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Who's the man?
Scribes, Orthographic Variation, and the Pluralization of Nouns Fronted by LÚ in the Canaanite Amarna Letters

Tyler R. Yoder
(Culver Academies, Indiana)

Abstract

This essay analyzes the diverse uses of the {lú} determinative, focusing especially on the way orthography and pluralization shed light on geographical, educational, and socio-political factors that shaped the work of Canaanite scribes during the Late Bronze Age. With five orthographic means to write the plural, the evidence reveals a complex matrix of both variation and homogeneity that provides a snapshot of, on the one hand, a community of second-language learners applying their teachers' instruction, and, on the other hand, diplomacy marked by scribal agency. It is not necessarily hard-and-fast or universal rules that constrain the alternations one sees within the Canaanite scribes' use of {lú}; independent variables can also impact orthography. At a minimum, the orthographic variation attested among the Canaanite Amarna data reflects a variation in scribal education. Yet the combination of different spellings found at a single site or in the dossier of a single scribe complicates the matter, implying additional factors help generate the variation. Some examples stem from lexical factors, while other patterns pair with idiosyncratic sign values, individual scribal conventions, or even, as seen at Jerusalem, rhetorical flourishes. The sum of evidence points to the multifaceted roles of the Canaanite scribe as second-language learner, interpreter, and diplomat.

Keywords

Amarna Letters, Late Bronze Age, orthography, Akkadian, scribes, scribal education, diplomacy, determinatives, syntax, scribal interlanguage, Canaanite.

1. Introduction[1].

When peripheral forms of Akkadian[2] began to burgeon outside Mesopotamia proper (e.g. Mari, Emar, Canaan), some non-normative orthographic practices characteristic of

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a scribal language ensued[3]. Such is the case for the Canaanite Amarna Letters, the Late Bronze Age epistles sent from provincial Canaanite rulers to their overlord, Pharaoh, in which a largely East Semitic lexicon amalgamated with a largely West Semitic grammar and verbal system[4]. Situated between two strands of Semitic, Canaanite scribes responded to "generational fossilization," whereby the non-normative instruction they received inevitably led to the transmission of newly generated linguistic forms (BARANOWSKI 2016: 212 [cf. 40-3]). For example, unlike normative Old Babylonian, peripheral Akkadian often exhibits a plural marker tacked on to a determinative before relevant plural terms (i.e., $^{\text{lú.meš}}$ÌR "servants" or $^{\text{lú.meš}}$ÌR.MEŠ instead of $^{\text{lú}}$ÌR.MEŠ)[5]. Since determinatives were non-syntactical units, never intended to be read, the appending of plural markers in various permutations opens an avenue to explore the nature of Amarna Akkadian and the training of the scribes who actualized it. And the attestation of only one such plural determinative within the non-Egyptian correspondence of the Great Powers (8:r32: LÚ.MEŠ DUMU.MEŠ *ši-ip-ri-ka*) highlights this Canaanite deviation from standard Middle Babylonian[6]. Were such orthographic conventions still classifiers or had they entered the syntax, instantiating either *status constructus* or apposition?[7] To what extent, with what terms, and in what places, did these changes take shape? This study of the {lú}[8] determinative thus serves

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[2] Baranowski provides a strong explanation of peripheral Akkadian: "…a cover term for the language(s) of the texts written by non-native speakers in various localities outside Mesopotamia (Ugarit, Hattuša, Emar, and Alalah being the prime examples). The common characteristic of Peripheral Akkadian is the influence of the local languages on the grammar and lexicon that distinguishes it from the native varieties of Akkadian, to which I refer collectively as *Mesopotamian Akkadian.* The use of the cover term *Peripheral Akkadian* does not imply its uniformity as a tradition or the homogeneity of its linguistic features but refers (collectively) to the Akkadian language that was learned and used in places outside Mesopotamia, especially in the second part of the second millennium BCE" (2016: 21, n.2).

[3] Though recent studies by Baranowski, Mandell, and Vita disagree on the particular nature of Amarna Akkadian (e.g., scribal code or interlanguage; written only or also spoken; scribal agency or not), they each have compellingly challenged an earlier consensus view that classified it as a type of a contact language. This study endorses the trajectory of their important work, in general. In particular, the evidence from this study elicits a view of the scribal language used by Canaanite scribes during the Amarna period that brings Mandell's "scribal code" and Baranowski's "scribal interlanguage" into conversation, showing how they may together present a fuller presentation. See §6 for further discussion.

[4] Baranowski contends that another distinction between the Canaanite of the Amarna Letters and other instantiations of peripheral Akkadian lies in its proliferation of an Old Babylonian stratum rather than a more propinquitous Middle Babylonian one (RAINEY 1996.2: 17; cf. HUEHNERGARD 1989: 27).

[5] Brief notes on the peripheral Akkadian determinative appear for the materials from Ugarit (HUEHNERGARD 1989:87-9), Amurru (IZRE'EL 1991: 29-30), and Amarna, in general (RAINEY 1996.1: 28-31).

[6] Among the ten extant letters from Egypt, two (EA 1, 162) attest a plural marker on the {lú} determinative. EA 1 uses a variation of $^{\text{lú.meš}}$DUMU KIN eleven times (1:o22, 27, 29, 31, r54, 67, 73, 79, 82, and 86; 1:o40 alone uses a double plural: $^{\text{lú.meš}}$DUMU.MEŠ KIN-*ia*). And three examples pair {lú.meš} with a plural spelling for *hazannu* (1:r90; 162:13; 162:8 alone uses a double plural: $^{\text{lú.meš}}$*ha-za-nu*$^{\text{┐}}$-*te*.$^{\text{┌}}$MEŠ$^{\text{┐}}$).

[7] For a similar challenge in discerning between logogram and determinative in Hittite literature, see WEEDEN 2011: 159-160, 299, 315-316.

[8] In this essay, curly brackets {} represent signs used as determinatives.

as a means to enhance understanding of the education and socio-political role of Canaanite scribes in the Late Bronze Age.

This study addresses these questions by analyzing the data from two perspectives: lexeme and scribe. It commences with an overview of the high-frequency terms within the data set before shifting to a focus on the different spellings scribes used to write plurals. What results is a complex matrix of orthographic variation induced by independent variables that shows how script can foster meaning that communicates well beyond the signs pressed into clay, informing readers about the character of scribal education, isoglosses and scribal networks, and, as seen at Jerusalem, in particular, the dynamic role of scribal agency.

2. Interpretation and scribal culture

This study grounds its understanding of the scribal process beheld in the Canaanite Amarna letters in the concept of a scribal language tailored for correspondence between Canaan and Egypt. What follows here is a brief unpacking of the implications and some attendant assumptions. At least four, if not five, parties played an indispensable role in each missive: provincial Canaanite rulers, Canaanite scribe(s) commissioned to work on their behalf, a "runner" tasked with shipping the letter, recipient scribes commissioned by the Egyptian crown, and perhaps Egyptian officials of higher standing. In a nutshell, kinglets would utter a message to their scribal hireling, who would then edit and transmit the message into a dialect used exclusively within the Canaanite scribal network, but comprehensible to the Egyptian amanuenses waiting at the other end. Once the letter arrived, the Egyptian scribe – or a Canaanite scribe employed by the Egyptian chancery – would convey the message to an Egyptian bureaucrat who would discern whether or not to involve Pharaoh or one from his retinue (cf. BARANOWSKI 2016: §2.5). What happened in that transmission process remains speculative, though there is internal evidence to suggest that the epistolary content represents a rudimentary blueprint for a *much fuller* dispatch intended for delivery. In the end, a five-person operation was ultimately predicated on a two-man job: Canaanite scribe to Egyptian consulate scribe (BARANOWSKI 2016: 58).

According to this framework, the role of the Canaanite scribes transcended that of mere messengers, as seen in the Great Powers correspondence; they were royal functionaries, diplomats, and "gatekeepers controlling the flow of information" (MANDELL 2015: 127). Though the Canaanite letters evince standardized material – especially in messages from southern Canaan – it was the scribe who controlled the communiqué from his boss to the most powerful man in the world: Pharaoh. To this end, scribes drew on their own background to craft material that would catch the eye of the recipient and lead to a response in line with the memorandum's perlocutionary effect (e.g., the Shechem scribe's rhetorically-charged "ant" proverb)[9]. A scribe's

[9] Yet just as a scribe's culture and education engendered opportunity, so did it constrain the prospect of innovation, which, in turn, led to the repetition of content within the corpus (MANDELL 2015: 132). For example, learners of a second language tend to "chunk" groups of words together as a semantic unit early in the process, pairing them together even as fluency improves (BARANOWSKI 2016: 48; LOEWEN – REINDERS 2011: 24). The speculative nature of the question of whether Canaano-Akkadian was spoken, as well as written, has not dissuaded its role as a source of scholarly debate (for different views, see MANDELL 2015: 144 [written only] and Vita 2010: 392-393 [written and spoken]), though

grammar and language, as well as perhaps his idiosyncrasies, stemmed ultimately from his own personal training, even more so than the local dialect of his or the kinglet's community (VITA 2010: 869, 878; BARANOWSKI 2016: 119). The resulting contrived language, be it a "scribal interlanguage" that involved an oral component or a "scribal code" that did not (so MANDELL 2015: 136), was at once personal, parochial, and politically-driven.

The linguistic content betrays a network of scribal schools throughout Canaan that both championed a bevy of basic, overarching principles – mainly derivative from those established in Mesopotamian traditions – and distinctive emphases. And the demands for cuneiform acquisition were high; certain scribes, such as the Jerusalem scribe, demonstrate a higher level of proficiency (or, at least, agency) in cuneiform orthography, which allows them to transcend the often-formulaic language that emanates from the real-life struggle to learn a second language and commit material to memory (e.g., Rib-Hadda's letters utilize parallelism and repetition; scribes organized content according to sections on a tablet). Regardless of the linguistic skill one obtained, however, the job of a scribe at this time was replete with inevitable high-stakes decisions that tested their mettle. As not only transmitters of information, but interpreters of content, the job requirements of a scribe afforded a sense of interpretive autonomy, where he could develop his own rhetorical style, that thrust him into the role of a diplomat. Glosses and colophons (e.g., EA 286-289, 316) provided natural corridors for such license, but so did more subtle cues, such as orthography, morphosyntax, and lexical use (cf. MANDELL 2015: 150).

These features have thus fossilized a living conversation between individuals, on the one hand geographically and culturally discrete, while, on the other, bound professionally by the shape-shifting political machinations of their time. It is their agency that uncovers clues to their humanity, informing readers about figures with varying educational profiles, social narratives, and personalities[10]. A Canaanite scribe's efficacy had less to do with orthographic fidelity to the underlying language(s) and more to do with the degree to which he grasped the language conventions so that his recipient could comprehend his message (MANDELL 2015: 225-26). The fruit of this

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the latter represents a minority position among scholars. For, as Sanders soundly reminds those engaged in the discussion, "[T]here is no explicit evidence that anyone ever read a Canaano-Akkadian letter out loud to its recipient.… The pattern of note-making and erasures in one letter (EA 369) implies that it was a set of mental notes by a scribe for an oral presentation to the Pharaoh: purely written, not spoken" (2009: 82).

[10] Yet just as a scribe's culture and education engendered opportunity, so did it constrain the prospect of innovation, which, in turn, led to the repetition of content within the corpus (MANDELL 2015: 132). For example, learners of a second language tend to "chunk" groups of words together as a semantic unit early in the process, pairing them together even as fluency improves (BARANOWSKI 2016: 48; LOEWEN – REINDERS 2011: 24). The speculative nature of the question of whether Canaano-Akkadian was spoken, as well as written, has not dissuaded its role as a source of scholarly debate (for different views, see MANDELL 2015: 144 [written only] and Vita 2010: 392-93 [written and spoken]), though the latter represents a minority position among scholars. For, as Sanders soundly reminds those engaged in the discussion, "[T]here is no explicit evidence that anyone ever read a Canaano-Akkadian letter out loud to its recipient.… The pattern of note-making and erasures in one letter (EA 369) implies that it was a set of mental notes by a scribe for an oral presentation to the Pharaoh: purely written, not spoken" (2009: 82).

labor thus allows the modern reader to approach variation constructively, opening inroads to numerous potential insights about the scribe, his world, and his orthography.

