CHARLES
UNIVERSITY

Dissertation Thesis
Disertační práce

František Válek

LIFE, SOCIETY, AND POLITICS IN RELATION TO RELIGION AT UGARIT IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE

ŽIVOT, SPOLEČNOST A POLITIKA VE VZTAHU K NÁBOŽENSTVÍ V UGARITU V POZDNÍ DOBĚ BRONZOVÉ

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University
Ústav Filosofie a religionistiky, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova

Field of study: Religious Studies
Studijní obor: Religionistika

Supervisor/*školitel***: doc. Dalibor Antalík, Dr.**

2023

Prohlašuji, že jsem vypracoval práci samostatně, řádně jsem citoval všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

V Českých Budějovicích 27. 9. 2023

František Válek

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The presented dissertation attempts to cover some aspects of the extensive topic of religion at Ugarit, an ancient site on the Syrian Mediterranean coast at the very end of the Late Bronze Age (late 14th to early 12th century BC). Religion is explored here in relation to everyday, social, and political life. It is based on the assumption that religion is not merely a matter of theological concepts and mythological narratives but is, first and foremost, a way of living in the world. Religion does not exist as a distinctly separate sphere of life but runs through the whole spectrum of human existence in different forms and with varying intensity. The present work discusses this broadly defined topic from several very different perspectives.

After the first introductory chapter comes the second part, in which religion is set in the broader context of the surrounding world. The surrounding landscape, mountains, rivers, seas, forests, skies, mineral resources, etc., have a considerable, though not straightforward, influence on lived religion. Social and historical contexts are also considered as essential factors.

In the third chapter, the thesis focuses on one of the central concepts of religious life in Ugarit: divinity. Here, the ways in which divinity manifests itself in the available sources are explored. The conceptualization of divinity is shown to be highly problematic and dependent on the contexts in which it occurs. Different types of sources – from rituals to myths to lexical lists to letters to administrative texts – always show a different side of the divine.

The fourth chapter deals with the issue of written sources. The scholarly preference for written material often fails to recognise that written sources are also material in nature and that their meaning is not exhausted by their content. The chapter deals with a statistical analysis of individual Ugaritic "archives" that reveal an interconnected network of centres of religious life manifested in written sources. The various languages and scripts attested in Ugarit are analysed in relation to religion. The materiality of the written sources is related to their power to manipulate reality, largely regardless of their content. The relationship of the written sources to the assumed illiterate majority of society is also briefly discussed.

In the following section, religion is examined from the perspective of the environment, particularly the city's architecture. The temples on the city acropolis and the shrines spread out in the urban built environment are examined. Attention is also given to residential architecture and how religion may have been present in it. The city's whole space is then considered as an environment in which various forms of religious life took place.

The extensive sixth chapter focuses on several narrower areas where religion was present in various forms. Firstly, the ways in which religion is manifested in onomastics are addressed, particularly by exploring the use of theophoric elements in anthroponyms and toponyms or the proper names of priests. Still, the wider symbolic significance of proper names is also considered. The next section focuses on the connection between cult activities and social life – in particular, which population groups participated in running the earthly life of the deities and in what ways. The question of public and private participation in religious activities is also addressed. The third section of chapter six is devoted to divination, especially as a practical way of living in the world. The fourth section discusses the administrative-economic dimension of religious activities more broadly. The care of deities was economically very demanding and required the broader participation of the whole society. Ritual texts are discussed here primarily as administrative documents, which in their structure are in many ways similar to ordinary economic activities. Part five examines the role of

religion in legal documents. For example, how and when deities were needed to guarantee made agreements. The penultimate section focuses on interpersonal communication as manifested in letters. Religion and symbolic communication are shown here as essential to letter-writing activities. In addition, various religious activities are occasionally addressed in the letters. The letters also show the religious dimension of political communication, illustrated by the example of the divine character of the Egyptian and Hittite rulers. The final section of chapter six deals with seals, which are not seen only as the iconographic representation of deities and religious activities but also as an important means of visual symbolic communication. A brief discussion of royal seals prefaces the last chapter.

The seventh chapter focuses on the relationship between politics and religion, showing them as interrelated spheres. It is divided into four narrower units. First, the participation of the monarch and the palace institution in cultural activities is discussed. These activities were largely directed from clergy institutions outside the palace itself. The second part deals with divinatory practices and their relationship to the royal palace. The third and most extensive part discusses the complex issue of political ideology and its relationship to Ugaritic narratives from the theoretical perspective of social myths. The discussion focuses mainly on the royal epics of Aqhat and Kirta. Their potential role in political propaganda is set in a broader social, religious, political, and historical context. The final section of the dissertation focuses on the issue of the divine character of deceased rulers.

Key Words

Ugarit; religions of the ancient Near East; religions of ancient Syria; divinity; lived religion; religion and law; economics of religion; divination; seals; temples; onomastics; correspondence; cult; material religion; social myth; religion and politics

Abstrakt

Předkládaná disertační práce se snaží komplexněji postihnout velice široké téma náboženství v Ugaritu, starověké lokalitě ležící na Syrském pobřeží Středozemního moře, v samotném závěru pozdní doby bronzové (konec 14. až začátek 12. stol. př. n. l.). Náboženství je zde zkoumáno ve vztahu ke každodennímu, společenskému a politickému životu. Vychází z předpokladu, že náboženství není pouze záležitostí teologických konceptů a mytologických narativů, ale že je to především způsob života ve světě. Náboženství neexistuje jako jasně oddělená sféra života, ale prochází v různých formách a s různou intenzitou celým spektrem lidské existence. Toto široce vymezené téma předkládaná práce probírá z několika velmi odlišných perspektiv.

Po první, úvodní kapitole, přichází na řadu druhá část, ve které je náboženství zasazeno do širšího kontextu okolního světa. Okolní krajina, pohoří, řeky, moře, lesy, obloha, zdroje nerostného bohatství, a podobně, mají na žité náboženství nezanedbatelný, byť ne přímočarý, vliv. Stejně tak jsou důležité sociální a historické kontexty.

Ve třetí kapitole se práce zaměřuje na jeden z ústředních konceptů náboženského života v Ugaritu: božství. Zde jsou prozkoumávány způsoby, jakými se božství manifestuje v dostupných pramenech. Konceptualizace božství je ukázána jako velice problematická a situačně závislá na kontextech v jakých se vyskytuje. Rozličné typy pramenů – od rituálů, přes mýty, lexikální seznamy, dopisy, nebo administrativní texty – ukazují vždy jinou stránku božství.

Čtvrtá kapitola se zabývá problematikou písemných pramenů. Badatelská preference písemného materiálu často opomíjí, že i písemné prameny jsou materiální povahy a že jejich význam není vyčerpán jejich obsahem. Kapitola se zabývá jednak statistickou analýzou jednotlivých

Ugaritských „archivů", která odhaluje provázanou síť center náboženského života manifestovaného v písemných pramenech. Rozličné jazyky a písma doložené v Ugaritu jsou analyzované ve vztahu k náboženství. Materialita písemných pramenů je vztáhnuta k jejich síle spoluutvářet realitu, a to ve velké míře bez ohledu na jejich obsah. Stručně je pojednán i vztah písemných pramenů k předpokládané negramotné většině společnosti.

V následující části je náboženství zkoumáno z hlediska prostředí, zejména architektury města. Prozkoumány jsou jak chrámy na městské akropoli, tak svatyně rozprostřené v prostředí městské zástavby. Pozornost je věnována i obytné architektuře, a způsobům, jakým v ní náboženství mohlo být přítomno. Celý prostor města je pak vzat v úvahu jako prostředí, ve kterém se uskutečňují rozličné formy náboženského života.

Rozsáhlá šestá kapitola se věnuje několika užším oblastem, ve kterých bylo náboženství přítomno v různých formách. Nejdříve je prozkoumáno, jak se náboženství projevuje v onomastice, zejména užitím theoforních prvků antroponym a toponym, či vlastní jména kněží, ale zvážen je také širší symbolický význam vlastních jmen. Další část se zaměřuje na propojení kultických aktivit a společenského života – zejména na to jaké skupiny obyvatelstva se podílejí na chodu pozemského života božstev a jakým způsobem. Adresována je i otázka veřejné a soukromé participace v náboženských aktivitách. Třetí bod šesté kapitoly se věnuje praktikám divinace, především jako praktickému způsobu žití ve světě. Ve čtvrté části je šířeji diskutován administrativně-ekonomický rozměr náboženských aktivit. Starost o božstva byla ekonomicky velmi náročná a vyžadovala širší participaci celé společnosti. Rituální texty jsou zde diskutovány především jako administrativní dokumenty, které jsou svou strukturou v mnohém podobné běžným ekonomickým aktivitám. V páté části se zabýváme rolí náboženství v právních dokumentech, například tím, jak a kdy bylo potřeba, aby božstva garantovala uzavřené dohody. Předposlední část je zaměřena na mezilidskou komunikaci tak, jak je manifestována v dopisech. Náboženství a symbolická komunikace je zde ukázána jako podstatná součást korespondenčních aktivit. Mimo to se v dopisech místy řeší rozličné náboženské aktivity. Dopisy také ukazují náboženský rozměr politické komunikace, který je ilustrován na příkladě božského charakteru Egyptských a Chetitských panovníků. Závěrečná část šesté kapitoly se potýká s pečetěmi, které nesloužily pouze pro ikonografické znázornění božstev a náboženských aktivit, ale také jako významné prostředky vizuální symbolické komunikace. Krátká diskuse o královských pečetích předznamenává poslední kapitolu.

Sedmá kapitola se zaměřuje na vztah politiky a náboženství a ukazuje je jako vzájemně provázané sféry. Je rozdělena to čtyř užších celků. V první řadě je diskutována participace panovníka a palácové instituce na kultických aktivitách. Tyto aktivity byly do velké míry řízeny z kněžských institucí mimo samotný palác. Druhá část se zabývá věštebnými praktikami a jejich vztahem pro královský palác. Ve třetí, nejrozsáhlejší části, je pojednána komplexní problematika politické ideologie a jejího vztahu k Ugaritským narativům z teoretické perspektivy sociálních mýtů. Diskuse je zaměřena zejména na královské eposy o Aqhatovi a Kirtovi. Jejich potenciální role v politické propagandě je zasazena do širší společenské, náboženské, politické a historické situace. Závěrečná část celé disertace se zaměřuje na problematiku božského charakteru zemřelých panovníků.

Klíčová slova

Ugarit; náboženství starověkého Předního východu; náboženství starověké Sýrie; božství; žité náboženství; náboženství a právo; ekonomie náboženství; věštění; pečetě; chrámy; onomastika; korespondence; kult; materiální náboženství; sociální mýtus; náboženství a politika

Contents

1 Introduction

The city of Ugarit, located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, has been the focus of countless studies. Many of those were concerned with religion. When discussing the religion of Late Bronze Age Syria, one would hardly find a better site. Consequently, Ugarit is one of the most discussed and explored sites in relation to religion in the ancient Near East. This presents both a great advantage for the research but also a difficult challenge. First, the reader may ask if there is anything relevant to be added to the discussion. Those familiar with the discussions could probably agree that despite the extensive research and publication activities, there is still more we do not know than what we do. However, uncovering the unexplored topics is not only the issue of research. It is also the issue of sources. Much of what we do not know, we will probably never know because there are no sources to inform us. Therefore, we must often look between the lines and consider the broader contexts.

The nature of the existing research itself causes another challenge. Numerous interpretations are flawed or are no longer valid in light of new sources. Sometimes, such interpretations were challenged, corrected, or disproved, but the original ideas already took on a firm grasp in the discussions. To navigate in the vast existing research, which is filled with numerous misinterpretations or whole fabrications, is an arduous task. The saying *trust but verify* is doubly true in this case. The reader is wholeheartedly welcome to be suspicious of anything stated in this thesis as it broadly relies on previous research that might have been flawed or misunderstood by me.

What I have often been missing in the discussions is the appreciation of religion as something that was actually lived by the ancient inhabitants of the city. The deities were not literary figures present in myths. They were present on earth and influenced the lives of individuals. The religion was not limited to the temples where priests carried out sacrifices. It permeated the everyday activities of the whole society, from households to international relations. This thesis aims to explore the available material in a way that would allow us to grasp the religion at Ugarit as an integral part of life.

Therefore, the reader cannot expect a comprehensive and deep study of religion at Ugarit. The goal is to provide a broader picture of different modalities of how the practice of living religion manifested in various sources. Consequently, this thesis may be seen instead as a set of explorations of Ugaritic religion. There are six core chapters, each exploring the religion at Ugarit from a different perspective.

Chapter 2) Contexts of Religion at Ugarit
After the introductory chapter, we will briefly explore the context in which the religion at Ugarit was lived. The premise of this chapter is that religion is never lived in isolation. The natural conditions, historical circumstances, or social relations help to shape but also limit the final character of different aspects of religion. Even though Ugarit was a part of the broader cultural milieu of the ANE, there are always details that make it different from any other site.

Chapter 3) Conceptions of Divinity

The next chapter is focused on one of the core concepts of religion at Ugarit, the deities. This concept will be largely problematised. Instead of suggesting any clear conception or definition of what deities were at Ugarit, we will outline the numerous ways in which their social reality was manifested in the sources. The resulting description is somewhat reminiscent of a mosaic composed of different conceptions changing according to the contexts in which the deities appear.

Chapter 4) Texts and Religion

Next, we explore the problematics of religion and written sources. This chapter explores the general situation of texts, languages, and scripts used at Ugarit and relates them to religious practices. In this case, a statistical approach is used to grasp the broader picture of how religion was dispersed over the city in the so-called archives, or rather clusters of texts. The texts are considered not only as the contents of writing but also as material objects in themselves – as actors within the religious life of the city. It is argued that they were not only the outcome of religious practices and thoughts but also something that influenced the lived reality of religion. In addition, the textual approach to religion favoured by most scholars is reflected and reconsidered.

Chapter 5) Religion and the City Environs

The fifth chapter presents the other side of the coin. Here, the archaeological material is given preference in contrast to the texts. The initial aim of this chapter was to explore how religion permeated and constructed the environment of the city. The focus would have been directed not only on the expected situation of temples and other sacred spaces but also on religion in domestic architecture, as well as the general presence of religion in the public space, for example, represented by stelae and street networks of the city. In this case, I must admit I have overestimated my abilities and competencies. Therefore, the results contrast with my plans. In the end, the core of the chapter is focused on the situation of temples and other types of sacred places. The issues of the domestic contexts of religion are explored only in vague outlines. The topic of environmental interconnectedness and organic space seems to be moved to the back of the queue. The final discussion primarily focuses on the complications and limits I have encountered.

Chapter 6) Religion in the Life of the City

The largest part of this thesis is devoted to several topics where we can observe how religion permeated different spheres of life in the city. The discussion begins with the topic of onomastics. The practice of naming, especially people, occasionally attests to religious realia. Individuals included divine names in their own names or otherwise referred to religious practices. A short exploration of the names of the clergy is carried out in order to find out if their names could have somehow reflected their occupation. We only briefly address the topics of the symbolic power of the name and the references to religion in toponyms.

The second section is aimed at exploring the place of cultic activities within the society. For some people, running the cults was their occupation or part of it. This was not limited to the priestly offices, such as the *khnm* or *qdšm*, but it also involved other professionals who contributed to the functioning of continuous veneration of deities. Next, numerous questions related to the public participation in cults are addressed. Last but not least, the issues of private cultic activities are briefly explored.

Closely related to the previous topic are divinatory practices. We possess several sources which clearly attest to the practice of divination at Ugarit. However, ascertaining how exactly these sources reflect the lived reality of religion is an arduous task. Therefore, this chapter opens several rather speculative discussions that aim to explore the possibilities or impossibilities of these practices. Part of the discussion is also devoted to a reflection or scholarly discussions surrounding a poorly understood and controversial tablet, which may attest to astromancy.

The fourth section of this broad chapter discusses how religion relates to the best-attested activity at Ugarit – administration and economy. There, we do not only discuss how religion was present in administrative and economic records but also how religious documents may be perceived as acts of administration and economy. We explore the possibility of understanding the ritual texts as administrative documents in their own right, the economic relations surrounding the functioning of the temple, as well as the economic and administrative activities of the temple institutions themselves.

Next, the category of legal activities is explored. There, three core themes are discussed. In the first part, the use of deities as guarantors of agreements is addressed. Maybe surprisingly, such references to deities are relatively scarce at Ugarit and pertain prevalently to international relations. Second, the employment of religious imagery in legal texts is explored, together with a consideration of the ritual nature of the legal activities themselves. Last, the few references to religious realia appearing in legal texts are documented.

The penultimate section deals with Ugaritic correspondence. Letters are one of the best attestations of interpersonal communication we possess. Religion once again appears in many modalities in these sources. First, the broad issue of symbolic communication is addressed. This includes, for example, the formulaic nature of addresses, the use of family metaphors, gift exchanges, and different forms of greetings and benedictions. The deities are an integral component of these modes of communication. Second, similarly to the case of legal texts, the letters occasionally comment on religious realia. These mentions provide a slightly different perspective than the straightforwardly religious texts. Special attention is then given to the correspondence with Egypt and Ḫatti, whose rulers were addressed in particularly religious language. A short note is made on Hittite seals, often impressed on the letters. These employ religious iconography and provide a connection with the last section of this chapter.

The concluding section focuses on seals. Quite often, the seals are used as sources for divine iconography. This perspective, however, forms only a secondary issue of the discussion. The creation of seals from Ugarit does not always correspond to the timeframe in which we situate their active use. This opens numerous questions about their roles and perceptions. Their potential as objects that express identity and confirm authority is explored, as well as the possibilities of reconstructing the perception of the engraved motives. Apart from sealing practices, the seals could have worked as objects of adornment, amulets, or votive offerings. Sources which could confirm such uses are briefly explored, too. The chapter concludes with a short discussion on royal seals, foreshadowing the following chapter.

Chapter 7) Politics and Religion

The final chapter explores several dimensions in which religion intermingles with politics. Occasionally, this topic has already permeated into the previous chapters – the palace was one of the most important actors in legal, administrative, and economic activities, members of the royal family

belong among the most frequent correspondents, and the state sponsored many of the cultic activities. In this chapter, the relations between the state and religion are the central focus.

The first section addresses the active involvement of the king, palace, and royal family in cults. A substantial proportion of cultic activities may, in fact, be connected with the state representation. Nonetheless, the common conception of the king as the highest cultic officiant or as the primary mediator between deities and humankind is contested. Instead, the mutually beneficial relationship between the palace and the temples is highlighted.

Second, the divinatory practices performed for the political organization are discussed. As noted in the section on divination in general, the sources are relatively silent about the exact performance of divinatory practices. Therefore, this issue is explored primarily through the comparative perspective of the ANE divinatory practices. The sources at Ugarit, especially the vast collection of ivory divinatory models from the palace and structure of Ugaritic divinatory compendia, may attest to the importance of divinatory practices for the state decision-making process, even if these practices are not otherwise made explicit in other materials.

Most of the space of this chapter is dedicated to the possibilities of ideological use of the royal narratives from Ugarit. Their ideological overtones were for long noted, albeit not widely accepted. However, in my opinion, the discussion lacked the proper articulation of why and how these literary compositions could have been actually used as part of the royal propaganda. The approach I have adopted is based on the theory of social myths. Through broader contextualization of the sources, I have tried to look for the context that would support the ideological interpretation of these works as a lived fact, not only a literary topos. The historical circumstances, authorship, context of Near Eastern royal epics, other attestations of narrative propaganda at Ugarit, literary figures, or broad conceptualizations of motives of failure are used to explore the possible functioning of these compositions. It must be stated, however, that all of this is so far only a preliminary exploration of possibilities and more detailed research is needed.

The final section of the last chapter revolves around the divine nature of the kings of Ugarit. This is a recurring topic in the discussions of political religion at Ugarit. The presented discussion is not a complete reconsideration or reinterpretation of already suggested interpretations. Instead, some problems and nuances are pointed out.

It is clear from this summary that the presented thesis is very broad in its focus and straddles across many themes while leaving many others aside. Even though its final form is quite far from my initial idea of what I would be able to explore, I hope the broadness of the focus is a positive trait. Admittedly, this has many negative consequences. Each of the chapters or sections could have been discussed in greater detail. Every little part of it would have deserved a dissertation of its own. Indeed, some already have. Consequently, each part of this thesis suffers from not being detailed enough. In many cases, broader contextualization within the cultural milieu of the ANE might have provided and would have led to more nuanced results. Probably, many questions that I ask but do not answer could have been answered if more detailed research had been done. More scholarly works could have been discussed; the development of interpretations and changes in our understanding might have enriched the discussion. All of this would undoubtedly improve this thesis, and it opens many of its parts to a deserved criticism. It might have also caused some of the suggested interpretations to be revealed as flawed or misleading.

On the other hand, the broadness of the thesis, in my opinion, allows us to imagine a more comprehensive picture of the lived reality of religion at Ugarit. I consider this a beneficial thing that leads us to consider the broader picture and appreciate the complexities of the historical material. However, it may be argued that I should have left such endeavour to the later stages of my academic career after exploring the individual topics in greater detail. Indeed, the theme I have chosen to cover would be more fitting as a final step before retirement or as the work for a broader team of researchers. In the presented form, there are numerous open issues. Nonetheless, at least for me personally, the work on this thesis has been a greatly enriching experience. I hope that for some, reading it will be enriching, too.

It must also be noted that I have tried to make the individual chapters of the thesis readable separately.[1] Consequently, there may be some repetitions or numerous references to the same issues so as not to force the reader to read through the book in search of repeated data or references. Therefore, the thesis includes a significant number of inner references. Occasionally, this may be a distracting element, but I hope it generally works for the better.

1.1   Remarks on Methodology

My primary academic background is in religious studies. Even though the ancient Near East religions have been my primary focus since the beginning of my university studies, and I have complemented my education with an M.A. in Assyriology, I am far from being a full-fledged Assyriologist. My linguistic skills in Ugaritic, Akkadian, or Sumerian are limited, and my palaeographic skills are almost non-existent. I also lack the experience and methodological background of archaeological research. The scholars from the field of Assyriology should, therefore, be aware that they are reading a thesis presented in a field of religious studies. At the same time, readers from the field of religious studies should be aware that the expected audience of this thesis is Assyriologists rather than scholars of religion. This situation may occasionally lead to redundant comments and explanations either for Assyriologists or for scholars of religion.

I have tried to transfer and apply my religious studies theoretical background to the field of Assyriology. Consequently, the perspective I am advocating may sometimes seem strange to the Assyriologists. Because I constantly encounter confusion about religious studies with theology or biblical studies, I must also stress that this is not the case. This may be an important distinction in studying Ugaritic religion, where biblical studies and theology were and are very active and influential.[2]

With this initial disclaimer, we may proceed to a more pressing question. What does it mean that my theoretical background is that of religious studies? As many may know, the study of religion, even if established as a separate academic discipline, does not have a single theoretical framework. It has undergone a long development,[3] and it is now a broad multidisciplinary field of research. There are many approaches the scholar may follow in pursuit of understanding the concept. From sociology, to psychology, to phenomenology, to anthropology, to cognitive science – to name just a few of the

---

[1] Biased by the presumption that other people work as I do: often reading only those parts of books which are of particular interest to them, because there is no time to read everything.

[2] Not in a bad way; there may only be different motivations and presumptions.

[3] For a reader friendly discussion on the most influential figures in the religious studies, see Pals 2006. Albeit selective, it is a good base for initial insight.

most influential frameworks, each of which has multiple branches. Individual approaches are occasionally portrayed as conflicting; indeed, there were numerous theoretical controversies and conflicts. Some scholars may scold their academic adversaries and address them as reductionists or, on the contrary, protectionists or crypto-theologists. There were and still are numerous debates on whether religious studies should adopt a single theoretical approach and, if so, which one. Even though I belong among those who favour the multidisciplinary approach, I think the critical debates are fruitful for highlighting the limits of individual perspectives and inciting reflection. In the end, religion, just as any other domain of human behaviour, is, in my opinion, a fluid category that no single theoretical framework can grasp fully. Different approaches may be more fitting for every single kind of material and, more importantly, for different research questions.

The first perspective that has personally influenced me the most is that of (social/cultural) anthropology. This is probably thanks to its multidisciplinary nature, even if the social aspects are usually the most stressed. Unfortunately, my preference for this theoretical framework does not mean I have ever performed anthropological research. Instead, my understanding of cultural realia is influenced by those who have lived among and studied those seemingly so different from us for extended periods. Reading the works of Malinowski,[4] Radcliffe-Brown,[5] Evans-Pritchard,[6] Lévi-Strauss,[7] Turner,[8] Douglas,[9] Leach,[10] or Geertz[11] and discussing their theories during my studies have strongly influenced the way I think about the world. Each in their own way, each having strengths and weaknesses.[12] It has changed not only my perspective on distant cultures but also made me realise even more clearly that *they* are no weirder in their ways of life than *we* are.[13] Every human action may be perceived as meaningful and normal. When some activities seem crazy to us, we should work on exploring their cultural contexts until they make sense.

Obviously, anthropological fieldwork is impossible in the study of ancient societies. This, however, does not mean some of its approaches are not applicable, especially if my goal is to reconstruct the religion as a lived reality. There is a prerequisite of learning the language of the target society, so different nuances are lost in translation as little as possible. The research should focus on observing the practices in their natural habitat. If there are any "sacred" texts used in rituals, they should be studied not by themselves but as a part of the living practice. In sum, the anthropological stance concerning the ancient societies is not to ignore that they were actually living humans.

---

[4] E.g., Malinowski 1926 or 1948.

[5] E.g., Radcliffe-Brown 1922 or 1952.

[6] E.g., Evans-Pritchard 1937 or 1965.

[7] E.g., Lévi-Strauss 1968 or 1978.

[8] E.g., Turner 1969, 1974, or 1982

[9] E.g., Douglas 1966, 1996, or 2007

[10] E.g., Leach 2000a, 2000b.

[11] E.g., Geertz 1973.

[12] Admittedly, I do not orient well in the latest anthropological research. Explorations of theoretical issues were mostly set aside in favour of exploring Assyriological studies.

[13] Here, I must stress another disclaimer. This does not mean I do not appreciate, for example, the modern science, especially scientific-based medicine. On the contrary, I believe that the findings of modern science are a great success for the whole humanity and I am always rather sad when someone, especially scholar, unjustly depreciates them. This may seem as an unnecessary note, but this sometimes really bothers me and I see why some may then see religious studies as crypto-theology (of course, not necessarily Christian) in this regard.

Second, the theory of social construction of reality, initially crafted by Berger and Luckmann,[14] has immensely influenced how I view the world. Perceiving realities as social constructs[15] has been, so far, the best theoretical framework and explanation that allowed me to see every social order or concept as meaningful while at the same time "arbitrary". Unlike what some may think, this does not mean that social reality is "only social", ergo not real. The social realities have very real implications for the world, even on the material level. It does not only allow us to take the studied societies seriously; it is a prerequisite of this approach. This theory has also been immensely influential for me on a personal level. It is fascinating to perceive how the world I live in is constantly socially (re)constructed. How it is continuously rethinked, how are different aspects of it here stressed, there suppressed. At the same time, it reveals how social reality is important, powerful, and, in the end, necessary. What is seemingly shown as arbitrary construction is a necessary condition for social life. Without this construction, there is no reality for humans to live in. In this respect, it is important to stress that this theory also allows for individual perspective and construction. This is, however, never devoid of external contexts. The reader may note that I often stress the perspective of social construction throughout the thesis.

Another approach which has broadened my perspective is that of the Actor-Network Theory.[16] It is one of the most recent additions to my theoretical background. Very briefly and possibly also misleadingly, this perspective exceeds the field delimited by social constructivism. It takes the "external contexts" to yet another level. In this perspective, everything should be perceived as an actor set within the network of relations. All the objects in the world – whether endowed with cognitive abilities or not – act on the other actors in the network. This theoretical stance is stressed mainly in the chapter on texts, where they are perceived as actors that significantly contribute to the religious reality of Ugarit. Similarly, the deities of the Ugaritians should be perceived not only as social realities but as actors in these realities.

The last theoretical framework I am going to mention explicitly as the source of my perspective is the theory of social myths.[17] This is the only theory which is applied more directly and explicitly. I have decided to use it in an attempt to grasp better the functioning of the royal narratives in the construction of royal ideology in Chapter *7.3 Constructing Royal Ideology*. Because it is particularly relevant to that chapter, it is discussed in greater detail there.

The reader may note that most of the time, the methodologies I have mentioned here are used implicitly. They strongly influence how I perceive the material, but I do not usually feel any need to accentuate them. This is especially the case of the anthropological theories, which are so deeply rooted in me that I do not consider it necessary to refer to the source. Frankly, I would often be unable to do that as the different approaches tend to merge into an undifferentiated repertoire of perspectives, and I am often unable to detect their origin. This is probably because I am not that

---

[14] Berger & Luckmann 1966. It has since been reworked and reused in many ways by a vast number of scholars.

[15] Putting the discussions on the reality outside of discourse aside, I should here also make a short personal disclaimer. Unlike some keen proponents of the social construction of reality, I am very much convinced there is also a world independent of humans' perspectives on it. Consequently, I also remain unconvinced by the more radical implications and stances of the ontological turn. See, e.g., discussions in Burr 2015: 93–120. For ontological turn, see, e.g., Holbraad & Pedersen 2017.

[16] See Latour 2005.

[17] See Bouchard 2017.

much interested in who said what in theory, but I rather accept or discard many things that I hear or read. It does not mean I do not want to acknowledge those who have inspired me, but I am very much lost in that. Also, whenever I try to theorise, I get stuck, stammer, babble, and get too wordy because I tend to complicate everything. Theorizing religion is not easy for me. There are always *buts*. This is why this chapter was initially titled *Do I suck at Theorizing?*

My primary methodological concern is scarcely the issue of applied theory. Instead, I try to direct my research by a simple rule: *how do we know what we say we know, and why do we claim whatever we claim?* I hope to show in this thesis that the understanding (which is always interpretation) of sources is highly complicated. History is always (re)constructed rather than revealed. As a consequence, there are too many "probably", "possibly", "maybe", "might have been", and so on and so forth. While this is far from being stylistically ideal, I cannot help it. The interpretation of sources is more often than not insecure. I am myself often triggered when someone uses words such as "clear", "undoubtedly", "absolutely," etc., because what usually follows is something very much unclear or a straightforward fabrication of the researcher's fantasy.

Closely related to this issue is "speculation as method". I am not a keen fan of speculations when it comes to history (of religions). However, as the reader will undoubtedly notice, there are numerous occasions when I let my imagination on. It has proven to be a useful methodological tool. Speculations allow us to direct our attention beyond the material itself, pondering the possibilities and impossibilities of interpretations. They also lead us to look for sources which may prove or disprove them. To speculate is sometimes good to deconstruct the "known" realia or "certain" claims of some scholars. By speculating a new possibility, the old one loses its firm grip and may be reconsidered. At the same time, I try to avoid wild speculations and always indicate where I apply this "method", so the reader knows when we are working with sources and when we are going beyond them and how far beyond we go. I also believe it is essential to be open about the process which has led to the conclusions presented in the thesis. Sometimes, the background of the research and the researcher may help the reader realise why some conclusions were reached, but also where a possible bias may be.

The last methodological problem I want to address here is comparative evidence. On the one hand, the whole research is based on comparative evidence. We could hardly understand the material at Ugarit without the broader contexts of what we know from somewhere else. On the other hand, each individual case is unique. For example, in time and space, the administrative practices were extremely varied, ritual texts were concerned with different details and were structured in numerous ways, temples functioned differently in every area, and so on. Thus, the comparative material may be very deceiving and must be used cautiously. My initial thought was to use comparative materials as little as possible, but it did not prove to be a beneficial approach. In the end, there are many occasions in which we would benefit by using more comparative evidence or by setting the discussed material better within the broader cultural milieu of the LBA world and of the ANE world in general. This is one of the main problems of this thesis. Its broad focus on very distinct areas of the human situation has limited my options to explore each theme in more detail and context. Doubtlessly, there will be many chapters and claims where a better knowledge of broader cultural contexts would slightly or significantly change my position, confirm or disprove some of my speculations, and so forth.

1.1.1 What I Talk about When I Talk about Religion

The central theme of this dissertation is "religion". I have already stated that there is no agreement among the scholars of religion on how to approach it. An essential part of the problem is that there is no agreement on what religion is. There have been plenty of definitions suggested to grasp and delimit this concept.[18] Of course, this introductory remark cannot aim to solve this discussion. The sole goal of it is to briefly outline my perspective, which necessarily influences the selection of the discussed topics and how I address them.

To begin with, I do not think any meaningful definition of religion is possible within the multidisciplinary framework I am pursuing. I would suggest that this is because any complex human behaviour is too varied to be easily and transculturally defined. Each definition of religion has been, in my opinion, flawed in at least one of these aspects: it used other defining features that also lacked proper definitions and consensus, it was circular, it was too narrow, or it was too broad. These and other flaws prevented any definition from being truly applicable and consequently to be unanimously accepted. It does not mean the attempts at definition were useless. On the contrary, the inability to define religion shows how deeply entangled and ambiguous human behaviour is in all of its aspects. Together with many scholars of religion, I resigned at attempts to define it. However, I do not belong among those who would discard it entirely. Instead, I try to reflect on what the use of this term does with our discussions. What does it contribute? Can its use explain anything? Where does it mislead us? Where does it distort the studied material?

I perceive the category of religion within the perspective of the social construction of reality. There is no religion *per se*. It is a concept, the meaning of which is created by its use – whether by the scholars of religion, other scholars, or the general population. This means that religion exists in those societies where this word is used and has a meaning for its members. Hand in hand with cultural contact, it describes some phenomena in other societies where such a concept may or may not exist. I understand this as a way of cultural translation. To understand something unfamiliar, we categorise it as something known. This process distorts foreign conceptions. Only by further familiarization with the *other* the *other* begins to make sense by itself. Translations became less and less necessary, or at least more nuanced. This process also modifies the original concept used for this translation. Religion, as I use it now, significantly differs from how I used it before I started my studies. The paradox is that before, I knew what religion was, but now its meaning has largely dissolved.

When I talk about religion now, I do it mainly because it is a concept under which the supposed target audience imagines something. The title of this dissertation may raise numerous associations in the expected reader: deities, myths, rituals, sacrifices, temples, prayers, priests, divination, and so on and so forth. Most of the time, the reader will not be disappointed to find these topics in the thesis. Therefore, I find it a helpful shortcut to raise primary expectations.

However, there are also numerous associations by which the concept of religion may do more harm than good. The most considerable risk I associate with using religion is that with it, the irrationality of the studied societies may often be highlighted. Religious people are often imagined as irrational, superstitious, uneducated, naïve, or plain stupid. Religions of the past are often seen in the evolutionary perspective as surpassed milestones in the evolution of humankind. Religious practices and thoughts are often laughed at and seen as absurd. It creates an unnecessary distinction between

---

[18] See, e.g., Pyysiäinen 2001, Arnal 2000, Idinopulos & Wilson 1998, Penner 1989, or Spiro 1966, for different discussions on the problems of definition. This list is by no means comprehensive.

us and *them*. This does not mean that I do not sometimes find some of the practices and thoughts funny or absurd myself, but when these are properly contextualised within the culture where they appear, they usually start to make sense, and the absurdness dissolves. Looking at our own society as if it were any foreign society also helps us to see that our thoughts and actions are as funny and absurd as any other.[19] The irrationalities of others are often abundantly clear to us, while our own are not. We may also find that what appears to us as irrational is only what we do not deem *normal*.

Rationality may often be overrated concerning human behaviour. There are so many actions and thoughts that we genuinely do not think through by a rational approach. And even if we do, this does not mean we are automatically correct. In everyday life, we build our analytical reasoning on learned *facts*. But we often do not adequately understand these premises. We take them as evident. We may then ask whether there is really any qualitative difference in reasoning between those who know the Earth rotates around the Sun and between those who believe it is the other way around and the Sun is a deity. For most people, these are facts because they learned it[20] that way, and everyone else in their society thinks the same. Not because anyone is more or less rational but because it is the lived reality. Note also what difference makes the used language. What we *know* is a rational science; what others *believe* is irrational religion. By this, I do not wish to anyhow depreciate science and rational thinking but highlight that mere references to science and rationality do not make any claims rational, scientific, or true. In addition, some religious thinking is very rational and rigorous, even if based on different presumptions and axioms than we see as relevant.

Another frequent association, already noted above, is the notion of "beliefs".[21] When talking about religions, we tend to describe the thoughts and actions by beliefs of the target society. They *believe* in gods; they *believe* if they perform a sacrifice, the rain will come; they *believe* in the afterlife; they *believe* in myths; and so on. In addition, we tend to perceive these beliefs as something solid, deep, and emotional. Religious beliefs are beliefs in holy, sacred, transcendental, etc. Beliefs are taken as deep convictions. Surely, some people are deeply entangled with the ritual performance. They feel the presence of the divine, the contact with the sacred.[22] However, the existence of deities (etc.) may not be a question of any beliefs in this sense; rather, it may be a social reality in which people live. There is no need to *believe* in anything when it is simply how things are.

Here, we may also note that the reasons for religious behaviour are as varied as humans can be. Some may attend a religious ceremony because they want to venerate deities, others because it is what everyone else does, what society or law demands, or because they find it pleasant for various reasons. The reasons may not be conscious and may vary for everyone in different situations. Beliefs may be only of secondary importance or irrelevant at all. Different societies also place a different emphasis on the importance of beliefs or what individuals think. Somewhere, the acts alone count; elsewhere, the inner intentions and beliefs are more important. What does this say about religion in general? Is a person who attends church every Sunday but does so because he has friends there, less

---

[19] See, e.g., Miner 1956 who describes the Americans (disguised under society of "Nacirema") as if they were any other "primitive society". Rather than excitingly expressing how weird the Americans are, this parody shows how biased we approach the *other*.

[20] Not necessarily in school but by simple living in the society where the facts exist.

[21] The problem of conceptualizing belief in religious studies is very similar to the problem of religion. For an example of recent discussion and summary of the problem, see, e.g., Blum 2018 – without any hope to resolve it.

[22] Note, e.g., the conception of the holy as *mysterium tremendum et fascinance* as crafted by Otto 1923[1917] which has fundamentally influenced the debate.

religious than those of his friends who go there because they want to pray for the souls of their dead relatives in purgatory? From the view of anyone who observes them, their behaviour may seem exactly alike. Even more, the one doing it for social relations may otherwise behave as a pious and moral Christian, while the one who takes it seriously may behave like an immoral atheist outside of the church. Who is more religious now?

Similarly, numerous visual features are associated with different religious traditions – from clothes to jewellery to hair and beard styling. However, to explain the following of these visual styles as expressions of religious beliefs may not be explanatory at all. Why would we see as religious a woman wearing a hijab but not a man wearing a suit? Both dress codes may be dictated by traditions, expectations of society, or particular situations and not by personal beliefs or (religious) convictions. And if personal preferences and convictions play any significant role, they may be highly varied, too.

This leads us to the issue of ritual – a term often used in relation to religion.[23] Here, we may once again observe the tendency to see the activities of others as ritualistic while our own as *normal* behaviour. And even if we accept that we also perform rituals, both knowingly and unknowingly, where is the line between religious and non-religious rituals? Why is a burial, or regular visits to the grave, accompanied by bringing of flowers and lightning of candles, seen as a normal activity, but when someone at Ugarit deals with the dead, it is considered a "cult of the dead"?[24] Is a visit to a grave religious activity when the visitor believes in an afterlife and non-religious when the visitor only wants to remember the deceased? Or are both participating in religious activity because they follow the tradition?

Some discussions on defining religion deal with the issues of function vs. content. Simplified: Is something religion because of some specific features (e.g., deities) or because it functions in a particular way (e.g., facilitates social cohesion)? Or is it a combination of both? It seems to me that in the general uses of the term, the content approaches are prevalent. Despite all the problems discussed for decades, the core feature in the conception of religion remains the deities and other kinds of supernatural beings and forces.[25] When an activity or thought involves any sort of supernatural element, it is readily recognised as religious. Anyhow, the recurring problem is not agreeing upon what constitutes anything as supernatural.

Yet another issue with the use of religion is that it often leads us to heavily interpret – search for hidden meanings, symbolic references, some profound truths, mysticisms, and so forth. This is possibly heavily influenced by the tradition of Biblical exegesis. This approach, unfortunately, often leads to unnecessarily complicated explanations of human behaviour. It may be disappointing, but many of the emic interpretations and self-understandings (do not forget our own) may be less noble than the conception of religion invites us to believe.

This discussion could go on forever.

What then constituted the selection of the topics in this thesis? I have already stated above that I use religion to raise primary expectations. The thesis will deal with rituals, cults, myths, deities, divination, etc. But do I have any reason to select these as religious while others not? It may be

---

[23] Here, I would like to highlight the introductory discussion in Delnero 2020, which may be very inspirative to understanding religion in the context of Assyriology, especially in relation to ritual activities.

[24] See further the discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs*.

[25] See also the discussion in Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*.

disappointing, but there is no other reason than the use of this word in the public discourse. However, and I hope this is where my thesis and perspective are helpful, I try to set these phenomena within the lived realities of ancient Ugarit. My attempt is precisely to show that these phenomena were entangled with other spheres of life. They are dependent upon them and vice versa.

In addition, I do not delimit the discussed topics to the primary expectations, but I occasionally slightly venture into the unexpected. The approach I am advocating invites us to look at other spheres of life as if it were religion, too. Something usually not considered a ritual, myth, cult, or deity may be analysed as such. This analysis often leads to interesting results that further dissolve the category of religion as something specific.

We should also ask how the concept of religion may be discussed in emic terms. Did the Ugaritians have religion in their perspective? To put it simply, no. No word or concept could be translated as religion in the way we use it.[26] However, the material clearly suggests that some concepts we further associate with religion were part of the social realities of Ugarit. There were deities (*il*), sacrifices (*dbḥ*), temples (*bt*), divination (*brt*), magic (*ḥrš*), sorcerers (*kšp*), or occupational categories related to deities and temple activities (*khnm, qdšm*). In some parts of this thesis, I hope to show that many of these concepts tended to be interwoven and thus formed a functional network of relations, which we consequently recognise as religion. Still, this is not enough to establish the category of religion as an emic one. In addition, due to this recognition, we often tend to ignore other nodes of these networks.

To conclude, throughout this thesis, the term religion could be written in quotation marks or accompanied by notes such as "what we call/perceive as/recognise as religion", etc. This would make the stylistics of this thesis even worse than it already is. Therefore, I have chosen to use this term as it is. Hopefully, this short introduction at least partially contributed to the (re)consideration of some association a reader may have to this concept. In the end, I have not aimed to convince the reader that the conception of religion presented here is somehow more valid than other conceptions; after all, what I have presented here is hardly a conception at all. Instead, I wanted to highlight how unclear this category is and how much its character depends on what approach we choose to follow. I invite the reader to consider throughout the thesis if the selection of the topics and following discussions are relevant – and why or why not.

1.2   Sources and Previous Research

The city of Ugarit is one of the most interesting sites for the research of the history of religions of the ANE. This is caused by several factors. The most important is the vast number of sources discovered at this site. The second factor is its close spatial, temporal, and, most importantly, cultural proximity to the Biblical world. Therefore, for many Biblical scholars, Ugarit is even more attractive than the rest of the ANE to provide the cultural contexts. This section presents a brief overview of the previous research and sources.

---

[26] Probably the closest parallel to it would be *parṣu* which covers more aspects of religion than any other Akkadian term. Still, it is far from categorical overlap; see *CAD P*: 195–203. At Ugarit, this term is attested in letter RS 34.141 (*RSO VII*, no. 32), from Dagān-Bēlu to Urtēnu. There, the sender scolds Urtēnu for lack of it. What is meant here is the lack of "proper behaviour" – the ritual of symbolic communication and gift exchange. Note also that the understanding of this letter heavily depends on the translations. Compare, e.g., *RSO VII*: 71 and van Soldt 2011: 195.

1.2.1   Summary of Archaeological Research[27]

Archaeological missions at tell Ras Shamra and adjacent sites now have more than 90 years of history. The first site excavated was not the tell itself but a tomb at Minet el-Beida (ancient *Maḫadu*, port village of Ugarit). Legend has it that in 1928, a peasant ploughing in the area hit a stone slab with his plough and thus disclosed an entry to a tomb. The event was described by Léon Albanèse, an archaeologist who conducted the excavation of the tomb.[28]

In 1929, an archaeological campaign started at the discovery site under the direction of Claude Schaeffer and René Dussaud. The research was extended to the nearby tell during the first campaign. At Minet el-Beida, the excavations continued parallel to the excavations at the tell during seasons 1929–1935. Unfortunately, a modern military port is located there, and access is currently restricted. After the 11th campaign in 1939, the mission was interrupted by World War II and resumed in 1948.

In 1973, a Late Bronze Age tomb on the nearby cape Ras Ibn-Hani was discovered, which indicated an LBA settlement.[29] Subsequently, a long-term Syrian–French mission was established apart from the Ras Shamra mission under the direction of Adnan Bounni and Jacques Lagrace. Archaeological missions within the kingdom of Ugarit were not limited to the three sites, but these remain by far the best explored.

Henri de Contenson replaced Shaeffer as the head of the Ras Shamra mission for seasons 1972–1973 and was followed by Adnan Bounni and Jacques Lagarce (season 1974), Jean-Claude Margueron (seasons 1975–1976) and Marguerite Yon (seasons 1978–1998).

The status of the excavations changed from French to joined French–Syrian in 1999. Yves Calvet was assigned as the French director, and Bassam Jamous as the Syrian one. Jamous was replaced in 2005 by Jamal Haydar.[30] Valérie Matoïan replaced Yves Calvet in 2009 and in the same year Michel al-Maqdissi joined Jamal Haydar.[31] Since 2014, the Syrian team is headed by Khozama al-Bahloul.

As far as I know, the last available report reflects the state from 2012.[32] According to the mission website, the Syrian team continues the excavations at the site while the French team focuses on the editorial activities.[33] On satellite images from *Mapy.cz* (fig. 1), a newly excavated area in the southern part of the tell (west of the *House of Urtēnu*, fig. 2, no. 17) is clearly visible as well as the whole state of the tell (including cleaned areas and those which covered by vegetation).

---

[27] Short summary of the archaeological mission is outlined in Yon 2006: 5–8, Curtis 1999, on the website of the mission *Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit*, available at: https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/la-mission/historique/ [accessed 29th August 2023]. More detailed information for each campaign can be found in individual excavation reports.

[28] Albanèse 1929.

[29] A Roman settlement at this site was known before.

[30] According to Yon 2006: 5. The website of the mission indicates that Haydar replaced Jamous in 2008, see note 27.

[31] *Report 2009 & 2010*: 440.

[32] *Report 2012*.

[33] Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit, *Les activités de la mission*, available at: https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/la-mission/les-activites-de-la-mission/ [accessed 29th August 2023].

Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any additional information on the state of excavations since 2012.

Figure 1 Aerial view of the tell Ras Sharma. Source: Mapy.cz: https://mapy.cz/ [accessed 4th May 2020].

1.2.2 TOPOGRAPHY OF THE TELL

The tell lies between two rivers – Nahr ed-Delbe on the south and Nahr Chbayyeb on the north. The rivers join into Nahr el-Fidd, which flows into the bay of Minet el-Beida. The tell is at the highest point ca. 30 m above the sea level and 22 above the surroundings.[34]

The general map (fig. 2) of currently excavated areas presents the currently excavated parts of the tell. These areas do not represent the actual districts of the ancient city but refer to areas of archaeological research. French names of the main districts are also provided since they are often used across publications. In *SDB,* a map with a topographical net was published.[35] Although the map does not cover all currently excavated areas, it is still a useful referential tool indicating the more precise location of some excavated objects.

---

[34] *Report 1931*: 15.
[35] *SDB*: cols. 1163–1166.
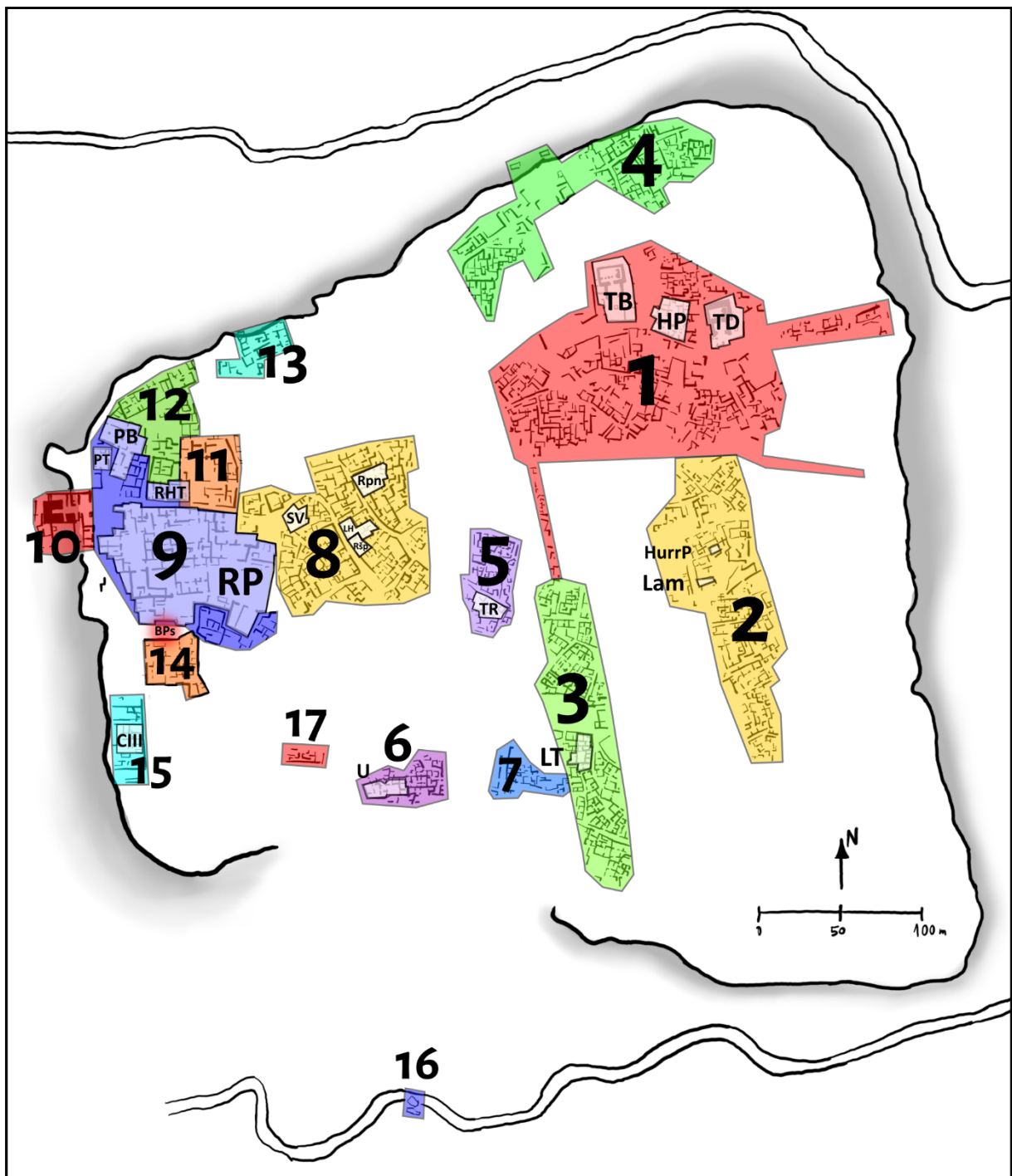
Figure 2 Archaeological zones of Ugarit.
Drawn by the author after Yon 2006: figs. 1, 18, 20, 25, 30, 33, 37, and 44, *report 2009 & 2010*: fig. 1, figures in *RSO X*, *RSO XIX*: figs. 28 and 58, *RSO XXVIII*: fig. 2, and a satellite image from *Mapy.cz* (fig. 2).

1) Acropolis (Acropole)
   o Temple of Baʕal (TB)
   o Temple/Terrace of Dagan (TD)
   o House of the High Priest (HP)
2) South Acropolis Trench (Tranchée Sud Acropole)
   o House of the Hurrian Priest (HurrP)

15

- o Lamaštu Archive (Lam)
3) South City Trench (Tranchée Ville Sud)
    - o House of the Literary Tablets (LT)
4) Lower City (Ville Base)
5) City Centre (Centre de la Ville)
    - o Temple of Rhytons (TR)
6) South Centre (Quartier Sud-Centre)
    - o House of Urtēnu (U)
7) Main Street (Grand Rue)
8) Residential Quarter/Aegean Quarter (Quartier Résidentiel/Quartier Égéen)
    - o House of Rapānu (Rpn)
    - o House of Rašapabu (Ršp)
    - o Literate's House (LH)
    - o Building with the Stone Vase (SV)
9) Royal Zone (Zone Royal)
    - o Royal Palace (RP)
    - o Palatial Temple (PT)
    - o Pillared Building (PB)
    - o Temple with the Rock-Hewn Throne (RHT)
10) Royal Fortress (Forteresse Royale)
11) North Palace (Palais Nord)
12) Northwest Area beyond the Royal Zone (Región Nord-Ouest, hors de la Zone Royal)
13) North Residence/Residence "1975–1976" (Résidence Nord)
14) House of Yabnīnu/South Palace/ Small Palace (Maison de Yabninou/Palais Sud/ Petit Palais)
    - o Cluster of texts "Between Palaces" (BPs)
15) Rampart (Chantier du Rempart)
    - o Court III of the Great House (CIII)
16) Bridge-Dam (Pont-Barrage)
17) ? site from the satellite image

1.2.3   LOCATION OF EXCAVATED OBJECTS AND STATE OF PROCESSING AND PUBLISHING

Many objects were unearthed and transported to museums during the seventy(+?) campaigns. Objects from Ras Shamra are scattered across several museums, and each object must be searched for individually. To my knowledge, no list of all the objects is available. In *TEO* (*RSO V/1*), concordances for textual material are provided up to the 48th campaign in 1988, including references to the locations of individual inscribed objects. Similarly, *KTU* references the locations of the objects inscribed in the alphabetical script.

Most of the objects are to be found in the Louvre Museum, National Museum of Damascus, National Museum of Aleppo, and National Museum of Latakia. The current state (or location) of objects from Aleppo is unknown to me. According to available information, these might have been

moved to Damascus[36] due to the Syrian Civil War. However, since the Aleppo Museum reopened in October 2019,[37] at least some objects might have been moved back.[38]

Because the excavated material is numerous, its processing and publishing takes a long time and is incomplete. The following list represents a selection of the most important series and individual publications that serve as first-hand referential literature:

o   Excavation reports were published for most seasons, mainly in journals *Syria* and *Annales Archéologiques de Syrie* (later *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes*). Some of the reports are referenced in the abbreviations.[39]

o   Systematic publishing of the material began in 1939 with the first volume of the series *Ugaritica*. Seven volumes were published in this series. The last (*Ugaritica VII*) was published in 1979. Both non-textual and textual materials were published in this series.

o   Five volumes (*PRU II–PRU VI*) of the *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit* series were published between 1957 and 1970. This series is focused on the textual material from the *Royal Palace*.

o   The most extensive series is *Ras Shamra – Ougarit* (*RSO*). Its first volume was published in 1983. Until now, thirty-one volumes (*RSO I–XXVIII*; *RSO V*, *VIII*, and *XII* consist of two volumes) were published. The scope of this series is extensive, encompassing topics from ceramics to architecture to religion to epigraphy or publication of texts.

o   After 50 years of excavations at Ugarit, a summary of Ugaritic archaeology, history, culture, administration, and economy was published in *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible* (*SDB*) in 1979.

o   In 2006, an English edition of a previous 1997 French publication[40] by Marguerite Yon, *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra,* was published.[41] This book presents a general and comprehensive overview of the archaeology of Ugarit. It also provides many photos of individual objects.

o   For Ras Ibn Hani, an exhaustive preliminary report *Ras Ibn Hani I* (*RIH I*) from season 1979–1995 was published in 1998. Texts from seasons 1977–2002 were published in *Ras Ibn Hani II* (*RIH II*) in 2019.

o   Numerous photos of objects from Ugarit placed within the Louvre Museum are available on the web *Louvre Collections*.[42] This applies to many objects bearing museal siglum AO (*Antiquités orientales*).

---

[36] DGAM, *The Museum (2020)/Official Trailer/Documentary Film/EN subtitles*, available at: http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2547 [accessed 29th April 2020; the video is no longer available at this address and I was not able to find it again].

[37] DGAM, *The reopening of the National Museum in Aleppo*, available at: http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2524 [accessed 29th April 2020; this reference is no longer available].

[38] I have not attempted to contact the mission directories about this issue, Valérie Matoïan, Khozama al-Bahloul or other scholars are probably better informed.

[39] For a broader list of excavation reports known to me, see GitHub repository for this thesis, GitHub, *UgariticReligion,* available at: https://github.com/valekfrantisek/UgariticReligion [accessed 30th August 2023].

[40] Yon 1997.

[41] Yon 2006.

[42] Louvre Collections, available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/ [accessed 29th August 2023].

- Apart from the above-mentioned series, some logosyllabic texts were collated and published in *Corpus des textes de bibliothèque de Ras Shamra-Ougarit (1936-2000): en sumérien, babylonien et assyrien* by Daniel Arnaud.[43]

- Alphabetical texts are collected and transcribed in *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten* (*The Cuneiform alphabetic texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and other places* (*KTU*, or more precisely *KTU³* referring to the most recent 3ʳᵈ edition). Alphabetical texts are often referred to according to this edition. Alphabetical tablets from seasons 1929–1930 were published in *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques: découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939* (*CTA*). *CTA* provides, unlike *KTU*, drawings and photos of tablets.

- Alphabetical texts were also published in 2003 in *Ugaritic Data Bank* (*UDB*), accompanied by a useful *A Concordance of Ugaritic Words* (*CUW*). Both are freely accessible on Academia.edu.[44]

- Online *Ras Shamra Tablet Inventory* (*RSTI*)[45] presents an updated version of the above-mentioned *TEO*. This inventory is accompanied by a rich photo collection by John Ellison.[46]

- Numerous photographs of the religious texts from Ugarit were published in the *Photographic Archive* (*PA*), accompanying del Olmo Lete 2014a. This archive is freely accessible on Academia.edu.[47]

- Currently underway is the publication of Ugaritic corpus on *ORACC*.[48] When finished, this project will significantly improve the accessibility to the texts and enable further application of digital research.

1.2.3.1   NOTE ON REFERENCES, TRANSLITERATION, TRANSCRIPTION, AND TRANSLATION

Throughout the thesis, I refer to many texts discovered at Ugarit. Texts are referred to either according to their *KTU* number (for alphabetical cuneiform texts) or by their excavation RS siglum (for texts in logosyllabic cuneiform). For the texts in the logosyllabic cuneiform, I try to provide references to editions where they were published. A broader discussion on the archives and discovery spots of texts from this site is presented in Chapter *4 Texts and Religion*.

Some of the texts are presented in the thesis in transliteration. Because some readers may not be acquainted with the conventions by which the Assyriologists indicate peculiarities of the cuneiform texts when transferred to the Latin script, I present here some of the basic conventions as used in the thesis.

---

[43] Arnaud 2007.

[44] *UDB*, available at: https://www.academia.edu/500096/The_texts_of_the_Ugaritic_data_bank_Ugaritic_Data_Bank_The_Text_with_english_commentaries_all_english_versions_ and *CUW*, available at: https://www.academia.edu/500138/A_Concordance_of_Ugaritic_Words_CUW_all_versions_ [accessed 29ᵗʰ August 2023].

[45] *RSTI*, available at: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/RSTI/ [accessed 29ᵗʰ August 2023].

[46] *RSTI*, *Texts with Photos by John "Jay" Ellison*, available at: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/RSTI/photos.html [accessed 29ᵗʰ August 2023].

[47] *PA*, available at: https://www.academia.edu/8708344/Photographic_Archive_Canaanite_Religion_second_revised_and_enlarged_English_edition [accessed 29ᵗʰ August 2023].

[48] *ORACC*, *Ugarit*, available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/aemw/ugarit/corpus [accessed 29ᵗʰ August 2023]. According to the URL address, this is part of the *Akkadian of the Eastern Mediterranean World ORACC* project. However, the corpus of Ugarit is not yet visible within the project main page or in the overview of the *ORACC* projects.

cursive	transcribed text in Akkadian or Ugaritic
kur-sí-wè	transliterated text in Akkadian (by logosyllabic signs)
krsîw	transliterated text in Ugaritic (by alphabetical signs)
SMALL-CAPS	text in Sumerian; sumerograms, ideograms, sign names
UPPER INDEX SMALL CAPS	determinatives and postdeterminatives

[text]	damaged text, reconstructed by editor
[...]	damaged text, not reconstructed
⌜text⌝	partially damaged text
te[xt and te]xt	partially damaged text connected to a completely damaged text.
{text}	redundant text considered by the editor to be a mistake
x	sign not interpreted by the editor

<text>	text filled in by the editor
(text)	text in translation filled by the translator
(...)	untranslated text

1.2.4   BRIEF NOTE OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

During almost 100 years of research on the material from Ugarit, an immense number of publications regarding the religion of Ugarit has emerged. Because of the extremely broad theme of this thesis, it is next to impossible to enumerate all the works that pertain to it. The sources from Ugarit were commented on by scholars from different fields, most importantly Assyriology, Biblical Studies, and History of Religion. The importance of this site is also reflected in the name of one of the most productive (concerning Ugaritic studies) publishing houses, Ugarit-Verlag, and its journal, *Ugarit-Forschungen*.

On the one hand, this extensive research is an extreme blessing. Nearly every material one wishes to discuss has already been touched by someone else. Hundreds, nay thousands, of texts have been collected, autographed, photographed, edited, transcribed, and translated. Objects were photographed, drawn, and published. Despite the fact that I belong among the researchers who do not have access directly to the sources, a lot of them were made accessible to me thanks to extensive publication efforts.

On the other hand, the vast research also has its limits. It seems that religion often invites wilder speculations than other spheres of life. For example, while Biblical scholars have done a great deal of excellent work on Ugaritic religion, there are also some who tend to interpret the Ugaritic material in light of the Old Testament to such an extent that the Ugaritic realia are gravely distorted. The study of myths, cults, deities, etc., indeed invites interpretation. But sometimes, the interpretations seem too wild to me, which is particularly problematic when they are presented not as interpretations but as clear facts. This problem is, of course, far from being limited to Biblical studies. The research by scholars of religion is often also far too interpretative or biased by particular perspectives and lack of Assyriological or Biblical background. The approach of linguists and archaeologist may, on the contrary, lack the theoretical background of religious studies, which may lead to grave misinterpretation of religious realia. This being said, I am not immune to these problems.

Because research begets research, there are numerous interpretations built upon previous interpretations. Consequently, the research of the Ugaritic religion is immensely complicated and varied, constantly being reconsidered. Sometimes, the suggested interpretations are caught in circles and repeat the known "truths" over and over again. A comment made by Cooley when exploring astronomy in Ugaritic poetics may be well transferred to any area of the research of Ugaritic religion: "*Scholars' readings of the text from Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit) have run the gamut from conservative to near feral, and this has some bearing on the topic with which I am concerned here.*"[49]

Due to the extensive research, it is also next to impossible to orient in it properly. The works cited in this thesis for individual topics are far from being comprehensive. They are even far from being the selection of the best which has been written on each subject. Because the research is scattered across thousands of monographs, journal articles (in journals that are often not related to the subject), conference proceedings, or book series, not all of which are easily accessible (especially to the poorly equipped research institutions like Charles University), it is often difficult to even find out about the existence of some publications. Consequently, on numerous occasions, I refer only to a handful of works that discuss each of the individual topics.

Should I name a "seminal" work on Ugaritic religion, I would choose Gregorio del Olmo Lete's *Canaanite Religion according to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit*.[50] The rich publication record of del Olmo Lete surely belongs among the most essential resources on the topic. Another exceptionally productive scholar of the Ugaritic religion is Nicolas Wyatt. This does not mean their works are bulletproof and immune to wild speculations. On the contrary, both scholars tend to interpret more than enough. Still – and maybe also thanks to it – their research on the study of Ugaritic religion is inspirational, and their contribution must be acknowledged.

The work of Dennis Pardee is extremely helpful for studying the Ugaritic ritual, namely his two volumes of *RSO XII* (*Les textes rituels*) and its abbreviated English translation *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*.[51] To these, we may add the work of David M. Clemens, *Sources for Ugaritic Ritual and Sacrifice*,[52] which presents a valuable handbook for sources that are not "religious *per se*" but refer to religious realia of Ugarit – such as letters, legal documents, foreign narratives, school texts, etc.

For the study of Ugaritic religion in material, the most influential for me were the works of Olivier Callot, namely his *RSO XIX* (*Les sanctuaires de l'acropole d'Ougarit, Les temples de Baal et de Dagan*) on the Ugaritic temple architecture, or Marguerite Yon, especially her *RSO VI* (*Arts et Industries de la pierre*) where statues and stelae are discussed, or her general archaeological overview.[53]

Unfortunately, there is no way to reasonably incorporate the general overview of the research relevant to the study of Ugaritic religion into this thesis. It would be an endeavour worth a separate monograph. Hereby, I express my gratitude to all the people who have contributed to this topic. Whether by shovelling the ground during excavations at the tell, photographing the excavated materials, publishing a single interesting article, or dedicating their life to the research of Ugaritic realia.

---

[49] Cooley 2013: 16.
[50] Del Olmo Lete 2014a. This is already second English edition. The Spanish original was published in 1992.
[51] Pardee 2002a.
[52] Clemens 2001.
[53] Yon 2006.

Kingdom of Ugarit,
ca. 1300 BCE

Anatolia

Mt. Sapunu

Mt. Nanu

M U K I S H

Himmuli

Kingdom border

Administrative districts

Maritime trade routes

Cities

2

Bidanna

1A

W 'Euphrates Trade Route' E

Pass

N I Y A

Qarqar

Wine Production Area

Sinaru

M e d i t e r r a n e a n

S e a

3

Magdala

1B

Nahranu River

Rahbanu River

Arutu

Suqalu

Adanu

Taribu

Coastal

Elevation (m)

500+

250-500

0-250

Orontes River

A l a w i t e   M o u n t a i n   R a n g e

Mahadu

Ugarit

Huri-Subu

Plain

4

U G A R I T

5

Rasu

Capital District

Rahbanu River

6

Pidu

Appu (Latakia)

Illistamu

Rus River

N U H A S S E

Cyprus and Greece

8

7

Atalig

N

'Coastal Trade Route'

Gabala

Siyannu

S I Y A N N U - U S N A T U

S

Suski

Canaan and Egypt

Ugaritic Commercial Products & Exports

Purple dye
Textiles
Timber

Ships

Wine
Olive Oil
Grain

HITTITE EMPIRE   *Karkemish*

Alep

ASSYRIAN EMPIRE

Mukish

Sinaru   *Niya*

Mahadu   *Ugarit*

Gabala   *Nuhasse*

Siyannu

Mediterranean Sea

Byblos

Beirut

Sidon

Tyre

Acco

Amurru

Area of detail

Canaan

Ashdod
Ashkelon

EGYPTIAN EMPIRE

Cyprus

Ancient Near East Political Boundaries (ca. 1300 BCE)

Ugarit   Vassal kingdoms under control of empire

Cities engaged in coastal trade

0   100
kilometers

0   10
kilometers

(c) Noam Aharon, Rutgers University, 2023

Sources: See attached references

Figure 3 Map of the Kingdom of Ugarit.

Source: © Noam Aharon 2023.

For further references, see https://sites.google.com/view/noamaharon/home/ugaritic-kingdom-map [accessed 28th August 2023]

2   Contexts of Religion at Ugarit

Religion as a lived reality of individuals and communities is always set within a broader context.[54] It is always interwoven with geography, climate, natural resources, politics, economics, history, and so on and so forth, even though the degrees of influence are not always the same. There is a constant confluence between tradition–stability and innovation–change. The culture of Ugarit has not emerged out of the blue in its specific contexts but is well set within the broader cultural milieu of the ancient Near East. In many ways, it goes millennia backwards, stemming from significantly different settings. Often, it is impossible to trace direct (inter)dependencies between religion and other realities, but in some cases, we may notice how the dialectics might have worked. In this chapter, we shall only briefly outline some of the contexts in which the religion at Ugarit existed, whether with directly traced impact or not. Sometimes, the realisations of contexts may provide us with important feedback, either opening a reasonable line of interpretation or avoiding improbable or impossible conclusions.

Exploring the context is necessary, especially for researchers such as myself – those with little or no experience with the conditions of the societies they study. Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to visit Ugarit, Syria, or any other site relevant to the ancient Near Eastern religions. The lack of experience may sometimes blur our perception of the material.[55] Because my experience and knowledge are limited only to second-hand sources, those who have experienced the site may find some things in this chapter imprecise or misleading. I hope it will be possible one day to correct any mistakes presented here. Other contexts, such as history or social and cultural realities, are second-handed for all of us for obvious reasons.

The apparent problem with the contextual approach is that we can never explore the context in its entirety. The second problem, sometimes ignored, is that every cultural phenomenon is set within a broad variety of contexts. We may often observe in the interpretations how researchers focus on one particular setting – be it politics, geography, agriculture, social organization, etc. Any social phenomena may then be fitted and explained in line with the perspective, which often leads to discarding the other views. However, the situation is usually far more complicated and fluid. Even seemingly opposing interpretations may exist side by side. Some might have been more relevant to the ancient Ugaritians than others, and the situation might have also greatly varied according to conditions or for different groups within the society.

The city of Ugarit was the centre of a larger political unit, conventionally named the *Kingdom of Ugarit* (fig. 3). Archaeologically, the city of Ugarit itself, the port Minet el-Beida (ancient Maḫadu), and residence at Ras Ibn-Hani,[56] are the best-explored sites. Nonetheless, the kingdom covered

---

[54] This may seem like a simple introductory chapter that presents basic facts about the topic or location under discussion. I hope this chapter does slightly more, highlighting why is such an introduction actually important to the discussed topic.
[55] Still, we must be aware of comparing the present situation with the past.
[56] The ancient name of this site is still disputed. Both van Soldt 2005: 13, 40 and Astour 1995: 58 suggest Rašu/Rêšu, but other names like Appu, Atallig, Ugrtym, or Biru/Biruti were also suggested; see al-Bounni 2000. Biru and Biruti are differentiated by van Soldt 2005: 13 to designate a village in the kingdom of Ugarit and Beirut in Lebanon.

a much larger area, which changed during history.[57] The approximate extent of the whole domain (in its heyday) is disputed, ranging from about 2000[58] up to 5425[59] square kilometres.[60] Because this is of little relevance for any discussed topics of religion, we may leave this undecided, keeping in mind the notion of ever-changing political realities.

The core of the kingdom had three natural boundaries. From the west, it was limited by the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea, from the east by the mountain range Jebel Ansariyah, and the north was guarded by the Ṣapan mountain (modern Jebel Aqra, 1759 m). The coastal plain of the kingdom was therefore accessible either by sea, by the northern pass between the Ṣapan and Jebel Ansariyah or from the south via the pass between Lebanon and Ansariyah ranges and along the coast. Because of this position, Ugarit was in a great place to connect trading activities both by land and by sea.[61]

Regarding the topic of this thesis, we may notice that the simple presence of mountains, their prominence and magnificence, helps to shape some religious ideas. In this regard, the position of Ṣapan mountain is the most relevant as it was perceived to be in special relation to Baʿal. Further, the presence of the sea, hand in hand with seafaring, found its reflex in religious activities, too. The tower temples of Ugarit[62] might have worked like "lighthouses" (except for the "light"?), visible from a far greater distance than the ports of Maḫadu. Numerous votive anchors of stone discovered in the precinct of the *Temple of Baʿal* seem to support such a hypothesis. They are evidence of a relationship between the weather deity and sailors, whose lives were at his mercy. The mythological persona of Yamm, the "Sea", should also be perceived with this background.[63]

These natural borders had a significant influence on the climate and natural resources of the kingdom. In general, we may assume that the climate was similar to other parts of the Mediterranean (hot and dry summers, cold and humid winters) but with generally higher levels of precipitation.[64] The high levels of rainfall (during the winter season) coming from the sea were stopped by the mountains, keeping them within the coastal kingdom. In addition, these mountains also blocked dry summer winds from the west and cold continental winds during winter. The climate here was more balanced and pleasant than in inland Syria.[65] Because of this, the area was also densely forested, which contrasts with many other places in the Mediterranean area, as well as with the situation in inland Syria or Mesopotamia.

At the same time, the precipitation was not evenly distributed throughout the year, and it varied in years. Even though the area was interlaced with rivers and streams, rich in water during rainy times, these were often dried up during the summer season.[66] The inhabitants of Ugarit faced this by developing

---

[57] Since about 1360 BCE, the kingdom was enlarged by areas taken from Mukiš (Alalaḫ) by Šuppiluliuma who granted them to Ugarit; see Singer 1999: 634–636 or Astour 1995: 55. On the other hand, during the reign of Niqmēpaʿ VI some territories in the southern part of the kingdom were taken from Ugarit for the benefit of kingdom Siyannu-Ušnatu; see Singer 1999: 636.

[58] Singer 1999: 635.

[59] Astour 1995: 55.

[60] See van Soldt 2005: 51–71 for a broader discussion.

[61] McGeough 2007: 266.

[62] See Chapter *5.1 Sanctuaries of Ugarit.*

[63] On the contrary, his epithet Nahar, "River", and associated judicial character may be more rooted within the Mesopotamian traditions. At Ugarit, there was probably no great river where ordeals were possible to perform.

[64] See, e.g., discussions in Traboulsi 2019, Geyer & Jacob-Rousseau 2017, Geyer 2017, Geyer 2012, McGeough 2007: 267–268, or Akkermans & Schwartz 2003: 4.

[65] For temperatures, see esp. Traboulsi 2019: 226–230.

[66] Geyer & Chambrade 2019a.

infrastructure aimed at water management. This is well attested by wells at the tell and the dam-bridge on the Nahr el-Delbe south of the tell.[67]

In general, the climate conditions were more than sufficient for practising unirrigated agriculture, even during more dry years.[68] Nonetheless, the dependence on rain, its uneven distribution, and occasional unpredictability must have been accounted for. It might have also found its reflection in the religious life. For example, the prominence of the weather deity Baʿal/Haddu fits well into this context.[69] It is also quite plausible to connect the passages about drought from the royal narratives with a possible fear/experience with a more extended period of lack of water.[70] The fact that climate conditions were one of the leading factors in the collapse of the LBA systems[71] gives these concerns a hallmark of urgency. In contrast with the rest of the LBA world, Ugarit's climate and food production might not have been so bad,[72] but some problems could not have been prevented.

Agriculture production, which included vine, olives, figs, and cereal crops,[73] also influenced the religious realities. For example, the prevalence of wine instead of beer (in contrast with Mesopotamia) may be visible in cultic and elite activities. Regarding farming, we may notice a strong prevalence of rams as sacrificial animals instead of cattle.[74] Here, we may also note that agricultural activities were not limited to the countryside and village population but were also an integral part of urban life.[75]

The availability of other natural resources should also be considered. We have already mentioned the dense forests covering the area of the kingdom, allowing easy access to timber. Another readily available material has been stones of various kinds.[76] Casual use of both of these materials is reflected in architecture.[77] This was in strong contrast to many parts of Mesopotamia, where stone and timber were often lacking. At the same time, not every kind of stone – especially gem – was so easily available at Ugarit,

---

[67] See e.g., Geyer & Calvet 2013, Geyer 2012, Calvet & Geyer 1995, 1987, or Callot's *RSO X*: 159–166. See also Geyer, Chambrade & Matoïan 2019 on springs. They even suggest possible connections of spring with mythological themes (p. 288): ʿAnat as a "spring", Ilu residing at the "springs of rivers", "springs of the earth".

[68] The average annual rainfall is about 800–1000 mm, in the mountains even over 1200 mm. During arid year, the rainfall may drop down even below 400 mm at the coast. Still, this is above what is needed for agriculture without irrigation (200–250 mm). In contrast, during humid years, the precipitation levels may reach 1000 mm around the city of Ugarit. See Geyer & Jacob-Rousseau 2017. Geyer 2012: 11 assumes that past and present conditions did not differ significantly in this aspect.

[69] This topic has been repeated over and over again, see, e.g., Green 2003: 153–154 and 196–214. Similarly, the agricultural/seasonal interpretation of the *Baʿal Cycle* was also very strong; see, e.g., Smith 1994: 60–75 or Green 2003: 196–214. While such interpretations are now not taken very seriously, they may not be as naïve as is sometimes claimed. The polyvalency and polysemy of myths allows for numerous parallel meanings. While the myth does not necessarily need to aim at agricultural production or on repeating the seasonal pattern, its agricultural and seasonal imagery and vocabulary can hardly be altogether denied. In the context of society where food production and weather played an important role, this was a language which might have well worked as a medium for any other meanings.

[70] E.g., Geyer 2012: 13. See also discussion in Chapter *7.3.1 Kirta and Aqhat as Social Myth-Narratives.*

[71] See below in the discussion of history.

[72] See, e.g., Halayqa 2010: 304–305.

[73] See e.g., Akkermans & Schwartz 2003: 4 or McGeough 2007: 269.

[74] See Pardee 2002a: 224–226 and *RSO XII/2*: 1024–1051 for statistics.

[75] See Schloen 2001: 335–342.

[76] For the lithology of this area, see e.g., Geyer & Chambrade 2019b or Elliot 1991: 10–12. For brief references on quarries in the kingdom, see e.g., Elliot 1991: 12 or Yon 1992b: 23.

[77] See esp. *RSO I* and *X*, Yon, Lombard & Reniso 1987 (in *RSO III*) for studies on domestic architecture of Ugarit.

which resulted in differences in their casual and prestigious character.[78] Various religious objects – like statues and stelae – were made of stones, occasionally inlaid with gems or other precious materials, now usually lost. Regarding stones, we should not forget bitumen, which was also a valuable commodity, albeit its uses at Ugarit are relatively scarce. In general, it is used as a fastening or water-proofing material. Therefore, it was applied in architecture, but also in the production of statues and other works of stone or clay.[79] Traces of bitumen were, for example, discovered on the statue of seated Ilu connected with the *Temple of Rhytons*.[80] We must also not forget about clay, the primary medium for writing and, more importantly, the basic material for pottery production, thus intrinsically connected with everyday life.[81]

The location of Ugarit on the Mediterranean coast is also connected with the production of purple dye from murexes.[82] This material and fabrics dyed with it were highly valued and subject to tributes and gift exchange.[83] In this regard, we may mention the cases of ritual rouging of Kirta[84] or Paġit[85] in Ugaritic narrative texts. However, apart from these mentions, I have not been able to confirm that the purple/red colour would be explicitly relevant to the ritual activities at Ugarit.

On the other hand, the resources that were not directly available were also significant. This is especially the case with metals. Copper and tin for the production of bronze were traded in large quantities, creating the backbone of the international relations of the Bronze Age world.[86] The precious metals – silver and gold – also were an essential part of trade and exchange relationships, both local and international.[87] The position of Ugarit and its role as a trade centre was a great advantage for this site. Once again, this issue may be linked to the topic of this thesis. Metals were an integral part of the production of statues of deities and other objects connected with the sphere of religion. The figurines were often made of cast bronze and then covered with a thin layer of gold. Whether this use should be connected only with the prestige and value of the materials or also to ensure a visual experience of "glow" (à la *melammu*, the Akkadian expression for "divine glare") is pure speculation. In addition, international relations, which helped to facilitate the trade with metals, also required a great deal of symbolic communication, of which religion was an integral part.[88]

Another context worth considering is the sky. While this is not something particularly specific to Ugarit, the present situation often makes us forget about it. The sky, especially the night sky, was far more visible and casually observed than today. Even though the present knowledge of astronomers, astrophysicists, and hobbyists far exceeds the knowledge of ancient scholars, the general population was probably far

---

[78] For studies on the use of stones and their value, see e.g., Icart, Chanut & Matoïan 2008, Matoïan 2008, or *RSO VI*. On stones/gems trade, see e.g., Chanut 2008.

[79] See e.g., Matoïan 2013, McGeough 2007: 270 and Connan, Dechesne & Dessort 1991, including references to availability of this material at Ugarit.

[80] Connan, Dechesne & Dessort 1991: 102–103, 117. See Chapter *5.1.5 The Temple of Rhytons.*

[81] The sourcing of clay at Ugarit is not resolved issue. It has been suggested that in some cases this was related to agricultural activities, which further interconnects the different aspects of life at Ugarit. See Boyes 2023: 182–184.

[82] See e.g., Dietrich 2009: 40–51, McGeough 2007: 270, or van Soldt 1990: 345–346. Dietrich in his paper discusses further connections of this topic to religion, namely with the persona of "Aṯirat of the sea". I am not particularly convinced by his line of enquiry.

[83] Dietrich 2009: 44–47.

[84] *KTU* 1.14 II: 9; III: 52.

[85] *KTU* 1.19 IV: 41–43.

[86] See e.g., Bell 2012, Kemp & Cline 2022: 212, Cohen 2021: 51.

[87] See e.g., McGeough 2007: 166–168, 208–209

[88] See Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters.*

more aware of the movements of celestial bodies. In addition, the understanding of astronomy by ancient scholars should not be underestimated.

My experience with the night sky in remote mountains in Kyrgyzstan, far from any source of light pollution, has made me realise what we are missing. The knowledge and experience of the movement of celestial bodies are occasionally reflected in the conceptions of deities, their functions, and narratives about them. The most important element of the sky was the Sun – goddess Šapaš. Her cultural connotations were immense – from providing a basic orientation in the world to protecting law and justice to association with the dead because she enters the underworld at night to the association with the rulers of Ḫatti and Egypt.[89] Similarly, the celestial contexts were important for Yarīḫ, the Moon, who was, for example, closely connected with time management. ʿAttarta and ʿAttar were then associated with the planet Venus, and according to some, the observations of the movement of this planet in the sky are also reflected in the narrative description of ʿAttar's enthronement.[90] Once again, it is essential to note that the celestial nature of these deities by far does not exhaust their character. It is only one part of the puzzle. The sky was also reflected in the astromantic traditions of Ugarit.[91]

The primary focus of this thesis is the city of Ugarit itself and the social life of its inhabitants.[92] During the LBA, the city stood upon a hill formed by the stacked layers of previous settlements – a tell. As such, it also formed a "natural" landmark in the environs. The estimates for the city population of Ugarit are usually given between six to eight thousand, but the precise number is difficult to establish.[93] We should not forget that we as humans are and were part of the natural environment. Obviously, this closely relates to the topics discussed above. To practice agriculture, people in the kingdom of Ugarit had to deforest some of the area, and further deforestation was carried on by the need for timber. Indeed, the forested reality of the ancient times is now mostly gone. Apart from agriculture, practised hunting or fishing, as well as farming activities, must have also influenced the presence of flora and fauna within the kingdom. To these, we may add the quarry activities, shaping the environment, as well as the construction of roads, paths, bridges, or dams. Building activities are probably those that were the most visible. The preserved and unearthed remains of the city have already been outlined in the chapter on archaeology.[94] In this thesis, we will also return to the analysis of environs and its relation to religion.[95] Still, the most important for us are the social realities as we explore religion primarily as a social activity. The social realia are further highlighted within other discussed topics. Here, we may only briefly outline some general characteristics.

During the timeframe we follow, the Kingdom of Ugarit has not been a truly independent state and always belonged to the sphere of influence or was a direct vassal of some of the larger empires – be it Mittani, Egypt, or Ḫatti. In addition, the city was an important trade hub. This has resulted in the city being socially more diverse than the ancient world is usually imagined. Ugarit is

---

[89] See discussion in Chapter *6.6.3 Divine Kings of Ḫatti and Egypt*.

[90] *KTU* 1.6 I: 44–65; see, e.g., Cooley 2013: 194–196 with further references.

[91] This topic is further addressed in Chapter *6.3.2 Astromancy, KTU 1.78, and the Question of Solar Eclipses at Ugarit*.

[92] For a general overview of the society of Ugarit, see, e.g., Vita 1999.

[93] Liverani 1979: 1319 estimated 6000–8000 inhabitants. This number is then followed by many authors, e.g., Watson 2003b: 124, Vita 1999: 455, or Yon 1992b: 19. See also discussion of Schloen 2001: 217–335 on household size and population density. Even more complicated is to ascertain the population of the kingdom. Usually, the estimates are given slightly over 30 000, but this must be taken with great caution; see, e.g., Vita 1999: 455.

