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THE LEXICAL FIELD OF THE ADJECTIVES OF "HEALTH" AND "ILLNESS" IN ANCIENT HEBREW: THE CASE OF TWO MARGINAL LEXEMES ('*MLL* AND ' *N(W)*Š) INSERTED IN THE NEGATIVE POLE OF LF[*]

In this study the essential theoretical foundation is to be found in modern functional languages.[1] There is no doubt that the Biblical Hebrew, as we see it, is characterized by a limited lexicon, which is also found for LF in object. Therefore, it is easy to declare that Biblical Hebrew should be broader in regard to lexical items than what is attested in the MT. The extra little epigraphic material, however, doesn't give witness to this.[2] For example, none of the lexemes related to the negative pole of the LF analyzed was found in the epigraphic material. The same situation is found in the Late Poetical Language of Ben Sira', although here it can be explained in light of didactical-sapiential current which is typical of this literature. Moreover it is not interested in corporal and organic matters. In this research, I employed the important works of scholars from the University of Florence in relation to the identification of twelve functional languages in ancient Hebrew. This application was perfected by I. Zatelli at the University of

Florence.[3] Studies conducted previously on the lexicon of ancient Hebrew took into account only some factors of analysis. J.F.A. Sawyer[4] for example, looked at important considerations on the context. The only method, according to the scholar, able to make the lexeme intelligible, which in itself had limitations, was a method that "dykes" contexts (identifiable by the criteria of "style" and "register") and does not create functional languages because important factors were absent. To speak of functional languages in terms of the methodology used in this study we must consider, in first instance, Coseriu:[5] "only in the functional languages is it possible to establish a linguistic structure".

The lexicon in this study is organized by "classes", meaning for class the whole of lexemes which are linked to a common distinguishing semantic trait. The first phase of the research included the collection and analysis of occurrences of related lexemes and every adjective has been studied through the occurrences in all

[*] *Legenda*: 0/1 = *qaṭal*; LF = Lexical Field; MT = Masoretic Text; EBH1 = Early Historical-Narrative Language; EBH2 = Early Poetical Language; LBH1 = Late Historical-Narrative Language; LBH2 = Late Peotical Language; LBH3 = Language of Job; MT= Masoretic Text; QH1 = Language of the Exegetical and Biblical Literature of Qumran; QH2 = Qumranic Poetical Language; QH3 = Language of the Exegetical and Biblical Literature of Qumran.

[1] For the methodology here used see E. Coseriu, *Sistema, norma y habla*, Montevideo 1952 [reprinted and traslated by R. Simone (ed.), Id., *Teoria del linguaggio e linguistica generale. Sette studi*. Bari 1971, pp. 19-103]; Id., *Structure lexicale et enseignement du vocabulaire*, in «Actes du premier colloque international de linguistique appliquée», Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de l'Université de Nancy (Annales de l'Est, Mémoire 31), Nancy, 26-31 octobre 1964, pp. 175-217; *Structure lexicale et einsegnement du vocabulaire*; *Les théories linguistiques et leur applications*, Nancy 1968, pp. 9-87; *Les structures lexématiques*, in W.T. Elwert (ed.), *Probleme der Semantik*, «Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur», Beiheft n.1 (1968), pp. 3-16; *Per una semantica diacronica strutturale*, in Coseriu,

Teoria, op. cit., pp. 225-279; *Solidarietà Lessicali*, in Coseriu, *Teoria*, op. cit., pp. 303-316; *El estudio funcional del vocabolario (compendio de lexematica)*, in *Gramática, semántica, universales. Estudios de linguistica funcional*, Madrid, pp. 206-238; M. Lynne Murphy, *Semantic Relations and the Lexicon. Antonymy,Synonymy, and Other Paradigms*,Cambridge 2003.

[2] J. Barr, *Hebrew Lexicography*, «Quaderni di Semitistica» 2 (1973), pp. 103-104.

