Three Religiously Themed Philistine Texts in Alphabetic Akkadian (1160-960 BCE)

By David D. Olmsted (August 27, 2020, Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 4.0 License)

Abstract

Three previously untranslated Philistine (Sea Peoples) texts are translated in the empire language of Alphabetic Akkadian/Aramaic. Their script style is in the Minoan lineage which began with the Phaistos Disk and continued on with Linear A. Unlike those texts these texts are now fully alphabetic meaning their inner word signs are consonants followed by arbitrary vowel sounds. These are the earliest readable linear texts of the Iron Age so far discovered. The texts are from Qubur al-Walaydah, Gath (Tel es-Safi), and Izbet Sartah. They all deal with religion indicating that local Pagan temples were responsible for maintaining alphabetic literacy through the dark age of the Bronze Age economic collapse. Izbet Sarteh is discussing the reasons for a local drought around the time Shechem and Shiloh were destroyed suggesting a drought was the root cause of that conflict.

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1.0 Methodology

These translations are done according to the scholar’s standard using the Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020). The scholar’s standard is:

1. The goal of translation is to transmit the intent of the writer, not to spin the text for any other purpose.
2. Letter assignments must be consistent and cannot be deliberately mis-assigned to make a word.
3. No consonant letters or word starting vowels can be added, subtracted, or shifted in the text to make a word.
4. Each ancient word is assigned one and only one English word or phrase for its translation. The only exception may be the word’s grammatical context. Semantic context (sentence meaning) is no reason to change word definition. If the ancients used one word then so should we. Allowing multiple word definitions just leads to translation bias.
5. Proper names are the last resort because they can represent any letter pattern and are a wild card. Names do not represent a translation.
6. The lexicon providing word meanings must be based upon numerous independent texts with many being long texts.

The letters are assigned using the letter assignment chart shown below in section 2.0. The words are assigned using the Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted 2020)

Making sense of any ancient text requires the reader to enter into the worldview of the times. The pre-classical worldview is significantly different from that of the classical era due to the cultural processes of lordification and dualism which arose due to empire building.

Lordification is the process which caused deities to be perceived as capricious ruling lords, that is, as more male and more human (“living gods”) instead of being labels for divine power clusters which could be optionally personified (perceptheism). Lord gods came to be feared because of their human-like capriciousness so they now had to be appeased with flattery, praise, bribes, sacrifices, and so on. Child sacrifice was a consequence of lordification.

Dualism is the mental habit of perceiving the world in binary terms of good versus evil (us versus them) instead of in triplet terms of a balance point between two extremes. Dualism originated with Zoroastrianism and spread worldwide because empires loved it. Their rulers could claim to be the good guys fighting evil (the neighboring people). Dualism is what caused the material world to be considered evil compared to the good divine realm. This produced the idealization of celibacy and led to the unsolvable conundrum of how a good god could create an evil world.

The pre-classical worldview is summarized in the chart of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm below. Notice that the deities are evenly balanced between male and female because genders were assigned to different yet complimentary roles in a causal network. The masculine represented the causal flow like water or electricity while the feminine represented the guidance of that flow analogous to a river bank or an electrical wire.
Ancient Pagan Paradigm

