

# ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE SAFAITIC INSCRIPTIONS\*

by  
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1. The Safaitic inscriptions which are found in some parts of North Arabia are attributed to Arab tribesmen who resided there some centuries before the Prophet Muḥammad.

About 10000 such inscriptions are presently known. The script is a branch of the South Semitic scripts and represents their northernmost extension, whereas the most southern extension is marked by the Ethiopian script, the only South Semitic script still in use.

The similarities between the two scripts are extensive not only in regard to the shape of the letters but also to the characteristic feature of the Semitic script system. That is to say there are, in general *nomatres lectionis* (consonants without value of radicals) (see WH p.12)

2. One should therefore read, as Littmann does, 'aTaY 'he came' not as in Classical Arabic 'atā (أتى). It is worth mentioning that the Old Ethiopic form (as the Epigraphic South Arabian) in question (ʔatāwā) also shows a strong third radical. Concerning the different third radical in Safaitic and Old Ethiopic one must bear in mind that the Safaitic perfect does not reveal any difference between verbs ending in w or y, whereas in Arabic only the pronunciation but not the graphic representation is identical (cf. Saf. NaGaY (or NaGiY) Arab. naḡā (نجا), see Ch. Rabin: *Ancient West-Arabian*, London 1951, p. 160-166).

The material which is far from being exhausted may be mastered in the following three steps:

- 1) edition and, if necessary, re-edition of texts,
- 2) comparative treatment (e.g. grammar, dictionary),
- 3) comprehensive description of the culture, religion and history or of the aspects of the Safaitic world revealed in the inscriptions.

Here a contribution to step two will be made by setting up a classification of inscriptions according to their structure.

Indeed, there have been classifications from the beginning of the decipherment. Thus E. Littmann<sup>1</sup> distinguishes between:

memorial inscriptions,  
claims to property,  
documents of sale,  
inscriptions with signatures of draughtsmen,  
funerary inscriptions and  
prayers.

A first formal treatment of some inscriptions, namely those containing elements of the Classical Arabic poetry (Nasib of the Qasidah, see K. Petráček: *Die Vorebereitungsperiode der arabischen Literatur, Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Philologicae* 3 (1964), p. 35-51), was undertaken by Petráček<sup>2</sup>. According to their prevailing semantic elements, these inscriptions are, in his opinion, characterized by the kernel structure.

“finding of inscription(s) ---> feeling of affliction”

that can be extended by several non-terminal elements (as invocation, protection).

In contrast, I intend to provide a classification according to formal criteria. The inscriptions are considered to be composed of certain UNITS. Unit means a sequence of words that is formally marked. The marking is made by the word class of the relevant element of the second subunit and the introducing element (first subunit) applied to. Therefore, each unit consists of two subunits:

[subunit 1]  
 'introducing elem.':  
 one or two of the  
 following elements

/L—/  
 /W—/  
 /F—/  
 /H—/

[subunit 2]  
 'relev. elem.': 'compliment'

/PN/  
 /V/  
 /D/  
 /S/

The 'relevant element' can be regarded as a 'free form'<sup>3</sup> and if consisting of only one word 'minimum free form', the 'introducing element' as a 'bound form' (thus indicated by a hyphen). Together they constitute a 'non-minimum free form', a unit. The 'compliment' may be zero.

Since every combination of these elements is not possible, one can, for the time being, differentiate between the following units:

L—unit	or [L—],
W—unit	or [W—],
F—unit	or [F—],
H—Deity-unit	or [H—D],
W—H—Deity-unit	or [W—H—D],
F—H—Deity—unit	or [F—H—D],
H—Substantive-unit	or [H—S] and
W—H—Substantive-unit	or [W—H—S] and also
Adverbial-unit	or [A]

The subunits form the units in the following way, e.g.

/L—/ — /PN/ = [L—]  
 /W—/ — /V / = [W—]  
 /W—/ — /H—/ — /D/ — /S/ or /V/ = [W—H—D.]

There is at least one unit which occurs in inscriptions that is not taken into account in this analysis, the

SNT—unit or [SNT—]

Since it can appear as a complement of various units.

A further division of the subunits, which should be based on their extensions, is not undertaken here.

Another criterion for grouping arises from the ORDERING of the units. A H—D—unit on the end of an inscription, for instance, has to be valued differently than at its beginning. In the same way a W—unit following a L—unit must be considered for the most part in another way than following a F—unit. Therefore, a W—unit which is following a W— or F—unit need not constitute an independent unit. We write

F-(W) - unit or [F—W—],  
 W-(W) - unit or [W—W—].

In connection with this one has to bear in mind that a grammatical analysis that is based on formal criteria cannot dispense with taking the significance of elements into consideration. Even the decipherment of an inscription is not possible without reflecting on the meaning of the elements in question. Equipped with these prerequisites we can venture upon a formalized description and classification of the Safaitic inscriptions.

How do these units come together to form texts?

A. According to the first element we may distinguish between inscriptions beginning directly with a personal name (/PN/) and those beginning with a prepositional element.

### A.1. / [PN] /

The type/[PN]/ must be considered as somewhat different from the other types of texts, since it does not reveal well-formed and highly structured sentences. Although it is not justified to restore an apparently missing *lām*<sup>4</sup> which marks the beginning of most texts the number of inscriptions without *lām* may be reduced by correcting misinterpretations.

So, from the relevant inscriptions in *WSIJ*<sup>5</sup>, that is 2, 84, 502, 512, 569, 603, some may be read in another way. The *lām* of *WSIJ 84* according to *Jamme (Notes p. 42)* is “clear in the copy”. *WSIJ 512* may be the end of the foregoing inscriptions (see *Jamme Notes p. 46*). Instead of the name *ḤNFṢ* (*WSIJ 569*) *Jamme (Notes p. 112)* reads *Ḥall FukK* “*H. was freed!*” which brings forth another problem (new type of text). Therefore in this corpus *WSIJ 2* (?*WS BN—?DM BN—Ṣ ḤD*), 502 (*Ḥ ḠZT*) and 603 (*H—MWT*) remain.

Also the reading of *LSI*<sup>6</sup> 262 (*BQL F—H—YTḡ...*) must be corrected to *L—QLF H—YTḡ...* (see *Jamme Notes p. 83*) thus fitting a well attested pattern.

The occurrence of this type is restricted and can be regarded as influenced by Thamudic inscriptions consisting of only a personal name<sup>7</sup>.

On the other hand, this feature does not require an external influence, for this sort of one-component utterance seems to be a universal of human language.

