that *qaṭl* shifted to *qāṭāl*, thus conjecturing an unpredictable behavior for *qaṭl*, which, according to him, developed into both *qāṭál* and *qǽṭæl* (Kienast 2001: 85, par. 77.2b; 89, par. 84.1). Moreover, he is compelled to impose Modern Arabic word structure on Classical Arabic noun formation in order to justify the use of *qatal* as a noun, rather than as an adjective, as if it arose by anaptyxis from Modern Arabic *qaṭl* devoid of case endings (Kienast 2001: 100–5). Not only does he anachronistically apply the influence of Modern Arabic, but he also posits random conduct for *qaṭl*, which, according to him, was sometimes retained and sometimes shifted to *qaṭal*.

4.4.2. Gender

4.4.2.1. In Biblical Hebrew, as in the other Semitic languages, there are two genders: **masculine** and **feminine**. Gender is a grammatical category that formally marks agreement between words in a sentence; thus, its primary function is syntactic. As is true of many languages with gender, the gender of substantives in Biblical Hebrew sometimes correlates with the natural sex of animate beings. But this correspondence is only partial; more broadly, all nouns, including inanimate objects, are classified as grammatically masculine or feminine. Therefore, not only animate beings are either masculine (like אִישׁ 'man') or feminine (like אִשָּׁה 'woman'), but also inanimate objects (such as שֻׁלְחָן 'table' masculine, כִּסֵּא 'chair' masculine, אֶרֶץ 'earth, land' feminine, יַבָּשָׁה 'dry land' feminine).

4.4.2.2. Some scholars surmise that in the Semitic languages, including Biblical Hebrew, there originally existed a much broader system of nominal classification (as is reflected, for example, in the complex nominal categories of the Bantu languages), and thus masculine and feminine are only the residues of this system. It has also been claimed that the **suffix -*at*** originally marked singularity (*nomen unitatis*), in opposition to collective nouns with zero ending ("masculine" nouns; cf. Kienast 2001: 131, §122.1). Perhaps nouns with the -*at* suffix are derived from ("masculine") nouns with zero ending and their signification results from their opposition to the latter. That is, in opposition to the masculine מֶלֶךְ 'king', מַלְכָּה denotes 'queen'; in contrast to the collective noun שֵׂעָר 'hair', the "feminine" שַׂעֲרָה marks a single hair, whereas דָּגָה, being derived from דָּג 'a single fish', has a collective meaning.

4.4.2.3. In some cases, the possibility has been considered that suffixes of a different nature were interpreted as marking the feminine by metanalysis. However, no certain cases of this kind are known. H. Bauer (1914: 371–72) had the ingenious idea that the double parts of the body became feminine in the Semitic languages, because the 3MD **paʿalā* of the suffix-tense (which is also the corresponding dual form in Classical Arabic) was reinterpreted as 3FP (which in Proto-Semitic was indeed **paʿalā*). In the Semitic languages

(especially Arabic), in general, and in Biblical Hebrew, in particular, the femi-
nine ending, as mentioned above, is used to mark *nomen unitatis*. According
to Bauer again (see Bauer-Leander 1922: 511z), the ending marking **nomen
unitatis** was originally different from the feminine ending (perhaps being re-
lated to Arabic *taww* 'single [thing]'), but was reinterpreted as the feminine
ending, and so the nouns with this ending were transferred to the feminine
category. We have already seen (see §4.2.4.5.2, p. 179) that the final *-t* ending
of זֹאת 'this (feminine)' was possibly originally a demonstrative element with
no gender distinction, which was reinterpreted as the feminine suffix.

4.4.2.4. As a rule, **masculine nouns** do not have an ending (i.e., they have
a zero ending, e.g., מֶלֶךְ 'king'). **Feminine nouns** terminate either in the
stressed *-ā* suffix, as in מַלְכָּה 'queen', derived originally from **-at**, which is still
preserved in non-final position, when preceding pronominal suffixes (מַלְכָּתוֹ),
and even in construct (where it stands in internal open juncture: מַלְכַּת־שְׁבָא
'the queen of Sheba'), or in **-t**, such as יְהוּדִי 'Jew', יְהוּדִית 'Jewess'. This latter
ending is apt to give rise to segolate forms, as in יוֹשֶׁבֶת 'sitting' < *yāšibt;
שׁוֹמַעַת 'hearing' < *šāmiʿt. It stands to reason that these two feminine suffixes
are genetically related, *-at* being the original ending from which, under certain
phonetic conditions (caused by stress), the *a* was elided. The original condi-
tioning of this elision has been blurred by widespread analogy, so that the
original constraints can no longer be reconstructed. In Biblical Hebrew, there
is a certain tendency to use *-at* (> *-ā*) in the absolute, *-t* in the construct and
preceding pronominal suffixes (such as *mamlakat > מַמְלָכָה 'kingdom' in the
absolute, מַמְלֶכֶת < *mamlakt in the construct, and מַמְלַכְתִּי).

