Psalm 42-43— Logotechnical Analysis

Guidelines

- Please read the General Introduction as well as the Introduction to Book I and Book II.
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see "Key to the charts".

Specific features of Psalm 42-43

- Psalm 42-43 is the first of the eleven Korahite psalms in the Psalter: seven in Book II (Psalms 42-49), and four in Book III (Psalms 84-85 and 87-88).

- As in the case of Psalm 9-10, there is no cogent evidence to show that Psalm 42-43 comprises two different poems. It is a coherent literary unity with an ingenious structure fundamentally determined by the three refrains and the words directly addressed to God.

- A striking feature is the single occurrence of the name YHWH in comparison with the **17** occurrences of the word אֱלֹהִים, 'God'. This number significantly corresponds to the **17** verselines, and **17** Masoretic verses, and recurs in the **187** (11 x **17**) words of the psalm.

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt: 2-4, 5-*6* || 7-9, 10-*12* || 43:1-2, 3-*5* (3 cantos demarcated by a refrain, 6 strophes, **17** verselines, 37 cola, disregarding the change in the direction of address).[1]

- Fokkelman: 2-3, 4 || 5, 6 || 7, 8, 9-10 || 11, 12, 43:1-2 || 3-4, 5 (5 stanzas with 12 strophes, with 29 verselines and 63 cola).

- Labuschagne: 2, 3-4, 5, 6 || 7-8, 9, 10-11, 12 || 43:1-2, 3-4, 5 (3 cantos marked by three refrains, 11 strophes determined by the direction of address, **17** verselines and 42 cola, on account of the *atnach* in 42:3, 7 and 9, and taking v. 5 as two bicola).

Logotechnical analysis vs.

- Column **a**: words before atnach; **b**: words after the atnach;
- Column **c**: words addressed to God; **d**: words spoken about God.
- The numbering of the verselines is shown in brown.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מַשְׂכִּיל לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח׃ Heading, v. 1	4	4			
2	1 כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מָיִם^	5	5		5	
	כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים׃	5		5	5	
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 2	10	= 5	+ 5	= 10	+ 0
3	2 צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי לֵאלֹהִים לְאֵל חָי	5	5			5
	מָתַי אָבוֹא^	2	2			2
	וְאֵרָאֶה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים׃	3		3		3
	Total, v. 3	10	= 7	+ 3	= 0	+ 10
	Total, v. 2-3	20	= 12	+ 8	= 0	+ 10

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[1] Private communication: manuscript in preparation.

