Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope and aims

A full-scale study of chiasmus in ancient Hebrew poetry[1] would require more time and more space than have be available. Nor could it be the work of a single person, even dependent (as he must be) on the work of others.[2] Accordingly, in the pages which follow the emphasis will not be on exhaustiveness but, rather, on systematic presentation. An attempt is made to order the results achieved so far in the hope of providing a solid foundation for future research.

Another aim has been to remove existing confusion. The envelope figure, to take only one example, is related to chiasmus, but the two cannot be facilely equated. This explains the need for a section on terminology and the ma tables. It must not be forgotten that chiasmus is only one of the many structural devices available to the poet and that chiastic patterns mean little unless incorporated into a larger system of poetic theory. Also, sequences withi the strophe differ from chiastic patterns spread over longer segments of text. Clarification of this kind is necessa at the outset.

Generally speaking, the concept of function within poetry has been neglected by commentators.[3] Some work ha been done with respect to chiasmus,[4] but the topic has not been adequately covered and is so important that a complete section has been given over to it here.

Finally, this study makes some deliberate omissions. Non-poetic texts, even if they were very probably first composed in verse, have not been considered to avoid introducing methodologically extraneous problems. Generally speaking, extreme novelty has been avoided here, since the primary purpose of the present chapter is describe the state of the art.[5] Also the relationship between chiasmus and literary form, interesting as it is,[6] has been left for study elsewhere.

1.2 Dating

No attempt has been made in these pages to correlate chiastic patterns with the dates of poetic texts for severa reasons. Firstly, there is no unanimity among scholars regarding the detailed chronology of biblical texts.[7] Secondly, many „late" books preserve archaic material[8] or deliberately use archaisms. Also, much of the OT has undergone at least one editiorial re-working and the difficulties of assigning levels of text to different hands still occupy scholars.

1.3 Metrical problems

Although the problem of Hebrew metre is still unsolved, there does seem to be a consensus that it is accentual in character, that is to say, based on stress.[9] **The accentual** theory finds additional support from the following poin First is the fact that in Hebrew stress is phonemic, indicating it to be metrically significant as well.[10] To this argument from phonology can be added two others regarding poetic devices. One is the broken construct chain by means of which an additional stress can be created. In Isa 19:8, for example, *kol maslîkê bay^e' or hakka* („All tho casting hook into the Nile"), there are 3 stresses, balancing 3 stresses in the first colon. If the word sequence had been, as it normally would be, *kol maslîkê-hakkâ bay^e' or*, there would have been only 2 stresses.[12] The other is the pivot-patterned bicolon in which the crucial element is silent stress, by which is meant the absence of an expecte (final) stress-word. So, in Ps 59:2[13]

hassîlenî me'oy^{e}bay '^{e}lohîm mitt^{e}qom^{e}may t^{e}sagg^{e}benî Rescue me from my foes, God,

Against my attackers be my bulwark.

If this example (which was chosen because it also exhibits chiasmus) has been correctly analyzed as a pivot pattern,[14] it shows stress to be metrically significant.

Of the other theories put forward to explain Hebrew metre, none is convincing.[15] Some seem rather to belong t the level of stichometry and as such are useful, to a limited degree, to determine the length of cola.[16] These problems do not impinge directly on the present study since chiasmus seems to function independently of metre They have been considered briefly because some scholars maintain there is a relationship between syllable-counting (which they equate with metre) and chiasmus.

1.4   Terminology Basic to the ensuing considerations is clarity of terminology. Scholars use different terms for the same component, calling a colon a hemistich, for instance, or employing the words „stanza" and „strophe" indiscriminately. This can lead to confusion even though a particular writer may employ his terms consistently.[17] Here, therefore, to avoid all ambiguity, a table of terms will be set out. It must be stressed, though, that more tha mere nomenclature is in question, since the terms used imply a certain underlying theory concerning the structu of poetry. Broadly speaking it is as follows: the larger units, whether whole poems or stanzas, are composed of strophes, each strophe comprising one or more cola. These cola, in their turn are made up of still smaller units. Accordingly, a poem can be considered as a set of components (in loose terms, word-units) forming larger and larger complexes which ultimately combine into a single unified structure.[18]

In accordance with the method of analysis adopted,[19] the definitions will proceed from the smallest units to the largest. Correct analysis can only begin once such terms have been defined with precision.[20] (See Table 1).

SYLLABLE, WORD Since not even linguists can agree on defining these two basic terms, only their generally accepted meanings will be implied here.[21]

HEMISTICH A subdivision of the colon comprising one or more words.

COLON A single line of poetry; also called „stichos,‟ „stich‟ and even „hemistich.‟ Holladay defines the colon as a group of words in parallelism with another colon[22] but this does not allow for monocola.

MONOCOLON A colon standing on its own (within a stanza or poem). It can be defined as a single colon which does not cohere closely with another colon, although in a wide sense no element of a poem stands in total isolation.[23]

BICOLON Two lines of verse, generally in parallelism; a couplet formed of two (parallel) cola. The bicolon is the standard unit of verse in Hebrew poetry, and is also referred to as „distich,‟ „couplet‟ and „line.‟

TRICOLON A set of three cola forming a single whole or strophe, e.g. Ex 32:8.

TETRACOLON A unit of verse made up of four cola, sometimes called a „quatrain,‟ e.g. Jer 2:13.

PENTACOLON, HEXACOLON etc. Combinations of five, six (etc.) cola respectively, each set making up a strophe (e.g. I Sm 18:7b).

STROPHE A strophe is a verse-unit made up of one or more cola, and is a general term for monocola, bicolon, tricolon etc. Many authors call the stanza a strophe, perhaps because there are occasions when a stanza may contain only one strophe.

STANZA A combination of one or more strophes. Generally speaking, a complete poem is composed of several stanzas. Some poems, though, comprise only a single stanza (e. g. Ps 117) just as some stanzas contain only one strophe.

For the various terms and definitions directly related to chiasmus see the introductory chapter to the book.[24] The following symbols will be used:

a, b, c : to denote elements (generally, words) of a colon A, B, C : to denote complete cola
p : to denote the pivotal element in a pivot-patterned bicolon R : to denote refrain
x : to denote (extra-chiastic) anacrusis I, II, III : to denote stanzas

Subscripts and superscripts will be used sparingly, either to press a point home or to avoid confusion. Words in CAPITALS are keywords or significant words within a poem; italicized words are significant for a particular pattern.[25]

COLON (monocolon)	hemi- stich hemi- stich
BICOLON (strophe)	c o l o n c o l o n
TRICOLON (strophe)	c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n
TETRACOLON (strophe)	c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n

PENTACOLON (strophe)	c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n c o l o n strophe 1strophe 2
	strophe 3
STANZA	STANZASTANZA
POEM	STANZA

Table 1[26]

1.5 Chiasmus, the strophe and the stanza

A recurrent topic in the analysis of Hebrew poetry is how to divide a poem into strophes and stanzas, but in spite of many sporadic attempts no overall solution has yet been reached. In part this is due to some confusion over the meaning of the terms „strophe" and „stanza". Definitions have already been given, some justification for which must now be provided. According to the terminology adopted here, a stanza is a large unit of poetry which can be subdivided into strophes. So, in Jg 5:25

I	Water he requested II	A	*Milk*
B	in a lordly bowl A		she proffered *curds*

the stanza is made up of two strophes (I, II), a monocolon and an ABA' (chiastic) tricolon. Similarly, a four-line stanza such as Jb 21: 29-30 consists of two bicola, and so on with varying combinations of monocolon, bicola, tricola etc. It can also happen that a stanza cannot be further subdivided into smaller strophes, as when a four-line stanza is a tetracolon.

A poem is generally subdivided into stanzas (e.g. Ps 119, with 22 stanzas), but some poems comprise only a single stanza, examples being Ps 117, II Sm 3:33b-4 (see below). To add to the possible confusion, a poem may consist of one stanza and that stanza be made up of only one strophe, e.g. I Sm 18:7b.

One of the first scholars to realize that by identifying chiastic patterns, stanzas and strophes could then be distinguished, was Möller. This aspect will be considered below, in section 6.3. **1.6 Classifying chiasmus**

With these distinctions in mind, the classification and typology of chiastic patterns can now be approached. In the main, the „Types of Chiastic Pattern" (Table 2) follows the layout of „Terminology" (Table 1). Three broad subdivisions of chiasmus emerge: strophic chiasmus, chiasmus in the stanza, and chiastic poems. First, and possibly most important, is strophic chiasmus, which forms the subject of the whole of section 2. Its fundamental component is the chiastic bicolon (2.1), which is basic because the bicolon in direct (synonymous) parallelism is the building-block of Hebrew poetry. There follow paragraphs on chiastic forms of the monocolon, tricolon, tetracolon and so on. Other types of chiasmus, including gender chiasmus, are discussed next (2.8) and, finally, patterns related to chiasmus (2.9).

Chiasmus in longer passages (section 3) deals with chiastic poems and with segments of poems written in chiast form. Strict classification is not possible since the subject-matter is too varied in form. The topic of chiasmus in th stanza is covered in part by section 2 and in part by section 3. While not completely satisfactory, this has proved the easiest way of presenting the material and has therefore been adopted here.

The detailed classification, or rather, sub-classification of 2.1 has not been carried over into the other types of chiasmus because there the unit is the colon itself or a multiple of the colon.

a b a	chiastic monocolon (2.2)
A B A	chiastic tricolon (2.3)
A B B A	chiastic (ABBA) tetracolon (2.4, 2.5)
A B C B A	concentric pentacolon (2.6)
A B C C B A	chiastic hexacolon (2.7)

Table 2

2 STROPHIC CHIASMUS

2.1 Chiastic bicola

It is not always possible to make a clear distinction between different chiastic patterns. For example, is the standard abc//cba type, with its central, unchanged element (b), complete chiasmus or only partial? Nor can the typology be totally rigid, because some strophes seem to fit none of the categories mentioned here, e.g. Pss 72:9 74:19. The typology adopted here, then, is provisional and further study will reveal a more precise way of differentiating the various patterns.[1] For convenience, a table of chiastic bicola will be set out first. (Table 3)

TYPOLOGY OF CHIASTIC BICOLA

1   *Mirror chiasmus*   4   *Partial chiasmus*

abc // cba – where a=a, b=b and c=c   abc // cb 2   *Complete chiasmus*
  ab-c // ba-c ab // ba   a-bc // a-cb abc // cba
 abc // ba 3   *Split-member chiasmus*

a-bc // bc-a ab-c // c-ab ab-cd // cd-ab   **Table 3**

(1) *Pure or mirror chiasmus.* The second colon, in this pattern, repeats exactly the same words used in the first col but in reverse order; schematically: abc // cba. Since the resulting two lines are mirror images, the term „mirror" chiasmus seems suitable. In fact, it is simply a form of repetition. He shall open, and no one will shut; He shall shu and no one will open Isa 22:22[2] Also, 9:2.[3]

(2) *Complete chiasmus.* The sequence followed in the second, parallel colon is the reverse of that used in the first, the description „complete" referring to the fact that none of the components is omitted. Two sub-types belong under this heading:

ab // ba You will be punished by your wickedness, Your defections will convict you Jer 2:19a And Dt 32:16, Isa 3:8 5:21, 6:7b, 32:6, 42:15a, 54:2, Ez 19:7, Hos 2:2, 4:13, Mic 4:6, 7:16b, Zeph 3:19, Pss 38:11a, 46:10b, 49:7, 78:54 119:15, 126:5, 139:1, Jb 7:14, 36:3, 37:3, Lam 5:21, Ecclus 12:18.

abc // cba Or, strictly, abc // c'b'a', since it is not mirror chiasmus.[4] I removed the burden on his shoulder, His hand from the basket were freed Ps 81:7 Also, Gn 9:6, Isa 14:30, 29:17, 40:12a, 26, 27b, 42:4, 51:4, 62:1b, Pss 3:8f, 7:17, 81:7, 142:3, 147:4, Jb 17:1, 20:6, 32:14, Pr 3:10, 8:21, 13:6.

(3) *Split-member chiasmus.* First identified by Möller, this subdivision is basically a variant of complete chiasmus, t a and b components each (either separately or together) split into two further elements. A chart will make this clear: (Table 4)

complete chiasmus:

(ab // b'a')	a	b	b'	a'

split-member chiasmus:

(a-bc // bc-a)	a	bc	bc	a
(ab-c // c-ab)	ab	c	c	ab
(ab-cd // cd-ab)	ab	cd	cd	ab

Table 4

a-bc // bc-a The second component in the chiasmus is made up of two elements (bc), but the chiasmus does not affect their sequence. *She led him on* with her many persuasions, By her smooth talk *she pressed him* Pr 7:21 And Gn 32:29b, Isa 11:1, 29:14b, 32:3, 6c, 48:1, 60:13b, 16, Pss 6:10, 7:16, 22:13, 35:18, 40:14, 59:3, 69:34, 72:11, 81:17, 105:44, 107:11, 109:16, 116:3, 147:16, Jb 13:12, 28:2, Pr 2:8, 10:10, Lam 3:22.

ab-c // c-ab In this pattern both the first and last components of the bicolon are split *I will punish him* for his conduct, And for his deeds *I will repay him* Hos 4:9 Further: Jg 1:15, Isa 13:21b, 27:11b, 43:15, 60:2b, 20, 64:1a, Hab 2:1, Pss 7:16, 15:3b, Jb 10:5, 19:9.

ab-cd // cd-ab All the components have been further subdivided, the sequence of the subsections being preserve in an overall chiastic arrangemennt. Do not claim honour in the king's presence, And in high positions do not set yourself Pr 25:6 Also, Isa 33:4, Ez 11:19, 32:13, Pss 9:16, 36:12, 78:24, 89:7, Jb 3:6, 31:16, Pr 4:14, 24.

X (4) *Partial chiasmus.* A set of patterns in which the position of one element remains unchanged and can be considered as standing outside the chiasmus. They are abc // cb, ab-c // ba-c and a-bc // a-cb. (The pattern abc // cba has already been considered).

abc // cb The unchanged element is at the beginning, and the pattern itself is a variation of the stereotype abc // b formation frequent in Hebrew (e.g. Hos 5:8, 7:1) and in Ugaritic poetry. Who rides through the heavens to your aid, and in his majesty, the skies Dt 33:26b. Also, Isa 48:18f, 49:18, Nah 3:8, Hab 1:3, 15, Pss 35:17, 78:33, 80:1: 92:3, 103:7, 105:45, 126:2, 132:4, Jb 6:15, 8:5, 18, 27:7, 39:6, Song 1:4.

ab-c // ba-c The c-element is outside the pattern: Lifting from the dust the feeble, From the midden, raising the poor Ps 113:7 similarly, Isa 27:5, 49:22, Pss 21:9, 143:1.

a-bc // a-cb Making attentive to wisdom, your ear, Bending your mind to understanding Pr 2:2 and Nb 24:18, Isa 59:3b, Pss 85:14, 139:7, Jb 3:12, Pr 2:2.