4.4.2.4n. Cf. §§4.3.3.4.6–4.3.3.4.8, pp. 210–211. In exceptional cases, *-at* has not shifted
to *-ā*. It was, e.g., preserved in (original) adverbs such as מָחֳרָת 'the morrow' (originally:
'tomorrow'), because as an adverbial marker it was felt necessary (cf. Blau 1979a: 10 =
Topics, 29, par. 2.3.1). It is also preserved in poetic usage (בָּרְקַת 'emerald', alternating
with בָּרֶקֶת) and especially in proper nouns (צָרְפַת), presumably borrowed from another di-
alect that preserved *-at*.

For the unstressed nominal ending *-ā* (הָ-), see below, §4.4.4.13, p. 269.

4.4.2.5. Some very archaic feminine nouns lack a special ending, not only
those denoting feminine beings (such as אֵם 'mother', אָתוֹן 'she-ass'), but
others as well, such as אֶבֶן 'stone', אֶרֶץ 'earth' (see above, §4.4.2.1, p. 263),
עִיר 'city', רִבּוֹ 'ten thousand', גֶּפֶן 'vine'. This is especially the case with nouns
denoting the double parts of the body (see above, §4.4.2.3, p. 263), such as יָד
'hand', רֶגֶל 'foot' and also names of countries and towns. Some nouns (such as
דֶּרֶךְ 'way', רוּחַ 'spirit, wind', שֶׁמֶשׁ 'sun') are both feminine and masculine.
Masculine nouns with the feminine ending are exceptional. Similarly excep-
tional is קֹהֶלֶת (perhaps originally the name of the office 'collection', if the
feminine ending does not have an intensive force as in Arabic), as in אָמַר קֹהֶלֶת
'Qohelet said' Eccl 1:2, in contrast to אָמְרָה קֹהֶלֶת Eccl 7:27, where the gram-

matical ending has prevailed over the sense. Strangely enough, מוֹרָה 'razor' is construed as masculine in וּמוֹרָה לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ 'and no razor will come upon his head' 1 Sam 1:11.

4.4.3. Statuses: Absolute, Construct, Pronominal

4.4.3.1. The normal position of nouns, when they do not stand in a special relationship to a following noun, is the ***status absolutus***. If, however, a noun is proclitic, forming a stress unit with the following noun (which stands in the same relation to it as the genitive stands to its govegrning noun in languages with case inflection), it stands in the construct (***status constructus***). Since in the construct no pretonic lengthening occurs and the noun behaves as if stress were on the following (governed) noun, it is often quite different from the absolute: דְּבַר־ 'the speech of' as opposed to the absolute דָּבָר; צִדְקַת (with the construct feminine ending) 'righteousness of' as opposed to the absolute צְדָקָה. Moreover, as these examples demonstrate, the final closed syllables of absolute nouns contain a long vowel, those of the construct a short vowel (see §3.5.7.1.5, p. 120).

4.4.3.1n. It is not the case that construct nouns are proclitic according to the biblical cantillation marks; this, however, is no doubt due to the solemn, ceremonial reading of the Bible. In everyday speech, especially in quick conversation, the construct was often devoid of stress and formed one stress unit with the following noun (the *nomen rectum*), which bore the stress of both nouns. Cf. §3.5.7.6.10, p. 131. The construct noun is also proclitic in Biblical Hebrew when the construct is hyphenated. On the other hand, the fact that Philippi's Law (see §3.5.8.6, p. 133) operates in construct nouns attests that they are in fact stressed. One should not be surprised by the operation of Philippi's Law in hyphenated construct nouns, as is the case, e.g., in בַּת־צִיּוֹן 'the daughter of Zion'. The vowel of the stressed construct noun was changed by Philippi's Law and *afterward* the noun became hyphenated.

4.4.3.2. The **status pronominalis**, i.e., the status of nouns governing pronominal suffixes (which perform a function similar to that of English possessive pronouns), resembles the construct, not only in function but also in form. It exhibits a shift of stress (which rests on the pronominal suffix or the vowel "connecting" it with the noun) and the feminine ending *-at*. Pretonic lengthening is excluded only before the so-called "heavy" suffixes כֶם-, כֶן- (and הֶם-, הֶן-; e.g., יְדְכֶם), whereas it may occur before the others (the "light" suffixes), because the noun forms one word with its pronominal suffixes (i.e., they stand in internal close juncture). Therefore, pretonic lengthening acts as it does in simple words, whereas the construct and the *nomen rectum* stand in internal open juncture and, therefore, in the construct no pretonic lengthening occurs. For the "connecting" vowels, see the following section (§4.4.4.6, p. 268).

4.4.3.2n. The "heavy" suffixes are invariably stressed. The suffix ך- attached to singular nouns (such as in יָדְךָ) bears the stress as well, but this stress is secondary (see §3.5.12.2.8,