In ancient times, all change on earth was thought to originate in the divine realm surrounding earth. The upper sphere (day-time sky) was masculine while the lower sphere (night-time sky) was feminine. The dark lower sphere was home to dead animal and human spirits. Only later with lordification did the whole divine realm become masculine (Greek Uranus) while the earth itself became feminine (Greek Gaia). The change powers were divided into the two classes as listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life-Growth Powers</th>
<th>Motion Powers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Powers which form and grow animal and plant life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Divine causal fluid for opening its objects: fertility fluid (correspondences: red blood, milk)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- By Greek times these feminine powers have been mixed in with the motion powers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fertility-Fluid Creation (male)</th>
<th>Home Creation (female)</th>
<th>Wind-Spirit Creation (male, astrological powers)</th>
<th>Home Creation (female, emotional powers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Anu (day time upper sky dome)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Erishkigal (Ningal = lady of the chalice corresponding to night sky lower sphere)</td>
<td><strong>Mesopotamian:</strong> Su - full moon, definer of time, shepherd of the stars, astrological powers (Sin, Suen = powers of Su)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Ningirsu (lady of purification)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Alu (Alohim, ‘elohim = “powers of Alu,” Allah = “power of Alu”)</td>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Theo</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Su</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Mesu (the pure night-time enabling place, home of ancestral spirits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Nu</td>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Selene (“powers of Selu”</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Tem, Atum?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mesopotamian:</strong> Atu (Combined sun and bull)</td>
<td><strong>Mesopotamian:</strong> Inanna, Ishtar (crescent moon)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Mu’ulil (one who sprouts wind), Enlil (lord of breath)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Sud (SUD3 - speaker), Ninlil (lady of wind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Atu – light: Hu, Shamash (sun); chaotic, dark: Aḫḫāzu, Ba’al (storm bull)</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Ayu – dark: “Reed Boat” (crescent moon), Thahanu (“grinder”)</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Thesu (wind)</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Apu (cloud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Apollo (“life-empowered Atu”) - Helios (sun “life-empowered Hu”) and Zeus (storm bull)</td>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Artemis (“powers of Ayu”), Artemis (“Controller’s enabling magic”)</td>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Thoth</td>
<td><strong>Greek:</strong> Hermes &amp; Hermes as hermaphrodite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Horus (Montu), Amun; Re (sun), Seth (storm bull)</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Hathor, Amaunet, Nephthys</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Wepi, Thoth? (communication)</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Wepwawet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object Revealing (male)</th>
<th>Flow Gating (female)</th>
<th>Motion Revealing</th>
<th>Emotion Gating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Nudimmud, Enki (lord of earth), Ea</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Nunu, Ninki (lady of earth)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Pabilsag (one who sprouts what’s inside)</td>
<td><strong>Sumerian:</strong> Sud (SUD3 - speaker), Ninlil (lady of wind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Ea, E’u, I’u, Yahu (Yahweh = power of Yahu)</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Utu</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Zigu (breath)</td>
<td><strong>Medit:</strong> Apu (cloud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Osiris, Pe</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Isis, Pet</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Shu</td>
<td><strong>Egyptian:</strong> Tefnut, Wadjet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 2.0 Western Mediterranean Iron Age Letter Styles (Chart 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Name: Semitic Greek</th>
<th>Bronze Age (Serabit el-Khadim)</th>
<th>Sea People (Izbet Sartah)</th>
<th>Phoen. (Sidon)</th>
<th>Israelite (Gezer)</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Name: Semitic Greek</th>
<th>Bronze Age (Serabit el-Khadim)</th>
<th>Sea People (Izbet Sartah)</th>
<th>Phoen. (Sidon)</th>
<th>Israelite (Gezer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aleph Alpha</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mem Mu</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Bet Beta</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Nun Nu</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Gimel Gamma</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Samek Xi</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dalet Delta</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>IY</td>
<td>Yod Iota</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>He Epsilon</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>'</td>
<td>Ayin Omicron</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Het Eta</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>Š</td>
<td>Sade San</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Zayin Zeta</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pe Pi</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Teth Theta</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Qop Qoppa</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Vav Upsilon</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>R*</td>
<td>Resh Ro</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Kap Kappa</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Shin Sigma</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lamed Lamda</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Taw Tau</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
<td>🎒</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ordered according to letter list on the Izbet Ostracon.

*The letter “R” does not exist in the Izbet Ostracon letter list.

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3.0 Background – Iron Age Revival

These texts are the earliest linear texts from the Iron Age found anywhere and they are from the Egyptian labeled “Sea Peoples” who are also called the Philistines in the Hebrew Scriptures. The texts date to between 1160 and 960 BCE which is during and after the great drought which led to the systemic collapse of the Bronze Age economy. This first Iron Age script and their Akkadian language is a direct descendent of the Bronze Age Minoan Phaistos Disk (1700 BCE) and later Linear A texts (Olmsted June 2020, July 2020). These texts were scratched or written in ink on pottery shards and pieces of wood instead of being neatly inscribed on stone as most surviving examples would be later.

This Minoan connection of these first Iron Age alphabetic texts correlates well with a recent DNA study (Feldman and all, 2019) indicating that the Philistines were mostly European in origin. This DNA study compared 10 Bronze and Iron Age individuals from the Philistine city of Ashkelon. They found that the early Iron Age population of this city was genetically distinct from the Bronze Age people yet this genetic difference was no longer detectible in the later Iron Age population. This study also shows that empire languages like Akkadian are not restricted to any one ethnic group because Akkadian originated in Mesopotamia. Just like the empire language of English today, Akkadian was spoken and written by many different ethnic groups.

Like most regions of the earth, correlating the archaeology of the southern levant with carbon 14 dating and absolute dating has been undergoing some debate. The best correlation with linguistics is the chronology proposed by Amihai Mazar in 2014. This chronology is reproduced below:

![Figure 1. Lake bottom Core sample data from the Sea of Galilee. In historical times it shows two major droughts. The 50 year long Great Drought of 1180 to 1140 BCE (Iron Age 1 period) which ended the Bronze Age (called the "Late Bronze Climate Crisis" in the chart) and the 10-year long Elijah drought of 850 BCE. The yellow gives the tree pollen level while the green gives the non-tree pollen level. (Langut and Finkelsein 2013)](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Mazar’s Date</th>
<th>Simplified</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iron 1A</td>
<td>1200–1140/1130</td>
<td>1190-1140</td>
<td>Great Drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron 1B</td>
<td>1150/40–ca. 980</td>
<td>1140-980</td>
<td>Recovery from Great Drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron 2A</td>
<td>980–ca. 840/830</td>
<td>980-840</td>
<td>Prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron 2B</td>
<td>840/830–732/701</td>
<td>840-732/701</td>
<td>Elijah drought to Assyrian Invasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron 3A</td>
<td>732/701 BCE–605/586</td>
<td>701-605/586</td>
<td>Assyrian Invasion to Babylonian Invasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron 3B</td>
<td>605/586–520</td>
<td>586-520</td>
<td>Babylonian Subjugation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.0 Qubur Drinking Bowl Text Supports Life-Growth Priestesses and Priests - 1160 BCE (Levant Text 4)

This text is promoting the activities of the life-growth priestesses in regards to crop fertility as opposed to the magic crafters of the motion powers. This text is in Alphabetic Akkadian and it is etched around the rim of a drinking bowl which is indicated by its simple straight rim. It has not been translated until now. It has three sections divided by two vertical lines. It reads left to right:

1. To activate the fertility-fluids sprout the nourishing |
2. Those are opened by the life-growth priestesses |
3. To activate the life-growth-powers ...