[94] See Chapter *1.2.2 Topography of the Tell*.

[95] See Chapter *5 Religion and the City Environs*.

consequently often regarded as a multicultural or even transcultural society, where many languages[96] were used, and people of varied origins frequented the streets.[97] This might have occasionally caused some social friction. This situation is also reflected in the preserved texts – it seems that ritual activities played an essential role in appeasing such cases.[98] Nonetheless, despite this multicultural character, the culture of Ugarit may be characterised as dominantly (West-)Semitic. As such, the religion was well set within the Semitic cultural milieu of the time: from Mesopotamia to Palestine. Apart from the Semitic cultural elements, the Hurrian component was very strong. Hurrian deities were venerated at Ugarit; some cults were described with Hurrian language, accompanied by Hurrian hymns.[99] The popularity of Hurrian culture was also well visible in Ugaritic onomastics.[100]

Describing Ugarit's social organisation is much more complicated than one may expect. The main problem is that our perception of it is guided mainly by pre-conceptualised theories of how the ancient societies looked like.[101] It seems to me that in recent years the patrimonial household model is gaining the upper hand, and society is seen as dominantly organised around the family and household – from property to trade relations to both domestic and international political organization.[102] This applies not only to the biological or spatial dimensions but, most importantly, to the symbolism and language. The patrimonialism of Ugaritic society is, for example, well visible in administrative records that often record people not according to their name but by their patronymic. This finds its reflection in the organization of the Ugaritic pantheon, too.[103] Still, there is much more to social relations than any model may cover.[104] Society was far from being static; social mobility was possible, and people were not defined only by their fathers. Discussion on economic relations at Ugarit from the perspective of the "network-based model of economic modalities"[105] has been particularly interesting. I believe many of its conclusions go well beyond economics. The social relations are set within a complex network of mutual interactions, which are not perceived equally by all the involved parties. Patrimonialism and household metaphors are only one part of these relations. Religious activities were set within these complex networks of asymmetrical relations, from the king, who was at the apex of the society, to queens and royal family, to the various high and low officials running the administration, to the scribes, priests, singers, or farmers.

---

[96] See Chapter *4.1 Texts, Languages and Scripts at Ugarit.*
[97] See also Válek 2021, or Vita 1999: 456–463.
[98] See Chapter *6.2 Cults and Community* on texts *KTU* 1.40, 1.84, 1.121, and 1.122.
[99] See, e.g., Válek 2021: 49–54 and Chapters *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace* and *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest.*
[100] See, e.g., Hess 1999, Grøndahl 1967, or Watson's series 1990a–2016 on onomastics. See also Chapter *6.1 Onomastics.*
[101] See, e.g., Schloen 2001: 187–254 for reconsideration of previous conceptions of Ugaritic society, based on feudal, urbanistic, "Two-Sector", or "Asiatic Mode of Production" models. See also McGeough 2007: 39–88 for a similar discussion with special focus on economic relations.
[102] See esp. Schloen 2001: 255–316 or
[103] See, e.g., Schloen 2001: 349–358. See also Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity.*
[104] It must be highlighted that the Schloen's discussion is far from simply applying the Weberian model.
[105] See McGeough 2007: 350–364.

2.1 History of Ugarit[106]

Chronological overview[107]

Level	Level (*SDB*[108])	Dates	Period	Life on the tell
V C	V C (6500–6000)	Ca. 7500	Pre-potter Neolithic	First settlements; farming
V B	V B (6000–5750) V A (5750–5250)	Ca. 7000	Pottery Neolithic	Pastoralism; ceramics; stone architecture (rectangular rooms)
V A	IV C (5250–5000) IV B (5000–4500) IV A (4500–4300)	Ca. 6000	"Halaf" Chalcolithic	Differentiated architecture; specialised crafts
III C **III B**	III C (4300–4000) III B (4000–3000)	4th millennium	"Ubaid"	Appearance of copper
III A	III A3 (3000–2600) III A2 (2600–2300) III A1 (2300–2200/2100)	Ca. 3000	Early Bronze Age	City-type agglomeration, rampart; copper metallurgy
		Ca. 2200		Abandonment
II	II 3 (2100–1900) II 2 (1900–1750) II 1 (1750–1650)	Beginning of 2nd millennium	Middle Bronze Age	Arrival of Amorite population; urban development: temples (?), ramparts (fortification)
		Ca. 1650		Abandonment? Temporary decline?
I	I 3 (1600–1450) I 2 (1450–1365)	Ca. 1600	Late Bronze Age	New urban period
	I 1 (1365–1185)	14th–13th centuries (see the right column)		Kings of Ugarit (from texts)[109] ˁAmmiṯtamru II (?–1370) Niqmaddu III (ca. 1370–1335) Ar-Ḫalba (ca. 1335–1332) Niqmēpaˁ VI (ca. 1332–1270) ˁAmmiṯtamru III (ca. 1270–1230) Ibirānu VI (ca. 1230–1210) Niqmaddu IV (ca. 1210–1200) ˁAmmurāpi II (ca. 1200–1182)
		Ca. 1190/85		Destruction and abandonment
	Hiatus (1185–550)			
	Persian period (550–33)	5th–4th centuries	Persian period	A small settlement on the tell
	Hellenistic period (333–200)	---	---	---
	Roman period (2nd–1st centuries)	1st century	Roman period	A few traces of occupation

---

[106] So far, the most comprehensive overview of the history of Ugarit remains Singer 1999. Since then, new texts were discovered and published, especially from the *House of Urtēnu*. These have implications particularly in relation to the final stage of Ugarit's existence or to the dating of the Ugaritic alphabetical script. For broader historical context of LBA world, see, e.g., Liverani 2014a: 271–377 or van de Mieroop 2007: 127–206.

[107] The table is primarily based on Yon 2006: 24.

[108] Following *SDB*: cols. 1133–134 and 1143–1144.

[109] Dating the reign of individual kings of Ugarit is complicated and various suggestions appear. Here, I follow Liverani 2014a: 332. On the problems of chronology, see Singer 1999: 606–608. Contra Yon 2006: 24 or Liverani 2014a: 332 I have chosen to follow the numbering established by Arnaud 1998 based on Ugaritic genealogical lists. However, I do not include here the kings prior to ˁAmmiṯtamru II, who is the first historically attested ruler of Ugarit. This topic is further addressed in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

The site of Ugarit has a long history of occupation. The oldest settlement excavated was a small Neolithic village, recognised in a sound from 1935 in the vicinity of the *Temple of Baʿal*, 18.55 m below the surface. It is dated to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (ca 7500 BCE).[110] References to Ugarit are also found in the EBA Ebla or MBA Mari.[111] However, the vast majority of excavated sources, including the written material, belong to the final level of the city's occupation from the LBA. Therefore, the focus of this thesis is explicitly limited to the timeframe covered by written sources (mostly) discovered at the site, i.e., from the 14th to the beginning of the 12th century BC. Expectedly, the data thickens the closer we get to the site's demise. The historical overview is limited to this period and presents only the most critical milestones in the history of Ugarit that are further referenced in the thesis.

The first written sources attesting the names of Ugaritic kings are part of the Amarna correspondence. Letters EA 45–49[112] cover the epistolary exchanges of ʿAmmiṯtamru II and Niqmaddu III with their Egyptian counterpart. As is apparent from the letters, the kings of Ugarit expressed their never-ending loyalty to the Egyptian ruler. Probably not long before, the kingdom of Ugarit still belonged to the sphere of influence of Mittani.[113] Nonetheless, describing the relations between Ugarit and Mittani or Egypt in terms of vassalage may be misleading.[114] This term is better to be applied to the relationship between Ugarit and Ḫatti.

It was already Niqmaddu III who changed his allegiance to Egypt. This change of heart was caused by the military expansion of Šuppiluliuma I over the territories in northern Syria. The southern neighbour of Ugarit, Amurru, opposed the Egyptian dominance and consequently threatened Ugarit. A military "protection" treaty was concluded between Aziru of Amurru and Niqmaddu III. Ugarit paid a hefty sum for this protection.[115] Still, this did not keep Ugarit completely safe, as military endangerment was coming from Mukiš, Nuḫḫašše and Niya.[116] Facing the military conquest, Niqmaddu III and Šuppiluliuma I entered into an agreement, establishing the vassalage status of Ugarit.[117] The treaty was later confirmed by an additional document concluded between Niqmēpaʿ VI and Muršili II.[118] It has been by some understood as a proof of revolt of Ar-Ḫalba, brother of Niqmēpaʿ VI, but the reasons for his short reign may also lay elsewhere.[119] The treaties had an essential effect on the economy and geography of Ugarit. Ugarit was bound to pay

---

[110] See Matoïan & al-Bahloul 2016: 282. For prehistory of Ugarit, see *RSO VIII*.
[111] See Singer 1999: 605, 608–609, 616–619.
[112] See, e.g., Rainey 2015: 370–381.
[113] See Singer 1999: 619–621.
[114] See Morris 2005 or Mynářová 2006.
[115] Treaty RS 19.068 (*PRU IV*: 284–286).
[116] The so-called "anti-Hittite coalition". For a map demonstrating the position of these lands (north and east of Ugarit), see, e.g., Liverani 2014a: 336, fig. 19.5.
[117] Treaty RS 17. 227 and duplicates (*PRU IV*: 40–52). Treaties between Ugarit and the Hittites are further addressed in Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities*.
[118] Treaty RS 17.237 and duplicates (*PRU IV*: 63–70).
[119] See Singer 1999: 637–638. Ar-Ḫalba was also left out from the Ugaritic genealogy list; see Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

tributes, provide military assistance,[120] extradite fugitives, and the borders of the Ugaritic domain were shifted several times, sometimes in its favour, other times to its disadvantage.

Since the reign of Niqmēpaˤ VI, the dominance of the Hittites was more or less firmly established up until the destruction of Ugarit. In many regards, its power was mediated via Karkemiš, the "governor" state of the southern Hittite domain. The king of Ugarit, however, did not strengthen their bonds with the overlords via directed dynastic marriages. This practice was directed towards the Amurru; already Niqmēpaˤ VI had married Aḫat-Milku. While Ugarit was probably economically stronger and was more interwoven in the international trade with luxury goods, its southern neighbour was stronger militarily and politically. Unlike the kings of Ugarit, Amurru had direct dynastic bonds with the Hittite royal court. Consequently, the position of the Amurrite rulers was higher than those from Ugarit.[121] ˤAmmiṯṯamru III married an Amurrite princess (unnamed), who was the granddaughter of the Hittite king, Ḫattušili III. This bond, however, did not last; ˤAmmiṯṯamru III later divorced his noble wife for an unspecified offence against him. This act has stirred up diplomatic relations among all the involved courts.[122] Despite her noble origin, the princess's fate has not been favourable – with the approval of her royal brother Šaušgamuwa and in exchange for a hefty sum of gold.

The subservient position to the Hittites did not entirely cut off Ugarit from the well-established ties with Egypt. It seems that the trade relations continued apart from a short period of the greatest animosity between the Hittites and Egyptians around the battle of Qadeš. The situation was further significantly improved after Ḫattušili III and Ramesses II concluded the "Silver Treaty".[123] It seems that Ugarit served as a trade intermediary between the two hostile states, which brought a certain level of prosperity and maintained its unique position.[124] Thanks to its geographical position and established international relations, Ugarit was a significant trading hub among Anatolia, inland Syria, Egypt, and the Mediterranean.

The period during the reign of ˤAmmiṯṯamru III seems to have brought two crucial factors that have severe implications for the religious history of Ugarit. Both theories are now more or less accepted by the scholarly community, but they remain theories nonetheless. Since some interpretations presented in this thesis are derived from them, the reader is invited to be cautious.

The first one is the invention(?) and practical application of the alphabetical cuneiform for local matters – from administration to correspondence to ritual texts and narratives.[125] This had an immense impact on the cultic and narrative texts from Ugarit that are now preserved in local tradition and not in Akkadised articulation. It is possible that without the vernacularisation process, the local

---

[120] It seems that this obligation was mostly avoided by the Ugaritians, but they were, e.g., involved in the battle of Qadeš (1274 BC). See Singer 1999: 643–644 and 682–683.

[121] This is well reflected in the epistolary documents, where the kings of Ugarit are "sons" to their Amurrite counterparts. See Chapter *6.6.1 Symbolic Communication, Greetings, and Benedictions* for the discussion on symbolic communication.

[122] In sum, at least fifteen preserved letters pertain to this issue. See *PRU IV*: 125–148 and Singer 1999: 680–681. Some aspects of the divorce process are further discussed in Chapter *6.5.1 Deities as Guarantors*.

[123] See Edel 1997.

[124] Singer 1999: 647.

[125] For the shift in dating the origin of the alphabetical cuneiform to the time of reign of this king, see esp. Roche-Hawley & Hawley 2013: 258–263 or Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 234 with further references.

mythology would never been recorded. In addition, the support of local scribal practices may be interpreted as a way of negotiating the strong Hittite position.[126]

The second historical event was the occurrence of a strong earthquake, dated to ca. 1250 BC.[127] It has demolished many buildings at Ugarit, including the great temples at the *Acropolis*. One of the temples was subsequently never rebuilt, and only a terrace has taken its place. The building of the royal residence at Ras Ibn-Hani may also be a consequence of this earthquake, which necessitated the temporary transfer of the royal court to a nearby area.[128]

Some of the interpretations presented in this thesis are also set in the context of the nearing end of the kingdom of Ugarit,[129] together with the general dissolution of the LBA world. The above-mentioned earthquake might have already been part of the process that culminated at the beginning of the 12th century BC. The Ugarit remained a Hittite vassal up until the very end. However, the sources suggest that the coastal kingdom tested the limits of the power of its overlords.[130] In general, the mutual relations seem to have been relatively tense. The lands kept each other in check. Ugarit was unable to break from the Hittites,[131] and the Hittites could not keep Ugarit in line with every aspect of its obligations.[132] During this time, part of the diplomatic communication between Ugarit and the courts of Ḫatti and Karkemiš was mediated through the *House of Urtēnu*. Some of the diplomatic activities were also directed not towards the king but to the communal government institutions and other officials – the elders and "great men" of Ugarit, or the *sākinu* ("governor").[133]

The Hittites probably had some far more pressing issues to deal with than Ugarit. One of the threats that finds its reflection at Ugarit was the expansion of Assyria. The conflict has led to the battle of Nihriya. The story of this battle was used by the Assyrians to undermine the position of the Hittite king in the eyes of the king of Ugarit.[134] Even though the relations between Ḫatti and Assyria were afterwards calmed, because Assyrians directed their attention towards Babylonia, the state was left significantly weakened.

The stability of the LBA system has been further compromised by additional factors. The general collapse of the LBA system may be seen as a synchronous failure on many fronts.[135] Unfortunately, we are far from a detailed understanding of the process and its complexity. The period was relatively long, and we often lack precise synchronicities. While the evidence supports the theory of cumulating problems, which finally led to the collapse, the simplified model may be

---

[126] See, e.g., Boyes 2018, or many statements within 2021, especially p. 245–259. See also broade discussion on the negotiation of Hittite dominance in Devecchi 2019 or Zemánek 2006.

[127] See esp. Callot 1986: 748, *RSO X*: 204–205, and Callot & Yon 1995: 167.

[128] See Callot 2006.

[129] See further Halayqa 2010 and Sommer 2016 (that I have, unfortunately, not explored yet).

[130] See esp. Devecchi 2019 and Boyes 2018. See also Halayqa 2010: esp. 304–305 or 314–316.

[131] The question is if they even wanted to. Testing the limits of the power might have been in order to negotiate Ugarit's position, but not necessarily a move towards absolute independence.

[132] Still, the Hittite power was firmly felt in many ways. See, e.g., Vita 2021: 195 or van Soldt 2010c.

[133] See letters RS 34.129 (*RSO VII*, no. 12) and RS 88.2009 (*RSO XIV*, no. 2). The king of Ugarit is noted as young and unexperienced. See further discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2 Intentions behind the Compositions and Means to Achieving them*.

[134] Letter RS 34.165 (*RSO VII* 46) form Shalmaneser I or Tukultī-Ninurta I. In addition to this letter, an excerpt of the *Epic of Tukultī-Ninurta* has been discovered at Ugarit, which may also relate to the Assyrian propaganda at Ugarit. See also discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2.2 In the Contexts of Near Eastern Royal Epics?*.

[135] See esp. Kemp & Cline 2022 and Knapp & Manning 2016.

misleading. Among the factors that are usually discussed in this regard, we may mention the following: recurring droughts,[136] problems with crops, lack of food, social instability, migration, earthquakes, military activities, or lack of defence systems. Ultimately, the final blow that Ugarit could not withstand seems to be a military attack on the city, generally attributed to the "Sea Peoples". The city was abandoned, never to be fully reoccupied again.

---

[136] These are also attested archaeologically; see Manning, Kocik, Lorentzen & Sparks 2023.

3 CONCEPTIONS OF DIVINITY

One of the most common notions of religion is that it is concerned with "beliefs in supernatural beings". By these supernatural beings, one usually means *gods and alike*. Because the world of the Ugaritians was filled with entities we call *gods*, it may be argued that such an understanding of religion is valid for Ugarit. While such a conception of religion does not, in my opinion, exhaust the issue, nay it distorts our understanding, deities are one of the central concepts recurring in this thesis. For such a central concept, we understand it very little. What are *deities*?[137] The common understanding of the term is very much implicit and overwhelmingly anachronistic. It is, therefore, essential to discuss this issue.

As can be deduced from the methodological remarks,[138] my primary goal is to explore deities as meaningful concepts that had an indispensable place in the society of Ugarit. Without them, many aspects of the social practice would be meaningless. I try to take the emic perspective as a central focus of the research and as something that must be taken seriously. At the same time, I do not avoid going beyond a simple description of sources, and I make interpretations that were not necessarily reflected by the creators of these sources and would probably be hardly accepted by them. In this regard, I find it helpful to explore briefly the topic of what "we" consider the deities to be "in general" (the etic, "scientific" conception of deities) and what position I take in the discussion. While it may seem unnecessary, as we are not entering a comparatist discussion, I believe it is only fair to reveal my presuppositions. My perspective on the deities of Ugarit is in dialogue with these discussions.

3.1 DEITY – AN ETIC CONCEPT?

> "*'God' is not a scientific but an emic concept used intuitively.*"[139]

There is no generally accepted definition of *deities* among scholars, not among the humanities scholars, not among the historians of religions, not among Assyriologists, etc. The concept of deity seems to be only rarely explicitly reflected upon among those who use this term (or *gods* and *goddesses*).[140] Already before we have entered the scholarly discussion on *deities* (or other kinds of *supernatural beings,* for that matter), we have already been using this category, and we have known some examples of this category. But how do we recognise that some previously unknown entity is

---

[137] I avoid using the term *god* because I believe that *deity* raises slightly different associations than *god* among the general public. Both of these terms are in the West rooted in the conception of the God of the Christians, or of the Jews and Muslims. Nonetheless, *god* may more likely raise the image of the *God Almighty* while *deity* may be perceived as broader by default and it also directly raises other associations, for example those of the Greek deities. This distinction may differ among various translations of the respective terms to other languages. Taking the meaning of *deity* as "divine nature", the term is easier to use for God-like entities and not only the God.

[138] See Chapter *1.1 Remarks on Methodology*. See also Chlup 2018 for an inspirational suggestion on how to approach deities. Even though it is aimed primarily on the Greek material, it may well apply to the ANE sources.

[139] Pyysiäinen & Ketola 1999: 207.

[140] However, it must be noted that there are some great studies addressing this topic. To name just few works relating to the ancient Near East and Egypt: Hundley 2013b, contributions in Porter 2009b and 2000 or in Walls 2005, and Hornung 1982.

categorically the same as something we already know? How is Baʿal, Zeus, Quetzalcoatl, or Shiva similar to the God Almighty? And how are they similar to Narām-Sîn or Šulgi, the *deified* kings of the Akkad and Ur III periods? Are some of them deities *more* than the others?[141]

The term is more or less generally understood[142] – *everyone knows what a deity is* – and that is both its greatest strength and weakness. While the term works for quick mutual understanding, the associations it triggers differ greatly. Shortly, everyone understands *it,* but everyone understands *it* differently; everyone draws different aspects of different exemplars. In addition, the associations triggered by this term are usually rooted within the Abrahamic religions, possibly updated a bit with a vague knowledge of the deities of the ancient Greeks, Romans, Norsemen, and so on. This knowledge is far more often constructed in contact with popular culture (movies, TV shows, fantasy books, modern adaptations of ancient myths, or children's Bible), with misleading encyclopaedia entries, or with even more misleading primary and secondary school textbooks than with the ancient sources themselves. This is not to state that such concepts of *deity* are not valid. They are for everyday use in our own culture. But the deities of ancient Ugarit were probably very different to what usually comes to mind of any modern person, be it a scholar or a layman.

During the rich history of religious studies, many scholars have tried to come up with a definition that would precise the term, which is one of the key concepts within religious studies. Through definitions and theories, the approach tries to go beyond the intuitive/social/ common/emic understandings of the term. While I do not think it is possible to create a bullet-proof transcultural definition of *deities*, numerous definitions and approaches can expand and enrich our understanding of the term and may be applied in specific contexts. In addition, exploring the actualizations of this term throughout various cultural contexts can help us better understand the ancient Near Eastern reality.

In the end, every approach or definition reflects most on the researchers themselves – from which angle they view the concept and what they wish to explore or explain. My preference for the emic understanding of deities is no exception from this: I am most interested in how deities were perceived and how they acted from the perspective of the inhabitants of Ugarit.

In the following lines, I briefly summarise a few of the approaches to deities that were influential in my understanding of the concept. The goal of this section is not to explore the history of research on deities, to discredit the theories, or to prove them wrong. It is instead to put forward some questions and problematise the term. But especially to bring to our attention that these perspectives influence how I think about deities, even if I try to view them primarily in their historical and social contexts. This being said, the reader may have a different experience with the concept. Hopefully, at least a part is relatable.

---

[141] Different views such as prototype theory, exemplar theory, family resemblance etc. could be discussed in this regard. This is however, far of the scope of this thesis. For an introductory discussion with references regarding deities, see, e.g., Pyysiäinen 2001: 1–3.

[142] At least when considering the "Western culture". Knowingly, I now ignore the cultural and personal experience of the rest of the World, where the associations and vocabularies may be very much different. This is important to keep in mind when talking about "*etic*" conceptions.

Probably the most common approach to deities is to see them as "supernatural beings".[143] While most would probably not see any problems in this conception, there are plenty of them. First, the distinction between natural and supernatural (or immanent and transcendent and any other semantically related periphrases) has been for long seen as culturally determined, and its usefulness in transcultural comparison has been compromised.[144]

There are some periphrases which try to overcome this obstacle. Instead of "supernatural", terms like "non-natural", "superhuman", "metaperson", or "extrahuman" have been suggested. However, these terms are caught in other problems, for example, how humans are conceived in respective cultures or how they differ from other phenomena that may be described as such (for example, sometimes animals may be perceived as superhuman). In my opinion, not even the concept of "counter-intuitiveness", often used by the cognitive theorist,[145] overcomes the difficulties and may occasionally seem only as a fancy word for "supernatural". What is counterintuitive for researchers may be very much intuitive from the emic perspective.

Another problem may be seen in subsuming very different kinds of beings into the same category – for example, spirits, ghosts, daemons, heroes, deities, etc. When exploring particular cultures, one easily faces the fact that many kinds of "supernatural beings" are nothing alike in emic perspectives. On the other hand, for some research perspectives, such distinctions are only marginal or wholly irrelevant. Different issues arise with different research questions.

Possibly surprisingly for some, the term "being" may also cause some difficulties. For example, the conception of material objects as deities in ancient Mesopotamia[146] calls this into question. Suggestions to replace this term with "agent" or "entity" help to some extent, but the notion of humanization, personification, or general animation usually remains. In this regard, one may wonder, for example, about conceptions of the Eucharist. The transubstantiation makes the bread to a living God, but is the Eucharist then seen as a (*intentional*) agent? Here, we may see how the theoretical attempts to grasp such a topic seem to be incompatible with the emic perspective, where such an issue may not be present before a researcher asks the question.[147] What may help us here is the Actor-Network Theory,[148] suggesting that an "actor" may not necessarily be self-aware or intentional in order to "act" in the world.

Last but not least, this approach often brings to our mind a notion of "something which does not actually exist". From the social constructivist perspective, which I generally follow, such a notion is off-topic. To put it simply, I am interested in social realities – from the standpoint of the inhabitants of ancient Ugarit, where deities very much existed and acted in the world. However, other approaches may see this issue differently, and the problem of ontology is more pressing for them.

---

[143] See, e.g., Pyysiäinen 2001: 12–14, Pyysiäinen & Ketola 1999: 207, 210–212, or Spiro 1966: 91–98 for general introductory discussions.

[144] See, e.g., Paden 1994: 121–122.

[145] See, e.g., Pyysiäinen 2009 for the cognitive approach on this topic.

[146] See Porter 2009a.

[147] One may, obviously, claim that this topic was quite possibly commented on by some theologians. Nonetheless, I believe that a substantial part of the Christians attending communion never asked such a question and deem it rather irrelevant. Admittedly, I have no hard data on this, it is only an assumption based on living in a broader society of Catholics.

[148] See Chapters *1.1 Remarks on Methodology* and *4 Texts and Religion*.

We should also briefly comment on the cognitive approaches already mentioned in relation to the "supernatural" character of deities. It would be unfair to see cognitive religious studies as a simple spin-off from essentialist definitions of "supernatural beings", reframing them as "counterintuitive agents". In this perspective, deities may be considered an evolutionary by-product, a category that can be explored by neuroscience – as a product of human cognitive (dis)abilities. In addition, contra-intuitiveness is seen as an essential element in the cultural spreading of such concepts because they seem to be easily remembered. While some researchers rooted in the anthropological perspective may see cognitive sciences as a gravely reductionistic approach, I am far from discarding it entirely. In the end, I also believe that deities, even if seen as social realities, are perceived by individuals and by their cognitive (dis)abilities. The problem of disagreement among scholars may be mainly in asking different research questions but demanding the same answers.

One of the approaches that influenced me the most sees deities as systems of classification.[149] This is not actually in opposition to the variant conceptions of "supernatural beings" – indeed, it still more or less counts with deities as personifications of different categories – but it shifts our attention from their behaviour and abilities to meanings expressed through them. For me, the most interesting implication of this approach is that deities may be regarded as "antistructural guarantors" of the order. Considering that every order is only a limited selection from unlimited possibilities, it is constantly threatened by collapse. Deities are then those who are at or beyond the limits of any order, and as such, they are not confined by it. They are effective "mechanisms"[150] to hold systems together as if from the outside. Through deities, the system also reflects upon itself and explores its own limits. In addition, situating deities at the extremities of orderly systems may help us to understand why they are sometimes so "weird". Not confined by the same limits as humans, they are "extreme" in many senses of the word.

In the end, I am most inclined towards understanding the concept of deity as a Weberian "ideal type". Baʿal, Zeus, Quetzalcoatl, Shiva, God Almighty, Narām-Sîn, or Šulgi may all be regarded as belonging to the same category. They have many common traits, but hardly all at the same time or one decisive and central. Moreover, a deity understood as an ideal type can more easily mediate among different scholarly approaches, accentuating here and there different aspects of deities, their different roles and meanings in cultures or for individuals. The precise scientific term is, in my opinion, not necessary. What is needed are discussions constantly rethinking it.[151]

For me, designating something as a deity is primarily a form of cultural translation, not an act of etic categorization. We are using something familiar to describe and approximate something foreign and unknown. Similar to any other translation, this entails a certain level of distortion. To compensate for this distortion, I think it is necessary to discuss the source material in detail and try to appreciate various peculiarities specific to a concerned society. We should be aware that this remains a translation.

---

[149] See, e.g., Chlup 2018 for broader discussion.
[150] To borrow a description from Chlup 2018: 111.
[151] Cf. Pyysiäinen & Ketola 1999: 207, 212.

Regarding translation, there remains one last issue to address. It may be argued that we can avoid the problem entirely simply by using emic terms and not categorise at all. Therefore, when talking about Ilu, Baʿal, ʿAṯtarta, ʿAnat, Rašap, and so forth, we would say they are *ilūma* instead of *deities*. However, this does not solve anything. We may summarise the discussion given by Porter on this issue:[152] "You say *ilūma*, so you mean *gods*, right?" I aim to reach at least a reverse sentence: "You say *gods*, so in the context of Ugarit, you mean *ilūma*, right?"

Throughout the discussion, we must be aware that the search for any consistent theology at Ugarit is in vain.[153] As far as we can tell, there was no attempt to formulate any emic conception of deities. And even if there were, it would have probably only a limited impact on the population. I think a short comparative (and personal) excursion is in place here. I myself identify as a Catholic. But this does not mean I am much interested in theological discussions about the nature of God. While working on this chapter, I have realised how foolish my endeavour may be. How could I hope to explore the conception of deities of ancient Ugarit when I could hardly formulate what my conception of God – in whom I, according to my thoughts and words, believe – is? I have observed that my own beliefs are relatively fluid, perspectival, and inconsistent. Consequently, I am convinced that the ancient thought was similarly fluid and inconsistent; different aspects of deities were relevant in different contexts. At the same time, practice allows for a certain level of alignment. To exaggerate, no matter what anyone thinks, we all act the same during the Mass. The "beliefs"[154] are often quite immaterial to the practice. Therefore, what is central to the following section is the exploration of how deities were "practised" and what traces they left in the material.

3.2 Deities at Ugarit

The focus of this section is to explore entities designated as *ilu* (Ug./Akk.), *eni* (Hurr.), or DINGIR (Sum.), whom we translate as *deities*.[155] In the world of Ugarit, deities were very much present, and their reality has been materialised in many sources, both physical and written. This materialisation of deities is what we are going to explore here primarily. Unsurprisingly, the sources that survived up to our time provide us only with a partial and indirect perspective on how deities were perceived. We have to be aware that most of the picture is inevitably lost. For example, we may only speculate about human emotions the interaction with the divine might have caused. The psychology of religion lies beyond our survey. Our sources are also very much limited by the lack of explicitness – most of the issues were too obvious and clear to be stated in clay. Some gaps may be filled in by what we know from the broader cultural milieu and contexts in which Ugarit existed, but the sources directly from Ugarit are the base for the discussion.

---

[152] Porter 2009a: 159–160.

[153] See also Wiggins 2020: 65–66, Koubková 2016: 15–16, or Handy 1994: 5, 8–9.

[154] See note 21 above.

[155] For studies on the structure of the pantheon and the interpretations of divine from various perspectives, see, e.g.: M. Smith 2001, del Olmo Lete 2014a: 33–66, Rahmouni 2008, Wyatt 2007b: 47–84, Handy 1994, Korpel 1990. Some of the deities from Ugarit, usually in broader comparative perspective, were treated in individual studies, e.g.: ʿAnat by Walls 1992; ʿAṯtarta by Wilson-Wright 2016; ʿAnat, ʿAṯtarta, and Aṯirat by Stuckey 2002; Dagan by Feliu 2003; Rašap by Münnich 2013, Baʿal by Green 2003: 153–218; iconography of Baʿal and Rašap by Cornelius 1994; iconography of ʿAṯtarta and ʿAnat by Cornelius 2008.

We may start our discussion with the ritual texts. While mythological texts are usually preferred to reconstruct the conception of deities, ritual texts possibly reflect more on how deities interacted with humans. The content of ritual texts from Ugarit is, to a large extent, constructed around a simple structure: listing deities and sacrificial material given to them. An excerpt of *KTU* 1.148 may be given as an example:

23	*il . ḫyr . ilib . š*	The deities of (the month) *Ḫiyyāru*: for Ilib a ram
24	*arṣ w šmm . š*	for Arṣu-wa-Šamûma a ram
25	*il . š . kṯrt . š*	for Ilu a ram, for Koṯarats a ram
26	*dgn . š . bʿl . ḫlp alp w š.*	for Dagan a ram, for Baʿal of Ḫalāb a bull and a ram
27	*bʿl ṣpn . alp . w . š.*	for Baʿal of Ṣapan a bull and a ram
28	*ṯrṯy . alp . w . š.*	for Ṯarraṯiya a bull and a ram
29	⌜y⌝rḫ . š . ṣpn . š.	for ⌜Ya⌝riḫ a ram, for Ṣapan a ram
30	⌜kṯ⌝r . š . ʿṯtr . š.	for ⌜Koṯa⌝r a ram, for ʿAṯtar a ram
	...	...

Such texts bear a strong informative value. The simple fact that most of the information we have at our disposal about deities is how many rams and bulls they received directs us to suppose that providing the deities with sacrifices was a highly significant act. This is well in accord with the traditions of the ancient Near East. One of the most famous literary compositions of ancient Mesopotamia, *Atraḫasīs*, quite clearly states that this is why humans were created in the first place: to work instead of (and for) deities.[156] The relevance of this Mesopotamian composition for Ugaritic material may be doubted, but at least some of the scribes of Ugarit were acquainted with it, as an excerpt of it has been discovered in the so-called *House of the Literary Tablets*.[157] Even though this text was more likely a part of the scribal education rather than a reflection of local cosmologies, the alimentation of deities is one of the shared practices (not only) in the ancient Near East.

One additional comparative material may further illustrate this problem. In a letter from Šamšī-Addu, king of the Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia, to his son Yasmaḫ-Addu, king of Mari, the difficulties of sustaining a large number of deities is expressed quite emotionally:

> *For what use are the gods that you plan to make? Where is your silver, where is that gold of yours to make these gods? What kind of (victorious) campaign have you undertaken? Which town has agreed to (give you) 10 to 20 pounds of silver as substitute for its country's tribute or income? As for you, the silver is not at your disposal - yet you would commission the making of gods? [...]*

> *Why would you commission the making of 6 gods? These gods that you plan to make require one month of festival (sacrifices). What!? – Where are the oxen and sheep that you must keep providing for sacrifices at festivals? Here, you keep writing to me about oxen and sheep, saying "I have no sheep or lambs!" Yet, you would still fill the town with gods here,*

---

[156] See esp. table I lines 194–197 of the composite editions; Lambert & Millard 1999: 56–57.
[157] RS 22.421, published in *Ugaritica V*, no. 167 and Arnaud 2007, no. 40; English translation available in Foster 2005: 255.

when however many sheep now available hardly suffice for sacrifice to them. How could you do this? Have you no adviser who can counsel you? [158]

While a few hundred years older than the Ugaritic texts, this text illustrates the situation quite poignantly. To have deities is not as easy as one may suppose. Deities are quite expensive and require large quantities of sacrificial material. Of course, not only the bulls and rams were sacrificed for them. Deities were also cared for in other aspects – for example, clothed, anointed, or pleased by recitations of hymns. Once again, *KTU* 1.148 may be used to illustrate such practices:[159]

18	*k tᶜrb . ᶜttrt . šd . bt . mlk* [...]	When ᶜAttarta Šadi enters the *Royal Palace* [...]
19	*ṯn . skm . šbᶜ . mšlt . årbᶜ . ḫpnt . ⸢d⸣ [qt ...]*	two *sk*-garments, seven *mšlt*-garments, four ⸢f⸣[ine] *ḫpnt*-garments [...]
20	*ḫmšm . ṯlṯ . rkb . rtn . ṯlṯ . måt . ⸢š⸣ [ᶜrt...]*	fifty three RKB RTN, three hundred (units of) ⸢w⸣[ool ...]
21	*lg . šmn . rqḫ . šrᶜm . ůšpġtm . p⸢l⸣ [d ...]*	a *lg*-measure of perfume oil, twenty[160] *ůšpġt* (type of) ga⸢rm⸣[ents ...]
22	*kṯ . ẓrw . kṯ . nbt . šnt . w t⸢ṯ⸣n⸢t⸣ [...]*	a *kṯ*-jar of balsam, a *kṯ*-jar of (this) years honey and you ⸢will recite⸣ [...]

This passage is preceded by a Hurrian hymn (l. 13–17).[161] A number of Hurrian hymns were also discovered in the *Royal Palace*,[162] and it thus seems that Hurrian music was well appreciated in the Ugaritic cult. References to recitation are encountered in multiple ritual texts from Ugarit.[163] Usually, the content of these recitations is not specified or only indirectly indicated. We may suppose that hymns and prayers are the usual suspects as they sometimes appear directly in ritual texts – the Hurrian hymn in *KTU* 1.148: 13–17 or a prayer for the well-being of Ugarit in *KTU* 1.119: 26'–36'. The question of reciting myths during rituals remains undecided.[164] The mythical compositions, however, may corroborate this practice. In *KTU* 1.3 I: 18–22, Baᶜal is pleased by singers during his celebratory feast. The description of feasts in mythology, such as the one surrounding the singing in the *Baᶜal Cycle* or a wild feast of Ilu described in *KTU* 1.114,[165] may be seen as narrative elaborations of what is going on during the earthly cult. After all, the feast of Ilu is introduced with the words *îl dbḫ b bth*, "Ilu *sacrifices* in his house".

---

[158] A 3609; edited in *FM 8*, no. 1. Translation according to Sasson 2015: 250.

[159] See also Lam 2011, who interprets a Hurrian ritual *KTU* 1.42 as a ritual of anointing deities.

[160] Supposing *šrᶜm* is a mistake for *ᶜšrm*. Pardee 2002a: 48 takes this as "two/some ŠRᶜ".

[161] See Fournet 2022 for a detailed discussion of this passage which is often left untranslated – e.g., in Pardee 2002a: 48.

[162] See Chapter *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace*.

[163] E.g., *KTU* 1.112: 20, 1.106: 23, 32; 1.41: 45, 46 and more. Sometimes, the performer of the singing is indicated. In *KTU* 1.112: 21 it is a *qdš*-priest who sings a song, in other cases professional(?) singers (*šr*) are those who perform it (e.g., *KTU* 1.106: 16–17). But it might have been even the king who was instructed to perform a recitation (e.g., *KTU* 1.41: 44–46 and parallel 1.87: 48–51). Specific place for a recitation may be indicated, too – in *KTU* 1.106: 23 this activity takes place in a garden.

[164] See e.g., note in Pardee 2002a: 91.

[165] Usually understood as a mythological introduction to a remedy for hangover. See e.g., Lewis in Parker 1997: 193–196 or Pardee 2002a, no. 51.

Especially in connection with feeding, clothing or anointing deities, we may note that they were not some ephemeral, invisible, transcendent beings. They were physically present in their earthly abodes. Unfortunately, the texts from Ugarit say only very little about any process of manufacture of deities. Rather than deities, there are some references to manufacture statues of important persons to be placed in front of the deity. This practice is attested by a letter RS 88.2158 from Egypt, replying to the request of the Ugaritic king for the manufacture of a statue of the pharaoh Merenptah for the *Temple of Baʿal*.[166] In narratives, this may be further corroborated by the *Epic of Kirta* that references a promise to Aṯirat to manufacture a statue of Lady Ḫuraya, Kirta's wife-to-be, in silver and gold, possibly to be placed in her shrine.[167] In the context of the ancient Near East, it is reasonable to suppose that some procedures ensuring the full presence of deities in their earthly bodies were at work at Ugarit, too. Unfortunately, any details elude us.[168]

Some material evidence may be added to the discussion. First, there are some statues discovered at Ugarit that depict deities. For example, a famous group of bronze statues foiled with gold has been discovered in a house in the *South City*.[169] However, to simply connect these statues with cultic activities is not possible. Interestingly, these statues (rather small, from ca. 10 to 15 cm) have pegs which allow them to be fixed in place. In comparison with a depiction of standard carriers from Mari,[170] it has been suggested that such statues might have been used in (public?) processions[171] – fixed on standards. But were those the deities mentioned in cultic texts as the recipients of offerings? The discovery outside of the cultic context may suggest otherwise. We may be on firmer ground with copper statues discovered in the so-called *Hurrian Temple*.[172] The temple context of their discovery may indicate a cultic use, but still, such an interpretation is far from certain. In addition, they were probably buried in a depot below the temple floor well before the time we are interested in.[173] Other candidates for cultic representation of deities may be seen in a stone statue of Ilu discovered close to the *Temple of Rhytons*[174] or in Stelae, especially those discovered in the vicinity of the *Temple of Baʿal*, like the famous *Baʿal au Foudre*.[175]

What seems more apparent to us is that these representations of deities needed to live somewhere. The so-called "temples," several of which are archaeologically attested, were primarily conceived as "houses" (Ug. *bt*) or rather "households". Ritual texts occasionally mention where the action takes place – referring to many different houses of deities. Temples are further discussed in

---

[166] For this text, see also Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters* and Morris 2015 for a broader study.

[167] *KTU* 1.14: IV: 38–43. See also Lewis's note 37 in Parker 1997: 43–44. There is also a possibility that this episode refers to manufacture of the statue of Aṯirat and not of Ḫuraya.

[168] Comparisons from the ancient Near Eastern neighbours of Ugarit may be given. See e.g., Walker & Dick 1999 and 2001, Dick 2005, or Boden 1999 for the discussion on Mesopotamian ritual *mīs pî* ("washing of the mouth") and Collins 2005 for Hittite practices. For general discussion on divine images in ancient Syria, see, e.g., Lewis 2005. For the topic in broader contexts see further contributions to Dick 1999 or Walls 2005.

[169] RS 23.394 – seated Ilu, RS 23.392 and 2.393 – menacing Baʿal, and RS 23.391 – a bull. For photos, see e.g., Yon 2006: 132–133 (no. 14 and 15), or Schaeffer 1966: pls. I, III, and figs. 3–5. See also discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.1 Figurines of Deities*.

[170] See Schaeffer 1966: 12, fig. 9.

[171] Possibly, such activities are attested in *KTU* 1.43: 23–26.

[172] A seated goddess (RS 9.277, ca. 24cm in height) and a standing god (RS ?, ca. 20 cm in height); See *Ugaritica I*: 128–140 or Yon 2006 132–133 (no. 16).

[173] *Ugaritica I*: 133.

[174] RS 88.070, see e.g., Yon 2006: 130–131 (no. 13).

[175] RS 4.427, see e.g., Yon 2006: 134–135 (no. 18).

Chapter *5.1 Sanctuaries of Ugarit*; here, we may only point out that the earthly abodes of deities worked similarly to (elite) households. Deities lived in their houses, possibly together with other deities, but also with their servants and full service provided by the cultic personnel.[176] In general, the sacrificial cult is in many regards similar to administrative texts – administering the functioning of these divine households. The connection between the cult and economy at Ugarit is further discussed in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

After illustrating the materiality of divine presence at Ugarit, we may now move to lists of deities that give us a different perspective. In this regard, we may encounter an interpretation that the Ugaritians themselves created some kind of "canonical pantheon".[177] The proof for such a systematic theology is seen in several lists enumerating deities: one in syllabic cuneiform (RS 20.024) and two in Ugaritic (*KTU* 1.47 and 1.118). The first nine lines of *KTU* 1.148 are usually added to these lists. This tablet is inscribed with a long prescription of sacrifices which remarkably correspond to the lists.[178]

RS 20.024	*KTU* 1.47	*KTU* 1.118	*KTU* 1.148[179]
	il . ṣpn		*dbḥ . ṣpn* [*. ȧlp w š*]
DINGIR *a-bi*	*ilỉb*	*ilỉ*[[d]]*b*	[*ilỉb . ȧlp w š*]
DINGIR-*lum*	*il*	*il*	*il* . [[*l*]] *. ȧlp w š*
ᴰ*da-gan*	*dgn*	*dgn*	[*dgn . ȧlp w š*]
ᴰIM *be-el* ᴴᵁᴿ·ˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi*	*bᶜl . ṣpn*	*bᶜl . ṣpn*	[*bᶜl . ṣpn . ȧlp w š*]
ᴰIM II	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜlm . ȧlp w š*
ᴰIM III	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜlm*	[*bᶜlm . ȧlp w š*]
ᴰIM IV	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜlm* [[x]]	*bᶜlm . ȧlp w š*
ᴰIM V	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜlm*	*bᶜl*[*m .*] *ȧl*[*p w š*]
ᴰIM VI	[*b*]ᶜ*lm*	*bᶜlm*	[*bᶜlm . ȧlp w*] *š*
ᴰIM VII	[*bᶜl*]*m*	*bᶜlm*	[*bᶜlm?*[180]]
ᴰIDIM *ù* IDIM	[*ȧrṣ*] *w šmm*	*ȧrṣ w šmm*	*ȧrṣ w šmm . š*
ᴰ*sa-sú-ra-tu₄*	[*ktr*]*t*	*ktrt*	*ktr*[*t .*] *š*
ᴰEN-ZU	[*yrḫ*]	*yrḫ*	*yrḫ* [*. š*]
-	-	-	[ᶜ*ttr?*][181]
ᴰ·ᴴᵁᴿ·ˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi*	[*ṣpn*]	*ṣpn*	*ṣpn . š*
ᴰ*é-a*	[*ktr*]	*ktr*	*ktr . š*
ᴰ*ḫe-bat*	[*pdry*]	*pdry*	*pdry . š*
ᴰ*aš-ta-bi*	[ᶜ*ttr*]	ᶜ*ttr*	_[182]

---

[176] See Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations*.

[177] E.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 53–60.

[178] See also Pardee 2002a, no. 1 for a discussion of these texts.

[179] *KTU* 1.148 has this sequence on only

[180] Baᶜal no. VII is not read in *KTU*. Both del Olmo Lete 2014a: 55 and Pardee 2002a: 14. reconstruct it there. This part of the tablet is heavily damaged; see *PA*, pl. XCIV and XCV.

[181] Neither *KTU* nor del Olmo Lete 2014a: 55 read anything here. Pardee 2002a: 14 reconstructs here deity ᶜAttar who would be otherwise missing from *KTU* 1.148. Photos in *PA* indicate that there is enough room for one more entry and Pardee's reconstruction thus seem plausible.

[182] del Olmo Lete 2014a: 55 reconstructs ᶜAttar here (see note above). The photo in *PA* clearly shows that this is impossible. It seems that del Olmo Lete does so to create the notion of the canonical pantheon.

ᴰḪUR.SAGᴹᴱˢ *ù* A-*mu-ù*	[ġrm w thmt]	ġrm w [thmt]	ġrm w ˹thmt˺[183] . š
ᴰaš-ra-tu₄	[åtrt]	[å]trt	åtrt . š
ᴰa-na-tu₄	[ˤnt]	ˤnt	ˤnt . š
ᴰUTU	[š]pš	špš	špš . š
ᴰal-la-tu₄	[å]rṣy	årṣy	årṣy . š
ᴰiš-ḫa-ra	[ů]šḫry	ůšḫry	ˤttrt . š
ᴰEŠDAR-iš-tar	[ˤ]ttrt	ˤttrt	ůšḫry . š
ᴰDINGIRᴹᴱˢ til-la-at ᴰIM	il tˤdt bˤl	il tˤdt bˤl	il tˤdr bˤl . š
ᴰGÌR.UNU.GAL	ršp	ršp	ršp . š
ᴰda-ad-mi-iš	ddmš	ddmš	ddmš š
ᴰpu-ḫur DINGIRᴹᴱˢ	pḫr . ilm	pḫr . ilm	pḫr . ilm . š
ᴰA.AB.BA	ym	ym	ym . š
ᴰ.ᴰᵁᴳBUR.ZI.NÍG.NA	ůtḫt	ůtḫt	-
ᴰ.ᴳᴵˢki-na-rù	knr	knr	knr . š .
ᴰma-likᴹᴱˢ	mlkm	mlkm	ålpm . ˤsrm . gdlt
ᴰsa-li-mu	šlm	šlm	...

There are several problems with inferring any "canonical pantheon" from the lists presented above.[184] First, these four texts can hardly trump other numerous sequences of deities that appear at Ugarit, whether in lists or in rituals. Even *KTU* 1.148 includes in its other sections different arrangements. For example, the section on lines 23–44 of this tablet may be connected with yet another logosyllabic deity list RS 92.2004.[185] While some converges among these and the above-mentioned lists are present, there are also other parts that significantly differ and deities that are not shared among these lists. By far, none of these lists include all of the deities who were venerated at Ugarit.

At the same time, all of these texts suggest that what may seem like a simple list with no further information may be connected with ritual practice. These lists were discovered in several locations. The ritual *KTU* 1.148 has been found together with the list *KTU* 1.118 in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. The list *KTU* 1.47 was discovered in the *House of the High Priest*. Both of these locations are intrinsically connected with cultic practice. On the other hand, the logosyllabic lists RS 20.024 and 92.2004 were discovered in buildings that are not particularly interwoven with such practices. There, it may be more reasonable to connect them with scribal education. This may indeed support some connection of scribal curriculum with practical knowledge – what has been learned was put to use.

However, not all of the lists were put to use in local practice. Writing, copying, or memorising lists was a vital part of scribal education.[186] This included lists of deities. It has been argued that the scribal curriculum did not aim at practical literacy but at constructing specific scribal identity and knowledge.[187] In addition, some of the lists were not preserved as a part of education but as handbook

---

[183] *KTU* reads ġrm . w ˹ˤm˺[q]t š. Accordingly, it reconstructs as such the respective lines in *KTU* 1.47 and 1.118. However, both Pardee 2002a: 14 and del Olmo Lete 2014a: 55 read here *thmt*, following the logosyllabic text.

[184] See also Pardee 2002a: 11–12.

[185] See Pardee 2002a, no. 3. RS 92.2004 can be further connected with badly damaged RS 26.142 (*Ugaritica V*, no. 170).

[186] For scribal education at Ugarit, see note 322

[187] See discussion in Roche-Hawley 2015 and Tugendhaft 2016: 169, esp. references to Veldhuis 2011.

references.[188] At Ugarit, the scribal culture was set within the broader cultural milieu of the ancient Near East, essentially drawing most of its sources back from Babylonia (even though mediated). Of these, the most interesting documents for us are the "Weidner Gods Lists" (WGL)[189] and a polyglot syllabary,[190] part of which is dedicated to deities – following the WGL sequence. This part is often seen as proof of the international translatability of deities, providing us with "translations" of different members of the pantheon in Sumerian/Akkadian, Hurrian, and Ugaritic. Several entries of this list are provided here as an example:[191]

[AN	a-n]i	ša-mu-ma
[an-tum]	⌈aš-te⌉-a-ni-wi	ta-a-ma-tum
[ᴰEN.LÍL]	⌈ku-mur⌉-wi	DINGIR-lum
ᴰU₄	tu-en-ni	ya-⌈mu⌉
ᴰUTU	ši-mi-gi	šapšu
ᴰA.A	e-ia-an	ku-šar-ru
ᴰIM.ZU.AN.NA	te-eš-ša-⌈ab⌉	ba-a-lu

At first sight, this list seems relatively straightforward. The Mesopotamian Anu is Hurrian Ani, and because the Sumerian AN means heaven, this deity is seen at Ugarit as Šamûma, whom we have already encountered in the sacrificial cult. Similarly, the Sun (UTU/Šamaš, Šimigi, Šapaš) is shared by all of these cultures. However, as pointed out by Tugendhaft, not all deities are like the Sun.[192] The list created a long time ago in distant Babylonia can hardly reflect the cultic situation at Ugarit. After all, it did not even reflect the cult in its place of origin. Not all of the deities present in the list have straightforward equivalences. This leads to problems like equating different Mesopotamian entries with repeating Hurrian or Ugaritic deities. In addition, the Hurrian (and consequently also the Ugaritic) scribes faced concepts that did not correspond to local realities. To solve this problem, the scholars invented some deities to fill in the gaps. For example, for the Mesopotamian Antu, the Hurrian scribe created Ašte-Anive, "the wife of Ani".[193] Some other deities were "misunderstood" by the scribes in the Western "periphery". Signs used to write goddess Aya (ᴰA.A) were probably read as e₄-a, resulting in reinterpreting this divine wife of the Sun as the craftsman deity Eyan, respectively

---

[188] This applies especially to "Palaeographic Syllabaries A" that included archaic forms of cuneiform script which may be consulted when reading older documents (such as seals inscriptions) or when manufacturing archaizing documents. See Roche-Hawley 2012 for general discussion. Some fragments were edited in *Ugaritica V*, no. 118 and *PRU III*: 213. Full publication has been announced by Roche-Hawley 2012, n. 6, but to my knowledge this edition is not yet been finished. Of the two better preserved manuscripts, one belongs to the *Lamaštu Archive* (RS 14.128+), the other to the *House of Urtēnu* (RS 86.2222+).

[189] Weidner 1924/1925. For WGL at Ugarit, see *Ugaritica V*, no. 119–129. These texts we discovered in places we connect more with scribal education than with cultic practice (such as *House of Rapānu*, *Literate's House*, *House of the Literary Tablets*). The educational character of RS 20.136 A (*Ugaritica V*, no. 127) from the *House of Rapānu*, is made even clearer by the fact that it includes Ugaritic abecedary on the verso (= *KTU* 5.26).

[190] RS 20.123+, *Ugaritica V*, no. 137.

[191] For the full preserved list, see *Ugaritica V*, no. 137 or Tugendhaft 2016: 175–176.

[192] Tugendhaft 2016: 176–177.

[193] Tugendhaft 2016: 177–178.

Koṯar(-wa-Ḫasīs).[194] In the case of Tešub and Baˤal, the interpretation was based solely on the first line, two signs of the Mesopotamian entry ᴰIM, indicating a Storm-God.[195]

Tugendhaft then asks what we are to gain from such scholarly invention and playfulness.[196] It seems that it hardly had any practical impact outside the scholarly community. Indeed, some deities are truly met only within these elaborate lists. In regard to the conception of deities, the most essential note of Tugendhaft is that this leads us to rethink the relation of seriousness and play with deities.[197] What can we make from the fact that scholars could have simply(?) invented a deity just to fill a box in a table? What does it say about these deities – did they "believe"[198] in them? To draw on the previous theoretical discussion, the deity here is not some cognitive dysfunction, nor is it an antistructural guarantor of the order. It is a philological fabrication to complete a list which does not correspond to local reality. Instead of providing any definite solution to this phenomenon, I provide an example from my own experience: During the rite of baptism (in the Catholic Church), the saint bearing the name of the newly baptised person is invoked. From time to time, it happens that there is yet no saint of the chosen name. This does not stop the priest from invoking him or her – there is a box in the list to fill.[199] At the same time, it cannot be simply stated that the attendants of the rite do not care or do not reflect this situation – from time to time, someone smiles at this practice, and someone even says that it is stupid. But in the end, that is all anyone does. Non-existent and at-spot fabricated saints may be a part of ritual practice, not causing any damage to the system or to the beliefs of the attendants. By this example, I wanted to further expand and support the stance of Tugendhaft; seriousness and playfulness can go hand in hand.

To return to the Ugaritic lists, those reflected in cultic practices, we may suppose that the formation of scribes easily resulted in creating lists for local purposes and in the local language. The scribal identity did not stay (completely) apart, locked in ivory towers.[200] Even though the lists copied and encountered during education may be seen as impractical,[201] they formed the way the scribes thought about the world and how they managed it in writing – quite often by extensive use of lists of different kinds. Deities were no exception in this regard.

These discussions also highlight the distinction in the perception of deities between an educated scribe and a layman (as well as between a Christian theologian and a layman). We must be aware that our sources are biased in this way, and we are often reconstructing the scholarly level.

This discussion of polyglot lists also leads us to address the problem of translatability and transcultural understanding of deities. So far, it may seem that these lists are discredited as any proof for equating deities from different cultures. I would argue that this is not entirely the case. While not every listed deity found use in practice, some of them did. Written sources (also other than polyglot lists) occasionally attest to the complexities of transcultural understanding of deities.

---

[194] Tugendhaft 2016: 179–180.

[195] Tugendhaft 2016: 179.

[196] Tugendhaft 2016: 182.

[197] Tugendhaft 2016: 182.

[198] See note 21.

[199] However, it must be noted that this example is flawed in few regards. For example, for some these saints may definitely be in the role of the guarantors of the order. In this instance, it is indeed the purpose of such invocation.

[200] Cf. Hawley 2015: 75.

[201] As Roche-Hawley 2015: 63 notes, this was not only the case of deities, but of many listed items which did not correspond to the local cultural milieu. Some were useless in total, other received grave reinterpretation.

We may illustrate the problem with the help of letter RS 86.2230[202] from Bēya, an Egyptian military official, to ʿAmmurāpi II, king of Ugarit:

6	*lú-ú šul-mu a-na muḫ-ḫi-ka*	May well-being be upon you.
	a-na-ku a-qa-ab-bi a-na ᴰ*a-ma-ni*	I speak to Amon,
	a-na ᴰUTU ᴰIM DINGIRᴹᴱ�š *ša* ᴷᵁᴿ*mi-iṣ-ri*	the Sun-Deity, the Storm-God, and the gods of Egypt
9	*ma-a li-iṣ-ṣu-r*[*u ...*]	thus: "May they protec[t ...]

This letter may illustrate several issues. We may now focus on how to read and translate the letter properly.[203] This may be approached either from the perspective of the Egyptian sender or the Ugaritic receiver. In the first case, we may understand ᴰUTU as Re(?)[204] and ᴰIM as Seth. In the second, we may see them as Šapaš and Baʿal. In this regard, we should consider how the letter was perceived by the correspondents. Did the sender consider how these deities would be seen by the receiver? Did he mention the Storm-God there because Seth was important in foreign relations, because he knew Baʿal was important for Ugarit, or both? And did the receiver think of these deities as belonging to the cultural context of the sender, or did he readily read them as his own deities? The surrounding context of Amon and the gods of Egypt may indicate that even the Storm-God and Sun-Deity might have been interpreted by both correspondents as their Egyptian variants.

Another issue is whether the reading itself mattered to the correspondents. The scribal practice made extensive use of ideograms, and this had, in my opinion, necessarily led to a certain level of shared understanding of many deities. There was something that allowed the scribes to draw associations among Baʿal, Seth, Teššub, and Addad, or among Re, Šapaš, or Šimigi. It is not only the level of reading but also the level of practice. For example, we may quite securely state that the Storm-God of Ḫalāb was associated with different local names for Storm-Gods[205] – it was Baʿal in the case of Ugarit. Similarly, Ṭipṭi-Baʿal, a known individual from Ugarit, wrote down his name on his Egyptian-style seal using Seth-animal determinative.[206] Consequently, even if the Egyptian sender read Re and Seth, and Ugaritian receiver Šapaš and Baʿal, they might have said these were the same deities.[207]

However, this supposed translatability and equality of deities is somewhat anachronistic,[208] rooted in the concept of *interpretatio* (*graeca/romana*), which allows for any unknown deity to be seen as a known deity. The pantheons of the ANE societies were not the same, nor were their individual members. And even if the lists or practice occasionally merge them, the situation was far more complicated. The evidence is contradictory and attests to a variety of modalities of how the relations among deities were conceived in practice. To overcome this obstacle, I have argued for the *contextual interchangeability* of deities.[209] This concept suggests that the contradictory evidence is to

---

[202] *RSO XIV*, no. 18.
[203] For a parallel discussion on aquatic deities, see Tugendhaft 2010 and 2018: 63–72.
[204] Which of the Sun deities from Egypt should we select?
[205] See, e.g., Green 2003: 170–172.
[206] See short discussion of this seal in Chapter *6.7 Religion and Seals*.
[207] See Assmann 1998: 44–47, who was a strong proponent of the internationality of pantheons.
[208] On the criticism of Assmann's stance, see, e.g., M. Smith 2010: 49 or Tugendhaft 2018: 65.
[209] I have illustrated this concept on the relation between Baʿal and Seth; see Válek 2023.

be taken seriously as inconsistent. There is no single answer to the identity or distinction of individual deities. In some contexts, Baˁal and Seth were the same; in others, they were distinct. My favourite example to illustrate the importance of context is from more recent times. The traffickers used a photo of the Statue of Liberty to lure Polish immigrants to the USA. They told them it was the Virgin Mary, the queen of the Polish.[210] The same object represented very different entities. For the immigrants, the statue was the Virgin Mary, irrespective of its original meaning. The obvious problem is that we often cannot ascertain how the situation was perceived by the parties involved.[211]

The issue of the interchangeability of deities is further connected with the problem of the multiplicity of deities. As we have seen in the lists connected to *KTU* 1.148, Baˁal appears in many manifestations, all of whom receive individual offerings. This is connected both with local and international culture. *KTU* 1.148 includes the following Baˁals: Baˁal of Ṣapan,[212] six times Baˁal[213] (numbered II–VII in the logosyllabic version!), and Baˁal of Ḫalāb.[214] Other tablets further include Baˁal of Ugarit[215] or Baˁal-*kanapi*.[216] In my opinion, these multiple manifestations reflect the cultic presence of different representations of Baˁal in the kingdom of Ugarit. Even if we suppose that an ultimate unity and some supposed ideal Baˁal behind all of these entities was perceived by the Ugaritians (about which I am convinced[217]), each of the earthly representations still needed its own cult and sacrifices. Each Baˁal was specific and important.[218] Certainly, Baˁal is not the only deity that appears in multiple representations. In the ritual texts, we encounter, for example, ˁAṯtarta, ˁAṯtarta-Ḫurri, or ˁAṯtarta-Šadî; ˁAnat, ˁAnat-Ḫablay, ˁAnat-ḪLŠ, ˁAnat of Ṣapan, or ˁAnat-SLZ/Ḫ;[219] and many more examples.

Finally, we get to the topic which the reader may expect most when talking about "conceptions of divinity". How were the deities imagined? There are plenty of sources in which the ideas about deities were materialised and are thus accessible to us. We have already mentioned several visual representations that are connected to this issue – statues, stelae, or seals depicting deities. In general, there seems to be a prevalent tendency to depict and talk about deities in anthropomorphic form. In many, probably even most, depictions, the deities are represented in human form. Once again, this well coincides with the general ancient Near Eastern cultural milieu, and it is reflected by the incipit

---

[210] Pollack 2014, 250–251 (Czech translation); for the German original, see Pollack 2010.

[211] There are some cases where we may. For example, many of the Egyptian depictions of "Baˁal" bear actually inscription "Seth". I suggest we should trust the authors to know what they depicted – who are we to correct them. See Válek 2023: 453.

[212] Lines 2, 10, 27

[213] Lines 3–4, 11–12, 43–44 (probably not all seven as comparison with RS 92.2004 suggests – there are only four Baˁals).

[214] Lines 26

[215] E.g., *KTU* 1.109: 16. or 1.112: 23.

[216] KTU 1.46: 6. Meaning: "of the wing"; Pardee 2002a: 276 suggests comparison with Egyptian Seth.

[217] This may be further supported by onomastics, which do not seem to differentiate between manifestations. However, for example Rašap may be connected with theophoric element Ḫagab, because Rašap Ḫagab appears in ritual texts. See *RSO XII*: 989 and van Soldt 2016a: 102.

[218] Similarly, Virgin Mary appears in many hypostases in Catholic tradition. The unity combined with multiplicity and specificity does not seem to be a great deal here neither.

[219] For the overview of attestations, see *RSO XII/2*: 984–986.

of *Atraḫasīs*: *inūma ilū awīlum*, "when the gods were (like) humans".[220] This imagery is further corroborated by narrative texts.[221] There, the gods and goddesses of Ugarit walk, talk, fight, drink, eat, behave like humans, have hierarchies, promise, lie, deceive, change alliances, etc.[222]

In sum, they are like people, albeit their actions are often extreme and exceed human limits. By this, their basic otherness from men is expressed. In visual imagery, the otherness may be expressed by adding some non-human features. The shared emblematic feature of deities across the ancient Near East is a horned tiara.[223] Statues of deities have often lost these horns, but the corpus quite often bears holes where such emblems might have been fixed.[224] This minimalistic theriomorphic feature easily allows us to distinguish humans and deities. On occasion, deities may bear additional animal features. For example, a winged goddess is depicted suckling two infants on the ivory bed panel from Ugarit.[225] In addition, deities may appear wholly in animal form. In these cases, it may be difficult to decide if the animal is indeed a deity, such as in the case of the bull statue mentioned above.[226] Here, the context of three other divine statues indicates this one may be a deity, too. In addition, a bull is an animal often connected with deities in written texts. For example, Ilu is often described as *ṯr*, "bull",[227] and Baˤal, in a poorly understood text *KTU* 1.10, seems to beget a son in the form of a calf.[228] The theriomorphic descriptions are not exhausted by horns, wings or bulls. Other descriptions use imageries of birds, fish or snakes.[229] The interpreters diverge in opinions on what exactly such descriptions say about deities. Should we take them absolutely seriously or rather as metaphors and symbolisms? Do they express their perceived nature, or are these attempts to describe the indescribable? I am inclined to see these descriptions as pointing out the "liminal" and "antistructural" character of deities, highlighting their characters, meanings, or significance. But the perception itself is beyond the possibilities of reconstruction.

What may suggest that the "core nature" of every deity did not have to be anthropomorphic are a few examples of non-anthropomorphic members of the local pantheon. We may start with the deities representing the cosmos and natural phenomena as attested in cults. Arṣu-wa-Šamûma – the "Earth-and-Heavens", Ġūrūma-wa-Tahāmātu – "the Mountains-and-Deep-Waters", Ṣapan – the

---

[220] Lambert & Millard 1999: 42–43. Even though this may not be an indication of visual resemblance but rather a reflection of the original state in which deities had to work, the anthropomorphic appearance remained central for the most part of the ANE history. On the transformations and peculiarities, see e.g., Ornan 2009 and Porter 2009a.

[221] In this respect, we should consider the bias cause by authorship. The most informative compositions from Ugarit: *Baˤal Cycle, Epic of Kirta*, and *Epic of Aqhat* were all written by the same person, Ilimilku; see Chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History.* How much is our conception of the Ugaritic pantheon distorted by the ideas of one single person? In the end, I believe the bias is not that strong as the behaviour and description of Ugaritic deities in these compositions fits well into the broader cultural milieu of ANE; the author's input may be sought in different aspects of his works. See also discussion in Handy 1994: 172–175.

[222] The varied depictions of divine activities and descriptions has been collected by Korpel 1990. The social realities as model for the divine world have been explored by Handy 1994.

[223] See Boehmer 1975.

[224] E.g., the above-mentioned statues of Ilu (RS 23.394) and Baˤal (RS 23.392 and 23.393).

[225] RS 16.056+28.031; see Yon 2006: 136–137, no. 21.

[226] RS 23.391, see also note 169. See also discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.1 Figurines of Deities.*

[227] For collected references, see Rahmouni 2008: 318–330.

[228] See e.g., translation in Parker 1997: 181–186. Similarly, Baˤal is having an intercourse with a heifer in *KTU* 1.5 V: 17–19.

[229] For a collection of theriomorphic descriptions, see Korpel 1990: 523–559.

mountain north of Ugarit where Baʕalu resides,[230] Šapšu – the Sun, or Yarīh – the Moon. Of course, in all of these instances, it may be argued that they are possibly personified and, therefore, anthropomorphic. This may be corroborated with broader Near Eastern contexts where at least the Sun and the Moon appear in human-like figures. However, we should not ignore that these deities are (also) natural phenomena and might have been perceived as such parallelly.[231]

There are also "even more" non-anthropomorphic deities appearing in cults, namely the Lyre,[232] the Incense-Burner,[233] and possibly also the Door-Bolt.[234] Even here, one might argue for personification, but the comparative evidence would not support such a conclusion. On the contrary, there seems to be a broader tradition of having (purely) material deities, for example, objects that have been used in cults, belong to other deities, and so on.[235] It seems all of this was without any need for anthropomorphism.

When discussing deities, we cannot avoid encountering some beings that appear at the edge of the category. In the case of Ugarit, this issue is especially relevant to the dead and the kings. As will be further addressed below,[236] the dead are usually connected with the category of Rapiūma. Rather than deciding whether they are deities *per se* or not, I find it more useful to explore how they are talked about. We encounter them in a narrative composition[237] where they are invited to a banquet of Ilu, to which they travel from afar. With the poetic use of *paralelismus membrorum*, the *rpủm* are also addressed as *ỉlm* or *ỉlnym* on numerous occasions.[238] A parallel is found in the *Baʕal Cycle*,[239] where Šapšu is said to rule the Rapiūma in parallel with *ỉlnym*. This is followed by another parallelism: *ỉlm* and *mtm*, the "gods" and the "dead".[240] The very use of such poetic devices, as well as the preference for *ỉlnym* instead of *ỉlm* may, in my opinion, reflect the specific and liminal character of these beings. It is kind of like deities, but not exactly.

---

[230] According to Green 2003: 192, this name morel likely represents Baʕal (of Ṣapan). However, the discussed lists and associated sacrifices in *KTU* 1.148 have both Baʕal of Ṣapan and Ṣapan as separate entities. While Ṣapan was definitely connected with Baʕal (or with other Storm-Gods of the ancient Near East, see Green 2003: 190–198), the general conception of deities at Ugarit surely allows them to be venerated as separate deities.

[231] For example, in RS 92.2006: 6–7, *a-ba-ba ta-ma-tu₄* DAGAL-*tu₄*, the "the Sea, the Vast Deeps" lack divine determinatives. Nonetheless, the context suggest they should be regarded as deities. May the lack of the determinative indicate their non-anthropomorphic conception? See Koubková 2016: 17.

[232] Ug. *knr*, in logosyllabic texts ᴰ·ᴳᴵˢ*ki-na-rù* and ᴰ·ᴳᴵˢZA.MÍM (Akk *sammû/zannaru*). See *KTU* 1.148: 9, 43?, 1.118: 31, 1.47: 32, RS 20.024: 31, RS 26.142: 6' and RS 92.2004: 37. See Franklin 2006 for a broader discussion on lyre deities. He argues that lyres were special among the musical instruments as they were used as base for tuning, therefore, it is not a coincidence that it was lyre that was a deity and not any other instrument (p. 42). See also Koitabashi 1992.

[233] Ug. *ủtḫt*, in logosyllabic texts ᴰ·ᴰᵁᴳBUR.ZI.NÍG.NA or ᴰ·ᴰᵁᴳBUR.ZI.NÍG.DIN (Akk. *burzigallu/šēḫtu*). See *KTU* 1.148: 43, 1.118: 30, 1.47: 31, RS 20.024: 30, RS 26.142: 5' and RS 92.2004: 36.

[234] Unfortunately, the Ugaritic equivalent in *KTU* 1.148 is lost in lacuna. This interpretation is base on comparison with a parallel list RS 26.142 (=*Ugaritica V*, no. 170) which has on l. 15' DINGIRᴹᴱˢ ᴳᴵˢSAG.KUL, Akk. *ilānu sikkūru*, the "gods of the door-bolt". This parallelism is further complicated by yet another parallel logosyllabic list, RS 92.2004, which has a different entry in this position: ᴰE.NI.ḪU.RA.UD.ḪI. This entry remains unexplained.

[235] See e.g., Porter 2009a or Koubková 2016.

[236] Chapters *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs* and *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[237] *KTU* 1.20–1.22, see e.g., translation by Lewis in Parker 1997: 196–205.

[238] E.g., *KTU* 1.20 I: 1–3; II: 1–2, 6–7, 8–9; 1.21 II: 3–4, 1–12; 1.22 II: 5–6, 10–11, and more.

[239] *KTU* 1.6 VI: 45–47.

[240] *KTU* 1.6 VI 48–49.

The divine nature of the (deceased) kings of Ugarit is expressed in lists where royal names are preceded either with the DINGIR determinative in logosyllabic texts or by the lexeme *il* in the alphabetical texts.[241] In addition, we meet Malkūma, the "Kings", as recipients of sacrifices in cultic texts.[242] The issue of the royal cults and the divine character of the kings of Ugarit is discussed separately.[243]

The kings of Egypt and Ḫatti are also at the border of the category. In the sources, they are often addressed as ᴰUTU or *špš*, connecting their character with the Sun-Deities. The correspondence between Egypt and Ugarit also suggests that the king of Ugarit wanted a statue of Merenptah to be placed in the *Temple of Baʿal*.[244] In the letter, ALAN, "statue/image" is categorised with the DINGIR determinative, indicating its divine character. At the same time, Merenptah himself is preceded with the DIŠ determinative, indicating his human nature. There seems to be an interplay between the categories. This topic is further addressed in Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters.*

Last but not least, we may consider the category of "demons", "genies", and similar entities, which we would not consider divine, but we may count them among the "supernatural beings". Fortunately, this category is relatively underrepresented at Ugarit. An entity named *ḫby* from *KTU* 1.114 is sometimes considered a demon-like figure, but this understanding is very uncertain.[245] In addition, there is nothing in the text that would elaborate on his nature and relation to the divine or daemonic. The description of him having horns and a tail is now associated with the devil. This is, however, an anachronistic conceptualization based on Biblical criticism of ANE deities.[246] A second figure which may be tentatively placed in this category is Šaʿatiqat, a healing figure from the *Epic of Kirta*.[247] In this case, we may wonder if the search for any specific identity of this figure is even in place. Because she is a narrative figure, her identities may merge. I personally understand the episode as a narrative description of magico-medic practices, which does not need to precisely correspond to the practice but only draw on its imagery. This does not mean the audience could not perceive this figure in some specific way or even know its precise role in the culture I am just very sceptical in our possibilities for reasonable interpretation. The conception of similar entities is problematic in the context of the ANE in general,[248] and the evidence from Ugarit is too limited to draw any serious conclusions.

To conclude this chapter, we should also mention that deities were reflected in other types of texts. Rituals and myths are not the only relevant sources. Quite on the contrary, the presence of deities in legal documents, letters, seals, or medical texts attest to their everyday existence in the lives of the people.[249] They were a force to be reckoned with. But there is also plenty of evidence on the contrary. Often, deities were left out of such documents. We should, therefore, avoid seeing them as beings

---

[241] *KTU* 1.113, RS 88.2012, 94.2501, 94.2518, and 94.2518. See discussion in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[242] *KTU* 1.111: 16–17, 1.47: 33, and 1.118: 32. See Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults.*

[243] Chapters *7.1 Kings and Cults* and *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[244] RS 88.2158: 12'–13'.

[245] See, e.g., Nogel 2006.

[246] See the entry on *ḫby* in *DDD*: 377 by Xella.

[247] *KTU* 1.16 V and VI: 1–14. See, e.g., Lewis 2013 and 2014 for a discussion on this entity.

[248] See, e.g., Konstantopoulos 2017.

[249] See Chapter *6 Religion in the Life of the City.*

who directed every step of every person at all times. The world of the ancient Ugarit was in many ways "disenchanted", too.

The presented discussion should lead us to reconsider the search for any "core conception" of deities. This will always be in vain. As noted in the introduction to this section, we were exploring how the social reality of deities materialised in the sources: how were they written about in different types of texts with different uses, how were they depicted, what buildings were erected for them, what items were manufactured for them, etc. This cannot lead us to any consistent conception of deities. Rather, the category that emerges is very fluid and unbound, even if with some prevalent preferences and tendencies.

4   Texts and Religion

Texts are the most appreciated sources for the study of religion – not only – at Ugarit. Their position among scholars by far exceeds the position of other sources. This research attitude is quite understandable because texts are able to communicate intellectual and explicit meanings that are otherwise lost to us. For example, without texts, we would only speculate that there has been some oral mythology, names of deities would be gone, we would know far less about political and economic organization, etc. Texts are essential for the study of ancient history, and without them, we feel very much deprived. The influence of Biblists within the field of study of the ancient Near East,[250] or religious studies in general, could also account for part of this preference for *the scripture*.

However, this focus on textual sources often makes us forget that texts are also material sources and that their meanings and significance are not exhausted by their textual contents.[251] Due to the focus on written sources, we can also miss that the cultures we study were far more oral, visual and material-oriented.[252] Consequently, the textual data did not necessarily have to be so valued or ever-present as would seem from the prevalent research.

Of course, my claim here is a bit exaggerated because there is a significant (and growing) number of scholars who contextualise texts, focus on their materiality, describe the effects of inscribed items among the illiterate population, and so forth. For example, Boyes extensively explored this topic on the Ugaritic material in his *Script and Society*,[253] which has been a great inspiration for me. What I wish to do in this chapter is to further strengthen the topic of considering the texts as sources beyond their contents, with a primary focus on religion.[254] I see this as still an underrated part of the research.

---

[250] In the case of Ugarit, this is probably even more visible than in other fields of ANE studies. The temporal, geographical and cultural proximity of Ugarit to the Biblical world, together with the riches of religious texts it yielded makes it the choice number one. With this I do not mean to disregard this overlap in research as something bad, I am only highlighting our preference for the scripture in the context of Judeo-Christian intellectual traditions.

[251] See also McGeough 2007: 222–223 for a similar discussion.

[252] While the modern world may be far more literate, we should not forget that a large part of our lives is also oral, visual, and material.

[253] Boyes 2021. See also del Olmo Lete 2018 for the contextual analysis of Ugaritic private archives or Delnero & Lauinger 2015 for more general focus in this regard on the ANE texts. Regarding materiality of texts and their social implications beyond content, see, e.g., Boyes 2023 and 2021: esp. p 25–26 on Ugarit with further references; or contributions in Balke & Tsouparopoulou 2016 address this issue in the context of early Mesopotamia, see esp. Tsouparopoulou 2016. The topic has regularly appeared in discussion during my studies, both of Assyriology and religious studies. It has also been an integral part of broader discourse (not only) of media studies at least since publication of McLuhan & Fiore 1967. Still, it is often underrated.

[254] There are also some lines of enquiry that have fallen out of the focus. E.g., the explorations of palaeography may bear further implications on the interpretation of the sources, help us to pinpoint the sources and authorship of texts and further corroborate on interrelations among Ugaritic households and their archives. For palaeography of Ugarit, see, e.g., *RSO XXVII*, Ernst-Pradal 2016, van Soldt 2012, Roche-Hawley 2012, or Pardee 2012.

The idea behind this chapter has been – already during its creation – broadened by a brief encounter with the Actor-Network Theory.[255] It has become even more apparent to me that considering texts as material sources as opposed to purely textual sources is still not enough. We should consider texts as *actors*[256] as well.

To illustrate this, one may notice how texts *act* on us – the "objective" scholars.[257] First of all, the abundant presence of texts at the archaeological site of Ugarit is one of the main reasons that the site has been our focus for so long, and we are still hoping to excavate more and more of them. The presence of mythological texts directs the attention of religious studies scholars to Ugarit more than to any other sites in LBA Syria. The processing and publication of textual material seem to be preferred to the processing of other types of finds. The "archives"[258] have been explored more than the non-textual parts of the city for the purposes of contextualization of texts but also for seeing these structures as more important than the rest. The texts, both their contents and their materiality, also direct our understanding of the site. For example, when the *Stela of Mami* was discovered,[259] identifying the depicted deity in Egyptian hieroglyphs as "*Seth de Djapouna (Ṣapouna)*",[260] it was assumed that the site of Ras Shamra was named Ṣapouna in antiquity.[261] Only later these interpretations have been corrected, assigning the name Ṣapan to the mountain north of the kingdom and Ugarit to the city on the excavated tell. Further, the discovery of textual material in a structure in the northern part of the *South Acropolis Trench* has led the researchers to assign various names to it – *House of the Priest Containing Inscribed Liver and Lung Models* (*Maison du Prêtre aux Modèles de Foies et de Poumon Inscrits*), *House and the Library of a Hurrian Priest* (*Maison et Bibliothèque d'un Prêtre Hourrite*), or *House of the Magician-Priest* (*Maison du Prêtre Magicien*). Inclining towards any of these interpretations then significantly influences the interpretations of scholars. The presence of liver and lung models in this smaller "archive" became so associated with it that it even overshadowed that there is actually a far larger collection of these models from the *Royal Palace*.[262] Highlighting the texts in Hurrian then shrouds the facts that more texts in Hurrian were actually discovered in the *House of the High Priest* (and in the *Royal Palace*) and that the vast majority of the texts discovered there were, in fact, in Ugaritic.[263] For these reasons, I should always write "so-called *House of This and That*" – for practical reasons, I do not.

Of course, this does not mean that other excavated materials do not act on the scholars. Quite on the contrary. But I would argue that texts act on us more than other materials and are more visible

---

[255] See esp. Latour 2005.

[256] While not attributing them with intentionality to which the term *actor* may lead us.

[257] See also Tsouparopoulou 2016: 261–263.

[258] Why to use quotation marks is explained below.

[259] RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183; fig. 29. As the excavation numbers suggest, the stele has been discovered in several fragments in years 1929, 1930, and 1933, see also Yon 2006: 135.

[260] *Report 1930*: 10.

[261] See *report 1930*: 10–11 and pl. VI.

[262] Discussed in Chapter *7.2 State and Divination.*

[263] See the discussion below, Chapter *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest*

to us,[264] probably because we tend to see texts as the prime sign of civilization, as something that is truly important and what really counts, not like pots and bowls.[265]

The main objective of this chapter is to set the texts in their ancient contexts. Once again, I return to the basic premise of this thesis: religion was, first and foremost, something that was lived. Texts were an integral part of this lived and perceived reality. People – literate and illiterate, elite and non-elite – acted upon texts, and texts acted back upon them.

The goal of this chapter is threefold:

1) to provide a general context for texts discussed in the following chapters,
2) to explore what the larger picture could tell us about the local religion, and
3) to highlight the implicit and non-content meanings of texts.

4.1 Texts, Languages and Scripts at Ugarit

Ugarit is very often described as a multilingual site. Indeed, the excavations have revealed texts in Ugaritic, Akkadian, Sumerian, Hurrian, Egyptian, Hittite/Luwian,[266] and Cypro-Minoan.[267] In addition, these languages have been recorded in five scripts: local alphabetic cuneiform, Mesopotamian logosyllabic cuneiform,[268] Egyptian hieroglyphs, Anatolian hieroglyphic script, and Cypro-Minoan script. The material mediums for writing do not significantly differ from the other ANE sites of the dominantly cuneiform world – clay tablets are the primary medium for most types of scripts and languages, but objects of stone, metal, or ivory[269] were inscribed, too. To these, we must also add other non-tablet objects from clay. It is also possible that perishable materials were used for writing, such as wood and wax.[270]

---

[264] Another perspective would be that of people outside of the scholarly community, e.g., museum visitors. There, the clear preference for visuality of material may be observed. Cuneiform tablets hardly attract much attention in comparison with Egyptian monuments.

[265] Once again, one should read this as a grave exaggeration. Of course, especially in archaeology, the pots and bowls are appreciated at a level that unfortunately eludes most of the religious studies (and other textually focused) scholars; including me.

[266] Hittite and Luwian are two distinct but very closely related Indo-European languages. E.g., in *KTU, TEO,* and *RSTI* as well as in Yon 2006 and elsewhere, "Hittite hieroglyphs" are used to designate Anatolian hieroglyphs and when these publications assign language, it is Hittite. According to Malbran-Labat, Luwian is attested at Ugarit only in anthroponyms on hieroglyphic seals (1999: 67–68). In this thesis I do not try to differentiate between Hittite and Luwian and I subsume everything under Hittite while I know there might be a discrepancy. After all, it is statistically insignificant and I do not make any interpretations based on it.

[267] Also, an inscription in Phoenician has been discovered at the site, but obviously outside of the LBA context; see e.g., Segert & Yon 2001. In addition, several inscriptions in Latin and one in Phoenician have been unearthed in Ras Ibn-Hani, these are clearly out of the LBA context, too.

[268] We can even differentiate several scribal traditions within this large category, see e.g., Viano 2016: 325–336 where he classifies the logosyllabic scripts used for Sumerian texts at Ugarit: Babylonian, Hittite, Ugaritic. For a more detailed study of palaeography of logosyllabic scripts, see *RSO XXVII.*

[269] See Chapter *7.2.2 Divinatory Models* on the ivory divinatory models from the *Royal Palace.* Gachet 1995: 246–247 notes that ivory objects were only seldomly inscribed in the ANE, so this corpus may indeed be quite unique.

[270] See Vita 2019: 403–404. He highlights written mentions of "wax tablets", *ṭupp ša* GAB.LÀL (in RS 19.053) or "wooden tablets", GIŠ.ḪUR, in his understanding covered with wax (in RS 34.136 and 92.2373). As far as I can tell, no references to papyrus of cloth as medium of writing are attested.

Nonetheless, as Ferrara[271] or Malbran-Labat[272] has convincingly argued, the multilingual nature of this site may be overly overstated. Before we delve into the reasoning why this is probably true, while the view of the multicultural, or transcultural, character of Ugarit may still be valid, we must address one significant problem: it is not at all easy to orient in the corpus as a whole.