For the abc // ba pattern see below (section 5.6). Patterns such as abc // ca (Isa 45:1, 49:13b) and abc // ba (Jer 4 Mic 1:4a) probably are not really chiastic, but have been mentioned for the sake of completeness. There is no agreement among scholars concerning the typology given above, since what is an ab // ba sequence for one write may be considered as abcd // cdab by another. This amounts to lack of agreement on what constitutes metre and how a word-unit is to be defined. A correct and exact typology may go some way, therefore, towards resolving th problem of Hebrew metre (touched on in section 1.3) and further refinement is evidently needed.

2.2 The aba (chiastic) monocolon

Akin as it is to the pivot pattern,[5] the aba monocolon[6] differs on two counts. Firstly it is a single line of poetry, no bicolon; and secondly, it is complete, with no ellipsis of a final stress.[7] For example, Mercy on us. Yahweh, mercy us Ps 123:3a is a chiastic monocolon with the pattern aba.[8] Its function is to open a stanza or poem, as in David's lament for his child: My son, Absalom, my son II Sm 19: 1b or the first line of Ps 115. Characteristic is the central vocative.[9]

2.3 The ABA (chiastic) tricolon

The ABA (or ABA') three-line strophe is a tricolon[10] which can be described as two parallel cola separated by an isolated line,[11] and forming a close-knit unit. With identical outer cola: A   Wait for Yahweh B   be strong an stout of heart A   Wait for Yahweh Ps 27:14 Normally, though, the outermost lines are in parallelism: A   A worry to his father B   (is) a foolish son A'   And bitterness to her-who-bore-him Pr 17:25 Here the A-colon corresponds to the A'-colon, the central B-colon referring to both of them. The son, of course, comes from both h parents, so that the layout is an appropriate way of expressing their mutual relationship. See, too, Gn 27:39, 49:8 Sm 2:2, Isa 5:25, 14:8, 16:11, 30:31, 51:3, 56:9, Amos 1:3, Nah 2:4, 3:17, Pss 9:15, 27:14, 32:8, 64:11, 86:12, 104:15, Jb 3:1f, 24:14, 34:37, Song 1:11, 2:12, 4:12.

Being a chiastic tricolon the ABA-patterned strophe combines the functions both of the tricolon and of chiasmus to open or close a poem or stanza, and to express merismus. These functions will now be illustrated.

(1) *To open a stanza (or poem)*. A   See, of the fat of the land B   will your home be A'   and from the dew of heaven above Gn 27:39[12]

Also 49:8, Isa 56:9 (cited below), Amos 1-2, Hab 2:6, Pss 4:2, 32:8, Jb 3:1-2, 10:1. (2) *To close a stanza (or poem)*.

So that A   I may recount all your praise B   in the gates of Daughter Zion A'   I may rejoice in your history

9:15 The next verse begins a series of curses on the wicked, while *lᵉmaᶜan,* „so that," alludes to what has gone before; accordingly, v. 15 closes the short stanza, vv. 14-15. Similarly, Isa 51:3, Ez 34:6, Pss 6:11, 27:14 (cited above), Jb 10:22, 34:37, Pr 5:22. (3) *To express merismus.* A   All (you) beasts of the field B   come to eat, A'   All (you) beasts of the forest Isa 56:9 The clue here, as is often the case, is the word *kol,* „all, every." Likewise Isa 25:7, Pss 9:15, 89:17, 109:14, 121:6,7, Jb 10:22, 34:37, Pr 17:25.

2.4 The ABBA Tetracolon

The pattern in question is found in tetracola where the first and final cola match (A, A) just as the two central cola correspond (B, B). A   The fountain of living WATER B   To hew themselves CISTERNS B   CISTERNS that cannot crack A   And cannot hold WATER Jer 2:13 This type of ABBA-pattern is the most frequent, where the chiastically arranged elements are two words (or words based on two roots), here „water" and „cistern". A related type is where the AA cola are semantically similar (parallel), as are the BB cola. Finally, the pattern can involve other poetic devices or be interlocked with other chiastic sequences, as will be set out below.[13]

Sub-types of the ABBA tetracolon

Chiastic word repetition, on the lines of Jer 2:13 cited above, forms the basis of the following tetracola (with repeated words in parentheses): II Sm 1:24 (clothed jewels ornaments clothing),[14] Isa 49:24f (prey captive capti prey), Jer 9:3 (friend brother brother friend), Ez 19:2b-3a (lion cub cub lion), Nah 2:12b-13a (lioness cub cub lioness), Pss 12:4f (lips tongue tongue lips), 47:7f (gods king king gods), Jb 6:25f (words argue argue words), 27:10f (Shaddai Eloah El Shaddai), Pr 18:6f (lips mouth mouth lips), 31:19-20 (hand palm palm hand),[15] Song 2:1 (face voice voice face). Also, Dt 32:43, Pss 78:29f, 113:2f, Jb 21:31f, 27:16f.

In *semantic chiasmus* the repeated words are not in identical pairs but semantically parallel, or else the whole cola is „repeated" by using a parallel phrase.

Must Abner die so base a death? Your hands were *not* bound Your feet *not* thrust in fetters Like one falling at a ruffian's hands you fell II Sm 3:33b-4 The two central cola are parallel: „your hands unbound // your feet unbound (paraphrasing) and the outer cola are related by wordplay (see below). Other examples: Gn 16:11, Isa 5:7, Ps 48:11f, Pr 11:18f, 30:4.

Occasionally the ABBA-pattern *interlocks*[16] with other patterns to form a more complex arrangement of cola. So in Ez 32:7-8a the sequence A   And I WILL DARKEN their stars .... B   Nor the moon SHALL BEAM OUT ITS LIGHT B   All the BEAMING LIGHTS in the heavens A   I WILL DARKEN on your account

interlocks with the sequence (also chiastic):

C   I WILL COVER, when you are blotted out, the heavens A   And I WILL DARKEN their stars C   The su with a cloud I WILL COVER

to form the pattern CACBBA

C   I WILL COVER, when you are blotted out, the heavens A   And I WILL DARKEN their stars C   The su with a cloud WILL I COVER B   Nor the moon SHALL BEAM OUT ITS LIGHT B   All the BEAMING LIGHTS

the heavens C   I WILL DARKEN on your account.

A similar pattern can be identified in Ez 21:8b-10[17] and Ps 72:1-4.[18] Also, Pr 1:26f (chiastic tetracolon in climac
pentacolon), and texts such as Isa 49:24f and Mal 3:19.

Several *other patterns and devices* can be combined with the ABBA tetracolon. So, in Pr 18:6f, the arrangement of
repeated roots coincides with a pattern of *gender-reversal* which runs:

f + m   A   (lips   –   contention m + f   B   mouth   –   blows m + f   B   mouth   –   undoing
f + m   A   lips   –   trap),

both being chiastic. Double *wordplay* binds the components of II Sm 3:33b-4 (cited *above*): *nabal*, „fool"[19] of the
first colon and the verb *napal*, „to fall," used (twice) in the last colon; and the PN Abner (cf. *nîr*, „yoke,"[20]) exploited
by the middle couplet dealing with binding both hands and feet. A phonetic component amounting to *end-rhyme*
the basis of chiasmus in Gn 49:11.

He tethers to the vine his ass (*cîrô*) And to the red vine, the colt of his she-ass (*'atonô*) He washes in wine his cloak
(*lebusô*) And in grape-blood his robes (*sutô*)

the pattern being formed by the pronominal suffixes: -ô, -ô, -ô, -ô). See also Pr 30:4. The *break-up* of an expression
found in Jb 27:10-11, combined with chiasmus:

Will he delight in SHADDAI? And call on ELOAH at all times? I will teach you EL's power, What SHADDAI has I'll
not conceal

the expression being El-Shadday (see also v. 13). The ABBA pattern also acts as a link here, connecting the series
of rhetorical questions (vv. 8-10) with v. 11.

No one single *function* can be assigned to the ABBA pattern: each case must be inspected in turn. The usual
functions of chiasmus are: to express merismus (Gn 16:11 Jer 9:3), or antithesis (Jer 2:13, 9:3, Jb 6:25f, 27:16f,
18:6f); to link components of a poem (Gn 49:11, Jb 27:10f, Pr 11:18f) and to express the reversal of events (Ps
12:4f). Noteworthy are Song 2:14 which is a refrain and Pr 31:19f which forms the centre of an alphabetic
acrostic.

Although the ABBA tetracolon has been considered here under the heading „strophic chiasmus", there are
examples which amount to *4-line stanzas* formed from two strophes, each a bicolon, the only common element
being the repeated keywords:

(a)   Each against his FRIEND be on guard And in every BROTHER put no trust, (b)   For every BROTHER only
supplants And each FRIEND peddles slander Jer 9:3

Couplet (a) is a complete unit, as is couplet (b), the link formed by the keyword pattern *reac*, *'ah*, *'ah*, *reac*.

Similarly, Isa 44:21,[21] 49:24-25, Hos 13:14, Ps 124:4-5, Jb 21:31-32, Pr 3:11-12[22]. Evidently the ABBA sequen
serves as a link at stanza-level, binding the two component strophes together.

2.5 Other Chiastic Tetracola

Some tetracola are chiastic without exhibiting the ABBA pattern. For instance

Listen, WISE ONES to my words, Knowledgeable ones, GIVE EAR to me, For the EAR, words does test, As the PALATE tastes by eating Jb 34: 2f

where the chiasmus is based on *sound: hkm, hk* (first and last cola), *h'zn, 'zn* (central cola), the stanza forming an introduction to the block of poetry which follows. Other texts include Isa 1:18bc, 14:30, 18:6b, 48:18f, 58:7,[23] E 11:19[24] and Ps 3:8f.[25]

2.6 Chiastic Pentacola

As with tetracola, it is difficult to differentiate 5-line strophes from 5-line stanzas. Accordingly, some illustrative examples will be set out and examined. The clearest chiastic structure is ABCBA, as in the first set of texts.

A   Who had said to them B   „This is your resting-place. C   Give rest to the weary! B   Yes, this is your place of repose." A   But they would not listen Is 28:12 „The verse is built concentrically, and the sound effects correspond to the structure,"[26] the main thrust of the pentacolon lying in the central colon (C; cf. Isa 57:21).

A   And in the period of their disorder they say: B   „Up, and save us!" C   But where are the gods you fabricated for yourselves? B   Let them up and even save you A   In the period of your disaster Jer 2:27c-28 The central line of this pentacolon[27] is again the most significant as is evident both from the chiastic structure an the allusion to *iy aliyn b^cl*, „Wherever is Mightiest Baal?" of the Ugaritic texts.[28]

Similarly patterned are: Isa 42:2-4, 55:8-9, Jer 30:16, Ps 104:29f, and, finally

A   Do not withhold discipline from a lad. B   If you beat him with a cane C   he'll not die; B   Beat him yourself with a cane A   And you'll save from Sheol his very self Pr 23:13f which is not a simple ABBA-pattern[2 but a five-line stanza centering on „He will not die" meaning both „a good hiding will do him no lasting harm" and „by discipline he will be saved from a worse fate".

Another chiastic sequence is AABCC, as in Hos 14:10[30]. More frequent is the ABBA tetracolon with an addition colon, either before it or as the final line. Examples are Isa 14:19,[31] 56:5,[32] Other patterns, too occur.[33]

2.7 Chiastic Hexacola, and longer chiastic sequences

The more lines there are in a chiastic unit, whether strophe or stanza, the fewer the examples, so that exact typology is difficult. This paragraph will deal with chiastic units of six lines (hexacola) and more.

There are enough instances of *chiastic hexacola* for a broad grouping into three types: ABCCBA (pure chiasmus), AABBA'A' (an expanded ABA sequence), and lastly, miscellaneous sequences. The classic example of ABCCBA (a part of a nine-colon stanza) is Isa 6:10

A   Be-lard the HEART of this people, B   Their EARS deaden C   Their EYES close fast C   To avoid ther seeing with their EYES, B   Or, with their EARS, hearing, A   Or, with their HEART, understanding.

Also, Isa 65:18, Zech 2:12f,[34] Jb 33:20-22[35] and perhaps Amos 5:4f. A variant form of the pattern is ABCCBD ir Jer 4:29. The second type is made up of three bicola:

A   I will even make in the desert a path, in the wilderness, streams B   I am honoured by the wild beasts, jackals and ostriches, A   For I can provide, in the desert, water, streams in the wilderness Isa 43:19-20

Also, Jer 4:11-12a[36] and Lam 2:4.

Finally, sets of six cola such as Isa 5:20 (a chiastic series or list), and Am 2:11f (ABCBAA').

Chiastic heptacola are Amos 5:4f (unless a hexacolon) and Ps 12:4-5:

A   Amputate[37] may *Yahweh* B   all smooth LIPS, C   every TONGUE speaking big; D   those who say
C   „By our TONGUE are we great, B   Our LIPS: our weapon, A   Who more *master* than us!" Ps 12:4-5

The words „Yahweh" and „master" (*adôn*) are in italics and not in upper case since they do not correspond exactly there is additional synonymy in the C cola: „big" and „great".

Octocola are Nb 12:6-8[38] and Jer 4:14-16[39]:

A   Wash your heart of wickedness, O JERUSALEM that you might be saved. B   How long shall they lodge within you, your EVIL thoughts? B   Hark! A Voice announcing from Dan, and divulging the EVIL from Mount Ephraim. A   Mention these things, O nations, divulge the mischief of JERUSALEM.

Further passages are considered in section 3 (Chiasmus in Longer Passages).

2.8 Other Types of Chiasmus

In addition to the various kinds of straightforward structural chiasmus already considered, there are other forms of chiasmus based on different principles. These are skewed chiasmus, assonantal chiasmus, semantic-sonant chiasmus and gender chiasmus.

