement among scholars as to the existence of an adverbial *m*. Some scholars who accept this grammatical particle are Gordon, *UT*, §11.5; Singer, *BJPES* 10 (1942-43), 57-61; De Langhe, *Le Muséon* 59 (1946), 95-108; Aistleitner, *WUS*, 175; Albright, *JBL* 69 (1950), 387 and Ginsberg, *BASOR* 97 (1945), 6, n. 13. Those who reject the idea of attributing an adverbial sense to the suffixed *m* and prefer to derive this force from other grammatical elements in a sentence are Pope, *JCS* 5 (1951), 123-28 and Aartun, *AOAT* 21/1, 51-55. Pope states that all cases of alleged adverbial *m* except possibly *špšm* in the formula *ahr špšm b-* are misconstrued and can be alternatively explained as "a) *m* not enclitic, but integral part of the dual or plural ending; b) omission of the preposition, or extension of the force of a preposition; c) accusative + enclitic-*m*." Aartun describes each case as a type of accusative + "hervorhebendem-*m*." His translations have the prepositions written in parentheses often followed by a citation of the literal meaning without them. Since the dispute is over which element conveys the adverbial sense and not the existence of this sense in a sentence, one's opinion about adverbial *m* does not affect the meaning of a text, only its analysis.

28 For examples of the instrumental use of adverbial *m*, see II AB II: 29; I K: 16, 17; V AB B: 15, 16; II K VI: 8.

29 Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature* (Rome, 1949), 59.

30 Tsumura, *The Ugaritic Drama of the Good Gods*, 8.

31 Février, *JA* 229 (1937), 295.

32 Tsumura, *The Ugaritic Drama of the Good Gods*, 33.

33 Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1956), 69 translates *blsmt* with the previous verse.

34 *Ibid.*, 69.

35 Caquot, Szyner and Herdner, *Textes Ougaritiques*, 474.

36 M. Dietrich and O. Loretz, *UF* 10 (1979), 434-35.

exclude $y^c b\dot{s}$ ³⁷ in the second. According to their analysis, $y\dot{l}b\dot{s}$ is the 3rd masculine singular verb of the bicola, *šm il* and *brkn šm il* are its subjects and *mtm* and *ğzrm* are its objects. They translate the passage as: “Dort versammelt(e) der Name Els die Manner / (versammelte!) der Segen des Namens Els die Helden.”

<i>ymğy:</i>	aħr šp[š]m b[š]l[š]	(IK: 195-211)
<i>ylk:</i>	ym[ğy] ³⁸ lqdš a[tr]t] šrm	
	wlilt šd[yn]m	
	tm yd[r k]rt t[š] . . .	
	ylk ym wtn . . .	
	ymğy ludm rbt	
	wudm [tr]rt	

Then, at the su[n] on the third,
 They co[m]e to the shrine of Asherah of Tyre
 Even that of Elath of Sidon
 There [Ke]ret the Noble vo[ws] . . .
 He marches a day and a second . . .
 He arrives at Udum the Great,
 Even Udum the [Gr]and (Ginsberg)

In l. 194, *tlkn ym wtn*, the author uses a plural verb which has as its subject Keret and his army. *tlkn* seems to be the appropriate choice since the preceding lines deal with the vastness of the army, descriptions of the volunteers and similes which enhance the images of innumerable masses joining to march in Keret's army. But starting with l. 195 and continuing for the rest of the column and into the next one, the subject is Keret.³⁹ There has been a change in subject and focus between *tlkn* of l. 194 and *ym[ğyn]* of l. 197. The change from *t* to *y* preformative is not arbitrary but rather reflects this switch from a plural to a singular subject. Ll. 195-206 relate an incident on the way to Udum in which Keret is the only character. We assume that his army is still with him but since they play no role in this episode, they receive no attention. The author centers the spotlight on Keret by employing singular verbs.⁴⁰ After this incident, the story continues along the lines foretold at the beginning of the tablet. The author, either consciously choosing to keep the focus on Keret because of his actions upon his arrival at Udum or unconsciously continuing because of the preceding incident, retains the use of singular verbs. In l. 207 he uses the verb *ylk* and in l. 210 the verb *ymğy*. Of course Keret is not the only one to arrive but his arrival is explicitly stated while the arrival of

37 Dietrich, Loretz and Sanmartin in *KTU, AOAT* 24/1, 65 claim that $y^c b\dot{s}$ is a scribal error for $y\dot{l}b\dot{s}$. They then suggest that a repetition of $y\dot{l}b\dot{s}$ does not belong, the *y* prefix of the verb should have been attached to *brkn*; *ybrkn*, and the rest of the verb; $\dot{l}b\dot{s}$ should have been erased. In *UF* 10 (1979) their opinion is slightly altered. They assume that the verb, $y\dot{l}b\dot{s}$ of the first colon applies to the second as well and the whole verb of the second colon including the prefix is a mistake and should be eliminated.

38 For this restoration see Herdner and Virolleaud in A. Herdner, *CTCA*, 65. For the restoration *ym[ğyn]* see Ginsberg, *LKK*, 18.

39 For an example of *ymğyn* as a 3rd masculine singular see II D II: 24, 25 = I D: 170-72, *dn il bth ymğyn* // *yštql dnil lhklh*. For examples of *ymğy* as 3rd masculine singular see I AB I: 60 and II D V: 25.

40 I would like to thank Prof. Edward L. Greenstein for pointing out to me that all the verbs in this section need not be 3rd masculine plural. Others who take these verbs as singulars are Gibson, *CML*, 87, 88; Aistleitner, *WUS*, 88, 191; and De Langhe, *Le Muséon* 59 (1946).

the rest of the contingent is merely understood. Accordingly, *ylk* and *ymgy* are more likely to be singular than plural.

The examples listed above show that there are numerous clear cases of *t* preformative 3rd masculine plural. The examples of 3rd masculine plural with *y* preformative are few in comparison and inconclusive. This evidence dispels both the commonly held opinion that the 3rd masculine plural prefixed verb is formed equally well with either *t* or *y* preformative and the uncommon opinion that a *t* preformative 3rd masculine plural does not even exist.⁴¹ In addition, I suggest that the above material supports the proposal that the 3rd masculine plural prefixed form of the Ugaritic verb is formed only by preformative *t*.⁴² Any examples of *y* preformative are suspect and should be scrutinized for alternative interpretations.

41 Gibson, *CML*, 41, n. 5. He writes "It is not certain whether forms like *tph* and *tphn* accompanying masculine plural (or dual) nouns should be regarded as variants of the regular 3rd masculine plural (or dual) forms with *y*- prefix or as 3rd feminine singular forms with the subject nouns being treated as collective." Moran, *JCS* 2 (1948), 243 also questioned the existence of *t* preformative 3rd masculine plural in Canaanite Amarna but he retracted this opinion in 1951. See Moran, *JCS* 5 (1951), 33-35. It is hard to believe that Gibson in 1978 still hesitates to accept a 3rd masculine plural with preformative *t*.

42 I would like to thank Prof. Anson Rainey of Tel Aviv University for a letter confirming his publicly stated opinion that the 3rd masculine plural Ugaritic verb is formed only by preformative *t*.