4.1.1 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

To date, I am not aware of any definite corpus database. Probably the most complete is *RSTI* (*The Ras Shamra Tablet Inventory*[273]) that is based on *RSO V/1 = TEO* (*La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit*) published in 1989. Fortunately, the creators of *RSTI* made many revisions and added objects excavated or published later. Nonetheless, the completeness of this database is compromised, as there seem to be some unresolved discrepancies between *TEO* and *RSTI*.[274] No definite number of texts can be simply extracted from this or any other database. This is largely due to the fact that many of the tablets were, in fact, broken, and not every made joint is reflected in *RSTI*. Joint making is complicated for many reasons – e.g., discontinuity of fragments, distribution of fragments, etc.[275] The more important problem regarding statistics is that most of the tell remains unexcavated. With more findings, the suggested interpretations will probably change more than with having an absolutely complete database of texts already discovered. This is implied by the very varied nature of each of the "archives".

One problem is listing all the objects (texts/fragments),[276] and the other is getting relevant metadata for them. *KTU*, *RSTI*, and *TEO* provide some additional information. In most cases, both *RSTI* and *KTU* are dependent on *TEO*. The metadata I am interested in particular are: language(s), script(s), findspot(s), and genre(s). The problems connected with findspots (and consequently attribution to a particular "archive") have already been mentioned in note 275. With languages and scripts, the problem lies mainly in the selective publication processes (especially at the time of the creation of *TEO* and the first editions of *KTU*). Therefore, the information in any databases may not be entirely reliable. For example, in comparison with the list of Sumerian texts listed by Viano,[277] it has come to light that in several cases, only Akkadian has been listed in *RSTI*. However, the genres are the most complicated issue while at the same time being of utter importance to the discussed

---

[271] Ferrara 2019.

[272] Malbran-Labat 1999.

[273] *RSTI*, available at: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/RSTI/ [accessed 30th August 2022].

[274] E.g., several texts from season 20 are missing in *RSTI*, including RS 20.025, one of the few Cypro-Minoan texts. It has been this text in particular that have pointed to the incompleteness of this season to me. Other discrepancies have been revealed while merging data from *KTU* and *RSTI*. While this shows the problems and incompleteness of the final database, the outcome is for me within the limits of statistical error (except for scarcely attested languages/scripts like Cypro-Minoan or Sumerian).

[275] Some of the joints were indeed discovered during different seasons, sometimes many years apart. Others were discovered at different places, which is probably to be attributed to storing practices at upper levels of buildings – the collapse of a building then dispersed the tablets around its original context. Some texts were excavated but not recorded properly, or excavated illegally. Quite often the stratigraphy is also problematic. Especially problematic are data from pre-1970s excavations; see e.g., McGeough 2007: 222 and elsewhere in chapter *The Archival Context of the Tablets* (pp. 222–264), where he points out many of the difficulties. See also van Soldt 1991: 48–49.

[276] To complicate the matter even more, the corpus includes also a number of uninscribed fragments and one sometimes wonders why such objects are present in collections of texts (e.g., KTU category 8 is "Illegible and uninscribed", RS 11.846 is in *TEO*, p. 61 as "*anépigraphe*"). Probably, most of these are fragments of tablets that are otherwise inscribed, which turns us back to the topic of joints attribution.

[277] Viano 2016.

topic. Of the above-mentioned databases, only *KTU* tries to systematically assign genres to the texts. Unfortunately, it is by its nature limited to the alphabetical texts. Moreover, it is sometimes very hard to attribute a particular genre to a text (see the discussion below).

Because of the problems mentioned above (and many more not mentioned), I have been working on a database that would fit my purpose better.[278] The core is built on data from *RSTI* and *KTU* (with the great help of *UDB*[279]) and updated on whatever I have encountered. Especially Clemens 2001 has been a great help with attributing texts with possible relevance to religion. In addition, Viano 2016 has been helpful with Sumerian texts; Arnaud 2007 with classifying Akkadian and Sumerian data; and Vita 2009 for the Hurrian corpus. The most problematic for now remains Egyptian. I cannot claim I have come anywhere near to discovering all the discrepancies, but I have tried my best to improve the database.
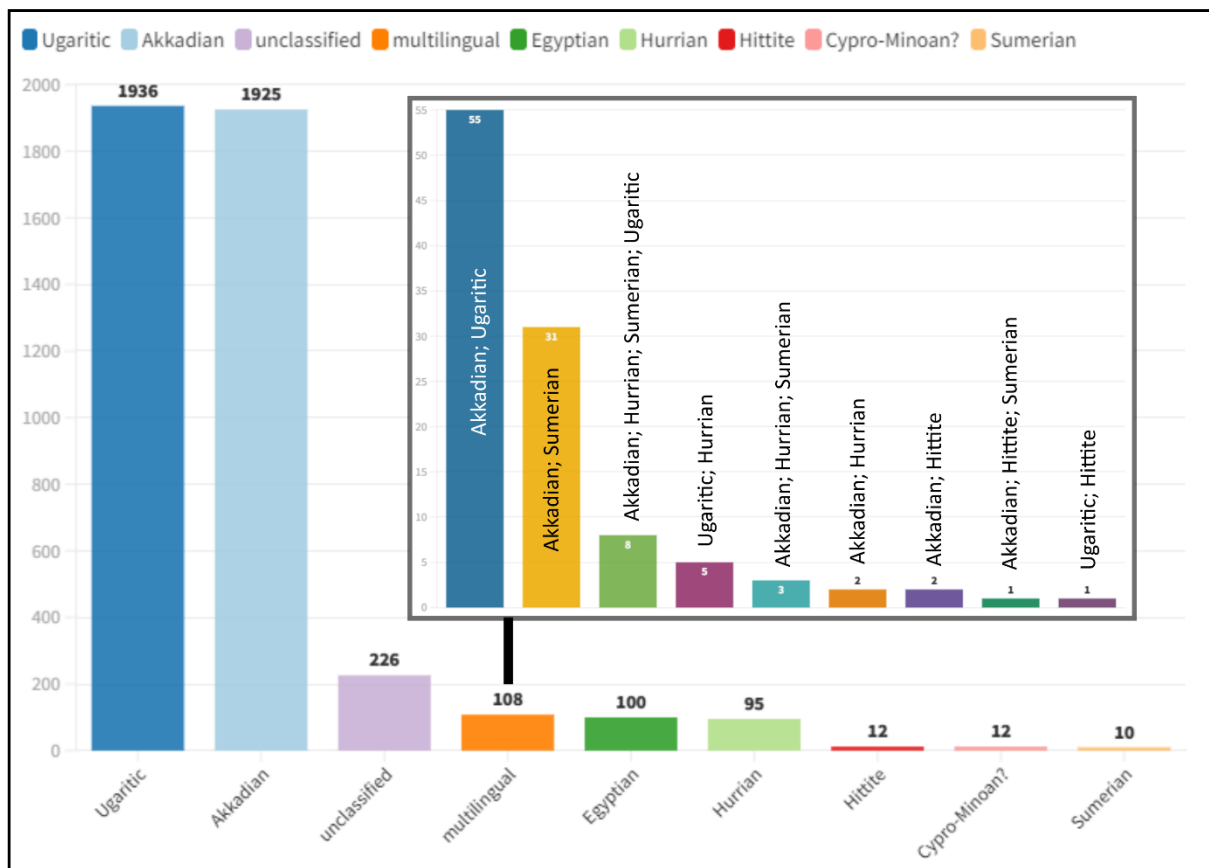
Figure 4 Language statistics.
For the interactive versions, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11913012/
and https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11913230/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

Statistical overview of the language distribution in the corpus of Ugarit (including texts from Ras Ibn-Hani, Minet el-Beida and Ugaritic texts outside of Ugarit) can be seen in fig. 4. From a brief look

---

[278] The database I worked with is accessible at GitHub, *UgariticReligion*, available at: https://github.com/valekfrantisek/UgariticReligion [accessed 29th August 2023], together with some auxiliary code that facilitates statistical analysis.

[279] Published before the 3rd edition of *KTU* (here abbreviated as *KTU* without further indication), but making use of *KTU²* numbering, which is mostly consistent with *KTU*.

at the statistics, it seems clear why some scholars doubt the multilingualism of the city. It is clear that Akkadian and Ugaritic clearly overshadow the rest of the languages. Nonetheless, only a more detailed look at the nature of the texts hidden behind the statistics can tell us more details.[280]

The following overview summarises the reconstructed role of each of the languages.[281] Nonetheless, just as *pots are not people*, the *texts are not people, too*. Therefore, the fact that some language is not well attested textually or is attested only in a specific context does not in itself mean there were not people talking in that language at the site.[282] Therefore, the summary given below must be considered as related to the materialization of languages only.

Ugaritic

Within statistical error, Ugaritic is attested at Ugarit as much as Akkadian. There is a good reason to suppose that Ugaritic has been the native language of most of the inhabitants. Ugaritic has been used across genres and is attested all over the city (see below).

Very intriguing is the vernacularisation process at the site. It is very unusual that a local language is attested so well textually – usually, it was Akkadian (albeit "peripheral" or heavily influenced by local languages[283]) that is attested for writing in the LBA northern Syria. In addition, it is not only the language but the script as well.[284] While the Ugaritic alphabetical script was surely not the first alphabetic script,[285] it is the oldest attestation of local script used extensively for multiple purposes. Why did it happen at Ugarit? Was it only because other local alphabets form the area have been written on perishable materials? According to many scholars, the situation may reflect cultural and political resistance, a process of negotiating relations with the Hittites overlords.[286]

Akkadian

The position of Akkadian at Ugarit is similar to other sites. During the LBA, Akkadian has been a *lingua franca* of the Ancient Near East. Its uses at Ugarit are connected primarily with international affairs (letters, treaties), both political and commercial, and with scribal education[287] (sapiential literature, literary texts, lexical lists, etc.). While very well attested textually, it is hard to ascertain how broadly it has been used as a spoken (nay native) language.

---

[280] We should always bear in mind the infamous saying about three levels of lies: "*lies, damned lies, and statistics*" (trying to pinpoint the sources of this saying has been in vain).

[281] For a broader comparison of the roles of languages, see e.g., Malbran-Labat 1999. Unless specifically referred, the summary follows generally accepted understanding of the languages that is to be encountered across publications.

[282] For "foreigners", their position and their relation to local religious traditions, see, e.g., Válek 2021

[283] See, e.g., von Dassow 2010 on discussion on whether written "Akkadian" may actually represent another language.

[284] For the dating of "invention" Ugaritic script to the mid-thirteenth century during the reign of ʿAmmiṯṯamru III (ca. 1270–1230 BCE), see Roche-Hawley & Hawley 2013: 258–263 or Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 234 with further references.

[285] See, e.g., Boyes 2021: 43–51 for discussion and further references on the emergence of alphabetical script.

[286] See Boyes 2018, or many statements within 2021, especially p. 245–259. See also similar interpretations in Devecchi 2019 or Zemánek 2006. In general, I agree with such an interpretation. However, I still see the influence of the Hittites as an important one, while not on the level of language. In Válek 2021: 49–54, I have argued that it may be in religious activities – namely Hurrian cults – where the relations were negotiated and mediated, too.

[287] See also note 322.

Sumerian[288]

Sumerian seems to be present only in the context of scribal education. Among all the mentioned languages, it is the safest one to be marked as not spoken, as it has been extinct for a long time, even in Mesopotamia. The corpus of Sumerian texts is rather small in general. It "often" appears in multilingual contexts (for example, as a column in lexical lists or as a parallel translation of a text in Akkadian or even Hittite). Sumerian at Ugarit is not always a "proper Sumerian" but a phonetic rendering of it, sometimes side by side. This, as well as the fact that of the small number of Sumerian texts at Ugarit, several are attested in more copies, underlines their scholarly character. There is one area where I suspect Sumerian might have been used outside of scribal education: incantations. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine if the attested Sumerian incantations were used within the scribal education or also practised.

Hurrian

The use of Hurrian in texts seems the most genre-specific. Out of 95[289] Hurrian texts, only one is not "religious"[290] in nature (a letter RS 11.853). Most of the Hurrian texts written in logosyllabic cuneiform may be classified as hymns. The texts in alphabetical cuneiform may be counted among rituals and incantations. To the 95 Hurrian texts, we should add some of the multilingual texts. These are also primarily cultic (ritual texts combining Hurrian and Ugaritic), with the exception of eleven lexical lists, where Hurrian is represented only by one column. Two texts combining Hurrian and Akkadian are a wisdom text[291] and a letter.

There is no general agreement on the use of Hurrian as a living language at Ugarit.[292] I have already argued elsewhere that the Hurrian cultural influence – not limited to the written language, but also to onomastics and narrative references – could be possibly supported by the Hittite hegemony, which often made use of Hurrian cultural heritage.[293] In my opinion, when considered from the perspective of written documents, it seems to be more of a cultural/cultic language and not a living one.

Egyptian

Egyptian is probably to be connected mostly with inscribed elite objects, some of these connected with cultic activities.[294] While some Egyptians probably lived at Ugarit,[295] the general presence of the

---

[288] For a great analysis of Sumerian at Ugarit, see Viano 2016, especially p. 325–336 and 361–379.

[289] In my previous work I have counted with only ca. 70+ Hurrian texts; see Válek 2021: 49. Following Vita 2009: 219. Number 95 is based on the current database.

[290] Incantations/hymns, lists of sacrifices, ritual prescriptions. These are addressed further below.

[291] RS 15.010 is composed of the same text rendered both in Akkadian and Hurrian.

[292] See Vita 2009 who argues for Hurrian as a living language.

[293] See e.g., Válek 2021: 49–51, Lam 2015, Vita 2009, Sanmartín 2000, or Dietrich & Mayer 1999. I rather doubt it has been present as a living language outside cultural references. In general, I agree with Boyes comment: "*The question of the Hurrian language must be disconnected from Hurrian identity. We know that the term 'Hurrian' meant something at Ugarit, but it's not at all clear what that was, nor that language was necessarily a defining criterion.*" (2021: 206), but I still prefer to connect the position of these elements within the (elite and religious) culture of the Hittite empire of which Ugarit was a part. This does not mean the Hurrian culture was not present at Ugarit before the Hittite dominance, but its cultural position might have shifted.

[294] See Válek 2021: 54–58 for further references.

[295] As can be illustrated, e.g., with the *Stela of Mami*, see fig. 29.

Egyptian language is not visible in the sources. Even in the very active sphere of trade and political relations, Akkadian was preferred to Egyptian.[296] In theory, this may be attributed to the use of – now lost – papyrus for mundane Egyptian documents.[297]

Hittite/Luwian

The very poor attestation of Hittite and Luwian is possibly one of the most puzzling statistics we have. By all means, Ugarit was a Hittite vassal, and one would expect it to be more present. The lack of such texts is probably to be attributed primarily to the use of Akkadian in international relations.[298] However, it seems hardly conceivable that Hittite or Luwian would not have been occasionally used, especially in diplomatic relations or trade, for example, by the Anatolian merchants appearing at Ugarit.[299] Interestingly, two fragments of Hittite ritual texts were also discovered at Ugarit,[300] but I have doubts about their actual use in cult.[301]

Cypro-Minoan

Trade and political relations with Cyprus (*Alašiya*) are well attested at Ugarit. Nonetheless, the language itself made only little archaeologically detectable impact in the city. Only eleven[302] texts in Cypro-Minoan (script) have been unearthed at Ugarit (and Ras Ibn-Hani). Interpretations are made difficult by the fact that we cannot read this script. Therefore, we are not even sure in what language these texts are.[303] However, the distribution of these texts more or less suggests that the script was found where trade connections with Cyprus are visible. Lively trade and political relations with Cyprus suggest that it could have been possible to encounter whatever language this was in its live form.

4.2 The "Archives" of Ugarit

To clarify, the term "archive" may be a bit misleading. Usually, scholars use it to refer to groups of texts "discovered together".[304] This, however, mixes together collections of very different characters. Would you call a bookshelf over your desk an archive in the same sense as when describing a public library or doctor's records? While "archives" remains the most used term, it is often discussed and problematised. Sometimes, other designations are used. For example, Pedersén tries to differentiate

---

[296] Note, e.g., that the earliest written attestation of contact between the royal courts of Ugarit and Egypt belong to the Amarna correspondence (EA 45–49) and were written in Akkadian.

[297] Malbran-Labat 1999: 67 even speculates that there could have been scholars able to read Egyptian hieroglyphs and communicate in Egyptian.

[298] One the other hand, many of Hittite vassals used Luwian; see, e.g., Boyes 2021: 221.

[299] Malbran-Labat 1999: 69 points out the possible use of wooden tablets in this context. See also note 270.

[300] *RSO XIV*, no. 31 = RS 92.2011 and 92.6278.

[301] These were discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*, which is not much associated with ritual activities. There are, however, few exceptions and the situation may be more complicated. See the discussion below.

[302] Cf. Boyes 2021: 212 talks about only 9 attestations (or rather 8 as two fragments are from the same tablet). This is probably caused by the fact that two texts in *RSTI* have unknown locations of discovery (but RS siglum suggests it has been discovered in the city); also the Ras Ibn-Hani tablet is not included by Boyes.

[303] It is possible that some of the texts in Cypro-Minoan script have been made locally and some may even be in Ugaritic; see Boyes 2021: 16 and 198. Others even connect it with experiments with writing systems; see Ferrara 2016: 236–237 and 2019: 27.

[304] See Pederseén 1998 for a general study of LBA and IA Near Eastern archives.

between "archives" and "libraries" on a functional level.[305] In the end, this distinction often fails and leads to "archives, sometimes with library section"[306] and vice versa because the lived situation has never been so strict. Boyes uses simple "tablet collections/assemblages"[307] and discusses further functions for each of these collections separately. In my opinion, a description that best expresses our situation is "clusters of texts" because:

1) it preserves their spatial proximity in an archaeological context,[308]
2) while maintaining that not every cluster is an archive,[309]
3) or even a (single) collection because the texts might have fallen from different floors of the buildings or from adjacent rooms,[310]
4) acknowledging that not every text is actually a tablet, and
5) it leaves plenty of room for functional analysis of different clusters.

Texts were unearthed in numerous places all over the city, with various languages and scripts used, as discussed above. The large number and wide distribution of texts are in many ways different[311] in comparison with close-by sites, for example, with Alalaḫ[312] or Emar.[313] At the same time, the concentration and overall context of the clusters point out that literacy was not widespread. As I argue further in this chapter, this does not necessarily mean that texts were irrelevant to the rest of the population, living in places where the presence of texts was limited or absent.

In the following pages, we briefly outline the general character of the most important clusters at Ugarit in relation to religion based on statistical analysis and previous works. The overall situation and nature of different clusters have already been extensively discussed in many publications.[314] Once again, it must be stressed that the statistical overviews may be quite misleading. I have chosen a rather conservative approach of attributing texts to a cluster according to architectural structures where it

---

[305] Pedersén 1998: 3: "*With rather broad definitions of the terms 'document' and 'literary text,' it may be simplest to say that archives are collections of documents and libraries are collections of literary texts.*"

[306] E.g., Pedersén 1998: 70.

[307] Boyes 2021:17.

[308] Especially when the excavation practices were rather poor. See above, note 275.

[309] I understand "archive proper" as intentionally created collection of tablets (and other texts or even uninscribed object) as a single unit.

[310] For example, the cluster generally described as the *Southwest Archive* of the *Royal Palace* may actually consist of several originally independent tablet collections, see e.g., McGeough 2007: 233–235.

[311] On the other hand, specific nature of archival practices may be defended for almost every individual site. The differences do not relate only to the distribution and number of texts, but also on what the archived texts record and in which way. Here, we may clearly see how varied the customs were. This may further reflect differences in social realia, attesting to what was of particular importance at each different site. This is also visible when comparing the structure and content or ritual texts, see also discussion in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[312] See e.g., von Dassow 2015: 182: "*At Alalaḫ during the Late Bronze Age – unlike contemporaneous Nuzi, for example, and more or less like Ugarit – the distribution of written records indicated that writing was seldom of any use to anyone outside the spheres of institutional administration.*" She notes at the same page that no private archives were discovered at Alalaḫ, while excavations were extensive enough to excavate them if they existed. Most of the texts from Alalaḫ belong to the palace and adjacent buildings. Therefore, it was also *unlike Ugarit*. See also Hess 1996.

[313] In Emar, most of the texts were discovered in the so-called *Temple M₁* or rather the *House of the "Diviner"*. See, e.g., Hess 1996 or Beckman 1996.

[314] See, e.g., Boyes 2021: 115–171, del Olmo Lete 2018, Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 242–246, McGeough 2007: 222–264, or van Soldt 2000 and 1991: 47–231.

has been discovered (in the charts). As a result, some of the texts that belonged there in antiquity might have fallen out of my statistics just as they have fallen out of their original places. On the other hand, some of the texts might have fallen in. Only limited corrective is provided by the secondary literature reflected in the summaries.

The suggestions presented here must remain only provisional and limited. The writing does not represent the full account for the functional analysis of a structure – we are here discussing only the part of reality that interested the official administration (and clergy, etc.) or important individuals (capable of writing or having access to a scribe) enough to write it down and to store it. In addition, some of the texts remain unpublished – further excavations and publishing may still shift our understanding of respective clusters, as well as add new ones.
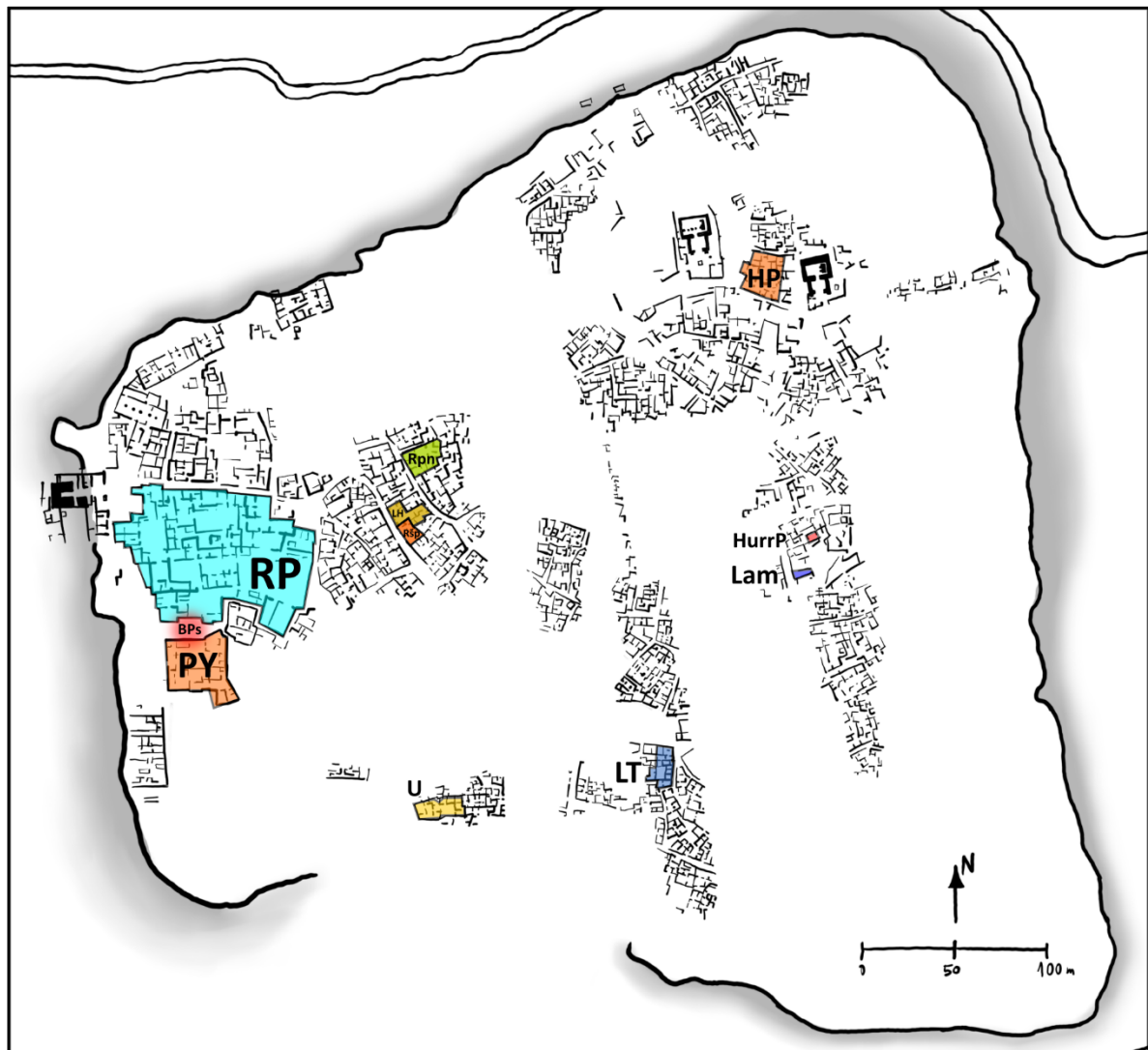
Figure 5 Primary clusters of texts at Ugarit. Drawn by the author, see fig. 2 for sources.
RP = Royal Palace; PY = Palace of Yabnīnu; BPs = between Royal Palace and Palace of Yabnīnu; Ršp = House of Rašapabu;
LH = Literate's House; Rpn = House of Rapanu; U = House of Urtenu; LT = House of the Literary Tablets; HP = House of the
High Priest; HurP = House of the Hurrian Priest; Lam = Lamaštu Archive.

Fig. 5 maps the main clusters of texts at Ugarit. However, it overshadows the fact that texts were found elsewhere, too – almost literary "all over the tell". The chart in fig. 6 shows the number of texts belonging to these clusters, reflecting language distribution. While the smallest cluster listed here
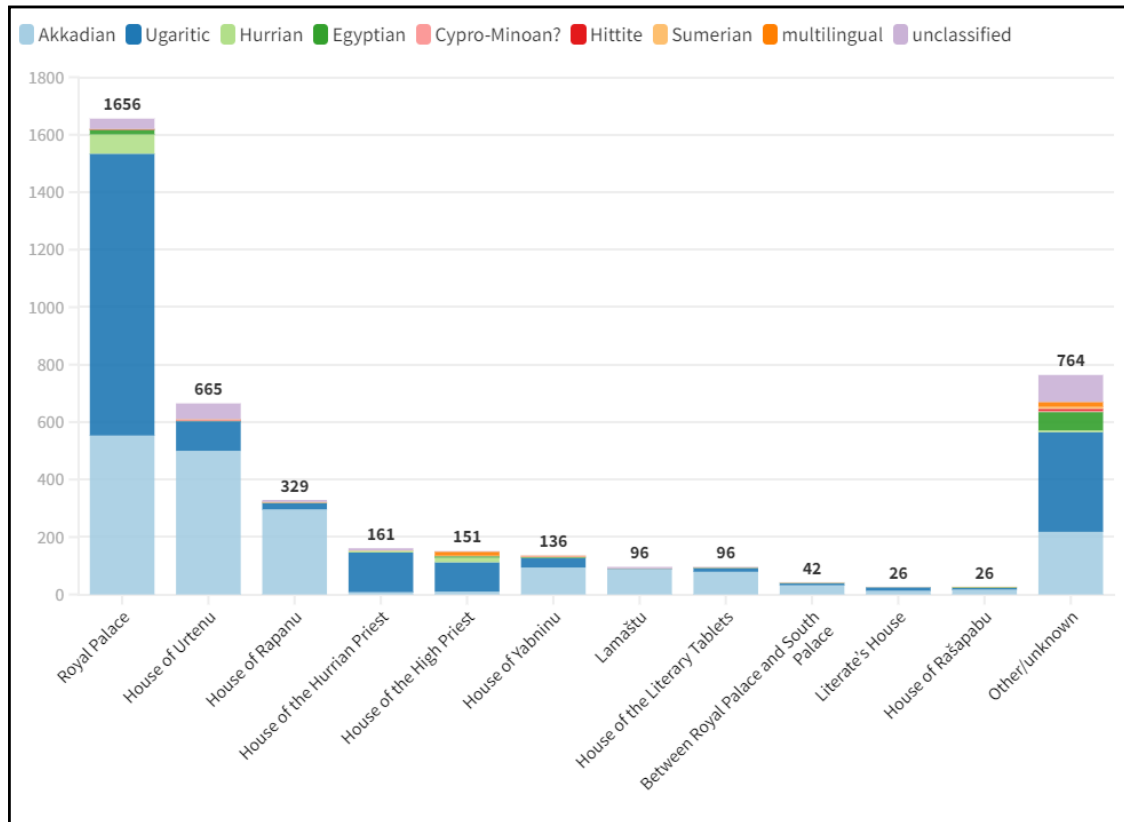
Figure 6 Languages in clusters.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11910302/ [accessed 30th August 2023]
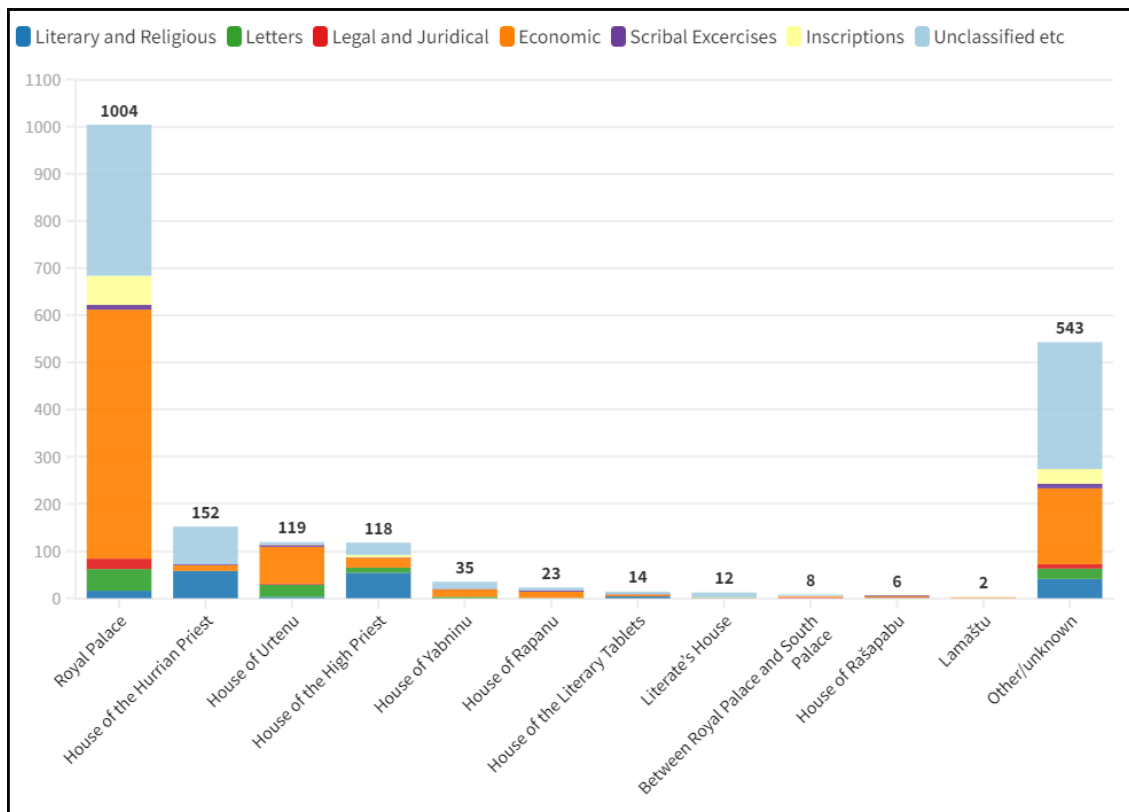
Figure 7 Distributions of genres according to *KTU*.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11969400/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

(*House of Rašapabu*) consists of only 26 texts, there are still over 750 more texts dispersed throughout the tell (for more than half of these, we lack proper location). This statistic does not include texts from Ras Ibn-Hani, Minet el-Beida or elsewhere.

In fig. 7, you can see the distribution of genres according to *KTU*.[315] While ignoring the Akkadian data, this genre distribution is very instructive about the supposed roles of individual clusters. It is also clearly visible what was the most important topic of writing – administration, not religion or intellectual activities. The distribution of languages then partially points towards the "international" vs "local" dimensions of individual clusters. Oversimplified: the higher proportion of the Akkadian texts suggests a higher proportion of international relations of respective clusters. However, in some cases, like *Lamaštu*, *House of the Literary Tablets*, or even the rest of the "private archives",[316] the Akkadian is also a reference to the scribal education practices. Because this thesis aims to discuss the religion of Ugarit, we can leave aside general characteristics of individual clusters[317] and focus on the presence of texts that are more relevant to us.

4.2.1 RELIGION IN CLUSTERS

4.2.1.1 WHAT IS A "RELIGIOUS TEXT"?

To look for the spatial distribution of "religious texts", we first need to identify what classifies as a religious text.[318] We could now relate back to the never-ending discussion on the definition of religion, as we have done in the introductory chapter.[319] The approach I follow gives way to a fluid

---

[315] The category *Unclassified etc.* includes KTU 7–9: unclassified, unintelligible/uninscribed, and unpublished texts.

[316] While clusters not belonging to the *Royal Palace* are often described as "private" this designation bears many difficulties because the spherese of private and public tend to intemingle. We may ask if such a division is a fiting description.

[317] Following list includes basic references for more detailed study of individual clusters. *Royal Palace* and *Between Royal Palace and Palace of Yabninu*: Boyes 2021: 117–129, del Olmo Lete 2018: 93–98, 113–116, Yon 2006: 36–45, McGeough 2007: 223–246, Whitt 1993, and van Soldt 1999: 29–32 and 1991: 49–159.

   - *House of Urtenu*: Boyes 2021: 138–139, del Olmo Lete 2018: 61–64, McGeough 2007: 257–259, van Soldt 2000: 240–242 and 1991: 221–223.
   - *House of Rapānu*: Boyes 2021: 133–134, del Olmo Lete 2018: 65–76, McGeough 2007: 247–249, van Soldt 2000: 233–234 and 1991: 165–180.
   - *House of the Hurrian Priest* and *Lamaštu Archive*: these are actually just individual rooms, sometimes considered as adjacent clusters belonging to the same building. Sometimes, these are also connected with the *House of Agapṭarri*, located north of the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. Boyes 2021: 135–137, del Olmo Lete 2018: 27–54, Yon 2006: 100–101, McGeough 2007: 259, 263, van Soldt 2000: 235–238 and 1991: 194–212.
   - *House of the High Priest*: Boyes 2021: 128–129, del Olmo Lete 2018: 13–26, McGeough 2007: 262–263, van Soldt 2000: 239–240 and 1991: 213–220.
   - *Palace of Yabninu*: Boyes 2021: 130–131, del Olmo Lete 2018: 87–92, McGeough 2007: 254–255, van Soldt 2000: 230–231 and 1991: 143–159.
   - *House of the Literary Tablets*: Boyes 2021: 133–135, McGeough 2007: 259–260, van Soldt 2000: 234–235 and 1991: 182–193.
   - *House of Rašap-abu* and *Literate's House*: Possibly distinct archives, but due to their proximity, these are sometimes connected. Boyes 2021: 130–133, del Olmo Lete 2018: 77–86, McGeough 2007: 249–251, van Soldt 2000: 231–232 and 1991: 160–165.

[318] For some discussions on the general problem of genre attribution, see e.g., Vita 2018; or comments of von Dassow 2015: 178–182 about similar problem in the Alalaḫ corpus.

[319] See Chapter *1.1.1 What I Talk about When I Talk about Religion*. What I Talk about When I Talk about Religion

and porous spectrum of phenomena that could be included in the analysis.[320] To simplify the issue, I have largely delimited the selection of the texts for this analysis to those that include references to 1) deities, 2) to cultic practices, 3) to clergy, and 4) to divination,[321] i.e., to realia, which are in the end revolving around the deities.

Nonetheless, even in this narrow conceptualisation of religion, the topic of texts opens yet another line of problems. For example, mythological or ritual texts would be recognised as religious without much ado. However, from the perspective of practice, these do not necessarily have to be intended as anything religious, sacred, holy, ritual, etc. The situation is quite well illustrated by the number of Akkadian and Sumerian texts intended for scribal education.[322]

While the previous paragraph may suggest that such a text is not "religious", I tend to understand the situation differently.[323] Although the primary purpose of these texts may be to learn cuneiform script and Akkadian or Sumerian, its contents are not irrelevant. For example, encounters with foreign traditions were significant for international contacts. Not only narratives or wisdom texts but also the lexical lists shaped the scribes' understanding of the world. Thanks to the shared cuneiform culture, deities could have been equated, compared, associated or at least known across distant lands.[324]

The same applies to Ugaritic texts. Some ritual texts,[325] incantations[326] or even myths[327] were identified as educational, too.[328] For example, *KTU* 1.96 from the *House of the Literary Tablets* is recognised as a scribal exercise because the tablet combines an incantation against the "evil eye" in Ugaritic on the obverse[329] and an extract of the logosyllabic "alphabet" on the reverse.

Although it seems not problematic to regard Mesopotamian myths as scribal exercises, it seems far more problematic to do that with local traditions. For example, *KTU* 1.133 from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* includes an excerpt from the *Baʿal Cycle*,[330] and part of the same myth is rendered in Akkadian on RS 94.2953 from the *House of Urtenu*.[331] This questions the assumption held by some scholars that only the *House of the High Priest* hosted the sacred texts – "*the Magna*

---

[320] For a summary of a broader discussion on this topic, see also Clemens 2001: 601–605. We will briefly return to the selection of the *Sources for Ugaritic Ritual and Sacrifice* below.

[321] This category is included even if no direct references to the previously mentioned realia are present. Divination was closely connected to the divine world and sacrificial practices, and it therefore fits this narrow definition. See Chapter *6.3 Divination.*

[322] For some studies on scribal education in the LBA world and Ugarit, see, e.g., Roche-Hawley 2015, Cohen 2013: 55–77, Hawley 2008, or van Soldt 2016b and 1995.

[323] This issue has already been addressed by some scholars; see, e.g., Delnero 2020: 20–31 for a discussion on "literary approaches" to the Mesopotamian religion.

[324] See the discussion in Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity.*

[325] *KTU* 1.74, 1.79, 1.80, 1.105, 1.123, 1.130.

[326] *KTU* 1.65, 1.96.

[327] *KTU* 1.45, 1.93, 1.133, 1.152 (or a list of temple personnel?).

[328] See *KTU*: 601, n. 1.

[329] For the discussion on this incantation, see e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014b: 129–156 with further references.

[330] *KTU* 1.5 I 11–21. The excerpt is not an exact copy. Del Olmo Lete 2018: 15 suggest it might have been dictated. According to Pardee 2002a, no. 57, this text is a *myth that explains a ritual practice.* While possibly true, I believe this is an undervaluation of the meanings that myths may provide. The discussions should not necessarily aim to limit the interpretation to one single explanation.

[331] This short excerpt of 14 lines includes the episode of the construction of the Baʿal's temple; see Arnaud 2007, no. 65.

Carta of the Ugaritian concept of gods and the Cosmos".[332] Quite interestingly, in the note to claim that "*… in no other Ugaritian archive have copies of these mythological texts turned up*", del Olmo Lete states the exception of *KTU* 1.133.[333]

What does this say about the mythological texts? Were they as sacred and restricted as del Olmo Lete suggests, or was their character made profane when used in the scribal curriculum? Were the copies part of the education, or were they copied for another purpose? Possibly, the two aspects of these texts are not mutually exclusive. The sacredness of a text may not necessarily forbid its profane use. Even as scribal exercises, we may consider them religious. The appearance of such texts in the scribal curriculum (and in any other activities) significantly contributed to the construction of the world of the scribes.

Similar may be the role of epics. We will discuss the role of royal epics at Ugarit below.[334] For now, it seems enough to point out that such text not only worked as a background for royal ideology but also as a source for creating such ideologies. They might have constructed a world where the practised royal ideology made sense.

In sum, in order to write and work with myths, ritual texts, incantations, etc., the scribes had to learn that. While a scribal exercise in itself did not have to be used as expected from the genre, it was very important for constructing the world where such genres could have been created and used as intended.

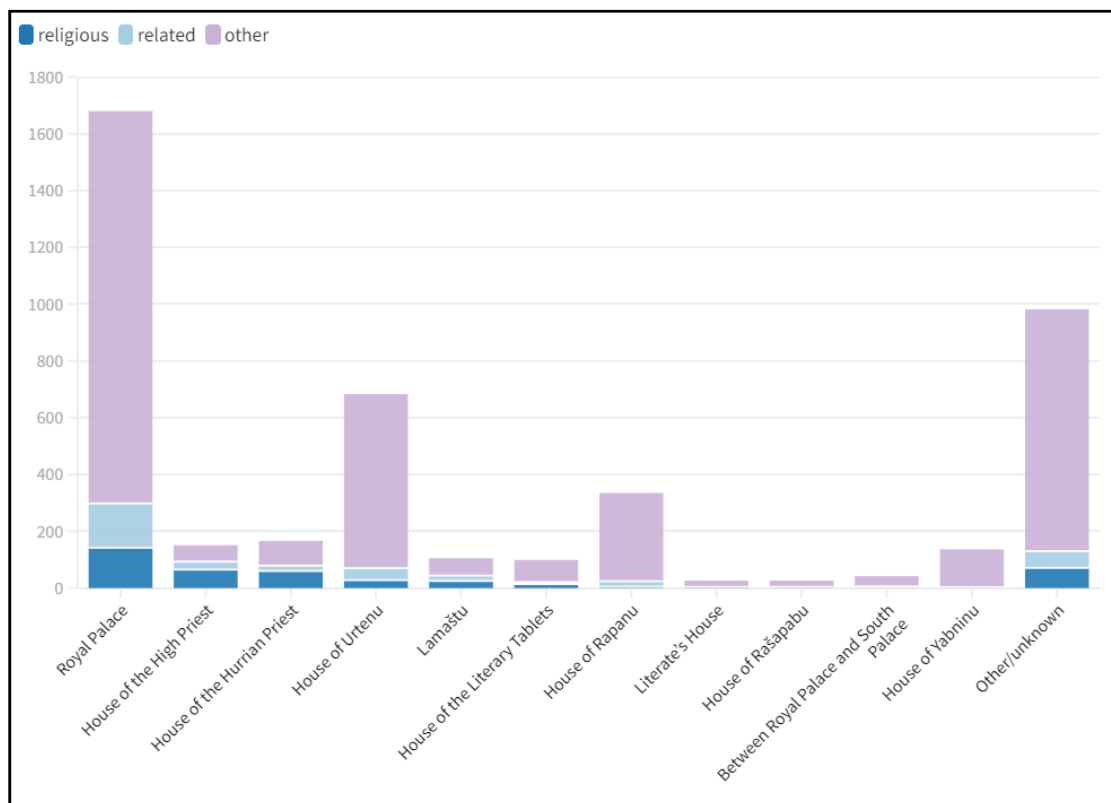*Figure 8* Proportion of religious and related texts in clusters, presenting "religious hubs".
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11970076/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

---

[332] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 14.
[333] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 15.
[334] See Chapter *7.3 Constructing Royal Ideology.*
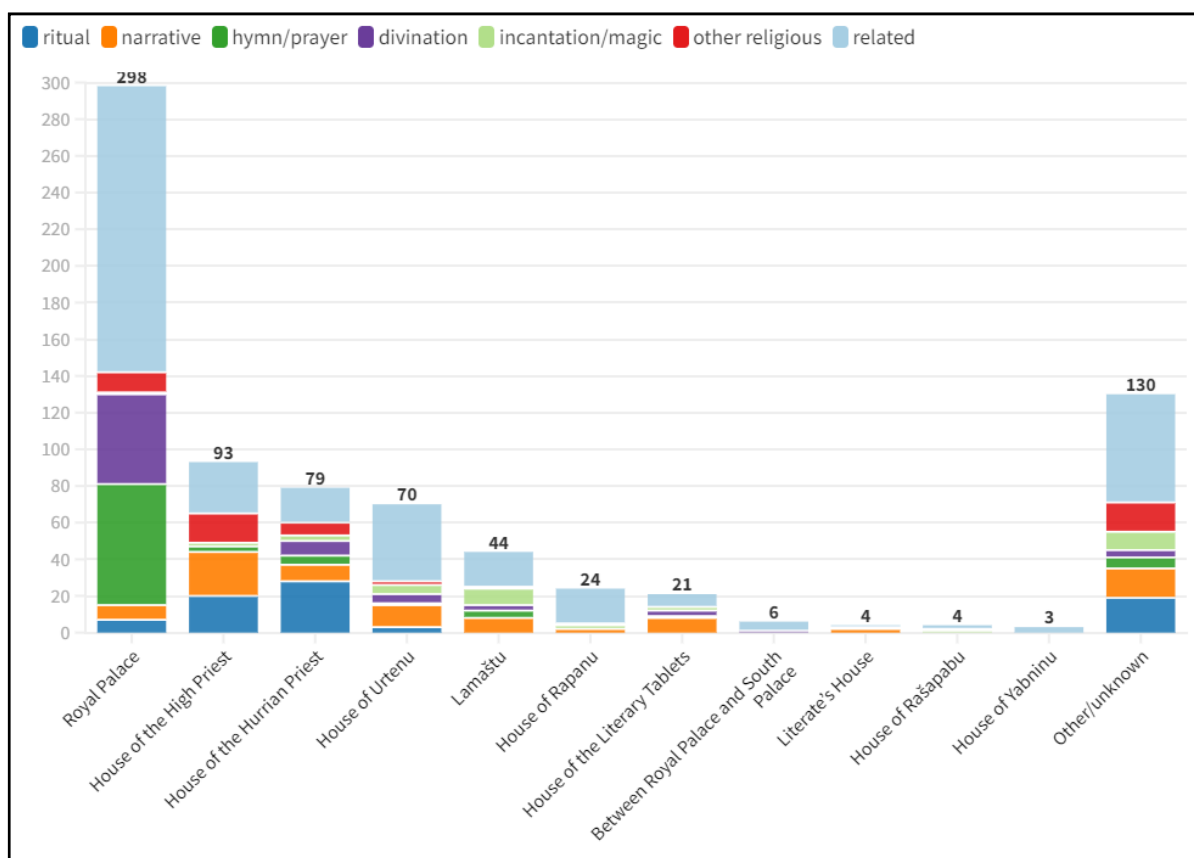
Figure 9 Distribution of "religious" genres in clusters.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/11970324/ [accessed 30ᵗʰ August 2023]

With all this in mind, the inclusion of texts into the category of religion is rather broad within this thesis. Fig. 9 shows the indicative distribution of relevant texts according to several categories: *ritual* (e.g., liturgical texts, lists of sacrifices or offerings, etc.);[335] *narrative* (e.g., myths, epics, but also wisdom texts), *hymn/prayer*; *divination* (e.g., divinatory compendia, but also inscribed models), *incantation/magic*,[336] *other religious* (e.g., votive or religious administrative texts), and *related*. The

---

[335] The nature of Ugaritic ritual texts is in general closer to administrative texts then to a description of ritual actions. For broader studies of Ugaritic ritual/liturgical texts and practices, see e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a, Pardee 2002a or *RSO XII*.
[336] Here, we may note the problematics of the magic and its relation to religion. Personally, I have always considered magic as a part of religion as I perceived it. I still do. But this approach is not shared by everyone. See, e.g., Versnel 1991. Another issue is the relation between magic and medicine. The general imagery of the past societies may be that healing practices were inherently connected with magic and religion. However, the evidence suggest that this may not actually be always the case. E.g., judging by the hippiatric texts (published in *RSO II*), deities are absent and it goes down mostly to herbal (?) medicine. Watson 2003b: 141–142 explicitly notes that these texts do not include magic. But there are also medical texts which make use of deities to support the effect. It is important to note that there are emic categories which may be connected to the sphere of magic, witchcraft, or sorcery. E.g., *mnt* is used to designate "incantation/spell", *kšp* is used to designate an evil "sorcerer" who by means of words causes harm; similar is the use of *dbb*; *mlḫš* is "conjuror/whisperer"; *ḥrš*, usually associated with manual craft, may be in some instances interpreted as a "spell" or as verb "to make an incantation". Nonetheless, we must be aware that the translations of these emic categories are heavily influenced by our own conceptions. The discussions on overlap between our and the emic categories are outside the scope of this comment. [note continues on the next page]

last category contains Akkadian and Ugaritic texts that are not "straightforwardly religious" but contain various references to religious realia at Ugarit[337] – for example, administrative texts including references to cultic personnel, letters mentioning deities, priests, rituals, or sacrifices, etc. These show the porous nature of religious activities, dispersing into the mundane world of administration, economy, or correspondence. One last note should be made before interpreting the graph. Across the categories, some texts are actually "religious with a question mark", i.e., texts that are too fragmentary to categorise with certainty. These add up to ca. 20 % of the presented corpus (not counting the *related* category). More detailed statistics for each cluster are given below.

The chart in fig. 8 serves to demonstrate the relative proportions of "religious texts" across the observed clusters. Not surprisingly, the highest proportion is in the houses designated as priestly. The very high number in the *Royal Palace* then shows that religion was an essential part of the official sphere. At the same time, the relatively low proportion of religious text to others (especially when not counting *related*) shows well that not everything was endowed with sacred awe, and most of the time, religion did not make it to the texts. Even in the houses attributed to clergy, not everything was about deities.

4.2.1.2   Religion in Languages
Before we delve into the discussion of individual clusters as "hubs of the religious life in writing", we should consider one last angle – the language characteristics of religious texts. In fig. 10, the data presented in the charts above (figs. 8 and 9) are classified according to language. The language distribution in this chart is consistent with the suggested role of languages. The use of Ugaritic and Hurrian languages suggests that religion was present "lively" in those clusters, while the prevalent use of Akkadian and multilingual texts indicates using religious texts mainly in the scholarly context. The

---

Yet another issue relevant to our dataset is the distinction between incantation, hymn, and prayer. In general, I would consider incantations when these may be interpreted as part of the magical practices in contrast to cultic. However, also due to the problems with classification of magic and religion, this is not an easy task. I have made some adjustments in contrast to *KTU*, e.g., I classify the Hurrian texts assigned as incantations as hymns instead. But the reader must be aware that these distinctions are subtle and heavily depend on the interpreter. Obviously, this is not a problem exclusively to these genres. As an illustration of the problem in scholarly community, see, e.g., overview of classifications of *KTU* 1.13, which includes following categorizations: myth, hymn, literary, prayer, ritual, cultic, ode, epic, or scribal exercise; see Clemens 2001: 1167–1168 with further references. I have succumbed to the classification of *KTU* in this case, counting it among the incantations. On this particular text and problems of its attribution, see also Stahl 2016: 266–268 or del Olmo Lete 2014b: 85–86.

Broader discussion on magic and medicine is not included in this thesis, despite it would make an interesting use case on the dispersion on religious realia into the life of the city. Rather, references to the practices which may belong to this category are dispersed throughout the thesis. For Ugaritic magic, see, e.g., contributions in Müller, Naumann & Salo 2022 or del Olmo Lete 2014b, for broader ANE contextualization, see, e.g., contributions in Abusch & van der Toorn 1999 and other volumes from series *Ancient Magic and Divination*.

[337] This category is based on Clemens's *Sources for Ugaritic Ritual and Sacrifice* (Clemens 2001), where he collected numerous texts that are relevant. I have moved some texts discussed by him directly to the more specific categories. The rest were left to the *related* category. There are some problems with this construction of the database. Some of the texts discussed by Clemens are only discussed because someone noted their religious character, but Clemens argues contra such interpretation. E.g., *KTU* 4.14, 4.257, or 4.481 to mention but few. Also, there are some texts that were unpublished at the time of the creation of Clemens 2001. These are consequently left out of his analysis or he references of those who had seen the original. I have tried to adjust the data where I have encountered flaws, but there may still be many errors, which are hopefully not very significant.
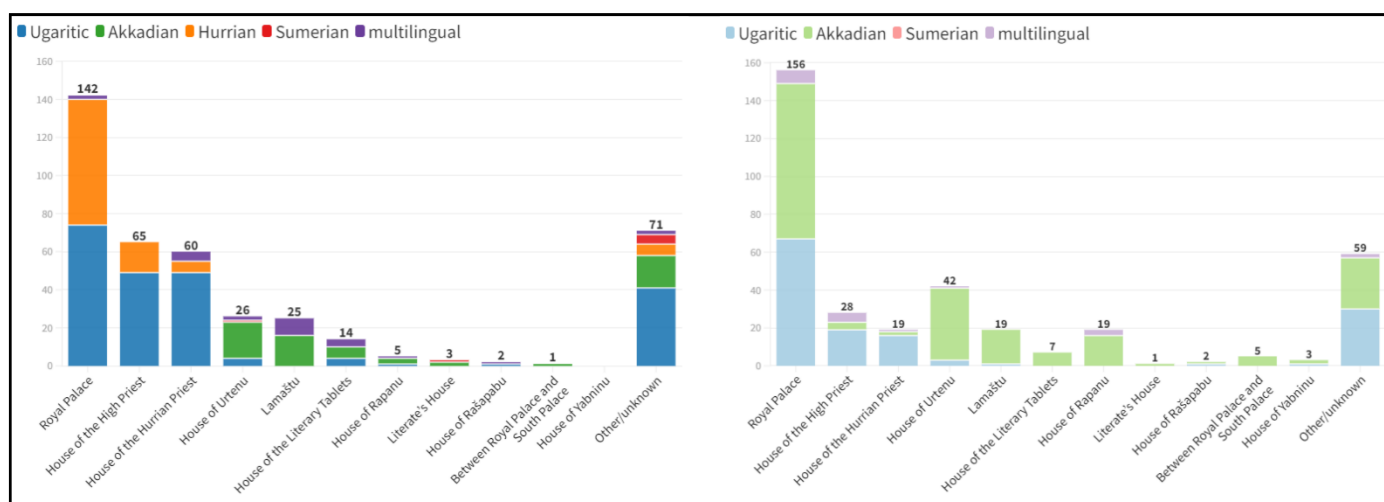
right part of the chart presents the language distribution in the category of *related* texts. It indicates primarily the international vs. local dimensions of each cluster. The use of Akkadian is connected mainly to international relations, while Ugaritic is used for local affairs (mainly interstate correspondence, economy, and administration).

An important bias of these statistics must be noted. I have not included the Egyptian materials in this analysis. The main reason for this is the role of the Egyptian language at Ugarit, indicating that objects inscribed with Egyptian were, from the local perspective, considered primarily as objects and only secondary as texts. This is also corroborated by their distribution at the tell, which does not significantly correlate with the other clusters – Egyptian texts were not archived in the manner as the texts in other languages. I have already argued elsewhere that the presence of Egyptian art at Ugarit was primarily a matter of prestige.[338] Nonetheless, this does not negate their relevance to religion. For example, scarabs and statuary often depict deities. There are clear indications that sometimes Egyptian religious realia were lived at Ugarit, too. This is best attested by the *Stela of Mami*, which shows how Baʿal of Ṣapan might have been venerated by the Egyptians in the Egyptian manner.[339] The discussion of the Egyptian material at Ugarit poses different questions than I am trying to discuss in this section. It is far more relevant to the discussion on texts as materials.

With the larger picture in mind, we can now have a more detailed look at several of the clusters. It will become apparent that even though the interpretations based on statistical overview are more or less valid, there may be some exceptions to the general rules.

4.2.1.3   Hubs of Religious Texts in the City

The statistics above have helped us to pinpoint several of the locations that are worth discussing as hubs or nodes of religious life in writing within the city. In the present section, we will discuss primarily the case of the *Royal Palace*, *House of the High Priest*, and *House of the Hurrian Priest*. These will be then briefly contrasted with the textual evidence from the temples as well as other clusters at Ugarit. Note that the three localities should not be regarded as the nodes of religious life

---

[338] Válek 2021: 54–57.
[339] RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183; fig. 29. See, e.g., Levy 2014, Válek 2021: 57–58.

in general but reveal only one of its modalities. For example, the presence of religious activities in the environment reveals a significantly different picture of the religious life in the city.[340]

4.2.1.3.1 ROYAL PALACE

By far, most of the texts at Ugarit have been unearthed in the *Royal Palace*. The structure that extends over nearly 7000 square meters[341] is further divided into a large number of clusters (fig. 11[342]). It seems that each of these clusters had a set of different roles and purposes that do not need to be discussed here.[343] In fig. 12, the distribution of religious genres within the palace is shown. From this perspective, the most relevant is the *Southwestern Archive* cluster.

Most texts discovered here belong to the genre of hymns praising deities. These are actually the Hurrian texts. These comprise the majority of Hurrian texts all over the city.[344] In contrast to other Hurrian texts in the city, these were written in logosyllabic cuneiform.[345] This raises an important question of whether the script, hand in hand with the location, suggests a difference in use. According to the palaeographic analysis of Ernst-Pradal,[346] there were at least five scribes who created these hymnic documents, and they were probably created at Ugarit by local scribes.[347] At the same time, the colophons of some of these musical texts suggest that they were authored by Hurrian composers.[348] This situation indicates they were intentionally copied for local purposes. The

Figure 11 Clusters of texts in the Royal Palace. Redrawn by author after Yon 2006: fig. 20.

colophons also note the tone in which the songs were to be performed.[349] This may further corroborate their practical character. Still, the crucial issue is the placement of these texts outside the easily detectable cultic context. In my opinion, it is problematic to argue that these texts were, for example, specifically part of the royal cults. These cults were dominantly organised from other

---

[340] See Chapter *5 Religion and the City Environs*.

[341] Yon 2006: 36.

[342] See, e.g., Boyes 2021, figs. 6.2–6.5 for more detailed dispersion of texts' findspots with further references to archaeological publications. We may also note that if the clusters from the palace are taken individually, the largest cluster from Ugarit is the *House of Urtēnu*.

[343] See especially discussions in McGeough 2007: 223–245 and Lackenbacher 2008.

[344] Whitt 1993: 238 suggests number of 65 Hurrian tablets in this archive, 63 it is according to my database. Because I do not have access to Whitt's dissertation (this is a secondary reference from McGeough 2007: 233), I cannot detect the difference.

[345] It is good to stress that beside the *Southwestern Archive*, and few other isolated finds in the Royal Palace, no logosyllabic Hurrian texts were found at Ugarit, except for multilingual lexical lists.

[346] Ernst-Pradal 2016.

[347] We know two of them by name, Ipšali and ʿAmmurāpi; see Ernst-Pradal 2016: 90–93 for summary.

[348] Ernst-Pradal 2016: 77–80. The names were, e.g., Urḫia, Puḫiya, Tapšiḫuni, or Ammiya.

[349] The most notable text in this regard is the famous *Hymn to Nikkal* which includes "notation"; RS 15.030 + 15.049 + 17.387 = *Ugaritica V*, h. 6 = *PRU III*: 334.

localities.[350] On the other hand, we may speculate that while the organization of the liturgy was organised by the clergy, the palace provided its own signers. Possibly, the few references to vocal activities in the royal cultic texts may be understood in this context and would further highlight the collaboration between the palace and temple institutions. The corpus of these Hurrian musical texts may be further contextualised with a number of Hurrian hymns written in alphabetical cuneiform from other clusters, as discussed below. The Hurrian element seems to have been particularly strong in regard to musical/vocal tradition.[351]
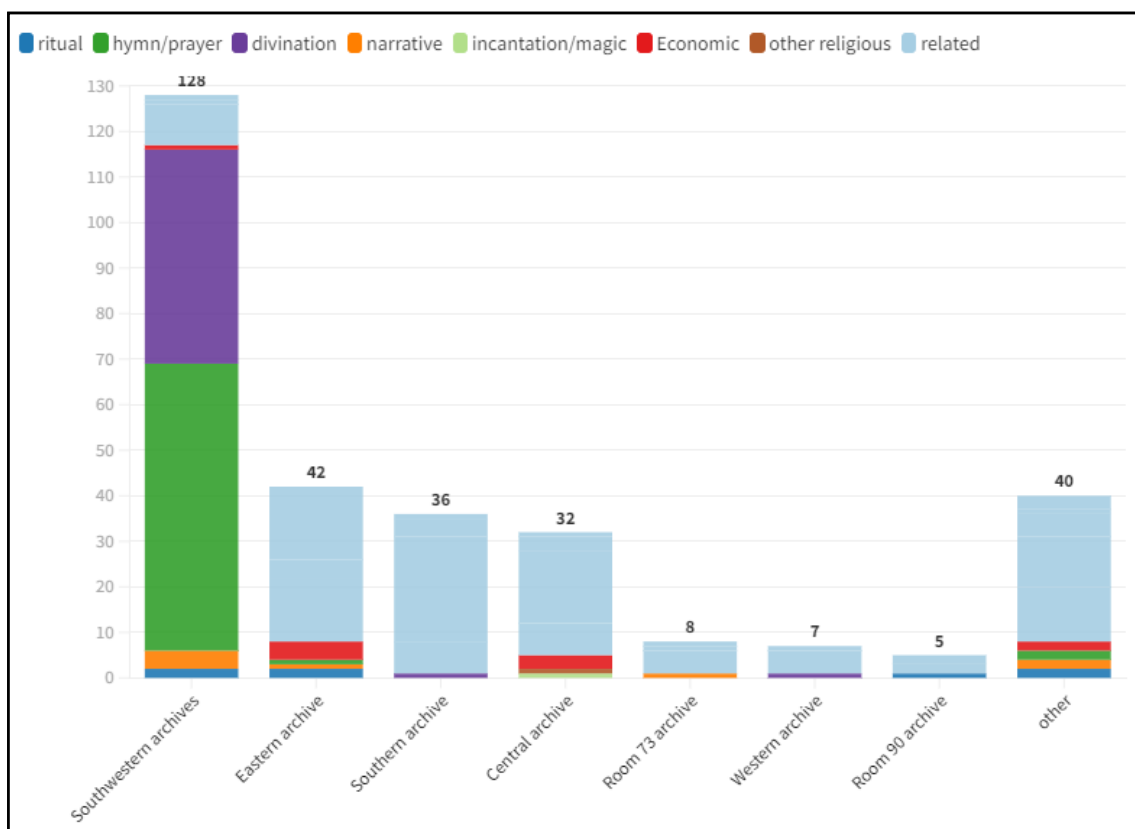
Figure 12 Distribution of religious genres in the *Royal Palace*.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/12002021/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

The second most attested texts in the *Southwestern archive* belong to the genre of divination. It is represented by inscribed divinatory models of livers.[352] In my opinion, they clearly indicate that divination was important for the royal court.[353] In contrast to the second largest hub of divinatory models from the *House of the Hurrian Priest*,[354] these were in ivory and not in clay. This probably indicates their higher value and more elite status.[355] Unfortunately, their state is very poor – the

---

[350] See Chapter *7.2.2 Divinatory Models.*
[351] See also Salvini 1995: 94–96.
[352] See Gachet & Pardee 2001 and Gachet 1995 for broader study on these objects.
[353] See the discussion in Chapter *7.2 State and DivinationState* and Divination
[354] See below.
[355] At least one of these objects was also covered with a golden foil. Gachet & Pardee 2001, no. 38.

models are heavily burned and damaged.[356] Note also that not every liver model in this archive has been inscribed; therefore, the full number of the model is, in fact, a bit higher, over 60.

Four possible narrative texts were discovered here, all in Ugaritic. The longest one (40 lines), *KTU* 1.92, contains a short narrative about a hunt of the goddess ʿAṯtarta.[357] The others (*KTU* 1.93, 1.94, and 1.95) are rather fragmentary, and their mythical character is questioned by *KTU* classification. *KTU* 1.93 could be a scribal exercise.

Only two ritual texts have been discovered in this cluster – *KTU* 1.90 and 1.91. Both rituals involve the king as an important participant. It should be noted that by these texts, the religious role of the king is not exhausted. Indeed, more texts that involve the king in religious activities have been discovered in the houses of the priests.[358]

Note, however, that the discussion provided by McGeough seems to paint a different picture for the *Southwestern Archive*.[359] He states that 121 economic texts add up to 74.6 % of the texts in this cluster,[360] and only 24 religious texts are counted. This is probably because the divinatory models are listed as "ivory" by van Soldt, and their actual number is lowered by a confused numbering of these objects. Still, even when considering the lowered number of religious texts in this cluster, these, by McGeough's analysis, comprise more than 60 % of religious texts in the palace.[361] With this interpretation, the economic importance in contrast to the religious one of this cluster is overstated.

Nonetheless, if the count of economic texts is 121, as McGeough and van Soldt suggest, their number is a bit larger than the number of religious texts in this cluster. Therefore, administrative practices were prevalent even in "the most religious cluster" in the Royal Palace. In the end, it is quite possible that the divinatory texts were stored also for administrative purposes and attest to the interconnectedness of various practices. Their location by no means indicates that the divinations were practised in the same place. At the same time, we may consider the possibility that the administrative record did not originally belong to the same collection as the hymnic or divinatory texts. While in the same cluster, the spatial proximity may be only a coincidence of collapse.[362]

The chart also draws our attention to the *Eastern Archive*, where – besides some letters and economic administration related (not only) to religious activities – two rituals,[363] one narrative and one hymn have been discovered. The ritual texts are fragmentary *KTU* 1.81, which seems to be a list of sacrifices for deities, and *KTU* 1.80, which may refer to rural sacrificial context, but no deities are named, only

---

[356] Gachet 1995: 245. In addition, some of the material has since its excavation disintegrated or got lost, other fragments were joined, etc. Therefore, the exact number may slightly differ.

[357] See e.g., Wyatt 2002b: 370–374, Dijkstra 1994, or Margalit 1989a. Interestingly, this tablet was signed by the scribe Ṭabʾilu on the first line; see Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 255; cf. Wyatt 2002b: 370, note 1.

[358] See Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults* and the discussion below on the houses of clergy as clusters.

[359] McGeough 2007: 234–235.

[360] With a reference to van Soldt 1991: 114–121.

[361] Van Soldt 1991: 140 counts only 40 religious texts in the *Royal Palace*. He counts separately the literary (2) and school (12) texts.

[362] See also McGeough 2007: 235.

[363] Some would argue to add *KTU* 4.275 to these statistics, but this seems improbable. See Clemens 2001: 413–417 or McGeough 2011: 143.

a slaughter of ewes. The context is not clearly religious, and it may also be a non-sacrificial slaughter of an animal.[364] These ritual texts may be complementary to the administrative records.

The narrative text is a bilingual edition of a wisdom composition in Akkadian and Hurrian.[365] The hymnic text is in Hurrian, and it could have well belonged to the larger corpus of such texts in the *Southwestern Archive*. This raises intriguing questions. What does it do here? Could it suggest that the hymns from the *Southwestern Archive* could circulate around the city, for example, for use in cultic activities? Why would such a text end up in a place that is at best connected with cults through its administration? Was it just a coincidence? For now, I have no answers to this.

Ritual texts seem to be dispersed over the palace, and no clear archives of ritual texts emerge. In sum, only seven ritual texts have been discovered in the palace. Two of these have already been mentioned in connection with the *Eastern Archives* and two with the *Southwestern Archives*. The last three were discovered in *Room 90* (*KTU* 1.84), *Court V* (*KTU* 1.87), and *Court I* (*KTU* 1.79[366]).

KTU 1.84 is an important ritual text generally interpreted as a ritual for calming down social frictions, and its variant versions have been discovered in the *House of the High Priest* (*KTU* 1.40) and the *House of the Hurrian Priest* (*KTU* 1.121 and 1.122).[367]

KTU 1.87 is a long text (61 lines) that includes a prescription for rituals enacted during the month *rišyn*, with a possible overlap to the following month. It is interesting to note that a text that is largely parallel has been discovered in the *House of the High Priest* (*KTU* 1.41).[368] These texts are further discussed in the chapter on royal involvement in local cults.[369]

As has been already mentioned, texts related to divination belong mostly to the *Southwestern archive* and are represented by liver models of ivory. In addition to these, only two other divinatory texts appeared in the palace. A possible list of dream omens *KTU* 1.86[370] has been found in the *Southern Archive*. *KTU* 1.78 from the *Western Archive* could be an astrological report.[371]

Narrative texts add up only to eight. Five have already been discussed above. The rest are unfortunately too fragmentary *KTU* 1.83 (*Room 73*), 1.88 (*Room 74*) and 1.89 (*Room 77*) for any reasonable discussion here.

---

[364] See e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 30, p. 119–120. *KTU* also suggests this may be a scribal exercise. Some connection with ritual activities is made probable by reference to the same person, Ṣitqānu, in *KTU* 1.79 that has been found in the *Court I* of the *Royal Palace*. This text mentions this person sacrificing to Rašap. See also Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*, where I argue for strong association of slaughter with the sacrificial and religious contexts.

[365] See Arnaud 2007, no. 46, p. 139–140.

[366] This text seems to be connected with rural ritual activities; it can be connected with *KTU* 1.80 mentioned above, as Ṣitqānu is mentioned here, too. See note 947, and Pardee 2002a, no. 30, p. 119–120.

[367] For the translation and basic discussion of this ritual, see e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 22, or Válek 2021: 60–61. See also Chapter *6.2 Cults and Community*.

[368] See Pardee 2002a no. 15 for both of these texts.

[369] Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults*.

[370] See e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 45. Cf. classification in *KTU* suggests: *myth?, ritual?, incantation?*. I incline to the interpretation of Pardee, but even he expresses some doubts.

[371] Pardee 2002a, no. 41. See Chapter *6.3.2 Astromancy, KTU 1.78, and the Question of Solar Eclipses at Ugarit*.

A few more texts are worth mentioning. The first is RS 15.152 – a bilingual Akkadian-Sumerian incantation from the *Central Archives*. This tablet is actually a duplicate of RS 17.155 from the *House of Rašapabu*. Two additional Hurrian hymns were discovered scattered in the Palace. These, together with the one from the *Western Archive* may further support the practical use of these hymns – this dispersion indicates some level of mobility.

In addition, several relevant texts could be counted in the *Royal Palace* cluster from the area *Between Royal Palace and House of Yabnīnu*. These are four letters and one legal text (all in Akkadian), discussed by Clemens 2001,[372] and one possible divinatory text classified by Arnaud.[373]

In sum, the *Royal Palace* includes many texts that relate to religion. However, this hub seems to be primarily genre-specific in Hurrian hymns, ivory divinatory models, and religious administration. Some references to religion are found in administration, letters, or legal texts.[374] The presence of other genres like rituals, narratives, or incantations is relatively poor in comparison with other hubs of religious writing, but also in contrast with the total number of texts within the palace. The situation suggests that the texts in the *Royal Palace* were primarily practically oriented. The economy, correspondence (both international and local), and divination practices were all necessary to run the state properly. In this respect, religion was something that had to be administered, but also something that provided services for the state. At the same time, the religious texts were clearly concentrated in one cluster (*Room 81* of the *Southwestern Archive*). This suggests that the hymns and divinatory models were regarded as something that could be perceived as belonging together. This may be taken into consideration when discussing the emic perspective on religious activities.

---

[372] Fragments RS 18.054 18.054A, 18.054B are all discussed as one text by Clemens, probably correctly; see Clemens 2001: 830–831. These letters refer to the "blasphemous incident in Sidon", see further short discussion in Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters*. Letter RS 18.089 only mentions deities (reconstructed) in the benediction. Legal RS 19.068 includes references to deities as guarantors of the document.

[373] See Arnaud 2007, no. 12. However, the location of this text may be doubted – according to Arnaud, the attached RS number is wrong (with reference to *PRU VI*, no. 188).

[374] The topics of administration and correspondence have been put aside in this chapter. For a broader discussion, see Chapters *6.5 Religion, Administration, and Economy*, *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities*, and *6.6 Religion and Letters*.

4.2.1.3.2 House of the High Priest

The name given to this structure suggests it is supposedly the most important building in regard to religious texts. Its position right next to the *Temple of Baʿal* and the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* underlines this status (see map in fig. 16). Even though the absolute number of religious texts from the *Royal Palace* is higher, this house provides us with a completely different picture. The genres present at the palace were relatively specific and narrowly oriented. The texts from the *House of the High Priest*, on the other hand, cover a wider variety of genres and reflect more the cultic life at the tell, as well as its religious-ideological background. The vast majority of texts discovered here were written in Ugaritic (over one hundred[375]), which indicates a focus on local practices. Apart from religious texts, letters and administrative texts are the best-attested types of documents. These indicate that the functioning of this building was not limited to the organization of cults or the creation of mythology but was lively interwoven with the life in the city on other levels, too. To the Ugaritic religious texts, we may also add sixteen texts in Hurrian, written in the alphabetical cuneiform. These relate exclusively to the cultic sphere, either as ritual texts or as the three hymns. The twenty-five texts in logosyllabic cuneiform belong mostly to the genre of lexical texts, attesting that access to scholarly knowledge was important to this cluster. Three of the logosyllabic texts are letters in Akkadian. The cluster also included one Cypro-Minoan text and five inscribed Egyptian scarabs.
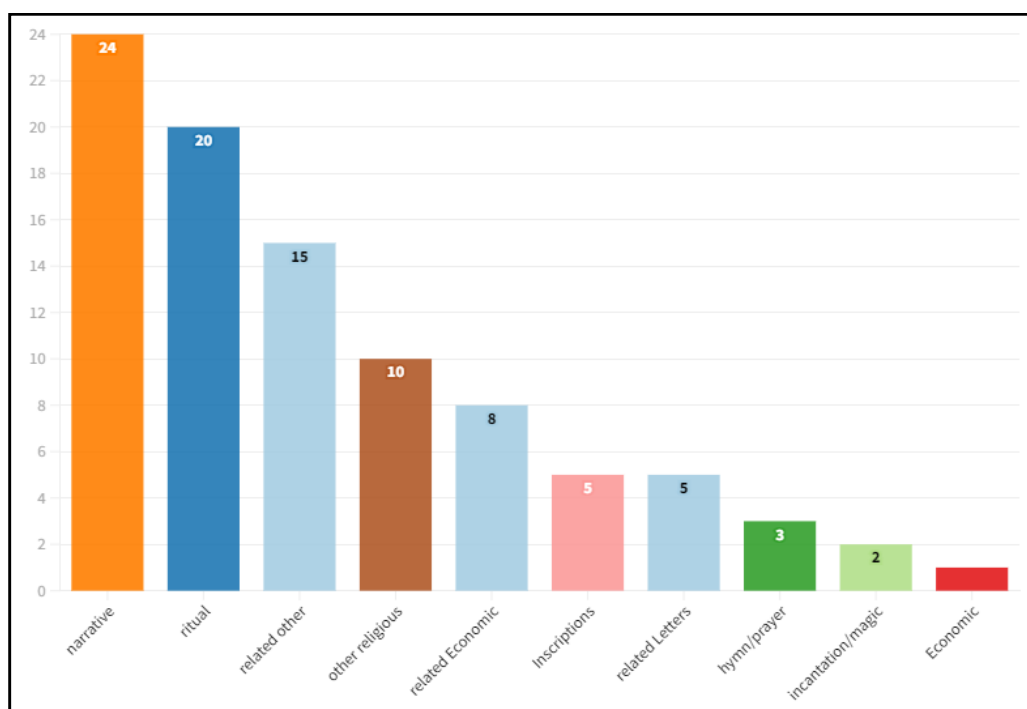
Figure 13 Distribution of religious genres in the *House of the High Priest*.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/12016243/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

---

[375] From this number, at least five objects should be subtracted if we would discuss this cluster as an archive. *KTU* 6.6–6.10 are inscriptions on depot objects, hidden under one of the thresholds in this building. See further below and Chapter *5.2.2.3 Depots*.

The prevalence of narratives and ritual texts in this cluster is clear. The narratives were probably the most explored and commented texts ever discovered at Ugarit. I do not intend to provide an analysis of Ugaritic mythology here or elsewhere in this thesis. Rather, these texts will be taken into consideration while analysing other topics. The exception is the royal narratives, which are discussed in in relation to the construction of royal ideology.[376] Nonetheless, a basic overview is in place.

The writing of most of the tablets containing literary compositions from this cluster is attributed to only one scribe, Ilimilku. The fact that the most important mythological and epic texts from Ugarit were probably written (and authored?) by only one person should not be taken lightly.[377] These compositions are: the *Baʿal Cycle*[378] on six tablets (*KTU* 1.1–1.6), the *Epic of* Aqhat[379] on three tablets (*KTU* 1.17–1.19) and the *Epic of Kirta*[380] also on three tablets (*KTU* 1.14–1.16[381]). These three compositions thus cover 12 tablets out of 24, i.e., half of the narrative texts from here and more than a half when considering the lengths of the texts.

The texts comprising the second half are: several still quite long mythological texts (*KTU* 1.20–1.22,[382] 1.23,[383] and 1.10[384]), several shorter mythological texts/fragments (1.11,[385] 1.12,[386] 1.45, 1.61, 1.62, and 1.63), plus *KTU* 2.2 (i.e., letter in *KTU* classification, but interpreted as a possible wisdom text by others[387]).

Regarding Ugaritic narrative traditions, the *House of the High Priest* is definitely the most important hub at Ugarit. We have already touched upon the question of the "sacred nature" of such texts within the Ugaritic symbolic system. This issue is a rather complicated one, and many different opinions exist – understanding the texts ranges anywhere from the works of literature to satire to ideology to sacred narratives. To be sure, there is no direct evidence of the practical use of the narrative texts, and all interpretations are based on further contexts and presuppositions. As noted above, in this thesis, I focus in greater detail only on the royal narratives.

---

[376] Chapter *7.3 Constructing Royal Ideology.*

[377] See further discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History.*

[378] For translations, see, e.g., M. Smith in Parker 1997: 81–176 or Wyatt 2002b: 39–146. See also M. Smith 1994 and Smith & Pitard 2009 for broader commentary on the first four tablets of this narrative. Note that the translations I am providing might have been updated since. Pardee 2009 made a joint of RS 3.364 (previously *KTU²* 1.8) with the broken beginning of the sixth column of *KTU* 1.3. This is already reflected in the third edition of *KTU*. While this joint did not add any particularly new contents to the epic (it includes a parallel passage), it renumbered the column lines. Therefore, some discrepancies in references may appear across discussions.

[379] For translations, see, e.g., Parker 1997: 49–80, or Wyatt 2002b: 246–312.

[380] For translations, see, e.g., Greenstein in Parker 1997: 9–48, or Wyatt 2002b: 196–243.

[381] *KTU* 1.14 has findspot as "surface" in *TEO*. However, its clear connection with the rest of this composition, as well as its year of discovery support its inclusion into this cluster.

[382] "*The Rapiūma*"; for translation, see e.g., Lewis in Parker 1997: 196–205, or Wyatt 2002b: 314–323.

[383] "*The (Birth of the) Gracious/Goodly Gods*"; for a translation see e.g., M. Smith 2006: 18–25, Lewis in Parker 1997: 205–214, or Wyatt 2002b: 324–334. For a more extensive study on this topic, see e.g., M. Smith 2006. This text is also an important contribution to the relationship of myth and ritual at Ugarit, as it seems to combine these two genres. Nonetheless, this text is in my opinion rather enigmatic and interpretations vary to such an extent I do not dare to contribute to the discussion.

[384] "*Baʿal Fathers a Bull*"; see e.g., Parker 1997: 181–186, or Wyatt 2002b: 155–160.

[385] "*A Birth*"; see e.g., Parker 1997: 186–187, or Wyatt 2002b: 161.

[386] "*The Wilderness*" or "*The Devourers*"; see e.g., Parker 1997: 188–191, or Wyatt 2002b: 162–168.

[387] E.g., Dijkstra 1999: 145.

The second most important category is ritual texts. These consist of simple lists of sacrifices but also of more complex ritual prescriptions both in Ugaritic[388] and Hurrian.[389] Because of their structure, some of these are sometimes very close to administrative texts. This issue is further addressed in Chapter *6.4Religion, Administration, and Economy*. Several very fragmentary texts in Ugaritic[390] and Hurrian[391] are also added up among ritual texts.

To these, we must add a few more ritual texts that deserve more of our attention. *KTU* 1.40 has already been mentioned in connection with *KTU* 1.84 from the *Royal Palace* and will be mentioned once again below in connection with *KTU* 1.121 and 1.122 from the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. All these are variant versions of a ritual aimed at calming social frictions at Ugarit.[392]

Several ritual texts are worth mentioning due to the royal involvement. For now, it seems enough to list these texts: *KTU* 1.43, 1.46, and possibly also 1.49, and underline that the dispersion of rituals concerning the king is limited neither to the *Royal Palace* nor to the *House of the High Priest*. Other texts informative about this topic were also found in the *House of the Hurrian Priest* or even at the *House of Urtenu*. This topic is further explored throughtout Chapter *7 Politics and Religion*.

The *related* categories, which comprise a large proportion of the texts plotted in the chart, include mainly unclassified texts from *KTU* category 7 or 1 in Ugaritic[393] and Hurrian.[394] In addition, several multilingual lexical lists[395] belong to these two categories.

Another significant category comprised of only five texts is *inscriptions*. This category belongs to a much larger collection of objects – a buried depot of bronze objects under the threshold of the house.[396] It was thanks to the five inscribed objects[397] that this house has been identified as belonging to the "high priest" (*rb khnm*, see fig. 14 and 28). One of the adzes includes even the name of the high priest: Ḫurṣana (*ḫrṣn*).[398] Interestingly enough, the title *rb khnm* is otherwise almost unknown from Ugarit. As far as I know, the title appears only in two alphabetical texts: *KTU* 2.4: 1 and 1.6: vi 56, both also discovered in the *House of the High Priest*. The first one is a letter addressed to the *high*

---

[388] *KTU* 1.27, 1.39, 1.41, 1.48, 1.50, 1.53, 1.56, 1.58, and 1.76. See e.g., discussion on some of these in Pardee 2002a.

[389] *KTU* 1.26, 1.42 and 1.60. Especially 1.42 is worth noting when exploring the Hurrian cults at Ugarit, as this is a fine example of a complex ritual in Hurrian, in this case of anointing deities; see Lam 2011 for a broader discussion.

[390] *KTU* 1.57 and 2.7 (once again, this is classified by *KTU* as a letter, but as a ritual by others; for references, see *KTU*).

[391] *KTU* 1.32+1.33; these probably belong together but are lister separately in *KTU*, so I keep the distinction in my statistics.

[392] See further comments in Chapter *6.2 Cults and Community*.

[393] *KTU* 1.37, 7.6, 7.9, 7.10, 7.33–7.35, 7.37–7.39, 7.41, and 7.44–49.

[394] *KTU* 1.35, 1.36, 1.52, 1.59, 1.64, 7.24, 7.40, and 7.42.

[395] RS 1.[059], 1.[065][A]+[B]+[C], 2.[013], 2.[017]+2.[020], 2.[017][A], 2.[017][B], and 3.318. There are also other lexical texts, which, however, do not refer to religious realia, as far as I can tell.

[396] The depot included a number of axes, hoes, adzes, sickles, lance tips, swords, daggers, arrow tips, and one decorated tripod. In sum, there were 77 objects. See also Chapter *5.2.2.3 Depots.*

[397] Adzes *KTU* 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, and 6.10 and a hoe *KTU* 6.9.

[398] At first, it has been suggested that this lexeme stands for "axe" according to cognates in Akkadian or Hebrew, see *Ugaritica III*: 269. However, the possibility of this being the name have already been suggested there, too. The second possibility was later more or less confirmed by several logosyllabic texts, where this name appears (for references, see *DUL*: 402–403). See also Watson 1990a: 119, 1990b: 245–246, and 2003: 246 for other etymological possibilities, variants, and attestations of this name. See also the discussion and references in Clemens 2001: 489–491.

priest.[399] The second occurrence is in the colophon of the *Baʿal Cycle*, where Attēnu, the master of Ilimilku, is described as *prln rb khmn rb nqdm*, "the diviner, high priest, chief herdsman".[400] In addition, this office is possibly referred to in two logosyllabic texts.[401] As Clemens notes, very little is known to us about this office,[402] but it must have been rather important.[403] Unfortunately, even though we know at least two *high priests* by name, we know next to nothing about their competencies.

Figure 14 RS 1.[053] = AO 11612; hoe from the depot of the *House of the High Priest* inscribed with *rb khnm*.
Source: © 2021 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Mathieu Rabeau;
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010136330# [accessed 29th August 2023].

The chart also directs our attention to the genre of incantations and magical texts. The two texts[404] attributed to this genre in this cluster are, unfortunately, very complicated, and their interpretation is highly insecure. Therefore, in this case, the genre should be taken with great caution, and no further interpretations are suggested here.[405]

---

[399] This text is further briefly addressed in Chapters *6.6 Religion and Letters* and *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations*. See also Clemens 2001: 155–178.