3. Methodology

The inextricable set of potential orthographic relationships between LÚ and concomitant nouns requires this study to delineate parameters for what constitutes a determinative over and against apposition or *status constructus.* To this end, I generally read LÚ(.MEŠ) as a determinative, not a logogram, in the following contexts: 1) when it is followed by either a male occupational term or a gentilic[11]; 2) when its collocation with the following term lacks sense as a genitival or appositive construction. The usage rate of LÚ with high-frequency terms, such as *hāpiru* (89%) and *rābiṣu* (84%), also favors a determinative use.

But there are specific factors that that argue for an alternative assessment. First, those inflected terms that uniformly yield a final /*i*/ case vowel imply a genitival relationship (e.g., LÚ.MEŠ *arnûti* "men of treachery" [142:23]; LÚ.MEŠ *miši* "men among the army" [101:4])[12]. Second, the semantics of a collocation can suggest a form of apposition or *status constructus* (e.g., LÚ.MEŠ *maṣṣartu* "men, (namely) regular army troops" [289:36]; LÚ UR.GI$_7$ "(that) man, the dog" [84:35]; LÚ *ar-ni* "the man of guilt" [136:45]). Third, this study understands ambiguous examples preceded by a numeral as indicators of appositional sequences (13 LÚ.MEŠ ⌜DAM⌝.[GÀR.MEŠ] "13 men, [namely] merchants" [313:2]). Fourth, the presence of a phonetic complement on LÚ may point to the use of apposition (LÚ-*lu ar-nu* "the man, the guilty one" [138:104]).

Moreover, I adopt the following terminology to describe the five basic ways scribes wrote a plural within the Amarna archives (GAL stands in arbitrarily for the forms):

1. Conservative: LÚ + GAL.MEŠ
2. Progressive:
    a. short syllabic: LÚ.MEŠ + *rabû*
    b. long syllabic LÚ.MEŠ + *rabûtu*
    c. short logographic: LÚ.MEŠ + GAL
    d. long/reduplicated logographic: LÚ.MEŠ + GAL.MEŠ[13]

Finally, this study uses the term "Canaanite" in a broad sense, delineating geographical boundaries that encompass the entire Levantine territory, from Ugarit in the north all the way down to Gaza in the south. To this end, it incorporates data sets from two northern polities, Amurru and Ugarit, whose dialects and historical contexts evince distinctive features compared to their Levantine neighbors to the south[14].

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[11] Vita presents a compelling case in favor of Amarna glosses as a way to show off one's pedigree (2012: 282).

[12] Four gentilic forms show up with four different endings: ^{lú}*ah-la-ma-i* (200:8); ^{lú}*ah-⌜la⌝-ma-ú* (200:10); $^{lú.meš}$*ka-ši-yi* (287:33); $^{lú.meš}$*šu-ti-i* (318:13).

[13] For an older, yet still authoritative reference on case endings in the Amarna inventory, see KOSSMANN 1987-1988: 38-60.

[14] The methodological constraints are admittedly maximalist, though in the many formally ambiguous cases where one could reasonably read either a determinative or an appositive construction, selecting

Notwithstanding, I incorporate the material from these locales in order to highlight examples of scribal and orthographic continuity and discontinuity, given their similar socio-political status (e.g., subordinate to Pharaoh), their geographical proximity to smaller Canaanite polities (e.g., Qaṭna; Ṣumur), and, most importantly, their use of lexemes and spellings found throughout the rest of the Canaanite corpus in similar literary and historical contexts.

4. Lexical Analysis[15]

4.1 Professional Titles

4.1.1 (SA.)GAZ :: *hāpiru* "*apiru*"

As the most widely used nominative paired with LÚ (98x), an array of spellings comprise the *hāpiru*/(SA.)GAZ data set (see Table 1 below). The Jerusalem scribe's exclusively syllabic spellings stand out amidst a general logographic trend elsewhere (i.e., SA.GAZ)[16]. Among the nine singular spellings, only four such references denote an individual *apiru* member (112:46, 185:49, 288:29, 366:12); the other five imply a collective reference (e.g., 71:21, 148:43, 45, 298:27, and 366:21). And three spellings finish with a final {ki}.

Over half of the total references appear with a plural determinative (55x), 38 of which include a second plural marker. And over a third of the data set marks a plural according to normative Old Babylonian (i.e., LÚ + X.MEŠ); 86% of such forms, however, derive from Ashkelon and Hazi scribes (cf. §5.5 and §5.15 below)[17]. The evidence from Byblian scribes contrasts the homogeneity of those two scribes, as seen in five different permutations: {lú} + GAZ.MEŠ; {lú.meš} + GAZ, SA.GAZ, GAZ.MEŠ, and SA.GAZ.MEŠ (cf. §5.7 below).

Table 1. (SA.)GAZ :: *hāpiru*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}(SA.)GAZ: 9	1. ^{lú}GAZ (71:21; 112:46)	1. Byblos: 2
	2. ^{lú}SA.GAZ (148:43, 45; 366:12)	1. Tyre: 2
	3. ^{lú}⌜SA⌝.GAZ (366:21)	2. Gath: 2
	4. ^{lú}⌜SA.GAZ⌝ (185:49)	3. Hazi: 1
	5. ^{lú}⌜SA.GAZ⌝^{ki} (298:27)	4. Ashkelon(?): 1
	6. ^{lú}*ha-pí-ri* (288:29)	1. Jerusalem: 1

the latter would still nudge a scribe towards a "progressive" reading, which would not affect the conclusions of this study.

15 Vita includes the Amurru records in his 2015 monograph, though leaves out those from Ugarit, arguing that "they should be studied from this perspective within the framework of the text archives found in Ras Shamra" (9).

16 This section highlights only those high-frequency terms that account for five or more attestations, at least one of which is a plural.

17 From this point forward, I use the term "conservative" to denote specifically Old Babylonian orthographic conventions, as opposed Middle Babylonian, the language used by the scribes among the missives of the Great Powers.

^{lú}(SA.)GAZ.MEŠ: 34	1. ^{lú}GAZ.MEŠ (76:37; 90:25; 207:21) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝}$GAZ.$^{⌜}$MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (91:5)	1. Byblos: 3 2. Ashtoreth: 1
	3. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ (185:13, 20, 21, 27, 28, 41, 45, 56, 58, 62, 63; 299:18, 24; 305:22; 313:6) 4. $^{lú⌜}$SA.GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (185:16, 36, 38; 186:14, 44) 5. ^{lú}SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (185:42) 6. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (185:47) 7. ^{lú}SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.[MEŠ] (185:51; 186:30) 8. $^{⌜lú⌝}$SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.[MEŠ] (186:27) 9. ^{lú}[SA].$^{⌜}$GAZ.MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (186:48) 10. $^{lú⌜}$SA$^{⌝}$.[GAZ.MEŠ] (186:53, 66) 11. ^{lú} [SA].GAZ.MEŠ (186:59) 12. ^{lú}SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ.MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (186:64)	1. Hazi: 26 2. Ashkelon: 4
^{lú}*hāpirūtu*: 1	13. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ-tu_4 (299:26)	1. Ashkelon: 1
^{lú}*hāpiru* (pl):1	14. ^{lú}*ha-pí-ri* (286:19)	1. Jerusalem: 1
$^{lú.meš}$(SA.)GAZ: 16	1. $^{lú.meš}$GAZ (73:29, 33; 76:18; 77:24; 81:13; 94:68; 179:22) 2. $^{lú.meš⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$ (74:36) 3. $^{⌜lú.meš}$GAZ$^{⌝}$ (85:41)	1. Byblos: 8 2. Tubihu (?): 1
	4. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ (197:11, 30; 254:34) 5. $^{lú.meš⌜}$SA.GAZ$^{⌝}$ (243:20; 246:r7) 6. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$SA.GAZ (272:17)	1. Mušihuna: 2 2. Megiddo: 2 3. Shechem: 1 4. Gezer: 1
	7. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ^{ki} (215:15)	1. Gaza (?): 1
$^{lú.meš}$(SA.)GAZ.MEŠ: 32	1. $^{lú.meš}$GAZ.MEŠ (71:29; 79:10, 26; 83:17; 85:73; 91:24; 113:25; 118:38; 132:21) 2. $^{lú.⌜meš}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (79:20) 3. $^{[lú].meš}$GAZ.MEŠ (85:78) 4. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$GAZ.MEŠ (105:74; 117:58) 4. $^{lú.meš⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.[MEŠ] (116:38) 5. $^{lú.meš⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (130:38) 6. $^{⌜lú.meš}$ GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (293:16)	1. Byblos: 15 2. Gezer: 1
	7. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ (88:34;104:52, 54; 144:30; 189:r11, r17-18; 273:19) 8. $^{lú.meš⌜}$SA$^{⌝}$.GAZ.MEŠ (108:62) 9. $^{lú.meš}$SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.[MEŠ] (129:89) 10. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš⌜}$SA.GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (144:26) 11. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ (271:16) 12. $^{lú.meš}$SA.$^{⌜}$GAZ$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (273:14) 13. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.$^{⌜}$MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (274:13) 14. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ-*ia* (195:27) 15. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GA.$^{⌜}$AZ.MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (318:11)	1. Byblos: 5 2. Gezer: 4 3. Qidšu: 3 4. Sidon: 2 5. Mušihuna: 1 6. Bīt-Tenni: 1
$^{lú.meš}$*hāpiru*: 7	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ru* (286:56) 2. $^{⌜lú.meš}$*ha*$^{⌝}$*-pí-ru* (288:38) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ri* (287:31; 290:13) 4. $^{[lú.meš}$*ha*$^{⌝}$*-pí-*$^{⌜}$*ri*$^{⌝}$ (288:44) 5. $^{lú.meš}$ / *ha-pí-ri* (290:23) 6. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ri*^{ki} (289:24)	Jerusalem: 7

4.1.2 MAŠKÍM :: *rābiṣu* "commissioner"[18].

Scribes typically spell *rābiṣu* logographically (72/80 references), in which cases they never use a phonetic ending, though several singular pronominal suffices are sometimes appended[19]. All syllabic forms are inflected properly. The spellings are relatively straightforward, though an Ashkelon scribe fronts {lú} with {m}, graphically distinguishing the particular "commissioner" Yidya had in mind from other MAŠKÍM (cf. 322:19, 22). Among the 18 total plural forms, 16 occur with an initial plural determinative, four of which attest a reduplicated plural (deriving from northern locales, Byblos and Qidšu). The Jerusalem scribe preserves the lone conservative plurals.