Behaghel in his book on German syntax<sup>8</sup> discerns four sentence types:

1) primitive (non-verbal) single-element sentences (“ur-sprünglich eingliedrige Sätze”, p. 435) such as interjections, vocatives, prepositions (as ‘On!’, ‘Off!’) and cases like ‘Fire!’, ‘Attention!’,

2) verbal single-element sentences (“verbale eingliedrige Sätze”, p. 439) such as imperatives, impersonal constructions (as ‘It’s raining!’) and probable infinitives as in Arabic *sukūt* ‘Silence!’.

3) non-primitive single-element sentences (“unursprüngliche eingliederige Sätze”, p. 439) that arise from reduction of multiple-element sentences (anacoluth, aposiopesis) as in Latin ‘*Quos ego!*’.

4) multiple-element sentences (“zweigliedrige Sätze”, p. 468) which consists of subject and predicate.

The first two types can not be conceived as incomplete sentences or emphatic ellipses, as Noreen supposes<sup>9</sup>.

A correct indication is given by Ries<sup>10</sup> for distinguishing incomplete sentences (cp. no. 3 and 4) from incomplete sentences which do not in fact have their origin (by shortening) incomplete sentences.

Therefore, it is best to follow Jespersen<sup>11</sup> who distinguishes three sentences types:

I) inarticulate sentences coinciding with no. 1 and 2 of the Behaghel classification,

II) semi-articulate sentences, e.g. ‘Thank you!’ abridged from ‘I thank you!’, corresponding to no. 3,

III) articulate sentences corr. to no. 4.

According to this terminology the Safaitic [PN] — type represents inarticulate sentences. If one thinks rather of semi-articulate sentences, one has to bear in mind inscriptions containing the independent pronoun of the 1. person and a personal name. Together with the mostly preceding element *W*-the type */W—?N [PN]/* emerges.

Such texts occur not infrequently in Thamudic<sup>12</sup>, Syriac, Moabite and Phoenician<sup>13</sup> and so on.

A unit with these two nominal elements may be posited in Safaitic (see C.3.c.)

### A.2. / [PN] [...]/

Not well-attested is the type [PN] followed by a verbal form. An example is found in *Jamme’s* emendation of the text *WSI 569*. He reads *HL FK* ‘Hall was freed!’ instead of *ḤNFṢ*. As to Thamudic cp. van den Branden (*Inscriptions p. 477*) *ḤRB ḤB* ‘*ḤArb aime!*’, which can be read also as *ḤR B-ḤB* ‘*Ḥlrr fils de Ḥubb!*’. Another obscure instance is *WH*<sup>14</sup> 2444 or 2827.

### B. / [H-D] /

The first major criterion for the classification of the texts was the occurrence of a personal name at the very beginning. The second one concerns the preceding prepositional element which is either *H*-or-*L*-. The text *LSI 273* displaying the preposition *bā?* is clearly Thamudic

“The letters of these inscriptions look Thamudic rather than Safaitic”, p. 67 and should not to be taken into account here.

The only prepositional element apart from *lām* in this connexion is the vocative particle *Hā—/HaY-* (or *HaYā*, see WH p. 47) always followed by the name of a deity. This constitutes the second main type of Safaitic inscriptions: / [H-D] /. The relevant deities are usually *Ruḏā* and *Allāt* <sup>16</sup>.

The god *Ruḏā*, who is conventionally read as *Raḏu*, exhibits two variants: *RDW* and *RDY* (possibly representing the evening and morning star or generally a masculine and feminine deity <sup>17</sup>).

In the most cases the names of gods are followed by the imperative of the verbs *Sa aD* ‘to help’ and *FaLLaT* ‘to deliver from’:

(LSI 495) H—RDW FLT—N M—B?S...,

(LSI 505) H—?LT S<sup>d</sup>D ĠWT BN-?BRR...,

(WSIJ 863) H—RDW RWH̄ (see *Jamme Notes* p. 92).

Other deities are rarely found:

(LSI 1067) Hā-NuHaY Sā<sup>i</sup>D GaLS ...

(WSIJ 516) Hā-KāHīL FaLiT... (?) this reading being uncertain.

The name of a deity (H-?LT) not followed by an imperative is found in the obscure inscription CIS <sup>18</sup> 2372 (s. *Jamme Notes* p. 93).

Although texts with deities at the outset occur several times, this type seems to be archaic or perhaps Thamudic influenced (cp. the remarks of Littmann to the above-mentioned inscription LSI 495 <sup>19</sup>).

C. The remaining type with L- beginning dominates in most texts. The Safaitic inscriptions are, therefore, more uniform than other North Arabic inscriptions, that is to say the alternative ways to formulate a text is in Safaitic more restricted.

Well, how can we classify these numerous inscriptions ranging in their extent from one up to some thirty words?

#### C.1. / [L-] /

The first subdivision contains inscriptions having only a L—unit (that is *lām* plus a personal name). Since this unit is part of all texts of the C-type (and any following type), it may be appropriate to treat it here without regard to the fact that it can occur alone or together with other units.

The personal name complex consists maximally of the following parts.

The *first name* can be:

- a) a name fulfilling a nominal pattern (e.g. *MuḤaLLim*, *ʿaQRaB*, *?aN ʿaM*, *ḤaBīB*),
- b) a laqab containing the article H- (e.g. *Hā-ḤagG-īY*, *Hā-?aSaD*, *Ḥaf-FaTaY*),
- c) composed names (as *ŠāNi?* *Has-SvBv?*, *?aBū-?aNas*, *BiN-?aŠYaB*, especially theophorous names (e.g. *WaHB-aLLāH*, *Qain-?īL*) (see LSI p. xxv),
- d) names with prefixed or suffixed elements as B-, L-, K-, and -Y, -H (e.g. *Li-ŠaMS*, *Bi-ʿamMi-H*, *KauKaB-īY*) <sup>20</sup>.

The *filiation* (*nasab*) that sometimes indicates ancestors up to ten or more generations is expressed by BN- plus a name which can be formed like the first name illustrated above or by elements equivalent to a BN-filiation. This case arises when the father unknown (or should not be known):

(CIS 2214) *Li-?aSHaM BiN-YaHūD* ‘By A., son of a Jew!’