[400] The connection of titles and names in this colophon is a subject of debate. I follow the interpretation of Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 247–249; see discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History*.

[401] ᴸᵁ́PA SANGA appears in RS 16.186: 13 (*PRU III*: 168). This may be interpreted as "overseer of the priest(s?)" and consequently as possible equivalent to *rb khnm*. The second text is RS 17.428 (*PRU VI*, no. 9) which is unfortunately a bit insecure; see also Heltzer 1982: 135–136.

[402] Clemens 2001: 156. In n. 49, Clemens provides an extensive list of bibliographical references. For broader discussion, see Clemens 2001: 155–178. The interpretation of this text vary greatly.

[403] *KTU* reconstructs the king as the sender of *KTU* 2.4. According to del Olmo Lete 2018: 23, the king addresses *rb khmn* as his brother – a salutation reserved for people of equal rank. However, there are some problems to this interpretation. First, this expression appears only later in the body of the text and not in the address. More, the king as the sender is reconstructed. I personally doubt that the king would address even *rb khnm* as an equal. On the other hand, if the sender is truly king, the high position of *rb khnm* is indicated already by the fact that the sender opens the letter with a relatively rich benediction. Usually, the royalty did not include such benedictions when writing to their subordinates; see discussion in Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters*.

[404] Ugaritic: *KTU* 1.13 and 1.65.

[405] See also note 336.

Noticeable is also the number of letters and economic texts which relate to religion. In the context of such a priestly structure, this should not surprise us. We should not forget that cultic and other activities we tend to connect with clergy were integral to the official administration. Therefore, the bureaucracy and correspondence with the rest of the officials did not escape the priestly class.[406]

In contrast with the *Royal Palace* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest*, there is also a grave lack of divinatory texts. Just like with the legal documents, it is possible that divination practices were not the responsibility of the clergy residing in this house. Or, the divinations might have been carried in the context of sacrifices at the temples, but their results could have been stored elsewhere, e.g., in the *Royal Palace* or the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.[407]

The *House of the High Priest* is spatially quite extensive, which further underlines its importance. Therefore, a more detailed analysis of the findspots would help us understand the inner clustering of the texts. Unfortunately, as Boyes notes: "*the archaeology of this structure and the findspots of specific tablets are not well recorded even by the standards of the site.*"[408] The data at my disposal seem to suggest that the genres were indeed distributed across different findspots, and no clear pattern emerged.[409]

4.2.1.3.3   HOUSE OF THE HURRIAN PRIEST[410]

I have already noted the issues with the designation of this cluster at the beginning of this chapter. The presence of Hurrian texts in this archive veiled that it may not be as significant as one might have thought by the name assigned to the structure. Still, I choose to keep this reference for the sake of tradition, but the notion should be slightly modified. In my opinion, there is no reason to believe that a Hurrian priest *per se* dwelled in this house.[411] By the same logic, we could claim that he was present in the *House of the High Priest* or in the *Royal Palace* because these yielded numerous Hurrian texts. Actually, neither the proportion of the Hurrian texts nor their absolute number is not as high as in the *House of the High Priest*.[412] At the same time, more texts have been unearthed here, in one room, than in the whole house of the supposed foreman of the priestly class. The notion of a Hurrian

---

[406] See some notes on this issue in Chapters *6.6 Religion and Letters* and *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[407] See Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

[408] Boyes 2021: 128.

[409] Still, from the figure that Boyes provides (2021: 129, fig 6.6), three inner clusters seem to be present in this house. Possibly more detailed analysis and consultation with excavation diaries and archaeological maps could be helpful. But the topographic points suggest that even the *Baʿal Cycle* was dispersed across the site.

[410] Cluster named *House of the Hurrian Priest* in this section refers to finds from the *Room 10* (and also few texts from *Room 11*, in/on tomb) of the building in *Southern Acropolis*. The associated clusters, namely the *Lamaštu Archive* and text dispersed in vicinity, possibly belonging to the same building are discussed separately at the end of this section. Consequently, the house as such may be sometimes designated as the *House of Agaptarri*. This designation is based on an inscribed vase in a shape of a lion's head mentioning *bn ảgptr*, "the son of Agaptarri"; RS 25.318, *KTU* 6.62. According to the inscription, this vase was an offering to Rašap; see, e.g., Yon 2006: 148–149. Among other designations of either the whole building or the *Room 10* of it, following may be also encountered: *House of the Priest Containing Inscribed Liver and Lung Models* (*Maison du Prêtre aux Modèles de Foies et de Poumon Inscrits*), *House and the Library of a Hurrian Priest* (*Maison et Bibliothèque d'un Prêtre Hourrite*), or *House of the Magician-Priest* (*Maison du Prêtre Magicien*).

[411] Cf. del Olmo Lete 2018: 46: "*... to find Hurrian cultic texts in the workshop and archive of a Hurrian magician-priest needs no further justification.*" This is in my opinion a clear case of circular argumentation. To notion of a *magician-priest* is further problematized below.

[412] Sixteen in the *House of the High Priest* contra eleven in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*, including the multilingual.

living here warns us about the difficulties of identity, which we often tend to base on an anachronistic category of ethnicity.
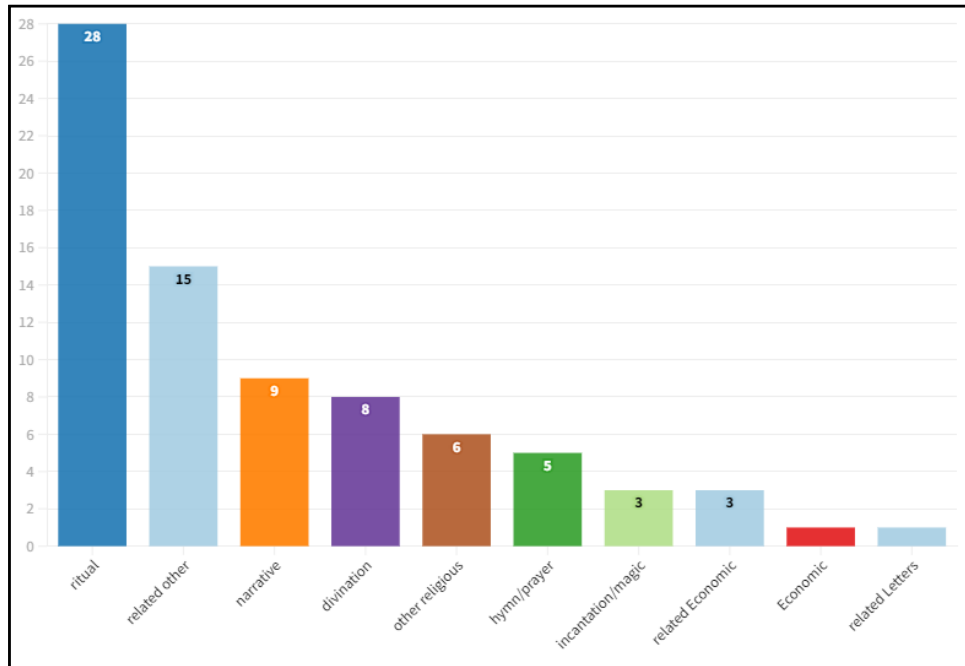
Figure 15 Distribution of religious genres in the House of the High Priest.
For the interactive version, see https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/12020218/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

Similarly to the *House of the High Priest*, the *House of the Hurrian Priest* is clearly dominated by texts in Ugaritic – over 130 objects. The Hurrian is running far behind the vernacular – only eleven texts may be attributed to this language, and five of them combine Hurrian with Ugaritic.[413] The position of Akkadian in this cluster is hard to discuss. According to *RSTI*, there are twelve texts in Akkadian. However, at least three of these texts may be, in fact, in Ugaritic, as they are also listed in *KTU*.[414] Since these include only a trace of signs, their informative potential is limited either way. From the remaining nine texts, one may be a lexical list implying multiple languages.[415] In general, as far as I can tell, no solid references for the logosyllabic texts from this cluster are available. Even those texts commented on by Clemens are always seen as uncertain.[416] From what was recognisable, it may be provisionally suggested that these pertain to (international?) correspondence, scholarly knowledge, or administration.[417] Possibly, the presence of the logosyllabic texts at this place may be better

---

[413] Hurrian: *KTU* 1.120, 1.125, 1.128, 1.131, 1.135, and 1.149; Hurrian-Ugaritic: *KTU* 1.110, 1.111, 1.116, 1.132, and 1.148.

[414] RS 28.054[K]–[M] = *KTU* 8.18–8.20.

[415] RS 28.058+24.[663]. See van Soldt 1991: 658. I provisionally classify it as Sumerian-Akkadian, combining the attribution of *RSTI* and van Soldt.

[416] RS 24.229 (administrative), RS 24.657 (letter), RS 28.058+24.[663] (lexical?). See Clemens 2001: 935–936 and 995. The consideration of these as pertaining to ritual and sacrifice is based primarily on their findspot in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. It is then curious why the additional possible letter and administrative tablets were not included, too.

[417] Presumably RS 24.273 and 24.657 (letters), RS 24.290 and 24.299 (administrative?), and the RS 28.058+24.[663] (lexical?).

explained as interconnection with the neighbouring cluster of *Lamaštu Archive*, which possibly belonged to the same building.[418]

When ignoring the logosyllabic corpus, there seems to be a clear focus of this cluster on religion. Even though many alphabetical texts are beyond reasonable recognition,[419] a vast majority of those readable belong to the categories delimited here as primarily religious. Two texts belong to the category of scribal exercises, and twelve may be classified as economic/administrative texts, of which at least four are/may be somehow related to the cultic activities.[420]

Contra intuitively, the number of ritual texts[421] in this cluster is higher than in the *House of the High Priest*. This may be only a coincidence, as 20:27 is not necessarily a grave difference, especially considering the dubious attribution of few of these.[422] Similarly to the case of the ritual texts from the *Acropolis*, some of the ritual texts are simple lists of sacrifices, while others are more complex.

Of these, several texts are worth noting in particular. As noted above two times already, this house yielded *KTU* 1.121 and 1.122, variant versions of *KTU* 1.40/1.84, the ritual of social appeasement.[423] Unfortunately, these two pieces are very fragmentary. *KTU* 1.111 is a Ugaritic-Hurrian text which describes a three-day ritual, probably concluded by a *hierogamos*/betrothal rite between deities ʿAṯtaru-Šadi and Ibbu.[424] However, what is more relevant in the overall context of this thesis is the involvement of the king in this rite. The connection of this cluster to royal rites[425] is further highlighted by the last ritual(?) text to mention: *KTU* 1.113. This tablet is inscribed with a rather enigmatic ritual text on the obverse and a list of royal names on the reverse. The most puzzling feature of the reverse is that royal names are preceded with *il*, "deity", which invites numerous questions with even more interpretations. In addition, Akkadian variants of this list have been discovered in the *House of Urtenu*.[426] As has already been mentioned above, the royal cults were dispersed over several locations in the city. These topics are further discussed in Chapters *7.1 Kings and Cults* and *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

Next, we can turn to the topic of divination that has already been announced in connection with the *Royal Palace*. Because this will be discussed in detail in Chapter *6.3 Divination*, we can only briefly

---

[418] See below.

[419] In sum, 78 unclassified or illegible texts in alphabetical cuneiform belong to this cluster. For eighteen of these, possible relevance for religion has been discussed in Clemens 2001. *KTU* 4.728, 4.734, 4.736, 4.815 (*KTU²* 7.140), 7.133, 7.134, 7.135, 7.136, 7.137, 7.138, 7.147, 7.162, 7.177, 7.201, 7.202, 7.203, 7.204, 7.205.

[420] *KTU* 4.728, 4.734, 4.736, and 4.815. See Clemens 2001: 456–464 and 557–559. Some of these texts are further discussed in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[421] Ugaritic: *KTU* 1.104, 1.105, 1.106, 1.109, 1.112, 1.113, 1.115, 1.119, 1.121, 1.122, 1.126, 1.130, 1.134, 1.136, 1.137, 1.138, 1.139, 1.147, 1.153, and 1.156;
Hurrian: 1.111, 1.125 and 1.135;
Ugaritic-Hurrian: 1.110, 1.116, 1.132, and 1.148.

[422] *KTU* 1.113, 1.137, 1.147, 1.153, and 1.156.

[423] See further comments in Chapter *6.2 Cults and Community*.

[424] See e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 26 for a translation and commentary.

[425] Relevance to various aspects of royal cults from this archive may be seen in rituals *KTU* 1.105, 1.106, 1.109, 1.111, 1.112, 1.115, 1.119, 1.126, 1.132, 1.139, and 1.148; hymn *KTU* 1.108; deity list *KTU* 1.118; and *KTU* 1.113 which combines list of deified(?) kings with a poorly understood ritual(?) section. See discussions in Chapters *7.1 Kings and Cults* and *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[426] RS 88.2012, 94.2501, 94.2518, and 94.2518. See Arnaud 1998 and Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

outline the sources pertaining to these activities: Five inscribed clay divinatory models of livers[427] and one model of lung;[428] one relatively long and one very fragmentary collection of omens related to divination from malformed foetuses;[429] and one text is even regarded as necromantic by some.[430] Still, the textual focus overshadows the importance of the divinatory models, as there are seventeen more liver models that are not inscribed. As has been already mentioned, the presence of these divinatory models is base for an alternative designation of this structure, *House of the Priest Containing Inscribed Liver and Lung Models* (*Maison du Prêtre aux Modèles de Foies et de Poumon Inscrits*).

The next category that the chart presents as well represented is narratives. Unfortunately, six of these are so fragmentary that counting them in this category is a rather risky business.[431] The other three include an excerpt of the *Baʿal Cycle*[432] that has already been mentioned as a possible issue in the construction of the absolute sacredness of this composition because it might have also been used as a scribal exercise in this context.[433] Another mythological text is *KTU* 1.117, which may actually be partially parallel to the *Baʿal Cycle*, too.[434] The last text from this category, and at the same time the best preserved one, is a narrative about the solar deity Šapaš and a Mare bitten by a snake.[435] This is usually interpreted as an incantation against snakes, and thus, this text may be consequently perceived as connected with another category – incantations and magic-medicine texts. This gave the structure yet another name, the *House of the Magician-Priest* (*Maison du Prêtre Magicien*).[436] We have already mentioned above that these genres, together with hymns and prayers, may often be

---

[427] *KTU* 1.141–1.144 and 1.155; see, e.g., Pardee 2002a, nos. 35–39.

[428] *KTU* 1.127; see, e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 40.

[429] *KTU* 1.103+1.145 and 1.140, see e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 42 and 43.

[430] *KTU* 1.124; see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 261–265. Cf. Pardee 2002a: 170–172, who is not so keen to accept this theory, and with whom I agree. This text once again draws our attention to the issue of classification. Because a "consultation" with ancestor figure Ditānu is present here, del Olmo Lete takes it in a necromantic character. However, I would not perceive Ditānu as ancestry in a sense of dead corpse or spirit of the dead (which I associate with necromancy), he seems to be somewhere in between the deities and the dead. Pardee, on the other hand, accentuates more the healing practices reflected in this text and classifies it as *historiola*. The categories are getting blurred once again, and arguments may be easily given to count this tablet among divinatory, magical, and medical. In addition, these activities are also set within ritual practice. All of these are categories are connected and overlapping. In the end, I count it among the magico-medic category, because I see healing as the primary purpose of this tablet.

[431] *KTU* 1.129, 1.151, 1.157, 1.158, 7.134, and 1.152 (this one may well be rather a list of cultic personnel or a scribal exercise). In addition, *KTU* 1.147 mentioned above the ritual texts may be a myth, too. Unfortunately, the fragmentary nature of it does not allow proper distinction.

[432] *KTU* 1.133.

[433] This does not negate other possible uses and roles of either the composition or the particular tablet itself. For example, we may note that Pardee 2002a: 211–213 understands it as a myth that explains ritual practice. Even if the understanding of this text as materialization of the scribal education process, it does not strictly separate the text from practice. Scribal education was in many ways practically oriented. More so in the context of possible education within the dominantly cultic context.

[434] See comment in *KTU*: 136. Lines 2–7 are compared with *KTU* 1.4 IV: 45–55, but with several problems. In addition, horizontal lines are dividing individual lines of the text. For now, I leave speculations on this text aside. They may be similar to the previous note on *KTU* 1.133.

[435] *KTU* 1.100; For translations, see, e.g., Parker 1997: 219–223 or Wyatt 2002b: 378–387.

[436] Here, the reader should also note that divination is by some also considered a magical practice, so this name may refer to divinatory practices, too. See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2018: 38, where he designates the divinatory models as "magical apparatus". In addition, this name is also based on association with the *Lamaštu Archive* that included, among other, Mesopotamian incantations.

hardly separated. *KTU* 1.107 is interpreted as an incantation against snakebites, too.[437] Next, *KTU* 1.114 is a well-known text. It is also a combination of mythology and magic-medicine, this time supposedly used as a remedy for excessive intoxication – the motif that made this text famous.[438] Several hymns and prayers are also part of this cluster. Two hymns from this cluster have been written in Hurrian, once again strengthening the role of Hurrian as a poetic/musical component of local rituals.[439] The last two texts mentioned here are a hymn extolling enthroned Baʿal[440] and a hymn/prayer to Rapiu.[441]

One interesting excavation context must be mentioned. While we have discussed this cluster as belonging to one room, there seems to be a particular feature. About twenty texts have been discovered buried under the floor level in a "pit". These include various genres: divinatory (four of the five inscribed liver models[442] and teratological omens[443]), ritual texts,[444] narratives[445] and hymns/incantations,[446] but also an administrative tablet,[447] a list of deities,[448] and two texts in Akkadian.[449] In addition, other uninscribed objects were interred there, including numerous uninscribed liver models.

What was the purpose of an interment of these texts? Del Olmo Lete[450] suggests that these texts (and other objects) were interred because of their "magical contamination" after use or because their "magical power" was exhausted, and therefore, they must have been buried. About the administrative records found here, he speculates that these represented the list of those for whom a divination was made, but they could not afford a personally inscribed model.[451] Also, the difference between inscribed and uninscribed models is interpreted by him as reflecting the value paid for their creation.[452] Because the pit covers varied genres and languages,[453] I find these suggestions improbable yet inspiring. We will briefly return to this issue in Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

---

[437] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014b: 157–164.

[438] See e.g., translation by T. Lewis in Parker 1997: 193–196. This text is also an important source for study of the institution of *marziḥu*, see further discussion in Chapter *6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities*.

[439] *KTU* 1.128 and 1.131. See above on the corpus of Hurrian musical texts from the *Royal Palace*.

[440] *KTU* 1.101; see e.g., Wyatt 2002b: 388–390.

[441] *KTU* 1.108; see e.g., Wyatt 2002b: 395–398. On the category of Rapiūma, see further Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs* and *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[442] *KTU* 1.141–1.144.

[443] *KTU* 1.103+1.145.

[444] *KTU* 1.105, 1.106, 1.109, 1.125, and 1.134.

[445] *KTU* 1.117 and 1.134.

[446] *KTU* 1.101, 1.107, and 1.128.

[447] *KTU* 4.728, possibly to be understood as a record of persons who did not deliver oil (for sacrifices?); see further discussion in Chapters *6.3 Divination* and *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*. Del Olmo Lete 2018: 44 also adds 4.727 to the pit. Indeed, it has the same topographic point (3743) as some other objects from the pit, and even the find depth would correspond. Still, neither *TEO* nor *RSTI* place it there. Once again, we face the problem of ʹproblematic archaeological record.

[448] *KTU* 1.118.

[449] RS 24.273 and 24.290.

[450] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 33.

[451] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 44.

[452] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 38.

[453] Contra del Olmo Lete's claim (2018: 46), there are also Hurrian texts in the pit according to *TEO*/*RSTI* (*KTU* 1.125 and 1.128).

The cluster of *Room 10* of the *House of the Hurrian Priest* is often taken as a part of a larger building (complex) connected to the *House of Agapṯarri* and the *Lamaštu Archive*.[454] If this interpretation is correct – and I am convinced it is – it would mean that the writing within this house has been spatially distributed with some intention. The distinction is already visible in the language distribution of Akkadian and multilingual texts in the *Lamaštu Archive* and Ugaritic/Hurrian in *Room 10/ House of the Hurrian Priest* (see fig. 5 above). It has been suggested that this divides the area into a "cultic practice" and a "scribal school".[455] This distinction may be problematised. For several of the Ugaritic texts from *Room 10,* interpretation as scribal exercises was suggested, too, including the above-mentioned excerpt of the *Baʿal Cycle*.[456] Nonetheless, this could also be understood as an education connected to the Ugaritic tradition, focused on religion. Personally, I am rather reserved to the interpretation of these as school texts, and there may be other than functional alternatives on how to see the division of this house. For example, it may be perceived in the context of family inheritance, resulting in separate yet interconnected households.[457] The functional distinction remains clear from both clusters. Whether both clusters were owned/operated jointly by one person for different purposes or separately by different persons (even if brothers or other relatives) is now impossible to ascertain.

Many of the texts from the Lamaštu Archive may be understood as religious, too – incantations, hymns, literary texts, as well as divinatory compendia. It seems to me that the general opinion favours the interpretation of these documents as distinctly set in the context of scribal education. While I generally agree with the school nature of this cluster, we should not forget that the schooling formed the students. In my opinion, many of the learned activities were transferable to practice, not only in the ability to write. The education significantly contributed to the construction of the social reality of the scribes. I address this issue on several occasions in this thesis, for example, in the possibility of "constant awareness" to ominous signs observed even by those who did not directly practice divination[458] or when discussing the royal narratives in the context of Assyrian royal epic – an excerpt of which was discovered in the *Lamaštu Archive*.[459] These texts influenced the religious reality at Ugarit, even if mostly in a more subtle and group-limited way than the Ugaritic texts, reflecting more widespread practice, possibly relevant for the broader population.

4.2.1.3.4   Texts and the Temples

While the two temples located at the *Acropolis*[460] (see map in fig. 16) were not counted among the most important clusters of texts within the city, their relation to religion is tautological. Therefore, it is important to mention the few texts discovered at these places. Some of these will be further contextualised within the next chapter, focusing more on the material situation.

---

[454] See e.g., del Olmo Lete 2018: 27–54, namely pp. 28–32, or McGeough 2007: 263. See also Yon 2006: 99–101, where the connection is slightly problematized. Therefore, a caution is at place.

[455] And a "private residence" in the *House of Agapṯarri*; e.g., del Olmo Lete 2018: 31.

[456] *KTU* 1.105, 1.123, 1.130, 1.133, and 1.152.

[457] See namely the discussion in Schloen 2001: 317–334. In this case, the building might have indeed been a *House of Agapṯarri*, whose son mentioned on the lion's head vessel occupied, together with his family, the northern part of the building. But this hypothesis is with the state of archaeological record impossible to prove.

[458] See namely Chapter *7.2 State and Divination.*

[459] RS 25.435 (Arnaud 2007, no. 36). See discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2.2 In the Contexts of Near Eastern Royal Epics?.*

[460] The most comprehensive study on these wo temples is *RSO XIX* by Callot.

Temple o Baʿal

Eight objects bearing writing were discovered in the area where the *Temple of Baʿal* once stood. Five of these are in Egyptian, and three are in logosyllabic script.

Apart from a possible lexical list,[461] the logosyllabic texts include an Akkadian letter[462] about a debtor-refugee. While the text mentions a benediction, "*May the Storm-God protect your life*", its context is hard to connect with its location at the temple precinct of this deity. We cannot be sure if it has been placed there intentionally or by coincidence. Dating of this text to the reign of Niqmēpaʿ (presumably VI) suggests that it was written before the earthquake and, thus, before the construction of the new temple.[463] The third inscription in Akkadian has been made on a votive(?) statue.[464] However, it seems that it stratigraphically belongs outside of our timeframe. It has been suggested that it relates to a journey of Mariote king Zimrī-Lîm to Ugarit during the 18th century BCE.[465]

The Egyptian data may be divided into those that belong to our timeframe and those outside of it. The Statue of a Sphinx, bearing an inscription mentioning Amenemhet III, is both stratigraphically and historically belonging to the MBA.[466] This can possibly be connected with more finds of Middle Egyptian (MBA) statues, several of which have been mutilated.[467]

Regarding our timeframe, the most interesting object is the *Stela of Mami*.[468] This stela has already been mentioned several times, and it will again resurface. For now, it is enough to state that this stele is evidence suggesting that local cults were not inaccessible to foreigners living at Ugarit and that local deities might have been venerated in non-local practices. Next, a fragmentary statue[469] is dated to the reign of Ramesses II based on its style and thus fits our timeframe, too.[470] Unfortunately, I cannot find any more information on this one. For now, I have also not been able to find more data on the offering table[471] and stele bas relief.[472]

Temple/Terrace of Dagan

The *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* , contained only two inscribed objects, both stelae. These bear short inscriptions in Ugaritic, mentioning Dagan and *pgr*-sacrifices[473] – one by the queen Ṯarriyelli and the

---

[461] RS 27.054. See *TEO*: 329 or van Soldt 1991: 657.

[462] RS 4.449, See e.g., Hoftijzer & van Soldt 1991 for translation and Clemens 2001: 628–630 for further references.

[463] See Chapter *5.1.2 The Temple of Baʿal.*

[464] RS 4.458. Only a little fragment survives. See e.g., photo in *TEO*: 35 or online, Louvre Collections, *AO 25.162*, available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010149844 [accessed 18th August 2023]. See Clemens 2001: 630–631 for a brief discussion and further references.

[465] See e.g., Singer 1999: 618–619.

[466] RS 4.416. Interestingly, the Akkadian inscription (RS 4.458) and this Egyptian statue are said to be on the same kind of stone. See Singer 1999: 619, note 48 and Clemens 2001: 630–631. However, it seems that the relation of these two objects is not further inspected.

[467] *Ugaritica IV* 212–223. See also e.g., Singer 1999: 616, Yon 2006: 16–18, or Válek 2021: 56.

[468] RS 5.183+1.[089]+2.[033], fig. 29.

[469] RS 1.[090]

[470] See Louvre Collections*, AE 86865 and 86867*, available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010419229 [accessed 4th December 2022].

[471] RS 1.[091].

[472] RS 2.[034].

[473] Usually understood as mortuary sacrifices. This interpretation is based on comparative evidence (Mari), but the exact meaning of *pgr* as a type of sacrifices is far from certain at Ugarit; see, e.g., Pardee 1996: 281–282, 2002a: 123–125.

second by certain ʿUzzīnu. These texts demonstrate that the site has been in use after the temple collapsed during an earthquake.[474] Therefore, we can assume there has been some sacred precinct even though without a proper temple. In addition, these texts are the argument for identifying this structure as associated with Dagan.

4.2.1.3.5   RELIGIOUS TEXTS OUTSIDE THE MAIN HUBS

It has already been noted that the *House of the High Priest, House of the Hurrian Priest,* and *Royal Palace* may be, from the textual perspective, detected as the primary hubs of religion. However, it has also been mentioned that these, by far, do not exhaust the written character of religious practices at Ugarit. The religion in writing was dispersed throughout the city and was reflected in numerous types of texts. Some modalities are further explored in Chapter *6 Religion in the Life of the City*, where we focus on religion as reflected in administration, legal activities, or correspondence. Here, we will continue with the focus on texts more directly connected with religious practices – rituals, myths, hymns, prayers, divinatory texts, etc. For now, we will limit ourselves almost exclusively to the Ugaritic texts due to the focus on local practices. This discussion aims to provide a contrasting image to the main three hubs. The case of Akkadian and other languages is left aside in light of what has been stated above about the *Lamaštu Archive*.

Ritual and cult

Outside of the three hubs discussed above, ritual and cultic texts are virtually absent from the city. This indicates that the interaction with deities was at some level (the temple/cultic/official) highly concentrated, and the organization/administration of it was limited to a selected group of individuals, presumably the clergy.

There are only a few exceptions to this rule. With a great deal of imagination, *KTU* 1.74 may be mentioned. Its fragmentary character makes its ritual character dubious. In addition, it has been discovered at the *Acropolis* in the vicinity of the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan*. Therefore, even if its attribution as a cultic text is correct, it does not fall far from the expected context.

KTU 1.177 is a fragmentary record of sacrifices. If its attribution to the *City Centre*[475] is correct, it cannot be connected with any larger cluster of texts nor with any cult lieu, and its findspot is striking. On the contrary, if it belongs to the *House of Urtēnu*, it becomes a part of one of the most important households at Ugarit. A very important and broadly discussed ritual text has been discovered there: *KTU* 1.161.[476] Here, we may mention a few details pertaining to the networks of religious hubs at Ugarit. This tablet is quite different from the majority of ritual texts that may be characterised as cultic, i.e., as aimed at the veneration of deities. It is usually understood as the ritual of a royal funeral and thus reflects another modality of ritual activities at Ugarit. Its placement in this cluster is highly intriguing. The connection of royal ideology is further supported by the presence of logosyllabic lists of the (deified) kings of Ugarit, similar to the above-discussed *KTU* 1.113 from the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. In addition, the data from the *House of Urtēnu* suggest a lively contact

---

[474] See Chapter *5.1.3 The Temple/Terrace of Dagan.*

[475] The location of this text raises some doubts, *TEO*: 361 indicates "Centre Ville", i.e., the *City Centre* as the findspot. However, it has been published in *RSO XIV* (no. 33) among the texts from the *House of Urtēnu*. Possibly, there has been some mix up about *City Centre* and *South Centre*, which is the part where the *House of Urtēnu* lies. All of the other texts excavated in the same year (1988) are attributed to the *South Centre*, which makes the interpretation of *RSO XIV* possible. I am not able to determine which of the placements is correct.

[476] The text is further discussed in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*, including further references.

with the royal family and elite of the city (including Ilimilku, the scribe/author of the local narratives), as well as with foreign lands, taking part in diplomacy and trade. A certain level of cooperation among the *House of Urtēnu* and the three main hubs is visible in the sources. In sum, cultic activities remain clearly limited to the three delimited hubs.[477] The royal funerary text and the "royal genealogies" are here understood primarily from the perspective of royal ideology, where a broader cooperation seems to have existed.

Narratives

Narratives in Ugaritic were also mainly concentrated in the three main hubs. There is a handful of texts which may attest to the broader presence of local narratives in the city. Most of these were discovered at the *Acropolis*: *KTU* 1.7, 1.9, 1.24, 1.25, and 1.75. Due to their findspot, it is possible they were originally associated with the *House of the High Priest* and are consequently not unique at all. Similar may be the situation of *KTU* 1.98 from the *South Acropolis*, which could possibly be related to the *House of the Hurrian Priest.* I have not been able to ascertain the findspots in greater detail. Anyhow, in my opinion, there are no other clusters to which they could belong and be further contextualised.

The only two possible narratives that may be directly attributed to some larger cluster are *KTU* 1.159 and 1.160 from the *House of the Literary Tablets.* These are unfortunately so damaged that their understanding as narrative is very uncertain. They, however, mention ꜥAṯṯar[ta] and Dagan and may be related to the religious realia.

When considering the Ugaritic narrative tradition, the clear association with the main hubs of religion remains clear. There is a possibility to count among these texts the above-mentioned Akkadian excerpt of the *Baꜥal Cycle* from the *House of Urtēnu*.[478] It at least attests to the local tradition, and since it narrates the episode of the construction of the palace/temple of Baꜥal, it may be further contextualised within the historical event. I would argue it is best to interpret this text in line with the construction of royal ideology since the construction of the new palace was state-sponsored.[479] But its more literary, educational, or ritual characters are possible lines of enquiry, too.

Magico-medic

The last categorization of religious texts discussed in this section is related to the sphere of magic and medicine. The problems with this category have already been mentioned above.[480] This may be well illustrated with the four hippiatric texts,[481] which are to be considered as medical, but contra commonly held assumptions about the ancient cultures, these do not include any references to deities or straightforwardly magical activities. Four hippiatric texts were discovered in several places: two at the *Acropolis*[482] and one each in the *House of Rašapabu*[483] and *House of the Literary Tablets*.[484]

---

[477] Note that we are considering here the case of the city of Ugarit. There are also several cultic and other religious texts form Ras Ibn-Hani. As a royal residence, this locality may be in many ways parallel to the case of the *Royal Palace* and their presence there is not very striking. Nonetheless, Ras Ibn-Hani lies outside the scope of this chapter.

[478] RS 94.2953 (Arnaud 2007, no. 65).

[479] Note, e.g., the reference to the construction of the palace in RS 88.2158, see Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters.*

[480] See note 336.

[481] See *RSO II* on broader discussion.

[482] *KTU* 1.71 and 1.72.

[483] *KTU* 1.85.

[484] *KTU* 1.97.

To these, we may add four texts which make reference to religious realia. *KTU* 1.82 has been discovered in the *Residential District*. This presents an incantation against snakebite.[485] Two texts were discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*. *KTU* 1.178 is once again an incantation against snakebite. It bears an interesting feature: it is explicitly created for Urtēnu. As far as I can tell, such personalisation is unparalleled at Ugarit.[486] The second text from this house is *KTU* 1.179. This time, it makes greater use of narrative elements,[487] but it once again deals with the danger of snakebite. This text bears an interesting reference to authorship; it contains a colophon naming its author, who claims to have created this text on his own.[488] The author seems to be no other than Ilimilku, the creator of the mythological and epic compositions.[489] Both of the documents from the *House of Urtēnu* reveal to us the personal dimensions of magical-medical practices and hint at the creation of these texts.

The process of creation of magico-medic text is further elucidated with *KTU* 1.96 from the *House of the Literary Tablets*. This time, this is an incantation against the "evil eye".[490] Interestingly enough, this may be identified as a scribal exercise, as it contains a training sequence of logosyllabic "alphabet" on the reverse. In my opinion, this tablet, in the context of the magico-medic tradition of Ugarit, illustrates well that scribal education was also practically oriented and that some scribes later created incantations for their colleagues. Furthermore, these practices and their textual form may be correlated with the presence of magico-medic texts from the Mesopotamian tradition.[491] I suspect this tradition might not have been limited to schooling but was also part of the practical knowledge available in the Ugaritic archives to be consulted when needed.[492] This may also well compensate for the scarcity of medical texts in Ugaritic. In addition, there are several incantation texts that were written down in alphabetical cuneiform but are actually interpreted as Akkadian, which may support their use and permeability of scribal education to practice.[493] In sum, this genre seems to me to be slightly more independent of the hubs of religion. Still, as especially the evidence from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* indicates, it was far from being detached from them. The sources from the *House of the Hurrian Priest,* as well as the authorship of *KTU* 1.179 by Ilimilku, indicate that magic-medicine might have been an integral (albeit not exclusive) component of the work of persons involved with the organization of the cult.

---

[485] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014b: 109–128.

[486] *KTU* 1.178: 14–15: *l . urtn . l . gbh / l . tmnth*, "for Urtēnu, for his body, for his form." Del Olmo Lete 2013: 195 suggests that KTU 1.82 and 1.107 are personalized incantations for Papašarratu and *šrǵzz*. However, in my opinion, these names are incorporated into the narrative section, *šrǵzz* probably used as a word-play in the text. Contrary to this, Urtēnu is directly and clearly made the beneficiary of the incantation in *KTU* 1.178. See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014b: 173–187 for broader discussion of this text.

[487] Here, we may further observe the fluidity of genres, as well as practical application of narratives.

[488] *KTU* 1.179: 42': *... ind ylmdnn*, "no one has thought it (the author)".

[489] The name itself is lost in lacuna, but comparison with other colophons of this author, esp. KTU 1.6 VI: 54–58, leaves little doubt about this attribution. See also discussion in Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 248–253.

[490] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014b: 129–156.

[491] See also del Olmo Lete 2014b: 127–128.

[492] This might have also been the case of some lexical lists, which presented scholarly knowledge and not (only) a step in education; see Tugendhaft 2016.

[493] *KTU* 1.67, 1.69, and 1.70. These were discovered at the *Acropolis*. *KTU* 1.73 lacks discovery context. See also discussion in Clemens 2001: 605–624. According to del Olmo Lete 2014b: 103 these texts do not correspond to the lived practices but belong to the context of scribal education.

4.3 Dynamics of Texts

In the previous section, we have focused mainly on the spatial distribution of texts, searching for the main nodes of religious life as reflected in writing. Now, we can turn back to the topic that was raised in the introduction to this chapter – texts can be viewed as *actors* in the networks of (not only) social relations.[494] The actor character of inscribed material can be separated into two basic lines of enquiry – texts as materials and texts as readable contents of those materials. Often, these go hand in hand; in other cases, these may gain independence, or different levels of importance may be given to one or the other. The materiality is full of symbolic potential. This applies to the ancient societies just as it does to us, even if the specifics of symbolism change. We may illustrate this issue with several examples: How valued is a mint first edition of a superhero comic in contrast to a new reprint? How valued are old books – even if only to be displayed and never read? What is the difference between reading a physical book, reading an e-book on Kindle or watching a movie? Of course, these examples are specific; they are always set within the symbolic worlds of individuals who tend to value and appreciate different aspects of the world. The materiality often affects us unconsciously, and it greatly influences how we perceive the content. In this regard, we may highlight the case of advertisement, where the design is often far more important than the text. Consider also how scholarly text would be perceived when written in `comic sans`. Not only does it make it harder to read, but it also makes the whole work look far less believable and professional.

The following discussion will address several modalities that reflect on such topics. Rather than a detailed and in-depth study, this section is more a reflection and speculative exploration of the different ways in which texts (not only) at Ugarit could function and act. Hopefully, this pondering may invite us to consider some aspects that often stay hidden and unrealised.

The situation of Ugaritic texts, as described in the previous section, is relatively static, fixed by the destruction of the city. The ancient situation was far more dynamic – the inscribed material circulated not only within the city but also around the kingdom and internationally. This is most easily seen in the case of letters – the nature of which is to circulate.

Unfortunately, apart from letters, it is often very difficult to reconstruct the movements. Of course, in some cases, the situation is made easy by the supposed origin of them. Objects from Egypt, often inscribed, were brought to Ugarit by merchants, diplomats, or other people who travelled. More could have been made locally by other actors – foreign craftsmen or local artists inspired by the valued style. We will encounter this topic when discussing letter RS 88.2158 from Egypt, replying to the request of the Ugaritic king for the manufacture of a statue of the pharaoh Merenptah for the *Temple of Baʿal*.[495] Broadly represented writing is that in logosyllabic cuneiform – mostly in Akkadian, Hurrian, or Sumerian, sometimes in combination. In some cases, this has travelled to Ugarit from Mesopotamia, sometimes via numerous mediators. Literary compositions, lexical lists, sapiential literature, or incantations travelled to Ugarit also as physical objects.[496] Several of these

---

[494] This stress may go against some of the core concepts of the *Actor-Network Theory*, but for me, the social (and human oriented) dimension of such networks is of the primary interest.

[495] See Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters*. See also Morris 2015 for a broader study.

[496] See e.g., Viano 2016, especially 325–336 and 361–379. In connection with several compositions discovered at Ugarit, it is possible to identify whether these were written elsewhere (or at least by a foreign scribe) or locally. This topic would probably be best explored via the means of petrographic analysis. As far as I am aware, the research on Ugarit is in this

compositions appear in more clusters at Ugarit, which may have two explanations (possibly working hand in hand). First, the compositions used for scribal education were to some extent shared across the LBA Levant and Anatolia[497] and might have entered different scribal schools at Ugarit independently. Second, the compositions might have arrived at Ugarit in one exemplar and then be shared among the scholars. Of course, the transmission of ideas is not limited to the physical movement of texts but is to be attributed to the movement of people, too. This is also true of letters, which probably also depended a great deal on the oral transmission of the message. In addition, some scribes of Mesopotamian origin were probably present at Ugarit.[498] The social encounter with foreign texts also heavily influences social realities. The cuneiform culture brought with it not only the presence of languages and scripts, but these have consequently changed how the society worked and perceived the world around them. The scholarly knowledge also might have given the scribes the ability to understand archaizing scripts or to create objects that mimicked archaicity.[499] The visual appearance of signs was part of the message, too. Obviously, the effect of foreign traditions had various modalities, and a local scribe was influenced by this in a different way than an international merchant, diplomat, or low-class servant. In the end, even the local alphabetical script has been influenced by the Mesopotamian cuneiform tradition as it adopted clay as the medium and made use of the impressing mode of writing, resulting in wedges rather than engravings.

The topic that interests us the most in the context of this thesis is the materiality and movement of texts relevant to religion. The movement may be actualised both physically as a transfer of tablets or other inscribed objects or mentally, for example, by learning how to write a ritual, narrative, or magical text and then transfer this reality on a new object, either "directly" or with changes. While the materiality of texts is highlighted here, the contents are easily made independent of their medium. Unfortunately, the dynamics are very difficult to follow, let alone prove. From the hints we have on this topic, we may highlight a few.

For example, the circulation of mythical compositions, or at least their contents, is visible in the presence of a few excerpts of the *Baˁal Cycle* in several clusters in the city.[500] Once again, the reason for their dissemination rather eludes us – was it for ritual practices, sacred knowledge or simply for scribal training? Possibly, these explanations do not need to be mutually exclusive. While the best-preserved edition of the *Baˁal Cycle* can be attributed to the scribe Ilimilku, we know he did not invent the plot completely, as references to the fight of the Storm-God with the Sea are known

---

regard quite limited. See, e.g., Goren, Bunimovitz, Finkelstein & Na'aman 2003, Goren, Finkelstein & Na'aman 2004, where Ugarit appears as a part of petrographic analysis of Alašiyan texts or Amarna letters; or Boyes 2023: 183 with a short commentary on the state of petrographic studies of clay from Ugarit.

[497] See, e.g., the numerous repeatedly appearing compositions in Viano 2016.

[498] See, e.g., Viano 2016: 378 or van Soldt 2012.

[499] See, e.g., Roche-Hawley 2012 and 2015.

[500] The "full" composition in the *House of the High Priest* (*KTU* 1.1–1.6), excerpts in the *House of the Hurrian Priest* (*KTU* 1.133), and the *House of Urtēnu* (RS 94.2953; Arnaud 2007, no. 65).

already from the MBA Mari[501] or even from Egypt.[502] This once again refers to the large-scale dynamics of this myth.[503]

A possible reference to the movement of texts may be seen in a few of the Hurrian hymns in the *Royal Palace*[504] that have been found outside the *Southwestern Archive*. This may imply that these hymns might have circulated within the palace, possibly also out of it, for whatever reason. For example, could the collection of Hurrian hymns in the *Southwestern Archive* serve as a deposit from which the singers or priests selected songs that were to be sung on specific occasions? Who would be those persons who made use of these tablets? Did they serve as a "hymnary"? The notations or tone indications highlight their practical character. But who was able to read them? And were their Hurrian contents understood? From a comparative perspective, we may surely know that for many of the participants, the meaning of cultic songs did not have to be relevant at all. Still, the content was there and was relevant, at least for some.

The materiality of texts seems to have been of great importance in the case of divinatory practices.[505] Instead of creating a simple tablet, inscribed models of innards were created. The physical form of the medium bearing writing was probably more important than the inscriptions themselves, which is suggested by the fact that the majority of these models were not inscribed. Interesting in this regard is not only the form but also the choice of material – while the models from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* were made in clay, the models from the *Royal Palace* were crafted in ivory. The focus on the "obvious" interpretation considering prestige and value may shadow some more nuanced reasons.

Royal cults are another set of activities where the movement of texts is observable. Rituals involving the monarch were found at all of the main hubs of religious texts in the city. In their contents, they refer to numerous places, for example, different temples, where the activities are supposed to take place. All of this invites further movement – of the king, the priest, other participants, sacrificial animals and possibly also of the texts themselves. Some of the texts seem to be structured as instructions of what is to happen. While there was always a person behind the creation of any ritual text, at some point, the texts might have become independent of their creators. The texts, as instructions, are then the actors which make people do things.

Of course, with the destruction of the city, the movement of the texts did not cease. We may suppose that some of the texts were taken with those flying out of the city. But fortunately for us, a large number of them were left behind. The collapse of buildings, where many of the textual sources were stored in the upper stores, as well as possible looting, resulted in one last dynamic dispersion of texts out of their storage. That is until the archaeologists, philologists, Assyriologists, Biblists, and others came and once again provided the texts with a new dynamic life that dispersed them all around the world – physically, by copying, or by reference. In some cases, the modern life of these texts even

---

[501] *FM 7*, nos. 5 and 39. See, e.g., Durand 1993 or Sasson 2015: 280–281.

[502] pBN 202 and pAmherst 9. For the text and translation, see Collombert & Coulon 2000. The text combines the Egyptian and Levantine cultural realia.

[503] See also Ayali-Darshan 2015. In addition, a possible late reference to a *Baʿal Cycle* has been recognized in a Safaito-Hismaic inscription by al-Jallad 2015.

[504] See Chapter *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace.*

[505] See Chapters *6.3 Divination* and *7.2 State and Divination*

resembles the ancient situation of scribal schools. Take, for example, *A Manual of Ugaritic*,[506] which includes a large collection of Ugaritic texts aimed at linguistic education. Together with learning the language, the student also becomes more and more aware of the contents of these texts. The texts are pulled out of their original cultural milieu, and the student is at the same time pulled into it. Of course, the intentions and purposes of this book, in contrast with, for example, the *Lamaštu Archive*, are different on many levels.

What is a text for one may be a brick for another – the material objects bearing writing might have changed their purposes. Throughout the ancient Near East, there is plenty of evidence of the reuse of clay tablets as building materials as well as bricks being inscribed.[507] Of course, the change of purposes did not have to be so radical. Sometimes, the physical form of writing itself could have played its role, but it did not have to be understood. This may be the case for many Egyptian objects. In some cases, the contents go hand in hand with the visual form and are a part of the symbolic value of an object. This may be the case of a local businessman (and a son-in-law of the queen) Ṯipṭi-Baʿal, who made for himself a seal in Egyptian.[508] With this, we may see how texts may be used to shape identities. This person, bearing a Semitic name referencing the *Storm-God*, was addressed as *ṯpṭbʿl mṣr[y]*, "Ṯipṭi-Baʿal, the Egyptian" in an administrative text.[509] This calls into question the notion of cultural-ethnically based formation of identity.[510] We have already encountered this issue in the case of Hurrians. However, as mentioned above, Egyptian/Egyptianizing objects are, in many cases, to be regarded rather as prestigious items. Their content could have often been irrelevant. This is highlighted by those objects that only mimicked the Egyptian script, known from the ANE. At Ugarit, there are also some seals which employ cuneiform pseudo script.[511] The focus on content may sometimes mislead our interpretations.

This brings us to the topic of (il)literacy,[512] which is often discussed, mostly in relation to access to information. But the ability to read, more specifically read in a particular script and/or language, has for long been recognised as something that shapes and forms human thinking. We suppose that most of the inhabitants of Ugarit were not able to read. At the same time, they probably were occasionally in contact with writing practices. And they lived in a society organised with the help of writing.

---

[506] Bordreuil & Pardee 2009.

[507] See, e.g., Boyes 2021: 149 or Tsouparopoulou 2016: esp. 268–272. There is also another modality to writing and building – some bricks might have been inscribed, and some of the foundation deposits bore writing, too. I suspect that tablets from Ugarit which place of discovery is described as "*restauration de murs*" (esp. season 31) may be an example of reuse of tablets as building materials, but I have not been able to confirm this hypothesis. Also, the discussed "fosse" from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* could have been a filling of the floor, even though this does not seem particularly likely to me.

[508] See also briefly in Chapter *6.7 Religion and Seals*. See also Boyes 2021: 202, Singer 1999: 696–697, Vita & Galán 1997, *Ugaritica III*: 85, or *Ugaritica V*: 261.

[509] *KTU* 4.775: 13.

[510] After all, the Egyptian × Ugaritic identity of this person is not as straightforward issue as I have presented it here, opting for understand him as an Ugaritian who present himself as an Egyptian; see Vita & Galán 1997: 712–713.

[511] E.g., RS 6.307 or RS 4.409; see Chapter *6.7 Religion and Seals* for figures.

[512] This topic itself would deserve an in-depth study in itself as conceptions of literacy and illiteracy are recurring issues of the study of the ANE, but are usually discussed with considerable forethought. Admittedly, I also lack proper background, which I have not been able to supplement yet. These references recommended to me are on my long to-do-list: Goody 1977 and Ong 2005[1982].

People were, for example, recorded by the administration – an act with various possible reasons and effects. Unfortunately, we know too little to solidly support any speculations on how these acts might have been perceived and experienced by the administrator and by the administrated. In this regard, we have to acknowledge the possibility that some of the administration was not done performatively in front of those whom it concerned. This significantly changes how it would affect the involved parties. Written administration had and has a heavy influence on the involved parties – both on the material and symbolical level, influencing the exchange of commodities and services, and establishing power relations.[513]

A similar encounter with texts is visible in legal activities. It might have been the case that often, those whom a legal contract concerned were not able to read the text. At the same time, the contract in writing worked as a material confirmation of the concluded relationship. Its authority was derived from the presence of the king, witnesses, seals, or even from divine patronage.[514] We may also see this actor role of texts in a more familiar situation: not reading a legal text (at least not entirely) before signing it. We do not need to know the exact contents of a legal text for us to have value and symbolic significance. The legal texts are a great example of the power of symbolic communication – physically, there is no reason why a text should act on us or why a signature or seal imprint should have consequences in regard to our possessions – that is, except for their symbolic power. Of course, this may be further contextualised with state apparatus and means and possibilities of enforceability of these symbolic relations.

The interaction with texts beyond their contents has many more modalities. For example, Boyes recently presented a preliminary discussion on how the broader society beyond the literate elite participated in the functioning of the writing practices – for example, in the sourcing of clay or other materials employed in writing, like wax.[515]

The discussion on the materiality of writing could be further continued, elaborating on more and more details and modalities. The purpose of this section was merely to outline how the practice of writing permeated the Ugaritic society on many levels. All of this is of great importance to religious practices. The texts contributed to the construction of social reality at Ugarit, including religion. Foreign compositions of various kinds were not entirely irrelevant to the local theological conceptions, and international contacts broadened the intercultural insights. Cuneiform culture contributed to the convergence of different traditions and to cultural translatability. Transmission of hymns, incantations, or divinatory compendia contributed to the form of local practices. The organization of cults with the use of writing shaped the ways in which they functioned. The scribal practices existed in a broader social context and had many implications for the functioning of the whole society. Some of the issues will occasionally resurface throughout the thesis. Here, we have only scratched the surface of this topic. Further exploration is in place but lies outside the scope of this thesis.[516]

---

[513] See, e.g., McGeough 2022 on the power of debt in social relations.
[514] See Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities* for further discussion.
[515] Boyes 2023.
[516] For further reading on Ugarit, see namely the works of Boyes.

5 Religion and the City Environs

This chapter closely follows up on the topic of texts and their materiality. The dominant focus on texts often overshadows that most of the activities one may consider "religious" do not take place on clay but are interwoven within the fabric of the environs. Similarly to texts, environs are not static but are continuously constructed, both by natural processes and by human activity.[517]

We have already outlined some of the natural features in which the kingdom of Ugarit was set.[518] The natural environment works in dialect with the social construction of the space. Some natural phenomena, like movements of celestial bodies, weather, or earthquakes, are out of human control but are nevertheless perceived, felt, and interpreted by humans.[519] Others are – at least to some extent – directly modifiable by human activities. The environment is shaped through agriculture, forestry, hunting, building, or simple movement. And vice versa, such a shaped environment acts on the minds of people and their social realities. Nothing is a simple human construct devoid of other natural realities. The dialectic is always there. We may note that the tell itself is a nice example of the construction of the environment. What is seemingly a hill – a natural feature – on which a city is built is, in fact, a pile of past settlements shaped in time into a mound towering some twenty meters over the surroundings. The older settlements have become the natural ground for the new ones.

Although this broad topic is very interesting and worth exploring in its complexity, the focus of this chapter will be limited to explorations of the construction of religious environs in the city of Ugarit. This will be done in two sections, focusing on temples/sanctuaries and domestic architecture. Most of the attention is given to the first category, while the rest is discussed mainly to broaden the context of city space and show that religion is far from being restricted to the temples.

5.1 Sanctuaries of Ugarit

Cultic activities often occur in spaces specially designed for them.[520] In this chapter, we shall discuss several structures from Ugarit that have been identified as sanctuaries, sacred spaces or temples.[521] So far, no complete study on the sanctuaries of Ugarit was made.[522] We should be aware that the list of

---

[517] Once again, the distinction of nature × culture may lead us astray from the fact that humans are a part of nature. But since my focus is on the human species, I highlight "our" perspective.

[518] Chapter *2 Contexts of Religion at Ugarit.*

[519] See also Vidal 2004.

[520] Once again, we should not forget about the fluidity of our conceptions. Sometimes, cultic activities inhabit otherwise "secular/profane" space or take place in natural habitat – not necessarily "sanctified" by any special ritual activity aimed to prepare them for further cultic activities.

[521] Discussion on the identification of *religious structures* in archaeological material lies outside the scope of this thesis. For a summarization of an archaeological approach to this problem, see e.g., Renfrew & Bahn 2016: 416–417, or Laneri 2015 with special attention to the ANE. The issue is highly complicated and fortunately, the popular saying that *whatever archaeologists do not understand is classified as religion*, is usually far from being true.

[522] The temples of Baʿal and Dagan were discussed in detail by Callot in *RSO XIX*. There are some brief general overviews, see, e.g., Yon 1984; de Tarragon 1995; del Olmo Lete 2014a: 21–25; Nakhai 2001: 122–125; or Caubet 2000: 41–43; or information scattered throughout archaeological publications, e.g., excavation reports, *Ugaritica* series, *SDB*, *RSO* series, or Yon 2006.
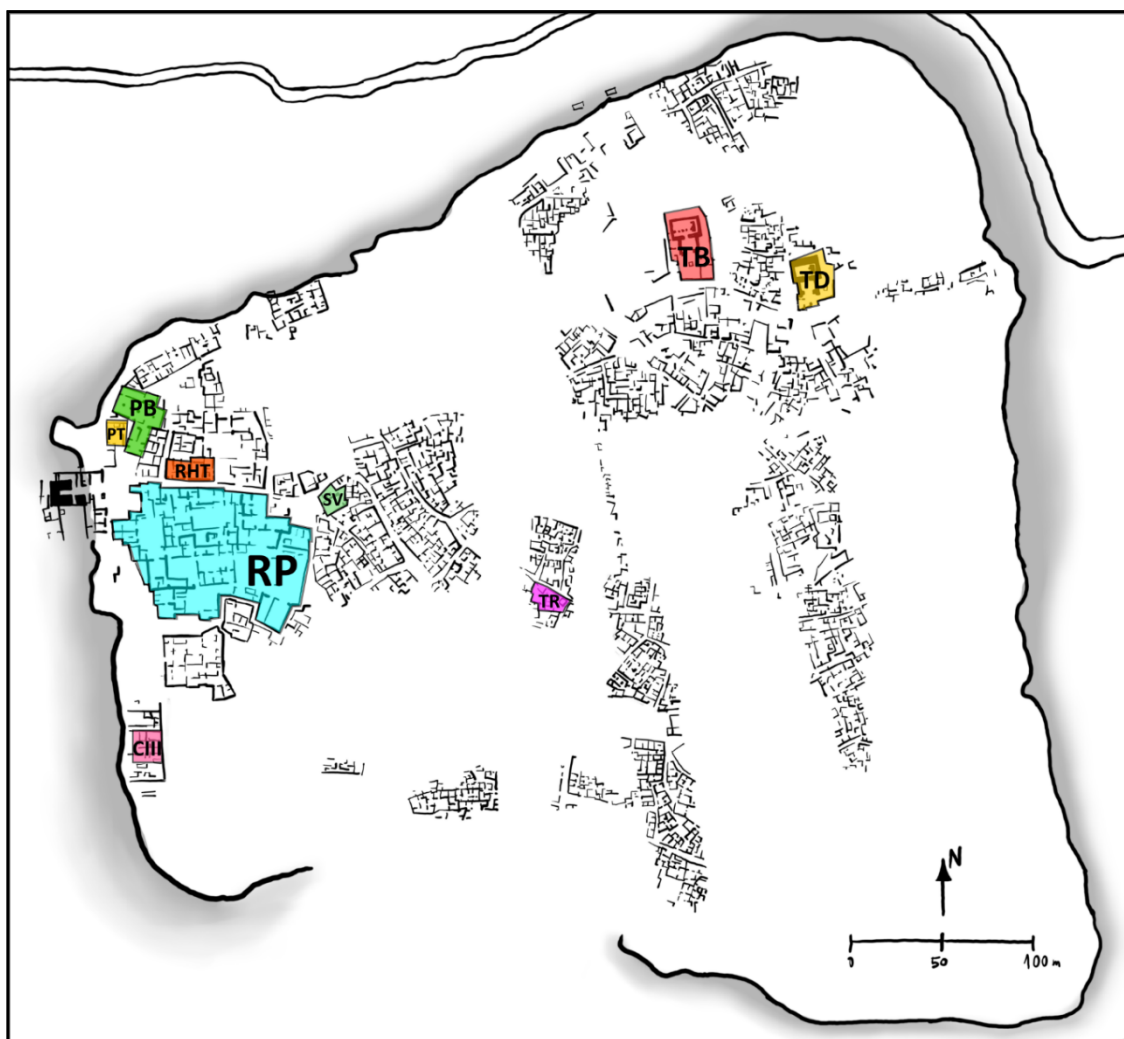
Figure 16 Temples and sanctuaries at Ugarit mentioned in this chapter. Drawn by the author, see fig. 2 for references.
CIII = Court III of the "Great Building"; PB = Pillared Building; PT = Palatial Temple (Hurrian Temple); RHT = Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne; RP = Royal Palace; SV = Building with the Stone Vase; TB = Temple of Baʿal; TD = Temple (Platform) of Dagan; TR = Temple of Rhytons

archaeologically identified temples and sanctuaries is not definitive. Most of the tell remains unexplored, and some cultic structures may remain undetected, hidden among domestic architecture. The texts mention structures that were not yet paired with any of the excavated structures.[523] Indeed, following the logic of ANE cults, we may suppose that every deity who received sacrifices or other offerings, as attested in the cultic texts, was physically present at Ugarit and had to inhabit some space, even if only in "shared housing". We have already noted that this may correspond to the multitude of Baʿals in Ugaritic ritual texts.[524] I argue that all these Baʿals refer to individual representations of Baʿal present at Ugarit, although not all of them were necessarily present in his temple. Therefore, a glimpse on the ideology and functioning of temples and sanctuaries is a good start for our enquiry.

---

[523] E.g., *bt ỉlt, bt ỉlm kbkbm, bt bʿlt btm rmm, bt ḥrn*; see, *RSO XII/2*: 1075–1090 for list of cultic places mentioned in ritual texts.

[524] *KTU* 1.47, 1.118, 1.148 and RS 20.024. See Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*.

5.1.1   Ideology and Functioning

What does the designation "temple" or "sanctuary" mean in the cultural context of Ugarit?[525] Firstly, the term we translate as such is most often simply *bt* in Ugaritic, meaning simply "house", less commonly *mṯb*, "dwelling", *ḫẓr*, "mansion/court", or *hkl*, "palace".[526] This strongly suggests that *temples* were conceived as abodes of deities, as their households.

In these households, the divine presence on earth manifested itself, probably most often in the form of divine statues or other cultic images.[527] These households likely hosted more than one deity. This may be seen, for example, in the *Baʿal Cycle,* which narratively describes the house of Ilu as an abode of his wife Aṯirat and his children,[528] but can also be deduced from the sheer number of deities venerated at Ugarit. As *elite* households, temple functioning depended on numerous people who cared for the needs of deities.[529] The regular care included various activities such as food service, make-up, clothing, anointing, washing, etc.[530] From the ritual texts and comparative material, we may imagine that the feasts and festivals included – besides rich meals from sacrifices – processions and mutual visits of the deities.

There is a question of whether temples themselves (and their equipment) might have been considered divine – as is sometimes the case in Mesopotamia or Hittite Anatolia.[531] Sanctuaries were *qdš* – "sacred (places?)"[532] – but does that mean they were *il*/DINGIR? There is scarce evidence that some parts of the temples at Ugarit received offerings.[533] In narratives, the temples were built of

---

[525] For a general discussion on the topic of temples of ancient Syria, see Hundley 2013a: 105–129.

[526] As far as I can tell, this term appears only in narratives. This may suggest that it was a part of literary inspiration of logosyllabic writing – from Sumerian É.GAL, "big house" and Akkadian *ekkalu*. We may wonder how well it might have been understood by the audience should it has been only a scholarly lingo. Note that this word is never used for the palace of the king in Ugaritic, this is always *bt mlk*, the "house of the king".

[527] However, no statue was ever found in contexts which would conclusively identify it as a *temple cultic statue*. In addition, contrary to Mesopotamia, we lack any ritual activity which would "activate" the statue to become "truly divine", "embodiment of a deity". For Mesopotamian tradition (*mīs pî* ritual complex), see, e.g., Walker & Dick 1999 and 2001, Dick 2005, or Boden 1999. For the Hittite practices, see Collins 2005. For a general discussion on the topic of presence of deities in ancient Syrian temples, see Hundley 2013a: 333–361.

[528] *KTU* 1.3 V: 39–44.

[529] These activities were far from limited to clergy; see Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations*. Generally, the temple was dependant and subjugated to the palace economy, but it was still an important economic hub; see Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[530] Unfortunately, the evidence of activities other than feeding (mainly through sacrifices), clothing and anointing is rather scarce and based mostly on the comparison with Mesopotamia, Anatolia, or Egypt. See, e.g., Hundley 2013a: 341, 353–354, and 360–361.

[531] See Hundley 2013a: 76, 100, and 125.

[532] While I tend to use the term "sacred" as translation of *qdš*, it may bring unwarranted anachronistic conceptualisations with it. The limits of understanding the conceptually related notion of "holiness" in ANE studies has been addressed by Pongratz-Leisten 2009. While it touches upon the term *qdš* only in passing, it is an inspirative reading on this topic.

[533] Parallel ritual texts *KTU* 1.41: 23 and 1.87: 25 indicate offering of bird[s?] to altars, *mdbḥt*, of Ilatu/goddess. Or does the fragmentary state of the tablets conceal that these were offerings *on* the altars? Probably not, because the fact that sacrifices are presented on the altars did not have to be explicitly stated. In *KTU* 1.119: 12, an offering of a bull to *mdgl* of Baʿal; *mgdl* is usually understood as a mistake for *mgdl*, "tower", in this case understood as the temple tower; on *mdgl*, see Pardee 2002a: 104, n. 51. See also Hundley 2013a: 125 and Korpel 1990: 376.

precious materials and by gods.[534] Ideologically, they might have been based on god's design.[535] Nonetheless, this by itself does not lay any proper foundation to consider any temple a divinity.[536] In sum, there is no evidence which would adequately support such a claim for Ugarit, but it is not inconceivable.

Sanctuaries were also sites for human contact with the divine. However, the question of access to the temples remains unresolved. It seems that the inner parts of temples were not accessible except to a few members of the cultic personnel. Some temple precincts at Ugarit included a courtyard, and according to some scholars, this was the place where even a commoner (under some circumstances) might have entered.[537] According to the excavated evidence, these courtyards were probably one of the places where worshippers might have placed a votive offering or erected a stela. There is also a debate over the presence of "windows", *ủrbt*,[538] in the Ugaritic temples and whether these might have (occasionally?) facilitated a public visual "access" to the temple.[539] Since the upper parts of temple structures are not extant, we must rely only on the written materials, which are unfortunately very elusive. According to Hundley, the windows and courtyards might have made the temples of Ugarit, and generally Syro-Palestine, one of the most accessible to the public in the whole ancient Near East.[540]

Temples at Ugarit were strongly connected to the palace. At Ugarit, just as elsewhere in the ancient Syro-Palestine, the palace held power, and temples were dependent on the state administration while still being an important locus of power.[541] The relationship between temples and the palace was symbiotic – temples needed the support of the king for economic abundance, and the king needed temples for divine support and contact with the divine.[542] The king of Ugarit played an important role in the Ugaritic cult, and several texts explicitly mention him as a participant or place the cult in the royal residence. Some cultic activities were even designated as *dbḥ mlk*, "king's sacrifices" or *dbḥ mlkt*, "queen's sacrifices".

---

[534] In the *Baʿal Cycle*, two tablets are centred around the construction of the palace for Baʿal; *KTU* 1.3–1.4. The building is attributed to the craftsman god Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs. We may note, that these episode further allude to the valued craftsmanship of Egyptians and Cretans, as this is where the dwelling of Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs is places in the narrative; see Válek 2021: 56–57.

[535] Possibly RS 94.2953, see Arnaud 2007: 201–202

[536] Cf. Korpel 1990: 376.

[537] See Hundley 2013a: 119–120, and 123.

[538] There is a debate over the exact architectural interpretation of this term. According to *DUL* this term may be interpreted also as a "skylight", or even "niche", "alcove" in the cultic context. Thus, a window which would enable people to look inside the temple is only one of the possibilities. Some ritual texts mention *ủrbt* as a place for offerings; e.g., KTU 1.109: 19 and partially reconstructed in KTU 1.41: 11 and 1.87: 13; see *RSO XII*: 1075–1076. Term *ủrbt* appears also in the *Baʿal Cycle* when Baʿal at first forbids a window to be built in his new palace and later changes his mind about that. Installing windows in temples may also be seen in light of the Hittite tradition and thus as a foreign influence at Ugarit. See Hundley 2013a: 94–97 for the Hittite tradition, see also Kohlmeyer 2009: 195 for fake windows in the temple of the Storm-God in Ḫalāb – these reliefs were constructed during the renovations under the Hittite rule and may provide a suitable parallel case. The narrative pondering on whether to have or not to have windows may then be perceived as a reflection of the power negotiations between Ugarit and Ḫatti; these issues might have possibly entered the process of the rebuilding of the *Temple of Baʿal* after its destruction in the mid-13th century; see the discussion below.

[539] See Hundley 2013a: 102, 120–121, and 124–126.

[540] Hundley 2013a: 124.

[541] See also Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[542] Hundley 2013a: 124; See also further discussion in Chapters *7.1 Kings and Cults* and *7.2 State and Divination*

5.1.2   The Temple of Baʿal

So far, both the archaeological and textual evidence suggest that the most important cultic centre at Ugarit during the final phase of its existence was a large temple at the acropolis (fig. 16, TB) dedicated to Baʿal. This temple, together with the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan*, is so far the best explored and published, thanks to Callot and his *RSO XIX: Les sanctuaries de l'acropole d'Ougarit: Les temples de Baal et de Dagan*.
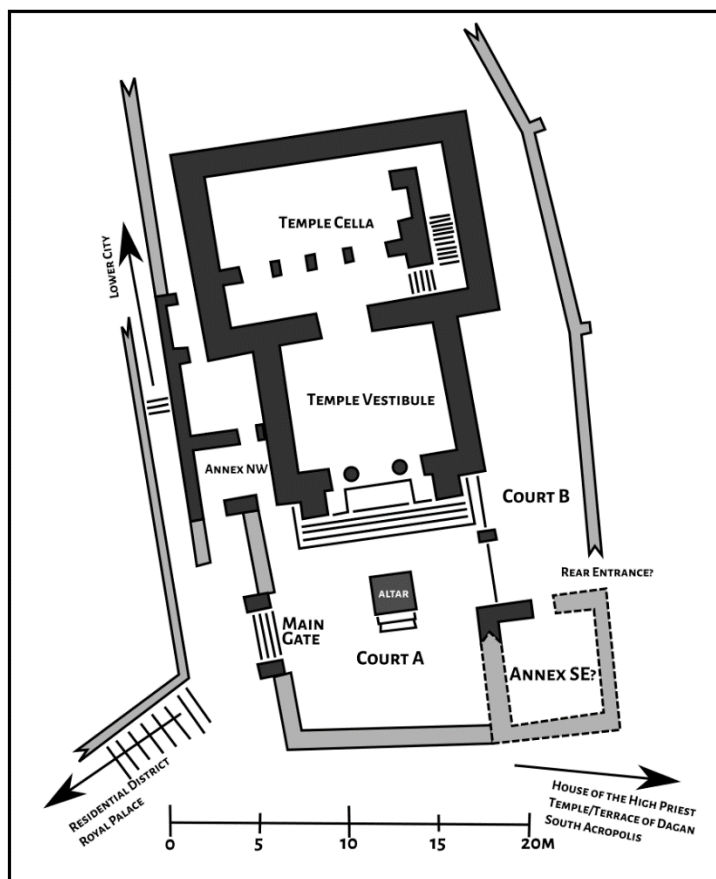
Figure 17 Schematic plan of the *Temple of Baʿal*.
Drawn by the author after *RSO XIX*: fig. 28.

5.1.2.1   Excavations and History

The *Temple of Baʿal* was unearthed during the first campaign in 1929 after Schaeffer moved from the port city in Minet el-Beida to the tell. The structure was at first not recognised as a temple but as a palace.[543] However, the mistake was realised shortly afterwards and following reports refer to this structure as a temple. The excavations in the area of this temple continued until 1933. Only in 1975 a more detailed survey of the unearthed area was done. Thanks to it, some details that are now lost due to the disintegration of the structure are recorded. Systematic excavations continued from 1988 to 2005.[544]

History and development of the structure are difficult to establish.[545] There seem to be two main architectural phases, both of which ended in destruction. Construction of the first dates back

---

[543] *Report 1929*: 294–297.

[544] For a more detailed the summary of the history of excavations, see *RSO XIX*: 23–25.

[545] For a more detailed study, see *RSO XIX*: 60–64.

to the 19th/18th century BC. The second phase utilised the foundations of the first, which allows us to reconstruct the outline of the first phase. The same cannot be said about the annexes which were possibly part of the temple precinct only during the final phase. The beginning of the construction of the second phase dates to the reign of ʿAmmiṯṯamru III, after 1250, when Ugarit was presumably hit by a strong earthquake and the temples at the acropolis were damaged and needed reconstruction.[546] The reconstruction seems to have been total, except for the foundations and continued with the following kings of Ugarit. The second phase came to an end together with the city at the beginning of the 12th century BC. The archaeological evidence from the 2nd phase is complemented with abundant textual material.[547]

5.1.2.2   STRUCTURE AND RECONSTRUCTION

Because the structure of the first phase eludes us almost completely, we will focus on the structure of the temple during the second phase after its reconstruction. Both were probably quite similar.

5.1.2.2.1   TEMPLE[548]

As stated above, the plan of the temple (fig. 17) itself was based on previous foundations. On the exterior, the temple is ca. 22 m long and 16,5 m wide, and its entrance is facing south (slightly to the east). The foundations were made of stone, using ashlar stones on corners and burdened parts. The width of the foundation walls is ca. 1,65 m on average, varying only slightly.

While reconstructing the structure above the foundations is a challenging and speculative task, and we must bear in mind that the final reconstruction is only an approximation based on scattered evidence, there is a reason to undertake such an endeavour. The architecture of this monument may help us to understand its functioning and its proper place within the city.

The ground floor was divided into two main parts – the southern (*vestibule*) and the northern (*cella*) sectors.[549] Inner dimensions of the *vestibule* are ca. 8,5 x 6,5 m. The vestibule was accessible from the courtyard through five steps made of large stone blocks leading to an over 5 m wide entrance. At the entrance, there were two wooden columns which supported its architrave. From the *vestibule,* a port of ca. 2,75 m was leading to the *cella*, whose floor was probably situated a bit higher than that of the *vestibule*.

The *cella* was, at least according to the remains, more complex than the *vestibule*. The large room (ca. 13,2 x 8,25 m) was divided alongside the east-west axis by three columns which supported the upper structure. It seems probable that the columns were not destined only to support the upper

---

[546] See Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit.*

[547] There is a possibility that the reconstruction of the temple may be connected to the *Baʿal Cycle*, the construction of the temple of Baʿal narrated in *KTU* 1.3–1.4. Part of this episode has also been discovered in Akkadian recension in the *House of Urtēnu* which further supports the connection of the narrative with the historical realia; RS 94.2953, see Arnaud 2007, no. 65. In addition, the building of the *Temple of Baʿal* is mentioned in letter RS 88.2158 exchanged between king of Ugarit (probably Ibirānu VI, see Fisher 2010: 619) and Egyptian king Merenptah. The letter mentions that the king of Ugarit requested an image of Merenptah to be placed in the temple. It may also imply that Egyptian craftsmen were send to help with the construction. See also discussion in Chapter *6.6 Religion and Letters* where the relevant part of the letter is translated. Some other texts testify to the appearance and functioning of the temple, or to its furnishing.

[548] For a more detailed study on the reconstruction of the temple with further references, see *RSO XIX*: 39–48. The publication also includes numerous figures and photos of the plan, excavations, and reconstructions. Functioning and organization of the temple is discussed in p. 54–60. A brief introduction is provided also in Yon 2006: 106–110.

[549] Designation *vestibule* and *cella* are according to Yon 2006: 109. We will use these terms to refer to these parts of the temple, but we must be aware the function and inner division of the temple might have been more complex.

floors, but the division of internal space was intentional – it was the space behind these columns where we suspect the innermost sanctuary was located and where the access was the most restricted. In the eastern part of the *cella* was a wooden staircase leading to the upper floors.

Callot reconstructs three upper levels of the temple. While the presence of upper floors seems quite probable, and this temple was most likely a "temple tower" – based on available texts, the presence of the staircase, or clay models of temples/houses from northern Syria – the exact reconstruction is speculative. For the purposes of this thesis, I have created a 3D model following Callot's reconstruction (fig. 18).[550] The height of the temple is estimated to be between eighteen and twenty meters. Since the acropolis of the tell was some twenty meters above the surroundings and about 30 meters above sea level, the temple towered very high. It has been suggested that it might have functioned as a kind of lighthouse or landmark for the sailors whose relationship to the temple and its deity is supported by rich finds of votive anchors discovered in the temple precinct.[551] The temple was probably constructed similarly to the domestic architecture at Ugarit[552] – using wooden armature and fillings of stone.

Figure 18 Reconstruction of the *Temple of Baʿal*.
Created by the author following reconstruction by Callot in *RSO XIX*.

---

[550] See the end of this chapter. For Callot's reconstruction, see *RSO XIX*: figs. 23–38.

[551] See *Ugaritica VII*: 371–381.

[552] See video "Architecture d'une maison" at Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit, *Vidéos*, available at https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/medias/videos/ [accessed 30th August 2023], and studies on domestic architecture, e.g., *RSO I* and *X*, Yon, Lombard & Reniso 1987 (in *RSO III*).

5.1.2.2.2 COURTYARDS[553]

The temple was accessed through a portal from the main courtyard ("court A" in fig. 17). The main courtyard was slightly irregular in shape and measured ca. 11,55–13,75 x 12,1 m. The main access from the city to it was probably through a large gate on its western side. However, there was also an entrance from the western annexes. One may guess that the main entrance was used during feasts and festivals, while the entrance from the annexes was used by cultic personnel for daily service.[554] In front of the temple entrance was an altar, which was well-preserved when it was discovered but is now unfortunately destroyed, and its remains are scattered in the courtyard. The altar was square-shaped, with an edge of ca. 2,2 m, and two steps from the south lead to its top. In total, the altar might have been slightly more than 0,5 m in height.

The eastern part of the main court was probably isolated from the second courtyard ("court B" in fig. 17) by a wooden fence, of which only a small part of support remains. This walled courtyard was no more than 6 m wide in its widest part, and it was stretched alongside the temple. It was probably of auxiliary importance, used, for example, for gathering animals before sacrifices, but this remains speculative.[555] In its southeast corner, there might have been an additional entrance through which the sacrificial animals were brought in.

5.1.2.2.3 ANNEXES[556]

There are two annexed buildings which seem to be connected directly to the temple precinct. We have already mentioned the western annexes from which there was access to the main courtyard. These annexes consisted of three rooms and were possibly used by cultic personnel. In the southeast corner of the main courtyard, there was a second annexe, which is unfortunately severely damaged, and even its interpretation as an annexe to the temple is not without difficulties.

5.1.2.2.4 ACCESS[557]

The temple precinct was probably accessible through three entrances. The main gate was connected to the street leading west to the *Royal Palace* (fig. 16, RP). This street was rather steep in its final part and finished in a stairway. The main gate itself included several stairs. The second access was through the western annexes, which were also accessible through the street leading to the palace. The third entrance was probably located on the east, leading to the second courtyard. Coming from the palace, one might have continued east along the southern wall of the temple precinct to a street leading to the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* along the *House of the High Priest*[558] or north along the wall of the western annexes to the *Lower City*.

5.1.2.2.5 TEMPLE OF BAʿAL AND ṢAPAN

When considering the topic of environs, we may wonder about whether and how the temple was intentionally incorporated into the space and how it might have impressed those looking at it. It has been suggested by Dietrich that both temples at the *Acropolis* were oriented towards the Ṣapan

---

[553] For a more detailed study on the reconstruction of the courtyards with further references, see *RSO XIX*: 37–39.

[554] *RSO XIX*: 55.

[555] *RSO XIX*: 56.

[556] See *RSO XIX*: 36–38, and 55.

[557] See *RSO XIX*: 36–37.

[558] So-called *Rue de la bibliothéque.*

mountain.[559] The main flaw of Dietrich's interpretation is that despite his claim, the temples of Ugarit were not oriented towers Ṣapan. And because Ṣapan is well visible from the acropolis, this can hardly be a mistake. I have not been able to find any reasonable explanation for the temples' orientations. The closest "nice" orientation is roughly south to north, but this in itself does not say much, and there are plenty of temples in Syria that provide a counterexample.

Nevertheless, Dietrich's very vivid descriptions of the interplay between the mountain and the temples have brought to my mind visual imagery of Armenian and Georgian churches that are often well incorporated into the mountainous terrain. There, the majestic mountains tower over the sacred buildings, impressing both believers and tourists (see figs. 19 and 20). The orientation of the temples does not at all diminish the possible visual experience. Even though the view at Ṣapan is rather poor when compared to the examples from Armenia and Georgia because it simply does not tower over the surrounding terrain that significantly,[560] it was still the most majestic natural landmark visible from Ugarit. Or rather, just as in the case of the photos of Khor Virap and Tsminda Sameba, the imagery is most impressive when looking at the city from afar. Once one gets under the city or in it, Ṣapan disappears, blocked by the tell and buildings. When standing in front of the temple itself, the view would have been fenced by the precinct wall. On the other hand, from the top of the temple tower, the panorama might have well been a part of a religious experience. This probably goes for the rest of the city, too – supposing the roofs of many houses were actively used, the panorama with Ṣapan might have appeared and even included the temple when looking from the southern parts of the city. The experience of the temple is then supported by its monumentality. If our reconstructions are close to the original, the temple towered high over the city. Still, the most crucial component of the creation of the experience is the symbolic significance of the temple, which significantly surpasses the simple monumentality and other visual features. The symbolic significance is even more relevant to other sanctuaries that are not nearly as pompous as this temple.

5.1.2.3   DEDICATION TO Baʿal

So far, we have taken the designation of the *Temple of Baʿal* for granted, but at least a short discussion on the identification of the principal inhabitant of this temple seems appropriate. The first part of the *Stela of Mami* (fig. 29) has already been discovered during the first campaign, and the deity was shortly afterwards identified as Seth/Baʿal of Ṣapan.[561] Hand in hand with other numerous Egyptian/Egyptianizing discoveries, the structure was firstly designated as "temple égyptien",

---

[559] Dietrich 2013. He also suggests that this is true for temples of male deities in the norther Syrian cultural milieu, while temples of female deities were oriented towards mount Inibaba. His claims are based on comparative evidence from Emar, Ekalte, ʿAin Dāra, and Alalaḫ. By simple inspection of maps, I have found his claims about the orientation of sanctuaries rather unconvincing.

[560] This follows from a simple consideration of distances and mountain height: Ugarit (30 m) to Ṣapan (1717 m): ca. 42 km, Tsminda Sameba (2130 m) to Mqinvartsveri/Kazbegi (5047 m): ca. 9 km, Khor Virap (820 m) to Ararat (5137 m): ca 31 km. In contrast to Ugarit and Ṣapan, the mountains of the counter examples are much closer to the sanctuaries and much more prominent at the same time. The visual imagery may also be explored and approximated by using Google Earth, available at: https://earth.google.com/web/ [accessed 19th August 2023].

[561] RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183. See *Report 1930*: Pl. VI. Interestingly, thanks to this discovery, it was initially thought that the ancient name of the city was Ṣapouna; *report 1930*: 10. Ugarit as the ancient name of the city was announced in a note to *report 1931*: 24–27. See also Levy 2014 and Cornelius 1994: 151–153.

Figure 19 Tsminda Sameba church and mount Mqinvartsveri/Kazbegi, Georgia. Photo by the author, 2014.

Figure 20 Khor Virap church and the peaks of Ararat, Armenia. Photo by the author, 2014.

"quartier égyptien", or "salle égyptienne"[562] then simply "temple" or "grand temple"[563] when finally,

its attribution to Baʿal came in 1934.[564]

There are two basic reasons for this identification. Firstly, several stelae and figures depicting Baʿal[565] were discovered either in the temple precinct or its vicinity.[566] Second, Ugaritic texts testify to the presence of a temple of Baʿal at Ugarit,[567] and some of them include feeble descriptive hints that may correspond to the archaeological material such as the presence of the tower. In addition, Baʿal was also the most prominent deity at Ugarit, both in cult and in narratives, which makes the attribution of the most prominent temple to him very plausible.

5.1.3 THE TEMPLE/TERRACE OF DAGAN

The other major temple at the *Acropolis* of Ugarit (fig. 16, TD) was probably dedicated to Dagan, and while there are some general similarities to the *Temple of Baʿal*, there are also some important differences. The most important issue regarding the religious life of the city is that this temple, unlike the *Temple of Baʿal*, was not renewed after its destruction during the earthquake, and a cultic terrace has taken its place.[568]
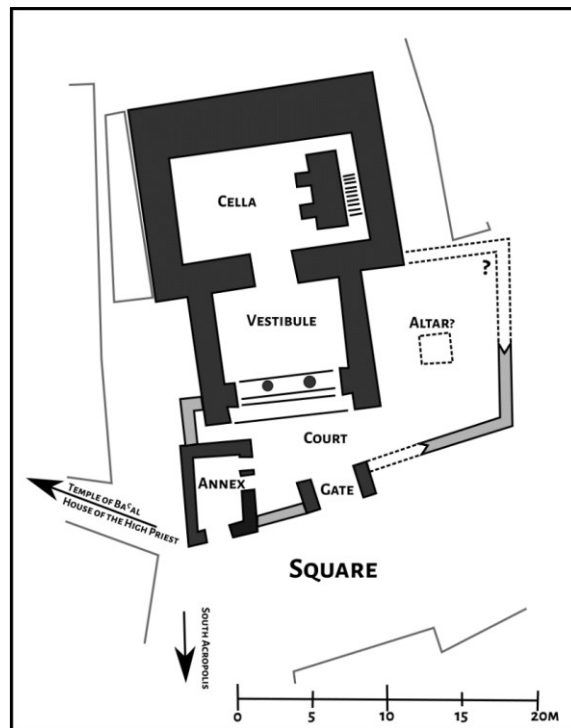
Figure 21 Schematic plan of the *Temple of Dagan*.
Drawn by the author after *RSO XIX*: fig. 85.

---

[564] See *RSO XIX*: 23 and *report 1930*: 8–13.

[563] Throughout *reports 1932* and *1933*.

[564] *Report 1934*: 155.

[565] Although only the *Stela of Mami* is inscribed with the deity's name, the iconographical criteria for other are widely accepted. On iconography of Baʿal, see, e.g., Cornelius 1994.

[566] E.g., the famous *Baal au Foudre* (RS 4.427; fig. 29) stela was discovered in a slope west of the temple, more than 10 m from the temple precinct, see *RSO VI*: 294, 322. It was possibly discarded there from the temple precinct during the destruction/looting of the city; see *RSO VI*: 299. In contrast, Gilbert 2021: 393–396 argues these might have belonged to the public space outside the temple.

[567] This has not been used as argument by Schaeffer in his report.

[568] See *report 2005 & 2006*: 37; and *RSO XIX*: 84–85.

