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TRADITIONS OF HOSEA 13

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PROPHETIC CURSING OF APOSTASY:
THE TEXT, FORMS, AND TRADITIONS OF HOSEA 13

By

Paul N. Franklyn

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the
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INTRODUCTION

The text of Hosea is often studied as if it is like other books of prophecy, even though it does not fit the critical and exegetical categories established for its contemporaries: Amos, Isaiah, and Micah. In spite of the relative atypicalities, which we shall expose in the study of text, form, and tradition, Hosea is often described as the quintessential prophet of covenant love, with an emphasis on the word "covenant."

At the popular and didactic level, the predisposition toward covenant love can supply teachers with a convenient and appealing one-sentence summary. And we do not need to relieve Hosea of this quality. A great deal can be learned about divine and human love through the parabolic activities in the story of Hosea's marriage to Gomer. But the emphasis on covenant, especially in the translation of the Hebrew term *hesed*, has perpetuated a partially uncritical reading of the book of Hosea, as if the prophet is actually participating in an institutional and liturgical life thoroughly defined by a covenant between God and Israel.

It will become clear that Hosea is indeed participating in the cultic life of eighth-century Israel, and there may be acknowledgment of prototypical

covenants between God and the people of God.¹ But Hosea, the only book from the north that was ever preserved in writing, is so different from other prophets in the Hebrew Bible that we should systematically query any summary which assumes that the prophet is related to language, cultic life, or tradition in the same way that the other prophets of the eighth century may have been related to these topics.

A limited portion of the book, Hosea 13, has been chosen to answer the larger questions raised above.² Hosea 13 is a fortuitous choice because it has led to new and provocative conclusions while reinforcing certain previously held views. First, and least importantly, it is significant because it has not been over-interpreted. Perhaps because Hosea 12 has received so much interest--this is pure speculation--our bibliographic research has not turned up a single journal article devoted to Hosea 13 as a unit, or for that matter, to any subunit in Hosea 13. Second, and most significantly, this lack of attention toward Hosea 13 is most

¹It is beyond doubt that those who committed Hosea to writing are part of a movement which led to Deuteronomic reform during the seventh century B.C.E. in Judah. This reformation, of course, emphasized the covenant between God and the elect people. So it is unreasonable to deny that Hosea had any knowledge of covenant, especially in his use (five times) of the word *b'rit*. John Day, "Pre-Deuteronomic Allusions to the Covenant in Hosea and Psalm lxxviii," *VT* 36 (1986), pp. 1-12, supports two references in Hos. 6:7 and 8:1. In the rest of this study, when we caution against certain aspects of covenant theology, such as treaty parallels, we are not denying the existence of covenant in early Israel. We are simply uncommitted to focusing all of the Hebrew Bible through the prism of covenant, as if it actually is *the* organizing principle for explaining Israel's institutions, history, and theology. See Chapter 3 for more information on Hosea in the cult.

²The actual Hebrew text that corresponds to Hosea 13 includes 13:1--14:1. Those who determined the verses for the Indo-European translations correctly recognized that 14:1 is linked to 13:15, and so 14:1 = 13:16 in the English Bibles. For the sake of convenience, we shall cite Hosea 13 when referring generally to the chosen passage. On specific occasions 14:1, rather than 13:16, will be referenced.

remarkable once we have demonstrated that chapter 13 is the climactic summary for at least chapters 4-12.³ As a summary, its importance increases because it so emphasizes the end of Israel that one is not so optimistic about Hosea's covenant love in chapters 1-3 after chapters 4-14 are evaluated.

Third, using the term "summary" in a different sense, we shall see that Hosea 13 serves as an excellent prism for summarizing the major critical questions that should be brought to the book as a whole:

Part Three: What theological themes are emphasized by Hosea 13 in the re-presentation of tradition through metaphor?

Part Two: What institutional setting is emphasized by Hosea 13 in the presumably unconscious selection of genre and form?

Part One: What is the "original," grammatically accurate text of Hosea 13, and is it legitimately interpreted as a literary unit?

The above outline of the major critical issues reverses the steps that we are pragmatically required to take. Hosea began with malleable theological themes and traditions, which assimilated orally into genres and speech forms, and which were eventually edited into the canonical form of the text. We begin with a fixed Masoretic Text and work backward by limiting the pericope, defining the text, determining the formal structures, and re-presenting the traditions. At times, these critical approaches will necessarily overlap, since none alone can rely entirely on its own bits of data or supply an accurate interpretation. It is thus

³Francis I. Andersen and David N. Freedman, *Hosea*, Anchor Bible 24 (New York: Doubleday, 1980), p. 626, observes that it "rounds off" chapters 4-14. S. L. Brown, *The Book of Hosea*, Westminster Commentaries (London Methuen, 1932), p. 111, notes that it sums up the first 12 chapters.

important that we relate the methods to one another without sabotaging our answers by depending on irrelevant information: using traditio-historical speculation to determine the text, or using form-critical typicality (or lack of typicality) to establish speculative redactions. This goal may be unattainable at times when dealing with a text that is approximately 2,500 years in age; occasionally it may be best to admit, after reasonable speculation, that we do not know what is meant by certain texts, forms, or traditions in the book of Hosea.

PART ONE
DEFINING THE TEXT

CHAPTER I

LIMITS OF HOSEA 13

The discipline of redaction criticism is sometimes distinguished from the methodology named composition criticism. In the study of Hosea we know far less than we like about the editor(s) who put together the book as we have it.⁴ There is an unusual consensus--unusual in the study of the Hebrew Bible--that nearly all of what we have recorded is attributable to the prophet himself, though not in the sense of *ipsissima verba*. Certain speculations are conjectured about the person(s) who organized these oracles,⁵ but it is far more productive to work with composition of the individual blocks of text, and so I prefer composition criticism which is limited to the available data. The problems raised by composition criticism include: the limits of the individual units, the integrity of the limited units, and the rationale for the given arrangement of the units.

Compositional Problems in Hosea

The identification of individual units in the book of Hosea is not as easy as in other eighth-century prophets. In Isaiah, for example, the formula "Thus

⁴The study of Hosea's composition is surely the most neglected when compared with the study of form and tradition. Only one lengthy article by E. M. Good, a brief study by John McKenzie, and one monograph (thesis) by Grace Emmerson are devoted exclusively to redactional problems. Ina Willi-Plein devotes 139 pages to the composition of Hosea in a monograph on redaction of Amos, Micah, and Hosea. (Each of these sources is cited in full below.)

⁵For example, chapters 1-3 are often attributed to a close family friend, given the purported "biographical data," in which "reality and symbolism merge." See Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 53-59.

says the Lord" often indicates the beginning or end of a new pericope. It is not that an editor failed to supply such "headings." We shall discover that this formula is not necessary to the speech forms used by Hosea. However--and here is the methodological question--is it permissible to base the unity of an entire prophetic book, or major section in the book, on the form-critical structure of perceived oracles? Are there other more legitimate factors?

Often it appears that the seams between units are chosen by interpreters at random, almost as a matter of convenience. This effect is easily produced when the contemporary commentator does not explain the chosen structure. There might be implicit form-critical reasons allowing these breaks in thought. This is understandable inasmuch as forms of speech are chosen unconsciously in a familiar context by the original speaker.

Andersen-Freedman, who find the structure of chapters 4-14 "maddeningly difficult to grasp," are persuaded that the book is not carefully organized.⁶ This lack of structure is termed "artful incoherence," an admitted oxymoron, by John McKenzie.⁷ He argues for unity in the "psychological context," which is complicated by three factors: (1) the emotional intensity of the imagery and rhetoric, (2) the corrupt state of the Masoretic Text, and (3) unrecoverable editing. Clearly the most important element for McKenzie, one which is inherent to Hosea, is a "revulsion of feeling" that renders chapters 11-13

⁶Ibid. It is written twenty to forty years after the prophet by one person, who was followed up by an unknown editor.

⁷"Divine Passion in Osee," *CBQ* 17 (1955), p. 287. He then proceeds to identify and link the oracles in chapters 11-13!

incoherent. There are no continuous oracles because of a "high emotional charge."

This frustration is overcome partially by E. M. Good's supposition that Hosea's oracles were transmitted orally until rather late in the process that merged them into the canon as a prophetic book. He suggests some very useful evidences of composition, which consequently reinforce the likelihood of oral transmission. In addition to changes in addressee (or shifts in speaker) he delineates four mnemonic techniques which effect coherence:

1. verbal associations display congruences in terminology, which relate disparate poems.
2. imagistic associations display congruences in metaphors and similes, which explain juxtaposition of oracles.
3. thematic associations display continuity in the content of proximate oracles.
4. aural associations indicate word-play and catchwords, which justify the movement to nearby poems.

By specifying these techniques, Good is able to show, with only minor failures, that each of the oracles of Hosea is composed in series, with each poem in the series connected to the one before. He also perceives a bracketing technique that connects the beginning of a series (e.g., 11:1-9) with the end of the series (e.g., 13:12--14:1).⁸ The multiple verbal associations, rather than the fewer thematic connections, and the extensive repetitions of entire poetic stichs, enhance his hypothesis about oral transmission.

⁸E. M. Good, "The Composition of Hosea," *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 31 (1966), p. 54. He is not advocating Ivan Engnell's theory (cited by source, and unavailable) that the book alternates from judgment oracle to salvation oracle.

The presence of repetition and the changes in addressee or speaker are well-known criteria for identifying redactional seams in biblical literature. Those who emphasize rhetorical artistry and oral transmission have learned to explain repetition as part of every act of communication. With respect to Hosea 13, these problems are inseparable from the form-critical analysis, and I choose to delay the issue until the structure of the oracles can be discerned.⁹

Thematic and imagistic connections are very useful, though they can be subjectively determined or forced by the interpreter. This is especially unsettling when the thematic connections are tied specifically to a chronological sequence of events. We notice this approach in Alt's classic interpretation of the Syro-Ephraimite war at 5:8--6:6.¹⁰ The chronological principle of composition is invoked by Ina Willi-Plein for chapter 13. "Die Anordnung der Sprüche in Kap. 13 bis 14:1 lässt also ein chronologisches Prinzip erkennen, geht aber auf redactionelle Arbeit zurück." Part of the chapter is associated with the war in 733 B.C.E., and the unit comes together as Hosea's final speech to the failing northern kingdom.¹¹ Again we see the merger of form criticism and redaction criticism, with the illegitimate imposition of historical dates chosen from events outside the text and which obfuscate the actual evidences of composition.

⁹In broad terms, I am convinced that repetition alone should never be used to speculate about some later editorial hand. Shifts in speaker are more problematic, as we shall see.

¹⁰See Chapter 4.

¹¹*Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments: Untersuchungen zum literarischen Worden der auf Amos, Hosea, und Micha zurückgehenden Bücher im hebräischen Zwölfprophetenbuch*, BZAW 123 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971), p. 228.

Compositional Stages in Hosea

Nineteenth-century commentators engaged in excessive sectioning of the text of Hosea. This "scissors-and-paste" evaluation was due in part to the characterization of Israelite prophecy as brief oracles blurted out during the heights of emotional enthusiasm.¹² This opinion arose during the infancy of form criticism, and will be discussed further in Chapter 3. In terms of composition, the assessment allowed Eichhorn to split Hosea 4-14 into sixteen unrelated sections. The mood even permitted complete rewriting of the book in a suggested "original" reconstruction.¹³ However, this attitude toward the prophetic text, which was influenced in part by the atomistic tendencies of early source criticism in the Pentateuch, has given way to theories about a Judean edition of the book of Hosea.

Judean Editions

If there is a consensus that much of Hosea has been preserved without excessive editorial tampering, it is also agreed that evidence of redaction should be attributed to someone living in the Judean south not many years after the demise of the north.¹⁴ This is a very reasonable assumption since the northern

¹²W. Nowack, *Die Kleinen Propheten*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament 3.4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1880), p. xxiii.

¹³See the commentary by S. L. Brown, *Hosea*; and the monographs by William R. Harper, *The Structure of the Text of the Book of Hosea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1905) and Johannes Lindblom, *Hosea, literarisch untersucht*, Humaniora 5 (Abo: Academiæ Aboensis, 1927).

¹⁴James L. Mays, *Hosea*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), says it was "created in its present scope in the south."

kingdom was finished by 722 B.C.E. Hosea was its last prophetic witness, and, most remarkably, the book bearing his name is the only literary witness surviving from the northern kingdom of Israel. It is likely then that all Hebrew literature survived after screening through the filter of Judean scribes.

There are various explanations of when and how a Judean editor assembled Hosea's oracles. Hans W. Wolff suggests two, possibly three, Judean editions: the first inserting messages of salvation for Judah, the second inserting messages of judgment for Judah. The entire book was "canonized" in the sixth century when the superscription was added by a Judean, Deuteronomistic editor.¹⁵ We can only explore this issue to evaluate its effect on Hosea 13.¹⁶

Grace Emmerson radically modifies the criteria for highlighting Judean editing: anything in Hosea that is critical of the northern cult is assumed to come from the hands of the central, Judean cult which despises the abuses of the northern kingdom. For example, in Hos. 13:2, Emmerson argues that Hosea would not have accused his own cult of human sacrifice. Hosea was disappointed in the sacrificing to idols, but the Judean editor changed the text in an attempt to discredit the northern cult with the despicable practice of taking human life by sacrifice.¹⁷

¹⁵*Hosea: A Commentary*, transl. by Gary Stansell, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974, pp. xxix-xxxii).

¹⁶See the persuasive case for keeping the references to Judah made by A. van Selms, "The Southern Kingdom in Hosea," *Studies on the Books of Hosea and Amos*, OTSWA 7-8 (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 1964-65), pp. 100-11.

¹⁷*Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, JSOT 28 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1982).

This criterion is stretched even further in the eight redactional stages proposed for Hosea by Ina Willi-Plein. At the sixth stage, an entire subunit, Hos. 13:1-3, is created and written by a redactor in Judah during the seventh century. The text is an *ex eventu* evaluation of Israel's death because Ephraim became haughty in dealings with Judah during the Syro-Ephraimite war in 733.¹⁸ This criterion, which eliminates Hosea's ability to criticize the northern cult, is easily dismissed on traditio-historical grounds, and we will supply enough form-critical reasons, related to the cursing of cultic apostasy, to find this redactional approach unconvincing, especially with regard to Hosea 13. We should allow evidence of Judean redaction--the reference to David in Hosea 3 as a case in point--but there are no longer any reliable criteria available for discerning very many specific redactional glosses. Once again we prefer to describe the compositional blocks of text.

Context of Hosea 13

To which larger part of the book is Hosea 13 attached? It is universally granted that chapters 4-14 have a different compositional history than 1-3. But the commentators differ on whether chapters 12-14 or 11-13 should be considered as a subcycle. Wolff prepares the most detailed case for the aggregation of chapters 12-14, which are described as three historical sketches that once were transmitted separately. They were related by theme into unified oracles, and crea-

¹⁸ *Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments*, pp. 221-22. K. Marti, *Das Dodekapropheten*, Kurzer Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament 13 (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1904, p. 98, also thinks the reference to Ephraim's death (*wayyāmot*) is a later gloss.

tively edited by the forerunners of the Deuteronomistic movement.¹⁹ It is difficult to see how Hosea 14 fits into this picture as a historical sketch, and there is some inconsistency in Wolff's remarks about Hosea 12-13. In the overview of 12-14, while trying to demonstrate the independent circulation of the sketches, he asserts that chapter 13 "has no stylistic or thematic connections" with 12 (p. 222). But in the introductory matter for chapter 13 he asserts that it is closely related to chapter 12 through the tradition of Jacob and the self-presentation formula. Despite this limitation in the way Wolff has put the matter, other commentators agree that the limits for the larger complex should be 12-14, which was appended to chapters 4-11.²⁰

Chapters 11-13 are chosen as the alternative compositional block. This position is more attractive because it allows the interpreter to explain chapter 14 as an appendix to the entire book rather than initially linking it to chapters 12-13. This approach also correctly reads chapters 11-13 as three historical sketches: Egypt (11), Jacob (12), and the summary (13). Good supports this position, but notes a number of verbal and aural associations, which hint at the reasons for appending chapter 14 at the end of the entire book.²¹

When chapter 11 is associated in the same compositional context as

¹⁹Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. 222-25.

²⁰Mays, *Hosea*; Nowack, *Propheten*; Brown, *Hosea*; Hellmuth Frey, *Das Buch des Werbens Gottes und seine Kirche, Die Botschafts des Alten Testament 23,2* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag), 1957; Theodore Robinson, *Die Zwölf Kleinen Propheten: Hosea bis Micha*, Handbuch zum Alten Testament 1.14 (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1954); and Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 53-59, who associate only 12 with 13.

²¹Good, "Composition of Hosea," p. 58. Another supporter to limit 11-13 as a unit is McKenzie, "Passion in Osee," pp. 167-79.

chapter 13, we understand why the interpretation of one affects the other even more strongly. Indeed, 11:8 and 13:14 supply the hermeneutical key to the tension in the book as a whole. It also allows us to pursue the interpretation of Hosea 13 without the burden of Hosea 14, a chapter more properly the subject of another study.

Unity of Hosea 13

There are three approaches to the integrity of Hosea 13, the passage that we have chosen for answering large questions about the book of Hosea: (1) the chapter is composed of many unrelated fragments, (2) the chapter was created from two originally disparate units, and (3) the chapter is a literary unity. Without overanticipating explanations from the rest of the study, these positions are briefly explained.

Unrelated Fragments

H. Frey divides the chapter into four oracles, the first actually beginning at 12:13 and ending at 13:1-3.²² The other unrelated parts are 13:2-6, 7-15a, 15b--14:1. The seams are chosen arbitrarily, without reasons given. Th. Robinson admits that 13 is usually regarded as a unity, but he remains unconvinced for metrical reasons. The fragments are broken as follows: 12:12--13:3, 13:4-14b, and 13:14c--14:1 appended at a much later date.²³ In this case, meter alone is not

²²Frey, *Das Buch des werbens Gottes*. E. Sellin, *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch*, Kommentar zum Alten Testament 12.1 (Leipzig: Deichert, 1930), also begins the unit at chapter 12:13 because he thinks the people arrogantly killed Moses, the prophet referenced in 12:13. See the traditional discussion in Chapter 8 below.

²³Robinson, *Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, pp. 49-52.

enough to disallow literary unity. We prefer to use a different approach with metrical analysis, which actually confirms structures discerned on other grounds.

Two Disparate Parts

W. Nowack does not explain why 13:1-8 cannot be linked with vv. 9--14:1.²⁴ The connection, admittedly, does not leap from the text, unless one grants two types of thematic coherence: the many deaths of Ephraim, and the traditio-historical summarization that occurs. We suggest these same associations in reply to A. Weiser's break between 13:1-11 and 13:12--14:1, which was supposedly appended later.²⁵

Good also breaks the chapter at v. 11, supposing that 13:12--14:1 was added to balance 11:1-8.²⁶ This break at v. 11 is more commonly suggested than the break between 13:14d and 13:15--14:1. How is the denigration of the monarchy in v. 11 related to the odd image of the unwise son? Again we delay our answer until the traditio-historical picture becomes clearer. Provisionally, as Good shows, it is not difficult to see how the "three poems" (which we shall dispute) are related in vv. 12--14:1 by theme and word-play. The controlling thread is birth and death in vv. 12-14, which in turn relate to the death of infants and pregnant women in 14:1. Good tempers his bifurcation of Hosea 13 by listing several remarkable aural or verbal associations:

²⁴Nowack, *Kleinen Propheten*, p. xxvii.

²⁵Weiser, *Das Buch der Zwölf Kleinen Propheten I*, *Das Alte Testament Deutsch* 24, fifth edition (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966).

²⁶Good, "Composition of Hosea," p. 52.

13:12b	<i>hattā'to</i>	13:2	<i>lah^ato'</i>
13:14b	<i>māwet</i>	13:1c	<i>wayyāmot</i>
13:15c	<i>mimmidbār</i>	13:5a	<i>bammidbār</i>
13:15d	<i>yeḥāreb</i>	14:1c	<i>baḥereb</i>
14:1a	<i>te'sam</i>	13:1c	<i>waye'sam</i>

These associations either support the juxtaposition of the two parts because of catchwords, or they suggest unity in the chapter as a whole. We prefer the latter because it is unlikely that *five* catchwords are required to link two passages.

A similar caution is present in McKenzie's decision to break Hosea 13 at v. 11. He finds the passage so emotionally charged after sorting among the oracles that he first identifies a unit in vv. 1-11, and then in 13:7--14:1. Finally, he decides that 13:1--14:1 is the great, final threat: "the chapter as a whole flows smoothly, more smoothly than most of the book of Hosea."²⁷

Unity

Andersen-Freedman write about unity out of desperation, of thematic balance in the midst of incoherence for Hosea 13.²⁸ But other commentators are much more comfortable with the integrity of the passage. H. W. Wolff boldly states that it is easy to distinguish the parts that merge into the thematic whole of the chapter.²⁹ S. L. Brown and W. Rudolph base their assessment of unity on

²⁷ McKenzie, "Passion in Osee," pp. 176-77.

²⁸ Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 626.

²⁹ Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. 222-25.

the thematic coherence in this final summary.³⁰ The passage focuses so completely on the end in all of its aspects.

However, those who support thematic unity will still question individual words or clauses in the chapter. For the sake of comparison, the following list collates all of the supposed glosses discussed for chapter 13:

- 13:1 *wayyāmot* (Marti)
 13:2 *zibhē 'ādām* (Emmerson)
 13:1-3 *wayyāmut* (Willi-Plein)
- 13:6b *sāb'ū* (Willi-Plein, Elliger, *BHS*)
 13:6c *š^ekēhūnî* (Marti)
 13:10 *w^ešoptēkā. . .w^ešārîm*
 (Marti, Elliger--*BHS*)
 13:15 *rûah yhw* (Marti)
 14:1 (Elliger--*BHS*)

Several of these suggested glosses, including those for 13:1-3, have been dismissed above. The textual and form-critical issues discussed ahead will lend further support for their authenticity. In 13:6b and 13:15, Willi-Plein, Elliger, and Marti object to repetition. We shall prove that this is essential to Hosea's style. In 13:6c and 13:10 Marti asserts that the prose-oriented editors (using *š^eser*) of Deuteronomy have inserted texts from Deut. 8:14 and 32:18 on the one hand, and 1 Sam. 8:12-14 on the other. Of course, since the era of Marti, biblical scholars tend to believe that the influence works in the opposite direction, toward Deuteronomy. Marti's perception of *š^eser* as a prose particle will raise a difficult form-critical question in Chapter 3 below. Finally, Elliger's proposed deletion of 14:1 in *BHS* is probably due to unexpressed questions about its purpose in Hosea.

³⁰Brown, *Hosea*, p. 140; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 240.

The preceding overview of opinions about the composition of Hosea has focused on three approaches to the task, not including those who acquiesce in frustration. The redactional approach (Willi-Plein, Emmerson, and Marti) seeks to uncover layers of editing and then attach these layers to a presupposed chronological schema. This approach was jettisoned because it reads too much into too few details. The traditio-historical approach (Rudolph, Wolff, and Brown) focuses on themes, or on how the ancient traditions bind the oracles into one package. The form-critical approach is actually implicit in every attempt to identify the building blocks of composition. An eclectic approach to composition criticism, much like that of E. M. Good, should take into account an adequate range of evidence. The following discussion of text, forms, and traditions shall justify these preliminary arguments for the unity of Hosea 13.

CHAPTER II

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL CRITICISM

Translation

- 1) When Ephraim spoke--dismay,
He lifted himself up in Israel;
so he became guilty at Ba'al and he died.
- 2) So now they continue sinning.
They make for themselves molten calves,
from their silver, idols according to their patterns;
all of it for themselves is the work of craftsmen.
They are speaking of those who sacrifice humans;
they kiss calves.
- 3) Therefore,
May they be like the morning fog,
like dew that rises early,
like chaff blown from a threshing floor,
like smoke from a chimney.
- 4) I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt.
You do not know any other gods besides me,
and there are no saviors except me.
- 5) I fed you in the wilderness,
in a land of hardships.
- 6) While on their pasturage,
[then] they were sated;
they were sated and exalted their hearts.

Therefore, they forget me.

- 7) I would be like a lion to them.
Like a leopard on the path I will watch.
- 8) I will encounter them like a bereaved she-bear.
I will tear a hole in their heart,
eating them there like a lion,
as a wild beast would shred them.

- 9) It is your destruction, O Israel,
while your help is in me.
- 10) Where now is your king
who saves you in all your cities:
who judges you and of whom you said,
"Give me a king and princes"?
- 11) I will give you a king in my anger,
and I will remove [him] in my fury.
- 12) The iniquity of Ephraim is being bundled up,
his sin is being stored up.
- 13) Pains of birthing come for him,
he is not a wise son.
When it is time, he does not stand forth
at the mouth of the womb.
- 14) From the power of Sheol shall I ransom them?
From Mot shall I redeem them?
Where are your plagues, O Mot?
Where your pox, O Sheol?
- 15) Compassion is hid from my eyes,
while he runs among brothers.

May an east wind come,
a wind of the Lord rising from the desert;
Let his fountain be dried up;
let his spring be parched.
It will strip his storehouse
of every precious item.

- 14:1) Samaria became guilty
because she rebelled against her God.
They will fall by the sword.
Their infants will be splattered,
and their pregnant women ripped open.

Verse 13:1

There are three major syntactical problems in the first verse. Each hinges on the meaning of the word *r^etēt*. The range of possibilities for the word has led to its deletion by some exegetes.³¹ This *hapax legomenon* seems vulnerable to many grammatical, Semitic, or text-critical analogies. If we accept H. R. Cohen's definition of the *hapax legomenon* as "any biblical word whose root occurs in but one context,"³² it is reasonable to take the absence of a controlling semantic field as an opportunity to hunt for roots and emendations. To be sure, it is often noted that the word *reṭeṭ* in Jer. 49:24 means "terror," but it cannot be used uncritically as a semantic association since it also is a *hapax legomenon* homonym, based on an Aramaic etymology. Further, Rudolph dismisses too facile a transfer from *tau* (ט) to *tet* (ט) in Hebrew orthography.³³

Beginning with the LXX reading of *dikaionata*, several have suggested a metathesis of *resh* and *tau*. By correcting this one effects a change from *r.t.t.*

³¹So J. Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten übersetzt, mit Notizen, Skizzen und Vorarbeiten* 5 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1893; fourth edition, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963), p. 131. He may be deleting the word on the basis of an Arabic etymology (ruler) which creates a redundant pair of clauses. On this see note 44.

³²*Biblical Hapax Legomena in the Light of Akkadian and Ugaritic* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), p. 5. Context includes parallel verses or multiple occurrences of the word in the same context. This definition is important since other words in this chapter are often but wrongly cited as *hapax legomena*.

³³*Hosea*, p. 236.

to *tōrōt*: "When Ephraim spoke judgments [or laws]." ³⁴ However, Ward finds this metathesis unlikely since *tōrōt* is a defective spelling that occurs nowhere else in classical Hebrew. ³⁵ Here he supports Sellin's opposition to the spelling, though not Freud's bizarre but entertaining theses concerning Yahwistic religion in *Moses and Monotheism* that were inspired by Sellin's alternative reading of *ribōt*: "When Ephraim spoke contentions." Sellin rightly contends that *dikaiomata* is not translated elsewhere for *tōrōt*, and at Jer. 11:20, 18:20; Deut. 17:18 and Job 13:6 the Hebrew *Vorlage* is *rîb*. This requires, according to Sellin, a confusion in the MT of *bet* (ב) and *tau* (ט). However, such a mistake is unlikely, and concordances show that the *Vorlage* for *dikaiōmata* is usually *ḥuqqōt* or *mišpāṭîm*. ³⁶ Further, Sellin can only make sense of his translation by moving Hos. 12:15b to follow 13:1. ³⁷

One could also translate "judgments" by relying on the Aramaic cog-

³⁴See K. Elliger, *BHS*; Th. Robinson, "Hosea," p. 48; they refer to *tōrōt* as *Weisungen* or instructions; R. Tournay, "Quelques relectures bibliques antisamaritaines," *RB* 71 (1964), pp. 504-36, esp. 511-13, sees this as evidence of the Samaritan schism. The Ephraimites as northerners tried to promulgate their own legal traditions but ended in idolatry with Jeroboam's calf. It is, however, surely too early at this eighth-century context to look for a divergent legal tradition, especially since northerners are responsible for the earliest of Israel's legal traditions.

³⁵James Ward, *Hosea: A Theological Commentary* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 219-20, notes that the correct spelling is *tōrōt* with plene *waw*'s supplied. Freud's interpretation of Hosea 13 and the alleged execution of Moses will receive further attention in Chapter 8 on tradition history. See E. Sellin, "Mose," pp. 29-30, 32; and his commentary, *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch*, pp. 120, 127.

³⁶Ina Willi-Plein, *Verformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments*, p. 219. Some earlier text critics do propose *ḥuqqōt*. See K. Vollers, "Das Dodekapropheton der Alexandriner," *ZAW* 4 (1884), p. 257, and nineteenth century commentators listed in W. R. Harper, *Amos and Hosea*, p. 393. Too many changes are required in the emendation.

³⁷Sellin, "Mose," p. 127: "Sein Blut werde 'ich' auf 'dich' schlendern // Und seine Schmach 'dir' vergelten." Moses' blood is spilled after Ephraim grows unruly.

nate *d.t.t.* A confusion of *resh* and *daleth* could certainly be accepted here, which may explain the LXX reading of *dikaiōmata* as a confusion of the MT. It is most likely that the Greek translator committed the error, since the word *d.t.t.* does not become part of the biblical vocabulary until the administration of the Persian period when Aramaic became the *lingua franca*. Even in Ezra and Esther it never occurs as a free plural form but only as a construct that implies an adjectival genitive; "the decrees of..." or "their decrees."³⁸

Granted, an Aramaic etymology for *r.t.t.* gathers considerable force now that the word has been found in the hymns of the Dead Sea Scrolls at IQH 4:33.³⁹ This meaning "terror" was already suggested by Nowack from non-biblical Aramaic (*rtyt'*) and Syriac (*rtyt'*).⁴⁰ The context in this particular Qumran hymn provides an intriguing yet inconclusive semantic field:⁴¹

wa^xnî ra'ad ûr^etēt^x hāzūnî
w^ekol g^erāmaay yirō'û wayyimas l^ebābî
kadōnag mipnê 'eš

So I, fear and trembling seize me.

³⁸See G. H. Patterson, "The Septuagint Text of Hosea Compared with the Masoretic Text," *Hebraica* 7 (1891), p. 202. His evidence anticipates and obviates K. Marti's proposal of *d.t.t.* in *Das Dodekapropheton*, p. 99. This type of LXX confusion is also apparent in a Greek misreading of *ś.y.m.* "put, assign" for the actual verbal root 'š.m. "guilt" at 13:1.

³⁹Read by J. L. Mays, *Hosea*, p. 171; E. Jacob, "Osée," p. 91.

⁴⁰W. Nowack, *Die Kleinen Propheten*, p. 231. Mark Sebhok, *Die syrische Übersetzung der zwölf kleinen Propheten und ihr Verhältniss zu dem massoretischen Text und zu den halteren Übersetzung, namentliche den LXX und dem Targum*, Dr. Theo. Thesis (Leipzig: Universität Leipzig, 1887; Huntington Beach, CA: Vision Press, 1981?; on microfiche), p. 25, works from the Peshitta to render *ratat* "there was trembling." Further, H. W. Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219, allows that some Greek translators--Aquila (*phrikān*), Symmachus, and Theodotion (*tromon*)--are reading the same Aramaic meaning that is rendered *pro horror* in the Vulgate.

⁴¹The text and pointing are supplied from A. M. Haberman, *Megilloth Midbar Yehuda* (Machbaroth, Israel: Lesifruith Publishing House, 1959), p. 119.

All my bones disintegrate
My heart melts like wax before fire.

Here *r.t.t.* is directly parallel with *ra'ad*, fear. Obviously a parallel meaning is appropriate. Even so the word may be a scribal mistake for *reṭeṭ* found in Jer. 49:24. Indeed, the language of Jeremiah's earlier confessions appears to provide a model for this Qumran hymn. This explanation gains strength if we note that *yirō'û* in the next clause of the hymn is from an Aramaic root *r.ʿ.ʿ*(II) which is really equivalent to the Hebrew root *r.ṣ.ṣ.*, disintegrate.⁴² The author of IQH 4:33 has Aramaicized the Hebrew language here, therefore, we cannot appeal without reservation to this late extra-biblical source for the etymology of *r.t.t.*, since the Hebrew *Vorlage* in the hymn may well be *r.ṭ.ṭ.* Moreover, though it may be ironic, Rudolph is probably justified in objecting that Ephraim never had enough respect to inspire any kind of trembling among the neighboring peoples. Wolff's theory of a past Syro-Ephraimite alliance in 735-34 B.C.E. that may have caused trembling in Judah is plausible, but it is the alliance that created the apprehension in the south, not Ephraim standing alone.⁴³ Finally, form-critical analysis requires that this announcement be rendered in the past tense. It is difficult to connect the ba'alistic idolatry of the third clause, ostensibly from an earlier era, with the future possibility of war. If this is the case, Wolff inadvertently has the war explaining why there is idolatry with Ba'al. In reality, the idolatry explains the theological reasons for the impending and disastrous war.

⁴²See Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot*, p. 86.

⁴³Rudolph, *Hosea*, pp. 236-37.

There is enough uncertainty with Aramaic explanations to encourage several Arabic etymologies. E. Zolli, A. Guillaume, and H. H. Hirschberg propose the Arabic word *ratt*: "when Ephraim spoke as a ruler."⁴⁴ This etymology is only plausible in parallel with an emendation of *nāsā'* to *nāsī'* (prince), but that parallel is far too self-evident to make sense: "When Ephraim spoke as a ruler, he was a prince in Israel." The Arabic homonym *ratt* "swine" is not helpful in a constructive way ("When Ephraim spoke as a pig!"), but Rudolph does prefer to accept the Arabic *'arattu* "stammerer" as a legitimate etymology: "When Ephraim spoke in stammering speech."⁴⁵ This is not stammering in the sense of delivering ecstatic oracles,⁴⁶ nor is it the famous shibboleth, stuttering lisp of Judg. 12:6; rather it refers to immature childish speech. Even as a fledgling Ephraim was important. Such imagery is consistent with the context of Hos. 11:1-2: "When Israel was a child . . . he went after Ba'al."

There is another possible emendation for this word which has not been previously suggested. In the context of the Jacob tradition preserved by the

⁴⁴Zolli, *Revista degli Studi Orientali* 32 (1957), p. 371ff., cited in Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237, and Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219. Zolli believes the word is a gloss due to its restatement in the second clause; i.e., if *nś'* is repointed to mean "prince" and *r.t.t.* means "ruler," we have a senseless parallelism. Guillaume, *Hebrew and Arabic Lexicography*, Vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), p. 32, acknowledges this redundancy at first by reading: "When Ephraim spoke as a ruler, he lifted up (his voice) in Israel" (cf. Isa. 3:7; 42:2, 11 for this meaning of *nāsā'* that implies *qđlō*; but he changes his mind by vol. III, p. 10: "he was a chief (*nāsī'*) in Israel." Hirschberg, "Some Additional Arabic Etymologies in Old Testament Lexicography," *VT* 11 (1961), p. 379, loosely paraphrases the clause. "Instead of *kdb* we suggest *bdb* and accept the word in the sense of the Talmudic *dbr* 'leadership'. The meaning of the passage is Ephraim could claim the leadership in Israel until he became unfit because of his connection with Baal-worship."

⁴⁵Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237, reads the Hebrew as an infinitive absolute, *rātōt*.

⁴⁶So Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 100.

Elohist, the patriarch eradicated worship of foreign gods on his way back to Bethel in the north. This causes great *hitat* "terror" in all the surrounding cities. The use of the Jacob tradition in Hosea 12 and later in 13:12-13 would seem to make this word "terror" a plausible element of the Hoseanic vocabulary. Further, it is possible to imagine a scribal corruption that ran the *het* (ח) into the following *tau* (ט). This was then erroneously separated into the present (טת) form. If so, we are able to render a translation quite similar to prior ones--"When Ephraim spoke there was dismay"⁴⁷--but with the advantage of a more certain meaning than previously obtained through Aramaic etymologies.

All of the options discussed for this troublesome word can be captured in the following table:

TABLE 1
TRANSLATIONS FOR *R.T.T.* IN HOSEA 13:1

Hebrew	Greek	Aramaic	Arabic	English
1. <i>r^etēt</i>			<i>ratt</i>	ruler
2.			<i>ratt</i>	swine
3.			<i>ratt</i>	stammerer
4. <i>reṭeṭ</i>	<i>phrikān</i>	<i>rtyt'</i>		trembling
5.	<i>tromon</i>			fear
6. <i>h^atat</i>	(<i>phrikān</i>)			terror, dismay
7.	(<i>tromon</i>)			trauma
8. <i>tōrōt</i>				instructions
9. <i>ribōt</i>	<i>dikaiōmata</i>			contentions
10. <i>dātot</i>	<i>dikaiōmata</i>			decrees

⁴⁷There is dismay among all those who perceive his condition. The word is a masculine noun, as at Job 6:21, *h^atat*, rather than the apparent feminine pointing, *hitāh*, at Gen. 35:5. This is likewise supported by the Greek translations normally mentioned for *reṭeṭ*.

It is difficult to choose between the two most likely meanings of "terror" (i.e., trembling) and "stammerer." Perhaps further traditio-historical evidence will clarify the context, but we will adopt the meaning "dismay" (or terror), simply because there are quantitatively more factors encouraging such a translation, as opposed to the single suggestion of an Arabic etymology for "stammerer."

The syntax in the first two clauses is also troublesome. First, if *kdb*r is pointed as a verb along with MT, then *r.t.t.* is probably pointed as an infinitive (*rōtēt*) or participle (*h^atat*): "with trembling (i.e., in a dismaying fashion)." It is difficult to justify the syntax or grammar of most versions which render, "there was trembling," unless some northern dialect is asserted.⁴⁸ If *kdb*r is pointed as a noun along with LXX, then *rtt* (or *dt*t) begins a new clause: "According to the explanation [word] of Ephraim, he undertook judgments in Israel."⁴⁹

Second, how are *hū'* and *nāśā'* to be understood? Again Sellin argues that the subject of the clause (*hū'*) is Moses who was found guilty by Ephraim for not following Ba'al. His martyrdom brings bloodguilt upon Ephraim.⁵⁰ All other critics, however, find the pronominal antecedent in Ephraim, and view this as a synthetic, parallel clause. I prefer to read the second clause as an apodosis to the protasis initiated by *k^e*: "When Ephraim spoke --dismay, [then] he lifted himself

⁴⁸Or, at least, there is imagined some oracular staccato delivery: "When Ephraim spoke...Dismay!" Cf. Harper, *Hosea*, p. 393, who opts for the infinitive. By using *h^atat* we could read, "When Ephraim spoke with dismay."

⁴⁹*nāśā'* is translated as *elaben* and attached to the object *dikaiōmata*. The word order is very odd, if not slavish and thus suspicious--despite support from the Peshitta and Targum. See Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 194.

⁵⁰Sellin, "Mose," pp. 29-30, 32.

up in Israel. The intensive or reflexive nature of the pronoun *hu'* is easily evidenced, especially in conjunction with the verb *nasa'*.⁵¹

- Numb. 11:17 *w^elō tišā' 'atāh l^ebaddekā*
 you, yourself, may not bear it alone
- Numb. 18:23 *w^ehēm yiś'û ^awônām*
 they shall bear their iniquity on themselves
- Isa. 53:12 *w^ehû' heṭ' rabbîm nāšā'*
 he bore the iniquity of many on himself

If *hû'* is intensive, the meaning is significantly altered : "When Ephraim spoke--dismay, [then] he, himself, was lifted up in Israel." This syntax is made possible by a niph'al reflexive in Hebrew,⁵² a pointing which can function with either a reflexive or intensive pronoun.

These choices now help to make sense of the *waw*-consecutive before '*š.m.*, thereby clarifying the syntax of the third clause. Though LXX typically mistakes the root here (*etheto* from *š.y.m.*),⁵³ and despite uncertainty for the meaning of the preposition *b* before Ba'al,⁵⁴ the final clause in this verse is surely a consequence of the preceding conditional statement: "So he became guilty at Ba'al and died."

⁵¹Also cf. Nah. 1:5, Hab. 1:3, Hos. 4:8, and Ps. 32:5. An alternative, if not preferable paraphrase is, "he bore (iniquity) upon himself."

⁵²Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237, and Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219, accept the niph'al pointing with textual support from the Targum. As mentioned above, several critics emend the word to a noun with support of the Syriac *whw' rb'* which is derived from *nāšā'*. See Elliger, *BHS*, and S. L. Brown, *Hosea*, p. 140.

⁵³See comments on verse 14:1.

⁵⁴The preposition can carry meanings such as in, through, with, and by. In proximity to the verb '*š.m.* several nuances permit different explanations for the meaning of the clause, but the following verb *yamot* is often formulated with *bet* to specify the cause of death. Ephraim died by means of this guilt with or at Ba'al. See Karl-Johan Illman, *Old Testament Formulas About Death* (Åbo: Åbo Academiae, 1979), pp. 82-83. Cf. Numb. 27:3, Deut. 24:16, Ezek. 3:20, and Amos 9:10.

Verse 13:2

The two textual cruxes of this verse are parallel to the two most hideous crimes specified by the prophet: idolatry and human sacrifice. Rudolph desires to place all such offenses into Israel's past. Thus he translates *w^e'attāh* as *trotzdem* "in spite of this," shifting the force of the *waw* to the imperfect verb and making it consecutive rather than conjunctive.⁵⁵ The prophet, however, clearly speaks with the knowledge that such actions are incomplete or still in progress.⁵⁶

The word *w^e'attāh*, which occurs ten times in Hosea, means "So now," with emphasis on the continual aspect of producing *massēkāh*. Is one idol or are many under criticism? The word could generally refer to any molten gods or images (Exod. 34:17; Lev. 19:4), but in the context of Ba'al traditions (v. 1) and the word *^agalîm* (calves), it probably belongs with the Sinai tradition (Exod. 32:4, 8). If not, the Ba'al-Peor tradition (Numb. 25:3) is a likely alternative, and the word should be specifically translated "molten calf" (cf. Deut. 9:16; Neh. 9:18).

The word *kitbūnām* is supposed to tell us something about the creation of this silver calf or calves. To be sure, the calf at Sinai was created from gold jewelry, but now there appears to be a continuous production line of silver idols (*^ašabbîm*; cf. Hos. 8:4-5). Yet there is hesitation here since at least three positions are taken with regard to the root behind *tbnm*.

⁵⁵Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237; or he suggests an alternative kal perfect *yāspû*.

⁵⁶Codex Alexandrinus supports this with *ēti*, but Vaticanus, Origen's Hexapla, Lucianic tradition (late third century C.E.), and earlier Greek recensions of the prophets (C) do not translate *'attāh*.

First, in an attempt to make sense of the MT, the majority of critics identify the root as *b.y.n.* "to understand." However, they are forced to explain the form *tābūnām* as an abbreviation or contraction of the more correct *tābūnātām*: "idols according to their understanding," or the paraphrase, "idols skilfully made."⁵⁷ Dahood is characteristically unique with his proposal of the root *k.t.b.* "to engrave." Thus *mikkaspām k^etābūnām ^aṣabbīm* is read, "'with their silver they engrave idols for themselves,' . . . the suffix *nam* explained as the Phoenician third person plural, here with a dative function."⁵⁸ It is more likely that the underlying verbal root is *b.n.h.* "to build." This also requires an emendation to *k^etabnītām* "according to their pattern," but such a change is supported by all the versions: LXX (*kat' eikóna eidōlōn*), Vulgate (*quasi simul-*

⁵⁷Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237, thinks *tabon* may be a north-Israelite pronunciation of the more typical *t^ebūnāh*. Or, perhaps, a scribe left out a *tau*. W. Nowack, *Propheten*, p. 232ff., suggests that this is a typical Hebrew contraction (generated by an odd dialect) which occurs regularly in Talmudic Hebrew; e.g., *^ahilō = ^ahiltāw*. See Jacob, "Osée," p. 91 and J. Mauchline, *Hosea: The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 6, ed. by G. A. Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 705. L. Treitel, "Die Septuaginta zu Hosea," *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums* 41 (1897), p. 451, points out that a feminine form can be used with the masculine noun *^aṣabbīm*, though the words do not have the same referent if the root is *b.y.n.* Nyberg, "*Hoseabuche*," p. 101, retranslates the Syriac *bdmwthwn* as *bitabnitām*. His recognition of a Syriac mistake of *kof* for *beth* is correct, but the Hebrew equivalent is probably in error. The Syriac reading is almost identical to the Targum Aramaic *kidmūthōn* "likeness" and is derived from the root *d.m.h.* or perhaps *b.n.h.* See Patterson, "Septuagint Text," p. 217; and Sebhok, *Peshitta*, p. 25.

⁵⁸M. Dahood, "Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography XII," *Biblica* 55 (1974), p. 383. Cf. the juxtaposition of *k.t.b.* and *ḥāraṣīm* "craftspersons" in Jer. 17:1. Except for the Phoenician analogy, this reading is plausible.

tudinem idolorum), Syriac (*bdmwthwn*), and Targum (*kidmūthōn*).⁵⁹

This first crux climaxes with a syntactical issue. Despite its length, the rhythm of the verse, as well as the word play or rhyme, would seem to link *massēkāh* with *mikkaspām*, which is followed by two appositional phrases. On the other hand, it is possible to include *mikkaspām* within the first apposition, "idols according to their pattern from their silver." This is syntax approved by the LXX,

kaì èpoiāsan éautoīs chōneuma èk tou àrguriou autōn
kat' eikōna eidōlōn, èrga tektōnōn suntetelesména autōis,

which questionably read the verb *kullō* "works of craftsmen finished for them," but rightly included the word *lāhem* (placed by Elliger, *BHS*, with the next clause). The Syriac pual form from *k.l.h.* demonstrates that the Masoretic consonantal text is correct.⁶⁰ The antecedent to the feminine pronominal suffix (*he*) is *massēkāh*, not necessarily the ^a*šabbîm* assumed by the LXX.⁶¹ The inclusion of *lāhem* at the end of the line balances the length of the clauses and establishes a verbal parallel between the second and fourth clauses:

w^eattāh yōsipû lah^ato'
wayya'sû lāhem massēkāh mikkaspām
k^etabnâtām ^ašabbîm
ma^ašēh hārāšîm kullōh lāhem.

⁵⁹Supported by Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, 128; Marti, *Dodekapropheten*, p. 99; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219; Harper, *Hosea*, p. 395; Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 217; and K. Vollers, "Das Dodekapropheten der Alexandriner," *ZAW* 3 (1883), p. 257. Some of these admit that the versions may be reading *kitmūnātām* in reference to the well known creation term, *t^emūnāh* "image," which is derived from the root *m.y.n.*

⁶⁰Vollers, "Dodekapropheten," p. 257.

⁶¹LXX also changes the singular *ma^ašēh* to a plural (*erga*).

