

PSALM 68:7 REVISITED

MURRAY H. LICHTENSTEIN

In an article appearing in the last number of the *Journal*, B. Margulis offered the following reading and rendering for Ps. 68:7(6):

אלהים מושיב יחיריים ביהה
מוציא ארוסים (!) בכושרוה

The Lord finds a mate for the solitary;
He escorts the betrothen along with the Košarot.¹

This proposal seeks to offer a solution to the problematic MT *bakōšārōt* in terms of the matrimonial role of the Ugaritic *ktrt*, as well as the supposedly matrimonial context of the biblical verse. The proposed solution, however, is itself not free from difficulties, some of which the present paper will consider. Further, the occasion of the article presents an opportunity to reconsider generally some of the more widely held positions on this verse, especially the long-maintained² identification of the biblical *kōšārōt* with the Ugaritic *ktrt*, however the latter may be defined.

Turning first to the emendation of *'asūm* to **'arūsim*, several points come to mind. The orthographic problem raised by finding **'arūsim* written with *s* for *š* in so archaic a text as Psalm 68 was already anticipated by Margulis.³ A more basic problem, however, stems from the very form of the word, a *qal* passive participle. It should be recalled that in Biblical Hebrew the root *'rś* is not attested in the *qal*.⁴ Moreover, the passive forms of the verb⁵ are employed exclusively with feminine subjects. In the Mishnah, where the *qal* of the root is developed, the passive participle *'arūsāh*,⁶ as well as the *pual m^eōrāsāh*,⁷ designate the female betrothed, while the male is spoken

¹ B. Margulis, "The Kōšārōt/*ktrt*: Patroness-saints of Women," *JANES* 4 (1972), 61.

² See H. L. Ginsberg, "Women Singers and Wailers among the Northern Canaanites," *BASOR* 72 (1938), 13: "If, however, *ktrt* in Ugaritic means '(female) singers,' *kōšārōt*, Ps. 68:7, must mean 'song,' 'music,' or the like."

³ B. Margulis, "Kōšārōt," 61 with n. 39.

⁴ Any appeal to the Akkadian G participle *ērīšu* (*CAD*, E. 301) is seriously weakened by the fact that the meaning 'bridegroom' for the Akk. substantive is itself open to doubt. See M. Held, "The Action-Result (Factitive-Passive) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic," *JBL* 84 (1965), 278, n. 29. Highly uncertain is the suggestion made by Margulis in "A Ugaritic Psalm (RS. 24.252)," *JBL* 89 (1970), 296 with n. 2 (cited by him in *JANES* 4 [1972], 60, n. 38) that Ugar. *iršt* in RS. 24.252 Rev. 5 is cognate to BHeb. *'rś* and means 'betrothed'. Although the text is broken, it is not unreasonable to assume that the substantive *iršt* is here, as elsewhere in Ugaritic, to be translated 'request' (cf. Akk. *erīštu*, *CAD*, E. 298ff. See *Ugaritica* V [Paris, 1968], 557, n. 5 and J.C. de Moor, *UF* I, 176:5). Note that the usage with the verb *šyt* in that text is paralleled in *UT* 2065: 14-16 [i]rš *'my mnm irštk dšrwt wank aštn lihy* 'request of me whatever is your request, what you require, and I will supply it to my "brother"' (see *UT*. Gl., 367, No. 379, cf. EA 158:17-19, where the Akk. has *nadānu* as the verb).

⁵ *Pual*. perf.: Exod. 22:15, Deut. 22:28; *Pual*. part.: Deut. 22:23, 25, 27.

⁶ E.g., Mishnah *Sotah* 2:5.

⁷ E.g., Mishnah *Sanhedrin* 7:9.

of only as *m^e'arrēs* (active!).⁸ Accordingly, the conjugation, voice, and gender of *'*arūšim* are all quite inappropriate in a biblical context.⁹

On the other hand, it is clear that MT '*asirim* is highly appropriate, both in the psalm as a whole, and in our particular verse. Thus Gaster,¹⁰ viewing Psalm 68 as one unified processional hymn, documents the specific action of freeing prisoners as an integral part of the ceremony reflected by the text. Or, following the view of Albright and others,¹¹ which treats the psalm as a collection of incipits or poem fragments, one still may view release of prisoners as a most fitting literary element. Reference to such activity as a divine attribute is amply attested as a conventional hymnic motif in the literatures of ancient Egypt,¹² Mesopotamia, and Israel.

In the case of the latter two, both Akkadian and Hebrew possess a particularly rich stock of expressions for 'liberation'. The respective terms employed in these languages, as well as the parallel conceptual patterns underlying them, are fully exploited in both Mesopotamian and Israelite religious texts to depict the divine liberator. Thus, in Akkadian hymns and prayers the most common idioms denoting the release of prisoners are *kasā/šabta/kamā paqāru*¹³/*eṭēru*¹⁴/*(w/m)uššuru*¹⁵/*rummū*,¹⁶ as well as the figurative *nūra kullumu*.¹⁷ The latter, which speaks of letting

⁸E.g., Mishnah *Sotah* 8:2.

⁹So, too, in an Ugaritic context, where the underlying concept of male activity and female passivity is operative. Thus the *trḥ* of IK (=CTA 14): 100, 189 (G participle *tāriḥu*; cf. Akk. *āḫizānu* 'bridegroom' [CAD. A¹, 192], a form also derived from the G participle; so, too, note *ḫā'iru*, CAD. H, 31) is one who weds, while the *mtrḥt* is the one wedded, i.e., his wife. The passivity of the latter term is clear, whether one construes the form *mtrḥt* as a secondary G passive participle (so Gordon, *UT*, Grammar, p. 78, 9.24.1), or as a D passive participle (J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch [=WUS]*, 328, No. 2803; J. Gray, *The Krt Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra* [Leiden, 1964], 31, ll. 12-13).

¹⁰T.H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (New York, 1969), 760.

¹¹For a succinct formulation of Albright's view and a brief history of its forerunners, see W.F. Albright, "A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems (Psalm LXVIII)," *HUCA* 23 (1950-51), 9.

¹²For Egypt see, for example, the translations of J. Wilson in *ANET*: p. 366a ("Hymn to Amon-Re," IV) "who hears the prayer of him who is in captivity"; p. 371b ("Hymns to the Gods as a Single God") "He that is imprisoned turns about to thee"; p. 377b ("Hymn of Victory of Mer-ne-Ptah") "... that he might set free many who had been imprisoned in every district"; p. 379a ("Joy at the Accession of Ramses IV") "They who were in prison are set free; they who were fettered are in joy"; p. 380b ("Gratitude for a God's Mercy") "Thou rescuest him who is imprisoned."

¹³For *kasā paqāru* as a divine activity, see K. Tallqvist, *Akkadische Götterepitheta* (Helsingforsiae, 1938), 151. In the prayer literature this activity is attributed to various gods in their capacity as an *ilu rēmenū* 'merciful god', e.g., E. Ebeling, *Handerhebung [=AGH]*, (Berlin, 1953), 8:1-2; 12:19-21. For examples in the hymnic literature, see, e.g., P.A. Schollmeyer, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen und Gebete an Šamaš* (reprint: New York, 1968), 34:78, 65:8, 96:5, 107:3. For *kasū* see CAD. K, 247-48.

¹⁴For *kamā eṭēru* see Tallqvist, *Götterepitheta*, 7-8; Ebeling, *AGH*, 116:17. For *šabta eṭēru* see Šurpu IV: 32 (E. Reiner, *Šurpu*, p. 26).

¹⁵For *kalū muššuru* see CAD. K, 91. For *šabta muššuru* see CAD. Š, 45 (cf. CAD. K, 248), to which should be added *Iraq* 31(1969), 85:42 and N.B. I, 44).

¹⁶Note the parallelism of *šabta muššuru//kasā rummū* in Šurpu II: 29. Cf. *AFO* 19(1959), 54:212. See *ibid.*, 57:60-61 for the parallelism of *maksi paqāru//maksī rummū*.

¹⁷For *nūra kullumu* see the references in CAD. K, 524. Particularly relevant here is Šurpu IV: 31, where this idiom appears parallel to *šūšū* (cf. the use of *mōšū* in our verse, and see nn. 25, 26 below). Some other idiomatic expressions for freeing, releasing, etc., are e.g., (a) *andurāra šakānu* (see CAD. A², 115ff). Although not usually applied to prisoners in Akk. texts, the idiom does take on this meaning in Hebrew; see Isa. 61:1 where *qārā' d'erōr* (*// peqah-qo'ah*, see S. Paul, "Deutero-Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions," *JAOS* 88 [1968], 182) is employed with *šebūm* (*// asūrīm*).

the prisoner see the light of day, is paralleled in Hebrew by $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n le' \hat{o}r$,¹⁸ for example, while the state of being free is described as seeing the light of day, Heb. $r\hat{a}'\hat{a}h \hat{o}r$ ¹⁹=Akk. $n\hat{u}ra am\hat{a}ru$.²⁰ The underlying idea of untying, basic to the verbs $pa\hat{t}\hat{a}ru$ and $rumm\hat{u}$, finds its expression in the Hebrew verbs $pit\hat{t}ah$ ²¹ and $hit\hat{t}ir$ ²² as used in the context of freeing prisoners. So, too, removal of, and thus salvation of prisoners, which underlies the usage of $e\hat{t}\hat{e}ru$, corresponds to Heb. $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$.²³ The notion of

(b) $\check{s}ubarr\hat{a} \check{s}ak\hat{a}nu$. Like $andur\hat{a}ra \check{s}ak\hat{a}nu$, this idiom has to do with release from obligations such as corvée work. Thus in En. el. VI: 49-50, the release of the gods is expressed by $\check{s}ubarr\hat{a} \check{s}ak\hat{a}nu$, but note that the same act is referred to in VI: 34 by the verb $mu\check{s}\check{s}uru$, and in VII: 29 by $pad\hat{n}$. In Atrahasis I (Lambert-Millard, *Atra-hasis*. 58-60: 240-41, 243; cf. 80:19) the action is described by $andur\hat{a}ra \check{s}ak\hat{a}nu$, and this usage may be viewed alongside the parallelism of $y\hat{o}\check{s}\check{e}b h\hat{o}\check{s}ek // \check{a}s\hat{i}r$ in Isa. 42:7 (cf., e.g., 49:9; Ps. 107:10). So, too, note the meaning 'prison' for $ma\check{h}\check{s}\check{a}k$ in e.g., Ps. 88:19 (cf. v. 9), for which compare the Akkadian expression $b\hat{u}t \check{s}ibitti u ekleti$ 'prison' in *Iraq* 31 (1969), 87:44. On the equation of darkness and imprisonment, see the discussion in S. Paul, "Deutero-Isaiah," 182.