The *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* was unearthed during the 6th campaign in 1934.[569] Already in the report to this campaign, it was suggested that this temple was dedicated to Dagan based on the discovery of two inscribed stelae.[570] Since 1990, a more detailed survey has been carried out. Unfortunately, the ruins were badly damaged by then.[571]

The chronology of the structure poses similar problems as did the sanctuary of Ba'al, but it still provides us with some very interesting evidence.[572] The foundations date back to the 19th/18th century BC, contemporary with the *Temple of Ba'al*. The evidence also suggests that there was a preceding cultic structure, allegedly similar in some aspects to the *Temple of the Obelisks* in Byblos.[573] The previous structure, which may date to the EBA, seems to have been partially incorporated into the then-new temple.[574] We have already mentioned that the temple has not been reconstructed after its destruction around 1250 BC. In fact, it seems that apart from the two stelae, there are no discoveries from the final phase of Ugarit's existence. Thus, the last phase of this structure poses several important questions regarding its importance and functioning. For example, was its reconstruction ever intended? In what ways did the terrace function in the cult? Could some deities have been present there permanently? Further research is needed in this regard.

In this section, we will only briefly outline the reconstruction of the temple in its phase before the destruction around 1250 BC.[575] The temple itself is very similar in plan (fig. 21) to the *Temple of Ba'al*. Its external dimensions were ca. 22 x 17 m, and its entrance was also oriented south, slightly to the east. However, the temple foundation walls were much more massive – the northern foundation wall was ca. 4,4 m thick.

The foundations of the *vestibule* were not strictly rectangular but rather trapezoidal. However, it is probable that the walls of the temple itself were then constructed regularly and not so thick. The structure of the *vestibule* is virtually the same as with the previous temple – it was accessed from a *courtyard* by a few steps, and the entrance portico was supported by wooden columns.

The *cella* was most likely accessed from the *vestibule*. However, the foundations, which are the only remains, do not show any indication of the position of an entrance. On the eastern side of the *cella*, the foundations suggest the presence of a staircase leading to the upper floors. It seems that the staircase went from south to north, where it turned west and was built into the northern wall, which was thicker than the rest of the walls. The inner dimensions of the *cella* room are reconstructed by Callot to ca. 9 x 7 m. We lack any evidence for an internal division of the *cella*, as we have seen in the *Temple of Ba'al*.

The temple was accessible from the *courtyard*. The current state of the remains is very unfortunate, and the courtyard is hard to define. However, it seems that it was much smaller than the one in the precinct of the *Temple of Ba'al*. The main gate was probably situated in the south, but

---

[569] However, we may see in *report 1933*: Pl. XVII that substantial part of it had been already unearthed before.

[570] RS 6.021 and RS 6.028, see *report 1934*: 155; and *RSO VI*: 301–303.

[571] See *RSO XIX*: 67–73.

[572] Following summary is based on Callot's study in *RSO XIX*: 83–86, unless stated otherwise.

[573] This is based on a discovery of stone sockets for stelae, obelisks, betyls etc. in the south-eastern corner of the precinct; see *RSO XIX*: 79.

[574] See *report 2009 & 2010*: 463 or Matoïan & al-Bahloul 2016: 286.

[575] For a more detailed discussion, see Callot's description in *RSO XIX*: 73–79.

the precinct was also accessible through an annexed building in the southwest corner. While no traces of an altar were found, there probably was one. Callot situates it in the eastern part of the *courtyard*, which was more spacious.

Once again, we lack proper evidence for the reconstruction of the upper floors. However, the general consensus is that this temple was also a "temple tower", similar in outer visuals to the *Temple of Baʿal*.[576]

5.1.3.3　Dedication to Dagan

While there seems to be little doubt about the identification of the *Temple of Baʿal* among scholars, the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* is far more complicated.[577] This designation is based on the two stelae dedicated to Dagan. However, synchronism with the Ugaritic alphabetical cuneiform and persons mentioned on the stelae[578] suggests that it was rather the cultic terrace that was related to this deity and not necessarily the temple that stood there before. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to suppose some degree of continuity of this sacred space. The absence of the "temple of Dagan", *bt dgn*,[579] from the Ugaritic corpus seems appropriate in this context – there was no such temple when these records were made.

Some scholars interpret this structure as dedicated to Ilu,[580] sometimes making Ilu and Dagan a fused entity.[581] Both Ilu and Dagan were prominent deities in Ugaritic ritual texts. Unlike the temple of Dagan, a *bt il*, the "temple of Ilu" is mentioned in the corpus. This question remains to be resolved, but I am more inclined towards separating these two deities in most contexts. After all, the ritual texts consider them as separate entities, too. Therefore, I would also separate their sanctuaries, albeit they might have even shared one. As discussed below, possible candidates for the sanctuary of Ilu may be the *Temple of Rhytons* or the *Temple with the Rock-Hewn Throne*. Also, the temple of Ilu may still be unearthed in the future.[582]

---

[576] For reconstruction, see *RSO XIX*: figs. 52–67.

[577] Yon 2006: 114.

[578] Queen Ṯariyelli – KTU 6.13; and an official ʿUzzinu – *KTU* 6.14.

[579] At least no mention of this term is known to me, nor to Merlo & Xella 1999: 303. Niehr 1994: 422 notes *KTU¹* 1.104: 13 which has been used as a reference to *bt dg*n*. However, the line is damaged in this part. Reconsidered reading in *KTU* now renders the passage as *bt d*[[x]]⌜t⌝*t* and Pardee 2002a: 34–35 *d*[-]*n*, suggesting filling in a temple of *Ditānu*.

[580] E.g., Crowell 2002: 44, Merlo & Xella 1999: 303, or Niehr 1994.

[581] E.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 22 and 39.

[582] Pardee 2002a: 170 suggests that *bt ilm rbm* in *KTU* 4.149: 1–2, the "temple of the Great Gods", may be the temple of Ilu, where these great gods were also worshipped. This does not bring us any closer to resolving the issue of the temple of Ilu. On the contrary, this hypothesis may further complicate the issue, indicating that different "temples" mentioned in the texts may indeed be different sanctuaries, sometimes located within larger temples.

5.1.4 Sanctuaries in the Royal Zone

5.1.4.1 The Palatial Temple and the Pillared Building
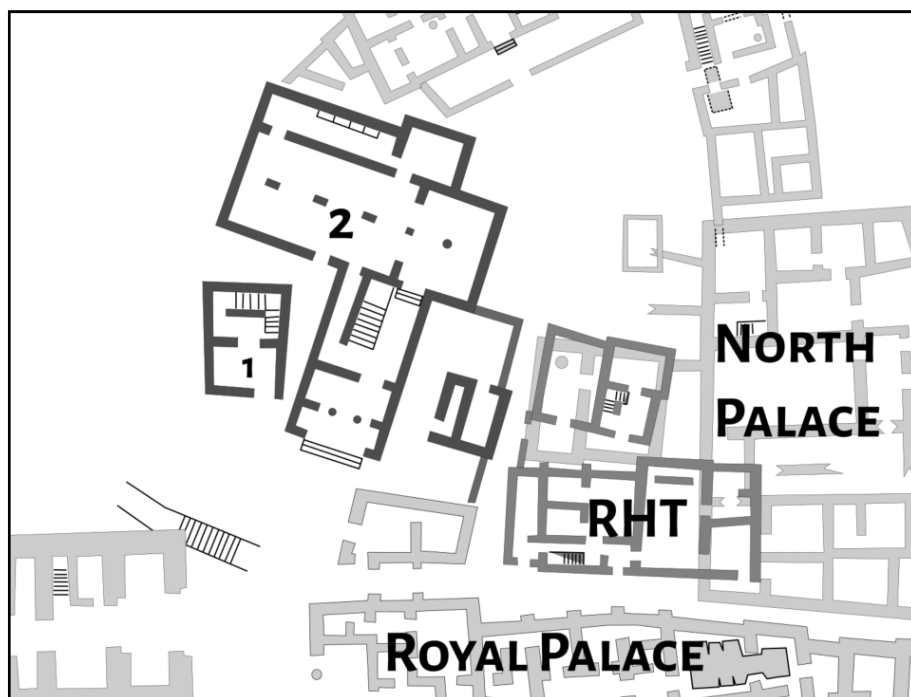
Figure 22 North part of the *Royal Zone* with the *Palatial Temple* (no. 1) and the *Pillared Building* (no.2).
Drawn by the author after Yon 2006: figs. 18, 20, 25, 30, and 33.

There is a temple structure north of the *Royal Palace* (fig. 16, PT; fig. 22, building 1). Excavations in this area began in 1937 but were interrupted shortly afterwards by World War II and resumed in 1948. It is often designated as a "Hurrian Temple", "Temple with the Mittanian axe", or "Palatial/Royal Temple".[583] I prefer the designation *Palatial Temple* due to the proximity to the *Royal Palace*, while not implicating it was necessarily used exclusively for royal cults. The terms relating to Hurrian culture are attributed to this structure due to discoveries of Hurrian/Mittanian style/origin, and there is a possibility that the temple might have been connected to rich Hurrian influences at Ugarit.[584] However, its dedication eludes us completely.

The temple foundations date back to the end of the MBA.[585] The building is rectangular, and its dimensions are ca. 12 x 8 m, and it consists of two rooms. The entrance is, unlike in the temples at the *Acropolis*, located in the eastern part of the southern wall. Thus, the entrance is not axial but bent-axis. The back room, possibly the *cella*,[586] included a staircase, and we may suppose that this temple had an upper terrace, but probably not a tower since the walls were too thin to support it.[587] In the *cella*, mostly in the corridor below the staircase, a number of oil lamps, miniature vases, Cypriote ceramics, and Egyptian scarabs were discovered. These are interpreted as votive offerings.[588] In addition, the excavators unearthed two copper figurines, possibly plated with gold and electrum

---

[583] Yon 2006: 49.
[584] See, e.g., Válek 2021: 49–54.
[585] For short description, see Yon 2006: 49.
[586] De Tarragon 1995: 203.
[587] De Tarragon 1995: 203–204.
[588] Yon 2006: 49; de Tarragon 1995: 204, *Ugaritica I*: 126–128.

and with inlaid eyes,[589] and an iron axe with a copper and gold handle of high artistic value featuring a boar and two lion heads.[590]

The figures and the axe were interpreted as carrying Hurrian stylistic influences based on a comparison with similar statues from Ḫattuša. This led to the designation of the temple as Hurrian. However, Aegean influences for floral motives on the axe handle were also noted by Yon. The stratigraphy of these objects places them outside the scope of this thesis: 19th–18th centuries for the statues and 15th–14th centuries for the axe.[591] This dating is consistent with the above-mentioned votive offerings,[592] which divide these finds into two depots. In sum, these depots highlight above all the value and prestige of foreign (Mittanian, Cypriote, or Egyptian) objects and can hardly say anything relevant to the "ethic" identity of the venerated deities.[593]

Still, this does not mean that Hurrian deities were not venerated here. Actually, they must have been venerated somewhere at Ugarit because they were an integral part of the cult. In addition, royal cults feature Hurrian deities on several occasions, and the proximity to the *Royal Palace* may be taken into consideration. Last but not least, the bent-axis scheme of this temple may suggest Hurrian-Hittite influences.[594] While this remains pure speculation, the *Palatial Temple* makes a good candidate for hosting Hurrian deities.

The *Palatial Temple* is surrounded from the north and east by the *Pillared Building* (fig. 16, PB; fig. 22, no. 2). This structure was built around the sanctuary only in the 13th century BC.[595] It was initially interpreted as a residence[596] or as a royal stable/manège.[597] However, it seems probable that the building was used for community (cultic?) ceremonies/gatherings, possibly connected with activities in the *Palatial Temple*.[598] Both the temple and the *Pillared Building* had access to a large area in front of them and direct access to the *Royal Plaza*.[599] The building was rather large, consisting of two main parts in the shape of "L". The *Pillared Room* itself measured 29 x 10 m and was paved with stone and equipped with a trough embedded in the ground. Its two northern annexes were also paved.[600] The *Pillared Room* was divided into two parts, each of them having its own access from the southern part of the complex. This part was internally divided into several parts and provided a monumental entrance to the complex. It included a staircase, which implies an upper floor/terrace.

---

[589] See Yon 2006: 49, 132–133, *Ugaritica I*: 128–140.

[590] See Yon 2006: 49, 166–167, *Ugaritica I*: 107–125.

[591] *Ugaritica I*: 112, 133.

[592] *Ugaritica I*: 126–127.

[593] The visual appearance of the deities may be misleading. One should consider strong Egyptian artistic influence on many of the Ugaritic statues of deities – a fact which does not make them Egyptian deities. See Válek 2021: 55–60.

[594] Comparison may be made with the Ḫalābian temple of the Storm-God. There, multiple renovations and additional constructions during the Hittite period gradually changed the temple's plan from axial to bent-axis as well as modified its decoration and equipment, see Kohlmeyer 2009.

[595] See Callot 1986 for the reconstruction of the development of the area.

[596] See *report 1938 II*: 313–317, Pl. XXXV.

[597] Yon 2006: 48.

[598] Yon 2006: 49.

[599] See also Gilbert 2021: 388–390 on a functional analysis of the adjacent area as public(?) space.

[600] Yon 2006: 47–48.
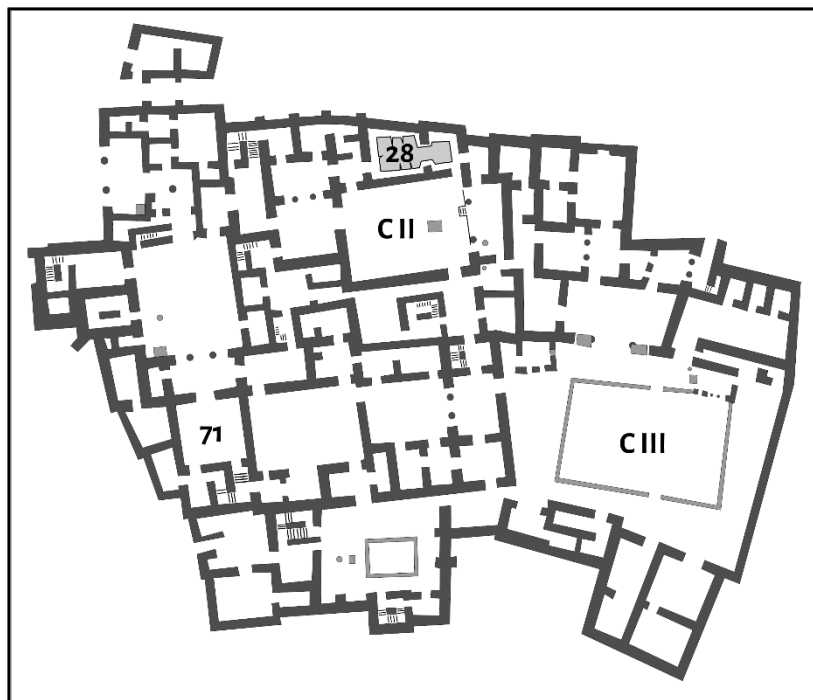
Figure 23 *Royal Palace* – plan.
Drawn by the author after Yon 2006: fig. 20.

While we have textual evidence that connects the king and the palace to the cultic activities at Ugarit, the archaeological remains of the *Royal Palace* (fig. 16, RP)[601] provide only limited evidence, which is hard to pair with the texts. To begin with, I must state that I do not share the opinion of del Olmo Lete, who suggested that the *Royal Palace* functioned as a *house* (= temple) *of the divine (dead) kings* and connected the royal cult as a cult of the dead.[602] Nonetheless, I believe that the temple included cultic space,[603] and some of the cultic activities were connected with space adjacent to the palace tombs (fig. 23, room 28 and court II). Since the temples and shrines are, in fact, conceptualised as "houses", almost any room within the palace might have had this function. However, to my knowledge, no cultic equipment indicating such a function of any of the rooms has been unearthed in the palace. Besides, the palace had at least one upper floor, which might have hosted sanctuaries, too. Therefore, we shall direct our attention to only two places in the palace with the most potential for hosting some ritual activities.

Tombs were discovered in the northern part of the palace (fig. 23, room 28). The often-used designation "necropolis" may be a misleading one since it included only two vaulted tombs.[604] However, no traces of the deceased or funerary offerings were discovered in that place.[605] Thus, it might have been prepared for future use only (?). Including the tombs within the royal residential

---

[601] Excavated since 1937, but mostly after the World War II, between 1950–1955.

[602] Del Olmo Lete 2014a: 23–24. See Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[603] While precise meaning and interpretation eludes us, Ugaritic terms *ḫmn*, *ʿly*, *qdš*, *kbm*, or *mṣd* (and possibly also *tgml/ʿgml*) probably relate to cultic structures, be it sanctuaries, chapels, temples, altars, or other, located within the *Royal Palace*. See, e.g., *KTU* 1.106 or 1.112, translated in Pardee 2002a, no. 8 and 14.

[604] One of them included two burial chambers, see *report 1948, 1948 & 1950*: 16–17.

[605] Yon 2006: 40.

area corresponds with the general burial practices at Ugarit. Whether the adjacent *Court II* was a place of ritual activities connected to the burial area is uncertain but possible. We will shortly return to the royal tombs within the discussion of domestic tombs (see below).

The other possible space used during religious activities might have been the *garden* located in *Court III* (fig. 23, C III) in the eastern part of the palace. The garden itself was possibly secluded from the courtyard by a wall[606] and was rather extensive, measuring ca. 14 x 23 m.[607] In the northwest part of the courtyard, there is a structure which yielded high-quality objects made of ivory.[608] It was suggested by the excavators that this structure was not the original positioning of these objects but that these were moved here during a fire-related evacuation.[609] There is a possibility that this *garden* may be connected to the term *gn* from the Ugaritic corpus.[610] The ritual interpretation remains purely speculative.[611]

The symbolic potential of the *Royal Palace* is not exhausted by the presence of possible cultic spaces. It has been primarily the monumental seat of the Ugaritic king. But it was far from being a wealthy residence of the royal family. While the palace, sometimes together with the broader *Royal Zone*, is often regarded as an area more or less strictly separated from the rest of the city,[612] the situation must have been much more complex. As the written sources suggest, the palace worked as a lively administrative centre of the kingdom, probably full of officials, scribes, servants, and other people who interacted with the palace administration. The palace and royal family also interacted with the rest of the city. One modality of these interactions was the royal cult. But the permeability of the activities of the palace is also reflected in the texts from the *House of Urtēnu*.[613] However, the exact nature of these interactions mostly eludes us. An interesting case study would be, for example, to interpret the throne room (probably room 71 in fig. 23[614]) as a place of encounter between the king and his subjects. An encounter which was probably of a highly ritualised nature. We will return to the issue of royal ideology later in Chapter *7 Politics and Religion*. Unfortunately, I have fallen into the trap of text-oriented research, and the *Royal Palace* and *Royal Zone,* which occupy an extensive area, have fallen out of my focus. However, these places must have significantly contributed to the construction of the royal ideology at Ugarit. With late regret, I must leave this issue to future explorations of Ugaritic royal ideology.

---

[606] Up to 2 m heigh, see Yon 2006: 42.

[607] *Ugaritica IV*: 15.

[608] E.g., the famous bed-panel (RS 16.056+28.031), a sculpture of a head of a young man, inlaid with metal and stone (RS 18.221), or a sculpture presenting a woman holding her breast, similar to other iconographic materials presenting female deities (RS 16.404); see Gachet-Bizollon 2008 and Yon 2006: 43, 136–139. For the ivories of Ugarit in general, see *RSO XVI*.

[609] *Ugaritica IV*: 17.

[610] On the other hand, del Olmo Lete connects *gn* with the "necropolis" and perceives it as a royal cemetery/funerary area; see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 24–25.

[611] It has also been suggested that the *Court III* functioned, at least in its south-eastern part, as a place for the material supplying of the palace; see, e.g., McGeough 2007: 244 or Yon 2006: 42–43 for a brief discussion.

[612] See, e.g., Yon 2006: 35, Margueron 2000: 206, or comment of Pucci in Gilbert 2021: 405 contra the postulated accessibility of this area in the article.

[613] See references throughout Chapter *4 Texts and Religion.*

[614] Yon 2006: 38.

5.1.5   The Temple of Rhytons

A very interesting example of a sanctuary is the so-called *Temple of Rhytons* (fig. 16, TR; fig. 24). This structure testifies to the incorporation of sanctuaries into residential architecture and may testify to cultic activities parallel to the official temple cult. The archaeology of this structure has been explored in detail by Mallet[615] and later summarised and updated by Yon.[616]

The structure was unearthed in the *City Centre* between 1978 and 1982. The stratigraphy suggests that the building was constructed during the LBA, possibly during the 14th/13th century BC, and underwent substantial changes after 1250 BC. These changes correspond to similar activities throughout the city, probably due to the earthquake we have already mentioned in connection with the temples of Baʿal and Dagan. We will focus on the final phase of this sanctuary.
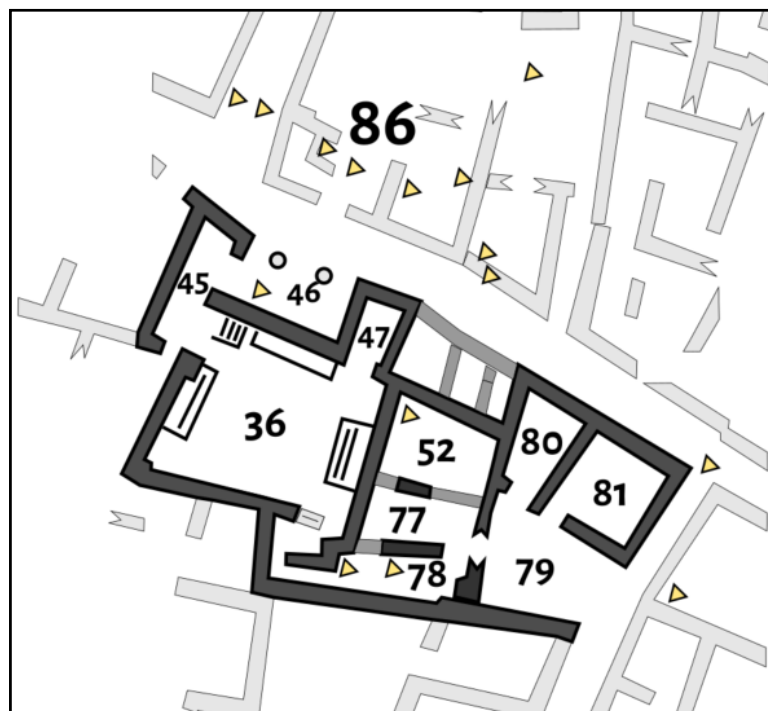
Figure 24 Temple of Rhytons in its final phase – plan.
Drawn by the author after Yon 2006: fig. 44, 1996: fig. 1, and 1987: fig. 1.

The plan (fig. 24) shows us a building consisting of several rooms. The dimensions of this structure were about 19,5 x 12,5 m. The building may be divided into three main parts: the entrance area (nos. 45 and 46), the sanctuary (nos. 36 and 47), and annexes/auxiliary rooms (nos. 55, 52, 77, 79, 80, and 81).

The entrance area facilitated access from the street located north of the building. The entrance made the inner sanctuary accessible only indirectly, separating it entirely from the outside. The entrance from the street was probably roofed and supported by two pillars.

The inner sanctuary consisted of a large room (ca. 45 m², the longest side was ca. 8 m long) and a smaller room northeast of the large one. The main room was ca. 0,75 m below the entrance level and was accessed by a few steps. It seems that alongside the northern and western walls, there

---

[615] Mallet 1987.
[616] Yon 1996: 406–412.

were "benches". These could have been used either for sitting or for presenting offerings, possibly each of them for a different purpose due to their different structures. By the eastern wall, a structure that may be interpreted as an altar/offering platform was discovered, consisting of four steps, the uppermost of them measuring ca. 2,3 x 0,45 m. The lower step was probably buried under the ground during the final phase. While it is far from being certain, the smaller room (no. 47, ca. 1,4 x 2,2 m) may be interpreted as a *cella*.

The third section of the building constitutes annexes of the sanctuary. These annexes included a courtyard (no. 79) which was accessible from the eastern street. The house probably had an upper floor, but the location of access to it remains uncertain. Also, these annexes testify to a reduction of the size of the building from the south after 1250 BC – it seems that the house south of this temple complex was enlarged and interfered with it.[617]

The functioning of the temple might not have been limited to the above-described complex, but it could have been connected with its surroundings. Namely, the area north of the sanctuary (no. 86), just across the street, included a large oil press (before 1250 BC), which Yon connects with the economic activities of the sanctuary. During the final phase, an open space, a courtyard, or a garden might have been there.

The modern name of the building is based on fifteen[618] rhytons in Syrian, Mycenaean, Minoan, and Cypriote styles discovered in or in the vicinity of this complex, probably used for libations.[619] The distribution of these rhyta is an additional reason why to connect space no. 86 with the sanctuary itself. This complex's cultic character is further supported by its layout and furnishing.[620] The only possible connection with royalty, and consequently with the official cult, is a cultic stand that may depict a *priest-king*.[621] However, I think it is probable that activities within this sanctuary were in parallel to the official activities within the temples on the *Acropolis* or the *Royal Palace*.[622] This does not diminish its elite status.

The main questions to be answered remain the dedication and functioning of this sanctuary. The benches and rhytons may lead us to believe that this sanctuary hosted some sort of collective cult activity.[623] Some tend to connect this sanctuary specifically with the cultic institution of *marziḥu*.[624] While any other kind of group gatherings with a touch of ceremonial/cultic/ritual activity remains possible, the *marziḥu* is the best (and only) attested in writing.

---

[617] For this structure, see Mallet & Matoïan 2001.

[618] Yon 1987: 345 and 1996: 415 mentions 17 rhytons in total, but two of them may be too far from the place in discussion.

[619] However, it has been noted that they might have been used as serving vessels; see Pardee 1996: 280. In my opinion these two functions are not mutually exclusive. See also McGeough 2003: 413–414. For photos and drawings, see Yon 2006: 150–151, no. 37 and 1987.

[620] See Yon 1996: 413–145 for a summary and Mallet 1987: 239–246 for an overview of the discovered material.

[621] RS 78.041+81.3659; see Yon 2006: 152–153, no. 41 and 1996: 414–415.

[622] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 23.

[623] Yon 1996: 413.

[624] See e.g., Yon 1996: 416. On the other hand, different places as a space for this has been suggested, e.g., the *House with the Stone Vase* by McGeough 2003. Because we know this cultic institution has been connected with different groups, these interpretations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Actually, some royal grants attest to houses given to different *marziḥu* groups (see Chapter *6.5.3 References to Religious Realia in Legal Texts*). *Marziḥu* is further discussed in Chapter *6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities*.

Some scholars suggest that this temple might have been connected with the cult of Ilu.[625] This suggestion is based on the statue of an "aged sitting god" who is interpreted as Ilu[626] and which has been discovered in the proximity of this structure.[627] In addition, *marziḥu* taking place in this structure would connect local cultic activities to Ilu thanks to KTU 1.114.[628] At the same time, as Yon rightly notes, this probably was not the principal sanctuary of Ilu, whose representations are dispersed across the city.[629] Possible attestations of multiple representations of any divinity, for example, of different manifestations of Baʿal, do not allow us to conclude that if this temple belonged to Ilu, then the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan* or any other couldn't have. Considering the importance of Ilu, I think that even if this dedication is right, he probably would have an official and "more proper" sanctuary somewhere else.

5.1.6 Other possible Cultic Structures

Yon suggests that the *Temple of Rhytons* is probably not the only example of a sanctuary being incorporated within a residential area.[630] Within this chapter, two other possible cultic structures are briefly discussed. We must also bear in mind that most of the tell remains to be unearthed, and more may resurface.

5.1.6.1 Court III of the "Great Building" in the Area of the Rampart[631]

One of the recently unearthed areas that may be interpreted as sanctuaries is located in the *Rampart* area (fig. 16, CIII). *Court III*[632] is a part of a larger household complex called the *Great House*. It is the largest court of the building complex, covering ca. 110 m². Its identification as a sanctuary relies on several discoveries: a stela depicting Baʿal (?) and two persons,[633] an ivory hand,[634] and an ashlar stone interpreted as an altar (*in situ*). The stone is accompanied by finds of pottery, animal bones, ivory objects, stone jewellery, cylinder seals, or bronze arrow-heads and armour scales. These objects are interpreted as votive offerings. However, the interpretation of the ashlar stone as an altar, especially when a connection with the discoveries of similar structures in Minet el-Beida is made,[635] may be doubted. Many of the structures interpreted as cultic by Schaeffer, including the altar of

---

[625] E.g., Yon 1996: 416 or Curtis 1999: 11, 16.

[626] RS 88.070, see Yon 2006: 130–131.

[627] I have not been able to find the precise location of this object with certainty. Consulting *report 1988* did not help.

[628] On the other hand, *marziḥu* is connected to this structure also because of its supposed dedication to Ilu. These too interpretations support each other, but the other evidence (namely, the statue for Ilu and rhytons plus communal character of the sanctuary for *marziḥu*) help us to avoid a completely circular argument.

[629] Yon 1996: 416.

[630] Yon 1996: 405–406, 413.

[631] This sanctuary has been studied and interpreted by al-Bahloul 2017. Online is also available her talk from 2016 conference *Société et religion à Ougarit* which includes some information unpublished in the reports or in her 2017 article. See YouTube, *Société et religion à Ougarit (4) - Thomas Römer (2015-2016)*, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjJZGQ1W_do [accessed 31ˢᵗ August 2023]. The *Rampart* area is one of the most recently excavated – since 2005 (see *reports 2005 & 2006*: 37–44, *2007 & 2008*: 25–29, and *2009 & 2010*: 442–447). An Islamic cemetery including more than 200 tombs was later build up in this area. This has led to some disruptions of the LBA layers.

[632] In *report 2009 & 2010*: 442–447, this court is designated as *cour XVIII*, probably following numbering of the rooms.

[633] RS 010/1; see *report 2009 & 2010*: 447, fig. 7.

[634] RS 09/5, see *report 2009 & 2010*: 446, fig. 4 or al-Bahloul 2017: 628, fig. 19

[635] See *report 1931*: Pl. III.

Minet el-Beida, were later recognised as features of domestic architecture.[636] On the other hand, the stela and some of the finds support the cultic interpretation. Among these finds, we may highlight the ivory hand, which has been drilled with holes allowing the flow of liquids from the wrist into the palm. Connecting it with libation practices seems not too far-reaching. In addition, a jug[637] comparable to the famous "jug of Ilu"[638] may be tentatively interpreted as "ceremonial", too.

The court itself was walled from the surroundings, and access to it was provided by a bent-axis schemed entrance. Surrounding rooms are interpreted as annexes to the sanctuary. The western annexe was an elevated area accessible by two steps from the court. Just as was the case elsewhere at the tell, the court surroundings underwent some architectural modifications during the last phase of Ugarit, mostly leading towards intensified internal division. In general, the architecture is comparable to domestic architecture attested elsewhere in the city. Stairs indicate that there was an upper floor, and a chamber tomb was a part of this complex. An interesting find was a pit tomb in the northern part of the court, dated to the LBA II. Possibly, it might have been connected with some ritual activities in the court. The size of the *Great Building* (thirty-three rooms, three courts, three staircases, and two family tombs) and the finds suggest an overall elite context.

If the interpretation of this court as a cultic structure is right, it provides new evidence for the dispersion of religious activities into the city, out of the more "obvious" contexts. In contrast to the *Temple of Rhytons*, *Court III* suggests the actual incorporation of ritual activities into the domestic context. While the *Temple of Rhytons* was in a domestic area, the building itself was probably not domestic, but the *Great House* of the *Rampart* seemed to be an elite household. At the same time, I would be restricted towards interpreting this lieu as a domestic cult in its narrow meaning. The size may suggest a more important, possibly communal or (semi-)official, nature.

Two cylinder seals inscribed in Ugaritic were discovered in this area and may help us to identify the owner or to specify the function of this alleged sanctuary. Unfortunately, these were not processed, and to my knowledge, it remains so.[639] Building up on interpretations regarding the *Temple of Rhytons*, this building is yet another possible candidate for the organization of *marziḫu* drinking activities – the space allows the grouping of people, and evidence for drinking activities may be deduced from the "ceremonial" jug. Obviously, such a specific interpretation is, for now, a pure speculation. We should be cautious in readily interpreting all places where ritual and drinking might have been joined as places of *marziḫu* activities. Nonetheless, this place is a material that may lead to new interpretations regarding (non-official?) communal cults.

---

[636] See *RSO XIII*: 10. Well known example is the interpretation of the "cultic libation installations" for the tombs, which were recognized as not-cultic already by Schaeffer in his later works, but in the meantime, this interpretation became well rooted. See Pitard 1994.

[637] See al-Bahloul 2017: 631, fig. 23; no excavation number is given.

[638] RS 24.440, see Yon 2006 146–147.

[639] Their photo is available in the talk by al-Bahloul (see note 631, time 17:59 on). By looking at it, I am not sure whether the seals include a script with some readable and meaningful content or are just mimicking it. The case of mimicking would be an interesting example of the materiality of script, beyond the content. However, publishing of these seals is needed for further interpretations.

5.1.6.2 Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne

Last but not least, the building north of the *Royal Palace* is worth our attention. Thanks to the discovery of a stone stool,[640] this building has received the designation *Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne* (figs. 16 and 22, RHT). A broad discussion on this building and arguments on why it should be considered a temple has been provided by Callot.[641] This building is yet another example of how sacred architecture might have been incorporated into the fabric of the city, this time not in the residential area but in the *Royal Zone*.

If the interpretations of Callot are correct,[642] this building is an excellent material for studying the construction of the sacred space. He identified three consecutive phases of this building:[643] 1) ca. 14th/15th century to mid-13th century when it was destroyed by the earthquake, like many parts of the city; 2) the reconstruction phase of the building till the destruction of Ugarit; 3) temporal reoccupation of this building for cultic purposes.

At least during the reconstruction phase of this building, it extended over the former *Northern Palace*, which had been long out of use at that time.[644] It seems that the area of the *Norther Palace* has been, in part, used as an auxiliary area for the construction of the *Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne*.[645] It seems that in most parts, the former palace was never reused, for example, for residential space. This may be in direct contrast with the supposed influx of people into the city, which occasionally resulted in the division of households and tightening of space.[646] The decision not to reuse this part of the city indicates that the royalty still had plans with it, of which the discussed building was a part. The earthquake might have been one of the important factors leading to large repair projects, which has postponed the construction activities in this area.[647]

According to Callot, the construction of this site was never finished.[648] It seems that only the western part of the building, which provided the auxiliary rooms for the future temple, was rebuilt, and the temple area itself was only under construction when Ugarit fell. The throne itself was not placed in the sanctuary but was left in these auxiliary rooms. The foundations of the supposed temple area possibly indicate an intention to build a roofed tower temple, in many ways similar to the temples of the *Acropolis*.[649] The main difference might have been a much more spacious auxiliary area. Presumably, the temple court was planned over the former *Northern Palace*. In the interpretation of Callot, it was the unfinished state of this temple which allowed its reoccupation

---

[640] RS 90.001, see *RSO VI*: 346–374, 350, fig. 1. Based on this finding, Callot 2013: 101 preliminary suggested attribution of this temple to Ilu who is usually seen as the seated deity.

[641] Callot 2013.

[642] Throughout his discussion, Callot himself is very cautious.

[643] Callot 2013: 90–91.

[644] See Yon 2006: 60–63 for a description of the *Northern Palace*, esp. p. 62 for the date of construction and abandonment.

[645] Callot 2013: 98.

[646] Yon 1992a: 114–115 or 1992b: 29. On an alternative explanation of the internal division of the space, see Schloen 2001:

[647] In addition, Callot connects the construction of the *Ras Ibn Hani* palace with the consequences of the earthquake. In his opinion, it was an urgently constructed temporally residence necessary due to the reconstructions of the *Royal Palace* at Ugarit. See Callot 2006.

[648] Callot 2013: 96–97.

[649] Callot 2013: 98–99.

after the destruction of the city. There were no upper parts to collapse, so the reuse was much easier than in other parts of the city.[650]

The outlined history of this building opens up some interesting questions. For example, why was the reconstruction of this space given preference over the reconstruction of the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan*? Could it have been thanks to the proximity to the palace, or were there some theological reasons? Another intriguing question is why it was never finished. Presumably, there were more than 50 years between the destructive earthquake and the demise of the city. Does this mean that the investments in the cultic spaces were only of secondary importance to the crown and to the city?[651] How did the cult function during the reconstruction of the sanctuaries? Callot has identified an altar and basin in the temple part of this building. These could possibly indicate some cultic activities were carried out there even during the reconstruction process. However, he suggests they belonged only to the third phase (reoccupation).[652] The issue of the functioning of the cult is actually even more pressing when we presume the simultaneous destruction of the most important cult spaces. How long did it take to repair at least the *Temple of Baʿal*? And where were the deities placed in the meantime? Does this mean there were enough cultic spaces that could accommodate them? Were some deities destroyed or damaged during the collapse of the temples? Or did they leave their earthly statues and wait for their abodes to be reconstructed? I believe that when considering the lived reality of religion in a culture where deities are very much present in their earthly (a)bodies, all of these questions are important. Unfortunately, the answers to them are, at least for now, left only to our imagination. Hopefully, new sources or careful contextualization of the old ones may lead to some reasonable suggestions.

5.1.7   Temples in the Kingdom of Ugarit

There is only very limited knowledge of temples/sanctuaries outside the city of Ugarit. While we are almost certain that such places existed, to my knowledge, there are none attested archaeologically. Some cultic spaces were initially identified by the excavators in Minet el-Beida[653] but were later recognised as more profane parts of domestic architecture.[654] Nakhai mentions, unfortunately, without any reference, that in Minet el-Beida, architectural assemblages commonly included altars.[655] This suggestion is probably based on the previous interpretation. The domestic architecture of Minet el-Beida also included tombs in its plan,[656] and the same goes for the *Royal Palace of Ras Ibn Hani*,[657] and we may suppose some ritual activities related to the dead.[658] Also, numerous artefacts of possible cultic nature – for example, statuettes of deities – have been unearthed in both of these sites. Some texts from Ras Ibn Hani are related to religion and include ritual tables, which suggest the presence of local cultic activities.[659]

---

[650] Callot 2013: 100.

[651] Contrast this with the presumed swift construction of the palace at *Ras Ibn Hani*; see note 647.

[652] Callot 2013: 99.

[653] E.g., *report 1930*: 2.

[654] See comments in *RSO XIII*: 10.

[655] Nakhai 2001: 125.

[656] After all, a tomb was the very first discovery which has led to the excavations at Ugarit, see Albanèse 1929.

[657] *RIH I*: 30–34.

[658] See Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs* for further discussion.

[659] See *RIH I*: 93–94. The texts were published in *RIH II* and are now also included in *KTU*.

To my knowledge, so far, the best – but also outdated and very brief – study of local sanctuaries form the kingdom of Ugarit and their involvement in religious activities of the city was provided by Heltzer.[660] He briefly summarises texts that inform us about the cults of some deities in individual villages of the kingdom, but there is very little to say. In the context of this thesis, which focuses primarily on the religion of the city itself, it is only important to highlight the fact that religious activities were not limited to the city but were dispersed across the whole kingdom. While it is probably not surprising information, it is good to be aware of it.

5.2   Religion in Domestic Context

Religion does not permeate the space only on the level of sacral architecture. We have already seen that the places of cultic activities might have been directly incorporated into the fabric of residential areas and are, in many ways, hardly distinguishable from domestic architecture.[661] It is possible that more buildings were connected to (communal) religious activities, [662] but we may not be able to recognise them properly because such activities have not left any trace. There is also another perspective on this issue. Because religion was something lived and practised, even outside of the proper temples, it is reasonable to suppose that some traces may occasionally appear in domestic contexts, too. In this section, we will only briefly consider several types of sources that attest to the permeability of religion within the households in the city.

5.2.1   Households, Religion, and Texts

For us, the most noticeable manifestation of religion in houses is of textual character. The most visible examples are the *House of the High Priest* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. The sources discovered in these buildings witness to state- and temple-organised activities, reflecting religion as an occupation-related and institutional matter. Should we not discover the tablets and other inscribed materials there, we would hardly ever associate these buildings with clergy and with cultic activities.

Some other written sources attest to the dispersion of the official activities within the city, too. For example, several lists of deities corresponding to the lived practice of sacrifices were discovered in the *House of Rapānu* or *House of Urtēnu*.[663] In addition, the *House of Urtēnu* yielded tablet *KTU* 1.161, recording the royal funeral and several copies of a list enumerating divinised kings[664] of Ugarit or the Akkadian excerpt of the *Baʿal Cycle*.[665] The exact reasons for the appearance of these sources within domestic (albeit elite) contexts mostly elude us and are subject to more or less substantiated speculations.

An interesting case for the dispersion of official cults into the domestic context is present in *KTU* 1.119. There, some sacrifices are said to be carried out in the house of *ṭaʿʿāyu*-official.[666] If we

---

[660] Heltzer 1976: 71–74.

[661] For studies on domestic architecture, see esp. *RSO I* and *X*, Yon, Lombard & Reniso 1987 (in *RSO III*). See also interpretation of domestic architecture in regard to the social organization in Schloen 2001: 317–348.

[662] We have already mentioned, for example, possible ritual interpretations of *the House with the Stone Vase*, see McGeough 2003 or Gilbert 2021: 390–393.

[663] RS 20.024 and 92.2004. See Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*

[664] RS 88.2012, 94.2501, 94.2518, and 94.2518. See Arnaud 1998 and Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*

[665] RS 94.2953 (Arnaud 2007, no. 65).

[666] *KTU* 1.119: 8: *bt . tʿy ⌜⌝ ydbḥ*. "(the previous offerings) are sacrificed in the house of the *ṭaʿʿāyu*-official". See also Pardee 2002a, no. 13. See also Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations* on the cultic roles of this office.

understand this text correctly, it attests to the possibility of bringing the cult outside of exclusive temple contexts.[667]

Several medical-magic texts may then be related to more private-oriented matters in the household context. For example, two tablets from the *House of Urtēnu* show a possibility of highly individualised practice of magical activities. In *KTU* 1.178, Urtēnu is marked as the one for whose benefit the incantation works.[668] *KTU* 1.179 then indicates authorship of the incantation – by Ilimilku, the author of known Ugaritic narratives.[669] Incantations and other medical-magical texts were also discovered in other households, especially in Akkadian[670] and a few in Ugaritic.[671] The possibility that the Akkadian texts were also relevant in practice is supported by several Akkadian incantations written down in the alphabetical cuneiform.[672] There might have been a variety of uses of these texts – from scribal education to professional practice of medicine to personal use of these texts.[673] Apart from these sources, which may be at least tentatively connected to the local practices, there are also many texts connected to scribal education and scholarly knowledge. It has already been argued that even these contributed to the construction of social realities at Ugarit, including religious realia.[674]

5.2.2   DOMESTIC RELIGION IN MATERIAL SOURCES

Nonetheless, none of the above-mentioned sources attest to "domestic cults". This is not that surprising as such activities hardly ever need any writing for their performance. Therefore, we must direct our attention to the material sources. Unfortunately, these are indirect and difficult to interpret. There is a lot of room for misinterpretation.

As far as I can tell, no domestic shrines were detected. The cases of the *Temple of Rhytons* or *Court III of the Great Building* are, in my opinion, better understood as functional units with communal focus and not as lieu of domestic cults intended to be used primarily by its inhabitants. However, this speculation is hard to corroborate because we know so little about what I would perceive as domestic cults *per se*. Still, there are several sources which may attest to domestic veneration of deities and other ritual activities.

5.2.2.1   FIGURINES OF DEITIES

First, we may consider the presence of divine figurines in household contexts, which could theoretically be used in domestic cults. Probably the most famous examples of such objects are

---

[667] Cf. del Olmo Lete 2014a: 250, esp. n. 15, who understands it as sacrifice offered *by* the house of the *ṯaʿʿāyu*.

[668] *KTU* 1.178: 14–15: *l . urtn . l . gbh / l . tmnth*, "for Urtēnu, for his body, for his form."

[669] See chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History* on this famous individual.

[670] *House of Rapānu*: RS 20.006 and 20.161+; *House of Rašapabu*: RS 17.155; *House of Urtēnu*: RS 34.021, 94.2067, 94.2178, and 94.2964; *Lamaštu Archive*: RS 25.418, 5.420+, 25.129+, 25.422, 25.434+, 25.436, 25.459C, 25.511A, and 25.519A; *Literate's House*: RS 17.081; other scattered texts in possible domestic contexts: RS 16.416[bis], 25.513, and 25.457.

[671] *House of Rapānu*: *KTU* 10.1(?) (Ugaritic in logosyllabic cuneiform?); *House of the Literary Tablets*: *KTU* 1.96; *House of Urtēnu*: *KTU* 1.178 and 1.179; *House of the High Priest*: *KTU* 1.13, 1.23, and 1.65(?); *House of the Hurrian Priest*: *KTU* 1.100, 1.107, and 1.114. Scattered texts: *KTU* 1.82, 7.50(?), 7.55(?).

[672] *KTU* 1.67, 1.69, and 1.70. These were discovered at the *Acropolis*. *KTU* 1.73 lacks discovery context. See discussion in Clemens 2001: 605–624. According to del Olmo Lete 2014b: 103 these texts do not correspond to the lived practices but belong to the context of scribal education.

[673] See note 336 on the problems with "magic", and Chapter *4.2.1.3.5 Religious Texts Outside the Main Hubs* for some further comments.

[674] See Chapter *4 Texts and Religion*.

bronze-cast[675] statues from house F of block XIII of the *South City Trench*.[676] The statues depict a standing bull,[677] two Baʿals in a smiting pose[678] and seated Ilu.[679] All of these statues are equipped with a peg that allows them to be mounted on something, in the case of seated Ilu, probably to some kind of a throne. The figures of Baʿals and Ilu were covered with golden foils. The figurines are relatively small – the bull is ca. 10 cm high (including the peg), the Baʿals ca. 12 cm (14,5 with the peg), and Ilu ca. 13,5 (the peg is irrelevant).[680]

This group of statues was found under the foundation stones[681] and was originally wrapped in a linen cloth that held them together – the bandage is said to have left visible imprints on the bronze statues.[682] There are several possible interpretations of their findspot.

According to Yon, the group of statues was hidden in the place where it was later discovered during the flight from Ugarit at the time of its destruction. The hidden valuables were never picked up by those who had hidden them.[683] If this was the case, these statues may attest to a household cult at Ugarit that involved such statues. The pegs would suggest they were attached to some household altar, which was not archaeologically identified (possibly due to its material?). On the one hand, the statues might have been hidden as valuable; on the other hand, in the fear of their theft, which would endanger the household on a symbolic level.[684] Although the quality and supposed price of such statues indicate that not everyone might be able to afford such statues for their domestic cult (even more, four of them!), the fact of using moulds for casting them may suggest a potential for widespread use. Surely, not all statues like this needed to be covered with gold and divine representations made from less exclusive materials like clay or wood are also thinkable even if not well attested.

The second interpretation is set within the interpretation of the house as a workshop. The house (or rather the group of houses E, F and G) was designated as *House of the Bronze Smith*,[685] *l'atelier d'un orfèvre*,[686] *la maison d'un orfèvre*[687] or similar. Even though this interpretation is no longer generally accepted,[688] it is still possible that this was a place where these statues were

---

[675] Whether the statues were cast using a mould casting or a lost-wax casting is not stated in the literature available to me, except for the statues of Baʿal that seem to be cast with a use of a mould because they are identical; see Schaeffer 1966: 8. A mould for casting a figurine was discovered at Ugarit (RS 5.228). Although it does not correspond to the statues presented here, it attests to the practice of casting in moulds, see Dardaillon 2012: 173.

[676] Yon 2006: 96 and 133.

[677] RS 23.391.

[678] RS 23.392 and 23.393.

[679] RS 23.394. These sigla correspond to Schaeffer 1966: pl. I, II and III and Caubet & Yon 2001: 155. Yon 2006: 133 designates seated Ilu as RS 23.393 and Baʿal (the one with the missing hand) as RS 23.394.

[680] See Yon 2006: 133 or Schaeffer 1966: 19.

[681] Saadé 1979: 128.

[682] Cunchillos 1979: col. 1264 and Schaeffer 1966: 7.

[683] Yon 1992a: 117.

[684] As "gods leaving the household" in a comparison to carrying deities out of a city and thus leaving the city without its divine protection; see, e.g., Hundley 2013a: 334–335.

[685] See Yon 2006: 96.

[686] Schaeffer 1966: 5.

[687] Saadé 1979: 127.

[688] The identification of this grouping as a metallurgical workshop was based on findings of several bronze artifacts, a bronze slag, bronze tools, gold jewellery, iron chisels and the above-mentioned statues. Yon, however, questions this

manufactured – even if only in part, for example, being covered with gold.[689] In this case, their final usage might have been located outside of the domestic context. Their relation to the temple cult should be considered as a possibility. This is, obviously, not without problems. We may ask whether such small statues were fit enough for a temple cult. Comparative evidence may suggest that it was possible. For example, Neo-Assyrian iconographic evidence of the capture of deities from Syro-Palestine indicates the relatively small size of divine statues.[690] Also, these figurines did not have to be temple statues but might have been used as representations for processions, for example, being fixed on poles. This may be corroborated by visual material from Mari.[691]

These four statues are not the only divine figurines discovered at Ugarit in the domestic context. As far as I can tell, the best-documented area in his regard is the *City Centre*. Monloup collected 29 clay figurines from this area in *RSO III*.[692] These include both anthropomorphic and theriomorphic figurines. The corpus includes objects of local provenance, but also a significant proportion of Mycenaean objects as well as one in Cypriote style. The Mycenaean figurines have more parallels from Ugarit and are sometimes found in burial contexts,[693] but the findings from the *City Centre* suggest they were also present in households as such. These may also attest to the presence of Mycenaeans at Ugarit, reflecting the religious traditions of the foreigners. This is, however, far from certain and other explanations, like prestigious objects, are also possible.[694] Figurines such as these are usually taken as attestations of domestic cults. I believe this conclusion is quite reasonable. Especially the figurines of nude goddesses in the local style seem very convincing examples.[695] Because of the accessibility of clay, the domestic cults of most households could have operated with similar figurines. Anyhow, figurines of bronze might have been present in domestic cults, too. To those four mentioned above, we may add, for example, a figure of Aṯirat(?) discovered in the vicinity of them[696] or a figure of Rašap from Minet el-Beida (fig. 25). I think the cited examples attest to the possibility of domestic cults more than enough, with indications of a variety of value invested in them. Obviously, a more detailed enquiry of these objects, especially of their immediate excavation context, may significantly enrich our understanding of domestic cults. Such endeavour lies beyond the scope of this thesis and my access to resources.

---

interpretation: the precious objects were discovered above the ground level and thus probably belonged to the residential second floor of the house which later collapsed, the tools might have belonged to the inhabitants, the slag might have been only a part of the soil rubble and in general, she suggests it was unlikely that activities producing smoke and pollution were located in such a densely populated area; see Yon 2006: 96. Previously, the whole *South City Trench* have been seen as filled with workshops; see Cunchillos 1979: col. 1264–1269 or Saadé 1979: 128. This statement has been also been reconsidered; see, e.g., Dardaillon 2012: 169.

[689] See Dardaillon 2012: 174.

[690] See, e.g., Hundley 2013a: 335, fig. 11.2.

[691] This interpretation has been suggested already by Schaeffer 1966: 12, fig. 9.

[692] Monloup 1987.

[693] See Yon 2006: 155 with reference to RS 3.188 from Minet el-Beida.

[694] See Monloup 1987: 312.

[695] From the *City Centre*: RS 81.0848, RS 83.5161, and 84.0001. See Monloup 1987: 314 and 327 or Yon 2006: 154–155.

[696] RS 23.395, See Schaeffer 1966: 6.

Figure 25 AO 11598, statuette of Rašap, Minet el-Beida.
Source: © 2017 Musée du Louvre / Thierry Ollivier
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136311
[accessed 30th August 2023].

5.2.2.2   "Ladles"

An interesting type of object that may be connected to domestic cults is the so-called "ladles". Such objects are known already from the first year of excavation in Minet el-Beida.[697] The most detailed study on these objects has been done by Carbillet in *RSO XXIV*.[698] Over 140 ladles were discovered in household contexts throughout the city[699] and have been from the beginning connected to cultic activities.[700] However, the exact function and usage cannot be securely established; suggested libations or fumigations seem reasonable options. I see the most likely use for fumigations because of occasional traces of fire in the hollows[701] and the relatively shallow hollows of some of these ladles that seem unfit for libations. However, libations and fumigations are not necessarily mutually
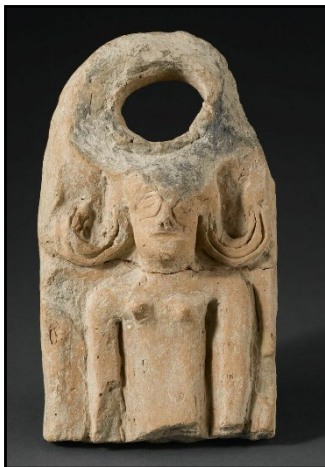
Figure 26 RS 10.152 (AO 25553), decorated upper part of a "ladle".
Source: © 2006 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux,
available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010150251 [accessed 30th August 2023].
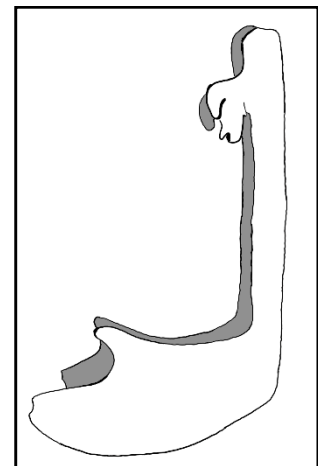
Figure 27 RS 9.230, decorated "ladle".
Drawn by the author after *RSO XXIV*: 205, no. 12.

---

[697] See *report 1929*: 288–289, fig 3.
[698] Carbillet 2016.
[699] See Carbillet 2016: 255, 259, and fig. 5 for map. The ladles from Ugarit present the largest corpus of these objects from the Levant.
[700] *Report 1929*: 288; for summary of different interpretations and for references on similar objects outside of Ugarit, see Carbillet 2016: 256–258.
[701] Carbillet 2016: 241–242.

exclusive. Their "offering" function seems to be indicated by their shape. Many of these ladles resemble set hands, forming a bowl (fig. 27).[702] Some of the ladles are also decorated, for example, with simple geometric motives (some may recall water and boost the association with libations[703]) or with figure-like reliefs depicting bulls[704] or "Hathoric" goddesses (fig. 26).[705]

While the precise function of these objects remains uncertain, they may well contribute to our understanding of how religion influences the environment. Their shape and loophole in their upper part suggest they were fixed on the walls. Without stating functional equivalence, we may recall the placement of religious objects, such as crosses or containers for holy water, within the domestic contexts of some Christian households. All of these objects subtly construct the houses' symbolic environments.

5.2.2.3 DEPOTS

Far less visible but symbolically significant, too, were depots. These are not only attestations of the social construction of space but are physically connected with the building activities. The best-known depot from Ugarit is represented by a hoard of over 70[706] bronze objects from the *House of the High Priest*, discovered under the threshold.[707] Five of these objects bear inscriptions mentioning *rb khnm*, the "high priest".[708] It is thanks to these inscriptions that the building received its modern designation. The interpretations of this depot vary greatly, and its interpretation as a foundation depot *per se* is not certain.[709] The literary liminal (under *limen*, "threshold") position of this depot may indicate some protective function. More detailed exploration and contextualization of all depots[710] from Ugarit is needed to reach further conclusions, but I am doubtful the material sources themselves can reveal the intentions with which they were established. In addition, I have not been able to ascertain how widespread the phenomenon of creating depots at Ugarit was. Here, I merely wanted to point out that these practices, whatever their purpose, were part of the symbolic construction of domestic space at Ugarit. Their "religious" character is linked to their presumed symbolic nature and protective value.

---

[702] E.g., RS 9.230 or 34.467, nos. 12 and 24 in Carbillet 2016.

[703] E.g., RS 80.5323, no. 74 in Carbillet 2016.

[704] E.g., RS 9.230, no. 12 in Carbillet 2016.

[705] E.g., RS 10.152, no. 13 in Carbillet 2016.

[706] I have not been able to verify the exact number of these items. See, e.g., information given in *Ugaritica III*: 251–252 (74 objects) vs. 253 (77 objects). See also Clemens 2001: 484–485 for discussion of these discrepancies.

[707] For a broader discussion, see namely Clemens 2001: 483–518 or *Ugaritica III*: 251–275. For the findspot, see fig. 216 in *Ugaritica III*: 252.

[708] *KTU* 6.6–6.10. Only *KTU* 6.10 are inscribed with *ḫrṣn rb khnm*, "Ḫuršānu, the chief priest".

[709] See broader discussion with further references in Clemens 2001: 483–518. The interpretations range from foundation depot with protective function, burial of ceremonial objects, gift to the priest, hiding of these objects when running from the city during its destruction (see the similar interpretation of the findspot of the statues from the *South City Trench* discussed above), votive gifts to a deity, and so on and so forth. Some of the interpretations are not mutually exclusive. The exact relation to the persona of high priest to these objects is also not clear. Clemens himself seems to favour the interpretation of foundational depot offered by the high priest (2001: 517).

[710] Clemens 2001: 505–512 points to some other depots – e.g., from the *House of the High Priest* (six bronze objects depot, jar depot) or from Minet el-Beida. I have not encountered any broader study on foundation depots from Ugarit.
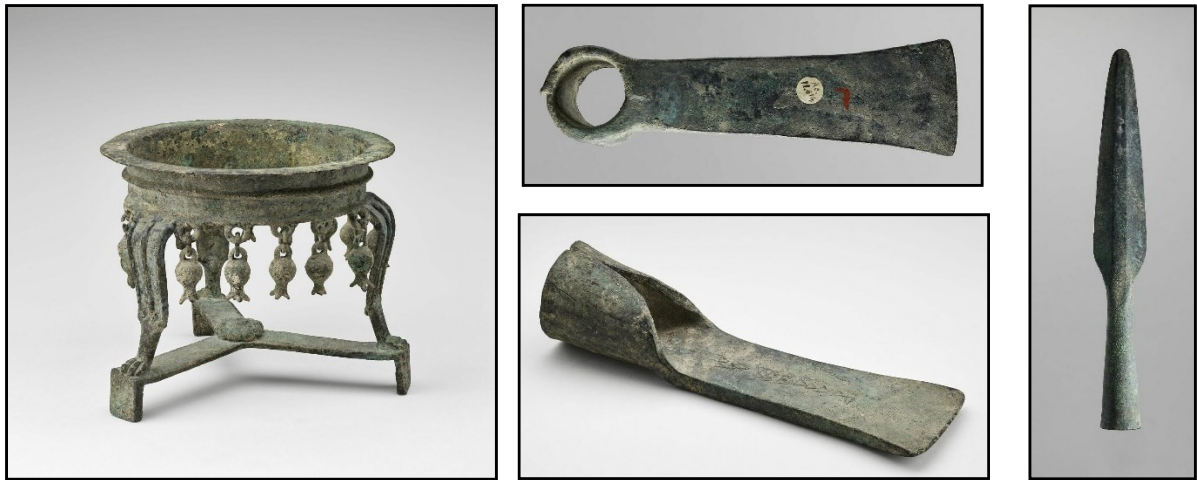
Figure 28. Examples of bronzes from the depot of the high priest.
Left: AO 11606; source: © 2021 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Mathieu Rabeau
    available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136323 [accessed 30th August 2023].
Middle upper: AO 11614; source: © 2008 Musée du Louvre / Thierry Ollivier,
    available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136332 [accessed 30th August 2023].
Middle lower: AO 11615; source: © 2021 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Mathieu Rabeau
    available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136333 [accessed 30th August 2023].
Right: AO 11624; source: © 2008 Musée du Louvre / Thierry Ollivier
    available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136343 [accessed 30th August 2023].

5.2.2.4 Household Tombs

The most visible architectural feature of Ugaritic households in the context of this chapter is tombs.[711] The aim of this section is not to discuss the archaeological situation of Ugaritic tombs in any detail. This has already been done by others.[712] The short discussion presented here is aimed mainly at noting the environmental setting of the tombs, situating it in the cultural context of the "cult of the dead", and consequently highlighting the problems of such conceptions at Ugarit.

Tombs at Ugarit were located underneath houses. It seems that they were built together with the erection of the buildings,[713] so their incorporation into the household required prior planning. The tombs were not uniform in their construction. The basic distinction may be made between chamber and vault tombs,[714] but they also differ in the quality of execution or in the riches of the funerary equipment.[715] This probably indicates more the differences in wealth than different afterlife conceptions. It also shows that tombs were one of the possible modes for communication of status.[716] As has already been mentioned above, the *Royal Palace* may be considered as an elite household in

---

[711] Note that during the history of Ugarit, there was a greater variety of burial practices in the city. See Marchegay 2007: 425–427.

[712] For studies focused on tombs, see, e.g., Marchegay & Matoïan 2019, Marchegay 2008, 2007, 1999, *RSO XXII*: 81–126, Salles 1995, *RSO X*: 168–176, or *Ugaritica IV*: 522–631. As far as I can tell, the most detailed study is Marchegay 1999. This is her Ph.D. dissertation and I have unfortunately not been able to gain access to it.

[713] *RSO X*: 169 or Marchegay 2007: 430–431.

[714] 33 vault and 181 chamber tombs were discovered in the LBA level; see Marchegay 2007: 429. These numbers may now be a bit higher due to later excavations.

[715] E.g., Marchegay 2007: 429–432. In regard to the funerary equipment, we may note that rich finds of Aegean style pottery have led the excavators initially to see strong Aegean population at Ugarit; see, e.g., Salles 1995: 173, Marchegay 2007: 430–431; see also *Ugaritica I*: 53–106 for the initial discussion on the Aegean issue.

[716] See Salles 1995: 175–176.

this regard because its tombs do not differ greatly from those of less elite domestic buildings.[717] The spacious and rich palace allowed for a special room dedicated to access to the tombs (fig. 23, room 28), something that not every household could afford. Some of the adjacent spaces in the palace are then usually connected with activities related to the dead (fig. 23, *Court III*). On the level of architecture, the dead kings do not seem to differ much from the other dead, except for wealth and space invested. We may wonder what these similarities can add to the discussion on the divine nature of the deceased kings.[718] Was the wealth invested in the dead thought to influence their position in the afterlife? Did the wealth and space itself reflect any different status of the dead kings in contrast to other dead, or were the ritual activities those where the differences became apparent? And was there even any difference in the nature of the dead kings and commoners?

The very presence of tombs and burials inside houses indicates that death was a fundamental matter for the inhabitants of Ugarit. It clearly shows strong relations between the living and the dead. However, the situation is a bit more complicated. Not every house had a tomb. These underground structures were sometimes shared by adjacent buildings.[719] Schloen incorporated this fact into his conception of the patrimonial society, where shared tombs might have worked for a broader rather than nuclear family.[720] An additional factor leading to the existence of shared tombs might have been the influx of inhabitants to the city, which resulted in the division of households.[721] This poses an interesting question concerning the connection between the dead and the living. How exactly did this work in the case of shared tombs? And what about the families that could have come to the city and occupied a house without a tomb? Did they have some burial place *extra muros*? It has also been suggested that the tombs were not located in the private parts of the households but were more accessible.[722] Once again, this opens more and more questions. To whom were the tombs accessible? Did the owner of the house have control over the access? There are multiple possibilities on how to answer the questions outlined in this paragraph, and I am not sure the material itself presents a solution. Schloen's interpretation certainly makes sense, but more variants of change in ownership than transfer within the family are, in my opinion, possible.

Another problem is that the tombs below the houses probably could not accommodate all of the dead at Ugarit. Secondary manipulation with human remains, such as a transition to ossuaries within the tombs themselves, might have solved the problem with space.[723] Another possibility is the presence of an extramural necropolis, for which, however, there is no evidence.[724] The existence of

---

[717] See Niehr 2007 for a broader discussion. Niehr also makes a connection between the archaeological material and narrative texts. In the *Epic of Kirta*, an *ảp* is mentioned in the context of dying king (*KTU* 1.16 I: 2–3). Niehr connects this with a Hurrian pit designated as *āpi*, identified by the archaeologist at Urkeš (Tell Mozan); see Niehr 2007: 228–230. I find these connections a bit too far reaching; nonetheless, considering the process of culture transfer of these realia, the differences in structure may be also ascribed to changes in these practices.

[718] See Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[719] Marchegay 2007: 430, Salles 1995: 175.

[720] Schloen 2001: 329–347, eps. 342–347.

[721] Yon 1992a: 114–115 or 1992b: 29. Schloen argues against this interpretation and sees it in the context of the patrimonial society where internal division of spaces was a consequence of generational cohabitation.

[722] Salles 1995: 176.

[723] See, e.g., Yon 2006: 119. On the contrary, Salles 1995: 177 argues against the presence of ossuaries due to the supposed need for integrity of the deceased. However, I believe the sources do not indicate such a need and allow a "dissolution" of individual identity.

[724] Marchegay 2007: 433–434. See also the discussion in Salles 1995: 184.

an extramural necropolis could lead us to reconsider the postulated close relations between the living and the dead on the household level. An interesting issue to consider is also the fact that in many of the tombs, there were no human remains.[725] It may be possible to explain this lack by the destruction of the city. After the renovation of some of the houses, which were presumably destroyed in the earthquake, new tombs were constructed, and some of them never saw their use. It has also been suggested that the tombs might have worked solely as places for the veneration of the dead, even if the remains themselves were placed somewhere else.[726] While I am rather sceptical of this theory, it is surely possible that the structure originally intended as a place of burial could have become their symbolic referent.

The relations between the living and the dead are usually articulated in postulating the existence of the "cult of the dead". The first problem is to ascertain how this relation was actualised in ritual practice. It has been noted by some scholars that there are no archaeological traces of regular cults for the dead in the domestic context.[727] Therefore, the tombs present the best archaeological evidence of it. Previously, it has been suggested that libations were made to the dead with the use of a sophisticated system of libation installations. This has been disclaimed as an erroneous conception already by Schaeffer – the author of the idea himself – but it has already taken root within the discussion, so it is best to note it anyway.[728] We are left in the dark as to whether the living regularly visited the dead in the tombs. The construction of tombs indicates it was possible to access them, but whether this has been done regularly or only during burial remains unclear. From time to time, feasts with the dead akin to Mesopotamian *kispu* were postulated for Ugarit.[729] For example, the parallel has been sought in the institution of marziḥu, but this interpretation was not broadly accepted, and I myself do not belong among its proponents.[730] Nonetheless, this does not mean that there was nothing like it. Spatial dispositions of some of the tombs would allow gathering right within the funerary space. Communal feasting with the dead in these spaces may be then supported by pottery finds within some of the tombs. However, it seems impossible to ascertain the actual use of this equipment and its connection with feasting activities is far from obvious.

More often than archaeology, textual sources are referred to in the (re)construction of the Ugaritic cult of the dead. For example, the royal funeral, *KTU* 1.161,[731] is clearly set within the cultural understanding of death. The problem is that for us, this cultural understanding is mostly lost. This tablet makes references to *rapiūma*, who are often understood as the manifestation of the

---

[725] Salles 1995: 176. This has made me wonder if these were truly tombs. What if some of these under house structures were actually cellars? Nonetheless, the general scholarly discussion as well as a significant number of burials suggest the tomb interpretation is more likely.

[726] Salles 1995: 176.

[727] E.g., Watson 2003b: 144. On the contrary, note some references in Schloen 2001: 346. However, the interpretation of wall cavities as shrines, let alone shrines for the cult of the dead, seems too insecure to me.

[728] For the discussion of this problem, see namely Pitard 1994.

[729] On *kispu*, see, e.g., Tsukimoto 1985.

[730] For example, del Olmo Lete associates this institution with necromantic practices. On the problems of the funerary/mortuary/necromantic interpretations of *marziḥu*, see further discussion in Chapter *6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities*.

[731] E.g., Lewis 1989: 5–46. See also discussion in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

dead.[732] The longest composition devoted to these entities has been written on three tablets, *KTU* 1.20–1.22.[733] However, I am very sceptical about any clear inferences about the *rapiūma*. The sources at our disposal are very laconic in their nature. Interesting is the poetical use of parallelism when talking about *rapiūma* that sets them side by side with deities (*ĭlm* or *ĭlnym*).[734] This may suggest their nature was divine-like, even if not necessarily divine *per se*.[735] Another source usually mentioned in discussions of the cult of the dead is the so-called "duties of an ideal son",[736] noting, among other obligations, the erection of a stela for *ĭlĭb*. The identity of this deity, generally understood as combining lexemes for "god", *ĭl*, and "father", *ăb*, is a constant matter of disagreement among scholars.[737] When related to the cult of the dead, it is usually understood as some manifestation of the deified ancestor or a divine patron of the family. The imagery of a son erecting a stela is then occasionally connected with the stelae from the area of the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan,*[738] which mention *pgr*-sacrifices. These sacrifices are usually considered mortuary in nature.[739] Still, both of the sources may easily relate to different kinds of practices.

It seems almost impossible to connect the written and material sources. They both reflect different aspects of social activities. Most of the time, when such connections are suggested, they seem to me somewhat artificial. We must also consider the elite bias of the sources – how justified it is to connect the duties of a royal(!) son to the practices of the inhabitants of Ugarit? How can we connect the mortuary stelae of a queen and a high official placed in the sacred precinct to the everyday activities of common people? What can be inferred from a royal funerary ritual to the funerary rituals of the rest of the population?

It is also useful to ask what the designation *cult of the dead* does to our understanding of the sources. We are constantly searching for connections, theological explanations, elaborate conceptions of the afterlife and so on and so forth. For example, del Olmo Lete, in my opinion, strongly overuses references to the cult of the dead, and he sees it almost everywhere.[740] Clearly, there are tombs underneath the houses, but the concept of the cult of the dead sometimes leads us to postulate feasts with the dead, venerate them (sometimes as deities), or see these activities as an everyday concern of the living. Once again, a peak into modern societies provides a helpful reflection. Why do we not see

---

[732] The precise understanding of these entities differs among scholars. See, e.g., Schmidt 1994: 71–93 for different interpretations given to the *rapiūma.* Lewis summarizes given interpretations as follow: minor deities, heroic warriors, tribal group, shades of the dead, or some combination of all; see the introduction to his translation of *KTU* 1.20–22 in Parker 1997: 196–204.

[733] See e.g., translation of Lewis in Parker 1997: 196–205, or Wyatt 2002b: 314–323.

[734] E.g., *KTU* 1.20 I: 1–3; II: 1–2, 6–7, 8–9; 1.21 II: 3–4, 1–12; 1.22 II: 5–6, 10–11, and more.

[735] Schmidt 2000: 238–239 suggests this parallelism rather contrasts them then equates them.

[736] From the *Epic of Aqhat*, *KTU* 1.17 I: 23–33 and parallels. See, e.g., Schloen 2001: 344, Schmidt 1994: 59–62, or Lewis 1989: 53–71.

[737] See, e.g., discussions in Schmidt 1994: 53–59, Pardee 2002a: 280, or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 57 or 358.

[738] RS 6.021 (=*KTU* 6.13) and 6.028 (=*KTU* 6.14). See also the discussion in Chapter *5.1.3 The Temple/Terrace of Dagan*. For the possible connection of the duties and these objects as well as problems with this interpretation, see, e.g., Lewis 1989: 72–79.

[739] This interpretation is based on comparative evidence (Mari), but the exact meaning of *pgr* as a type of sacrifices is far from certain at Ugarit; see, e.g., Pardee 1996: 281–282, 2002a: 123–125.

[740] Similarly, also Schmidt 1994: 71. The prevalence of the cult of the dead in the theories of del Olmo Lete was in my opinion best expressed in his 2004 article named "Ugarit e Israel: la religión de la vida y la muerte", where he highlights the focus of Ugaritic practices on the death.

it as a cult of the dead when someone has a photograph of their deceased parents on a working desk, brings flowers to their grave and takes regular care of it? In Georgia, I have encountered numerous cases of stashed bottles of alcohol behind the tombstone so those who visit the grave can feast on the spot – activities that, indeed, regularly occur. We may add to the list the iconic cemeteries dedicated to dead soldiers in the USA. Or memorials of fallen soldiers from the World Wars in Europe, where communal gatherings with political and religious representation are held every year.

We cannot easily claim that the difference is that we now do not believe in the afterlife, and we do it only for remembrance. First, because many people believe in the afterlife, even if the conceptions are vague and inconsistent. Second, because the praxis is often more important than the beliefs. Third, because the remembrance is not the only aim of these activities; for example, the burials and expressive care for the grave are even now an intensive mode of symbolic communication of social relations and statuses. Fourth, because we cannot be sure if the remembrance was not the main aim of the Ugaritians, too.[741] With this, I do not want to say that there was no cult of the dead at Ugarit or that such a designation is useless, but to point out that it may unnecessarily put *us* and *them* in contrast, making *them* more irrational and superstitious than *us*. It is important to note that this kind of cult takes on many forms, and focusing on only some aspects of it may mislead us.

As can be seen in the presented discussion, I am very sceptical about the possibilities of the reconstruction of the cult of the dead at Ugarit. There is hardly any agreement among the scholars except for a few details. This may be caused by the problem that the matters of the dead and the afterlife may not be well articulated or consistent within a culture. Death is something very much present in life, yet at the same time, it is rather uncertain domain. I suspect that the ambiguity of the sources may be a symptom of an unclear conception of the afterlife. This may also be the reason for the use of *paralelismus membrorum* of *rapiūma* and *ilūma/ilāniyūma* – pondering their nature while not indicating anything clearly.

I believe that the issue of the cult of the dead at Ugarit is worth a substantial reconceptualization and reconsideration for which there is simply no room in this thesis. Therefore, I leave this topic aside while acknowledging its utter importance to the general theme of this thesis.

5.3 Discussion – Problems of Reconstruction of the Religious Environment of the City

Admittedly, my initial intentions were far greater with this chapter. I have hoped to explore how religious practices and ideas permeated the space of the city and influenced its construction. The final form of this chapter is far from this goal. The exploration of the urban space of Ugarit and its functioning has a long tradition of research.[742] However, setting the religious practices within the *urban habitat* is an arduous task. For example, I have been able to provide an overview of the sacred spaces of Ugarit, but to set them into the context of the city has proven far more complicated than I have hoped for. The final result seems rather superficial.

The temples at the *Acropolis* were, aside from the *Royal Palace*, the architectural dominants of the city. They were towering over the city, far exceeding the surrounding buildings. However, in comparison with some other sacred buildings all over the world, including the ANE temples, they

---

[741] See, e.g., Schmidt 2000. Similarly, consider the search for immortality of Gilgameš – in the end, it consists in remembrance.

[742] See, e.g., Yon 1992b.

were actually not that impressive in their size – not in height nor in area. Nonetheless, reducing the importance and monumentality of these buildings to their size would be greatly misleading. I would argue that the cultural importance of these constructions is the most important feature in their perception. The presence of deities within the temples was what presumably gave them the "sacred aura". The richness of the construction or its size is then only a secondary feature, contributing to the perception but not establishing it. This may be further corroborated by those structures that may be identified as places of worship or cultic activities but which were not as dominant as the temples at the *Acropolis*.

But the claim of the impressiveness and cultural importance of temples is hardly anything unexpected or interesting conclusion. What would be far more interesting to ascertain is how the temples were encountered and perceived by the inhabitants of Ugarit. The problem is that we are missing crucial sources to elaborate on the details. An interesting contribution to the discussion is Gilbert's "Urban Squares in Late Bronze Age Ugarit".[743] In her article, Gilbert examines the street systems of Ugarit as a means for different modes of communal encounter. Her perspective highlights how the public space works as a place where political authority is performed, among other things, making extensive use of religious activities. As is discussed in one of the following chapters,[744] some of the religious feasts might have included abundant public participation. The environment of the city was surely constructed to accommodate such activities. The areas in proximity to the temples/cultic terrace were possibly conceived as relatively extensive Urban squares, allowing for such large gatherings and flux of people.[745] Gilbert clearly shows that the city's environment was not only a place for living but also a space where the inhabitants interacted – among themselves and with the ruling and religious representation. It shows that the line of enquiry I wanted to follow is very interesting, yet very problematic.

The initial intentions of this chapter have failed in my inability to explore in detail the archaeological context, which would support my presumptions. This was probably caused by several factors. First of all, I am generally focused more on the texts than on archaeology, and consequently, my orientation in the archaeological situation is, at this phase, not sufficient to reach solid conclusions. Second, the archaeological contexts of the discussed materials often seem inconclusive. This was made very clear to me when I started to work on the case of stelae. My presupposition was that stelae were distributed across the city with a stronger concentration in the areas of the *Temple of Baꜥal* and in the cultic terrace constructed over the foundations of the *Temple/Terrace of Dagan*. However, the archaeological context of over twenty objects[746] belonging to this category is

---

[743] Gilbert 2021. The article also includes commentaries by D. E. Fleming, V. R. Herrmann, V. Matoïan, and M. Pucci, providing a valuable feedback and problematizing some of the suggested interpretations.

[744] See Chapter *6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults*.

[745] Gilbert 2021: 393–398.

[746] Yon in *RSO VI*: 273–343 collected and studied 19 of these objects (no. 1 = RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183; no. 2 = RS 2.[037]; no. 3 = RS 2.[038]; no. 4 = RS 3.487; no. 5 = RS 4.427; no. 6 = RS 4.429+5.044+5.202; no. 7 = RS 6.021; no. 8 = RS 6.028; no. 9 = RS 7.116; no. 10 = RS 8.295; no. 11 = RS 9.226; no. 12 = RS 17.138; no. 13 = RS 23.216; no. 14 = RS 23.217; no. 15 = RS 23.218; no. 16 = RS 23.219 (undecorated); no. 17 = RS 24.434; no. 19 = RS 81.5004; and no. 18 discovered outside of proper excavations). To these, we may add RS 29.[300] which is not decorated (see Bessac & Matoïan 2021: 331–336), RS 010/1 (see *report 2009 & 2010*: 444 and 447); This adds up to twenty-one objects. I suspect I am missing one more stela, but I am not able to find it. Unfortunately, I have not noted the source from which I have assumed there were twenty-two stelae from Ugarit in total.

insufficient[747] for this goal. What was the original context of the five stelae associated with the *Temple of Baʿal*? Fragments of the *Stela of Mami* have been discovered in the area of the cella, but also in the access to the temple or close to the altar in the temple's precinct.[748] Each location may lead to completely different interpretations regarding the social construction of the space or the accessibility of the temples.

Figure 29 Stelae from Ugarit.

Left: *Baʿal au Foudre*, RS 4.427 (AO 15775); source: © 2006 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010140542 [accessed 30th August 2023].

Middle: *Stela of Mami*, RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183 (AO 13176); source: © 2016 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Mathieu Rabeau available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010137899 [accessed 30th August 2023].

Right: *Stela dedicated to Dagan*, RS 6.021 (AO 19931); source: © 2006 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010144640 [accessed 30th August 2023].

The stelae discovered on the slope west of the temple raise similar problems. Were they originally placed within the temple precinct (or even in the temple),[749] or were they located in the public space (square) outside of it?[750] The stelae presumably present in the residential quarters pose similar questions. Were they part of the domestic (cultic) equipment or placed outside?[751] After

---

[747] See also *RSO VI*: 275–281.

[748] RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183; For the excavation context, *RSO VI:* 322, fig. 2.

[749] E.g., *RSO VI*: 278–279.

[750] Gilbert 2021: 393–396.

[751] E.g., Gilbert 2021: 383–387 connects RS 23.217 with the market space, understanding it as "market god"; see also *RSO VI*: 310–311, 340, fig. 20 (no. 14). The interpretation of this stela depicting an archer (deity?) accompanied by a smaller figure bearing vessels as Rašap and consequently associate it with trade activities is not at all impossible. The association of Rašap with trade is, however, supported only by comparative sources, and not clearly attested at Ugarit. For Ugarit, see Münnich 2013: 124–169; for comparative material from Emar and Ḫattuša on the merchant character of this deity, see Münnich 2013: 171–172, 186, 189, and 200.

examining the sources, I became too insecure to interpret how exactly these objects contributed to the presence of religion in the city environments – even though I am confident they did.[752]

Another complication in this discussion is caused by the unresolved issue of different levels of accessibility of spaces at Ugarit. When considering the environment as inhabited by individuals, we must also consider the limitations of access and visibility. We have encountered this problem in the discussion on the temples. While there are some suggestions as to the accessibility of the temples at Ugarit, we are devoid of details. Every present boundary makes a different perception of space. The sources do not allow us to ascertain how, when, and for whom were what places accessible.[753] Was the communal participation in large feasts an opportunity to access the temple precinct for anyone? Could they have peaked into the temples? Could they enter? Or were they left standing in the squares and the streets outside of the temple precinct? Was the presumed cultic terrace more accessible in contrast to the temples? When the official Mami dedicated his stela to Baʿal of Ṣapan, did he bring it to the precinct, or did the clergy mediate the placement? Similar questions arise in the case of the presumed sailors offering the votive anchors. I would be personally inclined to see these objects as an indication of some level of accessibility, which has also been reflected in the discussion on the temples above.

The issue of access and visibility is not limited to the temples. As far as I am aware, access to the *Royal Palace* or the *Royal Zone* in general remains an unresolved issue.[754] Unfortunately, without a precise understanding of it, our understanding of its function within the city environment is relatively insecure. We have also seen in the discussion of domestic architecture that the issue of access pertains to it, too. Our understanding of how exactly the shared tombs worked is limited, and every suggested interpretation has some problems.

I hope that despite this rather pessimistic conclusion, this chapter has been instructive on at least a few aspects of the environmental dimension of religion. What has not yet been stressed is that the archaeological material may contribute to our understanding of the emic conceptualization of religion. Similarly to written sources,[755] the architecture shows that what we would classify as religious activities tend to be concentrated in specific hubs. The relations with the divine and various activities in which these relations were performed were particularly concentrated, delimited, and seen

---

[752] There would be many aspects to consider. We are devoid of some of their visual characteristics – at least some of the stelae were probably painted (*RSO VI*: 282–283) which results is completely different perception. The size of individual objects from this category would also be interesting feature to consider – the *Baʿal au Foudre* (RS 4.427) was 142 cm in height (*RSO VI*: 294) that is not actually monumental. Still, in the contexts of the stelae from Ugarit, this is a huge piece and most of them were relatively small, ranging from just over 20 cm to ca. 50. Only few are bigger and these belong to the temple areas. Does the size indicate different uses? What was the function of the "L" shaped base of some of the stelae (see the figures in *RSO VI*: 326–342)? Did it serve only as a balance feature or could it have been used as a small altar, too? What was the functional difference between different stelae – those depicting deities, symbols, undecorated, or inscribed? All of this and more makes the stelae an extremely interesting material.

[753] This is one of the issues of the Gilbert's article. The most problematic may be the conceptualization of the areas in the *Royal Zone*, the access to which is unresolved, but some level of restriction is assumed. See, e.g., Yon 2006: 36–38, 1992: 26–27. *KTU* 4.115 is sometimes discussed in relation to the control of the access to the palace, but this is far from conclusive; see McGeough 2011: 47.

[754] See the note above.

[755] See Chapter *4.2.1.3 Hubs of Religious Texts in the City*.

as distinct. The temples and sanctuaries are the clearest examples of it. The simultaneous dispersion of religious activities within the space, even permeating into the domestic premises, does not contradict this situation – any human activity is hardly present in total isolation devoid of broader social contexts. At the same time, we must be careful in a harsh claim that this means there was a clear distinction of "religion". Instead, there was a tendency to concentrate and delimit the preformation of relations with deities, which correspond to one of the aspects of what we call religion. There was also a tendency to set in different manners the relations with the dead, which, when conceptualised as a cult of the dead, corresponds to different aspects of what we call religion. To what extent these activities conceptually overlapped in the minds of the inhabitants of Ugarit is difficult to ascertain, but the little we know indicates that it was far from being equivalent.

Last but not least, working on this chapter has led me to create a kind of by-product of this thesis that is so far a work in progress. I have begun to work on a 3D reconstruction of Ugarit, starting with the *Temple of Baʿal*, following the reconstructions of Callot.[756] I hope that further work on this project will lead me to better grasp the topic I have wished to explore in this chapter. The ability to "walk" through the streets of ancient Ugarit, albeit limited by the quality of the sources and distorted by a certain degree of (mis)interpretation and artistic licence, may help us to better grasp the peculiarities of the city's environment. The work on such a reconstruction itself is then enlightening for the researcher as it opens new questions and provides new perspectives, which may go unnoticed when working in writing.