Fertility fluids are generated by Alu in the divine realm above, transported to earth through the network of Atu and Ayu where it opens up invisable platonic life forms to be filled with earthly nourishment with the power of Yahu. This is the scheme of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm.

This text is stating that to increase the land’s fertility those openings need to be “sprouted.” The analogy is that of planting and tending a seed in order to get it growing. From other texts this “sprouting” function is the role of the feminine power, Utu, of the manifestation layer of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. Her complementary masculine power of Yahu then makes the form visable by manifesting it. While “Utu” is the Mediterranean name for this power the Egyptian name is “Isis” while the Sumerian name is “Nunu” having the epithet Ninki (“lady of the earth”).

The text nexts starts to talk about the life-growth powers then breaks off. Presumably it would list the function of the masculine power of Yahu and his priests.
This bowl was found during a 1977 rescue dig by Rudolf Cohen at a small 2 hectare (80 meters in diameter) settlement at the head of Nahal Besor (Wadi Gaza) (fig. 3). This location suggests that it was originally a military outpost and trading center between the Egyptian controlled coast and the hill people before the Philistines took it over. It was built about 50 years before the great drought.

This bowl dates to the Iron Age 1A period (Lehmann and all, 2010) which ranges from 1190 - 1140 BCE which is the period of the 50 year great drought which ended the Bronze Age. While the archeological remains at the beginning of this period are qualitatively poor like this bowl the end of this period was a time of prosperity such that they were able to import overseas trade goods and create more colorful pottery (the bichrome ware).

This small settlement had a central building which was a monumental mud-brick building having outer walls of 1.5 to 2 meters and standing two stories tall. (Lehmann and all, 2010). The floors were cobble and earth. Yet sometime after the Sea People took over the area an earthquake occurred causing the walls to fall inward. This debris preserved the artifacts then in the building. Besides various types of bowls a flint scythe was found with a shiny gloss on the blade indicating it had been used in nearby agriculture production. This shows that agriculture was now the main focus of the Philistine settlement which in turn explains the focus of the text. After the earthquake a poor squatter’s settlement was built on top of the ruins.

**Translation Justification (Levant Text 4)**

**Sentence 1 (left to right)**

Clause 1

1. Shin (Ṣ)
2. Mem (M)

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. Ṣ [Akkadian ṣu] activity (noun), active (adjective), activating-potential, to activate (verb) – often an epithet for the motion or motion potential of fertility fluids which must be activated by the motion class of powers.
2. **M [Akkadian mû]** fertility-fluid (noun), fertility-fluid (adj) - the fluid of the life-growth class of divine powers which flows through the life-growth network to eventually open object images on earth.

(imperative form)
- To activate the fertility-fluids

Clause 2

1. Gimel (G) Ayin (') - ayin is partly destroyed
2. Bet (B)
3. Line (|)

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. **G' [Akkadian gâ'u]** sprouting (participle), to sprout (verb) – the process of creating new plants and divine network links
2. **B [Akkadian bu]** nourishment, nourishment-items (noun), nourishing (participle), nourishing (adj), to nourish (verb) - To be manifested the invisible “platonic” object forms of living things must be filled with nourishment. At the most fundamental level this nourishment is the amorphous dust of matter although this dust may be transported as formed food objects. The image form is opened by the feminine manifesting power under the influence of divine powers higher up in the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. The image form is then filled by the masculine power which is labeled Yahu in the Mediterranean. The word “Yahweh” literally means “power of Yahu.”
3. Line: Sentence divider

(imperative form)
- sprout the nourishment |

Sentence 2 (left to right)

Clause 1

1. Aleph (A)
2. Pe (P) – this letter pe is similar to the pe on left side of the Serabît el-Khâdim sphinx
3. Alep (A) Beta (B)
4. |

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. **A [Akkadian ā]** that thing, this thing, those things, these things, their things (noun), that, this, those, these, their (adjective) – the “thing” is a wild card for whatever thing is being referenced.
2. **P [Akkadian pû]** opener (noun), to open-up to, to open-up, to make openings (verb), open (adjective), opening, opening-up (participle) - often an epithet for the opening up of invisible object images by directed fertility fluids for filling up with matter (nourishment). Fertility fluids are directed by Ayu, opened by Utu, and filled in (manifested) by Yahu
3. **AB [Akkadian abu]** life-growth--priest (noun) - not a magic worker but an agent of the life-growth class of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm who seek to enable those powers instead changing
the divine network directly. The life-growth powers direct the fertility fluids through the divine network to open object images to be filled with earthly nourishment or dust. These images would later be called “Platonic” images. With the growth of dualism life-growth-priests became the good priests who were also labeled as “fathers.” Compare to A’ (“motion-priest”)

4. **Line:** Sentence divider

(ongoing form)

- Those are being opened by the life-growth priests

**Sentence 3 (left to right)**

Clause 1

1. Shin (§)
2. Dalet (D) – Other possibilities are Het and He but these have cross lines which should be observed. Consequently, this has to be a D in the Serabat el-Khadim style.

