CHAPTER 46
The Pronouns

The Personal Pronouns

Semitic etymologists believe the Hebrew first-person, singular pronoun, *ani*[589] = "I" is composed of two elements. The first element is *an*[575], a contracted form of *ayin*[369], = "to be nothing," "to not exist," "a nonentity." The second element is *ee* = "island." Brown, Driver and Briggs classify the latter under the general form of *Ah*, and its several derivatives: as an adverb, "whence" or "where," as an interjection, "alas," and as a different adverb, "not," and "nought"[335-339]." One might assume that the "island" meaning came from a geographical entity which does not amount to much in comparison to the continental land masses. We saw *ee* used by St. Columba in the naming of his island we know as Iona.

Literally, in Hebrew, *ani* means "an island nonentity," or perhaps "a lonely nothing."

Confusion may exist on the linguistic origin of "island" because it is represented by the Hebrew *yod* and one cannot simply write *yod* by itself in Hebrew script. It is written with the help of *aleph*. The origin of *ani* also may not be simple because the *ee* (*yod*) ending is found on all words which indicate the first person singular, both nouns and verbs: *moothee* = "my death," *libbee* = "my heart," *lamadtee* = "I study."

OED has a lengthy dissertation on the form of the "I" letter in English, and its ultimate origins through Greek and the Puni (Hebrew) *yod*. The English "I" was earlier pronounced the same as the Hebrew *yod*, as a long *ee*.

In the Mediterranean and eastern European languages "I" was sounded with a hard "k," "kh," or "g" sound, found in Greek and Roman *ego*, German *ich*, Gothic *ic*, Norwegian *eg*, and so on. Again, English shows reversion to the more original Semitic phonetics.

(In Greek, the name *yod* became *"iota"* by shifting the "d" to a "t" and adding an "a." We know it in English as *"jot".*)

The Greek and Roman *e(g)o* is composed of the Semitic *"ee"* married with the Indo-European *"o"* first person ending, found in Latin *amo* and in Greek *philio* = "I love." The form of the pronunciation was more like *i'o*, with the glottal stop. This marriage suggests that Greek and Latin did not abandon the IE first person singular *"o"* form, but retained it under the Hebrew/Semitic *"ee"* influence.

Although the English first person, singular "I" may show a correlation with the Hebrew first person singular inflectional ending, the third person, singular pronouns are far more interesting.

Consider the following tabulation[EOH]:

Third Person Singular Pronouns

Language	Masculine	Feminine
English	he	she
Hebrew	hu	he
Aramaic	hu	he
Arabic	huwa	hea
Mehri	he	se
Minean	su	se
Akkadian	shu	she
Assyrian	shu	she
Egyptian	siu	sIt

We can see plainly evident that the third person, singular pronouns in modern English are identical to those of the ancient Semitic/Hamitic languages. The masculine "he" is found in the masculine Mehri, and the feminine "she" is found in both feminine Akkadian and Assyrian. It can be seen also that in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic, the feminine took on the masculine *"h"* while losing the feminine *"s."* It can be seen further that the predominant Semitic masculine ending is *"u,"* while the feminine is *"e."*

In 1936, E. A. Speiser, a noted Hebrew scholar who wrote the Anchor Books volume of *Genesis*, published a detailed study of these formatives (affixes), and their origins in the Semitic languages[OBS]. From his study Speiser proposed that the original Semitic mother tongue used *"h"* for the masculine, and *"s"* for the feminine. Individual languages which had swapped the initial phoneme, identification was still possible because of the masculine *"u"* and the feminine *"e"* inflectional endings.

Are the parallels of modern English third person pronouns with the ancient Semitic third person pronouns a linguistic accident?

Consider use of English forms in various dialects over the past 1500 years.

Examples of English *He* and *She*
(Not indication of evolution.)

Old English	hu	he
Old Frisian	hi	hio
c. 1200	he	heo
c. 1300	hu	shu
Went to:	he	sio or sie
English	he	she

Immediately obvious is that Old English had the identical form of the Semitic third person pronouns, both masculine and feminine, found in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. If the origin of the Old English pronouns was Semitic that origin was Hebrew, and not Akkadian, Assyrian, or Egyptian.

This list has many forms common with the Semitic list. They include not only

"he" and "she," but also "hu," "sio/siu," and "shu." The linguistic forces which led to variations in the Semitic languages were apparently the same as those which were at work in the Teutonic languages.