[3] I. Zatelli, *L'ebraico biblico in alcune tendenze dell'attuale ricerca linguistica*, «Henoch» 1 (1979), pp. 246-276; Ead., *The Study of Ancient Hebrew Lexicon. Application of the Concepts of Lexical Field and Functional Language*, «Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt» (KUSATU) 5 (2004), pp. 129-159; Ead., *Functional Languages and Their Importance to the Semantics of Ancient Hebrew*, «Studies in Ancient Hebrew Semantics. Abr-Nahrain Supplement» 4 (1995), pp. 55-63.

[4] J.F.A. Sawyer, *Semantics in Biblical Research*, London 1972, p. 32.

[5] Coseriu in Conseil de la Coopération Culturelle…, 1967, pp. 9-87.

functional languages. We identified, lexeme by lexeme, and language by language, the morphological and syntactic characteristics, syntagmatic relations, classematic notes and, finally, the lexical solidarity. My research also made use of ancient Versions: Targum, LXX and Vulgate in order to establish an old intelligence of the lexemes analyzed. The dimensions of the lexemes in object will be studied during the second phase of the research.[6] The reconstruction of the meaning of each lexemes of the LF will be done by the identification of the distinctive traits, meaning for significance the result of complementary interaction of semantic traits themselves, by the studying of existing antonyms in LF. Thus understood, the significance "is to be considered as distinct from the "designation", i. e. the specific and contextual use of the significance". The second phase of the research led in first instance to identify, for each of the values of lexemes of LF, functional language by functional language as well, the dimension within which the single value is given. The third part consisted in the study of LF as a paradigm in each of the twel-ve functional languages in the *corpus* of ancient Hebrew. The definitions of lexemes and their dimension within the paradigmatic structures of the LF, are presented for each functional language, using the comparison of the data and their interpretation.[7]

The research in question looks at the occurrences of the lexical field of adjectives "healthy" and "ill" in the *corpus* of ancient Hebrew. Even though in the ancient Hebrew language there are many contrasting theories concerning the definition of the morphological identity of the adjective, in this study it is accepted the independence in Semitic languages, of the category "adjective".[8] Also we maintained the distinction between attributive and predicative function, although this distinction is not entirely functional for the reconstruction of the meaning because the border between these two functions is not always clearly identifiable.

In the following diagrams we will give for any functional language classematic analysis of the analyzed lexemes.

Funcional Languages	Classes	*’mll*	*’nwš*
EBH1	Inflicted pathological situations		*k’b* "painfulness" Is 17: 11; *mk’bk* "your painfulness Jer 30:15 *mkty* "my wound" Jer 15: 18; *mkt* "your wound" Jer 30:12; *mkwtyh* "his wound" Mic 1: 9
EBH2	Persons	*’ny* "I" Sl 6: 3	
	Organs	*lbtk* "your mind" Ez 16: 30	*hlb* "the mind" Jer 17: 9
	Chronological references		*ywm* "day" Jer 17: 16
	Agricultural Products	*yṣhr* "oil" Jl 1: 10	
LBH1	People	*Yehudim* "Jews" Neh 3: 34	
QH1	Persons	*’ny* "I" 4Q 177 4: 7	
LBH3	Inflicted pathological situations		*ḥṣy* "my arrow" but, poetically, "my wound" Job 34: 6
QH2	Pathological situations		*k’yb* "pain" 1QHa 13: 28; 1QHa 16: 28; 4Q429 (Hodayot c) f2: 11
QH3	People		*wlw’ hyh ’nwš* "without being sick" 1QS 7: 12

[6] H. Geckeler, *Strukturelle Semantik und Wortfeldtheorie*, München 1971 (trans. G. Klein, La semantica strutturale, Torino 1979, pp. 194-195).

[7] M. Di Giulio, *Classi e Variazioni d'uso nel paradigma degli aggettivi* yph e n‘ ym: *un esempio di analisi semantica nei* corpora *dell'ebraico antico*, «Materia Giudaica» IX/1-2 (2004), p. 137.