(1) *Skewed chiasmus.* In Holladay's words „a chiasmus which, after the midpoint, begins its way back, only to plunge forward briefly once more, and then, in the last line, offers a set of simultaneous balances in several medi which psychologically brings us all the way home." He terms it „a striking compromise between the chiastic patte and sequentiality."[40] His examples are Jer 16:1-9, 23:1-4 and 23:25-32. The chiastic pattern of Jer 23:1-4, for instance, is ABCB'D and then D'C'B"A'.

(2) *Assonantal chiasmus.* Here belong not only texts which simply exhibit or exploit both chiasmus and assonance (see below, section 4.11) but also those with a chiastic pattern of root consonants. Such are Jer 5:25 and 16:6.[41] There is some overlap with the next category.

(3) *Semantic-sonant chiasmus.* A combination of chiasmus and assonance „in which one leg of the chiasmus is formed by a pair of words of similar meaning (the semantic pair), and the other leg is produced by a pair of words of similar sound (the sonant pair),"[42] So, in Eccl 7:1a

tôb sem	Good repute
missemen tôb	beats good perfume

the four components are chiastically arranged and the similarity of *sem*, „name, repute" and *semen*, „oil, perfume" exploited in wordplay. Also, Gn 37:36, II Sm 1:21b, and Ez 22:2, where the semantic element consists of the same word, repeated; Jer 2:7b, where a word pair is used, and Ps 147:15, Lam 3:22. A subset of this group comprises couplets where the consonants of a word in the first colon have been inverted in the second, as

Without oxen, the manger is CLEAN *(br)* But MANY *(rb)* crops result form a bull's strength Pr 14:4

Similarly, Pss 51:19 *(zbhy – tbzh)*, 78:33 *(bhbl – bbhlh)*. To these examples of Kselman can be added Isa 40:4 *(h^{c}qb lbq^c)*, Jer 4:27b-28a *(smmh – smym)*, Hos 7:7 *(w'lkw – mlkyhm)* and Ps 20:5 *(lk – kl)*.

(4) *Gender chiasmus.* The term „gender chiasmus" is used as a convenient abbreviation for a complex poetic pattern which involves matching nouns and genders. The basic form (not involving chiasmus at all) is simply a rather sophisticated form of synonymous (or direct) parallelism:

Out must go the *groom* (m) from his *chamber* (m) and the *bride* (f) from her *bower* (f) Joel 2:16

Here, the word for a room is m. with reference to the bridegroom and f. with respect to his future wife. The device occurs quite frequently in Hebrew poetry.[43] The chiastic patterns to be considered below are variations of such gender-matching parallelism. Of additional interest is that they share some of the general functions of chiasmus as well as having functions of their own.

The sub-sets to be discussed can be grouped into four blocks: strophes where gender-matching obtains, with the additional use of chiasmus; strophes where only cross-matching of genders is apparent; a very small sub-set where chiasmus of both gender and noun occurs, and fourthly, segments of poetry longer than a bicolon (A complete poem based on gender-chiasmus is set out in section 3).

Chiastically-patterned bicola (with gender-matched synonyms) are best explained by a close look at one clear example.

Hidden in the *ground* (f) is a *rope* (m) for him, And a *trap* (f) for him upon the *path* (m). Jb 18:10

The matching of genders is here reversed: in the first colon a m. noun („rope") is coupled with a f. noun („ground") in the second, the word „path" is m. and its connected noun („trap") is f. The chiastic pattern is based on synonyms

PLACE – SNARE SNARE – PLACE

while the resulting pattern of genders is *not* chiastic:

f   m f   m

the function of the two patterns combining to express surprise. Another example is Hab 3:3

Does cover the *heavens*(m) his *radiance*(m) And his *splendour*(f) fills the *earth*(f)

the chiastic arrangement, which expresses merismus[44] being

PLACE („heavens")　　　– APPEARANCE („radiance") APPEARANCE („splendour")　–　PLACE („earth"),

again the corresponding genders not chiastic. Other instances: Isa 11:4, 28:15, 42:4, 62:1b; Nah 2:13, Pss 57:6, 12 (// 108:6), 76:3, 92:3, 147:15, Jb 28:2. (For Isa 28:15 and 18 see below, section 4). The function of this patter is to express merismus (Isa 42:4, Hab 3:3, Ps 57:6 (& par.); cf. Nah 2:13), reversal of existing state (Ps 76:3, Jb 28:2), a surprise event (Jb 18:10) and harmony (Isa 11:4, 62:1b).

Strict *gender chiasmus* is obtained not from the cross-arrangement of nouns but by the layout of their genders. S in Pr 20:9

Young men's *glory* (f) is their *strength* (m) But old men's *splendour* (m) their *grey hair* (f)

the antithesis is brought out by the gender-pattern

m　　　　　f f　　　　　m

although otherwise the sequence of words in both cola is identical. Similarly, in Isa 60:17 c the elliptic word sequence (abc // b'c') is in effect synonymous, the only contrast being the non-alignment of genders which expresses the change that is to take place:[45]

And I will transform your *overseers* (f) into *peace* (m) your *taskmasters* (m) to *fairness* (f)

One last example will show how gender chiasmus can transform plain prose into expressive poetry:

They bartered a *lad* for a *lay* (f) And a *wench* they sold for *wine* (m) and drank it Joel 4:3 The m + f // f + m pattern, instead of an expected m + m // f + f sequence, expresses how utterly beyond the normal people were acting.

Further examples: Gn 49:15(fmmf),[46] Dt 32:14(fmmf), Isa 3:1(fmmf), 29:4(fmmf), 60:17b(mffm), Ps 25:13(fmm Pr 8:20(mffm), 10:15(mffm), 30:19b(fmmf), Song 7:7(fmmf); also, Jb 29:13(fmmf) and Joel 4:10. No single overriding function is evident, so that each text has to be looked at individually. Expressed are antithesis (Pr 10:1 20:29), abnormal event (Dt 32:14, Isa 29:4, 60:17bc), and paradox (Gn 49:15, Pr 30:19b, Song 7:7).

Chiasmus and gender chiasmus in combination is found in only two texts, Pr 10:11 and

May she grind for *another* (m), my *wife* And over *her* may there kneel *others*(m) Jb 31:10[47] where the pattern is

(verb: f) – (prep. + noun: m)　　– (noun: f)　　　　ab –c (prep. + sfx.: f) – (verb: m)　　– (noun: m)　　　　c –ab

The function of both types of chiasmus is to express the reversal of existing conditions.

The *fourth subset* comprises texts longer than the customary bicolon discussed so far. They are Jer 16:3, Mic 7:6, Pr 18:6-7 as well as Gn 12:6 and 49:3. (For Pr 18:6-7 see above, section 2.3).

For this is what Yahweh says Against the sons   m And against the daughters bo
in this place   f + m And against their mothers who bear them   f And against their
fathers who sire them in this land   m + f Jer 16:3

Discussing whether Jer 16:1-9 is prose, or poetry or something in between, Holladay comments „Is it significant

that *bmqwm hzh*(„in this place") is masculine and *b'rs hz't* is feminine, or is this only coincidence?".[48] In view of the

numerous examples discussed already (especially Jer 16:9), it would seem that design rather than accident is at

work here. The antithesis of death coming to destroy parents and children alike (v. 4) is heightened by the intrica

pattern of genders, the line-by-line sequence mffm acting in counterpoint with the inversions of the second (f + r

and last (m + f) cola.

For sons treat like fools (their) fathers   m + m Daughters rebel against their mothers
          f + f Daughter-in-law against mother-in-law   f + f A man's enemies are the people
his house   mmmm Mic 7:6

This, the final strophe of Mic 7:1-6, is a tetracolon with the basic structure mffm, exactly as in Jer 16:3, though

here all the genders in any one colon match. Again, as in the passage from Jeremiah, the resulting arrangement

expresses the reversal of normal events.

Reuben, my first-born You are my *strength*   m and the *start* of my vigour,
          f (+ m) pre-eminent in *authority*   f and pre-eminent in *power*
      m Gn 49:3[49]

The five-line stanza is made up of an introductory monocolon and two bicola which the chiastic gender pattern

binds together into a unit. Finally, while not strictly poetry, perhaps the list in Gn 12:16 also displays the pattern

under examination:

Flocks and cattle   f + m and asses and slaves   m
  m and maids and she-asses   f + f and camels

The chiastic structure, already recognized by Lund[50] makes nonsense of Speiser's comment, „The list of Abrahar

acquisitions appears to have been subjected to some reshuffling in the course of transmission, as is indicated by

the separation of he-asses and she-asses".[51] Instead of applying modern occidental reasoning it makes more sen

to realize that in the ancient Near East slaves and animals were lumped together as chattels.

2.9 Patterns Related to Chiasmus

The patterns in question are alternating chiasmus, inclusio and chiastic inclusio, and the chiastic gather-line. To

some degree they could be classed as chiastic, but in order to avoid confusion they will be discussed separately.

(1) *Alternating chiasmus.* Used by some scholars[52] to describe patterns such as ABA'B' (e.g. Pss 8:3, 4, 51:7), the

term is misleading. It assumes that an ABB'A' pattern has become ABA'B' which is a form of direct parallelism.

However, it may be significant in considering the development of chiasmus and so has been mentioned here.

(2) *Inclusio.* Inclusio or envelope figure is the repetition of the same words at the beginning and end of a section [of] poetry[53]. It is a form of distant parallelism,[54] a description more applicable when the repetition is not verbatim, but cannot be confused with chiasus.

(3) *Chiastic inclusuio.* Some examples of phonological inclusio are chiastic (see above section 2.82 and 2.83) such as

By his wind (*brh*) the heavens were made fair Pierced did his hand the serpent who flees (*brh*)

Jb 26:13

and Jb 12:10. Of a different order is

He shall not come within this city Nor shoot an arrow at it, Nor approach it with a shield; By the way he came he['ll] return. Within this city he shall not come Isa 37:33–4

where the components of two lines in distant parallelism are chiastically arranged (a – b and b – a). Also, Eccl 8:5[–] 6c.

(4) *Chiastic gather-line* A gather-line is the final line of poem which mentions all or most of the elements of the poem,[54] so that a chiastic gather-line is one which reiterates in chiastic order the components of the preceding lines. Examples are Jer. 23:4 and 23:32.[55]

3 CHIASMUS IN LONGER PASSAGES

3.1 Introductory

While it is relatively easy to determine the presence of chiasmus in short stretches of text, from the monocolon t[o] the stanza of eight lines, it is considerably more difficult to establish the same pattern for longer sections of poetry[1]. Among the early scholars to consider such extended chiasmus can be numbered Boys[2] and Lund.[3] Lund[,] who was rightly critical of Boys' efforts,[4] attempted to be more scientific in method. However, his set of seven „laws"[5] were deduced from the examples he had collected and could not be applied as controls. Even so, Lund wa[s] a careful scholar, and, as in other disciplines, later scholars will remain indebted to these pioneer studies. Howev[er] some of Lund's examples do not stand closer scrutiny[6] and many more instances have since been recognized. While not pretending to be exhaustive, the present section will discuss the problem of extended chiasmus, set ou[t] a representative selection of chiastic poetical texts and mention other texts for reference.[7]

Certain controls are particularly relevant here to help assess which poetical texts are truly chiastic in structure. Such controls include the following points:[8]

(a) First, such chiasmus must be *strict.* There are cases where a poet has applied chiasmus loosely, or where variants of a standard form are used. (Deviation is often the mark of a good poet). Cases of this nature, though, c[an] only be judged against an established norm.[9]

(b) Next, the *whole stretch of text* must be involved, not simply certain select parts. So, for example, omitting vv. 7 8 of Ps 30, or v. 10 of Ps 58 (unless this v. can be considered a ballast variant) in order to establish chiasmus – so Lund – is to beg the question.[10]

(c) *Repetition* of single words (or their synonyms) is of more value than labelling of the order „God's judgement" „Futility of idols".[11] Traditional word pairs[12] are also significant.

(d) The *basis* on which the chiastic structure is posited *must be stated*, whether it is change of speaker, alternatio of gender or content.

3.2 Examples of Large-scale chiasmus

The examples considered to exhibit chiasmus, discussed below, are Jgs 9:8–15, II Sm 1:19-25a(+25a-7), Isa 1:21 6, 28:15-8, Jer 2:5-9, Hos 12:36, Amos 9:1-4, Ps 136:10-5, Jb 32:6-10, Eccl 3:2-8. Mostly they have been culled from the work of other scholars (with some modifications) and not all are of equal merit. Some have been include to make the range as wide as possible, so that both Judges and Ecclesiastes are represented. Space forbids completeness (many more Psalms could have been analyzed).

Jotham's Fable: Jgs 9:8-15 This four-stanza poem[13] illustrates how gender-chiasmus[14] can be combined with a refrain-like structure. The chiastic pattern is based on the genders of the trees named: the olive (m), the fig (f), th vine (also f) and finally, the boxthorn (m), in tandem with repetition of „to anoint a king" in the opening and closin strophes (inclusio).

	preamble One day the trees went to ANOINT A KING over themselves. I	9:8
A (m)	They said to the OLIVE-TREE „Be KING over us". And the OLIVE-TREE said to them „Should I abandon my rich oil by which both gods and men are honoured to go and hold sway over the trees?" II	:9
B (f)	And the trees said to the FIG-TREE „You come and be QUEEN over us". But the FIG-TREE said to them „Should I abandon my sweetness and my lovely fruit to go and hold sway over the trees?" III	:10:11
B' (f)	So the trees said to the VINE „You come and be QUEEN over us." But the VINE said to them „Should I leave my wine which gives cheer to gods and men to go and hold sway over the trees?" IV	:12:13
A' (m)	Then ALL the trees said to the BOXTHORN „You come and be KING over us." And the BOXTHORN said to the trees „If you really are going to ANOINT me KING over you come for refuge under my shade; but if not, may fire proceed from the BOXTHORN and consume the (very) cedars of Lebanon.[15]	:14:15

David's Lament: II Sm 1:19-25a(+25b-7) The refrain was first recognized by Moulton,[16] the chiastic structure of t first part (vv. 19-25a) by Shea[17] and the ABBA patterns in stanzas II and IV by Ceresko.[18] My translation is base

on these and other studies,[19] with some divergences and slightly differing stichometry (especially in v.22a, considered part of stanza II).

Refrain

> The Gazelle of Israelupon your hill-flanks slain: truly the heroes have fallen.   1:19

I

> Give it not out in Gath, proclaim it not in Ashkelon's streets, in case the
> Philistine daughters should rejoice, in case the Uncircumcized's daughters   :20
> should exult.