What is our understanding of the origin of the modern English *"he"* and *"she?"*

OED states that an original Teutonic demonstrative stem *hi* = "this" supplied not only the pronouns *him*, *his*, *her*, and *(h)it*, but also the adverbs *here*, *hence*, and *hither*, Old English *he*, and Old Saxon *hi*. Other Teutonic languages apparently dropped the "h" to build upon a stem *i*, illustrated in Old High German *ir*, *er*, and Gothic *is*.

This does not explain how the *hu* got into Old English, except through a linguistic process commonly at work on the personal pronouns in both Semitic and Teutonic languages. The swapping back and forth between the *"u"* and *"e"* inflectional endings, which Speiser identified respectively as masculine and feminine in an original Semitic mother tongue, shows a fluid state of evolution in the English language. Did the Hebrew personal pronoun *he* serve as the origin of the Teutonic demonstrative *hi*? Is it possible the Semitic third person pronouns were carried into the Teutonic languages in their actual application, and that the demonstrative pronouns derived from them, not vice versa? Our ability to rigorously determine these relationships is buried in the obscurity of available linguistic evidence.

A similar difficulty faces us in attempts to understand the origins of the English feminine *she*. OED remarks that *she* is "of difficult etymology, but probably an altered form of the Old English demonstrative *sio*,*sie*. ...The phonetic development (of she) is exactly parallel to that of the Old English feminine personal pronoun *hio* and *he*." In other words, etymologists are uncertain of that evolution, although similar parallels between *he* and *she* are indicated in the historic record. Evolution into *she* is assumed due to a conflict on meaning between the masculine and feminine forms. ". . . The phonetic development of various dialects had in the 12th and 13th centuries rendered the pronoun s*he* (masc.) and *heo* (fem.) almost indistinguishable in pronunciation." This was a strong motive for resorting to the demonstrative *sio* (shu) and *sie* (she).

The ability to trace these developments is complicated by related words. Under etymology of the word *the* OED states that *sie* (she) may be ". . . the reduced and flectionless stem of the Old English *se* and *seo* . . ." which later shifted to *the*, *theo*, and *thaet*, with the last our modern *that*. A related *sa* demonstrative was a common Teutonic and Indo-European stem found in Old Saxon *se*, Old Norse *sa*, Gothic *sa*, Sanskrit *sa*, and Gaelic *so*, all related to a shifted *tha* found in Slavonic *ta*, Greek *to*, Sanskrit *ta*, Latin *tam* and *tum*.

Obviously, the different forms of the pronouns, both demonstrative and personal, have a complex interrelationship and evolution, in phonetics and meaning, in both the Semitic and Indo-European languages.

The curiosity once again is the reversion of the English third person singular pronouns to Hebrew phonetics and meaning, a reversion which is not found in other Teutonic languages.

Demonstrative Pronouns

Hebrew has the following demonstrative pronouns:

Singular		Plural	
English	**Hebrew**	**English**	**Hebrew**
this (m)	ze (za)	these	elle
this (f)	zoth		
that (m)	hu	those (m)	hem
that (f)	he	those (f)	hen
yonder (m)	hallaze	yonder	hallaz
yonder (f)	hallezu		

The masculine and feminine of the Hebrew singular *that* are the same as the personal pronouns, "hu" and "he." The masculine and feminine of the Hebrew plural *those* are the same as the inflectional endings on the Hebrew third person, plural nouns, "-hem," and "-hen." Thus, they are mere borrowings from the pronoun and noun inflections. If these forms came into the European languages as demonstratives we would not be able to easily distinguish them from the personal pronouns and noun inflectional influences.

However, the masculine *this* = "ze," a word heightened in sound from a lost accusative "za," finds parallels in Teutonic Europe. The plural *these* = "elle," finds strong influence in Latin and the Romance languages.

In the statements I quoted above from OED about the origin of the English *the*, it was noted that a proposed original Teutonic stem *sa* was the nominative singular masculine and feminine base. In a Kentish dialect of the 14th century this shows up as *ze* masculine and *zy* feminine. In the course of evolution the "t" also shifted to "d," found in modern German *der*, *die*, and *das*. Thus much evidence exists for a fluid swapping through time of "t," "d," "s," and "z" sounds, among the several Teutonic languages and dialects.

From this evidence we see there are no formidable linguistic barriers to propose that the Hebrew *za* demonstrative could have been the source of the Teutonic *sa* demonstrative. The resulting complex of English "the," "this," "these," "those," "that," and similar words, would have resulted from that one ancient Hebrew stem. However, the underlying influence of a more ancient Semitic demonstrative *sa* cannot be ignored. If it existed prior to the separate development of the Indo-European and Semitic languages a proposal of influence from Hebrew *za* upon the Teutonic languages may be amiss. The Hebrew *za* was merely part of the linguistic heritage from the more ancient Semitic mother tongues. The evolution of these linguistic paths is far too complex for us settle on a definitive origin.