Perhaps this parallelism can clarify the antecedent of *lāhem*. When it is part of the fifth clause of the verse, one is unsure if the *vox populi* is raised in desire to sacrifice on behalf of the idols or for their creators. Thus, nearly all of the translations present the people speaking to the idols. In the above arrangement it is clear that *lāhem* refers to the same antecedent in both places: the rebellious and idolatrous people who craft these evil artifacts for corrupt liturgical purposes.

The second textual crux is partially a consequence of the first. It makes no sense for *lāhem* to represent the idols and thereby have the worshipers ordering the idols to sacrifice people, not to mention bulls. Such is the difficulty with the versions that woodenly render, "To these they say" There are, of course, various ways offered to circumvent the problem. Elliger, *BHS*, apparently accepts Robinson's emendation to ²*lohim*, but this requires a forced meaning for ⁰*ōmrîm*, prompting Robinson to go a step further, ²*lōhîm hēm q^orā'ūm*, "They call them gods."⁶² Marti deletes the word and then repoints to *hēm ²mōrîm* (cf. Isa. 17:9), "They are Amorites, those who sacrifice men."⁶³ Wolff reads it as a reflexive, "They say to themselves," but reads it with this clause rather than the fourth.⁶⁴ Wolff and Marti are both translating the plural

⁶²Robinson, *Hosea*, p.48; cf. also Harper, *Hosea*, p. 395, who tries a vocative: "To these they say, O God!" The context of the rest of the chapter does not justify these emendations.

⁶³Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 99.

⁶⁴Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219.

participle found in the MT, *zōbhê 'ādām*, "those who sacrifice humans."⁶⁵

The MT is the basis for the reading accepted here, but even one so faithful to the Masoretes as Nyberg finds the vocalization of *zbhy* impossible. He first eliminates the word breaks (*'mrymzbhy*), then changes the *aleph* to *zayin*, adds a *resh*, and adds a *he* to *hēm*. When this is properly separated and vocalized Nyberg proposes:⁶⁶

lāhem hāmeḥ zimerû
yārimû zibḥê 'ādām
^a*gālîm yiššāqūn*

To them they strike up noisy music,
 while they bring human offerings,
 kissing calves.

We should ignore the oversubtle changes involving the *zayin* and *resh*, focusing rather on the reading of a masculine nominative plural construct, *zibḥe*, that establishes *'ādām* as an adjectival genitive. There are enough examples of this construction with either *zibḥê* or *'ādām*:⁶⁷

Micah 5:4	<i>nisîkê 'ādām</i>	molten images of people
Isa. 29:19	<i>'ebyōnê 'ādām</i>	poor among humans
Hos. 8:13	<i>zibḥê habḥābay</i>	offerings of passion

We find it an attractive alternative: "They are speaking about human offerings.

They kiss calves."

⁶⁵Wolff actually reads *'ādām* as an accusative direct object and probably removes the construct state by emending to *zōbhîm*; cf. Elliger, *BHS*. The grammar is better but the meanings are identical. The NEB version, explained by H. McKeating, *The Books of Amos, Hosea, and Micah*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 141, is paraphrastically close as a statement about the idolatrous condition: "(Men) say of them, 'those who kiss calf images offer human sacrifice.'"

⁶⁶*Hoseabuche*, p. 101.

⁶⁷Cf. also Pss. 51:21 and 106:28--*zibḥê mēlîm* "sacrifices of the dead."

Rudolph speaks for a third major approach to this syntax. He objects to any participial form for *z.b.h.*, for one usually kisses humans and offers calves during the course of Ba'al worship. And he argues that *'ādām* is the subject of *n.s.k.*, "men kiss calves," thus overruling any notion of human sacrifice.⁶⁸ These horrified concerns about human sacrifice in ancient Israel are irrelevant. There is, indeed, some enigmatic reference to kissing idols in 1 Kings 19:8, but the issue is one of legitimate grammar. Moreover, the LXX reading of an imperative, *zibhu*, which is adopted by Rudolph, is followed by an accusative, "Sacrifice humans!"⁶⁹ The Greek evidence is discarded here since it can be explained as a misreading of the Hebrew. While it is possible that a *yod* was mistaken for a *waw* on the end of *zbh* (*thusate anthropous*), it appears that this reading is forced, as evidenced by the LXX explanation which follows the order to sacrifice people, *moschoi gar êkleloîpasin* "because bulls are lacking." Normally the LXX translates the verb *leipō* from *'s.p.* (Hos. 4:3) or even *ś.û.p.* It is possible that the *pe* (פ) and *qoph* (ק) were confused here, perhaps from a blurred manuscript, causing the LXX to force a verbal root of *ś.û.p.* upon *yiššāqun*. Further evidence is present in the insertion of the motive particle *gar*.

⁶⁸Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237, translates: "To these they say, 'Sacrifice!' Men kiss calves." Cf. RSV; Mays, *Hosea*, p. 171; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 220. Rudolph's objection to *'ādām* as an explicative genitive is more appropriate to Wellhausen's explanation (*Kleinen Propheten*, p. 131) of the phrase as *menschenopferer* which represent "Opferer aus dem Genus Mensch." Like Marti, *Dodekapropheten*, p. 99, I also wonder who does sacrificing other than humans? Grace Emmer-son, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, accepts the attack on human sacrifice, but believes, as observed in Chapter 1, that it is from a Judean editor attempting to discredit the northern cult of Israel (p. 146).

⁶⁹This Greek reading is based on Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Sinaiticus, Theodotion, and the Vulgate.

Finally, three other translations of the clause should be mentioned, though not taken too seriously. Duhm tried dropping the *aleph* on 'adam, leaving *dām* "sacrifices of blood," but this word order is never found elsewhere.⁷⁰ We must expect *dām zibhî* "my blood sacrifices" (Exod. 23:18, 34:25). Secondly, Eitan cleverly and independently improves on Duhm's proposal by vocalizing the final verb as *yašqun*, "To these they say, 'Slaughter!' [These] they water with the blood of calves."⁷¹ This emendation, however, still cannot avoid objections to the referent of "idols" for *lahem*, and to the imperative vocalization that disregards the aforementioned syntax problems in the LXX. Thirdly, Harper conjectures that *zbhy* is just a fragment of the original line, *'ām zobhîm lašēddîm*. "It was easy for 'm to have dropped out when note is made of the several preceding words ending in *ym* and *hm*; furthermore, *lašēddîm* precedes a word not dissimilar in form to *'ādām*."⁷² This results in the bizzare translation, "with a people sacrificing to demons, men kiss calves." The intent here is possibly related to Jerome's fourth-century C.E. suggestion that the calves represent demons,⁷³ but it is certainly inspired by a proposed emendation for Hos. 12:12, *ûbagilgāl lašēddîm zibhî*, "In Gilgal they sacrifice to demons."⁷⁴ Harper appropriately anticipated that his proposal would receive little attention.

⁷⁰Duhm's proposal is cited in Nowack, *Propheten*, pp. 233-34.

⁷¹I. Eitan, "Biblical Studies," *HUCA* 14 (1939), p. 4. One could improve this a bit more by rewording the translation, "Sacrifice to these,' they say," but the accusative *lamed* must then be arbitrarily dropped when the direct object is carried over by implication to the final clause.

⁷²Harper, *Hosea*, p. 395.

⁷³Cited in Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 237; see also Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 649-50, for a list of potential deities and demons in Hosea.

⁷⁴See Elliger, *BHS*, Hos. 12:12.

Verse 13:3

Prior difficulties encountered with the subject of the subunit continue here. It is not clear whether the referents of the analogies are idols or the artisans who created them. In either case, when one passes away the other is sure to follow.

This verse, on the whole, is relatively free of textual controversy: *yihyû* could be translated as a regular imperfect or as the imperfect jussive, "May they be like" ⁷⁵ An emendation in the pointing of *y^eso'er* (a poel form meaning "chaff blows") to *y^esō'ār* (a pual form meaning "chaff is blown") corrects the syntax to the required passive meaning. ⁷⁶ The verbal root *s.y.r.* connotes the sudden gusts of wind which arise in the storm, an image analogized in the LXX translation *apophusaō* that pertains to an exhaling of breath. Such a meaning partially explains the confusion in the Greek versions concerning the last simile. ⁷⁷

The Masoretic pointing of the text, *ûk'ašan me^arubbāh*, is straightforwardly translated "as smoke from a window (or vent)." Without benefit of pointing, the Greek versions attempted four different renderings of the consonants *'rbh*. By maintaining this image of vaporized air (as in clouds, dew, and exhaling) Codex Vaticanus (fourth century C.E.) reads *ōs atmís apò dakruōn* "as vapor from tears," in the sense of water droplets sizzling in a hot pan. Vollers ex-

⁷⁵See W. R. Harper, *Elements of Hebrew by an Inductive Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974; reprint of 1921 ed.), pp. 87, 113.

⁷⁶Elliger, *BHS*; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 219; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 48.

⁷⁷Nowack, *Propheten*, pp. 234-35, contends that the extreme variants in the LXX codices are evidence of LXX corruption or guesswork.

plains the Vaticanus text as a consonantal corruption of the original Greek reading $\acute{\alpha}\rho\delta$ *akridōn* "locusts," which is in itself translated from a mistaken pointing of the Hebrew consonants, 'arbeh "locust."⁷⁸ The Greek plural translation of a singular Hebrew only adds to the uncertain LXX text. Further, the image of roasting locusts seems so out of place that the Vaticanus editor played with the consonants of *akridōn* to give *dakruōn*. Nyberg suggests a similar meaning by citing Codex Alexandrinus, Theodotion, and a corrected Hexapla. All read *ek kapnodochās*, which he apparently links to *dakruōn*⁷⁹ by implying a Hebrew *Vorlage* of *me'adbām*.⁸⁰ Since tears of grieving, however short, are out of place here, it is better to accept the usual translation *ek kapnodochās* "out of a chimney," as the best equivalent of the Hebrew. In summary, all the Greek variants can be explained by the Masoretic Text.

Verse 13:4

The MT here is grammatically and textually consistent, which makes it a rare verse in this chapter. However, there is an intriguing interpolation located in the LXX right after $^{\text{e}}l\text{ō}h\acute{e}k\bar{a}$ in the first clause:

stereōn toū ouranōū
kaì ktízōn gān
oū ai xeres ēktisan

⁷⁸Vollers, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 258. *akridōn* is read by less than one-fourth of the known miniscules.

⁷⁹Though uncited, Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 101, must be relying upon C⁺, a Septuagint fragment of the prophets which has a conflated reading: $\acute{\alpha}\rho\delta$ *dakruōn kapnodochās*, possibly from Vaticanus and Alexandrinus.

⁸⁰Ibid. He also tries to include such a word in Hoseanic vocabulary by emending Hos. 7:6 to *b^e'adbam* from *b^e'arbam*.

*pāsan tān stratiān tou oûranoū
 kaī oû paredeixá soi aútā
 toû poreúesthai ópiso aútōn
 kaī egō̄ ânāgagon se*

Both Nyberg and Patterson agree that this passage was translated from a Hebrew *Vorlage*, especially due to the presence of Hebraisms, such as no article in *ktīzōn gān* and the typical Hebrew word order for the indirect object *soi*. They disagree, however, about the exact Hebrew retroversion:⁸¹

Patterson	Nyberg
<i>nṯh šmym wbr' 'rṣ</i>	<i>rqq' hšmym wmkwnn 'rṣ</i>
<i>ydy 'šw kl sb' hšmym</i>	<i>'šr kwnnnw ydyw šb' hšmym</i>
<i>wl' hr'ytyk 'tm llkt 'hryhm</i>	<i>wl' hr'ytyk 'tm llkt 'hryhm</i>
<i>w'anky m'lk</i>	<i>w'ny h'lytyk</i>

The fact that Syriac adds only *d'sqth* (= *kaī egō̄ ânāgagon se* = ^a*šer he^elêûkâ*) "who brought you up" may explain an instance of homoioteleuton as the scribal eye moved from *w'anky m'lk*. This supposition might allow the text to be a fairly early manuscript. The following considerations, however, mitigate this possibility. Wellhausen thought that the interpolation was drawn from the hymns in Amos 4:13, 5:8-9, and 9:5-6.⁸² These hymns, however, are probably composed after the eighth century, and Wellhausen does not indicate at what stage the interpolation might have entered, possibly implying only a Septuagint creation. The phrase, *tān stratiān tou oûranoū* is normally only found in Deuteronomistic theology of the seventh century B.C.E. (1 Kings 22:19; Zeph. 1:5,

⁸¹Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 208; Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 102. Nyberg rejects the text as "an genuine clause of Deuteronomistic stamp."

⁸²*Propheten*, p. 131; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 220, agrees and adds the Deuteronomic hymn from Deut. 32:8-9 to the list. Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238, also suggests hymnic interpolation, citing Jerome who claims that the addition is not in the oldest LXX editions.

and Jer. 7:18, 8:2). This could mean that the gloss entered during a Judahite redaction of the book. But another puzzling piece of data is found in Hos. 12:9. The self-presentation formula, "I am the Lord your God," is also followed with a LXX interpolation, *ánágagón se* (= *hoṣe'îm* in Exod. 20:2 and Jer. 7:22 or *he^elêûkâ* in Hos. 12:13, Exod. 32:4, and 1 Kings 12:28). This gloss could be explained by homoioteleuton, or it may just illustrate a LXX translation tendency which cannot resist clarifying the self-presentation formula. Neither explanation can be proven, especially since the LXX text of Hosea has few additions outside of chapter 13. With such an impasse, the status quo prevails, and the MT will be used for exegesis. This is the choice generally conceded by all commentators since the content of the interpolation belongs more to the heirs of Hoseanic theology, Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic Historian.

Verse 13:5

With the exception of Mauchline,⁸³ all commentators choose to explain *anî y^edatîkâ* as a corruption in the MT. Under the influence of *têdâ'* in v. 4 the *yod* in *'anî* was accidentally repeated (dittography) at the same time a *daleth* was confused for a *resh*.⁸⁴ Some add that this scribal corruption erased the desirable word-play with *mar'îtam* (pastures).⁸⁵ The emended reading *r^eîîkâ* is supported by the versions, though it is reflecting some ambiguity in the meaning of

⁸³"Hosea," p. 707, tentatively follows the MT *y^eda'îîkâ* since the analogy with *k^emar'îtam* in v. 6 is weak, the latter word requiring emendation.

⁸⁴E.g., Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238.

⁸⁵So Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 102.

the Hebrew root *r.ʿh*. The LXX translates the shepherding nuance in this verb by *ἐγὼ ἐποιμαῖνον σε*, "I tended you," while the Syriac apparently emphasizes the grazing or feeding aspect of the same verb, *ʿn rʿytk*.⁸⁶

The second of the two true *hapax legomena* in chapter 13 occurs in *talʿubōt*. Its meaning has not generated as much speculation as *r^etet* in v. 1, probably because it is placed in a parallel member with *midbār*. Whatever it signifies, its meaning is controlled by the harshness of the desert. Since the LXX is probably guessing on the basis of parallelism,⁸⁷ with the reading *ἐν γᾶ̄ ανοικᾶ̄τῶ̄* "in an uninhabited land," the lexicographers turn to cognate tongues. Koehler-Baumgartner cites the Akkadian *laʿābu* "to punish with fever" and suggests "in a land of fevers." Wolff opposes this suggestion since the contextual problem of vv. 5-6 is hunger and drought rather than disease.⁸⁸ Most others turn to the Arabic cognate and read *talʿubōt* "thirsty" as a plural intensive adjective.⁸⁹

The first problem in this verse was settled on the textual authority of

⁸⁶Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 217; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238, translates *Ich habe dich geweidet* "I have pastured you." This free translation here and in v. 6 carries on the paraphrastic intent of the Targum, *ʿnam sōpqēt šōrkēhōn*.

⁸⁷The Peshitta compounds this guess by combining the MT tradition and the Septuagint. Sebhok, *Peshitta*, p. 25, observes that "For *bʿrš tlʿwbwt* [sic], Peshitta has a duplicate translation *bʿr hrbtʿ dlʿ ytba*, with the latter words glossed from the Alexandrian tradition."

⁸⁸*Hosea*, p. 220. This argument is not conclusive. Dehydration and thus fever come from a lack of food and water in the desert.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50; Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Clarendon: Oxford Press, 1906; reprinted 1979; hereafter *BDB*), p. 520 (drought); Nowack, *Propheten*, p. 235, asserts that the Hebrew *l.ʿb* and *l.h.b* come from the same Arabic root "to burn." He translates "land of burning fires." I am not competent to evaluate these supposed variants in the Arabic, but Nowack is not followed by any commentators or lexicons. His authority for the suggestion is a commentary by Ewald.

LXX and Syriac. However, the opposite is true when evaluating this *hapax legomenon*. Here the versions can be explained as guesswork on the meaning of a difficult consonantal text.⁹⁰ In the context of the exodus-wilderness tradition complex that is mediated through the self-presentation formula, I tentatively propose that *tal'ubōt* (תִּלְּבֹט) be emended to *t^ela'ah* (תֵּלְאָה) or the plural, which admittedly is not attested in the Hebrew Bible, *t^elā'āyyōt* (תֵּלְאָאֵי). The meaning "in a land of hardships" fits well with the situation in Exod. 18:8.

Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship (*t^elā'āh*) that had come upon them in the way, and how the Lord had delivered them (RSV).

Admittedly this proposal is founded from a traditio-historical consideration, and it is without versional support. Andersen-Freedman do indicate a semantic parallel in *ereṣ ṣiya* "arid land," but they are in agreement with the intention of my proposal that the phrase in Hosea is a symbol of discipline rather than desolation.⁹¹ There is probably room for one more alternative in a text constantly open to suggestions from cognate languages.

Verse 13:6

Mauchline correctly highlighted the uncertainty involving the word

⁹⁰E. Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, Jerusalem Biblical Studies (Jerusalem: Simor Ltd., 1981), also has great doubt about a retroversion of the LXX to a Hebrew *Vorlage*. "The word *tl'bw*t occurs only here in the OT, and it may therefore have been unknown to the translator, who rendered it according to context. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the translator was thinking of *l'-byt*, since elsewhere the privative *a-* represents *l'* and *oik-* represents *byt* If the LXX indeed presupposes *l'-byt*, the graphic similarity between this reading and the MT *tl'bw*t is easily recognized."

⁹¹*Hosea*, pp. 226, 634.

k^emar'itām. However, it is the form and vocalization that cause concern, not any analogy to a verbal root (*r. 'h.*) beginning with *resh* instead of *daleth*.

Wolff and Rudolph attempt to make sense of the MT, one emphasizing a nominal aspect, the other a verbal. The latter suggests that *mar'it* functions as an infinitive to be translated here as a finite verb, "The more [they were] revived, the more. . . ." ⁹² Wolff analyzes the syntax in terms of a nominal circumstantial clause followed by an imperfect consecutive clause: "In accord with their pasturing, they were. . . ." ⁹³

Others achieve similar translations by emending the text. Rather than delete the entire word plus the following verb, ⁹⁴ Elliger, *BHS*, separates the full form of the adverb *k^emô* "when," as in v. 7, from the first person perfect *r^e'itām* "I had fed them." Mauchline deletes the first *mem* and renders a third person perfect *k^era'itum* "when they had fed." ⁹⁵

The versions are also divided over the choice between a nominal or verbal clause. LXX *katà tàs nomàs autōn* is almost identical to MT except for changing a *yod* to a *waw* and reading a plural *kammar'ōtam* "according to their pastures." This seems to be a wooden translation of an apparently idiomatic

⁹² *Hosea*, p. 238.

⁹³ *Hosea*, p. 220.

⁹⁴ Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50.

⁹⁵ "Hosea," p. 707; Practically the same result is rendered by Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 101, who follows Wellhausen.

Hebrew. Syriac opts for a verb *wr'yt 'nwn* which is equivalent to *ūr'itîm*⁹⁶ or *k^emō r^e'ōtam*.⁹⁷

I am inclined to accept the difficult text as is, rather than emend to a simpler form. The LXX translation, and Wolff's as well, is too wooden or literal for the concise idiomatic word. It is probably a circumstantial clause to be translated "While [on]⁹⁸ their pasturage."

In the following forms of *ś.b.ʿ* one may choose either two separate clauses repeating the same verbal idea *wayyis̄ba'û śab'û* "then they were sated. They were sated . . .," or, with a metathesis of *ayin* and *yod*, read an infinitive absolute *wayyis̄ba'û śab'û* "then they were completely sated." The first possibility dramatically heightens the impact of the language. This repetition is certainly resonant with the Hoseanic style, though Elliger, *BHS*, urges deletion in every one of the following examples:⁹⁹

- 2:4 *rîbû b^e'imm^ekem rîbû*
plead with your mother--plead
- 6:3 *nēd'āh nird^epāh lāda'at*
let us know, let us press on to know
- 11:1-2 *qāra'tî libnî qara'tî [LXX] lāhem*
I called my children, I called to them
- 11:10 *k^e'aryēh yiš'āg kî-hû' yiš'āg*

⁹⁶Nyberg's translation in *Hoseabuche*, p. 102, which he uses to emend even further, *kir'ōtî 'ōtam*, is "als ich sie auf die Weide fñhrte." The MT as an infinitive construct is unintelligible.

⁹⁷Wolff's translation of the Syriac in *Hosea*, p. 220, which he admits as a possible or original text.

⁹⁸One could propose the addition of a preposition *b* which was lost due to haplography with the *kaph*.

⁹⁹This evidences an old view of literary criticism which often underestimates the necessity of repetition. The step-parallelism is more acceptable to Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 635.

He will roar like a lion, even he will roar

LXX, on the other hand, supports the reading of a single infinitive absolute clause, but not without qualification: *kaḥ eneplāsthāsan eḥs plāsmōnān* means that the second verb was translated as either *śabōā*¹⁰⁰ or *l^eśab'ah*.¹⁰¹ In any case, whether one clause or two--infinitive, infinitive absolute, or kal perfect--the meaning of the phrase is not in much jeopardy. There is little difference between:

While on their pasturage they were so sated
that they exalted their hearts,¹⁰²

and

While on their pasturage they were sated.
They were sated and exalted their hearts.

Both achieve dramatic heightening through different rhetorical devices. It is best to follow the repetitive approach in light of stylistic features peculiar to Hosea.

Verse 13:7

The first word *wa^hhī* introduces a major textual crux in this chapter that eventually climaxes in determining the extent of love and wrath in Hosea. For the other three occurrences of the form (vv. 10, 14), *BDB* devotes an entire entry and translates it as a variant of the adverb "where" *yyēh*. On the basis of 13:7, however, the word is "taken by many of the older interpreters, and even

¹⁰⁰Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 102. Syriac offers little constructive help since *śab'ū* is totally misread as *k^ereśam*, "their belly was full." See Sebhok, *Peshitta*, p. 25.

¹⁰¹Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 211.

¹⁰²LXX is again too literal with *aī kardāi aūtōn*, reading a plural for *libbam*. The collective singular in the MT is typical Hebrew style.

by Gesenius in 13:14, as a first singular, imperfect apocope of *h.y.h.* 'I would be.'¹⁰³ There is little doubt that the word is to be read verbally in this verse. Yet the tense is still in question and might be decided on the basis of form-critical considerations.

The word *š^ekēhūnī*, not to mention the rest of the verbs in v. 6, maintains a perfect tense through *waw*-conversive. This is followed by the LXX translation of *kai' ēsomai*, which is clearly imperfect and probably the equivalent of *wē'ehyeh* "I will be." However, nothing prevents a jussive rendering for the verbs in the following clauses, even if a first person singular jussive is rare in biblical Hebrew. Wolff admits the imperfect tense but attaches consecutive significance to the *waw*, "I became." This provokes a desirable tension between the first clause and the other five of the unit, as the tradition proceeds from past to present.¹⁰⁴ In either case, the text should be emended to *w^e'ehyeh* and the present form explained as a MT attempt to make all four similar forms consistent in chapter 13.

If one continues to follow the LXX with the support of the Peshitta and Vulgate, the same verb in the first clause is implied or carried over to the second clause. Though there is some attempt to emend, the issue here is the same as in v. 1. Should the consonants *'šwr* be pointed as a proper noun or an imperfect verb? Again the versions choose the noun. Yahweh is "like a leopard on the way

¹⁰³BDB, p. 13.

¹⁰⁴Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220.

to Assyria [*'aššûr*]."¹⁰⁵ Several older commentators with biases toward Greek correction adopt this pointing,¹⁰⁶ but the trend has shifted toward the Masoretic pointing. Rudolph denies that Ephraim was torn as prey on the way to Assyria. The invaders surprise Israel in capture as these northern Israelites are to be seized in their own land and shredded. Such a distinction may be one of splitting hairs since the Assyrians are well known for their decimation of populations by deporting the victims. Further, LXX and Syriac readings could be supported if *šam* (v. 8) has a locative referent. It may be temporal, as in Pss. 36:13 and 132:17,¹⁰⁷ but *šam* probably refers to the location of the *derek* under surveillance by the wild beast.

If this is so, a verb is required to maintain the parallelism with the other five clauses. In Hebrew *š.û.r.* often means "to look upon" or "watch," but many critics emend the verb to *'ešqōd* "I will lurk," citing Jer. 5:6, *nāmēr šōqēd 'al-'ārêhem*.¹⁰⁸ It seems that the text as it stands in the MT gives better sense. Most exegetes believe that mere watching is not strong enough for the context. Direct confrontation or contact is required. Consequently, etymologies for *š.û.r.*

¹⁰⁵ *r'twd* in the Peshitta; *in via Assyriorum* in the Vulgate.

¹⁰⁶ Harper, *Hosea*, p. 398; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 113, 140; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁷ Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 227.

¹⁰⁸ Elliger, *BHS*; Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 101; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 128. Each read "auflauern." Perhaps they saw such a strong literary connection between Hos. 13:7 and Jeremiah that they forced harmonization. It should be observed, however, that Jer. 5:26, granting possible textual corruption, contains the phrase *yāšûr k'šak*, perhaps "he will watch like a fowler." The presence of this word should caution against a close analogy in Jer. 5:6 for Hos. 13:7.

are offered from Aramaic and Arabic. Eitan has convinced many to read an Aramaic meaning from $\text{š}^e\text{war}$, "to jump up, to leap," that is supported in the Targums, Talmud, Peshitta,¹⁰⁹ and in the Arabic cognate *sāra*; this last cognate has two possible meanings, "to march or journey," or "to attack."¹¹⁰ Both "I will attack like a leopard on the way (Aramaic and Arabic) or "I will journey on the way like a leopard" (Arabic) fit the context but transform an already probable text. The beast must surely watch over the path before encountering its prey. The verbal progression of watch, meet, tear, and eat is more convincing than leap, meet, tear, and eat.¹¹¹

Verse 13:8

The series of verbal progressions commenced in v. 7 continues in the first person imperfect up until the very last vicious curse in this oracle.¹¹² The form-critical observation that the subject is no longer Yahweh but the beasts of the field, has prompted Elliger in *BHS* to propose the reading *k^ehayyat haššdeh^a baqq^eēm* "I will shred them like wild beasts." LXX and Peshitta are both aware of this incongruity in subject, but they make a pointing change in the verb of the previous clause, thereby balancing the last third of the unit. The Masoretes read

¹⁰⁹Eitan, "Biblical Studies," pp. 4-5; perhaps anticipated by Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 102; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238; M. Buss, *The Prophetic Word of Hosea: A Morphological Study* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1969), p. 25; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220.

¹¹⁰Guillaume, *Hebrew and Arabic*, Vol. II, p. 33.

¹¹¹Contra Eitan, "Biblical Studies," p. 5.

¹¹²Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50, translates a past tense here for the imperfect since these repeatable acts are in the wilderness. He is trying to harmonize the verbs with the past tense of v. 6c.

a participle $w^e\text{'ōklēm}$, which presumably kept Yahweh as subject. $ka\grave{i}$
kataphāgontai aútous is a Greek translation of $wa^xkālûm$ "they ate them" and
wn'kwł 'nwn is a Syriac reading of $w^ey\text{'ōklēm}$ "he ate them" or $wā^xkālam$ "I ate
 them," depending upon which vowels the Syriac preferred.¹¹³ Each of these in-
 terpretations can be explained as a misreading or, at best, pointing clarification of
 a probable MT. The subject however continues to be Yahweh since the last two
 clauses are understood as results or consequences.

I will confront them as a $\check{s}akkûl$ she-bear.

I will tear a $s^egôr$ in their heart.

Eating them there $k^elābîm$

[As] a wild beast would shred them.

The particle k^e "as" or "like" is implied and probably not necessary in the
 Hebrew since the last clause is more of a result than a simile.

In addition to the verbs, the versions also dispute the types of destruc-
 tive predators under consideration. The MT describes Yahweh as a she-bear who
 is robbed of her cubs ($\check{s}akkûl$).¹¹⁴ A slight change from *shin* to *sin* (*s.k.l.* II) can
 be read as *aporoumenā* in the LXX, that is, a bear who has been bound and is
 now distressed.¹¹⁵ Or the Syriac reads $\check{s}abûr$ by translating *dtbr'* "a mauling
 bear," presumably confusing a *bet* for a *kaph* and a *resh* for a *lamed*. Clearly,
 these variants can be explained by the Hebrew text.

E. Nestle can give no versional support for the emendation of $s^egôr$

¹¹³Vollers, "Dodekapropheton," p. 258; Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 197.

¹¹⁴Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220, complains that there is no feminine ending on the participle as
 is expected with the feminine *dōb*. This may be due to the normal masculine plural ending
dubbîm.

¹¹⁵Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 102; also see *BDB*, p. 968, and Liddel-Scott, Vol. IV, p. 214.

libbām to *k^egûr lābî'*.¹¹⁶ This overly subtle reference to "young lions" who are supposedly stolen from their mother (see next clause) requires too many confusions (*kaph* for *samech*; insert an *aleph*) and too many references to lions (three) in the wrong contextual order. Nor is *s^egôr* really *hapax legomenon* since the root is well attested.

Some have also found the reference to *k^elābî'*, "like a lion," in v. 8c stylistically awkward when juxtaposed with the lion of v. 7a (*šahāl*). Therefore Elliger and Rudolph accept Duham's old proposal to read "dogs [*k^elābî'm*] who eat them there."¹¹⁷ Such a change is apparently suggested by the third person plural verb of the LXX, which is consistent with *skúmnoi drumoû*. However, even though Wolff tries to equate *k^elābî'm* with *skúmnoi*,¹¹⁸ most commentators recognize that *drumos* (forest or thicket) is an interpretive gloss by the Greek translator, and *skumnos* usually refers to a lion (*lābî'* or *k^epîr*) in LXX translation.¹¹⁹ It is best to read the MT as is and try to explicate the effect of multiple references to the lion image in Hosea 5, 11, and 13.

¹¹⁶"Miscellen," *ZAW* 25 (1905), p. 204-5. The proposed emendation is probably an attempt to be consistent with the Greek rendering of v. 8c, "cubs of the thicket."

¹¹⁷See *BHS*; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 128, 131, is a bit more creative with *w^e'aklû b^ešāram k^elabî'm*, "and dogs will eat their flesh."

¹¹⁸Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220. It is not enough to claim that Hosea does not use the word *labi'* elsewhere. A different word occurs in each of the references to lion (cf. 5:14, *šahāl*, *k^epîr*; 11:10 *'aryēh*). This is another place where repetition counters assertions that a redactor has introduced awkward style which should be deleted.

¹¹⁹Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 101; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 131; Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 197. Vollers, "Dodekapropheton," p. 258, analysis of the LXX translation of the words for lion is more consistent than the evidence allows. *leōn* is not always equivalent to *'aryēh* or *lābî'*, and *skumnos* is not always read for *k^epîr*. There is simply no pattern for the Greek *Vorlage*.

Verse 13:9

Form-critical considerations continue to influence the choice of subject in v. 9. The MT is pointed as a piel perfect, third masculine singular *šihetkā*. The context rules out the translation "Israel has destroyed you" since the suffix, a direct object, is already Israel. If the subject is Yahweh in v. 8c-d, the Masoretes may be continuing the same in "He has destroyed you, O Israel."¹²⁰ Ward refers back to vv. 1-2 to establish the antecedent: "It [the sin] has destroyed you, O Israel."¹²¹ The former possibility could be established from the LXX *diaphthorā* if it is read as a verb with the pointing *šahatkā* "pit" or, better, *š^ehīt* "It is your destruction, O Israel."¹²² The Peshitta leans more toward the verbal aspect but in the piel *šihattikā*, "I have utterly destroyed you." This last directive is adopted by most critics since it only requires the addition of a *yod*, if at all.¹²³ Regardless, they are forced to read it as a future (so Elliger, *BHS*, ^a*šahetkā* [*sic*]) or to claim that the perfect has a future meaning in a causal construction; "If I destroy you, O Israel, then" ¹²⁴

It seems appropriate to adopt the LXX reading of a noun, though the

¹²⁰Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103, renders "He has brought you to destruction, Israel." He dismisses the LXX and Syriac readings as "oberflächliche Konjektur."

¹²¹Ward, *Hosea*, p. 220.

¹²²Cf. Hos. 11:4, where *diaphthora* is read for the noun *hebel* "cord, snare," and S. Grünberg, "Exegetische Beiträge," *Jeschurdn* 17 (5/8), pp. 274-79, cited by "Zeitschriftenschau," *ZAW* 48 (1930), p. 313. He reverses the clauses and renders "denn bei mir, der ich dirzu Hilfe kam, ist (jetzt) dein Verderben, Israel!"

¹²³Marti, *Dodekapropheten*, p. 102; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 128; Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. 220-21; Mays, *Hosea*, p. 176.

¹²⁴Mauchline, "Hosea," pp. 710-11; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238.

explanation advanced by Ward is just as reasonable. The meanings are identical, but the nominal choice has the advantage of being the more difficult syntax, yet form-critically consistent with the closure of the unit at vv. 14e-15a.

In both v. 9a and v. 14e the first clause of the inclusion is immediately followed by a *kî*- clause of a definite emphatic nature. Most critics, however, emend the clause to an interrogative,¹²⁵ though with some dispute over dropping the *kî*. Most argue with considerable force that the *bi* was miscopied from a genuine *mî*. This is certainly evidenced in the Greek reading of *tîs* and the Syriac *mnw* "who."¹²⁶ Patterson and Mays prefer to retain the emphatic *kî* "for, indeed,"¹²⁷ but Wolff contends that the *kî* was miscopied from *mî* and the *bî* dittographed from the *bet* on *b^e'ezrekā*.¹²⁸ This does not explain the *yod*, however, and one is persuaded to accept Treitel's decision that the most difficult reading is again possible and desirable: "[It is] your destruction O Israel, since in

¹²⁵Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238; Mauchline, "Hosea," pp. 710-11; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50; Sellin, *Zwölfsprophetenbuch*, p. 128, 132.

¹²⁶Vollers, "Dodekapropheten," p. 231, even lists five other places where he claims the Masoretes mistook a *bet* for *mem*: Hos. 8:6; 10:6; Amos 6:7; Micah 7:17; Joel 2:23. This list, however, is exaggerated and not necessarily relevant (e.g., in Hos. 8:6 the *mem* should be replaced with *b^enē*).

¹²⁷Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 214; Mays, *Hosea*, p. 176.

¹²⁸Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 221.

me is your help."¹²⁹

Verse 13:10

Though there are ambiguous data in the previous verse, there should be little concern over the series of interrogatives which are introduced in v. 10. Yet nearly every word of the verse (nine of thirteen) is seriously disputed by the versions and critics. The particle ^hhî is no exception.

The decision to read *wa* ^hhî as a verb in v. 7 has little import for all the commentators who read an adverb in v. 10.¹³⁰ This translation, "Where?" is supported by the versions (LXX *pou*, Peshitta *'aykaw*, Targums, and Vulgate) in a context that requires denunciation of the monarchy, rather than divine assumption of a royal mantle. Even those who read an interjection ^hhah "Woe! Alas! Aha!" or a jussive verb are forced to modify *'epô*' "now" to *'êpoh* "Where?" and maintain the interrogative force of the clause.¹³¹ Though it may be stretching the lack of evidence to say that Hosea's pronunciation ^hhî is a northern dialectical form of *'ayyeh*,¹³² it is clear that the word *'epô*' is an emphatic, enclitic par-

¹²⁹"Die Septuagint zu Hosea," p. 453; see also Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103; M. Dahood, "Interrogative *kî* in Psalm 90:11, Isaiah 36:19, and Hosea 13:9," *Biblica* 60 (1979), pp. 573-74, argues that it is unnecessary to emend the consonantal text and yet still arrive at the same meaning as in LXX and Peshitta. In Ps. 90:11 he contends that parallelism equates *mî* with *ukî* --note improper word division and the LXX *kaî âpô*; Isa. 13:6 balances *'ayyêh* (where?) with *w^ekî*, and Hos. 13:9 follows suit. If *bî* is precative and *kî* interrogative, we could read "Who, please, will be your helper?" Such faithfulness to the MT, though innovative, is extreme.

¹³⁰So Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, pp. 128, 132; Mauchline, "Hosea," p. 711; Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 219.

¹³¹Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50, is the lone exception to this consensus.

¹³²Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 221; *BDB*, p. 13.

ticle used only with interrogatory pronouns or adverbs.¹³³

The first word of the next clause is always read as relative.¹³⁴ It is difficult, however, to determine whether the following words are taken with the hiphil imperfect form *w^eyōšī^akā*, or if a new parallel structure is formed by associating them with the next noun *w^ešoptēkā* "and your judges." The first option reads smoothly and requires only minor transposition of the *yod* in *w^eyišpotkā* "who judges you" to create three consecutive, relative clauses. This is the option supported by the LXX and adopted here.¹³⁵

If one follows the first option there are two possible readings for *s.p.t.*, depending on a verbal or nominal form:

'ayyeh malk^ekā 'epō' w^eyōšī^akā
w^ekol-šarēkā w^eyišpetūkā
^ašer 'āmartā

Where now is your king who will save you,
 and all your princes who defend you,
 of whom you have said . . .

The only change of the three required in the middle line that is supported by a version is the replacement of a *waw* for a *bet* before *kol*.¹³⁶ The Syriac actually

¹³³Gen. 27:33, 37; Exod. 33:16; especially Judg. 9:38; Isa. 19:12; Job 17:15. It is not necessary to follow Vollers' ("Dodekapropheton," p. 258) emendation from *'epō* to *zeh*. The LXX *oūtos* is not always read for *zeh*. On the errors involved in this type of retranslation see Tov, *Septuagint*, pp. 97-139.

¹³⁴A slight variation is suggested by Ward, *Hosea*, p. 219. He reads the verb as a participle "savior" (or one who saves) to agree with the noun in the next clause "judges."

¹³⁵*kaì diasōsátō se èn pásais taís pólesi sou. krinátō se* "let him deliver you" *ὅν εἶπας*; Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103, reads nearly the same but suggests an implied question, "and (where) are your judges?" carried over from the first clause.

¹³⁶So Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 221; Sellin, *Zwölftprophetenbuch*, pp. 128, 132, and most nineteenth-century commentators listed by Harper, *Hosea*, p. 392.

does this by moving the *waw* from the participle to the preposition, "who judges all your cities--of whom you asked and said" *dš'ltny w'mrt*. This can be explained as an interpretation of the Hebrew, thus requiring no retroversion. Further, there are no grounds for the change to "princes." This was first suggested by Houtsma and is widely adopted by certain critics who claim a resemblance between *ayin* of *'ārêkâ* and *sin* of *šārêkâ*.¹³⁷ Similarly, Mays prefers H. Graetz' suggestion of a mistaken *ayin* for *tsade* in *šārêkâ* (enemies).¹³⁸ Finally, the two consonantal changes required in the verbal form encourages one to lean toward the previous reading, making but one change.¹³⁹

The choice of a nominal form for *š.p.t.*, as in the MT,¹⁴⁰ in conjunction with the other proposed emendations allows, "and all your princes, and your judges, of whom you said. . . ." This triad of government officials (king, princes, and judges) is appealing, but the imperative response from the audience, "Give

¹³⁷Houtsma, "Bijdrage tot de kritieken verklaiing van Hosea," *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 9 (1875), p. 73; cited and followed by Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 221; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 132; Mauchline, "Hosea," p. 711; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 140.

¹³⁸Graetz, *Emendationes in plerosque Sacre Scripturae Veteris Testamenti libros*, Nach dem Tode des Verf. hg. v. Villhelm Bacher II (Breslau, 1893)--cited by Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 238; Mays, *Hosea*, p. 176; Harper, *Hosea*, p. 392; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50. Like Rudolph, these all find the change from *ayin* to *sin* "schwer vorstellbar."

¹³⁹Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 221; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 128; Marti, *Dodekapropheten*, p. 102; Elliger, *BHS*; Mauchline, "Hosea," p. 711; Harper, *Hosea*, p. 392; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 140. Each adds a *yod* and lengthens a *yod* to a *waw* in order to read the third person plural form *w^eyišp^etūkâ*. This brings to five the number of proposed emendations required in the MT consonants. Wolff's remark that the MT is the result of prior corruption due to the similar diction of 1 Sam. 7:7 and 1 Chron. 12:6 appears irrelevant.

¹⁴⁰Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239; Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 219, retain this nominal form.

me a king and princes,"¹⁴¹ is too self evident and the repetition does not achieve the stylistic effect found in the other examples related to v. 6. To be sure, redaction critics relieve the tension by dropping part or all of v. 10c-d.¹⁴²

Verse 13:11

The choice of past or future tense is the most important issue at stake here. The MT clearly reads the *waw* as conjunctive in *w^e'eqqah*. The lack of a *waw* at the beginning throws the whole sentence into the imperfect tense. This implies repeated action which is still underway, but LXX, Symmachus, and Theodotion apparently ground their reading in antimonarchical motifs. They prefer a past tense by reading two *waw*'s-consecutive.

The LXX text of *kai̇ ěschon* "I have removed" is explained as an example of reverse haplography, in which the *kat-* prefix normally required to translate *l.q.h.* has dropped off *eschon* due to similarity with *kai̇*.¹⁴³ The same verb is involved in the Peshitta addition of a third singular suffix, thereby attempting to provide a direct object.¹ This very same motivation is responsible for the LXX punctuation that ends the clause in v. 12 after *kai̇ ěschon ěn tō thumō mou sustrophān àdikías* (= *^awōn*) "I will take away in my anger hidden iniquity." The Hebrew style, however, allows the direct object *melek* to carry

¹⁴¹The plural *šārîm* in the MT is not supported by the singular of the LXX, Peshitta, and Targums. This is a trivial difference; see Vollers, "Dodekapropheton," p. 258, and Harper, *Hosea*, p. 392.

¹⁴²Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 102, cuts off v. 10 before *^ašer* since he is bothered by the similarity to 1 Sam. 8:6, "Give to us a king." Elliger, *BHS*, hesitantly indicates that all of v. 10c-d is a gloss, probably to eliminate the syntactical problems discussed here.

¹⁴³Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239.

over to the first clause, making unnecessary Greek and Syriac changes in the text.

Verse 13:12

The awkward nature of the LXX punctuation in this first clause is heightened by the Greek reading of the proper name as a vocative, "O Ephraim! His sin is being concealed." The parallelism of v. 12 certainly requires the Masoretic arrangement. The passive participles are rare forms for these verbal roots (*ṣ.r.r.* and *ṣ.p.n.*), but there is no textual controversy.

Verse 13:13

It is not clear whether the pains of childbirth are borne by the mother or inflicted upon the child. The preposition *lamed* can bear a meaning of "upon him" or "for him," but the context probably implies that the unwise child Ephraim is experiencing so much pain that he refuses to emerge.¹⁴⁴ Thus the conjunctive *waw* supplied before *hu'* in a few manuscripts would indicate that some scribes read a cause-effect relationship into the first two clauses.

The Greek translation of the second clause is textually corrupt within its own transmission and should not be used for retroversion. *οὗτος ὁ υἱός σου ὁ φρόνιμος* "this son of yours is prudent" could imply that the children are wise for not coming to face certain destruction at the mouth of the womb. However,

¹⁴⁴So J. L. McKenzie, "Divine Passion in Osee," p. 296; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239. The LXX interpretation *ōdīnes ὄs tiktousās* "pains like birthing" is aware of the ambiguity and proceeds by making this pericope more of a simile, applying the labor pains to the boy. See Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 207. Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50, tries to generalize the referent even further by emending *lō'* to *lāhem* "to them."

one can see how the *sigma* had dittographed and then joined with *ou*, a negative particle. The definite article was then supplied to correct the grammar. Such a scenario has led to various corrections in the Greek versions. Zeigler accepts Codex Venetus (eighth century C.E.) and Origen's Hexapla for the restoration of *ou*. The retention of *sou* can be explained as dittography imposed from *uîós* upon *ou*.

The emphatic and temporal particles in the third clause have received much comment. The word *kî-’ēt* "for it is time" is awkward. Thus most Greek versions dispose of *’ēt*, leaving only *dioti*. Peshitta, Targums, Old Latin, and the Vulgate agree on the addition of the *he* in *kî ‘attāh* "for now."¹⁴⁵ These changes remain awkward in light of the usual emendation demanded by the context, *kā’ēt* "At that time" or *k’ittō* "At his time."¹⁴⁶ This only requires the removal of a *yod* or its transposition in plene form as a *waw* to the end of the word.

Verse 13:14

In the first two clauses of this verse there are no interrogative particles that clearly pose a question. At an oral stage one might rely on inflection in the prophet's voice. This inflection was probably still fresh when the text was written down, and it obviated the need to provide a grammatical clarification. We are thus forced to consider the threatening context in the chapter, as well as the way questions are posed at other places in Hosea. This is a form-critical concern

¹⁴⁵The Syriac Peshitta is missing *kî* (contra Sebhok, *Peshitta*); see Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 104: Harper, *Hosea*, p. 401, proposes *kî kā’ēt* "for at that time" or *mē’atā* "from now."

¹⁴⁶Elliger, *BHS*; Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 103.

which deserves further treatment in Chapter 5. Still, at this stage of translation, it is helpful to cite three other texts in Hosea with similar implied questions: 4:16, 7:13, and 10:9.¹⁴⁷ These analogies gain strength if we choose to translate the first word *ʔhî* of the next two clauses adverbally, as in v. 10.¹⁴⁸ Most exegetes prefer to read an interrogative "where" at this point, yet such a correction does not lessen the considerable ambiguity in the verse. Is the process of divine questioning initiated from a genuinely frustrated pathos, or is it rhetorical and rather sure of the answer? A few critics attempt to clear up the uncertainty by reading a verb or an interjection, as in v. 7. Even this move can give opposing interpretations. Nyberg reads, "Alas! your plagues are Death. // Alas! your disastrous deeds are Sheol." This puts the power of the underworld in the hands of Yahweh; sickness and evil in the people are equated with these dark deities.¹⁴⁹ McKeating, for the NEB translation—"Oh for your plagues O Death. // Oh for your stings O Sheol"—permits the interrogatives in the first two clauses but calls for death to the people. Such death is an external force outside of Yahweh's influence.

A third and fourth variation are offered by M. Buss and J. Ward, the latter reading questions for only the first two clauses, but the former reading all declarative statements as follows:

¹⁴⁷Note the same word *ʔpdem* "Shall I redeem them?" in 7:13. This text is not beyond dispute either. Direct questions with interrogative particles are fairly rare as well; see Hos. 6:4, 8:5, 9:5, 9:14, 10:3, 11:8, 14:8.

¹⁴⁸See prior discussions on this word at vv. 7 and 10, p. 44.

¹⁴⁹*Hoseabuche*, p. 105.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 1986

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday School

9:45 a.m.

We will worship with Tabernacle Baptist Church this afternoon at 3:30 p.m.