Table 2. MAŠKÍM :: *rābiṣu*

Spelling	References	Provenance
^{lú}MAŠKÍM: 55	1. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM (68:19, 23; 71:10; 85:82; 104:34; 118:15, 33; 132:46; 149:14, 48; 155:37, 66; 220:18, 29; 285:24; 286:17; 288:19, 59; 315:13; 317:21; 322:19; 337:27; 362:69) 2. ^{lú}⌜MAŠKÍM⌝ (66:10; 287:45; 326:17) 3. ⌜^{lú}⌝MAŠKÍM (216:14) 4. ⌜^{lú}MAŠKÍM⌝ (117:66; 292:20) 5. ^{lú}[MAŠKÍM] (135:22, 25) 6. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM$^{!}$ (316:16; 321:15; 328:24) 7. $^{m.lú}$MAŠKÍM (322:22) 8. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM-*ia* (60:24; 292:37) 9. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM-⌜*ia*⌝ (253:34) 10. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM-*ka* (104:28; 294:9) 11. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM-*šu* (84:27; 113:17; 148:29, 46; 151:22; 292:35; 296:24, 31) 12. ⌜^{lú}MAŠKÍM-*šu*⌝ (90:29; 95:32) 13. ⌜^{lú}⌝MAŠKÍM-*šu* (293:17) 14. ^{lú}⌜MAŠKÍM⌝-*šu* (326:14) 15. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM-*ši* (106:37; 107:23) 16. ^{lú}⌜MAŠKÍM⌝-*ši* (106:22)	1. Byblos: 20 2. Tyre: 7 3. Jerusalem: 5 4. Gezer: 7 5. Ashkelon: 6 6. Zunu: 2 7. Amurru: 1 8. Gaza (?): 1 9. EA 66: 1 11. Yurza: 1 12. Bit-Tenni: 1 14. Lachish: 1 15. Zuhru (?): 1 16: Shechem: 1
^{lú}*rābiṣu* (sg): 7	1. ^{lú}*ra-bi-ṣí* (313:10) 2. ^{lú}⌜*ra*⌝-*bi-ṣí-šu* (298:32) 3. ^{lú}*ra-bi-ṣí-ia* (254:15) 4. ^{lú}*ra-bi-ṣa-šu* (94:71) 5. ^{lú}*ra-bi-ṣa-*⌜*šu*⌝ (272:20) 6. ⌜^{lú}⌝*ra*-[*bi-iṣ*] LUGAL (207:11) 7. ^{lú}[*ra*]-*bi-iṣ* (328:17)	1. Ashkelon: 2 2. Ashtaroth (EA 207): 1 3. Shechem: 1 4. Byblos: 1 5. Gezer: 1 6. Lachish: 1
^{lú}MAŠKÍM.MEŠ: 2	1. ^{lú}MAŠKÍM.MEŠ (287:34) 2. ^{lú}⌜MAŠKÍM⌝.[MEŠ] (286:48)	1. Jerusalem: 2

[18] For the role of *rābiṣu* in Late Bronze Age Canaan, see MUNTINGH 2016: 795-810.

[19] While the Jerusalem scribe only wrote *hāpiru* syllabically, he writes *rābiṣu* exclusively with a logogram.

$^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM: 11	1. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM (116:30; 371:24) 2. $^{lú.meš}$⌜MAŠKÍM⌝ (118:51; 145:16; 135:4) 3. $^{⌜lú.meš⌝}$MAŠKÍM! :: *ma-lik*.MEŠ (131:21) 4. $^{lú.meš}$[MAŠKÍM] (81:48) 5. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*ka* (264:11) 6. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*ka*$_4$ (371:38) 7. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*šu* (198:12) 8. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*šu* (224:12)	1. Byblos: 5 2. Amurru: 2 3. Sidon: 1 4. Kumidu: 1 5. Šamhuna: 1 6. Ginti-Kirmil: 1
$^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM.MEŠ: 4	1. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM.MEŠ (119:22; 129:14; 189:13) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$⌜MAŠKÍM⌝.MEŠ (93:15)	1. Byblos: 3 2. Qidšu: 1
$^{lú.meš}$*rābiṣu* (pl): 1	$^{lú.meš}$*ra-bi-ṣí* :: *sú-ki-ni* (256:9)	1. Pihilu: 1

4.1.3 DUMU KIN :: *mār šipri* "messenger" [20]

Among the three different forms Canaanite scribes use to spell *mār šipri* (DUMU KIN, KIN, and DUMU *šipri*), only the Jerusalem scribe and that of EA 92 preserve the base form, KIN. For the scribes who wrote it logographically, most finish the form with either a standardized phonetic ending, *-ri*, a pronominal suffix, or both.[21] While the final *–ri* represents the construct nature of the *mār šipri* collocation (lit. "son of a sending"), {lú} characteristically identifies its professional status. Plural are rare (11/55 references) and exclusively progressive in form (10/11 use the short form; the lone reduplication stems from Vita's Byblian "Scribe 4" [hereafter, S4]).

Table 3. DUMU KIN :: *mār šipri*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}DUMU KIN: 22 ^{lú}KIN: 11 ^{lú}DUMU *šipri*: 11	1. ^{lú}DUMU ⌜KIN⌝ (88:46) 2. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ia* (53:66; 88:13) 3. ^{lú}[DUMU] KIN-*ia* (92:38) 4. $^{lú⌜}$DUMU KIN⌝-*ia* (157:35) 5. $^{lú⌜}$DUMU KIN⌝-[*ia*] (168:7) 6. $^{lú⌜}$DUMU⌝ [KIN-*ia*] (168:r16) 7. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-⌜*ka*⌝ (87:9) 8. $^{⌜lú⌝}$DUMU KIN-[*šu*] (54:38) 9. $^{⌜lú⌝}$DUMU [KIN]-*šu-nu* (92:40) 10. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ri* (47:14; 161:49, 50, 54) 11. $^{lú⌜}$DUMU⌝ [KIN-*ri*] (46:11) 12. ^{lú}[DUMU KIN-*ri*] (46:18) 13. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ri-ia* (47:12) 14. ^{lú}DUMU ⌜KIN-*ri*⌝-*ia* (160:35) 15. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-[*ri-ia*$^{?}$] (160:42)	1. Byblos: 5 2. Amurru: 3 3. Qaṭna: 2 1. Amurru: 7 2. Ugarit: 4 3. Qaṭna: 1

[20] For the role of the DUMU *šipri* in Late Bronze Age Canaan, see MUNTINGH 2017: 424-26.

[21] The Beirut scribe alone utilizes ŠÌP instead of the more prevalent *ši-ip* combination for *šipri*. And in one of his two such references, he fronts DUMU with {lú} and *šipriya* with {m} (^{lú}DUMU $^{m⌜}$*šìp*⌝-[*ri-ia*] [137:8]).

	16. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ri-ia* (164:42) 17. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ri-šu* (56:36) 18. ^{lú}DUMU ⌜KIN⌝-*ri-šu* (160:34)	1. Amurru: 1
	19. ^{lú}DUMU KIN-*ip-ri-ia* (170:31) 20. ^{lú}KIN-*ri* (147:22; 151:45) 21. ^{lú}KIN-⌜*ri*⌝-[*ia*] (151:25) 22. ^{lú}[KIN-*ri-šu*] (151:28)	1. Tyre: 4
	23. ^{lú}KIN-*ia* (92:16) 24. ^{lú}KIN-⌜*ia*⌝ (285:7) 25. ⌜^{lú}⌝[KIN]-⌜*ia*⌝ (92:12) 26. ^{lú}[KIN-*ia*] (92:26) 27. ⌜^{lú}⌝[KIN-*ia*] (92:14; 285:28)	1. Byblos: 4 2. Jerusalem: 2
	30. ^{lú}DUMU *ši-ip-ri* (108:46; 299:13; 302:11; 329:13) 31. ^{lú}DUMU *ši-ip-*⌜*ri*⌝ (250:53) 32. ^{lú}DUMU *ši-ip-*⌜*ri*⌝-[*ia*] (88:47; 126:41) 33. ^{lú}⌜DUMU⌝ [*ši-ip-ri*] (117:44) 34. ^{lú}DUMU *ši-*<*ip*>*-ri-ia* (126:39)	1. Byblos: 5 2. Ashkelon: 3 3. Megiddo: 1
	35. ^{lú}DUMU ^{m}⌜*šìp*⌝-[*ri-ia*] (137:8) 36. ^{lú}DUMU *šìp-*<*ri*>*-ia* (137:21)	1. Beirut: 2
$^{lú.meš}$DUMU KIN: 2	1. $^{lú.meš}$DUMU ⌜KIN⌝ (52:37) 2. $^{lú.meš}$DUMU KIN-⌜*šu*⌝ (53:54)	1. Qaṭna:2
$^{lú.meš}$KIN: 4 $^{lú.meš}$DUMU *šipri*: 4	3. LÚ.MEŠ DUMU KIN-*ri-ni* (59:14) 4. ⌜$^{lú.meš}$ DUMU KIN⌝-*ri-ia* (171:10)	1. Amurru: 1 2. Tunip: 1
	5. $^{lú.meš}$DUMU *ši-ip-ri* (108:54; 116:21) 6. ⌜$^{lú.meš}$⌝DUMU *ši-ip-ri*⌝ (90:54) 7. ⌜$^{lú.meš}$⌝DUMU *ši-ip-ri-ka*⌝ (90:48)	1. Byblos: 4
$^{lú.meš}$DUMU.MEŠ *šipri*: 1	$^{lú.meš}$DUMU.⌜MEŠ⌝ [*ši-ip-ri*] (129:55)	Byblos: 1

4.1.4 *hazannu* "city ruler"[22]

As with *rābiṣu*, the *hazannu*, a specific designation for Canaanite provincial rulers under Egyptian hegemony, provides another commonly used and widely distributed bureaucratic role within the Amarna archives. Just three spelling aberrations appear outside of the standard *ha-za-nu/ni/na*: the Jerusalem scribe's medial ZI + A (contra ZA elsewhere); Amurru S3 idiosyncratic CV sign, AN, following ZA; and the Beirut scribe's anomalous writing with a superfluous, medial plural marker ($^{lú.meš}$*ha*.MEŠ-*za-ni*; cf. §5.8 below). Always spelled syllabically and inflected, the most common orthography (58% of the data set [30/52 references; 17 from Byblos]) is a plural

[22] For the role of the *hazannu* in Late Bronze Age Canaan, see MUNTINGH 2016: 811-817.

determinative plus a plural spelling[23]. But the evidence is mixed. {lú.meš} sometimes fronts a formally singular term (9x), just as it does at least twice to what amounts to be a triply plural term (159:39; 365:16; cf. 137:13). The plural determinative affords a degree of orthographic flexibility, as seen by spellings from Byblos, which may mark plurals with either general oblique (e.g., ˹lú.meš˺*ha-za-ni* [129:11]) or accusative markers (e.g., lú.meš*ha-za-na* [138:26])[24]. The data set reveals that scribes generally presuppose {lú.meš} to be a classifier for plural *hazannu* and eclectically apply such thought.

Table 4. *hazannu*

Form	References	Provenance
lú*hazannu*: 11	1. lú*ha-za-nu* (144:5) 2. lú*ha-za-ni* (251:3) 3. lú*ha-*˹*za-ni*˺ (317:24) 4. lú*ha-za-na*-[*šu*] (113:3) 5. lú*ha-za-an* (237:17) 5. lú*ha-zi-a-nu* (286:48; 288:9; 289:9) 6. lú*ha-*˹*zi*˺*-a-nu* (287:22) 7. ˹lú*ha-zi-a*˺*-nu* (288:39) 6. lú[*ha-zi-a-nu*] (285:5)	1. Sidon: 1 2. Central Palestine (?): 1 3. Bit-Tenni: 1 4. Anaharat: 1 5. Byblos: 1 1. Jerusalem: 6
lú*hazannūti*: 1	1. lú*ha-za-nu-ti*$_7$ (212:8)	1. Upper Shephelah (?): 1
lú.meš*hazannu*: 9	1. lú.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-nu-šu* (114:47) 2. lú.meš*ha-za-*˹*ni*˺ (121:50) 3. ˹lú.meš˺*ha-za-ni* (129:11; 173:4) 4. lú.meš˹*ha*˺-[*za-ni*] (129:28) 5. lú.meš*ha-za-ni-ka* (109:21) 6. ˹lú˺.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-ni-ka* (132:49) 7. lú.meš*ha-za-ni-ku-nu* (117:62) 8. lú.meš*ha-za-na* (138:26)	1. Byblos: 8 2. Unknown: 1
lú.meš*hazannūtu*: 28	1. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-tu* (118:45; 125:33) 2. lú.meš˹*ha-za*˺*-nu-tu* (109:60) 3. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-tu*$_4$ (108:34) 4. lú.meš*ha-*˹*za*˺*-nu-tu*$_4$ (73:30) 5. lú.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-nu-tu*$_4$ (126:10) 6. lú.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-an-nu-ú-tu*$_4$ (157:38) 7. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-ti* (107:24; 118:20; 124:37; 126:16; 161:53) 8. lú.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-nu-ti* (77:25) 9. lú.meš˹*ha*˺*-za-*˹*nu-ti*˺ (125:32)	1. Byblos: 17 2. Amurru: 2 3. Canaan (?): 2 4. Gezer: 1

[23] Scribes generally inflect the term correctly, though errors do crop up (e.g., the bound form before *ša* in 237:17; cf. two writings presupposing a triptotic plural: ˹lú.meš˺*ha-za-nu-ta* [74:34]; lú.meš*ha-za-nu-ta*.MEŠ [365:16]).