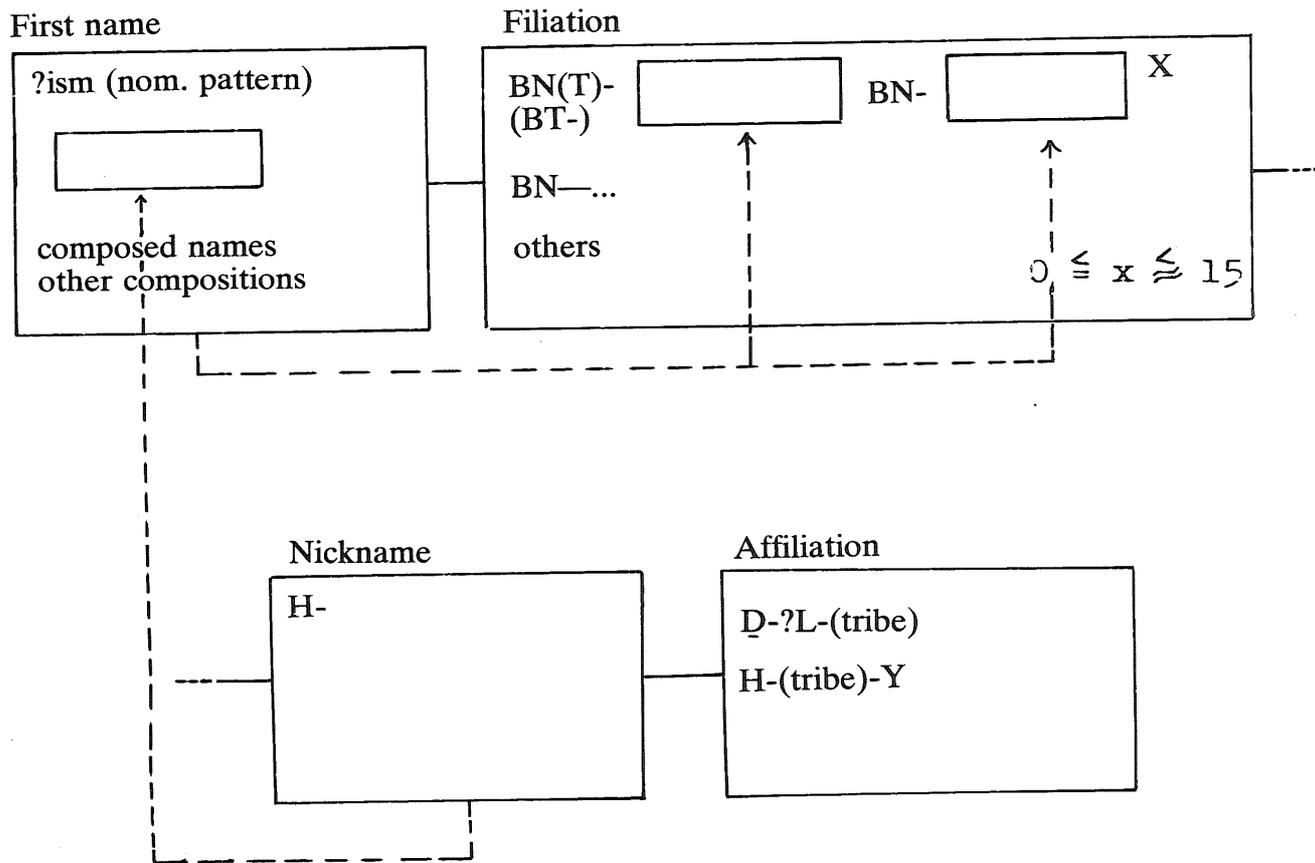
(HCH <sub>21</sub> 193) *Li-ʿaDāR FuTaYY Hanī?-īL...* ‘By A., the young servant of H.’

I do not think that the second *yā?* is erroneously written as *Harding* suspects, for it may be an indication to read the diminutive *futaiy* and not the form *fatay* which are in Classical Arabic rendered graphically in the same way (فٲٲ) or to read the diminutive *futaiyyi* not attested in Classical Arabic from *fatīy* conceived as having four radicals.

The *nickname* (*laqab*) is formed by means of the article (see above).

The *affiliation* (*nisbah*) to a tribe or occasionally to a location (s. HCH 82: *Li-ʿaZīZ BiN-HaNi?* *Dī-?āL-NaMāRaT*) is indicated by the relative pronoun *Dū—* followed by the substantive *?āL-* plus the tribal name, including names of peoples, clans or even families (many instances in HCH) <sup>22</sup>.

Another way to express affiliation is by forming a nisba (in the literal sense of the word) that is together with H- and -Y (cp. in Classical Arabic e.g. almakkī 'the Meccan').



By combining these various elements one gets a vast number of personal name complexes which form together with lām a main type of texts:

(LSI 52) L-ḤNN '(This inscription is) by Ḥuanain!' (The discussion concerning the meaning of iām is left out here!)

(WSIJ 376) L-BLS BN-... (12 time)

(LSI 72) L-?KMD BN-WR? BN-H-ʿBD H-SLM-Y ... (Thus the nisba belongs to Akmad, not to Hā-ʿabd as indicated by Littmann.)

(WSIJ 195) L-?B-?NS BN-ʿLYN BN-?B-?NS

(CIS 3031) L-ḠDN BNT-M?QN

and so on. An unusual position of the filiation is reported in F.2. Very striking on the other hand is the lack of the kunyah which is an integral part of the Classical Arabic name. But there are some names having ?B- as the first element (besides others with ?B as a second element)<sup>23</sup>.

If this ?B is not derived from the root ?bb 'to yearn' or ?wb 'to return', it forms a kunyah. However, ?abū in classical Arabic does not only indicate the fatherhood (of the person whose name is following) but also a characteristic feature of the person (cf. names like Abū-Hurairah or Abū-Šamah). At any rate, in Safaitic the kunyah does not work as a grammatical device in the field of onomastics. Its function may be that of a name of honour, thus comparable with the laqab functioning as a first name (cp. BN-?B-?NS with BN-H-ʿBD and BN-BN-ʿQBN).

### C.2 / [L—] [H—S] /

A great portion of the Safaitic texts including the most interesting one, contains other units after the L-unit. A first division is immediately distinguishable, i.e. those texts with a substantive determined by the article. This substantive may denote

- 1) the inscription (as ḤṬṬ, SFR, HY),
- 2) an accompanying drawing (as ḤṬṬ or more specified: GML, BKR, BKRT, ʿR, NQT, FRS, ZBYT) or

- 3) also locations near the place where the letters (and drawings) were scratched (as DR, D?RT, BNYT, BHRT, NSB, M<sup>c</sup>MR, SR, WŞD, WQ?T, DRĤ), sometimes with specifications (as R<sup>c</sup>Y RĤB ‘spacious pasture’ in WG30) and
- 4) property.

As to the third subtype, our interpretation differs from that of Littmann and others. E.g. (LSI 38) Li- [PN] Had-DāR has to be translated not as ‘This place belongs to PN!’ but as ‘(This inscription is) by PN (when he was) at this place!’ This view is supported by more elaborate texts as:

(LSI 379, 396, WH 1096b) Li- [PN] Wa-ḤallLaL Had-DāR... ‘(This text is) by PN when he stayed at this place...!’ (cp. the indication of place in ‘Kilroy was here!’<sup>24</sup>).