[8] See at least G. Amikam, *The Category ‘Adjec-*

The first lexeme to analyze: 'mll

In the languages of MT the lexeme *'mll* does not occur in the Early Historical-Narrative Language but for Early Poetical Language we have three occurrences of *'mll*, and it is possible to disambiguate the classes: "persons" (Ps 6: 3); "mind" (Ez 6: 30) and "agricultural products" (Jl 1: 10). For what concerns the paradigmatic placement, we have two dimensions: "corporal" and "mental". As a lexematic variant *'mll* is considered very marginal in the LF: the distinguishing characteristic is "degeneration", while the seme of field has a decidedly semantic secondary role. It neutralizes the distinctive features of "organic decay *stricto sensu*" widely seen below. In this functional language *'mll* is in gradual antonymy with *'nwš* (seriously ill).

In addition to class and dimension, *'mll*, "wasted away in relation to health" is characterized by the distinctive features: "corporal", qualified as "organic, individual and / or mental degeneration". The semes that constitute the lexeme and distinguish it from the others of its sub-group are, in the case Ez 16: 30, "abject", "con-sidered as relating to the individual psychology". In the mental class the lexeme *'mll* is differentiated for the distinctive features "mind abjection" and "perseverance in abject behaviour". For the Historical-Narrative Language we only have an occurrence for the adjective (Neh 3: 34) and here it is in polar antonymy with the verb 0/1 (הֲיַעַזְבוּ = are they perhaps fortifying?).

The context helps us (with the opposition of an organic and cultic regeneration) to understand better the significance.

Indeed in the case of language of Exegetical and Biblical Literature of Qumran we have the same situation for the lexeme analyzed. But here, while the characteristics and the dimensions of lexeme remain unchanged as indicative

of the *status* of organic and mental degeneration, it allows a possibility of mitigating the *yr't* Yhwh (reverence of Yhwh).[9]

In the QH3 language the lexeme *'mll* only occurs as a whit definite article,[10] the dimension is "mental" but the markedness[11] is in relation to the sectarian rules of purity. In addition to class, *'mll* is characterized by distinctive features: "impure", "qualified as organic decay and generic disorder". It appears in gradual antonymy with the other lexemes of the negative pole and although it occurs in a fragmentary context of examination of sexual impurity, we can deduce that the distinctive features of the lexeme are connected to the rules of purity to use with sick people in order to guarantee periods of peace in accordance to particular procedures and rules of the sect.

The second lexeme to analyze: 'n(w)š

Regarding the second lexeme analyzed in this research: *'nwš*, it occurs in BH1 six times, the classes are "corporal changes", "sensory organs" and "chronological period". Paradigmatic collocation is in the "corporal" dimension. It is brought into relief Jer 17: 9 in which the lexeme is characterized by the same distinctive feature of the LF which is found for the other analyzed adjectives of the negative pole. In addition to class and dimension, this characterization by the distinctive features "aggravating", "classified as generic" and it is in gradual antonymy with the lexeme *'mll*. In the EBH1, Jeremiah is the privileged place of the analyzed lexeme. With regards to a corporal dimension, it is marked in relation to an "inflicted pathological condition" and "a generic disease".

The case of Jer 17: 16 is very difficult and so very interesting. In this passage the class is "chronological period", marked as "generic

tive' in Semitic Languages, «Journal of Semitic Studies» 40 (1995), pp. 1-9.

[9] I. Zatelli, *yir'at YHWH nella Bibbia, in Ben Sira' e nei rotoli di Qumran*, «Rivista Biblica» 36 (1988), pp. 229-237.

[10] «Such words are rarely substantivized if however, the adjective is preceded by a definite article or if it expresses abstract notions or if expresses a person having the quality spoken of, or if there is a cle-

ar indication from the context that the adjective has been substantivized, then conversion from adjective to noun is possible without causing ambiguity». (D.J. Kamhi, *The term* TŌ'AR *in Hebrew and its Status as a Grammatical Category,* «Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies» 34, p. 263).

