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Introduction

Grammatical type: n.f.

Occurrences: 3× HB (0/3/0); 0× Sir; 0× Qum; 0× Inscr. (Total: 3)

Nebiim: 1 Sam 13:20 (2), 21 (1).

Qumran: — (see B.1 below)

A.1 While the first occurrence of מַחֲרַשְׁתּוֹ in 1 Sam 13:20 (מַחֲרַשְׁתּוֹ, with pataḥ as the third vowel) is a form of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, the second occurrence (מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, with šērē as the third vowel) is a form of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת. The Masoretic vocalization of 1 Sam 13:20-21 suggests that the second occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת is a form of the same noun as מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21. T supports the Masoretic vocalisation and translates the two forms with šērē by forms of the same noun (שערף), while it represents the single form with a pataḥ instead of the šērē with a form of a different noun (פרה). However, most of the ancient versions treat the first occurrence of מַחֲרַשְׁתּוֹ in 13:20 and מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21 as forms of the same noun (see section 4). The latter option becomes more attractive as soon as one notices that the series of agricultural implements in 13:20 (מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת) partially corresponds to the series in 13:21 (מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת).
A. 2 Of course, the twofold occurrence of מַחֲרֵשֹׁת in a single series of utensils (1 Sam 13:20) has raised questions. Since part of the utensils mentioned in 13:20 recocur in the same order in 13:21 (מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, אֵת, קַרְדֹּם, דָּרְבָּנ), the latter verse was sometimes used as a basis for emending the text of 13:20. Julius Wellhausen assumed that the second מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, the fourth item of the list in 13:20, originally corresponded to הַדָּרְבָּן at the end of 13:21. He pointed to the fact that the ancient Greek and Syriac translations read forms of the same noun (LXX: δρέπανον, ‘sickle’; Sy: שַׁלְשֹׁקִּים, ‘ox goad’) where MT reads מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (13:20) and מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (13:21). Wellhausen’s proposal to read הַדָּרְבָּן at the end of 13:20 was taken over by many others. Other scholars, however, assumed that the reading τὸ δρέπανον αὐτου, ‘his sickle’, goes back to Hebrew חֶרְמֶשׁ, since δρέπανον represents Hebrew חֶרְמֶשׁ, ‘sickle’, in Deut 16:9; 23:26 (=23:25LXX). These scholars regarded the reading מַחֲרֶשֶׁת as secondary.

Dominique Barthélemy argued that there is insufficient reason to replace מַחֲרֶשֶׁת by a different word on the basis of the readings of LXX and S. The earliest translators seem to have experienced the same problems with the Hebrew text as modern scholars. They translated the second occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת differently from the first. The translators of LXX and S decided to use a noun that they used also to render הַדָּרְבָּן, the last utensil mentioned in 13:21. Barthélemy maintained that the first and second מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:20 derive from two different nouns, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת and מַחֲרֶשֶׁת. The two nouns must have had different meanings, but neither the earliest translators nor modern scholars could retrieve exactly to what kind of sharp utensils the two terms initially referred. DCH shares Barthélemy’s suggestion that the two occurrences of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:20 refer to two different agricultural utensils and translates them as ‘plough’ and ‘goad’, respectively.

B. 1 The sectarian composition Serekh ha-Yaḥad (Community Rule, ca. 100 BCE?) contains an enigmatic phrase: כִּא בָּאוּס אֲרֵם מַחֲרֶשׁ. The passage describes the characteristics of those who may not enter the community of the faithful. Although the interpretation of the phrase is disputed, it is clear that מַחֲרֶשׁ is not an alternative form of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת. It has been proposed to regard מַחֲרֶשׁ as a noun meaning ‘ploughing’. If סָאוֹן is taken as equivalent to Aramaic סֶעִי, סֵע, ‘mud’, the whole phrase can be taken as a proverbial saying: ‘For in the mud of wickedness (is) his ploughing.’

The text contains a discussion of the双重 occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:20. The first occurrence is often treated as a form of the same noun. The second occurrence, however, is sometimes treated as a reference to a different noun, הַדָּרְבָּן. This is supported by the ancient Greek and Syriac translations, which use the same noun in similar contexts. However, other scholars argue that the second מַחֲרֶשֶׁת goes back to Hebrew חֶרְמֶשׁ, since δρέπανον represents Hebrew חֶרְמֶשׁ, ‘sickle’. The two nouns must have had different meanings, but neither the earliest translators nor modern scholars could retrieve exactly to what kind of sharp utensils the two terms initially referred. The translators of LXX and S decided to use a noun that they used also to render הַדָּרְבָּן, the last utensil mentioned in 13:21. DCH shares Barthélemy’s suggestion that the two occurrences of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:20 refer to two different agricultural utensils and translates them as ‘plough’ and ‘goad’, respectively.