On the other hand, the related *se* may have come out of the Hebrew *ze*.

More enlightening than the Teutonic demonstratives are those found in Latin and the Romance languages.

Frederick Bodmer, in *The Loom of Language*[TLL], provided graphical illustrations of the influence upon the Romance languages of the Latin nominative singular

demonstratives *ille* and *illa*= "that," and the plural *llli*, and *illae*, together with the accusative plurals, *illos*, and *illas* = "those." Refer to the tabulation below.

We can recognize immediately how the Latin demonstratives went into French, Spanish, and Italian third person personal pronouns, both singular and plural. This is a process parallel with the Teutonic *sa* and *se* demonstratives going into English third person personal pronouns. It is the reverse process as Hebrew third person personal pronouns or inflections becoming demonstratives.

Important to this discussion is the origin of the Latin *ille*= "that," the singular, masculine, nominative demonstrative pronoun. *Illi*= "those" is the plural. The feminines are *illa* and *illae*. The Hebrew nominative, plural demonstrative pronoun is *elle* = "these," both masculine and feminine.

If the Latin *ille*, with its inflections blossoming out into the Romance languages, derived from Hebrew *elle*, this single word had far reaching impact.

A difficulty exists with assignment of the particle words which Bodmer used. As simple particles they could have other origins. For example, Hebrew also used a simple *el* = "these" as a demonstrative. This particle is found eight times in the Pentateuch. Did the Spanish *el* and the French *il* have origins other than through *elle*? The Hebrew preposition *la* = "to" is used in a wide variety of applications. Did the French, Spanish and Italian *la* words have an origin through other paths? Did the Hebrew adverb *lo* = "not" somehow find its way into the Spanish and Italian words?

We saw how the *hem* and *hen* third person inflectional endings of the pronouns were used in Hebrew for demonstratives. Other Hebrew inflectional endings show in the European languages. Consider the following Hebrew personal pronouns.

Singular		**Plural**	
I	ani	we	anakhnu
you(f)	atte	ye(f)	atten
you(m)	atta	ye(m)	attem
she	he	they(f)	hen
he	hu	they(m)	hem

The Hebrew second person singular feminine *-te* ending is found in the *te* second person singular feminine personal pronoun of Greek, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian *it*. The Hebrew second person singular masculine *-tah* ending is found in the second person singular masculine pronoun *tu* in Greek, Latin, Spanish and Portuguese.

The same Hebrew *-ta* and *-te* endings are found in Old English and English *thou* and *thee*. The plural *hem* and *hen* endings have parallels in English *them* and *then*.

Thus we find many forms of the personal and demonstrative pronouns in the European languages which could have had origin in Hebrew.

One could go on and on with these fascinating relationships. For example, in two pages following I tabulate some of the parallels in the prepositions and conjunctions. It is not my purpose here to do an exhaustive linguistic study. I wish merely to illustrate how the influence of the migrating Iberi tribes infiltrated into all levels and groups of the widespread European people.

There was a master force at work to bring this blood and cultural power to European people, and even a more subtle force to return English to many of the more original phonetics and meanings. We should not underestimate the power of God.

Prepositions and Conjunctions

A number of parallels exist between Hebrew and the European languages. The following tabulation shows more outstanding ones.

English Affix	Latin Meaning	Hebrew Meaning
AD-	Motion, direction, change to or toward; adherence, addition, proximity, intensification.	To duplicate or repeat. Even to, for, into, till, so that, so long as, toward, until, thus far, unto, again, further, etc. Used also for duration, terminus, perpetuity.
DE- DI-	From, down, away; denotes separation, intensification, completeness, reversal This word is used in many Keltic and Romance surnames: de Leon, Dimaggio, D'Arco, and so on.	DE: enough, ability, too much, sufficient, after, among, from, in, since, etc. DI: but, for, that, until, which, whom, whose, when, therefore,
IN-	In, within, into, toward, on; not, non-, un-	From *ayin* = in, en: be nothing, not exist, non-entity, come to nought, fail, was not.
-AL	Belonging to, pertaining to, have the character of, appropriate to.	Denoting motion towards, often in general to, occasionally, quiescent; against, as far, near, toward, unto, with, among, etc.
OF, OFF	Teutonic Origins	AUF: primitive root, to cover, to fly, also, moreover, furthermore, but, yet, even, etc.
AS	Teutonic Origins	AZ: at that time or place, therefore, at which time, now, then, yet.