**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. **§ [Akkadian šu]** activity (noun), active (adjective), activating-potential, to activate (verb) – often an epithet for the motion or motion potential of fertility fluids which must be activated by the motion class of powers.
2. **D [Akkadian dû]** life-growth realm, life-growth-items, life-growth powers (du + i) (noun), life-empowered (adj), to life-empower (verb) - One of the two main classes of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. This word represents the Life-growth powers in both their masculine and feminine forms. This power is responsible for the creation and growth of plants and animals. With lordification this word became the “Divine-One” or “God.” Life-growth priests were called AB from abu. (compare to AL meaning Alu as the masculine life-growth source power. UM - bull’s anarchic storm powers of the life-growth class, EM - powers of human authority for commanding divine birds, and A’ representing all the powers of the motion class.

(Imperative form)

- To activate the life-growth-powers ...
5.0 Gath Graffito Claims Life-Growth Priests are Making Them Poor - 1000 BCE (Levant Text 9)

This previously untranslated Alphabetic Akkadian text was found at Tell es-Safi which was the Philistine city of Gath. This shard is from a holding bowl with a smooth red slip. It reads (right to left):

1. Life-growth-priests are making us poor |

(two 2nd sentences are possible due to it being incomplete)

- On account of the house ...
- On account of magical nourishing ...

The second sentence seeks to explain why the life growth priests are making people poor but it is incomplete and this makes its sentence structure uncertain. The first possibility talks about the “house” which is an epithet for the night sky and thus would blame astrology. The second possibility is stating the problem is with the metaphysical platonic form nourishing process and thus would blame the manifestation powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm.

This inscription was first reported in 2006 and published in 2008. It is on a type of pottery which belonged to the time between the late Iron Age I to early Iron IIA. This dates it to about 1000 BCE. Gath was the reported home of Goliath (1 Samuel 17).

It was found in an industrial/commercial area as a cast-away on the floor of a heavily used room. Based upon the number of bones on the floor this room seems to have been a food preparation area. The bowl is a red slipped holding bowl as indicated by its flat vertical rim (carinated rim). Whatever was put into the bowl was meant to stay there until dug out. The thin red slip allowed the etched letters to appear with little effort and red is the color corresponding to blood, the fluid of the life-growth powers.

Translation Justification (Levant Text 9)

Sentence 1

1. Aleph (A) Bet (B)
2. Kap (K) Taw (T)
3. Line
1. **AB** [Akkadian *abu*] life-growth-priest (noun) – not a magic worker but an agent of the life-growth class of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm who seek to enable those powers instead changing the divine network directly. The life-growth powers direct the fertility fluids through the divine network to open object images to be filled with earthly nourishment or dust. These images would later be called “Platonic” images. With the growth of dualism life-growth-priests became the good priests who were also labeled as “fathers.” Compare to A’ (“motion-priest”)

2. **KT** [Akkadian *katû*] poor (noun), to make poor (verb)

3. **Line:** (sentence divider)

Life-growth-priests are making us poor |

**Sentence 2**

1. Kap (K)
2. Bet (B)
3. Taw (T)

**Figure 5.** The north edge of the room where the shard was found showing its strata. To the right of the wall is the little alcove which the room had. The shard was found in strata A3 between its two floors A3b and A3a. This room had two floors because it was heavily used due to it being a food preparation area (lots of bones were found). Above strata A3 is a city destruction stratum dating to about 800 BCE (Maeir and all’s figure 4, 2008).

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**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. **K** [Akkadian *ku, ki*] from, on account of, due to, involved with (preposition), are from, are involved with, is due to (verb) – a more general concept than in English referring to something that is from or for someone else.

2. **BT** [Akkadian *bētu, bītu*] house (noun) – often an epithet for the astrological motion powers of the night sky which is the roof over the earth. A nest is bird house so see B’ meaning “nest.”

   - On account of the house ...
1. \textbf{K [Akkadian ku, ki]} from, on account of, due to, involved with (preposition), are from, are involved with, is due to (verb) – a more general concept than in English referring to something that is from or for someone else.

2. \textbf{B [Akkadian bu]} nourishment, nourishment-items (noun), nourishing (participle), nourishing (adj), to nourish (verb) - To be manifested the invisible “platonic” object forms of living things must be filled with nourishment. At the most fundamental level this nourishment is the amorphous dust of matter although this dust may be transported as formed food objects. The image form is opened by the feminine manifesting power under the influence of divine powers higher up in the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. The image form is then filled by the masculine power which is labeled Yahu in the Mediterranean. The word “Yahweh” literally means “power of Yahu.”