This is, however, not valid for nouns of section 1 and 2:

(WSIJ 258) Li- [PN] Hag-GaMaL (By PN (is drawn) this camel!’,

(LSI 349) Li- [PN] Has-SiFR ‘By PN (is) this inscription!’.

This type can be continued (see below).

It is not evident to what extent inscriptions with a substantive of 2 or 3 may denote a claim of property; see the discussion in LSI p. ix and WH p. 28 and inscriptions as (WH 1943, 2196) Li- [PN] BT, the last form being rendered as BitT ‘(PN has a daughter!)’. I would prefer to see here an adjectival or participial form of the verb BāT ‘to spend the night’ (according to LSI p. 302).

### C.3.a. / [L—] [W—] /

The usual continuation of the L-unit, however, is made with the W-unit which expresses various notions. Generally speaking it indicates the circumstances of scratching the inscription.

a) They are the wandering and all that is connected with change of place or, with other words, all *external circumstances* or activities in connection with scratching the inscription:

(LSI 434) Li- [PN] Wa-ḤaḌiR Had-DāR ‘(This text is) by PN when he was present at this place!’,

(LSI 87) Li- [PN] Wa-NaFaR MiN-RūM ‘... when he escaped from the Romans!’,

(LSI 343) Li- [PN] Wa-Ra<sup>c</sup>aY... ‘...when he pastured...’.

Others verbs used in this context are ḤLL ‘to stay’, MT<sup>c</sup> ‘to bring away’, ŞYR ‘to journey’, ḤRŞ, NZR, TZR ‘to be on the look-out’, NŞT ‘to journey’, TRD ‘to drive away’, RDF ‘to follow’, BNY ‘to build’. Widespread is the verb WGD ‘to find (the inscription of a relative or friend)’, as in

(CIS 2769) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ?aBī-H Wa-<sup>c</sup>amMi-H... ‘(This text is written) by PN when he found the inscription of his father and his uncle!’,

and the controversial verb WGM ‘to lay stones on a tomb’ or as the case may be ‘to mourn’<sup>25</sup>.

b) Mentioned are also *internal circumstances* as longing, grief and sadness (WLH, WG<sup>c</sup>, TŞWQ, NDM, as to others see WH p. 29). Pertinent to this section may also be the above-mentioned verbs WGD and WGM which have a very marked emotional meaning.

(LSI 28) Li- [PN] Wa-WaLiH<sup>c</sup> aL(ā)-[PN] ‘...when he yearned for PN!’,

LSI 680) Li- [PN] Wa-TaŞauWaQ ?iL(ā)-Rā<sup>c</sup>ī-H ‘...when he longed for his fellow!’.

c) other events are referred to for instance in

(LSI 419) Li- [PN] Wa-WaLaD Ham-Mi<sup>c</sup>ZaY ‘...when the goats brought forth young!’,

(WH 148b) Li-ḤadD Wa-Ba?iS ‘... when he was miserable.’,

(WSIJ 716) Li- [PN] Wa-?aMiN Hā-?aRD ... ‘...when the land was felt to be safe...’.

### C.3.b / [L-] [W-H-S] /

In WH another construction is found where a L-unit is followed by W-and a substantive with article ([W-H-S]). The subtypes are according to the substantives that can occur in this positions (see C.2.), i.e.

- 1) the inscription (not possible),
- 2) an accompanying drawing (as ḤTT or more specific: BKRT) and
- 3) (locations near) the place where the inscription was scratched (as DR),
- 4) property (not possible).

Quite clear is subtype 2 (s. WH p. 15), the translation of which is given correct in WH:

(WH 353) Li- [PN] Wa-Hā-Ḥuṭūṭ ‘(The inscription is) by PN and also the drawing!’,

(WH 2562) Li-[PN]Wa-Hab-BaKRaT ‘(The inscription is) by PN and (the drawing of) the she-camel (too)!’.

This interpretation would be corroborated by

(WSIJ 436) Li- [PN] Wa-LaHu Has-SiFR... ‘(The inscription is) by PN and by himself (is written) the inscription...’,

if the rendering of this text is correct, cf. the postponed L-H H-ḤṬṬ in WSIJ 607. More problematic is the third subtype with a local designation. The interpretation of WH is as follows:

(WH 1924)Li- [PN] Wa-Had-DāR ‘By PN. And the camping-place (is this).’.

I would think rather of the shortening of a fuller text that contains a verbal form, e.g.

Li- [PN] (Wa-ḤalLaL (or NaŠaT) Has-SvR (or similar)) Wa-Had-DaR (or simply: Li- [PN] Wa-ḤalLaL Had-DāR)

‘(This inscription is) by PN (when he encamped in this valley) and (even) at this place.’ (or: ‘(...) by PN when (he encamped) at this place.’).

C.3.c. / [L- ] [W - NS] /

Unusual is WH 1001 with a nominal sentence after W-, but see WSIJ 436 (C.3.b.). Problematic is also the inscription type

Li- [PN<sub>1</sub>] Wa-? aNā [PN<sub>2</sub>].

see the inscription WH 1403 b and the discussion in WH p. 17

C.4. / [L-] [ W-H-D ] /

Another continuation of the L-unit is produced by W-followed by a H-D-element (that is the vocative particle plus a name of a deity) and an imperative (as in the type B.) or a substantive. The texts of this type are prayers:

(LSI 293) Li- [PN] Wā-Ha-RuḌāY SaLaM ‘(This inscription is) by PN (when he prayed:) O RuḌā, (give) peace!’,

(WSIJ 63) Li- [PN] Wa-Ha-Yiṭa<sup>6</sup> ʿauWiR MuʿauWiR Hā-Ḥuṭūṭ ‘(...) by PN! O Yiṭa<sup>6</sup>, blind anyone who effaces the inscription (and drawing)!’, cf. LSI 282, 303, 380, 393, 418, WSIJ 49, 63, 125. The invocation of more than one deity and also the addition of another is possible:

(WSIJ 700) Li- [PN] Wa-Hā-ILāT ĠaNīMaT Wa-RuḌāY... ‘(...) by PN! O Allāt, (grant) plunder! O RuḌā, ...!’ (type / [L- ] [W-H-D-W-(H- ) D] / ).

The vocative particle is lacking also in LSI 286 (/ [L-] [W- (H- ) -D] /).

C.5. / [L- ] [F- ] /

There remains only the way to continue the L-unit with F- to be discussed. The type with a F-unit is more rarely found than one with a W-unit. Since the F-unit denotes the succession of an action, as we will see below, one has e.g. to translate:

(WSIJ 453) Li-Han-NvGvŠ BiN-Ka-ʿamMi-H Fa-SaRaY ‘(This text is) by H. b.K.! Then he was again on journey!’,

(WH 2399) Li- [PN] Fa-QāZ or Fī Qaiz ‘(...) by PN, then he spent the summer/in the summertime.’.