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1. Root and Comparative Material

A.1 Root: Both מַחֲרֵשָׁה and מַחֲרֶשֶׁת are commonly assumed to derive from חַרְשׁ, ‘to plough’, ‘to engrave’. These nouns have some Semitic cognates denoting an agricultural implement, as will be shown below. The Hebrew verb חָרֵשׁ stems from proto-Semitic ḥrt̲ and has cognates in Ugaritic, Akkadian and many other Semitic languages (see below). It must be distinguished from חָרֵשׁ, ‘to manufacture’, which stems from proto-Semitic ḥrš, just like Ugaritic ḥrš and Phoenician ḥrš, ‘craftsman’, ‘artisan’. Contrary to Hebrew חָרֵשׁ, ‘to plough’, ‘to engrave’, Hebrew חָרֵשׁ refers to the work of the craftsman or artisan.

A.2 Akkadian: The Hebrew verb חָרֵשׁ has a cognate in Akkadian erēšu, which means ‘to seed by drilling seed into a furrow by means of a seeder-plow, to cultivate or plant (a field)’. Among the derivatives of this verb are mērešu and mēreštu, which mean ‘cultivation’ or ‘cultivated land/field’. Derivatives relating to a utensil are not attested.

A.3 Ugaritic: The Ugaritic cognate of Hebrew חָרֵשׁ is ḥrt̲ ‘to plough’. The Ugaritic noun mḥrṭ̲t (KTU 1.6:IV.3,14; 6.14:3) is usually interpreted as ‘ploughed field’. However, O. Loretz proposed to regard it as a nomen instrumenti denoting the ploughshare or the plough as a whole.

A.4 Arabic: The Arabic verb ḥarat̲a is a cognate of Hebrew חָרֵשׁ and means ‘to plough, to cultivate’. The Arabic noun mḥrāt designates a plough. In Old South Arabian, however, mḥrṭt refers to ploughed, cultivated land.

A.5 Ethiopic: The Ethiopic (Ge’ez) verb ḥarasa is a cognate of Hebrew חָרֵשׁ and means ‘to plough’. The noun māḥras is translated as ‘ploughshare’ or as ‘plough’.

A.6 Postbiblical Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic: In the Mishnah, the Tosefta and the Talmudim, the word מַחֲרֶשֶׁת is virtually always spelled with a yod as mater lectionis: מחרישה. The term occurs ca. 70 times and denotes the plough in its entirety. Not surprisingly, the word occurs in a context relating to ploughing חָרֵשׁ qal. The expression חָרֵשׁ דַּקָּפָא, literally ‘the pin of the plough’, denotes the sharp metal plough-point. The Tosefta refers to חָרֵשׁ, ‘plough-points’, that were attached to the plough’s חָרֶב, ‘tail-piece, handle’. In the Babylonian Talmud, the expression מחרישה דָּכָפָא does not represent a plough, but a strigil made of דָּכָפָא, ‘silver’. Such a strigil was used for scraping the skin; cf. the meaning ‘to engrave’ of the verb חָרֵשׁ. In modern Hebrew the word מחרישה means ‘plough’.
2. Formal Characteristics

A.1 *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* is a miqtal form with a feminine termination.

A.2 *מַחֲרָשָׁה* is a maqtil form with a feminine termination. Many maqtil forms denote a utensil.

3. Syntagmatics

A.1 In 1 Sam 13:20, מַחֲרֶשֶׁת and מַחֲרָשָׁה represent the first and fourth objects of the verb לְטַשׁ, ‘to forge’, ‘to hammer’, ‘to sharpen’. The other objects are (2) זָה and (3) קַרְדֻּמּוֹ (all marked by the accusative particle אֵת). 1 Sam 13:21 indicates that the price for מַחֲרֶשֶׁת as well as some other agricultural utensils was אֹפֶשׁ. Apparently, the price was paid for either producing or repairing them (see below).

4. Ancient Versions

A.1 In the following survey, ‘20¹’ represents the first occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (MT: מַחֲרֶשֶׁת) in 1 Sam 13:20, while ‘20²’ represents the second occurrence (MT: מַחֲרֶשֶׁת). ‘21’ represents the word מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21.

a. Septuagint (LXX) and other Greek versions

θέριστρον, ‘reaping-hook’; 35 20¹ (most manuscripts of LXX).
θεριστήριον, ‘reaping-hook’; 36 20¹ (Antiochene text of LXX).
θεριστήριον, ‘reaping-hook’; 37 20¹ (LXX).

β. Peshitta (s)

מַסְאָס, ‘sickle’; 49 20².

c. Targum (t)

מַכִּין, ‘goad’, possibly also ‘ploughshare’; 50 20¹.
מַכִּין, ‘adze’, ‘carpenter’s axe’, etc., used for chipping; 51 20², 21.

d. Vulgate (v)

vomer, ‘ploughshare’; 52 20¹, 21.
sarculum, ‘hoe’; 53 20².
A.2 As the surveys show, the two occurrences of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 1 Sam 13:20 MT have two different counterparts in all the ancient translations. Aquila, s and v treat the first occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (20) as a form of the same noun as מַחֲרָשָׁה (21) and translate the second form (20) differently. In LXX, the words representing מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (20) and מַחֲרָשָׁה (21) are derivatives from the same root. On the other hand, the translation of T suggests that the second occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (20) is a form of the same noun as מַחֲרָשָׁה (21). This corresponds with the Masoretic vocalization.