4	הָיְתָה־לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה^	3	6	6						6
	בֶּאֱמֹר אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃		6		6					6
	Total, v. 4		12	= 6	+ 6		= 0	+ 12
	Strophe 2	Total, v. 3-4	22	= 13	+ 9		= 0	+ 22
5	אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי נַפְשִׁי	4	5	5						5
*	כִּי אֶעֱבֹר בְּסֹךְ אֶדַּדֵּם [בַּסָּךְ אֶדַּדֵּם]		4	4						4
	עַד־בֵּית אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל־רִנָּה	5	5	5						5
	וְתוֹדָה הָמוֹן חוֹגֵג׃		3	3						3
	Strophe 3	Total, v. 5	17	= 17	+ 0		= 0	+ 17
		Total, v. 3-5	39	= 30	+ 9		= 0	+ 39
6* Refrain	מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וַתֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	6	5	5						5
	הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ		5	5						5
	יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָי [: 7] וֵאלֹהָי׃		2/3	2/3						2/3
	Strophe 4	Total, v. 6	12/13 = 12/13	+ 0		= 0 + 12/13
		Total, v. 3-6	51/52 = 42/43	+ 9		= 0 + 51/52
	Canto I	Total, v. 2-6	61/62 = 47/48	+ 14		= 0 + 61/62
7*	[אֱלֹהַי] עָלַי נַפְשִׁי תִשְׁתּוֹחָח	7	4/3	4/3				4/3		
	עַל־כֵּן אֶזְכָּרְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ יַרְדֵּן^		2	2				2		
	וְחֶרְמוֹנִים מֵהַר מִצְעָר׃		3		3			3		
	Total, v. 7		12/11	= 9/8	+ 3 = 12/11	+ 0
8	תְּהוֹם־אֶל־תְּהוֹם קוֹרֵא לְקוֹל צִנּוֹרֶיךָ^	8	6	6				6		
	כָּל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ עָלַי עָבָרוּ׃		5		5		5		
	Total, v. 8		11	= 6	+ 5	= 11	+ 0
	Strophe 5	Total, v. 7-8	23/22 = 15/14	+ 8 = 23/22	+ 0
9 Single instance	יוֹמָם יְצַוֶּה יְהוָה חַסְדּוֹ	9	4	4						4
Middle verseline:	וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירֹה עִמִּי^		3	3						3
17 = 8 + 1 + 8	תְּפִלָּה לְאֵל חַיָּי׃		3		3					3
(Middle) Strophe 6	Total, v. 9		10	= 7	+ 3		= 0	+ 10
10	אוֹמְרָה לְאֵל סַלְעִי לָמָה שְׁכַחְתָּנִי	10	5	5						5
	לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֵלֵךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב׃		5	5						5
	Total, v. 10		10	= 10	+ 0		= 0	+ 10
	Total, v. 2-10		104	= 79	+ 25 = 33/32	+ 72
11	בְּרֶצַח בְּעַצְמוֹתַי חֵרְפוּנִי צוֹרְרָי^	11	4	4						4
	בְּאָמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃		6		6					6
	Total, v. 11		10	= 4	+ 6		= 0	+ 10
	Strophe 7	Total, v. 10-11	20	= 14	+ 6		= 0	+ 20
		Total, v. 7-11	53/52 = 36/35	+ 17 = 23/22	+ 30
12 Refrain	מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	12	6	6						6
	הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ^		5	5						5
	יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי׃		3		3					3
	Strophe 8	Total, v. 12	14	= 11	+ 3		= 0	+ 14
		Total, v. 10-12	34	= 25	+ 9		= 0	+ 34
		Total, v. 9-12	44	= 32	+ 12		= 0	+ 44
	Canto II	Total, v. 7-12	67/66 = 47/46	+ 20 = 23/22	+ 44
		Total, v. 2-12	128	= 94	+ 34 = 33/32	+ 96

43:1	שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי	13	4	4			4			
	מִגּוֹי לֹא־חָסִיד^		3	3			3			
	מֵאִישׁ־מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְפַלְּטֵנִי:		4			4	4			
	Total, v. 1		11	= 7	+ 4	= 11	+ 0		
43:2	כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי לָמָה זְנַחְתָּנִי	14	6	6			6			
	לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב:		5	5			5			
	Total, v. 2		11	= 11	+ 0	= 11	+ 0		
	Strophe 9 Total, v. 1-2		22	= 18	+ 4	= 22	+ 0		
43:3	שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי^	15	5	5			5			
	יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־קָדְשְׁךָ וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:		6		6		6			
	Middle words of 43:1-5 **26** + 7 + **26** Total, v. 3		11	= 5	+ 6	= 11	+ 0		
43:4	וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים	16	4	4			4			
	אֶל־אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי		4	4			4			
	וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי:		4	4			4			
	Total, v. 4		12	= 12	+ 0	= 12	+ 0		
	Strophe 10 Total, v. 3-4		**23**	= **17**	+ 6	= **23**	+ 0		
43:5 Refrain	מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	17	6	6					6
	הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ^		5	5					5
	יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי:		3		3				3
	Strophe 11 Total, v. 5		14	= 11	+ 3	= 0	+ 14	
	Total, v. 4-5		**26**	= **23**	+ 3	= 12	+ 14	
	Canto III **Total, v. 1-5**		**59**	= **46**	+ 13	= 45	+ 14	
	Grand Total, Ps. 42:2-43:5		**187**	= 140	+ 47	= 77	+ 110	
	With the heading, Ps. 42:1-43:5		191	= 144	+ 47			

* In 42:5b I read בְּסוֹד אַדִרָם, 'in the ranks of the elite' instead of בַּסָּךְ אֶדַּדֵּם (cf. *HAL,* s.v. אַדִּיר). In 42:6-7 I have restored the text by moving the first word of v. 7 to the end of v. 6 (see *BHS*). The latter emendation is based on the two other refrains (42:12 and 43:5). The word-counts of the emended text are highlighted. It does not affect the total number of words.