II

R

> O mountains in Gilboa: no dew nor rain upon you fields of the heights, for
> there was defiled the shield of heroes, the shield of Saul – anointed though   :21:22
> he was with oil – by the blood of the slain, by the fat of heroes.

III

> Jonathan's bow never turned back – Saul's sword never returned empty!
> Saul-and-Jonathan,beloved-and-graceful neither in their lives nor in their   :23
> deaths were they apart. Swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.

IV

> Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul who dressed you in scarlet bejewelled,
> who put gold ornaments on your dresses.   :24

Refrain

> Truly the heroes have fallen in the thick of battle(-slaughter), Jonathan upon
> your hill-flanks slain.   :25

V

> Grievous 'tis to me on your account, my brother Jonathan, delightful were
> you to me greatly, marvellous you were; to me, loving you was more than   :26
> love for women.

Refrain

> Truly, fallen have the heroes (their) war weapons destroyed.[20]   :27a

The main chiastic pattern affects the first four stanzas anel the refrains: (R stands for refrain)

R I — A: Foreign women   (f) II — B: Death of Saul and his men   (m) R III — B: Jonathan and Saul   (m) IV — A: Israelite women   (f) R

It is based on gender (fmmf) and contrasts negative (I and II) with positive (III and IV, expressed negatively). No strophic chiasmus is present but there are chiastic patterns in II and IV. II is a double ABBA tetracolon followed by a mini-refrain (v. 22a, echoing elements from the main refrains, chiefly the word pair „slain//heroes") which is the very centre of the main poem. The pattern is ABBAA'B'B'A'R. And, this very stanza (II) forms the core of the whol lament. In IV, the chiastic sequence (again ABBA) brings the main part of the poem to a close.[21]

The Faithful City: Isa 1:21-6 The chiastic arrangement adopted here was proposed by Lack[22] and, while the overal
pattern is evident, it is not exact in a mathematical way, being based on content. The turning-point of the poem
comes at E and in the lines which follow, the reversal of the city's present condition is described, expressed neatl
by the inverted sequence DCBA. Inclusio, too, is present.

A	How she has become a whore, the *faithful city*.	1:21
B	Replete with justice, right lodged in her; but now, murderers!	
C	Your silver has turned base, your liquor, cut with water.	:22
D	Your rulers, rebels, thick with thieves. Each a lover of bribes, running after gifts. No orphan they judge, the widow's case never comes up before them.	:23
E	Accordingly, – utterance of the Lord, General Yahweh, Bull of Israel	:24
D	I'll certainly gain respite from my foes, take vengeance on my enemies.	
C	Again will my hand be upon you I will refine, like potash, your base-metal and I'll purge away all your impurities.	:25
B	I will restore your judges as before, and your counsellors as of yore.	:26
A	Only then will you be called „Right(-living) town, *faithful city*".	

Undoing the Deal with Death: Isa 28:15-8 The chiastic pattern, already known to Lund[23] is evident as is its functio
to express the reversal of existing conditions. The people of Yahweh are to trust in him, not in death. As with the
previous poem the chiasmus is based on content, but there is a certain amount of repetition too (italicized). It is
difficult to determine whether v.19 belongs to the passage; it seems to form a connecting link with vv. 20ff.

	(For you say)	
A	We cut *a covenant with Death*, and with *Sheol* we made a *pact.*[24] *The flood-lash, when it passes*, will not reach us.[25]	28:15
B	For we have made *Lie* our *refuge*, and in Deceit we are *concealed*. (Accordingly, this is what Yahweh says)	:16
C	See, I have laid a foundation-stone n Zion, a granite stone, a weighty corner-foundation, laid by the Expert who does not rush.[26]	
C	And I will set Rectitude the line, and Justice the plummet.[27]	:17
B	Away will hail sweep *Lie's refuge, Concealment*, waters will flood.	
A	And annulled will be your *covenant with Death*,[28] and your *agreement* with *Sheol* will not stand, *The flood-lash, when it passes*, you will be its base.	:18

Yahweh Spurned: Jer 2:5-9 The overall pattern results both from content and from repeated keywords and
catchphrases.[29] „Never saying ‚Where is Yahweh' " recurs in C and C'; „land" (repeated four times in D) is the
keyword of the central section (D, E, D') and „fathers" (A) corresponds to „grandchildren" (A'). Finally, in both B ar
B' there is wordplay on the name „Baal", in the expressions *lo' yoᶜilu*, „non-profitmaking" and *bᵉlo' yoᶜil*, „for what
makes no profit".[30]

This Yahweh has said: 2:5

A	What did your FATHERS find wrong with me, to keep their distance from me?	
B	Chasing „Delusion" and being deluded.	
C	*Never saying: 'Where is Yahweh'*[31]	:6
	who brought us from the LAND, Egypt steered us through the desert	
D	through the LAND of steppe and chasm, through the LAND both hot and dark, through the LAND no-one crosses, where no man lives.	:7
E	I BROUGHT YOU TO AN ORCHARD LAND, TO EAT ITS LOVELY FRUIT.	
D'	But, on arrival you fouled my LAND. my bequest you made disgusting.	
C'	The priests *never said: 'Where is Yahweh?'* Law-experts did not know me, pastors rebelled against me;	:8
B'	prophets prohesied by Baal, and after „no-go(o)ds" ran.	
A'	So, my case against you rests, Yahweh's word, against your GRANDCHILDREN is my case.	:9

The central line, probably a monocolon, is both the main thrust of the poem and its turning-point.

Yahweh's Lawsuit: Hos 12:3-6 Holladay has shown, by reference to Gn 32:20, 35:15 and expecially 33:4 (which explains Hos 12:4-5, Jacob's rivalry with Esau) that this poem is a unit, concentric in pattern. The eleven-line stanza[33] can be set out as follows:

A	A lawsuit: Yahweh's with Israel.	12:3
B	Truly he punishes Jacob for his ways,	
C	according to his actions, he repays him.	
D	In the womb he „jackbooted" his brother(=Esau),	:4
E	and in manhood he „struggled-with-God",	
E	he „struggled-with(-God)" and won,	:5
D	weeping he found favour with him(= Esau).	
C	At Beth-El, He finds him(=Jacob),	
B	and there he spoke with him	
A	Yahweh, God of the Armies Yahweh is his Name	:6

Strictly speaking, only the central portion(DEED) is totally concentric; the general scheme is chiastic in a broad sense. The second two lines of v.3 show inner chiasmus, the central cola(EE) are connected by anadiplosis and th final couplet exhibits incremental repetition.[34] But Coote rejects Holladay's analysis as „implausibly neat" and al because „it neglects the significance of Bethel and other wordplays in the chapter".[35] This example has been included to show the issue can be controversial and that there is room for scepticism.

No Escape: Amos 9:1-4 Originally identified by Lund,[36] the pattern suggested by him has here been modified.

A	Smite the capital, make the door-post vibrate in pieces on top of them all.	9:1b
B	Their posterity *by the sword I'll kill:* no fugitive shall flee, no survivor survive.	
C	If they dig down to Sheol, there my hand will seize them.	:2

D	And if they rise to the sky, from there I'll bring them down.	
D'	And if they hide atop (Mt) Carmel, from there, having searched, I'll seize them.	:3
C'	And if they hide from my EYES in the sea-deep, there will I COMMAND the sea-snake to bite them.	
A'B'	And if their enemies march them into captivity there will I COMMAND *the sword to kill them*, and I'll fix my EYES on them with evil, not good intent	:4

The central section (vv.2-3) is pure chiasmus with the CDD'C'-pattern (depths, heights, heights, depths) forming the nucleus for the rest of the poem. It interlocks with the closing stanza by use of the repeated words: EYES, COMMAND, COMMAND, EYES, and combines with the opening lines to form an inclusio (words in italics). The final four lines deviate slightly from a consistent chiastic pattern. *A Litany: Ps 136:10-5* A significant study of this psalm appeared recently and is followed here.[37] The repeated refrain makes this six-line stanza (in reality 3 + 3, see presently) into a unit twice that length,

A	To the smiter, in Egypt, of their firstborn Truly eternal is his kindness,	136:10
B	Bringing Israel from their midst, Truly eternal is his kindness,	:11
A'	With powerful hand and extended arm Truly eternal is his kindness,	:12
A'	To the parter of the Reed Sea into two parts, Truly eternal is his kindness,	:13
B	Helper-across of Israel through its midst, Truly eternal is his kindness	:14
A	Shaking off Pharaoh and his army in the Reed Sea Truly eternal is his kindness.	:15

Both groupings (vv. 10-12 and 13-15) are chiastic, and at the same time, the two halves belong together. A: *Egyp smitten*, corresponds to A(v. 15): pursuing *Pharaoh drowned.* Both the B couplets describe Israel's deliverance, while A'A' form the centre: Yahweh exerting his power over the elements. Not only does the vocabulary match („Egypt and firstborn" – „Egypt and army"; „Israel – Israel"; „midst – midst") but the constructions too:

10 „to" + participle. . . . . (Egypt, firstborn) 11 „and" + causative („Israel, midst") 12 13 „to" + participle. . . . . 14 „and" + causative („Israel, midst") 15 („Pharaoh, army")[38]

The pattern is varied by v. 12 which, though not mathematically central, functions as a hinge, and by the double envelope structure in vv. 13 and 15 („parter – Reed Sea – parts – Reed Sea").

Elihu's Disclaimer: Jb 32:6-10 First noticed by Ceresko on the basis of repeated words[39] these chiastic lines form Elihu's own preamble to his speech. Considering the length of Elihu's contribution to the debate (32:11-37:24) i not surprising he used chiasmus to solicit his listener's attention.[40]

Young am I in days but you are aged[41] so I was terribly afraid[42] of DECLARING	32:6b:7
my INSIGHT to you. I SAID[43]: Let days speak out, MANY years teach WISDOM; but it is the spirit in a man, the breath of Shadday giving them UNDERSTANDING.	:8
	:9

It is not the MANY(-yeared)[44] who are WISE, or elders who UNDERSTAND :10
correctly. So I SAY: Listen to me, DECLARE my INSIGHT can I, too.

In Season: Eccl 3:2-8 The merit for seeing the complex chiastic arrangement in these seventeen lines is Loader's.[4...]
He set out its components as either „favorable" or „unfavorable" and his analysis is followed here in the main, the
symbols (+) and (–) being used instead. Apart from v. 5 the translation presents no obstacles.

To everything, a season, and a time for every matter under the sun. A time for birth and a time for death A time to plant and a time to uproot plants	+ – + – A – – – – –	3:1:2
A time to kill and a time to heal A time to demolish and a time to rebuild A time for weeping and a time for laughing A time for mourning and a time for dancing	– + – + – + B – + – – – – –	:3:4
A time for and a time for A time for embracing and a time to leave off embracing A time for seeking and a time for losing A time for keeping and a time for rejecting	+ – + – B' + – – – – – –	:5:6
A time for ripping and a time for sewing up A time for whispering and a time for speaking (up)	– + – + A' – – – – –	:7
A time for loving and a time for hating A time for war and a time for peace	+ – – + C – – – – –	:8

The patterns of (+) and (–) suggest an overall chiastic pattern as set out in the second column: A (+ – twice), B (– ...
four times), B' (+ – four times) A' (– + twice) and a closing chiastic bicolon (C).[46]

3.3 Evaluation

The examples set out above showing chiasmus over longer passages make it clear that a great deal of variety is
possible and that the term „chiastic" can be interpreted in quite different ways. This does not rule out strictly
chiastic passages, listed in the index already referred to. From that list an almost random selection of texts can b[e]
mentioned: Isa 2:6-22, 16:6-12, 29:1-3,[47] 51:1-11,[48] Jer 5:1-8, 50:2-46,[49] Hos 8:9-13, Pss 7:13-7, 15, 29,[50] 30[...]
51:1-11,[51] 58, 59, 72,[52] 95:1-7c,[53] 105:1-11,[54] 137,[55] 139,[56] Pr 30:1-4, and Lam 2:1-22.[57] Most of these text[...]
have been studied very recently. Certain passages, notably Ps 68,[58] are too uncertain for inclusion; others have
been analysed along structural lines and are definitely not chiastic;[59] Ps 67 and Pr 1:20-33 have been set out
below. **3.4 Editorial chiasmus**

Editors have also used chiastic patterning when compiling books (and portions of books) of the Old Testament.
Walker and Lund showed this to be the case in Habbakuk[60] and Lack has examined Isaiah along similar lines.[61] F[or]
example, according to Lack, Isa 56 – 66 has the following pattern: A (56-58), B (59:1-14), C (59:15-21), D (60-62[)]
C' (63:1-6), B' (63:7-64:11), A' (65-66).[62] Again, some books have an overall ABA' pattern, e.g. Job

A: prose   1 – 2 B: poetry   3– 42:6 A: prose   42:7 – 17[63]

As already stated, chiasmus at this level has not been discussed and has been mentioned here only for the sake of completeness of treatment.

4 THE FUNCTIONS OF CHIASMUS IN POETRY

To isolate a particular chiastic pattern in a particular poem is largely a preliminary. The next step is to see how the element in question articulates with the rest of the poem (or structures the whole poem, or even set of poems) and especially to determine what function it fulfils. Here the term „function" is being used rather broadly to mean the purpose the poet had in mind. Why did he employ a chiastic pattern at this point in the poem? What effect is it intended to have? This section, accordingly, is an attempt at answering such questions, hoping to encourage both student and scholar in the quest for better answers.[1]

Broadly speaking, the general function of chiasmus is to break the monotony of persistent direct parallelism.[2] More specifically, chiastic patterns fall into two main classes: *structural* and *expressive*. Structural chiastic patterns contribute to the overall form of a poem (see section 3), often providing a key to the poet's plan. „Expressive chiasmus" is a rather vague term adopted to cover what is in effect non-structural chiasmus, where the device has been used to achieve a certain effect or to heighten an effect already present in the meaning of the words. The table set out here (Table 5) shows the subdivisions within these two broad categories and is at the same time an outline of the ensuing paragraphs.

1. *STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONS* (4.2) (a)   – to open a stanza or poem (b)   – to close a stanza or poem (c)   – to link components of a poem (d)   – to indicate the midpoint of a poem

2. *EXPRESSIVE FUNCTIONS* (4.3) To express (a)   – merismus (b)   – reversal of existing state (c)   – emphatic negation or prohibition (d)   – strong contrast or antithesis (e)   – other functions

Table 5

4.2 Structural Functions

(a) *To open a stanza or poem.* The first of the structural functions is quite straightforward: a chiastically-patterned strophe often serves to begin a stretch of poetry:

From Aram I was fetched by Balaq, (By) the King of Moab *from the Eastern Ridges* Nb 23:7[3]

Also: Isa 32:3, Jer 14:2, 20:14, Nah 1:2, 3:1, Hab 2:1, Pss 5:2, 19:2, 34:2, 51:3, 92:2, 138:1, 139:1, Jb 4:17, 26:5, 29:2.

