

Facets of Hebrew and Semitic linguistics

LING 214/614, JDST 215/675, Fall 2013

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Handout 6 (Sept. 24)

Theme: Comparative and internal reconstruction, especially w.r.t. Hebrew.

NB: No class on September 26 (*Shmini Atseret*).

Reading: Bennett, Parts 6-7 (and conclusion).

Background reading: Naveh, Joseph. *Early History of the Alphabet: An introduction to West Semitic epigraphy and palaeography*. Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1982. Especially chapters 1, 2 and 4.

Homework for Tuesday, October 1: **Reconstructing phonology**

1. Comparative reconstruction: Bennett, pages 42-45, exercises 7, 8 and 10 (but not exercise 9).
2. Internal reconstruction: Take the following paradigms in Modern Hebrew. Suppose that all verbs have (originally had) a three-consonantal root. Based on the alternation in contemporary Hebrew (and strictly forgetting about orthographic conventions!), can you reconstruct the hypothetical original three-consonantal roots? Can you hypothesize sound changes?

		'to learn'	'to write'	'to ride'
Past	Sg. 3. masc.	<i>lamad</i>	<i>katav</i>	<i>raxav</i>
	Sg. 3. fem.	<i>lamda</i>	<i>katva</i>	<i>raxva</i>
	Sg. 2. masc.	<i>lamadta</i>	<i>katavta</i>	<i>raxavta</i>
Future	Sg. 3. masc.	<i>yilmad</i>	<i>yixtov</i>	<i>yirkov</i>
	Sg. 2. fem.	<i>tilmedi</i>	<i>yixtevi</i>	<i>yirkevi</i>
Imperative	Sg. 2. masc.	<i>Imad!</i>	<i>ktov!</i>	<i>rexov!</i>