MORNING SERVICE
11:00 a.m.

B.T.U.-----5:30 p.m.

July 2, Wednesday, Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Adult Choir Rehearsal-----Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

July 6, First Sunday, Orientation Class at 5:30 p.m. The lesson will be on "The Hidden Secrets of Tithing".

July 13, Second Sunday, WOMEN'S DAY.

July 15 - 19, VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL; 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

July 20, Third Sunday, we will worship with True Vine Baptist Church in their Homecoming.

July 27, Fourth Sunday, HOMEcoming. Vine Glenn Baptist Church will be our guest.

SICK AND SHUT-INS

Sis. Mayfield

Announcements

Rev. Barlow

Recognition of Visitors

Choir

Selections

Minister

Sister A. Coleman-----1396 Hillside Avenue
Mother Mason-----Bordeaux Hospital
Sister Golina Nicholson-----at home
Sister Mattie Mosley-----703 B 32nd Avenue, N
Deacon Earl Curley-----909 Battlefield Dr.

Sermon

Minister

Invitation to Discipleship

Choir

Selection

Officers

General Offering

WELCOME!!!

We welcome all of our visitors and hope you enjoy the service. Please feel free to worship with us again!!!

From Sheol I will ransom them.
 From Death I will redeem them.
 I will be your plague O Death.
 I will be your sickness O Sheol.

For both scholars ²*hî* is emended to a verbal form *'ehyeh*, and Yahweh is given absolute control over the underworld deities, tossing their tools of destruction back upon them.¹⁵⁰ Yet with persistence, the ambiguity may still be here if Yahweh is now working for the underworld deities, Sheol and Mot.

Though I have chosen to render questions tinged with ambiguity, one cannot ignore the controversial support provided by the New Testament for a positive affirmation of divine intervention. The Pauline quotation of Hos. 13:14 in 1 Cor. 15:55 is based on an LXX reading of *poû* (where?). However, Paul's midrashic interpretation is derived from a typically loose *peshet* quotation, perhaps from memory, that imposes Isa. 25:8 upon Hos. 13:14, in order to reverse through the victory of Jesus the force of the Old Testament threat of sin and death.¹⁵¹

This analysis of loose New Testament reinterpretation is especially obvious from a comparison with the LXX and 1 Cor. 15:55.

¹⁵⁰Buss, *Hosea*, p. 26; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 220-21, translates all references in Hos. 13:10, 14 as "I am." In spite of acknowledging the power of Ba'al he argues for a radical Yahwistic monotheism in Hosea. Therefore, any reading of an adverb (where?) "is a bowdlerizing of the text. The ancient commentators generally followed the LXX in interpreting the verses as a promise of redemption (cf. Paul's allusion to it in 1 Cor. 15:55), but the moderns are almost unanimous in judging it a threat." Ward saves it as an ambiguous question rather than a promise of life (contra Robinson), *Hosea*, p. 50. In response, the Pauline quotation can be explained as an intentional reversal and reinterpretation to prove a point of Christology.

¹⁵¹E. E. Ellis, "Pauline Hermeneutics," *New Testament Studies* 2 (1955-56), p. 131. He identifies Hos. 13:14 as "perhaps the most notable instance of *peshet* quotation in the Pauline literature. . . . This interpretation of the Hebrew is one created (or recovered) in the early church."

LXX *poũ á díkā sou, thánate*
poũ tò kéntron sou, áda

NT *poũ sou, thánate, tò níkos*
poũ sou, thánate, tò kéntron

LXX Where is your penalty O Death?
 Where is your sting O Hades

NT Where [in] you, O Death, is the victory?
 Where [in] you, O Death, is the disease?

The syntactical differences are just too consistent in both clauses to support any supposition that there is an alternative LXX *Vorlage* for the quotation in the Corinthian epistle. The style is hellenized by moving the vocative to the middle rather than the end of both clauses, and the pronominal suffix (-*kā* = *sou*) is placed before its noun rather than in its required Hebrew position after the object.

However, the substitution of *nikos* for *dikā* (the plural is *dikās*) in 1 Corinthians points to a genuine confusion within LXX transmission history. This is in addition to corrections on the New Testament text in order to harmonize with the LXX and MT. Some late Greek minuscules of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries C.E. [220+(c), 130', 534] are joined by the Armenian version and Cyril's commentaries on the twelve prophets in reading *nikā* "victory" at Hos. 13:14. These corrections led to Nyberg's conjecture that *dikā* is an erroneous LXX correction for the original word *nikā*, which was translated from an infinitive construct of *g.b.r.* "to prevail," in the sense of Exod. 17:11, *w^egābar yiśra'ēl*. Here

the *daleth* (ד) was misread for *gimel* (ג).¹⁵² The credibility of this explanation is diminished but not eliminated, however, since another example of an infinitive construct for this word is not to be found in the Hebrew Bible. Such silence makes it difficult to establish a meaning of "victory" from the verbal root, especially since other vocabulary is more likely when expressing the idea. Further, a parallel between the word pairs *deber* and *qaṭab* in Ps. 91:6 suggests that the LXX has merely mispointed *d.b.r.*, reading *dabar* "word" (by implication, "penalty") instead of *deber* "plague." This is a frequent practice in the LXX (e.g., Hab. 3:5; Ps. 90:3, 90:6),¹⁵³ and is dramatically exposed in Aquila's reading of another alternative *ramata* "word."

The Hebrew meaning "plague" is disputed by the Kohler-Baumgartner Hebrew lexicon. The context of the identical word pair in Ps. 91:3 and 6 influenced them to render "thorns" for *deber* and "stings" for *qōṭeb*. This unique rendering for *deber* is dependent on an isolated semantic field rather than any etymological evidence. Such lexical work is legitimate, but the field must be affected by the meaning for *q.ṭ.b.* The Syriac word *qurt'ba* (not used in the Peshitta at Hos. 13:14) "sting" is generally cited as the etymology for Hosea 13 and Psalm 91, but an Arabic word, *qaṭ'ib* "Pocken" (small pox), provides an ex-

¹⁵²*Hoseabuche*, p. 104. He does not claim that the *delta* was misread for *nu*. He argues that his emendation is supported by the Syriac *'kwṭ'*, but Sebhok, *Peshitta*, p. 26, is at a loss for explaining the Syriac meaning of this word. Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239, translated the Syriac "your victory" and decided it is derived through Christian influence from the Corinthian text.

¹⁵³E. Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, fourth edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 65; cf. also Tov, *Septuagint*, p. 167. Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239, asserts that *dika* is translated from *rīb* "strife" in the LXX and Theodotion. This is the case at Amos 7:4 and Micah 7:9, but it is used normally for *naqam* "vengeance" in the LXX, so one cannot force a literal meaning from *dikā* any more than from *dabar*.

cellent German alliteration, *Pest und Pocken*, that maintains the semantic field in the realm of sickness.¹⁵⁴ This is much more consistent with the abundant examples of the meaning "plague" for *deber*.

The consonantal text of the last clause in v. 14 is undisputed, but it is difficult to specify a precise meaning for *nōḥam* since the word is only found here in this form, though this does not qualify it as *hapax legomenon*. Indeed, quite opposite translations have been proposed. The possibilities include "resentment" or "vengeance," leaving the text open to a positive interpretation: Yahweh will not destroy, or will prevent destruction by removing a wrathful nature from the divine attributes.¹⁵⁵ However, the analogy with Gen. 27:42, usually cited in support of this meaning, has some difficulty. The notion of vengeance is only implied through consideration of the entire context of the sentence in Genesis. Esau takes comfort upon himself through the thought of killing his brother Jacob. There is nothing intrinsic to the use of the word *mitnāḥēm* that makes this type of comfort any different from compassionate comfort. Both evoke a warm feeling. It is the motive of murder indicated by the context that colors the word here and in Isa. 1:24: "I will comfort myself [*'ennāḥēm*--a niphal imperfect] on

¹⁵⁴See J. Blau, "Über Homonyme und angeblich Homonyme Wurzeln II," *VT* 7 (1957), p. 98, cited in Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239. The arrow of Ps. 91:5 does not necessarily require a puncture image in 91:6. Divine protection is requested for every form of danger whether military or sting. The LXX translation *kentron* "sting" is possible here, though Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 105, would prefer to use the LXX translation *boukentron* at Qoh. 12:1 for *darbanah*, and emend the MT to *darbān* "goat" instead of *qōṭeb*. Cf. also Isa. 28:2 and Deut. 32:24.

¹⁵⁵So Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 132. The debate over the etymology of the verb *niham* is a classic example of the illegitimate transfer of meaning from one semantic domain to another. See James Barr's analysis of the word in *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: University Press, 1961), p. 117. This discussion is continued by H. Van Dyke Parunak, "A Semantic Survey of *NHM*," *Biblica* 56 (1975), p. 527.

my enemies." At best, if vengeance is allowed here, Yahweh is claiming that this wrath is dispensed without divine glee. The usual comfort is hidden from Yahweh's eyes. Yet Hosea 13 is really much more severe. Most critics translate something like compassion, sympathy, sorrow, or repentance. The latter two are preferred if the word is pointed *niḥām*,¹⁵⁶ but the MT pointing *nōḥam* is analogous to the masculine noun *nō'am* "pleasantness" (cf. Zech. 11:7f.). Yahweh is unable to see any sympathy in store for Ephraim.¹⁵⁷

Verse 13:15

No matter what the meaning for *nōḥam*, whether "vengeance" or the more probable "compassion," it is quite legitimate to read the first clause of v. 15 as a consequence of v. 14. The versatile particle *ki* then means either "though" (if *nōḥam* means "vengeance") or "while" (if *nōḥam* means "compassion"), and this choice affects the translation of the entire clause. The ultimate key here is the meaning of the verb.

The versions unanimously reject the consonantal text and render the equivalent of the Hebrew *yaprîd*, exchanging the *aleph* for the *daleth*: "Though

¹⁵⁶So Nowack, *Propheten*, p. 243; Harper, *Hosea*, p. 405.

¹⁵⁷Mays, *Hosea*, pp. 181-2; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239; Mauchline, "Hosea," p. 714; Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 222, cites Rashi in support of the MT form. Finally, the LXX *paraklāsis* "consolation" strengthens this position.

he causes separation among the brothers."¹⁵⁸ This verb requires no emendation of the object; only the addition of a yod in the preposition *ben* (not *ben* "son"). Such a reading is possible, but the meaning and motivation for divine wrath is thoroughly obscure.

Many critics prefer to associate a hiphil form of *p.r.ʿ* with the verb *p.r.h.* "bear fruit or flourish" because the Aramaic of the Targum and the Syriac shift the *he* to an *aleph* for the noun "fruit": "Because" [or "Though, Indeed!"] he flourishes among his brothers. Since the sense, motivation, and timing of this translation is also obscure, most emend *'ahîm* "brothers" to an Egyptian loan-word *'āhû* that appears at Gen. 41:2 and Job 8:11: "Though he flourish among reed grass."¹⁵⁹ Wolff believes that the same word in all three places is from the Ugaritic *'ah* "meadow." The *mem* originally attached to the participle *mip^eri'* "flourishes" was wrongly divided and linked to *'āhû*. The new misinterpreted reading "brothers" caused the versions to try *yapri'd*, a possible reading, but if so, an exilic gloss.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸The Greek *diasterei* is translated for *p.r.d.* at Gen. 25:23; 30:40; Ruth 1:17; 1 Kings 2:11; Prov. 18:18. Peshitta has *nprwš*=Aramaic *p.r.š*. Vulgate has *dividit*. This reading is approved by Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 132; Vollers, "Dodekapropheten," p. 259; Sebhok, *Peshitta*, p. 26, claims it refers to a split between Israel and Judah; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 141; Marti, *Dodekapropheten*, p. 103; Ward, *Hosea*, p. 221. Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239, thinks the versions are not changing the text to *p.r.d.* but are translating with an Arabic etymology from *p.r.j.* "to separate." Patterson, "Septuagint of Hosea," p. 217, had long ago rejected this etymology.

¹⁵⁹Cf. *BDB*, p. 826. Wellhausen, *Propheten*, p. 133, was apparently the first to suggest this. Many have followed with variations *k^ebên mayyîm 'āhû* "like reeds among the waters." See Harper, *Hosea*, p. 402; Mauchline, "Hosea," p. 715; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 52.

¹⁶⁰Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 222. The flourishing meadow will now be scorched as desert according to the remainder of the verse. Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 239, emends *'ahîm* to *ḥayyîm* "among the living." Two unlikely consonantal changes are required in this conjecture.

An equally clever explanation that certainly fits the Hoseanic message involves another etymology for the verbal root. Hosea 8:9 had already played on the name 'eprayîm "Ephraim" in connection with *pere*', a "wild ass" lustfully wandering among nations and hiring lovers.¹⁶¹ The verbal root *p.r.*' does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible but does mean "run" in Talmudic Aramaic.¹⁶² The wild ass derives the name from its swiftness, so Ephraim may again be the object of a pun, "because he flees among brothers," that is, to his lovers. The sirocco curse that follows in the rest of the verse is certainly consistent with the ambivalence of love and death in the desert imagery of Hosea.

All the following verbs continue to cause translation difficulties. The least of the problems is the choice between an imperfect, as in the current MT *yābô'*, and the niph'al *yābî'* required by the LXX *éráxei*. The subject is unclear. In the MT the *qādîm* "east wind" is the subject, but in the LXX Yahweh causes the wind to come. This forces the Greek translator to combine the next four words into the same sentence, emending the verb *'ōleh* to a preposition with a suffix, *'ālô*: "He causes the east wind to come, a wind from Yahweh, from the desert upon him." The MT followed here is more dramatic since each sentence gets a bit longer.

¹⁶¹ Jer. 2:24 depends upon this image in the same context as Hosea 8 and 13.

¹⁶² I conceived this verbal etymology before finding similar suggestions in A. Cohen, *The Twelve Prophets* (London: Soncino, 1948), pp. 51-52; Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 640, analyze it as a hiphil denominative meaning "wild," as in the wild ass; and in Nowack, *Propheten*, p. 244, who cites the unavailable Hesselberg, *Die Zwölf kleinen Propheten* (Königsberg, 1893), "fruitful among the tribes as a wild ass." Nowack also rejects Hitzig's suggestion in *Die Zwölf kleinen Propheten* (Leipzig, 1838) that a metathesis of *aleph* and *resh* occurred. This would give the original *yap'îr*, "Though he be glorified among brothers." The change is possible but again difficult to explain in light of Ephraim's low position throughout the book.

All versions and critics are certain that $w^e yēbōš$, from the root $b.ō.š$. "shame," is wrong here. The LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate maintain Yahweh as subject, which encourages Elliger, *BHS*, to assert hiphil pointings, $w^e yōbîš$ "He will cause his fountain to dry up."¹⁶³ Even before the discoveries at Qumran, Nyberg read a kal, $w^e yābēs$ (*waw*-consecutive).¹⁶⁴ This last kal pointing is adopted by the newer commentators because of the fragment of Hosea found at Qumran. $w/ybs mq/wrw$ requires the kal pointing; "his fountain will be dried up."¹⁶⁵

Other verbs in the verse are obliterated on the Qumran fragment, but there is every reason to ignore the hiphil pointing implied by the versions, and maintain the MT pointing that is in harmony with the verb of the previous clause.¹⁶⁶ The antecedent to the pronoun before the final verb is unclear. It could be Yahweh, but it is probably the wind which symbolizes Yahweh's designate, who will "plunder" (*yišseh*) the storehouse of all the precious vessels.

LXX apparently implies the wind as its subject, as indicated by further changes: $aútòs kataxāranēĩ tǎn gǎn aútòũ kai pǎnta ta épithumātā aútòũ =$

¹⁶³So Elliger in *BHS*; Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 103; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 141; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 52; Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 132. The versions could be translated, "It will cause his fountain to dry up," but they probably do not have the east wind in focus, rather Yahweh in a causal sense.

¹⁶⁴Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 106; also anticipated by Harper, *Hosea*, pp. 402, 406.

¹⁶⁵M. Testuz, "Deux fragments inédits des manuscrits de la Mer Morte," *Semitica* 5 (1955), pp. 38-39.

¹⁶⁶Harper, *Hosea*, p. 406, prefers $w^e yeh^e rab$ "his spring will be parched" against Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 103. Nor is it necessary with Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 52, to read a past tense for these verbs, $wayyah^a rēb$, unless all of the oracles in this chapter are meant for the past.

hû'yaš'eh 'aršô w^ekol k^elî ħemdāh; "It will drain his land and all his precious vessels." The LXX verb *katāxaranēi* "drain," (or lit., "dry down") appears to be an interpretative parallel to the previous *anaxāranei* "dry up" (for *wyḃš*), which in turn forced the emendation of *'ošar* "storehouse" to *'aršô* "his land." The LXX verb is possibly the result of a hearing mistake since *kataxāranēi* is the translation equivalent of *yaš'eh*, which sounds suspiciously similar to *yišseh*.¹⁶⁷

Verse 14:1

The shift to a third person feminine subject causes understandable form-critical apprehension. The implications of this problem must await further discussion. At this stage, it is possible to explain proposed emendations as reactions to the form-critical crux.

Most critics no longer take very seriously the LXX reading of *āphanisthāsetai Samāreia* "Samaria shall be exterminated."¹⁶⁸ This would derive from the Hebrew verb *š.m.m.* with a third feminine singular form *tešam* instead of the MT *tešam*. Since the phonetics are nearly identical we should again consider the possibility of a hearing error. In fact, LXX apparently mistook

¹⁶⁷Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 132, is alone in following the LXX here. To obviate the problem with drying up solid "vessels" *k^elî*, he conjectures "precious oaks" *'elē* mentioned in Hos. 4:13. Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 106, proposes that *š.s.h.* is derived from the Akkadian loanword *šasū* "demand or collect," rather than the Hebrew "plunder." He translates: "He will collect for the (Assyrian) storehouse every precious vessel." He correctly points out that *kly* is mispointed in the MT. Instead of *k^elî* it should be the construct, *k^elê*, though this plural is not always necessary in Hebrew.

¹⁶⁸Nowack, *Propheten*, p. 245, and Ward, *Hosea*, p. 221, are two notable exceptions. The former gains some support from the Syriac agreement with the LXX. The latter believes that a copyist's error is likely since ten of the previous thirteen words start with *aleph* in the first syllable. This piece of evidence seems irrelevant.

š.m.m. for 'š.m. in a considerable number of places: Prov. 24:33 (Heb. 30:10); Hos. 5:15, 10:2.¹⁶⁹

Once 'š.m. is retained, three possible nuances in the meaning of the word arise. Some degree of interdependence occurs in translations such as: "bear the guilt,"¹⁷⁰ "make atonement,"¹⁷¹ or "pay the penalty."¹⁷² We adopt the first meaning and acknowledge that all three are used in Hosea.

The last three sentences of the verse are punched out in stacatto fashion but shift back to third person masculine plural verbs. The change clashes with the feminine content--Samaria, babies, and pregnant women--of the verse. Specifically, *w^ehārîyôôtâw* is a feminine singular subject with a masculine singular suffix juxtaposed to a masculine plural verb *y^ebuqqâ'û*. Some older perfectionists correct the grammar and force the words into agreement, *w^ehārôôtîhēm* *t^ebuqqa 'nāh*,¹⁷³ but recent grammarians acknowledge that agreement of feminine nouns and masculine verbs is "often neglected [in Hebrew] especially with the third plural feminine."¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹Cf. Joel 1:8 where precisely the opposite occurred. The MT reads *ne'šāmû* "they are guilty" when the context clearly calls for *nāšammû* "they are confounded." This conclusively illustrates the LXX tendency to confuse the two verbs.

¹⁷⁰Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 222; Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 240; Brown, *Hosea*, p. 141; cf. 13:1.

¹⁷¹Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 52; A. Weiser, *Zwölf kleinen Propheten I*; cf. Hos. 5:15.

¹⁷²Hos. 10:2.

¹⁷³So Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 104; Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 52; Elliger in *BHS*, encourages deletion, again displaying less than helpful *BHS* notation in Hosea.

¹⁷⁴Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 222; Cohen, *Twelve Prophets*, p. 52, refers to the rabbinical commentaries of Ibn Ezra who compiled a list of such problems in grammar.

Summary

The text of Hosea 13 proves to be typical of the book as a whole. It is slightly more manageable than other passages in a book well known for text-critical problems. In only two verses (13:11-12) were the syntax and grammar straightforward, though the meaning is far from obvious in the present context.

Our wrestling with *hapax legomena* will always bring tentative conclusions. Thus the meaning for *r.t.t.* "dismay" in 13:1 and for *t^elā'āh* "hardships" in 13:5 is proposed with openness for fresh evidence.

We are urged by the obscurities of the syntax in Hosea to adopt a relatively conservative attitude with respect to the consonantal Masoretic Text. We learned that Hosea is fond of rhetorical repetition throughout the book. Thus translators are urged to avoid the tendency of applying redaction critical techniques to the editing of the consonantal text.¹⁷⁵ There is also the equal danger of being overly influenced by form-critical and traditio-historical evidence in the determination of the text. In proposing the above solutions for the *hapax legomena* we acknowledge reliance on traditio-historical evidence in the absence of anything more conclusive with Hebrew lexicography. And when relying on form-critical influence for determining the text, we have remained within the book of Hosea so as to use secure comparisons (e.g., with the rhetorical questions of 13:14) in an atypical book.

Much more crucial to our forthcoming theological conclusions, and to the study of prophecy in general, is the rendering of rhetorical questions in 13:14,

¹⁷⁵This glossing is constantly suggested by K. Elliger in *BHS*.

when combined with the meaning of *nōham* at 13:14-15a. This ambiguous turning point in Hosea's theology will be highly stressed as a form-critical feature and as a metaphorical model for Hosea's treatment of tradition.

PART TWO
STRUCTURING THE FORMS

CHAPTER III

FORM-CRITICAL PROBLEMS IN HOSEA

The unit of interpretation, Hosea 13, was delimited in Chapter 1. The text has been established through an analysis of versions, grammar, and syntax. The next four chapters in Part 2 will demonstrate why Hosea 13 is a crucial but neglected text in the interpretation of Hebrew prophecy. The most important issues in form criticism of the prophets can be focused through the lens of this chapter. Such issues include the viability of the form usually called an oracle of judgment, the poetic or prosaic nature of genre in prophecy and specifically in Hosea, and the place of the prophet in relation to religious institutions of the eighth century B.C.E.

Methodological Overview

Form criticism is a complex process that affects all other approaches to interpretation. It generally includes matters of genre, form, structure, intention, function, and setting.¹⁷⁶ Such ideals in the method have been applied with revolutionary success in Old Testament scholarship, but knowledgeable exegetes display some caution in the application of the tool. More often than not, the text under consideration is atypical because it does not quite fit the projected form. Tucker ascribes this feature to mutations in the history of the form which can tell us

¹⁷⁶Gene M. Tucker, *Form Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), pp. 11-12. This process is further clarified by John H. Hayes and Carl Holliday, *Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), pp. 77-83.

much about the power of oral tradition. "There is a certain tenacity in the genres, but also flexibility and change as they develop. . . . Two factors account for the variations: the historical development of the genre, and the individuality of each prophet."¹⁷⁷

It is this power in oral tradition that was unappreciated by the early literary (source) critics and that became the main impetus in the form criticism of the prophets.¹⁷⁸ However, as the task matured, there was again too much concern with the "atomistic" units of the text, mainly because it was too tempting to assume that each unit could be inserted within an appropriate universal category (in prophecy: judgment oracle, salvation oracle, prophetic lawsuit, etc.). The pendulum swing has been corrected now with the burgeoning emphasis on the aesthetic, artistic, and rhetorical integrity of the text. The drive for literary appreciation and rhetorical unity has been properly restored despite some legitimate concern that the pendulum may swing too far. Nonetheless, it is this restoration of literary appreciation that will require an investigation of the aesthetic aspects of the traditions in Hosea 13.

Early Form Criticism in Hosea

When the method of biblical form criticism was first emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century, Hosea, along with Amos, was accepted by

¹⁷⁷Tucker, *Form Criticism*, p. 8. The study of oral tradition, which hints at mutations, is not entirely separable from the goals of form criticism. This is evident in the examination of the self-presentation formula in Chapters 5-8.

¹⁷⁸Martin Buss, *A Form-Critical Study in the Book of Hosea, with Special Attention to Method*, Ph.D. Dissertation (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1958), pp. 33-35.

form critics as the prime example of the earliest setting and structure for all of prophecy in general. Hosea's oracles appear to be short bursts of speech in one or two lines that were never really organized. This is witnessed in the continued confusion over attempts to outline the book.¹⁷⁹ But any notion that Hebrew prophecy can be characterized as short ecstatic ejaculations of divine speech is now long rejected.

Later, after the domination in prophetic studies of Claus Westermann's conclusions concerning "messenger speech" (building upon the work of Ludwig Köhler), Hosea lost its place as the ideal example of pure prophetic speech; the book possibly was ignored because the messenger formula is practically absent in its oracles. "Thus says the Lord" is not to be found, and *n^e'um yhw^h* "oracle of the Lord" is found only in two sections that are questioned by many redaction critics.¹⁸⁰

Current Form Criticism in Hosea

The form-critical study of Hebrew prophecy is generally restricted to individual articles or monographs. Very few commentaries in the Old Testament, and in Hosea as well, exhibit an explicit awareness of form-critical issues. Some

¹⁷⁹See Gustav Hölscher, *Die Propheten* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914), who first linked these short bursts of speech to ecstatic behavior. See Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 69-70. They helpfully suggest that the incoherence is due to theological tension in the message; see also p. 51, and compare this point with the ambiguity evident in the traditions of Hosea, which are explored in Chapter 8.

¹⁸⁰Buss, *Hosea*, p. 50, believes the formulae are absent in Hosea due to the poetic nature of the oracles; the phrase is normally part of prose letters or oral messages, and is outside the metrical structure. It is hard to evaluate this explanation since *n^e'um yhw^h* is found in the poetic texts of other prophets. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 8, 11:11 probably is not an exilic gloss.

pay homage to the discipline through introductory remarks, but a consistent acknowledgement of the issues and systematic treatment of the texts are rarely sustained throughout a commentary. The commentary of H. W. Wolff is an exception, but the subtle and needed reactions to his work by Buss and Andersen-Freedman have questioned the progress of form criticism in the book of Hosea to the point that a full scale study of the whole book along these lines is now required. The following chapters can give an example of such an endeavor.

The current impasse, which has never really overcome the incoherent structure of Hosea, reverts to the problem of fitting the particular into the universal. Klaus Koch captures this frustration, which is either complicated or caused by the seemingly inconsistent fluctuations in notions of verbal time.

In Hosea . . . there is not a single prophecy (much less a vision) which can be shown to be a pure example of its genre. Instead there are extensive sections in which Hosea switches backwards and forwards between sayings about the present and sayings about the future.¹⁸¹

The oracles vascillate between imperfect (analogous to future time) and perfect tenses (analogous to a past but continuing aspect). When this is combined with a "bewildering practice of shifting from direct address to third person references to the audience," it is no wonder that exegetes are hard pressed to discover a useful replica of the judgment oracle formula.¹⁸² There are no messenger formulae for delimiting speech forms, and oracular formulae ("oracle of the Lord") are

¹⁸¹*The Prophets* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), p. 77. He proposes that the prophecy is worked out through dramatic sketches inspired by audience reaction to the message. Cf. Wolff's formal category of disputation.

¹⁸²Mays, *Hosea*, p. 6.

found only at 2:13, 16, 21, and 11:11. The summons formula ("hear the word of the Lord") that is indicated with the imperative *šim'û* can be found only at 4:1 and 5:1.

Confusion Between Historical and Form Criticism

Commentators generally suggest that the units of prophetic speech in Hosea are woven together either by a common theme (see 2:2-15) or by a common setting appropriate to oral delivery (see 5:8--6:6 or 8:1-4). Only Wolff has attempted to overcome the tentative and vague nature of this consensus. Yet he is often criticized for attaching precise dates to many texts in Hosea on the basis of extrapolated political or institutional settings. For example, the formal structures of 9:3, 11:5, and 12:2 are cited as evidence of Israel's diplomatic mission to Egypt during the reign of Hoshea ben Elah. This attempt to secure foreign military aid to support the Ephraimite rebellion against Assyria was described at 2 Kings 17:4. Wolff does not hesitate to link 13:10 with 13:15 in order to identify "this final period, when king Hoshea already had been taken at the beginning of Assyria's attacks."¹⁸³

When testing a hypothesis this sort of speculation about precise historical dates appears reasonable. Such conclusions are often drawn from Hosea with the aid of insights from historical criticism. Brown places Hosea 13 at the beginning of the Assyrian siege of Samaria.¹⁸⁴ So did Sellin.¹⁸⁵ But in the comments

¹⁸³Wolff, *Hosea*, p. xxi.

¹⁸⁴Brown, *Hosea*, p. 111.

¹⁸⁵Sellin, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 133.

from Wolff, one is immediately aware of an unusually tidy chronological order in the book of Hosea; chapters 1-4 are dated in the period 750-46 B.C.E., 5-8 in the years near 733 B.C.E. concerning the Syro-Ephraimite wars, and 9-13 in the years 727-22 B.C.E. concerning the ill-fated and final uprising (if chapter 14 is an exilic addition). This schema is too obviously imposed upon the book.

Further, Buss perceives that Wolff has misused the search for a "setting in life" by carefully trying to identify the historical (that is, chronological) occasion of every oracle. Setting is much more legitimately recovered if it refers to a structural or institutional element in the organization of the society.¹⁸⁶ Wolff is occasionally interested in explaining this functional aspect while engaged in form-criticism, but in the commentary on Hosea the goal is nearly always chronological.

Very similar objections are published in the commentary by Andersen-Freedman. They add that Wolff would be unable to find mention of a single historical figure in chapters 4-14 of Hosea. Caution is urged concerning the identity of a concrete historical situation behind any particular oracle or group of oracles. Their scepticism about the value of traditional form criticism in the study of Hosea is especially poignant with regard to Alt's classic and widely held interpretation of Hos. 5:8-6:6. Alt had cleverly argued that this passage was shaped by the political and military details of the Syro-Ephraimite conflict. But Good

¹⁸⁶Buss, *Hosea*, p. 1. There is a distinction here in Wolff's use of historical data for the sake of form criticism and in the imposition of chronological schema upon evidence of redaction or composition. In the first instance historical supposition is applied to an oral stage. In the second instance historical conclusions are drawn from the late stage of composition.

had just as ingeniously proposed a seasonal fertility ceremony as the institutional setting for the same verses. Given such radically dissimilar readings of the same evidence, they wonder if form criticism, as traditionally conceived, is the most beneficial tool for interpretation of the book. They caution us about Wolff's tendency to withdraw from a form-critical problem, in which he is at a loss to find a proper generic category, by settling for a "mixed form" such as "disputation."¹⁸⁷

Atypical Genre and Form in Hosea

When dealing with the same problem of mixed forms, Buss is puzzled by the small utterances that are found within the larger oracles. Wolff tries to gather these oracles under the term "disputation," envisioning a setting in which the prophet admonished an audience while in ecstatic frenzy.¹⁸⁸ But Buss correctly recognized that Wolff breaks the speech into too many jagged units that could not be properly interpreted. "In Hosea's words it is only the larger groups (called "oracles"), which have sufficient complexity to contain the interplay of accusation, threat, lament, and irony, and the combination of the different address styles, which comprise the essential structure of his prophecy."¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷Andersen and Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 72-73.

¹⁸⁸The designation of disputation will be evaluated in Chapter 5 when 13:9-15a is analyzed.

¹⁸⁹Buss, *Hosea*, p. 35. In the following Buss' use of the terms "form" and "genre" apparently follow a "German" approach which has genre refer to the broad categories like narrative, prose, poetry, prophecy, gospel, and epistle. Form designates the basic structures that participate in these genres, and it includes categories like judgment oracle, salvation oracle, proverb, etc. In recent scholarship, however, genre is defined as the occurrence of more than one specimen of the form in more than one source. The volumes in the series, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature*, ed. by Gene Tucker and Rolf Knierem, systematically follow this approach.

Mixture of Prose and Poetry

Rather than a mixture of forms, Buss and Andersen-Freedman prefer to accentuate a more fundamental mixture--that of prose and poetry. This perception came subjectively to Buss when he realized that at least half of

all sentences with enough words to make a transposition possible deviate from standard or ordinary word order. The individual deviations are not necessarily inappropriate in a prose context, for nonstandard forms may be used especially for the sake of emphasis. The presence, however, of a significantly large percentage of such forms lends a peculiar aura to the style. . . [the words] keep up a hammering rhythm which hinders a fluid reading.¹⁹⁰

Thus Buss' solution to the problem of mixtures in genre, poetry, and prose is to allow more universal categories such as poetry, brevity, and narrative to "cut across the major divisions of human life--cult, court, and common life."¹⁹¹ These mixtures are then evaluated in terms of positive and negative "feelings" that also cut across the same divisions. For example, instead of lament or thanksgiving, he might break the language down into general mood categories. This practical and functional approach can be useful as a synthesis of Hosea's thought, but it is less useful in the exegesis of units as important as a chapter or two. In effect, Buss has overreacted to Wolff's historical and form-critical atomism by overstating the breadth of the discipline. This is evident from the difficulty encountered when

¹⁹⁰Buss, *Hosea*, p. 47. This problem has grown in significance over the centuries until it now tends to dominate current theoretical discussions of form criticism. And Hosea is probably the most-controversial test case in the discussion. Buss, in "The Study of Forms," in *Old Testament Form Criticism*, p. 9, sketches the history of this debate, which goes back to the oratory of Cicero. His rhetoric was classified as poetic-prose, and the same label was applied to Hadrian's speeches. The controversy reached a highpoint in the seventeenth-century debates about "high prose" but has laid dormant until recent years.

¹⁹¹Buss, *Form-Critical Study*, p. 24.

trying to extract something from his study and apply it exegetically to a particular passage or delimited pericope.¹⁹²

Andersen-Freedman also decide that this mixture of prose and poetry was at the root of earlier form-critical failures to capture the setting or function of Hosea. Their conclusion is illustrated by a statistical study of the prose particles *'et*, *šer*, and the definite article. Only chapters 8, 11, 13, and 14 barely fit into the range of pure poetry. They also find this ambiguity reason for two cautions: avoid the desire to excise so-called prose accretions or avoid the urge to force form and genre onto texts, a tendency which is always followed by an elimination of misfit phrases, and a practice recommended all too often in Elliger's editing of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.¹⁹³ However, they apparently forget this early identification of pure poetry when they actually arrive at the exegesis of Hosea 13. There a supposed mixture of prose and poetry is announced in defence of a "total impression of incoherence" (pp. 626-27).

At first it is difficult to see the ultimate exegetical benefit that one obtains through noting the peculiar atypicality of Hosea's poetic prose or prosaic poetry.¹⁹⁴ Is the poetry a more heightened emotional speech of the ecstatic, half-crazed (*m^ešuga*; Hos. 9:7) malcontent? Or is the prose a rational and calm

¹⁹² Later Buss sheds some of the anthropological baggage, though he still urges great flexibility in the use of forms to interpret ("The Study of Forms," p. 53): "Virtually all human experiences involve a combination of categories applied simultaneously." This combination is called a matrix. "If forms are understood not as exclusive genres but as potentially interacting structures, the study of forms becomes of increasing, rather than of decreasing, importance for highly important phenomena."

¹⁹³ Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 60-62.

¹⁹⁴ Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 132, coin the term, "rhetorical oratory."

speech of the self-controlled narrator? It is tempting to generalize, but such stereotypes for prophets have rarely lasted after close scrutiny. What is one to do with a book such as Hosea, which holds in tension these two fundamental categories of oratory—narration and poetry?

Social anthropologists, who continue to explore the phenomena of religious prophecy, cannot typically substantiate the claim that the intermediary between deity and cult has always lost control of rational and emotive aspects of the personality, though this can happen even as it can to any member of a society. Thus we should beware of those who prematurely demean the prophetic activity in the book of Hosea by fleshing out unwarranted conclusions about brief, irrational, ecstatic frenzies from Hosea's oracular idiosyncracies.

Mixture of Prophetic and Divine Speech

More fruitful exegetical issues can be raised by moving beyond the mixture of prose and poetry to shifts in pronominal voice and verbal aspect. There is actually a relationship, though not immediately obvious, between the deviations in prose and poetry and the pronominal shifts. Both are specified in attempts to determine the authority inherent in prophetic language. Earlier critics believed that the highly charged prophetic poetry was evidence of divine control and authorization of the intermediary. In more recent commentaries authority is not determined by this so-called emotional quality; rather it may be the recognition of a deviation from prophetic to divine speech.

There is considerable disagreement about the usefulness of these data, if not the way in which it is obtained. While arguing for the unity of Hosea 13,

Rudolph is persuaded that nothing can be gained from the changes of speaker within the chapter.¹⁹⁵ Mays concurs but still draws a conclusion about the pronominal shifts, because "Hosea is so personally identified with his God that shifts to third-person references to Yahweh do not fundamentally interrupt the actuality of his function as God's spokesman."¹⁹⁶ To be specific, Wolff only accepts 13:4-14 as divine personal speech which is framed by prophetic discourse at vv. 1-3 and vv. 15--14:1. He too accepts the fundamental unity of the chapter because divine speech in Hosea signifies a consistent theme, but the disputation style, "with Yahweh in the third person, may appear in the midst of these complexes. This can result in a lively alternation from divine to prophetic speech."¹⁹⁷ Anderson-Freedman make the same comments,¹⁹⁸ but there is an obviously arbitrary procedure at work here. Why is the third-person speech of vv. 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14 considered divine speech though vv. 1-3 are not? The enigmatic category of disputation cannot adequately deal with such inconsistencies in the application of these data.

Buss also believes that legitimate distinctions can be made between divine and prophetic speech, and most of his book is structured around these shifts; "not as separable genres existing independently, but. . . they are factors of

¹⁹⁵ *Hosea*, pp. 241-42.

¹⁹⁶ *Hosea*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁷ *Hosea*, p. xxiii.

¹⁹⁸ *Hosea*, p. 627. Weiser, *Kleinen Propheten*, p. 96-97, sees this shift to divine speech at v. 4 as the highpoint in the chapter and the key to the setting.

style, perhaps not necessarily rigid ones."¹⁹⁹ Here he cautions against equating a particular prophetic form with a specific identification of a speaker, whether divine or prophetic, and he prefaces these remarks with scepticism concerning the identification of any divine speech whatsoever in the book.

Admittedly, the substantive distinction between the two types can be upheld only if one credits to divine speech no more than those sayings in which the divine "I" explicitly occurs. But two arguments point in favor of assigning doubtful cases to prophetic speech. First, the prophet is the actual speaker; "divine speech" is merely a term for those words in which an "I" other than the prophets becomes stylistically prominent. The burden of proof lies on the side of an assignment to Yahweh. Secondly, and more important, in content and evidently in feeling, grammatically neutral statements are closer. . . to clearly non-divine statements than to clearly divine ones.²⁰⁰

This is a useful conclusion even if Buss has arrived there on a highly subjective path of "feeling," "style," and "grammatically neutral statements" (that is, where no speaker is identified). Such subjectivity is apparent at Hos. 13:1-11, which he identifies as a case of direct divine address. This conclusion has little to do with identification of speaker on the basis of pronoun or speaker shifts. In v. 1 alone the subject of the verbs may have three referents: Ephraim the subject of the whole verse; the prophet Moses (compare Sellin's interpretation) could be the subject of *nāšā'* and *wayyamōt*, Ephraim the subject of *dabbēr*, and Israel the nation the subject of *wayye'šam*; or Yahweh as an emphatic pronoun might even be the subject of *nāšā'*.²⁰¹ These choices are all possible (though the first case is

¹⁹⁹Buss, *Hosea*, p. 65.

²⁰⁰*Hosea*, p. 64

²⁰¹Mauchline, *Hosea*, p. 704.

preferred), which makes it difficult to retrace the reasons that permit Buss to call vv. 1-3 divine speech, whereas Wolff hears the human and prophetic. We need to look at the specific subjects in Hosea 13 to illustrate the complexity.

The following table (2) will be of considerable assistance throughout Chapter 5 as we seek to discern specific shifts, whether in pronoun, verb, verbal tense or aspect.

From the column under person there is observed a rapid shift from first through third person speech.²⁰² As Buss stated, there is no rigidity; the shifts may well be a matter of style. Ephraim and Israel are both addressed in third person singular or plural ("he" or "they"). Only in vv. 4-5, 7-8, 9-12, and 14-15a can we be sure of divine speech. With this structure in view, it seems likely that these particular verses are brackets around their particular units. It is more accurate to say that the divine speech operates more specifically in a bracketing fashion than does the prophetic mode, though this is true of both. Compare the structure of alternating voices in the speeches as they are considered individually.

vv. 1-3	prophetic
4-5	divine
6	prophetic
7-8	divine
9-12	divine
10-13	prophetic
14-15a	divine
15b-16	prophetic

This alternation of prophetic and divine speech shows more complexity

²⁰²It is not yet possible to analyze this chart, since it will receive constant attention in Chapter 5.

TABLE 2

VERBAL AND PRONOMINAL TABLE (HOSEA 13)

Verb	Person	Number Gender	Aspect	Tense
(1) dabbēr	3rd	ms	piel perf	past
nāsā'	3rd	ms	kal perf	past
wayye'sam	3rd	ms	kal impf	past
wayyamōt	3rd	ms	kal impf	past
(2) yōsipû lah ^a to'	3rd	mpl	kal impf	present
wayya'sû	3rd	mpl	kal impf	present
hēm 'ōmrîm	3rd	mpl	kal part	present
yîssaqûn	3rd	mpl	kal impf	present
(3) yihyû	3rd	mpl	kal impf	future
yihyû	"	"	"	"
y ^e sō'ar	3rd	ms	pual impf	future
yihyû	"	"	"	"
(4) (copula)	1st	ms	kal	past
tēdā'	2nd	ms	kal impf	present
(copula)	3rd	ms	kal	present
(5) y ^e ra'tî	1st	ms	kal perf	past
(6) wayyîsbā'û	3rd	mpl	kal impf	past
śāb'û	3rd	mpl	kal perf	past
wayyārām	3rd	mpl	kal impf	past
š ^e kēhû	3rd	mpl	kal perf	present
(7) wā'hî	1st	ms	kal impf	future
'āšûr	1st	ms	kal impf	future
(8) 'epgaš	1st	ms	kal impf	future
w ^e 'eqra'	1st	ms	kal impf	future
('ōkēl)	---	ms	kal part	future
(t ^e baqqē')	2nd	fs	piel impf	future

Verb	Person	Number Gender	Aspect	Tense
(9) (copula)	3rd	ms	kal	present
(copula)	3rd	ms	kal	present
(10) (copula)	3rd	ms	kal	future
yôšîa'	3rd	ms	kal impf	future
w ^e yišpōtkā	3rd	ms	kal impf	future
'āmartā	2nd	ms	kal perf	past
t ^e nāh	2nd	ms	kal impv	present
(11) 'etten	1st	ms	kal impf	future
w ^e 'eqqah	1st	ms	kal impf	future
(12) (copula)	3rd	ms	kal	future
(copula)	3rd	fs	kal	future
(13) yābō'û	3rd	mpl	kal impf	present
(copula)	3rd	ms	kal	present
ya' ^a mōd	3rd	ms	kal impf	present
(14) 'epdēm	1st	ms	kal impf	future
'egālēm	1st	ms	kal impf	future
(copula)	3rd	mpl	kal	future
(copula)	3rd	mpl	kal	future
yissātēr	3rd	ms	niph impf	present
(15) yaprî'	3rd	ms	hiph impf	present
yābô'	3rd	ms	kal impf	future
'ōleh	3rd	ms	kal perf	present
w ^e yôbîš	3rd	ms	hiph impf	future
w ^e yah ^a rîb	3rd	ms	hiph impf	future
yîsseh	3rd	ms	kal impf	future
(16) te'šam	3rd	fs	kal impf	present
mārtāh	3rd	fs	kal perf	past
yippōlû	3rd	mpl	kal impf	future
y ^e rutṭāšû	3rd	mpl	piel impf	future
y ^e buqqā'û	3rd	mpl	piel impf	future

and precision than was expected. It is obvious that the shifts are directly linked to transitions from one speech form to another. This overall alternation will be verified in the forthcoming form-critical exegesis of each subunit in Chapter 5.

Equally significant conclusions can be gleaned from the column dealing with verbal tense (time). Throughout the book the prophet is apparently fond of expressions expecting immediate consequences. See Hos. 1:4 "in a short time"; 13:12, "when it was time," or the frequent expression *'attāh* "now." This sense of expectancy is not surprising if we note that the forms in Hosea 13 progress on a time continuum from past to present (or present to past) to future. This is clearest in vv. 1-3. Most importantly, each prophetic form arrives at an emphasis on the immediate future.²⁰³

These conclusions will be documented with greater detail, but first we turn to the methodological issues complicating the identification of the forms of prophetic speech that are present in Hosea 13. The two most important forms, which have merited extended discussion in the literature, are judgment oracles and inclusion--though the latter is a very complex mass of rhetorical activity, which include the problem of rhetorical questions in this specimen.

Are There Judgment Speeches in Hosea?

The history of research on the most important form-critical element in the prophetic vocabulary--the oracle or speech of judgment--has been the subject of many articles and monographs throughout the twentieth century. The refine-

²⁰³The movement from past to present to future is characteristic of Hosea's reappropriation of tradition, which is discussed in Chapter 8.

ments attained in understanding this form are carefully traced in Westermann's *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*.²⁰⁴ But Westermann propelled the discussion toward a new consensus through his emphasis on the messenger formula that introduces or concludes the judgment speech. He begins with the messenger speeches delivered before the king by the preclassical prophets. These individual oracles had a very specific orientation:

1. a particularized transgression is presupposed.
2. two inseparable parts--an accusation and an announcement of punishment--are presented.
3. the messenger formula is introduced at some point by "therefore," implying the stereotypical phrase, "thus says the Lord."
4. the announcement is presented in one simple, direct sentence of judgment.

By the classical period the form had evolved to include the entire nation. This meant that the accusation was broadened to contain a large number of violations. The announcement of judgment was also expanded; the form was then of a more complex structure:²⁰⁵

1. accusation
 - a. a general reproach
 - b. a citation of misdeeds
2. announcement
 - a. first-person speech of intervention by Yahweh
 - b. third-person sentence of punishment

Westermann has an explanation for those problematic speeches that offer no evidence of a messenger framework. Hosea, in particular, experiences this lack more than any other prophet. In a slightly circular sense, he asserts that a

²⁰⁴Transl. by H. C. White (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967).

²⁰⁵Westermann, *Basic Forms*, pp. 170-71.

speech is formally a message even before it is outfitted with any formula or framework.

Obviously, any ordinary speech cannot be made into a message by inserting it into the framework of a messenger speech, thus prefacing it with the aforementioned formulae: *the speech itself which is to be transmitted assumes, as a message, definite, fixed forms which first make it into a message.*²⁰⁶

He does not define any limits or narrow the definition of these fixed forms, and one wonders if any speech with fixed forms can be construed as a messenger speech, provided it is merely communicated from one person to another. The significance of the discovery is thus diluted.

This dilution is precisely what Westermann claims for the exilic and post-exilic prophets. The tight structure of the judgment against the nation loosened, and the distinction between the accusation and announcement became blurred, leaving no suitable slot for the messenger formulae.