¹⁸E.g., Isa. 9:1, noting the occurrence with $h\hat{a}lak h\hat{e}h\hat{o}\check{s}ek // y\check{a}\check{s}ab b\hat{e} \hat{e}re\check{s} \check{s}alm\hat{a}w\hat{e}t$.
¹⁹For references see *CAD*. A², 21; cf. also ^dUTU (*\check{S}ama\check{s}*) $am\hat{a}ru$, *ibid.*, 22-23.
²⁰The verb $pit\hat{t}ah$ is said of $m\hat{o}\check{s}\check{e}r\hat{o}t$ 'bands' (e.g., Ps. 116:16; Job 12:18, 39:5), just as in the Akk. idiom $mak\hat{s}i rumm\hat{u}/pa\hat{t}\hat{a}ru$ (*AfO* 19, 57:60-61). For its usage with related objects see Isa. 58:6 (with $h\hat{a}r\check{s}\check{u}b\hat{o}t$), Job 30:11 (with $\check{y}e\check{t}er$). Like its Akk. counterparts, $pit\hat{t}ah$ is also employed with a personal direct object, e.g., Jer. 40:4 $pit\hat{t}ah\hat{l}\hat{i}k\hat{a}$; Ps. 102:21 $l\hat{e}pat\hat{e}h b\hat{e}n\hat{e} l\hat{e}m\hat{u}t\hat{a}h // \check{a}s\hat{i}r$. To be excluded here is the use of the root $pt\hat{h}$ in Isa. 14:17-18, which Ginsberg ingeniously recognized as the noun $petah$ 'palace gate', reading $\hat{o}s\hat{i}r l\hat{e}petah b\hat{e}t\hat{o}h$ "who chains to his palace gate [all the kings of nations]?" ("Reflexes of Sargon in Isaiah after 715 B.C.E.," *JAOS* 88 [1968], 52). The corruption in MT is due, no doubt, to a confusion with the use of $pit\hat{t}ah$ as a term for liberation, which would have further suggested the MT reading $\check{a}s\hat{u}r\hat{a}w$ 'his prisoners', taken as the direct object (see their juxtaposition in Ps. 102:21).

²¹Although the etymology of this verb is obscure and much confused in the lexicons, the meaning in our context is clear. Note the use of $hit\hat{t}ir$ in Ps. 79:11 (reading $h\hat{a}t\hat{t}er$) with $b\hat{e}n\hat{e} l\hat{e}m\hat{u}t\hat{a}h$, exactly as $pit\hat{t}ah$ is employed in Ps. 102:21. So, too, the verb is paralleled by $pit\hat{t}ah$ in, e.g., Isa. 58:6 (with object $band$), Ps. 105:20 (used with a personal object).

²²For the underlying sense of removal, i.e., rescue (of prisoners), inherent in $e\hat{t}\hat{e}ru$, see *CAD*, E, 404 (and note the meanings 1c and 2 given on 402). For Heb. $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$ see, for example, Ps. 107:14 where $darkness // m\hat{o}\check{s}\check{e}r\hat{o}t$ refers to prison (cf. v. 10 and see n. 18 above). This idiom is employed with terms specifically associated with imprisonment, e.g., $\check{a}b\hat{o}l\hat{i}m$ in Ezek. 3:25, and $masg\hat{e}r$ in Ps. 142:8 and Isa. 42:7. In the latter verse the idiom is also employed with $b\hat{e}t kele$, for which cf. Jer. 52:31. So, too, $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$ may be compared to the expression $la-m\hat{a}w\hat{e}t id\check{s}\hat{a} \hat{o}r$ 'escape from death' in Ps. 68:21 (cf. Ugar. $l=$ from and note W.G. Lambert, *BWL*, 54, line f) $\check{s}a l\check{s}tar ana i\check{s}\hat{a}i u\check{s}\check{e}\check{s}\hat{a}$ "Whom Ishtar had rescued from fire").

Moreover, the notion of removal, underlying $e\hat{t}\hat{e}ru$ 'to save', is clearly present in Akk. $\check{s}\check{u}\check{s}\hat{i}n ina (= \check{s}\check{u}\check{s}\hat{i}n ultu$, see *CAD*, A², 382, meaning 7o). This is clear, for example, from the parallelism of $\check{s}\check{u}\check{s}\hat{i}n ina // nas\hat{a}hu$ 'to uproot, dislodge' (said of demons, illness, etc., see, e.g., KAR 184 Obv. 14, cited in *CAD*, A², 383). Compare also the idioms $ina pu\check{s}\check{q}i \check{s}\check{u}\check{s}\hat{i}n$ (KAR 100 ii 3 cited in *CAD*, A², 375; cf. KAR 26:26 cited in *CAD*, A², 383, meaning 10) and $ina pu\check{s}\check{q}i e\hat{t}\hat{e}ru$ (*CAD*, E, 403, especially En. el. VI:150), which both denote 'to rescue from difficulties'. So, too, note the same idiom with the verbs $\check{s}\check{u}zubu$ (e.g., Ebeling, *AGH*, 122:6) and $\check{s}at\hat{a}pu$ (e.g., CH iv: 38).

It is clearly this usage of $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n$ with the preposition min which suggested the variety of emendations for MT $ba-k\hat{o}\check{s}\check{a}r\hat{o}t$ in Ps. 68:7, e.g., $mi-m\hat{o}\check{s}\check{e}r\hat{o}t$, $mi-masg\hat{e}r\hat{o}t$, or interpretations like $bik\hat{e} bal\hat{i}m$, $b\hat{e}z\hat{a}q\hat{i}m$ (see U.M.D. Cassuto, "Ehilim 68," *Tarbiz* 12 [1940], 12, n. 48).

It should be noted that $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$, like $e\hat{t}\hat{e}ru$, need not always express physical extrication, but develops into a general term for salvation. It is thus that $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$ in 2 Sam. 22:49 could easily be replaced by $pill\hat{e}t min$ in the Ps. 18 parallel.

To be compared with $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$ is the usage of $h\hat{a}la\check{s}$ 'to remove', which due to this same semantic development may be used either with or without the preposition min , taking on the more general meaning of 'to rescue' (c.f., e.g., Ps. 119:153 alongside Job 3:15). Given this usage, $m\hat{o}\check{s}\check{e}r\hat{o}t$ in Ps. 68:7, which is used without the preposition min , may be grouped together with the idiom $h\hat{o}s\hat{i}^n min$. Alternatively, see n. 26 below.

sending away, or letting go, is expressed both by Akk. *(w/m)ušsuru*=Heb. *šillah*²⁴ and Akk. *šūšū*²⁵=Heb. *hōšē*.²⁶

In light of this highly developed usage, it would seem unwarranted to do away in our verse with so pervasive a hymnic motif as the divine liberator, in favor of the clearly less familiar role of bridal attendant, best man, or the like. The point is further borne out by the specific employment of *hōšē*, which has been shown above to have had a prominent place in the stock of idioms denoting liberation of prisoners. On the other hand, it will be recalled that the usage of *hōšē* in matrimonial contexts was demonstrated by Margulis only by a citation from *Pirqē dē-Rabbī 'Eli'ezer*.²⁷

So, too, the very context appealed to by Margulis, namely, the reference to "the father of orphans, the adjudicator of widows" (v.6),²⁸ would seem to argue against his interpretation. Thus in Ps. 146:7, for example, the Lord is called *matīr 'asūrīm* 'one who releases the imprisoned', which is followed in verse 9 by mention of the *yātōm w'e'almānāh* 'orphan and widow'. Moreover, the identical association of unfortunates is paralleled in both Egyptian²⁹ and Akkadian³⁰ hymnic literature, where the socially

²⁴For *šillah* with the object *'āsūr* see Zech. 9:11. Note the parallelism of *šillah*//*pittah mōsērōt* in Job 39:5. In the latter verse the idiom occurs tautologically as *šillah hōpšē* (c.f. Exod. 21:26, 27; Deut. 15:12, 13, 18; Isa. 58:6; Jr. 34:9-11, 14). The same meaning is present in the expression *šillah l'nefēs* (+possessive suffix) in Deut. 21:14, while the two idioms are combined in Jer. 34:16 *'āser šillaḥtem hōpšim l'napšām* 'whom you set free'.

²⁵Although *šūšū* is not among the most common verbs denoting 'to free' in the prayer and hymnic literature, this seems due to stylistic preference rather than to any real distinction between it and the more regularly employed Akkadian terms discussed above. Note, in this connection, the parallelism of *šūšū* + *nūra kullumu*//*eṭēru* in Surpu IV: 31-32. So, too, *ana nūri šūšū* 'to liberate' (see *CAD. A*², 372) may be viewed alongside the more usual *nūra kullumu*.