C.6. / [L-] [F-H-D] /

More easily explicable is the occurrence of a F-H-unit instead of a W-H-unit, for the invocation can be interpreted without effort as the result or intention of the inscription:

(LSI 380) Li- [PN] Fa-Hā-ILāT NvQā? aT Li-... ‘(...) by PN! So, O Allāt, (send) ejection upon...!’,

(LSI 348) mentions five deities, but brings only one invocation (F-H-D<sub>1</sub> (W-D<sub>2</sub> W-D<sub>3</sub>....) X, X being the content of the invocation, cp. in contrast the above-mentioned sequence W-H-D<sub>1</sub> X<sub>1</sub> W-D<sub>2</sub> X<sub>2</sub>).



D.2.a. / [L- ] [W- ] [W- ] / or / [L- ] [W-W- ] /

The second W-unit brings further circumstances for scratching the inscription, mostly as a consequence of time or as a result of the foregoing W-action:

(LSI 332) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ?aBī-H Wa-WaLiH KaBīR ʿaL(ā)-?aBī-H Wa-ʿaL(ā)-DāDi-H ‘(This text is) by PN, when he found the inscription of his father and he was therefore very much grieved on account of his father and of his uncle!’,

(WSIJ 818) Li- [PN] Wa-ḤaLLaL Wa-TaṢauWaq ‘(...) by PN when camped (at this place) and was therefore filled with longing’, LSI 183, 234, 254, 255, 334, 341, 350, 369, 406, 409, WSIJ 90.

D.2.b. / [L- ] [W- ] [W-H-D] /

This type is rarely found:

(LSI 72) Li-[PN] Wa-WaGaʿ Wā-Hā-RuḌāW RaWāḤ ‘(...) by PN, as he was grieved and (implored thus) O Rudā, (give) rest!’ (possible is also the reading RauWiḤ),

(LSI 308) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaM ʿaL(ā)-[PN] Wa-ʿaL(ā)-[PN]<sup>5</sup> Wa-Hā-iLāT ʿauWiR Ḍū ... ‘(...) by PN, when he ..., O Allāt, strike blind him who...!’.

D.2..c. / [L- ] [W- ] [F- ] /

The most common tripartite type has an F-unit as terminal element. In Classical Arabic it denotes an action subsequent to the former action (expressed by W-) and generally “connected with it by some internal link, such as that of cause and effect”<sup>26</sup>.

The verbs mostly involved are NG<sup>c</sup>, WGM and B?S MzLL:

(LSI 382) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ?aBī-H Fa-NauGaʿ ‘(...) by PN, when he found the inscription of his father, thus he longed (for him)!’ (the last verbal form may be vocalized also (i) NGaʿ),

(WSIJ 819) Li-[PN] Wa-WaGaM ʿaL(ā)-?uḤTi-H SauDaT MaḤaT Fa-ḤabBaLa-H ‘(...) by PN, when he grieved for his sister S., who has passed away, thus it has mentally deranged him’,

(WH 1275) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaM Fa-WaGaD SiFR ?aBī-H ‘(...) by PN, when he grieved, thus he found the inscription of his father’ (cp. the more natural text (WH1273) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ʿamMi-H Fa-WaGaM!). Cf. e.g. LSI 10, 150, 154, 157, 299, 313, 328, 399, 416, WSIJ 819.

D.2.d. / [L- ] [W- ] [F-H-D] /

This type is very well-attested (see e.g. LSI 160, 180, 184, 237, 245, 308, 326, 374, 403, WSIJ 37, 39, 58, 59, 73, 78, 80, 132, 134, 716):

(LSI 155) Li- [PN] Wa-Ra ʿaY Hab-BaQaR Fa-Hā-iLāT SaLāM ‘(...) by PN, when he tended the cattle, so, O Allāt, (grant) security!’,

(LSI 415) Li- [PN] Wa-BaʿiS ... Fa-Hā-Ṣaiʿ-Haq-QauM SaLāM ‘(...) by PN, when he mourned, so, O S., (grant) security!’,

(WSIJ 45) Li- [PN] Wa-ʿaṢRaQ Fa-Hā-iLāT SaLāM ‘(...) by PN, when he has gone eastward, so, O Allāt, (give) peace!’.

D.3. / [L- ] [W-H-D- ( ] [ ] W- (H- ) D] /  
(see C.4.)

D.4. [L-] [F- (H-D)] ...

sequence of a L- and F- or F-H-D-unit is seldom followed by an other unit:

(WH 135) L- [PN] F-H-LT QBL L ?HL (or QBL...) SLMF-NNGY ‘(...) PN, so, O Allat, ..., then let us escape!’.

E. Some text types contain four units. It seems that only the [L-] [W-] sequence can be supplemented in this way.

E.1. [L-] [W-] [W-]... or [L-] [W-W-] ...

Two W-units after a L-unit may according to their meaning be regarded as an extended unit [L-] [W-W-] or as two separate units ([L-] ( [W-] [W-] ). In fact, there is no / [L-] [W-] [W-] [W-] /-text, one or two W-units has to be combined in a foregoing W-unit:

(LSI 407) Li-[PN] Wa-ḤallLaL Had-Dār Wa-Ra<sup>ʿ</sup>aY ... Wa-NaGaY ... Fa-Hā-Ba<sup>ʿ</sup>aL-SaMīN RaWāḤ Li-... ‘(...) by PN encamping at this place, when he tended flocks... and he rushed forth...! So, O. B., (give) rest to...!’. Cp. the numerous W-units in LSI 406 and WSIJ 688.

E1. a. / [L-] [W- ( ) ] W-H-D] /

(WSIJ 87)L- [PN]W-?ḤD H-NHY W-ḤRṢ W-H-LT NQ?T L-... ‘(...) by PN, when he ...(?) and he was on the look out, and, O Allāt, ...’

E.1.b. / [L-] [W+( ) ] W-] [F-H-D]

This type is well-attested (moreover, the various combinations of the double W-unit verbs should be compiled, see D.2.a.):

(LSI 404) Li-[PN]Wa-WaLiH <sup>ʿ</sup>aL(ā)-[PN]Wa-ḤallLaL Had-Dār Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLāM ‘(...) by PN, when he was sad on account of PN and encamped at this place. So, O Allāt, (give) peace!’

(LSI 330) Li- [PN] Wa-QaiYaZ <sup>ʿ</sup>aL(ā)-Han-NaMāRaT Wa-QaNiṬ Haš-ŠāNi? Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLāM ‘(...) by PN, when he spent the summer in front of N. being afraid of the enemy, so, O Allāt, (grant) protection!’ cp. LSI 189, 325, 407, WSIJ 295).

E.2. [L-] [W-] [F-]...