The messenger formulae forfeits its pregnant meaning. Many times it is abbreviated to a mere "therefore"; this abbreviation is completely understandable because in prophetic speech to the people there was no longer any interest in setting off the announcement of judgment, as the real word from God, from the reason. Now it is no longer a matter of a single transgression of an individual. . . which can be established by any witness, but a complex of sins, offenses, and disobediences which the authority of the word of God demanded be exposed. So the messenger formulae can now be abbreviated, reconstructed, or even left out entirely."²⁰⁷

As predicted, nearly all examples of the two-part judgment against the nation are found outside Hosea, though there is a possible exception in Hos. 2:5-7, which is

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 111.

²⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 179-80.

the only pure form cited. The form is supposedly reversed at Hos. 9:7-9; the announcement of punishment (intervention and result) precedes the accusation (general and expanded). At other points (again, outside chapter 13) there are only fragmentary hints for the expected judgment form: an accusation against the priestly house in 5:1-2 and fragmentary sentences of punishment at 2:16-18, 21-23.

Westermann prefers not to explain the compilation of Hosea as a post-exilic task. In his evolutionary schema, it was not until the exilic period and following that prophetic speeches were delivered with lengthy, complex expansions. The transmission of Hosea is apparently an exception because its composition is generally attributed to pre-exilic contexts (with possible minor glosses from the south at a later date).

The small collection of speeches clearly set off in Hos. 9:10--13:11, in which each prophetic speech contains the expansion and which was obviously compiled on the basis of this criterion, shows that the contrast construction as an expansion of the [Judgment against the Nation] was already recognized by those who transmitted the prophetic books.²⁰⁸

In this collection, especially in chapters 9, 11, and 13, one is unable to separate the "expansions" from the essential and purposeful structure of the oracles. This becomes very clear in the inclusion at 13:9-15a. It is conceivable that this inclusion is the exilic accomplishment of a Judean editor, but that would return the state of form criticism to an unacceptable position which presupposed short ecstatic utterances from a frenzied intermediary. The inclusion here, as we shall demonstrate, unifies what otherwise appears to be disjointed phrases.

²⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 182-83.

Further, H. J. Boecker identifies these expansions (*Tatfolgebestimmung*) in both the accusation (indictment) and sentence (reproach). This widespread distribution partly convinced Boecker that the threat and reproach are unified in a single judgment speech. If Westermann had come to this same conclusion on these grounds rather than the other ones, mentioned above, he might have resisted the tendency to argue that a more complex, expanded form is necessarily later. This principle is certainly rejected in the New Testament practice of form criticism.²⁰⁹

There is more dissatisfaction in Buss' work with the traditional understanding of the so-called judgment speeches in Hosea. Buss is unconvinced by the usual explanation for third person pronouns (indirect speech) in the accusations: (1) the people are literally absent and the prophet reports what the people have said, or (2) the legal style of the oracle against the nations, which presupposes a courtroom proceeding. But Buss cannot imagine a realistic context for this particular legal process in Hosea.

Third person accusations in Hosea hardly reflect legal style, since there is no forum to which they are referred, for even a human king dispenses with the court situation for his own cases. . . .The style of the declaration of judgment is too variable to provide a firm analogy: if a framework is assumed, a sentencing in absentia can provide the background of indirect speech.²¹⁰

Buss proposes a much more complex envelope for Hosea's discourse. Threat,

²⁰⁹H. J. Boecker, *Redeformen des Rechtsleben im Alten Testament*, WMANT 14 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964). Westermann does accept the early date, if not the originality in the first edition, of the Hosea expansions. But this implication is certainly overlooked in his conclusions about the lateness of other expansions.

²¹⁰*Hosea*, pp. 76-77.

lamentation, and accusation are intertwined around a principle of "appropriate-consequence." The prepositive causal *ki* is combined with second person direct address (see 4:6; 5:1; 8:7a; and 10:13-14) in a transition that specifies the third person, indirect consequences of Israel's actions. Hosea inherited this rather rare oratorical technique from *priestly laws or curses on the people* (exemplified at Gen. 3:14, 17 and Numb. 15:31) who oppose Yahweh.²¹¹

This "appropriate-consequence" principle is more recognizable as the equivalent of Klaus Koch's widely-accepted "act-consequence" schema in the Hebrew Bible. Like Koch, Buss asserts that the irresistible power of the spoken word works like a sacred curse. Merely by stating the accusation in a cultic setting, the sentence is guaranteed. "The diagnosis seals the doom."²¹²

Buss' explanation of a priestly, cultic setting for Hoseanic accusations and curses is convincing, but his explanation of how such language might assume authority over the listeners is not as persuasive. If prophetic (divine) speech truly had such awesome power in ancient Israel, we surely should expect a far more awesome and careful response to the pre-exilic, prophetic message. This hypothetical reverence for the power of the message should be demonstrated by the absence of physical abuse against the prophets. Audience reaction and later traditions show that the prophets suffered severe opposition when they presented judgments and curses. Much more fundamentally at issue is the philosophical un-

²¹¹Ibid., pp. 119-120. We will have reason to note that this explanation is slightly less than adequate for Hosea 13. Deitic *ki* is not used; rather *ya'an* or *laken* introduce the execution of the curse. Buss does allow similar meaning to *ki* and *laken*.

²¹²Ibid., p. 122.

derstanding of language that influences and undergirds these act-consequence explanations for prophetic authority and institutional setting. An entire monograph should be devoted to this subject because it is so widespread throughout scholarship on the Hebrew Bible. The subject will be treated later in Chapter 7, when the power inherent in metaphorical language is related to the study of continuity and discontinuity in the prophetic use of tradition.

Inclusion in Hosea

An important feature in the development of form criticism, which has simultaneously affected rhetorical criticism, is the process of identifying a chiasmus or an inclusion. The significance of these structures is detailed in J. Lundbom's work on Hosea's heir, Jeremiah.²¹³ It is not surprising, provided we admit that Jeremiah inherits the theological and metaphorical legacy of Hosea,²¹⁴ that both of these structures are found in Hosea 13.

Though inclusion is also found by D. N. Freedman and J. Lundbom at three other places in Hosea, we acknowledge the warning of form critics who are sceptical about the usefulness of inclusion formations.²¹⁵

To be a rhetorical inclusio, the terms must close off the unit by bringing the auditor's attention back to its beginning. Once the recurrence of a term or of similar terms has been observed it is necessary to make

²¹³ *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, SBL Dissertation 18 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1975).

²¹⁴ These connections are developed by the present writer in "Israel in the Balance: Metaphors of Judgment and Mercy," *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration in Prophetic Thought*, ed. by Avraham Gileadi (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986).

²¹⁵ Michael V. Fox, "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones," *HUCA* 51 (1980), p. 14, note 18.

a subjective evaluation of their rhetorical effect. . . . There must be rhetorical gain. . . . An inclusio, especially when it consists of a repeated and prominent idea and not of one word, can summarize the unit and reinforce memory.

M. Fox's caution is well received, for it is possible to identify an insignificant inclusion or chiasm. There is need for an exegetical reward, but it does not have to be limited to oratorical persuasion. It is unacceptable to assume that language, be it imagistic or the rhetorical structures of chiasmus or inclusion, is spoken only for the sake of persuasion and technical superiority. Lundbom's dissertation, which describes so many instances of chiasmus and inclusion throughout an entire prophetic book, is a corrective to the atomistic tendencies ironically present in form criticism, because these structures are more fundamental than other potential structures.

Hosea 8:9-13

Freedman has analyzed the first inclusion, which is translated in full:

Indeed, they have gone up to Assyria . . .

A wild ass roaming alone,
Ephraim buys herself lovers.
Even if they hire among the nations,
I will retrieve them immediately,
And for now they will quit anointing kings and princes.

Ephraim has so many altars for sin
because he has multiplied altars for sin.
I write for him my laws by ten thousands;
they are regarded as a stranger.
They sacrifice gifts, they sacrifice flesh, and they eat.²¹⁶

²¹⁶The Hebrew is very difficult, especially with the *hapax legomena*, *habhābāy*, discussed in Chapter 2, at the section on 13:2. I am reading *zabḥû habhābāy/ zabḥû bāsār/ wayy'okēlû*, instead of the curious *zibḥê hahābhāy yizbḥû bāsār wayy'okēlû* in the MT. This only requires identifying a defective *waw* and dittography on the *yod*.

The Lord is hardly pleased by them.
He will remember their iniquity immediately,
and he will punish their sins.

. . . *They will return to Egypt.*

The opening and closing phrases "constitute a normal bicolon which the poet has broken up in order to give this unit of poetry a frame."²¹⁷ The bracket serves to indict the harlotrous monarchy with the idolatrous priesthood in a conspiracy against the authority of Yahweh. Their future course (onward to Assyria) will revert them to past bondage (backward to Egypt).

Hosea 4:4b-9a, 11-14

Two other inclusions created from a broken bicolon are analyzed by

Lundbom.

Your people are like the contentions of a priest . . .

You shall stumble by day,
and the prophet also will stumble with you by night,
and I will destroy your mother.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge;
because you have rejected knowledge,
so I reject you from being priest to me.
And since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I will forget your children--even I.

The more they increased,
the more they sinned against me.
I will engage their glory for shame.
They feed on the sin of "My people";
they are greedy for their iniquity.

²¹⁷J. R. Lundbom, "Poetic Structure and Prophetic Rhetoric in Hosea," *VT* 29 (1979), p. 300-01; "Contentious Priests and Contentious People in Hosea iv:1-10," *VT* 36 (1986), pp. 64-68. He also cites other examples of this broken bicola at Deut. 12-13, 14:2-21; and in Jer. 51:20-23. Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 321, suggest that the inclusion runs from 4:6aA-14bB.

. . . Therefore, it shall be like people, like priest.

New wine takes away the sense of "My people". . .

"My People" makes requests of his sacred tree,
his staff gives oracles to him.

Because a spirit of harlotry causes them to wander,
they play the harlot--
away from their God, upon the tops of hills they sacrifice,
and upon the hills they burn incense--
under oaks, poplar, and terebinth
because shade is good there.

Therefore, let your daughters play the harlot,
and let your brides commit adultery.
I will not punish your daughters for playing the harlot,
nor your brides for committing adultery,
because [the men] themselves are paired with harlots,
and they sacrifice with cult prostitutes.

. . . A people without sense will be thrown down.

The inclusions at 4:11-14 and 8:9-13 contain seven bicolic or tricolic lines within the broken bicolon, adding up to a total of eight lines in the unit. A similar feature is repeated in Hosea 13, which we will presently add to this growing list.

Lundbom believes that Hosea was fond of the broken bicolon to keep the audience off balance and waiting for the tidy but surprising conclusion to the argument.²¹⁸ But the frequency and typicality of this particular inclusion structure press us to expand the usual explanation of an important rhetorical or oratorical device. It appears to be inherent to prophetic speech in Hosea, and Lundbom documents its pervasiveness as the fundamental structure for delimiting

²¹⁸"Contentious Priests," pp. 67-68. "Hosea does not want to be too clear. In fact, he is probably being purposefully obscure."

speeches in Jeremiah. Elsewhere in Hosea, Andersen-Freedman identify the inclusion at 2:4-15 and 7:12-16.²¹⁹ The audience always includes the monarchy and the priesthood. If inclusion is only stylistic ornamentation, it is of little consequence to the goals of interpretation, but in Hosea its structure is consistently fused with the content of harlotry, torah revelation, and sacrifice. The same themes are evident in Hos. 13:9-15a, which will be dissected in Chapter 5 after the related cultic themes of fertility, law, and ritual apostasy are explored in light of past research on Hosea.

²¹⁹*Hosea*, pp. 128, 470. The later is another example of the inclusion with broken bicolon that bracket several bicola or tricola.

CHAPTER IV

HOSEA AND THE CULT

With only an occasional exception,²²⁰ all who approach Hosea are struck by the profound importance that the cult assumes in the message. However, there has been no agreement about how the words of Hosea indicate which institutional attachments or detachments that the prophet may have cultivated. Past scholarship has institutionalized the speeches of Hosea in three ways: with connections to the fertility cult; with links to juridical practices acculturated from the secular courts; and as a levitical prophet trained to search out and destroy cultic apostasy. The speech forms that hypothetically fit the first two settings have been well described, but the third explanation, which has gained the most recent adherents, has been relatively unsubstantiated with unique speech forms.

Connection with the Fertility Cult

Hosea is obviously familiar with the cultic practices assigned to the Ba'al deity in Canaan. J. L. Mays inadvertently overstates the connection by claiming that Ba'al mythology "is the foil of most of Hosea's sayings."²²¹ Perhaps such generalizations are encouraged by H. L. May's influential essay which comes from

²²⁰The perspective of Helmut Utzschneider and Richard Hentschke will be appropriately discussed in Chapter 7. Their approach is more consistent with traditio-historical concerns.

²²¹*Hosea*, p. 8.

a period when the religion of Mesopotamia was far too easily paralleled with that of Canaan.²²² Consequently, some commentators (for example, J. Mauchline) failed, as did May, to make distinctions between the cult dominated by a bovine deity and the one dedicated to the dying and rising vegetation deity. Mauchline includes the elements of Ba'al worship, drunken orgies, plastic images, and *hieros gamos* all under one rubric and presented as if the religions of the ancient Near East were one.²²³

Cultic Sites and Language

An inductive approach to the book (as much dependant on tradition as form) does find considerable circumstantial evidence for the influence of cultic activity upon Hosea's message. (1) Several cultic sites are legitimately associated with words of judgment against idolatry:²²⁴

8:5 the calf of Samaria

4:15 the calf at Beth-aven

5:8 " "

10:5 " "

12:2 bull-sacrifice at Gilgal

10:15 wickedness of Bethel

12:5 Jacob at Bethel

6:8 blood at Gilead (child sacrifice?)

²²²"The Fertility Cult in Hosea," *American Journal of Semitic Literature* 48 (1932), p. 76-98.

²²³*Hosea*, p. 554.

²²⁴Renee Vuilleumeir-Bessard, *La tradition cultuelle dans la prophetie d'Amos et d'Osee* (Neuchatel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1960), p. 39. A more comprehensive listing is found in Grace Emmerson, *Hosea*, pp. 120-30.

- 9:15 wickedness in Gilead
- 9:9 Gibeah is a place of corruption
10:9 " "
- 5:1-2 Mizpah, Tabor, and Shittim are corrupt
- 5:8 cultic music at Ramah
- 6:9 murder (of priests?) on the way to Shechem

Nearly every possible cultic site in the north is identified by the prophet. This attention to detail is all the more important when it is remembered that not one contemporary individual (with the exceptions in the Deuteronomistic superscription) is identified by name. To be sure, there is no proof in some citations that cultic practices are involved at every location; however, good evidence can be supplied for each site.²²⁵ For example, the supposed place name, Beth-aven, "house of iniquity," has been revocalized (*Bet-ʿāwôn*) and translated "house of wealth" by Grace Emmerson.²²⁶ But this modification is unnecessary in the new context. It is true that Hosea does not denounce the sanctuary in essence. However, Hosea separates the sin from the place where sinners gather (Bethel), and he emphasizes this aspect by renaming the site with his pun: Beth-aven.

(2) Certain terms such as *ʿāšam*, *ḥesed*, *ʾemet*, and *raḥam* are further evidence of Hosea's cultic critique upon Israelite society, and they are probably

²²⁵References to cultic objects at these sites are beyond doubt: altars (4:19; 10:2, 8; 12:12), a wooden oracle staff (4:12), and the ephod (3:4).

²²⁶*Hosea*, p. 124. For a summary of the literature on the identity of Beth-aven see Ernst A. Knauf, "Beth Aven," *Biblica* 65 (1985), pp. 251-53.

only learned at the cultic site. More specific language could be involved if the prophet is denouncing certain false gods:²²⁷

<i>pesel</i>	11:2
<i>'āṣāb</i>	4:17, 8:4, 13:2, 14:9
<i>massēkāh</i>	13:2
<i>ma^aśeh yādênû</i>	14:4
<i>qālôn</i>	4:7, 18

But in each of these verbal or locative connections the data are easily manipulated into links for many forms of cultic activity. Nyberg stressed the operation of *melek*-ideology (divine kingship) that was supposedly dominant in the Canaanite faith. He assumes the typical cult drama that leads the king-god from chaos to creation and from death to life.²²⁸

Dying and Rising Deity

Similar Mesopotamian parallels are crucial to H. G. May's definition of the fertility cult encountered by Hosea. The cult of the dying and rising vegetation deity is responsible for the liturgy of Hosea 5:13--6:3. The wild animal kills the vegetation deity, but the spring rains engender new birth to Ephraim, the deity. The wounded Ephraim approaches Assyria--the land of no return or the netherworld--for healing. They hope that the sacred marriage (*hieros gamos*) of the people with the land (mother goddess), which is celebrated through cultic

²²⁷Vuilleumier-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, pp. 30-33; see also the table of false deities in Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 649-50.

²²⁸See H. S. Nyberg, *Hoseabuch*, and the critique by Gunnar Östborn, *Yahweh and Ba'al: Studies in the Book of Hosea and Related Documents* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1956), p. 7.

prostitution, can restore their health and prosperity.²²⁹

May finishes the reconstruction with an analysis of Hosea 13. There child sacrifice is offered to release the curse of infertility (13:12) and bring the dying god from Sheol (the netherworld) back to life (13:14), but Ephraim is stubborn and cannot break out of the womb. Lifegiving water is dried up by the eastwind (13:15). Lifelessness is evident in all species (5:6-7, 10:5, 2:8-11, 9:11-14).²³⁰

Hosea 13 and 5:8--6:6 are spliced together into a single sophisticated cultic drama by May to explain the institutional setting for the speeches of Hosea. This is unfortunate, not only because the reconstruction has influenced much subsequent research on Israelite popular religion but because it arises from a "flat" unidimensional reading of the biblical and extrabiblical material. May has drawn parallels from all cultures of the ancient Near East. Then he chooses corroborating examples of this fertility religion as if all the prophets represent the same viewpoint. Even if the texts of Ezek. 16:20-22; 37; Jer. 32:35; and Ps. 106:37-39 reflect a very broad and universally recognized picture of Canaanite fertility religion, it is still necessary for May to rationalize with the characters in the drama: How can the victim in the Hoseanic liturgies (Ephraim himself) also represent the dying god?²³¹

²²⁹"Fertility Cult," pp. 73-75.

²³⁰Ibid., pp. 76-77, 96-98. The other images referring to children are also explained in behalf of this fertility drama; for example, the wayward son of 11:1, 3 and the symbolic names for Hosea's children in chapter 1.

²³¹Ibid., p. 96.

The mythology of *hieros gamos* is also applied by E. Jacob to Hosea's protest against cultic prostitution and worship of the vegetation deity. Earlier attacks against the Canaanites were based on political considerations of the ninth century (Elijah and then Jehu), but Hosea develops a personal cultic attack which is influenced by desert nomadism. Jacob's dependance on the theme of the dying and rising deity is not nearly as radical as is that of May. He notes some survival of lamentation rites for the dead deity at 7:14-16, when Ephraim wails on its bed and lacerates itself in ba'alistic masochism, perhaps at Beth-aven.²³² But Jacob, influenced by R. Bultmann, claims that the prophet "demythologizes" the theme of death. It is historicized and applied to the people:

- 2:5 People mourn their thirst
- 3:3 People thirst and die in the desert
- 5:7 People are devoured by the New Moon
- 5:12 People are devoured by moth and rot
- 6:6 People are dead
- 7:9 People are devoured by aliens
- 8:8 People are captured by the fowler
- 9:16 People are dried up, barren
- 13:7 People are devoured by animals

This historicization eventually requires a conversion of God in chapter 11 that overcomes the moment of nonexistence (chaos) for the people as they are restored to life.²³³

²³² "L'heritage Canaaneen dans le livre du prophete Osée," *RHPR* 43 (1963), pp. 251-54. Other potential texts that represent lamentation rituals are 2:11, 4:6, 5:6, 5:14, 9:12, and 10:5. Compare the death-cult practices in Song. 3:1-3 for the ritual background of divine marriage and lamentation for the dead.

²³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 255-57.

Hosea 5:8--6:6

This general overview of Hosea's theology which is supplied by Jacob has some appealing elements because it appreciates the mythic character of Canaanite faith. The desire to overcome death and the hope for restored life are powerful urges that the fertility cult tries to address. But how can one tell if Hosea has only appropriated the positive, historicized elements of Canaanite faith? Indeed, is the prophet actually "demythologizing"? This dilemma of how to choose between history and myth is well illustrated in the positions that have crystalized around Hos. 5:8--6:6.

(1) As noted above, some critics connect 5:8ff. with the life and death celebrated by Ba'al's springtime victory in the fertility cult. There are images of the Lion (5:14) as a sexual symbol of the netherworld, the Dawn (6:3) as the "benevolent god begotten by 'EL, who intervened at the time of the rainy season," or the Dew (6:3), who functioned as Ba'al's own daughter to bring either blessing or slippery instability. But this reconstruction is highly conjectured since there is no evidence of a dying and rising god in Ba'alism.²³⁴ It is now apparent that few if any scholars still link 5:8--6:6 to the vegetation cult of Tammuz and Adonis.²³⁵ Instead, the pericope is usually explained as a political metaphor of national sickness.

(2) When Hosea mockingly repeats the pious plaint of the people (6:1-3),

²³⁴J. Wijngaards, "Death and Resurrection in Covenantal Context (Hosea 6:2)," *VT* 17 (1967), pp. 227-28. He places the text in a unique covenant liturgy.

²³⁵O. Loretz, "Tod und Leben nach altorientalischer und kanaanischer biblischer Anschauung," *Biblische Notizen* 17 (1982), p. 37.

is he demythologizing Canaanite liturgy to present a veiled attack on concurrent political developments? This widely-held explanation is derived from A. Alt's classic essay.²³⁶ Alt had broken the text into a series of five discontinuous oracles that outlined the events of the Syro-Ephraimite war:²³⁷

- 5:8-9 Syria and Ephraim fail in invasion of Judah
- 5:10 Imperialistic Judah deserved the attack
- 5:11 Ephraim is losing the war
- 5:12--14 Ephraim and Judah are vassals of Assyria
- 5:15--6:6 The religious solution: return to Yahweh

There has been significant opposition to this majority opinion. First G. Fohrer and then E. M. Good objected to such precise historical allusions behind the prophetic poetry.²³⁸ Further, Alt is forced to adjust the text to fit the Syro-Ephraimite context.²³⁹ There are far too many emendations for us to be convinced that this text should be removed from the sanctuary and into the

²³⁶"Hosea 5:8-6:6. Ein Krieg und seine Folgen in prophetischer Beleuchtung," *Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift* 30 (1919), pp. 537-68; also found in *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (München: C. H. Beck, 1953-59).

²³⁷The same position is modified by H. W. Wolff, *Hosea*, to include, as one kerygmatic unit, 5:8--7:16. Most recently, M. W. E. Thompson has completely resurrected Alt's thesis in *Situation and Theology: Old Testament Interpretations of the Syro-Ephraimite War* (Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1982). Millard C. Lind, "Hosea 5:8--6:6," also reproduces Alt's thesis in *Interpretation* 38 (1984), pp. 398-403.

²³⁸G. Fohrer, "Umkehr und Erlösung beim Propheten Hosea," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 11 (1955), p. 165; E. M. Good, "Hosea 5.8--6.6: An Alternative to Alt," *JBL* 85 (1966), pp. 273-86.

²³⁹One can see the direct influence of Alt's article on Elliger's textual apparatus for the *BHS* and on the translation of the RSV: 5:8 *hah^aridû* should be read for *'ah^arêkâ*; 5:11 *šārô* should be read for *šāw* and *waw* is omitted in 5:12; 5:13 *ûbêt y^ehûdâh* should be read for *wayyîšlah*, *melek yārēb* is redivided to *malk^hrâb*, *yigheh* is repointed to read *yagheh* (hiphil); 5:15 *ye^smû* is repointed to agree with LXX root *ś.m.m.*; 6:2 *w^eniḥyeh l^epānâw* is deleted; 6:3 *w^enēd'āh* is deleted, *k^ešah^arēnû kēn nimšā'ennû* should be read for *kešahar nākôn mōšū 'ô*, *yarweh* should be read for *yôreh*; and finally in 6:5 he deletes the first clause, "I have hewn them by the prophets," is deleted because he does not understand it.

purely political context.²⁴⁰

(3) Instead, Good would link the poem to the cult because of theophanic and liturgical elements. The three accusations (removing boundaries, following false torah commands, and finding foreign assistance); the emphasis on Yahweh returning to his place (*m^eqomî*) at the cult-site of theophany; the acknowledgment of guilt (*'š.m.*); the seeking (*b.q.š.*; after oracles); the dawn liturgy and divination (*s.h.r.* could be the two day purification comparable to Exod. 19:11, 15, 16) followed by theophany on the third day when Yahweh is expected to come forth like the rain; and the response of divine judgment that reverses the popular application of repentance--all these "point to a liturgical setting with two foci: legal judgment and restoration through theophany."²⁴¹

Good also sets Hos. 9:1-6 with the New Year autumn festival because of numerous allusions to food, threshing floors, winevats, *tišmah* and *tagîl*, the House of Yahweh, the feast, precious silver and vessels, and booths (tents).²⁴² The festival context for 9:1-6 and 5:8--6:6 is convincing,²⁴³ though I resist identifying the New Year festival, and the supposed connections with the Babylonian

²⁴⁰Good, "Alternative to Alt," p. 276. Thompson's use of this material (*Situation and Theology*, pp. 19-20, 75) points to an obvious contradiction. He readily admits that 6:1-6 is set in the context of the sanctuary, but the consequences of this setting are completely overlooked for 5:8-16. He asserts that 5:8--7:16 is one unredacted kerygmatic unit addressing the Syro-Ephraimite War, but the significance of the liturgical poetry at the heart of this oracle is completely denied. In the final analysis, even Alt's reconstruction has to give priority to the longest speech, which prescribes the religious solution.

²⁴¹Good, "Alternative to Alt," pp. 277-80, 85.

²⁴²This hypothesis was developed from a suggestion by Wellhausen in *Die Kleinen Propheten*, p. 122. See Good, "The Composition of Hosea," p. 43.

²⁴³See also Mauchline, *Hosea*, pp. 557-58.

akitû are not compelling. Shortly, I shall link Hosea 13 with a general New Moon festival, and it appears that the data in 5:8ff. and 9:1ff. could fit in an equally general context. It is very difficult to associate Hosea with the autumn festival, Exodus 19, and the parallel *akitû*. Ephraim and Judah, as enemy states, would have to be identified separately at the same national festival in the eighth century. It is more likely that the prophet is operating at a local festival in the north, probably initiated like most festivals by the lunar celebration. But prior to this reconstruction we remember that the hypothesis of the New Year festival took a significant turn in subsequent prophetic research. The prophet became a covenant mediator overseeing covenant lawsuits at the annual autumn festival. This is the second manner in which Hosea has been connected to the cultic institution in Israel.

Connection with Covenant Law

By allowing the importance of the Mosaic tradition at 9:10, 11:1ff., 12:13, and 13:4, Good proceeded to establish Hosea as a Mosaic covenant mediator that oversaw the prophetic lawsuit during the annual festival. Though there is a marked lack of data for filling in these reconstructions, the Israelite prophet has often been granted this particular responsibility for handling public and cultic legal matters. The story of this hypothesis is lengthy and can only be explained as it relates to Hosea.

Previously we noted that Westermann discussed the legal setting present in every judgment speech against the nation.²⁴⁴ J. L. Mays would localize such

²⁴⁴Westermann, *Basic Forms*, p. 199.

legal activity at the city gate where a complaint (*rib*) could be adjudicated.²⁴⁵

W. Brueggemann then takes the prophetic lawsuit, justice in the gate, and the covenant context as far as it can go in Hosea.²⁴⁶

Covenant Mediator

Gerhard von Rad had described the cultic ceremonies which were developed in two forms, depending upon either Exodus 19-23 or Deuteronomy 1-11.²⁴⁷ From this Brueggemann developed an extensive description of Hosea's role as Mosaic mediator of covenant lawsuits.

Much of the groundwork for this reconstruction of Hosea's place in society comes from the ongoing discussion about the nature of the judgment speech. Brueggemann calls it "indictment speech," but he admits that "the form is broken in Hosea to an exceptional extent." He still identifies nearly every attack or accusation as a fragment of the legal form, but the only pure text he can exemplify is 4:1-2, which consists of the following elements.²⁴⁸

Summons to Hear
Name of Accused
Name of Accuser
Announcement of Trial
General Accusation
Specific Accusation

²⁴⁵ Hosea, p. 6. He observes that the term *rib* occurs four times (2:2, 4:1, 4:4, 12:2). The change in speaker and addressee is part of the trial procedure.

²⁴⁶ Brueggemann, *Tradition for Crisis: A Study in Hosea* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1968).

²⁴⁷ Gerhard von Rad, "The Form-Critical Problem of the Hexateuch," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, transl. by E. W. T. Dickens (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). See also Vuilleumeir-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, p. 29.

²⁴⁸ Brueggemann, *Tradition for Crisis*, pp. 55, 58-59.

The sentence then follows in 4:3, but it is not a threat since that would imply anger or vengeance. Rather it appeals, according to Brueggemann, to covenant cursing in Leviticus 26, which affects many speeches in Hosea:

5:2b	//	26:18, 28	(the guilty will be chastized)
4:5, 5:5b	//	26:37	(the unfaithful will stumble)
11:6, 13:16	//	26:25	(the vengeful sword will destroy)
5:14, 13:7-8	//	26:22	(the wild animals will ravage)
4:10, 13:6	//	26:26	(the food will not satisfy)

Both parts of this lawsuit (indictment and sentence) are said to exist in broken form throughout Hosea as part of a covenant liturgy, which includes stipulations or laws (Lev. 26:1-2) and cursings (26:14-39). Brueggemann proposes more than the simple juridical context allowed by Westermann. He requires a solemn gathering for the purpose of covenant renewal, at which Yahweh prosecutes.²⁴⁹ There is no actual courtroom process or trial, but it is the closest functional analogy to the covenant encounter.

Inadequacy of the Lawsuit Analogy

There is dissatisfaction with this particular legal setting for Hosea 4:1-3 because it is institutionally and functionally inadequate, though Brueggemann is headed in a useful direction with an emphasis on cultic cursing. The commitment to the lawsuit analogy thoroughly overwhelms the more important clues to institutional setting. And if this explanation fails with the only pure example of the lawsuit model for Hosea, it cannot be pressed into service for the "broken" forms.

M. DeRoche has demonstrated that the usual translation of *rib* as

²⁴⁹Though not explicit, he also implies a link to the model of the vassal treaty.

"lawsuit" is too dogmatic. In Hosea 4:3 there is a "dispute" between two arguing friends or lovers.²⁵⁰ In this text there are only two parties involved when three separate identities--plaintiff, defendant, and judge--are required for the courtroom. The model of a lawsuit is forced too far if we claim that Yahweh functions as both plaintiff and judge (in other examples of the so-called lawsuit, the mountains and heavens do not judge; rather they witness [hear] the accusations). "A *rîb* is something [people] have prior to the initiation of any juridical procedure. . . .The term *rîb* does not indicate the means of its own solution."²⁵¹ By limiting the functional setting of the passage to a courtroom proceeding, we are forced unnecessarily into a choice of narrowing the model further to either secular law (H. J. Boecker) or covenant law (Mendenhall and Wüthwein).

Those who opt for the model of covenant law are not willing to eliminate the elements of the secular court from the covenantal process. It is helpful to explain, without recourse to the city gate in Hosea, the role of priestly blessing for obedience and cursing for ritual and political apostasy. This activity probably did take place during either a solemn or festive assembly, but it goes beyond the evidence to assume the New Year autumn gathering for every "broken" speech in Hosea.

²⁵⁰Michael De Roche, "The Reversal of Creation in Hosea (4:1-3)," *VT* (1981), pp. 400-09.

²⁵¹DeRoche, "Yahweh's *rîb* Against Israel: A Reassessment of the So-called 'Prophetic Lawsuit' in the Pre-exilic Prophets," *JBL* 102 (1983), pp. 568-69. In the very act of passing judgment the deity is assuming fault if not accusation. This type of divine authority does not qualify Yahweh as a plaintiff in the sense of an intentional legal assembly. According to DeRoche, "a *rîb* is a grievance that one party brings against another. . . .The difference between a *rîb* and a lawsuit is that a *rîb* is a contention, while a lawsuit is a particular way of solving a contention" (p. 369). There are many way of solving contentions, including arbitration, debate, murder, and war.

Connection with Apostasy

The history of the judgment speech has been inseparably linked to that of the covenant mediator who prosecutes the divine lawsuit. But the nature of the accusations and the essence of the cultic guilt that is specified have required a closer inspection of cursing, as the subject is treated in recent commentaries on Hosea.

Cultic Cursing

In our overview of judgment speeches we noted that Westermann saw cursing as the antecedent to the ideal judgment speeches of the classical prophets. Likewise it is apparent that the speeches of Hosea are antecedant to the ideal form of the judgment speech. Nevertheless prior scholarly reconstructions have forced on Hosea the structures of judgment speeches that are more appropriate to other prophets.

A basic consideration is the setting in life of the Israelite curse. If the conclusions in W. Schottroff's exhaustive study are acceptable, then cursing has nothing to do with cultic life, and thus prophecy that engages in cursing has nothing to do with cultic life.²⁵² He is convinced that cursing emerges from the magical ethos of the desert tribe. It has a setting in the fundamental human conflict of the nomadic lifestyle. The simplest, purest form of the curse involves the participle *'arûr* "Cursed be you."²⁵³

For our purposes the original tribal ethos is not decisive, and some of

²⁵²*Der altisraelitische Fluchspruch* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969).

²⁵³*Ibid.*, pp. 17-19, 206-07.

Schottroff's assumptions require close scrutiny. First, the anthropological identity for early Israel as nomadic in the Bedouin sense is questioned and doubted now that biblical sociology is clarifying the institutional structures of the ancient Near East. Second, he engages a genetic fallacy by assuming that the origin of cursing prohibits any absorption into the cult over the ensuing and complex centuries. Thus he reasons that the curse collection in Deuteronomy 27-28 is "secondary" and that the conditional curse, "you shall surely die," has its provenance apart from cultic law.²⁵⁴ Thirdly, he has restricted the qualifications for a curse far too much. Curses throughout the ancient Near East do not have to depend on a technical term, such as *'arûr*, to be considered part of a curse collection.

We think it reasonable to allow cursing within the cult of the eighth century B.C.E., but we must still determine its purpose with reference to the functionaries of the cult. At issue is the research on the authority attached to the ancient curse (and other speech forms in ancient Israelite language). It is usually believed, since the days of Johannes Hempel, that blessing and cursing are rooted in magic. But "according to this logic virtually all biblical poetry would have to be rooted in magical incantations."²⁵⁵ The crucial issue here is the power of the spoken word, an issue that seems to permeate all discussions of Israelite language. We shall need to approach the subject as a whole in Part 3, but

²⁵⁴Ibid., p. 129.

²⁵⁵H. C. Brichto, *The Problem of "Curse" in the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1965), p. 205.

are assured with Brichto that the Israelite curse is "subordinated to the will of Yahweh" in the Hebrew Bible.²⁵⁶ This conclusion distances the prophetic curse, which is generally delivered in first person speech of the deity, from any setting among nomads who practice incantation and imprecation.

Hosea as Cultic Curser

Some of the curses in Hosea have no connection to the known curse collections in Leviticus or Deuteronomy: rot and moth (5:2), fire (8:14), miscarriage (9:14), unclean food (9:3), nets (7:12),²⁵⁷ and thistles and thorns (10:8). But this diversity of curses, when combined with the known stock curses from the legal narratives, has encouraged the most recent work on Hosea to yoke the prophet to cultic ceremony in terms of curses on apostasy. Though Wolff could not place Hosea exclusively at cultic places (2:4-17; 4:4-19; 9:1-9, and add 13:1--14:1, which he inadvertently overlooks) or at the city gate (4:1-3, 5:1-7, 5:8--8:14, 12:1-14), he did initiate the proposition of priestly cursing.

It is the Levites who are said to be the guardians of the first "theology"--*da'at 'lōhîm*--or knowledge of God.²⁵⁸ These priests and their prophetic supporters were to educate the people on the difference between the holy and the profane: the nature of cultic sins (*hattā't*) that bring on cultic guilt

²⁵⁶Ibid., p. 7.

²⁵⁷The curse of nets is known from ancient Near Eastern texts. See M. Buss, *Hosea*, p. 113.

²⁵⁸H. W. Wolff, "Wissen um Gott' bei Hosea als Urformen von Theologie," in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964), pp. 182, 193ff.; first published in *Evangelische Theologie* 12 (1953), pp. 533-40. Note that Wolff has a thoroughly secular setting for 4:1-3, though Brueggemann placed it at the renewal ceremony.

(*'awon*, which requires cultic exposure (*'š.m.--*"to become guilty").²⁵⁹ Rather than a personal, intimate knowledge of God, as some assume from the marriage metaphor in Hosea 1-3 (there it is love *'āhab* of God), Hosea the theologian is requiring a cognitive, legal estimate of the deity, a proper discernment of the presence of the Holy One in piety, worship, and ritual matters.²⁶⁰

This is not the place to take up the emerging opposition to the tradition-history hypothesis of northern Levites,²⁶¹ who are probably functioning as Hosea's support group. Indeed Wolff places Hosea in the northern levitical orbit on the basis of historical applications drawn from 4:4-19; 6:4-6; 9:7-9; and 12:1-8, 13-15, which follow the so-called lawsuits and shift subtly from the city-gate to the cult site. Even if this lawsuit reconstruction should be doubted, we do not hesitate in describing Hosea's priestly role. And the stylistic as well as formal similarities between Hosea and his heir, Jeremiah, should reinforce the view that Hosea had a priestly heritage, if not a priestly function.

From this crystalization of the ways in which Hosea is yoked to the cult, we can be certain that the oracles were spoken in the context of some solemn festival or assembly, and probably in response to controversy between priests and

²⁵⁹Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 145. These priestly words are part of the same semantic field at Hos. 4:8, 5:5, 8:13, 9:9, 12:4, 13:2, and 14:2-3.

²⁶⁰Walter Harrelson, "Knowledge of God in the Church," *Interpretation* 19 (1976), pp. 12-16, adjusts Wolff's definition of *da'at 'lōhîm* to include more than simply knowledge of sacral law. The phrase is the earliest attempt to define "religion" as the way to turn toward God in love (as a bride). See Chapter 8 for further consideration of the relationship between love and knowledge.

²⁶¹See Chapter 7 and J. Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983).

people. M. Buss, F. I. Andersen, and D. N. Freedman agree with H. W. Wolff and W. Brueggemann that Hosea spoke as one ordained to ferret out religious immorality through the cursing of apostasy and the assertion of ritual guilt. We shall see that more details can be provided. In the next chapter we clarify the formal contours of Hosea 13 to illustrate the likelihood of this function and setting for his oracles.

CHAPTER V

FORMS OF HOSEA 13

Hosea 13 provides an important perspective on many of the problems associated with the form criticism of the entire book. Each of the four formal units may be viewed as a microcosm; one can make suggestions about the resolution of the key issues that have been raised in vv. 1-3, 4-8, 9-15a, and 15b--14:1: the atypical prophetic genres and forms, the shifts in speaker, and the institutional setting of the language within Israelite religion and society.

Verses 13:1-3

<i>k^edabbēr 'eprayim rōtēt</i>	(11)
<i>nāsā' hū' b^eyisrā'ēl</i>	(12)
<i>wayye'sam babba'al wayyāmōt</i>	(11)
<i>w^e'attāh yōsipū lah^atō'</i>	(13)
<i>wayya'sū lāhem massēkāh</i>	(12)...(25)
<i>mikkaspām k^etabnîtam ^asabbîm</i>	(12)
<i>ma^aśēh hārāšîm kullōh lāhem</i>	(16)...(28)
<i>hēm 'ōmrîm zōbhê 'ādām</i>	(14)
<i>^agālîm yisśāqûn</i>	(10)...(24)
<i>lākēn yihyū ka^anan bōqer</i>	(13)
<i>w^ekatṭal maškîm hōlēk</i>	(10)...(23)
<i>k^emōš y^essō'ar miggōren</i>	(11)
<i>ûk'āšan mē^arūbbāh</i>	(12)...(23)

- 1) When Ephraim spoke--dismay.
he lifted himself up in Israel,
so he became guilty at Ba'al and he died.

- 2) So now they continue sinning.
They make for themselves molten calves,
from their silver, idols according to their patterns,
all of it for themselves is the work of craftsmen.
They are speaking of those who sacrifice humans;
they kiss calves.

- 3) Therefore,
May they be like the morning fog,
like dew that rises early,
like chaff blown from a threshing floor,
like smoke from a chimney.

Genre

The numbers to the right of the transliteration represent

D. L. Christensen's system of counting *morae*: "the length of time required to say the simplest syllable from a phonetic point of view."²⁶² Thus a long vowel is accounted two *morae* and a short vowel is allowed one *mora*, granting that the long vowel takes relatively more time. Christensen combines this system with the modern Ley-Sievers method that counts word stresses within lines. For our purposes the Ley-Sievers method is unnecessary. It is enough to acknowledge structural symmetry in the relative length of the lines. This in turn leads to uncomplicated judgments about the poetic nature of the prophecy, and it confirms the text-critical choices made in Chapter 1.

²⁶²"Two Stanzas of a Hymn in Deuteronomy 33," *Biblica* 65 (1984), p. 385. Christensen rehearses the history of metrical analysis in light of its recent revival and advocates a return to a simplified version practiced in the nineteenth century but discarded when it became too refined. See also Christensen, "Zephaniah 2:4-14: A Theological Basis for Josiah's Program of Political Expansion," *CBQ* 46 (1984), p. 671. The point of counting *morae* is simply to gain statistical ("objective") control of the length of the lines, rather than proposing some subjective speculation about the symmetry of the clauses.

The first three lines are nearly identical in length with cola of eleven morae bracketing a colon of twelve morae, and this immediately suggests poetic speech rather than rambling prose. This tricolon is set off in length from the next six lines which appear nonsymmetrical as single cola, but as couplets they tighten considerably when counting the morae, with 25, 28, and 24 morae respectively. Finally, the last four lines indicate another transition in the structure of the unit since the two bicola total 23 morae. Again, all that is proved by this estimation of reading time and counting of syllables is the structural symmetry of the poetic unit rather than an uncontrolled length of narrative. Previous form-critical research has granted these very transitions when labeling vv. 1-3 "an oracle of judgment."

The transitions are confirmed by J. L. Mays' perception of the changing verbal aspect. Verse 1 is past, v. 2 is present, and v. 3 is in future time.²⁶³ In all schemes the past and present constitute the indictment (vv. 1-2), and the future tense, which is characteristically introduced by the adverb *laken*,²⁶⁴ identifies the so-called verdict.

²⁶³See the Verbal and Pronominal Table at p. 85. Cf. Mays *Hosea*, p. 171. Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 628, disagree because Mays is reading a past tense for *wayye šam* but a present tense for *wayya šû*, even though both are the same imperfect form. The key to this syntax is the effect of the preposition *'attāh*, which shifts v. 2 into the present, despite Andersen-Freedman who doubt the meaning of *'attāh*.

²⁶⁴See H. Lenhard, "Über den Unterschied zwischen *lākēn* und *'al-kēn*," *ZAW* 95 (1983), pp. 269-70. *lākēn* nearly always refers to a future situation. The reverse is true of *'al-kēn*, with the exception of Hos. 4:3, where *'al-kēn* is used with the future. As usual, Hosea defies all the stereotypes.

Structure

This label of "judgment oracle" has led H. W. Wolff to place the oracle within the search for justice at the city gate, especially with the third person subjects in v. 3.²⁶⁵ Yet it should be noted that the third person accusation and punishment is maintained throughout the unit. The surprise does come, however, in the shift from third person singular in v. 1 to plural in vv. 2-3. From the content it appears that v. 2 is a more specific accusation than is v. 1. Idols, sacrifice, and kissing calves are listed as specific transgressions. But the guilty party "they" is broader than just the metaphorical Ephraim of v. 1, who died by means of Ba'al. The specific sins are applied generally to an entire audience, which is not necessarily identical with Ephraim.

This structure outlined by Wolff, Mays, Jacob, and Rudolph is essentially consistent, though each expresses himself with distinct terminology.²⁶⁶

1. Indictment
 - a. General guilt (13:1)
 - b. Specific sinning (13:2)
2. Punishment (13:3)

It should be obvious immediately that the terms chosen to name these structures tend to prejudice the setting in life that is accepted. There is an assertion of guilt in v. 1, though that hardly requires a juridical arena.

Here we see how chapter 13 brings together many prior accusations

²⁶⁵Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. xxiii, 222.

²⁶⁶What Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 222, calls the "motivation," Mays, *Hosea*, p. 171, labels the "indictment," Jacob, *Osée*, p. 92, the "reproach."

against Ephraim in one last release of righteous indignation:²⁶⁷

- 4:17 Ephraim consorts with idols.
 8:4b With their silver and gold
 they made idols for themselves.
 10:5 For the calves of Beth-aven
 those who dwell in Samaria tremble.
 11:2 To Ba'als they keep sacrificing,
 to images they keep burning incense.

Note the reference to *lahem* in 8:4. One can tell that the author is thinking of this verse in the final recapitulation at 13:2, "They make for *themselves*." Their worship is self-centered. This guilt is then mixed with a sense of lamentation—"and he died"—as the form attains elasticity and the past is used to examine the present.²⁶⁸ But does this require the use of loaded terms like "verdict," which beg the interpreter to envision a courtroom setting? The courtroom is at best an analogous setting, but there is no evidence that specifically links these words to daily gatherings at the local bar of justice in the city gate.

The same qualification is true of the judgment speeches in Hos. 11:1-9, where similar elasticity of form apparently prevails. Assertions of guilt and ejaculations of lament (vv. 8-9) are mixed with announcements of punishment. Many other examples of this fusion can be provided: 2:4-17, 4:14, 5:11, 6:1-3,

²⁶⁷See Rudolph, *Hosea*, pp. 242-43.

²⁶⁸See Illman, *Formulas About Death*, pp. 82-85, on the use of the *wayyāmōt* formula here. In the proximity of the preposition *b*, both '*š.m.* and *m.w.t.* are consequences of or results derived from involvement with Ba'al. They became guilty because of Ba'al and they died (because of Ba'al).

7:7-8, 7:11-12, 7:16, 8:1-3, 8:8, 9:11-14.²⁶⁹ In each of these cases the lamentation is part of the statement of guilt which exists in the present tense. Thus, with so much typicality present, it might be appropriate to identify a different speech form here, rather than press the word "lamentation" into the previously expected "judgment oracle," which is implicitly set in the courtroom. This suggestion is especially appealing when we realize that the classic form of a judgment speech can hardly be found in any of the examples outside chapter 13.²⁷⁰

An accusation of guilt that is delivered with heart-wrenching words of lamentation seems entirely appropriate if we recognize that the threatening words which follow in v. 3 are most likely curses. For example, the oracle in 9:1-6, which is delivered during a feast in Israel, is labeled a "vicious curse" by Ward.²⁷¹ One might well expect an anguished, lament-filled description of guilt to climax in the ejaculation of a curse.