The relationship of *šūšū* to *mušsuru-šillah* in the sense of 'to send away free' is clear from the fact that the releasing of birds in the biblical flood story is expressed by *šillah* (see Gen. 8:7-12), while in Gilg. XI:146, 149, 152 the Akk. has *šūšū*//*mušsuru*. Compare also the royal act of freeing a prisoner expressed by both *kalā šūšū* (*KAR* 178 r. i 43 cited in *CAD. A*¹, 375) and *kalā mušsuru* (4R 33* ii 24 cited in *CAD. K*, 91).

²⁶As noted above, (n.23), verbs denoting the freeing of prisoners undergo a semantic development which might tend to blur original distinctions. Accordingly, the conceptual patterns of (a) loosening, (b) removing, (c) sending off free, with which the material presented above has been schematized, are to be viewed more as conveniences than as constraints. The distinction between 'removing from' and 'sending away' is largely a question of directional focus, viz., focusing upon the prison or upon the outside world. To be consistent with the three patterns, however, Akk. *ina X šūšū*, indicating removal, is to be kept distinct from *šūšū*, without the preposition. The latter would seem to fall together with *mušsuru* in the sense of 'letting go [free]'. The usage of *hōšē* in Ps. 68:7, i.e., without the preposition, would logically belong to this grouping. So, too, in Isa. 49:9 and Ps. 88:9, *yāšā' (qal)* is employed without the preposition *min* in contexts involving being set free. The same underlying notion is more clearly expressed in the idiom *hōšē l'e* in, e.g., Mic. 7:9 and Ps. 18:20 (cf. 2 Sam. 22:20).

²⁷Margulis' reference to Ps. 19:5-6 and Joel 2:16 ("Kōšārōt," 58) is less than convincing. In both cases the verb *yāšā'* is employed in the *qal*. not the *hiphil*, and in neither case is the activity or even the presence of a bridal attendant, best man, etc., in evidence. Indeed, the use of *yāšā'* in Joel 2:16 involves the interruption or cessation of marital proceedings, rather than their proper execution. The citation of Gen. 24:63 (B. Margulis, *ibid.*, 59) is likewise inappropriate since the action of "going forth" in that verse is unrelated to any kind of marital proceedings. (Isaac is not formally made aware of his intended bride until v. 66, and the actual marriage is not described until v. 67.)

²⁸B. Margulis, *ibid.*, 61.

²⁹See, e.g., *ANET*³, 371b "Do (not) widows say: 'Our husband art thou,' and little ones: 'Our father and our mother'? The rich boast of thy beauty, and the poor (worship) thy face. He that is imprisoned turns about to thee, and he that has a sickness calls out to thee . . ." Cf. 379a "They who were in prison are set free; they who were fettered are in joy . . . The homes of the widows are open (again), so that they may let wanders come in . . ."

³⁰See, e.g., *Iraq* 31 (1969), 85:37 *tušēšer ekūtu almattum nassu dalpu* alongside l. 42 *tu'āššar šabtu* and l. 44 (p. 87) [*kasū?* *bi' šibitti u ekleti [āsi]ru? tukallam nūra*.

unprotected female and child are mentioned together with prisoners as recipients of divine mercy.

It will be recalled that Margulis laid the groundwork for the emendation of *'asîrîm* to **'arûsîm* by initially determining matrimony as the context of the first hemistich of our verse.³¹ Such an interpretation, however, is open to question. At the outset, it must be clarified that Margulis' appeal to the Targum on Ps. 68:7 is an appeal to midrash,³² and in this case can hardly be considered legitimate support from an ancient Bible translation.

Further, reference made by Margulis to the commentaries of Qimḥi and Ibn Ezra would have been more appropriate had he translated *bayîṭ* by 'household, family', father than by 'mate, wife'. This is clear from Qimḥi's own explicit statement: "They that are solitary ones, a man and his wife who have not produced children, [the Lord] installs them in a household, which is the totality of sons and daughters, as in [the biblical expression] *waya'as lahem bātîm*."³³ Ibn Ezra also cites this verse along with others³⁴ which call for a translation 'household, family' and to which he adds his comment: "And its meaning is that He made them numerous and settled them."

As to biblical *hōšîb* as "an idiomatic if not technical designation for 'marriage'," the unusual and clearly restricted usage³⁵ in Ezra 10:17-18, Neh. 13:23, and so forth, can hardly be relevant to what appears in our verse. Suffice it to note that in these passages the action is performed by the groom and that the object of the verb *hōšîb* is his (foreign) bride. In Ps. 68:7a, however, the action would have to be performed by the Lord (presumably as a matchmaker), and the object *y^ehîdîm* would, at the very least, have to include the male. Such an interpretation ignores the various roles involved in the usage of the verb as a matrimonial term. It would also seem to violate the underlying concept of male activity and female passivity, as did the suggested reading *'arûsîm*, which, again, would include the male as a passive recipient of the action.

Nor should the passages from Ezra and Nehemiah be grouped together with Ps. 113:9, which has less to do with marriage than with the granting of fertility.³⁶ Just as

³¹B. Margulis, "Kōšārôt," 57-58. The remarks which follow deal with the assertions made on these pages.

³²On the midrashic character of the Targum on Psalms in general see A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic* (Leiden, 1968) IVA, foreword p. viii. That a matrimonial interpretation of the first part of our verse is specifically, midrashic is clear from a comparison of, e.g., *Genesis Rabbah* 65:2 and 68:4 (cf. e.g., *Leviticus Rabbah* 8:1) with the Targum to our verse. In each of these two midrashim, a different homily is developed, each having as its theme the Lord as divine matchmaker. The very language of these texts, e.g., *m^ezawwēg* (*zîwwūgîm*) is evident in the phraseology of the Targum to our verse.

³³Exod. 1:21. For Qimḥi's statement see A. Darom, ed., *R. David Qimḥi: The Complete Commentary on Psalms* (Jerusalem, 1967), 146-47 [in Hebrew].

³⁴2 Sam. 7:11; Exod. 1:1; 12:3.

³⁵Not only is the meaning to marry restricted to such late texts as Ezra and Nehemiah, but even there the verb occurs only with foreign women as its object. Given the context of the campaign against intermarriage, it is not unreasonable to suppose that *hōšîb* was here consciously employed, in place of what were considered more formal or legitimizing terms, to so denigrate such unions. When speaking of marriage between Jews, the common idiom *lāqah 'išāh* is employed (e.g., Ezra 2:61; Neh. 6:18; 7:63). It should be noted, however, that the verb *nāšā* is used in, e.g., Ezra 9:2, 12; 10:44, when speaking of intermarriage, and in Neh. 13:25, when speaking of unions between the offspring of mixed marriages.

In any event, one should not assume that *hōšîb* as a marital term in Ezra and Nehemiah derives from a root other than *yšb* 'to dwell' (so D.N. Freedman, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job," *Eretz Israel* 9 [1969], 39). This usage of *hōšîb* (with an object *bayîṭ* understood ?) might be viewed alongside such expressions as Akk. *ana bīti X erēbu* (said of the wife) or Ugar. *lqh bt/šrb ḥzr* 'to take to house'. For these terms and their Hebrew equivalents see the discussion in J. Greenfield, "Some Glosses on the Keret Epic," *Eretz Israel* 9 [1969], 63-64.

³⁶See, for example, 1 Sam. 2:5 where the *'aqārāh* is specifically blessed by the granting of offspring. The

the barren woman is ensconced "in a household,"³⁷ the *yehîdîm* of our verse, also individuals without family or progeny, would understandably be shown the same compassion, that is, be set up as the head of their own households. If Ps. 113:9 and Ps. 68:7a are to be so connected, and the *yâhîd* is specifically mentioned here as one who lacks progeny, then the parallelism of *yehîdîm*//*'asîrîm* in our verse may be compared to that of Akk. *lā ālîti*//*kasû* 'barren woman//prisoner' in a SU.ILA prayer.³⁸

In Akkadian literature the *ēdu/ēdēnu* 'unattached individual' is provided by the deity with a companion³⁹ or with progeny,⁴⁰ but not necessarily with a wife. Further, in contexts mentioning the solitary person, the emphasis is upon his lack of, or alienation from, family associations, rather than upon his being a bachelor. Thus one finds the complaint: *ana rapši kimāti ēteme ēdāniš* 'to [my] many relatives I seem as one without family [lit. a solitary individual].'⁴¹

The assumption that the usage in our verse is related to that in Ps. 113:9, while highly probable, is not the only possible interpretation for the first hemistich. It will be recalled that in the Ugaritic legend of Keret, the *yhd/'ahd*⁴² is listed among those for whom going off to war represented a definite hardship. In his particular case, he is depicted as having to close down his home, there being no one to maintain it in his absence. What comes to mind, then, is the reading⁴³ *mēšîb(!)yehîdîm bāyetāh* 'One who allows *yehîdîm* to return home'. The sense here might be either a reference to a specific divine exemption from military service, or the special protection shown by the Lord to this disadvantaged social class in wartime.⁴⁴ The military context of returning

parallel usage is especially significant when it is recalled that this text shows close affinities to Ps. 113, both sharing the passage *mēqîm (mēqîmî) mē'āpār dal mē'āšpōt yārîm 'ebyôn l'ehōšîb(î) 'im n'ēdtîm . . .*

³⁷Both the grammar and syntax of Ps. 113:9 are far from clear, which complicates the seemingly natural connection to Ps. 68:7a. What is clear, however, is that Heb. *bayit* 'household', i.e., progeny (see nn. 33 and 34 above), is more relevant to an *'aqārāh*, than is an idiom denoting marriage.