[11] For the use of "markedness" in this study see J. Lyons, *Semantics 1&2*, Cambridge 1977, pp. 305-306.

unfortunate". I used the old versions to confirm the marginality of the lexeme *'nwš* into the negative pole of the LF. Targum Jonathan is the only version that restores the seme of field for the lexeme analyzed. The sintagmatic unity "*ywm 'nwš*" (= unfortunate day) is translated by "*ywm byš*"[12] (= evil day), while the LXX translate ἡμέραν ἀνθρώπου (the day of a man) in agreement with Vulgata (*diem hominis*). The last two versions have not the distinctive feature for *'nwš*, LXX and Vulgate conduct it into the root of *'*nš* "man".[13]

In the EBH2 the lexeme has a secondary role: the paradigmatic collocation for the only occurrence is in the "corporal" dimension. This occurrence could be considered as peculiar of a linguistic subsystem in which the lexeme is further specified, while remaining marked as "aggravating of a pathological *status* externally inflicted", the distinctive features are "aggravating", "classified as degenerative". In this language it is in gradual antonymy with the other lexemes of the negative pole of the LF.

In the LBH3 we have only an occurrence and if it couldn't be considered metaphorically, as the context suggests, it conforms to the other values of the lexeme of an "aggravating of a pathological *status*", however here the distinctive feature is "heavy and mortal decay". The dimension is "cultic" and the markedness is into relation of "discomfort". The absence of the other lexemes of the negative pole of the LF could be explained in the light of the characteristics of this language. Job refused the antonyms related to the didactic-sapiential current and produces others more functional to the intention of his discourse.

In QH2 we have six occurrences for *'nwš* while its absence in the QH1 confirms the hypothesis that this language offers more space to the use of the analyzed lexeme. The class for all occurrences is "overall discomfort" and in regard to the paradigmatic collocation, it is placed into the dimension "corporal". It is characterized by the distinctive features "degenerative". On the other hand it is interesting to note that

it is often in a gradual antonymy to the lexemes *nm'r* "painful" and *mrwr* "bitter". In this language besides the lexeme *'nwš* always appears into contexts of severe corporal degeneration; never as an isolated attribute of an overall malaise. This shows, therefore, a peculiar situation to this functional language. This *datum* is important because it confirms the evidence that in the LBH2 the variant *'nwš* has lost its generic indication, becoming a simple variant of more usual lexemes, while containing the same distinctive feature. We can easily put it into the marginality of the LF.

At least in the QH3 only an occurrence appears for the analyzed lexeme and its use confirms the *data* of the other functional languages, the class is "persons" and the paradigmatic collocation is into the "corporal" dimension. In addition to class and dimension, *'nwš* "sick" is characterized by distinctive features: "disease *status*", "qualified as individual". In this language were found two dimensions: "cultic" and "corporal" and the situation is reversed: the corporal dimension remains predominant and extends its influence over the others. The former is marked in regard to purity (*'mll*, "impure") and the latter is marked in regard to the sectarian rules (*'nwš* "sick"). Therefore, *'nwš* loses the distinctive feature of "aggravating a previous pathological condition" and instead acquires the distinctive feature "generic and individual pathological condition", that allows to sick people an extenuation of the purity rules of their sect. No wonder, then, that this lexematic process is peculiar of legal language and promotes the disappearance of the lexeme *ḥlh* "sick" "indicative of the disease phenomenology not *lato sensu* specifiable".

In the following diagrams we will give for any functional language the semic content and the paradygmatical organization, giving their interpretation, mentioning also the lexeme *ḥlh* "sick".

For the Early Historical-Narrative Language we have most of lexemes of the negative pole of the LF.