As an afterthought, and final excursus, Westermann has already reflected on the connection between cursing formulae and the judgment speech. In his schema the cursing is "not a genuine prophetic speech genre. From the viewpoint of its origin it does not belong to the messenger speech [the essence of prophecy] but to the borrowed speech forms that were inserted or made to

²⁶⁹Identified by Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. xxiii-iv, and Buss, *Hosea*, p. 120. Wolff (p. xxviii) calls them lawsuits with a special twist derived from Yahweh's internal struggle over the consequences of his judgment.

²⁷⁰This is true even of 4:3, which we challenged as a lawsuit. See above at p. 109.

²⁷¹*Hosea*, p. 161.

resemble the messenger's speech."²⁷² There is more to be explained here, as Westermann acknowledges. Earlier he notes (see p. 90) that Hosea's complex forms do not fit the evolutionary expectations built into the history of the judgment form. Now he would assert that cursing and lamentation, which are supposedly borrowed from some prophetic woe oracle, are much earlier and unrelated to the true vocation of the prophet. This contradiction--mixed complex forms are later though cursing involved in prophetic woe is much earlier--is resolved in the following identity that will be proposed for Hos. 13:1-3.²⁷³

The similarity between certain of the similes in Hosea and Akkadian incantations has been documented by W. G. E. Watson.²⁷⁴ He concludes that the Akkadian curse collections--including the Lipsur litanies, the Surpu collection, and the *dinger.ša.dib.da* series--contain a high number of similes (seventeen, seventeen, and eleven, respectively) which, like Hosea, are clustered together.

²⁷²Westermann, *Basic Forms*, p. 198.

²⁷³Westermann's observations about cursing and woe spawned several immediate responses. R. J. Clifford, "The Use of HÖY in the Prophets," *CBQ* 28 (1966), 458-64, asserts that the series of woes in some texts is not comparable to curse collections. Woes are connected by catchwords. (But so are similes in curses.) He also dismisses Gerstenberger's argument that woes are developed by sages since there is only one example in Proverbs. Instead he locates woe in the funeral lament, though in later prophecy this is indicative of "bitter" woe, which is equivalent to cursing, as in Jeremiah. Hosea is somewhere between Isaiah and Jeremiah on this continuum. This does make some sense out of Hosea's emphasis on death and guilt in chapter 13. J. Williams, "The Alas Oracles and Eighth-Century Prophets," *HUCA* 38 (1967), pp. 75-91 pursues an outdated line of criticism: "The curse proper issues from the sphere of the cult and apodictic law, to which the pre-exilic classical prophets were related only loosely as participants in a general cultural milieu." The prophets' primary concern is said to be ethical conduct, as if this conduct is described by moral principles rather than formulaic speech.

²⁷⁴"Reflections of Akkadian Incantations in Hosea," *VT* 34 (1984), pp. 242-46.

They are even on occasion identical to the similes in Hosea.²⁷⁵ This is especially true for Hosea 13:3.

First it will be remembered that v. 3 is a recasting of the punishment (or curse?) decreed by Yahweh at 6:4 in response to the popular lament. "Your lovingkindness is like the morning fog, like dew that rises early." The ritual links between 5:8--6:6 and 13:1--14:1 appear to indicate an identical setting for both units. In the latter case it is either the people themselves or the idols that evaporate.²⁷⁶ In the context of a curse the subject is left quite general, but other curses (delivered in the psalms and prophets) engaging chaff and smoke do make the subject a person rather than an inanimate object. For example, Ps. 35:5 curses the wicked: "May they be (*yihyû*) like chaff before the wind."²⁷⁷ Or the enemies of God are cursed in Ps. 68:3: "As smoke is driven away, may they be driven away."²⁷⁸ The same vagueness is true of the Akkadian incantations which parallel 13:13: "Like smoke from a chimney" // "May the curse rise [skyward] like smoke (Lipsur II 1 23'). Two lines later (II 1 25'), "May the curse, like drifting cloud, rain down into another field," there appears an attempt to avoid the

²⁷⁵Westermann, *Basic Forms*, p. 193, also describes the presentation of curses in series. On the breadth of curses in the ancient Near East, outside the realm of covenant or treaty, see R. Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), pp. 15-17, 19.

²⁷⁶The wording of the two verses is identical except for a substitution of *laken yihyu* in 13:3 for *w^ehasd^ekem* in 6:4. Most interpreters translate 6:4 in the present tense (no verb is given), but the preceding clause at 6:4 is in the imperfect and implies a future tense, just as in 13:3. The curse in 6:4 is a response to the rhetorical question, "What will I do to you, Ephraim; What will I do to you, Judah?"

²⁷⁷Cf. also Ps. 1:4 and Isa. 17:13, 41:15-16.

²⁷⁸Cf. Ps. 37:20 and Isa. 51:6.

incantation similar to 13:3, "May they be like the morning fog." The point here is not verbal similarity, though Watson overstresses this. Nor is it that a simile automatically signifies a curse in Hosea. Here in 13:3 we merely acknowledge that these simile clusters are appropriate in curse collections.

An identical circumstance exists in 5:10-12. The speaker accuses Judah of moving boundary stones and laments Ephraim's oppression which is required due to her pursuit of false torah ("command"--*šav*). By a formulaic simile Ephraim is cursed with mothholes and Judah with dry rot. The same structure can be found at 2:3-5, 5:1-7, 7:11-13, 9:10-12, and in 11:8-9 where Yahweh seems unable to carry through his curses of a return to Sodom and Gomorrah; in the last example lamentation affects the curse as well as the accusation.

It remains then to give this emerging structure a name such as "curse oracle." Its ideal framework can be delineated at 13:3 in two parts:²⁷⁹

1. Accusation
 - a. assertion of guilt (*'āšam*)
 - b. lamentation (*wayyāmōt*)
2. Curse
 - a. jussive (*yihyû*)
 - b. a series of similes (four)

The simile does seem particularly suited to the curse, but again it is not the only formula available, nor is the simile a definite sign of cursing.

²⁷⁹Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition*, pp. 10-11, supplies some caution for our tentative hypothesis about the structure of curse collections: "we possess only very limited literary evidence of solemn acts of blessing and cursing in Israel's cult, and very little other material from which to recover a detailed picture of the liturgical forms which were in use in Israel before the monarchy or even earlier." It is easy to discern similarities but difficult to elaborate. This is true of all ideal form-critical reconstructions. To be sure we have pointed out the weaknesses in labels such as "lawsuit" or "disputation," especially with regard to Hosea. But this is the function of creative research. Before we may advance into our proposal for the liturgical form of a curse oracle, we needed to demonstrate why previous form-critical suggestions for Hosea's oracles were unable to account for the content.

Further consideration of the content seems to imply a curse oracle at 13:1-3. First, Andersen-Freedman interpret v. 1 as "an oath to enact vengeance" because Ephraim is haughtily raising his fist (*nāsā'*) in Yahweh's face.²⁸⁰ I disagree with their textual choices concerning the asseverative *k^e* in v. 1a--if it were asseverative it would read *kⁱ*--but they still have captured the violent reaction of guilty defiance (in the form of an oath) against Yahweh. The accusation can be characterized in another way as a description of guilt-ridden self-aggrandizement. The clause in v. 1b *nāsā' hū'* was defined and translated as a reflexive: "[then] he lifted [something] upon himself in Israel." This is philologically related to similar constructions in Numb. 11:17, 18:23, and Isa. 53:12.²⁸¹ A similarity in content is also perceived. In Numb. 18:3 the Levites bear (*nāsā'*) their own "iniquity" on themselves. The same phrase is applied during the exilic era to the messianic servant at Isa. 53:12. Specifically in Hos. 13:1 there is a clear connection with 4:8: "To their own iniquity they [the priests] lift up [*yis'ū*] their souls." Thus the content of the curse oracle is directly identified as rebellious cultic apostasy and iniquity.

Setting

Hosea 13 is a good example of Wolff's tendency to confuse the conclusions obtained from historical criticism with those derived through form criticism. Under the heading "setting" he decides that the accusations in the judgment speeches of 13:1, 7, and 13 refer to previous threats that went unheeded. Thus

²⁸⁰Hosea, p. 629.

²⁸¹See above at p. 28.

the speech probably was pronounced in a period of political optimism long after 733 B.C.E. but before the crisis in 723. Without any evidence Wolff claims that the prophet is "standing on the southern border" of Ephraim and about to flee into Judah when he unleashes his harshest judgment speeches. Such a spiritualized setting is not derived from the structure and intention of the form.²⁸² The identification of a "curse oracle," however, is consistent with Hosea's probable function in the cult. It is true that widespread disagreement prevails concerning the relationship of cursing and the cult,²⁸³ but we are neither concerned with the genesis of cursing nor its possible secondary embellishments. Even if the Deuteronomists are the first to be concerned with linking the legal cursing of Deuteronomy 27 to the cult, the most recent research on traditio-historical connections between Hosea and the Deuteronomists determines that Hosea was involved at the inception of such rhetoric. The tradition stream from Hosea is undeniable. Further, the legal, jussive form, which we have identified in Hos. 13:3, has not been studied in depth nor has it been related precisely to curse formulae ('arûr). The preponderance of the evidence here encourages this complex association.

Technical vocabulary at home in the legal proceedings of the cult (again,

²⁸²Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 224. The same technique is adopted by Jacob, *Osee*, p. 92.

²⁸³See p. 111 and Malcolm Clark, "Law," *Old Testament Form Criticism*, ed. by John Hayes (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1974), pp. 114-15. He summarizes the studies of Schultz and Schottroff, who claim a secondary linkage to the cult in the time of DtrH, contra Hillers and Lehmann. Recent dissertations on Israelite law do not even include cursing as a form of legal pronouncement: Rifiat Sonsino, *Motive Clauses in Hebrew Law*, SBL Dissertation 45 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1980); Harry W. Gilmer, *The If-You Form in Israelite Law*, SBL Dissertation 15 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975).

see Hos. 4:15-16, 5:15, 10:12, and 14:1), such as "they became guilty at Ba'al [Peor]," is combined with a word that probably once functioned as a legal clause of motivation. The priest would often declare in the legal codes that "you shall surely die." The prophet acknowledges this in the effort to lament the past, "and he died," which is an accusation for the present, "So now they continue."

The renewed denunciation of making the idols (cf. *ʿaṣabbîm* in 4:17 and 8:4) "according to their pattern" (13:2) is further technical vocabulary from cultic law. The same phrase is used in the prohibitions of Deut. 4:16-18. And finally the discussion of those who engage in human sacrifice and kiss calves is clearly associated with action in the sacred space of a cultic assembly.

One can picture Hosea operating at a solemn cultic assembly, when he emerges to deliver a curse oracle, probably against the local priests who are further incited by a contentious people (cf. Hos. 4:8), a curse oracle which is suitable specifically to identify cultic apostasy. Rather than a courtroom analogy or a *riḅ* lawsuit, we should project the typical role of the priest who is expected to ferret out immorality and apostasy. In this case it is quite conceivable that this role is turned inward toward hierarchical matters of the cultic establishment (priests and rulers), and that is the fine line which separates the prophet from the priest in Hosea 13.

Verses 13:4-8

w^e ʿānōkî yhw^h ʾlōhēkā mē ʿereṣ miṣrāyîm (24)

wē ʾlōhîm zûlâtî lō ʾtēdā ʾûmōšîa ʾayin biltî (30)

ʾnî r^e ʾtîkâ bammidbār (14)

b^eeres t^elā ʾāyôt (10)

k^emar ʾtām wayyisba ʾû (12)

sab^e ʾû wayyārām libbām (13)

ʾal-kēn s^ekēhūnî (10)

wā^ehî lāhem k^emô šāhal (14)

k^enāmēr ʾal-derek ʾāšûr (13)

ʾepg^ešem k^edōb šakkûl (10)

w^eʾeqra ʾs^egôr libbām (9)

w^eōklēm šam k^elābî (12)

ḥayyat haššādeh t^ebaqq^e ʾēm (11)

- 4) I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt.
You do not know any other gods besides me,
and there are no saviors except me.
- 5) I fed you in the wilderness,
in a land of hardships.
- 6) While on their pasturage,
[then] they were sated;
they were sated and exalted their hearts.

Therefore, they forget me.

- 7) I would be like a lion to them.
Like a leopard on the path I will watch.
- 8) I will encounter them like a bereaved she-bear.
I will tear a hole in their heart,
eating them there like a lion,
as a wild beast would shred them.

Genre

This pericope is more complex than the curse oracle of vv. 1-3. The complexity is caused by an obvious digression into prose at v. 4 and the seeming

recklessness at the close of the oracle, as the speaker nearly loses control of the cursing. Verse 4 is clearly prose, as confirmed by the erratic (24 and 30) morae count. Verse 4 does appear rhythmic but this feature is subjective because the content is well known from historical narrative and will, of course, be the subject of extended comment.

The poetry begins in vv. 5-6 since both bicola display similar total length (24 and 25 morae respectively) as well as identical content. There is then a complex transition that includes a summary accusation in 10 morae. It is difficult to tell if this belongs with vv. 5-6 or with the following three bicola in vv. 7-8. These latter bicola contain lines each of which add up to a morae length of $x+(x-1)$ --or 14/13, 10/9, and 12/11.

Though the structure of this pericope can be broken into three parts--a prose introduction, a poetic accusation, and a poetic set of curses--it is further complicated by a sudden shift from first person divine speech to prophetic third person speech in v. 6 alone; it then returns to first person divine speech in vv. 7-8. This shift can be explained if we realize that the actual accusation of guilt is in the mouth of the prophet and is totally contained in v. 6. Verse 5 then functions as a transition from divine prose to poetry, which prepares the way for the prophetic accusation. This bracketing device will also occur in the next pericope of Hosea 13.²⁸⁴ The prophet clothes his language in divine authority.

Whereas the previous oracle moved from past to present to future, vv. 4-6 intertwine the present and the past in their ultimate focus on the future (vv.

²⁸⁴See p. 84.

7-8). It would help if we knew whether the perfect verbs here meant a condition that is still current to the time when the oracle was delivered.²⁸⁵ A knowledge of the tradition history decides the question, as the oracle moves from Egypt to the wilderness, and then to the pastoral process of settling on the land (pasturage).

Structure

This pericope has also been located at the city gate and described as a typical, two-part judgment oracle containing an indictment (historical preface plus sins) and a sentence of wild beasts to devour the accused.²⁸⁶ Wolff further explains the digression into second person at v. 6 as typical of the courtroom and dependent on the self-introduction speech. He uses the terms plaintiff and defendant and speaks of the case moving from a "preliminary hearing" in vv. 4-5 to the actual testimony in vv. 6-7. The "verdict" is handed down in v. 8.

Once again the formal structure has been prejudiced by an imposed schema. While we should not go so far as Andersen-Freedman in saying that the speech is without structure or coherence and should only be related to the chapter as a whole,²⁸⁷ we can be fairly confident that this is not the typical judgment oracle complete with plaintiff and defendant.

²⁸⁵Robinson, *Hosea*, p. 50 strangely reads the verbs in vv. 7-8 as a past tense; that is, an imperfect of repeatable acts, whatever that may be. One can see why he wants to put the entire oracle in the past tense, given the ancient exodus and wilderness traditions, as well as the journey in the past described by v. 7, but it violates the obviously imperfect verbs. Likewise Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 220, reads *'ašûr* as an imperfect applied to the present. This is his attempt to maintain a tension between past and present. Cf. also Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 243-44. Of course this is implied by the reinterpretation of the exodus-wilderness traditions, but it is not explicit in the verbal aspect.

²⁸⁶See Mays, *Hosea*, p. 174.

²⁸⁷*Hosea*, p. 633.

Rather the oracle actually begins at v. 5 after the prosaic formula of self-introduction in v. 4. As Wolff stated, it is the self-introduction in the divine first person that requires the immediate second person accusation. The progression continues to third person plural (they) so that no one escapes the breadth of this speech. Then at the heart of the poetry is the very brief but central accusation, "they forget me," which is a one word summary of the message for the entire book of Hosea. The curses conclude the oracle in vv. 7-8. Thus the pericope can be outlined as follows:

- A. Self-introduction (prose)
 - 1. historical preface
 - 2. first commandment
- B. Accusation
 - 1. Yahweh fed them
 - 2. They got fat
 - 3. They forget the source²⁸⁸
- C. Curses
 - 1. a series of similes (four)
 - 2. wild beasts

Each of these parts will now be treated in more detail.

(A) The history of the formula of divine self-introduction has been satisfactorily documented by W. Zimmerli,²⁸⁹ but his conclusions as they pertain to Hosea could benefit from adjustment and review.

First, we are aware that this formula is rather widespread in the ancient Near East. It occurs in the guise of a rhetorical question when the *muhhum*

²⁸⁸We translate "forget" because the sentence is the transition from accusation in the past to cursing in the immediate future.

²⁸⁹"Ich bin Jahwe," in *Geschichte und Altes Testament*, Festschrift A. Alt, ed. by G. Ebeling (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1953), pp. 179-209. Translated by D. W. Stott in *I am Yahweh* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), pp. 1-28.

prophet-priests of Mari addressed their royal superiors or benefactors:²⁹⁰

Am I not Adad, the Lord of Kallasu. . . .

Thus I am the Lord of the Throne, earth, and city. . . .

The form of question is identical to Jer. 23:23, "Am I a God at hand. . . and not a God afar off?" But the vast preponderance of the self-introduction formulae occur as a statement, "I am the Lord your God."

Zimmerli begins his investigation with the Holiness Code (H) of Leviticus 17-26, probably because he is determined to understand the provenance of the formula in relation to the priestly language of Ezekiel. In H he identifies the frequent short form "I am Yahweh" as earliest and descriptive of Yahweh's personal name, first revealed liturgically in the Priestly narrative of Exod. 6:2.

"Die Aussage 'Ich bin Jahwe' enthält das Element der Selbstvorstellung unter dem Eigennamen in reiner Form. Die vollere Formulierung, 'Ich bin Jahwe, euer Gott' fügt zu dieser Selbstvorstellung unter dem Eigennamen als Zweites die Feststellung dass der sich unter dem Namen Jahwe Vorstellende zugleich in der göttlichen Herrenbeziehung zu der im Suffix bezeichneten Menschengruppe (zu Israel, dem Volk Jahwes) stehe.

Whereas the brief form is linked to holiness, this longer form, "I am the Lord your God," is nearly always connected to the exodus act in H--"from the land of Egypt" (cf. Lev. 19:36, 20:24, 25:38, 26:13).²⁹¹ An investigation of the statements in P, H, and Ezekiel leads "unmistakably to a liturgical procedure. . . which can imply an entire liturgical event and a presentation of legal material. . . Both the

²⁹⁰Westermann, *Basic Forms*, pp. 125-26; Zimmerli, *I am Yahweh*, p. 16, credits von Soden with this discovery.

²⁹¹We should add that in Leviticus 26 the formula is intertwined with the very curses that Brueggemann finds in many oracles in the book of Hosea.

account of Yahweh's saving deeds in history as well as the mediation of the divine maxims are placed under the introductory and concluding formula of Yahweh's self-introduction that is to be spoken with full authority by the person commissioned."²⁹²

From here Zimmerli works relatively backward to Second Isaiah, where the self-introduction formula is very frequent due to "liturgical poetry." It is self-exaltation and exclusion spoken in the context of judgment and salvation against rival gods: "I am Yahweh and there is no God; besides me there is no other. I am Yahweh" (Isa. 45:5). Such words are said to bring forth comfort and consolation, just as they are intended in the rare use by J and E of the formula. The Elohist formula, "I am God [*'el*]" is introduced in theophany as the promise of divine help and guidance (Gen. 31:11, 46:3; Exod. 3:6) but never as the proclamation of law.²⁹³ Rather they are related to the liturgical and priestly answer, "Fear not," which is given in response to a supplication of the people.²⁹⁴

It would seem then that the self-introduction formula of Hos. 13:4-8 (complementing the next oracle, 13:9ff.) is a dramatic reversal of the priestly answer. Rather than consolation he delivers cursing. But this is not what Zimmerli projects for the two occurrences of the formula at 12:9 and 13:4 in the eighth century. It does not occur in Amos, Isaiah, or Micah. There the long

²⁹²Zimmerli, *I am Yahweh*, pp. 13-15.

²⁹³Zimmerli, *I am Yahweh*, p. 14.

²⁹⁴As defined by Begrich for Second Isaiah, *ZAW* 52 (1934). This setting of the salvation oracles of Isaiah within the priestly answers to supplication has been challenged in recent scholarship. See Thomas M. Raitt, *A Theology of Exile: Judgment/Deliverance in Jeremiah and Ezekiel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977).

form of the phrase is found in full connection with the exodus tradition: "I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt." Zimmerli ties this phrase in Hosea neither to the words of consolation nor to the proclamation of torah. Rather it is an unoriginal recapitulation of Israel's short historical credo that is thoroughly altered by the proclamation of torah in the priestly statements of P, H, and Ezekiel.²⁹⁵ Further, the phrase in 13:4 is correlated with the exclusion of other Gods and is thus a type of hymnic self-praise.

Hymnic self-exaltation is certainly true of the LXX interpolation in 13:4 (see the textual comments in Chapter 2), but Zimmerli has not examined the total context of Hosea 13. In fact, the formula also occurs at Hos. 11:9: "I am God [*'ēl 'ānōkî*] and not a man // the Holy One in your midst, // and I will not come to burn [reading *bā'ēr* for *b'ēr*]." There the Elohist formula is combined with the levitical notion of holiness as well as words of consolation, "I will not destroy." In 12:9 the circumstances of the formula include an accusation of guilt (*ʿwôn*) and Jacob's patriarchal exodus from the land of Egypt. This is followed by a reversal, as spoken by the prophets (v. 10), of the national exodus because they will again dwell in tents. The prophet confronts the cult by replacing the priest as spokesperson.

In Hos. 13:4 the formula is followed directly by a narrative form of the first commandment: "You shall not know any other gods besides me, and there is

²⁹⁵ "Ich bin Yahweh," p. 196.

no other savior except me."²⁹⁶ Hosea is clearly remembering the decalogue and the right of Yahweh to establish torah for Israel. Thus, contrary to Zimmerli, the prophet is transforming the historical credo with the proclamation of law. The technical term *tēdā'*, which Wolff identified as knowledge of divine torah and the earliest form of theology (knowledge of God), clearly indicates the exclusion of false torah learned while pursuing other gods.

Zimmerli has constructed an inseparable wall between the activity of the priest and the prophet in the cult. So in Judg. 6:8-10 he notes that the divine speech with its credal formulation lacks the divine name. This means that its setting is in the mediation of legal maxims (decalogue) rather than prophecy--despite the fact that the speech is delivered by an *ʾš nābī'*, an unknown prophet!²⁹⁷ He asserts that:

The formula of self-introduction does not have any *Sitz im Leben* of its own in prophetic speech. Its frequent appearances in Ezekiel are not a constituent part of Ezekiel's fundamental prophetic characteristics, but rather direct our attention back to his priestly heritage. . . .The passages in Hosea reflect Israel's early credal formulations. . . .It is clear that the prophets do not experience this encounter in the kind of theophany (with the "I am" introduction) described by the older tradition.

The dramatic theophanic setting in life of the earlier decalogue traditions may have been transformed or diluted by the eighth century, though Zimmerli hints that this did not happen until the exile, with Ezekiel. But the form and content

²⁹⁶Wolff, *Hosea*, relates 13:4 to the proclamation of divine law, as in Deut. 5:6. Cf. also Mays, *Hosea*, pp. 174-75. Mays translated the disputed word in 13:5 as "I knew you" rather than "I fed you" (my preference) and locates it with Amos 3:2, "where it means the recognition extended by a suzerain through (the stipulations of) a treaty to a vassal."

²⁹⁷*I am Yahweh*, p. 22.

of this oracle prove it is impossible to deny that Hosea is delivering this divine self-introduction in the context of a liturgical event which is concerned with the pursuit of the pure knowledge of Yahweh.

(B) The accusation of guilt in 13:4-6 is of primary importance to the traditio-historical investigation of the exodus/wilderness memories. For now it is enough to observe that the content of the accusation touches on themes that follow directly from the self-introduction formula. Exodus, wilderness, and the search for food provided by the deity demonstrate an inseparable continuity in the content of the oracle, despite the shift from prose to poetry. It would be expected that the summarized accusation, "Therefore they forget me," should be the introduction to the judgment speech in vv. 7-8. The adverb *'al-kēn* normally would require a judgment speech in the past tense.²⁹⁸ However, Hosea has already had occasion to avoid such syntax (cf. 4:3), and here he leaves no doubt that this is *not* a judgment speech. This pivotal phrase, "therefore they forget me," should best be understood as a historical present between the accusations of the past and the cursings of the future. Thus this oracle proceeds on the same time continuum as the curse oracle in vv. 1-3: past, present, and future.

Two stylistic features in this oracle also bear some importance. Hosea dramatically heightens his language by repetition. Thus 13:6 (as with 2:4, 6:3, 11:1-2, 11:10) is composed of two separate clauses that duplicate the verb, "they were sated."²⁹⁹ In the latter cases of 6:3 and 11:1-2, 10 there have been many

²⁹⁸Lenhard, "Unterschied zwischen *lākēn* und *'al-kēn*," p. 270.

²⁹⁹See p. 43.

occasions to comment on similarities in form and setting with Hosea 13. The same is true of 5:14 and 13:5, both of which move from *'ānōkî* to *ʾnî* when using the divine pronoun.

(C) Hosea 5:14 is divine speech that invokes the curses of wild beasts until the people acknowledge their guilt (*ye's^emû*): *kî 'ānōkî kaššahai l'eprayim*. In 13:7 Ephraim is again cursed with Yahweh who is *k^emô šāhai*. In addition to the lion, the similes are piled up one upon the other to indicate certain disaster. This reminds one of the woe that follows from the Day of Yahweh in Amos 5:19; lion, bear, and serpent prevent any escape. This time the verbal progression of the curse also follows inevitably: Yahweh as a variety of beasts will watch, confront, tear, and then eat the victim. Further, vv. 7-8 contain a series of four similes (indicated by *k^e*), which is the same number in the curse cluster at v. 3.

Mays believes like many others that these "metaphors have their background in the treaty curses of the ancient Near East."³⁰⁰ Without becoming mired in the debate about the origin of covenant theology and the term *b^erîṭ*, it is enough to recognize that these punishments in vv. 7-8 emerge from the mouths of those who do cursing. In Elohist and subsequent Deuteronomistic theology, the wild beasts are the primary agents of divine cursing.

Setting

There can be little doubt that 13:4-8 is delivered in the same type of cultic setting as 13:1-3. Here the prophet establishes his credentials by speaking

³⁰⁰Mays, *Hosea*, p. 175-76. Nearly everyone quotes D. R. Hillers, *Treaty Curses in the Old Testament Prophets* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964).

in the divine first person. Only when stating specifically the accusation of guilt-- they became fat and haughty--does he slip into third person prophetic speech.³⁰¹

The proclamation of torah (in the narrative form of the first commandment) and right knowledge of God (*tēdā*) is wholistically combined with an acknowledgment of Yahweh's saving deeds (the preamble from the credo). The punishment is then meted through a cluster of animal curses. This is probably another form of the "curse oracle" which is delivered by the prophet at a liturgical event. He is one chosen to search out and destroy cultic apostasy. Though impossible to decide for certain, the unity of Hosea 13 implies that it is just as likely that this curse oracle was delivered at the same occasion as the previous one.

Verses 13:9-15a

<i>š^e hitkā yiśrā'el</i>	(9)
<i>kî-bî b^e 'ezrekā</i>	(9)
<i>'ayyēh malk^e kā 'ēpô</i>	(11)
<i>w^e yôšî^a kā b^e kol- 'ārêkā</i>	(16)...(27)
<i>w^e yišpōṭkā ' ^ašer 'āmartā</i>	(13)
<i>t^e nāh-lî melek w^e šārîm</i>	(12)...(25)
<i>'etten-l^e kā melek b^e 'appî</i>	(12)
<i>w^e 'eqqaḥ b^e 'ebrātî</i>	(9)
<i>šarûr ^awôn 'epṛāyim</i>	(11)

³⁰¹M. Buss (*Hosea*, pp. 32, 73-74) includes 13:4-5 with 9:7, 12:9, 6:1-3, 14:2-4, and 13:10 as quotations cited by the prophet from the cultic context. These are supposedly satirical attempts to irk and incite the audience. 13:4-5a is "part of, or related to, a traditional recital."

s^epùnāh ḥaṭṭa'tô (10)

heblê yôlēdāh yābô'û lô (17)

hû'-bēn lô' ḥākām (10)

k^e'itô lô' ya^amōd (10)

b^emišbar bānîm (7)

miyyad š^e'ôl 'epdēm (8)

mimmāwet 'eg'ālēm (9)

'ayyēh d^ebārekā māwet (13)

'ayyēh qāṭābkā š^e'ôl (12)

nōḥam yissātēr mē'ēnā (14)

kî hû' bēn 'aḥîm yaprî' (12)

- 9) It is your destruction, O Israel,
while your help is in me.
- 10) Where now is your king
who saves you in all your cities,
who judges you, and of whom you said,
"Give me a king and princes"?
- 11) I will give you a king in my anger,
and I will remove [him] in my fury.
- 12) The iniquity of Ephraim is being bundled up,
his sin is being stored up.
- 13) Pains of birthing come for him;
he is not a wise son.
When it is time he does not stand forth
at the mouth of the womb.
- 14) From the power of Sheol shall I ransom them?
From Mot shall I redeem them?
Where are your plagues, O Mot?
Where your pox, O Sheol?

- Compassion is hid from my eyes,
15) while he runs among brothers.

Genre

The only possible candidate for prose in this pericope would be vv. 10-11, especially when the verbs are not translated as participles or nouns, as suggested by numerous critics. But an analysis of the morae count does provide remarkable balance for the entire length of the two bicola, with 27 and 25 morae respectively.

In 13:9-15a we have a total of ten bicola. This is a subtle shift in structure from the two previous oracles, which are built from a combination of bicola and tricola. As in the previous oracle of vv. 4-8, the speaker shifts from divine to prophetic to divine; once again the prophetic analysis of the current condition in Ephraim (vv. 12-13) is bracketed with divine authority (vv. 9-10 and 14-15a). Of course, the identity of the speaker in vv. 10 and 14 would be indeterminate unless we were not positive that the verbs shift into third person because of the question which begins with *'ayyēh*.

The verbal time also tends to follow the bracketing effect created by the shifts of speakers. In the first part (vv. 9-12) characterized by divine speech the verbs move from present time to future time.³⁰² Then the end of the oracle moves from future time (v. 14) to present time. All of the prophetic speech at the heart of the oracle is in present time, as an analysis of current conditions.

Structure

If the preceding data are combined we begin to recognize a definite

³⁰²The quotation of past tradition from 1 Samuel 8 in Hos. 13:10 naturally is preceded by a verb in the past tense. A full display of speaker and tense can again be found on p. 84.

structural symmetry in vv. 9-15a. This is true despite all previous comments that disparage the unity and coherence of these verses, even though they are granted to the unity of chapter 13 as a whole, if and when that is at issue. For examples, Wolff identifies 13:12--14:1 as a self-contained judgment oracle in three parts: (a) indictment (vv. 12-13), (2) rejection of false hopes (v. 14), and (3) announcement of punishment (14:1).³⁰³ This structure is inapplicable, as is evident in the neglect of another indictment (given his terminology) in v. 14:1. Further, McKenzie translates 13:14 in the same way as Wolff but decided instead that the verbs emerge from Yahweh's mouth as threats rather than just falsified hopes in the minds of the people.³⁰⁴ Mays also unites 13:12--14:1, assigning the verses to the years of Hoshea's reign, which is again an illegitimate transfer from form to history, especially since he is thoroughly unclear about the form; is it a "warning" or a "divine saying"? He helpfully notes that "the unity of vv. 12-15 is apparent in the dependence of all the pronouns and verb-subjects on the opening Ephraim of v. 12."³⁰⁵

Similar frustration is evident for vv. 9-11. Andersen-Freedman give up because of the second person address and the inadequacy of the "disputation"

³⁰³ *Hosea*, p. 223.

³⁰⁴ McKenzie, "Divine Passion in Osee," *CBQ* 17 (1955), p. 175. He even reads the childhood "proverb" as a threat. On the other side is Robinson, *Kleinen Propheten*, p. 51, who reads 13:12-14b as a promise. He would be representative of those who wrongly translate the word *hî* as a Kal imperfect apocope, "I would be," rather than the adverb, "Where." See the textual notes.

³⁰⁵ *Hosea*, pp. 178-79.

label for determining a setting or a usage.³⁰⁶ Wolff loosely uses the term with reference to vv. 9-11 because he assumes that Hosea is threatening the people in response to their specific objections. Thus the form of 13:9-11 is evaluated as "complex" or "special."³⁰⁷ Mays also assumes that these verses were extracted from a very personal confrontation with those people who doubt divine vengeance. "The disputation-speech may have been placed here because it belonged to the setting in which the two foregoing sayings were delivered."³⁰⁸

The structure and significance of a disputation speech has not been clearly stated in most technical studies of form criticism. This is thoroughly rehearsed by Adrian Graffy,³⁰⁹ and we note that not a single oracle of Hosea will fit into the careful criteria that Graffy develops for disputation speech. Since the pioneering studies of Gunkel, commentators describe reported quotations or rhetorical questions in the prophets as evidence of immediate and heated refutation. But in most cases the purpose is really to accentuate guilt.³¹⁰ Wolff is, of

³⁰⁶ *Hosea*, p. 635.

³⁰⁷ Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 223.

³⁰⁸ Mays, *Hosea*, p. 177.

³⁰⁹ *A Prophet Confronts His People: The Disputation Speech in the Prophets* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1984), Part One.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6. Quotations can also express popular hopelessness, as in Ezek. 37:11 and Hos. 6:1-3. Similar conclusions are presented by Gary Harlan Hall, *The Marriage Imagery in Jeremiah 2 and 3: A Study of Antecedents and Innovations in a Prophetic Metaphor*, Th.D. Dissertation (Richmond: Union Theological Seminary, 1977), pp. 13-15. "The provenance of the disputation genre is not clear."

course, well aware of this purpose,³¹¹ but Graffy is disappointed in Wolff's application of the disputation label to Amos 3:3-6 and 8, 5:18-20, and 9:7. Each has a different structure; the only similarity present is the appearance of rhetorical questions, which express hopeless and impossible situations. There is no good reason to describe a "disputation style," which is implicit in prophetic speech, because prophetic speech in Amos or Hosea, for example, is by definition confrontational and argumentative against either king or cult.

Controls and structures are supplied by Graffy for the "disputation genre."³¹² The two-part speech must include an explicit quotation followed by an equally specific refutation. It is nearly always introduced with messenger speech.

With these criteria accepted, it is clear that Hos. 13:9-15a does not contain the structure of disputation speech. The quotation in 13:10, "Give me a king and princes," is part of the larger question, which is not refuted but answered rhetorically as if the question were a mere datum of tradition. The prophet is rejecting the three-hundred-year-old tradition of monarchy rather than current ideas of a recalcitrant audience.

We suggest that vv. 9-15a should be identified as a complex inclusion. Like the inclusions identified by Freedman and Lundbom at Hos. 4:4b-9a, 11-14 and 8:9-13, this inclusion at 13:9-15a is created by a series of bicola. In two of

³¹¹"Das Zitat im Prophetenspruch," *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1973), pp. 94-95.

³¹²*A Prophet Confronts His People*, pp. 107-16. He thinks it is an understatement to call the disputation a "form" of speech rather than a true literary "genre."

the previous examples the inclusion was created by breaking open a single bicolon and inserting a series of seven related bicola. Here we find a total of ten bicola, with the first (v. 9) and the last (v. 14d-15a) constituting a single topic and separated by eight related bicola.

The continuity in the inclusion can be briefly illustrated:
 It is your destruction, O Israel,
 while your help is in me.

. . . .

Compassion is hid from my eyes,
 while he runs among brothers.

The ingredient that makes this an inclusion is primarily content--You are destroyed, Israel, because you reject Yahweh's help, and he, Ephraim, is not spared because he seeks aid among allies--but there is formal similarity also, because both bicola give a temporal reason that is introduced by *kî*. It is true that Wolff labels the particle in v. 15 a deitic *kî*, in a brief excursus, and he deletes the one in v. 9. However, his other textual decisions in both verses were not preferred, and the consonantal text should be retained as it stands. Further, the shift from second to third person address by the time the inclusion is completed is acceptable because the shift is completed naturally within the first rhetorical question which in turn is answered by the ancient tradition.

This suggests that we should take the speech as a whole subunit. We can outline the following structure:

- A. Inclusion (v. 9)
 - 1. destruction
 - 2. reason, with *kî*
 - 3. one bicolon

4. divine address

B. Rhetorical Question # 1 (v. 10)

1. adverb *'ayyēh*
2. two bicola
3. divine address

C. Answer to # 1 (vv. 11-12)

1. two bicola
2. divine address

C'. Answer to # 2 (v. 14a-d)

1. two bicola
2. human address

B'. Rhetorical Question # 2 (vv. 14a-d)

1. adverb *'ayyēh*
2. two bicola
3. divine address

A'. Inclusion (vv. 14e-15a)

1. no compassion
2. reason with *kî*
3. one bicolon
4. divine address

The balance in this inclusion is striking. It collapses inward to focus on the answers given first in divine voice--no king--and second in a prophetic voice--Ephraim's sin is enwombed in Sheol. To be more specific we shall have to examine each internal part of the inclusion separately.

(B) The first rhetorical question naturally follows from the first part of the inclusion. Help (*'ezer*) is only available through the intervention of Yahweh, and so the deity mockingly asks what type of salvation has been secured through the monarchy. The obvious tradition recalled here is discussed in Chapter 8, but we do recognize Hosea's fondness for the word-pair of kings and princes (3:4, 7:3,

8:10, 13:10).³¹³ The first such question appears at 4:16 when the prophet rhetorically dismisses a cultic meal-- "can the Lord now feed them?"--because they have mated in orgy like heifers. The other rhetorical questions also imply a cultic setting: (6:4) "What shall I do with you, Ephraim?"; (7:13) "Should I redeem them when they speak lies against me"; (8:5) "How long will they not be completely pure?"; (9:5) "What will you do on the day of the festival, on the day of the feast of the Lord?"; (9:14) "Give to them, Lord, what will you give?; and importantly, (10:3) "a king, 'What could he do for us?'" In each of these cases the answer is immediately before or after the question,³¹⁴ and it is thoroughly negative: Yahweh will ignore ("let him alone") the idolatrous Ephraim (4:17); Ephraim's love is like the morning fog (6:4); "Woe to them . . . Destruction to them (7:13); Ephraim's kings and calves were established without permission (8:4); they will go to Assyria on the day of the festival (9:5); they will get miscarrying wombs and dry breasts (9:14); they have no king (10:3).

(B') The content in each of these questions comes to focus here in Hosea 13 (cultic food, king, calf, dew, birthing). In every question the answer is negative, except for the difficult Hos. 11:8: "How can I give you up, Ephraim// How can I deliver you over, Israel?" There Yahweh's compassion (*niḥûmây*) grows warm and he spares Ephraim. This interpretation has coerced many commen-

³¹³The king is also identified as a *šōpēt* in 7:7, leading to the conclusion that the text should not be emended to eradicate a triad of ruling parties: king, prince, and judge. Rather, the prophet has the monarchy under general scrutiny for seeking aid outside of Yahweh (7:11 and 8:8-10). See R. Vuillemeir-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, p. 63.

³¹⁴The position of the answer is apparently not critical to a rhetorical question.

tators to adopt the same posture in the rhetorical question at 13:14 by modifying the word *nōham* to mean something other than compassion; whatever the translation, it is hid from Yahweh's eyes, as the inclusion moves to its completion.

The perceived inclusion, which is clearly phrased as a harsh condemnation, confirms that the translation of v. 14 is also negative. Further, the first rhetorical question, which is unquestionably critical of the monarchy, is so similar in structure to v. 14—second person address, adverb *'ayyēh*, two bicola—that we have every confidence in the proposed rhetorical intent for this second question.

The nature of the question and the adverb is even clearer if we consider Illman's assertion that questions about death are rhetorical without exception.³¹⁵ Further, though he neglects Hosea 13, Illmann has collected nearly all of the places where Death and Sheol are paired together in one construction. Some of these follow:³¹⁶

Isa. 28:15 We have made a covenant with Death,
and with Sheol we have concluded a pact.

38:18 For it is not Sheol that praises you,
not Death that extols you.

Ps. 18:6 The cords of Sheol entangled me,
the snares of Death confronted me.

55:16 Let him incite Death against them;
may they go down alive into Sheol.

³¹⁵*Formulas About Death*, pp. 82-83. Cf. 1 Sam. 20:32, Eccl. 7:17, Gen. 47:15, etc. Such questions are generally but not always introduced with *lāmmāh*.

³¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 149-53. He does not believe that the word-pair itself expresses "any distinct idea or motif but can be used in different contexts." On the contrary, the combination of Death and Sheol is universally a deity, place, or condition to be avoided! Verbs such as encircled, engulfed, clutches, encompasses, and overtakes say much more about function and motif than Illman grants.

In this last example from Ps. 55:16 we find a sentiment analogous to that expressed in Hos. 13:14. The psalmist, perhaps even an oppressed prophet, remembers the sweet fellowship and conversation of a close friend in the "house of God," but now this person is an enemy who is formulaically cursed with Death and Sheol. The prophet in Hosea 13, in the context of cultic cursing, speaks for Yahweh in the first person. The curses have been invoked, and Yahweh assures the people through the question that the plagues and pox, well-known tools (cf. Ps. 91:6, Deut. 32:23-24) of Death and Sheol, will not be retracted.³¹⁷ Further, the verbs in v. 14a are technical terms from cultic law, especially if spoken by Yahweh. One ransoms *'epdēm* another from legal or cultic obligation by paying a price; one redeems *'eg'ālēm* personal property by protecting it from others.³¹⁸ This could be a purely secular act, but the tradition of redemption in the exodus (Exod. 15:13) leaves little doubt about the cultic implications here. And the rhetorical question in 7:13 asks essentially the same thing, "Should I redeem [*'epdēm*] them," but it also discards that possibility because of a dishonest cult—"when they speak lies."³¹⁹

The first example above, Isa. 28:15, is also helpful because it is presented

³¹⁷Ibid., p. 92. Illman isolates these subformulaic tools, which include "hunger" (Exod. 16:3, Isa. 14:30), thirst (Exod. 17:3, Judg. 15:18), plague (Jer. 21:6, Ps. 78:51). The triplet formula of sword, hunger, and plague is found constantly in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

³¹⁸See Mays, *Hosea*, p. 181.

³¹⁹The answer that precedes this rhetorical question at 7:13 contains the formula of woe (*'ōy*), which is related (cf. the discussion in 13:1-3) to cursing. J. J. Roberts, "Form, Syntax, and Redaction in Isaiah 1:2-20," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* N.S. 3 (1982), pp. 296-97, reminds us, against Westermann and Gerstenberger, that *hōy* is usually an exclamation to get attention; it has no overtones of woe like *'ōy*.

as a chiasmus. The chiasmic structure that intertwines Death with Sheol is also found in the bicola of Prov. 5:5 and Song 8:6. So it is possibly formulaic to find this chiasmus in Hos. 13:14. Andersen-Freedman find two elaborate chiasmic patterns.³²⁰

14a	Sheol		First person verb
	Death		First person verb
		X	
14b	Particle + object		Death
	Particle + object		Sheol

Further, the entire inclusion in vv. 9-15a evokes a chiasmic structure, but the usefulness of the chiasmus might be exaggerated. We have chosen to apply the criterion of inclusion rather than chiasmus because of the technique of bracketing now observed at three places in Hosea.³²¹ The speech does focus upon the "answers" supplied for the rhetorical questions, and we can grant that there is a clear relationship between questions and answers that are enveloped by the inclusion.

(C) The first answer begins with a direct denial of the popular request for a royal form of government. While this connection with the preceding rhetorical question is very obvious, the likelihood of the next verse following has provoked considerable doubt. First we observe that the morae count for the answer in vv. 11-12 is very close: 21 and 20 morae respectively. But the best way to overcome this barrier is through an increasingly popular metaphorical inter-

³²⁰Hosea, p. 627.

³²¹William L. Holladay, "Chiasmus, the Key to Hosea XII 3-6," *VT* 16 (1966), p. 64, tries to establish an "enormous chiasm" for the text of Hosea 12. If the definition of chiasmus can be stretched so far as to include structure and theme as well as vocabulary, we might be persuaded to grant the chiasm in Hosea 12 and also here in 13.

pretation that correctly identifies the semantic field for the terms *šārūr* and *š^epûnāh*. These are the technical terms for binding and storing up legal and communal documents at Qumran.³²² One would like to see this verse as an announcement of punishment which is randomly disconnected from its context, but it should be understood as a response that captures and binds up the accumulating guilt which results from the institution of the monarchy. The guilt is irreversible, and it is hidden away on sealed legal documents with which the audience cannot tamper. Wolff compares this to Jeremiah's purchase of his cousin's field and the subsequent sealing of the legal documents in an earthenware vessel, "that they may last a long time" (32:14).³²³ Mauchline reminds us of Job's fear (14:17): "My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and you sew up my iniquity."³²⁴ In this case one can imagine the sins of the monarchy being stored up by the appropriate cultic and prophetic functionaries as a permanent record of guilt.

(C') The next answer in prophetic speech is also presented in two bicola, but it precedes the rhetorical question. Many critics have been quick to notice that the imagery of the womb is very appropriate to the the word-pair of Death and Sheol in v. 14. The womb is frequently considered a grave for the dead (Jer. 20:17; Job 3:11, 10:8; Ps. 139:13-15). Symbolism for mother earth is generated.

³²²See Rene Vuillemeir-Bessard, "Osee 13:12 et le manuscrits," *Revue de Qumran* 1 (1958), pp. 281-82. Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 637-38 list several other possibilities which are attractive: they could be written down on the great heavenly book of Moses in (Exod.) 32:32; they could be the burden placed on the head of the goat demon Azazel on Yom Kippur (Lev. 16:21). They prefer to recognize idols (^a*wôn* and *ḥaṭṭa't*) which are "removed for safe storage."

³²³Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 228. He supports an association of vv. 4-11 with vv. 12--14:1.

³²⁴*Hosea*, p. 712. The image of sewing up a womb may also be implied.

"The womb becomes Sheol before birth because life does not loose itself from darkness."³²⁵ Further, the fertile womb of mother earth is often associated in the Near East with Death. "The connection with agriculture is obvious; earth is the 'fertile womb' and when man is buried, he is laid to rest in his mother's womb."³²⁶

It is very important to witness the powerful connection between the answer of v. 13 and the following rhetorical question of v. 14. When the full force of this is granted there is little room for a positive or salvific reading of v. 14. Ephraim is the unwise child who has refused to be born. Yahweh will not redeem him from the plagues and pox of Death and Sheol. These two verses then merge naturally with the content of the closure on the inclusion. Yahweh will not have compassion on the stillborn child because it seeks help from other allies: brothers in iniquity.