Where as the inscriptions of the foregoing E.1. -type could also be explained as three-unit texts, the types with a [F-] or F-H-D-unit in third position after [L-] [W- ] are well-distinguished and unequivocal.

E.2.a. / [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-H-D] /

With a F-H-D-unit as terminal element one gets the semantic structure:

- (I.) “writing of inscription ←--- finding of inscription(s) →--- affliction →--- invocation” or  
 (II.) “writing of inscription ←--- circumstances of writing →--- special event →--- invocation”.

(LSI 146) Li- [PN] Wa-ḤallLaL Had-Dār Fa-Ra<sup>ʿ</sup>aY Hā-?iBiL Fa-Hā-ILāT Wa-Ba<sup>ʿ</sup>aL-SaMīN ŠaiYi<sup>ʿ</sup>... ‘(...) by PN, when he encamped at this place, then he tended the camels, so, O Allāt and B.-S., help...’,

(LSI 342) Li- [PN]Wa- WaGaD SiFR ?aŠYā<sup>ʿ</sup>i-H Fa-NaDiM ... Fa-Hā-GaD-<sup>ʿ</sup>aWiD Wa-DūŠaRā Wa-Hā-ILāT ... ‘(...) by Pn, when he found the inscription(s) of his fellows, thus he was sad ...! So, O G. and D. and A., (grant) ...!’ (the same structure exhibits WSIJ 56, cf. LSI 161, 357, 385, 415, WSIJ 911).

E.2.b. / [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-] /

Rare is a terminal F-unit:

(WSIJ 730)Li- [PN]Wa-<sup>ʿ</sup>aLaY Hag -GuDaRī Fa-DauWaQ Fa-Ba?iS MuZallLaL ‘(...) by PN, when the smallpox broke out, thus he experienced (it), so he was miserable, completely overwhelmed!’.

E.3. / [L-] [W-] [F-H-D(-) ] W-H-D] /

The terminal invocation of the / [L-] [W-] [F-H-D] /-type (see D.2.d.) can be extended by a W-H-D-unit and has, properly speaking, to be taken for a F-H-D(W-H-D)-unit:

(WH 367)Li-[PN]Wa-WaGaM <sup>ʿ</sup>aLā-GaLS Fa-Hā-ILāT Ta?R Wa-Hā-ILāT NvQ(v)?aT Li-... ‘(...) by PN, when he grieved for G., so, O Allat, (grant) blood-revenge, and, O Allāt, ejection to...’.

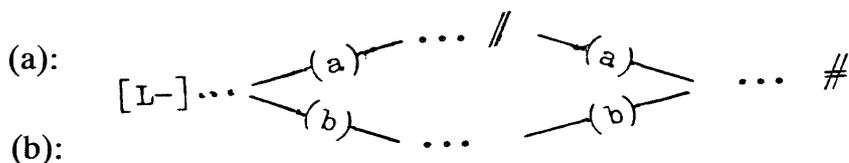
## F. Composite texts

There are also texts not fitting the above given patterns.

### F.1. Bipartite texts

Most of them can not be considered to exhibit an appendix which brings forth elements

previously forgotten, but to comprise of two texts (a) and (b) written by the same author at the time and place:



In their linear representation elements of set (a) and (b) which are not identical (i.e.  $(a) \cap (b)$ , the average of both) are written only once whereas non-identical elements of (a) and (b) (i.e.  $(\bar{b})$  and  $(\bar{a})$ , the remainder sets of (a), resp. (b), on  $(\bar{b})$ , resp.  $(\bar{a})$ ) are put one after another. Elements which may be zero are indicated by ...

If  $(a) \cap (b) = \emptyset$ , there are two entirely different texts (a) and (b),

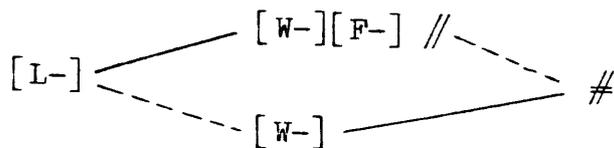
if  $(a) \cap (b) = (a) \cup (b)$ , the two texts coincide ( $a=b$ ).

The breach in the text between (a) and (b) is marked by //.

*F.1.a.* / [L-] [W-] [F-] // [W-] /

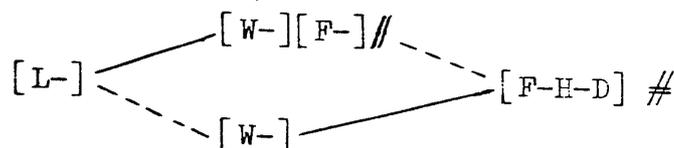
Sometimes the text is continued after a terminal F-unit by means of a W-unit. Apparently the writer forgot a detail to be related in one of the preceding W- or F-units and therefore placed it at the bottom of the inscription (...// [W-] /):

(LSI 4) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ?aN<sup>ca</sup>M Fa-NvGa<sup>c</sup> Wa-Ra<sup>ca</sup>Y Hā-?iBiL ... '(...) by PN, when he found the inscription of A., so he longed (for him)! (And this happened) when he tended the camels?'

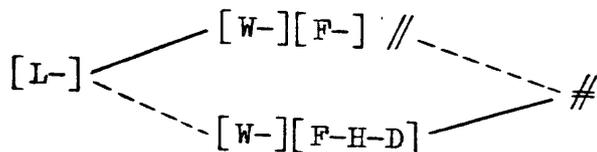


*F.1.b.* / [L-] [W-] [F-] // [W-] [F-H-D-] /

Somewhat different is the following inscription which shows an extension of a four-unit text (/ [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-H-D-]/) by a W-unit being equivalent to the [W-] [F-] sequence:



Or rather the text is structured in the following way:



(WH 595) Li-[PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ṬvrVd Fa-Ba?iS MuZ(al) LaL Wa-WaGaM <sup>ca</sup>Lā... Fa-Hā-ILāT ... '(...) by PN, when he found the inscription of Ṭ., so that he was miserable overshadowed (with grief), and (when) he grieved for..., so, O Allāt,...'.

*F.1.c.* / [L-] [W- (W-)] [F-H-D-] // [W-] [F-] /

(LSI 306) Li- [PN] Wa-TaQuL <sup>ca</sup>L(ā)-?aḤī-H... Wa-QaNiṬ Haš-ŠāNi? Fa-Hā-ILāT Wa-GaD-<sup>ca</sup>WiD WiQāYaT Wa-WaGaD ?aTaR ?aŠYā<sup>ci</sup>-H Fa-Ha-NvGa<sup>c</sup> '(...) by PN, when he was heavy-hearted on account of his brother... and was afraid of the enemy, so, O Allāt and G., (grant) protection! (By the same) when he found traces of his fellows, thus he longed (for them)!'