[12] Probably a confusion with sg. ttm אֱנֹשׁ (see F. ZORELL, *Lexicon Hebraicum Veteris Testamenti*, Roma 1989, *sub voce*; *byš* is a frequent adjective in various Targumim related to the lack of physiolog-

ical health, see it in G. DALMAN, *Aramäisch-Neuhebräisches Handworterbuch zu Targum, Talmud, und Midrasch*, Frankfurt 1922.

[13] P. FRONZAROLI, *Studi sul lessico comune semi-*

EBH1	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	socioeconomic	markedness in regard to misfortune	*'nwš* "unfortunate"
		markedness in regard to decay	*'nwš* "grave"
	corporal	markedness in regard to inflicted pathological condition	*'nwš* "grave"
		markedness in regard to general disease	*ḥlh* "sick"
	mental	markedness in relation to capacity	*'nwš* "grave"

In EBH1 we have mostly lexemes of the negative pole of the LF. In this language we have three dimensions: "socioeconomic", "corporal" and "mental". For "socioeconomic" dimension, the lexeme *'nwš* "seriously ill" is marked in regard to decay and in regard to misfortune. For the dimension "corporal" the lexeme *'nwš* "seriously ill" is marked in regard to inflicted pathological condition, while the lexeme *ḥlh* "sick" (achlexeme of the field) is marked in regard to general disease. In the mental dimension *'nwš* "seriously ill" is marked in relation to skill. In EBH1 the corporal dimension is prominentt and extends its influence over the others. Here *'nwš* "seriously ill" simply implies a further aggravating of a previous pathological condition. It is in gradual antonymy with *ḥlh* "sick" and whether for dimension or for markedness they can neutralize each other.

In the EBH2 we have four dimensions: "corporal", "economic", "cultic" and "mental".

EBH2	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	corporal	markedness in regard to generic pathology	*'mll* "sick"
		markedness in regard to pathological status	*ḥlh* "sick" *'nwš* "grave"
	economic	markedness in regard to decay	*'mll* "corrupt"
	cultic	markedness in regard to purity	*ḥlh* "sick"
	mental	markedness in regard to disconfort	*ḥlh* "sick"
		markedness in regard to behaviour	*'mll* "degenerated"

For what concerns the corporal dimension, all the lexemes of the negative pole of LF occur. *'mll* "sick" has a markedness in regard to a generic pathology (*'mll* "sick") only in corporal dimension. *Ḥlh* "sick" is marked in regard to pathological *status*, while *'nwš* "seriously ill" has the same distintive feature of "aggravating of a pathological *status*". The economic dimension has only a lexeme (*'mll* "corrupt") marked in regard to decay. In the cultic dimension only a lexeme occurs: *ḥlh* "sick" marked in regard to purity. For what concerns a mental dimension, we have two lexemes, but marked whether in regard to discomfort (*ḥlh* "sick") or behaviour (*'mll* "degenerated").

The corporal dimension is largely preminent and extends its influence over the others. In the same dimension, all the lexemes of the negative pole occur, although the adjective *'nwš* "seriously ill", also indicative of an inflicted pathological condition, has a decidedly secondary role. The same lexemes are in gradual antonymy.

In this dimension two marked lexemes are disambiguated: the former relating to a generic pathological condition and the latter related to an inflicted condition. The economic dimension is decidedly secondary, and concerns the phenomenology of a period of misfortune. The cultic dimension is secondary and it refers to the

tico. II Anatomia e fisiologia, «Atti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti. Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche» VIII/ 19 (1968), pp. 243-280.

rules of sacrificial animals. At least, the mental dimension is proper to the language of the Song and implies a level of discomfort related, probably to "love's anxiety", as evidence of successful syntagmatic unity *ḥwlt 'hbh* (= sick of love). It fits also the poetic language of Ezekiel, although here it has a markedness in regard to behaviour.

In the Late Historical-Narrative Language we have two dimensions: corporal and socioeconomic.