Setting

Since we are proposing a unity of vv. 9-15a, previous suggestions about setting are beside the point when based on the view that there are at least two oracles. Mays thinks 13:9-11 arises from ancient theology of holy war, which is the progeny of Deut. 33:26-27. In the context of blessing Yahweh will act to give help against every adversary. "Now Yahweh vindicates his role by a frightful

³²⁵*Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Netherworld in the Old Testament*, *Biblica et Orientalia* 21 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), p. 124.

³²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 122. This is consistent with the Egyptian practice of relegating the vegetation deity (Osiris) to the netherworld, which functions as a fertile womb. It explains "the custom of burying people in a squatting position. . .this is the last position of a child in its mother's womb." Ps. 139:13-15 refers to the child "made in secret, spun deep in the earth."

contradiction: their helper destroys them."³²⁷

This example from Deuteronomy 33 is extracted from the cultic realm of blessing and cursing. This is a good starting point, though the concept of holy war seems extraneous to the setting or function of the current words. Here the blessing of divine aid is reversed. Divine aid is also at stake in the other inclusion at Hos. 8:9-13. If we are to take seriously the inclusion as a rhetorical device in Hosea, we should be prepared to assess the typicality of its structure and content. At least for the book of Hosea the inclusion is much more than just a stylistic device that pays a rhetorical dividend. The same has been granted for the book of Jeremiah because both prophets are engaged in the critique of a contentious priesthood. The delicate nature of the apostasy encourages dramatic suspense which is required in such a setting.

The inclusion is at the very least a rhetorical technique of great importance. In Hosea and Jeremiah the inclusion provides the essential structure for many speeches which contain accusations of cultic guilt and idolatry. As a rhetorical device the inclusion suspends the tension between judgment and wrath by breaking open a bicolon and enclosing the description of guilt.

In 8:9-13 the broken bicolon refers to Ephraim's going up to Assyria for help but being returned to Egypt in a reversal of the exodus. Thus part one of the broken bicolon summarizes the forthcoming accusation of cultic guilt; part two summarizes the punishment. The harlot imagery is invoked and merged with the practice of "anointing kings and princes." His altars are for sinning and the

³²⁷*Hosea*, p. 177.

laws by ten thousands are written down, says Yahweh, but they are ignored. The sacrifices of gifts and flesh are rejected as unpleasing. Clearly in this inclusion the same subjects as in 13:9-15a--kings and princes--are attacked for their rejection of divine aid. This accusation occurs from within the cult because the prophet is intimately aware of widespread ignorance of cultic law and apostasy. He suggests immediate punishment but does not specify its nature outside of a return to bondage.

The first inclusion at Hos. 4:4b-9a exposes a contentious priesthood which is clearly opposed to the prophet. Because the priestly and royal leadership have failed, the people suffer from lack of knowledge about torah revelation. This lack leads to endless controversy among the priests and people. The speech then focusses on well-stated images for sacrifice ("feed on sin") and the euphemism for apostasy ("shame" = Ba'al). The mother and her harlotrous children are to be destroyed and forgotten.

In 4:11-14 cultic prostitution and harlotry are merged with an attack on divination which is practiced by use of wooden staves. The broken bicolon blames the lack of cultic understanding (*lō' yābîn*), which is echoed later at 13:13 in the unwise (*lō' hākām*) child, on excessive drinking of the cultic wine. This will bring them to ruin, though that is also not specified. Again, in Hosea 4, the first part of the bicolon summarizes the cultic guilt during a confrontation with the priests and people; part two restates the guilt and effects the punishment.

A comparison of these three inclusions with the one of 13:9-15a, in terms of structure and content, leaves little doubt that the prophet is still engaged in a

mission against cultic apostasy. In some popular contexts it might be enough to say that Hosea is a cultic prophet, or even that he is determined to point out the lack of theology (*dā'āt lōhîm*) in the cult. However, through the speech form of curse oracle and the rhetorical device of inclusion we are in a much better position to explain how this typically happens, for we are able to be much more precise about the prophet's function.

Verses 13:15b--14:1

yābô' qādîm
rûaḥ yhwḥ
mimmidbār 'ōleh (20)

w^eyābēš m^eqôrô
w^eyeḥ^erab ma'yānô
hû' yišseh 'ôṣar
kol-k^elê ḥemdāh (33)

tē'sam šōmrôn
kî mortāh b^e'lōheha (20)

baḥereb yiḥpōlû
'ōllêhem y^eruṭṭāšû
w^eharîyôtâw y^ebuqqā 'û (34)

15b) May an east wind come,
 a wind of the Lord rising from the desert.
 Let his fountain be dried up;
 let his spring be parched.
 It will strip his storehouse
 of every precious item.

14:1) Samaria became guilty
 because she rebelled against her God.
 They will fall by the sword.
 Their infants will be splattered,

and their pregnant women ripped open.

Genre

This subunit is clearly phrased in four parts: two tricola which bracket three bicola. There is unquestionable balance in the length of the two parts of the oracle, with 53 and 54 morae respectively. Further, part one is divided into two parts, of three then four cola, whereas part two is also divided into two parts, of two then three cola. As usual, such data are cited to illustrate balance in the structure of the oracle, and this in turn is suggestive of the actual poetic structure in the speech form. There is no interest here in a mechanistic theory of Hebrew poetry.

The speech is totally prophetic because the speaker refers to Yahweh and God in the third person. We are reminded that the opening curse oracle in Hosea 13 was presented entirely in prophetic speech. Then the next two speech units bracketed prophetic speech with first person divine statements. Now the pattern is complete as the book closes with the harshest summation.

The two-part structure is also enhanced by a shift from Ephraim, as the masculine subject of part one, to Samaria as the feminine subject in part two. This probably suffices for two reasons. The code name "Ephraim," which was obvious all along, is now literalized and politicized as "Samaria." Once that is granted, the brutal feminine imagery follows naturally because Samaria is always followed by the feminine pronoun.

The verbal time is thoroughly acclimated to the future, with the exception of the re-presentation of past tradition, possibly from the exodus--she rebelled against her God.

Structure

Commentators who accept the unity of 13:1--14:1 give these final verses no more than a few sentences. This is even more surprising when they are considered part of an oracle beginning with 13:12. For other commentaries, as an even more drastic solution, these words are considered redacted, appended, or at best thoroughly unrelated to the preceding context. It is necessary to reaffirm that this final oracle is integral to the overall literary unity of the entire passage. The reasons involve speaker, vocabulary, and theology.

As demonstrated above, the chapter opens with prophetic speech and closes with prophetic speech. Both speeches emphasize the guilt of the northern nation; the imperfect of the verb *'š.m.* "guilt" is asserted in 13:1 and 14:1. And the enigmatic lament over the death of Ephraim because of his guilt with Ba'al (13:1) is specified in gruesome and literal terms (14:1). To say that Samaria is guilty because of rebellion is identical to asserting that Ephraim is guilty because of Ba'al. The sirocco that sweeps in from the desert is a clear reversal of the tender care once provided in the desert (13:5-6).³²⁸ Finally the metaphor of the unwise child in v. 13 that refuses to exit the womb is thematically related, in that two curses for guilty children are caught up alongside one another, with the splattering of infants and the pregnant women who are ripped open.

Given the previous curse oracles, it is appropriate to translate these words of judgment as curses. For example, the oracle would start, "May an east

³²⁸Buss, *Hosea*, p. 97, implies some shared mythological origins for the east wind from the wilderness and the netherworld of 13:14.

wind come; a wind of the Lord is rising from the desert. Let his fountain be dried up. Let his spring be parched." The east wind is the source of one of the plagues with which Moses curses the Egyptians on the way to the exodus (cf. Lev. 26:21 and Deut. 28:22 with Exod. 10:12-15).³²⁹ Indeed, Hillers identifies a curse of this type in which the deity is invoked by name against the ships of Tyre: "May Baal-semame, Baal-melage, (and) Baal-saphon raise an evil wind. May it tear apart their framework."³³⁰ Though it is difficult to date, Psalm 48 arises from the Zion tradition and is concurrent with the Zion theology of Isaiah or his immediate disciples. In 48:8 the congregation praises Yahweh because "By the east wind you shall shatter the ships of Tarshish." This is immediately preceded by the perception of royal fear that is similar (*h'îl kayyôlêdâh*) to the pain of a woman giving birth. This juxtaposition of punishment reminds us of the pain of giving birth (*heblê yôlêdâh*) in 13:12 and of the fate for pregnant women in 14:1.

The brutality against children and pregnant women is well documented in the Near East.³³¹ It must have been very literal experience, for the prophets accept it on at least eight occasions (2 Kings 8:12, 15:16; Amos 1:13; Nah. 3:10; Isa. 13:16, 18; Ps. 137:9; and Hos. 10:14). It appears to be a semi-formulaic ex-

³²⁹Moses engages in a ritualistic and symbolic action by raising his staff that locusts "may go up" (*yâ'âl*) on the land of Egypt. The east wind is also the mythic symbol of the divine presence which separates the waters in front of the fleeing Israelites (Exod. 14:21).

³³⁰*Treaty-curses and the Old Testament Prophets*, pp. 13, 27. This comes from the fragmentary "Baal of Tyre Treaty," reverse iv 3-4, which was negotiated between Esarhaddon of Assyria and Abdimilkutti of Sidon in 677 B.C.E.

³³¹J. Ward, *Hosea*, p. 222, quotes T. E. Lawrence's first-hand remarks (from *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Garden City, NY, 1936, p. 631) about the Turkish bayonets which were stuck between the legs of twenty pregnant women at the village of Tafas, Syria in 1918.

pression with the consistent use of the verb *r.t.š.* In 2 Kings 8:12 Elisha is portrayed weeping when he realizes that Hazael will become king of Syria. The northern prophet perceives that the cause of evil between Israel and Syria is Hazael's role in killing young warriors by the sword, splattering infants, and ripping open pregnant women. In the Deuteronomistic History we find the same progression of death as in Hosea 14:1.

It is difficult to be sure that this formula is part of the stock of curses in the Near East. The Israelite prophets generally use it in their oracles against the nations, which are sometimes analogized to Egyptian execrations (Bentzen and Würthwein). We hesitate here to carry out a jussive translation of all the imperfect verbs, though it is probably legitimate. In all of the other examples cited for killing infants and pregnant women the language is more descriptive than prescriptive. We suggest that this is a curse oracle with the following two-part structure:

A. Religious Cursing (13:15b-f)

1. invocation of Yahweh
2. formula of cursing (drought and plunder)
3. third person masculine (Ephraim)

B. Accusation of Guilt (14:1)

1. technical term *tē'sam*
2. formula of death (sword, infants, pregnant women)
3. third person feminine (Samaria)

In light of the two-part and balanced structure outlined under *Genre*, it may not be necessary to find curse parallels for 14:1. The cursing is appropriate for the destructive sirocco. The formula of death is probably a recognition of fact and should be attached to the accusation of guilt, even as Elisha uses it to accuse

Hazael of future evil in spite of the latter's disbelief that he could do such a wonderful deed (*haddābār haggādol hazzeh* in 2 Kings 8:13). Samaria is thus guilty of doing this to herself, even if Assyria may be the one to carry out the act.

Setting

The content of this oracle clearly eliminates a setting in the courtroom or the city gate. The cursing of drought combined with the plundering of the cultic vessels should be compared with Hos. 9:6, where the cultic vessels of silver are overgrown by weeds from disuse during the impending exile to Egypt or Assyria.³³² Once again another oracle is directed at an apostate and guilty cult that has most likely gathered for some solemn occasion. Throughout Hosea 13 there have been hints about the activity that characterizes this solemn gathering, and it remains to tie these loose ends together so that we can suggest a likely holy day that would have permitted the prophet to confront the worshipers with cultic apostasy.

³³²On the basis of historical comparison with Hos. 12:2--"Ephraim pursues the east wind all day long"--Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 246, is certain that the east wind represents an Assyrian invasion. In other words, Ephraim chases after an ally only to be invaded by that ally. But Weiser, *Kleinen Propheten*, p. 100, responds that the destruction through the east wind is timeless and undateable. The phrase *k^e l'ê hemdah* occurs elsewhere at Nah. 2:10, Jer. 25:34, 1 Chron. 32:27, 36:10, and Dan. 11:8; it generally refers to vessels stored for ceremonial use in the temple or at the palace.

CHAPTER VI

NEW MOON FESTIVAL

As stated above, Hosea's relation to the cult in northern Israel could be expressed with three models: the ba'alistic fertility cult, the covenant lawsuit and mediator, and the cultic apostasy. Throughout the analysis of Hosea 13 and the passages such as 5:8--6:6 or 11:1-12, we have perceived a prophet who is thoroughly engaged in pronouncing curse oracles that include accusations of cultic apostasy. This third model has been proposed by Wolff, Buss, and Andersen-Freedman, but not until now have there been identified definite, appropriate speech forms to cover the content of that particular cursing. From chapter 13 we describe two: the curse oracle (also found in chapters 2, 5, 7, and 9) and the inclusion (also found in chapters 4 and 8).

There is an element of truth in each of these models. However, the first two connections, which emerged during earlier periods of biblical research, over-emphasize elements that can lead to mistaken conclusions about Hosea's relationship with the cult. Related to Hosea's cursing of the lack of proper ritual knowledge is the deviation toward the alternative of the ba'alistic fertility cult. And the prophet is probably fulfilling such a role at some type of solemn festival. Whenever the probability of some festival is raised commentators naturally look immediately to the overinterpreted New Year festival celebrated in the autumn. Long before Mowinckel or the other Scandinavians developed an extensive history

for this festival, Wellhausen had placed Hos. 9:1-6 in such a setting.³³³

Unfortunately the debate over the existence of the New Year festival has been burdened with controversy about the origin of covenant theology in ancient Israel. The normal reconstruction allows for an annual or periodic covenant festival at which all the tribes gather (an amphictyony) to renew their pledge to the religion of Yahweh. There the prophet fulfilled a definite role as one who charismatically voiced the complaints of Yahweh in a juridical setting that was part of this covenant renewal. Analogies to various suzerain treaties in the second millennium were granted because this covenant festival was supposedly modeled after the treaty formulary.

This reconstruction of the covenant festival has been assailed from a variety of angles. Luther Perlit and Ronald Clements, in particular, have denied that covenant theology within Israel was even understood in explicit terms until the end of the period of the Deuteronomistic History. The amphictyonic model of tribal congregation has been discarded in favor of retribalization during the monarchic period. And thus the role of the prophet as covenant mediator has fallen by the way at least until the exilic period.

There is no room in the present study to rehearse the reasons for and against a New Year festival in Israel. Thus we have sought to distance the characterization of Hosea as a curser of cultic apostasy from both the New Year celebration and from a controversial history of covenant theology.

³³³ *Kleinen Propheten*, p. 122. E. M. Good, "The Composition of Hosea," p. 43, lists all the ingredients of a cultic festival, including threshing floors, feasts, and silver vessels. See also Mauchline, *Hosea*, pp. 557-58.

The alienation of Samaria from her sister state to the south has always made rather tenuous her participation in a nationwide, notably Judean, fall festival. If we are correct in portraying Hosea as one who curses cultic apostasy at solemn occasions in the north, it seems appropriate to look for a festival with considerably more local appeal and one which is celebrated with more regularity, thus leaving the prophet numerous of occasions to deliver his curse oracles and other speeches. Several hints in the text of Hosea suggest the New Moon festival as a possibility. We shall systematically investigate the data and settle for a cautious suggestion that this is the proper occasion.³³⁴

History of the New Moon Festival

Numbers 10:10 reads: "On the days that you rejoice--at your appointed feasts and at your New Moons--you shall blow trumpets [*t^eqa'tem bah^ašōšrōt*] over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings. It will be for you a remembrance before your God. I am the Lord your God." In the very next verse, the Sinai interlude and revelation to Moses are finished and Israel resumes its trek behind the cloud. The verse also concludes a brief section on the significance of the two silver trumpets, which have two functions: (1) to summon the people to holy war (10:3-9) and to summon the congregation to wor-

³³⁴It is not always necessary to identify a specific institutional setting in the practice of form criticism, since a genre can exist in a functional or intentional setting within the occupation of the human mind. However, if there were curse oracles delivered before some audience of priests and people, it is helpful to conjecture an institutional setting.

ship (10:10). However late this text is in final form--³³⁵ and this verse is only cited because it includes the important and controversial elements of the festival--these are always the two options that exegetes have when explaining the use of the trumpet in Hosea.

The history of the New Moon festival is shrouded in mystery and suffers from a sparseness of data in concentrated texts, but the four important items evident in Numb. 10:10 can provide a useful though admittedly artificial structure for our reconstruction: (1) the trumpet is blown at various festivals and (2) particularly at the New Moon gathering; (3) there are sacrifices at these festivals; and (4), to restate what we learned from Zimmerli, the self-presentation formula ("I am the Lord your God") is liturgically attached to the New Moon and other appointed feasts.

Trumpet

The blowing of a trumpet at a cultic ceremony is expected and does not necessarily initiate a gathering on the occasion of the New Moon; it is required at other appointed festivals as well. Even in Humbert's definitive study of the *terou'a* rite he generally appropriates the cultic act to the New Year festival.³³⁶ Nevertheless the trumpet announces the theophany or epiphany of Yahweh and signals the official presence of the deity, whether in battle or preceding worship.

³³⁵Most critics would list it from the Priestly source in the exilic period but grant that it reflects earlier Elohist tradition. See P. Humbert, *La "terou'a": analyse d'un rite biblique* (Neuchatel: Secretariat de l'Universite, 1946), pp. 30-33.

³³⁶Vuilleumeir-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, p. 87.

A schematic listing of the shouting rite shows that it occurs in pre-exilic historical texts (Josh. 6:5, 10; 16:20; Judg. 7:21; 15:14), pre-exilic prophetic texts (Isa. 4:5; 10:24; 17:20, 52; Hos. 5:8), and pre-exilic psalms (41:12; 47:2; 66:1; 81:2; 95:1, 2; 98:4, 6; 100:1; 60:10; 65:14; 108:10). In all but the last three psalms listed it is a *hiphil* verb that means "make a shout." The *herî'ā* is a premeditated, congregational blast on the trumpet, though it occasionally is a noninstrumental shout for joy (Josh. 6:5ff.; 1 Sam. 4:5; 10:24; Ps. 47:2) that signifies the instigation of ritual activity or even the blowing on the trumpet to follow.³³⁷ The choice of words depends on the context of each passage.

A key passage for our purposes is Hos. 5:7-8, which we have discussed previously because its setting in life is so important to chapter 13. A break is generally perceived between these two verses. Based on Alt's classic interpretation of the Syro-Ephriamite war, it is assumed that 5:8ff. refers to the trumpet alarm and shout that precedes an invasion. An alternative, helpfully proposed by Good, makes more sense of the redactor's reasons for linking 5:1-7 with 5:8ff. "The probable cultic setting of 5:8-9, with the blowing of the *šôpar* and the declaration on the *yôm tôkêhāh*, might have some relation with the rather obscure but possibly cultic *hōdeš*, 5:7c (cf. 2:13b and Ps. 81:4)."³³⁸ Rather than a military warning the blowing of the trumpet in Hos. 5:8 is a liturgical act to be performed at three northern cultic centers: Gibeah, Ramah, and Beth-aven (probably Bethel). The tribes of Benjamin and Ephraim are called to a "day of

³³⁷Humbert, *La "terou'a"*, pp. 9-15, 22.

³³⁸"Composition of Hosea," p. 58.

decision" because desolation is certain. The root of *tōkēhāh* calls for punishment based on legal grounds, and thus 5:8-9 presents the same two themes as 5:10--6:6: cultic guilt or apostasy (vv. 10-15) and liturgy (6:1-6).³³⁹ There is even the form of cursing using similes of wild lions and the moth. As an analogy rather than treaty parallel, both kinds of curse are found in secular treaties.³⁴⁰

Final confirmation of a cultic setting for the trumpet blast comes in Hosea 8:1, which signals the start of a new literary unit after 5:8--7:16. To be sure, some would associate a military invasion with this trumpet blast, but it is clearly a call to assembly at the "house of the Lord." Ephraim is the dove and Yahweh is the vulture who will destroy because they have broken the divine covenant (*b^erit*) and violated the divine law (*torah*). It may be that the enemy is Assyria who will mount a military invasion, but the trumpet calls the congregation together so that it can hear this accusation of cultic apostasy, which involves king, cult, and calf.

New Year or New Moon Festival?

Not everyone would agree that *b^ero'sē hōdšēkem* in Num. 10:10 is signaling out the New Moon as a specific holiday before the exile. In a rather tor-

³³⁹Good, "Hosea 5:8--6:6," p. 282. Good's reading of the text is preferable but his conclusion about a covenant lawsuit compared to 4:1-3 is unwarranted. Humbert, *La "terou'a,"* p. 18, suggests a trumpet blast followed by a vocal shout. "Dans Os. 5,8 double invitation: a sonner de la corne et de la trompette a Guibea et a Rama, et a heri'ā a Bethel: 'A tes trousses, Benjamin'. Qu'on avec TM cette exclamation ou qu'on la corrigé en 'aharid (Cp. ex. BH³), elle represente tres probablement le contenu de l'exclamation provoquee par l'imperatif hari'u: la terou'a semble done distinguee, en tant qu'exclamation, de la sonnerie meme de schofar." There is no reason to emend the text as does RSV.

³⁴⁰See Hillers, *Treaty-curses*, pp. 55-56 and Isa. 51:8.

tuous study Norman Snaith sought to prove that such a phrase is understood as the new-month day, which is actually initiated on the full-moon day in Israel prior to the sixth century.³⁴¹ The crux of his problem is a legitimate distinction in the way of reckoning the calendar before and after the exile. Because certain texts initiate important festivals such as Sukkoth on the full moon (which is determined by its distinctive harvest color), the term *ḥōdeš* is either a separate new-month day in the pre-exilic period or all months actually begin on the day of the full moon, which corresponds to the initiation of Passover, Sukkoth, and Rosh Hashannah. Thus the *ḥōdeš* before the exile should indicate that the months began on the full moon; after the exile they began with the New Moon.

Nearly all of Snaith's reconstruction arises from Mishnaic and Talmudic wrangling over the post-exilic calendar. For example, how can one reason from Mishnah Sukkah 5:1-4, which says the water-pouring rite for Sukkoth occurred on the full moon of Tishri, to practices in pre-exilic Israel, which are explained in post-exilic legal materials? The force of Snaith's argument is to deny the existence of a New Moon festival in Israel until after the exile. This gives him the advantage of harmonizing contradictions about the start of major festivals, especially the New Year, within the redaction of the priestly calendars.

Those few who have actually focussed on the New Moon festival will acknowledge its presence throughout Israel's history, even if it is generally associated with some other religious feast. This continuous existence is to be expected if only because the lunar cycle is the very basis of the religious calendar

³⁴¹*The Jewish New Year Festival* (London: S.P.C.K. Press, 1947), pp. 82-97.

that governed daily life: the "moon marks the seasons" (Ps. 104:19). And the New Moon was reason for cultic assembly in other religious subcultures of the ancient Near East. Ringgren recalls that in Sumerian religion "the new moon was celebrated with a feast of three days."³⁴²

Rather than during the pre-exilic period, Andre Caquot begins his history of the New Moon celebration near its end, within the liturgical calendars that were devised from ancient traditions by the priestly school. Thus the sacrifices for the New Moon in Numb. 28:11-15 are sandwiched between those for the Sabbath and those for other appointed feasts, beginning with the Passover. The same placement is found throughout the Chronicler (1 Chron. 23:31; 2 Chron. 2:3; 8:13; 31:3; and Neh. 10:34).³⁴³ However, the legal collections such as the Covenant Code (Exod. 23:12, 17), the Yahwistic Calendar (Exod. 34:18-23), the Deuteronomistic Calendar (Deut. 5:12-15, 16:1-16), and the Holiness Code (Lev. 23:3-44) maintain silence about the New Moon, including only the Sabbath

³⁴²*The Religions of the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), p. 30. The Babylonian calendars collected by Benno Landsberger also show a regular celebration: *Der kultische Kalender der Babylonian und Assyrer* (Leipzig: J. C. Heinrich, 1915). The comparative material and issues are developed further by W. W. Hallo in "New Moon and Sabbath: A Case Study in the Contrastive Approach," *HUCA* 48 (1977), pp. 3-4, 9. His purpose is to prove the superiority of the sabbath system in Israel over the pagan Mesopotamian lunar cycle. On pp. 3-8 he supplies helpful details on the Mesopotamian lunar cult which survived for over one thousand years (2400-1000 B.C.E.) of making special offerings (cakes, oil, beer, and cattle). Any evidence of the lunar cult in Israel is downgraded as "minimal" (p. 9). The sabbath system was morally superior in terms of society, ethics, justice, and ecology. We agree that the evidence for a lunar cycle is underwhelming when compared to the sabbath, but Hallo's moralizing agenda is subjectively skewed. On the importance of the lunar cult to Arabic religion see É. P. Dhorme, "La religion primitive des Semites" in *Recueil É. Dhorme* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1951), pp. 711-30. First published in *Revue de l'histoire des Religions* (1944).

³⁴³"Remarques sur la fête de la néoménie dans l'ancien Israël," *Revue de l'histoire des Religions* 158 (1961), pp. 1-16.

and the three great annual festivals.³⁴⁴

Julius Wellhausen suggests that this silence is due to the overwhelming prophetic denunciation of abuses associated with the New Moon. He conjectures that the sabbath absorbed the New Moon festival in the post-exilic period, but Caquot contests any absorption because of the separation of Sabbath and New Moon in the sacrificial calendars from Numbers and Chronicles.

Ivan Engnell believes the codes are silent for sociological reasons.³⁴⁵ Before the exile the New Moon was a tribal or clan feast. As such the scribes ignored it because they were only interested in codifying what used to be national gatherings. After the exile the feast changed its character and was included in Ezekiel's theocratic vision for the new society.³⁴⁶

The orientation in the clan for the New Moon is clearly illustrated by 1 Sam. 20:18ff. Jonathan makes a deal with David to be absent from Saul's local celebration of the New Moon; they are testing Saul's affection. The feast is apparently a three day affair because Jonathan advises David that he will be greatly missed if not there as late as the third day. The pretext given for David's

³⁴⁴Actually Deut. 16:1 does identify the *hodes* as a particular day which preceded Passover observance. A similar point can be made with regard to Numb. 28:16.

³⁴⁵Cited by Caquot, "Néoménie," p. 4 from "Nymanad" in *Svensk bibliskt uppslagsverk* II (Gavle, 1952), col. 494-95.). Admittedly, Engnell and Caquot make too much of an ethnic gathering. We should not assume that the clan ethos has no cultic outlet or local implications for the sanctuary. After all, the local sanctuary was specifically established for tribal worship, be it ba'alistic or yahwistic.

³⁴⁶Cf. Ezek. 45:17 when the eschatological prince is to perform the New Moon sacrifice. According to J. C. Rylaarsdam ("New Moon," in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 3, p. 543-44) the eschatological significance only increases after the exile. The law is to be read by Ezra on the New Moon (Neh. 8:2). The New Moon and Sabbath are to be celebrated after the installation of the new heaven and new earth in Isa. 66:22-23. Cf. also Sir. 43:6-8.

absence has to do with familial responsibilities to sacrifice with his own clan in Bethlehem (20:28).

The three-day period of time for a New Moon feast may also be the setting of the penitential lament from the people, which the prophet mimics in Hos. 6:1-3. Martin-Achard suggests that "the moon, in its monthly cycle, remains invisible for three days, and it is possible that we have here the vestige of a lunar cult; moreover this luminary is often associated with fertility."³⁴⁷ It is quite likely that a northern prophet would be available to hear such a petition at the New Moon. In 2 Kings 4:23 the Shunammite woman is told by her husband that she should not seek aid from Elisha, the man of God, because it is "neither New Moon nor Sabbath." Apparently such days were considered appropriate to prophetic intercession and revelation.³⁴⁸ Such a suggestion would be implausible if eighth-century prophets were unaware of a feast associated with the New Moon.

Both Amos (8:5) and Hosea were convinced that the New Moon was menaced by idolatry. Perhaps they are influenced by the traditions (Deut. 4:19, Jer. 8:2, and 1 Kings 23:5) that prohibit lunar worship.³⁴⁹ Though these are specifically phrased as a later Deuteronomistic polemic against astral worship,

³⁴⁷ *From Death to Life* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p. 83. Another possibility is the ratification of the covenant on the third day. The New Testament claim that Christ rose from the dead on the third day "in accordance with the scriptures" is an interpretation of Hos. 6:2 which identifies the resurrection with the ratification of the eschatological New Covenant. See J. Wijngaards, "Death and Resurrection in Covenant Context," pp. 226-39.

³⁴⁸ Rylaarsdam, "New Moon," p. 544, notes that Ezekiel receives many of his visionary revelations on the first day of the month (26:1, 29:17, 31:1, 32:1. Cf. Isa. 47:13 and Hag. 1:1).

³⁴⁹ So Vuilleumeir-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, p. 75.

there is some evidence that the celestial cults were already a problem in the eighth century. Amos 5:26 prohibits the astral cult, though the text could be from a later redactor. The LXX interpolation at Hos. 13:4 is probably a similar polemic because it refers to Yahweh who made the "host of heaven." At least the textual addition suggests that a later tradition interpreted Hosea 13 in the context of the astral cult. Further, M. Coogan persuasively concludes that astral worship of the kind that is abhorrent to the central Judean cult in the seventh century B.C.E. was not imposed on Palestine by Assyria. Worship linked to celestial bodies, common to Semitic culture and the cult of the Queen of Heaven, is much older than Jeremiah's denunciations. Assyrian practices known from the lunar cult merge through a process of syncretism into Israel and Judah after they are mediated through Syrian practices to the immediate north.³⁵⁰

Hosea contains two references to the New Moon by name. He is silent about a New Year festival. In 2:14 (12) Yahweh announces the cessation of all "her feasts of the New Moon, her Sabbaths, and her appointed festivals." This is the same triad that is found later in the post-exilic calendars dealing with sacrifice. One feast might not be considered more in focus here if it were not for another controversial attestation at 5:7. The verse in whole reads:

They have betrayed the Lord
because they bear alien children.
[*'attāh yō'klēm ḥōdeš 'et- ḥelqêhem*]
Now the New Moon will devour them with their portion.

³⁵⁰ *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah, and Israel in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974), pp. 85-86. So the Bar-rakib stele shows the king of Sam'al (in Syria) with a "lunar crescent beside the inscription *mr'y b'ḥrn* my lord, Baal Haran. Here the local moon god is equated out of political tact with the moongod of the Assyrian overlord."

Most emendations of the MT are permitted because it apparently makes no sense to indict the New Moon here.³⁵¹ However the cultic interpretation of the trumpet in 5:8ff. requires a careful evaluation of the context. The oracle begins with 5:1 as the priests of God's house are formulaically summoned with the kings to local cultic sanctuaries (Mizpah, Tabor, and Shittim). Ephraim is accused of harlotry (vv. 3-4) and laden with *awôn* guilt (v. 5). They will be cursed with an absence of the divine presence; Yahweh has withdrawn. So when they bring their flocks and the children who were born of harlots to the sanctuary, it is the New Moon rather than Yahweh who will devour their alien children and the sacrificial portion (*heleq*)--compare 2 Sam. 6:9 where the *heleq* is apportioned food for the festival and Deut. 18:18, which refers to the equal share of the people's offering that is provided for every Levite.³⁵² Balz-Cochois also refers to the popular religion of the festival,³⁵³ during which the New Moon is expected to eat the bad children.

³⁵¹Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 95, notes that 5:7b is deleted in the Syriac. He reads with the LXX, "locusts will devour their fields," because of a double, direct object. Vuilleumeir-Bessard, *Tradition culturelle*, p. 46, rejects this in favor of the sheep having no grass to eat (cf. v. 5:6).

³⁵²Similar interpretations are available in Caquot, "Néoménie," p. 16: "He (Yahweh) will devour their fields on the day of the New Moon," which is reversed as a day of infertility and ruin. See also Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, pp. 396-97. G. Östborn, *Yahweh and Baal*, p. 66, assumes that the New Moon "consumes to them their own inheritances," i.e., the offerings brought to the festival.

³⁵³*Der Hohenkult Israels im Selbstverständnis der Volksfrömmigkeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982), pp. 24, 37. Cf. also Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 37. the "children of harlotry" are those conceived by the harlots of 4:4-5. Mauchline, *Hosea*, p. 619, agrees but calls this "poetic justice" rather than a literal reference to child immolation.

Human Sacrifice

It is fair to say that the New Moon festival is more than just an ethnic gathering at a secular feast. Sacrifices are clearly identified in the later calendars of sacrifice in Numb. 10:10, and during the eighth century in Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea.³⁵⁴ There is also strong evidence for abuses that include human sacrifice. This, of course, is a controversial topic in biblical studies. Most archaeologists claim that no evidence of human sacrifice has been uncovered at Ugarit,³⁵⁵ so many cautiously question its practice in Canaanite Ba'alism. The evidence has been thoroughly reviewed by R. de Vaux and A. R. W. Green.³⁵⁶ Both are very keen to disavow any connection between the practice of human sacrifice and official Yahwism. Some have proposed such an activity in "primitive" Israel because of a rather embarrassing command to offer the first born in Exod. 23:28-29. By using an implicit principle of scripture-interprets-scripture, de Vaux cites several other texts that order the redemption (presumably from sacrifice) of the first born for five shekels (Exod. 13:11-15, 34:19-20, and Numb. 18:15-16). In Numb. 3:40-51 and 8:17-18 the Levites are to be a dedicated substitute for the first born. He further explains the enigma of Ezek. 20:25-26 as Israel's gross, materialistic misinterpretation of the law of the first born in the Covenant Code.

³⁵⁴Amos 8:5 mimics the merchants who tire of sacrificing grain for the New Moon, which would bring a good price on the market. Isa. 1:13 refers to New Moon offerings as vain and idolatrous because iniquity and cultic gathering are mutually exclusive.

³⁵⁵A. Guglielmo, "Sacrifice in the Ugaritic Texts," *CBQ* 17 (1955), pp. 196-216.

³⁵⁶"Les sacrifices de pares en Palestine et dans l'Ancien Orient," *ZAW* 77 (1958), pp. 260-65, which is basically absorbed in *Studies in Old Testament Sacrifice* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1964); Green, *The Role of Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975).

The former law was bad because the people abused the commandment about the first born, and Yahweh allowed the abuse to punish a faithless people. Elsewhere Ezekiel condemns the practice of child sacrifice (26:20-21).

Green absolves official Yahwism from the practice of offering the first born for transgressions in Micah 6:6-7.³⁵⁷ But he does grant that such practices were the object of prophetic criticism. Early premonarchic Israel apparently practiced human sacrifice as "an acceptable aspect of Yahwistic belief." It was used in expiation and in crises, which were supposedly noncultic.³⁵⁸ An example of sacrifice during a crisis, which is labeled "magical," is found in the foundation sacrifice practiced in Mesopotamia and possibly paralleled at 1 Kings 16:34.³⁵⁹ To claim that a magical act has no religious significance in the ancient Near East is curious; especially since Landsberger includes the foundation sacrifice of the infant in the three-day celebration of the New Moon in pre-Sargonic Babylon.³⁶⁰ Green claims that there is no evidence of human sacrifice performed to ensure fertility, but de Vaux cites Ras Shamra I, AB, ii. 30-37 (=Gordon No. 49), in which Anat slices up Mot to restore Ba'al to life, as "the mythological transposition of a ritual action which was recovered in worship: a human sacrifice to ensure fertility." A biblical example is noted at 2 Sam. 21:1-14, which explains the

³⁵⁷*Human Sacrifice*, p. 173. He also agrees that Ezekiel 20 is a popular confusion of the Covenant Code.

³⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 199. It is hard to understand how the Abraham-Isaac episode is ignorant of any cultic implications!

³⁵⁹See de Vaux, *Old Testament Sacrifice*, p. 59.

³⁶⁰*Kalendar*, pp. 92-93, 106.

execution of Saul's descendants to restore the land after drought and harvest after famine.³⁶¹

Even if the evidence of human sacrifice at Ugarit is forced, there is practically a consensus that the Phoenician brand of Ba'al worship mediated child immolation into Israel. The Punic evidence at Carthage especially but also at Constantine, Sousse, Sardinia, and Sicily shows widespread practice of the rite from 750-250 B.C.E. in the Phoenician religion, with the most intensive periods occurring in the eighth and fourth centuries. A recent study of the site at Carthage by L. E. Stager and S. R. Wolff concludes that the sacrifices were offered to the deity Tanit (Canaanite Astarte) who was the consort of Ba'al-Hammon. The cemetery inscriptions clearly show religious burning for the goddess and Ba'al-Hammon (Greek, Kronos-Saturnus), who is symbolized as a lunar crescent above the figurine of Tanit.³⁶²

R. de Vaux is convinced that the Moloch sacrifices, described in 2 Kings 16:13 and Deut. 12:31, and the *tōpet* identified just south of Jerusalem in Isa. 30:33, are the earliest reference to this practice in Israel.³⁶³ Green cautions against too much reliance on etymological connections between the *molk* sacrifice

³⁶¹*Old Testament Sacrifice*, p. 61.

³⁶²"Child Sacrifice at Carthage--Religious Rite or Population Control?" *BAR* (Jan-Feb 1984), pp. 31-51.

³⁶³*OT Sacrifice*, p. 73-74. He believes that they actually began in the eighth century.

in Punic sources and the *m.l.k.* root in Hebrew.³⁶⁴ His caution about the exilic period and thereafter is well placed, because the Phoenician ritual of child sacrifice was dying out in Israel between the eighth and sixth centuries.

It is therefore surprising to find both de Vaux and Green rejecting the evidence of human sacrifice in Hos. 13:2, which we have read, "They are speaking of those who sacrifice humans."³⁶⁵ They reason that the versions do not support the MT, but we have disagreed in Chapter 2. More serious is the claim that "verses 1-3 are an attack on the cult images of the northern kingdom, Jeroboam's calves, and it is hard to understand in this case a reference to human sacrifice. Hosea never speaks of it elsewhere, and there is no question of it anywhere in reference to the cults at Bethel and Dan." It is easiest to counter de Vaux's claim that no mention is made of human sacrifice elsewhere in Hosea. We have already presented the evidence at 5:7 and would cautiously include another, albeit oblique, reference at 4:13, which is proposed by L. Rost as infant sacrifices of the

³⁶⁴*Human Sacrifice*, pp. 185-87. This is an error in de Vaux's reconstruction and the earlier case built by Eissfeldt. M. Coogan, *Imperialism and Religion*, p. 77, would join Green because he does not think that the Moloch cult was engaged in child sacrifice. The reference in Deut. 12:31 identifies a Canaanite cult of child sacrifice which was later confused by Jeremiah (7:31, 19:5, 32:35) and Ezekiel with the Assyrian rite of initiating infants by having them walk between fire rather than by burning them.

³⁶⁵Green, *Human Sacrifice*, p. 202, repeats verbatim from de Vaux the same arguments against the reading we prefer, *Old Testament Sacrifice*, p. 68. Green has to eliminate this reading because it would vitiate his thesis that human sacrifice is never connected to fertility ritual in the ancient Near East.

first born by cult prostitutes.³⁶⁶ H. W. Wolff agrees that in 13:2 the cultic functionaries consider the sacrifice of the "first born conceived in the sacral forests," which is an allusion to Hos. 11:3ff. because the cult has perverted Yahweh's tender love for the child.³⁶⁷ And this raises the traditio-historical issue, which must be detailed Chapter 8. Jeroboam's idolatry may be at stake here on a national level, but another traditional source could be the episodes at Ba'al-Peor in Numbers 25 or even the episode of the golden calf in Exodus 32. In any case, we are considering Hosea's cursing at a regionalized festival of the New Moon, so it is possible for the prophet to bring a great variety of tradition to bear on northern cultic abuses.

Self-presentation Formula

Our paradigmatic text at Numb. 10:10 closes with the self-presentation formula. The phrase certainly occurs in a variety of legal contexts, but its liturgical setting within the festivals as demonstrated by Zimmerli, specifically with the New Moon festival here, is of interest. That interest peaks when we note that the formula also occurs in Psalm 81, which is universally attributed to a festival setting in life.

On the basis of Jewish tradition in the Targum concerning Rosh

³⁶⁶ "Erwägungen zu Hosea 4,13f." in *Festschrift für Alfred Bertholet*, ed. by W. Baumgartner, et al. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), p. 456, esp. note 2. He is suggesting that sacrifice with male and female cult prostitutes involves more than just the typical animal or grain sacrifice. O. Eissfeldt suggests the same conclusion for Hos. 2:13 and 13:2 in *Molk als Opferbegriff im Punischen und Hebräischen* (Halle, 1935), cited in Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. 100-01.

³⁶⁷ *Hosea*, p. 225.

Hashanah,³⁶⁸ some critics are committed to the New Year festival in vv. 4-5, which reads, "Blow the trumpet on the New Moon, *bakkēseh*, for the day of our feast; because it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob." The difficult word transliterated here *bakkeseh* occurs only once in the Hebrew Bible in this spelling and once as *kēse'* in Prov. 7:20. The meaning of "full moon," which is borrowed from an Assyrian cognate, has led to the proposal of the New Year festival. The word may refer to the tiara over the Assyrian moon-god. But this precommitment to the New Year festival seems forced, and it is preferable to accept a general pre-exilic celebration at the New Moon festival.³⁶⁹

Corroboration comes in the festive shout of v. 3,³⁷⁰ the blowing of the shophar in v. 4 as a divinely-given ordinance for the liturgical gathering, and the self-presentation formula. This last item is directly comparable to Hos. 13:4-5. The formula of Ps. 81:10-11 is intertwined with the exodus tradition throughout and distinctively, like Hosea 13, presented with the prohibition of other gods. It reads:

There shall not be among you a strange god,
and you shall not worship a foreign god.
I am the Lord your God,
who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

In this psalm and in Hosea we can be sure that the self-presentation formula requires the liturgical presentation of cultic law, and it provides the obvious context

³⁶⁸Briggs and Gunkel call it a Passover Song; Kirkpatrick, Mowinckel, Kissane, and Weiser place it in Sukkoth; others leave its occasion unstated according to Caquot, "Néoménie," p. 4.

³⁶⁹See Caquot, "Néoménie," pp. 5-6.

³⁷⁰Humbert, *La "terou'a,"* p. 19.

for the cursing of cultic apostasy which violates that law.³⁷¹

Psalm 50 has also been associated with the same festival as Psalm 81 by Zimmerli. In 50:7 we find the Elohist expression of the self-presentation formula: "I am God your God."³⁷² But the most intriguing development is the recognition that the prophetic voice is part of Psalms 50 and 81. Despite his overcommitment to the New Year festival and a reliance on the amorphous form "dispute," J. Eaton helpfully describes the role of the prophet who rises to engage the cultus during the festival.³⁷³ A prophetic oracle in Psalm 81 is also thoroughly discussed by Th. Booij and dated to the pre-exilic period.³⁷⁴ The prophetic critique is against the idolatrous sacrifice of the wicked, a theme well known in the book of Hosea and in the literary tradition associated with other prophets from the eighth century. Of even more significance at 50:18 is the charge that adulterers are the associates of the wicked. Among others they are

³⁷¹Zimmerli, "I am Yahweh, p. 24, points to another reason why Mowinckel was wrong about the New Year festival in Psalm 81. The decalogue should not be separated from the formula of self-introduction during the festival.

³⁷²"Ich bin Yahweh," p. 207. He points out that in P and H the lawgiving is separated from the epiphany or presence of Yahweh, but in Psalms 50 and 81 the divine presence is clearly evident. Thus it is difficult to explain Zimmerli's dating of the psalms after the exile. The acknowledgement of epiphany fits his pre-exilic criteria for the formula in the JE cult (cf. the Elohist formulation in Hos. 11:8-9).

³⁷³Again we distance this thesis from the controversy surrounding the all-embracing New Year festival in Scandinavian scholarship. But Eaton is surely right about the prophetic response to the congregation. A good example of that is identified following the self-introduction formula in Isa. 48:17. He has been criticized by C. Stuhlmüller for not stressing the role of torah in this prophetic setting of worship ("Book Review," *JBL* 103 (1984), pp. 638-39.) The emphasis in this thesis on the legal background of cultic cursing should correct that neglect.

³⁷⁴"The Background of the Oracle in Psalm 81," *Biblica* 65 (1984), p. 446. He dates it in late pre-exilic times (Jeremiah) with an argument from silence: The exodus tradition contains no reference to Sinai. But he gives no reason why the traditions in the oracle are coterminous with Jeremiah. In fact Booij admits that the language is possibly pre-Deuteronomistic.

warned in 50:22, "Understand this you who forget [šōkḥē] God, lest I rend [’ētrōp] and there is none who will deliver [’ēn maššîl]." This is remarkably similar to the curse in Hos. 5:14—"I, even I, will rend [’ētrōp], I will go and carry, but there is none who will deliver [’ēn maššîl]."—and Hos. 13:6-8, where Ephraim is cursed with wild beasts because he forgets (šēkēhûnî) Yahweh’s commands.

Hosea 13 and the New Moon Festival

The case for the presentation of the oracular curse in Hosea 13 during the New Moon festival is admittedly based on circumstantial evidence. But the following summary will show that enough of this evidence merges to grant a strong probability.

First, we know that the New Moon gathering was an important day for the delivery of prophetic words (2 Kings 4:23). On two occasions Hosea refers to the cultic blast of the trumpet (5:8, 8:1) which is required at the New Moon. On at least two, possibly three or four, occasions (5:7, 13:2, 4:13?, 6:8?) Hosea refers to the practice of human sacrifice. In one of these contexts (5:7) it is described as an abuse during the New Moon festival, a possibility corroborated by the concurrent Phoenician worship of Tanit and Ba’al Hammon in the eighth century. In 13:2 it is linked to the kissing of calves, which is clearly a reference to the syncretism of the Ba’al cult.³⁷⁵

Hosea, who is the only prophet in the eighth century to speak the divine

³⁷⁵The practice of kissing calves is obscure, but it is described in 1 Kings 19:18 as a distinctive ritual of Ba’al worship, by which Yahweh separates for Elijah the seven thousand Yahweh worshipers from the Ba’al worshipers. Isaiah 66:3 joins the practice of pagan human sacrifice together with kissing (lit. *m^ebārēk*) an idol. See de Vaux, *Old Testament Sacrifice*, p. 69.

self-presentation formula, does so in the context of a liturgical setting. It is probable that the liturgical setting is the same as that of Psalms 50 and 81. These psalms have undoubted verbal and theological parallels to Hos. 5:8--6:6 and Hos. 13. The curse of Yahweh the lion is tempered in Psalm 50 because this psalm and Psalm 81 are clearly products of a cult that stresses salvation for the righteous rather than a prophet who curses his wicked congregation. The psalms are generally considered laments which are mixed with disputation, but such ingredients are the basis of the oracular curse described in Hosea 13. And these two psalms especially could have survived from the liturgical practices of the New Moon festival (81:4-5). Eaton has shown that it was appropriate for the prophet to assault the cult in such a setting, and we know that the New Moon gathering was an important day for the delivery of prophetic words (2 Kings 4:23). Thus we have good reason to believe that Hosea 13 is involved in the same process.