A.3 T translates each of the implements mentioned in 1 Sam 13:20-21 consistently: *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת*/מַחֲרָשָׁה is translated by פְּרָשָׁא (1x); אֵת is translated by סִכַּתפַּדְנָא (2x); קַרְדֹּם is translated by כּוּלְבָה (2x); *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת*/מַחֲרָשָׁה is translated by עָשְׁפָּא (2x); דָּרְבָּן is translated by זַקְתָּא.

The fact that Hebrew אֵת was rendered as סִכַּתפַּדְנָא, 'plough-point' (→ תָּא), seems to suggest that *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת*/מַחֲרָשָׁה was not interpreted as such. Therefore, it may be best to translate פְּרָשָׁא as ‘goad’.

A.4 Most of the ancient translations assume that the first occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 1 Sam 13:20 represents an implement used for ploughing (Aq, Th, Sym, v, possibly T). LXX and s, however, interpret the word as an implement used for harvesting. In the case of LXX there is reason to believe that the translators of 1 Samuel misinterpreted the verb חָרֵשׁ as relating to harvesting instead of ploughing. The only verse in 1 Samuel in which the verb חָרֵשׁ has the meaning ‘to plough’ is 8:12, where we find the phrase: וְלַחֲרֹשׁחֲרִישׁוֹוְלִקְצֹורְלִכְרֹזְרִי (MT), literally: ‘to plough the ploughing and to harvest the harvest’. Most manuscripts of the LXX render the phrase as καὶ θερίζειν θερισμὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ τρυγᾶν τρυγητὸν αὐτοῦ. Both θερίζειν θερισμὸν and τρυγᾶν τρυγητὸν can be translated as ‘to reap the harvest’, not as ‘to undertake the ploughing’.

There is insufficient reason to suppose that the Greek translation of 1 Sam 8:12 goes back to a Hebrew text that differs from MT. The translation of the first occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:20 by θέριστρον, ‘reaping-hook’, and the rendering of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21 by θερίζειν, ‘to harvest’, seem to be due to the same confusion regarding the meaning of חָרֵשׁ and its derivatives. In the Antiochene text of LXX καὶ θερίζειν θερισμὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ τρυγᾶν τρυγητὸν αὐτοῦ is preceded by καὶ ἀροτριᾶν τὴν ἀροτρίασιν αὐτοῦ ‘and to undertake the ploughing’. Apparently, the additional phrase was inserted to assimilate the LXX to the Hebrew text.

In 1 Sam 8:12, s remains close to the Masoretic reading לְהַרְשָׁתָא לְכָרֵשׁ כֵּי יָה (MT). In the case of 1 Sam 13:20-21, however, the reading of s (גָּלְבָנָא, ‘sickle’) seems to have been influenced by the Greek translation of the first מַחֲרֶשֶׁת/מַחֲרָשָׁה (13:20) by θέριστρον/θεριστήριον, ‘reaping-hook’.
5. Lexical/Semantic Fields

A.1 The nouns *מַחֲרֵשָׁה* and *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* are regarded as derivatives of the verb *חרשׁ*, ‘to plough’, ‘to engrave’. In the Hebrew Bible, the verb is used ten times for ploughing in a literal sense and four or five times for ploughing in a figurative sense. After a → עֹל, ‘yoke’, was fasted over the necks of two animals and attached to the plough, the animals pulled (משׁך qal; Deut 21:3) the plough.

A.2 The nouns *מַחֲרֵשָׁה* and *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* occur only in two lists of sharp utensils (1 Sam 13:20-21). The other items in the lists are → אֵת, → קַרְדֹּם, possibly → שלוש קִלְּשׁוֹן (→ קִלְּשׁוֹן), and → דָּרְבָן.

6. Exegesis

6.1 Literal Use

A.1 In view of the meaning of *חרשׁ*, ‘to plough’, ‘to engrave’, it is likely that one of the occurrences of *מַחֲרֵשָׁה* in the list of utensils in 1 Sam 13:20 denotes an implement used for ploughing. Most dictionaries interpret either *מַחֲרֵשָׁה* or *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* as ‘ploughshare’. In the Mishnah, Tosefta and Talmudim, the noun *מַחֲרֵשָׁה* designates the entire plough, while the cognates in Arabic and Ethiopic (and possibly in Ugaritic) also denote a plough (see above).