³⁸See Ebeling, *AGH*, 150:7-8 where the text is restored: *[a]na [lā] ālîti [apla tanamdin]/[a]na [ka]sî [šubarrā tašakkan]* 'You give an heir to the barren woman, /you effect the release of the fettered.'

³⁹Ibid., 48:105 *eḫlu ēdu tappâ tušarši*. Note the proper name *Marduk-tappî-ēdi-šubši* 'Marduk-Provide-a-Companion-for-the-Lonely' cited in *CAD*, E, 36. In this connection, see the NEB translation "friendless" for the *yâhîd* of Ps. 68:7a. Significantly, the theme of isolation from one's friends and acquaintances is directly paralleled by the motif of imprisonment in Ps. 88:9 (cf. v. 19).

⁴⁰See, e.g., the proper name *Gula-šumi-ēdi-libši* 'Gula-Let-There-Be-Progeny-for-the-Lonely' cited in *CAD*, E, 36-37. Note that the *ēdu* appears together with the *lā išari* 'impotent' in Ebeling, *AGH*, 48:105-106, which would seem to further link the *yâhîd* and *'aqārāh* as social types deprived of progeny, albeit for different reasons.

⁴¹Ludlul I: 79; see W. G. Lambert, *BWL*, 34-35 and cf. *CAD*, K, 376. For the clear sense here of rejection by the family compare Ludlul I: 91-92, for which see Lambert, *ibid*.

⁴²IK (=CTA 14):96 *yhd bth sgr* 'the solitary man closes down his house' (*sgr=yshr*?, as in l. 184; see the infinitive absolute construction *škr iškr* in ll. 97-98 for a possible source of contamination). Problematic is the substitution of *ahd* (l. 184) for *yhd* in the repeated portion of this command-action sequence. It is unlikely that these two words in our passage are to be separated in *yhd* 'a solitary individual' and *hd* '[the numeral] one', since only the former would have the social implications indicated by the context (viz., the grouping of *almnt. zbl. wr. trḫ hdt*).

⁴³This reading suggested in *BH*³ is excluded from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Psalms [Fasc. No. 11], 1969). Although not specifically acknowledged in their critical notes, the reading *mēšîb* would seem to account for the rendering 'restore' in the translations of, e.g., Oesterley (*The Psalms*, [London, 1939; reprint, 1962], 321) and Buttenweiser (*The Psalms*, [1938; reprint: N. Y., 1969], 257).

⁴⁴That is, to speed their path and direct them home after the fighting. Although our verse, taken by itself, presents no evidence that they *yehîdîm* in question were ever engaged in fighting, or were ever in enemy hands, one is inclined to compare here the repeated references in Akkadian hymnic literature to the safe and sure conduct home provided by a merciful deity for refugees in wartime. Thus, for example, in Ebeling, *AGH*, 52:7 Šamaš is called *mušēšir urhi munnarbi* 'he who directs the path of fugitives'. Similarly, it is

home, that is, returning to civilian life, is clear from such passages as 1 Kgs. 12:24 (= 2 Chr. 11:4) and 1 Kgs. 22:17 (= 2 Chr. 18:16) where the command $\text{šûbû} \text{š} \text{l}^e \text{bê} \text{t} \text{d}$ indicates an ending of hostilities. The same idiom is used to describe the release of various hardship cases from obligatory military duty in Deut. 20:5-7. Note that verse 5 of this passage expresses special concern for the fate of a man's newly built, unprotected home, a problem reminiscent of that faced by the yhd in Keret.⁴⁵

From a grammatical standpoint, the verb šwb , being a verb of motion, comports nicely with what may be the usage of locative heh in our verse. Locative heh in this context is little different from the usage of the preposition l^e in the idioms cited above, and may be directly compared to that of 1 Sam. 6:7 $wah^a \text{š} \text{b} \text{ö} \text{t} \text{em} \text{b}^e \text{n} \text{d} \text{h} \text{em} \text{m} \text{ê} \text{a} \text{h}^a \text{r} \text{ê} \text{h} \text{em} \text{h} \text{a} \text{b} \text{â} \text{y}^e \text{t} \text{â} \text{h}$ 'bring their offspring back from them to the house'. As against this use, note that the verb $yšb$ does not appear in idioms with locative heh . It was probably this very problem of syntax which suggested the reading $bth \langle m \rangle$ 'their household' to Albright,⁴⁶ and the interpretation by Dahood⁴⁷ of the final $-âh$ as a preserved archaic accusative ending, both of which obviate the locative in our verse.

The confusion of the roots šwb and $yšb$ is, of course, easily explained on orthographic grounds. Note, for example, the MT vocalization $wahašibôti$ in Ezek. 29:14 derives the form from šwb , while LXX renders by $katoikizein$ ⁴⁸ which assumes that the root is $yšb$.⁴⁹ More strikingly, in Zech. 10:6 MT $wêh \text{d} \text{š} \text{e} \text{b} \text{ô} \text{t} \text{î} \text{m}$ offers a con-

said of a goddess in AGH. 152:6, $tutâr \text{h} \text{ab} \text{t} \text{am} \text{š} \text{alla} \text{ana} \text{n} \text{i} \text{š} \text{ê} \text{š} \text{u}$ 'you return to their folk runaway [or released] captives' (for $\text{h} \text{ab} \text{tu}$ see CAD. H. 18. The usage here is as a hendiadys). This latter example is especially significant in its use of $târû$, the exact semantic equivalent of Heb. šwb . The same usage is seen in, e.g., Šurpu IV:35 $\text{š} \text{alla} \text{u} \text{kamâ} \text{ana} \text{n} \text{i} \text{š} \text{ê} \text{š} \text{u} \text{turru}$ 'to return the prisoner of war and the captive to his people' (cf. ll. 33-34). Note also that in the Šurpu passage there is a combination of the motifs of emancipation from prison (ll. 31-32), and the return of displaced persons (ll. 33-34), all of which may be significant for the proposed parallelism of $mêšib$ 'return'// $môšî$ 'release'. The same contextual pairing of fugitives being directed home and mercy shown to the imprisoned may also be clearly seen in "The Šamaš Hymn" (Lambert, BWL, 130:71-74; for Lambert's new restoration of l. 74, see CAD, A¹, 53, s.v. $abku$).

⁴⁵The interpretations suggested here for $mêšib$, viz., either as safe conduct home from war, or a divinely granted exemption, were prompted chiefly by the Ugaritic context for yhd , i.e., wartime conditions. It must be candidly admitted that the very same Ugaritic passage led Albright ("Catalogue," 18-19) to retain MT $môšib$ and interpret our verse as a "reference to the creation of homes for unmarried men." As stated above, such an interpretation of our hemistich is highly probable, especially in light of Ps. 113:9. Yet, mention of the hardship involved in the drafting of $y^e \text{h} \text{i} \text{d} \text{î} \text{m}$ in Keret is not necessarily an isolated case. Rather, it may be viewed alongside provisions for the $\text{ê} \text{d} \text{ê} \text{nu}$ in Akkadian texts from Nuzi, which include men so designated in a list of individuals released from military service: $am \text{ê} \text{l} \text{û} \text{ša} \text{ana} \text{b} \text{i} \text{t} \text{i} \text{š} \text{unu} \text{mu} \text{š} \text{sur} \text{û}$ (RA 28, p. 37: Nos. 4 and 7 cited in CAD, E, 27; cf. CAD, A², 461).

⁴⁶W.F. Albright, "Catalogue," 19 n.(c). The assumption of a haplography here aims at a perhaps overly formal congruity between pl. $y^e \text{h} \text{i} \text{d} \text{î} \text{m}$ and the substantive bayit . The reading, and the interpretation of the form as an accusative would agree, however, both with MT $môšib$ and the proposed $mêšib$. For the former see Isa. 44:13 $\text{l} \text{â} \text{š} \text{e} \text{b} \text{et} \text{bayit}$, 'to inhabit a house' and for the latter, a verb of motion, cf., e.g., 58:7 $\text{t} \text{â} \text{b} \text{î} \text{ bayit}$ '[the downtrodden poor] shall you bring [to your] home'.

⁴⁷M. Dahood, *Psalms II* (New York, 1968), 137. For other nouns so construed by Dahood, see *idem*, *Psalms III* (New York, 1970), 381. One assumes that Dahood is here referring to an ancient Israelite scribal practice, rather than to a Masoretic convention. If so, it would seem odd that the nominal ending $-âh$ in Hebrew, which already represents the Ugaritic fem. sing. ending $-(a)tu$, as well as locative heh , should have also been employed to represent the accusative case ending $-a$. The examples given by Cross and Freedman, where long (!) \bar{a} is represented by the letter heh (*Early Hebrew Orthography* [New Haven, 1952], 57) do not include cases where the heh clearly reflects an accusative ending. Indeed, the accusative $-a$ in Ugaritic, not being long, would hardly be represented in Hebrew by $-âh$.

⁴⁸The same Greek verb is used to translate $môšibî$ in Ps. 113:9, as well as MT $môšib$ in Ps. 68:7a.

⁴⁹Following the LXX, the alternation of šwb and $yšb$ in this verse could be viewed as an instance of paronomasia reminiscent of Jer. 32:37 $wahašibôtim \dots wêh \text{d} \text{š} \text{ab} \text{î} \text{m}$. More probable, however, is the

flated form of *hōšīb* and *hēšīb*,⁵⁰ no doubt the result of this ambiguity.

Clearly, whether one retains MT *mōšīb* or adopts the reading *mēšīb*, little support for a matrimonial interpretation of Ps. 68:7a seems in evidence. Accordingly, one is hard put to demonstrate the relevance here of the Ugaritic *ktrt* in their nuptial role. A more basic question, however, is whether these female members of the Ugaritic pantheon, no matter how construed, are at all relevant to *kōšārōt* in Ps. 68:7.