In our reconstruction Hosea uses the highly balanced speeches of the oracular curse and inclusion to describe the guilt of the northern cult and deliver the curses that are appropriate to an occasion when priests and people are engaged in controversy. From this study we are convinced that Hosea 13 affects the interpretation of key, parallel texts in Hosea 4, 5, and 11, and it challenges the adequacy of previous terms from form criticism; specifically the judgment oracle delivered as a lawsuit or the enigmatic disputation. Hosea 13 has served as an excellent prism for the message of the book as well as the form-critical method applied to Hosea. The same will be true for the traditions that are re-presented by the prophet.

PART THREE
APPROPRIATING THE TRADITIONS

CHAPTER VII

TRADITIO-HISTORICAL PROBLEMS IN THE BOOK OF HOSEA

When the topic of tradition history is broached in the study of the Hebrew Bible, it is not surprising that the book of Hosea receives unusual attention. The creative use of the earliest Israelite traditions in Hosea is paradigmatic for the study of tradition in general.³⁷⁶ The origins, roles, and activities of the priestly class, specifically the Levites, are most usefully focused in the study of Hosea. Hosea is likewise an excellent text for discussing the rhetorical nature, specifically the metaphorical power, of language in its ability to *create* and exploit either alternate or continuous realities. It can be demonstrated that this last question is near the heart of the debate about innovation in the message of the writing prophets.

The primary theological question for tradition history is captured in the title of Part 3: Appropriating the Traditions. It would be gratuitous to trace the streams and sources of tradition in any piece of biblical literature if we did not ask what any eventual conclusions meant for the understanding of reality, that is, for the perception of God and the revelation of God to individuals and communities. So we seek to give meaning to the method of tradition history by as-

³⁷⁶J. Vollmer, *Geschichtliche Rückblicke und Motive in der Prophetie des Amos, Hosea und Jesaja* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971), p. 56; Mays, *Hosea*, p. 10: "the historical traditions of Yahwism. . . are not mere tradition or isolated items of faith, but a guide to understanding and a way to put things in the right perspective. No prophet is better informed than Hosea about Israel's history."

king whether or not the prophet is attempting to conserve, manipulate, or reverse the traditions received in his reflection upon the knowledge of Yahweh, the *dā'āt lōhîm*.

By identifying the setting in life of the oracular curses in Hosea 13 at the New Moon festival, we have already determined, intentionally, a very specific relationship between prophet and institution. Thus we enter the debate about Hosea's fidelity to ancient tradition with a definite base of data from which to draw. But the matrix of Hosea and the celebration of the New Moon may still reveal some surprising conclusions.

Continuity or Discontinuity?

A cultic setting in life has not been universally accepted for the book of Hosea. But, as mentioned in the parallel section on problems in form criticism (Chapter 3), the grounds for presenting Hosea as a political operative are not form-critical but traditio-historical. Further, a "sociological" orientation for the study of tradition appears to raise questions that amount to a redefinition of the method.

A very important challenge to the matrix of Hosea and cult is presented by Helmut Utzschneider.³⁷⁷ Two criteria are usually involved, according to him, for proving a link between prophet and cult: (1) covenant, that is, finding prophetic words in the psalms to prove the likelihood of a covenant mediator; (2) *Gattung*, that is, proposing a typical form of speech to explain the content within

³⁷⁷ *Hosea, Prophet vor dem Ende: Zum Verhältnis von Geschichte und Institution in der alttestamentlichen Prophetie* (Freiburg-Schweiz: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980).

a cultic setting. Both criteria, as utilized by Haldar, Jepsen, Johnson, and Noth, are hopelessly conjectural--there is no specific statement in most of the texts that there is indeed a festive convocation--so Utzschneider prefers sociological research.³⁷⁸

By sociology Utzschneider actually means the study of ancient traditions in the text, but he has a rather mechanical view of how we should study the phenomena. (In fact, what he calls the history of tradition could be called the history of a form in other studies.) We should study the diachronic aspects of a tradition by (1) identifying a *theorem*, which has stereotypical elements; a traditional formula has diachronic stability; (2) we look for the stable ground elements as we trace the theorem to its source; (3) we notice how stable combinations form with other traditions; (4) and then we notice how these complexes attach to definite institutions.³⁷⁹ The synchronic aspects are studied by (1) identifying a typical *Gestalt* for the theorems; (2) identifying the institutional carriers; and (3) determining its argumentative (theological) functions. No pure form of the theorem (tradition) can be sought. In the attempt to absorb form criticism into the history of traditions, there are some helpful criteria presented through this case study on Hosea.

Utzschneider has accurately identified two of the criteria used in earlier

³⁷⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 14ff., 32-37, 43.

³⁷⁹Here is the link to form criticism. For example, we studied the stereotypical elements of the self-presentation formula and also institutionalized it with other elements in the New Moon festival. We acknowledge a true problem in the execution of form and tradition criticism. Theoretically traditions arise before forms, implying that tradition should be studied first; but practically it is most fruitful to start with an analysis of forms and then work backward.

chapters of this study to place Hosea at the New Moon festival, but in our texts there is noted the specific mention of a festival in Hosea 9 and in Psalm 81. Admittedly, too much is often made of the term "covenant mediator." Hosea's indignant role as prophet-priest, who turns to oracular cursing, is analogous to, but not dependent upon, theories of covenant mediators.

Perhaps more significant than any refutation of the cult is his assertion that Hosea is more concerned with the atrocities of the monarchy. It is his conclusion that Hosea secularizes an autumn festival in 9:1-9 by turning it into a legal scene (*Rechtsleben* and *Zivilrechtlichen*).³⁸⁰ The roots *p.q.d.*, *š.l.m.*, and *z.k.r.* are considered evidence of secular law. When the prophet explains the case, this is a theocratic adaptation of non-cultic legal and criminal expectations. The exodus tradition is purely historical summarization (*Begründstheorem*), and it is restated in full at 13:4-6.³⁸¹ The prophet is thus associated with the prophets of the royal court who served the king.³⁸²

The apparent attack by Hosea on cultic symbols (the exodus, the bull at Bethel, and other idols) is actually considered an attack against the political regime. The making of kings and princes is symbolized by making gold and silver idols. The attack on the monarchy is political (theocratic) rather than religious. As Hosea seeks to bring the political process under the sovereignty of Yahweh, he declares that Yahweh is the true helper (13:9-11).

³⁸⁰Ibid., p. 185.

³⁸¹Ibid., p. 44, 171. His point is that tradition and institution are not necessarily connected. Traditions can float in prophecy, narrative, and psalms.

³⁸²Ibid., pp. 39, 161-171.

There is nothing wrong with a general characterization of Hosea against the monarchy. Utzschneider's view is, however, too one-sided. It is best to acknowledge Hosea's function as cultic curser, while at the same time investigating his use of monarchic traditions. Once we remove the prophet from the cult by asserting that the symbols used in his message are mere analogies for the attack on the monarchy, we have an equally difficult time proving that the attacks on the monarchy are not truly analogies for the prophetic cursing of religious idolatry. Further, it is difficult to claim with Utzschneider that a court prophet--whose self-interest requires, by definition, maintenance of the central, political, and religious hierarchy--could actually perpetrate such a strong message against the northern monarchy.³⁸³

If Hosea is a peripheral rather than a central court prophet, is the message of the book in continuity with earlier traditions available in his Ephraimite context? For example, what are the consequences of showing the exodus tradition to be a purely historical recollection void of cultic drama? In making this claim Utzschneider suggests that Hosea reverses the exodus, while at the same time allowing for Yahweh's sovereignty over the event.

1. Er macht die Dimension des Geschehens klar. Mit der "Umkehrung" des Exodus ist die geschichtliche Stunde als diejenige bezeichnet, die die Existenz Israels im Lande ebenso grundsätzlich aufhebt, wie sie die "Heraufführung aus Ägypten" begründet hatte. Hier liegt das Moment der Diskontinuität. 2. Der Prophet macht des Geschehen als Handeln Jahwes identifizierbar. Souveränitätsverlust, Verwüstung und Depor-

³⁸³R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 226-31, describes Hosea as a peripheral, Ephraimite prophet who was intent on reforming the society as a whole. Wilson curiously does not raise the issue of cult in the study of Hosea, probably because he has excluded such connections from his agenda.

tation sind nicht irgendwelche, unglückliche, historische Umstände, Verschiebungen machtpolitischer Einflussphären und Gleichgewichte, denen man--wie die führenden Kreise des Nordreichs bis in die letzten Tage Hosea ben Elas verzweifelt gehofft haben mögen--durch geschicktes [*sic*] Taktieren begegnen konnte. Das Geschehen hat--was Israel betrifft--ein Subjekt: Jahwe, der Gott von Ägypten her. Er was es, der Israel ins Land brachte, und nur er kann es sein, der Israel das Land wieder entzieht. Jahwe ist Herr über Israels Sein *und* Nichtsein im Lande. Hier liegt das Moment der Kontinuität im Verhältnis Hosea zur Tradition.³⁸⁴

To claim that the continuity merely lies in the affirmation of divine sovereignty is to say too little. Any thoughtful resident in the ancient Near East would grant the sovereignty of their gods over the cosmos. Utzschneider is trying to identify Hosea as a radical revolutionary against the current political regime in the north, but his qualification grows out of discomfort with the radical views of G. Fohrer ("Umkehr und Erlösung beim Propheten Hosea," 1955) and J. Vollmer. The latter asserts that Hosea is uninterested in the events of the people as history. Within his theological agenda, Hosea does not modify the tradition; he negates it.

Das Verhältnis zur Tradition is rein negative. Mann könnte fast sagen, Hosea erinnere nur deswegen an das frühere Handeln Jahwe, um zum Ausdruck zu bringen, das Jahwe jetzt genau entgegengesetz handeln wird und das frühere Geschehen daher keine Geltung mehr hat. . . . Hosea Verhältnis zur Tradition is während der ersten Periode seiner Wirksamkeit, in der er Israel das Vernichtungsgericht anzusagen hatte, bestimmt durch schroffe Diskontinuität: Jahwe setzt der Geschichte Israels ein Ende."³⁸⁵

Hosea announces the end of Israel's history because there is no longer help from

³⁸⁴Hosea, p. 177.

³⁸⁵*Geschichtliche Rückblicke und Motive*, p. 120; cf. p. 70.

Yahweh. His use of tradition serves the purposes of the judgment speeches rather than any furtherance (continuity) of the tradition.³⁸⁶

These questions about prophetic continuity are as old as the nineteenth-century hypothesis about ethical monotheism. Then the eighth-century prophets were considered the great teachers who introduced noble yahwistic ethics in Israel. Extremes in function were described for prophet and priest--the latter responsible for the perversion of the great ethical and protestant faith. We see from the study of form-critical problems in the book of Hosea that the prophet's role in Israel is much too complex to separate radically his priestly function from the prophetic.

Thus we find H. W. Wolff's sober evaluation rather refreshing, in that he affirms Hosea's continuity with tradition. Like Utzschneider, he answers the question: "yes and no." Hosea does not use the history of tradition, that is Yahweh's history, to announce a revolution in ideas. The old history is used to enact reform. Hosea is a tradent rather than a revolutionary. He conserves the old tradition but, in the process, comes up with a new word to say. He is a preacher trying to overcome evil by letting the current message grow very closely alongside the old.³⁸⁷

Wolff does tend to emphasize a radical and complete judgment of Israel

³⁸⁶ A similar point is implied by A. Graffy, *A Prophet Confronts His People*, pp. 119-21. The disputation genre arises from popular scepticism about the content of a prophecy. Thus the tradition serves the disputation speech rather than its own re-presentation.

³⁸⁷ Wolff, "Hauptprobleme alttestamentlicher Prophetie," *Evangelische Theologie* 15 (1955), pp. 456-58, found also in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964), pp. 219-20.

in Hosea. And the prophet's rational, presystematic application of "covenant" law to judge non-Levitical and false priests gives Vollmer some cause to note inconsistency in Wolff's argument. With such complete judgment and disgust for the current cultic hierarchy, how could Hosea be just a "reformer"? However, if we grant that Hosea's message is best termed oracular cursing, which grows out of the legal requirements of a festival, there is more room for the continuity in the use of traditions.

Power of the Spoken Word

Some critics emphasize the creation of a new radical reality in the prophet Hosea (Vollmer, Fohrer, Utzschneider, and Hentschke). Others prefer a conservative or moderate re-presentation that leads to reform and renovation in Israelite cult and society (Wolff, Rendtorff, von Rad). But all justify their position by an appeal to the power of the spoken word. This appeal is only one step removed from the inquiry into the continuity from one tradition to another. If the prophet Hosea is thought by "primitive minds" to possess intrinsically within his language a power to change or revolutionize reality, it would be accomplished in a way that brings great conviction upon the audience.

How does the prophet's word, his use of old traditions, bring about the reversal or modification of prior realities? Where is the locus of the authority resident in the message of the prophet? Does the prophetic proclamation of a curse or a judgment oracle automatically guarantee that its execution will be carried out? Is there some belief in the magical power of words which caused the ancient listeners to recognize discontinuity, to heed the message or prepare for the

sure consequences? Is such a magical guarantee responsible for a belief in the desired or feared cultic, political, and social transformation of reality?

Affirmative answers to these questions permeate scholarship of the Hebrew Bible in every treatment.³⁸⁸ The supposed belief in a magical power of the spoken word is used to explain naming, blessing, cursing, judging, symbolic actions, and prayer. An entire monograph would be required to evaluate and modify this well-entrenched theory, but here we briefly rehearse the reasons for its pervasiveness, followed by some of its problems.³⁸⁹ Then we describe an alternative approach--using Hosea as the best example--which explains how language intrinsically has the power to transform perceptions and theological thinking.

(1) Ancient Israelites, like their Near Eastern neighbors, are often said to have possessed a belief in the magical power of spoken words. Speech was thought to be intrinsically capable of objectifying its own referent. There has rarely been more of a consensus in biblical studies than on this point. Nearly every introduction will emphasize how a prophet's words were feared because the mere speaking of them was enough to initiate the doom. Or a priestly blessing and curse will be explained as self-fulfilling once spoken. A biblical prayer or a sacrifice is said to derive from the magical belief in the power of words to manipulate the deity or forces involved with deity.

³⁸⁸Robert Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed: Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament* (New York: Seabury, 1979), contains an extended treatment of prophetic language, which he separates into four categories: magical, cultic, symbolic, and performative. His definitions of these are helpful, but like others he assumes that the ancients required an equivalence between word and event, lest there be dissonance and failure of prophecy (p. 56).

³⁸⁹The criticisms of the current consensus are admirably set forth in an often-neglected article by Anthony Thiselton, "The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings," *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S. 25 (1974), pp. 283-99.

It is now obvious that these explanations became entrenched in biblical scholarship through the influence of two important German works: Lorenz Dürer, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes im Alten Testament und im antiken Orient* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1938) and Otto Grether, *Name und Wort Gottes im Alten Testament*, BZAW 44 (Giessen: Walter de Gruyter, 1934).³⁹⁰ For example, Dürer argues that words in the ancient world could irresistibly achieve their ends because they were power-laden (p. 61). To speak a word was magically to guarantee its effect.

The identification and definition of magic is very important to theories of the power-laden word. Such definitions generally refer back to James Frazer's *Golden Bough*, written in the nineteenth century. By linking the stages of magic and religion in human spiritual development, Frazer thought that primitive minds made a facile leap from the word (cause) to its execution (effect), based on the "Law of Similarity."³⁹¹ Contemporary anthropology now finds the terms "primitive" and "magical" less than useful in understanding human behavior.³⁹²

³⁹⁰Dürer's ultimate purpose in proposing this theory was to explain the Johannine notion of *logos*.

³⁹¹In fact, until the expose by James Barr (*The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: University Press, 1961), pp. 129-40, it was widely thought that the Hebrew word *dabar*, which means both "word" and "thing," further demonstrated the objectifying power of words. Barr dismisses these connections because they rest on a misunderstanding of polysemy. Words can have alternate and various meanings. All the possible meanings of a word are not invoked every time it is used. A helpful breakthrough in the study of individual words has since appeared from Moises Silva, *Biblical Words and their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983).

³⁹²J. W. Rogerson, *Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), pp. 46-65. Rather than magic, the term "symbolic instrumentation" is now preferred, especially when dealing with physical rituals.

Given such a consensus in a discipline outside religious studies, it seems prudent to abandon the term "magic" in explaining the functions of religious language. And the arrogance of the term "primitive" is more easily disregarded.

(2) Dürer's primary source of evidence came from parallels in extra-biblical literature. But in demonstrating an ancient belief in the power of words, throughout the Near East (earlier, sociologists assumed such a belief for "primitives" in all cultures), interpreters fail to distinguish between words spoken by the deity and those in the lips of humans. This is especially true of examples taken from the Hebrew Bible. Invariably, the message is authorized and legitimated by the deity. When a judgment is announced or a curse is invoked, it is the authority of Yahweh or some other deity that is at stake--even if the deity is not specifically named. Such power is external; it does not reside magically in the process of speaking words. To say that the prophet's word will not return void (Isa. 49:10) is to affirm the source of the prophet's authority--Yahweh.

(3) Blessings and curses are most often invoked in the name of the deity.³⁹³ Perhaps more importantly, they can be alternately explained as a type of performative language--a term coined by the philosopher J. L. Austin. As behabitives, curses have nothing to do with cause and effect but operate because of conventional procedures accepted by the audience.

³⁹³Studies on biblical cursing are highly indebted to theories of word-magic. S. Gevirtz, "West Semitic Curses and the Problem of Origins of Hebrew Law," *VT* 11 (1961), pp. 137-58, argues that divine agency is responsible for the performance of Mesopotamian curses, whereas biblical curses depend upon the power of the spoken word. Brichto, *The Problem of "Curse"*, pp. 7, 12, 31, 205ff., cites Deut. 30:7 to argue that cursing in Israel does not have an inevitable, magical character which is irrevocable upon utterance. The sanctions against rebellion in Israel can be revoked *by God* if there is repentance.

In performative utterances we have an example of the power of words in which word and event are indeed one, but not on the basis of some primitive confusion between names and objects. Neither ancient nor modern society depends on mistaken ideas about word-magic in order to support the belief that words *do* things.³⁹⁴

The authority of the speaker is primary; the credibility of the prophet or the deity (e.g., Ba'al or Yahweh in 1 Kings 17-19) is evaluated.

There are many types of language available for human communication. The example of cursing as performative language should prevent us from returning to a monolithic explanation of prophetic language as "dynamic" or "dianoetic."³⁹⁵

Power of Hosea's Language

Our form-critical conclusion is that Hosea pronounced curse oracles which began with stereotypical descriptions of cultic apostasy. We now recognize that this function for his language is thoroughly in line with the expectations of his audience. He is struggling with the popular contest between Yahweh and Ba'al for authority over cultic and agricultural life.

We have questioned whether Hosea is completely overturning the traditions that were available in the eighth century. Is he in radical discontinuity with his theological heritage, or is he trying to reform his spiritual home in the cult? In either case we have dismissed the theory that Hosea uses primitive word-

³⁹⁴Thiselton, "Supposed Power," p. 294. The classic example of a performative is the formula: "I christen this ship the 'Queen Mary'," after which a bottle of champagne is broken on the hull. The actual contact with the ship has nothing to do with the symbolic naming of the vessel.

³⁹⁵These are terms used by Gerhard von Rad in *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 2 (New York: Harper, 1971), p. 80.

magic to effect his commission. Now we sense the need for an alternative explanation of linguistic power in tradition. Is there some other intrinsic factor within the prophet's language that carries power to transform religious and social reality?

Philosophers of language have reflected much upon the power of tradition in religious discourse. It is impossible to delve deeply into this subject, but here the problem of continuity and discontinuity emerges once again to the fore, in the technical terms of meaning and significance for the contemporary reader. The hermeneutical debate focuses upon ancient poetic discourse and thereby discloses important features of tradition. It is these conclusions that we seek to apply to the study of tradition in the book of Hosea, in the attempt to understand how the prophet's language has power to describe and transform society and religion in the eighth century.

Philosophers heavily indebted to the thought of Heidegger will call us to equate language with "being" by reading classic, poetic texts with the purpose of accepting what the text says--through the fusing of the horizon of the text and the horizon of the reader--rather than suspiciously criticizing it. This appears to be a convenient approach for Hans Georg Gadamer.³⁹⁶ At an opposite extreme is the Marxist thinker, Jürgen Habermas, who speaks for those who experience an alien reaction to a particular ancient tradition. Since language can be deceptive, masking prejudicial and oppressive institutions, he calls us to find ways of reflecting upon this alien reaction, refusing to pass on its deception.

³⁹⁶Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), pp. 63-64. I am indebted to this book for the following sketch of tradition in philosophical theology.

Paul Ricoeur seeks a mediating approach in this conflict of interpretation between Gadamer and Habermas, by describing the power of metaphor in religious and, especially, poetic language. To the delight of many, Ricoeur has focused upon the biblical text, by way of the problem of evil, to describe the function of metaphor in religious discourse.³⁹⁷ An influential contingent in biblical scholarship has taken note by sifting through his theories of language to understand the importance of tradition in the Israelite prophetic movement.³⁹⁸

Ricoeur has written voluminously on the function and essence of metaphor. To summarize briefly, we find him challenging views of rhetoric which have prevailed for over two millennia. The classical presentation of rhetoric, explained first through Aristotelian poetics, is now described in the substitution theory of metaphor. Metaphor is considered a linguistic decoration, an embellishment designed to aid the orator with the craftiness of rhetorical technique. In this view we are urged to understand a metaphor literally by translating the figurative word into literal terms and substituting the definition in place of the trope. Metaphor thus has ornamental value; it functions solely for the sake of persuasion. Once substituted it is discarded as insignificant baggage.

Whereas Aristotle extracted his definition of metaphor from literal and

³⁹⁷Ricoeur's descriptive task and agenda in the study of metaphor and parable from the Bible tend to place him more in the conservative camp with Gadamer, at least within the Christian environment.

³⁹⁸For example, Walter Brueggemann, "Vine and Fig Tree: A Case Study in Imagination and Criticism," *CBQ* 43 (1981), pp. 88-89. He appeals to the call of Jeremiah, where the prophet is directed "to do both the dismantling and the new evoking. . . .to bring old worlds to an end and to initiate new worlds into their awareness." In such an alternate world we find a redescription of reality--the way things should be constituted.

figurative meanings of isolated words, Ricoeur perceives that "metaphor is only meaningful in a statement."³⁹⁹ Instead of looking for movement of meaning from one word to another, we should look for deviation in two completely different interpretations of an entire phrase or sentence. Meaning is obtained through juxtapositions of absurdity, so that a literal interpretation expresses an absurd condition. This is semantic impertinence, or what we call a "metaphorical twist."

The role of resemblance in this theory is far different from its function in the substitution view. One does not simply undress an idea to remove the decorative images and expose its literal nakedness; rather one reduces through description the shock of the clash between two different interpretations of the same sentence. For, instead of simply noting a likeness or resemblance, metaphor establishes or creates resemblance.⁴⁰⁰ By drawing together words which previously had no kinship or resemblance, the metaphor creates a new meaning "which has no status in established language and which exists only in the attribution of unusual predicates."⁴⁰¹ By giving new information the metaphor

³⁹⁹"Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4 (1975), p. 77.

⁴⁰⁰Max Black, *Models and Metaphors* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962).

⁴⁰¹Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 196. See also *Interpretation Theory* (Fort Worth: TCU Press, 1976), p. 68. "In the sacred universe the capacity to speak is founded upon the capacity of the cosmos to signify. The logic of meaning, therefore, follows from the very structure of the sacred universe. Its law is the law of correspondences, correspondences between creation *in illo tempore* and the present order of natural appearance and human activities. This is why, for example, a temple always conforms to some celestial model. And why the hierogamy of earth and sky corresponds to the union between male and female as a correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm. Similarly there is a correspondence between the tillable soil and the feminine organ, between the fecundity of the earth and the maternal womb, between the sun and our eyes, semen and seeds, burial and sowing of grain, birth and the return of the spring."

transcends the role of persuader and decorator to become creator of reality. Put in the arena of theology, metaphor often--by no means always--generates the essence of knowledge about God; it is the primary medium of revelation.

It seems reasonable to assume that simile is included by Ricoeur in this particular theory of metaphor, if only because Ricoeur requires all language to depend upon metaphor or analogical thinking. Predictably, the history of this inquiry originates in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

The simile also is a metaphor; the difference is but slight. When the poet says of Achilles that he 'Leaps on the foe as a lion,' this is a simile; when he says of him, 'the lion leaps,' it is a metaphor--here since both are courageous, he has transferred to Achilles the name of 'lion'. . . similes are to be employed just as metaphors are employed since they are really the same thing except for the difference mentioned.⁴⁰²

The Aristotelian theory has metaphor as an elliptical or condensed simile; actually the same technique is at play in both, but the technical comparative term "like" is removed. The modern substitution theory views simile as a bad metaphor, "offering only the 'bare bones' of the transfiguring process in the form of a limited analogy or comparison."⁴⁰³ However, is not resemblance an essential explanatory function of simile? Resemblance is at work in the same but less obvious way that it functions in metaphor.⁴⁰⁴ If there is a difference it may be that

⁴⁰²Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, Book III, chap. 4, 1-8, quoted in Marsh H. McCall, Jr., *Ancient Theories of Simile and Comparison* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1969), p. 258. The two terms of comparison (*eikon*, *parabola*) are not really translated as simile, but signify that issue.

⁴⁰³Hawkes, *Metaphor*, p. 3.

⁴⁰⁴When Ricoeur is summarizing Roman Jacobsen's ordering of the various kinds of analogy in *The Rule of Metaphor*, p. 186, he implicitly recognizes no difference between metaphor and simile. This agrees with the remarks of Wheelright, *Metaphor and Reality*, p. 71. Both engage in semantic transformation and innovation.

simile reduces the shock of the clash between the literal and the metaphorical predications of the statement.

To return this debate about metaphor to the descriptive terms of tradition history in the study of the Hebrew Bible, we ask again whether Hosea the prophet and his tradents were interested in preserving the ancient Ephraimite traditions of fidelity to Yahweh, knowledge of God (torah), and cultic purity? Or was the prophet in radical, political discontinuity with the traditions of cult and monarchy, seeking to revolutionize the religious faith of his day?

Here the description of tradition and metaphor converge. Rather than studying it as a mere theme or as the history of a notion--as it is treated in most explanations of tradition history, if at all-- metaphor could well be the primary vehicle of tradition. As is often said of specific traditions, particular metaphors are malleable. In Chapter 8 we shall find that metaphor has the ability to redescribe. Metaphor can be passed on without appearing to change but in the process it is actually redescribing and renewing. It is the shock of metaphor itself which gives the transfer of tradition that uncomfortable, dismantling effect.⁴⁰⁵

Students of tradition in the Hebrew Bible have been explaining the same process in precisely this way. We should now recognize that metaphor gives this power to tradition, and we should make the study of metaphor "an essential part

⁴⁰⁵To allow renewal here is a bit more optimistic than McFague in her synthesis of Ricoeur's views. She prefers to say that Ricoeur, through the vehicle of metaphor, "introduces a distinctively negative note, a note of *disorientation*, of nonidentity, of distanciation, of the future as different from and *alienated* from the present." *Metaphorical Theology*, p. 64 (italics ours).

of critical exegetical method."⁴⁰⁶ It is metaphor in the re-presentation of tradition that authorizes and empowers the prophecy of Hosea in the ears of his audience and for those responsible for the process of canonization. We can thus dispense with explanations from word-magic for the power of the prophetic word. This type of power is most likely dependent on the authority which is perceived as coming through the deity, Yahweh. The power we describe here is of a different category. It is the power of religious discourse to supply meaning for cultures and faith communities.⁴⁰⁷

Before describing the traditions operative in Hosea 13, there is one further problem that now arises in nearly every study of Hosea's use of tradition. It too has a bearing on whether or not Hosea was a member of an institution capable of reforming or revolutionizing Israelite faith.

Was Hosea a Levite?

The history of the Levites is shrouded in mystery, obscurity, and disagreement. Like Joseph Blenkinsopp, we are prepared to grant a blurred history for the group,⁴⁰⁸ but this is no reason to reject broad attempts to explain the activity of Hosea and his tradents in terms of priestly roles. Even Blenkinsopp's

⁴⁰⁶This shift in biblical exegesis is proposed by Carol Newsom because metaphor allows one to participate in meaning when the reader is forced to engage in interpretation. See "A Maker of Metaphors—Ezekiel's Oracles Against Tyre," *Interpretation* 38 (1984), p. 164. Also urging a shift in exegetical emphasis is J. Cheryl Exum, "Of Broken Pots, Fluttering Birds, and Visions in the Night," *CBQ* 43 (1981), pp. 331-52.

⁴⁰⁷In my view, these two categories are not mutually exclusive. The power of metaphor within tradition is an explanation *von unten*. The power of the deity, so often asserted in the biblical text, is an explanation *von oben*.

⁴⁰⁸*Prophecy in Israel*, pp. 99-103.

source for this obscurity, Alfred Cody,⁴⁰⁹ is willing to trace a general path from Moses to priests (most likely Levites) who spread the authority and traditions connected to Moses.

The most important issue in this debate is the question of whether the Levites were originally secular or religious Israelites. To put it historically, did they become a class of priests before or after the exile.⁴¹⁰ Haran observes that the true priests are descendants of Aaron in P. In D all male Levites are priests if serving in the proper location. J and E allow every Israelite to sacrifice and make offerings on family feast days. With D, J, and E, priests are Levites. In Exod. 32:25-29 Levites are attendants to the portable wilderness sanctuary. Beyond the Pentateuch, the promonarchic narrative of Judges 17-18 implies that a Levite was a preferred sanctuary attendant, a "*gerîm* with priestly specialization,"⁴¹¹ who over the years was divested of land holdings and turned to priestly vocations to guarantee economic security.

The question of levitical origins is probably gratuitous for the study of Hosea. By the eighth century it is clear that Israelite tradition has recognized the role of Moses in sanctioning the levitical priesthood. Though Moses was not a priest, it was the Levites who spread his popularity and authority. H. W. Wolff

⁴⁰⁹*History of Old Testament Priesthood* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969).

⁴¹⁰Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 60-62. Haran believes that the secular/sacral dichotomy is misplaced. There were no secular Levites. It is the families, for example, Aaronides, who vie for pride of place within the priesthood.

⁴¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 54.

enters the reconstruction at this point. The judgment speeches of Hosea are delivered against the contemporary priesthood (4:4-6), which is dependent on material methods for implementing covenant law. "Die Begründung in [6:6] zeigt, das *mišpat* die Bundesordnung meint, an der Segen und Fluch, Leben und Tod für Israel hängen."⁴¹² Rather than sacrificial offerings the covenant law is known through right worship before God. "Die Propheten dagegen sind diejenigen Werkzeuge Jahwes, die durch Heraufführung des Gerichtes wieder das Gottesrecht und den Bundessinn als den eigentlichen Willen Jahwehs zur Geltung bringen, wie er durch ein verkündigtes und beherzigtes Wissen um Gott in Israel lebendig bleiben sollte."

Wolff places Hosea (12:14) as a prophet in the line of Moses, who is opposed to the Canaanite cult of Jacob. Hosea is a Levite "near to the prophetic circles" because Jeroboam displaced his priestly clan at the cult sites of Dan and Bethel. Like Moses who stood against the bull cult at Sinai, and the Levites who stood against the bull cult of Jeroboam, it appears that Hosea re-presents the old traditions, via metaphor and simile, to actualize a message of judgment.⁴¹³

⁴¹²"Hoseas geistige Heimat," in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964), pp. 235, 240-46. Originally in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 81 (1956), pp. 83-94.

⁴¹³Richard Hentschke, *Die Stellung der vorexilischen Schriftpropheten zum Kultus*, BZAW 75 (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1957), pp. 44-45, 54, 89, 134-36. He rejects a cultic association for Hosea because of, he says, a completely radical attack on the priesthood. Hentschke interprets any attack on sacrifice as a total protestant rejection of a special priesthood in ancient Israel. For a reaction to this approach, see J. P. Hyatt, "The Prophetic Criticism of Israelite Worship," Samuel H. Goldenson Lecture (Hebrew Union College Press, April, 1963), pp. 3-24.

CHAPTER VIII

TRADITIONS OF HOSEA 13

The study of form criticism in Hosea was shown to be highly uncertain because the prophet's speech forms are atypical when compared to other writing prophets. With the study of tradition in Hosea there is much more confidence because of the prophet's emphasis on the knowledge of God. The prophet first insists on an intimate acknowledgment of Yahweh in Israel. Here the personal love of God beckons the unfaithful nation. At the same time he provides content for this knowledge, because intimate acknowledgment (love) cannot be separated ultimately from cognitive knowledge of God (torah), lest there be merely uncontrolled passion and sentiment.

The prophet accomplishes this fusion of personal and cognitive knowledge by showing, through the tradition, early and repeated acts of transgression that led to cultic apostasy and infidelity. Hosea is pointing at past experience to explain the present conditions.⁴¹⁴ But this is not an examination of pure history. It is rather an interest in prototypical beginnings, such as Jehu (1:4), Saul (9:5, 13:10), or Ba'al Peor (13:2).⁴¹⁵ Hosea urges knowledge of the his-

⁴¹⁴Vollmer, *Geschichtliche Rückblicke*, p. 115. Hosea contrasts the past and future in sweeping epochs through the use of the terms "then" and "now," which are the boundary between the desert and the sown.

⁴¹⁵Wolff, *Hosea*, p. xxvi.

toric traditions (13:4-5) which enrich worship and form moral community.⁴¹⁶ So we seek compromise concerning the content of Hosea's theology, noting that knowledge of God which involves obedience leads to morality, but must assume love, lest one is obedient to a tyrant. And knowledge of God that involves information leads to belief, but only because of divine *hesed*, lest information become self-serving.

If we agree that it is helpful to think of the Levites as the ones who curse cultic apostasy in the north by redescribing traditions to pass on knowledge of God, we have yet to show how this is accomplished via metaphor in Hosea 13. Yet we do not wish to be simplistic by restricting the study of tradition to the analysis of metaphor. Thus each tradition complex in Hosea 13 will be investigated for (1) its metaphorical content, (2) its description within the immediate unit of chapter 13, (3) its place in Hosea as a whole, and (4) its possible origins in the realm of Pentateuchal tradition. Certain aspects of these four emphases will receive more attention than others.

The fourth emphasis, the relation of Hosea to Pentateuchal tradition, has often been noted in a general way. Joseph Blenkinsopp suggests that, "In Hosea, for the first time, we find the outline of the hexateuch narrative, if in fragmentary and rudimentary form."⁴¹⁷ If Hosea as a whole is presenting a sum-

⁴¹⁶Ward, *Hosea*, pp. 83-87, sides with Wolff against Fohrer in favor of cognitive knowledge rather than personal knowledge.

⁴¹⁷*A History of Prophecy in Israel*, p. 105. He prefers von Rad's argument for the Hexateuch, though he curiously includes traditions appropriate only to a Pentateuch--Sodom and Gomorrah, Jacob, exodus, wilderness, and decalogue.

mary of the Pentateuch, it will become equally evident that Hosea 13 is a summary of all that comes before in the first twelve chapters,⁴¹⁸ and especially chapters 4-12.⁴¹⁹ In such a way, it too is a crystallization of Pentateuchal tradition. In the following sections we shall explore Hosea's traditio-historical redescription of the settlement, exodus/wilderness, and monarchy. We shall see that a fragment of patriarchal tradition is connected to each of these complexes.

Settlement and Idolatry

Given the chronology of the Pentateuch itself, it is logically difficult to begin with the traditions of settlement, of stable life on the settled land, but this is where Hosea begins, with a network of metaphors assimilated from correspondences established in the plant world.

Plants

In 9:16 metaphor, alliteration, and pun are synthesized with an efficient economy of language: "Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit." The alliteration of v. 15, *kol-šārêhem sōrrîm* is improved in the juxtaposition of *'eprayim* and *p^erî*, which simultaneously functions as a pun. Ephraim is a felled tree whose roots are withering. Obviously Ephraim is not literally a tree, as Hosea implies by mixing the metaphor to include birth followed by death. The threat of this metaphor calls for another. The tender young

⁴¹⁸Brown, *Hosea*, p. 111.

⁴¹⁹Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 626; Brueggemann, *Hosea*, p. 37. The latter defines the themes in terms of the cultic and legal tradition rather than the categories generally applied to the Pentateuch by M. Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

shoots are cursed in the same way that poisonous weeds crowd the furrows of the plowed field (10:4). Sexual and agricultural infertility are the appropriate punishments for the social disease which smothered the idolatrous priesthood.

We see that punishment and election are organized in an excruciating tension through the plant metaphors. "Israel is a luxuriant vine that yields its fruit" (10:1). The fathers were "the fruit on the fig tree" (9:10). Israel shall (in 14:5-7)

blossom as the lily,
 strike root as the poplar,
 its shoots shall spread out,
 its beauty shall be like the olive tree,
 its fragrance like Lebanon.
 They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow;
 they shall flourish as a garden;
 they shall blossom as the vine;
 their fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

If Israel is a blossoming fruit tree, how can it dwell beneath Yahweh's shadow?

The metaphorical network uniquely answers that Yahweh is a tree, a towering evergreen cyprus overshadowing the tender and succulent blossoms, the source of Israel's fruit. There is a tension evoked from curse versus blessing and punishment versus election in this network of plant metaphors. And this expresses a deep dissonance within the prophet.

The metaphors drawing on plant life are surprising, and most probably are more incursions in the sphere of the fertility cult; they are a way of claiming that the whole realm of growth in the settled land belongs to Yahweh alone but that his real interest is not the fertility of crops but the obedience of persons.⁴²⁰

⁴²⁰Mays, *Hosea*, p. 10. It is impossible to know if Hos. 14:1 ends the book or if chapter 14 is a later addition. The tension we see in the metaphorical polarization suggests that the book reaches its climax in chapter 13 (which means the theology of the prophet climaxes in judgment). Chapter 14 is anti-climactic if it belongs to the original prophet rather than a later disciple.

Along with divine election to the promised land, and its insured fertility, a frightening responsibility emerges. Ephraim passes on the traditions of settlement by plowing on the profanely metaphorical surface of fertility symbolism.

Planting

The metaphor of plants calls forth that of planting. The cultivated ground presupposes the plowed earth. The heifer obliges or balks. "Like a stubborn heifer (*pārāh*), Israel is stubborn" (4:16). "Ephraim was a trained heifer (*'eglāh*) that loved to thresh" (10:11). The shock of these metaphors, which places Israel and the bull in a condition of resemblance, is irreducible. Then the surprise is intensified in 10:11 as Yahweh assumes the role of farmer in first person speech.

It is well known that Ba'al was depicted in bovine imagery.⁴²¹ Both of these metaphors follow on the heels of a warning about the Canaanite sanctuary known as Beth-aven. In 4:5 Israel is to take an oath in which she pledges never to ascend toward Beth-aven. In 10:5, Hosea reports that "the inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the calves (*'eglōt*) of Beth-aven." Their idols are exiled from the land.⁴²² The stubborn heifer is one which refuses to toe the line, to plow in the direction plotted by Yahweh. The well-trained heifer is Ephraim when she

⁴²¹On the supposed origin of calf-worship see M. H. Farbridge, *Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism* (New York: KTAV Publishing, 1970; originally published in 1923), pp. 61-65.

⁴²²Compare 7:6 with 8:5, a tradition from the monarchy. See Jack R. Lundbom, "Double-duty Subject in Hos. 8:5," *VT* 25 (1975), pp. 228-29.

had it easy,⁴²³ playing on the threshing floor. Yahweh had already known of her beautiful neck (that is, strong and supple), but he allowed her liberty from hard labor. Now her election to the land required exertion; she was adopted to strain at the yoke.⁴²⁴ The metaphor is resumed at 11:4.⁴²⁵ Yahweh gently guided Ephraim, his heifer, with the reins of love, easing the yoke from upon her jaws. Israel's disobedience at the plow, in spite of her idyllic election, in spite of her taskmaster's tender guidance, will complicate the next stage in the process toward harvest.

If Ephraim expects to survive she must show righteousness that she may reap steadfast love (10:1). Instead they "sow the wind and reap the whirlwind" (8:7). By means of a paraphrased proverb, Hosea informs his audience that it reaps what it sows (cf. Prov. 11:8, 22:8; Job 4:8). If they sow the wind, they will be caught up in its wings (4:19).⁴²⁶ Ephraim's seed is not blown off course by chance, as an accident of the sowing practice. Rather, she intentionally "herds the wind and pursues the east wind all day long" (12:1).

⁴²³M. H. Goshen-Gottstein is fairly sure of a connection between Ugaritic *m.d.l.* and Hebrew *l.m.d.* in Hos. 10:11. See *Biblica* 41 (1960), pp. 64-66. The root of *l.m.d.*, previously unknown, can be found in *m.d.l.*, which means to "prepare an animal for the way, to spur or saddle." In Hos. 10:11 this implies that the heifer was trained on the yoke but was spared from hard labor. Moreover, it is possible that Jer. 31:18 reverses the metaphor of 10:11. There Ephraim is an untrained heifer (*k^e'ēgel lō' lummād*).

⁴²⁴Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 185.

⁴²⁵There is some problem with the text of 11:4. Mays, *Hosea*, p. 154f., tries to merge it with the image of the father-child in 11:1-3. By revocalizing 'ōl "yoke" in the MT to 'ul "baby," he completes the metaphor. Either translation is possible, and Hosea could be intentionally mixing farming and parenting metaphors to explain divine election to land and adoption.

⁴²⁶The image of wind is linked with the image of Yahweh the vulture in 8:1. See Mays, *Hosea*, p. 78., and cf. Zech. 7:14.

So far we can see how Hosea remains firmly entrenched in agricultural fertility metaphors, including every aspect of planting or sowing and reaping, as he effects resemblances to redescribe the relationship between the people and Yahweh. This particular network is the essence of settled life in the land, and it forces upon the reader a polarization of wrath and love, a polarization that is mediated by the symbol of evaporation.

Water

The wrath of God is to be poured out like water on the southern aristocracy (5:10). The terror of the divine storm is not selective. Its wrath sweeps northward against the king of Israel (10:15).⁴²⁷ These images are related to the traditions of monarchy, but incredibly, Hosea can present the notion of divine love in the same liquid symbol.

Yahweh desires to "rain righteousness" upon those who seek him (10:12).⁴²⁸ In light of this, the hopeful people liturgize: "He will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth" (6:3). This last simile, drawn from Hosea 6, attracts another liquid image of genuine fidelity or irresponsible fickleness. In 6:4 and 13:3 Yahweh chastizes Israel because her devotion is "like a morning cloud, like dew that rises early." Yet in 14:5 Yahweh's love is

⁴²⁷I am following the *BHS* emendation of *baššahar* "dawn" to *bašša'ar* "storm." The only grounds for this are contextual (10:7) and the assumption of oral textual transmission.

⁴²⁸Contra Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 180. He argues that LXX *genamata* is equivalent to $p^{\acute{e}}r\hat{r}$ "fruit." But, as Wolff notes, LXX uses only *karpos* for $p^{\acute{e}}r\hat{r}$ in Hosea. Only because *yōreh* is not used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible does Wolff reject MT. He thinks the series of metaphors--sow, break ground, and fruit--are more logical. Actually, the progression in the MT makes better sense: sow by breaking ground, then rain before fruit.

correlated with the dew, even as the people had hoped in 6:3. The same image of rain and dew functions to describe the curse of the storm, the fickleness of the people, and the love of God.

These structural tensions are a genuine consequence of Hosea's dilemma. All of the preceding metaphors and similes, especially images of the storm and dew, are critical of Canaanite theology. The lives of these ancient peoples were intimately and concretely connected with the agricultural processes of settled life. It can be safely said that Hosea daringly runs the entire gamut of fertility symbolism, destroying old interpretations and redescribing the referents for the sake of Yahweh. This carries on the process begun with the invasion of the land. If anywhere, Hosea's discontinuity with tradition is most evident in his redescription of fertility under the sovereignty of God. This is well summarized in the climactic chapter 13.

Hosea 13:1-3

The beginning of Israel's settlement on the land is presented enigmatically, that is, metaphorically, in 13:1-3. Ephraim is said to elicit some sort of "trembling," "terror," or "dismay" that eventually breaks down in idolatry. Given the immediate precedent of Jacob in Hosea 12 (and probably in Hosea 13:12), it is appealing to consider an Elohistic tradition about the patriarch who causes great *h^atāt* "dismay" (not *r^etēt*) in all the cities surrounding Bethel. Jacob, otherwise imaged as Ephraim by Hosea, would be known to the prophet as an ancestor who eradicated worship of foreign gods within his household just be-

fore returning to Bethel to resettle in his homeland (Gen. 35:5, 9ff.).⁴²⁹

The constant but intentional confusion of Jacob with the nation and Ephraim in Hosea 12 is possibly continuing into Hosea 13:1. The founding patriarch who wrestled with the angel of God is commended as an example of holding fast to the love and knowledge of God. But he is more well known to the prophet for his deceitful, that is, idolatrous deeds. Again we see this tension between true love and infidelity. In 13:1 it is perhaps Jacob--Ephraim--no, actually Israel--who has exalted himself and fallen into idolatry at Ba'al.

Ephraim became guilty at a place such as Ba'al Peor or through association with or by means of the deity, Ba'al. The choice is usually dependent upon the meaning of the preposition *b* in 13:1. We noted earlier that the *b* is to be associated with the verb *yamōt*, so that Ephraim died "by means of" guilt associated with Ba'al. Thus a translation of *b* still leaves the meaning open, and the prophet probably intended such an enigma.

Two very well-known traditions in Israel vie for consideration here. Most critics exclude the contest between Ba'al and Yahweh which was facilitated by Elijah (1 Kings 17-19). The construction of the golden calf by Aaron and the people is a possible cause but usually ranked behind Jeroboam's act and the

⁴²⁹One can tell that 13:1 is still in pre-Mosaic time (Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 242), but with 13:2 we are on the verge of settled time through the idolatry of Ba'al. This is the enigma of Deuteronomy. The projected syncretism of the nation with the gods of others is drawn from the experience of a settled people of God and imputed back into the ancestral era.

yoking at Ba'al Peor.⁴³⁰ The openness of Hosea's metaphor in 13:1 is obvious because it urges the imagination to consider these four episodes of apostasy involving Ba'al.

It is reasonable to think that Hosea, as a Levite, is aware of Jeroboam's legitimization of the northern kingdom in the ninth century.⁴³¹

Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. If this people goes up to make sacrifices at the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, the heart of this people will return to their master, Rehoboam, king of Judah. They will murder me and return to Rehoboam, king of Judah." So the king was advised, and he made two golden calves. He said to them, "After many times of your ascending to Jerusalem, behold your gods, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." He placed one at Bethel, and the other he gave to Dan. . . . He made *bamot* houses and he established priests from various people who were not sons of Levi. And Jeroboam established a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast in Judah. He brought up sacrifices--so he did in Bethel--to sacrifice to the calves which he made. The priests of the high places, which he made, he let serve in Bethel (1 Kings 12:26-32).

The theological touch of the Deuteronomistic Historian is evident in this poignant characterization (especially v. 30), but Hosea, still smarting as a displaced Levite, could have recalled the entire story in one metaphor: "they became guilty by means of Ba'al."

The same metaphor could also carry on the tradition of apostasy at Ba'al Peor, in which the people are on the verge of settlement while staying at Shittim. Hosea is elsewhere disturbed by the murderous priests of Shittim (5:1-2).