(b) *To close a stanza or poem.* Akin to function (a) is the use of chiasmus to bring a section of poetry to a neat end (see function d).

Turned to mourning has my lyre, and my flute to weepers' voices Jb 30:31

And Isa 5:11, 14:20-1, 30:2, 32:6c, 51:11b, Jer 8:8-9, Amos 5:14-5a, Pss 1:6, 29:11, 105:45, Song 1:11, Lam 1:22ef, Ecclus 12:18.[4]

(c) *To link components of a poem.* At the level of a complete poem, chiasmus acts as a structuring link throughout (see section 3 for examples). Even at the level of the strophe it is evident that a chiastic arrangement welds its components together:

A jealous god and an avenger is Yahweh, An avenger is Yahweh and a wrathful Lord Nah 1:2[5]

(d) *To indicate the midpoint of a poem.* The midpoint is either the hinge or turning-point in a poem, or its climax. Th central strophe may be chiastic, as for example Jer 2:27b-8a[6] or it may be non~hiastic, but come at the very cent of a chiastic pattern, e.g. Pr 1:26-27 (see below).[7]

4.3 Expressive Functions

(a) *To express merismus.* Merismus is the expression of totality by the mention of representative parts of that totality. A very common way of expressing merismus is to use a polar word pair[8] but it is by no means the only wa as will be shown. In Ez 32:13, God has threatened to wipe out all the cattle of Egypt, and adds (with reference to its rivers):

No longer shall they be churned up by *human feet, Cattle-hooves* shall not churn them up

Or, with reference to the stars:

He who led out by numbers *their host,*   *All of them* called by name Isa 40:26b,

the clue being the use of *kol,* „all" (as is often the case). Also, Isa 10:4a, 11:4b, 13:16, 18:6b, 30:14, 42:4, Jer 2:9, 6:7, Ez 17:23, Nah 1:8, 3:1, Hab 3:3, Pss 12:9, 19:2, 20:5, 22:13, 34:2, 38:10, 57:6, 72:11, 83:12, 92:3, 105:44, 145:2, 10, 20, 147:4, Jb 7:18, 12:10, 14, 31:4, 37:3, 39:8, Pr 21:7, Eccl 2:10, 3:1.

(b) *To express reversal of existing state.* Under this heading comes a comparatively large number of examples whic perhaps indicates that further subdivision of function is necessary. The chiastic pattern is used to emphasize the meaning of the words: that a drastic change is either imminent or has already taken place. So, in Zeph 3:19 Yahw promises that times will change for the better:

        I will rescue *the lost*   And *the dispersed* I will gather.

As part of a theophany Mic 1:4a describes how nature will be affected by Yahweh's appearance:

        Dissolve will the mountains beneath him,   The valleys will be torn apart.

See Isa 1:18bc, 5:20-21, 6:7b, 11:1, 4b, 6, 8, 13, 13:10b, 16, 21b, 14:25, 30, 26:19a, 29:17, 30:22, 32:6c, 40:3, 42:4, 12, 15a, 43:18, 48:21b, 49:13b, 14, 18, 59:3, 60: 13b, Ez 17:4b, Mic 4:6, 7:16b, Mal 3:24a, Pss 38:8, 46:10 76:3, 81:7, 145:2, 147:4, Jb 11:4, 17:7, 19:9, 14, 28:2, 34:6, 36:12, 39:6, Pr 2:2, 3:10, Song 1:6.

(c) *For emphatic negation or prohibition.* This heading covers negation of three kinds: simple negation, denial, and prohibition. The particles *lo'* or *'al* (as expected) are usually present. Simple negation is evident in

Therefore, *no* mercy will be shown them by their Maker, Their Moulder will show them *no* favour Isa 27:11b[9]

An example of denial is

Never shall dwell within my house an agent of deceit, A liar shall *never* remain before my eyes Ps 101:7

Similarly, v.3 and Pss 9:19, 26:4-5, 37:19, 132:4 (=oath), Jb 20:9, 20, 21:9, 32:14, Lam 3:22. Chiasmus is more commonly used for straightforward prohibitions, mostly in wisdom literature. e.g.

Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence, And, in high places, *do not* take your seat Pr 25:6

Also Jer 6:25, Ps 74:19, Jb 3:6, Pr 23:10, Ecclus 7:5, 10, 11:8.[10]

(d) *To heighten antithesis or contrast.* A chiastic pattern helps emphasize antithesis[11] and is particularly frequent in Proverbs, e.g.

The just man eats to sate his appetite, But the belly of the wicked is empty Pr 13:25

and 10:3, 4, 12, 12:20, 13:24, 14:4 etc. Also, Pss 37:19, 38:8, 78:33, 89:7, 145:20, Jb 10:5, 11:14, 13:12, 34:6, Ecclus 10:10.

(e) *Other functions.* Finally, a group of rather mixed functions for which perhaps only one representative text can be provided.

to express reciprocity: Ps 25:3, Zech 13:9b and Song 6:3:

I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;

to express „poetic justice"[12]: Jer 2:19a, 27b-8a, Pss 9:16, 18:21, 25, 25:3 and 7:16-7[13]:

A pit he dug, but it pitted him, and he fell into the hole he made;

his mischief recoiled upon his head, and upon his skull his malice redounded;

as mere emphasis: Jer 1:4-19, 4:5a, 6:1-7, Ps 89:3-5[14] and Song 1:2-3:

Truly, *sweeter* is your love than wine, than perfume is your fragance *sweeter;*

to express a surprise event: Ps 78:24 and Jb 18:10:

Hidden in the ground is a rope for him, and a trap for him on the path;

to express harmony: Is 11:4, Jer 30:18b, Zeph 3:19, Pss 25:3, 72:7 and Isa 62:1b:

Until out shines, like a light, her justice, and her deliverance like a torch blazes;

to denote impossibility[15]: Isa 40:12a, Jer 5:12b, Jb 4:17 and Isa 40:27a:

Hidden is my way from Yahweh, and by my God my rights are disregarded;

to express paradox: Eccl 4:14[16]:

For from the womb even the *king* issued, For, in spite of his *kingship*, he was born poor;

to express simultaneity: Jb 17:7, 19:9, 26:5, 38:38 and Isa 3:8:

For stumble did Jerusalem, and Judah fall.

5 CHIASMUS AND OTHER POETIC DEVICES

Chiasmus is not always used in isolation and is often combined with other poetic devices,[1] an interrelationship which will be explored here. The devices in question can, broadly speaking, be divided into structural and non-structural.

A: Chiasmus and other structural devices The devices to be considered are anacrusis, ballast variant, the terrace pattern (anadiplosis), word pairs, the list, the pivot pattern and keywords. Incremental repetition and the acrosti will be treated only briefly. The accompanying chart (Table 6: Chiasmus and Related Patterns) will help both for comparative purposes and as a convenient summary.

a	b	a		chiastic monocolon
x a c	b b	c a		anacrusis (5.1)
a c'	b b'	c d'		ballast variant (5.2)
a	b b	a c	d	terrace pattern (5.3)
a b'	b a'	p		pivot pattern (bicolon with silent stress) (5.6)
a a	b c			incremental repetition
				Table 6

5.1 Chiasmus and Anacrusis

Anacrusis is the presence of an extra-metrical word (or words), generally at the beginning of a line.[2] Similarly, a word (or words) can stand outside the chiastic pattern:

For, a lamp is a command, teaching is a light Pr 6:23

the pattern being x-ab // ba, x representing the extra-chiastic word *kî*. Also, with both chiasmus and anacrusis: Isa 17:10, Amos 5:4-6, Pss 67:5, 107:9, 11; Isa 5:20, 21 (*hôy*, „woe") ; Hos 4:4 (*'ak*, „surely") ; Ps 9:19 (*kî lo*, „for not").

5.2 Chiasmus and Ballast Variant

In a parallel couplet or bicolon, an equivalent to a word in the first line is sometimes missing from the second. In compensation, the balance is maintained by a lengthening of one of the elements in the second colon. The longer element, called „ballast variant" is also termed „expletive" or „filler" and is characteristic of oral poetry.[3] So in Pr 5:16

Should your springs overflow outside? In the square your *water-runnels?*

the lack of a verb in the second colon (i.e. *yapûsû*) is balanced by the long expression *palgê-mayîm*, ballast variant *ma^{c}ynotêka*.[4] Similarly Jg 5:19 („kings // kings of Canaan"), Isa 14:15 („from upon them // from upon his shoulder"),[5] Ez 17:23 („beneath it // in the shade of its boughs"), 32:4 („on land // upon the surface of the ground"), Pss 22:23 („to my brothers // within the assembly"), 103:7 („Moses // sons of Israel"), 145:2 („I will bless you // I will praise your name"), Jb 28:26 („rain // thunderstorm"), 30:31 („dirge // voice of weepers").[6]

5.3 Chiasmus and Terrace Pattern

In the terrace pattern the terminal part of one colon is repeated in the immediately following colon[7] and its use is perhaps one of the easiest ways of producing chiastic verse:

A jealous god an *an avenger is Yahweh*, *An avenger is Yahweh* and a wrathful Lord Nah 1:2

See too (repeated elements in parentheses): Isa 29:17 („Carmel"), Ez 22:2 („you will judge"), Amos 4:7b („upon one city").[8]

5.4 Chiasmus and Word Pairs

Since chiasmus is a variation of parallelism[9] it is not surprising that word pairs can belong to its structure. Without digressing into the topic of parallel pairs[10] it is enough to point out that chiasmus exploits this device in characteristic ways. The most common is to *invert* the standard (AB) sequence,[11] a good example being Pr. 18:6-7 where the sequence of the word pair „mouth // lips" (first bicolon) is reversed in the second („lips // mouth") resulting in an ABBA tetracolon:[12]

The LIPS of a fool lead to strife, and his MOUTH for a beating cries out: a fool's MOUTH is his ruin, and his LIPS own snare.

5.5 Chiasmus and the List

Although there are only a few examples of chiastically patterned lists, they deserve mention, since the list is a ver elementary but effective literary form made even more striking when combined with chiasmus. By employing chiasmus in its central cola the catalogue of Gn 8:22 becomes poetry:

While the earth lasts, seedtime and harvest, *cold* and *heat*   *summer* and *winter*, day and night shall never cease.

Also, Gn 12:16 (cited above, 2.8), Isa 5:20, Ez 34:4, Song 4:14[13] and Eccl 3:2-8 (see section 3).

5.6 Chiasmus and the Pivot Pattern

As first recognized by Möller[14] some chiastic bicola have the form

a   b   p b'   a'

with the components of the first colon (a, b) repeated and reversed in the second (b', a'), the central element (p) appearing only once. For example Jb 18:11

Around (do) frighten him terrors, (Do) harry him at every step.

Also: Isa 30:8a,[15] 33:17, 59:2, Jer 4:2b, Ez 32:13b, Mic 1:4a, Nah 2:5, Pss 67:7-8, 72:1-2, 75:3, 102:20, 119:149 166, 174; Jb 21:30, 32:6, 38:38, Pr 15:25.

5.7 Chiasmus and Keywords

A keyword is one which occurs several times in a passage and contributes to its meaning.[16] To determine which are the keywords in a text the first step is to tabulate all the repeated words[17]. From such tables it is possible to see whether the words have been arranged chiastically, bearing in mind that synonyms or antonyms can be significant as well. An example of this last point is Ps 12:4-5 where the synonyms „Yahweh" and „Master" amount to variants of the same keyword since they are equivalent in function (see above, section 2.6). One of the first passages to be successfully examined in this way was Lam 1,[18] but as a concrete illustration of a rather neglected aspect of chiasmus Pr 1:20-33 has been chosen.[19] It will be examined in detail.

Pr 1:20-33

The chiastic arrangement of the poem was clearly demonstrated by Trible.[20] The tabulation of keywords drawn here provides independent confirmation of Trible's findings, since she made no mention at all of keywords. The overall pattern can be seen at a glance and the heavy clustering in E (vv. 26-7) shows it to be the most important section, as Trible had already proved. In addition, the keyword table provides certain refinements of analysis, notably the stanza-division between v. 23a and 23b (contrast Trible) since the verb *sûb* obviously belongs to both B and B'. Also, prepositions and particles form part of the chiastic pattern[21]; examples are *kol,* „all," in D, D' and *lo* „not" (also D, D') repeated four times for emphasis. Finally, there is a tendency for such keywords to be echoed

(denoted by parentheses), e.g. *qara'*, „to cry, call," (v. 21a), the preposition *b^e*, „in," used five times in section A (see and the nouns „reproof" (v. 23a) and „dread" (v. 33c).
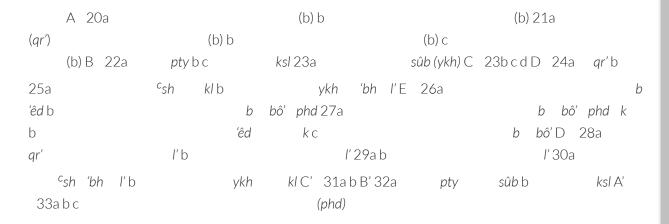
```
        A   20a                        (b) b                           (b) 21a
(qr')                        (b) b                        (b) c
      (b) B   22a      pty b c            ksl 23a              sûb (ykh) C   23b c d D   24a    qr' b
25a                       c sh      kl b              ykh    'bh   l' E   26a                              b
'êd b                            b    bô'   phd 27a                         b    bô'   phd   k
b                                 'êd        k c                     b    bô' D   28a
qr'                      l' b                         l' 29a b                 l' 30a
      c sh   'bh   l' b                  ykh       kl C'   31a b B' 32a      pty      sûb b            ksl A'
  33a b c                                     (phd)
```

Table 7: Chiastic Keywords in Pr 1:20-33

Pr 1:20-33[22]

A 20a	Wisdom, in the street, bawls,	
b	In the squares she gives out her voice,	
21a	From the top of the walls she CRIES,	P
b	In the entrances to the gates,	Q
c	In the city she says her say.	P'
B 22a	How long, FOOLS, will you love FOOLISHNESS?	
b	Scoffers, in scoffing be pleased with yourselves?	
c	SIMPLETONS, hate knowledge?	
23a	(How long) will you TURN from my REPROOF?	
C 23b	See!	
c	I will pour out on you my spirit,	
d	I will make known my words to you.	
D 24a	Because I CRIED (out), but you refused,	
b	Stretched out my hand, but no one noticed.	
25a	You have ignored ALL my COUNSEL,	
b	And my REPROOF you did not WANT.	
E 26a	Aloud will I, at your CALAMITY, laugh,	S
b	I will mock WHEN PANIC COMES TO YOU,	T
27a	WHEN TO YOU, LIKE a storm, PANIC COMES	T '
b	And your CALAMITY, LIKE a whirlwind arrives,	S'
c	When to you come distress and anguish.	
D' 28a	Then will they CRY to me, but I'll NOT answer,	
b	They'll look for me but will NOT find me,	
29a	Since they hated knowledge,	
b	And respect for Yahweh did NOT choose.	
30a	They did NOT WANT my COUNSEL,	
b	Despised ALL my REPROOF.	
C' 31a	They'll eat the fruit of their wages,	
b	And with their own counsels be satisfied.	
B' 32a	For, by TURNING away the FOOLS are killed,	
b	And the complacence of SIMPLETONS destroys them.	
A' 33a	Who listens to me	
b	Lives securely,	
c	At ease, not dreading evil.	