3. \textbf{T [Akkadian tû]} magic, magic-crafter (noun), magical (adjective), to craft magic (verb) – Magic in ancient times was all about generating the underlying forces causing change and motion. The magic of the life-growth class of powers involved the opening of ideal images to be filled by amorphous matter (nourishment). The magic of the motion class had two divisions: emotional and astrological. Emotions underlie human activities and via extrapolation other activities as well. The motions of the heavenly bodies were seen as responsible for seasonal changes and via extrapolation to other various event related to that like the cycles of life (fate), flooding, drought, and pestilence. Compare to MG meaning “magi.”

- On account of the magical nourishing ..... 

6.0 Izbet Sartah Ostracon Blames Drought on Envy, a Magical Phenomenon ~ 1000 BCE (Levant Text 6)

The Izbet Sartah Ostracon (pottery shard) seems to be a priestly student exercise. The first lines were written by the teacher which the student probably had to read back. The student in a slightly different letter style then imperfectly added an abc list as the last line.

Yet the lines written by the teacher explains that once again emotional magical feelings are interfering with the workings of the life-growth powers. This ancient conception of magic based upon generated feelings is unavoidable. This shows that the magic of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm is based upon a different conception of reality (worldview) than the voluntary mystical incantations of the later classical era.

The inscription reads by line (left to right):

1. (teacher) Motion-powers are exciting \[missing \text{adjective}\] Atu. Motion-powers ...

2. In the usual way the magic is interfering with the divine threads of Hu. Atu is going without Ayu. \[missing \text{word}\] is coming near the silver-vessel ......


4. (teacher) Envy detaches the threads which reveal Hu’s fertility-fluids. Atu is going without awareness. Thread elimination is squeezing the grazing. The motion-powers by not having friends are going without the divine-birds for the life-growth-powers.

5. (student) A B G D E Ḫ Z Ṭ W K L M N S I ‘Š P Q Š T (missed the R, conflated P and Q signs, and reversed signs for B and L)
Figure 6. The Izbet Sartah Ostracon with drawing above. Red letter assignments by Olmsted (from Maeir and all, 2008)
A local drought seems to be happening and this teacher is blaming the emotional magic of envy for causing it by blocking the fertility-fluids. Along with the astrological powers, emotional powers were thought to be a source of all motion. Together they belonged to the motion power class of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm (see chart in Methodology). These motion powers moved the fertility fluids through the life-growth network from the divine realm down to earth. If the fluid flow was blocked then the network channels or links were effectively detached.

The fertility fluids were a component of the god Hu’s power. This fertility-fluid power opened up the invisible platonic images of living things allowing them to be filled with “nourishment” (dust) from the earthly realm.

Emotional magic from humans on earth competed and/or complemented the life-growth power’s own network editing represented by the crescent moon goddess Ayu who was the feminine connective power of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. Both power classes used divine birds to do their editing. Owls like the Athenian owl added and opened network channels while eagle-vultures trimmed or blocked those channels. The Greek word “Athena” seems to come from Akkadian and mean the “power of Ayu” as “Ayu-na.”

The god Hu is the orderly sun form of Atu of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm who also has a chaotic rainstorm form which is given the Akkadian epithet of “lord” or ba’al” in the Hebrew Scriptures.

This pottery shard (ostracon) was found during the 1976-1978 excavation at Izbet Sartah which is located in what is now in Rosh-Ha’ayin, a far eastern suburb of Tel Aviv. This was the border between the coastal plain and the hill country (fig 3). Its site overlooked the Nahal (Wadi) Raba valley which is a major tributary to the Yarkon River leading to the coast. This inscription was first published in 1977 by the excavation’s lead excavator Moshe Kochavi (Kochavi 1977). The shard dimensions are 16 x 9 cm and it has never been translated.

The small settlement at Izbet Sartah was sort lived only being in existence during the eras of Iron Age 1A (1190-1140 BCE) and 1B (1140-980 BCE). It only has 3 strata. The lowest strata was settled by the Philistines and was composed of small wooden or mud brick dwellings with adjacent storage pits. After the great drought ended and prosperity was returning these poor dwellings were cleared away to make room for the stone 4-room house located at the center of the settlement. While typically thought of as Israelite this style of house seems to have been a standard style for the whole area.
The stone house was surrounded by dozens of smaller poorer buildings. This lasted until the settlement was temporarily abandoned around 1020 BCE for a time long enough for the stone house to fall into disrepair. The last phase of settlement did not last long but its people were able to return and repair the four-room house until it was permanently abandoned around 980 BCE.