The 3D model has been created using Blender.[757] The game mode allowing explorations of the model and its transformation into VR was created using Unreal Engine.[758] The materials and textures are obviously only preliminary as they do not properly correspond to the ancient materials. The continuation of this project necessitates further collaboration with archaeologists and graphic designers. Otherwise, it is doomed to fail.

---

[756] *RSO XIX*: 39–48, and figs. 2–42. See also the discussion in Chapter *5.1.2 The Temple of Baʿal.*
[757] Blender, available at: https://www.blender.org/ [accessed 2nd August 2023].
[758] Unreal Engine, available at: https://www.unrealengine.com/en-US [accessed 2nd August 2023].

Figure 30 3D Reconstruction of the *Temple of Baʕal*.
Upper left – model in Blender; upper right: model in Unreal engine;
lower figures: screenshots from the Unreal engine "game mode".

6   RELIGION IN THE LIFE OF THE CITY

The central focus of this thesis is to explore how the religion was lived at Ugarit. In this chapter, we shall discuss this issue from the perspective of various activities in which the inhabitants of this city were involved. However, it would be a grave exaggeration to claim that this chapter deals only with their everyday life. Some of the topics discussed here were of unique character, others were encountered repeatedly, and only some were encountered on a daily basis.

We are, of course, heavily limited by the nature of sources at our disposal. There are numerous topics we would like to know more about, but they left either none or too feeble traces. For example, the issue of domestic cults, discussed from the perspective of archaeology in the previous chapter, remains mostly a mystery. To me, it is a mystery to such an extent that I have decided not to discuss it any further in this chapter despite its obvious relevance. Similarly, we know next to nothing about any rites of passage.[759] Other topics are not devoid of this problem. Indeed, in every topic we will encounter in this chapter, the sources are silent on numerous details, often those of most interest. In the following discussions, I try to make many of the gaps in our knowledge explicit. Still, the reader will probably encounter more and more weak points and questions.

The topics addressed in this chapter are various. Some are rather general; others deal with a specific type of activity or with a particular type of material. It may always be argued that another division could have been chosen. What is presented in this thesis is, of course, a result of my specific interests, worldviews, experiences, or even a chance of encountering material that seemed to me worth discussing. I have tried to select those areas of interest that help us to grasp the dynamics, fluidity and complexity by which religion was interwoven in the lives of the inhabitants of the city.

First, we briefly focus on onomastics, which may reflect religious realia on the very most individual level. Next, the issue of cults and community participation in them is considered. From the perspective of religion, this is probably the most visible and important type of activity happening in the city. After all, a considerable portion of the previous chapter's content was a result of the need for cultic activities – manifested in space as architecture. Third, the practice of divination is addressed. Here, we focus on the possible relevance of these practices in relation to individuals and communities. On the contrary, the issue of divination in politics is discussed separately in Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*. A relatively long discussion is then made with a focus on religion in administrative and economic activities that are actually the most often attested concerns of the textual sources at our disposal. In the fifth section, we address the relationship between legal activities and religion. Sixth, the genre of correspondence is used as a material in which religion appears in

---

[759] In this regard, sources like the "Betrothal of Yarīḫ and Nikkal" (*KTU* 1.24; see, e.g., translation of Marcus in Parker 1997: 215–218 or Wyatt 2002b: 336–341) or the royal funerary ritual (*KTU* 1.161, see Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*) are occasionally mentioned. However, they in my opinion bear only limited and biased perspective when discussion the issues of lived religion. Consequently, I have decided to focus on other topics in this chapter.

many of its forms. Finally, seals are discussed as items that can be used as material mediums for religious imagery but also as important objects mediating symbolic communication.

In all of these sub-chapters, the practice is the central focus, not "theology", mythology, cosmology, or ideology. The reader should know this so no false expectations are raised. At the same time, these areas are relevant and important. Therefore, they are occasionally referred to in order to help us understand the discussed practices.

6.1 ONOMASTICS

Designations of individuals are an important component of social realities. They enable interpersonal communication, identification and administration of people, participate in the construction of personality, may reflect personal preferences, etc. The term "designations" has been used on purpose in order to note that not every "designation" is readily a personal name. Humans can also be designated by their profession, place of origin, nickname, family relations, etc. All of these also contribute to the construction of social realities of the designated individuals.

The different kinds of designations may also be permeable. What was once a profession or nickname may become a name. Consider, for example, one of the most common surnames in the English-speaking world: Smith. Similarities may be found in the Ugaritic material, too.[760] We may, for example, encounter persons named *qdšt*,[761] probably related to the profession of cultic personnel. It may often be difficult to differentiate what is a personal name *per se* and what is a nickname or other type of designation. Indeed, it is difficult to ascertain how and when the people themselves made such distinctions or whether such distinctions were present as a social reality.

Our interest here is to outline how personal names may connect with religion. The reader should note that this chapter is not intended as an in-depth study of this topic. Instead, it aims to sketch the situation in a very general way. As is repeatedly the issue in this thesis, further explorations of prosopography may enrich our understanding of the outlined relations. I am leaving this for future research, as well as many questions postulated here.

In regard to the lived practices surrounding personal names, there is more that we do not know than the other way around. We know thousands of names,[762] mostly from administrative and legal records or from correspondence. In many cases, we can analyse their meaning,[763] and we are fairly certain that they were mostly understood within the Ugaritic society. Within the context of this thesis, we must

---

[760] Watson 2012: 339 even includes *tblm*, "Smith", but there are doubts this is used as a personal name and not as a plural designation of an occupational category; see *KTU* 4.790: 15.

[761] E.g., *KTU* 4.412, where *bn qdšt*, "son of *qdšt*" appears. That this should be considered a personal name rather than profession is suggested by the context of numerous *bn* PN in the same text and not *bn* of occupational categories.

[762] Van Soldt 2016a: 97 states that there are around 6 500 names attested. Previously, the same scholar (1991: 39–40) has counted almost 5 900 names – 1737 of which are attested only once, 373 twice and 165 three times. There are also few names that appear over 30, up to 40 times. There are probably around 2 600 different names attested; see Watson 2016: 353. For relevant studies and collections of onomastics of Ugarit, see e.g., indexes in *PRU II–VI* and *Ugaritica V*; van Soldt 1991: 32–43, Hess 1999, Watson 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2002, 2003a, 2007, 2012, and 2016; Segert 1995, Grøndahl 1967, Kinlaw 1967, or Uyechi 1961. Van Soldt 2016a focuses specifically on deities in Ugaritic onomastics and del Olmo Lete 2014a: 283–284 explores briefly the relations between religion and personal names. As far as I know, no comprehensive list of names from Ugarit have been published, but such a database is currently in creation by Robert Marineau within *Tyndale House Old Testament project*. See Tyndale House, Cambridge, *Robert Marineau*, available at: [https://tyndalehouse.com/about/staff/robert-marineau/] [accessed 30th August 2023].

[763] Especially the Watson's series on onomastics (see the note above) are extremely useful in this regard.

ask for the purpose of name-giving practices. Unfortunately, the Ugaritic sources themselves do not provide any solid information on the practices of name-giving.[764] According to del Olmo Lete:

> *In everyday life, the giving of a name is one of the few ways by which we can learn about how personal and family piety was expressed, inasmuch as it tells us which gods were actually vital in the religious feeling of the ordinary faithful and the kind of relationship they had with them and what they hoped to gain from them. With his or her name, the child became in some way recommended to the patronage of a god and to change it could mean a whole religious or cultic "conversion" which had, of course, to be well guaranteed.*[765]

While it sounds credible, such a statement is hard to corroborate. Surely, some names seem to reflect this theory: *bʿlšlm*, "Baʿal is Well-Being";[766] *ảrttb*, "Gift of Teššub";[767] *išbʿl*, "Man of Baʿal";[768] *nẓrỉl*, "Ilu Is the Guardian"/"Guardian of Ilu";[769] or *ʿttrủm*, "ʿAttar Is Mother".[770] On the contrary, there are also many names that contrast with such a conception. It seems that the parents did not go far for many of the names: *ḫrpn*, "Premature Child"/"Autumnal Child";[771] *snb*, "Foundling"/"Abandoned Child";[772] *bṣy*, "Offspring";[773] *nkly* – "Born in (Month) *Nql*";[774] or *ảkpgt*, "Born By the Sea".[775] Even royal daughters in the narratives from Ugarit were not particularly "inventive"[776] – the last daughter of Kirta is named Ṯitmanit, "Octavia"[777] and Daniil has Paġit, "Girl"/"Princess".[778]

Some names may even seem rather harsh: *nkn*, "Lame";[779] *kbr*, "Fat";[780] *bủš*, "Smelly(?)";[781] *dbb*, "Fly";[782] or *gbʿn*, "Hunchbacked".[783] Here, we may only wonder whether these names reflected

---

[764] The only exception that comes to my mind is the naming of the children of the hero of the *Epic of Kirta*. Here, their names are pronounced prior to birth, or even conception, by Ilu. See *KTU* 1.15 II: 25 and III: 7–16. The concept of divine selection of name probably does not reflect the practices of most of the population, if any.

[765] Del Olmo Lete 2014a: 283.

[766] Watson 2012: 328.

[767] Watson 2012: 325.

[768] Watson 2016: 337.

[769] Watson 1995: 225.

[770] Watson 1996: 103 and 2002: 236.

[771] Watson 1990a: 119.

[772] Watson 1990a: 122.

[773] Watson 1990b: 244.

[774] Watson 1993: 217. See Watson 2012: 344–345 for names referring to months (of birth?).

[775] Watson 2012: 324

[776] Nonetheless, I suspect this is an important wordplay and it is therefore symbolically very strong. The generality of these female characters is in the narratives well contrasted with their importance for the plot. E.g., the last, eight, daughter is named the firstborn. This narrative feature will resurface in Chapter *7.3.1 Kirta and Aqhat as Social Myth-Narratives*.

[777] On the other hand, this designation may be particularly chosen in order to contrast for her proclaimed position as the firstborn. See *KTU* 1.15 III: 7–16.

[778] *DUL*: 656.

[779] Watson 2012: 334.

[780] Watson 2003a: 234.

[781] Watson 1995: 220 and 1996: 97.

[782] Watson 1993: 215.

[783] Watson 1995: 221.

the first impressions of the parents, were actually nicknames, or were given intentionally in order to repel evil forces.[784]

Comparative evidence suggests that names could have also been changed during the lifetime of an individual.[785] For example, Piyašili changed his Hittite name to Hurrian Šarri-Kušuḫ once he was placed on the throne.[786] Unfortunately, as far as I know, the name change is not explicitly recognised in Ugaritic sources. We may consider names like *ynḥm*, "May He Be Comforted/at Ease"/"May (the god) Have Compassion";[787] *ỉybʿl*, "Where Is Baʿal?"[788]; or *ỉyrḫ*, "Where Is Yarīḫ?".[789] As those reflecting some personal crisis during the life of an individual.[790] We may also wonder whether the name of Ilimilku, the famous scribe, might have been intentionally chosen by its bearer in light of his position towards royalty. The interpretation may also be influenced by the understanding of the name; is it "Ilu Is King", "My God Is King", "Milku Is My God", or "The King Is My God"?[791]

Selection of names, be it by parents or by the individuals themselves, may also reflect other features than their meaning. For example, the relatively high proportion, over 20 %,[792] of Hurrian onomastics at Ugarit may be correlated to the strong influence of Hurrian culture.[793] Both the meaning and cultural background of names should be considered as important features in the selection process.

It must be noted that our understanding of personal names is not perfect. Often, there are more possibilities. Hidden meanings, as well as personal explanations or specific understandings by their bearers, are always possible.[794] We may also note that many personal names were reversible. For example, *ảb-ršp* and *ršp-ảb*; *dn-ỉl* and *ỉl-dn*, or *ṯpṭ-bʿl* and *bʿlm-ṯpṭ*.[795] This practice may further complicate our attempts to precisely detect their meaning. The reader should, therefore, be cautious about each suggested interpretation.

6.1.1 Deities in Personal Names

From the perspective of religion, primary interests are those names that include theophoric elements.[796] A few of them have already been mentioned, but the data are much larger. Here are a few

---

[784] See Seymour 1983: 113; see also Collazo 2019 for transcultural study of apotropaic names.

[785] Seymour 1983: 114–116.

[786] De Martino 2014: 86.

[787] Watson 1996: 99.

[788] Watson 2016: 338.

[789] Watson 2016: 338.

[790] See Seymour 1983: 116.

[791] See Watson 2012: 326, 2016: 352–353, Wyatt 2015: 401, n. 7.

[792] Hess 1999: 509 and van Soldt 2003. Depending on social groups, the percentage may usually vary from 5 to 30 %. However, some higher officials are even more "Hurritized": in the case of *sākinu* ("governor") the percentage reaches up to 69 % and in the case of *šatamu* even up to 75 %; see van Soldt 2003: 701–702. In 2016a: 97, van Soldt differentiated between probable inhabitants in contrast to foreigners and lowered he average percentage of Hurrian names to 15 %.

[793] See van Soldt 2003 for the detailed overview of Hurrian names and Válek 2021: 49–54 for a general overview of the cultural influences.

[794] See Watson 1995: 229. The problem of our understanding of personal names is also addressed in Watson 2007: 206.

[795] Watson 2016: 349–352.

[796] See van Soldt 2016a, Ribichini & Xella 1991, or Grøndahl 1967: 78–85.

more examples: *ỉlảbn*, "Ilu Is a Stone";[797] *ỉlyqn*, "My God/Ilu Has Created";[798] *ybˁ.bˁl*, "May Baˁal Pour Water(?)";[799] *ỉlbˁl*, "Baˁal Is God";[800] *ˁbdbˁl*, "Servant of Baˁal";[801] *ảbršp*, "My Father Is Rašap";[802] *mtbˁl*, "Man of Baˁal";[803] *nqmd*, "The Vengance of Haddu";[804] *ṯbỉl*, "The God/Ilu Has Returned (to) Me";[805] *ỉlảdn*, "Ilu Is Lord";[806] *ˁnỉl*, "Ilu Is Beautiful";[807] *ảrkd̲(n)*, "Kušuḫ Has Given (a child)";[808] *ḥyỉl*, "Ilu Is Alive";[809] *ảmrỉl*, "Ilu Saw";[810] *ỉlt*, "Goddess";[811] and so on and so forth. There is a variety in types of these names – some express thankfulness to a deity, others exalt them or establish a relation between the deity and the name-bearer, and some may be perceived as short prayers.

Van Soldt calculates that out of ca. 6 500 attested names, some 1 100 belong to this category, i.e., around 17 %.[812] The number may be a bit higher if we consider names where deities are only implicit.[813] From the statistical perspective, the deities are not the most common choice in name-giving practices.

Interesting data in relation to religion may be obtained by statistical analysis of personal names with theophoric elements. Comparison of these data with statistical analysis of ritual texts may show us whether there was any significant correlation. For this purpose, the data collected by van Soldt[814] and Pardee[815] are very useful. However, one should always be aware of the gaps in the material and preservation of the tablets. Especially the case of some "sacrificially" rich tablets may seriously distort the data.[816]

---

[797] Watson 1990a: 116. This meaning is a bit striking to me even though it may bear some symbolic connotations of stone. Possibly, it could be understood as "Ilu is our father", too(?).

[798] Watson 1990a: 116.

[799] Watson 1990a: 119.

[800] Watson 1990b: 214.

[801] Watson 1990b: 218.

[802] Watson 1995: 218.

[803] Watson 1996: 101.

[804] Watson 1996: 102.

[805] Watson 1995: 105.

[806] Watson 2002: 232.

[807] Watson 2002: 236.

[808] Watson 2012: 325.

[809] Watson 2012: 331.

[810] Watson 2016: 337.

[811] Watson 1995: 219.

[812] Van Soldt 2016a: 97.

[813] E.g., *yqm*, "(The God?) Raised Again" and *mdd*, "Beloved (of a deity?)"; see Watson 2016: 349 and 1995: 224.

[814] Van Soldt 2016a: 99–104.

[815] *RSO XII/2*: 962–996.

[816] E.g., in *KTU* 1.162, otherwise unknown deity *ảmšrt* receives a ram, but the ritual was to be repeated 22 times.
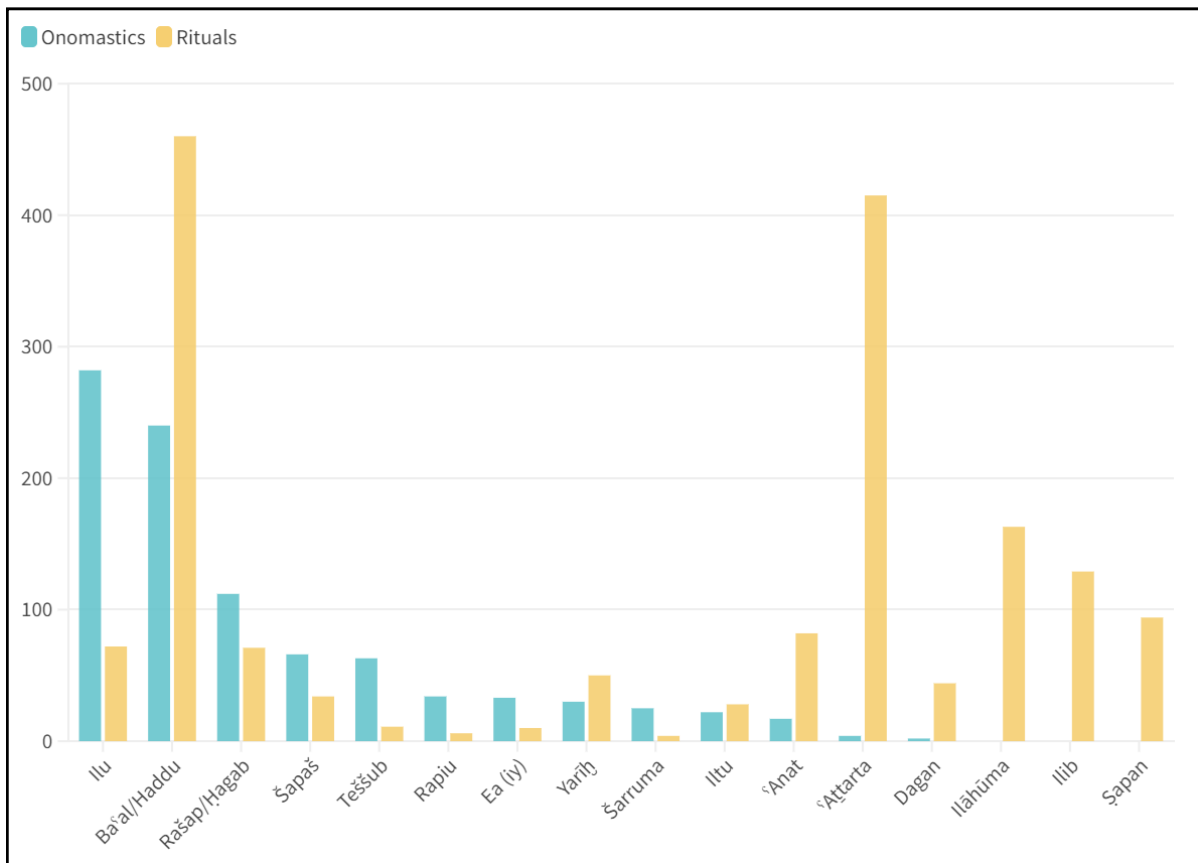
Figure 31 Attestations of personal names with theophoric elements in comparison with number of offerings presented to deities or mentions of deities in ritual texts.
Based on van Soldt 2016a: 99–104 and *RSO XII*: 962–996.
Interactive chart available at https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/14365229/ [accessed 30th August 2023]

The presented chart shows data related to the ten deities who receive the most sacrifices and the ten deities most often used as theophoric elements. The overlap is only partial; therefore, sixteen deities appear. Besides the bias of the source preservation, the data are distorted by the following factors: 1) the number of sacrifices is added together with the number of their appearance without any sacrifices;[817] 2) some deities' names are merged together. First, different manifestations of supposedly the same deities are joined. For example, Baʿal appears in ritual texts in many forms: Baʿal, Baʿal of Ṣapan, Baʿal of Ḫalāb, etc. These are all counted together.[818] Baʿal is then connected with Haddu/Adad, who goes by this name in onomastics or narratives but not in ritual texts. The category of storm-deities is also a nice example of problems with interpreting ideograms – ᴰIM in this case. In personal names, this may stand for any Storm-God at Ugarit, most often Baʿal, Haddu, or Teššub. Here, I have set aside Teššub as a Hurrian deity in contrast to Semitic Baʿal and Haddu. After all,

---

[817] E.g., the Rapiūma appear in ritual texts only in *KTU* 1.161, where they are invoked, not sacrificed to. In addition, this "entity" appears as *ủlkn . rpủ*, *trmn rpủ*, *rpỉm . qdmym*, and *rpỉ . ảrṣ*. Here, we are dealing more with a category of beings that with a single deity. It is possible that the Rapiūma in personal names are intended as some particular Rapiu.

[818] On the contrary, I did not count in plural(?) form *bʿlm*, which appears in several texts; see *RSO XII*: 974. However, these sacrifices might have well been intended for the multiple forms of Baʿal present at Ugarit. Counting them in, the number of sacrifices to Baʿal/Haddu would rise by additional 142 offerings.

these are set aside both in onomastics and rituals.[819] Similarly, ʿAṯtarta appears also as ʿAṯtarta-Ḫurri, or ʿAṯtarta-Šadî. Rašap appears also as Rašap Guni, Rašap Ḫagab, etc. Because of Rašap Ḫagab, the names with Ḫagab are counted together with Rašap. Iršappa is left aside as the Hurrian variant, just as Teššub was. Very complicated is the case of Ilu. Lexeme *il*, "god" appears as a part of other deities who are sacrificed to – e.g., *ilib, il bt, il ḫš, il ḫšt, il šr, il bldn, ilh,* or in plural forms as *ilhm, ilm,* etc. It is very problematic to merge these deities into one. In addition, some would argue in favour of merging Ilu and Dagan.[820] In personal names, the lexeme *il* may also stand in for the general word for deity, and it is problematic to interpret it always as Ilu.

The statistics lead to contradictory results. In general, we may see a relatively strong connection between names and cults in the cases of storm-deities and Ilu, who is somewhat underrated in the presented chart but was a very prominent deity. Rašap, Šapaš and Yarīḫ are strongly attested in personal names. Their position in cults seems not so strong, but at least Rašap and Yarīḫ still make it into the top ten venerated deities. The relatively prominent position of Teššub and Ea in personal names may be connected with the above-mentioned strong liking for Hurrian culture. While the Hurrian element is also strong in cults, it cannot compete with the Semitic cult in overall numbers. The most striking is the position of ʿAṯtarta and ʿAnat – the most venerated female deities make it only scarcely to personal names. Dagan's low position in onomastics is also in striking contrast with his position in cult. On the other hand, I am not surprised by the absence of Ilāhūma, Ilib, or Ṣapan in personal names.[821] I see them as rather specific cultic personas. However, this feeling of mine definitely needs further elaboration, especially from the perspective of the conception of deities. For now, I leave this issue for further research.

In the end, the preliminary observations presented here do not differ from what has already been suggested by van Soldt[822] or Pardee.[823] The onomastics show only a weak correlation with cultic practices but hardly any brutal contrast. It is difficult to ascertain the reasons behind the name selection process. In some cases, the popularity of deities within the cultural space seems to be reflected. In other cases, fondness for Hurrian culture might have played a decisive role. The domestic cult and personal piety were surely a decision factor, too. The statistics are silent on these issues, especially when ignoring the particular meanings of individual names. The divergence of the statistical appearance of deities in onomastic, cult, and mythology is not truly surprising. All these spheres are products of different perspectives, intentions and motivations. The statistics show us that we should not straightforwardly base our understanding of cultic realia on onomastics.

6.1.2 Personal Names with References to Religion

The names with theophoric elements are not the only ones that reflect religious realia. We may also meet some that take this from different perspectives: *krby*, "Blessed";[824] *ybrk*, "May (God) Bless

---

[819] See also discussion in van Soldt 2016a: 97. The probable reading in personal names may be based on the language of the other elements in the name. See also Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*, where the interchangeability of deities is addressed.

[820] E.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 22 and 39.

[821] Ṣapan appears as element in personal names, but it is rather dubious that it is mean as a deity. See, e.g., Grøndahl 1967: 38 and 189 or Ribichini & Xella 1991: 167.

[822] Van Soldt 2016a.

[823] Pardee 1988: 136–141.

[824] Watson 2016: 341.

You"/"May You Be Blessed";[825] *ủby*, "Faithful";[826] and above, we have already mentioned *qdšt*, the feminine form of priestly-office, used as a personal name. A personal name *t'y*, which may be related to a type of sacrifice/a particular type of (priestly)office, is also attested.[827] In narratives, the son of Kirta is named *yṣb*. This name is by some interpreted as "He Who Erects (his father's mortuary stela after his death)",[828] but other interpretations are possible, too.[829] It seems to me that this category is very small, as I have encountered only a few such names. A more detailed exploration of personal names and their full publication may reveal more examples.

6.1.3 PERSONAL NAMES OF PRIESTS

Yet another line of connecting onomastics with religion is to explore the names of the holders of priestly offices – the *khnm* and *qdšm*.[830] There are at least four administrative documents in Ugaritic that list individual holders of these offices: *KTU* 4.69 VI: 22–36, 4.412 II: 8–17, 4.633, and 4.761.[831] Unfortunately, most of these individuals are listed only by their patronymic, i.e., "*bn* PN". The only names that may be related directly to the priests themselves are *ảnnš*[*n*][832] and *ảgy bn* [...].[833] The first name is probably of Hurrian origin,[834] but I have not been able to ascertain its meaning. The second name is rendered by Watson as "(A God) Carried" and is also Hurrian in origin.[835] We also know by name one *rb khnm*, the "chief priest", from the colophon of Ilimilku. It is *Attēnu*.[836] We may notice that all of these names are of Hurrian etymology.

Three of the texts listing *khnm* (*KTU* 4.69, 4.633, and 4.761) have significant overlaps. All three of them include *bn nqly*, *bn snrn*, *bn ảmdn*, *bn pzny*, and *bn mglb*. At least in two of them, the following names appear: *bn ṯgd*, *bn dtn*, *bn dbb*, and *ảnnšn*. In addition, *KTU* 4.69 is in its overall structure and content parallel (not identical) with logosyllabic RS 16.257+.[837] There, the office is designated with the use of the sign SANGA, Akkadian *šangû*. Interestingly, the logosyllabic text lists these persons also by their name in addition to their patronymic. The following names are included:

RS 16.257+ III: 38–55[838]	*KTU* 4.69/ 4.761/4.633	possible meaning of name and patronymic

---

[825] Watson 2016: 349.

[826] Watson 1995: 220.

[827] *KTU* 4.69 VI: 23. See further notes in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy.*

[828] Watson 2002: 234 and Greenstein in Parker 1997: 44, n. 65.

[829] Watson discussed this name once again in more detail (2007: 192–194). He suggests reading it as "(Divine) Suckling", *Yaṣṣubu*, in comparison with Akkadian *naṣābu*, "to suck". He also mentions other suggested interpretations; for example, as a cognate of Arabic *waṣaba*, "to continue, to establish" which resonates in the story, or as "One Who Stands Up (serving his father)".

[830] See Chapter *6.2.1.1 Clergy - khnm and qdšm.*

[831] See also Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy.* for other attestations of these offices in administrative documents. Most of them do not specify individuals.

[832] *KTU* 4.633: 14 and 4.761: 6.

[833] *KTU* 4.761: 3

[834] Grøndahl 1967: 217–218.

[835] Watson 2012: 324–325; the Hurrian origin is mentioned in comment to *ảkyn*.

[836] Unless the title belongs to Ilimilku. See discussion in *Chapter 7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History.* Possibly, this name can be understood as "Teššub is the Father"; see Grøndahl 1967: 221 for *at-* and note 854 for *-tēnu*. Alternatively, it could be related with the month Attana(?); see Watson 2012: 344 in comment on name *ảtnb*.

[837] *PRU III*: 199–204. See also Schloen 2001: 211, van Soldt 1991: 34, or Heltzer 1982: 133–134.

[838] Following reading of *PRU III*: 202. Some edits were made according to Schloen 2001: 211.

[ᴰᴵˢ]ÌR-*du* DUMU *am-ma-da-na*	*bn . åmdn*	name: "Servant" patronymic: ? (Hurr.?[839])
[ᴰᴵˢ] ÌR-*an-ti* DUMU *ka-bi-iz-zi*	–	n.: "Servant of ˤAnat(?)" p.: "Launderer"[840]
ᴰᴵˢ*tag*-ᴰU DUMU *da-ti-ni*	*bn . dtn*	n.: "Crown of Teššub/Teššub is beautiful"?[841] (Hurr.) p.: "Strong(?)"[842]
[ᴰᴵˢ]*ia-an-ḫa-am-mu* DUMU *pí-zu-ni*	*bn . pzyn*	n.: "My He Be Comforted/at Ease"[843] p.: "Rejoicing"[844] (Hurr.)
[ᴰᴵˢ]*ku-un-am-mu* DUMU *ni-qa-la-a*	*bn. nqly*	n.: ? p.: "Born in (month) *Nql*"[845]
ᴰᴵˢ*a-gap*-ŠEŠ DUMU *ku-ni-ya*	–	n.: "My Brother Has Caried"?[846] (Hurr.) p.: "Rightful/Firm One"?[847]
ᴰᴵˢ*a-bur₅-ša-nu* DUMU «NA» *ma-ag-li-bi*	*bn . mglb*	n.: "Brother Is My Lord"?[848] p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢSUM-ᴰU DUMU *sí-na-ra-na*	*bn . snrn*	n.: "Gift of Teššub"[849] (Hurr.?) p.: "(a plant)"?[850]
ᴰᴵˢ*ia-an-ḫa-am-mu* DUMU *ši-gu-dì*	*bn . ṯgd*	n.: "My He Be Comforted/at Ease"[851] p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢDINGIR-LUGAL DUMU *ú-lu-na-a-ri*	–	n.: "Ilu is King"[852] p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢ*ia-tar*-ᴰMAŠ.MAŠ DUMU *ša-am-ra-na*	*ṯmrn*[853]	n.: "Rašap(?) has Returned" p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢÌR-ᴰMAŠ.MAŠ DUMU *ta-ak-te-na*	–	n.: "Servant of Rašap(?)" p.: "Crown of Teššub/Teššub is beautiful" (Hurr.)[854]
ᴰᴵˢ*ia-qub-ia-nu* DUMU *ša-ba-ra-na*	*ṯbr*[*n*] (?)[855]	n.: ?

---

[839] *DUL*: 68, Grøndahl 1967: 219.

[840] Watson 1990a: 120.

[841] For "crown" see discussion of element *tg/tagi-* by Watson 2012: 339; for "to be beautiful" and further suggestions, see Richter 2012: 428. Since this element is Hurrian, reading Teššub is probable and has already been suggested by Nougayrol in *PRU III*: 202.

[842] Watson 2007: 163, but see also 2006: 454, "Bisson(?)" when understood as an animal. This meaning could have also been transferred to a personal name. Possibility of Ditānu seems incompatible with the logosyllabic writing.

[843] Watson 1996: 99.

[844] Watson 1990a: 123.

[845] Watson 1993: 217.

[846] Compared with *ågpt*; see Watson 2012: 324.

[847] See Grøndahl 1967: 278. Grøndahl argues for Anatolian etymology, from Hittite *kunna-*.

[848] See Watson 1990a: 114. The selected rendering follows possible Hurrian reading.

[849] See Watson 2012: 325.

[850] See Watson 2012: 338. Possibly Egyptian etymology?

[851] Watson 1996: 99.

[852] See the discussion on Ilimilku above.

[853] Schloen 2001: 211 does not connect these two names, but it seems probable to me.

[854] Element *-tēnu* is to be understood as hypocoristic form of Teššub; see Labat & Roche 2007: 64, n. 4. This name is therefore comparable to the logosyllabic ᴰᴵˢ*tag*-ᴰU on line 40.

[855] Schloen 2001: 211 does not connect these two names, but it seems probable to me. See also Watson 2012: 342.

		p.: "Broken"[856]
ᴰᴵˢ*ar-te-nu* DUMU *ša-ša-na*	–	n.: "Teššub has Given"?[857] (Hurr.) p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢ*at-te-ya* DUMU *iš-la-ma-na*	–	n.: ?[858] (Hurr.?) p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢŠEŠ-*mu-nu* DUMU *ša-a-la-na*	*ṯ*ˤᵀ*Γ*[*n*] (?)[859]	n.: "Brother Has Provided Food"?[860] p.: ?
ᴰᴵˢ*a-ḫa-ma-ra-nu* DUMU *ma-ri-ma-na*	–	n.: ? p.: ?

Unfortunately, due to the problems of understanding personal names and my grave lack of expertise in this regard, the interpretations are worse than preliminary. So far, it seems to me that the holders of the office have more names with theophoric elements than their fathers. Hurrian elements are quite strong. This may be evidence of the name changes during the lifetime of individuals. Possibly, upon taking hold of the office, the priests changed their name to something that reflected their position better.[861] At the same time, the list also suggests that if this was a possibility, it was not a necessity. Some names do not seem to bear any reference to cults. This remains a provisional suggestion that needs further research.

Another explanation may be given. It has been argued that the designations by patronymic reflect the patrimonial model of society, in this case, the hereditary nature of occupations.[862] This practice was not anything unique to priests – *KTU* 4.69 addresses in the same way individuals belonging to several other professions – from *mariyannu*, to their commercial agents, to guards. *KTU* 4.69, as well as other documents of a similar nature, also uses the designation *w . nḥlh . w . nḥlhm*, "and his heir(s) and their heir(s)" to list even more individuals belonging to the same patronymic. Seen in this light, these lists may actually deal with those priests who are currently working together with their fathers. It follows that the patronymics also reflect the names of priests. Hence, the names of the sons might not have been changed upon taking hold of the office but reflect the choice of priestly fathers who here project their interests onto their children. This line of interpretation also invites the possibility that the fathers of the father were priests, too. Here, however, the preference for theophoric names was not manifested.

KTU 4.412 II: 8–17 is similar to the texts discussed above. It lists individuals by their patronymic belonging to the category of *qdšm*. Unfortunately, the tablet is rather damaged in the relevant section. More relevant could be another section of RS 16.257+, following immediately after the listing of the SANGA. There, LÚ.MEŠ *ša na-qí* are listed.[863] It is probable this is an alternative rendering of the *qdšm* in the logosyllabic script because they follow SANGA, just like *qdšm* may follow *khnm*. In addition, LÚ.MEŠ *ša na-qí* may be translated as "those who perform sacrifice", which would be relevant to the understanding of *qdšm* as priests.[864] The text is unfortunately very fragmentary, but even here, there is one ᴰᴵˢÌRᴰ30, "Servant of Yarīḫ(?)", and ᴰᴵˢÌR.NIN, "Servant of Bēltu/Lady". The case is, however, not very

---

[856] Watson 2012: 342.

[857] For *ar-*, see Richter 2012: 41–42. For *-tēnu*, see note 854.

[858] See Watson 2012: 326. Possibly, element *at-*, "father", is present here? See note 836 on *Attēnu*.

[859] Schloen 2001: 211 does not connect these two names, but it seems probable to me.

[860] See Watson 1993: 214.

[861] The comparative evidence of the ancient Near Eastern practices is not conclusive in this regard; see, e.g., Seymour 1983: 116–118.

[862] See Schloen 2001: 211–215.

[863] RS 16.257+: III 56–IV 6 (supposing the list continues over

[864] See also discussion in Dijkstra 2000: 88.

strong. In general, the material is relatively poor to make any inferences, but further explorations in Ugaritic prosopography may bear new insights.

6.1.4 Name and Symbolism

A short note may be made on the symbolic connotations of *names*. In a legal text RS 15.109+: 56–57, we may read: "Whoever destroys this tablet, may the gods destroy his name".[865] Even though such a statement is not anyhow usual among the Ugaritic maledictions, this attestation suggests that cursing a name was a threatening thought.

The practice of name-giving itself may also be perceived in symbolic terms. The episode from the *Baʿal Cycle* where Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs names the weapons with which Baʿal defeats Yamm[866] may be seen in this light. The act of name-giving is a constitutive element in the manufacture of the weapons and gives them their identity, purpose and power.

In this regard, we may also wonder if a name mentioned in a medical text might have some symbolic connotation, which would make the remedy more powerful. However, since only *KTU* 1.178 may be counted among such texts, we can hardly make any general assumptions.[867]

Creative use of non-creative names has already been noted in relation to the females from the epic narratives of Ugarit. There, the giving of generic names, Ṯitmanit, "Octavia" and Paġit, "Girl"/"Princess", is contrasted with their uttermost importance to the plot of the epics. Similarly, the names of other narrative characters may be interpreted in line with or in contrast to their character, like Yaṣṣib, "He Who Erects (his father's mortuary stela after his death)", who ends up as the one who is cursed by his father. Šaʿatiqat, the entity created by Ilu to cure Kirta, may possibly be interpreted as "She who Causes Evil/Illness to Pass Away".[868] The names of Kirta and his acquired wife Ḫuraya, as well as his home city Ḫubur, refer to the Hurrian cultural milieu. This literary creativity, however, does not have to reflect the practices of symbolism of real-used names.

These feeble sources and hints suggest there may be much more to the symbolics of onomastics at Ugarit. However, the exact extent of the interplay between names and their symbolic power is hard to determine in greater detail. The comparative perspective and further contextualization in ANE practices may bear more fruit.[869]

6.1.5 Toponyms

Only briefly we may also make a few references to the names of places.[870] Even here, we may sometimes encounter references to deities or some religious realia. Following Watson, we may note following toponyms: *ỉnbb*, "Deity (of a) Mountain",[871] *ỉlštm*, "The (place of) the God of Listening/Attention",[872] *ʿṯtrt*, "ʿAṯtarta", *dmt qdš*, "Sacred Tower",[873] *gbʿly* or *gbʿl*, "Site of Baʿal",[874]

---

[865] *ša ṭup-pu an-na-am ú-na-qí-it* DINGIR^MEŠ-*nu šùm-šu li-ḫal-li-iq*

[866] *KTU* 1.2. IV: 11–27.

[867] See also discussion in Chapter *4.2.1.3.5 Religious Texts Outside the Main Hubs.*

[868] Lewis 2013: 197. See Lewis 2013 and 2014 on broader discussion of this entity.

[869] See, e.g., Seymour 1983: 111–113.

[870] See namely Watson 2007: 195–206 for an overview. For the topography and references to place names, see also van Soldt 2005: 72–115.

[871] Watson 2007: 197. This is a mountain which in Ugarit appear primarily as a part of mythological cosmography. See, e.g., 1.3 IV: 34, 1.13: 9, 1.44: 4, and 1.100: 20.

[872] Watson 2007: 197.

[873] Watson 2007: 198

[874] Watson 2007: 199.

ḫmrm/n, "Cult Installation",[875] *knkny*, "Libation Pipe?",[876] or *ṯbil*, "May Ilu Return".[877] In general, the proportion of toponyms which may be related to religious realia is not very significant. Whether these might have reflected any cultic realia throughout the kingdom of Ugarit is possible but hardly provable.

6.2 CULTS AND COMMUNITY

Religion in the form of cultic activities – sacrificial veneration of deities – is one of the most visible and attested components of religious practices from Ugarit. Cultic activities leave numerous traces in the material. We have already discussed in the previous chapter how they influenced the environment of the city, most visibly by architecture.[878] In one of the following sections, we will focus on the issue of the administration of cults, closely connected to the economy of cults.[879] The involvement of the king in cults is also discussed separately.[880] Here, we shall explore in what ways the inhabitants of Ugarit were involved in them. The exploration of ritual texts themselves is not part of this section, as extensive research has already been done on them, especially by Pardee[881] and del Olmo Lete.[882] Needless to say, there are very significant gaps in the material and most of the questions we would like to know answers to are left unanswered.

6.2.1 CULTS AND OCCUPATIONS[883]

One of the modes by which the inhabitants are included in the organization of cults is professional involvement. First, this includes the category of "priests". "Priest" is usually used as a translation of Ugaritic *khn*; but another term, *qdš*, may also belong to this category. We have already encountered these occupations in the previous section. By priests here, I understand those who were directly involved and responsible for the organization and carrying out of cults. Therefore, throughout the thesis, I subsume these two designations as "priestly-offices" or "clergy" rather than simply "priests". But these priestly-offices were not the only ones who were involved. Other occupations that may be connected with cults will be briefly addressed, too.

6.2.1.1 CLERGY - *KHNM* AND *QDŠM*

Unfortunately, there is only very little we know about the activities of the clergy. Most of the mentions of these occupations are of administrative nature[884] and are not very informative about their role. Nonetheless, these documents at least entangle them with the royal administration[885] and economic life of the city.

---

[875] Watson 2007: 200.

[876] Watson 2007: 201.

[877] Watson 2007: 205.

[878] Chapter *5 Religion and the City Environs.*

[879] Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy.*

[880] Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults.*

[881] Especially the two volumes of *RSO XII* and their English compact variant – Pardee 2002a.

[882] Especially del Olmo Lete 2014a.

[883] See also del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 1998: 176–184 or Heltzer 1982: 131–139.

[884] Discussed further in Chapter *6.4.4 Administration of Temple Personnel.*

[885] Dijkstra 2000: 97 even states that *qdšm* clearly belonged to the *bnš mlk*, "the men of the king" category. Similarly also Heltzer 1982: 136 and 138. While I do not doubt this was so in many cases, I am not sure it was a prerequisite. It may only be a bias of the administrative sources which were made from the perspective of the palace. For more recent discussions on the character of *bnš mlk*, see namely Rowe 2003 or McGeough 2007: 90–94. The category seems to

We should start the discussion with the basic questions: How do we know that *khnm* and *qdšm* should be characterised as clergy? In the case of *khnm*, there are two core arguments:

1) The etymology of this term suggests that it is used to designate "priests" in other West Semitic languages, too.[886] This term is also attested in Ugaritic logosyllabic texts as ᴸᵁSANGA,[887] Akkadian *šangû*, "priest".

2) The building conventionally addressed as the *House of the High Priest* has been identified based on the inscriptions on depot objects, specifying *rb khnm*, the "high priest". Its proximity to the temples on the *Acropolis*, as well as the presence of ritual and mythological texts, indicate its priestly function.

In the case of *qdšm*, the situation is more complicated, and some authors would not agree with me that this even refers to a priestly occupation.[888] However, I have not encountered any interpretation dissociating them from temple activities. The arguments for including them in this category are as follows:

1) The etymology of this term connects them with the conception of "sacredness/purity".[889] In the ritual texts, the lexeme *qdš* also appears in designations of sanctuaries,[890] as a divine name(-component),[891] or as a term for consecration.[892] When referring to a person, the term may be translated as the "holy one".[893]

2) In administrative texts, *qdšm* often appear in proximity to *khnm*.[894]
   a. The administrative texts of similar character (often the same texts where *qdšm* and/or *khnm* are included) deal with occupational categories, suggesting this term designated an occupation, too.

---

designate those who entered in a relationship to the palace(king) from which some obligations inferred. A result of this relationship was exchange of services and commodities. How was this relationship established cannot be securely derives from the sources, in some cases it might have been related to debth. It does not designate a general category of royal dependants, nay a social class.

[886] For cognates, see, e.g., *DUL*: 428.

[887] The equivalence of these words is supported, e.g., by the above-discussed texts RS 16.257+ in relation with *KTU* 4.69. See also *DUL*: 428.

[888] E.g., some scholars would consider this as a laic position. See the discussion and references in Clemens 2001: 307. In addition, most of the discussions of this term need to deal with the previously favoured interpretation connected with temple prostitution based on Biblical evidence. This interpretation has now, in my opinion quite fortunately, fallen out of favour and no evidence from Ugarit may support it; see, e.g., the discussions in Pardee 2002a: 240, Clemens 2001: 304 and 310, or Dijkstra 2000: 86.

[889] See, e.g., cognates in *DUL*: 685. See also *CAD* Q: 46–50 and 146–147. We have already noted the problems of the translatability of the notion of sacredness, holiness, etc.; see, e.g., Pongratz-Leisten 2009.

[890] E.g., *KTU* 1.119: 33', see Pardee 2002a, no. 46, or 1.115: 7, see Pardee 2002a, no. 16.

[891] E.g., *KTU* 1.123: 20' or 26', see Pardee 2002a, no. 47.

[892] E.g., *KTU* 1.169: 3, see Pardee 2002a, no. 48; or 1.119: 30', see Pardee 2002a, no. 46.

[893] See also Pardee 2002a: 240 for very short discussion.

[894] See Chapter *6.4.4 Administration of Temple Personnel*. In *KTU 4.29* the *khnm* and *qdšm* are even the only two administered positions.

b. Thanks to RS 16.257+, they may possibly be connected with [LÚ]*ša na-qí*.[895] The designation [LÚ] suggests they are an occupational category, and connection with the Akkadian verb *naqû* may indicate sacrificial connotations.

3) In a ritual text, *qdš* is presented as a participant in a ritual, instructed to sing.[896]

However, the precise activities these two occupations should have carried within the cult are a great unknown. *Khnm* are not mentioned in the ritual texts at all.[897] I assume that the instruction for *qdš* to sing is mentioned because it is something out of the ordinary rather than because it is one of their default cultic roles. Signing in cults might have been left for *šrm*, "singers". The best indication is, in my opinion, given in the mentioned RS 16.257+ where the logosyllabic rendering suggests sacrificial connotations. Therefore, *qdšm* might have been those who performed the sacrificial act itself. I see no reason to connect *qdšm* specifically with the practice of divination.[898]

However, I do not think it to be substantiated to delimit the competencies of these two occupational categories so strictly. As the colophon of Ilimilku from the *Baʿal Cycle* suggests, the priest might have been responsible for carrying out multiple activities. Putting aside the precise distribution of the titles between Ilimilku and Attēnu for now, we see that there are five offices/occupations for two people: "**Scribe**: Ilimilku from Šubbanu, student of Attēnu, **the diviner**, **chief priest**, **chief herdsmen**, *ṯaʿʿāyu*-**official** of Niqmaddu, the king of Ugarit".[899] We cannot be sure whether the individuals held different responsibilities all at the same time or if these rather reflect some professional development. We cannot even be sure if the office of *rb nqdm*, "chief herdsmen", was limited to holders of title *khn* or if this was a simple coincidence and accumulation of positions. There was probably some permeability among occupations.[900]

The title of *rb khnm* also clearly indicates a stratified organizational structure, possibly designated as *dr khnm*, the "circle of priests".[901] Unfortunately, apart from the existence of this leading position, we know nothing else about this organization. The social standing of the chief priest was presumably quite high. However, the two sources referred to as manifestations of this high status

---

[895] The equivalence of this logosyllabic designation and Ugaritic word is based on structural comparison with other administrative texts where *qdšm* follow *khnm*. The interpretation of the logosyllabic rendering is then in accord with presupposed interpretation. See also Dijkstra 2000: 88 who supports this interpretation by prosopography. In RS 17.131 (*PRU VI*, no. 93), [LÚ]NU.GIG is seen as Ugaritic *qdšm*. This corresponds to Mesopotamian material where this logographic record reads as *qadištu*; see *MZL*: 270. In this text, *qdš* unusually precedes the entry with [LÚ]SANGA, *khn*.

[896] *KTU* 1.112, see Pardee 2002a, no. 8.

[897] Pardee 2002a: 271.

[898] This has been suggested, e.g., by Heltzer 1982: 136 with reference to RS 18.02: 16 (*PRU IV*: 201) where a witness [DIŠ]AN[D]U [LÚ]MÁŠ.ŠU.GÍD.GÍD [LÚ]SANGA [D]U, "Šamû-Addu(?), the diviner, the priest of the Storm-God" appears. In this case, the fact from the administrative texts that *qdšm* are in proximity to *khnm* does not apply, as this is not an administrative list. If anything, this text connect profession of divination with *khn*. At the same time, this suggest differentiation of the occupation of diviner from the priestly offices, while it leaves room for both professions being performed by one person.

[899] *KTU* 1.6 VI 54–57. *spr . ỉlmlk šbny / lmd . ảtn . prln . rb . / khnm rb . nqdm / tʿy . nqmd . mlk ủgrt*. See also discussion in Chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History*

[900] Beside the above-mentioned note on RS 18.02 which attest to concurrence of occupation, it has been also suggested that RS 16.132: 5–7 (*PRU III*: 140–141) refers to a royal sanctioned transition of certain Atalšeni from the position of *qdš* and placed him among *mariyannu*; see Del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 1998: 180. Note, however, the disagreement in their interpretation and the view presented in *PRU*.

[901] *KTU* 4.357: 24. We may also consider a possibility that this does not designate the full collective of priests, but only a selected part of them, maybe the "organization board".

are based on unclear evidence. In a letter RS 17.428[902] a chief priest presumably addressed *sākinu* ("governor") of Ugarit as his brother, i.e., his peer. Unfortunately, the reading of the "chief priest" is insecure, and the "brother" is almost entirely lost in the lacuna. The second text is *KTU* 2.4, addressed to the *rb khnm*. According to del Olmo Lete,[903] the king addresses the chief priest as his brother, which would indicate their peer status. However, this expression appears only later in the body of the text and not in the address. Since the texts are heavily damaged, the exact relations between the king and the priest may not be so clear. Even more importantly, the king as the sender is reconstructed (⌈*m*⌉[*lk*]). I personally doubt that the king would address even *rb khnm* as an equal. On the other hand, if the sender is truly king, the high position of *rb khnm* is indicated already by the fact that the sender opens the letter with a relatively rich benediction. Usually, the royalty did not include such benedictions when writing to their subordinates.[904] The high standing of the *rb khnm* is also indicated by being placed first before the name/designation of the sender. Both of these features, in my opinion, make the reconstruction of the king unwarranted. Anyhow, they highlight his high social standing in relation to the lost sender.[905]

The organization of cults was a complex task involving numerous assignments:[906] administration, collection of sacrificial animals, taking care of them, sacrifice, butchering, cleaning of temple premises, building activities, preparation of drinks, cooking, clothing and anointing deities, procession of gifts, divination practices, incense lighting, kindling of sacrificial fire, placing of votive offerings, preparation of floral decoration, singing and recitation of hymns and prayers, possibly also of myths, holding of standards, and so on and so forth. The administration texts suggest that there was quite a number of *khnm* and *qdšm*,[907] but we are not sure which of these activities were reserved for either of them and which they only organised and administered.[908] The interpretations also heavily depend on how accessible we imagine the temples and temple courtyards to be.

6.2.1.2 OTHER OCCUPATIONS

The complexity of temple administration and the organization of cults probably required a broader use of human resources and participation. Some of the topics are further addressed in the section on economy and administration.[909] Here, we may note a few occupations that may be directly involved in the ritual performance and operation of cults. While we tend to consider them as "professionals," there is a possibility that, at least partially, these activities were carried out by "volunteers," even if

---

[902] *PRU VI*, no. 9.

[903] Olmo Lete 2018: 23.

[904] See discussion in Chapter *6.6.1 Symbolic Communication, Greetings, and Benedictions.*

[905] In this regard, they are often contrasted to *qdšm* whose lower standing is assumed; see, e.g., Heltzer 1982: 137 or Dijkstra 2000: 89. However, apart form the position of *rb khnm*, the sources in my opinion do not highlight any clear differences between *khnm* and *qdšm*.

[906] The following enumeration is partially based on the available evidence, but some of these have been included based on my imagination of cultic activities.

[907] Solely on the base of the administrative texts, Heltzer 1982: 135 argued that the number of *khnm* did not exceed 25–30. However, this seems to me an unsubstantiated assumption.

[908] Pardee 2002a: 239 argued that "the primacy of the king in the Ugaritic texts at our disposal has resulted in the virtual absence from those texts of references to the cultic personnel who actually performed the sacrificial and other cultic acts." I would not agree with this line of interpretation. The king was mentioned because he needed to be instructed, while the clergy might have been omitted because their position was then-obvious. This may correlate with the instruction for *qdš* to sing, which might have been irregular.

[909] Chapter *6.4.4 Administration of Temple Personnel.*

some material exchange relationships might have been part of the practice. The "professional" interpretation may be caused by the biased perspective of the administrative sources.

One of the most often mentioned categories in regard to cult performance is *šrm*, "singers".[910] The singers occur in a few administrative sources[911] but are also mentioned within a ritual text[912] or in narratives. The narrative compositions may further elaborate on their character. For example, in the *Epic of Aqhat*, the imagery of the singer playing his lyre is used as a literary topos.[913] This broadens the vocal character of singers, and we may regard them more broadly as musicians. Musical accompaniment of divine feast is also used as literary topos in the *Baʿal Cycle*.[914] Music and cult may be further contextualised with the broad attestation of Hurrian hymns at Ugarit, even though the exact modus of cooperation between the musicians and the archives yielding the musical text is not clear from the sources.[915] Musical performance in cults may be further connected to *mṣlm*, "cymbalists", who are mentioned in the sources, too.[916]

In *KTU* 1.23, officiants(?) designated as *ʿrb* and *tnmm* appear.[917] They are usually understood as the "ones who enter" and the "guards", respectively.[918] Unfortunately, their precise character and role within cults remain speculative. In this text, the *ʿrbm* are possibly involved in some vocal activities,[919] and both *ʿrbm* and *tnmm* may be connected with the sacrificial act.[920] The meaning of *ʿrbm* may indicate they were the ones who entered the temple[921] of the deity, and their siding with the *tnmm* could suggest that this access was guarded. However, since the sources are scarce and *KTU* 1.23 is generally rather enigmatic, it is possibly best to avoid further reconstructions.

The operation of the Ugaritic sanctuaries was also supported by *šib mqdšt*, the "water drawers of the sanctuary", mentioned in a single document.[922] It is in cases like this one when it is difficult to ascertain if the administration reflects stable positions, "occupations", within the temple staff or if it refers to a singular event of service provision. In addition, many of these occupations should not be seen as something specific to the temple organization. For example, there is no reason to suppose that the musicians could not have been employed by different institutions or persons to perform outside of the cultic context.

---

[910] E.g., Heltzer 1982: 137 or del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 1998: 181–183. Both of these publications consider *šrm* right after *khnm* and *qdšm*.

[911] *KTU* 4.103:41 and 4.168:4.

[912] *KTU* 1.106:15 and 1.23:22(?).

[913] *KTU* 1.19 I: 7–8. *k šr knr úṣbʿ<t>th*, "Like a signer her finger on a lyre". This imagery is used in a broken passage and probably relates to ʿAnat and the bow of Aqhat.

[914] *KTU* 1.4 I: 18–22.

[915] The largest corpus of Hurrian hymns comes form the *Royal Palace* (see Chapter *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace*), but other hymns were also discovered in the *House of the High Priest* or *House of the Hurrian Priest* (see Chapters *4.2.1.3.2 House of the High Priest* and *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest*).

[916] *KTU* 1.108:4 and 1.19 IV 26–27(?). In administration *KTU* 4.126: 30 and 4.225: 5(?).

[917] *KTU* 1.23: 7, 12, 18, 26.

[918] See M. Smith 2006: 38–39 for short consideration and references; Lewis in Parker 1997: 208–209 translates them as "ministrants" and "marshals".

[919] *KTU* 1.23: 12 and the following songs.

[920] *KTU* 1.23: 26–27

[921] The act of entering occasionally appears in ritual texts, e.g., *KTU* 1.43, 1.91, 1.111, or 1.148; see *RSO XII/2*: 1013.

[922] *KTU* 4.609:15. Their appearance on *KTU* 6.25 has been reconsidered.

6.2.1.2.1 _Ṯ ʿY_

An interesting position to consider in this section is _tʿy_. The root _t-ʿ-(y)_ seems to cover a broader range of meanings and uses. It appears numerous times in the ritual texts from Ugarit. Mostly, it appears as a designation of a (special type of) sacrificial act.[923] But there are several instances where it may be understood as a cultic role/official/priest. In _KTU_ 1.90: 22–23, we may read: (…) _w mlk / ynṣl . l tʿy_. Translations of this section differ. Some understand it as "and the king ceases as an officiant".[924] Others take it as a reference to the type of sacrifice and not as a cultic role: "And the king will move away to perform the _tʿ_-sacrifice".[925] In _KTU_ 1.119: 8, another contested instruction appears: _bt . tʿy_ ⌜.⌝ _ydbḥ_. This statement may mean that the sacrifices are to be performed at the house of the _tʿy_-person,[926] offered by the household of the _tʿy_-person,[927] or at the house of the _tʿy_-sacrifices.[928] Last, _tʿy_ is mentioned in _KTU_ 1.169: 2 from Ras Ibn-Hani.[929] Here, the _tʿy_-person is used in incantational imagery of his voice healing the patient's problem. Some understand this occurrence as an indication of an "exorcist" character of this position.[930] As can be deduced from these references, there is nothing clear to state about this office in the context of cult.[931] If one inclines towards some of these translations, it may actually be argued that _tʿy_ does not appear as a cultic official at all. However, if this is a cultic office, then we can, at best, suppose he was connected with the _tʿ_-sacrifices, based on the similarity of these expressions.[932] The unclear information gathered from _KTU_ 1.90 may indicate that this was not a prerogative of this office or that this position was contextual and different persons, including the king, could have taken it upon themselves.[933] In contrast to _khnm_ and _qdšm_, the _tʿy_ does not appear as an administered occupation.

It has also been suggested that the designation relates to a _taʿʿāyu_-official as a state official. The colophon of Ilimilku suggests that he was a holder of this office.[934] Van Soldt has suggested equating this term with SUKKAL in logosyllabic texts, used for senior and high-ranking scribes in a role similar to "royal secretary" or "secretary-of-state".[935] It is difficult to connect this office with the functioning of the cult. Is there any connection between the _tʿ_-sacrifices, _tʿy_-cultic official, and _tʿy_-state official? To me, it seems unnecessary to differentiate between the two. After all, Ilimilku is connected both to the cultic/religious activities and to politics as well as other elite relations, and the

---

[923] See _RSO XII/2_: 1014–1015 for references.

[924] See, e.g., _DUL_: 638, or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 271–272.

[925] E.g., Pardee 2002a: 74.

[926] E.g., Pardee 2002a: 52. I personally prefer this understanding.

[927] E.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 250.

[928] See del Olmo Lete 2014a: 250 with further reference to de Tarragon.

[929] See Pardee 2002a, no. 49. This seems to be an incantation against sexual disfunction.

[930] See, e.g., _DUL_: 881 with further references.

[931] I leave aside the interpretation of del Olmo Lete 2014a: 340–343 who connects it more specifically with the cult of the dead and with royal ancestry. As I have stated above (Chapter _5.2.2.4 Household Tombs_), I think del Olmo Lete exaggerates this line of enquiry. Del Olmo Lete also previously interpreted _tʿy_-office as specifically connected with the royal participation in cults; see del Olmo Lete 1988.

[932] See also Pardee 2002a: 239 and 273.

[933] The mention of the house of the _tʿy_ in _KTU_ 1.119 makes it in my opinion improbable that this position would always refer to the king.

[934] See the discussion in Chapter _7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History_ on his colophons.

[935] Van Soldt 1988. The argument for equating SUKKAL and _tʿy_ is based on the structure of Ugaritic and Akkadian colophons. This interpretation has been accepted by the scholarly community, see, e.g., Tugendhaft 2018: 31 or Malbran-Labat & Roche 2007: 99.

cultic role of *ṯʿy* in the texts is rather unclear. This office may be yet another connection between the state and the cults.

6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults

The public participation in cultic activities at Ugarit remains mostly shrouded in mystery. Nonetheless, the public dimension of religious activities should not be taken lightly. Its importance might have been much more considerable than the sources attest to. The issue may be dealt with at least from three perspectives. 1) How accessible was the temple as a place of worship to the public? 2) Were there any cultic feasts that involved public participation? 3) How did the community contribute to the cults?

We have already touched on the first topic in the discussion of temples and sacred spaces.[936] It has been argued that at least the courtyards of the temples were probably accessible to the public.[937] However, any details of this completely elude us. Was it anyhow limited to feast, or was it accessible on a daily basis? Were some purification rituals needed in order to enter the precinct?[938] Was there any difference in the access to the temple courtyard and to the terrace that was made instead of the collapsed temple? Did access depend on the status of the individuals? How restricted was the access to the inner temple? Was it even possible to "peak" inside?[939]

Votive offerings discovered in the temple courtyards are the best material evidence for this topic. Among these, we may particularly point out the votive anchors[940] from the *Temple of Baʿal*, indicating that sailors might have brought them to appease the deity who could strongly affect their fate or possibly to thank him for safe travels or survival of maritime disaster. Some stelae also suggest the public relevance of the temple. For example, the *Stela of Mami*[941] indicates that it was a personal offering left in the temple area by a private individual to establish a relationship between him and Baʿal of Ṣapan. A similar case can be made with the two stelae discovered on the temple terrace of Dagan.[942] However, these three stelae are connected to high-ranking individuals; Mami was a "royal scribe, overseer of the royal domain",[943] and the two stelae in Ugaritic were dedicated by the Ṯariyelli, the queen, and ʿUzzinu, who was probably a *sākinu*.[944] This may cast doubts as to the possibilities of less prominent individuals.

Several ritual texts may attest to public participation in cultic feasts. For example, in *KTU* 1.115, we encounter the following instructions:

| 6 | *w šḥl⸢l⸣ . ydm* | purify the hands (of the participants?) |

---

[936] See Chapter *5.1.1 Ideology and Functioning*.
[937] See, e.g., Hundley 2013a: 119–120, and 123.
[938] Not the *šib mqdšt*, "drawers of the water of the sanctuary" mentioned above. While this remains a pure speculation, the brought water might have been used as a mean of purification.
[939] Particularly the discussion on the windows (*ủrbt*) is interesting in this regard. See, e.g., Hundley 2013a: 102, 120–121, and 124–126, and further discussion and references in Chapter *5.1.1 Ideology and Functioning*.
[940] See *RSO XIX*: 92–94, or Frost in *Ugaritica VI*: 235–245.
[941] RS 1.[089]+2.[033]+5.183; see fig. 29.
[942] RS 6.021 (inscription as *KTU* 6.13) and RS 6.028 (inscription as *KTU* 6.14).
[943] See Levy 2014: 297.
[944] Pardee 2002a: 124–125, n. 3.

7	*b qdš ỉl bt*	in the Sanctuary of Ilu-bêti
8	*w tlḥm ảtt*	and the women may eat.[945]
9	*š l ỉl bt . ỉlmm*	A ram for Ilu-bêti as a peace-offering,
10	*kll ylḥm bh*	all (of the participants) are to eat of it.

As disappointing as it may be, this is probably the best textual evidence for any communal participation in rites. Quite significantly, this text also suggests that, at least in some instances, the sacrifices made explicitly for the deities were consumed during the ritual by the participants and that some purification was part of the process. At the same time, the need to write it down may indicate that it was something unusual – unless the distinctive feature of the situation was that part was intended only for women and part for everyone. The second issue is who were the participants. The simple fact that some people participate in a ritual does not make it public. Indeed, this text belongs among those where the king is explicitly mentioned.[946] Here, he actually figures as the one performing the sacrificial act. Therefore, the participants may be only a selected group. The number and size of the sacrificed animals also indicate only a smaller number of people. Similarly limited is our understanding of a reference to the procession made in *KTU* 1.43:

23	*mlk . ylk . lqḥ . ỉlm*	The king will go to take the deities.
24	*ảṯr . ỉlm . ylk . pʿnm .*	(The participants?) walk behind the gods, walking on foot,
25	*mlk . ⌈pʾ⌉ʿnm . yl[k .]*	the king walks on foo[t] (too)
26	*šbʿ pảmt . l klhm*	seven times for all of them

The problem we are facing is caused by several biases in the extant texts. First of all, they are somewhat limited in the details they give. This is probably because what was to be done and how exactly was well known by those who worked with these texts. In addition, from the limited number of ritual texts we have, a substantial proportion deals with cultic activities involving the king. It is very hard to infer how interconnected the royal cultic activities were with the public sphere. It may be reasonably argued that participation in ceremonies was a part of the public self-representation of the royalty, but this is hardly provable.

The ritual texts themselves, therefore, provide only insecure evidence for public participation in the city cults.[947] However, there is also other evidence that may be taken into consideration. First, as addressed in the previous chapter, the environmental setting of temples and public areas demonstrates that the city was a space fitting for public participation in temple activities. Second, the sheer number of sacrifices made in some ritual texts may indicate a large number of people who took part in the feasts that followed.[948] For example, in *KTU* 1.48, at least 24 bulls and 81 rams were

---

[945] Sacrifices of a ram and a turtle dove are made in the previous lines.

[946] See chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults* for further discussion of the royal cultic activities.

[947] *KTU* 1.79 and 1.80 could also be considered in this regard. Pardee categorizes them as "rural" (2002a: 119–122; texts no. 30 and 31), because they mention sacrifices made in connection with *gittu*s, the "farming communities" (Pardee 2002a: 122, n. 9) or "agricultural estate" (McGeough 2007: 130). However, their classification as "public" is hard to establish as only individuals are mentioned there.

[948] That the sacrificial ceremonies were conceived as feasts may be further corroborated by narrative texts. In *KTU* 1.114, the feast of Ilu is connected with *dbḥ*, a "sacrifice"; the epics of Kirta and Aqhat include episodes where the rulers invite

sacrificed.[949] I will not try to calculate how much people could have been fed by this much meat, but the number can definitely go up to thousands. I would say that even the entire population of the city might have had a share of the meat from these sacrifices. Other festival activities might have been connected with these large feasts. These are mostly left to our imagination. I suspect processions, music or dance to be present, but I must remain sober in further developing the details. Ultimately, it must be stressed that not every sacrificial instance needed to be conceived as a public festival with abundant public participation. A comparative material could also be used to support these conclusions further. The ritual texts from Emar may provide the closest parallels due to their proximity in space, time, and culture. The ritual texts from here are more informative on public participation.[950]

In the context of public participation, we may also wonder how these activities affect society and individuals. Usually, there is not much to follow, and we are left to general speculations. Nonetheless, there is at least one ritual complex where the intended aim may be observed. This is the case of *KTU* 1.40 from the *House of the High Priest*, *KTU* 1.84 from the *Royal Palace*, and *KTU* 1.121 and 1.122 from the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. These tablets present variant versions (not identical copies) of a ritual seemingly aimed at appeasing frictions within a society full of people of different origins.[951] Ugarit was an important trading centre set within the broad networks of LBA trade and diplomacy. Consequently, the community was far from being uniform – people from different places and of varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds frequented the city. Here, we may well observe that ritual was a suitable mode of calming friction that might have appeared within such a diverse environment. More, it was intentionally so. The importance of this ritual may be supported by its variants discovered in several places. This also indicates it was performed repeatedly. Unfortunately, the extant tablets are badly damaged; *KTU* 1.40 presents the best preserved exemplary. There, the ceremony consisted of at least six sections. Interestingly, the sections alternate between masculine and feminine grammar. In each section, sacrifices were performed: a ram was slaughtered in the third and fourth, while a donkey was sacrificed in the fifth and sixth. It is possible that a third type of animal was offered in the first two parts. An excerpt of *KTU* 1.40 may serve as an illustration of this ritual:

26′	*w . šqrb . ʿr . mšr mšr. bn . ugrt . w np[y . gr . ḥmyt] ugr<t>*	And let come near a donkey of exculpation: exculpation of a son of Ugarit and puri[fy the protégés of the walls of] Ugari<t>
27′	*w npy yman . w npy . ʿrmt . w npy .* x[...]	and purify Yamanian and purify ʿAramtian and purify x[...]
28′	*w npy . nqmd . u šn . ypkm . u l p . q[ṭy . u l p . ddm]y*	and purify Niqmaddu. If your dignity was defiled, whether by words of Qa[ṭiyan or by words of Didma]yan

---

the deities to feast (E.g., *KTU* 1.15 II and III, 1.17 V: 15–39, or 1.19 IV: 22–31) and the *Baʿal Cycle* depicts deities feasting on numerous occasions. (E.g., *KTU* 1.3 I) These texts may be thought of as narrations of sacrificial feast from the perspective of the divine realm.

[949] Additional two bulls, two birds and a cow were sacrificed as a burnt offering, *šrp*, of which the people possibly could not consume anything.

[950] See, e.g., ritual texts discussed in Fleming 2000.

[951] For further discussions, see, e.g., Válek 2021: 60–61, del Olmo Lete 1989; 2014a: 116–127, Hoyt 2010, Pardee 1991; 2002a: 77–83, *RSO XII/1*: 92–142, Shedletsky & Levine 1999, Tarragon 1998, or de Moor & Sanders 1991.

29'	*u l p . ḫry . u l p . ḫty . u l p . alty . u l[p . ġbr .] u l p*	or by words of Hurrian or by words of Hittite or by words of Cyprian or by [words of Ġabiran] or by words of
30'	*ḫbtkm . u l p . m[dl]lkm . u l p . qrzbl . u šn [.] ypkm*	your pillagers or by words of your op[press]ors or by words of QRZBL. Or your dignity was defiled
31'	*u b apkm . u b q[ṣ]rt . npškm . u b qtt . tqṭṭ*	whether by your anger or by your w[e]akness or by a disgracefulness with you should commit
32'	*u šn . ypkm . l d[b]ḥm . w l .ṯʕ . dbḥn . ndbḥ . hw .ṯʕ nṯʕy .*	or your dignity was defiled regarding the sac[ri]fices and regarding the *ṯaʕa*-sacrifice. (These) sacrifices we sacrifice, this *ṯaʕa*-sacrifice we sacrifice.
33'	*hw . nkt . nkt . y[t]ši . l ab . bn . il . ytši . l dr*	This (is) slaughtered. May the slaughter ri[se] up to the father of the sons of Ilu, may it rise up to the *Circle of*
34'	*bn il . <l mpḫrt . bn . il> l ṯkmn [. w] šnm . hn . ʕr*	*the Sons of Ilu* <to the *Assembly of the Sons of Ilu*>, to Ṯakiman-wa-Šanim: here (is) a donkey.

Last but not least, the inhabitants of the kingdom also had to be part of the material supply for cultic activities. Once again, the details of the relationship between the temple institutions and the population mostly elude us. It is hard to determine if the people brought animals for the festivals by themselves or were involved only indirectly by taking care of royal or temple herds. I can easily imagine both scenarios. In the first case, the people would have brought their animals on the occasion of a public festival – possibly to give it as a sacrifice for their own intentions and/or to have divination performed on its entrails by the diviners present at these feasts(?).[952] Personal contributions to the sacrificial practices could have also been made on occasions other than the communal festivals. A need for an oracle or sacrificial intention could have probably occurred at any time. At the same time, the official support of the temple activities was quite probably needed – on the one hand, to make the cults work independently of the personal needs of the inhabitants; on the other hand, as a means to ensure the divine support to the royalty and provide the palace with much-needed oracles. Some of the issues outlined in this paragraph are further developed in Chapters *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy, 6.3 Divination,* and *7.2 State and Divination.*

6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities

There is also evidence that cultic activities were not reserved only for state/temple-administered events. We have already briefly discussed the limited evidence for "household" religion in the previous chapter.[953] The second set of evidence is related to *marziḥu* which may be considered a private institution with cultic connotations. *Marziḥu* has already drawn the attention of many scholars and has received numerous interpretations.[954] I have nothing particularly new and relevant to add to these discussions. The term is mainly used as a designation of groups, we may even say

---

[952] However, this is rather complicated issue. In light of the comparative material, the selection of the sacrificial animal for divination was not random and the divination process was complex; see Cohen 2020: 33–35. This would complicate its incorporation into large public ceremonies. See further the discussion in Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

[953] See chapter *5.2 Religion in Domestic Context.*

[954] See, e.g., Amadasi Guzzo & Zamora 2018, Dvorjetski 2016, del Olmo Lete 2015, Criscuolo 2012, McGeough 2003, McLaughlin 2001, Pardee 1996, M. Smith 1994: 140–144, Lewis 1989: 80–94, or *RSO IV*: 13–74.

"associations", but it can also designate feast events organised by(?) these associations. The conclusions of McLaughlin seem to me the most fitting:[955]

1) it was an elite association with strong economic ties,
2) it has its religious dimensions as individual groups were associated with deities, but the veneration of these deities was not the primary goal of the feasts, and
3) copious drinking was an integral part of the feasts

It is vital to include *marziḥu* in the discussions in this thesis as it is related to several topics. First, we have already discussed it in relation to the environment.[956] Because the evidence conclusively suggests that *marziḥu* associations owned property, including houses, searching for them in the archaeological material is legitimate. Several suggestions have been made – most convincingly for the *Temple of Rhytons* or the *House with the Stone Vase*. The problem may be that whenever some place is connected with communal drinking, *marziḥu* readily comes into mind. This notion may be somewhat misleading as alcohol drinking was a broadly spread custom. Second, *marziḥu* reappears in this thesis in connection with administrative and legal texts.[957] These references show the relatively widespread presence of marziḥu in Ugaritic society and its relation to properties and attest to relations between different groups and deities.

In this light, *marziḥu* is the best-attested phenomenon that can be related to private cultic activities at Ugarit. A certain problem arises with the term "cultic" in this case. It has been occasionally pointed out that it was not cultic, and sacrifices were not associated with the event of *marziḥu*.[958] However, the association of individual *marziḥu* groups with particular deities suggests that veneration of a deity might have been a component of their meetings. *KTU* 1.114 narrating the divine banquet of *marziḥu* held by Ilu is then, in my opinion, explicitly connected with sacrifices: "Ilu slaughters/sacrifices in his house".[959] Here, I would like to refer to the chapter on administrative practices,[960] where I argue that meat production was mainly connected with sacrificial administration and that animal slaughter was possibly primarily interwoven with ritual practices. Albeit this may be a bias of different focuses of palace, temple, or private administration, in the case of *marziḥu*, the feasting (possibly including meat products, as suggested by *KTU* 1.114) and association with deities coincide. This does not mean that *marziḥu*, as such, was a cultic institution, but that it had a cultic component.

To conclude, m*arziḥu* at least attest to the possibility that the inhabitants of Ugarit might have gathered and participated in activities that were (at least in part) associated with deities. And they did so as private organizations separate from temples and the palace.[961]

---

[955] McLaughlin 2001: 64–79. The dissociation of *marziḥu* from the cult of the dead has already been note in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs.*

[956] See esp. Chapter *5.1.5 The Temple of Rhytons* with further references.

[957] See Chapters *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy* and *6.5.3 References to Religious Realia in Legal Texts.*

[958] E.g., McGeough 2003: 407, McLaughlin 2001: 69, Pardee 2002a: 184, n. 2., or Pardee 1996: 278.

[959] *KTU* 1.114: 1; *il dbḥ . b bth.*

[960] Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy.*

[961] This does not mean that clergy or state officials could not participate in these gatherings.

6.3 Divination

At Ugarit, divination was an integral part of practical life, just as in other parts of the ANE.[962] The sources at Ugarit may help us cover several topics related to divination. The place which seems to be the most connected to the professional practice of divination is the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. There, the best-known divinatory materials were discovered. In the first part of this section, we will discuss this building as a locus of divinatory practices and explore it as a functional unit in this regard. This discussion will deal with clay divinatory models and alphabetical divinatory compendia, as well as with general considerations of divinatory practices and their relation to cultic activities.

Second, we will shortly focus on an astromantic text from Ugarit, *KTU* 1.78. In this case, we will slightly diverge from the ancient material itself and use the tablet as a material that helps us reflect on the scholarly discussion that revolves mainly around the issue of solar eclipse.

The case of divination for the palace will be considered separately in Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*. There, we will consider ivory divinatory models and a possible oneiromantic compendium from the *Royal Palace*, an astromantic text from Ras Ibn-Hani, but also several texts from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* that are related to divination for royalty. Here, we may once again observe how the different spheres of life at Ugarit were interwoven. The issue of divination in narratives is left aside or noted in passing.

6.3.1 Divination in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*

The building located in the *Southern Acropolis* has already been mentioned several times.[963] Here, we will discuss it as a locus of divinatory practices. The presence of material related to divination has also led to one of the alternative names used for this building – *House of the Priest Containing Inscribed Liver and Lung Models* (*Maison du Prêtre aux Modèles de Foies et de Poumon Inscrits*).

The materials related to divination are the following:[964]

1) divinatory models:[965]

---

[962] For general studies on divination at Ugarit, see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 290–304, Dietrich & Loretz 1990, Pardee 2001: esp. 223–229 and 235–243, or Pardee 2002a: 127–148 and 229–230. For broader studies of ANE divination and its various forms, see, e.g., Maul 2018, Fincke 2014, Cooley 2013, Annus 2010, Rochberg 2004, or Jeffers 1996, and more.

[963] See esp. Chapter *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest.*

[964] I intentionally leave out *KTU* 1.124, which is by some seen as an attestation of "necromancy", see namely del Olmo Lete 2014a: 261–265. I believe this interpretation is primarily a result of del Olmo Lete's preoccupation with the cult of the dead at Ugarit (see the discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs*), and I do not share this line of interpretation. For *KTU* 1.124 from a different perspective, see, e.g., Pardee 2002a: 170–172 and comments in Chapter *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest.*

[965] There seem to be some discrepancies in the exact number as well as to the numbering of the objects. Both the inscribed and uninscribed models were collected by Courtois in *Ugaritica VI*: 101–116. On p. 166, he indicates 21 model of livers: RS 24.308, and 310–327 and 396, four of them inscribed. However, as the cited numbers indicate, I have not been able to identify one of the uninscribed models in the discussion. My best guess is that RS 24.309 may belong there, too, but it was omitted. This is probably the liver designated as "RS 21" in Meyer 1987: 225, which lack excavation siglum. Del Olmo Lete 2018: 38 lists and talks about nineteen uninscribed models, but he has counted in 24.320 and 24.321 twice. Plus, he counts in RS 24.312, 323, 326, and 327 which are actually the inscribes models, but he then adds these inscribed models to the full number of models. On the contrary, he leaves out RS 24.324 or 24.392 that are listed by *Ugaritica VI*: 114 and 116. There, a discrepancy regarding *KTU* 1.141 appeared as it was numbered as RS 24.235 and not as RS 24.312. RS 24.312 was there described as anepigraphic (p. 103). According to *RSO IV*: 194, n. 5, the numbers are wrongly

a. five inscribed models of livers: *KTU* 1.141–1.144, and 1.155[966]
b. seventeen uninscribed (but incised with symbols/marks[967]) models of livers, RS 24.308, 310–311, 313–322, 324, 325, and 392.
c. inscribed model of lung, *KTU* 1.127
2) divinatory compendia:
a. malformed animal foetuses[968] *KTU* 1.103
b. malformed human foetuses[969] *KTU* 1.140

These materials are a great indication of how religion was interwoven with the life of the inhabitants of Ugarit. The inscribed models quite probably reflect individual instances of divination performed to answer specific questions asked by the people.[970] As such, these models attest to actively conducted divination practices. Unfortunately, as is often the case, there are not many details we can give about the process of these practices. We may reasonably argue that at least sacrifices were integral to divinatory practices: the entrails for examination must have come from somewhere. One of the liver models even directly connects divination with sacrifices.[971] I have already stated in the previous sections[972] that I suspect that some of the animals sacrificed in the cult might have been presented by individuals (but possibly also groups or institutions, including the palace) who craved an oracle. However, this issue is complicated, and the suggestion is not only far from secure but rather complete speculation.

The comparative material suggests that the sacrificial animals were carefully selected and that their sex or age was a selection feature, too.[973] In this light, the rams – most often sacrificed animals in the Ugaritic ritual texts – might not have been fit for divination. The sacrifice and interpretation of livers were by far not the only components of the process of extispicy. It was composed of numerous ritual steps, extended for a longer period of time,[974] and the livers were not the only object observed to ascertain the divine will. The closest comparative evidence comes from contemporary Emar and Ḫattuša. The *šumma immeru*, "if a sheep", divinatory compendia discovered there show

---

inverted in *Ugaritica VI* and consequently also in the Damascus museum. Inscribed liver model RS 24.654=*KTU* 1.115 was omitted in *Ugaritica VI*, as well as from del Olmo Lete 2018: 24–54. The reason for this omission may be that this model was not discovered in the "fosse" (see the discussion below), but both publications mention RS 24.277=*KTU* 1.127, the inscribed model of lung which also belong to this cluster, but was not in the "fosse". Del Olmo Lete mentions *KTU* 1.155 in 2014a: 23. To sum up, the full number should be 17 uninscribed models of livers, 5 inscribed models of livers and one inscribed model of lung.

[966] For photos, see esp. *PA*: pl. LXXXIII, XCII, and XCIII.

[967] See the photos in *Ugaritica VI* and Meyer 1987: 217–233 for a more detailed study and interpretation of the meaning of these marks. The discussion in Meyer shows how were there signs to be read. This aspect of the models is often ignored in contrast to the inscriptions on few of them. In regard to the practice, the marks and symbols were more important than the texts.

[968] In Akkadian tradition, this would belong among *šumma izbu* series, "if a malformed foetus". For the edition of *šumma izbu* series, see de Zorzi 2014.

[969] In Akkadian tradition, this would belong among *šumma sinništu* series, "if a woman". These are a subset of the *šumma izbu* collections; see de Zorzi 2011: 44.

[970] Pardee 2001: 227.

[971] RS 24.323 = *KTU* 1.142: 1: *dbḥt . bṣy . b⸢n⸣*[...], "the sacrificial consultation of *bṣy*, so⸢n of⸣[...]". See also Pardee 2002a: 128, and 132, n. 5.

[972] See namely chapter *6.2 Cults and Community*.

[973] See Cohen 2020: 33–35 for the selection process in comparative perspective.

[974] See Cohen 2020: 31–46 for the summary of the whole process.

us a part of this complex process.[975] These attest to the observation of other ominous signs: the approach of the sacrificial animal to the slaughter, any slight movements of the sacrificial animals, the flow of the blood after the cutting, etc. It may be argued that following the full prescribed procedure during the large sacrificial feasts with public participation was impossible. The question remains whether extispicy was always performed this way or whether some less elaborate versions existed.

The inscribed liver models pertain to individual cases of divination performed for individuals seeking answers to some specific questions. Thanks to their low number, we can cite the inscriptions from all of them:[976]

KTU 1.141

1	*l ag⸢pṯ⸣r k yqny ġzr ⸢d ả⸣lṯyy*	For Aga⸢pta⸣rri, when he was (about to) purchase a youth ⸢from an A⸣lašiyan

KTU 1.142

1	*dbḫt . bṣy . b⸢n⸣[...]*	A sacrifice of BṢY, so⸢n⸣[of ...]
2	*⸢ṯ⸣ry . l ʕtt⸢r⸣[...]*	⸢Ṯ⸣RY for ʕAtta⸢r⸣[...]
3	*d . ⸢b ʕttrt⸣[...]*[977]	who (is) ⸢in ʕAttarta-⸣[...]

KTU 1.143

1	*kbd . dt ypt*	liver of YPT
2	*bn yknʕ*	son of YNKʕ,
3	*k yptḫ . yr⸢ḫ⸣ hnd*	when this mon⸢th⸣ was beginning

KTU 1.144

1	*[...]l*	[...]L
2	*d ⸢yb⸣nmlk*	of ⸢Yab⸣nimalku,
3	*l ḫpṯ*	regarding ḪPṮ

KTU 1.155

1	*k⸢bd⸣ ḥ[...]*	li⸢ver⸣ of Ḥ[...]
2	*k ymmr [...]*	when ?[978] [...]
3	*ym š⸢ḫ⸣[...]*	on the day of š⸢Ḥ⸣[...]

It can be concluded that the informative potential of these inscriptions is rather limited. Nonetheless, some information about the practice of divination may be inferred from them. On a very general

---

[975] Emar 698 and KBo. 36, 47 and 42, 116; see Cohen 2007. See also Cohen 2020 for a broader study on *šumma immeru* omens in the ANE.

[976] I follow the transcription of Pardee 2002a, nos. 35–39; there are several differences to reading in *KTU*.

[977] Note completely different reading in *KTU* (*d . b t⸢b⸣r*), or in *KTU²* (*d . b qbr*). Reading *qbr*, "tomb" has lead Schmidt to connect this liver with the agency of the dead (1994: 48–49).