Most of the ancient translations assume that the first item in the list of 13:20 represents a plough (Aq, Th), or its cutting part (Sym, v, possibly T'). Since the plough is one of the most important agricultural utensils, it is indeed not unlikely that it is represented by the first item in the list. In view of the evidence from the Mishnah, Tosefta and Talmudim, it is attractive to revocalize the first occurrence in 13:20 as *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* (with sērē) and to maintain the vocalization of the parallel item *מַחֲרֶשֶׁת* in 13:21 (see above).

A.2 Ploughs were largely made of wood, as is shown by the burning of *כְּלִיהַבָּקָר*, ‘equipment of the oxen’, which had just been used for ploughing a field (1 Kgs 19:19-21), and the use of *כְּלִיהַבָּקָר*, ‘equipment of the oxen’, for its wood (עֵצִים; 2 Sam 24:22). However, 1 Sam 13:19-22 demonstrates that ploughs also comprised a sharp element made of metal, apparently the so-called ‘plough-point’. The latter passage records that in the time of Saul and Jonathan the Israelites were subject to rigid constraints. The Philistines maintained a monopoly that enabled them to dominate the Israelites and to prevent them from producing their own weapons. According to many scholars, the monopoly concerned the production and/or repair of iron implements. However, the MT does not say explicitly that the implements involved were made of iron. It reveals only that among the Israelites there was no *חרשׁ*, ‘craftsman’ (13:19), who produced (לַטשׁ; 13:20) utensils for them. Only
the renderings of חָרָשׁ in LXX (τέκτων σιδήρου) and V (faber ferrarius) specify that the craftsmen concerned were iron smiths.\textsuperscript{67} Actually, archaeological evidence from consecutive centuries demonstrates that in ancient Israel implements of bronze and implements of iron were used in the same contexts. Bronze plough-points and iron plough-points were also excavated in the same excavation layers (see below). The suggestion of LXX and V that the Philistines maintained an iron monopoly is an attractive option, but the MT may imply that the Philistines forbade all metallurgical activities among the Israelites.\textsuperscript{68}

The structure of the ancient Israelite ploughs is not described in the Hebrew Bible or other contemporaneous sources. However, a reconstruction is possible on the basis of contemporaneous illustrations from Mesopotamia and Egypt and archaeological finds from Israel/Palestine (see below). Further, some terminological information can be found in the Mishnah, the Tosefta and the Talmudim, especially in m. Kelim 21:2.\textsuperscript{69} In the latter passage, the word חָרָשׁ does not occur, but the following terms are used to denote elements of the plough: הקבר (‘yoke’), הקצרב (‘collar-piece?’), הבוה (‘thick ropes?’), המרכ (‘tail-piece’ or ‘handle’), הברד (‘knee-shaped beam’), הצה (‘handle’ or ‘cross-piece’), יין של מחכת (‘metal ring’), הילינ (‘guides’), יער (‘plough-flanks’ or ‘mouldboards’). Unfortunately, it remains unclear to which elements of the plough some of the Hebrew terms refer.\textsuperscript{70} Also, it is dubious whether the ancient Israelite plough consisted of the same elements as the plough type to which this section of the Mishnah refers.

A.3 Philip King and Lawrence Stager give the following description of the way in which ploughing was performed in ancient Israel:

Plowing prepared the ground for sowing in late October-November, after the first rain (yôreh) had softened the earth. A field was plowed twice, once to loosen the crusty soil before the seed was broadcast, and then at right angles to the first plowing to cover the seed. The metal-tipped scratch plow did not turn over the soil the way a moldboard plow does but simply scratched a shallow furrow by breaking and loosening the soil.\textsuperscript{71}

Like the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian ploughs, ancient Israelite ploughs were usually pulled by a pair (צֶמֶד) of oxen (בָּקָר: 1 Sam 11:7; 1 Kgs 19:21; Amos 6:12; Job 1:3, 14; 42:12). A female cow could also be used for ploughing, as is shown by the remark that in specific situations a cow that had not yet carried a yoke or pulled a plough was used (פָּרָה, ‘cow’: Num 19:2; 1 Sam 6:7; עגלה, ‘heifer’: Deut 21:3; cf. Judg 14:18; Hos 10:11). Donkeys could also be used to work the land (cf. Isa 30:24: עירים, ‘male donkeys’), but it was forbidden to let an ox (שׁוֹר) and a donkey (חֲמוֹר) pull a plough together (Deut 22:10).\textsuperscript{72}
A.4 If the second occurrence of מַחְרֵשׁה in 1 Sam 13:20 is left unemended, only one of the two occurrences may be assumed to designate a plough(-point). A classical translation of the second occurrence is ‘mattock’. Stephen Cook supposed that the first of the near-homonyms derives from הַרְשׁ, ‘to plough, to engrave’, while the second derives from הַרְשׁ, ‘to manufacture’ (see above). According to Cook, the first noun clearly refers to a plough, while the second noun, which can be translated as ‘crafted/forged tool’, can best be interpreted as an equivalent of the parallel term דָּרְבָן, probably ‘goad’ (end of 13:21). However, the interpretation of the final item in the list of 13:20 remains uncertain, as Cook admits. Actually, the interpretation as a ‘goad’ is not attractive, since the presence of a metal point at the end of goads was not essential. The noun can still be seen as a derivative of הַרְשׁ and may refer to a tool that is used for ‘engraving’ the soil, wood, etc. The noun may represent a hoe (cf. sarculum in V), or a mattock, or an adze, etc. (cf. עָשֶׂפָא in T). Dominique Barthélemy maintained the word, but decided to leave it untranslated.