(LSI 344) Li- [PN] Wā-Ra<sup>ca</sup>Y Haḍ-Ḍa?N Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLāM Li-... Wa-WaGaM <sup>ca</sup>L(ā)-

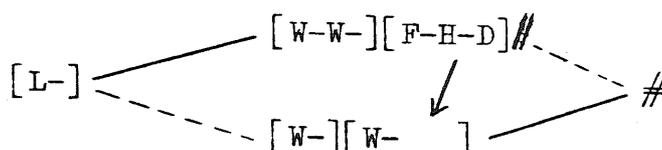
?aBī-H Fa-NvGaḡ ʕaL(ā)?aBī-H... '(...) by PN, when he tended the sheep, so, O Allāt, (give) peace to...! (Further on) when he laid a stone on the tomb (?) of his father, thus he felt sorrow over his father...!' (cp. WSIJ 85).

F.1.d. / [L-] [W- (W-)] [F-H-D] // [W-] [F/W-H-D-] /

In this type too the second part is not connected with the first one by the content, but through the same authorship and environment i.e. time and place:

(LSI 233) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaM ʕaL(ā)-?aHī-H QaTīL Fa-Hā-ILāT Ta?R Miš-ŠāNi? Wa-HāRaṢ ?aHāWai-H Fa-Hā-ILāT ... '(...) by PN, when he mourned (?) over his killed brother, so, O Allāt, (grant) blood-revenge on the enemy! And (also) He was looking out for his two brothers, so, O Allāt, (send) ...!' (cp. LSI 305 with a W-H-D-element instead of the second F-H-D-element),

(LSI 243) Li- [PN] Wa-BaKaY WaGaM ʕaL(ā) ?aBī-H QaTīL Fa-Hay-ILāT Ta?R Wa-TaŠauWaQ ?iL(ā)-.... Wa-ʕaWāR Li-...', the last element being from the functional point of view a W-H-D-unit:



F.1.e. / [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-H-D] // [W-] /

(LSI 156) Li-[PN] Wa-WaGaD ?aTaR DaDi-H Fa-NvGac KaBiR Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLaM Li-... Wa-WaGaM caL(a)-... (with only one post-terminal unit).

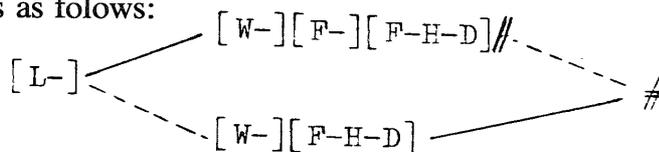
F.1.e. / [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-H-D] // [W-] /

(LSI 156) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD ?aTaR DāDi-H Fa-NvGaḡ KaBīR Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLāM Li-... Wa-WaGaM ʕaL(ā)-... (with only one post-terminal unit).

F.1.f. / [L-] [W-] [F-] [F-H-D-] // [W-] [F-H-D] /

(WH 999) Li-[PN] Wa-WaGaD ?aTaR ʕamMi-H Fa-WuLiG ... Fa-Hā-ILāT ... Wa-Ra ʕaY... Fa-Hā-ILāT SaLāM '(This inscription is) by PN, when he found the inscription of his grandfather, thus he felt pain..., so, O Allāt, (grant) ...; (and the continuation of the inscription is by the same) when he pastured..., so, O Allāt, (give) security!'

The set-up of the inscription parts is as follows:



## F.2. Texts with postposition/insertion

Other texts show intrusions of elements or units which regularly do not occur in this place. The characteristic feature of these types results from setting up two breaches embracing the out-of-place unit or element.

F.2.a. / [L-] // [W-] // [W-] [F-H-D] /

The inscription

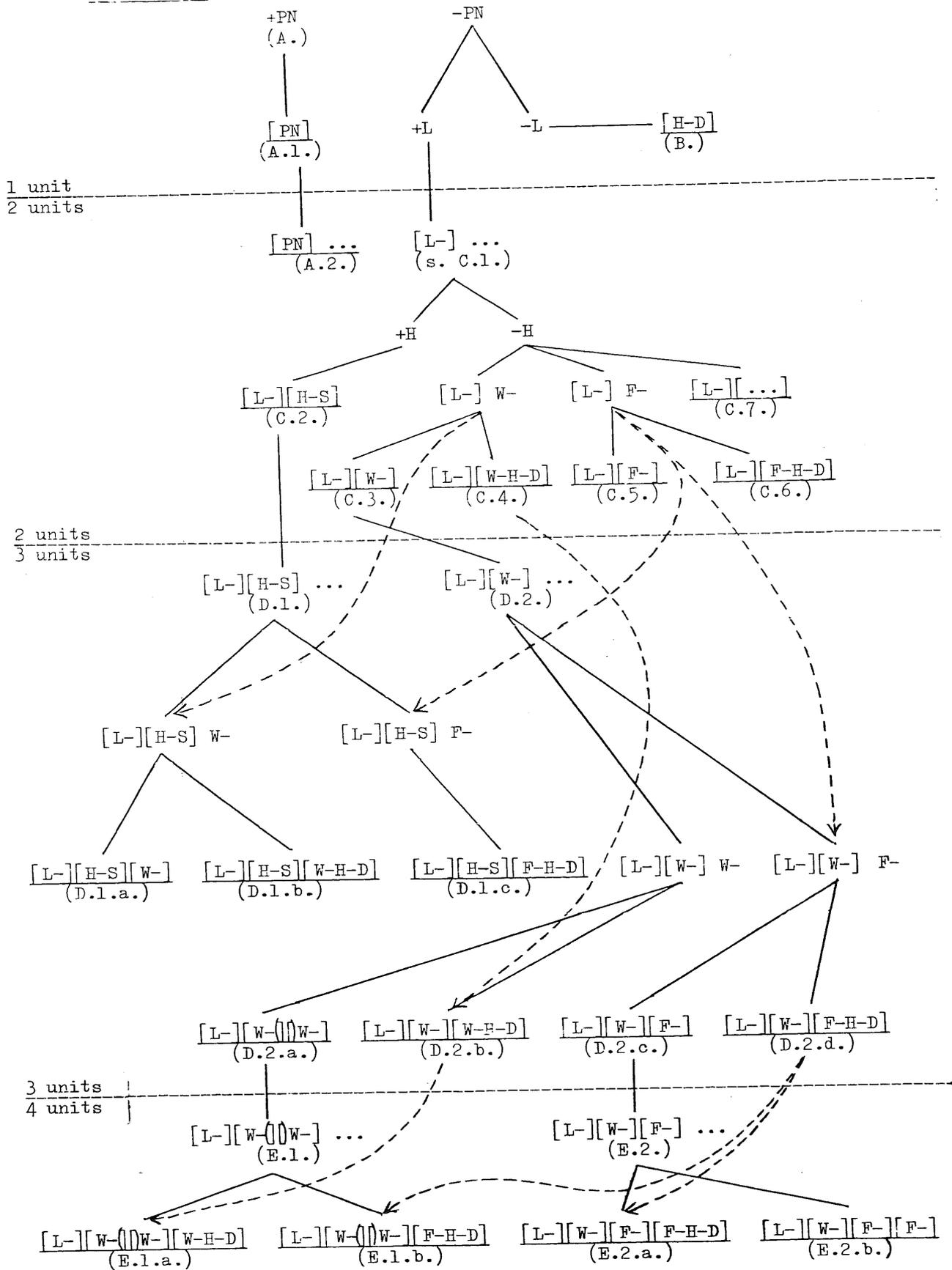
(LSI 179) Li- [PN] Wa-ʕaWāR Li-Dī Yu ʕauWiR Has-SiFR Wa-Ra ʕaY Hā-?iBiL Fā-Hā-ILāT SaLāM Miš-ŠāNi? '(...) by PN, - and (O Allāt) blindness to him who effaces this inscription when he tended the camels, so, O Allāt, (grant) protection from the enemy!' (cp. LSI 210) shows the intrusion of an element that belongs to the terminal unit:

/ [L-] // [W-] [W-] [F-H-D] /

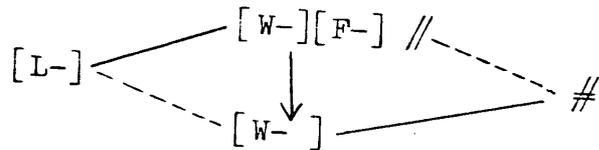
F.2.b. / [L-] [W-] // [F-] // [W-] /

A normally final F-unit intruded here into the preceding W-unit of a three unit text (/ [L-] [W-] [F-] , see D.2.c.):

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(LSI 443) Li- [PN] Wa-WaGaD SiFR ŠamMi-H Fa-NvGaš Wa-SiFR DāDi-H'(...) by PN, when he found the inscription of his grandfather, thus he longed (for him)! And (he found also) the inscription of his uncle!'.  
Another way is by positing a bipartite texttype with an omission of the (b) verb which is the same as in the (a) part of the text:



### F.2.c. Inversion inside a unit

Some metatheses occur in even very short inscriptions when the filiation of the writer is put afterwards (see WH p. 90):

(WH 3166) Li-?aŠHaB//Hab- BaKRaT // BiN-?aMR-?iL, 'This she-camel (is drawn) by A.b.A'.

See also the inverted invocations

(see WH p. 15) ... Fa-Hā-ILāT // Sa LāM // Wa-Šaiš-Haq-QauM,

(LSI 576) ... Fa- // Ra WāḤ // Ha-?alLāT,

(c 4961) ... Fa- // SaLāM // Hā-ILāT Li-Dī/ū Sa'?aR,

(see WSIJ 806, 836)

The consideration of further texts may bring about an elaboration and, if necessary, a revision of the here given classification of Safaitic inscriptions, as, in fact, was the case with the incorporation of the WH-collection.

### 3. Notes

1. Littmann: *Semitic Inscriptions, C: Safaitic Inscriptions*, Leyden 1943, P. viii ff.
2. Petracek: Zur semantischen Struktur der safaitenischen Inschriften, *Archiv Orientalni*, 41 (1973), p. 52-57.
3. The terminology is that of L. Bloomfield (A Set of Postulates for the Science of Language (Language, 2 (1926), p. 153-164), *Readings in Linguistics*, I. Ed. by M. Joos, 4. ed., Chicago 1971, p. 26-31). Strictly speaking, the definition of the 'minimum free form' (i.e. word) does not hold for Safaitic on account of its restricted utterances. To fit the description of word as "a form which may be uttered alone (with meaning)" (p.27) we have to enlarge the corpus of utterances by assuming the existence of some others in popular Safaitic (e.g. \* SaLaM # # TaSauWaQ #) which are in fact hitherto not attested.
4. See. A. Jamme: *Safaitic Notes*, Washington, D.C. 1970, p. 15.
5. Fr. V. Winnett: *Safaitic Inscriptions from Jordan*, Toronto-London 1957.
6. See. note 1.
7. See. A. van den Branden: *Les Inscriptions Thamoudéenes*, Louvain 1950, passim.
8. O. Behaghel: *Deutsche Syntax, eine geschichtliche Darstellung*, 3: Die Satzglieder, Heidelberg 1928.
9. A. Noreen: *Einführung in die wissenschaftliche Betrachtung der Sprache*, Halle (Saale) 1923, p. 266.
10. J. Ries: *Was ist ein Satz*, Prag 1931, p. 123 ff.
11. O. Jespersen: *The Philosophy of Grammar*, London 1968, p. 308.
12. Fr. V. Winnett-W.L. Reed: *Ancient Records from North Arabia*, Toronto 1970, p. 74 and 83.
13. J.C.L. Gibson: *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 1-2. Oxford 1971-1975, H. Donner - W. Rölling: *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, 1., Wiesbaden 1962, p.2.
14. F.V. Winnet - G. L. Harding: *Inscriptions from Fifty Safaitic Cairns*, Toronto (etc.) 1978.
15. See. *Jamme Notes* p. 109, 112.
16. See. LSI p. xi and E. Littmann: *Thamūd und Šafā*, Leipzig 1940, p. 105.
17. See. Winnett-Reed *Ancient* p. 75.
18. = G. Rychmans: *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, 5: Inscriptiones Saracenicis continens, 1., Paris 1950.
19. and E. Littmann: *Semitic Inscriptions*, New York 1904, p. 110.
20. as to k-names see. *Jamme Notes* p. 139, some b-names may be shortened from the Runya, see. WH p. 19.
21. G.L. Harding: The Cairn of Hanī', *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 2 (1953), p. 8-56.
22. See. G.L. Harding: *The Safaitic Tribes, Al-Abhath*, 22 (1969), p. 3-25, G. Ryckmans: Les Noms de Parenté en Safaitique, *Revue Biblique*, 58 (1951), p. 377-392, cf. J. Ryckmans: Le Sens de d'L en Sud-Arabe, *Le Muséon*, 67 (1954), p. 339-348.
23. See. G.L. Harding: *An Index and Concordance of Pre-Islamic Arabian Names and Incriptions*, Toronto 1971.
24. W.H. Oxtoby: Kilroy in the Desert, *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 15 (1970), p. 21-23.
25. See. A. Jamme: The Safaitic Verb wgm, *Orientalia*, 36 (1967), p. 159-172.
26. W. Wright; *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 1., Cambridge 1967, p. 291.

#### 4. Index

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