[978] Pardee considers option *k . ym mr*, "according to a bitter day"; see Pardee 2002a: 133, n. 10.

level, these texts confirm the practice of divination for individuals, connect divinatory practices with sacrifice, and attest that divination was performed with particular interest.[979]

The question is why some models were inscribed and thus personalised while others were not. Different interpretations may be given. Del Olmo Lete argues that all the liver models were made for different individuals, but the inscribed ones were pricier.[980] Surely, this is a possibility, and the clients of the diviner might have had a better feeling when their services included a performance of scribal activities.[981] But there are also other possibilities. We may speculate that the diviner made the inscriptions as notes on whom the livers belonged and to which issue they pertained. Possibly, the people who ordered the service were about to stop at the diviner later to enquire about their oracles. This may explain the very brief notes made: for whom, when, and about what it was performed. The inscriptions themselves do not contain the results of the oracle because this information was encoded in the markings and engravings on the models – both inscribed and uninscribed.[982]

Seen in this line of interpretation, the uninscribed livers might have been meant for those individuals who were about to collect the results soon or were themselves present during the divinatory process. No notes on their identity were needed. Supposing the comparative discussion about complexities of divinatory practices applies to Ugarit, it seems plausible that some beneficiaries were not present for the whole time or were represented by someone on their behalf. Other interpretations are possible, too. For example, some models might have been used as divinatory aids or as schooling material. For this, there is ample comparative material. However, the type of models from Ugarit seems to be primarily created as divinatory reports.[983]

Another important issue is why these models were present at this house. Or rather, why were they not held by the individuals for whom they were intended? As far as I know, no other place at Ugarit yielded divinatory models except for the *Royal Palace*. Should we suppose that the individuals collected their oracles, there is only a little chance that no such objects would have been discovered at the tell. This leads me to conclude that the diviner stored these objects. Del Olmo Lete has suggested that "the diviner retains proof of the religious sanction of the act."[984] If this was actually the case, my previous suggestion about the reason for inscriptions fails. However, unless the diviner had an excellent memory (which cannot be disproved), we may ask whether he could have kept a trace of the relevance of all individual liver models. This also highly depends on the overall number of divinations carried out by the diviner. It is true that the act of divination was costly – an entire ram was slaughtered to give a single oracle. How exactly the exchange relationships work in this regard is not clear. The "customer" might have been obliged to sacrifice a whole sheep/lamb on behalf of the oracle and receive none of it back or even pay something on top of it. To suppose high material input by the beneficiary is not an unreasonable suggestion. In addition, if we presume the existence of a more elaborate process, divination was also time-consuming and might have included more sacrificial materials. At the same time, the selection process of the sacrificial sheep/lamb supposes access to a herd to select from. Therefore, the number of performed divinations for particular

---

[979] In Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*, I argue that this does not necessarily precludes their relevancy to the state.
[980] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 38.
[981] See the discussion in Chapter *4 Texts and Religion* on the materiality of writing.
[982] See note 967.
[983] For the discussion of varied uses of models from the ANE, see Maul 2018: 168–170 or Meyer 1987: 9–19 and 265–266.
[984] Del Olmo Lete 2014a: 293.

individuals might have been relatively low. Still, in the context of several thousand inhabitants, the overall amount was plausibly much higher than the 20+ present models indicate. Where are the rest of them? And should we even suppose regular manufacture of them, or was it something occasional or even unique?

There are numerous possible answers to these questions. The comparative perspective should lead us to consider that the divinatory models were made for many purposes.[985] The following lines are simple considerations of possibilities. Del Olmo Lete argued that some of the administrative text (listing individuals) from this archive might have been records of divination performed for those who could not afford a model made.[986] This is very hard to corroborate as the administrative texts are too often silent on their purposes, and none are explicitly connected with divination. However, connecting administrative records with professional practices is undoubtedly possible for many different purposes. The small number of models may also be understood in the context of professional education – the models could have been educational documents. This does not necessarily disconnect them from the practice: a student might have performed divination and marked the observed signs on the model as part of the exercise. Another possibility is that the models record some exceptional findings that the diviner deemed interesting or important to preserve, perhaps as educational material. Or, these models could have been sent from more distant places to the diviner because they recorded something relevant to the state matters, even if the divination itself was personal.[987] The last interpretation that comes to my mind is to connect the number with the end of Ugarit. Possibly, the models were not stored in the diviner's house for a long time, and the discovered models only represent the recently performed divinations. In this light, the models could have been considered a kind of administrative document with only a limited lifespan.[988]

If the interpretations favouring higher production of liver models were closer to the real practice, we should ask what happened with the rest of these models. Where were they discarded? Once again, we are at the level of speculation here. Del Olmo Lete suggested that the models were ritually disposed of because they were ritually "contaminated" or had exhausted their "magical" potency.[989] In his opinion, this is why most of the models were discovered in the "fosse". However, I am not particularly convinced by this suggestion. While the concentration of the models in a pit is definitely intriguing, other documents were also discovered there. In my opinion, these did not need any ritual burying for the reasons suggested by del Olmo Lete. This pertains to, for example, ritual texts *KTU* 1.105, 1.106, 1.109, 1.125, 1.134, a list of deities *KTU* 1.118, a Hurrian hymn *KTU* 1.128, or the divinatory compendium *KTU* 1.103. We may also follow up on the previous discussion: the number of the models discovered there is so small that I do not think this may represent a pit continuously(!) used for ritual disposal of these objects if they were made for a substantial number of divinations. I have not been able to explore the archaeology of the "fosse" in a way bearing any interesting results.[990] It seems safe to state that there was a hole in this place, but determining its purpose is far beyond my capabilities. I am not confident we may securely state that the models and

---

[985] See note 983.
[986] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 44.
[987] See further discussion in Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*.
[988] As has been suggested by Vita, most of the administrative record are to be dated to the very last years of Ugarit; see Vita 2019 for the discussion, esp. p. 410. See the discussion in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.
[989] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 33.
[990] See, namely *RSO IV*: 10–11, *Ugaritica VI*: 91–119.

tablets discovered there were indeed intentionally "buried" there during the time of the functioning of the building, falling into a hole with a totally different purpose during the collapse of the building, or were simply used as a floor-filling when a hole has been dug there for an unknown reason. I leave this as an open issue to which I would very much like to return one day. In the end, we do not have to be too stricken by the fact that the models are missing. And we do not need to readily attribute it to their "magical" power or ritual "contamination" – we do not do so in the case of missing administrative texts.

Of interest to us may also be an administrative text *KTU* 4.728. It has been discovered in the "fosse", too. Interpretations of this text differ significantly. The text is headed as follows: *ʿrk . bʿl / ḫlb . dt . l ytn / šmn*. McGeough understands it as an "account of the workers from *ḫlb* (GN) who did not bring oil".[991] On the contrary, Pardee translates this as "*ʿrk*-taxes for Baʿlu of Aleppo that were properly paid in oil".[992] If we consider McGeough's interpretation correct, we could further speculate that the workers should have brought the oil as payment for divinatory services. Or, even more speculative, as a material for the divinatory practices of lecanomancy. However, this type of divination is not attested at Ugarit, so it cannot be adequately contextualised and confirmed. But we may at least assume that the payments in oil, for whatever reason, might have been considered less costly than the presentation of a sacrificial animal.[993] From a comparative perspective, extispicy made on birds' entrails would also be a less expensive alternative.[994] We could then speculate more and more on the availability of divinatory practices performed by a professional diviner across the social strata of Ugaritic society. We may also search for non-specialist divinatory practices. But for this, more data is needed. I have already speculated in this chapter more than I like to.

Now, we may briefly touch upon the divinatory compendia discovered at the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. For us, the essential fact is that they were written in Ugaritic and not in Akkadian. This strongly indicates that they were indeed part of the divinatory practices. There are also several divinatory compendia in Akkadian discovered in different archives.[995] There, they might have been more likely used in scribal education or to broaden the accessible knowledge of the scholars who had these archives at their disposal.[996] Once again, it must be stressed that using some material in scribal

---

[991] McGeough 2011: 467–468.

[992] Pardee 2002a, no. 59. Sacrifices from these taxes are possibly mentioned in *KTU* 1.105: 17'–18'; see Pardee 2002a: 43.

[993] In this regard, a statement from an Assyrian dream omen made me consider this in light of costs, albeit concerned with totally different issues: "the *bārû*-priest brings you (an offering of) cedar perfume, the widow (only) MADGA-(and *kukkušu*)-flour, the poor woman (some) oil, the rich from his wealth brings you a lamb."; KAR 252 III: 21–23 and K. 3333: 9'–10'; see Oppenheim 1956: 301 and 340. Could this also have reflected some "progressive costs" in relation to economic abilities of the beneficiary? For this line of enquiry, see brief note by Maul 2018: 13.

[994] See Maul 2018: 103–122. The possible literary reference to this type of divination in the *Epic of Aqhat* (*KTU* 1.19 III: 1–39) may indicate that even if this was a less costly, it was nonetheless effective mode of divination.

[995] *House of the Literary Tablets*: RS 22.226+22.230 (astrology), 22.405 (extispicy), 23.038 (astrology); *Lamaštu Archive* (or vicinity): RS 25.141 (almanac), 25.452 (extispicy); *House of Urtēnu*: RS 34.172 (astrology), 92.2018 (*šumma ālu*, with *namburbû* ritual), 94.2473 (*šumma izbu*), RS 94.5016+ (*šumma izbu*); *City Centre*: RS 79.026 (*šumma izbu*); Uncertain point of discovery: RS 7.001 (*šumma izbu*); *Royal Palace*: fragmentary *PRU VI*, no. 188, attributed RS 18.276 is according to Arnaud wrong (2007: 54). For the texts and references, see Arnaud 2007: 47–54.

[996] See also Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*, where this is tentatively connected with building a constant awareness to signs which may affect the king or the kingdom.

education does not mean it was detached from practice. But I would be cautious in seeing the presence of these texts as an indication of the broadly dispersed practice of divination.

The Akkadian texts also highlight how Ugarit was set in the broader cultural milieu of the ANE, including divinatory practices. The scholars from Ugarit were interested in obtaining these materials. However, it may be wrong to state that the Ugaritic texts were mere translations from the Akkadian lore. Pardee notes that the compendia from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* are not straightforward copies of any known series from Mesopotamia and show structural differences.[997]

Nonetheless, similarly to the Mesopotamian tradition,[998] these compendia strongly use the imagery of kings, enemies, lands and so on and so forth in their apodoses. Several examples may be seen in the following excerpt of *KTU* 1.103:[999]

56'	*w* ⸢ʿ⸣[-] . *ilm . tbʿrn ḫwt . ḫyt*	And if ⸢ʿ⸣-⸢[-] the gods will destroy that land.
57'	*w ʿnh* [*b*] ⸢*l*⸣*ṣbh . mlkn yʿzz ʿl ḫpṯh*	And if its eye(s) is/are [in] the forehead, the king will become more powerful than his *ḫupṭu*-troops.
58'	*w ḫr . ⸢w -⸣r . bh . mlkn ybʿr ibh*	And if it has ḪR ⸢andʔ⸣ -⸢ʔ⸣R, the king will destroy his enemy.
59'	*w in yd š⸢⸣mảʔl bh . ḫwt ib tḫlq*	And if it has no left (foreʔ)leg, the land of the enemy will perish.

Seen in this light, we might be tempted to consider these compendia as reflecting the state matters, made for the most prestigious beneficiary – the king. However, the known parallels from the ANE lead us to consider the interpretation of such ominous signs as reflecting divination for personal purposes, too. The apodoses may be seen instead as positive or negative signs that, in their sum, answer the oracle question.[1000] The compendia dealing with the interpretation of livers[1001] or observations of sacrificial sheep (*šumma immeru*) worked similarly and included numerous state-related apodoses, too. But other statements are also ubiquitous, as well as apodoses directly related to the personal issues of the beneficiary.

Nonetheless, there is a crucial distinction to be made. While the extispicy belongs to the induced divinatory practices, i.e., the conditions for divination were intentionally created by the sacrifice and removal of the livers, the teratological omens were created by a matter of chance, i.e., by deities. This may indicate that these particular compendia were kept by the diviner in case some spontaneous ominous signs in the form of malformed foetuses appeared so that he may consult it for the benefit of the king. It is once again the comparative perspective that may be useful to us here. While the extant Ugaritic material informs us only about the state apodoses, the Mesopotamian *šumma izbu* omens include apodoses of both public and private relevance,[1002] just like the *šumma immeru* or extispicy manuals. A hypothetical situation may be pondered: a herdsman encounters an anomalous birth within his flock. He takes it to the diviner, who then consults the observations with his manual. Depending on observed signs, this abnormal birth may be relevant only to the herdsman

---

[997] Pardee 2002a: 134.
[998] See, e.g., de Zorzi 2014 for *šumma izbu* omen collections.
[999] Transcription and translation according to Pardee 2002a: 140.
[1000] For a summary of the interpretation process, see, e.g., Cohen 2020: 26–28.
[1001] See, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000.
[1002] De Zorzi 2011: 45–46. Still, there is strong prevalence of the public/state matters.

and his household or to the king, palace or the whole kingdom. It is then possible that additional extispicy was performed to confirm the findings,[1003] and if the omen was negative, necessary precautions – *naburbû*-rituals,[1004] were performed.

We will return to these divinatory manuals in the context of divination performed for the palace. The same goes for the divinatory model of the lung that may belong to the sphere of state divination. The liver models will also be considered again in regard to the palace.[1005]

We may also briefly comment on the persona of the diviner. We have already touched on this issue several times. There are several lexemes which may relate to divinatory practices. In the logosyllabic script, ᴸᵁ́MÁŠ.ŠU.GÍD.GÍD was used, with Akkadian reading *bārû*. This was, e.g., the case in legal text RS 18.02: 16.[1006] There, a witness ᴰᴵŠANᴰU ᴸᵁ́MÁŠ.ŠU.GÍD.GÍD ᴸᵁ́SANGA ᴰU, "Šamû-Addu(?), the diviner, the priest of the Storm-God" appears. This shows that priests might have held the position of the diviners. The alternative designation is Hurrian *prln*, which is attested as an occupation of Attēnu, the teacher of Ilimilku.[1007] There are doubts about whether this term refers to a practitioner of divination or whether the meaning has shifted, for example, to a more administrative/organization-oriented position.[1008] Another term that could be related to the profession of divination is *šỉl*, "questioner/the one who asks",[1009] connected with Akkadian *šāʾilu*. However, the relevance of its divinatory interpretation for Ugarit remains uncertain.[1010] As far as I am aware, none of the terms applicable to the profession of diviner have been encountered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.

6.3.2 Astromancy, KTU 1.78, and the Question of Solar Eclipses at Ugarit

KTU 1.78 deserves at least a short comment in the context of Ugaritic divination. Since its interpretations are so varied and contradictory, it may be used to reflect the issues one may encounter in Ugaritic studies.

We may begin with a fun fact. It does not happen very often that Ugarit makes it to the *Nature* journal. *KTU* 1.78 made it several times[1011] and was even commented on in the online issue of *Forbes* magazine.[1012] The evolution of discussion in *Nature* may be summarised with the use of the articles' titles: "The Earliest Known Record of a Solar Eclipse"[1013] → "The Earliest Known Solar

---

[1003] Maul 2018: 246–250.

[1004] As mentioned in note 995, RS 92.2018 contains an Akkadian version of these apotropaic rituals. For *namburbû*, see, e.g., Caplice 1974 or Maul 1999.

[1005] See Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*.

[1006] *PRU IV*: 201.

[1007] See Chapter *7.3.1.2.1 Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History* for further discussion and references.

[1008] See, e.g., Válek 2021: 54.

[1009] Attested in letters *KTU* 2.63 and 2.50 (in broken context).

[1010] See references in *DUL*: 785. Based on the Akkadian cognate, this term may be connected also to the practices of prayers. In case of divination, it may relate to the oneiromantic practices rather than to the extispicy etc.

[1011] Stephenson 1970, de Jong & van Soldt 1989b, Walker 1989, Mostert 1989, and Pardee & Swerdlow 1993.

[1012] K. N. Smith, "People Recorded a Total Solar Eclipse for the First Time 3,241 Years Ago", *Forbes* 5th March 2018, available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/kionasmith/2018/03/05/people-recorded-a-total-solar-eclipse-for-the-first-time-3241-years-ago/?sh=2a7008337a55 [accessed 21st August 2023]. The data presented in this article are based on de Jong & van Soldt 1989a.

[1013] Stephenson 1970.

Eclipse Record Redated"[1014] → "Not the Earliest Solar Eclipse".[1015] The issue has not been resolved to date.[1016]

When we take a look at the tablet and its text, there may be a reason why: there is simply not much to base a solid interpretation on. Another problem is encountered on the level of reading. Namely, the reading of the fifth line is the most contested. The following tables show different readings suggested for *KTU* 1.78:

1) reading *kbdm*

	Dietrich & Loretz 2002: 64	KTU[(3)] 1.78	de Jong & van Soldt 1989a: 67	Xella 1999: 356	Cooley 2012: 24–25; 2013: 188
obv. 1	*b tt . ym . ḫdt*	*btt . ym . ḫdt*	*btt . ym . ḫdt*	*btt . ym . ḫdt*	*b tt . ym . ḫdt* *b tt . ym ḫdt*
2	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*	*ḫyr ˤrbt*	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*
3	*špš . tġrh*	*špš tġrh*	*špš tġrh*	*špš tġrh*	*špš tġrh*
4	*ršp*	*ršp*	*ršp*	*ršp*	*ršp*
rev. 5	*kbdm . tbqrn*	*kbdm . tbqrn*	*kbdm tbqrn*	*kbdm tbqrn*	*kb⌈d⌉m . ⌈t⌉bqrn* *kb[d]m . tbqrn*
6	*skn*	*skn*	*skn*	*skn*	*skn*

2) reding *w ảdm*

	Pardee in RSO XII: 417 Pardee 2002a: 132	del Olmo Lete 2014a: 296	del Olmo Lete 2012b: 250
obv. 1	*b tt . ym . ḫdt*	*btt . ym . ḫdt*	*btt . ym . ḫdt*
2	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*
3	*špš ⌈.⌉ tġrh*	*špš ⌈.⌉ tġrh*	*špš . tġrh*
4	*ršp*	*ršp*	*ršp*
rev. 5	*⌈w ả⌉dm ⌈.⌉ tbqrn*	*w ⌈ả⌉dm tbqrn*	*w ảdm [.] tbqrn*
6	*skn*	*skn*	*skn*

3) different reading:

	Sawyer & Stephenson 1970: 32
obv. 1	*btt . ym . ḫdt*
2	*ḫyr . ˤrbt*
3	*špš tġrh*
4	*ršp*
rev. 5	*w (ˤ) bdm tbq(r)n*
6	*śkn*

[1014] De Jong & van Soldt 1989b.

[1015] Pardee & Swerdlow 1993.

[1016] Pardee 2002a, no. 41 holds his position that it refers to the repeated observing of setting of Mars at sundown. The theory of solar eclipse is also not accepted by Cooley 2012: 23 or Hunger & Pingree 1999: 10–11. Others, like Dietrich & Loretz 2002, or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 295–297, favour the eclipse interpretation. For further references, see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 295, n. 69.

The translations suggested for this tablet are also highly diverse. An uninformed reader may wonder whether these translations actually relate to the same text:

- "In der Stille des Neumondtages des (Monats) Ḫijar war untergegangen die Sonne, ihr Pförtner war Rešep. (Deshalb) untersichte man (eine/zwei) Leber(n): Störung/Unruhe(n)/Gefahr-(?)."[1017]

- "Im sechsten (Abschnitt) des Neumondtages des/im *Ḫiyyār* ist untergegangen die Sonne, ihr Torhüter ist *Rešeph*. Zwei Lebern hat man untersucht: Gefahr!"[1018]

- "Pendant les six jours (après) la nouvelle lune (du mois) de *ḫiyyāru*, le soleil s'est couché, son portier (étant) *Rašap*. Les hommes s'enquerront auprès du gouverneur."[1019]

- "During the six days of the new-moon festival of the month of *Ḫiyyāru*, the sun (*Šapšu*) set, her gatekeeper being *Rašap*. The men (?) shall seek out the governor."[1020]

- "At (the watch) six of the new moon of *Ḫiyyaru* set *Šapšu*, her gatekeeper (was) *Rašpu* and (appeared) red. Let them scrutinise. (There is) danger."[1021]

- "At (the wake) six of the new moon of *ḫiyyaru* set *Šapšu*, her gatekeeper (was) *Rašpu* and it turned red. Let them scrutinise/They scrutinised. (the/. There is/was) danger."[1022]

- "The day of the new Moon in the month of Ḫiyar was put to shame. The Sun went down (in the daytime) with Rashap in attendance. (This means that) the overlord will be attacked by his vassals."[1023]

- "On the … day of the new moon in (the month) *ḫiyaru* the Sun went down, its gate-keeper was *Ršp*. Two livers were examined: danger."[1024]

- "During the six days of the new moon (festival) of Hyr, the Sun set; its gate was Resheph. They should examine the livers: danger(?)."[1025]

- "In the silence(?) (of the month) *ḫyr* down went the Sun: her gatekeeper was Rašap. (For this) (1/2) liver(s) was/were examined: danger!"[1026]

The difficulties with reading this tablet may be well visible in the photography.[1027] Especially the reverse of the tablet is not written in an exemplary manner. It is not my intention here and now to explore and decide what transliteration and translation is to be favoured. Instead, we may observe where the interpretation of sources and vivid imagination may lead us. In my opinion, this was best

---

[1017] Dietrich & Loretz 1990: 49.
[1018] Dietrich & Loretz 2002: 64.
[1019] Pardee in *RSO XII*: 418–419.
[1020] Pardee 2002a: 132.
[1021] Del Olmo Lete 2014a: 296.
[1022] Del Olmo Lete 2012b: 250.
[1023] Sawyer & Stephenson 1970: 474; same translation given in Stephenson 1970: 651.
[1024] De Jong & van Soldt 1989a and 1989b.
[1025] Cooley 2012: 24–25.
[1026] Xella 1999: 356. He notes that his translation is "provisional and hypothetical".
[1027] See *PA*: pl. XIX.

demonstrated by the interpretation of Dietrich & Loretz.[1028] Their understanding is basically set within the following premises: 1) the tablet records the solar eclipse, 2) it has been discovered in the entrance to the royal palace, 3) it is written in a shaky hand, 4) Ugarit was destroyed sometime during the first quarter of the 12th century BC, and 5) we know a solar eclipse has occurred on 21st January 1192. These scholars spin an almost epic tale around the tablet:[1029]

Not long after noon, the Šapaš has disappeared from the sky, being almost wholly covered by Yarīḫ. The diviner observing the event knew this was a bad omen for the kingdom. He had grown uneasy and sacrificed a lamb so the deities may reveal what this means for Ugarit in its entrails. Danger! To be sure, he took another lamb. Danger! It was as he had worried; there was an imminent threat to the land! Hastily, he had taken a pinch of clay into his hands and recorded the event. His hands were shaking from the thrill of the evil omen. He could have barely written the signs on the tablet. As soon as he finished his work, he readily set on foot to deliver the bad portent to his majesty, King ʿAmmurāpi. However, the people had already noticed that their end was nearing. The diviner could not squeeze through the crowd fleeing from the palace. He was knocked down to the ground, and the tablet disappeared below the feet of the running people. It was too late. He joined the crowd at abandoned the city. And we've known ever since that Ugarit was abandoned and consequently destroyed in the afternoon of January 21st 1192 BCE.

As imaginative as this may sound, Dietrich and Loretz have done great work on contextualising the material into a set of solid data: from palaeography to excavation context to history to cultural connotations of astromancy. The problem remains the starting point – *KTU* 1.78, the reading of which is insecure – from the eclipse to the examination of livers to the exclamation "danger!".

Unless new relevant sources are discovered, we will probably never know with certainty what astronomical event the tablet related to and what has been done after observing these events. At least the astronomical character of this tablet is something the scholars agree on. Instead of aiming to solve the problematics of the interpretation of this tablet, we may ponder the importance of the sky for the inhabitants of Ugarit, especially diviners. In Ugaritic, the only other astromantic text is *KTU* 1.163 from Ras Ibn Hani, which includes several lunar omens.[1030] In addition to this one, some logosyllabic texts also attest to the scholarly knowledge of the Mesopotamian astromantic tradition.[1031] As far as we can tell, the solar eclipse was considered a powerful ominous sign (not only) in the ANE cultures. Cooley argued that solar eclipses are rarely visible, and consequently, the astrological omens concerning it would be of little practical value.[1032] We may put this assumption to the test. Thanks

---

[1028] Dietrich & Loretz 2002.

[1029] The reader must note I summarize their interpretation with a bit of literary exaggeration. It has reminded me of some scenes from the Mel Gibson's *Apocalypto* movie (2006).

[1030] See, e.g., Pardee 2002a, no. 44, del Olmo Lete 2014a: 297–298. This text is briefly commented in Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*.

[1031] Solar astromantic texts RS 23.038 (see Arnaud 1996 and Clemens 2001: 933–935) and RS 22.226+ (see Arnaud 2007, no. 8 and Clemens 2001: 918–920), and fragmentary RS 34.172 (see *RSO VII*, no. 44 and Clemens 2001: 1010–1011).

[1032] Cooley 2012: 22.

to modern astronomy, we can tell when solar eclipses appeared at Ugarit.[1033] During the period 1250–1180, i.e., when alphabetical cuneiform was in use, there were actually quite a lot of them:

Date	eclipse type	at Ugarit	note[1034]
7th September 1251	annular	partial	weak coverage
20th December 1247	annular	annular	Venus, Mercury, and Mars (Rašap?[1035]) at the sky
5th March 1223	total	partial	strong coverage, Venus, Mercury, and Mars at the sky, Mars right next to the eclipsed Sun.
6th June 1218	annular	partial	relatively good
16th May 1208	annular	partial	almost annular, Venus close to the Sun
30th October 1207	annular	annular	before sunset, Mercury, Mars, Jupiter
9th October 1197	annular	partial	relatively good, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn(?)
21st January 1192	annular	partial	almost annular, Mercury visible next to the eclipsed Sun, Jupiter and Venus at the sky
28th August 1185	total	partial	weak coverage
12th January 1183	annular	partial	relatively good, after sunrise

Indeed, the eclipse of the Sun has not been a common phenomenon, but it might have been recurring enough to spark the interest of local diviners. It may be too far-reaching, but there is a possibility that the presence of the Mesopotamian astromantic omen compendia was not (only) a consequence of scribal education needs but a specific reflection of observed situations. Even a partial solar eclipse, as well as other observed phenomena, might have played a significant role in the symbolic systems of the local population. We may highlight once again that the sky was much more visible than today and was also observed more regularly. When some stars and planets were suddenly visible during the day, and the Moon covered the Sun, it certainly gave rise to symbolic interpretations, no matter if *KTU* 1.78 refers to it or not. As weak as the sources may be, the sky was an integral part of the lived

---

[1033] See NASA, *NASA Atlas of Solar Eclipses*, available at: https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEatlas/SEatlas.html [accessed 21st August 2023]. Note that the Gregorian Calendar is used for dates after 1582 Oct 15. Julian Calendar is used for dates before 1582 Oct 04. In addition, years in this catalogue are numbered astronomically and include the year 0. Historians should note there is a difference of one year between astronomical dates and BCE dates. Thus, the astronomical year 0 corresponds to 1 BCE, and the astronomical year -1 corresponds to 2 BCE, etc. This may be something known to the reader, but it has taken me quite time to realise where the discrepancies appear.

It is often noted that the astronomical knowledge of the Mesopotamian scholars was immense, including the ability to predict solar eclipses. For a more detailed study on the Mesopotamian astronomy, see Hunger & Pingree 1999.

[1034] Notes are based on observations in the *SkySafari* app; see Simulation Curriculum, *SkySafari 6* available at: https://skysafariastronomy.com/skysafari-6-professional-astronomy-telescope-control-software-for-android.html [accessed 22nd August 2023]; I have been using version 6.8.6.15 for Android]. Use of such mobile apps makes the research much more accessible than it was when the *Nature* articles were written. However, the bias of laicity of the users (such as me) must be considered. Especially the visibility of other sky objects in the sky is disputable, since my poor understanding of astronomical phenomena (the setting of the app allows to set the limit of visual magnitude to be displayed).

[1035] The understanding of Rašap mentioned in the text as planet Mars is based on later Mesopotamian sources, where Nergal(=Rašap) is equated with this planet. It may be debated whether this anachronistic comparison is tenable. See, e.g., discussions in Pardee & Swerdlow 1993, del Olmo Lete 2012b, on Walker 1989: 204.

reality, and it was perceived as a part of the cosmos through which the gods and goddesses communicated their will, plans, or the future.
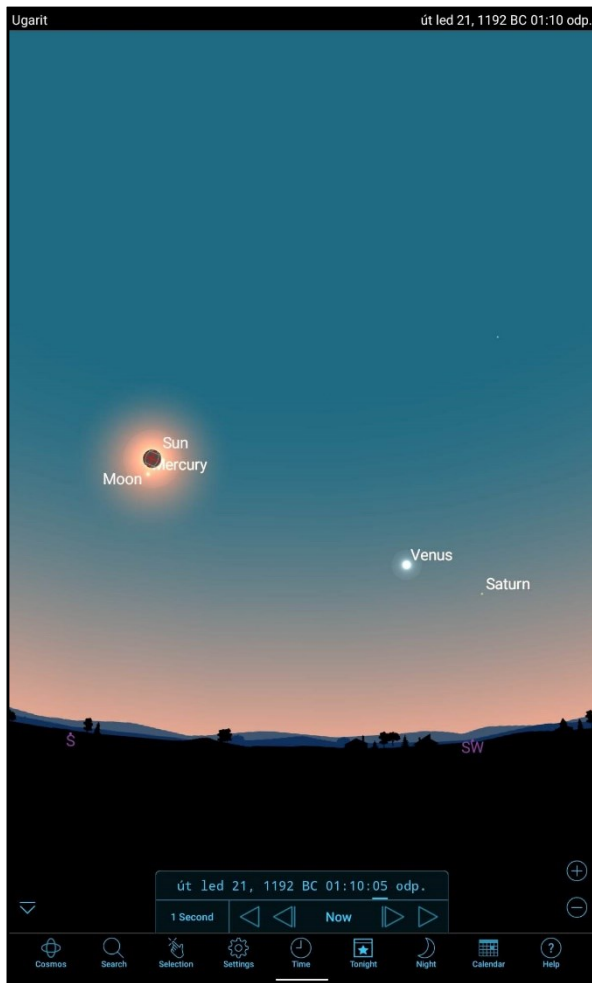

Figure 32 Eclipse on 21ˢᵗ January 1192 BC as seen from Ugarit. Source: SkySafari mobile app, see note 1034.

6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy

Administrative activities[1036] are those that have left most of the traces in written material. Out of ca. 1400 legible and classified texts inscribed in alphabetical cuneiform, about 840 are classified as "economic" by the editors of *KTU* (category 4).[1037] Administrative texts usually do not use any dating formula, and their setting in history is therefore problematic. However, it has been reasonably argued that the vast majority of the economic texts belong to the very last year(s) of the city's existence.[1038]

While economic activities are those administered most often, it must be noted that these categories only partially overlap. Not every administrative text is necessarily related to the economy. The *KTU* category number four is sometimes referred to as "administrative texts", which may indeed

---

[1036] For general studies on administration and economy of Ugarit, see especially McGeough 2007 and 2011; see also van Soldt 2010b, or Vita 2019 and 2021; Beckman 1992 (on Hittite administration), or Heltzer 1982 and 1976. For broad contextualization of trade of Ugarit, see, e.g., Monroe 2009. For Ugaritic administrative/economic texts, see namely *KTU*, category 4 (edition) and McGeough 2011 (translation); see also Clemens 2001 who discusses many of the economic texts in relation to religion.

[1037] Category 4 goes up to number 872. The discrepancy is caused by reclassification of some of the texts, e.g., to the category of legal texts (see also the discussion in Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities*).

[1038] See Vita 2019 for the discussion, esp. p. 410.

be more fitting.[1039] Vice versa, not every dealing with the economy is present only in administrative texts; the economy is further reflected in numerous letters or legal texts.[1040] Indeed, the legal texts and letters may be included in the administration category because of their archival nature. Regarding religion, we will consider a number of sacrificial texts that may also be regarded as administrative and economic. Therefore, the corpus of sources for economy and administration is much larger than the mentioned 840 documents.

When religion and economy are mentioned in the context of the ancient Near East, what possibly comes to mind for many people is the "temple economy". What is usually meant by this expression is the socio-economic organization in which the temple plays the central role – as owner, producer, employer, redistributor, etc. This, however, is not the case with Ugarit. The sources suggest that temples held only minimal economic authority over the population. While temples and cult officials engaged in rich economic relations, they were only one party of many.[1041] By far, the palace has held the greatest economic authority, but to consider the general social-economic relations only from the perspective of the palace is also inadequate.[1042] The situation was far more complex.[1043] In this chapter, we shall explore how "religion" was entangled in the economic and administrative activities, or rather, how this entanglement was materialised in the sources. I leave entirely aside theoretical considerations of sacrifice from the perspective of economic relations, as this lies outside the scope of this thesis.[1044]

6.4.1 RITUAL AS ADMINISTRATION?

Even though the temples were not central economic players, they were significant and influential. We start the discussion with texts placed in *KTU* into category 1: "literary and religious texts", namely the ritual texts and sacrificial lists. We shall consider these texts from the perspective of the administration. Of course, I am not the first one to suggest that these documents are of (quasi-)administrative nature.[1045] However, when some cultic texts are recognised as administrative *per se*, they are usually not sacrificial records. For example, Pardee categorises as ritual/cultic administrative

---

[1039] See e.g., Vita 2018: 126.

[1040] Vita 2019: 398 notes that there are about 1000 administrative texts in alphabetical cuneiform and ca. 200 in logosyllabic. Here, we may see that the agreement among scholars on what exactly are "administrative", "economic", or "legal" texts is in some cases clearly fluid.

[1041] See McGeough 2007: 340–341.

[1042] Ca. 530 of the economic texts were discovered in the palace.

[1043] McGeough presents a *network-based model of economic modalities* in opposition (or as corrective) to temple, (crypto-)feudal, two-sector, patrimonial household, or semi-institutional models. For the summary of his findings, see esp. McGeough 2007: 339–364. See also 42–88 for more detailed discussion of the different models and approaches to Ugaritic economy.

[1044] The principle *do ut des* should not be underestimated. From my point of view, it's far from exhausting the theory of sacrifices, but it remains one of the possible and very strong motivations. At Ugarit, this may be seen in the *Epic of Kirta*, where the hero makes sacrifices to Aṯirat in Tyre in order to ensure the success of his mission (*KTU* 1.14 IV: 34–43). His disregard to fulfil the promise is later punished by the goddess (*KTU* 1.15 III: 25–30).

[1045] See, e.g., Vita 2013: 410–411, Pardee 2002a: 1–2 or 117, or Arnaud in *RSO XIV*: 232 who creates category "textes administratifs religieux et profanes" when editing texts from the *House of Urtēnu*. See also del Olmo Lete 1999: 306 and 327. Pardee in *RSO XII/2*: 749 notes in commentary to *KTU* 4.728 that most of the administrative texts are written across the width of the tablet but ritual texts are written lengthwise. This would indicate different materiality that may reflect different purposes. Verifying this claim lies behind the scope of this thesis, but it can make an interesting case study on the materiality of texts. I leave this for future research.

texts only *KTU* 1.91, 3.9, and 4.728.[1046] We may also note that *DUL* considers *khn*, "priest", as administrative personnel at Ugarit.[1047]

The first step in the discussion is to compare the structure of ritual (primarily sacrificial) and non-cultic administrative texts. In theory, the similarities in structure and language may lay the ground for considering them as the same genre. For this, three kinds of ritual texts are selected: 1) lists of deities, 2) lists of sacrifices for deities, and 3) monthly rituals. In this part, we shall limit the discussion to the texts in alphabetical cuneiform,[1048] which has been used for administrative as well as religious documents most often. They dominantly represent the local practices during the final phase of the city. For the sake of a more straightforward comparison with the administrative texts, I decided to simplify the translation (for example, using DN, "divine name" instead of the name itself). This makes the structural similarities much more evident.

1) Lists of deities

In general, there are not many lists of deities, i.e., lists that only enumerate deities and nothing else, except for a possible header indicating what is enumerated.[1049] As an example of a deity list, we may use already discussed *KTU* 1.47 from the *House of the High Priest* and place it side by side with a list of personal names as attested from randomly selected *KTU* 4.183:

	KTU 1.47				*KTU* 4.183	
					...	
1	*il . ṣpn*	god(s) of Ṣapan		12	⌜ḫ⌝*rš . mrkbt*	⌜ch⌝ariot builders
2	*ilib*	DN		13	*mnḥm*	PN
3	*il*	DN		14	*mṣrn*	PN
4	*dgn*	DN		15	*mḏrġlm*	guards
5	*bʿl . ṣpn*	DN		16	*agmy*	PN
6	*bʿlm*	DN		17	*ʿdny*	PN
7	*bʿlm*	DN		18	*ʿbdbʿl*	PN
	...				...	

Here, we may see that the structure is essentially the same. We are presented with a list that enumerates either deities or persons. The difference may be seen in the fact that *KTU* 4.183 lists more categories than the list of deities that is specifically focused on only one category. In addition, we have more "copies" of *KTU* 1.47 and also a ritual text *KTU* 1.148 that confirms this ritual list being reflected in cultic practice.[1050] The same can be seen in other administrative lists. Some of them have

---

[1046] Pardee 2002a: 214–220. He selects these administrative texts because they deal exclusively with cultic rites, explicitly ignoring the much broader corpus of administrative record touching upon many cultic activities (2000: 321 or 2002a: 214). For him, the primary difference between administrative and ritual texts is that the first are predominantly descriptive while the latter prescriptive (2002a: 1–2).

[1047] *DUL*: 428.

[1048] Note that there is a bulk of "Ugaritic" texts that also include information in logosyllabic cuneiform. See Vita 2021: 193–195 for discussion.

[1049] Among lists, we may enumerate: *KTU* 1.47, 1.102, 1.118. As far as I can tell, all other texts include some additional information or are too fragmentary (e.g., *KTU* 1.74, no. 2 in Pardee 2002a).

[1050] See *KTU* 1.47, 1.118, 1.148 and logosyllabic RS 20.024 and 92.2004; see also *Chapter 3 Conceptions of Divinity*, and Pardee 2002a, no 1.

significant overlaps,[1051] and we should suppose that they were somehow of practical use for those who administered the people.

2) lists of sacrifices for deities

The act of sacrifice being offered to a deity may be expressed in different modes. The most common are "x *l* DN" and "DN x", where x = sacrificial material. On occasion, "*l* DN x" or "x DN" may appear, too. *KTU* 1.39 may be given as an example, as it combines these modes. It may sometimes confuse which sacrifices belong to which deity:

1	*dqt . ṯ͑ . ynt . ṯ͑m . dqt . ṯ͑m*	An ewe – *ṯ͑*-sacrifice, a dove – *ṯ͑*-sacrifice, an ewe – *ṯ͑*-sacrifice,
2	*mtntm w kd . ảlp . š . l ỉl*	two kidneys and a liver, a bull,[1052] a ram for DN,
3	*gdlt . ỉlhm . ṯkmn . w šnm . dqt*	a cow – DN, DN – an ewe,
4	⌜r⌝*šp . dqt . šrp . w šlmm. dqtm*	⌜D⌝N – an ewe; a burnt-offering[1053] and a peace-offering two ewes –
5	[*ỉ*]⌜*l*⌝*h . ảlp w š ỉlhm . gdl*⌜*t*⌝ . *ỉlhm*	[D]⌜N⌝, a bull and a ram – DN, a co⌜w⌝ – DN
6	[*b*]⌜*l* š . ảṯrt . š . ṯkmn w šn⌜m⌝ . š	[D]N – a ram, DN – a ram, DN – a ram
	...	

Parallels are clearly visible in numerous administrative texts. Different texts may be used as illustrations of the expressions suggesting some movement of goods. Here, "x *l* PN" and "PN x" structures are also significantly prevalent. The "x DN" mode of description seems to be completely absent. The administrative texts also employ other prepositions and structures to express different parties in the exchange process.[1054] On the contrary, the ritual texts do not use the "DN – number" design, which is often used in administrative texts.[1055]

l PN x – *KTU* 4.638[1056]

3	[...]x . *l* . ⌜*gm*⌝*npk š*⌜*d*⌝[...]	[...] for ⌜P⌝N a fie⌜ld⌝[...]
4	[...] . *l* . *bn . ydln š*⌜*d*⌝[...]	[...] for son of PN a fie⌜ld⌝[...]
5	[...]⌜*n*⌝ . *l* . *bn k*⌜*try*⌝ *š*[*d*...]	[...] for son of P⌜N⌝ a fie[ld ...]

x *l* PN – *KTU* 4.269[1057]

2	*tš͑ . ͑šrh . dd . l . bt* [...]	19 *dd*-measures for the house of [...]
3	*ḫmš . ddm . l . ḫtyt*	5 *dd*-measures for the Hittite woman
4	*ṯlṯm . dd . kśmn . l . gzzm*	30 *dd*-measures of *kśmn*-grain for the shearers

PN x – *KTU* 4.263

6	*grbn . lṯḫ*	PN – a *lṯḫ*-measure
7	*srn . lṯḫ*	PN – a *lṯḫ*-measure

[1051] Compare, e.g., *KTU* 4.633 and 4.761 or 4.12 and 4.412 II: 8–17 that lists clergy – *khnm* and *qdšm*. See Chapter *6.2.1.1 Clergy - khnm and qdšm.*

[1052] Alt. "liver of a bull"; see Pardee 2002a: 68.

[1053] Pardee 2002a: 68 connects this type of offering with the previous ewe for Rašap.

[1054] See McGeough 2011: 3–24.

[1055] To give just one example: *KTU* 4.93. We often lack the information on what the numbers refer to.

[1056] This type of designation appears only scarcely. In the example given one may wonder whether the structure my be actually altered by what is lost in the lacunae. Another fragmentary example of this structure is *KTU* 4.34.

[1057] Dividing lines have been left out for the sake of clarity.

8	*ykn . ltḫ*	PN – a *ltḫ*-measure

KTU 4.149 may be an example of an administrative text combining different modes of expression. Still, it is not as wild as in *KTU* 1.39. In addition, this text is an excellent example of yet another issue discussed further below – that of merging "religious" and "mundane" administration. This one is worth citing in full:

10[1058]	*šbʿ yn*	7 (measures of) wine
11	*l mrynm*	for *mrynm*[1059]
12	*b yṯb mlk*	in the dwelling of the king[1060]
13	*kdm . ġb išḫry*	2 *kd*-measures – the sacrificial pit of DN
14	*ḫmš yn . b d*	5 (measures of) wine for (?) sa-
15	*bḫ mlkt*	crifices of the queen
16	*b mdrʿ*	in the cultivated field (?)
17	*ṯlṯ bt . il*	3 – house/temple of DN-
18	*ảnn*	DN
1	*kd . bt . ilm*	*kd*-measure – house/temple of the great
2	*rbm*	gods
3	*kd l ištnm*	*kd*-measure for PN
4	*kd l ḫty*	*kd*-measure for the Hittite
5	*mảḫdh*	in Maḫadu
6	*kd l kblbn*	*kd*-measure for PN
7	*kdm . mṯḫ*	2 *kd*-measures as a present
8	*l . ảlṯy*	for the Alašiyan/to Alašiya
9	*kd . l mrynm*	*kd*-measure for *mrynm*
19	*kd . bt . il ảnn*	*kd*-measure – house of DN

We can also note another parallel with the ritual texts: on line 7, the *kd*-measures are designated as a *mṯḫ*, "gift/present". This may be in parallel with the specification of the form of sacrifice – for example, the *ṯʿ*-sacrifices or the burnt- and peace-offerings. Most of the time, such a specification is needed neither in administration nor in ritual.

In addition, the occasional indication of place within the administrative texts[1061] may be compared to the indication of location in ritual texts. Some administrative texts are even more similar to this practice. We may compare, for example, *KTU* 1.109 and 4.269:

	KTU 1.109			*KTU* 4.269	
11	*... w b bt . bʿl . u̇grt*	... and in the house/temple of DN:	19	*krwn b . gt . nbk*	PN in the GT[1062] of GN/PN

[1058] I follow the order suggested by Pardee 2007a contrary to *KTU*; see also McGeough 2011: 111–112 for discussion.
[1059] The "charioteers", see e.g, McGeough 2007: 102–105.
[1060] Or GN? See McGeough 2011: 111.
[1061] Lines 12, 16, 5, or 8. I take the records of divine houses/temples as institutions rather than places.
[1062] For *gt*, "agricultural estate", see McGeoug 2007: 130.

12	*kkdm . w npš . ilîb*	two KKD and a neck – DN	20	*ddm . kśmm . l . ḫtn*	two *dd*-measures of *kśmn*-grain to PN
13	*gdlt . il š . bʿl š . ʿnt*	a cow – DN, a ram – DN, a ram - DN	21	*ddm . l. trbnn*	two *dd*-measures to PN

3) monthly rituals

Numerous ritual texts are titled in relation to specific months. I initially thought this was something specific to cultic documents – providing liturgies for monthly ceremonies.[1063] However, the exploration of economic texts has revealed strong parallelism, too. *KTU* 1.41 (and 1.87):[1064]

1	*b yrḫ . [riš yn . b. ym . ḫdt]*	In the month [*riš-yn* on the day of the new moon:]
2	*šmtr . ⌜u⌝[tkl . l . il . šlmm]*	cutting a ⌜b⌝[unch of grapes for DN as a peace-offering]
3	*b tltt ʿ[šrt . yrtḫs . mlk . brr]*	On the thirt[een day, the king will wash himself clean,]
4	*b årbʿ⌜t⌝[. ʿšrt . riš . ʿrgmn]*	on the fou⌜r⌝[teen day, the best of the tribute[1065]]
5	*w tn[1066] šm . ⌜l⌝[bʿlt . bhtm . ʿšrm . l inš]*	and two rams ⌜for⌝[DN, two birds for DN-]
6	*ilm …*	DN …

may be compared with *KTU* 4.172:

1	*b . ym . ḫdt*	On the day of the new moon,
2	*b . yrḫ . pgrm*	in the month *pgrm*:
3	*lqḫ . bʿlmʿdr*	PN
4	*w . bn . ḫlp*	and son of PN
5	*⌜w .⌝[…]y . d . ⌜bʿ⌝l*	⌜and⌝ [PN?] have obtained the ⌜contro⌝le
6	*mi⌜ḫd⌝ . b*	of G⌜N⌝ for
7	*årbʿ . måt*	400
8	*ḫrṣ*	gold.

The main difference between administrative and ritual texts concerning the indication of months and days is that the ritual texts often cover numerous days or even months. The administrative records are often satisfied with stating the day of the transaction, sometimes only a month.[1067] Dating was usually not an issue for the administrative records. In the few examples where dating appears, the transaction may have some limited validity, and dating was, therefore, necessary.[1068] Still, the language and structure employed are very similar.

[1063] See Pardee 2002a, nos. 6–15.

[1064] These parallel texts (one from the *House of the High Priest*, the other from the *Royal Palace*) complement each other's gaps. See Pardee 2002a, no. 15. The transcription presented here reflects the state of *KTU* 1.41.

[1065] See Pardee 2002a: 63 and 106, n. 70.

[1066] This is unusual – number two is usually expressed using dual.

[1067] E.g., *KTU* 4.193.

[1068] In the example given above, the transaction possibly relates to obtaining some concessions for activities (tax collection) in Maḥadu, the harbour town of Ugarit. These might have been limited in time and therefore, the dating is a necessary information. Compare with *KTU* 4.266, 4.336, 4.388; see McGeough 2011: 175, 198–201, and 220–221.

In the examples above, we have outlined the structural similarities between ritual and administrative records. However, there are also many features that stand out from administrative practice. For example, some ritual texts include references to hymns or recitations;[1069] some may specify performed actions,[1070] especially the texts mentioning the king usually gives information on what he should do;[1071] repetition of offerings may be expressed.[1072] Such additional details are truly scarce in the administrative documents, but some exceptions appear. For example, *KTU* 4.168 includes the following note:

5	*mlbš . ṯrmnm*	*ṯrmn*-garments:
6	*k . yṯn . w . b . bt*	when they become old, from the house of
7	*mlk . mlbš*	the king, garment
8	*yṯn . lhm*	will be given to them

There are also ritual texts that are very different from any of the administrative records already by their overall structure. *KTU* 1.40 (the ritual for appeasing social frictions[1073]) or *KTU* 1.161 (the royal funerary ritual[1074]) are the clearest examples.

In light of these texts or numerous prescribing references in other ritual texts, it may be argued that ritual texts might have served instead as instructions, "to-do lists", or scenarios rather than as administrative records. However, this may be claimed for many administrative texts, too. Organization of ritual entails its administration hand in hand.[1075] Unfortunately, we can hardly accurately reconstruct how exactly the ritual and administrative documents were used in practice.

An indication may be seen in the deity list *KTU* 1.118. This tablet has a wedge imprinted at the beginning of each line. It has been suggested that these are markings made for control purposes, which implies the administrative "to-do list" character.[1076] Pardee even suggests that the list was once marked in full, then the marking was erased, and the list was marked again only on lines 1–10. This would correspond to the two sacrificial sections of *KTU* 1.148: lines 1–9 and 10–12.[1077]

The question is, what was the purpose of the ritual texts? Was that to administer the cults? To keep records? Or to "make proper cult"?[1078] I would argue that the numerous differences between the ritual and administrative texts were caused primarily by the different needs, concerns, and

---

[1069] E.g., *KTU* 1.106: 26'–36'; 1.112: 20–21; or 1.148: 13–17.

[1070] E.g., *KTU* 1.104: 3, 12, or 16;.39: 20.

[1071] See Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults.*

[1072] E.g., *KTU* 1.39: 20.

[1073] This tablet has been discovered in the *House of the High Priest*, but variant versions include one tablet from the *Royal Palace* (*KTU* 1.84) and *House of the Hurrian Priest* (*KTU* 1.121, 1.122, 1.153, and possibly 1.154). *KTU* 1.40 is by far the best preserved. The ritual is briefly addressed in Chapter *6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults.*

[1074] See Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?.*

[1075] See also Vita & Matoïan 2019, esp. p. 106.

[1076] See *KTU*: 136–137, n. 1, or Pardee 2002a: 12–13.

[1077] Pardee 2002a: 12–13. For photo where the marks are visible, see *PA*: pl. LXXIV and LXXV.

[1078] As Delnero & Lauinger 2015: 16–20 discuss, the opinions greatly differ in whether the purpose of administration was "to police or to plan". They conclude that there is no consensus and probably cannot be due to the multipurpose nature of these texts, variable in time and space. Adding a personal or institutional perspective to it, the issue gets complicated even further.

perspectives of respective institutions. The administration of rituals requires different data than the economic administration of the *Royal Palace*. Different concerns result in differences in vocabulary but also in differences in structure. After all, the "normal" administrative texts are also very varied – depending on what they administer. In the case of cultic texts, the focus may also be directed toward specifying additional information. The administrative function was, in my opinion, *raison d'être* of many (if not most) ritual texts.[1079]

There is also another issue where I would see an interesting complementarity between administrative and cultic records. This is related to the administered materials. It seems to me that ritual texts are those that have almost a monopoly on administering animals, especially their slaughter. Animal sacrifices are those which comprise most of the offering materials.[1080] On the contrary, the administrative documents from Ugarit are not much concerned with animals. If so, they do not seem to record animal slaughter but instead living animals – as objects of sale, "members" of households,[1081] draught animals, or receivers of rations – fodder.[1082] However, there are also some exceptions – for example, *KTU* 4.247 from the *Royal Palace* includes butchered animal parts and large quantities of fish.[1083]

This seems to indicate that cultic activities were the primary (recorded!) setting for animal butchering. Even the most general expression for sacrifice – *dbḥ*, has intrinsic butchering connotations.[1084] We may even wonder whether any emic distinction was made between slaughter for deity and mundane slaughter or whether all animals were sacrificed to a deity at the time of their slaughter.[1085] But we should not confuse the absence of evidence for the evidence of absence.

As such, the temples and their administrators were a crucial part of economic relationships at Ugarit, through which a large part (if not all) of meat production was processed.[1086] The unanswered question is how exactly this has worked. Administrative records show that people and institutions owned and cared for animals. Somehow, these animals then ended up on the sacrificial altars (?) of local temples. We have already touched on this issue above,[1087] suggesting that this is one of the most common modes of public participation in cults. However, we cannot tell whether the sacrifices were supplied by obligatory "tithes", by those inhabitants requesting cultic services from

---

[1079] See also Vita 2013: 410–411.

[1080] For detailed listing of offering materials *RSO XII*: 1024–1051. For summary, see Pardee 2000: esp. 328–331.

[1081] E.g., in *KTU* 4.295: 1–2, the household is listed as comprising of a man, his son, wife, a bull and eight sheep.

[1082] See, e.g., *KTU* 4.128, 4.142, 4.295, 4.296, 4.337, 4.341, 4.380, 4.636, 4.775, 4.749, 4.790 for references to animals in administrative records.

[1083] Except of one offering of *šbšlt dg*, "fish soup", in *KTU* 1.106: 21–22, I know of no other use of fish as sacrificial offering.

[1084] Del Olmo Lete 1995: 37–38.

[1085] I would argue that at least fish, which are attested in great quantities and outside the cult, were common comestibles. This could also correspond with their cold-blooded nature. However, this claim would need further evidence and discussion that is outside the scope of this thesis. The *Epic of Kirta* may also evidence for non-sacrificial slaughter of animals. In *KTU* 1.15 IV and V, a feast is organized by Kirta for his officials, devoid of any connection with deities. We can also consider whether there may be any distinction made between *dbḥ* and *ṭbḥ* as to religious vs. profane slaughter; see a comment of Pardee 2002a: 120. However, the evidence does not seem conclusive to me. According to *DUL*, both of the terms can be used as sacrificial vocabulary.

[1086] See also McGeough 2007: 261–264.

[1087] See Chapter *6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults*.

the temple institutions[1088] or by employing enforced necessity – i.e., a slaughter of an animal was always a sacrifice mediated by the temple. We also cannot tell how the subsequent redistribution worked. We can reasonably suppose this was also a part of how temple personnel were financed, but any details elude us.

6.4.2 Supplying the Cult

The issue of supplying the cult was not limited to animals.[1089] The cult was costly and needed a rich material supply.[1090] Different kinds of vegetable products and products thereof (grapes, oils, perfumes, cereals, myrrh, garments, etc.) were probably used as offerings, some of which might have been used for taking care of the deities, for example, anointing.[1091] Garments, fabrics, and materials for them (especially wool) were the second most common materials after the animals. We can assume that part of these offerings was intended for clothing the deities themselves,[1092] but part might have once again been redistributed to the cultic personnel. The deities could also receive precious metals or objects made of them. All of these materials are, contrary to animals, regularly administered by other institutions and individuals, too.

The supply of other types of offerings for religious institutions is also better traceable in the non-sacrificial administration. Here, we may best observe how the *Royal Palace* participated in the cult. We have already mentioned *KTU* 4.149, which records deliveries of wine to different people/places/events, including "the sacrificial pit of Išḫara", "sacrifices of the queen", "temple of Ilu", "temple of the great gods", or "temple of *ỉl ảnn*". One of the most notorious religious administration texts from the palace is *KTU* 1.91,[1093] which records wine to be consumed during *dbḥ mlk*, the "sacrifices of the king". These sacrifices include some other known ceremonies, including the *dbḥ ṣpn*, "sacrifices of Ṣapan". This text also attests to how broad the category of the *dbḥ mlk* was and strongly links the cultic practices with the royalty.[1094] The administration of wine used for sacrificial purposes is also mentioned in *KTU* 4.213. Contrary to the previous example, this tablet also administers wine intended for other purposes. It seems that wine was one of the most often administered commodities in relation to cultic activities.[1095] However, it appears that wine was not

---

[1088] E.g., divination, see Chapter *6.3 Divination.*

[1089] See *RSO XII*: 1024–1051 or Pardee 2000: esp. 328–331 for summary of sacrificial materials.

[1090] See also the discussion in Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity* where the comparative material from Mari has been discussed.

[1091] See, e.g., Lam 2011 and his interpretation of *KTU* 1.42.

[1092] This practice is possibly mentioned in *KTU* 1.43: 22 or 1.104: 15–17. Informative may be also *KTU* 4.182 that deals with textiles and mentioned *šk btbt*, possibly "cloak of Bitu-bēti", and 4.168 where wool is delivered to *šr ʿttrt*, the "singers of ʿAṯtarta". See also Pardee 2002a: 35–36, 72, 100 (n. 16), and 226; and Vita & Matoïan 2019.

[1093] Pardee 2002a, no. 58.

[1094] See Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults.*

[1095] Clemens 2001: 377 lists following texts that connect wine and cultic activities: *KTU* 1.91, 4.149, 4.213, 4.216(?), 4.219, 4.230(?), 4.246(?), 4.274, 4.279(?), 4.284, 4.761(?). In his further comments he more or less disqualifies following text: *KTU* 4.230 (p. 387–391), 4.246 (p.397–404), 4.279 (p. 417–422). He would also disqualify *KTU* 4.761 because it only lists priest and not directly cultic activities (p. 465). Administration of cultic personnel is further discussed below. I agree with Clemens that sponsoring cultic personnel dos not have to be readily considered as a direct support of cult. *KTU* 4.274 would be disqualifies by the understanding of McGeough 2011: 215, who does not understand *bt* on line 5 as a temple but as a personal name.

always simply given to the temples. *KTU* 4.219 lists "wine that was given in silver",[1096] i.e., sold.[1097] Once again, the text mixes cultic (namely ʿAṯtarta and Rašap Guni) and other transactions of wine.

KTU 4.182 deals with large quantities of fabrics and garments, some of which seem to be intended for deities. For example, ʿAṯtarta-Šadî is mentioned here. Unfortunately, the broken context makes the interpretation difficult. Some persons might have been explicitly designated as those who make textiles for this deity, including *bnš mlk*, but we cannot be sure. This possible inclusion of *bnš mlk* into the cult support further interconnects the overall economic relations at Ugarit if we consider *bnš mlk* as those who perform services for the king.[1098]

Apart from wine and textiles, the palace administered oil for the "lamp of the gods" in *KTU* 4.284. The palace also administered numerous activities that involved cultic personnel. These, however, cannot be readily regarded as evidence of a state-sponsored cult. This issue is further discussed below.

We must also remember that the palace probably extensively sponsored the construction of sacred architecture. An issue that has been particularly relevant in the final phase of the city after the earthquake has damaged the sacred infrastructure.[1099] The king of Ugarit referred to such construction activities in a letter to Merenptah.[1100]

The material supply of the cult is intrinsically connected with farming and agricultural activities. Such activities are usually imagined as being located outside the city, in the villages and countryside. In this perspective, the cult was dependent on the supply from outside of the city. However, it has been convincingly argued that the city itself was also part of the food production activities, and the division of urban × rural/village communities is not as strict as one may suppose.[1101] Consequently, the imagery of urban centres as merely using up the resources from the rural communities seems anachronistic. Still, the contribution of the kingdom's economy to the city cults must have been substantial.[1102] We know the palace administered economic relations with the villages within the kingdom, even though the details mostly elude us and our understanding of the relations is inadequate.[1103] There is only limited evidence related directly to the cultic activities. For example, the texts *KTU* 1.91 and 4.213 deal with deliveries of wine from different rural localities. The evidence for the rural supply of cults we possess is directly connected with the royal administration.

KTU 4.728 may then cast some light on the non-royal participation. It lists people who did not bring oil. The cultic nature of this text has been primarily based on the findspot of this tablet (*House of the Hurrian Priest*), but its header has played a role, too. It mentions *bʿl ḫlb*, possibly Baʿal of Ḫalāb.

[1096] [*y*]ʿ*n* . *d* . *ntn* [.] ʿ*k*ʾ*sp*.

[1097] See also *KTU* 4.341: 5–6, where the some gold is probably bought by/for the *Temple of Ilu*; See McGeough 2011: 231–233 for further discussion.

[1098] See note 885.

[1099] See Chapter *5.1 Sanctuaries of Ugarit*, esp. the discussion on the temples of Baʿal, Dagan, and the *Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne*.

[1100] RS 88.2158: 10'–16'. See *Chapter 6.6 Religion and Letters* where the relevant passage is also translated. The message of the king of Ugarit is cited in the letter that was send from Egypt to Ugarit.

[1101] See the discussion in Schloen 2001: 335–342.

[1102] In addition to this, the rural and village communities also supplied local cultic activities (this does not necessarily mean they were independent on the state administration or participation) to which there is only very limited evidence. The issue has been touched in Chpater *5.1.7 Temples in the Kingdom of Ugarit*. See also Heltzer 1976: 71–74.

[1103] See, e.g., McGeough 2007: 311–322, or previously Heltzer 1976.

However, the header on lines 1–3 causes some difficulties.[1104] McGeough favours translation "account of the workers of ḫlb who did not bring oil",[1105] while Pardee translates "ʿrk-taxes for Baʿlu of Aleppo that were properly paid in oil".[1106] These translations do not exhaust suggestions that have been made.[1107] Anyhow, even McGeough considers this text as referring to supplies for the cult, even if not to the temple of Baʿal of Ḫalāb. In his opinion, the text may list individuals who failed to follow their cultic obligations of providing the cult with oil.[1108] In the end, the light this text casts on the public provisioning of cults is rather feeble.

It is hard to corroborate how or even if the inhabitants of Ugarit were economically entangled with the cultic activities *per se*. For example, the texts from the *House of Urtēnu* inform us about deliveries of barley, including fodder for horses of Rašap,[1109] and transaction of wine(?) with khnm.[1110] Several texts mention khnm and qdšm in unspecified context,[1111] and one text may even mention a temple of Šapaš.[1112] *KTU* 4.809 mentions the manufacture of krkbm-objects with specifications of their widths and lengths. It has been cautiously suggested that these objects may be metal frames around the combustion area of altars.[1113] However, this interpretation is far from certain and no cultic reference is made in the text itself. To add material from other archives: *KTU* 4.633 from the *House of Yabnīnu* informs us about unspecified dealings with khnm. None of these texts may be connected directly with supplying sacrificial practices. In theory, we may consider provisions of animals for sacrifice as part of divinatory practices.[1114]

6.4.3   Economic Activities of Temple Institutions

So far, we have considered the economy of "temple institutions" as being supplied as if sponsored, especially by the state apparatus. However, the temples as institutions[1115] were also economically active on their own. We have already briefly outlined the ideological conception of temples as

---

[1104] ʿrk . bʿl / ḫlb . dt . l ytn / šmn.

[1105] McGeough 2011: 467.

[1106] Pardee 2002a, no. 59.

[1107] Different understanding of lexemes ʿrk, bʿl, ḫlb, or the preposition l may lead to different understandings of this header, e.g., "ʿrk-sacrifices"/"ʿrk-priest" instead of "account" or "ʿrk-taxes", "owners of ḫlb" instead of "workers of ḫlb" or "Baʿal of Ḫalāb". The preposition l may be understood as emphatic or negative. See McGeough 2011: 467–468 for further discussion and references.

[1108] See also McGeough 2007: 199, 263, and 360.

[1109] *KTU* 4.790. It also mentions fodder for horses of mlk . ʿttrt, but I am not sure we may understand this as a divine name. We should also consider the possibility that Rašap is here used as personal name. McGeough 2011: 527 understands both mentions as divine names.

[1110] *KTU* 4.761. The administered commodity is measurable in kd-measures. McGeough 2011: 522–523 follows Zamora 2000: 360 in suggesting these probably contain wine. Still, we do not know whether the listed persons were providers of receivers of this commodity. For cultic personnel, including khnm and qdšm, see Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations*.

[1111] E.g., *KTU* 4.837 or 4.838. See below for the discussion of administration of temple personnel.

[1112] *KTU* 4.803. However, it may also designate a household of someone named Šapaš (see McGeough 2011: 535), or even the daughter of the Hittite king. Compare this with the interpretation of bt špš in *KTU* 6.24 and 6.25 by van Soldt 1989b: 379. The fragmentary state of this tablet does not allow any definite conclusions. The truth is that such temple is not reliably attested in the sources, but this goddess was recipient of sacrifices and we should assume she was present somewhere.

[1113] See *RSO XVIII*: 120–121.

[1114] See Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

[1115] Apart from sacrifices, there is no indication of economic activities placed within the temple precincts themselves; see McGeough 2007: 261.

households.[1116] I believe the sources allow us to consider "temples" or "temple institutions" as these households not only on the theological/ideological level but also very practically. We may be inclined to consider the *House of the High Priest* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest* as parts of these institutions. However, this is not as straightforward as it may seem. Here, the *network-based model* of McGeough[1117] allows us to consider the nuances of the economic relations in which the temples and the houses of priests were set. We may view these "institutions" not as independent economic units with separate administrations but as nodes where economic (and other) activities happen. Already the great complexity of the administration of cultic activities shows us that the *House of the High Priest* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest* cannot be viewed as parishes assigned to selected temples. They administered cults across different temples for different deities, collaborated extensively with the *Royal Palace* and had relations with individuals or groups of people. Both of the houses yielded texts that show a significant overlap of cultic competencies. It is possibly better to say that the priestly houses were an integral part of the temple network, significant nodes.[1118]

Here, a note should be made on the archaeological distribution of ritual/sacrificial texts – virtually all of them have been discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest* or the *House of the High Priest*. The *Royal Palace* yielded only a few ritual texts,[1119] and one should note that even the rituals involving the king belong prevalently to the priests' houses. Several ritual texts were also unearthed in Ras Ibn-Hani.[1120] Outside these locations, only a few ritual texts were discovered. The most intriguing is *KTU* 1.161, the royal funerary ritual that has been discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*.[1121]

It may be said that deities were those who acted as the household owners.[1122] The designation "*bt* DN" – "house of DN" is in a clear parallel to "*bt* PN" which refers to households in administrative records. We have already seen that these divine households may appear as recipients of commodities. But there is also a low number of texts that attest deities/temples as owners/managers of fields or villages. These belong primarily to the dossier of legal texts and are discussed in the following chapter.

[1116] See Chapter *5.1.1 Ideology and Functioning*.

[1117] See note 1043.

[1118] See also Vita 2019: 408–409; here he argues in the context of overall administrative practices that the "the [private archives] functioned as "ministries" of some kind that, together with the palace and its various extensions (inside and outside the capital), co-administered the political and economic affairs of the kingdom." He even calls the system a "commercial oligarchy, headed by the king", recalling the patrimonial household model of Schloen 2001. I personally tend to see in the sources a bit more independence. Vita 2013 also discusses general relations of administrative texts with letters, legal texts, rituals, and labels – all of this forms a functional unity. Each of the types of these texts view the situation from different perspective.

[1119] *KTU* 1.81 is very fragmentary; 1.84 is a variant version of 1.40 from the *House of the High Priest* and *KTU* 1.121 and 1.122 from the *House of the Hurrian Priest*; 1.87 is a parallel to 1.41 from the *House of the High Priest*; 1.90 is a ritual involving royal participation; 1.91 is the administrative record of wine for the "sacrifices of the king"; *KTU* 1.79 and 1.80 record sacrifices in rural setting.

[1120] *KTU* 1.164, 1.165(?), 1.166(?), 1.168, 1.170, 1.171, 1.173, and 1.174(?). Most of the legible texts involve the king and are further discussed in Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults*.

[1121] This text is further discussed in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*. For some texts, we lack precise information; several texts from the Acropolis may best associated with the *House of the High Priest*; *KTU* 1.177 was discovered in the *City Centre*, but is too fragmentary for further interpretation.

[1122] It has also been suggested that it was the deities who were the ultimate owners of the land; see e.g., van Soldt 2010b: 249, or Schloen 2001: 230–231. However, I cannot find any evidence supporting such a thesis. All the data suggest that it was the king who was the "owner" of the land – even in the case of "sales"; as noted by Schloen: "the king is sovereign because he is the proprietor" (2001: 231). Schloen also problematizes the notion of "ownership" that has many anachronistic connotations.

The ownership/administration/management of property entails economic activities. How exactly these activities were organised is challenging to ascertain. From our perspective, we assume that deities themselves did not manage their estate and tended to delegate these responsibilities to the clergy. Therefore, it is useful to explore the few administrative records from the priests' houses that do not deal directly with cultic activities. These are probably the best indications of the administration of the economy of the temples. However, we should not forget that 1) these texts may reflect the economic activities of the clergy independent of the temples and 2) other administrative records, namely those from the *Royal Palace*, may administer temple economies, too, but we are not able to recognise it.

The *House of the High Priest* yielded 21 texts in the *KTU* category 4.[1123] Some of these texts are too fragmentary for any reasonable interpretation, and many others have only limited informative value. Some texts are simple lists of personal names, some of which may be understood as temple personnel. For example, *KTU* 4.12 lists names without further specification, but some of these names are also attested in *KTU* 4.412 (II: 8–17) from the *Royal Palace*, where they are listed as *qdmš*. It is possible that the specification was not needed and was obvious to the administrators in the context of the *House of the High Priest*. However, any grouping of persons may also have other reasons.[1124] Other texts connect persons with geographical locations or list locations in relation to numbers. While these texts indicate administration and economic relations, they are not truly informative. At least *KTU* 4.27 indicates the inclusion of this node with trade relations: it lists the numbers of merchants in different geographical locations. Other administrative texts deal with different kinds of products – textiles,[1125] large amounts of gold and silver,[1126] various comestibles, vegetal products, but also birds and donkeys,[1127] or deliveries of unspecified jars to individuals.[1128] The administration of the workforce is demonstrated by *KTU* 4.15, which lists workers from different households (*bt* PN) probably assigned to the *Temple of Ilu* (*bt ỉl*), and by *KTU* 4.16. In *KTU* 4.29, two groups of nine people (*bnš*) and one donkey are assigned to *knhm* and *qdšm*, but no further indication is given. *KTU* 4.13 is also interesting in that it lists tables. Unfortunately, the left side of the tablet is broken off. Its connection to economic activities is dubious. In my opinion, these tables may be rather related to communal ritual activities. Comparative material from Emar may support this suggestion.[1129] In theory, correspondence may enrich our understanding of the economic activities of this building, but as far as I can tell, this is not the case.[1130]

[1123] *KTU* 4.2, 4.4, 4.5+4.19, 4.10, 4.12, 4.13, 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18, 4.20, 4.21, 4.22, 4.23, 4.25, 4.27, 4.28, 4.29, 4.30, and 4.34. See McGeough 2011: 479–496. Possibly, some of the texts discovered at the *Acropolis* may be associated with this building, but we shall leave them aside for now. See also McGeough 2007: 262–263 for the summary of economic activities in this building.

[1124] See McGeough 2011: 487 and Clemens 2001: 273.

[1125] *KTU* 4.4

[1126] Badly damaged *KTU* 4.23.

[1127] *KTU* 4.14. It has been also suggested that this is a list of offerings, but this is in my opinion improbable. See McGeough 2011: 490 or Clemens 2001: 276–280 for further discussion and references.

[1128] *KTU* 4.34. The jars most likely contain wine. It may also list deliveries of breads; see McGeough 2011: 485 with further references.

[1129] E.g., during the ritual of the installation of the high priestess of the Storm-God, tables are set for participants and deities (e.g., lines 15–17 or 24). See Fleming 1992: 12-13, 15, and 50–51, where the relevant passages are transliterated and translated.

[1130] See *KTU* 2.1–2.10 and 2.92.

Twelve administrative texts were discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.[1131] To these, we could also add two from the *Lamaštu Archive*,[1132] which probably belonged to the same household[1133] and four from the vicinity of these two clusters.[1134] The information potential of these texts is once again diminished by their physical state. Possibly broad economic relations are attested by *KTU* 4.727, which lists households (*bt* PN). 24 entries are preserved, but the original tablet probably included more. A number of other texts list personal names. Unfortunately, there is no additional information that would provide us with any details on the nature of these relations. Del Olmo Lete suggested that some of the lists may relate to the divinatory practices, which are attested by divinatory models discovered in this location.[1135] Del Olmo Lete argues that these "administrative" documents record those for whose benefit the divination was performed but who could not afford a personalised model. While the latter statement seems an exaggeration to me, these lists may well relate to divinatory practices. I suspect that providing such services might have been one of the main economic activities carried out in this building. In addition, divination from animal entrails is intrinsically connected with sacrifice. We may suppose that hand in hand with providing these services, sacrifices were also carried for deities – the local officials have thus solved two birds with one stone. We have already mentioned *KTU* 4.728, which probably lists persons who did not bring oil. One of the many possible options is that they should have brought it as a payment for the divinatory services or even as a material for lecanomancy. This is, however, probably too far-reaching a line of thought because this type of divination is not attested at Ugarit.[1136] The fragmentary text may only indicate that silver,[1137] myrrh oil,[1138] or something measurable in *kd*-measures[1139] was administered here. *KTU* 4.745 from the *Lamaštu Archive* indicates unspecified relations with a number of occupational categories, including, for example, military officials, archers, shepherds, merchants, chariot-makers, or priests (*khnm*). The second text from this room only informs us about the distribution of *dd*-measures to individuals. From the texts discovered in the vicinity of these clusters, we may note *KTU* 4.729 administering shepherds, listing them under the authority of various individuals.

Reference to pastoral activities opens the question of the self-sustenance of temples. It may be argued that the temple activities, namely sacrifices, were also supplied from their own herds and other economic activities. Apart from the above-mentioned institutions, the so-called *Temple of Rhytons* was suggested as an example of a religious economy, namely oil production. An oil press was present just across the street from this temple structure. If the suggestion that this building served as

---

[1131] *KTU* 4.727, 4.728, 4.730, 4.731, 4.732, 4.733, 4.734, 4.735, 4.736, 4.737, 4.743, and 4.815. See McGeough 2007: 259 and 263. He discusses the texts from the *House of Agapṯarri*, *House of the Hurrian Priest* and *Lamaštu Archive* separately. See del Olmo Lete 2018: 27–54 for a connected discussion; see also Chapter *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest*

[1132] *KTU* 4.745 and 4.746.

[1133] See Chapter *4.2.1.3.3 House of the Hurrian Priest*

[1134] *KTU* 4.729, 4.742, 4.744, and 4.747.

[1135] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 44.

[1136] See also the discussion in Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

[1137] *KTU* 4.735

[1138] *KTU* 4.815. Clemens 2001: 557–559 discusses also the possibility that this is a ritual text. However, the state of this tablet hardly allows any definite conclusions.

[1139] *KTU* 4.743.

a meeting place of a *marziḫu* association is correct, the economic activities stand out even more clearly – this cultic association appears in the sources often connected with economic activities.[1140]

6.4.4 Administration of Temple Personnel

Yet another perspective on relations of religion, economy, and administration is visible in numerous documents from Ugarit that administer religious realia. Among these, we may note particularly those administrative texts that mention cultic personnel, namely *khnm*[1141] and *qdšm*,[1142] the two common designations for cultic officials.[1143] To these, we could also add texts dealing with other professions that may be associated with cult – *nqdm*, "shepherds",[1144] *šrm*, "singers",[1145] *mṣlt*, "cymbalist"[1146] or possibly *ṯʿy*-officials.[1147] However, these professions are not cult-specific. On the contrary, the already mentioned *šib mqdšt*, "water-drawers of the sanctuary", may be counted among cultic personnel.[1148] Sometimes, the personal names of the holders of these offices and professions are listed, and explorations of prosopography may lead to very interesting results, but this remains outside of the scope of this thesis.

Quite often, documents dealing with cult officials refer to other occupational categories, too. In general, it seems that the administration did not particularly differentiate between religious and other types of administration but merged them. Also, the administration did not deal priests separately from shepherds, chariot-makers, potters, singers, artisans, merchants, servants, *mariyannu*, or other professions. Maybe we should consider whether the often-used term "priestly class" and alike are proper. Where is the line between a social class and an occupation? It may be argued that some occupations are more prestigious than others and lead to the formation of distinct classes. Nonetheless, from the perspective of administration, *khnm* and *qdšm*, as well as *mrynm*, were counted among other occupations. In *KTU* 4.752, members of the priest-occupations are listed under the general term *bnš*, "men", who were under the authority of *rb ʿprm*, the "chief of the *ʿapirūma*".[1149]

[1140] For additional discussions, see Chapters *5.1.5 The Temple of Rhytons, 6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities,* and *6.5.3 References to Religious Realia in Legal Texts.*

[1141] E.g., *KTU* 4.29, 4.36, 4.38, 4.68, 4.69, 4.99, 4.126, 4.282, 4.357, 4.416, 4.633, 4.745, 4.752, 4.761, 4.806, or 4.814. As *rb khnm* also in *KTU* 2.4, 1.6 VI: 56, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, and 6.10.

[1142] E.g., *KTU* 4.29, 4.36, 4.38, 4.47(?), 4.68, 4.126, 4.412, 4.416, 4.752, 4.806, 4.814, 4.837, or 4.838.

[1143] See Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations.*

[1144] E.g., *KTU* 4.68, 4.93, 4.103, 4.126, and many more.

[1145] E.g., *KTU* 4.103, 4.126, 4.863, and more.

[1146] This profession is attested only in economic tablets *KTU* 4.126 and 4.225, but there are references to cymbals in narratives as musical accompaniment of feasts (*KTU* 1.3 I: 19 or 1.19 IV: 26–27) and it is also mentioned in hymn *KTU* 1.108. The precise translation of this musical instrument may be subject to further debate, e.g., Pardee 2002a: 194 translate it as "double-sistrum". For the purpose of this thesis, the identification of this object as musical instrument is sufficient.

[1147] Possibly *KTU* 4.175. McGeough 2011: 382 understand *ṯʿy* here as a personal name. The use of this word as personal name is supported by many texts where *bn ṯʿy*, "son of *ṯʿy*" appear. In these cases, understanding it as a personal name is the most probable interpretation. See, e.g., *KTU* 4.76, 4.122, 4.354, and more. In 4.69 VI: 23, *bn ṯʿy* is actually listed among *khnm*.

[1148] *KTU* 4.609, where they probably receive rations from the palace.

[1149] The term *ʿapiru/ḫapiri/ḫabiru,* etc. is usually understood as designating a marginal social group. It is then intriguing that priests and other occupations are placed under the authority of their chief. That is, unless the *rb* refers to an administrator of this group who is himself not the member of the liminal society. On the text, see short comment in

The reasons for the administration of cultic personnel are various. As is often the case with administrative texts, some do not give any information in this regard. In those cases where some information is given, priests appear as recipients/providers of commodities, for example, flour, silver, or sheep;[1150] as owners/managers of property, for example, fields;[1151] those who have authority over someone;[1152] but also as those who are placed under the authority of someone else.

In the end, these mentions do not provide us with many details, and we are mostly left with more questions than answers. Anyhow, they attest to the broad presence of *khnm* and *qdšm* in economic relations at Ugarit and present them as not-insignificant items. At the same time, they suggest that we should slightly reconsider their position in social relations. Their social status seems to be more varied than may be usually assumed.

6.4.5 Understanding Religion from an Administrative Perspective

Explorations of administration and economy may also cast some light on the issue of the conception of religion at Ugarit. It may lead us to consider this concept as an issue of perspectives. It seems that for the administration of the *Royal Palace* or some private archives, religious phenomena were usually administered with other issues. Sales of wine to individuals might have been administered together with sales to the temples, and *khnm* and *qdšm* might have been listed side by side with other professions in various economic activities. At the same time, it was still valuable to differentiate priests from merchants or carpenters and *khnm* and *qdšm* are usually mentioned in proximity.

In contrast, from the perspective of sacrificial rituals, the administration was prevalently focused on recording offerings to different deities in different places in a variety of forms. Documents for rituals and festivals were intentionally accumulated in separate clusters. They also had some specifics which differentiated them from other administrative texts. Religion may thus appear as a clearer and more distinct category from the perspective of temples and priests' houses but be blurred and fuzzy when viewed from the perspective of the palace or of the archive. Of course, the perspectives are not exhausted by these two contrasting examples.

6.5 Religion and Legal Activities

The ancient Near East is popularly known for the *Code of Ḫammurabi*,[1153] the famous law collection of a Babylonian ruler. When talking about legal activities at Ugarit, one may expect an exploration of the law codes of this city. This, however, is not the case. Even though law codes were present in the broader cultural milieu of the ancient Near East, they were relatively few in number.[1154] The Hittite

---

McGeough 2011: 509; on ʿapiru, see, e.g., Justel 2020: 311–312, or von Dassow 2008: 110–111 with further references to previous discussions.

[1150] *KTU* 4.38 lists both *khnm* and *qdšm* in association with all these three commodities. However, it is impossible to say whether they are providers or recipients of the indicated amounts.

[1151] *KTU* 4.282, 4.357, or 4.837. In the latter document, the field is associated with *dr khnm*, the "circle of priests", probably the professional group headed by *rb khnm*, the "high priest".

[1152] Possibly *KTU* 4.29. In 4.416, *khnm* and *qdšm* are associated with a number (lost in lacuna) of people, without further specification – they may provide or receive them, but both possibilities entail some authority over these persons.

[1153] Louvre, SB 8/AS 6064.

[1154] For a general overview of the history of law in the ancient Near East, see, e.g., Westbrook 2003. For the general overview of law codes in particular, see p. 8–10.

overlords of Ugarit also had these collections,[1155] but such documents are so far unattested at Ugarit.[1156]

Actually, it is rather problematic to exactly define the corpus of Ugaritic texts that should belong to the category of "legal texts".[1157] Especially problematic is the differentiation between legal and administrative texts in alphabetical cuneiform. *KTU* lists 35 texts as legal and juridical documents,[1158] but this number is not unanimously accepted. Pardee and Hawley have designated as legal 27 texts,[1159] and the overlap in their selection and *KTU* selection is only 19 texts.[1160] Some of their "legal" texts are considered administrative texts by the editors of *KTU* and vice versa. Vita further shifts some of the texts into one category or the other.[1161] Additional discrepancies may appear when considering the logosyllabic texts[1162] from Ugarit that form a much larger corpus (ca. 400 texts).[1163] Here, some texts that may be considered legal are written in the form of letters – this goes especially for the edicts of the Hittite king. Interestingly, Ugaritic never replaced Akkadian as the main language of legal activities – not even in the case of domestic affairs. This is in great contrast with administrative texts.[1164]

Rowe has suggested that legal texts are, strictly speaking, those that serve as written proof that a transaction has taken place and what differentiates it from administrative records is mainly the presence of witnesses.[1165] The witnesses may not be present when the king presides over the transaction.[1166] Legal texts are also often validated by seals. Legal documents may be further recognised by their formulaic nature and structure. This was not anyhow strict but still fairly repetitive in documents dealing with similar kinds of transactions.[1167] At the same time, transactions of various natures are not the only kinds of legal texts. Namely, the edicts of the Hittite overlords and international treaties can hardly be named "records of transactions". However, their binding character clearly associates them with legal activities.[1168]

Legal texts can be characterised and classified in a number of ways. One of the most commonly adopted views is basic division into international and domestic issues. The domestic texts

---

[1155] See Hoffner 1997.

[1156] For studies on Ugaritic legal activities, see, e.g., Rowe 1999, 2003, and 2006, Vita 2018, van Soldt 2010a, Pardee & Hawley 2010, Miller 1980, or *PRU III*: 283–308. To my knowledge, there is no complete collection of legal texts from Ugarit, but many of the texts were published; see namely *PRU II, III, IV* and *VI, Ugaritica V, KTU* – category 3, or Lackenbacher 2002.

[1157] See Vita 2018 or Rowe 1999: 390–391 for discussion.

[1158] Category 3 in *KTU*. The number of this category was only 10 in *KTU²*, the increase has been caused mainly by reclassification of administrative texts, but also of a letter. See Vita 2018: 126.

[1159] Pardee & Hawley 2010.

[1160] Vita 2018: 126.

[1161] Vita 2018: 127–132.

[1162] Mostly in Akkadian. Only two texts in Hittite have been discovered; Rowe 1999: 420–422.

[1163] Vita 2018: 125.

[1164] See Rowe 1999: 393 and 411–412 for a brief discussion of this issue. In some cases, the Ugaritic texts may be copies of Akkadian originals (including the international treaty *KTU* 3.1; see Rowe 1999: 419–420, Pardee 2001 and 2007b for further discussion), other cases may testify to a parallel tradition to the Akkadian texts – very similar in content and formulation.

[1165] Rowe 1999: 390.

[1166] Rowe 1999: 394.

[1167] See van Soldt 2010a, esp. p. 89–100 (transfer of real estate); 107–109 (adoptions); 111–113 (wills); 115–117 (clearance); 119–120 (trials); 121–122 (penalty). See also Pardee & Hawley 2010: 126–128.