This abandonment suggests that some conflict forced its people to flee. This conflict would have been the same one which led to the complete destruction of Shechem and nearby Shiloh by fire around 1000 BCE by an unknown group. At the time Shechem was the ruling city of the hill country based upon its size and common pottery culture (Finkelstein, 2019). The people of Israel were these hill people but they were also something more. The word “Israel” means the “righteous of Alu” as IŠR-AL in Akkadian. Alu was the source power for all the life-growth powers. This indicates they collectively had rejected the magical motion power half of the traditional Ancient Pagan Paradigm and devoted themselves exclusively to the life growth powers. Thus they would not have written the Izbet Sartah Ostracon which views magic as problematic but unavoidable because it is emotion based.

**Previous Translation Attempts**

Scholars trying to translate this inscription assuming it was Hebrew have been puzzled. In 1978, Joseph Navah claimed that the lines in this inscription:

> “do not seem to comprise a text in any Semitic language. For the time being the ostracon can best be described as the scratching of some semi-literate person, who after writing the abecedary not very successfully, merely scratched an agglomeration of random letters.”
>
> (Naveh 1978)

In 1980 Frank Cross gave this opinion:

> Many of its problems will be solved only as the corpus of 13th-11th century B.C. swells with future finds. Meanwhile the ostracon will stimulate lively discussion and disagreement, as the papers of Demsky (1977: 14-27) and Navah (1978: 31-35) demonstrate. The chief barrier to precise analysis of the text is the lack of skill on the part of the scribe – if he may be dignified by such a title. Naveh is surely correct in describing the ostracon as “the scratching of some semi-literate person, who after writing the abecedary, not very successfully, merely scratched an agglomeration of random letters” (Naveh 1978: 31). The sherd is, I believe, simply a learner’s practice tablet..... (Cross, 1980)

**Translation Justification (Levant Text 4)**

**Top Line**

Clause1

1. Aleph (A) Ayin (ʼ)
2. Shin (Ṣ) Resh (R) Het (Ḥ)
3. Aleph (A) Taw (Ṭ)
4. [1 or 2 destroyed letters]
1. **A’ or ‘W or AW or ‘ [Akkadian a’û]** motion space, motion-powers (a’u + i) (noun) – One of the two classes of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. Motion powers cause all movement on earth and in the divine network’s fertility fluids. Its source deity is the masculine full moon Su. Its sub-powers are: IM - emotional magic powers and IR - astrological powers. Their respective priests are: NŠ - "emotional energy-raiser" and AMR - "seer" or "astrologer." The other class is the life-growth powers (D from du). Compare to EM – human powers of lordly authority which can command the divine birds. Also, the ayin letter sign by itself as the moon or as the moon traveling along the night sky symbolically represents the motion powers allowing the sign to be used in isolation.

2. **ṢRH [Akkadian ṣarāḫu]** excitement (noun), to excite (verb)

3. **AT [Akkadian atu]** Atu (noun) - life-growth connective god of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm representing the fertility fluid flow through the divine network. It literally means “that which is magical” from A.T as that.magical. When the flow is orderly and constant, he is in his healing sun form called Hu and Shamash from Š-M-Š (active - fertility-fluid – activity. When the flow is chaotic or anarchic, he is in his storm form represented by the Bull called Ba’al meaning “Great-One.” Aḥḥāzu is also the storm form meaning “that which eliminates Hu” from A-Ḥ-Z. Atu’s storm form is also the Greek Zeus from Z.Š or Zū.Šu meaning elimination.activity. Atu’s healing sun form is Greek Apollo coming from Atu.alu to Ato.alo meaning "life-empowered Atu." Both rain and sunlight are needed for plant growth. Its sub-powers are: UM - bull’s storm powers and NM - the sun’s healing powers.

4. [ ] (missing adjective)

(ongoing form)

- Motion-powers are exciting [ ] Atu

Clause 2

1. Aleph (A) Ayin (’)
2. ....

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. **A’ or ‘W or AW or ‘ [Akkadian a’û]** motion space, motion-powers (a’u + i) (noun) – One of the two classes of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. Motion powers cause all movement on earth and in the divine network’s fertility fluids. Its source deity is the masculine full moon Su. Its sub-powers are: IM - emotional magic powers and IR - astrological powers. Their respective priests are: NŠ - "emotional energy-raiser" and AMR - "seer" or "astrologer." The other class is the life-growth powers (D from du). Compare to EM – human powers of lordly authority which can command the divine birds. Also, the ayin letter sign by itself as the moon or as the moon traveling along the night sky symbolically represents the motion powers allowing the sign to be used in isolation.

- [ ] motion-powers ....

Second Line

First Clause

1. Sade (Š)
1. Š [Akkadian šū] corresponding-thing, same-thing, usual-way, same, it, she, her, he, him, they, them (noun), its, his, her, their, similar, same (adjective), to do the same, have similar (verb) – a more generic pronoun than is found in English. Pronouns have the form “same as [name].” English has special pronouns for people. In Akkadian the “same” construction is often indicated by the helper word “that.”

2. T [Akkadian tû] magic, magic-crafter (noun), magical (adjective), to craft magic (verb) – Magic in ancient times was all about generating the underlying forces causing change and motion. The magic of the life-growth class of powers involved the opening of ideal images to be filled by amorphous matter (nourishment). The magic of the motion class had two divisions: emotional and astrological. Emotions underlie human activities and via extrapolation other activities as well. The motions of the heavenly bodies were seen as responsible for seasonal changes and via extrapolation to other various event related to that like the cycles of life (fate), flooding, drought, and pestilence. Compare to MG meaning “magi.”