B.1 Only rarely is none of the occurrences of מַחְרֵשׁה in 1 Sam 13:20-21 identified with a plough or an element of it.

6.2 Figurative Use

Nihil.

6.3 Pictorial Material

A.1 The lack of ancient pictures of ploughs from the Levant (Syria-Palestine) is compensated by images from Mesopotamia and Egypt. The ploughs are commonly depicted as drawn by two oxen. The images show two types of plough:

- Simple ploughs without a seed drill drawn by a pair of animals and guided by a single man, who may hold a stick or goad or whip to drive the animals. In such cases, the seeding was done after the first ploughing. The distinction between the two procedures is illustrated by images displaying a sower who works at some distance from the ploughman and his plough.

- Ploughs provided with a seed drill, drawn by a pair of animals and guided by a single man, who is assisted by another man, who takes care of the seeding process.

The depicted ploughing scenes are Mesopotamian or Egyptian, but there are good reasons to believe that the ploughs of the Israelites were quite similar to the ploughs on the images. In ancient Israel, ploughs were not yet provided with a seed drill and the sowing took place after the first ploughing of the ground. Therefore,
the Israelite ploughs were probably of the same type as the simpler ploughs of the Mesopotamians and Egyptians.

The ploughs of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian depictions have the following features in common:

- A wooden beam connects the plough with a yoke that was fastened over the necks of the pulling animals.

- The essential part of the plough is a wooden beam protruding forward in the direction of the animals, at the bottom of the plough. The beam may be curved and is provided with a sharp metal point that makes furrows in the ground.

- The plough includes a wooden handle or a pair of handles, serving to steer the plough. Usually, the steering handle is part of the same beam as the wood to which the plough-point was affixed.
A.2 Photographs from the early twentieth century show traditional ploughs with construction styles that hardly differed from the ancient Near Eastern structures. Recent film recordings show a way of ploughing that gives an impression of the ways in which ploughing was performed in the ancient Near East.  

![Figure 2: Plough shop in Beersheba, October 16, 1924](image)

Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht, Collectie Vriezen

6.4 Archaeology

A.1 Of course, the wood of ancient Near Eastern ploughs has usually decomposed completely, but many metal plough-points have survived. The archaeological evidence from Israel/Palestine shows that in the twelfth century BCE bronze plough-points began to be replaced by iron plough-points, although the use of bronze plough-points appears to have continued for several centuries. Oded Borowski offers an excellent description of the excavated plough-points:

> The plow-point was an elongated tool, 20-30 cm long, with a pointed tip for soil penetration. The other end was shaped like a pipe, ca. 8-10 cm wide. A wooden shaft, which was part of the plow-handle, was inserted into this end.
Nowadays, the designation ‘ploughshare’ is commonly used for the curved blade of the so-called mouldboard plough, which turns over the soil. It is confusing to denote the cutting element of the ancient Israelite scratch ploughs as ‘ploughshare’, since its form and function were quite different from the ploughshares of mouldboard ploughs. Therefore, Borowski’s designation as ‘plough-points’ is preferable.91

7. Conclusion

A.1 It is justified to interpret מַחֲרֵשָׁה as a term denoting the ancient Israelite ‘plough’ or ‘plough-point’. In the Mishnah, Tosefta and Talmudim, the word מַחֲרֵשָׁה denotes the plough as a whole. It is possible that one of the occurrences of מַחֲרֵשָׁה in 1 Sam 13:20 also designates the entire plough, but it cannot be excluded that at this earlier stage it represented only the metal plough-point. If in 1 Sam 13:20 the first occurrence of מַחֲרֵשָׁה represents a plough, the form must probably be revocalized as מַחֲרֶשֶׁת. The vocalization of the parallel term מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21 can be retained and this form can be translated as ‘ploughs’ or ‘plough-points’. The reasons to replace the second occurrence of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 1 Sam 13:20 by a different word are debatable. If we leave the text unemended, it is not possible to identify the item with any certainty. The noun may denote a hoe, a mattock, an adze, or another implement.