Chiasmus also interacts with other structural devices such as the acrostic,[23] incremental repetition[24] and the refrain.[25]

B: Chiasmus and non-structural devices The topics to be examined here in connection with chiasmus are the „break up" of a standard phrase, wordplay in its various forms, the simile, rhetorical questions, sound patterns, the broke construct chain and several minor devices.

5.8 Chiasmus and „Break-up"

Related to the word pair (perhaps as its origin) is the device now known as the break-up of a stereotype phrase.[2] In essence it involves splitting up the components of a set phrase and distributing them over parallel cola;[27] e.g.

Treat kindly[28] what your right hand (*yᵉmîneka*) planted, And the son (*ben*) you strengthened for yourself[29] Ps 80:16

Here the stock expression „Benjamin" (*binyamîn*), which actually occurs in v.3[30] has been split up, its constituent inverted and from them a chiastic bicolon constructed. Other examples: Isa 48:7,[31] Pss 69:34, 78:56[32] and Jb 36:3.[33]

5.9 Chiasmus and Wordplay

Chiasmus also interacts with or exploits wordplay, mostly in the guise of paronomasia and rootplay.[34] There is chiastic paronomasia in

When you ascended (*ᶜalîta*) your father's bed, Then you fouled the suckler's (*ᶜôla*) couch Gn 49:4[35]

and in Jer 30:16,[36] Pss 106:23f (*hᵃmatô*, „his anger" and *hamad*, „to please"), 107:11 and Pr 24:21-2. Occasional the consonants of a word in the first colon are inverted to form another word in the second (rootplay) as in

She led him by plenty of smooth-talk (*leqah*) By the smoothness (*heleq*) of her lips she urged him Pr 7:21

both words also being used chiastically. (See section 2.8 for other examples). Syllepsis is used in combination wit chiasmus in Isa 58:10.

5.10 Chiasmus and Simile

Chiastic components sometimes comprise similes as in Hos 4:16

For, *like a heifer*, wildly has Israel run: Now pasture them, Yahweh, *like lambs in the wide meadow*

Also: II Sm 23:4,[37] Mic 1:4, Ps 133:2-3[38] and Ecclus 15:2.

5.11 Chiasmus and Rhetorical Questions

Curiously, chiasmus is frequent in rhetorical questions, examples being Jb 6:12, 38:16-7, 25, Pr 30:4. Its function is to emphasize the inherent contradiction of such questions:

Like a human's days: *your days? Your years* like an adult's? Jb 10:5.

Note, too, the chiastic arrangement of interrogative particles in

(ha-) Am I a God at hand, says Yahweh, and not a God far off? *('im)* Can a man hide himself in secret places where I cannot see him? says Yahweh *(hᵃ-)* The sky and the earth: Do I not fill them? says Yahweh Jer 23:23-4.[3]

5.12 Chiasmus and Sound Patterns

The sound patterns to be discussed are assonance, alliteration and rhyme. Of course the three components cannot be clinically isolated, but one or the other does tend to be predominant in a particular verse. To begin with assonance: it can be heard strongly in the central chiastic cola of Hos 7:7

All of them *(kullam)* are hot as an oven, they consume *(wᵉ'akᵉlû)* their rulers, all their kings *(kol-malkêhem)* have fallen, None among them calls to me,

with echo-assonance in the first line. Further: Jer 5:25, 30:16, Pss 20:5, 72:11, Jb 21:9, Pr 2:2, 8, 21:17. Chiastic alliteration, instead, is present in both Song 1:6*(s)* and

If I refused *('im 'emnaᶜ)* any want of the needy, Or the eyes of the widow made pine *('almanâ'ᵃkallê)* Jb 31:16[40]

Rhyme with chiasmus is very rare, sample texts being Isa 3:8a *(kasᵉlâ – yᵉhûdâ)*, 51:7 *('al-tîr'û – 'al-tehattû)* and 48:5 (see next paragraph).

5.13 Other Devices

Both chiasmus and hendiadys[41] are operative in Ps 55:6

Terrible fear comes upon me, I am overwhelmed by *shuddering*

the expression „terrible fear" consisting of two words joined by a copula *(yir'â waraᶜ-ad)*.[42] Also, Isa 51:3b,[43] Jb 17:15 and Lam 2:21. Chiasmus heightens the effect of hyperbole in Jb 20:6[44]

If his statue should rise to heaven, or its head to the clouds reach up.

A last device to be considered is the broken construct chain used with a view to producing chiastic word-order:

The sinew *(gîd)* of your neck is iron   a b c Your forehead, brass   c' b' Isa 48:4[45]

or in Pr 17:6 where chiasmus results from interposing the word „sons" between two nouns in the construct.[46]

C: The interrelationship of chiasmus and other poetic devices The survey provided by subsections A and B has been brief and incomplete, but it has shown the extent to which chiasmus and other poetic devices available to the Hebrew bards intermeshed. At times the function of chiasmus is subordinate, in other texts it dominates and occasionally it coincides with, functions of other poetic devices. Further research is required to determine the underlying rules of poetic technique.

In order to show, in a practical way, how such structural and nonstructural devices interrelate with chiasmus, a single poem will be analysed in detail, the example chosen being Ps 67, already examined by Lund.[47] Although some uncertainties of translation remain, they do not obscure the intricacy of the poem.[48] Analysis and discussion will be provided after the translation.

I	May God show us mercy and bless us; May he look favourably on our plough,[49] To proclaim[50] on *earth*(f) your power (m?),[51] Among all the nations(m) your deliverance(f).	67:2:3
R	Praise you, will the peoples, O God, Praise you, will the peoples, all of them.	:4
II	May the folk be happily rejoicing, For you judge the nations with rectitude, And the folk of the *earth* you care for.[52]	:5
R	Praise you, will the peoples, O God, Praise you, will the peoples, all of them.	:6
III	*Earth* yielded her produce – Blessed us has God, our own God, Blessed us has God – Respected his sign[53] have all earth's ends.	:7:8

(1) **overall chiastic pattern** Quite clearly, stanzas I and III correspond as regards content. There is also a degree of common vocabulary: „God," „bless," „earth," They are also related by wordplay: „plough" *('et)* and „sign" *('ot)*; „may he look" *(ya'er)* and „(they) have respected" *(weyîre'û)*. The central stanza, unfortunately difficult to translate, links the outer stanzas and uses words from both: „earth" and „nations."

(2) **refrain and stanza-structure** The refrain (R: vv.4 and 6) sections off the poem into stanzas of 4, 3 and again lines, resulting in a pleasing balance. The refrain itself is formed by the use of incremental repetition (staircase parallelism or expanded colon).

(3) **keywords** As already noted, certain words are repeated, notably „peoples" (x 6; cf. „folk" x 2 and „nations" x 1), „God" (also x 6), „earth" (meaning both *soil* and the *world* generally) „all" and „praise" (each 4 times). These words not only contribute to the structure of the poem but also spell out its main theme: By blessing Israel God will induce the whole world to acknowledge his power. (See next paragraph on repetition of the suffix).

(4) **structural patterns**

The *envelope figure* (inclusio) appears three times: the main words of v.2 are resumed in vv.7-8; the third stanza opens and closes with the word „earth," and, thirdly, in the double wordplay of vv. 2 and 8. The suffix -*nû* (1st pers. pl.) is used seven times. The two central lines of the last stanza (itself chiastic, of *ABBA pattern)* comprise a *pivot pattern*.

(5) **other devices**

Apart from paronomasia, the following devices are present: hendiadys (v. 5 „happily rejoicing" and possibly v. 2 „mercifully bless us"), ballast variant (v. 5 „folk" // „folk of the earth"; v. 7 „earth" // „all the ends of the earth"; also the refrain and in v.3 „On earth" // „among all the nations").[54]

(6) **conclusions** By its larger chiastic structure the diverse elements making up the poem are given unity. Even though there is a refrain, repetition and a rigid arrangement of lines, there is no sense of monotony and the whol[e] tenor of the psalm is optimistic.

6 THE VALUE OF RECOGNIZING CHIASMUS

Apart from the general aspect of increasing one's appreciation of Hebrew poetry (and in addition to what has already been set out regarding function), recognition of chiastic patterns can be valuable in several specific ways[.]

6.1 Chiasmus, Textual Criticism and Philology

If it can be established that chiasmus obtains in a particular passage, then it can be better understood at the philological level, which in turn may obviate a textual emendation. Since chiasmus operates at a different level, there is no danger of circular reasoning. Dahood has already examined several texts from Job in this way.[1] Such texts are: Isa 2:2,[2] 32:1 (asseverative *lamed*),[3] 32:6 (*dbr:^{c}sh:^{c}sh:dbr* pattern „argues in favor of the received text against the Qumran Isaiah Scroll's *hwsb* for *ya^{c}aseh*"),[4] Jer 4:14-16,[5] Pss 10:11-12 (*'el* need not be deleted),[6] 78: (*b*= „than"), 138:1 (insertion of *yhwh* in first colon not required),[7] Pr 23:10.[8]

6.2 Chiasmus, Poetry and Prose

The texts examined in this chapter are mainly in verse, but there is a „grey" area, not quite prose and yet not quit[e] good poetry, which has not been looked at. While by no means exclusive to verse[9] chiasmus does seem to indicat[e] (in combination with other factors) that a particular passage is poetic in character. Many examples could be given[10] (see above on Jg 9:8-15) but one will suffice here. In critical editions of the Hebrew Bible Mal 3:19 is printed out as prose, but it exhibits chiastic structure:

For see, *the day is coming*, glowing like an oven; Turned will be *all* the arrogant, and *all* evildoers to chaff, Setting them ablaze, *the day that comes*,

i.e. an ABBA tetracolon with an intrusive second colon. See, too, I Sm 3:17.

This suggests that other passages need to be looked at with a critical eye, to determine whether they are prose o[r] poetry.

6.3 Chiasmus, the Strophe and the Stanza

Although these topics have already been touched on, in view of their importance and of a certain degree of confusion among scholars, a final example will be given here. It is Isa 54:2, recently translated by Dahood.[11]

| (A) | *strophe* I | Enlarge the site of your tent, and the curtains of your home stretch out. | a–bc bc– |
| (B) | *strophe* II | Do not hold back. | |

(A')　　　　*strophe* III　　　　Lengthen your cords, and your stakes make fast.　　　　a'b' b'a

Chiasmus shows that *strophe* I is a unit, a chiastically-patterned bicolon. The same applies to *strophe* III; so that th[e] central *strophe* II can only be a monocolon. However the three strophes form a chiastic *stanza* (symbolized by the letters A, B, A' in parentheses), a unit of a higher order. Chiasmus, then, is a key factor in differentiating such self-contained units within a larger pattern, although not many texts are as crystal-clear as this one.

6.4 Other Points

In passages where there is some doubt about stichometry, chiasmus (if present) can be a useful criterion e.g. Ps 67:5 where the xabc // bca pattern determines the stichometry:[12]

For you judge the nations justly;

and the peoples on earth you guide.

Chiasmus, too, indicates the climactic centre (eg. Ps 12) and explains why a poem such as Lam 3 ends on a dismal note: the real climax lies in vv. 31-33:

For the Lord is not always angry: Even if he punishes cruelly, he'll show compassion, in line with his abundant love
For he does not mindlessly hurt or punish mortal

6.5 Chiasmus and the Oral Poet

The claim that a large part of the Old Testament was orally composed is generally accepted, even though it is not always possible to establish how much derives directly from oral composition. Certainly it is safe to assume that much of the poetry was improvised in front of an attentive audience and that poets employed certain techniques to assist smoothness of delivery. To the question: Did the use of chiasmus belong to such techniques? the answe[r] appears to be in the affirmative. To take the simplest case first: having delivered a single line of poetry, the easies[t] way to produce a second automatically parallel colon would be to repeat the components (perhaps with slight variations) in reverse sequence. In fact, it would seem that students were schooled in precisely this manner. The[y] would be given the first line of a saying and asked to provide a second line to cap it; for example,

A wise son makes a glad father,

which has different second lines in Pr 10:1 and 15:20. Or, a second line was given, the exercise being to provide [a] suitable first line:[13]

Blessings are on a just man's head, *But the wicked man's mouth hides violence*　　　　Pr 10:[

A fount of life is a just man's mouth, *But the wicked man's mouth hides violence*　　　　Pr 10:11

Both are chiastic but the quality of the second „answer" is higher. Even slight variations resulted in effective couplets. From these it was but a series of steps to more and more elaborate sequences, though it is debatable whether complete texts in chiastic form could have been produced orally. More probably such poems, once committed to writing, were later re-worked (much as were alphabetic acrostics) in order to complete or even create wholesale chiastic patterns.

6.6 Closing Remarks

Many more topics could have been dealt with, for instance dating,[14] but conclusions concerning them must be reserved for another occasion, since the extent of the material involved is so large. As stated in the introduction, the main emphasis in the present chapter has been on terminology and classification. Once these have been sure established (and there is certainly room for further correction and refinement) then a good basis for further research will have been provided.[15]

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 1

1   Here „ancient Hebrew poetry" means, in effect, the OT with its extra-canonical books (in some traditions), suc as Ecclus, since no other extra-biblical Hebrew poetry has survived.