[24] What one could parse as a plural oblique in 121:50 (lú.meš*ha-za-*˹*ni*˺) instead likely represents a genitive singular in construct, given the use of similar comparanda in that same letter (l.11: lú.meš*a-*[*bu*]-˹*ti-ia*˺; l.12: lú.meš*ma-ṣa-*˹*ar-ti*˺).

	10. $^{lú.meš}$*ha*$^{?}$*-za-nu-*[*ti*] (92:57) 11. $^{ʳlú.meš¹}$[*ha-za-nu-ti*] (90:27) 12. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-nu-te* (73:24; 362:54) 13. $^{ʳlú.meš}$*ha-za*^{¹}*-nu-te* (230:17) 14. $^{[lú].ʳmeš¹}$*ha-za-nu-te-ka*$^{!}$ (KU) (230:9) 15. $^{[lú].ʳmeš¹}$*ha-za-nu-*^{ʳ}*te*$^{?¹}$-[*šu*] (279:17) 16. $^{ʳlú.meš¹}$*ha-za-nu-ta* (74:34) 18. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-zi-a-nu-ti* (286:51; 288:27) 19. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-zi-*^{ʳ}*a*^{¹}*-nu-ti* (288:56) 20. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-*^{ʳ}*zi*^{¹}-[*ia-nu-ti*] (286:19) 21. $^{lú.ʳmeš}$*ha-zi-a-nu-ti*^{¹} (287:24)	1. Jerusalem: 5
$^{lú.meš}$*ha*(MEŠ)*zannu*: 1	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ha.*MEŠ-*za-ni* (137:13)	1. Beirut: 1
$^{lú.meš}$*hazannūtu*.MEŠ: 2	2. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-an-nu-ú-*[*te.*MEŠ] (159:39) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-nu-ta*.MEŠ (365:16)	1. Megiddo: 1 2. Amurru: 1

4.1.5 GAL :: *rabû/rabûtu* "magnate"

Thirty-two of the altogether thirty-five collocations of LÚ(.MEŠ) GAL depict the base singular, without phonetic complement or suffix. A plural determinative plural fronts all three plural forms: a short form from Megiddo; and two reduplicated forms from northern Syria.

Table 5. GAL :: *rabû/rabûtu*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}GAL: 32	1. ^{lú}GAL (64:13; 85:87; 102:22; 103:13, 15; 108:41; 129:84, 85; 140:13; 178:8, 11; 189:16, 18; 238:3, 10, 14; 238:28, 30; 239:12, 21) 2. ^{ʳlú}GAL^{¹} (95:1) 3. ^{lúʳ}GAL^{¹} (103:21; 238:4) 4. ^{ʳlú¹}GAL (178:1, 25; 238:1; 284:27; 333:1) 5. ^{ʳlú¹}[GAL] (238:16) 6. $^{m.lú}$GAL (96:3; 252:11) 7. ^{ʳlú¹}GAL-*bi* (53:50)	1. Byblos: 10 2. Anaharat: 10 3. EA 178: 4 4. Qidšu: 2 5. Gath: 2 6. Lachish: 1 1. Ṣumur: 1 2. Shechem: 1 1. Qaṭna: 1
$^{lú.meš}$GAL: 1	1. $^{lú.meš}$GAL-*šu* (250:24)	1. Megiddo: 1
$^{lú.meš}$GAL.MEŠ: 2	1. $^{lú.meš}$GAL.MEŠ-*šu* (189:14) 2. $^{lú.meš}$GAL-*tu*$_4$.MEŠ (55:14)	1. Qidšu: 1 2. Qaṭna: 1

4.1.6 ÌR (*ardu*) "slave"

The evidence for ÌR comes exclusively from Syria (primarily Amurru and Qaṭna) and Jerusalem, a southern locale heavily influenced by northern traditions (MORAN 1975: 146-166; 2003: 249-274). Half of the total plurals (6/12 references) represent conservative spellings, with the progressive evidence stemming entirely from Amurru.

Table 6. ÌR (*ardu*)

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}ÌR: 20	1. ^{lú}ÌR (46:25; 166:27; 171:18) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ÌR$^{⌝}$ (165:27) 3. ^{lú}ÌR-*ka* (55:5; 59:5, 21; 160:6, 29; 161:4, 10) 4. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ÌR-*ka*$^{⌝}$ (53:4) 5. ^{lú}ÌR-[*ka*] (157:7) 6. ^{lú}ÌR-*ka-ma* (53:2; 59:2; 159:2) 7. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ÌR$^{⌝}$-*ka-ma* (53:7) 8. ^{lú}ÌR-[*ka-ma*] (160:2) 9. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ÌR-*ka-ma* (161:2) 10. ^{lú}ÌR-$^{⌜}$*šu*$^{⌝}$ (171:35)	1. Amurru: 10 2. Ugarit: 1 3. Qaṭna: 6 4. Tunip: 3
^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ: 6	1. ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ (186:46) 2. ^{lú}ÌR.$^{⌜}$MEŠ$^{⌝}$ (288:18) 3. ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-*ia* (55:44) 4. ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-$^{⌜}$*šu*$^{⌝}$ (53:44) 5. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ÌR$^{⌝}$.MEŠ-*šu* (53:49)	1. Qaṭna: 3 2. Amurru: 1 3. Hazi: 1 4. Jerusalem: 1
$^{lú.meš}$ÌR.MEŠ: 6	1. $^{lú.meš}$ÌR (164:9; 166:10) 2. $^{lú.meš}$$^{⌜}$ÌR$^{⌝}$ (164:10) 3. $^{lú.meš}$[ÌR] (165:44) 4. $^{⌜lú.meš⌝}$[ÌR-*ka*] (165:9) 5. $^{lú.meš}$ÌR-*šu* (169:12)	1. Amurru: 6

4.1.7 ERÍN *piṭṭātu* “regular army”[25]

Perhaps the most salient datum pertaining to ERÍN (*piṭṭātu*) in this study is that it is rare with LÚ(.MEŠ) – in fact, over 150 citations rarer. Three of the nine examples in the data set include the Egyptian term, *piṭṭātu* “archers” (in Amarna vernacular, the Egyptian “regular army”), immediately after ERÍN. And in one instance, ERÍN elides altogether, leaving only $^{lú.meš}$*pi-ṭa-ti* (286:53). Among the voluminous references to ERÍN *sans* LÚ(.MEŠ) in the Amarna archive, none occurs *without* a plural marker following ERÍN, though this phenomenon shows up thrice when fronted by the determinative: ^{lú}ERÍN *pi-*$^{⌜}$*ṭa*$^{⌝}$*-ti* (286:59), $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN (151:58), and $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:54). This datum accentuates the uniqueness of the singular example in 286:59, implying the possibility of a missing plural marker either after {lú} or ERÍN.

Table 7. ERÍN *piṭṭātu*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}ERÍN: 1	^{lú}ERÍN *pi-*$^{⌜}$*ṭa*$^{⌝}$*-ti* (286:59)	Jerusalem: 1
^{lú}ERÍN.MEŠ: 4	1. ^{lú}ERÍN.MEŠ *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:57) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ERÍN.MEŠ (138:59) 3. $^{⌜lú⌝}$ERIN$^{⌝}$.MEŠ (55:36)	1. Jerusalem: 1 2. Byblos: 1 3. Qaṭna: 1

[25] For the role of the ERÍN *piṭṭātu* in Late Bronze Age Canaan, see MUNTINGH 2017: 416-417.

$^{lú.meš}$ERÍN: 2	1. $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN (151:58) 2. $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:54)	Tyre: 1 Jerusalem: 1
$^{lú.meš}$ERÍN.MEŠ: 1	$^{\lceil lú \rceil}$MEŠ ERÍN.MEŠ (169:25)	Amurru: 1
$^{lú.meš}$*piṭṭātu*: 1	$^{lú.meš}$*pi-ṭa-ti* (286:53)	Jerusalem: 1

4.1.8 *šāru* "enemy"

This data set consists in 14 examples, 11 of which are plural spellings. Among the plurals, three exhibit conservative orthography, all from a Hazi scribe who orthographically delineates singulars from plurals, while the remaining eight (deriving from Byblos, Gezer, and Beirut) use */a/* for the plural oblique case marker. Viewing the evidence from this perspective affords a lucid glimpse into an orthographic vestige of scribal education, especially when the plural oblique forms from Hazi are juxtaposed with progressive forms found elsewhere.

Table 8. *šāru*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}*šāru*: 3	1. ^{lú}*ša-ru* (185:64) 2. ^{lú}*ša-ri* (100:16) 3. $^{\lceil lú \rceil}$*ša-*$^{\lceil}$*ra*$^{\rceil}$ (185:73)	Hazi: 2 Byblos: 1
^{lú}*šārū*(*tu*): 3	1. ^{lú}*ša-ru-ta*.MEŠ (185:70) 2. ^{lú}*ša-ri*.MEŠ (185:56) 3. ^{lú}*ša-*$^{\lceil}$*ri*.MEŠ$^{\rceil}$ (186:59)	Hazi: 3
$^{lú.meš}$*šārūtu*: 8	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ša-ru-tu* (124:48; 137:48) 2. $^{lú.meš\lceil}$*ša*$^{\rceil}$-[*ru-tu*] (100:26) 3. $^{lú.meš\lceil}$*ša*$^{\rceil}$-*ru-tu*$_4$ (102:31) 4. $^{lú.meš}$*ša-ru-ta* (103:31; 279:21) 5. $^{[lú].\lceil meš \rceil}$*ša-*$^{\lceil}$*ru*$^{\rceil}$-*ta*$_5$ (138:115) 6. $^{lú.meš\lceil}$*ša*$^{\rceil}$-[*ru-te*] (279:13)	Byblos: 5 Gezer: 2 Beirut: 1

4.1.9 *weʾu* "soldier"[26]

References to *weʾu* "soldier" generally appear in correspondence from northern trained scribes. Among the 12 attestations, 5 of which exhibit progressive plurals, the scribes use case markers appropriately with one exception (viz. $^{lú\lceil}$*ú-e*$^{\rceil}$-*éʾ* in nominative position [287:69]).

[26] For the role of the *weʾu* in Late Bronze Age Canaan, see MUNTINGH 2016: 818.