⁴³⁰See Klaus Koch, *The Prophets I*, p. 84. He traces Jeroboam's act back to a patriarchal tradition for Jacob, in which the calf-deity (*ʾēbīr*) is set up in battle (Gen. 49:24; Numb. 23:12).

⁴³¹This is the position of Rudolph, *Hosea*, p. 242; and Brown, *Hosea*, p. 111.

Israel was settling down in Shittim when the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. [The women] invited the people to the sacrifices for their gods. The people ate and drank to their gods. Israel became yoked to Ba'al Peor and the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel (Numb. 25:3).

The literal expression of harlotry becomes a metaphorical yoking of Israel to a false deity. Surely Hosea is redescribing the same movement from literal to metaphorical through his relationship with Gomer.⁴³² The exilic recitation of Israel's apostate history in Ps. 106:28-39 suggests a very similar movement from literal to metaphorical. The reference of human sacrifice to the idols of Ba'al, while the people play the harlot, is suggestive of Hosea's theology. Psalm 106 either reflects a re-presentation of Hosea and his heirs or it contains the same history of tradition available to the prophet. It does seem more likely, in light of the book as a whole, that Hosea is more aware of the yoking at Ba'al Peor, though the metaphor of death, by means of guilt accrued through Ba'al, leaves the assertion open to all of Israel's history of apostasy.

There is room to mention one other entertaining interpretation, however bizarre. Ernst Sellin focused on the emphatic pronoun *hû'* "him" in 13:1 to develop the theory that Moses was martyred by the people of Israel at Ba'al Peor.⁴³³ He observes in 12:15a that Ephraim harbors bitter anger, probably against the prophet (Moses in 12:14) who brought Israel up from Egypt. This is

⁴³²George Mendenhall, *Tenth Generation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973), p. 112. "The reference to 'yoking' we take to be a designation specifically of the ritual intercourse, performed for or in deference of Baal-peor--it was not the deity to whom they were 'yoked,' though Hosea perhaps interprets the act in this way."

⁴³³"Hosea und das Martyrium des Moses," *ZAW* 46 (1928), pp. 26-33. See also his commentary, *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, pp. 126-28.

in reaction to the bitter anger of Moses and Yahweh in Exod. 32:19 and Numb. 11:11. By the time the people begin to relax at Shittim they have grown disrespectful of the founder of their religion. When Moses has the judges slay those who are yoked with the daughters of Moab, the people rise up and murder the prophet. Sellin argues that only Hosea remembers this in the bloodguilt of Ephraim and in the proper translation of 13:1.

When Ephraim spoke contentiously (*ribot*),
 he [the prophet] bore it in Israel;
 but when he [Israel] was guilty of Ba'al worship,
 he [the prophet, Moses] died.

In this translation Sellin has not secured the support of a single colleague in the study of the Hebrew Bible,⁴³⁴ but Sigmund Freud was inspired to write an entire monograph on the psychology of religion--based on this interpretation of 13:1!

After fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938, when the protection of the Catholic church failed, Freud went to England and published the results of his psychological work on religion. He decided that religion and neurosis are linked together as part of the same psychological process. Freud noted that patients who killed their father wanted desperately to remove the parent for being severely harsh. Then they generally proceeded to forget why they committed patricide by repressing all memory of the murder.

Freud, himself Jewish, was armed with myths (about the Egyptian, Sargon II) related to the birth of Moses and Sellin's theory about the forgotten mur-

⁴³⁴See Mauchline, *Hosea*, 703-04. The bloodguilt could refer to many things: Jehu at Jezreel in Hosea 1:4, or perhaps the murderous priests at Shittim in 5:1-2.

der of Moses in Hosea 13. He then wrote his version of the psychological history of the people of Israel in *Moses and Monotheism*.⁴³⁵ The myth of Moses' birth is typical of founder myths in which the hero of society is "a man who stands up manfully against his father [Egypt] and in the end victoriously overcomes him."⁴³⁶ Moses overcame his parents by transferring the monotheism of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhnaton (Akh-en-aton) to his followers in flight from Egypt. But the people rebelled and eventually killed their founder, Moses. They suppressed this murder until they wished he could rise from the dead. This wish led to messianism and Christianity, but Moses met with the "same fate that awaits all enlightened despots." The people could not bear his harsh religion, so they killed him (p. 52).

To be sure, Freud's psychological history of the Jewish people has been ignored in his own discipline,⁴³⁷ but this illustrates how a brilliant thinker in one discipline can be led astray by a creative suggestion from another. And it was the metaphorical enigma of Hosea 12:14--13:1 which led to such polyvalent meaning. In this case, Sellin went too far and literalized the metaphor, which led to an absurd interpretation that was later retracted.

Hosea is most likely recalling the apostasy perpetrated right at the start of the settlement of the land given by God (2:21-23, 14:4-8, 6:7, 9:15). The sin-

⁴³⁵(New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939).

⁴³⁶Here Freud applies the interpretations of dreams for individuals to that of myths for society. Myths are the dreams of societies.

⁴³⁷A rebuttal was quickly issued by Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, *The Hebrew Moses: An Answer to Sigmund Freud* (New York: The Jewish Book Club, 1939).

ning continues "now" in a factory-like assembly line of molten calves which are the object of adoration (kissing) and human sacrifice. The incident at Ba'al Peor comes more clearly into focus through the curses that are invoked in v. 3. The images of dew and morning fog are open more to settled existence than to desert life, and the threshing floor and the chimney clearly indicate a life on the sown, but just on the edge of settlement, for Hosea is far more interested in redescribing exodus and wilderness.

Exodus/Wilderness and Rebellion

The desert follows the settled life in Hosea's logic because Ephraim is ex-
 odused back into the wilderness. Thus the tradition of exodus and wilderness,
 which appear interchangeable in Hosea,⁴³⁸ are reversed or reinstated as punish-
 ment for apostasy. Hosea's description of the tradition is generated through
 metaphor and simile.

Desert

The book of Hosea commences with the parabolic action of chapters 1
 and 3. Because the land surely fornicates (*zānōh tizneh*) against Yahweh (1:2),
 he will make her like a wilderness (*kammidbār--2:5*). Now it is literally absurd

⁴³⁸Ward, *Hosea*, p. 198 suggests that wilderness and exodus are interchanged to "show that it was the total experience of Israel in the wilderness era that had primary theological significance for Hosea and not the event of the exodus per se." This premise of interchanging tradition is more appealing than Snaith's view in *Mercy and Sacrifice: A Study in the Book of Hosea* (London: SCM Press, 1953), pp. 42-43. He claims that the same split is found in Deut. 32:10, Ezekiel, and the Psalms. This was caused by an old nomadic ideal which knew nothing of the Egyptian bondage. He gives two possible sources for the exodus in Hosea: (1) The northern Jacob tribes who left Canaan, or (2) the Kenite element of the J tradition, which first learned the sacred name in Gen. 4:6 but not at the bush.

even to suggest that the land could have sexual relations. Still, the term *ca'eres* is not to be substituted with a more literal term such as "inhabitants." This metaphor calls to mind a "profusion of Canaanite fertility cults in whose theology the 'land' appears in the form of a Mother Goddess. In her encounter with a youthful god (the Baal of heaven or a local Baal) she conceives by means of the *sperma* of the rain."⁴³⁹ This is the furtherance of a very dangerous process that Hosea disseminates. He tries to eradicate the influence of Canaanite Ba'alism by reappropriating the very symbols that he wishes to destroy.

In 2:5 the act of making Israel like a wilderness is part of the threat to establish her as a parched (*šîyyāh*) land, and to slay her with thirst (*šamāh*). The curse of "wilderness" is the result of nakedness (2:4). The destruction of her vines and figs, planted when in the land (2:4), is the consequence of an exposed lewdness (2:12). But before vine and fig can be raped (*š.m.m.*⁴⁴⁰) they must be fattened into a forest which will lure the wild beasts, who are advised to take advantage of the feast.

The land which fornicated will now mourn its existence as desert (4:3). It is the very ground itself (cf. Gen. 4:10-12) that laments the loss of wild beasts, birds, and fish. Here we see how one metaphor that mediates the tradition of desert can evoke an entire network of metaphors about nakedness, rape, fertilization, and food. But this is only one side of the desert hierarchy.

The threat of desert is replaced by Yahweh's desire to seduce Israel and

⁴³⁹Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 15.

⁴⁴⁰Cf. *BDB*, p. 1030.

allure her (*m^epattəhâ*) into the desert (2:16). There (*miššām*) he will give vineyards and make the Valley of Achor (Trouble) a door of hope. Wilderness is not merely a stopping place along the way for Hosea.⁴⁴¹ It is simultaneously a place of destruction and a place where Yahweh can seduce Israel alone, away from the Ba'als.⁴⁴²

Yahweh had nurtured ("fed") Israel in the wilderness (13:5); he had discovered her there like a bunch of grapes (9:10).⁴⁴³ There is a startling message in the metaphors of 2:16, 9:10, and 13:5. The description of a vine and its fruit in the desert is shocking to our expectations. Wilderness can issue the threat of punishment or be transformed into the hope of blessing.

Birds and Beasts

Equally enigmatic in 13:4-8 is the curse of wild animals. Perhaps these enigmas continue because Hosea sees Israel tottering on the brink between settled life and wilderness. In Deuteronomistic theology, the wild animals are a curse against those who fail to keep the covenant by slowly ridding the settled and promised land of false gods and evil nations, lest the beasts multiply too fast

⁴⁴¹Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 15 argues that wilderness is important because *miššām* "from there" refers to Israel leaving the land and going into the wilderness while Yahweh is hard at work restoring gifts (vineyards) back in the land.

⁴⁴²Cf. Walther Zimmerli, "Prophetic Proclamation and Reinterpretation," in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. by Douglas Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 80.

⁴⁴³It is possible that 13:5 means Yahweh "knew" Israel in the wilderness, but see the textual notes in Chapter 2. In either case the biblical sense of knowing and feeding are quite related. Perhaps this election image has an erotic referent, comparable to the song of the vineyard in Isa. 5:1-7. See J. T. Willis, "The Genre of Is. 5:1-7," *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 337-62, who is not convinced that grape imagery is erotic.

(Deut. 7:22: cf. Exod. 23:29).⁴⁴⁴ Hosea is not aware of such a cause for the proliferation of mauling animals. Quite the opposite, Israel has failed even to remember Yahweh in the wilderness, let alone drive out the corrupt nations too quickly. Thus Yahweh assumes the role of various wild animals throughout the book. The theriomorphisms continue to polarize basic themes of love and wrath. But in the analysis of bird, snare, and feline metaphors Israel is more obviously Yahweh's enemy.

Unfortunately, the text of Hos. 7:11 has been enmeshed in controversy. Most renditions "have little sympathy with this particular dove."⁴⁴⁵ In 7:11 the sentence is not producing a resemblance with Israel that evokes silliness or foolishness. Compared with the Song of Songs, "what the prophet has in mind is obviously the young, inexperienced dove, still lacking a sense of orientation, going hither and thither."⁴⁴⁶ Yet there is a deeper meaning here. The data from the Songs associate the dove with sexual seduction (see Song. 1:5, 2:14, 4:1, 5:2, and 6:9). The erotic word-play with *k^eyônāh pôtāh* "like a flirtatious dove" in 7:11 confirms this orientation.

In the ancient Near East the dove is clearly an erotic symbol, usually a chief female goddess of fertility. Indeed, the rabbinic puns played with the words

⁴⁴⁴The theology of the Deuteronomistic Historian is clearly anticipated by Hosea. In 2 Kings 17:24ff. the assimilated cultures are under seige by lions because they do not know Yahweh.

⁴⁴⁵Labuschagne, "Similes," p. 69.

⁴⁴⁶Ibid.

yôṇāh "dove" and *zōṇāh* "harlot."⁴⁴⁷ This dove is Ephraim cooing (*qāra 'û*) to Egypt, flitting to Assyria.⁴⁴⁸ The metaphor of the fluttering bird is reappropriated at 9:11 ("Ephraim's honor shall fly away like a bird") and reinforced in 11:11 ("They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from the land of Assyria"). The latter example implies that Ephraim, who lost his respect by whoring after other lands, will again regain its dwellings.

Before any future return, they will have to contend with Yahweh's vulture in 8:1 (*nešer*).⁴⁴⁹ The vulture senses impending destruction. The dove in its sanctuary is as good as dead, caught either in the tendrils of Yahweh or terrified by the menacing grasp of Yahweh's designate. Dove and vulture are polarized, evoking the confrontation of coy seduction and languering death.

This digression into the bird imagery is useful here because the movement from fowl to fowler in Hosea encourages the shift from snares to the wild beasts of chapter 13. Both Yahweh and Israel flit from fowl to fowler in their confrontation. The priestly hierarchy is accused of being a snare, a net, and a pit (5:1-2), even to Hosea, himself (9:8). Yahweh threatens to spread his net over the

⁴⁴⁷E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), VII, p. 42. The passage cited is BT Kethuboth 63a.

⁴⁴⁸Wolff's attempts to ground the simile of the fluttering bird in the historical context of Pekah and Pekahiah are enlightening. "The simile of the fluttering bird (also in 11:11) appears repeatedly in the annals of Tiglath-Pileser III from the same year (733)." Note the assonance in the verb *qāra 'û* and the transliteration of a dove-call in heat: "gookarooooo."

⁴⁴⁹The translation of *nēšer* is debated in Labuschagne, "Similes," p. 70 and Grace Emerson, "The Structure and Meaning of Hosea VIII:1-3," *VT* 25 (1975), pp. 702-03. The latter's reasons for rejecting a translation of "vulture" fail to understand the shifting meaning of bird metaphors and similes in the Hebrew Bible.

seductive dove.⁴⁵⁰ However, one can be certain that Yahweh will not be trapped by the deep royal pit of Shittim. These pits were designed in various images to trap lions.⁴⁵¹ But Hosea is unconcerned as he scatters three feline images in different oracles.

Actually most commentators would accept only two lion images. Mays rejects 11:11 because it appears to be "a later Judahistic theology of salvation" which departs from the style of 11:1-9, 11, uses a different noun for lion (*'aryēh*), and reverses the metaphors of 5:14 and 13:7.⁴⁵² To be consistent Mays must also drop v. 11 (obviously Hoseanic) because vv. 10-12 are clearly a unit. Without the roar of the lion, the birds have no reason to tremble. Secondly, *'aryēh* was chosen properly in reference to the full-grown lion "able to roar impressively."⁴⁵³ Wolff allows the verse as part of available tradition, but he rejects its present rendering because (1) there is a change from first to third person in the verse, (2) the roaring lion echoes the book of Amos, and (3) there is a lack of poetic diction.⁴⁵⁴ Such reasons are even less compelling. It is common for Hosea's oracles to shift from third to first person. Rather than imitating Amos he is drawing from a stock of available metaphors for lions. Finally, it is highly subjective to assert a lack of poetic diction.

⁴⁵⁰See the same image from the Hymn to Shamash, in Buss, *Hosea*, pp. 68, 84, 113.

⁴⁵¹Prov. 22:14 and 23:27 associate the loose or adulterous woman with a deep pit. Ezekiel 19 allegorizes Israel as a lion trapped in a deep pit.

⁴⁵²*Hosea*, p. 158.

⁴⁵³Labuschagne, "Similes," p. 65.

⁴⁵⁴*Hosea*, p. 158.

After noting numerous polarizations in the images of Hosea, it is predictable that the positive resemblance of 11:11 is bracketed by the two most malevolent and brutal similes in the book at 5:15 and 13:7-8.

For I would be like a lion to Ephraim,
like a young lion to the house of Judah.
I, even I, will rend and go away.
I will carry off and none will rescue.

I would be like a lion to them.
Like a leopard on the path I will watch.
I will encounter them like a bereaved she-bear.
I will tear a hole in their heart,
eating them there like a lion,
as a wild beast would shred them.

In both theriomorphisms, the juxtaposition of the divine first person "I" and the creature produces an arresting shock. The literal interpretation reports that Yahweh is a beast, the metaphorical sense reports that Yahweh is an enemy. (Whether literal or metaphorical, neither is desirable.) This is not unusual since the royal psalms and other prophets provide ample parallels.⁴⁵⁵ The pattern is also prominent elsewhere in the Near East.⁴⁵⁶

Yet even with the literal interpretation the statement effects a new possibility. That Yahweh is essentially a ferocious brute is only half of the shock.

Another erotic interpretation of the lion image is cunningly noticed by Buss.

⁴⁵⁵See Engnell, "Figurative Language," p. 251; Labuschagne, "Similes," p. 65, and Buss, *Hosea*, pp. 61, 83-85. Hos. 5:14 = Ps. 50:22 and is mimicked in varied form at Ps. 7:3, Micah 5:7, Isa. 5:29, Dan. 8:4-7, Deut. 32:39, Isa. 43:13, and Job 10:7. Two other texts in Hosea refer to strangers devouring Israel. Buss remarks that, "In the socio-political realm, from a certain ideological perspective, 'stranger' and 'enemy' are virtually synonymous terms." He also acknowledges provocative material parallels from Samaria. One statue shows a lion attacking a bull and biting its neck; the well-known seal of Shema pictures a roaring lion.

⁴⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 84. Egyptian and Mesopotamian kings are described as roaring lions going to battle. This is an example of what Wolff means by the stock of "available traditions."

"The lion image has a certain, though subtle, connection with sexuality, expressing---the strongly emotional struggle between life and death." This conflict of interpretations is evidenced in a polarization similar to that perceived in the exodus/wilderness tradition. The desert could simultaneously signify punishment and seduction. Yahweh the lion might entice his trembling subjects to the lair or shred their fattened carcasses. The people apparently fall for Hosea's ruse, as the prophet mimicks in liturgical format the false piety of popular repentance (6:1-3).

Hosea 13:4-8

This false piety was dealt with in reference to settlement traditions at 13:1-3, where the curse of 6:4 is repeated. So we conclude, as with the study of forms, that the curses of Hosea 13:3 and 7-8, effervescent divine love and wild beasts, are a summary of key settlement and exodus/wilderness traditions, presented earlier in 5:8--6:6 and 11:1-12. Vollmer also thinks that 13:4-8 summarizes themes of desert and rebellion in 11:1ff. But the current rebellion ("exalting the heart" in 11:7 and 13:5) refers to forgetfulness during the settlement (4:6 and 8:14), though it is surely a memory of the wilderness (2:15).⁴⁵⁷ It is this slippery movement back and forth from settlement to exodus to wilderness that lends further ambiguity to Hosea's presentation of tradition. The metaphors and similes, which function as vehicles of the tradition, prevent us from reading Hosea with clear and distinct periods in mind, though we know he tries to focus

⁴⁵⁷ *Rückblende*, p. 68. See the Deuteronomistic image of the rebellion, expressed also in "exalting the heart" at Deut. 8:14 and 17:20.

on these eras. The whole story of the people is characterized by the polarization of love and wrath, which uses agriomorphisms or theriomorphisms as a natural expression of this ambiguity.

The ambiguity continues because, as mentioned earlier, Hosea repeatedly curses Ephraim with a return to Egypt (8:13, 9:3, 11:5), a reversal of the exodus back into the wilderness. On the one hand, Yahweh is found, in the self-presentation formula of 12:9 and 13:4, as the God who brought Ephraim up from the land of Egypt.⁴⁵⁸ Ephraim is Yahweh's son brought from Egypt (Hos. 11:1).⁴⁵⁹ This is an obvious recollection of the exodus tradition in which Moses demands that the Pharaoh release Yahweh's first-born son (Exod. 4:22). Now on the other hand, a reversed exodus and a new wilderness await Samaria in 13:15b--14:1 because of her rebellion by means of cultic guilt: pursuing other gods and saviors (13:4), that is, human rulers. Thus Assyria appears as the destination of the new exodus/wilderness rather than just Egypt. This reversed process explains the frequent paralleling by Hosea of the two ancient superpowers, even when a new exodus goes unmentioned.

Monarchy and Idolatry

The traditions of the origins and rise of the monarchy are within the boundaries of Hosea's prophecy. He is obviously not restricted to traditions of patriarchy, exodus/wilderness, and settlement. In fact he continues to slide

⁴⁵⁸See the discussion of the self-presentation formula in Chapter 5.

⁴⁵⁹Ephraim is the offspring of Yahweh's marriage with the people in the wilderness (2:16).

among them by introducing some very sharp opinions about monarchy alongside those about patriarchy in 13:9-15a.⁴⁶⁰ If we look carefully, Hosea has a disappointed reaction to both eras in the Israelite social development.

Politics and Religion

It is easy to assert that Hosea does "not contain a single word of appreciation or one note of gratitude" for the achievements of the monarchy,⁴⁶¹ but is the prophet attacking the contemporary political situation--well known for its back-stabbing--to seize power? A series of four usurpers (Menahem, Shallum, Pekahiah, and Pekah) had assassinated their predecessor in quick succession.⁴⁶²

Such literal, political experience could be the reason for Hosea's attack on the monarchy, but he is more probably interested in the lack of trust in Yahweh to deliver. This is a religious issue, and it is the point of the inclusion (13:9 and 15a): help and salvation are to be found in Yahweh alone.⁴⁶³ The dependence on human kings, who are inherently corrupt, results in religious idolatry,

⁴⁶⁰It is not exactly legitimate (see Ward, *Hosea*, p. 198) to parallel directly Hosea's reworking of the traditions with that of the Pentateuch. It is true that the traditions of conquest go unmentioned because they are not theologically useful in Hosea, but there is indeed a connection between the exodus and the promised blessing to the patriarchs (11:1; 12:9). The conquest is not mentioned because Hosea is very intent on showing how certain beginnings in Israelite tradition have been polluted by pursuit of rebellion and idolatry. We cannot say that Hosea's silence is evidence that the prophet knows nothing of conquest traditions.

⁴⁶¹Ward, *Hosea*, p. 181.

⁴⁶²See Utzschneider, *Hosea*, p. 100, in which he refers all attacks on the monarchy to the contemporary political regime. Thus the making of kings and princes equals the making of gold and silver calves. See our rebuttal at p. 185. Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 635 think that the kings given in anger are Shallum and Menahem, but they grant an earlier, therefore more religious, possibility--Saul.

⁴⁶³Yahweh is well known as helper in Deut. 33:26-27 and Pss. 121, 115:9-11. But here they are encouraging self-destruction because they are self-reliant.

and the cult is guilty again, unworthy of compassion because it anxiously runs wild among allies to seek aid and comfort. The traditions about the royalty are merged into the cycle of iniquity and rebellion already registered for the settlement and exodus/wilderness.

Thus the traditions of 13:10 summarize two earlier texts in Hosea, and they recall certain earlier accounts of the rise of the monarchy.

They make kings but not from me.
They make princes, but I do not know it (8:4).

For now they say, "There is no king for us,
For we do not fear the Lord.
And the king, what does he do for us?" (10:3).

Where now is your king,
who saves you in all your cities;
who judges you and of whom you said,
"Give me a king and princes."
I will give you a king in my anger,
and I will remove [him] in my anger (13:10).

In all three cases the illegitimate royalty is connected with idolatrous calf worship (8:5, 10:5, 13:2). For Hosea, whoredom involves two things: false worship and false loyalty to Yahweh, who is the exclusive deity and savior.⁴⁶⁴ The same matrix is found in earlier traditions from the origin of the monarchy.

First Samuel 7-15 presents various traditions about the initiation of

⁴⁶⁴See Ward, *Hosea*, pp. 148-53. Northern kings were not privileged with as much respect as those in Judah because they had no lasting dynasty and because northern prophets were more likely peripheral than central. Nyberg, *Hoseabuche*, p. 103-04, tries to assert an even more explicit idolatry in the royalty. These kings and princes are translated as the deities Melek and Sarim who rule over Canaanite cities. But Nyberg would be unable to explain how Yahweh "gave" these deities to rule for even a short period.

monarchy in Israel.⁴⁶⁵ It is usually agreed that at least two sources have been woven together, one antimonarchic and one promonarchic. There is obvious opposition to the monarchy in 1 Samuel 8, but some read it from a later hand (Noth's Deuteronomistic Historian) while others expect such opposition from the inception of the monarchy (Weiser). Hosea 13:10--"Give us a king and princes"--is a rather certain paraphrase of 1 Sam. 8:6, "Give us a king to govern us."⁴⁶⁶ The same antimonarchic tradition is obvious in 1 Sam. 10:19. The people have rejected God, saying "No! but set a king over us." And Saul suffers the same fate in 15:23, "Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he also rejected you from being king."

In 1 Samuel 15 the rejection of Saul's kingship is based on his idolatrous sacrifice. Hosea recalls this period of apostasy by focusing on its inception and by labeling it with the root metaphor, "harlotry," which scatters images for (1) the power of ruthless wealth and (2) the attempt to influence idolatrous gods with odious fertility rites and false sacrifices. In Hosea 13:11, there does appear some recognition of Yahweh's divine choice of Saul (1 Samuel 9-10), followed by the angry rejection of the monarch (in 1 Samuel 15).⁴⁶⁷

The inception of the monarchy is apparently imaged by the phrase

⁴⁶⁵For a source-critical study of these texts see Bruce Birch, *The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy: The Growth and Development of I Samuel 7-15* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976).

⁴⁶⁶Birch, *Israelite Monarchy*, p. 27, argues that 1 Sam. 8:8-17 is a reworking by DtrH of the tradition, because 'zb in 8:8 is a Deuteronomistic word. But note Hosea 13:6, where the term seems earlier.

⁴⁶⁷Buss, *Hosea*, p. 104; cf. Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 636.

"days of Gibeah" at Hos. 9:9 and 10:9. But it is often suggested that this could refer to the crimes committed at Gibeah according to the levitical traditions of Judges 19-20. The accusations of homosexuality and rape are heinous enough reportedly to incite the entire tribal confederation in riot against one guilty tribe. And war does overtake the Benjaminites because of the sins of Gibeah. Thus the theme of Hos. 10:9 could fit this memory. It is possible, however, that the metaphor refers as well to an era in Israel's institutional life, implying the organization of the monarchy by Saul at Gibeah in 1 Samuel 10.⁴⁶⁸ The dissatisfaction with the kingship in 10:3 apparently keeps our attention on Hosea's cursing of the idolatrous monarchy, created during the days of Gibeah. If the prophet also has the apostasy of Judges 19-20 in focus, it only reinforces the abhorrence over establishing the human throne in such an evil place.⁴⁶⁹

Patriarchal Rebellion

It is as if the sins in the days of Gibeah were fermenting until they emerged fully in the idolatry of the first king. But Hosea wishes to show in the climactic chapter that apostasy has its beginning long before the monarchy, even though corrupt human rulership is the current expression of rebellion against Yahweh's help. Thus the fragment of patriarchal tradition in Hosea 13:13 is subsumed within the rejection of the monarchy. There is a metaphorical connection

⁴⁶⁸Ward, *Hosea*, pp. 154, 182-83. He does not think that Judges 19-20 is "analogous to the crimes of the eighth century." Even though Saul's kingship began at Gilgal or Mizpah according to other traditions, Hosea would naturally focus on Gibeah.

⁴⁶⁹Brueggemann, *Hosea*, p. 35 prefers to include both traditions behind the phrase because we should not choose between them.

between the storing up or bundling of sins in 13:12 and the unborn son in 13:13. It is the matrix of two forms of social organization: monarchy and patriarchy. Neither is idealized; both are enveloped in death for Ephraim. Ephraim's guilt is apparently recorded on a royal scroll (cf. Ezra 4:14-19) and then stored in a parcel to protect it from catastrophic events, which are expected.⁴⁷⁰ Later this will be the practice of the residents at Qumran, who become experienced in catastrophes.⁴⁷¹

However, the storage of guilt is actually fraught with possibilities. It is not as final as one expects. The sins of Ephraim are stored up, that is, they are "protected" for now from disaster. This is similar to the point of Job 14:7-17. The disinterested sufferer wonders if there is any future after death. He begs for a hiding place in Sheol (*biš^e'ōl tašpinēnî*) so as to avoid the oppressive divine wrath (14:13). He knows that if his sins are "sealed in a bag" (*bišrōr*) his iniquity will be hidden from sight, away from judgment. Like Job 14, the metaphor in Hosea 13:12 is apparently descriptive; it explains, in answer to the rhetorical question, how iniquity is bundled rather than congratulating such a process.

The description continues with the patriarchal fragment of 13:13. Here the prophet recalls the lesson of Hosea 12. It is not surprising to find Hosea

⁴⁷⁰LXX renders 13:12 in terms of a royal conspiracy, a collection of seditious people. Cf. Hos. 7:2-7 for the image of the conspiracy, which burns like an oven.

⁴⁷¹Vuilleumeir-Bessard, "Osee 13:12 et les manuscrits," pp. 281-82. The Dead Sea manuscripts are put in a packing sheath (*šārūr*), which is then stored inside a vase (*s^epūnāh*) and placed in an inaccessible place to protect it from disaster. Hosea 4:19 also uses the term *sarar* to refer to iniquity under the wrapping of the wind's wings, but this image is difficult to grasp. It probably implies a shiftless pursuit of evil, as in 12:2, "They pursue the east wind all day long."

familiar with the Jacob tradition since both are concerned with Bethel.⁴⁷²

Bethel, as the place where Jacob found God (Gen. 35:1-7), is the location attached to earlier Jacob-Esau traditions. It is the principal place of iniquity, known as Beth-aven in Hosea's time.

In Hosea 12 Jacob is not presented as the one who brings patriarchal blessing but as one who deceives, the one who rebels against God.⁴⁷³ The genre of blessing (in Genesis 27) is broken open by deception.⁴⁷⁴ This deception goes back to the very inception of the patriarchal history, or, as it were, the very birth of the people. Hosea is familiar with the birth story of Jacob (*babbeten*), which is known to us through Gen. 25:26. Jacob's bad character emerges in the womb at Hcs. 12:4, and the prophet works this into the final summary of apostasy at 13:13. Here the womb threatens to become a tomb for the unwise son because Hosea wonders if Jacob (Ephraim) should have ever emerged at the mouth of the womb.⁴⁷⁵

However, as with the reference to concealed sin in 13:12, the unborn son has potential. Thus the rhetorical questions about Mot and Sheol (13:14) evoke intense divine pathos over the future of the unborn son. Yahweh wonders if he

⁴⁷²Hosea would know nothing of the hypothetical distinction between east-Jordanian and west-Jordanian Jacob traditions. In the eighth century Jacob is already an eponym for Israel. For the attempted reconstruction of the history of the Jacob traditions see William McKane, *Studies in the Patriarchal Narratives* (Edinburgh: The Handsel Press, 1979), pp. 105-08.

⁴⁷³Vollmer, *Rückblicke*, p. 114.

⁴⁷⁴Claus Westermann, *The Promises to the Fathers*, transl. by David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 77.

⁴⁷⁵Cf. Jer. 20:17 for the image of the womb as grave.

should redeem the deceptive child.⁴⁷⁶ By the end of the inclusion Yahweh can no longer have compassion on the rebellious son. Compassion is impossible because Jacob looks for help among allies rather than with Yahweh (13:9 and 15a). But compassion is also enigmatically possible in the context of the entire book because another fragment of patriarchal tradition is also used to explain Yahweh's internal pathos. In 11:8-9 the annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah (Admah and Zeboiim) is used to show how Yahweh is reluctantly willing to spare Ephraim. The polarization of compassion and no compassion is accomplished through the metaphors of patriarchal tradition. Abraham's righteousness is implicitly accepted as a reason for the change in God's will ("My heart overturns within me"). But Jacob, thought by many critics to be the original patriarch in the actual history of tradition, becomes a bad example for Israel because he is Israel rather than a specific father with twelve sons.⁴⁷⁷

In Hosea 13, through the metaphors of the Jacob tradition (the womb) and the Saul tradition (the king given in anger), the prophet shows how the two periods of Israel's social history, patriarchy and monarchy, were stained with apostasy from their inception. The chapter is thus a climactic summary of the traditions which have been represented throughout the rest of the book. It is also

⁴⁷⁶See Walter Harrelson, "About to be Born," *Andover Newton Theological Quarterly* 11 (1970), pp. 58-59.

⁴⁷⁷McKane, *Patriarchal Narratives*, p. 177; E. M. Good, "Hosea and the Jacob Tradition," *VT* 16 (1966), p. 151. He argues that Hosea rejects the patriarchal traditions which are connected to the apostate Bethel cult because he does not want this in the corpus of Yahwistic traditions. Good overstates the point because Hosea was much more interested in cultic apostasy than he was in laying out a systematic or narrative treatment of Israelite traditions.

an important summary of Israelite levitical tradition in general, as we have come to know it through the Pentateuchal narratives concerning patriarchs, exodus, wilderness, and the settlement of the land.

We have noted repeatedly that Hosea reappropriates these traditions through the vehicle of metaphor and simile. This imagistic language is inherently ambiguous because it legitimately opens the images to many interpretations. We have freely pursued earlier narrative tradition in illuminating the enigmatic images. This has indicated the prophet's rather astonishing ability to curse cultic apostasy while at the same time suggesting new potential in the midst of death. It is the relentless and reluctant march toward death for Ephraim that will structure our descriptive theological conclusions, which emerge from this study of the text, forms, and traditions of Hosea 13.

CHAPTER IX

CLIMAX

Our task in Chapters 1-8 has been to understand better the text of Hosea 13. We have learned the following things: As a delimited block of composition, Hosea 13 is a unified literary text. Its integrity is endangered by shifts from prophetic to divine speech, by shifts from poetry to prose (13:4-5), and by shifts in verbal aspect. Nevertheless, each of these deviations is explained by intelligent and intentional structures supervising the unity of the passage.

The composition of Hosea 13 can be further broken down into four sub-units, which are related one to another in terms of institutional and functional setting during a time of cultic controversy. We have coined the phrase "curse oracle" in an attempt to account for the idiosyncracies of Hosea's speech. This new form of speech is only proposed after rejecting the application of form-critical terms, such as judgment speeches, which are appropriate and more demonstrable in other Hebrew prophets. Curse oracles are identified three times at 13:1-3, 13:4-8, and 13:15b--14:1. Possible curse oracles can be found elsewhere at 2:3-5, 4:1-3, 5:8-12, 7:11-13, 9:10-12, and 11:8-9.

This leaves the unit at 13:9-15a which is labeled an inclusion. The bicolon at 13:9 refers to the destruction of Israel because the nation has forgotten the source of help. The oracle is closed by the bicolon at 13:14e-15a which witnessed the lack of divine compassion because the nation has frantically sought out

aid among allies. Similar inclusion structures are documented elsewhere in Hosea at 4:4-9a, 11-14, and 8:9-13, which demonstrates an intentional use of the rhetorical device with specific focus on apostasy.

Circumstantial evidence in Chapter 13, which includes a reference to human sacrifice at v. 2 and the self presentation formula at v. 4, led to the proposal of the New Moon festival as the occasion for Hosea's prophecy. This evidence is corroborated by the liturgical blowing of the trumpet at Hos. 5:8 and 8:1, as well as reference to human sacrifice in Hos. 5:7. It seems highly unlikely that Hosea was hunting cultic apostasy during the course of a New Year's festival. These enigmatic hints, as further supported by liturgical elements in Psalms 50 and 81, point to a frequent clan or familial gathering for the occasion of the New Moon.

The prophet's use of tradition also suggests liturgical rather than purely historical interests. But his curse oracles were not effective in the cultic setting because the audience was predisposed to the magical efficacy of spoken curses. We chose not to accept those views of ancient language that associate cursing with word magic. We prefer instead to assert that Hosea's curses bring together word and event (or create new meanings) by transmitting the ancient traditions as oracular statements, which at the same time proclaim startling messages. It is the simile and metaphor in these curses that reveals something new from the old traditions.

This sketch still leaves unresolved a question which we have delayed about the efficacy of Hosea's message in the cult. What would actually happen if

these curse oracles were taken seriously? How would the cult have changed theologically and how would it have behaved politically if eighth-century Israelites regarded this use of tradition as more than just the babblings of a crazy priest turned prophet?

On a scientific, methodological level, this question provides meaning to the whole endeavor of form criticism. One does not submit to the form of an advertisement in a newspaper unless the marriage of form and content has some commercial reward. Similarly, Hosea would not deliver his curse oracles or his inclusions if he expected no transformation of perceived reality. However, we thoroughly resist looking for a mere rhetorical "payoff," as if the forms of speech or the metaphorical images can be discarded as nonessential once everything is reduced into propositional and didactic language.

In one sentence, we can say that Hosea seeks a change in the way that the people of God relate to Yahweh. This further amounts to a change in perception about the role of Yahweh in the cult. In Hosea 13 the change is not for the better.

Alternating Shades of Death

Hosea is a curser of cultic apostasy. He decries the lack of knowledge or theology in the land, which is another way of saying that the people forget their primary relationship with the character of Yahweh. Instead they turn their attention to Ba'al by means of idolatry, material images, and the ritual devaluation of human life. This misdirected devotion leads to arrogance and self-sufficiency, with an emphasis on the royal form of security. In a word, no *da'at* means

"rebellion." Because of this arrogant rebellion, Ephraim has become "guilty" in the technical religious sense. The priest is required to curse this cultic guilt; when it involves the people engaged in controversy with the priests, the prophet delivers speeches with alternating shades of death.

A	Nothingness	fog, dew, chaff, smoke
B	Mauling	lion, leopard, bear, lion
A'	Abruption	stillbirth, abortion
B'	Invasion	sirocco, sword, women and children

Death is, of course, named along with the abode of the dead, Sheol, in the rhetorical question of v. 14. Yet each of the oracles in the chapter describes a form of death, to the extent that this theme conveys the overwhelming message. A thematic parallelism is also evident.

The first type of death is imaged as nonexistence. To be like fog, dew, chaff, or smoke is to be present one moment and gone the next. This lack of permanence is paralleled in the third type of nothingness. A child which refuses to be born is neither dead nor alive.⁴⁷⁸ Ephraim is such an infant—one who only existed as hopes and dreams, but one who is trapped in the abode of Sheol without hope of rescue once the divine eyes are closed to any compassionate salvation.

The second form of death is truly graphic and physical, as the wild beasts maul the arrogant and forgetful people. Such cruelty is only paralleled in the fourth death by the savaging storm of the invasion, when barbarity extends to the defenseless pregnant women and their infants. Thus we have two basic kinds of death, each displayed in two ways. The first type of death is existential

⁴⁷⁸Contemporary law recognizes this state of limbo by issuing a special certificate of fetal registration. It is neither a birth nor a death certificate.

and abstract. It points to the futility and impermanence of rebellious existence. The second type of death is physical and concrete. It points to the cruelty and oppression brought about among an apostate people. Both types of death are primary characteristics of Deuteronomistic theology.⁴⁷⁹

Religious Syncretism

Throughout this investigation into the religion of eighth-century Israel, our goal has been descriptive rather than normative. Hosea truly believes that apostasy can be avoided. Any contrary possibility was probably never of much concern to the prophet or to the Deuteronomists, whose primary responsibility was the cataloging of rebellious apostasy in the monarchic cycles of Israel's history. By stating the matter in this way we are beginning to evaluate Hosea's approach to the cursing of apostasy. And the question of avoiding apostasy forces itself on the interpreter because of the metaphors and similes invoked by the prophet as the vehicle of ancient tradition.

In the description of traditions invoked through metaphor in Hosea 13, we are constantly reminded of the prophetic reappropriation of images first at home among the followers of Ba'al.⁴⁸⁰ He clearly reappropriates much of the language of Canaanite fertility religion while destroying its referent (Ba'al) as an apostate source of idolatry and cultic guilt. In Hosea 13 the juxtaposition of the

⁴⁷⁹Also of prime importance to the Deuteronomists is the love of God, to which we must return. It is curious that the tension between love and wrath in the prophets is often criticized as a secondary juxtaposition, though the same tension is easily reconciled in Deuteronomistic theology, perhaps because the latter is seeking to make the prophetic interpretations more systematic and consistent. There is little if any hint of love in Hosea 13.

⁴⁸⁰This process is well known from many texts, such as Psalm 29.

divine first person pronoun "I" and the mauling creature produces an arresting shock. The literal interpretation reports that Yahweh is an enemy. But why does this prophet tread on the surface of Canaanite symbolism by redescribing Yahwistic reality in terms of obviously syncretistic resemblances?

First we observe that our question has shifted from apostasy to syncretism. The terms are not synonymous in primary religious language. Apostasy is syncretism out of control and without limits. Hosea uses the metaphors of fertility, but he defines apostasy, to put it philosophically, as rebellion against the sovereign will of Yahweh, in which the primary knowledge of God (torah) in Israel is rejected in favor of a competing religion. This topic, apostasy, and its implications for modern praxis, require a great deal of further research in the study of the Hebrew Bible. However, the very perception of syncretism in modern religious expressions has made it difficult for responsible scholarship to define or evaluate religious apostasy, even in the ancient texts. Then the typically oppressive if not deadly response of the ruling religious authorities through the ages has left even less of a desire to evaluate prophetic cursing of apostasy, especially if the issue shifts from belief to the consolidation of power. Any religious tradition which is to survive must attempt to deal with apostasy, yet such encounters could be well informed by Hosea's emphasis on national rebellion against God rather than emphasis on proper linguistic imagery, pure rhetoric, or even personality conflicts among ruling authorities.

Some scholars are aware that Hosea daringly toys with syncretistic resemblances. H. W. Wolff suggests that the prophet is influenced by the sapiential study of nature because he was an eighth-century modernist.

Because of Hosea's impudent modernistic language, some of his similes must have sounded almost flippant to his audience. . . . The prophet's language itself strikes in the heart of his audience the terror of Yahweh's presently burning anger (5:10; 13:11). As far as we know, never before had anyone dared to speak of God in this fashion. Subordinating all considerations of pious tradition and aesthetic sensitivities, the prophet sought to bear witness to Yahweh's awesome and overpowering strength and present action.⁴⁸¹

Mays concurs in this opinion but emphasizes the polemical purpose of Hosea's language. "With daring skill he appropriates the language and thought of Canaanite religion while rejecting Baalism itself. By this strategy Hosea achieves a fresh modernism that plunges into the contemporaneity of his audience."⁴⁸² There is certainly a polemical outlook in the prophecy of Hosea, but it does not totally explain why Hosea used these metaphors.

It is suggested that the people of Israel, torn between two lovers, may hardly have been able to make a distinction between worshipping Yahweh or Ba'al. If Hosea simply used a common language so he could make his polemic palatable, then he would have known beforehand that his proclamation of divine threats was doomed to failure. Secondly, we observe that the metaphorical polarizations betray a very real dissonance within the prophet himself. He is as much an Israelite as those who hear his oracles. As Hosea reappropriates the lan-

⁴⁸¹Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. xiv-xviii.

⁴⁸²Mays, *Hosea*, p. 80; Labuschagne, "Similes," p. 75, also notices Hosea's polemical tone, though he returns to his classical view of metaphor. He suggests that Hosea only uses similes when making comparisons to Yahweh, because metaphors might be taken too literally. "The reason for this is that he warily shuns any shade of identifying Yahweh with the animals, trees, or natural phenomena, in view of his consistent fight against Ba'alism." Verse 12:11 is then manipulated by Labuschagne as an insight into Hosea's self-understanding. The prophet was commissioned by Yahweh to make comparisons, *damah*.

guage and redescribes meaning in the conflict of fertility interpretations, he struggles to maintain a balance between love and wrath, but the divine terror of Yahweh as enemy ultimately tips the scales of justice in Hosea 13. The northern kingdom, rather than his metaphors, has vanished. The dissonance emerges most poignantly in the divine speech at 11:8-9, as Yahweh struggles to decide Ephraim's fate. "How can I give you up Ephraim. . . All my compassion is aroused. . . I will not come in wrath." The struggle peaks again in the climax at 13:14. "Where O Death are your plagues? Where O Sheol are your pox? Compassion is hid from my eyes while he runs wild among brothers." Is such dissonance the product of divine indecision, as suggested by Andersen-Freedman, or is it due to prophetic uncertainty, as suggested by G. Boling.⁴⁸³ Abraham Heschel's theme of prophetic *sym*-pathy with the divine pathos suggests that both possibilities are correct. Yahweh hesitantly and reluctantly expresses divine anger, and Hosea reluctantly cooperates in the expression of what is expected in the cult: the northern kingdom is cursed with violent death and existential nothingness.

Further related to this dissonance is the considerable ambiguity in predicting Yahweh's response to the rebellion by the people of God. This is Hosea's primary concern. On one level the ambiguity is felt from the juxtaposition of Hosea 13 and 14. It is not difficult to see why so many scholars prefer to assign the final chapter of restoration to the exilic era or later. On the other

⁴⁸³ Andersen-Freedman, *Hosea*, p. 51; Boling, "Prodigal Sons on Trial," *McCormick Theological Quarterly* 19 (1965), pp. 13-14.

hand, the structural polarizations, evident in the appropriation of disparate metaphors (desert, lions, etc.) could well convince us to maintain the tensive balance between love and wrath.

On a second, post-biblical level the ambiguity is felt from our personal discomfort with the problem of syncretism. If and when the limits of syncretism are impossible to establish, which might happen in the dangerous reappropriation of tradition, one will often witness the disappearance of terms such as "sin" and "apostasy" from the vocabulary of the priesthood. (Hosea is highly concerned with this lack of knowledge.) This level of ambiguity leaves one wondering how the deity is truly relevant to daily and worldly life. It becomes difficult to understand how love and wrath could issue forth from the same God.

The second level of ambiguity is complicated in part by the post-Enlightenment preoccupation with relativity and pluralism. We all live with this sort of tension in the practice of religious tradition. But we should become self-critically aware that this filter affects our reading of Hosea. Thus we should avoid the urge to overlook the first level of metaphorical ambiguity, which culminates in prophetic sympathy with the predicament of Yahweh.

Further Research

We are not disappointed in the role played by Hosea 13. The chapter has served admirably as an important methodological prism and as a summarization of Hosea.

(1) Composition. Considerably more evidence is required before the redaction of Hosea can be understood. This is the greatest need in the study of

the book. Chapter 13 appears to be a literary unit and belongs with the cycle comprising chapters 11-13. Further we are not overly disturbed by the positive finale in chapter 14, given the primary level of ambiguity related to compassion and rejection. Nevertheless, the social setting of the final redaction is unknown.

(2) Form. Now that the typical form-critical approaches are found wanting, other curse oracles in Hosea need to be inspected more closely. This should confirm Hosea's diagnosis of cultic apostasy as the overwhelming cause of Israel's demise. It is unlikely that the text of Hosea will allow further evidence in support of a local clan festival such as the New Moon. The circumstantial nature of our case is admitted, though we cannot think of a better localized occasion. A more detailed study of the Mesopotamian lunar cult could be of considerable interest.

(3) Tradition. More can be concluded about the role of metaphor as the vehicle of tradition in the prophets. Such research would also thoroughly dissect linguistic theories about the power of the word in ancient contexts. Study of the entire book of Hosea, as well as other prophets such as Second Isaiah, could benefit from an extensive application of the approach suggested above. One particular problem would involve the identity of root metaphors and supporting images. Perhaps definite guidelines could be developed for systematically discussing the metaphorical hierarchy dominating prophetic texts.

In the case of Hosea 13 we discovered that many of the most important ancient traditions--exodus/wilderness, settlement, patriarchy, and monarchy--came together in one unit. This development has permitted us to describe the

chapter as the thematic climax of the entire book, and it has forced us to confront successfully the critical methodological questions plaguing the book of Hosea.

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