2   I am particularly indebted to Robert Smith, who provided a long list of texts exhibiting chiasmus, which formed the nucleus of this chapter, as well as helpful criticism of the first draft.

3   On function in poetry see Leech, *A linguistic guide to English poetry*, p. 4.

4   Andersen, *Sentence*, pp. 121-4; Ceresko, *CBQ* 40:1-10 (published after the submission of my first draft).

5   By novelty of this order is meant, chiefly, solutions to philological problems. See, however, section 3.2.

6   Holladay, *JBL* 85:434 asks „To what degree does chiasmus depend on the *Gattung* of a passage?" and „Does th *Gattung* suggest chiasmus, or is there no close relation between them?" The study of literary forms requires mor refinement before it can be related to the presence of chiasmus. For a brief survey of chiasmus cf. Stek, *CTJ* 9:24

7   Systematic proposals are not lacking, e.g. Segert, *MIO* 15:312ff; Kurylowicz, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, p. 67, n. 2; Margalit, *UF* 7:298, n. 15 and 300, n. 16 – but none is convincing. The early Hebrew inscriptio provide a growing body of comparative material by which biblical texts can be dated (a suggestion I owe to Dr. John C. L. Gibson of Edinburgh).

8   See Watson, *Biblica* 53:191-207.

9   By far the most readable survey, and still valid today, is Cobb, *A Criticism of Systems of Hebrew Metre*.

10   As Dr. John C. L. Gibson pointed out to me, „Syllable counting may be a viable undertaking for Ugaritic wher differences in vowel quantity are phonologically relevant, but is hardly meaningful in the case of a stress-oriente language like Hebrew." Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, p. 140.

11   Discussed below, setion 5.13.

12   See also Isa 10:5, Pss 16:11, 71:7, Pr 17:6.

13   Following Dahood, *Psalms*, II:67; he did not recognize the pivot pattern.

14 Considered in more detail in section 5.6

15 Among them can be mentioned the word-unit (Ley, Robinson, Kosmala), the thought-unit, syllable-counting, vowel-counting (Freedman) and letter-counting (Loretz).

16 Syllable-counting is perhaps the system of metre now most in vogue; a convenient survey with lengthy examples is provided by Stuart, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter.*

17 The problems of terminology are discussed by Kraft, *Strophic Structure*, p. 4, n.5 and p. 32, n. 1; Lotz, *Helicon*, 4:132; Albright, *YGC*, p. 5, n. 15; Fowler, *Anglia* 86:280-320; Boadt, *CBQ*, 35:24, n. 14.

18 Not only was this the technique of oral (improvised) composition, it also reflects the manner in which written works were compiled.

19 Small is sure; it is easier to detect patterns within lesser complexes, although, of course, the whole context must never be lost sight of.

20 Note that the term „verse" has generally been avoided to prevent confusion with the verse-numbering of MT.

21 Cf. Kramsky, *The Word as a Linguistic Unit.*

22 Holladay, *JBL*, 85:403.

23 „Orphan lines in poetry of pervasive parallels are a contradiction in terms, since whatever the status of a line, all its structure and functions are indissolubly interlaced with the near and distant verbal environment, and the task of linguistic analysis is to disclose the levers of this coaction. When seen from the inside of the parallelistic system, the supposed orphanhood, like any other componential status, turns into a netword of multifarious compelling affinities": Jakobsen, *Language* 42:429.

24 The definition of chiasmus accepted in this chapter is very broad, as will be apparent.

25 Note the abbreviations: m: masculine; f: feminine; c: common gender; ETr: English translation; lit.: literally.

26 For chiasmus on a larger scale see section 3.4, below. **FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 2**

1 Strophic chiasmus can also be analyzed grammatically and syntactically, for which see Andersen, *Sentence*, pp. 127ff.

2 Ceresko, *CBQ* 40:9.

3 See also Ez 17:24, Mal 3:24a, Song 6:3 and Eccl 7:1a.

4 „A rather infrequent sequence" according to Dahood, *Psalms*, III:345

5 And to incremental repetition (expanded colon); on the pivot pattern see sections 1.3 and 5.8. It must not be confused with the ABA tricolon.

6   A single colon can be of the following types: aa'a" (three-synonym colon, not a tricolon as in Watson, *UF* 7: 483-4); aab, abb and aba (chiastic).

7   The peculiar characteristic of the pivot-patterned bicolon is silent stress, on which see Abercrombie, *Linguistic* 6:5-13 and Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 251.

8   It could also be termed a telescoped form of mirror chiasmus (see above, on typology).

9   On Ps 57:2,8,9 see Auffret, *Semitica* 27:59-73, who notes the stanza-opening function too. For Ps 67:7b-8a see section 5, below; Song 1:15 (= 4:1) is a marginal case. Ps 47:7, exceptionally, forms a bicolon from two successive and identical aba monocola.

10   Often confused with the pivot pattern; see note 5.

11   So Austerlitz, *Ob-Ugric metrics*, p. 47.

12   Although the actual poetic section is very short (vv. 39-40) it is opened by a ABA tricolon.

13   Ceresko *UF* 7:77-81, *CBQ* 38:305-6 and *CBQ* 40:9-10 are useful for the lists of ABBA patterns, but unfortunately no distinction is made between occurrence over 4 cola (ABBA tetracola) and distribution over greater or lesser segments.

14   See section 3.

15   As pointed out to me by Smith, this tetracolon is at the very centre of the acrostic passage Pr 31:10-31.

16   Termed „intercalation" by Fiorenza, *CBQ* 39:360-3 (citing R. J. Loenertz) this kind of multistructural overlap (as Smith reminded me) is a feature of Songs (cf. Exum, *ZAW* 85:47-79).

17   Boadt, *VT* 25:697.

18   ABBA – A'B'CCB'A'; cf. Kselman, *BASOR* 220:77-81.

19   For the meaning of this term see Levenson, *CBQ* 40: 13ff.

20   See P. D. Hanson, „The Song of Heshbon and David's *NIR*, " *HTR* 61:297-320.

21   As translated by Dahood, *MUSJ* 48:460.

22   Following the version by Wernberg-Möller, *JSS* 3:323; the ellipsis of a verb in the last colon is usual in similes; its presence would have ruined the chiastic pattern.

23   See Dahood, *Biblica* 57:105.

24   As reconstructed by Brownlee, *JBL* 89:396-9.

25   Auffret, *ZAW* (forthcoming). On Ps 74:4 see Dahord, *Biblica*, 59:262f

26 Irwin, *Isaiah 28-33*, p. 23f; his translation is adopted here.

27 Contrast Ceresko, *CBQ* 38:305.

28 *CTA* 6 iv 28 (UT 49:IV:28) etc.

29 So Dahood, apud Ceresko, *UF* 7:81.

30 „The odd line (B) forms a sort of middle term, or connective link between two couplets": Forbes, *SSS* p. 26. It no accident that it is the last stanza in the book (even though *NEB* sets it out as prose) for which it is a fitting clos

31 See Dahood, *MUSJ* 48: 53 for translation.

32 Cf. Ceresko, *CBQ* 40:10.

33 Gn 3:17-8 (Andersen, *Sentence*, p. 99), Jer 22:30 (ABBCC) and Zeph 1:17 (ABCA'A").

34 Cf. Ceresko, *CBQ* 40:10.

35 A difficult text to translate, but any attempt must take into account the pattern of repeated words (identified by Ceresko, *UF* 7:86) „life, soul (appetite), sight, sight, soul, life".

36 Holladay *VT* 26:34-7.

37 In Mesopotamia, cutting off the tongue was prescribed punishment for falsehood; see texts in *CAD*, L, p. 210

38 Kselman, „A Note on Numbers XII 6-8," *VT*, 26:500-4,

39 Translation: Dahood, *Biblica*, 57:108.

40 Holladay, *JBL*, 85:432-3.

41 Holladay, *JBL*, 85:408 and 418.

42 Kselman, „Semantic-Sonant Chiasmus in Biblical Poetry," *Biblica*, 58:219-23; cf. Kselman, *CBQ*, 35:491-3 on Gn 7:11, *BASOR*, 220:79 on Ps 72:7 and Ceresko, *CBQ*, 38:303-11.

43 It was first identified by Cassuto; see, conveniently Cassuto, *Goddess Anath*, pp. 44-46. The present author read a paper entitled „Gender-matched Synonymous Parallelism in the OT" at the Sixth International Congress Biblical Studies, Oxford 1978, to be published in *JBL*.

44 Note the polar word-pair „heavens // earth" and the verb „to fill".

45 It is worth noting how a feminine noun, $p^e qudd\hat{a}$ (literally, „surveillance"), here an abstract noun with concret meaning, is used to denote men.

46 Recognized by Gevirtz, *EI*, 12:111*.

47   Discussed at seminar held by Dahood at Edinburgh University in 1977. On Pr 10:12 see Dahood, *Bibbia e Oriente*, 15:253f (unavailable to me).

48   Holladay, *JBL*, 85:417.

49   For translation see Gevirtz, *JNES*, 30:87-98.

50   Lund, *CNT*, p. 43. See section 5.5, below.

51   Speiser, *Genesis*, 90.

52   E.g. Lund, *AJSL*, 49:283.

53   See particularly Liebreich, *HUCA* 27:181-92 and Ridderbos, *Psalmen*, 35-37.

54   A term coined by Dahood, *RSP* I pp. 80-81.

54a „One line weaves together several words, one word out of each of two, three, or four consecutive lines, eith preceding or following the gather-line": Thiering *JSS* 13:191 (who coined the term).

55   For these poems cf. Holladay, *JBL* 85:424-5. **FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 3**

1   Reflecting the very process by which poetry was composed: the smaller units first, the larger later because th themselves were made up of these lesser units.

2   Boys (ed. Bullinger), *Key*; see also Forbes, *SSS*.

3   Lund, *CNT*, 64-136.

4   Lund, *CNT*, 40.

5   Lund, *CNT*, 40-1 and 95-6.

6   Notably Ps 101 on which cf. Kenik, „Code of Conduct for a King: Psalm 101" *JBL*, 95:391-403.

7   Particularly useful in this regard is Smith's Index. See, too, Alden, *JETS*, 17:11-28; 19:191-200; Ceresko, *CBQ*, 40:1-10.

8   For two controls (word-pairs and wordplay based on consonantal assonance) in determining semantic-sonant chiasmus, cf. Kselman, *Biblica*, 58:220. A further control, not listed above since it only applies to very few long passages, is comparison with a parallel text (eg. Ps 18 // II Sm 22).

9   See Radday's Excursus.

10   Analysis into prelude + chiastic passage (e.g. Ps 30 – Lund, *CNT*, 119-20) or the reverse (see II Sm 1:19-27, below) is not, therefore, discounted.

11   On Chiasmus and Keywords, see section 5.7.

12 Useful are *RSP* I and II, supplemented by the corrective book reviews of de Moor and Loewenstamm.

13 Brought to my attention by Smith. See Boling, *Judges*, 166.

14 Discussed above, section 2.8(4).

15 Philological notes: „One day the trees went", lit. „the trees certainly walked"; „come for refuge", lit. „come, shelter" (hendiadys); „boxthorn"; cf. Akk. *eddetu*, „boxthorn,'" *CAD*, E, p. 23 (with discussion) and *atutu*, „(a thorny plant)," *CAD* A/II, 522. Not even the latest study of this passage, Crüsemann, *Der Widerstand gegen das Königtum*, pp. 19-32, has taken the differences of gender into account. Note that Crüsemann (ibid. 20, n.9) rejects the meaning „to hold sway over" in preference for „to reel around" (herumzutorkeln).

16 Moulton, *The Literary Study of the Bible*, p. 158. See Freedman, „The Refrain in David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan," *Ex Orbe Religionum*, pp. 115-26.

17 Shea, „David's Lament," *BASOR*, 221:141-4.

18 Ceresko, *CBQ*, 40:4-5.

19 Gevirtz, *Patterns*, pp. 77-82; Holladay, *VT*, 20:153-89.

20 The repeated word-pair *hll // gbr* („slain // heroes") which occurs throughout the poem, always refers to Saul, Jonathan and their fellow soldiers. Accordingly, it cannot denote the enemy in v.22a – as commonly if not universally accepted – but refers instead to the land being ritually defiled by the shedding of Israelite blood. Neither rain nor dew is to wash it away since it has not yet been avenged.

21 For the interlocking refrains see Freedman, „The Refrain etc." 120.

22 Lack, *Symbolique du Livre d'Isaïe*, pp. 164-71.

23 Lund, *CNT*, 45; see, too, Irwin, *Isaiah 28-33*, 26ff.

24 Lit. „we pressed the breast", an idiom used in Akkadian to mean „to make an agreement"; for details, cf. Watson, *Biblica*, 59:132-3.

25 See Irwin, *Isaiah 28-33*, 27-8 (following Gese).

26 A different analysis is proposed by Irwin, *Isaiah 28-33*, 30-2.

27 Gevirtz, *El*, 12:111* noted the matching of genders in v.17a.

28 For *hazut*, „covenant," see Weinfeld, *JAOS*, 93:197 n. 101. In v. 15 the chiastic pattern „covenant Death Sheol treaty" is combined with the gender pattern f + m // f + m. In v. 18, however, both these patterns are flouted which expresses how Israel's pact with Hell is to be annulled.

29 See, too, Lundbom, *Jeremiah*, 70-4 (unavailable to me) who bases his division on the speakers A(5): Yahweh, B(6-7a): fathers, C(7b): Yahweh, B'(8): priests(fathers) and A'(9): Yahweh.

30   Following Bright, *Jeremiah*, 15.

31   Again an allusion to „Where is Mightiest Baal?" of the Ugaritic texts; see above section 2.6.

32   Holladay, *VT*, 16: 53-64; cf. Ginsberg, *JBL*, 80:339-47, Coote, *VT*, 21:389-402, Ackroyd, *VT*, 13:245-59, Good *VT*, 16:137-51, Gertner, *VT*, 10:241-84.

33   On the significance of the 11-line „semi-acrostic" stanza cf. Christensen, *ZAW*, 87:24; Auffret *VT*, 27:11-2.

34   The translations „jackbooted" and „struggled-with-God" are attempts at mirroring the wordplays on „Jacob" (cf. ^{c}*aqeb*, „heel,") and „Israel."

35   Coote, *VT*, 21: 393 n.2.

36   Lund, *CNT*, 86-7.

37   Auffret, „Note sur la structure littéraire du Psaume CXXXVI," *VT*, 27:1-12, esp. 4; see, also the diagram, p. 6 a the overall plan of the Ps. p. 9.

