

קָרָדִים

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Introduction

Grammatical Type: n. Gender unattested although BDB (899) and Gesenius (1835:1236) register it as masculine. Pl קָרָדִים (1x) and קָרָדִמוֹת (3x).

Occurrences: Total 5x OT, 1?x Sir (40.16), 0x Qum, 0x inscr.

Text Doubtful:

A.1 In Jdg 9.48 the pl has been considered problematic (see Exegesis). BHK suggests that we read the sing קָרָדִמוֹ. This involves the removal of the final Tav, and of the initial He of the article. By the assumption of textual corruption in two parts of the word the emendation is made less plausible. BHK claims Gk support for the proposal, and possible support from Pesh. BHS suggests that MT's הַקָּרָדִמוֹת be emended to אֶחָת הַקָּרָדִמוֹת. It suggests possible support from LXX and Pesh (see Versions). Zorell (738) and BDB (899) also support the emendation. In addition it may be noted that in Jdg 9.48 there is no *daghesh* in the Mem in van der Hooght's edition of the Hebrew Bible (1862), or according to Gesenius (1835:1236).

A.2 In Ps 74.5 BHS has the proposal to read קָרָדִמוֹ instead of קָרָדִים. This emendation goes back at least to Schmidt (1934:141), and is more recently followed by Kraus (1978:677). It seems to be motivated by the fact that מְבִיא is singular, and it is thought unlikely that an individual would simultaneously use more than one קָרָדִים. Emerton (1963:376) questions the basis of the emendation thus: "Judges ix. 48 has the same plural noun after a verb with a singular subject, and it may be suspected that the text is right in both passages and that the plural is to be explained in some way which no modern scholar has yet discovered." As an explanation for the occurrence of the pl twice with a sing subject Davies (1997) refers to the possibility that for chopping wood a single individual possessed axes of more than one size, i.e. a felling axe and a hand-axe.

A.3 Sir 40.16 reads *הל [] גפת בקרדמות על* according to MS B, but according to MS M the text reads *הל בקרמית על גפות נחל*. Since LXX has *ἄχι ἐπὶ παντὸς ὕδατος καὶ χείλους ποταμοῦ πρὸ παντὸς χόρτου ἐκτιλήσεται* the reference cannot be considered as probable.

B.1 [nil]

Qere/Ketiv: none.

1. Root and Comparative Material

A.1 The only convincing parallels to *קרדם* outside Hebrew are in Arb and Eg. Even these parallel words may not be native to those languages.

A.2 In Levy RH *קרדום* and *קרדום* “Grabscheit”, “Grabeisen” are equated with the BH lexeme. *HAL* (1061) quotes the former and Gesenius the latter (1835:1236). With regard to the word in RH Vogelstein (1894:37) refers to the plowing of fields with a “Doppelhacke mit zwei Blättern (*קרדום*). Das eine Blatt hatte eine ziemlich breite scharfe Schneidefläche, die zum Holzspalten verwendet werden konnte (*בית עקיע*), das andere Blatt lief in eine auf allen vier Seiten sich verjüngende Spitze aus (*עושה*) und diente speziell zum Behacken des Bodens.”

A.3 Discussions of the etymology of *קרדם* generally connect it with Arb *qaddūm* “Adze”, e.g. Gesenius (1835:1236), BDB (899), KB (853), *HAL* (1061). Gesenius and KB state that the sequence Resh-Daleth developed from a geminated Daleth. GK (§85 *w*) similarly regards the Resh as inserted into a trilateral root to make a quadrilateral root. According to Fränkel (1886:84) the word has been loaned into Arb. He says, “Ich möchte auch *qdw*m...erst als Entlehnung aus einem aram. *קרדומא* (hebr. *קרדם*) fassen.” According to him Ibn as-Sikkî as recorded in Jawhari warned against the form *qdw*m with *shadda* on the d. Fränkel then comments “so scheint dies doch grade die ältere von den späteren puristischen Lexicographen verdrängte Bildung.” BDB (899) mentions both Arb *qaddūm* and *qadūm*, quoting Fränkel’s view that they are loan-words.

A.4 Albright (1934:51) registered Eg “*qa-ar-dī-na*, *qa-ra-dī-na*, axe, adze = Can. **garzin(a)*, which seems to be somehow related to N. Can. *ḥrṣn*, adze, a

dissimilation of Accad. ḥaṣṣīnu (cf. Heb. qardōm, adze = Aram. *qaddūmā > Arab. qaddūm, adze).” He says that Eg *qa-ar-di-na* may come from the form *g(q)aršin(a).