3. N’ [Akkadian ne’u] interference (noun), to interfere with (verb)

4. Q [Akkadian qû] threads, divine threads (noun) - channels for the fertility fluids

5. Ḫ [Akkadian Ḫu] god Hu – the masculine deity which represents Atu’s healing sun form powers (light, heat) as opposed to his chaotic storm form powers (rain). Dagon (DGN) meaning “constant divine power” is an epithet for Hu as is Helu (HL) meaning “bright-one.”

(ongoing form)

• In the usual way the magic is interfering with the divine threads from Hu

Second Clause

1. Aleph (A) Taw (T)
2. Lamed (L)
3. Aleph (A) Yod (I or Y)

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. AT [Akkadian atu] Atu (noun) - life-growth connective god of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm representing the fertility fluid flow through the divine network. It literally means “that which is magical” from A.T as that.magical. When the flow is orderly and constant, he is in his healing sun form called Hu and Shamash from $-M-$ (active - fertility-fluid – activity. When the flow is chaotic or anarchic, he is in his storm form represented by the Bull called Ba’al meaning “Great-One.” Aḥḥāzu is also the storm form meaning “that which eliminates Hu” from A-Ḥ-Z. Atu’s storm form is also the Greek Zeus from Z.$ or Zū.Ṣu meaning elimination.activity. Atu’s healing sun form is Greek Apollo coming from Atu.alu to Ato.alo meaning "life-empowered Atu." Both rain and sunlight are needed for plant growth. Its sub-powers are: UM - bull’s storm powers and NM - the sun’s healing powers.

2. L [Akkadian la, lu] by not, without (preposition), to not have, are without (verb)
3. **AY, 'Y [Akkadian ayyu, ayu]** Ayu (noun) - feminine life-growth connective power and compliment power to masculine Atu. Ayu is and assembles the life-growth network through which flows the fertility fluids. She corresponds to the sky-shell. Her dark forms are “reed boat” (the dark spot of the crescent moon) and Thanu (meaning “grinder”). Ayu edits the divine network with divine birds, owls and eagle-vultures, a trait she share with magic-crafters. She is the Mesopotamian Ishtar, Sumerian Inanna, Egyptian Hathor, Greek Athena-Artemis. Athena seems to mean “powers of Ayu” as AY-N with /n/ being the plural power ending on a deity. Artemis derives from Ar-Tu-Mas from Aru-Tu-Maṣū to which means “The Controller’s-enabling-magic” where “controller” is an epithet for Ayu. The “setter” is another epithet because Ayu is responsible for setting or fixing the connections of the divine network at dusk.

(ongoing form)
- Atu is going without Ayu

**Third Clause**

1. [2 missing letters]
2. Teth (T) Ayin (ʼ)
3. Bet (B) Teth (Ṭ)
4. ....

**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. [missing word]
2. ʼṬ, ṬḤ [Akkadian ṭaʼu, ṭahu, ṭeḥu] near (noun), to come near to (verb)
3. ʼṬ [Akkadian baṭū] - some vessel made of copper or silver (noun)
4. ....

(ongoing form)
- [missing word] is coming near the silver-vessel ......

**Third Line**

**First Clause**

1. Pe (P) Qop {Q}
2. Qop (Q) Qop (Q)

**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. **PQ [Akkadian pāqu]** Thread-opener (noun) - an epithet for the owls which add threads (channels) to the divine network under various influences. From Pa.Qu meaning “Opener.Thread.”
2. **QQ [qaqû, quqû]** snake-bird (noun), snake-bird (adj) – an epithet for the masculine motion flow connective power which caused the fertility-fluids in the life-growth network to flow. The snake represented the powers of life while the bird represented the power of wind motion. This deity was Hermes in the Greek tradition and his symbol was the caduceus which was a staff having two intertwined snakes with bird wings on top.
(phrase)
- The snake-bird thread-openers

**Fourth Line**
First Clause

1. Qop (Q) Ayin (ʼ) – The Q is not shown in the drawing but it definitely shows in the photo.
2. Qop (Q)
3. Gimmel G) Lamed (L)

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. \(Q\) [Akkadian \(qi'u\)] envy (noun)
2. Q [Akkadian \(qû\)] threads, divine threads (noun) - channels for the fertility fluids
3. GL [Akkadian \(galû\)] detachment (noun), detaching (participle), to detach, to indicate detachment (verb)

(statement form)
- Envy detaches the threads

Second Clause

1. Nun (N)
2. Het (Ḫ)
3. Mem (M) – this letter is not drawn correctly as photo shows jagged wiggles indicating it is M

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. N [Akkadian \(nu\)] revelation, revealer (noun), revealing (adj), to reveal (if inanimate source), to say (animate source - direct speech), to ask (animate source - direct speech), revealing (adj) – A “revealer” is an epithet for Yahu who reveals or manifests the invisible object images.
2. Ḫ [Akkadian \(Ḫu\)] god Hu – the masculine deity which represents Atu's healing sun form powers (light, heat) as opposed to his chaotic storm form powers (rain). Dagon (DGN) meaning “constant divine power” is an epithet for Hu as is Helu (HL) meaning “bright-one.”
3. M [Akkadian \(mû\)] fertility-fluid (noun), fertility-fluid (adj) - the fluid of the life-growth class of divine powers which flows through the life-growth network to eventually open object images on earth.