LBH1	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	corporal	markedness in regard to force	*'mll* "languente"
		markedness in regard to health	*ḥlh* "sick"
	socioeconomic	markedness in regard to justice	*ḥlh* "heavy"

The former is marked in regard to force (*'mll* "languishing") and in regard to health (*ḥlh* "sick"). The latter dimension is marked in regard to justice (*ḥlh* "heavy").

In this language the lexeme *'mll* "languishing" implies a state of general pathology and is no longer marginal in the LF. We must disambiguate two semic values for *ḥlh* "sick": it is, as other functional languages, the archlexeme of LF, but it can assume also the value of *'nwš* "seriously ill" frequently in most of functional languages.

In LBH3 the adjective *'nwš* "mortal" occurs in its usual value, although probably hyperbolic, of aggravating a previous pathological condition, to be understood in a mental report.

LBH3	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	cultic	markedness in regard to disconfort	'nwš "mortal"

The absence of the others lexemes of the negative pole of the LF is explained before in the classematic analysis. It identifies the cultic dimension here equivalent to that existential, but not disambiguated.

In the QH1 we just may suppose that the lexeme *ḥlh* "sick" is the only lexeme of LF due to corruption of the epigraphic contexts. It can acquire a non technical value and it is, probably, indicative of a "generic pathological *status*".

The dimensions here individuated are: mental and corporal, respectively marked in regard to cult and generic health.

In this functional language both lexemes appear in gradual antonymy. In this language *'mll* "sick" loses the distinctive features verified for the other functional languages of MT and it is listed as indicative of a state of malaise and / or general mental distress, in other words, it is no longer marginal in the LF.

QH1	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	mental	markedness in regard to prayer	*'mll* "sick"
	corporal (?)	markedness in regard to general health (?)	*ḥwlh* "sick"

In the QH2 two dimensions appear for the negative pole of LF analyzed: mental and corporal. The former marked in regard to pain (*'nwš* "seriously ill") and the latter marked in regard to function (*ḥlh* "sick").

QH2	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	mental	marked in regard to pain	*ʾnwš* "grave"
	corporal	marked in regard to function	*ḥlh* "sick"

In the QH3 we have the same dimensions of QH1 and two lexemes are, respectively, marked in regard to pain (*ʾnwš* "seriously ill") and function (*ḥlh* "sick"). *Ḥlh* "sick" has the same distinctive feature for *ʾnwš* "sick" in QH3, but it only remains as indicative of a previous malaise.

This malaise has to be understood as a corporal *datum* which confirms *ʾnwš* "seriously ill" as phenomenological individual specification.

At least in QH3 the corporal dimension is prominent and extends its influence on the mental one.

QH3	Dimension	Markedness	Lexeme
SICK	cultic	markedness in regard to purity	*ʾmll* "impure"
	mental	markedness in regard to sectarian rules	*ʾnwš* "sick"

In conclusion, the two lexemes *ʾnwš* and *ʾmll* in the negative pole have a marginal role within the LF. Only *ḥlh* has the generic distinctive feature of "sick", while the others change in relation to the specific use of various functional languages.

For the negative pole of the LF analyzed none of the three lexemes *ʾnwš*, *ʾmll* and *ḥlh* can be considered the archlexeme of LF. Only *ḥlh* "sick" has almost always referred to general corporal health, at the exception of the occurrence of Qohelet,[14] while the others change in relation to the specific use of various functional languages.

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SUMMARY

This study analyses the classes, the dimensions and the changes of usage of two marginal lexemes pertinent to the lexical field of health and illness in ancient Hebrew. The research in question looks at the occurrences of *ʾmll* and *ʾn(w)š* within the lexical field of all adjectives indicating "health" and "illness" in the corpora of Ancient Hebrew. This research also made use of ancient Versions: Targumim, LXX and Vulgate in order to establish an old intelligence of the analyzed lexemes.

KEYWORDS: Lexical Field; Adjectives; Illness.

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[14] It confirms this hypothesis. See Qo 5: 12 and 15: «[…] יֵשׁ רָעָה חוֹלָה» «Ther is a sire evil […]».