B.1 Some authorities view קרדִם as a development from a form with the consonants qdm. This proposal can take different forms. In Levy (372) RH קרדִזִם is said to be from קרדִם, meaning “abmeisseln”. Given that קרדִם is not attested in the corpus of Ancient Hebrew, it may make more sense to see it as a denominative from קרדִזִם. However, Levy sees קרדִם as a pīrel form from קדם. KB (853) reads “קרדִם: < *קדמ, ja., sy. קדד, [Arb] qadda schneiden *cut*, [Arb] qaddūm Axt *adze*”. This view is rejected by HAL (1061), which says “etym. inc., wohl Primärnomen”. Gesenius (1835:1236) says, “Hebraeum autem קרדִם ortum censeo ex verbali Pi. קדם, [Arb] qaddūm inserta littera r (v. ר), a קדם primaria acuendi significatione...”

B.2 Dahood (1968:202) commenting on Ps 74.5 wrote, “qardummōt probably equals Ugar. qrdm in the divine title aliy qrdm.” With respect to this view HAL (1061) says, “...doch ist sehr fraglich, ob das ug. qrdm mit dem he. subst. gleichzusetzen [ist]; die Axt wäre dann ein Symbol des Baal...” HAL (loc. cit.) mentions that Ug qrdm may be parallel to Akk qarrādu/qurādu “‘Krieger, Held’ u. danach ‘lij qrdm = der Stärkste unter den Helden, bzw. Mächtigster der Helden...” Here the Ug *m* may be understood as a plural ending.

B.3 In addition to Arb qaddūm, Gesenius (1835:1236) cites Arb kirtīm “securis” as cognate.

B.4 With the assumption that a word in Sir 40.16 meaning “*calamus, iuncus*” is the same lexeme, Zorell (738) claims that Arb quddūm is cognate.

2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 קרדִם is a quadriliteral noun.

B.1 Levy (372) considered קרדִם as a pīrel form from the root קדם (see Root and Comparative Material).

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 A קרדום is used to cut עץ שוכת in Jdg 9.48, and occurs in close association with עץ in Jr 46.22 and Ps 74.5. Given that there are no occurrences of קרדום with other materials, e.g. rock, as its object, it may be that a קרדום was specifically a wood-cutting axe.

A.2 By its concurrence with בידו in Jdg 9.48 קרדום was clearly a hand-held instrument.

A.3 Obj לקח (Jdg 9.48), לטש (1Sm 13.20, “hammer, sharpen, whet” [BDB:538], “hämmern, schärfen *hammer, sharpen*” [KB:480]). Another phrase connected with קרדום is מביא למעלה “bringing upwards” in Ps 74.5 (see Exegesis). This phrase is understood in LXX to be a reference to an “upper entrance”, cf. Hebrew מבוא.

A.4 In 1Sm 13.21 קרדום occurs in association with the word פצירה. The meaning of this word is disputed: it is corrupt according to BDB (823), but according to others means “sharpening (of ploughshare)” (KB:772), “Preis” (HAL:898).

B.1 [nil]

4. Versions

A.1 LXX always ἀξίνη. LXX has the same number as MT, except in 1Sm 13.21 where LXX uses sing.

A.2 Sym 1Sm 13.20 had τὸ ἀξινάριον according to the Cambridge LXX. In Ps 74.6 Sym has ἀξίνη pl.

A.3 Field (1875) on 1Sm 13.20 says “Procop. subjungit: Ἀκύλας τ’ ἄλλα μὲν ὡσαύτως, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ δρεπάνου, τριόδοντά φησιν”. Thus Aq probably used ἀξίνη as LXX. This conclusion is supported by Aq’s use of ἀξίνη in the pl in the next verse.

A.4 Pesh in Jdg 9.48 uses nrg’ (probably sing), and the same in the pl in Ps 74.5. According to Payne-Smith (1879-1901:2468) nrg’ means “*securis, ascia*”. In 1Sm 13.20 it has kwlb’ in the sing, and in 1Sm 13.21 the same probably in the sing. According to a seventh century Ms (7a1) it also uses kwlb’ in Jr 46.22 in the pl. Payne-Smith (loc. cit.) says that kwlb’ means “*securis*” or “*bipennis*”.