Notes

1 ↑ If מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in 13:21 were a plural form of מַחֲרֶשֶׁת, the expected vocalisation in 13:21 would be מַחֲרֶשֶׁת (with qames). Cf. מַעֲרָכוֹת in Lev 24:6, מַאֲכָלוֹת in Prov 30:14, and the similar plural forms of other nouns mentioned in BL, 490 a.
2 ↑ DCH V (מ-נן), 229-30. See also the discussion in 4. A.2 and 6.1.
3 ↑ Wellhausen 1871: 84.
4 ↑ See BHK1, BDB, 361, and the literature mentioned in Barthélemy, CTAT 1: 180.
5 ↑ See BHK2/3, KBL, 515, Ges18, 661, and the literature mentioned in Barthélemy, CTAT 1: 180-81. In other contexts, ὀδοὺς represents Hebrew מַעֲרָכָה (Isa 2:4; 18:5; Mic 4:3; Joel 4:10) or Hebrew מַעֲרָכָה (Jer 50:16 = 27:16LXX; Joel 4:13). Remarkably, no scholars seem to have suggested reading מַעֲרָכָה instead of מַעֲרָכָה at the end of 1 Sam 13:20. Stoebke (1973: 254) proposed reading מַעֲרָכָה instead of מַעֲרָכָה (cf. 2 Sam 12:31).
6 ↑ Barthélemy, CTAT 1: 181. Similarly: Cook (1994), who retained the MT as the lectio difficilior.
7 ↑ DCH V (מ-נן), 229-30.
8 ↑ The reading is found in 1Q28/1QS iii:2 (Burrows 1951: Plate III; Charlesworth 1994: 12) and 4Q257/4QpapS iii:3-4 (DJD XXVI, 73, damaged).
9 ↑ For unknown reasons, the noun מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in the Community Rule is mentioned under the lemma מַחֲרֶשֶׁת in Ges18, 661.
10 ↑ DJD XXVI, 76.

11 ↑ See Charlesworth 1994: 13 (with different translations in n. 44); DJD XXVI, 76-77. See also the lemma *מַחֲרָשׁ* in DCH V (m), 229.

12 ↑ BDB, 361; KBL, 515; DCH V (m-n), 229; HALOT, 572.

13 ↑ For cognates of *חרשׁ* in Old Canaanite, Official Aramaic, Palmyrenean and Phoenician, see DNWSI, 407, 408.

14 ↑ Loewenstamm 1959; TDOT V 222-23. For *חרשׁ* and *חרשׁה* in Gen 4:22 (cf. Gen 1 Kgs 7:14); cf. the noun *חרשׁ* 'craftsman', 'artisan'.

15 ↑ For Ugaritic *ḥrš*, 'craftsman', 'artisan', see WUS, 108; UT, 399 (#903); DULAT, 366; KWU, 47. For Phoenician *ḥrš* in KDGS, 243. In addition to the occurrences mentioned in the following notes, the word מַחֲרֵישָׁה occurs in m. Bava Batra 2:1, 12, 13; t. Shabbat 6:8; t. Bava Qamma 2:6; t. Bava Batra 1:2, 14; t. Kelim Bava Metzi‘a 5:7; t. ‘Ohalot 15:13; b. Ta‘anit 25b; b. Bava Qamma 30a; b. Bava Batra 17a, 18a, 19a, 26a, 27b, 82b; y. Pe‘ah 2, 17a; 6, 19c; y. Kil‘ayim 7, 55d; y. Bava Qamma 3, 3c; y. Bava Metzi‘a 9, 12b (together with כַּר in 1 Sam 13:20-21); y. Bava Batra 2, 13ab; 7, 15c. In m. Shavi‘it 5:6 and b. ‘Avodah Zarah 15b, reference is made to כַּר וּמַחֲרֵישָׁה, ‘the plough and all its implements’.

21 ↑ Lane, 541-542; Wehr, 166.

22 ↑ SD, 71; DOSA, 192.

23 ↑ CDG, 243.

24 ↑ According to m. Bava Metzi‘a 9:13, a creditor who wants to take a pledge from a debtor may take a כַּר, ‘pillow’, by day and must give it back by night (cf. Deut 24:12-13) and may take a מַחֲרֵישָׁה by night and must return it by day. Apparently, the כַּר and the מַחֲרֵישָׁה were seen as essential. The rule is quoted in b. Bava Metzi‘a 113a, y. Bava Metzi‘a 9, 12a, and b. Temurah 6a.

28 ↑ m. Shabbat 17:4 quotes Rabbi Yose as saying that on the Shabbat ‘all utensils may be moved except for the large saw and the plough-point’ (לכל כליי נטנח חום במתנים גדול וחרישות). The saying occurs also in t. Shabbat 14:1; b. Shabbat 123b, 157a; b. ‘Eruvin 35a; y. Shabbat 17, 16a. Further, the expression כַּר וּמַחֲרֵישָׁה occurs also in b. ‘Eruvin 86a.

29 ↑ m. Kelim Bava Batra 1:7, which refers also to the יָע, ‘eye’, as an element that could be detached from the plough. In m. Kelim 21:2 the terms כַּר וּיָע are also used for parts of the plough (see above).
According to b.Bava Metzi ʿa 113b, Raba son of Rabbah interpreted the word מחרישה in m.Bava Metzi ʿa 9:13 (see above) as ‘strigil’, not as ‘plough’.