At the outset, it may be observed that the practice of isolating one function performed by the *ktrt* as attested in a particular text (e.g. NK = CTA 24), and then proceeding to assume that this one aspect is that which was transmitted to and preserved in ancient Hebrew hymnic literature, is highly questionable. Clearly, 'bridesmaids' can not be favored over 'midwives', if equal weight is given their roles in Ugaritic literature. This point would seem to have been appreciated by Margulis, given the appropriately general subtitle of his study "Patroness-saints of Women." Yet, such a neutral understanding of the Ugaritic term could hardly prompt an emendation of *'asrīm* to **'arūšīm*.⁵¹

The stock epithet *bnt hll snnt* 'jubilant ones [lit. daughters of jubilant song],⁵² swallows' is, perhaps, a more reliable guide to the general nature of these personages than the individual contexts, since the appellation is employed both in NK⁵³ and in Aqht (=CTA 17).⁵⁴ Accordingly, Ginsberg's attempt to isolate this particular aspect of the *ktrt*, and assume its preservation as 'song, music' in Biblical Hebrew would seem to be on surer ground than the deduction from their nuptial role. Yet if an abstract noun *kōšārōt* denoting 'music' were to be sought in the Ugaritic pantheon, an even clearer association than these female personages would seem to be the god *ktr*. Thus in RŠ. 24.252:5 one encounters *hbr ktr ṭbm* 'goodly companions of Kothar',⁵⁵ who are clearly musicians, dancers, or the like.⁵⁶ This usage might suggest that the Ugaritic *ktrt* were accorded the epithet *bnt hll snnt* partly because of their relationship, nominal and otherwise,⁵⁷ to the divine craftsman-musician, rather than to any specifically musical role of their own.⁵⁸

retention of the MT reading, especially in light of the usage of the preposition 'al in the Ezekiel passage. To be compared with this usage are, e.g., Jer. 16:15; 23:3; 24:6 (cf. Hos. 11:11 where read *wahašībōlīm*).

⁵⁰The language of Zech. 10:6 closely links this verse with, e.g., Jer. 12:15 and 33:26, which, along with context, call for the root *šwb*, rather than *yšb*.

⁵¹The same problem of overly restricting one's definition of the *ktrt*, and so coloring one's understanding of *kōšārōt* in Ps. 68:7 is evident in Albright's most recent treatment. Thus in *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (New York, 1968), 136, Albright renders the biblical term "'birth pains' (literally, divine midwives)," cf. 143, as well as "'the process of birth', (originally the goddesses of birth)" on 187.

⁵²Note especially the Akk. hendiadys *ina eḫli ningūti* 'in jubilant song' (lit. in jubilation, (in) music), e.g., Streck, *AŠb.*, 88:95.

⁵³CTA 24, ll. 6, 15 (restored), 40-42.

⁵⁴CTA 17, II, ll. 26-27 and *passim*.

⁵⁵For the translation see *Ugaritica* V, 553; cf. J.C. de Moor, "Studies in the New Alphabetic Texts from Ras Shamra I," *UF* 1 (1969), 175; S. Parker, "The Feast of Rāpi'u," *UF* 2 (1970), 244.

⁵⁶Contrast B. Margulis, "A Ugaritic Psalm," *JBL* 89 (1970), 293, and 295 nn. 12ff., where the line is translated "Kothar pours spirits from the vat." Note that for this translation one would have expected the verb *yšq* 'to pour' (cf. e.g., III RP [=CTA 22], B: 17ff.), rather than the supposed Ugaritic verb **dšn*.

⁵⁷In light of the correspondence of *ktrt* to *Yassurātu*, and that of *ktr* to Ea (see *Ugaritica* V, 51, l. 15), it is suggestive to consider the close relationship of Ea (Enki) with the birth goddesses in, e.g., Atrahasis I:200ff. The connection between *ktr* and *ktrt*, however, may be little more than the fact that they each perform their respective functions "skillfully" (Ugar. *ktr*).

⁵⁸Contrast the generalized epithet *bnt hll snnt* with the more specific Akk. divine title *bēlet zamāri* 'Mistress of Song'.

It should be pointed out, moreover, that little attention was originally paid to the precise contextual suitability of a rendering 'with music' for MT *ba-kôšārôt* in Ps. 68:7.⁵⁹ Dahood⁶⁰ cites Ps. 105:43 *wayôšî 'ammô b'eššôn b'erinnâh 'et b'ehîrâw h'ôšî* here, especially in the syntactical pattern *h'ôšî X b'e X*, is certainly parallel to that in Ps. 68:7b, but this hardly helps to establish the meaning of *kôšārôt* as 'jubilation, music'. For in verse 37 of Psalm 105 we find attested *wayôšî 'em b'ekesep w'ežā-hāb* 'he brought them out with precious goods [lit. silver and gold].'⁶¹ Accordingly, one might just as well cite this verse, and so substantiate the traditional translation of our *ba-kôšārôt*, namely, 'into prosperity'.⁶²

Further, Dahood's citation is closely tied to his interpretation of Ps. 68:7b as a reference to the exodus from Egypt. In a wider context, however, Ps. 105:43 may be viewed alongside Isā. 35:10 = 51:11, and 55:12 which also speak of the mass movement of exiles "in joy, in jubilation." It remains to be demonstrated, however, that 'song, music' is equally appropriate when speaking of the specific divine activity of releasing prisoners, as expressed in the stock formulae of ancient Near Eastern hymnic literature.

If the role of 'song, music' in Ps. 68:7b is open to question, and, so, also the relevance of the *kṭrt* as songstresses, not to mention as bridesmaids or as midwives,⁶³ then the texts from Ugarit may yet provide material for the resolution of our crux. As was alluded to above in noting the musical role of the god *kṭr*, rather than looking to the activities of the female goddesses, the focus should instead be upon their name, and more specifically the root *kṭr*. In attempting to discuss this particular Semitic root, one is overwhelmed by an embarrassment of riches.⁶⁴ Yet the usage of the root in Ugaritic may serve to limit the range of possibilities to basically two meanings. These, in turn, suggest two alternative interpretations for our *ba-kôšārôt*.

⁵⁹Ginsberg (see above, n. 2) did not deal with this particular aspect, and Albright's comment ("Catalogue," 19) that "such singing women were employed by the Canaanites to help celebrate joyous occasions (as in the Aqhat epic)" would seem overly general.

⁶⁰*Psalms II*, 137, n. 7.

⁶¹So, too, compare the language of Gen. 15:14 *yēš 'û bir'ekûš gādôl* (cf. Dan. 11:28), also said of the exodus from Egypt.

⁶²E.g., RSV, JPS, etc.

⁶³See. S. Spiegel, "Noah, Daniel and Job," in *L. Ginzberg Jubilee Volume* (1945), 312, n. 5. Cf. A. Caquot, "Le psaume LXVIII," *Revue de L'histoire de Religions* 177 (1970), 154, who renders *kôšārôt* by "les expertes," i.e., skilled midwives who deliver fetuses "imprisoned" in the womb.

⁶⁴In Akkadian alone three distinct verbs have been isolated for *kašāru*, denoting respectively: (a) to repair (usually said of walls and buildings); (b) to succeed, to achieve; (c) to replace, to compensate (so *CAD*, *K*, 284-86; contrast von Soden's treatment in *AHW.*, 461-62, where only one verb is listed, and the above meaning subsumed under it). In Arabic the root *k-t-r* denotes 'to be or become much, copious, abundant, etc.'; see E.W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*. (reprint: Beirut, 1968), Part 7, p. 2593. In Syriac the root *k-ṣ-r* (for this loan see n. 70 below) denotes 'to prosper, succeed, be fortunate, be favorable, be of use, serve well' (see J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* [reprint: Oxford, 1957], 229-30).

A connection between meaning (b) for Akk. *kašāru* and the Syriac is clear, as is the connection with BHeb. (Esther and Ecclesiastes) *kāšēr* 'to be proper, succeed' and the noun *kāšrôn* 'success' (less transparently with the meaning 'skill' as in Eccl. 2:21). However, the attempt by Driver (*Canaanite Myths and Legends* [=CML] [1956; reprint: Edinburgh, 1971], 145, n. 5) to connect Akk. *kašāru* (meanings (a) and (b) with the Arabic, and so derive the Syriac, is considerably more difficult. So, too, J. Aistleitner, *WUS*, 159 has assumed an equally tenuous connection between the Akk. meaning (a) and the Hebrew/Syriac usage 'to be proper, succeed.' The semantic problem is only further aggravated by the Ugaritic usages to be discussed below, viz., (1) *kṭr* 'health, well-being [?]; (2) *kṭr* 'to be skilled, expert'.

(1) Ugaritic *kṭr* 'health, well-being (?)'; Biblical Hebrew *ba-kôšārôt* 'safe and sound, unscathed'.

The idiomatic 'safe and sound' by which NEB has rendered our crux may be supported by Ugaritic usage. Thus in the first tablet of the Keret legend (ll. 16-17), the text has *mṭlṭt kṭrm tmt/mrb't zblnm*, which Ginsberg now translates, "One-third died in health/One-fourth of sickness."⁶⁵ Similarly, Driver renders *kṭrm* "in (their) prime (?)," "good health,"⁶⁶ followed by Gray "perfect in health,"⁶⁷ although they each construe the couplet in a way different from Ginsberg's. In his discussion of Ginsberg's previous suggestion for *kṭrm*, namely, "at birth,"⁶⁸ Gaster⁶⁹ adduced a convincing parallel in Job 21:23-26, which served to highlight the antithetical nature of the parallelism in the Keret passage. At the same time, he cited Syriac *kšr* to support his translation "in full vigor." Since this etymology is problematic,⁷⁰ for the present, context will have to remain the surest support for rendering *kṭr* 'health'.⁷¹

⁶⁵ANET³, 143a.