Observations

1. Like Psalms 9 and 10, Psalms 42 and 43 constitute a single composition, despite the fact that the psalm is presented in Codex L and other editions as two separate poems. In some manuscripts Psalm 43 even has a heading: לְדָוִד, 'belonging to David', while the LXX has 'Psalm of David' (cf. *BHS*). In several other manuscripts the two parts rightly appear as a single psalm.

   The structural unity of Psalm 42-43 is not only attested by the content and the use of the three refrains as a demarcating device (42:6, 12, and 43:5), but also numerically by the **17** verselines, the **17** occurrences of the word אֱלֹהִים, 'God', and by the total number of words: **187** (11 x **17**). Note also that the **7** Korahite psalms have altogether **119** (**7** x **17**) verselines! See Table VI in the Introduction to Book II.

2. In terms of the **187** (11 x **17**) words of the psalm, the middle word is, חַיָּי, 'my life', in v. 9c (**187** = 93 + 1 + 93), which is not very likely to have been consciously designed as the meaningful centre. A far better candidate is to be found in terms of the poetic structure: the middle verseline, v. 9, which coincides with the middle strophe:

   יוֹמָם יְצַוֶּה יְהוָה חַסְדּוֹ   וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירֹה עִמִּי ^ תְּפִלָּה לְאֵל חַיָּי:

   By day YHWH grants his love / at night a song for him is with me //
   a prayer to the God of my life.

3. The canto structure is clearly determined by the words addressed to God and by the three refrains: each canto begins with a passage directly addressed to God and ends with a refrain:

Canto I	Strophe 1	v. 2	10 words addressed to God
	Strophe 2	vs. 3-4	22 words spoken about God
	Strophe 3	v. 5	17 words spoken about God
	Strophe 4	v. 6 (refrain)	13 words spoken about God
Canto II	Strophe 5	vs. 7-8	22 words addressed to God
	Strophe 6	v. 9 (centre)	10 words spoken about God
	Strophe 7	vs. 10-11	20 words spoken about God
	Strophe 8	v. 12 (refrain)	14 words spoken about God
Canto III	Strophe 9	43:1-2	22 words addressed to God
	Strophe 10	43:3-4	23 words addressed to God
	Strophe 11	43:5 (refrain)	14 words spoken about God.

4. The divine name numbers and the *kabod* numbers feature in the following instances:

42:2-4	**32** words in total
42:5	**17** words in total
42:4-5	**23** words before atnach
42:3-6	**52** (2 x **26**) words in total
42:3-8	**17** words after atnach
42:3-8	**23** words addressed to God and **52** (2 x **26**) spoken about him
42:2-9	**69** (3 x **23**) words before atnach and **32** addressed to God
42:9-10	**17** words before atnach
42:2-10	**104** (4 x **26**) words in total
42:7-11	**52** (2 x **26**) words in total, with **17** after atnach
42:10-12	**34** (2 x **17**) words in total
42:9-12	**32** words before atnach
42:7-12	**46** (2 x **23**) words before atnach
42:2-12	**128** (4 x **32**) words in total, with **34** (2 x 17) after atnach
43:1-3	**23** words before atnach
43:3-4	**23** words in total, with **17** before atnach
43:4-5	**26** words in total, with **23** before atnach
43:1-5	**46** (2 x **23**) words before atnach.

5. The name יהוה is relatively scarce in the 31 psalms of Book II, for it appears only 36 times – see the Introduction to Book II, Table V. In the present psalm, it features only once, in 42:9a, where it highlights the meaningful centre. For the use of a significant (middle or only) instance of the divine name as a highlighting device, see the General Introduction, "Special devices to highlight the meaningful centre".

The designation אֱלֹהִים, 'God', however, occurs no less than **17** times. The word אֵל, 'God', appears 4 times (vs. 3a, 9c, 10a, and 43:4a).