Table 9. *weʾu*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}*weʾu*: 7	1. $^{\lceil lú \rceil}$*we-ú* (150:8) 2. $^{lú\lceil}$*we-u*$_5$$^{\rceil}$*-ka* (230:11) 3. ^{lú}*we-a* (109:39) 4. ^{lú}*ú-e-ú* (288:10) 5. $^{\lceil lú \rceil}$*ú-i-ú* (285:6) 6. ^{lú}*ú-e-*$^{\lceil}$*ú*$^{\rceil}$ (287:47) 7. $^{lú\lceil}$*ú-e*$^{\rceil}$*-éʾ* (287:69)	Tyre: 1 Canaan (?): 1 Byblos: 1 Jerusalem: 4
$^{lú.meš}$*weʾū*: 5	1. $^{lú.meš}$*wi-i-ma* (108:16) 2. $^{lú.meš\lceil}$*wi*$^{\rceil}$*-i-ma* (150:6) 3. $^{lú.meš\lceil}$*wi*$^{\rceil}$*-*[*i*]*-*$^{\lceil}$*ma*$^{\rceil}$ (152:50) 4. $^{lú.meš}$*we-e-*[*ma*] (109:22) 5. $^{lú.meš}$*we-ʾì* (129:12)	Byblos: 3 Tyre: 2

4.1.10 AB.BA/AD.DA :: *abu* "father"

Canaanite scribes write *abu* six different ways with LÚ(.MEŠ), two of which denote a singular and four a plural. For example, the Jerusalem scribe uses Sumerian AD.DA.A.NI with {lú} in EA 287-288, while the Ugaritian scribe writes AB.BA for a plural (MEŠ [47:8-9]; E [46:1, 9, 23]); other scribes write *abu* syllabically, as does the composer of EA 55's triply plural forms.[27] These 24 examples yield a handful of challenges regarding case usage, some of which may suggest *status constructus*, but others that imply scribal mistakes.[28]

Table 10. AB.BA/AD.DA :: *abu*

Form	References	Provenance
^{lú}AD.DA: 4	1. ^{lú}AD.DA.A.NI (287:26; 288:13, 15) 2. $^{lú\lceil}$AD.DA$^{\rceil}$.[A.NI] (288:15)	Jerusalem
^{lú}*abu*: 7	1. ^{lú}*a-bu-nu* (250:14) 2. ^{lú}*a-bu-šu-ni* (250:8) 3. ^{lú}*a-bi-ia* (286:9,13) 4. ^{lú}*a-bi-nu* (224:18; 250:41) 5. ^{lú}*a-ba-nu* (250:18)	Megiddo: 4 Jerusalem: 2 Šamhuna: 1

[27] The variation between logographic and syllabic spellings (syllabic in EA 286, logographic in EA 287-288) at the hands of the same scribal hand presents a telling mark – especially given the shift from Akkadian *-ia* to Sumerian A.NI implementations of the pronominal suffix – not only of an attempt (A.NI literally means "his father") at erudition, but also possibly ostentatiousness.

[28] At least two of the three triply plural forms in EA 55 attest an oblique ending in nominative position (viz. ll. 7, 53; 55:39 is dubious due to the broken context), which may point to the fact that the scribe read it as a construct ("the men of my/your forefathers"). An analogous scenario plays out in two passages from S8 (EA 121:11; 130:21).

^{lú}AB.BA: 4	1. ^{lú}AB.BA-*e-ia* (46:9, 23) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝}$AB.BA$^{⌝}$-[*e-ia*] (46:1) 3. ^{lú}AB.BA.MEŠ-*ia* (47:8)	Ugarit
^{lú}*abbūtu*: 1	^{lú}*a-bu-ti-ia* (126:19)	Byblos
$^{lú.meš}$*abbūtu*.MEŠ: 8	1. $^{lú.meš}$*a-bu-tu-nu* (224:15) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*a-bu-ti-ia* (130:21) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*a*-[*bu*]-$^{⌜}$*ti-ia*$^{⌝}$ (121:11) 4. $^{lú.meš}$*a*-$^{⌜}$*bu*$^{⌝}$-*ti-nu* (144:33) 5. $^{lú.meš}$*ab*-<*bu*>-*ti-nu* (137:75)	Byblos: 2 Beirut: 1 Sidon: 1 Šamhuna: 1
$^{lú.meš}$*abbūtu*: 3	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*ia* (55:7) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*ka* (55:53) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*šu* (55:39)	Qaṭna

4.2. Assessment

The above analysis underscores the need to assess the lexical evidence on the terms of each individual lexeme, for orthographic patterns vary from one term to the next due to various factors (e.g., semantics, spelling). Moreover, the preceding evidence sets the stage for what is perhaps the most conspicuous isogloss: scribal tradition. Those tasked with crafting a message that both accurately replicates the sender's perlocutionary effect and communicates its point clearly to the Egyptian recipient inhered and exerted a degree of orthographic freedom to achieve their professional objective. Numerous variables (e.g. scribal training, rhetorical objectives, lexeme, etc.) converged, the circumstances of which could lead either to the constraint or fostering of agency (see §6 below)[29]. For instance, it is noteworthy that elsewhere in the Amarna records *abu* occurs over 200 times sans determinative. Or consider the Ugaritian scribe's selection of two different spellings for *asû* "physician" within three lines: A.ZU-*a* (49:22); ^{lú}A.ZU-*ú* (49:24). The impetus for such orthographic variability remains unknown to this reader, given the fact that line spacing is not a concern. But the reason for spelling variation is not always so ambiguous. Though one could reasonably find the bewildering number of different spellings a sign of scribal confusion, a closer look at the evidence combined with a hermeneutic of trust leads one to assume that, despite perplexing spellings and Akkadian not being their first language, the Canaanite scribes grasped the basic function of the determinative. Though the above analysis neither engenders consensus nor allows for sweeping claims, it has demonstrated the need to survey the data from the perspective of scribal agency in order to explain the variation.

5. Scribal Analysis

This second part of the study traces the use of LÚ both according to the location (moving from north to south, mirroring Vita 2015) from which the letters originate and, more essentially, the scribal hands responsible for writing them. The following analysis stands on the shoulders of the groundbreaking paleographical study of Vita, whose work builds on the similarly watershed contribution of Goren, Finkelstein, and

[29] Baranowski posits the unpredictability of scribal memory as an additional cause of lexical variation (2016: 119).

Naʾaman. The primary objective here is to trace possible orthographic patterns of plural determinatives across the scribal record within the Canaanite inventory in order to articulate more precisely the factors that contributed to the spelling variation outlined in the previous section. Each section will conclude with a brief evaluation of the scribal evidence according to the following three categories: conservative, progressive, and composite.

5.1 Ugarit[30]

In its modest dossier of only four clear plurals, each with logographic spellings of *abu*, the Ugaritic scribe(s) uniformly employ conservative orthography[31]. The fact that Ras Shamra "was much closer, both geographically and organizationally, to the Mesopotamian centers of learning than the southern Canaanite city states" (DEMSKY 1990: 160) provides a fitting context for such a datum[32].

Table 11. Ugarit Scribe(s)

Conservative Plurals	1. ^{lú}AB.BA-*e-ia* (46:9, 23) 2. ^{ˈlúˈ}AB.BA^{ˈ}-[*e-ia*] (46:1) 3. ^{lú}AB.BA.MEŠ-*ia* (47:8)

Evaluation

Scribe(s): Conservative

5.2 Qaṭna

Among the ten plurals preserved among the Qaṭna records, seven use {lú.meš} to classify a following noun. And nine of those ten derive from the work of S2. When it comes to *mār šipri*, S2 mirrors the practice exhibited by S1's lone plural. Moreover, S2 produces five reduplicated spellings in EA 55, each of which results in a triply plural form, a datum that, if not for Vita's note that EA 53 and 55 are "without a doubt" written by the same individual (2015: 12), would seem to argue for two different hands at work.

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30 For more on scribalism at Ugarit, see ERNST-PRADAL 2008.

31 Though Vita does not include Ugarit in his study, the two different plural endings on *abu* –not to mention the extensive contemporaneous cuneiform record at that site– suggest a plurality of scribes at work.

32 One final, though questionable, example emerges in a broken context. The term for "messenger" partially appears in 46:11 (^{lúˈ}DUMU^{ˈ} [KIN-*ri*]), a spelling that conforms to variations of four clear examples in EA 47 (see ll.12, 14, 16, 18). In 46:18, one reads {lú} before what likely results in another example of *mār šipri* (^{lú}[DUMU KIN-*ri*]), though Knudtzon (1915: 313, n. g) identifies the trace of a vertical wedge that can be seen at the bottom of the line following {lú}, opening up the possibility of a concluding plural marker. Rainey transliterates ^{lú}[DUMU KIN-*ri*], but translates "the am[bassador(s)]," without making any comment on the presence or absence of the alleged wedge (2015: 376-377). I am unable to confirm or deny its presence after reviewing the copy and photo; additional collation is desirable.

Table 12. Qaṭna Scribes

Scribe	Conservative Plurals	Short Plurals	Reduplicated Plurals
S1	n/a	$^{lú.meš}$DUMU ⌜KIN⌝ (52:37)	n/a
S2	1. ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-⌜*šu*⌝ (53:44) 2. ⌜^{lú}ÌR⌝.MEŠ-*šu* (53:49) 3. ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-*ia* (55:44)	$^{lú.meš}$DUMU KIN-⌜*šu*⌝ (53:54)	1. $^{lú.meš}$GAL-*tu*$_4$.MEŠ (55:14) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*mu-de*$_4$.MEŠ-*šu* (55:42) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*ia* (55:7) 4. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*ka* (55:53) 5. $^{lú.meš}$*ab-bu-te*.MEŠ-*šu* (55:39)

But when spelling *ardu*, S2 uses conservative orthography exclusively.[33] A closer look at the syntactical environment of the three conservative spellings further bolsters Vita's argument: each occurs with parallel expressions ("X.MEŠ are my/his servants"). The initially perplexing use of conservative plurals alongside others with reduplication may thus have less to do with the lexeme in use and more to do with the mechanics of this expression from S2's perspective. In any case, the drastically different orthography implies an intentionality that underlines both erudition and scribal freedom. Aware of multiple orthographies, he exerted license to select certain forms in certain environments.

Table 13. Conservative Plurals at Qaṭna

EA 53:43-4	*an-nu-ut-ti gáb-bá* LUGAL.MEŠ *a-na ša be-lí-ia* ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-⌜*šu*⌝	"all of these things belonging to my lord are his servants"
EA 53:49	LUGAL.MEŠ *an-nu-ut-ti* ⌜^{lú}ÌR⌝.MEŠ-*šu*	"these kings are his servants"
EA 55:44	⌜LÚ.MEŠ⌝ $^{[uru]}$⌜*qàṭ*⌝-*na* ^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ-*ia*	"the men of Qaṭna are my servants"

Evaluation

S1: progressive (based on only one example)
S2: composite (progressive leaning)

5.3 Qidšu

Stemming entirely from EA 189, the Qidšu material yields five reduplicated plurals. The movement from ^{lú}GAL (ll.16, 18) to $^{lú.meš}$GAL.MEŠ-*šu* (l.14) effectively demonstrates this scribe's approach to distinguishing singulars and plurals classified by {lú}.

Table 14. Qidšu Scribe

Singular	Plural
1. ^{lú}GAL (189:16, 18)	1. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM.MEŠ (189:13) 2. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ (189:r11, r17, r18) 3. $^{lú.meš}$GAL.MEŠ-*šu* (189:14)

[33] These three plural examples of *ardu* are the only attestations of ÌR.MEŠ within the Qaṭna dossier.

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.4 Amurru

Only 12 clear examples emerge from the extensive Amurru dossier of 18 letters, among which scribes use progressive spellings with general uniformity[34]. Each example spelled logographically reflects a short plural; the three long plurals apply S3's orthography of *hazannu* to the only syllabic spellings, each from the hand of S3[35]. One can thus infer from the evidence a unifying orthographic framework at Amurru: short plurals for logograms and long plurals for syllabograms[36].

Table 15. Amurru Scribes

Scribe	Short Plurals	Long Plurals
S1	1. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM (371:24) 2. $^{lú.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*ka*$_4$ (371:38)	
S3	1. $^{lú.meš}$ÌR (164:9; 166:10)[37] 2. $^{lú.meš}$ÌR$^{⌉}$ (164:10)	1. $^{lú.meš⌈}$*ha*$^{⌉}$-*za-an-nu-ú-tu*$_4$ (157:38) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-nu-ti* (161:53) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-an-nu-ú-te* (159:39)
S4	1. $^{lú.meš}$[ÌR] (165:44) 2. $^{⌈lú.meš⌉}$[ÌR-*ka*] (165:9)	
S5	$^{⌈lú.meš}$ DUMU KIN$^{⌉}$-*ri-ia* (171:10)	
S6	$^{lú.meš}$ÌR-*šu* (169:12)	

Evaluation

S1: progressive
S3: progressive
S4: progressive
S5: progressive
S6: progressive

[34] Rainey's collation of EA 156 (2015: 790) may preserve an exception (LÚ T[UR.MEŠ] [156:9]), though there are two reasons to suggest otherwise: the length of the break on the tablet suggests TUR closed the line; and there is no plural marker in the only clear example of the sequence 2 + TUR within the Canaanite letters (49:19; cf. 268:19).