⁶⁶CML, 29, 145.

⁶⁷J. Gray, *The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1964), 11, 32. Compare also the translation 'in good health' in J. C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba'lu* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 242.

⁶⁸H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Keret* (New Haven, 1946), 14, 34. Note that this largely abandoned translation is retained in C. H. Gordon, *Ugarit and Minoan Crete* (New York, 1966), 102.

⁶⁹T. H. Gaster, "The Canaanite Epic of Keret," *JQR* 8 (1947), 289, 291.

⁷⁰The etymology has been since taken up by Gray (*KRT*, 32). Syriac *k-š-r* is clearly a loan, since otherwise the root would have appeared as *k-t-r*. The problem is, however, that the meaning 'vigour', and thus the proposed 'health', is not to be found in Akkadian, Hebrew, or Arabic, but rather, is restricted to Syriac. Further, in light of this restriction, one wonders whether the meaning of the adjective 'vigorous' here really refers to 'health' or is simply related to the adjectival meanings 'diligent', 'industrious', 'active', etc., (J. Payne Smith, *Dictionary*, 229-30). Accordingly, it is difficult to appeal to a Syriac word, itself a loan which has undergone its own semantic development, to explain the usage in Ugaritic.

⁷¹If etymological speculation has been disappointing, one might hazard a suggestion based on semantics. It will be assumed for the moment that the noun *kṭr* in Keret is related to Akk. *kašāru* B 'to succeed, achieve' and, hence, should be compared to the noun *kušīru* 'success, profit' (and, perhaps, so vocalized). What then emerges is an association between 'health' and 'skill' (the two usages in Ugaritic, based on context) and the Akk. sense of 'success', 'profit'. For this association one might compare Akk. *dumqu* (n.) and *damqu* (adj.) which do embrace all of the above meanings (see *CAD*, D, 68, 180). For the specific usage in the sense of 'health', note especially the use of *lā damqu* as 'unhealthy' cited in the lexical section s.v. "damqu." Further, the association of Akk. *kušīru* and Akk. *dumqu* may be seen in the blessing "[may the gods let you achieve] good fortune [*dunqī*] in the morning, profit [*nēmelī*] in the afternoon, success [*kušīru*] at night" (see *CAD*, K, 599 for the citation). This suggestion is advanced with hesitation, since few verbs are as highly generalized as Akk. *damāqu*, which might be reduced to so broad a sense as, 'to be of good [hence, pleasing] quality' (see the meanings listed in *CAD*, D, 61 and compare the derivative formations given there). One would have to be willing, therefore, to assume a comparably wide range for Ug. *kṭr*, contrary to one's expectation.

Less sweeping is the range of Akk. *ešēru*, which would, nevertheless, encompass the meanings 'success, profit' (Akk. *kušīru*) and 'normalcy, good condition' (= 'health', Ugar. *kṭr*). See *CAD*, E, 352ff., meaning (2) "to thrive, to prosper, to be or become all right." Note especially the equation of SILIM.MA [=šalmiš 'in well-being, good condition'] = *išīr* cited in the lexical section s.v. *ešēru*. This equation is particularly significant in light of the use of *šalāmu* to be discussed below. So, too, see the use of *ešēru* as a prognosis in medical texts, *išīrma iballuṭ* 'he will get well and live' (Labat, *TDP*, 152:53' cited in *CAD*, E, 355). It may be observed that the latter expression is to be directly contrasted with *imarrašma imāt* 'he will become ill and die' (ibid., 154:10, 11). Compare also the adj. *išaru* (*CAD*, I/J, 224ff., meaning (2)) "in good condition, prosperous, favorable." Note especially the citation of Thompson, *Rep.*, 257 r. 6 in *CAD*, I/J, 225, where *ešēru* appears in antithetical parallelism with *marāšu*.

From the standpoint of form, both Ugar. *ktr-m* and BHeb. *ba-kôšārôt* may be construed as adverbial phrases describing the state of the individuals in question, at the time of the action indicated by the verb. In the context of Ps. 68:7b, the phrase would refer to the state of the prisoners freed by the divine liberator, namely, alive and well.⁷² This understanding of the Hebrew term prompts several comparisons to both Akkadian and Hebrew usage.

The most common Akkadian equivalents of the proposed *ktr* 'health, well-being' would be *balātu* and *šulmu*. Formally, the adverbial phrase *ba-kôšārôt* may be viewed alongside the adverbial use of *balūssun* 'alive, safe and sound',⁷³ often used to describe, for example, the state of captives as opposed to the enemy dead. The actual context of divine beneficence toward prisoners in our psalm, however, is more closely paralleled by the hymnic claim [*ana*] *hissat Marduk ibluṭū kamûte/ul iškunū napištu* "At the very mention of Marduk, the fettered ones remain alive./they do not expire."⁷⁴ So, too, the notion of divine protection for the imprisoned is expressed in the Šamaš hymn *abka ša ina bût [šibitti nadû (?) t]ušallam* "You sustain in well-being the captive who is imprisoned."⁷⁵ Further, language quite similar to that of Ps. 68:7 is to be found in an Akkadian fable⁷⁶ where a lion boasts *ārid qištiya ul utāra ana arkišu/u šalmiṣ ul uššima ul immar šamšu* "He who ventures into my forest will never return back./Neither will he escape safe and sound, nor will he be free [lit. see the sun]." Here the use of the verb (*w)āšū* with adverbial *šalmiṣ* may be directly compared to *môšî ba-kôšārôt*.⁷⁷ So, too, the employment of the idiom 'to see the sun'='to be free'⁷⁸ further connects this passage to our verse, since the idiom appeals to the imagery of a victim imprisoned, as it were, by the lion.

The usage of Akk. *šalāmu*, *šalmiṣ*, and so forth, to describe the well-being of a prisoner at his being rescued, is, not surprisingly, paralleled by a similar use of Heb. *šālôm*. Thus in Jer. 43:12 the Lord is to send Nebuchadrezzar to ravage Egypt, and after his mission is accomplished *w^eyāsā' mi-šām b'ešālôm* 'he will emerge from there unscathed'. The same usage in the context of rescuing the afflicted may be present in the disturbed text of Ps. 55:19, where the idiom *pādāh nepeš min* 'to rescue' (cf. Ps. 49:16) would seem to be qualified by *b'ešālôm* 'unscathed'. The difficulties of the verse notwithstanding, the possible analogy between *pādāh min* and our *hōšî' (min)*,⁷⁹ as well as between the phrases *b'ešālôm* and *ba-kôšārôt* in such a context is certainly suggestive.

⁷²A phrase depicting the sound state of those shown divine mercy (in this case, the prisoners) would serve as an appropriate contrast to the phrase in the third stich of our verse *šaknū šeḥiḥāh* 'inhabit the "wilderness" [?]' (= "underworld", so Dahood, *Psalms II*, 138). That is, the qualification 'in well-being, unscathed' would balance the phrase in the third stich, which indicates the discomfort experienced by the *sōr'erim* 'treacherous'. While semantically *asirim* and *sōr'erim* are not an antithetical pair, the use of the two terms may well be an intended paranomasia. This stylistic device, and certainly the conjunction *ak*, would indicate the antithesis between the second and third cola of the verse.

⁷³See *CAD*, B, 69-70 (cf. 66-69). Note the gloss *ḥayāma* on *balānu* 'alive' in EA 245:6, and compare the usage of Heb. *ḥayyim* in, e.g., 1 Kgs. 20:18.

⁷⁴*AJO*, 19 (1959), 66:9.

⁷⁵W.G. Lambert, *BWL*, 130:74, restored in *CAD*, A¹, 53.

⁷⁶Lambert, *BWL*, 200, Rev. iv: 1-2.

⁷⁷Compare also *ina šalmāti bēlni attā tušāšī'anni'āti* "You, our lord, have helped us come out unharmed" cited in *CAD*, A², 378. Note, however, that the context of the letter from which this quotation was taken does not involve imprisonment.

⁷⁸See n. 20 above.

⁷⁹See, e.g., Deut. 13:6 where *hōšî' min//pādāh min*, and compare Job 33:28 alongside 33:30 where *hōšîb min* interchanges with *pādāh min*.

Obviously, these comparisons to Akkadian and Hebrew usage are only as valid as the definition 'health, well-being' currently assigned to *kṭr(m)* in I Keret. Both will have to stand the test of time.⁸⁰

(2) Ugaritic *kṭr* 'to be skilled, expert'; Biblical Hebrew *ba-kōšārōt* 'deftly, with prowess'.