This form is proposed in BDB, 361; KBL, 515; HALOT, 572; Ges18, 661.

This form is proposed in DCH V (פ-ו), 229.


This form is proposed in DCH V (מ-ן), 229.


GELS, 328, with reference to Van der Meer 2008: 592-96. In all the other verses (Gen 24:65; 38:14, 19; Isa 3:23; Song 5:7), דמשקטונ is translated as ‘light summer garment’ or ‘veil’.

LSJ, 793; GELS, 328.


LEH1, 204.

GELS, 328.

Adrados, DGE, 521; LEH1, 62; GELS, 92.

Field 1875: 507.

Field 1875: 508.

Field 1875: 507-08.

Adrados, DGE, 1167; LEH1, 121; GELS, 178.


Field 1875: 507-08.

Payne Smith, CSD, 250; Sokoloff, SLB, 709.

Payne Smith, CSD, 285; Sokoloff, SLB, 793. SLB gives as a second translation ‘part of plow’.


Jastrow, DTT, 1059. WTM III, 711 (Hebr. מחריש): ‘der spitze Theil eines Instrumentes, welcher zum Bohren und Pfügen diente, der andere scharfe Theil dieses Instrumentes diente zum Holzspalten.’ According to m.Kelim 13:3, the → פְּרָשָׁא has an מחריש ‘paring/chipping edge’ and a בֵּיתבִּקּוּא ‘splitting/chopping edge’.

Lewis & Short, LD, 2014; OLD, 2103.

OLD, 1691. Lewis & Short, LD, 1631, describe sarculum as ‘an implement for loosening the soil, weeding, etc., a light hoe.’

For the distinctive character of the transmitted LXX text of 1 Samuel, see Hugo 2015: 129-32; Hugo 2016: 222-23.

GELS, 328, 689. For the precise meaning of θερίζειν θερισμὸν and τρυγᾶν τρυγητὸν, see also Grillet & Lestienne 1997: 196-97.

Grillet and Lestienne (1997: 197) suggest that the Hebrew source used by the Greek translators read קַרְדֹּם קַרְדֹּם instead of קַרְדֹּם קַרְדֹּם (MT). See also DJD XVII, 59.
However, in addition to the deviating Greek rendering of מחרשת/חורשת in 1 Sam 13:20-21, reference must be made to a fragment of 4Q51/4QSam\(^a\) showing the letters \(\text{ישו} \text{שחר} \text{ולחר}\) at the expected position (DJD XVII, 58). The Greek translation seems to be due to confusion about the meaning of Hebrew \(חרשׁ\); see Wirth 2017: 5.


58 ↑ McCarter argues that the Antiochene text of LXX reflects the initial Hebrew reading (reconstructed as \(חרשׁ \text{חרישו} \text{ולקצר} \text{ולבצר} \text{ולבצר}\)). This leads to the artificial assumption that the shorter readings of \(\text{מ}\) and the rest of \(\text{לֶּחֶשׁ} \text{וּלָּשֶׁנֶג}\) are ‘haplographic, each in its own way’ (McCarter 1980: 155).

59 ↑ s reads \(\text{עֲרָיִין} \text{בֹּרֶךְ} \text{יָצוּל} \text{חֶרֶב}\) \((\text{ wndbrrn dbrh wnhšdwn hšd} _{d})\). The verb \(\text{לטשׁ}\) \((\text{dbr})\) is a common translation of Hebrew \(חרשׁ\) with the meaning ‘to plough’ (see Deut 22:10; 1 Kgs 19:19, etc.), while \(\text{בֹּרֶךְ}\) \((\text{hšt})\) is a standard translation of the verb \(קצר\) \((\text{ṣr} _{m})\) (see 1 Sam 6:13; 2 Kgs 4:18; 19:29, etc.).

60 ↑ Deut 22:10; 1 Sam 8:12; 1 Kgs 19:19; Isa 28:24; Jer 26:18; Amos 6:12; 9:13; Mic 3:12; Job 1:14; Prov 20:4.

61 ↑ Judg 14:18, Hos 10:11, 13; Ps 129:3; Job 4:8.

62 ↑ For other terms used in connection with ploughing, see Borowski 1987: 48, 51-53.

63 ↑ Gesenius, \(\text{TPC I, 530; BDB, 361; GB, 416; Zorell, 428; KBL, 515; DCH V (ב-1), 229; HALOT, 572; Ges}^{18}; 661\).

64 ↑ Compare the rule in m.Bava Metzi’a 9:13 implying that a creditor may not take a מַחֲרֵשָׁה as a pledge during the day. See above.


66 ↑ The verb \(לטשׁ\) means ‘to forge’, ‘to hammer’, ‘to sharpen’. 1 Sam 13:20-21 was often assumed to relate to the repair of metal implements (e.g., McCarter 1980: 232; Klein 1983: 128), but is likelier that the passage has their production in mind. See Stoebe 1973: 254-55.