[35] Rainey reads LÚ.MEŠ *ha-za-an-nu-ú*-[*-te*.MEŠ] in EA 159:39 (2015: 780), though the MEŠ is hardly certain given both the scant available space at the end of the line and S3's use of the long plural form of *hazannu* elsewhere.

[36] The determinative status of the final example, a reduplicated plural (169: 25), remains dubious. Given the use of {lú.meš} as *nomen regens* before a geographical term elsewhere in EA 169 (LÚ.MEŠ ^{kur}*nu-ha-aš-še* "men of Nuhašše" [169:17]; LÚ.MEŠ *sú-u-tù* "Sutean men"), the collocation *gáb-bá* ⌈LÚ⌉.MEŠ ERÍN.MEŠ *su-u-tù* ("all of the men of the Sutean troops" [169:25]) likewise implies *status constructus*, a situation that concords with S6's orthography (and Amurru scribal activity, in general).

[37] Amurru scribes alone use {lú.meš} with ÌR, rather than {lú}.

5.5 Hazi

Tallying 30 total plurals, each of which has a singular counterpart, the records from Hazi, inland and slightly southeast of Byblos, yield a more wide-ranging and conclusive, yet complementary, picture to that attested by the Ugaritian scribes. Both syllabograms and logograms reflect exclusively conservative orthography[38], despite internal variation (e.g., two different plural spellings for *šāru*, one for nominative and another for oblique)[39].

Table 16. Hazi Scribe(s)

Conservative plurals	1. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ (185:13, 20, 21, 27, 28, 41, 45, 56, 58, 62, 63) 2. ^{lú}⌜SA.GAZ⌝.MEŠ (185:16, 36, 38; 186:14, 44) 3. ^{lú}SA.⌜GAZ⌝.MEŠ (185:42) 4. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ⌝ (185:47) 5. ^{lú}SA.⌜GAZ⌝.[MEŠ] (185:51; 186:30) 6. ⌜^{lú}⌝SA.⌜GAZ⌝.[MEŠ] (186:27) 7. ^{lú}[SA].⌜GAZ.MEŠ⌝ (186:48) 8. ^{lú}⌜SA⌝.[GAZ.MEŠ] (186:53, 66) 9. ^{lú} [SA].GAZ.MEŠ (186:59) 10. ^{lú}SA.⌜GAZ.MEŠ⌝ (186:64)
	1. ^{lú}*ša-ru-ta*.MEŠ (185:70) 2. ^{lú}*ša-ri*.MEŠ (185:56) 3. ^{lú}*ša-*⌜*ri*.MEŠ⌝ (186:59)
	^{lú}ÌR.MEŠ (186:46)

Evaluation:

Scribe(s): Conservative

5.6 Mušihuna

While Qidšu's lone letter generates seven relevant examples, the twelve total texts within the Mušihuna subcorpus produce only three total forms by two scribes: S3 twice

[38] Rainey has posited a tenuous exception in 186:50-1, modifying Knudtzon's original transliteration without comment. The two readings are, as follows: i-ri-bu-mi 40 a[mê]lūti *i*[*š-tu libbi*^{bi}] ^{amêlu}Sa.G[az.]Meš a-na ma-har ^{l}a[-ma-an-ha-at-bi]; "… es traten 40 L[eu]te *a*[*us der Mitte*] der Sa.G[az]-Leute hinein vor A[manḫatbi]…." (KNUDTZON 1915: 706); ⌜*i*⌝-⌜*ri*⌝-⌜*bu*⌝-⌜*mi*⌝ 40 ⌜LÚ⌝.MEŠ S[A.GAZ.MEŠ] >⌜LÚ⌝.⌜SA⌝.G[AZ].MEŠ< *a-na* ⌜*ma*⌝*-har* ⌜⌝⌜*A*⌝[*-ma-an-ha-at-pé*]); "…forty men of the ʿ[*apîrû*] >ʿ*apîrû*< entered in to A[manḫatpe]…." (RAINEY 2015: 874-875). Given the largely effaced surface of the tablet, after reviewing the photo I am unable to improve upon the reading of either individual in the contentious restoration (viz. Rainey's S[A.GAZ.MEŠ] and Knudtzon's *i*[*štu libbi*]). Since Rainey's reading postulates that the Hazi scribe generated a spelling – anomalous among 25 other homogeneous examples of the same lexeme – and then spuriously repeated it, committing not just a basic dittographic error, but one with a different spelling, Occam's razor thus favors Knudtzon's reading (or a restoration akin to his *ištu libbi*).

[39] In any case, Vita is ambivalent regarding whether the texts reflect the work of one or two different hands, maintaining that the issue "must remain open" (2015: 25).

writes {lú.meš} to govern the unmarked logogram, SA.GAZ, while S5 doubly marks that same lexeme. The evidence from Mušihuna offers additional corroboration of Vita's delineation between these two scribes, positing a scribal environment where colleagues received different training. Alternatively, the limited evidence leaves open the possibility that both scribes intended to reduplicate forms with a pronominal suffix.

Table 17. Mušihuna Scribes

S3	lú.mešSA.GAZ (197:11, 30)
S5	lú.mešSA.GAZ.MEŠ-*ia* (195:27)

Evaluation

S3: Progressive
S5: Progressive

5.7 Byblos

With 91 plurals in the data set, the Byblian subcorpus dwarfs the rest of the dossiers. Among the majority of progressive evidence, 37% (34/91 of references) are short plurals, 29% denote reduplicated plurals (26/91), and long plurals comprise just over 27% (25/91). The infrequent (7% of total evidence) and even distribution of conservative spellings – six examples emerge from the hands of five different scribes – make their appearance conspicuous. Each letter exhibiting a conservative spelling likewise includes a progressive counterpart. For instance, both S1 and S8 use conservative and progressive spellings of GAZ (N.B. S1 also uses a third form, the short plural, lú.mešGAZ), revealing an environment marked by scribal learnedness and orthographic fluidity. Analogously, S4, S6, and S8 all employ both short and long plural spellings of *hazannu*. And S4 and S8 write MAŠKÍM with both short and reduplicated spellings. While it is impossible to discern whether S8's lone conservative plural was intentional (and if so, for what reason) or evidence of slippage, the Byblian data depict a scribal context that championed the progressive spelling at the same time as it introduced students to multiple perspectives. What results is a picture of scribal creativity and autonomy.

Table 18. Byblian Scribes

Scribe	Conserv. Plurals	Short Plurals	Long Plurals	Reduplicated Plurals
S1	lúGAZ.MEŠ (76:37)	1. lú.mešGAZ (73:29, 33; 76:18) 2. lú.meš⌜GAZ⌝ (74:36)	1. lú.meš*ha-⌜za⌝-nu-tu₄* (73:30) 2. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-te* (73:24) 3. ⌜lú.meš⌝*ha-za-nu-ta* (74:34)	lú.mešGAZ.MEŠ (71:29)
S2	lú'*a₄-ia-⌜bi-ia⌝* (102:27)	lú.meš*be-li* (102:22)	lú.meš⌜*ša⌝-ru-tu₄* (102:31)	lú.mešSA.GAZ.MEŠ (88:34)
S3		1. lú.meš[MAŠKÍM] (81:48) 2. lú.mešGAZ (77:24) 3. lú.mešGAZ (81:13)	lú.meš⌜*ha⌝-za-nu-ti* (77:25)	⌜lú⌝.meš⌜ MAŠKÍM⌝.MEŠ (93:15)

S4	1. ⌜lú⌝ERÍN.MEŠ (138:59) 2. lú*a-bu-ti-ia* (126:19)	1. ⌜lú.meš⌝ha-za-ni (129:11) 2. lú.meš⌜ha⌝-[za-ni] (129:28) 3. lú.mešha-za-na (138:26) 4. lú.meš*we-ʾi* (129:12) 5. lú.mešBAD (138:49)	1. lú.meš⌜*ha*⌝*-za-nu-tu*$_4$ (126:10) 2. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-ti* (126:16) 3. lú.meš*ha-za-nu-te* (362:54) 4. [lú].⌜meš⌝*ša-*⌜*ru*⌝*-ta*$_5$ (138:115)	1. lú.meš MAŠKÍM.MEŠ (129:14) 2. lú.mešSA.⌜GAZ⌝.[MEŠ] (129:89) 3. lú.mešDUMU.⌜MEŠ⌝ [*ši-ip-ri*] (129:55)
S5		lú.meš⌜*ha*⌝*-za-nu-šu* (114:47)		
S6		1. ⌜lú.meš⌝GAZ⌝ (85:41) 2. lú.mešha-za-ni-ka (109:21) 3. lú.mešwe-e-[ma] (109:22)	lú.meš⌜*ha-za*⌝*-nu-tu* (109:60)	1. lú.mešGAZ.MEŠ (85:73) 2. [lú].mešGAZ.MEŠ (85:78) 3. ⌜lú⌝.mešGAZ.MEŠ (105:74)
S7		⌜lú.meš⌝ MAŠKÍM! :: *ma-lik*.MEŠ (131:21)		
S8	lúGAZ.MEŠ (90:25)	1. lú.meš⌜ MAŠKÍM⌝ (118:51) 2. lú.mešha-za-⌜ni⌝ (121:50) 3. ⌜lú⌝.meš⌜ha⌝-za-ni-ka (132:49) 4. . lú.mešha-za-ni-ku-nu (117:62) 5. ⌜lú⌝.meš⌜DUMU ši-ip-ri⌝ (90:54) 6. lú.mešDUMU ši-ip-ri (108:54) 7. ⌜lú⌝.meš⌜DUMU ši-ip-ri-ka⌝ (90:48) 8. lú.mešwi-i-ma (108:16) 9. ⌜lú⌝.meš⌜KEŠDA⌝ (107:42) 10. lú.mešKEŠDA (108:15) 11. lú.meša-ia-bu-nu (100:35)	1. lú.mešha-za-nu-tu (118:45; 125:33) 2. lú.mešha-za-nu-ti (118:20; 124:37 3. lú.meš⌜ha⌝-za-⌜nu-ti⌝ (125:32) 4. lú.mešha-za-nu-tu$_4$ (108:34) 5. lú.mešha-za-nu-ti (107:24) 6. ⌜lú.meš⌝[ha-za-nu-ti] (90:27) 7. lú.meša-bu-ti-ia (130:21) 8. lú.meša-[bu]-⌜ti-ia⌝ (121:11) 9. lú.mešši-bu!(ŠE)-ti-ši (100:4) 10. lú.mešša-ru-tu (124:48) 11. lú.meš⌜ša⌝-[ru-tu] (100:26) 12. lú.mešša-ru-ta (103:31)	1. lú.mešMAŠKÍM.MEŠ (119:22) 2. lú.mešGAZ.MEŠ (79:10, 26) 3. lú.mešGAZ.MEŠ (71:29; 79:10, 26; 83:17; 113:25; 118:38; 132:21) 4. ⌜lú⌝.mešGAZ.MEŠ (117:58) 5. lú.meš⌜GAZ⌝.MEŠ (130:38) 6. lú.mešSA.GAZ.MEŠ (104:52, 54) 7. lú.meš⌜SA⌝.GAZ.MEŠ (108:62)
Un-classified	⌜lú⌝GAZ.⌜MEŠ⌝ (91:5)	1. lú.meš MAŠKÍM (116:30 2. lú.meš⌜MAŠKÍM⌝ (135:4) 3. lú.mešGAZ (94:68) 4. lú.mešDUMU *ši-ip-ri* (108:54; 116:21)	lú.meš*ha*ʔ*-za-nu-*[*ti*] (92:57)	1. lú.mešGAZ.MEŠ (91:24) 2. lú.meš⌜GAZ⌝.[MEŠ] (116:38)

Evaluation

S1: Composite (progressive leaning)
S2: Composite (progressive leaning)
S3: Progressive
S4: Composite (progressive leaning)
S5: Progressive
S6: Progressive
S7: Progressive
S8: Composite (progressive leaning)
Unclassified: Composite (progressive leaning)

5.8 Beirut

Among the four total plurals from Beirut's dossier, all represent syllabograms from S1: three long plurals and an idiosyncratic fourth that integrates a medial MEŠ into a formally singular spelling, the latter of which requires further comment. First, the medial MEŠ represents an anomaly within the Canaanite letters. Second, arguing against the scribe's ignorance of the syllabic plural, *hazannūtu*, is both its ubiquity throughout Canaan (e.g., Byblos, Amurru, and Jerusalem) and his use of *–ūtu* plurals elsewhere in the same letter. Third, given the incommensurate appositional sequence, "my city rulers, my brother," the addition of a plural marker where none is expected and the omission of one where one does expect it (i.e., ŠEŠ.<MEŠ>-*ia*) posit a scribal anticipatory error as a reasonable explanation.