A.5 In number TgPro follows MT. Tg Jr 46.22 כְּשִׁיל 'axe'. Tg Jdg 9.48, 1Sm 13.20, 21 בְּלִבָּא, which is cognate with the Syr word kwlb' mentioned above. Tg Ps 74.5 (Díez Merino 1982) has בּוֹלְכִיא, most likely a mistake for בּוֹלְבִיא.

A.6 Vg always *securis* 'axe', following MT in number, except in Jdg 9.48, where Vg has sing.

B.1 [nil]

5. Lexical/Semantic Field(s)

A.1 It seems that קָרְדָם was primarily a forestry tool. There is no explicit mention of a קָרְדָם being used against a human in military contexts.

A.2 Although it is not its subject, in Jdg 9.48 קָרְדָם is used for the action represented by the verb כָּרַת. In Jr 46.22 a קָרְדָם can be used for the action represented by the verb חָטַב.

A.3 In 1Sm 13.20-21 קָרְדָם is part of a list of instruments which are probably for agricultural rather than military use.

B.1 [nil]

6. Exegesis

A.1 The context of 1Sm 13.20-21 suggests that a קָרְדָם was one of a number of tools that the Philistines did not mind the Israelites possessing, although the Philistines did not want the Israelites to possess חָרֶב or חֲנִית (1Sm 13.19). These tools were used primarily for agricultural purposes.

A.2 Emerton (1963:377) says, "It is probably a mistake to treat בְּמִבִּיא לְמַעְלָה...קָרְדָמוֹת as if it meant, or should be emended to mean, wielding or swinging axes upwards. The words make good sense if the text is translated unchanged 'like one who brings up axes into a thicket of trees'. Judges ix. 48 tells how Abimelech went to cut wood: he went up (וַיַּעַל) Mount Salmon, and he took axes

in his hand (וַיִּקַּח...אֶת־הַקַּרְדָּמוֹת בְּיָדוֹ). Hills were natural places to which to go to cut trees (Neh. viii. 15; cp. Isa. xl. 16), because they were parts of the country where the old woods had not been completely cleared for agriculture. Thus Ps. lxxiv. 5 compares those who damage the temple to those who take axes up into the wooded hill country in order to cut down trees.”

A.3 קָרְדָּם occurs predominantly in the pl. The fact that two of these pl uses (Jdg 9.48 and Ps 74.5), rather than merely one, have the difficulty that the subject appears to be singular, cautions against emendation in either case (see Emerton 1963:376). According to Byington (1920:79) in Jdg 9.48 the plural “has singular meaning”.

A.4 Moore (1895:267) suggests that the plural in Jdg 9.48 is exegetically difficult. “The plur. is difficult. There is no evidence or probability that the plur. was used of a single axe (Be.; originally *bipennis*, Stud.), and the explanation of Schm., al., that Abimelech took a number of axes to distribute to his followers, is an ingenious but improbable exegetical makeshift. We expect קָרְדָּמוֹ...”

A.5 Dalman (1935:5) said, “Als Werkzeug dient eine eiserne Axt (garzen) (5. M. 19,5; 20,19, Jes. 10,15), deren hebräische Bezeichnung (bei Onkelos aram. barzelā, Sa’adja ar. ḥadīd, also ‘Eisen’) dem Späthebräischen fremd ist, während die zum Baumfällen Jerem. 46,22 gebrauchten qardummōt als ein Gerät mit zwei Schneiden wohl bekannt sind. Das wohl einschneidige ma‘aṣād (Jerem. 10,3) könnte sachlich garzen entsprechen; kaššīl (Ps. 74,5) war wohl ein größeres Werkzeug und qardōm (Ps. 74,5) das gewaltigste.” Likewise Dalman (1942:43) calls qardōm “ein Doppelbeil”.

B.1 [nil]

7. Conclusion

A.1 קָרְדָּם, according to all authorities, may be translated “axe”. Further specification of the type of axe is less certain. A key question is the extent to which קָרְדָּם and גְּרִזָּן overlap in their meaning. Whereas גְּרִזָּן is used for cutting both wood and stone, קָרְדָּם is only used for wood. This distribution may be due only to the paucity of references we have.

A.2 Some RH testimony may suggest that קרדום was a two-sided axe.

B.1 [nil]

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