A second interpretation construes *kōšārōt* as an abstract noun, and the usage with the preposition *b* as adverbial.⁸¹ This meaning of the root in Ugaritic is most clearly seen in the divine names *kṭr w ḥss* and *kṭrt*.⁸² In the case of the former, the name of the divine craftsman is a hendiadys the meaning of which is conventionally demonstrated on the basis of Akk. *ḥāsisu* 'understanding'.⁸³ So, too, his epithet *hyn dhrš ydm*⁸⁴ is easily understood in terms of Aram. *hauna* 'cleverness',⁸⁵ as well as Akk. *er-šu* 'wise'.⁸⁶ This well-known understanding of the divine name would suggest that our *ba-kōšārōt* is little different in either form or meaning from BHeb. *bēḥokmāh* or *bi-ṭebūnāh*, which, like the terms cited above, denote intellectual or technical skill, as well as other nuances.⁸⁷

The same association is evident from the name of the *kṭrt* 'skilled women', which may be properly viewed alongside, for example, Akk. *sinništi ṭēmi* and BHeb. *'iṣṣāh ḥakāmāh*, each denoting 'skilled woman'. In the case of the former, the *sinništi ṭēmi* is depicted in the activity of spinning (Akk. *tew/mū*) at the spindle (Akk. *pilakku*).⁸⁸ So, too, in Exod. 35:25 it is the *'iṣṣāh ḥakmat lēb* who spins (BHeb. *tāwāh*) the various materials, and does so *bēḥokmāh* (v. 26) 'skillfully'. In light of this connection, one is tempted to construe (*ba-*)*kīšōr* in Prov. 31:19 not as an instrument of spinning,⁸⁹ but

⁸⁰More recent suggestions for *kṭrm* may be found in F.C. Fensham, "Remarks on Certain Difficult Passages in Keret," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*, 1 (1971), 19-20. There two interpretations are mentioned: (1) *k-ṭrm* 'while they dine'; (2) *kṭr-m* 'as craftsman [?]'. These would hardly suffice to replace 'in health', despite its uncertainty.

⁸¹It will be noted that Ps. 68 is particularly rich in archaic abstract nouns ending in *-ot*. Cf., e.g., *nēdābōt* (v. 10), *mōšā'ōt*, *iōšā'ōt* (v. 21), *halīkōt* (v. 25; cf. Akk. *alkakātu*), etc. The MT vocalization *ba* (for *bē*) is accounted for in Dahood's commentary (*Psalms II*, 137), and in light of the rendering here proposed, one might also compare *ba-ḥokmāh* in Eccl. 1:13, 2:3, 7:23; 1 Chr. 28:21.

⁸²More problematic is the substantive *mkṭr* in IIAB(=CTA 4), 2:30 which, if related to the usage here discussed, would indicate one skilled in fashioning a net or fishing. See Ginsberg's translation "Deft One" in *ANET*, 132b and cf. Driver in *CML*, 93 "cunning workers." Contrast J. C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern*, 143, where he translates "Place of Abundance," on the basis of Arabic usage.

⁸³See *CAD*, *H*. 126 ff. and cf. *ḥāsisu* (p. 127) and *ḥassu* (pp. 127f.).

⁸⁴See, e.g., VAB(=CTA 3), F, 22-23 (//*kṭr w ḥss*).

⁸⁵So T. H. Gaster, *Thespis*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1961), 163, who notes the use of this word in the Targum to Prov. 28:16 (= *ṭebūnōt*). See also S. Spiegel, "Noah," 313, n. 5.

⁸⁶See *CAD*, *E*, 313-14. Cf. Heb. *ḥārāš* 'craftsman', and note the Ugaritic and Hebrew usage denoting 'sorcery', for which see n. 99 below.

⁸⁷For the form *kōšārōt*, cf. *ḥokmōt* in, e.g., Prov. 1:20, 9:1 and *ṭebūnōt* in, e.g., Ps. 78:72; Prov. 28:16.

⁸⁸*Surpu* V-VI: 146/147ff. (E. Reiner, *Surpu*, 34).

⁸⁹Albright suggested the translation 'skill' for *kīšōr* in *Yahwah and the Gods of Canaan* (New York, 1968), 136 with n. 67 and 187, without reference, however, to the associative link provided by the context of spinning. Note that no convincing Semitic etymology is available for *kīšōr* with the meaning 'whorl, distaff'. See, however, the Sumerian etymology proposed in L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon* (Leiden, 1958), 434. There seems to be no independent substantiation for Driver's *kšr* 'distaff' in Ugaritic (*CML*, 145).

It will be noted that our *kīšōr* was connected to the root 'to be successful' and given the nuance 'skill' as early as the medieval Jewish lexicographer Menahem (see *sefer mahberet mēnaḥēm* [1854; reprint:

as an adverbial phrase, 'skillfully', semantically identical to *b^ehokmāh*⁹⁰ and etymologically identical to *ba-kôšārôt*. In the Proverbs passage the phrase would describe the talents of the 'ēset hayil⁹¹ in manufacturing (BHeb. *šillah yād*),⁹² specifically with respect to her use of the spindle (BHeb. *pelek*).⁹³

The *īššāh ḥakāmāh*, like the *kṭrt*, is depicted in various functions, her name referring only to the skill with which she executes a given function. Thus, alongside the technical skill in spinning seen in the *īššāh ḥakmat lēb*, in 2 Samuel 14 she appears as part professional mourner,⁹⁴ part actress, and part spokesman. In 2 Samuel 20 the role of spokesman is also evident, and the phrase *b^ehokmāh* in verse 22 refers, presumably, to her persuasive abilities in swaying the people to the side of one of the conflicting political figures.

In Rabbinic literature *ḥakāmôt*, like the *kṭrt*, are involved in the birth process, serving as midwives.⁹⁵ It will be recalled that the Akkadian mother goddess *par excellence* is Mami,⁹⁶ who is quite often referred to as *erīštu* 'wise',⁹⁷ while those who "heal the fetus" are said to perform this activity *ina nēmeqi* 'skillfully'.⁹⁸ Both of these Akkadian terms are semantically identical to BHeb. *ḥokmāh*,⁹⁹ which, in turn, highlights the association of *kṭr* and *ḥokmāh*.

A specific connection between Ugar. *kṭr* and BHeb. *ḥokmāh* and related terms, is also suggested by other instances of Biblical usage. Thus in Eccl. 2:21 there is attested the sequence *b^eḥokmāh ub^eda'at ub^ekīšrôn*¹⁰⁰ 'with wisdom, knowledge, and skill', which is little different from the sequence in 1 Kgs. 7:14 *ḥokmāh - t^ebūnāh - da'at*.¹⁰¹ Further, just as the activities of the *kṭrt* and the *īššāh ḥakāmāh* show correspon-

Jerusalem, no date], 110). So, too, Saadiah translating Prov. 31:19 treats the form adverbially and renders *bi-naqāḥim* "successfully" (I owe this helpful observation to my friend Dr. Leon Kassir).

⁹⁰Note the use of adverbial *b^eḥokmāh* in v. 26 of the same chapter.

⁹¹An 'ēset hayil in the sense of a capable and efficient woman is not unrelated to the term *īššāh ḥakāmāh*.

⁹²Given the idiom *šillah yād b^e*, one might expect *kīšôr* to be an indirect object, but cf. Prov. 13:16 *kol 'ārūm ya'āseh b^eda'at* 'every clever man acts wisely'. The latter provides both a syntactical and a semantic parallel to the proposed usage in 31:19. For the relationship of *da'at* to the proposed noun *kīšôr* 'skill' see, e.g., Eccl. 2:21 as discussed below. For the verb 'āšāh and the idiom *šillah yād* cf., *ma'aseh* 'endeavor, activity' = *mīšlah yād* (=Akk. *šipir qāti*; cf. BHeb. *me'lū'kāh* as an ellipsis).

⁹³For BHeb. *tāmāk pelek* cf. Ugar. *aḥd plk* IIAB (=CTA 4) II: 3-4.

⁹⁴The relationship between 'wailers' and the *kṭrt* was observed by Ginsberg, see n. 2 above. Note the parallelism in Jer. 9:16 *m^eqōn^enōt // ḥakāmôt*, which further serves to link *kṭr* and *ḥokmāh*.

⁹⁵S. Spiegel, "Noah," 313, n. 5.

⁹⁶See, e.g., Atrahasis I: 189ff. (W.G. Lambert, *Atra-ḥasis*, 56-63) where the mother goddess is referred to by several birth-related terms, e.g., *šassuru* 'birth-goddess' (ll. 189, 190), *tabšūt ilī* 'midwife of the gods' (l. 193).

⁹⁷Atrahasis I: 193, 250. See especially the f. pl. forms *eršēte* and *mūdēte* 'wise' and 'learned' modifying the very birth-goddesses equated at Ugarit with the *kṭrt* (see, e.g., Margulis, *JANES*, 4 [1972], 54).

⁹⁸See the discussion as well as the literature cited in Y. Elman, "Babylonian Echoes in a Late Rabbinic Legend," *JANES*, 4 (1972), 18 with n. 23.

⁹⁹Note the semantic link, for example, between *eršu* and *nēmequ* with respect to sorcery. Thus Marduk is referred to as *bēl nēmeqi* in respect to being the master of incantation lore, and in Ugaritic *hrš* (cognate to Akk. *eršu*) is the verb denoting 'to perform sorcery' (e.g., IIK [=CTA 17] 5:25-26). So, too, see Isa. 3:3 for the use of *hrš (/laḥaš)* as 'sorcerer'. The connection with *ḥakmāh* is provided by *ḥakām* 'one versed in magical lore', as in Gen. 41:8 and Exod. 7:11.

¹⁰⁰In Eccl. 2:26 the sequence *ḥokmāh w^eda'at w^ešimhāh* is incongruent, or at least atypical. See Ginsberg's comments on this verse in *Kohleth* (Jerusalem, 1961), 72. His translation has been incorporated in the new Jewish Publication Society translation "the wisdom and shrewdness to enjoy himself" (*The Five Megilloth and Jonah* [Philadelphia, 1969], 61).