Table 19. Beirutian Scribe

Long plural (syllabic)	1. ˹lú˺.meš*a-ia-bi-šu* (141:33) 2. lú.meš*ša-ru-tu* (137:48) 3. lú.meš*ab-<bu>-ti-nu* (137:75)
Reduplicated plural (with medial MEŠ)	lú.meš*ha.*MEŠ-*za-ni* (137:13)

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.9 Sidon

The four extant plurals from the Sidonian scribe together reflect a variation of progressive orthography: *abu* with a long syllabic plural; *hāpiru* with a reduplicated logographic spelling. Given this latter datum and the full break after the partial MAŠKÍM sign, one may assume the following restoration to 145:16: lú.meš˹MAŠKÍM˺[.MEŠ LUGAL] "the commissioners of the king."

Table 20. Sidonian Scribe

Long plural	lú.meš*a-˹bu˺-ti-nu* (144:33)
Reduplicated plurals	1. lú.mešSA.GAZ.MEŠ (144:30) 2. ˹lú˺.meš˹SA.GAZ˺.MEŠ (144:26) 3. lú.meš˹MAŠKÍM˺.[MEŠ] (145:16)

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.10 Tyre

The extensive subcorpus of ten letters from Tyre yields 30 singular forms, yet a meagre three plurals. S2 is responsible for all three, each of which uses {lú.meš}.

Table 21. Tyrian Scribe 2

Short plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN (151:58) 2. $^{lú.meš}$ʳ*wi*ˡ-*i-ma* (150:6) 3. $^{lú.meš}$ʳ*wi*ˡ-[*i*]-ʳ*ma*ˡ (152:50)

Evaluation

S2: Progressive

5.11 Megiddo

If Vita's strong confidence (e.g., he uses expressions like "certain" and "without a doubt" [2015:67]) that a singular individual composed EA 246, EA 250, EA 253, and EA 365 is warranted, the Megiddo scribe consistently distinguished syllabic spellings (reduplication) from logographic ones (short plurals) in the eight extant plurals.

Table 22. Megiddo Scribe

Short plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$ʳSA.GAZˡ (243:20; 246:r7) 2. $^{lú.meš}$GAL-*šu* (250:24)
Reduplicated plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-za-nu-ta*.MEŠ (365:16) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*ma-as-sà*.MEŠ (365:23) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ma-as-*ʳ*sà*ˡ.MEŠ (365:25) 4. $^{lú.meš}$ʳ*ma*ˡ-*as-*ʳ*sà*.MEŠˡ (365:14)

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.12 Šamhuna

The scribal activity at Šamhuna produced two total plurals in this data set: a short logographic form and a long syllabic one.

Table 23. Šamhuna Scribe

Short plural	$^{ʳlúˡ.meš}$MAŠKÍM-*šu* (224:12)
Long plural	$^{lú.meš}$*a-bu-tu-nu* (224:15)

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.13 Gezer

The Gezer subcorpus generates an inventory of 11 plurals comprising three different progressive orthographies: four long plurals with syllabograms; and the logographic evidence split between two short plurals and five reduplications. Notably, there are no Gezer letters that include both a short and a long or reduplicated plural. A close look at this data set adds some nuance to Vita's argument that one scribe crafted all 21 letters in

the inventory, or at least all but EA 369 (2015: 75-84). First, though four different letters spell *rābiṣu* logographically (MAŠKÍM: 292:20, 35, 37; 293:17; 294:9; 296:24, 31), only in 272:20 does the Gezer scribe write it syllabically (^{lú}*ra-bi-ṣa-*⌜*šu*⌝)[40]. Similarly, among the six references to the *apiru*, he writes it without a reduplicated plural only in EA 272:17 ($^{[lú].meš}$SA.GAZ)[41]. EA 268 preserves the only other short logographic form ($^{lú.meš}$TUR [268:19])[42]. The evidence from EA 268 and EA 272, if reflective of a single scribe's work, showcases one whose education equipped him with both multiple orthographies and the freedom to employ them in certain epistolary contexts.

Table 24. Gezer Scribe 1

Short Plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$TUR (268:19) 2. $^{[lú].meš}$SA.GAZ (272:17)
Long Plurals	1. $^{[lú].⌜meš⌝}$*ha-za-nu-*⌜*te*$^{?}$⌝-[*šu*] (279:17) 2. $^{lú.meš}$⌜*ša*⌝-[*ru-te*] (279:13) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ša-ru-ta* (279:21) 4. $^{lú.⌜meš⌝}$*a-ši-ru-ma* (268:20)
Reduplicated Plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ (273:19) 2. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$SA.GAZ.MEŠ (271:16) 3. $^{lú.meš}$SA.⌜GAZ⌝.MEŠ (273:14) 4. $^{lú.meš}$SA.GAZ.⌜MEŠ⌝ (274:13) 5. $^{⌜lú.meš⌝}$[SA.GA]Z.MEŠ (293:16)

Evaluation

S1: Progressive

5.14 Jerusalem

The southernmost composite evidence derives from a singular Jerusalem scribe whose writing style has led to what is now a scholarly consensus that he received his training in northern Canaan (MORAN 2003: 262). Among the 21 total examples, he uses three different conventions to express a plural.

Table 25. Jerusalem Scribe

Conservative Plurals	1.^{lú}MAŠKÍM.MEŠ (287:34) 2. ^{lú}⌜MAŠKÍM⌝.[MEŠ] (286:48)
	^{lú}ERÍN.MEŠ *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:57)
	^{lú}ÌR.⌜MEŠ⌝ (288:18)

[40] And he does so with an accusative form despite the fact that elsewhere he uses MAŠKÍM in accusative position (292:20). Relatedly, note the plural accusative, $^{lú.meš}$*ša-ru-ta*, in 279:21.

[41] In the same vein, EA 271-74 spell *hāpiru* fully (i.e., SA.GAZ), while the writing in EA 293:16 remains uncertain since SA may fit into the lacuna (i.e., $^{⌜lú.meš⌝}$[SA.GA]Z.MEŠ).

[42] I here transcribe the inherently ambiguous $^{lú.meš}$*a-ši-ru-ma* as a plural of *asīru* "prisoner" in 268:20.

Short Plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$ERÍN *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:54) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*pi-ṭa-ti* (286:53)
	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ru* (286:56) 2. $^{⌜lú.meš}$*ha*$^{⌝}$-*pí-ru* (288:38) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ri* (287:31; 290:13) 4. $^{[lú.meš}$*ha*$^{⌝}$-*pí-*$^{⌜}$*ri*$^{⌝}$ (288:44) 5. $^{lú.meš}$ / *ha-pí-ri* (290:23) 6. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-pí-ri*^{ki} (289:24)
	1. $^{⌜lú⌝.meš}$*a-si-ru* (287:54) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*a-si-ri* (288:21)
	$^{lú.meš}$*ú-bi-li-mi* (287:55)
Long Plurals	1. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-zi-a-nu-ti* (286:51; 288:27) 2. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-zi-*$^{⌜}$*a*$^{⌝}$*-nu-ti* (288:56) 3. $^{lú.meš}$*ha-*$^{⌜}$*zi*$^{⌝}$-[*ia-nu-ti*] (286:19) 4. $^{lú.⌜meš}$*ha-zi-a-nu-ti*$^{⌝}$ (287:24)

The Jerusalem scribe reflects some indelible orthographic patterns unique among the entire Amarna inventory, the signs of which point to a learned individual who craftily applied his extensive and nuanced training to his work, such as a medial /*i*/ in the lexeme *hazannu*, and an initial *ú-* fronting the lexeme, *weʾu* "soldier," rather than the PI sign used elsewhere. And in the subcorpus there emerges a sharp distinction between conservative and progressive spellings: the former pair with logographic writing and the latter with syllabograms[43]. Furthermore, the Jerusalem scribe writes *abu* on five occasions, each in the singular; in EA 286: 9, 13 he does so with a syllabic spelling (^{lú}*abiya*), while in EA 287-288 his idiosyncratic orthography employs logograms and the Sumerian first singular pronominal suffix (^{lú}AD.DA.A.NI [287:26; 288:13]; $^{lú⌜}$AD.DA$^{⌝}$.[A.NI] 288:15]).

An even more virtuosic display develops within a sequence of seven lines. Between 286:53-59, the Jerusalem scribe uses four different orthographic conventions for ERÍN, the only lexeme he writes in multiple forms (see Table 29 below). And his progression from three plurals to a rare singular reflects a striking rhetorical shift:

> May the king turn (his attention) to the *regular army* so that the *regular army* of the king, my lord, may come forth. The king has no lands; the *apiru* have plundered all the king's lands! If the *regular army* emerges this year, the king, the lord, will maintain territory; but if there is no(t even ONE) REGULAR ARMY, the territory of the king, my lord, is (as good as) gone.

In other words, Abdi-Heba claims to need at least one shred of hope, or Pharaoh can kiss his hold on greater Jerusalem goodbye. The use of the singular spelling to conclude this sequence highlights the scribe's cleverness, given the fact that only a few clear examples of singular ERÍN occur among 345 total attestations in the Amarna archive (cf. 75:10; 186:67). Though the Egyptian military boasted numerous different outfits capa-

[43] In a possible exception, ERÍN follows LÚ.MEŠ in 286:54, though *piṭṭāti* completes the term. Moreover, this usage falls within a peculiar span of inconsistent spellings, for which see Table 29 and related discussion below.

ble of protective measures within southern Canaan, the scribe's jarring example of style-shifting[44] takes advantage of different viable orthographic options to deconstruct rhetorically any notion of hope in an Egyptian rescue plan[45]. In so doing, the way the Jerusalem scribe spells words manifests the convergence of east and west, past and present, tradition and change, all within the confines of a few words. While the bulk of the Jerusalem records reflect a systematic wielding of progressive orthography in line with the current trend, his aberrations entail a subversion of "norms" that results from both impressive academic training and a keen insight into the political machinations of his time.

Table 26. Scribal Variation in EA 286

Short plural	$^{lú.meš}$*pi-ṭa-ti* (286:53)
Short plural + intervening ERÍN	$^{lú.meš}$ERÍN *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:54)
Conservative plural + *piṭṭātu*	^{lú}ERÍN.MEŠ *pi-ṭa-ti* (286:57)
Singular	^{lú}ERÍN *pi-*ʳ*ṭa*ˡ*-ti* (286:59)

Evaluation

Scribe: Composite (progressive learning)

5.15 Ashkelon

All five of the relevant plurals from Ashkelon derive from a single scribe and relate to the *apiru*.[46] Like the evidence from Hazi and Ugarit, the Ashkelon dossier evinces only conservative spellings, together preserving a form of the plural that had largely fallen into desuetude within the context of Late Bronze Age Canaan.[47]

Table 27. Ashkelon Scribe 3

S3	1. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ (299:18, 24; 305:22; 313:6) 2. ^{lú}SA.GAZ.MEŠ-*tu*$_4$ (299:26)[48]

[44] According to Holmstedt and Kirk, "Style-shifting is the use of more than one register within the same dialect/language" (2016: 546).