67 ↑ However, see also כֹּל מֵאָרֶז \(\text{מַחֲרֵשָׁה}\) ‘each iron implement’ in 1 Sam 13:21 T\(^3\).

68 ↑ McNutt 1990: 19, 144, 205, 238. Cf. also Dietrich 2015: 50.

69 ↑ In addition to m. Kelim 21:2, see the evidence discussed in 1.A.6. t. Kelim Bava Metzi’a 5:7 mentions מאַה \(\text{vomer}\) ‘hoop of the plough’. The noun בֹּרֶךְ, ‘knee of the plough’, is also mentioned in m. ‘Ohalot 17:1-3 and b. Ta’anit 25b.

70 ↑ For the disputed translation of the terms, see \(\text{WTM: Jastrow, DTT; Dalman, ANHT; Krauss 1911: 172-73, 553-56; Danby 1933: 636; Bunte 1972: 372-75. A drawing in Albeck’s edition of the Hebrew text (1959: 93) shows which elements of the plough were assumed to be designated by the terms בֹּרֶךְ, בֹּרֶךְ, וּלָּשֶׁנֶג, וּלָּשֶׁנֶג.}

71 ↑ King & Stager 2001: 92 (cf. 88).

72 ↑ See also Borowski 1987: 52.

73 ↑ For emendation proposals and Barthélémy’s objections, see above.

74 ↑ Gesenius, \(\text{TPC I, 530, translated one of the occurrences as \text{vomer, ploughshare}, and the other as \text{cultrum, knife, dens aratri, plough-point}.}

75 ↑ KJV, ASV, NJPS. In these translations, not only the final item of the list in 13:20 \((\text{מ}\) מַחֲרֵשָׁת) is translated as ‘mattock’, but the first item of the list in 13:21 \((\text{מ}\) מַחֲרֵשָׁת) is also translated as ‘mattocks’, undoubtedly because these forms have the \(s^{t}rē\) vowel in common.
In *DCH*, where the first occurrence of מָרְשָׁת in 13:20 is translated as ‘ploughshare’, the second occurrence is also interpreted as ‘goad’ because of the parallelism with דָּרְבָן (DCH V (2-3), 229-30).

Cook 1994: 252, 254, n.11.


In NASB not only מָרְשָׁת at the end of 13:20 but also דָּרְבָן at the end of 13:21 is translated as ‘hoe’.


Fokkelman (1986: 45) identified the first occurrence of מָרְשָׁת in 1 Sam 13:20 with a scythe, probably due to lxx θέριστρον. Like many others (see above), Fokkelman replaced the second occurrence in the same verse by חֶרְמֵשׁ, ‘sickle’.

Wiggermann (1999: 189-90, 228) remarks that if one ox is depicted this must be due to artistic convention, ‘since one ox cannot pull a plough in a straight line’ (190). Differently: Borowski 1987: 51; Seidl 2003-2005: 514.

Egyptian: Fig.1 in the present article; *ANEP*, 25 (fig. 84), 27 (fig. 91), 37 (fig. 122); *BRL*², 255 (fig. 66/2); Borowski 1987: 53 (fig. 5), 58 (fig. 8), 60 (fig. 10); Mesopotamian: Wiggermann 1999: 228 (fig. 7a, 7b).

Mesopotamian: Lambert 1979: 22-23, regarding Plate VII fig. 63; Wiggermann 1999: 228 (fig. 7c), 230 (fig. 9); Egyptian: Borowski 1987: 53 (fig. 5); Nicholson & Shaw 2000: 270 (fig. 11.2).

Only Mesopotamian: *ANEP*, 25 (fig. 86, cf. 88); Borowski 1987: 55 (fig. 6; cf. 56 fig. 7); Wiggermann 1999: 228 (fig. 7d); Seidl 2003-2005, 514.

Borowski 1987: 53-56. However, Borowski (47-48, 53-54) shows that also in Israel the relationship between ploughing and sowing was close, since ploughing was done for the sole purpose of sowing (cf. Isa 28:24).

See Figure 2 and Dalman, *AuS* 2, plates 18-39. See also the discussion in Dalman, *AuS* 2, 64-115; Borowski 1987: 48; King & Stager 2001: 92.

Several informative recordings have been uploaded on YouTube (e.g. from Egypt and India).

For the gradual replacing of bronze implements by iron implements in Israel/Palestine during the twelfth to tenth centuries BCE, see McNutt 1990: 209-11.

Borowski 1987, 51, with several drawings of plough-points (50-51, fig 3, 4) and a survey of the sites where they were discovered (49, 51). For a similar description as well as drawings of plough-points, see *BRL*², 255 (fig. 66/1). Excellent drawings of two iron plough-points excavated in Kinneret are offered in Fritz 1990: 366-67 (Plate 116). For a photo of an iron plough-point and other iron implements from Tel Mique-Ekron, see King & Stager 2001: 93.

Cf. also Wright 1943: 35; Dietrich 2015: 28.
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