¹⁰¹Cf., also, Exod. 31:3, 35:31.

dence, so, too, one might view the hypostasis *ḥokmāh*¹⁰² in the Book of Proverbs alongside the Ugaritic divine craftsman *kṭr wḥss*. Both figures are depicted in the role of master builder, with *kṭr* building a palace for Baal, and Wisdom her house of seven pillars.¹⁰³ Moreover, *ḥokmāh* actually labels herself 'amôn (=Akk. *ummānu*) 'craftsman' in Prov. 8:30.¹⁰⁴

In the context of Ps. 68:7b, the adverbial phrase *ba-kôšārôt* describes, perhaps, the deft manner in which the divine liberator accomplishes his task. Obviously a rendering such as 'intelligently' or 'artistically' is out of place. The precise sense of the term *kosarot* in our verse would seem, rather, to lie midway between intellectual or technical skill and physical ability or power. Semantically, the term would be comparable to the usage of Akk. *leñ*,¹⁰⁵ which embraces these various nuances.¹⁰⁶ Thus in Enuma eliš (I: 59) Ea (in many respects the Akkadian counterpart of *Kṭr wḥss*) is described by the sequence *šūtur uzna, itpēšu, tel'ū* 'exceeding in intelligence, expert, all able',¹⁰⁷ followed by *ḥasīs mimmama* 'omniscient'. Context indicates an intellectual type of prowess here,¹⁰⁸ while the use of *le'ū* to describe skilled craftsmen is seen, for example, in the designation *mārē ummāni le'ūti mūdē pirišti* 'skilled craftsmen, versed in the "secrets [of the trade]"'.¹⁰⁹ The notion of a more physical kind of prowess is suggested by the adverbial phrase *ina le'ūtim*, appearing, for example, in the epilogue to the Code of Hammurabi (xxiv, 22ff.). There, a series of primarily physical achievements¹¹⁰ in behalf of the people is said to have been performed.

ina kakkim dannim ša DN u DN ušatlimūnim
ina igigallim ša DN išimam
ina le'ūtim ša DN iddinam

with the powerful weapon which DN₁ and DN₂ bestowed upon me,
 with the wisdom [=expertise] which DN₃ allotted to me,
 with the prowess which DN₄ gave me.

As indicated by the use of *igagallu*, a term most often denoting intellectual ability,¹¹¹ the contextual association of intellectual or technical ability and physical

¹⁰²Cf. the Akkadian hypostasis *ḥasīsu*, for which see *CAD*, *H*, 127.

¹⁰³See Prov. 9:1 (cf., 14:1). Note that following the completion of their respective tasks, comes, in each case, the celebration of a banquet. For the affinities between the two accounts see M. Lichtenstein, "The Banquet Motifs in Keret and in Proverbs 9," *JANES*, 1 (1968), 21-22 with n. 10a.

¹⁰⁴For a reflection of the noun *ḥokmāh* as '[architectural] skill' see, e.g., Prov. 24:3.

¹⁰⁵Cf. Ugar. *l'y* 'to prevail' (e.g., IIK [= *CTA* 16], 6:1-2), and the epithet of Baal *aliyn* 'puissant' (Ginsberg's translation).

¹⁰⁶While it is here maintained that the various nuances are often interchangeable, it is not denied that three terms such as *gašrūtu* 'power', *ḥasīsu* 'understanding', *le'ūtu* 'ability', do maintain separate identities as well. See, e.g., the demarcation of these aspects in terms of Adad, Ea and Nabū respectively in KAR 25 ii 5 cited in *CAD*, *E*, 314.

¹⁰⁷For *tel'ū* see the listing with *palkū* 'broad [of intellect]' in a Neo-Babylonian synonym list cited in *AHW*, 547b. For *le'ū* and *itpēšu* together see Borger, *Esarḫ.*, 45:18.

¹⁰⁸See further Ebeling, *AGH*, 16:6; 76:20.

¹⁰⁹Borger, *Esarḫ.*, 83:29 cf. 21:36 and especially 94:40. Compare the use of *emqu* in the phrase *mārē ummāni enqūti* Borger, *Esarḫ.*, 82:18. For ones versed in the lore of craftsmanship cf. *mūdūte ini*, *CAD*, *I/J*, 152, s.v. *inu*, and note the sequence *pū ḥasīsi le'i ini kalāma* "intelligent (and) a master of technical knowledge in all fields" cited and translated there.

¹¹⁰E.g., obliteration of enemies, establishment of peacetime conditions, resettlement, and enforcement of security.

¹¹¹For the associated sense of technical expertise, especially with regard to craftsmanship, see Borger, *Esarḫ.*, 82:12.

proWess is not restricted to a general term like *le'ūtim*. Thus, *igigallu* is again coupled with military terminology in the description of a hero *ša igigallašu kakkašu šāba šuātu ikmū ikšudu ināru* 'whose wisdom [and] weapons paralyzed, caught and annihilated that army'.¹¹²

So, too, the usage of *igigallu* may be viewed alongside that of *ina nēmeqim* 'with wisdom' with, for example, the verb *pazāru* 'to protect',¹¹³ or of the adverbial phrase *ina pīt ḥasīsi* 'with intellectual ability' modifying *ana sapān māṭ ayyābi* 'for the purpose of devastating the enemy country'.¹¹⁴

Biblical Hebrew also employs terms usually denoting intellectual or technical skill in contexts involving a show of might. In Isa. 10:13 there is attested a parody of the braggadocio of Mesopotamia royal inscriptions and annals, which, in effect, translates the same Akkadian terms discussed above: *bekōah yādī 'āsūū/ubehokmāi kī nēbūnōtī* 'with my own power have I acted, and in my prowess, being so expert'. It will be noted that these phrases introduce depiction of military strength and show of force which includes territorial conquest, as well as subjugation of local leaders.

Physical prowess is again indicated by Job 26:12 *bekōhō rāga' hayām/ūbitēbunātō māḥaš Rāhab*¹¹⁵ 'with his power he riled Yam, and with his prowess smote Rahab'. Divine ability in guiding His people is expressed in Ps. 78:72: *ūbitēbūnōt kappāw yanḥēm* 'and through His own proficiency leads them'.¹¹⁶

In connection with these last two examples, it is interesting to note that the very same motif of the Lord's victory over the sea in Ps. 74:13 is expressed by *attāh pōrartā bē'ozzekā yām* 'With your power you have shattered Yam'. Here the interchange of semantically distinct terms like *kōah*, *tēbūnāh*, and 'ōz seems to make little difference in context. So, too, with reference to divine leadership, in Exod. 15:13 the text has *nēhaltā bē'ozzekā 'el nēwēh qodšekā* 'with your power you led [the people] to your holy dwelling place', which again demonstrates the ease of a substitution of 'ōz for *tēbūnāh*.

Conversely, a term usually denoting military or physical prowess may be substituted for one indicating technical skill. At the outset, one might note the designation 'ēšet ḥayil, where the usually military or physical term *ḥayil* denotes excellence and proficiency in various capacities. Further, in the context of divine creation, Ps. 65:7 reads *mēkīn hārīm bekōhō [//bigēbūrāh]* 'he who establishes mountains with his power', while in Jer. 10:12 (=51:15 cf. Prov. 3:19) the notion is expressed by

'ōšeh 'ereš bekōhō
mēkīn tēbel bēhokmātō
ubitēbūnātō nātāh šāmāyīm

Maker of the earth with his power,
he who establishes dry-land with his prowess,
and in his skill laid out the heavens.

It is thus quite possible that the psalmist employed the term *kōšārōt*, which one would have associated with skill in craftsmanship, in this more dynamic sense of

¹¹²*AnSt.* 5, 98:28 cited in *CAD, I/J*, 40.

¹¹³*CH Epil.*, xxiv: 57-58.

¹¹⁴*TCL* 3, 6:23.

¹¹⁵For the parallelism of *kōah*//*tēbūnāh* cf., e.g., Ps. 147:5.

¹¹⁶Cf. the Akkadian expression *lū emqēt u damqiš u'era* 'be clever and lead [your soldiers] well' cited in *CAD, E*, 152.

prowess and power. Accordingly, the divine attribute *mōšî* 'asîrîm *ba-kôšārôt* would, from a contextual standpoint, be close to the more familiar depiction of the divine rescue (*hōšî* 'min) of Israelites described by the adverbial phrases *b^eyād hazāqāh*, *b^ehōzeq yād*, *biz^erō^a n^etūyāh*, *b^ekō^ah gādōl*, and the like. It will be noted that such an interpretation of MT *ba-kôšārôt* conforms completely to the LXX rendering *en andreia*, which, while semantically analogous to BHeb. *big^ebûrāh*,¹¹⁷ could also have been used to render BHeb. *bit^ebûnāh*.¹¹⁸ This range of translation may be appreciated in light of the above discussion.¹¹⁹

The renderings of Ps. 68:7a, b prompted by the two usages of Ugar. *ktr* are thus:

- (a) He who ensconces the solitary ones in a household,
He who restores [*mēšib*] the solitary ones to [their] homes,
- (b) Who sets free the imprisoned *safe and sound*,
Who sets free the imprisoned *with prowess*.

While no single interpretation is being urged upon the reader, it is hoped that, at the very least, the air has been cleared with respect to applying Ugaritic material to this particular crux, and that limits have been placed on its usefulness. The problem, of course, need not find its resolution in the Ugaritic, or, more generally, the ancient Near Eastern material unearthed to date, and one should remain open to new possibilities.

¹¹⁷I.e., 'aner > 'andreia = geber > *g^ebûrāh* (see LXX for, e.g., Prov. 28:3).

¹¹⁸Note that LXX renders *t^ebûnāh* in Prov. 21:30 by 'andreia.

¹¹⁹While *hokmāh* and *g^ebûrāh* are contrasted in Eccl. 9:16, see the association of terms in Job 12:13-14. Note the combination of *ēšāh* and *g^ebûrāh* (e.g., 2 Kgs. 18:20; Isa. 11:2) alongside the parallelism of *ēšāh*//*hokmāh* in Jer. 49:7. See, also, the sequence *hokmāh t^ebûnāh* 'ēšāh in Prov. 21:30.