[45] The book of Qohelet's interspersing of two different relatives, שׁ and אשׁר, offers a potential analog from a millennium later. As Holmstedt cogently remarks that after these two relatives both became diffuse at two discrete points in time "the nearly equal use of שׁ and אשׁר in Qohelet indicates that the grammar of its author existed right in the middle of the diffusion of these two changes" (2013: 295). Like Qohelet, the Jerusalem scribe stood between two traditions and harnessed them both to engender multiple layers of meaning simply by his orthography.

[46] Another potential example emerges in a broken context, where the restored lexeme, *tamkāru*, is uncertain: 13 LÚ.MEŠ ʳDAMˡ.[GÀR.MEŠ] (313:2). In any event, the fronted position of a numeral bolsters the plausibility of apposition (i.e., "13 men, [namely] merchants"; cf. 289: 42-3).

[47] Unlike Byblian *hupšu* "working class" and *miši* "army – themselves likely both serving as *nomen rectum* in bound forms before the plural determinative – two terms used by the Ashkelon scribes that refer to "(horse) groomer," *kartappu* (10x at Ashkelon) and Eg. *kṯn* (normalized as *g/kuzi*; 5x at Ashkelon), appear only in the singular (for these latter terms, see MUNTINGH 2016: 820; for *miši*, see idem 2017: 419-420). The fact that the Ashkelon scribe only writes them with final /*i*/ reflects their stable position as modifiers within letter introductions.

[48] This lone spelling with a phonetic ending reflects an abstract formation of *hāpiru*, ^{lú}*hāpirūtu* "hapiruhood".

Evaluation

S3: Conservative

5.16 Bit-Tenni

The petrographic analysis argues that the Bit-Tenni dossier was composed somewhere in southern Palestine, such as Gaza (GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN 2004: 309). As Artzi persuasively argues, however, the southern clay should not undermine the strong plausibility of this scribe's northern training (1968: 168-169), which has led to a few complex scenarios (for which, see VITA 2015: 99-100). By carefully delineating three competing culprits responsible for wreaking havoc in the area (viz. *apiru*, "thieves," and Suteans), the Bīt-Tenni scribe matched each reference with a preceding plural determinative[49].

Table 28. Bit-Tenni Scribe

Short Plural	$^{lú.meš}$*ha-ba-ti* (318:12)
Reduplicated Plural	$^{lú.meš}$SA.GA.ʳAZ.MEŠ¹ (318:11)
Gentilic(?)	$^{lú.meš}$*šu-ti-i* (318:13)

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

5.17 EA 230

The provenance of EA 230 also remains a mystery, though Moran (2003: 262) suggests the paleography reflects northern training. The tablet's content evinces two long plurals from the lexeme *hazannu*: ʳ$^{lú.meš}$*ha-za*¹-*nu-te* (230:17) and $^{[lú].ʳmeš¹}$*ha-za-nu-te-ka*ˡ(KU) (230:9).

Evaluation

Scribe: Progressive

6. Synthesis

From the specific (e.g., Jerusalem scribe's trenchant progression with forms of *piṭṭātu* in EA 286) to the general (e.g., triply plural forms), north (e.g., Amurru) to south (e.g., Ashkelon), and lexeme to lexeme, there are very few constants throughout this data set of plural nouns fronted by {lú}. And lest one assume inconsistency applied exclusively to the use of LÚ, examples like NA$_4$.MEŠ *eh-lu-pa-ak-ku* (323:14, 16; cf.

[49] The putative MEŠ concluding $^{lú.meš}$SA.GA.ʳAZ¹ in 318:11, if there at all, may reflect a methodological decision to reduplicate plural markers with logographic writing. Knudtzon reads Sa.Ga.A[z.*M*]*eš*, though he notes that he saw no traces after AZ. His inclusion of MEŠ results from traces that light pressure (Ger. "Lichtdruck") may have produced (1915: 924, n. a). Rainey reads SA.GA.ʳAZ¹.ʳMEŠ¹ (2015: 1190), though without any post-collation comment.

314:19), KUR.HI.A URU *ú-ru-ša*$_{10}$-*lim*^{ki} (287:63)[50], and URU.DIDLI.HI.A URU *ga-ri* (256:23) presage a more endemic sense of orthographic fluidity[51]. Filtering the evidence according to scribal records leads both to the affirmation of certain general features observed already (e.g., a strong penchant toward progressive orthography) and the discovery of new insights (e.g., scribal imprints and fragmentation). Given both the remarkable spelling consistency demonstrated by each scribe and the rudimentary nature of Akkadian pluralization (e.g., tacking on a plural marker to a logographic spelling), the variation that does occur hints at both the prospect of conscious and unconscious implementation.

The Canaanite letters, themselves products of complex political and linguistic movements in the ancient Near East, afforded scribes a degree of flexibility in their orthographic conventions. Such flexibility resulted in aberrations from the "norm" that could communicate a range of different inferences, such as one's education, a different literary register, or a layer of meaning undergirding and informing the language itself[52]. For instance, the Jerusalem scribe's writing of ERÍN shows a scribe whose impressive command of the current orthographic trends allows him to leverage it to pack a rhetorical punch. His use of ERÍN, the only lexeme he writes in more than one way, shows up in four different spellings over the course of only seven lines in EA 286, each plural growing longer as the sequence progresses (see Table 29) until he offers the reader a simple denouement: a rare singular use of ERÍN, signifying the futility of any trust in Egypt coming to deliver Jerusalem (see §5.14 for further discussion). In a similar vein, the context in which scribes operated allowed for potential involuntary variation – not too dissimilar to this author's natural tendency to unintentionally omit an Oxford comma or pair a singular subject with a plural verb – of which would have presumably been comprehensible to the scribal recipients on the Egyptian end.

It is not necessarily hard-and-fast or universal rules that constrain the alternations one sees within the Canaanite scribes' use of LÚ; rather, independent variables can impact the orthographic conventions of individual scribes, eliciting a resulting picture of "structured heterogeneity" (BAYLEY 2002: 117). Some variations respond to lexical factors (e.g., Qaṭna S2's use of ÌR; Byblian S1's handling of GAZ; the Jerusalem scribe's writing of MAŠKÍM). Others presuppose a pairing of conservative orthography with idiosyncratic sign values (e.g., Byblian S2's conservative orthography with a rare sign value for HA [ʾ*a*$_4$]; the Jerusalem scribe's use of a plural marker after final -*ta*$_5$). Elsewhere, scribes develop certain patterns, as with the Jerusalem scribe's pairing of

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[50] Or consider the following variation in the determinatives used for ʿAmqu: URU.HI.A *am-qí* (170:16), KUR.KUR.MEŠ *am-qí* (140:27, 30), URU.HI.A KUR *am-qí* (170:16), and KUR *am-qí* (53:58; 173:2; 174:9; 175:8; 176:8; 363:8).

[51] Other "unorthodox" examples of pluralization occur in the Canaanite Amarna letters. For example, URU and DIDLI occur in different permutations, some of which include MEŠ, HI.A, KI, or even KUR. DIDLI itself occurs without URU on only three occasions, each of which derive from the hand of Vita's Byblian "Scribe 2" as *nomen rectum* after ^{d}UTU (KUR.KI.DIDLI.HI.A [84:1]; KUR.DIDLI.MEŠ.KI [102:8]; KUR.KUR.KI.DIDLI [106:5]). And HI.A appears as a plural marker for an abundance of nouns, most of which lack an initial determinative. Neither DIDLI nor HI.A pluralize nouns fronted by {lú}, however, leaving such exploration outside the scope of this study.

[52] Mandell argues that scribes showed their "intellectual skill" by "showing off their understanding of the signs used to represent words and employed graphemic puns", suggesting a more complex orthographic system than one of mere pragmatism or simplicity (2015: 252).

progressive plurals with syllabograms and conservative ones with logograms. Still other trends particular to certain scribes (e.g., the lengthened syllabic orthography of *hazannu* by Amurru S3; the triply plural loanword from the Megiddo scribe; Byblian S2's three different plural spellings of *hāpiru*; the Gezer scribe's variation between GAZ and SA.GAZ) manifest an even wider range of orthographic creativity. Taken together, these details support larger assumptions about the proliferation of scribal schools with slightly different emphases, as witnessed by the contrasting plural oblique permutations of *šāru* published by the Hazi scribe (^{lú}*ša-ri*.MEŠ) and Byblian S8 ($^{lú.meš}$*ša-ru-ta* [103:31]).

A broader scribal imprint shows the marking of clear orthographic boundaries according to both geography and education. Most scribes fully adhered to a progressive orthographic method, classifying professional nouns with {lú.meš}; but the dossiers from Ugarit, Hazi, and Ashkelon demand an alternative explanation, such as hypercorrection or conservative training. The identical spellings of the lexeme, *hāpiru*, in every single example from the geographically discrete scribes at Hazi and Ashkelon suggest the latter as a more plausible alternative. Either way, such orthography flouts a progressive methodology adopted overwhelmingly by their contemporaries. While the lack of proximity within such a scribal network generates intriguing, yet difficult, questions about the degree to which they knew of or trained with one another, the faithful application of their conservative spellings – especially within a landlocked, insular polity like Hazi – preserves a remnant of divergent training. Broader evidence leads one to postulate that such scribes were trained within similar systems by local instructors (*à la* Kidin-Gula, the Babylonian scribe at Emar, as seen in the IZI = *išātu* series); perhaps they were even former classmates[53]. The ties that bound these isolated communities point to a socially-embedded means to string certain words together in succession. In so doing, these scribal "conservatives" exude individuality in the midst of strong geo-political forces, thereby perpetuating methodological fragmentation within the broader scribal milieu.

As Mandell mentions, "writing is a semiotic system that has its own field of meaning, one that is not limited to language *per se*" (2015: 219). To this end, variation offers a heuristic lesson on the scribes as human beings with biases and blind spots, just like the modern scholars who assess their work. Canaanite scribes operated in a diplomatic environment where every word – especially those acquired in a second language – mattered. And the variations used to pluralize a classified noun suggest that they took such words seriously.[54] For example, pleonastic, triply plural, spellings – especially those plural obliques attesting a final /*a*/ – imply scribal learnedness, such as "neo-orthogisms" intended to impress, or even diplomatic discernment, such as hyper-

[53] Though it is by no means constrained to the scribes from these three localities, the evidence from each one presents the lexeme *awātu* with an intervocalic /*w*/, as opposed to the "progressive" (reflecting a shift underway within Middle Babylonian) form with intervocalic /*m*/ characteristic of Middle Babylonian Akkadian (viz. *amātu*), as conveyed by Amurru S3, S4, and S6, as well as Tyrian S1 (cf. intervocalic */b/* [*abātu*] in EA 211:10, 19).

[54] Note, for example, that Canaanite scribes do not append nouns classified by the male ({m}) or female ({f}) determinatives with plural markers, which would defy credulity (e.g., ^{m}*ša-ah-ši-ha-ši-*^{r}*ha*^{1} "scribe" [316:16]). Though pleonastic forms may suggest confusion to the modern reader trained in Old Babylonian, but separated from the original context by millennia, the complex dynamics of the plight of an Amarna scribe lead this reader to a more constructive assessment of the evidence at hand.

conservative renderings that would have appeared conspicuous to their recipient. At the very least, the orthographic variation in this study reflects a variation in training. But the composite evidence from a single city (viz. Qaṭna, Byblos, and Jerusalem) or a single scribe implies the possibility of additional factors. The Jerusalem scribe's use of pluralization for rhetorical means argues that scribal agency should be regarded as one such factor. It is the variation that one witnesses, regardless of the scribe's original intent, that provides a variegated snapshot of a world of second-language learners applying their teachers' instruction at the same time as they craft diplomacy[55].

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[55] The results of this study thus demonstrate some uses of determinatives that result from different scribal schools, yet other uses as conscious choices by scribes; they reflect a scribal culture full of agency at certain points, while lacking in agency at others – to some extent both "scribal interlanguage" and "scribal code."

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