38   Structural studies of this kind provide a good control for the presence of chiasmus.

39   Ceresko, *UF*, 7:85: „an interesting variant on the A:B:B:A pattern. Its configuration can be represented as A:B:C-D-E::C-D-E:B:A."

40   Note the prose introduction, 32:1-5.

41   As is often the case, the opening bicolon is pivot-patterned.

42   Hendiadys, lit. „I recoiled and was afraid."

43   Better, „I thought", but the translation „I said" preserves the repetition of the verb *'amar*.

44   On *rabbim*, „aged," see Dahood, *Psalms*, III:110 and Pope, *Job*, 212-3.

45   Loader, „Qohelet 3 2-8 – A 'Sonnet' in the Old Testament," *ZAW*, 81:240-2.

46   Positive and negative components are also operative in II Sm 1:19-27 (see above). The chiastic pattern suggests (+ –) for v. 5. Loader considers v. 5 to refer to sexual intercourse and v. 7 to silence during mourning, the thought of the whole 'sonnet' being „life – death – end – beginning". Alternatively, v. 5 could denote preparing a field for planting („to throw stones away," cf. Isa 5:2) and the building of a cairn for burial („to collect stones"), but until the allusion is known, no certainty is possible.

47   Dahood, *MUSJ*, 48:54 (ten-line stanza with inclusio).

48   Holmgren, „Chiastic Structure in Isaiah LI, 1-11," *VT*, 19:196-201. However, there is some doubt about the meaning of *'argi*^{ac} in v. 5 and with the overall stanza-division.

49   Kessler, *Semitics*, 3:31-5.

50   Freedman – Hyland, *HTR*, 65:237-56.

51   Ceresko, *CBQ*, 40:6; but he ignores repetition of the root *ht'* in w. 4b, 7b, 9a and 11a.

52   Kselman, *BASOR*, 220:77-81.

53   Riding, „Psalm 95 1-7c as a Large Chiasm," *ZAW* 88:418.

54   Ceresko, *CBQ*, 40:2-3.

55   Freedmen, „The Structure of Psalm 137," in Goedicke, *NESWFA*, pp. 188, 203-4. But see now Kellerman, „Psalm 137," *ZAW*, 90:43-58.

56   Holman, „The Structure of Psalm CXXXIX," *VT*, 21:298-310.

57   Mentioned to me by Smith.

58   For the latest attempt at translation of this difficult Psalm see Gray, „A Cantata of the Autumn Festival: Psalm lxviii ," *JSS*, 22:2-26.

59   For instance, see Auffret, *The Literary Structure of Psalm 2*.

60   Walker & Lund, „The Literary Structure of the Book of Habakkuk," *JBL*, 53:355-70. The three sections comprise I: A (1:1-4), B (1:5-11). C (1:12-13), B' (1:14-17), A' (2:1-5) – II:K (2:6-8), L (2:9-13), K' (2:14-17), L' (2:1 20) – I':A (3:2), B (3:3-7), C (3:8-10a), B' (3:10b-15), A' (3:16-19).

61   Lack, *La symbolique du livre d'Isaïe, (passim)*

62   *Ibid.* p. 125 and the table, p. 128.

63   See Welch, *UF*, 6:427 (citing Gordon). **FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 4**

1   See the works by Andersen and Ceresko referred to in section 1, note 3.

2   According to Holladay, *JBL*, 85:409 chiasmus is „used to vary the steady drumbeat of the normal pattern."

3   In translation the passive has been used (rather than „he brought me") in order to bring out the pattern. Balaa seems to be putting the responsibility for his utterances on the Moabite king whose name and title form the central part of this introductory bicolon.

4   See section 3.4 for poetry as opening and closing complete books.

5   Present, too, is the terrace pattern; see below, section 5.3.

6   Centre of Jer 2:2-3:24; cf. Holladay, *Architecture of Jer 1-20*, p. 32 (courtesy Smith who also lists Pss 141:5, La 1:11-12, Pr 31:19-20 etc.) For Ps 29:6 see Freedman Hyland, *HTR*, 66:242; Ps 72:9-11, Kselman, *BASOR*, 220:7

81; Ps 137:4-6, Freedman, in Goedicke, *NESWFA*, pp. 193-6.

7   Smith lists I Sm 2:1-10, II Sm 22:1-51 // Ps 18, Lam 2, 3, 4, 5, as well as Isa 2:6a-22, 60:1-3 etc.

8   See Krasovec, *Der Merismus (passim)*.

9   Also Pss 71:9, 89:34.

10   See, too, Andersen, *Sentence*, p.135 on Gn 37:22.

11   Accordingly, Andersen's claim (brought to my notice by Smith) that antithesis is lessened by chiasmus does r
apply to poetry; for details see Andersen, *Sentence*, pp. 73, 121-2, 159-60.

12   Lichtenstein, *JANES*, 5:255-65.

13   Translation: Dahood, *Psalms*, I:41 and 47.

14   Ceresko, *CBQ*, 40:6-9.

15   See below on rhetorical questions, section 5.11.

16   Translation: Dahood, *Biblica*, 43:356-7. **FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 5**

1   I still prefer „poetic devices" to „rhetorical devices" because the term „rhetorical" has negative overtones and
because „poetic" is a better description.

2   Robinson, „Anacrusis in Hebrew Poetry," *BZAW*, 66:37-40, and Andersen, *Sentence*, p. 139.

3   For the terms „expletive" and „filler" see Austerlitz, *Ob-Ugric Metrics*, pp. 64-65, 101ff. See, too, Gordon, *UT*, pp
135-7.

4   Noted by Weiden, *Livre des Proverbes*, p. 56, n. 137.

5   Dahood, *Biblica*, 54:358 and Ceresko, *CBQ*, 38:305.

6   The ballast variant can also be used to balance larger chiattic texts such as Jer 5:1-8, Ps 72:9-11 (courtesy
Smith).

7   See Austerlitz, *Ob-Ugric Metrics*, p. 38 and Watson, *ZAW*, 88:249.

8   Also Ps 37:40, Jb 17:15.

9   Welch, *UF*, 6:425.

10   See Watson, *Orientalia*, 45:434-7.

11   The AB sequence is discussed by Boling, *JSS*, 5:221-5.

12 For other examples see above, section 2.3, also section 5.8, below.

13 Exum, *ZAW*, 85:64; also, Jer 51:20-3 (Smith).

14 Möller, *ZAW*, 49:248-9; his example is Ps 5:2. The pivot pattern has also been discussed by Dahood, *CBQ*, 29:574-82; Watson, *ZAW*, 88:239-53; *UF*, 7:489-91; Auffret, *Semitica*, 27:59-73; *VT*, 28:103-10.

15 Watson, *Biblica*, 56:275-6.

16 Liebreich, „Psalms 34 and 145 in the Light of Their Key Words," *HUCA*, 27:181-92. Also, Alden, *JETS*, 19:191 200; Ceresko, *CBQ* 40:1-10.

17 As explained by Magne, „Répétitions de mots et éxégése dans quelques Psaumes et le Pater," *Biblica*, 39:177 97.

18 Condamin, *JTS*, 7:137-40.

19 On Ps 139 see Holman, *VT*, 21:308; on Jer 2:5-9, 2:33-7, 5:1-8, 8:13-7, 8:18-21 etc. cf. Lundbom, *Jeremiah*.

20 Trible, „Wisdom Builds a Poem. The Architecture of Proverbs 1:20-33," *JBL*, 94:509-18.

21 As Magne had already demonstrated – see note 17.

22 The keywords significant for the pattern are in capitals; two subsets of chiasmus have been marked: PQP' (v. 21) and STT'S' (vv. 26-7). The translation is a little stilted since the emphasis is on mirroring the word-order of th Hebrew.

23 E. g. Nah 1:4b, Pss 38:3, 8, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 22 (non-alphabetic acrostic) and 145.

24 As in Ps 29:8.

25 II Sm 1:19-27, Pss 76:4, 6, 80:4, 8, 15, 20, Song 2:14, 6:3.

26 As explained by Melamed, *SH*, 8:115-23; Braulik, *Semitics*, 1:7-11; Vigano', *RBI*, 24:225ff and Dahood, *UF*, 1:3 *Biblica*, 54:537f, *JANES*, 5: 83-9; but contrast Whitley, *UF*, 7:493-9.

27 Possibly, therefore, the device belongs under the heading „structural."

28 Cognate with Akk. *kunnu*, „to treat a person kindly" (*CAD*, K:540-2).

29 The construction with ^{c}*al* is difficult; for the last three words see Dahood, *Psalms*, II:260 who cites Ps 89:22.

30 Recognition of the break-up precludes deletion of „Benjamin" in v. 3.

31 Dahood, *Biblica*, 57:105.

32 See Dahood, *Psalms*, II:165, 246.

33 Dahood, in Bream, ed., *Light*, p. 126.

34 *Wordplay* and *pun* are generic terms. More specifically, *paronomasia* plays on similar-sounding words (e.g. Mic 1:10), *rootplay* uses the etymological root of a noun or verb, and *syllepsis* is double meaning.

35 As translated by Gevirtz, *JNES*, 30:97-8, who failed to notice the wordplay.

36 Dahood, *VT*, 27:482.

37 Three consecutive, chiastically arranged similes: Mettinger, *SEA*, 41-2:152-3.

38 As explained by Watson, „The Hidden Simile in Ps 133", *Biblica* (forthcoming); contrast Ceresko, *UF*, 7:81-2.

39 Brueggemann, „Jeremiah's Use of Rhetorical Questions," *JBL*, 92:358-74 (on 368-9); also, Held, *EI*, 9:71-9.

40 Pope, *Job*, 198; note the rootplay between *'emnac* and *cênê*.

41 See Brongers, *OTS* 14:100-14.

42 The verb in the singular shows hendiadys to be present.

43 Contrast the plural verb in v. 11.

44 Chiasmus but not hyperbole was noticed by Dahood, in Bream, ed., *Light*, p. 124 (his translation).

45 Note the rhyme with *'aggîd* („I shall declare") in v. 5.

46 The bibliography on the broken construct chain is large; see Freedman, „The Broken Construct Chain," *Biblica* 53:534-6 and Gevirtz, *Patterns*, 80 n. 31.

47 Lund, *CNT*, p. 97-8; also Boys, *Key*, p. 60.

48 Some recent studies taken into account include Mowinckel, *VT*, 15:29, Jefferson, *VT*, 12:210ff; Loretz, *UF*, 7:120ff and Kraus, *Psalmen*. There is no agreement on either literary form or date. Of course the Psalm develops the blessing of Nb 6:24-5, but it has been styled a prayer for rain (Dahood), a hymn of public thanksgiving (Mowinckel) and a harvest song for the Feast of Tabernacles (Kraus). If my translation of v. 2b is correct it may comprise a blessing for the plough at seedtime.

49 Dahood, *Psalms*, II:127 follows Rosenmueller in rejecting the construction *ya'er 'ittanû* as anomalous and repoints the second word *'atanu*, „may he come to us." My translation presupposes the word *'et*, „ploughshare," w suffix. For the meaning of *ya'er panâyw* see Dahood, *Psalms*, I:26.

50 Lit. „so that known will be" or the like; Dahood prefers „If . . . is known."

51 Assuming Heb. *derek* = Ug. *drkt* (so Dahood, *Psalms*, II:128); see note 54.

52 For nuances of the final verb see Parunak, „A Semantic Survey of *NHM*," *Biblica*, 56:512-43.

53 Repointing MT *'et* to *'ot,* „sign" since the accusative particle is redundant in poetry.

54 If *drk* does mean „power, dominion," in v. 3 and if it is m., then the bicolon exhibits the chiastic gender pattern fmmf. **FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 6**

1 Dahood, „Chiasmus in Job: A Text-Critical and Philological Criterion," Bream, ed., *Light*, pp. 119-130; he discusses Jb 6:15, 8:5, 11:14, 12:10, 13:12, 15:18, 17:7, 19:14, 21:8,9, 26:5, 28:2, 31:16, 32:14, 34:6, 36:3, 12, 37:3, 39:6,8 and 41:7.

2 Kselman, „A Note on Isaiah II 2," *VT*, 25:225-7.

3 Watson, *Biblica*, 59:133.

4 Ceresko, *CBQ*, 38:306.

5 Dahood, *Biblica*, 57:108.

6 Dahood, *Psalms*, I: 64.

7 Dahood, *Psalms*, III:276.

8 Weiden, *Proverbes*, pp. 139-40 and Dahood, *Psalms*, II:318.

9 For chiasmus in prose see Andersen, *Sentence*, pp. 119-40.

10 Ceresko, *UF*, 7:88 cites Gn 4:4-5, 12:19, 45:23, Ex 9:31-2, 33:13, Nb 15:35-6, Dt 5:8 and II Sm 18:20 as passages now considered verse due to recognition of chiasmus; Ceresko, *CBQ*, 38:309 cites Gn 1:5, 2:5-9, II Sm 19:7, Jer 7:16, 11:7, 16:11 and Ez 14:9. See also Isa 44:11 (Dahood, *RSP*, I, II 139), Jer 44:21 and Obd 1-2. On Gn 6:10-9:19 and 6:8-9 cf. Werham, *VT*, 28:336-48.

11 Dahood, „Yiphil Imperative *yatti* in Isaiah 54, 2," *Orientalia*, 46:383-4. Note, too, the gender-matching in the first bicolon (m + m // f + f).

12 Contrast Dahood, Psalms, II:126 „You will lead the nations into the plain // and peoples into the land."

13 For this technique cf. Gemser, *Sprüche Salomos*, p. 45; also Olivier, „Schools and Wisdom Literature," *JNSL*, 4:49-60.

14 A study along the lines of Freedman, „Divine Names and Titles in Early Hebrew Poetry," Cross, Lemke, Miller edd., *Magnalia Dei*, pp. 55-107 is needed; see especially the chronological tables pp. 105-7. Another topic is the relationship between chiasmus and enjambment, on which see Andersen, *Sentence*, p. 123, who cites Isa 60:20, and Dahood, *IDBSuppl*, p. 671 who mentions Isa 11:9b, Zeph 3:19 and the ABBA pattern generally.

15 Some of the material used in this chapter derives (particularly as regards approach and presentation) from my forthcoming book *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, part of which was written during an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowship in Münster. Most of the research on chiasmus, though, was carried out in Edinburgh.