(imperative form)
Which reveal Hu’s fertility-fluids

Third Clause

1. Aleph (A) Taw (T)
2. Lamed (L)
3. He (E or H) Dalet (D)
1. **AT [Akkadian atu]** Atu (noun) - life-growth connective god of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm representing the fertility fluid flow through the divine network. It literally means “that which is magical” from A.T as that.magical. When the flow is orderly and constant, he is in his healing sun form called Hu and Shamash from Š-M-Š (active - fertility-fluid – activity). When the flow is chaotic or anarchic, he is in his storm form represented by the Bull called Ba’al meaning “Great-One.” Aḫḫāzu is also the storm form meaning “that which eliminates Hu” from A-Ḫ-Z. Atu’s storm form is also the Greek Zeus from Z.Š or Zû.Šu meaning elimination.activity. Atu’s healing sun form is Greek Apollo coming from Atu.alu to Ato.alo meaning "life-empowered Atu." Both rain and sunlight are needed for plant growth. Its sub-powers are: UM - bull’s storm powers and NM - the sun’s healing powers.

2. **L [Akkadian la, lu]** by not, without (preposition), to not have, are without (verb)

3. **ED [Akkadian edû]** awareness (noun) are aware, to make aware, to be aware (verb)

(ongoing form)
Atu is going without awareness

**Fourth Clause**

1. Zayin (Z) Qop (Q)
2. Samak (S) Ayin (ʼ) – Samak not well drawn but in the drawing it is a rectangle with 3 central horizontal lines but a missing right vertical line. The 3 horizontal lines show it is an S
3. Taw (T) Ayin (ʼ)

**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. **Z [Akkadian zû]** elimination, eliminator (noun), eliminating (participle), eliminated (adj), to eliminate (verb)
2. **Q [Akkadian qû]** threads, divine threads (noun) - channels for the fertility fluids
3. **S’ [Akkadian se’u]** squeezing (participle), to squeeze (verb)
4. **T’, TW [Akkadian ta’û, tawû]** grazing-place or pasture (noun), grazing (participle), grazing (adj), to graze-together (verb) – the “pasture” is an epithet for the astrological night sky and its Shepherd, the full moon god Su.

(ongoing form)
Divine-thread elimination is squeezing the grazing

**Fifth Clause**

1. Aleph (A) Ayin (ʼ)
2. Lamed (L)
3. Aleph (A) Het (Ḫ)

**Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)**

1. **A’ or ‘W or AW or ‘ [Akkadian a’û]** motion space, motion-powers (a’u + i) (noun) – One of the two classes of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. Motion powers cause all movement on earth
and in the divine network’s fertility fluids. Its source deity is the masculine full moon Su. Its sub-powers are: IM - emotional magic powers and IR - astrological powers. Their respective priests are: NŠ - "emotional energy-raiser" and AMR - "seer" or "astrologer." The other class is the life-growth powers (D from du). Compare to EM – human powers of lordly authority which can command the divine birds. Also, the ayin letter sign by itself as the moon or as the moon traveling along the night sky symbolically represents the motion powers allowing the sign to be used in isolation.

2. L [Akkadian la, lu] by not, without (preposition), to not have, are without (verb)
3. AḪ [Akkadian aḫû] friend (noun), friendly (adj), to befriend (verb)

(ongoing form)
- The motion-powers by not having friends

Sixth Clause

1. Lamed (L)
2. Pe (P) Ayin (’)
3. Dalet (D)

Words from Alphabetic Akkadian Lexicon (Olmsted May 2020)

1. L [Akkadian la, lu] by not, without (preposition), to not have, are without (verb)
2. P’, P’Y, PY [Akkadian pa’ȗ, paya] divine-birds (noun), divine-bird (adjective) – the owls and eagle-vultures which edit the divine network (see AK - Aku owls, H’ - Hu’u owls, and R - eagle-vultures)
3. D [Akkadian dû] life-growth realm, life-growth-items, life-growth powers (du + i) (noun), life-empowered (adj), to life-empower (verb) - One of the two main classes of divine powers of the Ancient Pagan Paradigm. This word represents the Life-growth powers in both their masculine and feminine forms. This power is responsible for the creation and growth of plants and animals. With lordification this word became the “Divine-One” or “God.” Life-growth priests were called AB from abu. (compare to AL meaning Alu as the masculine life-growth source power. UM - bull’s anarchic storm powers of the life-growth class, EM - powers of human authority for commanding divine birds, and A’ representing all the powers of the motion class.

(ongoing form)
- are going without the divine-birds for the life-growth-powers

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