[1168] See Rowe 1999: 403–404.

may be further divided into royal and non-royal. The international into texts from the kings of Ḫatti – the "supreme overlord" of Ugarit, kings of Karkemiš – the "deputy overlord" of Ugarit, and other kings of petite kingdoms.[1169] Most of the preserved texts can be classified as domestic-royal, especially as royal deeds, i.e., the documents confirming the transfer of royal property to inhabitants of Ugarit, usually in exchange for performing some kinds of tax or service obligations, for example *(p)ilku*, *unuššu* (Akk.) or *ủnt* (Ug.).[1170] Other domestic documents legally treat, for example, cases of wills, adoptions, release of slaves, and so on. The international documents may deal with precision of the nature of international relations, namely defining the vassalage position of Ugarit, together with its obligations (extradition of fugitives, military assistance, borders, tribute, and so forth).[1171] Some of the international documents are then dedicated to solving some disputes of international character that needed mediation of the overlords – either from Karkemiš or, in more serious cases, from Ḫatti.[1172]

In sum, the archaeological context more or less reflects the expected distribution. The royal and international documents are attested primarily in the *Royal Palace*. The royal deeds were concentrated primarily in the *Central Archives* that seem to have been dedicated (not solely) for this purpose.[1173] The international material has been collected predominantly in the *Southern Archives* of the *Royal Palace*.[1174] Some of the international or domestic legal texts were also discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*, a fact that is not so surprising when considering the general nature of this archive – interwoven with both international and domestic politics.[1175] The non-royal legal activities were expectedly discovered in private houses. However, some "private" documents were also discovered in the royal context.[1176]

All legal texts belong to the ca. last 150 years of Ugarit's existence, namely to the era of the Hittite vassalage, from Niqmaddu III to ʿAmmurāpi. Most of them are dated to the reign of ʿAmmiṯṯamru III.[1177] Many of the legal texts are datable thanks to the references to rulers, but there are also many undatable. On occasion, the prosopography may help.[1178] In regard to the topic of this thesis, religion, there are no significant developments, but this does not mean that the texts were uniform during this period. Namely, the expectations about the *(p)ilku*-service have changed during the reign of ʿAmmiṯṯamru. While before his reign, the texts mention these obligations only when

---

[1169] E.g., Rowe 1999 or van Soldt 2010a: 86

[1170] These so-called "royal deeds" were explored in detail in Rowe 2006. For the discussion on the service obligations and exemptions from them, see, e.g., McGeough 2007: 194–198, Rowe 2006: 234–245, or Schloen 2001: 221–254. McGeough 2007: 341–343 warns against viewing the Ugaritic social-economic system as (crypto-)feudal. These grants and services/obligations based on them were only one (and not prevalent) modality of the social-economic relations.

[1171] Rowe 1999: 405.

[1172] See, e.g., Rowe 1999: 405–407.

[1173] Rowe 1999: 395–396; 2006: 48–52. Only three of these documents have been found outside the context of the *Royal Palace*, namely one in the *House of Rašapabu* (RS 17.065) and two in the *House of Urtēnu* (*KTU* 3.32 and 3.33). These seem to be copies of original royal deeds (the ones from *House of Urtēnu* are written in Ugaritic and lack the royal seal); see Rowe 2006: 52 and 1999: 413, and Hawley & Pardee 2012.

[1174] Rowe 1999: 402–403.

[1175] RS 34.179 (*RSO VII*, no. 1) and two (+?) unspecified texts from 1994 season mentioned in Malbran-Labat 1995: 107–108; I have not been able to identify these among the published texts.

[1176] Rowe 1999: 399–400.

[1177] Rowe 2003: 719.

[1178] See van Soldt 2010a: 86–87 for dating issues.

they were imposed, the later texts mention them only when they were not imposed. This suggests that before his reign, the obligations were not automatic, but after his reign, they were.[1179]

In regard to religion, there are several topics worth exploring when discussing legal activities. First, we will discuss how deities act as guarantors of the stipulations. Second, we will explore the few cases of religious imagery employed in the formulation of the legal texts and consider their ritualistic nature. Last, we shall focus on topics related to religious activities when mentioned in legal documents.

6.5.1   Deities as Guarantors

The main purpose of all legal texts at our disposal was to guarantee that an agreement (or a verdict/edict) – be it a transaction, will, adoption, or a vassal treaty – will be kept in the future, unmodified. This, of course, calls for some measures to be employed. Legal texts try to achieve this goal by several means. First, the very fact of writing an agreement down ensures its longevity. Next, the seals are often used to provide authenticity to agreements and guard them against forgeries.[1180] Witnesses are then listed as those who oversaw the making of an agreement and may be in the future consulted to elaborate on any details. In numerous cases, the persona of the king is the ultimate guarantor/witness, and his authority allows him to act alone.

The king may also act as a judge in cases of trials,[1181] and his juridical authority is reflected in the Ugaritic narrative poetry.[1182] This has led some scholars to understand the king as the supreme judge at Ugarit.[1183] Indeed, even though the existence of judges is established by mentioning them in several texts,[1184] there are no records of them making any legal decisions. In my opinion, it is, for now, impossible to decide whether the judges at Ugarit worked ideologically as "deputies" of the king in legal matters or as officials with independent capacity. After all, the king figures mainly in the texts where he is a party to an agreement. The simple fact that the kings and the *Royal Palace* as an institution stored and oversaw legal transactions pertinent to them does not make them supreme judges of all of the affairs of the city. Sometimes, the king may be replaced by a *sākinu* or a queen.[1185] Numerous private transactions evidence that the king was not a necessary referent. Still, he might have held the privilege of the final word of any matter – a fit position for an absolute monarch.[1186]

Besides the authority of the documents, as expressed in their various elements and backed by authoritative figures, there are sometimes explicit references to possible transgressions and penalties: "No one may file any claim against one another", or "He who starts a lawsuit will pay two thousand

---

[1179] See Rowe 2006: 234–238 or van Soldt 2010a: 97–98.

[1180] A possible forgery has been detected in RS 16.249 (*PRU III*: 96–98); see Rowe 2003: 723.

[1181] RS 16.245 (*PRU III*: 94), RS 16.254C (*PRU III*: 157), or RS 16.356 (*PRU III*: 71). See also van Soldt 2010a: 119–121.

[1182] *KTU* 1.16 VI: 33–34, 45–48, 1.17 V: 6–8, 1.19 I: 21–25.

[1183] E.g., Rowe 2003: 720–721.

[1184] See e.g., RS 16.132: 26 (*PRU III*: 140–141) where judges appear as a party in a deed or RS 16.156: 20 (*PRU III*: 61–62) where a holder of this office appears among the witnesses.

[1185] *Sākinu* ("governor" or "prefect") acted on behalf of the king in royal grant RS 16.145 (*PRU III*: 169) or as a judge in trial RS 17.067 (*Ugaritica V*, no. 10); see also van Soldt 2010b: 253. Queen Aḫatmilku then sealed a document RS 16.197 (*PRU III*: 150–151) created in the name of ʿAmmittamru III. See Rowe 2003: 721.

[1186] It has been suggested that *KTU* 3.11 refers to the functions of the king or prince, including the execution of justice; see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 140–142, or Virolleaud in *PRU II*: 20. This interpretation is uncertain.

(shekels of) silver (and) one thousand (shekels of) gold to Ewri-muda."[1187] Similar penalties are encountered from time to time in some of the non-royal texts.[1188] The case of the most common legal texts – the royal deeds – is usually devoid of similar phrases. However, it is here where we may encounter a few references to deities in the role of the guarantors of agreements.[1189] One complex tablet covering a number of royal grants ends with an exclamation: "Whoever breaks this tablet, may the gods destroy his name!"[1190] Another example of a malediction is: "May [Baˁal,]˹the lord˺ of Ṣapan break down [every]one [who] breaks [thes]e words. [For the days to come], for the sons of his sons, [for]ever."[1191] A similar statement is given in yet another royal grant: "Anyone who would attempt to abolish this gift, may Baˁal, the lord of Ṣapan put him into question."[1192]

Apart from royal deeds, the divine sanction also appears in the so-called "will" of Ar-Ḫalba,[1193] the short-lived king of Ugarit.[1194] In this text, the king declares some restrictions on his wife's marital options after he dies.[1195] That his edict is followed after his death is ensured by invoking Baˁal to punish the one who transgresses it:

9	ᴰIM *li-ra-ḫi-iṣ-šu*	may Baˁal flood him,
10	ᴳᴵˢGU.ZA *la ú-ra-bi*	(His) throne will not be made great,
11	ᴱ́ᴴᴸᴬ *la i-ši-ib*	his household will not thrive(?)
12	ᴰIM EN ᴴᵁᴿˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi*	May Baˁal, the lord of Ṣapan
13	*li-ra-ḫi-iṣ-šu*	flood him!

We may see that in the context of domestic legal documents, the divine patronage over legal matters, both royal and non-royal, is very laconic. I have not been able to find any solid reason why such divine patronage was used in those three specific royal grants. The will-edict of Ar-Ḫalba might have called for a divine sanction because the stipulations concerned the royal office itself. Here, the figure of the king himself possibly did not meet the authority requirements.

This directly leads us to the next topic – that of international "law", where the divine involvement is much more present. I believe that here, we may see the deities as the "antistructural guarantors" of the worldly order.[1196] Anything within the order must always be guaranteed by something "bigger". In the case of domestic affairs, the witnesses, tablets, or kings were usually enough to ensure the validity and effectiveness of agreements as they were those who could attest to this validity. However,

---

[1187] RS 15.90 and RS 16.189, translation according to van Soldt 2010a: 97.

[1188] See van Soldt 2010a: 97 and Rowe 2006: 253–255.

[1189] To these, we may add fragmentary RS 7.243 (*PRU* VI, no. 58). I have not encountered any other examples than those given here. See also van Soldt 2010a: 97, n. 73.

[1190] *ša-a ṭup-pu an-na-am ú-na-qí-ir* DINGIRᴹᴱˢ-*nu / šùm-šu li-ḫal-li-iq*. RS 15.109+: 56–57 (*PRU III*: 102–105).

[1191] [ᴰIM]˹EN˺ ᴴᵁᴿ·ˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi li-iq-qur / [ša mi-nu]˹-um˺-mé-e iš-tu a-wa-te*ᴹᴱˢ */ [a-na]˹-ti˺ i-na-qí-ir / [a-na* EGIR?]ᴹᴱˢ-*nu a-na* DUMUᴹᴱˢ DUMUᴹᴱˢ-*šu / [a-na*]˹da˺-ri-iš*. RS 16.238+: 18–22 (*PRU III*: 107–108).

[1192] *ša uš-bal-ki-it / ni-id-na an-na-a* ᴰIM EN ᴴᵁᴿ·ˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi / li-iš-al-šu*. RS 16.157: 25–28 (*PRU III*: 83–84).

[1193] RS 16.144 (*PRU III*: 76).

[1194] See the Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit*.

[1195] There is not an agreement among the scholars as to what exactly is stipulated in this edict. One side argues that the king forbids his brothers from taking his wife contrary to the levirate customs (e.g., Singer 1999: 637, van Soldt 2010a: 114), the other claim the exact opposite (e.g., Justel 2007). Therefore, I have intentionally avoided specifying whether the expressed punishment is aimed at his brothers or at others.

[1196] See Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*.

the field of international relations was outside the reach of mundane guarantees. Of course, the Hittite king and his deputy in Karkemiš were in a much higher position than the kings of Ugarit, but their situation was rather tricky. Something – or someone – beyond the politics was needed to guarantee the order itself.

We may now give several examples of such divine involvement in international relations. Already the treaty RS 17.227[1197] of Šuppiluliuma with Niqmaddu III, by which Ugarit entered the Hittite vassalage,[1198] includes the following closing statement:

43	*ù* ᴰUTU-*šu* LUGAL GAL *ki-i-it-ta ša* ᴰᴵ�봤*niqⁱᵠ-ma-an-da*	The Sun, the great king, the loyalty of Niqmaddu
44	*i-ta-mar-ma ki-i šu-ma it-tal-ka*	has seen when he has come,
45	*a-na šu-pa-li* GÌRᴹᴱ�š *ša* ᴰUTU-*ší* LUGAL GAL EN-*šu*	under the feet of the Sun, the great king, his lord
46	*ik-ta-ra-ar ù* ᴰUTU-*šu* LUGAL GAL EN-*šu*	he has fallen. And the Sun, the great king, his lord,
47	*ri-kíl-ta an-ni-ta a-kánᵃⁿ-na*	this treaty here
48	*i-ta-din-šu aš-šum a-ma-te*ᴹᴱš *ša* ŠÀ-*bi*	has established for him. Of the words that (are) written inside
49	*ṭup-pí an-ni-ti šaṭ-ru* 1 *li-im* DINGIRᴹᴱš	this tablet, may the thousand gods
50	*lu-ú i-du-ú* ᴰUTU AN-*e* ᴰIM ᵁᴿᵁ*a-ri-in-na*	know. The Sun-Deity of Heavens, the Storm-God of Arinna,
51	ᴰIM AN-*e* ᴰIM ᵁᴿᵁ*ḫa-at-ti*	the Storm-God of Heavens, the Storm-God of Ḫattuša,
52	⌈*l*⌉*u-ú i-du-ú ša a-ma-te*ᴹᴱš *ša ṭup-pí* ⌈*an*⌉-*ni-ti*	may they know (of anyone) who the words of this tablet
53	*ú-ša-aš-na-a*	alters.

In a subsequent treaty, RS 17.340,[1199] the loyal vassal Niqmaddu III and his kingdom were granted by Šuppiluliuma some new territories. A number of deities oversaw the treaty and its possible alteration:

16'	*ù ša a-ba-te*ᴹᴱš *ṭup-pí ša ri-kí-il-ti an-na-a-ti*	Who the words of this tablet of treaty
17'	*ú-ša-aš-na-a* 1 *li-im* DINGIRᴹᴱš *lu-ú i-di* ᴰIM *ša-me-e*	alters, may the thousand gods know (him). The Storm-God of Heavens,
18'	ᴰUTU-*šu ša-me-e* ᴰIM ᵁᴿᵁ*ḫa-at-ti*	The Sun-deity of Heavens, The Storm-God of Ḫattuša
19'	ᴰUTU-*šu* ᵁᴿᵁ*a-ri-in₄-na* ᴰ*ḫé-bat* ᵁᴿᵁ*ki-zuwa-at-ni*	The Sun-Goddess of Arinna, Ḫebat of Kizuwatna
20'	ᴰMÙš ᵁᴿᵁ*a-la-la-aḫ* ᴰNIN.GAL ᵁᴿᵁ*nu-ba-an-ni*	Ištar of Alalaḫ, Ningal of Nubanni
21'	ᴰIM ᴴᵁᴿ·ˢᴬᴳ*ḫa-zi*	Storm-God of Ṣapan

[1197] And duplicates, see *PRU IV*: 40–44. It has been suggested that *KTU* 3.1 is an Ugaritic copy/excerpt of this treaty. However, it has been also suggested that this text may be a later treaty from the time of Niqmaddu IV. For a balanced discussion, see Pardee 2003.

[1198] See the chapter on history; see also Singer 1999: 632–636 and *PRU IV*: 35–52.

[1199] *PRU IV*: 48–52.

The same deities were invoked when Muršili II confirmed this treaty for Niqmēpaˤ.[1200] So far, the deities have been mentioned only as those who supervise the agreements. We do not know what they will do about the ones who change or trespass these stipulations. We are given more details in RS 18.006+,[1201] a text belonging to the dossier surrounding the divorce of ˤAmmiṯṯamru III with the princess of Amurru.[1202] Here, Šušgamuwa, the king of Amurru, is warned not to prevent ˤAmmiṯṯamru III and his guards from getting hold of the ex-wife:

1' [ù šum-ma] ⌈DIŠ.DUTU-mu-wa⌉[DUMU DIŠZAG.ŠEŠ LUGAL KURa-mur-ri]

[If] ⌈Šaušgamuwa⌉[son of Bentešina, king of Amurru]

2' [ni]⌈-ir-ta⌉ e-pa-aš a-na DIŠa-⌈mis⌉[-tam]-⌈ri⌉ DUMU DIŠ⌈níq-me-⌉[pa-a]

commits [vio]⌈lence⌉ to ˤA⌈mmiṯ⌉[tam]⌈ru, son of Niqmē⌉[paˤ]

3' ⌈LUGAL⌉ KURú-ga-ri-it ù e-pa-aš [ni]-ir-ta

⌈the king⌉ of Ugarit, or commits [vio]lence

4' a-na GIŠMÁMEŠ ù a-na ERINMEŠ ša ⌈il⌉-la-ku-ni

to the ships or to the troops that ⌈co⌉me

5' a-na ḫu-ul-lu-qí DUMU.MUNUS MUNUSra-bi-ti

to take away the daughter of the Great Lady

6' Dsa-mu-ú ù Der-ṣe-⌈tum⌉ lu-ú i-du-ú-ni

May the Heavens and Ear⌈th⌉ know!

7' DIM GÁN-ni-te ù DEŠDAR URUtù-ni-ip DIM ḪUR.SAGḫa-zi

The Storm-God of enclosure (?) and Ištar of Tunip, the Storm-God of Ṣapan

8' ù Dḫé-bat URUa-ri ù DUTU AN-sa-me-e

and Ḫebat of Ari and the Sun-deity of Heavens,

9' D30 Diš-ḫa-ra ENMEŠ ma-mi-ti

the Moon-God, Išḫara, the lords of oath,

10' lu-ú i-du-ú DIŠ.DUTU-mu-wa LUGAL KURa-mur-ri

may they know (of) Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru,

11' DUMU DIŠZAG.ŠEŠ LUGAL KURa-mur-ri ù DINGIRMEŠ an-nu-tu

son of Bentešina, king of Amurru. May these deities,

12' ni-ir-ta li-ip-pu-⌈šu⌉-ni-iš-tu

comm⌈it⌉ violence to him,

13' ù li-ḫal-li-qú-šu ⌈iš-⌉[tu] ⌈ŠÀ⌉-bi É a-bi-šu

may they take him away ⌈fr⌉[om] ⌈insi⌉de of the house of his father,

14' ù iš-tu ŠÀ-bi KUR a-bi-[šu ù] iš-tu GIŠGU.ZA

and from inside he land of [his] father [and] from the throne

15' ša A.BA-šu

of his fathers.

[1200] *PRU IV*: 63–65, RS 17.237.

[1201] *PRU IV*: 137–138.

[1202] See *PRU IV*: 125–148. For the divorce, and probably very unfortunate outcome for the princess, see, e.g., Singer 1999: 680–681.

In these texts, we may also observe the "territoriality" of deities.[1203] There were a number of deities of the same name, possibly even of the "same nature", but their different worldly representations could have acted independently. At the same time, we may wonder why these particular deities were invoked. The Sun-Deities and Storm-Gods were often associated with legal activities in the ancient Near East. The Storm-God of Ḫattuša and Storm-God of Ṣapan (i.e., Baʿal of Ṣapan) were one of the principal deities of the capitals making the treaties, and their presence is therefore expected. In this regard, we may note that in the few cases where a deity appears in domestic affairs, it is only Baʿal of Ṣapan.[1204]

However, as we have seen, the role of guarantors of treaties was not only the prerogative of these deities but also of many others. It may not always be clear to us why the particular deities were invoked in each of the cases because we often lack precise contexts.[1205] However, the evidence suggests that their selection was far from random. For example, in the case of RS 17.340, the mention of Ištar of Alalaḫ makes sense because Mukiš, the kingdom of which Alalaḫ was the capital, was directly affected by this treaty. Kizzuwatna was then the next bordering territory and a significant cult centre of the Hittite world, and Nubanni seems to have been a city belonging to the sphere of Karkemiš.

The agreement between Karkemiš and Ugarit stipulates reciprocal procedures concerning homicides of merchants in these two lands.[1206] Here, the Storm-God of Heavens and the Sun-Deity of Heavens are supported by Kubaba, the Lady of Karkemiš, Ningal of Nubanni, and Ningal of Gurati.[1207] The role of Nubanni and Gurati is further illuminated in the agreement: if those who murdered merchants from Karkemiš are not caught, a representative from Ugarit must come to Nubanni or Gurati and declare an oath that they do not know the culprits and pay a financial compensation of three minas of silver per murdered merchant. On the other hand, no divine patrons representing Ugarit are present. In the case of a mirror scenario, the situation is parallel, but the place of oath-taking by the representatives of Karkemiš is specified only as Ugarit.

So far, we have presented the situation as if the international treaties were filled with deities. However, this was not the case. Indeed, many of the Hittite edicts are devoid of any divine references.[1208] It seems to me that the deities were invoked in liminal situations – for example, in establishing a long-term treaty of subordination, transfers of large territories between subordinate kingdoms, or when the problems surrounding the marital issues of ʿAmmittamru and his Amurrite wife escalated to an unprecedented scale. In the dossier related to the last issue, we may observe the

---

[1203] See also the discussion in Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity*.

[1204] We may also note the absence of Yamm/Nahar in legal texts. This deity is adorned with epithet *ṯpṭ*, "judge" on several occasions in *KTU* 1.2; see Rahmouni 2008: 311–315. This epithet is commonly associated with the Mesopotamian tradition of river ordeal (*nhr* means "river"), but since this epithet is limited to a single tablet, it may be a reflection of literary tradition rather than any practice of river ordeal at Ugarit. After all, rivers in the kingdom of Ugarit were hardly fit for such practices.

[1205] E.g., in RS 17.338 (*PRU IV*: 85–86), RS 17.004 (*PRU IV*: 99–100), 17.450 (*PRU IV*: 100), or RS 19.101 (*PRU IV*: 287–288) we are able to recognize a number of divine witnesses, but the tablets are too damaged to draw any further information. Still, the texts extensively expand the ranks of deities involved in treaties: Gulgiši, Zababa, Yarri, Ḫantidaššu, Ḫallara, Tapšuwa, Kuniyawanni, Telipinu, different manifestations of the Storm-God, some LAMA (protective) deities, Ištar of Nineveh, Zappana, etc.

[1206] RS 17.146 (*PRU IV*: 154–157)

[1207] Yet another village located in the sphere of Karkemiš, see *PRU IV*: 254.

[1208] E.g., RS 17.335+ (*PRU IV*: 71–75) or 17.382+ (*PRU IV*: 80–83), the decrees by Muršili II about Ugarit's borders with Siyyanu; or the regulations of the presence of the merchants of Ura at Ugarit in RS 17.130 (*PRU IV*: 103–105).

gradual development. At first, it did not necessitate any divine involvement. It was only when ʿAmmiṯṯamru wanted to take his ex-wife back – not from the kindness of his heart, but for revenge. Amurru and Ugarit were possibly on the brink of a conflict, and it was only here that the deities were invoked to guard the decision given by Tudḫaliya IV.[1209] The issue was further complicated by the fact that the ex-wife was actually a granddaughter of the Ḫattušili III. In the end, Šaušgamuwa acted according to the verdict and peaceful relations were resolved, but at the expense of the ex-wife.[1210] This extreme case may be contrasted with some petite territorial disputes or problems with trade relations that were efficiently dealt with by the royal authority without any need for deities.

6.5.2 Religious Imagery of Legal Activities

To an extent, all legal activities may be explored as rituals. The formulaic and repetitive structure of legal texts, the presence of authoritative figures (witnesses, kings, deities) or imprints of seals, and the practice of storing them attest to the rich symbolic communication involved in legal procedures. At the same time, we may observe that such ritual behaviour has clear and tangible outcomes in the real world – shifting of properties, changing of social roles, establishing obligations, and binding people and kingdoms.[1211] Here, we may observe how powerful social mechanisms the rituals are. In some cases, the ritualistic elements are constructed around religious imageries.

One of the formulas used to express when someone is made free of some obligations makes use of the Sun-deity. The act may be described as "as Sun-deity (Šapaš) is free, PN is free".[1212] Rowe notes that this formula is attested only at Ugarit and might have been, therefore, specific to this particular society.[1213] This figure of speech appears in many variants, which may sometimes further specify what the person is free. For example, ʿAmmiṯṯamru III has "freed Šayâ, his servant from slavery. Like Šapaš is free, so is Šayâ free from slavery."[1214] This expression also appears in legal texts in Ugaritic: "Like Špaš who is free, so ṢṬQŠLM is free of the *ůnṯ*-service forever."[1215] A ritual component is added to the freeing formula in RS 8.208. There, *sākinu* Kilbe-ewri freed Eliyāyu, his servant, and poured oil over her head. The pouring of oil may be understood as a purification rite,[1216]

[1209] This part of the tablet is broken, but in general, the issue was mediated through Tudḫaliya IV, so this reconstruction seems probable.

[1210] See esp. RS 17.228 (*PRU IV*: 141–143). The king of Ugarit paid a hefty sum (1400 shekels of gold) and Šaušgamuwa gave his sister so he may do whatever he pleases to do with her ("if you wish, kill her, if you wish, throw her into the sea.").

[1211] RS 16.356 (*PRU III*: 71) attest to a trial where a dispute over ownership of fields is solved by the testimony of witnesses in front of the king. The dispute was possibly caused by the fact that the two parties were namesakes: Agit-Tešub, son of Ilṣiya and Agit-Tešub, son of ʿAdbimalku. It seems that the first one tried to make use of possible confusion. Here, we may note that the namesakes caused troubles in the antiquity as well as modern times, making prosopography studies difficult.

[1212] E.g., RS 8.208 (*PRU III*: 110), RS 15.120: 14–15 (*PRU III*: 56–57), 16.252: 2–4 (*PRU III*: 66), 16.269: 15–16 (*PRU III*: 68–69), 16.267: 4–6 (*PRU III*: 110), 16.276: 18–20 (*PRU III*: 69–70), and more.

[1213] Rowe 2006: 244.

[1214] *ú-za-ak-ki* ᴹᵁᴺᵁˢ*ša-ia-a* GÌM-*šu* / *iš-tu* GÌM *ki-i-ma* ᴰUTU *za-ak-ki* / *ù*(?) *za-kà-at* ᴹᵁᴺᵁˢ*ša-ia-a iš-tu* GÌM. RS 16.267: 4–6 (*PRU III*: 110).

[1215] *km . špš / d brt . kmt . / br . ṣṭqšlm / b ůnṯ . ʿd ʿlm*. KTU 3.12: 2–5.

[1216] See, e.g., Fleming 1992: 177–179 for comparative evidence from Emar, where the priestess of Storm-God is anointed during her installation.

connected to the fact that she then married Puriyānu, to her previous profession of *ḫarimtu*, "prostitute",[1217] or to the general practice of freeing.

The Sun also appears in a figure *ina Šapši ūmi*, "in broad daylight,"[1218] that is sometimes used as a part of the legally binding *ṣamādu*-formula.[1219] What is lost in the English translation is the presence of a deity in this statement. Therefore, the phrase may be understood more broadly, denoting not only the publicity of the legal act but also the presence of the Sun goddess. Both of the formulas involving Šapaš may be considered in the broader cultural milieu of the ancient Near East, where the Sun-deities were often associated with legal activities.

A reference to divine involvement in the creation of agreements is attested in RS 17.352: 12–13.[1220] There, the queen of Ugarit Aḫat-milku makes her sons and ꜥAmmittamru III conclude an agreement in front of ꜥAttarta-ṣēri. This text belongs to the dossier of documents dealing with the expulsion of two sons of Aḫat-milku, brothers of ꜥAmmittamru III, to Alašiya.[1221] There is not much to suggest that this was the most usual way of making agreements, but some circumstances necessitated such actions. Oath-taking, possibly in the temple, has already been mentioned in connection with the treaty concerning homicides of merchants in Ugarit and Karkemiš.[1222] The practice of oath-taking in front of a deity might have also been referred to in RS 17.376+,[1223] but the relevant part is, unfortunately, very fragmentary. Letter RS 20.239[1224] mentions entering a temple that would be considered proof of innocence. Another letter[1225] mentions an agreement overseen by the Sun-Deity of Ṣapan. In addition, one of the parties should bring there some "very beautiful astragalus stones".[1226] What role these might have played in the agreement is not clear.

References to swearing in the name of gods are also present in the letter RS 34.165.[1227] This letter is important in yet another part of this thesis as it is considered to be a letter from the king of Assyria to the king of Ugarit, slandering his Hittite overlord.[1228] For now, we shall limit the discussion to lines 31–33. Here, the king of Assyria narrates how the messengers of the king of Ḫatti tried to avoid the armed conflict. They presented him with a tablet from the king of Ḫatti, proclaiming: "By the Storm-God and the Sun-Deity (I swear), I am not in war with the king of Assyria, my brother, I am in peace..."[1229] The proclamation then continues further.

[1217] Usually translated as a "(temple) prostitute". As far as I know, there is no evidence of temple prostitution at Ugarit. The theory of temple prostitution is rather disclaimed in present discussions of the ANE religion. See also Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations*, where the case of *qdšm* was discussed. Even them were for some time considered temple prostitutes in light of the Biblical evidence.

[1218] E.g., RS 16.154: 10, 25 (*PRU III*: 127–128).

[1219] See Rowe 2006: 227–228.

[1220] *PRU IV*: 121–122

[1221] The details of this expulsion are not clear. They are told to commit some unspecified offence that led to their deportation. Still, they received their share of inheritance and it seems that their fate was much more pleasant than that of their sister-in-law, the divorced wife of ꜥAmmittamru III. See, e.g., *PRU IV*: 120–124 and Singer 1999: 679–680.

[1222] RS 17.146, see above.

[1223] *PRU VI*, no. 23.

[1224] *Ugaritica V*, no. 52. This is a letter to the *sākinu* ("governor") referencing legal dispute.

[1225] RS 94.2364 (*RSO XXIII*, no. 67); see esp. lines 27–36.

[1226] *a-ba-na-a-tu₄ ša ki-i-ṣa-al-le-e-ti-⌈e⌉ dá-a-am-qú-ti dá-a-am-qú-ti.*

[1227] *RSO VII*, no. 46.

[1228] See Chapter *7.3.1.2.2 In the Contexts of Near Eastern Royal Epics?*.

[1229] *ma-a* ᴰIM *ù* ᴰUTU *lu-ú i-du-ú ma-a ⌈šum-ma⌉ a²-na²-ku / it-ti* LUGAL ᴷᵁᴿ·ᴰ*a-šur nakₓ-ra-ku-m[i² ù ...] / sal-ma-ku-mi.*

6.5.3 References to Religious Realia in Legal Texts

Some legal texts from Ugarit attest to religious realia in passing. While this information does not provide us with any abundance of data, it is a testimony to the presence of these realities in everyday life. For example, in RS 16.276,[1230] the king decrees that the *Temple of Baˁal*, the lord of Ṣapan, and its servants may not dispute the rights of certain KAR.EŠ who was given the village of Aḫnabu/Uḫnappu.[1231] The royal grant of the whole village is better understood when we learn that it has been given not only to KAR.EŠ, but also to Apapa, the daughter of the king. In this case, the village might have originally belonged to the temple's estates, thus providing us with indirect information on the temple economy. Similar indications of divine properties can be observed when estates are connected with specific deities. For example, legal texts mention fields of ˁAṯtarta-Ḫurri,[1232] ˁAṯtarta,[1233] Aliya, or Šatrana[1234]

Another legal case[1235] mentions certain Kiliya, a priest of Ištar(?) of Zinzaru, who receives a payment in order to free several people from obligations towards him. A diviner and priest of Baˁal, Šammū-Baˁal, is mentioned here as a witness. This mention attests to the possibility of concurrence of different cultic roles.

The international treaties may also attest to cultic activities. In the treaty *KTU* 3.1, some part of the tribute imposed on Ugarit is directly intended for the Sun-Goddess of Arinna.[1236] This probably amounts to twelve minas and twenty shekels of gold, a golden cup weighing one mina, four *ktn*-garments, and something more.[1237]

In some cases, the realia are in the damaged parts of texts, making our understanding of them very hard. On some occasions, we also do not properly understand the given references because we lack the necessary context to elaborate further. For example, RS 15.120 possibly mentions some estate described as "fields of oracle" and olive trees with which Anu did something. Anu is here possibly also called a creator of humankind.[1238] In fragmentary RS 16.173, something is given to ˁAṯtarta-Ḫurri and some other deities.[1239] Tablet RS 16.114: 14'[1240] possibly mentions a priest among the witnesses (alternatively, this may be a person named "Priest")

The most often referenced religious activity in legal texts is *marziḥu*.[1241] This term designates different "cultic associations" notorious in the scholarly community, especially in connection with copious drinking.[1242] Their involvement in legal activities attests to their economic activities. They

---

[1230] *PRU III*: 69–70.

[1231] See Rowe 2006: 227, n. 52.

[1232] RS 17.410 (*PRU VI*, no. 34). This goddess is also associated with vineyards in RS 18.001 (*PRU IV*: 230).

[1233] RS 16.254C (*PRU III*: 157), RS 18.022 (*PRU VI*, no. 55).

[1234] RS 18.022 (*PRU VI*, no. 55)

[1235] RS 18.002 (*PRU IV*: 201). Rowe 1999: 408 notes the Hittite/Karkemiš form of the tablets and draws our attention to the Hittite seal of Kiliya.

[1236] This attribution of tribute is not reflected in the Akkadian version. It is one of the indications that this is not a copy but a different and much later treaty. See Pardee 2003: 19–20.

[1237] There are some problems with precise interpretation as well as a partial damage. See Pardee 2003: 12–13.

[1238] See *PRU III*: 56–57. The appearance of Anu in Ugaritic realia is rather unusual, but the phonetical complement -*nim* to the DINGIR sign seems to suggest so.

[1239] See *PRU III*: 171.

[1240] *PRU III*: 33–34

[1241] See namely following legal texts: *KTU* 3.9, RS 14.016 (Virolleaud 1951, no. 6) RS 15.070 (*PRU III*: 130), RS 15.088 (*PRU III*: 88), and RS 18.001 (*PRU IV*: 230).

[1242] For *marziḥu*, see Chapter *6.2.3 Private Cultic Activities.*

are subject to royal grants and property agreements guaranteeing different associations' assets – houses and lands (notably vineyards). However, they are also subject to a land dispute of international dimensions due to having vineyards in the border area.[1243]

There are at least two topics that we haven't dealt with yet. First, the designation of the Hittite ruler as ᴰUTU, the Sun-Deity. This clearly connects his persona and office with the divine realm. This issue is further discussed below in the context of correspondence – a genre that, in the case of Hittite relations with Ugarit, merges with legal activities. The second topic has been occasionally mentioned in passing: seals – or rather, their imprints in the case of legal texts. Sometimes, seals are endowed with religious imagery. This applies both to the stamp seals of the Hittite rulers and the dynastic seal of the kings of Ugarit. Seals and their religious dimensions are discussed below.[1244]

6.6 Religion and Letters

Correspondence[1245] is one of the most important sources for historical research. Numerous historical events are commented on in letters, and should the correspondents not feel the need to address and discuss them, they would be inevitably lost. Letters are the source that allows us to at least approximate conversation and dialogue among the long-passed people. While they are far from being everyday conversation, they are the best we possess. Letters are thus a great attestation to the continuous construction of the social reality. This communication – both local and international – also contains numerous references to religion in many of its aspects.[1246]

6.6.1 Symbolic Communication, Greetings, and Benedictions

We may start our discussion by pointing out the topic of symbolic communication. Correspondence, similarly to other types of communication, is bound by certain rules. The letters of Ugarit are, in many ways, formulated in a highly formulaic manner. There are rules that specify who is to be addressed first to reflect distinct social relations, what is to be said for benedictions, what titles and addresses are to be used, and what gifts are to be exchanged.[1247] Notoriously famous is the use of family relations to express social relations. The great kings of the LBA world cultivated the concept of *aḫḫūtu*, "brotherhood", addressing themselves as brothers – proclaiming their equal status. This concept was not limited to royalty. Any peers might have used the imagery of brotherhood to indicate equality, friendship, and a generally positive attitude. It allowed easy and smooth communication where everyone knew what his position was.

In Ugaritic letters, the social differences expressed by a simple choice of words may be seen, for example, in *KTU* 2.88, a double letter to Urtēnu. The first letter comes from the queen and

---

[1243] RS 18.001 (*PRU IV*: 230).

[1244] Chapter *6.7 Religion and Seals*.

[1245] To my knowledge, there is no complex edition of Ugaritic correspondence. Letters in alphabetic cuneiform are collected in the second chapter of *KTU*: 171–225. 113 letters and fragments are collected here. Among the most important sources for Ugaritic correspondence, we may enumerate: the *PRU* editions (II, III, IV), Cunchillos 1989, some texts in Lackenbacher 2002, and helpful is also Pardee 2002b. Numerous letters from the archive of Urtēnu (both logosyllabic and alphabetic) were published in *RSO VII, XIV, XVIII*, and *XXIII*. For a general introduction on Ugaritic letters, see, e.g., Huehnergard 1999 or Cunchillos 1999 and 1989: 241–267.

[1246] For some previous notes on the religion in letter, see e.g., Cunchillos 1989: 254–257 or Cunchillos 1984.

[1247] See e.g., Hawley 2010, Mynářová 2007: esp. ch. 7 and 8. for a broader discussion on symbolic communication in the correspondences of the LBA Near East. On the exchange of luxurious gifts, see, e.g., Feldman 2006: 105–114.

simply states: *ṯḥm . mlkt / l . ůrtn . rgm*, "The message of the queen, to Urtēnu say:". The second letter comes from Ilimilku, and the formulation changes: *ṯḥm ỉlmlk . / l ůrtn . ỉḫy rgm,* "The message of Ilimilku, to Urtēnu, my brother, say." The positional importance of addressee and addresser is then nicely expressed in *KTU* 2.89:

1	⌜*l*⌝ *. mlkt . adty . rgm*	⌜To⌝ the queen, my lady, say.
2	*ṯḥm . skn . ʿbdk*	the message of the governor, your servant
3	⌜*l . p*⌝*ʿn* [[*bʿl*]]*ådty . qlt*	⌜at the f⌝eet of my [[lord]] lady I fall down,
4	⌜*l . å*⌝*dty . yšlm*	⌜with⌝ my ⌜l⌝ady may there be peace.
5	⌜*hl*⌝*ny . hnn . b .* [[*bt*]]	Look, here in [[the palace]]
6	*bt . mlk . kll*	the palace, everything
7	*šlm . ṯmny*	is well. There,
8	*ʿm . ådty . mnm*	with my lady, whatever (is well)
9	*w . r*[[*ṯ*]]*gm . ṯṯtb*	and a word return
10	*ʿm . ʿbdh*	the her servant (about it).

Besides the importance of the position of the correspondents,[1248] this reveals another trait. Whereas the correspondence of peers or of servants to the lords includes greetings and benedictions (more or less elaborate), the upper-situated person might have left these out. Therefore, the queen addresses Urtēnu only by his name and then proceeds right with the message. Ilimilku adds at least a simple *yšlm lk*, "may there be peace with you". The servant of the queen then adds a prostration, at least in words when he cannot bow to his lady directly, and some pleasantries. This formulaic character of letters has also been trained in scribal education.[1249] We may cite an excerpt from *KTU* 5.9 that shows a playful exercise of these practices.

1	[*t*]*ḥm ỉṯtl*	[The me]ssage of ỈṮTL
2	*l mnn . ỉlm*	to MNM. May the gods
3	*tġrk . tšlmk*	guard you, may they keep you well,
4	*tʿzzk . ålp ym*	may they strengthen you for a thousand days
5	*w rbt . šnt*	and for myriad of years,
6	*b ʿd . ʿlm*	for ever and ever
7	*ỉršt . åršt*	A request I request
8	*l åḫy . l rʿy*	of my brother, my friend
9	*w ytnnn*	and may he give it
10	*l åḫh . l rʿh*	to his brother, to his friend,
11	*rʿ ʿlm .*	friend forever.
12	*ttn . w tn*	May you give and give,

[1248] See Hawley 2010: 78–81 to explore further complexities and nuances of the symbolic communication at Ugarit.

[1249] See also RS 17.010 and 17.080 (*Ugaritica V*, no. 15) a Sumerian literary letter from the *Literate's House*. Among other letters suggested as a part of scribal education, see e.g., *KTU* 2.71 or 5.33. The scribal education also included learning of proverbs and sapiential literature, possibly to enable the scribes to make a use of it in letters. Evidence of this may be seen in RS 94.2091 which employs a short proverbial saying. See Cohen 2021: 55–57. For some studies on scribal education in the LBA world and Ugarit, see, e.g., Roche-Hawley 2015, Cohen 2013: 55–77, Hawley 2008, or van Soldt 2016b and 1995.

13	*w l ttn*	and truly give
14	*w ål ttn*	and surely give!
15	*tn ks yn*	give a cup of wine
16	*w ištn*	so I may drink.
	...[1250]	

It is clear that the rulers and structures which guided the hands of the scribed were not strict in every aspect. Especially with the benedictions, the scribes could show their creativity and wit. In the context of this thesis, the greetings and benedictions are those parts of the letters where we encounter "religion" the most – here, the deities are mentioned most often. These passages start from very simple ones:

RS 34.161: 4–5	ŠEŠ-*ia* DINGIR^MEŠ *a*-⌈*na s*⌉*ul-ma-ni* PAP-*ru-ka*	My brother, may the gods guard you for your wll-being.
RS 94.2497: 4–6	*lu-ú šul-mu a-na* ⌈UGU-ḫi-ka⌉ DINGIR^MEŠ *a-na šul-ma-ni* PAP-*ru-ka*	May you be well, may the gods guard you for well-being
RS 94.2288+: 4–5	DINGIR^MEŠ *a-na š*[*u-ma-ni* PAP-*r*]*u-ka ù li-š*[*al²-li²-mu²-ka²*]	May the gods guard you for your well-being and may they keep you well.
KTU 2.14: 4–5	*ilm . tġrk tšlmk*	May the gods guard you, may they keep you well.
KTU 2.21	[*y*]⌈*s*⌉*lm . lk* [*i*]⌈*l*⌉*m . tšlm*⌈*k*⌉ [*t*]⌈*ġ*⌉*rk*	[May] ⌈all be w⌉ell with you, may the [g]⌈od⌉s keep ⌈you⌉ well, [may]⌈they gu⌉ard you.

And proceed to some slightly more elaborate, such as in *KTU* 2.89, as we have seen above. Interestingly, some letters consist only of such benedictions, greetings and pleasantries. For example, *KTU* 2.68:

1	*l . mlkt . ådty*	To the queen, my lady
2	⌈*r*⌉*gm*	⌈s⌉ay
3	[*t*]⌈*ḥ*⌉*m . ůrġttb . ⁽bdk*	[The le]⌈tt⌉er of Urġi-Tešub, your servant
4	⌈*l*⌉ *. p⁽n . ådty*	⌈At⌉ the feet of my lady
5	*mrḫqt*⌈*m*⌉	from afa⌈r⌉
6	⌈*s*⌉*b⁽d . w . šb⁽d*	⌈s⌉even and seven times
7	*qlt . ly*	I fall. With
8	*ådty .* ⌈*ys*⌉*lm*	my lady, ⌈may all⌉ be well,
9	[*i*]⌈*l*⌉*m . tġrk*	may [the g]⌈od⌉s guard you
10	[*tšl*]⌈*mk*⌉	[may they keep]⌈you well⌉
11	[*ḥnn*]⌈*y*⌉	[her]⌈e⌉
12	[⁽*mn .*]⌈*k*⌉*ll*	[with us] ⌈a⌉ll
13	[*mi*]⌈*d . s*⌉*lm*	⌈is⌉[ver]⌈y we⌉ll

[1250] The alphabetic abecedary follows, as well as repeated sequences of individual signs. This clearly demonstrates the training character of this tablet. The letter was probably written by a senior scribe (see Pardee 2007b: 184–185), maybe as a reading exercise or as a model to be copied.

14	⌜ṯm⌝ny . ʿm	⌜Th⌝ere with
15	⌜ả⌝dty . mnm	my ⌜l⌝ady whatever
16	šlm . rgm	is well, a word
17	ṯṯb . l . ʿbdk	return to your servant (about it).

Similarly phrased greetings are present in more letters. The three core components – 1) prostration, 2) benediction for well-being and divine protection, and 3) information about personal well-being and request to be informed about the recipient's well-being, are recurring patterns.[1251] But, as we have seen in other examples, not all three are necessary. Quite often, the prostration is omitted, being reserved for special addressees. The king, for example, did not have to bow to his mother, the queen,[1252] or bowed only "once" and not "seven times".[1253] Similarly, the king of Tyre did not bow to the king of Ugarit,[1254] and the queen of Ugarit was worth only a simple benediction to the king of Amurru.[1255] Sometimes, the information about personal well-being is omitted.[1256]

Besides the patterns in greeting phrases, this letter opens an issue of letters "without content".[1257] Two more complex examples are worth citing in full, one Ugaritic (*KTU* 2.86):

1	l ẖḏmrt	To Ḫiḏmirati,
2	bʿly . rgm	my lord, say.
3	tḥm . ảnntn	The message of Anatēnu,
4	ʿbdk . ỉlm	your servant. The gods,
5	tġrk . tšlmk	may they guard you, may they keep you well.
6	l pʿn . bʿly	to the feet of my lord
7	šbʿd . w šbʿd	seven and seven times
8	mrḥqtm	from afar
9	qlt . w hnn	I fall. Here
10	ʿm . ʿbdk	with your servant
11	mỉd . šlm	everything is well.
12	w bʿly	and (about) my lord
13	⌜š⌝lmh	his ⌜w⌝ell-being,
14	w šlm	and well-being
15	nkly	of Nikkaliya
16	w šlm	and well-being
17	bth . w šlm	of his house and well-being
18	šm rgmk	of (all who) hear your pleasant
19	nʿm . ảt ṯ[[ṯ]]ṯb	words you return (a word)
20	ʿm ʿbdk	to your servant.
21	w bʿly . bt	And my lord, house

[1251] E.g., 2.11, 2.12, 2.16, 2.31, 2.31, 2.86, 2.100.

[1252] E.g., *KTU* 2.34.

[1253] *KTU* 2.31.

[1254] *KTU* 2.38

[1255] *KTU* 2.21.

[1256] E.g., *KTU* 2.33

[1257] For similar cases, see e.g., *KTU* 2.11, 2.24, 2.64, or 2.86

22	ꜥbdh . ảl . [[y]]	of his servant do not
23	ybꜥr	forsake // destroy
24	b ydh	from your hand // by your hand.

... and one Akkadian (RS 92.2017):

1	*a-na* ^{DIŠ}*ur-te-na* EN-*ia*	To Urtēnu, my lord
2	*qí-bi-ma*	say,
3	*um-ma* ^{DIŠ}URÌ-^DMAŠ.MAŠ ÌR-*ka-ma*	thus says Iṣṣūr-Rašap, your servant.
4	*a-na* GÌR^{II} EN-*ia iš-tu ru-qiš am-qut*	At the feet of my lord from afar I fall
5	*a-na muḫ-ḫi* EN-*ia lu-ú šul-mu*	may (all) be well with my master
6	DINGIR^{MEŠ} GAL^{MEŠ} *ša* ^{URU}*ú-ga-rit_x*	May the great gods of Ugarit
7	*nap-šat* EN-*ia* PAP-*ru ù li-šal-li-mu*	guard the life of my lord and keep him well.
8	*a-na a-ma-ri* EN-*ia lìb-bi ṣi-ḫa-an-ni dan⸣-niš*	To see my lord, my heart rejoices greatly.
9	*man-nu pa-né ba-nu-ti ša* EN-*ia li-mur*	Who would want to see the beautiful face of my lord
10	*ù da-ba-ab-ka ṭa-ba liš-te-mi*	and to hear yours good talk?
11	*um-ma-a a-na* EN-*ia-ma šulu_x-ka*	I have said to my lord: send your well-being
12	*a-na muḫ-ḫi* ÌR-*ka šu-pur lìb-bi*	to your servant send. May my heart
13	*lu-ú ḫa-di*	be joyful,
14	*mi-ri-il-ta ša a-na* ÌR-*ka*	Any wish that you want to be sent
15	*tu-še-bi-lu a-na ṭup-pi šu-ṭú-ur lu-ú i-di*	to your servant – on a tablet write (it) down, so I may know.
16	*a-na* ^{DIŠ}IŠKUR-DI.KU₅ EN-*ia*	To Addu-dayyān, my lord
17	*ù* ^F*ta-mar-*^D*ḫé-bat* GAŠAN-*ia*	and Tamar-Ḫebat, my lady
18	*qí-bi-ma*	say.
19	*a-na* GÌR^{II} EN-*ia u* GAŠAN-*ia*	At the feet of my lord and my lady
20	2-*šú* 3-*šú am-qut a-na muḫ-ḫi-ku-nu lu-ú šul-mu*	two times and three times I fall. May all be well with you (both),
21	DINGIR^{MEŠ} GAL^{MEŠ} *ša* ^{URU}*ú-ga-rit_x*	May the great gods of Ugarit
22	*nap-šat* EN-*ia ù* GAŠAN-*ia* PAP^{MEŠ}	guard the life of my lord and my lady
23	*ù li-šal-li-mu ki-i*	and may they keep them well.
24	EN-*ia ù* GAŠAN-*ia am-ma-ti-ma*	My lord and my lady any word
25	*a-na ša-a-li šul-mi*	to ask (about) the well-being
26	*ša* ÌR-*šu-nu ul iš-pu-ru*	of their servant have not written.
27	*ù lìb-bi na-kud dan-niš*	My heart is gravely anxious (about this)
28	*um-ma* ^{DIŠ«D»}URÌ-^DMAŠ.MAŠ	Thus says Iṣṣūr-Rašap
29	*a-na* ^{DIŠ}*zi-mi-na* ŠEŠ-*ia*	to Ziminu, my brother,
30	*qí-bi-ma*	say.
31	*lu-ú a-na muḫ-ḫi-ka* DINGIR^{MEŠ}	May the gods,
32	*a-na šul-ma-ni nap-šat* ŠEŠ-*ia*	for the well-being of the life of my brother,

33 PAP-*ru ù li-šal-li-mu*	guard your and may the keep you well.
34 *ki-i* ŠEŠ-*ia a-na ša-a-li*	As my brother has written to me to ask
35 *šul-mi-ia iš-pu-ru*	about my well-being,
36 *ù lìb-bi ḫa-di dan-niš* ŠEŠ-*ia*	my heart rejoices greatly. My brother,
37 *šulu_x-ka šu-pur lu-ú ḫa-da-ku*	about your well-being write to me, so I may be joyful.

These letters underline the importance of symbolic communication. Note especially the lines 24–26 and 34–37 of the Akkadian letter, as they reflect on the practice of simple exchange of pleasantries. It is a good manner to ask about well-being, and such behaviour is expected. This greatly contributes to the continuous creation and affirmation of social realities.[1258] After all, such communication is not special to ancient Ugarit or ancient Near East – we also employ similar modes of communication, only constructed around more or less different customs. At the same time, playful modifications of the structures of the letters may be used to negotiate the relations, reflect special circumstances, and so on.[1259]

These "letters without content" also open the question of the purpose of the letters as physical objects. Did they truly work as the primary "bearers" of the message? The contents of the letters are quite often very simple, and the messages might have been easily memorised. The letters might have then worked rather as testaments of the authority of the messenger as well as affirmation of the given message.

As already noted above, the benedictions included in the greeting formulas are the place where deities occur most often, quite often rather generally as simply *ilm*, "the gods". In RS 92.2017, we have also seen that the deities who are supposed to guard and provide for the well-being of the recipient are specified. In this case, these are the gods of Ugarit. Similar expressions appear in numerous letters, and the repertoire of deities is not limited to Ugarit, often reflecting the position of the sender as well as the recipient:

RS 94.2361+: 5–8	*a-na* UGU-*ḫi* DUMU-*ia lu-ú šul-mu* DINGIR^MEŠ *ša* ^URU*u-ga-ri-ta a-na šul-*⌈*me*⌉ *li-ṣu-ru-ka*	May all be well for you, my brother, may the gods of Ugarit guard you for well-being.

[1258] On occasion a failure to follow the conventions resulted in objections. In RS 34.141 Dagān-Bēlu scolds Urtēnu for a lack of expected etiquette; however, compare translations in van Soldt 2011: 195 and *RSO VII*: 71. The king of Ugarit is scolded for failing to present himself in an audience at the Hittite court (*KTU* 2.39). In the Amarna letters, the great kings sometimes object to the quality or quantity received gifts, see e.g., EA 9 or 16.

[1259] An interesting case study may be made on Talmiyānu and his communication with the queen Ṯarriyelli. The addresses between him and the queen are changing among the letters. He addresses Ṯarriyelli as his lady and himself as her servant in *KTU* 2.12. In *KTU* 2.11, he designates her as "my mother, our lady" (the letter was sent by two Talmiyānu and Aḫatmilku) and himself as a servant. In both cases, he places himself at the second, subservient, position. The situation changes in *KTU* 2.16 and 2.30 where he sheds the designation of servant and even places himself at the first line, above the queen whom he only addresses as "my mother". Pardee 2002b: 89, n. 3 suggest this inversion has happened because Talmiyānu was writing after an audience with the Hittite king and his social status was (temporally?) elevated by it. See also below, where this text is translated.

KTU 2.16: 4–6	*yšlm . lk . ỉly ủgrt . tǵrk tšlmk*	May all be well with you, may the gods of Ugarit guard you, may they keep you well.
RS 34.137: 4–5	*lú-ú šul-mu a-na muḫ-ḫi-ka li-im* ⌜DINGIR⌝MEŠ PAP-*ru-ka*	May well-being be upon you. May thousand gods protect you.
RS 86.2230 6–9	*lú-ú šul-mu a-na muḫ-ḫi-ka a-na-ku a-qa-ab-bi a-na* Da-ma-ni *a-na* DUTU DIŠKUR DINGIRMEŠ *ša* KURmi-iṣ-ri *ma-a li-iṣ-ṣu-r*[*u* ...]	May well-being be upon you. I speak thus to Amon, Re, Seth,[1260] (and) the gods of Egypt: May they protec[t...]
RS 94.2416+ 4–7	*lu-ú šul-mu a-na* UGU-*ḫi-ka* DINGIRMEŠ-*nu ša* KUR.URUṣur-ri *ù* DINGIRMEŠ *ša* KUR.URU*u-ga-ri-it a-na šul-ma-ni* PAP-*ru-ka*	May well-being be upon you. may the gods of Tyre and the gods of Ugarit guard you for well-being.
RS 34.142: 2–5	DIŠKUR Dda-gan *ù* dú?-tár?-mi-ri DINGIRMEŠ GAL-*tu₄ ša* KURma-ri nap-ša-ti be-lí-ia li-iṣ-[ṣu-]rù	May Addu, Dagan and Itūr-Mēr (?[1261]) and the great gods of Mari protect the life of my lord

In RS 92.2006, a letter from a colleague of Urtēnu, Dagan-Bēli from Emar, the benedictory introduction is perfected to perfection:

1	*um-ma* DKUR.EN	Thus says Dagan-Bēli,
2	*a-na* DIŠ*ur-te-na* ŠEŠ DU₁₀.GA-*ia*	to Urtēnu, my good brother
3	*ša ki-i* Ì.MEŠ DU₁₀.GA *ù ni-ip-ši*	whom as a good perfumed oil
4	GIŠERIN.NA *a-ra-a-mu qí-bi-ma*	of cedar I love, say:
5	DINGIRMEŠ *ša* KUR*u-ga-rit*ₓ DINGIRMEŠ *ša* LUGAL EN-*ka*	The gods of Ugarit, the gods of the king, your lord,
6	Dé-a be-lu DUGUD *a-ba-ba ta-ma-tu₄*	Ea, the respected lord, the Sea, the Vast
7	DAGAL-*tu₄ ù* DINGIRMEŠ KUR*aš-ta-tá* ZIMEŠ-*ka*	the Sea, the Vast [1262] and the gods of Aštata; your life
8	PAP-*ru ù a-na amá-ti-ka* KA[1263]-*ka*	may they guard, and the word of your venerable
9	*na-aṣ*ₓ*-ri a-na pa-ni* LUGAL EN-*ka*	mouth, before the king, your lord,
10	*li-*⌜*kab-bi-it-ka*⌝	may it be taken seriously.

[1260] Note here the problem with interpretation of the logographic writing. This issue has been addressed in the Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity.*

[1261] See also *RSO VII*: 101, n. 76.

[1262] Note here, that these cosmic phenomena are listed in a place where they could be understood as deities, but they lack the DINGIR determinative. This may support the thesis of Koubková 2016: 17 that this determinative may more often relate to the divine signifiers that are more inclined towards anthropomorphism, such as names or personalities. This is to remind the thesis that the "cosmic" deities did not have to be perceived prevalently as anthropomorphic, as has been noted in Chapter *3 Conceptions of Divinity.*

[1263] Written as KA×U.

Such personalised benedictions are also visible in the letters related to the highest level of political communication. In *KTU* 2.23, addressed to the king of Egypt, the king of Ugarit includes the following statement:

16	ảr˹š˺[. ḫy . l šp]˹š˺	I requeˈstˈ[life for the Su]ˈnˈ,
17	mlk . ˹r˺[b . bʿl]˹y˺ . p . l .	the ˹gr˺[eat] king, ˹my˺ [lord] and for
18	ḫy . np[š . a]˹r˺š	the vigour of his spiri[t[1264] I place a req]ˈueˈst
19	l . pn . bʿ[l .]˹ṣ˺pn . bʿly	to the Baʿa[l] of ˹Ṣ˺apan, my lord
20	w . ủrk . yˈmˈ . bʿly	so long dayˈsˈ my lord (may have)
21	l . pn . ảmn . w . l . pn	To Amun and to
22	ỉl . mṣrm . dt . tǵrn	the gods of Egypt, so they may guard
23	npš . špš [.]ˈmˈlk .	the life of the Sun, the great
24	rb . bʿly	ˈkˈing, my lord.

Besides a simple benediction formula, this letter also suggests a possible practice behind it. We may endorse the possibility that these benedictions in clay might have been further supported by actual petitions to the deities.

However, as we have seen with the letter from Ilimilku to Urtēnu, the deities may also be completely left out of the greeting. Simple *yšlm lk*, "may there be peace with you", suffices.[1265] Surely, we may ask ourselves if these formulaic expressions can tell us anything relevant about the religious conceptions of the correspondents. When someone says "God bless you" when someone else sneezes, we do not suppose that there are some profound theological conceptions behind this exclamation. However, further connotations depend on the position of the speaker. I personally know people who use God in everyday speech simply as a formulaic expression, without any further implications, but I also know those who use God and blessings very intentionally and filled with belief. In my opinion, the correspondence of Ugarit also includes both modalities, which may not be necessarily exclusive. The simple fact that some communication is symbolic, repetitive, and formulaic does not mean it cannot be taken seriously. Obviously, we cannot explore who used deities just as a fancy stuffing of the letters and who had "truly meant" it. Be it as it may, this was an integral part of the social reality of Ugarit, and this communication significantly contributed to its maintenance.

6.6.2 References to Religious Realia

The presence of deities is not limited to benedictions and greetings. Sometimes, they are referred to with the "proper" messages, too, and inform us of the broader cultural context. For example, in *KTU* 2.10, from Iwri-ḏarri to Pilsiya, the expression *yd ỉlm,* "hand of the gods", is used. The interpreters

---

[1264] Be aware of the problems such translation may bear. Note also that the translations given for *ḫy* and *npš* here are not unitary, by this I have at least a bit tried to point out the semantic range of these lexemes and their proximity.
[1265] Similarly, e.g., *KTU* 2.10,

differ in the precise understanding of the situation. For example, Singer,[1266] followed by Halayqa,[1267] understands the letter as follows:[1268]

> *… I have heard from Trǵds (Tarḫundišša?) and from Klby (Kalbiya?) that we were beaten. But if we were not completely beaten send me a messenger.* **The arm of the gods will be greater than the force of the warriors if we resist***. Put your reply and whatever you hear there in a letter (addressed) to me.*

On the contrary, Bordreuil and Pardee[1269] translate this passage differently:

> *… Regarding Tarǵudassi and Kalbiya, I have heard that they have suffered defeat. Now if such is not the case, send me a message (to that effect).* **Pestilence is (at work) here, for death is very strong***. If they have been overcome, your reply and whatever (else) you may hear there put in a letter to me.*

Of course, such differences in interpretation cast very different light on the role of deities and may lead to different historical interpretations. The understanding of Bordreuil and Pardee is supported by rich comparative evidence of seeing illnesses as effects of the "hands of the gods",[1270] and I would be personally more inclined to it.

The imagery of deities as the causers of problems is further reflected in RS 94.2091. In this letter, the king of Amurru informs the king of Ugarit[1271] about some very unfavourable events happening in his kingdom:

6	*a-mur a-ma-ta a-ni-ta*	Behold this issue
7	*ša ep-ša-tu-ni*	that has happened:
8	*ki-i* ᴰIŠKUR *ul-tu* ERÍN^MEŠ*-ia*	How Addad of my troops
9	*ù* GAL^MEŠ*-ia id-du-ku-ni*	and my nobles (many) have killed.

The nearing end of the LBA brought with itself numerous difficulties, many of them connected with military attacks on the Levantine coast.[1272] The king of Amurru proceeded with a request for military equipment held at Ugarit. Therefore, it seems probable that Addad was seen as a causer of the problems because of his bellicose character. In addition, he might have been connected with the sea from where the attackers arrived.[1273] The favour or adversity of the Storm-Gods can be further associated with environmental issues that have also been a recurring issue in these troubled

---

[1266] Singer 1999: 726–727.

[1267] Halayqa 2010: 232.

[1268] *KTU* 2.10: 5–19: *l . trǵds / w . l . klby / šmˤt . ḫti / nḫtu . ht / hm . ìnmm / nḫtu . w . lȃk / ˤmy . w . yd / ìlm . p . kmtm / ˤz . mìd / hm . nṯkp / mˤnk / w . mnm / rgm . d . tšmˤ / ṯmt . w . št / b . spr . ˤmy.*

[1269] Bordreuil & Pardee 2009: 233.

[1270] For texts using this imagery, see e.g., Scurlock 2014: 18–24, 33–40 and many parallels.

[1271] Note the king of Amurru addresses the Ugaritic ruler as "my son", indicating his subordinate position. This reflects well on the respective relations to their Hittite overlord – the dynasty of Amurru had much closer ties with the Hittite court. See, e.g., Singer 2011: 253–255.

[1272] See Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit.*

[1273] Note the votive anchors at the *Temple of Baˤal* and his association with naval activities. See Chapter *5.1.2 The Temple of Baˤal.*

times. Addad may thus have caused the death of people by not providing sufficient precipitation. In this case, however, this interpretation is less likely.[1274]

Some correspondence provides us with further references to cultic activities. For example, the content of RS 94.2179 is entirely dedicated to discussing matters related to cults:

1	*um-ma* ᴰUTU-*ši-ma*	Thus says My Sun
2	*a-na* ᴰᴵˢ*níq*-PA-ᴰIŠKUR	to Niqmaddu
3	LUGAL ᴷᵁᴿ*ú-ga-ri-it qí-bi-ma*	the king of Ugarit say.
4	*a-nu-ma* ᴰᴵˢ*ša-an-ga-bi*	Now, Šangabi
5	*ù* ᴹ*a-la-ma-an-⸢nu⸣*	(together with) Alamannu
6	*a-na* SISKUR *e-pé-ši*	(in order) to make sacrifices
7	*ul-tu* É.GAL-*lì*	from the palace
8	*iš-pu-ru-šu*	you have sent him.
9	*ù mi-nu-um-me-e*	And whatever
10	ᴰᴵˢ*ša-an-ga-bi*	Šangabi
11	*a-na* SISKURᴹᴱˢ	for the sacrifices
12	*e-re-ša-ak-ku*	demands from you
13	*i-na* KASKAL-*ni*	into his way
14	*lu-ú ta-ša-ak-ka₄-an-šu*	may you place it for him.

The importance of these activities is demonstrated by the fact that the king of Ḫatti takes care to instruct the king of Ugarit about it.

Very interesting is letter RS 94.2287. There, a king (possibly of Qadeš)[1275] writes to the king of Ugarit in order to ask for barley and offers to provide him with sheep for sacrifices in exchange.

11	ŠEŠ-*ia a-nu-ma* ŠEᴹᴱˢ	My brother, now barley
12	*i-na* ŠÀ-*bi* KUR-*ia ia-nu*	in the midst of my land is not.
13	*ù* ŠEŠ-*ia* ŠEᴹᴱˢ	May my brother give
14	*li-id-di-na*	barley
15	*ù a-na-ku* UDUᴴᴵ·ᴬ	and I (in return) will bring
16	*a-na ni-qà-e*	sheep to the sacrifices
17	ŠEŠ-*ia li-še-bíl*	of my brother.

This text may fit into the environmental issues that endangered the populations. The lack of grain was a recurring topic of many letters. Ugarit was sometimes able to compensate for this lack to its neighbours, even though the problems did not avoid it either. In regard to religion, the second part of the letter is of importance. The offer to provide sheep (or rather, rams) for sacrifices in exchange for barley further connects the cultic activities with the overall economic system. Providing sacrificial material is presented as an alternative mode of payment. In addition, we may note that the

---

[1274] See Cohen 2021: 55–57 for further discussion of this text in relation to the end of the kingdom of Ugarit.
[1275] See *RSO XXIII*: 98–99.

exchange relationships among the rulers are not framed as trade but rather as brotherly assistance, gift exchange, etc.

   KTU 2.40 then informs us about royal involvement in cultic activities:

13	*w . ḫt .*	and now,
14	*mlk . ṣyr*	the king to Sēyēra
15	*ns .w . ṯmny*	has moved (in haste) and there
16	*ydbḥ*	he sacrifices/celebrates
17	*mlǵ .* ⌜*ʿm špš*⌝ *// mlǵ*⌜*ǵm*⌝[1276]	the mlǵm-ceremonies ⌜for Šapaš⌝

   The letter itself is about Ṯipṭi-Baʿal keeping an eye on someone, but he makes a reference to the fact that the king has just left to make sacrifices in Sēyēra. This is an interesting addition to the royal participation in cults,[1277] as well as the reference to travels made in order to make sacrifices. In addition, if Bordreuil and Pardee are right and Sēyēra is a mountain,[1278] this letter also attests to cults connected with mountains. A practice that is most often connected with Ṣapan.

   One of the most interesting letters reflecting the role of religion in political relations is RS 88.2158.[1279] This letter from Merenptah, possibly to Ibirānu VI,[1280] reacts to a previously received request from Ugarit. The king of Ugarit asked for an Egyptian artisan who would manufacture a statue of King Merenptah in order to place it into the *Temple of Baʿal* at Ugarit. Lines 10'–26' of this letter cite the previous request and include the Egyptian reply:

10'	*ù ki-i ša at-ta tàš-pu-ru um-ma-a* LUGAL *li-id-din*	
		And as you have written, saying: "The king, may he give (an order)
11'	*a-na a-la-kí* 1-*en* ᴸᵁ*pur-kúl-la ù a-na* ⌜*ia²-ší² li²*⌝-*iṣ-ṣa*	
		for one lapidary to go, so ⌜he may⌝ come to ⌜me⌝,
12'	*a-na e-pé-ši* 1-*en* ᴰALAM *ša* ᴰᴵˢ*mar-ni-ip-t*[*a-aḫ*]	
		to make one image[1281] of Mernept[ah]
13'	*ḫa-at-pa-mu-a i-na pa-ni* ᴰALAM *an-ni-i ša* ⌜ᴰIŠKUR⌝	
		Haptuma facing the image of the Baʿal
14'	*ša i-na lìb-bi* É DINGIR-*lì an²-ni-i iš-ša-*⌜*a²*⌝	
		that (is to be) instaled inside the temple
15'	*ša a-na-ku e-te-*⌜*né-ep*⌝-[*pu*]-*uš-šu a-na* ᴰIŠKUR	
		that I am currently making for Baʿal
16'	*ša* ᴷᵁᴿ*ú-ga-ri-it at-ta ka-an-na táq-bi*	
		of Ugarit." So you have said.
17'	ᴸᵁBUR.GULᴹᴱˢ *ša an-ni-ka-a i-na* ᴷᵁᴿ*mi-iṣ-ri-i*	
		The lapidaries that work[1282] here in Egypt,
18'	*ši-ip-ra ep-pu-šu šu-nu dú-ul-la i-te-né-ep-pu-šu*	
		they are overwhelmed with hard work

[1276] According to Bordreuil & Pardee 2009: 239.

[1277] See Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults*.

[1278] Bordreuil & Pardee 2009: 240, 338. *DUL* sees this lexeme as an unknown toponym.

[1279] *RSO XIV*, no. 14; see e.g., Morris 2015 for a broader discussion.

[1280] Fisher 2010: 619.

[1281] Not that the image, ALAM (Akk. *ṣalmu*), is preceded by the DINGIR determinative, i.e., it is a divine image.

[1282] The verb is taken from the line below to fit English syntax.

19'	*a-na* DINGIR^MEŠ GAL^MEŠ *ša* ^KUR*mi-iṣ-ri-i a-mur*
	for the great gods of Egypt. See,
20'	*ki-i* LUGAL *a-ši-ib i-na muḫ-ḫi* ^GIŠGU.ZA *ša* ^DUTU
	as the king sits on top of the throne of the Sun-God (Ra?)
21'	*ù šu-nu ep-pu-šu ši-ip-ri a-na* DINGIR^MEŠ GAL^MEŠ
	and they work for the great gods
22'	*ša* ^KUR*mi-iṣ-ri- ù ki-i šu-nu i-ga-am-ma-ru ù* LUGAL
	of Egypt and as (soon as) they finish, the king
23'	*ú·*[1283]*-še-ba-al a-na ka-a-ša* ^LÚNAGAR^MEŠ *ša táq-bi*
	will send to you the carpenters[1284] that you have asked for,
24'	*ù šu-nu li-pu-šu gab-be ši-ip-re-ti*
	so they may do all the works
25'	*ša at-ta ta-qa-ab-ba-aš-šu-nu-ti ma-a e-pu-uš-šu-nu-ti*
	when you tell them: "Do these!".

Besides the topic of the political prestige of having an image of the Egyptian king in a temple,[1285] this letter informs us about the process of the (re)building of the *Temple of Baʿal,* which was probably destroyed in an earthquake not long before.[1286] We may also note how the request of the ruler of Ugarit is made humble: one craftsman to make one statue. The Egyptian king promises much more – numerous craftsmen, who will probably be able to help with the building of the temple, too. The message further refers to numerous gifts that the king of Egypt sent to Ugarit instead of the craftsmen. I had previously argued that unfortunately for Ugarit, before the craftsmen made themselves available, the city had ceased to exist.[1287] However, it seems clearer to me now that this might not have been the case, and the craftsmen of Ugarit probably had plenty of time to arrive, help with the construction of the temple and manufacture the image of their king. But we are unable to confirm whether this has ever happened.

Relatively long and well-preserved letters RS 86.2221+ and 86.2208[1288] present yet another case when issues related to religion entered international correspondence. In these documents, the king of Sidon writes to the king of Ugarit regarding a "great sin"[1289] that has been committed in his city by (an) Ugaritian(s). Excerpt from 86.2221+ may illustrate the issue:

[1283] *RSO XIV*: 240, note 6.: "Le texte porte *i*, ou puet-être *ú* écrit sur *i*".

[1284] Here, the pharaoh speaks suddenly of carpenters, ^LÚNAGAR^MEŠ (Akk. *nagarū*), instead of lapidaries, ^LÚBUR.GUL^MEŠ (Akk. *purkullū*). Why? Is he lowering the expectations of the king of Ugarit? Is he referring to some previous arrangements regarding the building of the temple? Or is this a simple case of interchangeability?

[1285] This practice can be further corroborated with evidence from the Amarna correspondence. For example, the letter EA 59 mentions Egyptian statues of deities and of the pharaoh in a temple in Tunip. Letter EA 55 states that in Qaṭna "names" of pharaohs were put before the statue of the local sun deity. Both letters include request for additional manufacture of these objects; see Válek 2021: 55–56. See also Morris 2013: 41, who contextualizes this practice with the divine nature of Egyptian monarchs; Frahm 2013: 105 for similar practices related to Neo-Assyrian rulers; or Winter 1992 for general context of "idols" of the kings in Mesopotamia who could have also received offerings.

[1286] See Chapter *5.1.2 The Temple of Baʿal.*

[1287] Válek 2021: 55.

[1288] Both published in *RSO XIV* as text no. 13 and 14. To the dossier relating to the same issue, we should also add RS 18.054 and fragmentary 86.2234; *RSO XIV*, nos. 15 and 16.

[1289] See, e.g., discussion in Avishur & Heltzer 2004.

21	*ù ki-i* LÚ [*ki-i pa*]-*ni-ti-ša ḫi-ṭa* GAL-*a an-na-ka i-na* KUR *ṣi-du-ni*
22	And because of the man [who ea]rlier a "great sin" here in Sidon
23	*iḫ-ṭí-ú-*[*ni i-na q*]*a-ab-le pe-*⌈*rek*⌉*-te i-na qa-qa-de₄ ša* ᴰIŠKUR
24	has commit[ed in the i]nside of the san⌈ctu⌉ary against the Storm-God,
25	SISKURᴹᴱˢ GAL[ᴹᴱˢ *e-ra-bu a-n*]*a gab-be* Éᴹᴱˢ *ša* DINGIRᴹᴱˢ *pa-ṭi₄-*[*ia*]
26	the great sacrifice[s will have to enter in] all of the temples of [my] land.

The incident has clearly stirred up the relations between the two lands. Apparently, the people from Sidon demanded a death punishment by stoning the culprit with a consequent public display of the body.[1290] This was a rather delicate matter regarding the mutual relations of the two friendly kingdoms and, therefore, required a more diplomatic solution.[1291]

In addition to these lengthier messages regarding different religious issues, there are also some cases when these are mentioned only in passing. For example, RS 94.249 mentions a delivery of cedar wood for *inzari*-sanctuary.[1292] RS 94.2288+ ends with a notation that the gods of Ugarit recognise those who do not speak good words. Here, the deities are used not as a part of benediction but rather included in a threatening expression. SANGA, "priest", is mentioned in RS 94.2602, but in a context which is not anyhow connected with further religious activities (it relates to some massacre). *KTU* 2.87 mentions sacrifices (*dbḥ*), but the context is uncertain. Possibly, the sacrifices may be connected with the misfortunes of Abniya, who is writing to her brother Ur-Tešub Urtēnu.[1293] Several references to deities are found in *KTU* 2.44 (from Byblos): Šapaš, Baʕal of Byblos, Koṯar, or Baʕal Ṣapan. Unfortunately, the tablet is so damaged that further interpretation is impossible. In RS 17.383, Takuḫli writes to the king to request *uqnû*-wool for a deity who saved his life when he was severely ill. Letter RS 94.2483 mentions divination made for Ilimilku.[1294] *KTU* 2.4, which has been addressed to the *rb khnm*, the "chief priest", has already been mentioned above when we discussed the possibility if it might have been an exchange between the king and this official.[1295] The correspondents also seem to discuss some religious activities, but the text is damaged, and interpretations differ.[1296] The chief priest may also be attested in a letter RS 17.428[1297] where he communicates with the *sākinu* ("governor") of Ugarit, possibly even addressing him as his "brother", i.e., peer.[1298]

[1290] Lines 32–34. See also discussion in Avishur & Heltzer 2004: 210–212.

[1291] Further implications of the letter lie (not far) behind the scope of this thesis, as the setting of the actions is outside of Ugarit. More research and interpretation are needed. This letter is potentially a valuable source for several topics: e.g., the "will of the people", religious trespassing, accessibility of sanctuaries, religion in international relations, etc. I hope to return to this letter with greater focus in the future. For further commentary, see Clemens 2001: 1034–1041 with additional references.

[1292] This understanding is not certain, but it is attested in Ḫattuša as a sanctuary of some goddesses; see *RSO XXIII*: 32.

[1293] Possibly, this double name is a full name of Urtēnu. For the family relations of Urtēnu, see Malbran-Labat & Roche 2007: 65–69.

[1294] See Chapter *6.3 Divination*.

[1295] See Chapter *6.2.1.1 Clergy - khnm and qdšm*. In context of the rules of symbolic communication, I find it improbable.

[1296] See Clemens 2001: 155–178 for broad discussion. It possibly relates to transfer of statues of deities which was supported by an oracular decision. I have myself no strong opinion about the meaning of this tablet.

[1297] *PRU VI*, no. 9.

[1298] The header of the letter is damaged and both the reading of the chief priest (GAL SANGA) and the designation of the *sākinu* as "bother" is uncertain.

In RS 94.2443, the prince Tāsi (of Ḫatti) mentions in passing that he is currently in Nuḫašše to perform there the *malḫaššê*-sacrifices. The same sacrifices are mentioned in RS 94.2389, where we are informed that someone has to perform these rites. In RS 94.2589, the *malḫaššê*-sacrifices are mentioned, too, unfortunately, in a very broken context. We do not even know the names of the sender and recipient. However, the addressee (a lady) is informed that a priestess (NIN.DINGIR) notifies her that she will bear wax (DUḪ.LÁL) instead of wool (SÍG^(ḪÁ.MEŠ)). Unfortunately, the state of the tablet does not allow us to make any further inferences. Possibly, the bearing of wax and wool was part of the *malḫaššê*-sacrifices, and the role of the lady within these rites has somehow changed.

Yet another letter may be connected with divine support in making deals and taking oaths. RS 94.2364 refers to an agreement overseen by The Sun-God of Ṣapan, whom we do not meet anywhere else. References to swearing in the name of gods are present in the letter RS 34.165. This letter is essential in yet another part of this thesis as it is considered to be a letter from the king of Assyria to the king of Ugarit, slandering the Hittite overlord of Ugarit.[1299] For now, we shall limit the discussion to lines 31–33. Here, the king of Assyria recounts a message from the king of Ḫatti, who tried to avoid the armed conflict. The messengers allegedly presented him with a tablet from the king of Ḫatti, proclaiming: "By the Storm-God and the Sun-God (I swear), I am not in war with the king of Assyria, my brother, I am in peace..."[1300] The proclamation then continues further. We may only note the obvious: the validity of the oath is supported by reference to deities. The issues of deities in legal practices have already been discussed above.[1301]

6.6.3   DIVINE KINGS OF ḪATTI AND EGYPT

The last topic addressed in this chapter is how the rulers of Ḫatti and Egypt are addressed in the Ugaritic epistolary. In Ḫatti, the kings had a close connection to the divine sphere.[1302] There is no evidence that the living king would be considered divine as a person when living, but his status well exceeded that of humans. The Hittite king was in proximity to deities and had their support and blessing, and he could even be depicted with the divine horned tiara when participating in cults. But mainly, it was the royal office itself that was considered sacred, and the sources seem to state quite clearly that once the king deceased, he became a deity.[1303]

This divine aspect of the royal office is well reflected in the correspondence of Ugarit. The Hittite monarch is consistently referred to as ᴰUTU in logosyllabic texts[1304] or as *špš* in Ugaritic texts.[1305] We have already encountered this issue with the letter RS 94.2179 above. When the king of Ḫatti writes to the king of Ugarit, there are no benedictions necessary; he only informs about his own well-being, and even that is not a strict rule. To know that the overlord is well is all the petite king of Ugarit may wish for. Excerpt from RS 94.2530 may be used as an example:

[1299] This letter is further addressed in Chapter *7.3.1.2.2 In the Contexts of Near Eastern Royal Epics?*.

[1300] Following transcription in *RSO VII*: 91: ma-*a* ᵈiškur *ù* ᵈutu *lu-ú i-du-ú ma-a* ⌜*šum-ma*⌝ *aʾ-naʾ-ku / it-ti* lugal ^(kur.d)*a-šur nak_x-ra-ku-m*[*iʾ ù* ...] / *sal-ma-ku-mi*.

[1301] Chapter *6.5.1 Deities as Guarantors*.

[1302] See Beckman 2012 for broader discussion.

[1303] See e.g., incantation *KUB* 41.23 II: 18'–21', which describes how the essence of the king merges with the essence of the Sun-God and the Storm-God. In addition, the dead members of the royal family were venerated within the state cults; See Beckman 2012: 608–609.

[1304] See e.g., letters *RSO XXIII*, nos. 1–9.

[1305] Solar aspects were not limited to the royalty of the Hittite and Egyptian Monarch. See, e.g., Charpin 2013 for discussion of solar aspects in the Old Babylonian cultural milieu.

1	*um-ma* ᴰUTU-[*ši-*]*ma*	Thus says My Sun
2	*a-na* ᵐ*am-mu-ra-pí-i qí-bi-ma*	to ʿAmmurāpi say.
3	*a-nu-um-ma it-ti* ᴰUTU-*ši*	Here, with My Sun
4	*gab-bu dan-niš šu-ul-mu*	everything is very good.

As an example of the Ugaritic text, we may cite a broader excerpt from *KTU* 2.39,[1306] which further reflects on the position in which the Ugaritic king was to the Sun of Ḫatti.

1	*tḥm . špš*	The Message of the Sun
2	*l . ʿmrpỉ . rgm*	to ʿAmmurāpi say.
3	*ʿm . š⌈p⌉š . kll . mỉdm*	With the S⌈u⌉n, everything is very
4	*šlm*	well.
5	*l . ⌈p⌉[⌈ʿn . a⌉]⌈d⌉n . špš*	"Be⌈f⌉[ore the lo]⌈r⌉d, the Sun
6	*ảd*[*nh . ⌈*ʿ*⌉bdh . ủk . škn*	[his] lor[rd] his [s]ervant surely has dwelt
7	*k . ʿ*[*bdm . ⌉⌈s⌉glth . hw*	as a s[ervant], his ⌈po⌉session he is!
8	*w . ⌈b⌉*[⌈ʿ*lh*] . *ủk . nġr*	and [his] ⌈l⌉[ord] surely he guards
9	*w . ⌈d⌉*[*rʿ . l .*]*ảdny . l . yḫsr*	and ⌈the ⌉[arm of] my lord is not lacking
10	*w . *[*ảt . y*]⌈*d*ʿ⌉ *. l . ydʿt*	and [you cert]⌈ain⌉ly know this."
11	*h⌈t⌉ *[. xxx]. *l . špš . bʿlk*	No⌈w⌉ [...] to the Sun, your lord
12	*⌈ʿ*b⌈*dm .*]⌈*s⌉glth . ảt*	a s⌈er⌉[vant]⌈a⌉ possession of his you are
13	*ht*[. xxx] . *špš . bʿlk*	Now [...] the Sun, your lord,
14	*ydʿm . l . ydʿt*	certainly you know this!
15	*ʿmy . š⌈p⌉š . bʿlk*	Why to the S⌈u⌉n, your lord,
16	*šnt . šntm . lm . {.} l . tlk*	for a year, two years, did you not come?

Lines 5–10 are a citation of a previous letter sent by the king of Ugarit to Ḫatti, where he requested an alimentary aid. The king of Ḫatti is then paraphrasing this request, pointing out that the Ugaritic ruler did not actually behave as he proclaimed. It seems that the last king of Ugarit did not attend the Hittite court for some time. It seems that this was not welcomed by the Sun. Indeed, the request for food aid is then dismissed, stating that Ḫatti is also lacking. While this may be corroborated by further evidence, and the Hittites did not have much to spare, the attitude of the Ugaritians might have played a role in the decision process, too.

The divine character of the Hittite royal office seems not to have been limited to titulary. In KTU 2.16, Talmiyānu, a son of the queen Ṯarriyelli, talks about his audience to the king of Ḫatti. The described experience verges that of encountering a deity:

1	*tḥm . tl⌈myn⌉*	The message of Tal⌈miyānu⌉
2	*l ṯryl . ủmy*	to Ṯarriyelli, my mother
3	*rgm*	say.
4	*yšlm . lk . ỉly*	May all be well with you, may the gods
5	*ủgrt . tġrk .*	of Ugarit guard you

6	*tšlmk . ủmy*	may they keep you well. My mother
7	*tdˁ . ky . ˁrbt*	you must know that I have entered
8	*l pn . špš*	before the Sun
9	*w pn . špš . nr*	and the face of the Sun has shone
10	*by . mỉd . w ủm*	upon me intensely. And (my) mother,
11	*tšmḫ . mảb*	may she make (my) father[1307] rejoice,
12	*w ảl . twḫln*	and may she not worry.
13	*ˁtn . ḫrd . ản⸢k⸣*	Now I am a (royal) guard.
14	*ˁmny . šlm*	With me, everything
15	*kll*	is well.
16	*w mnm .*	And (about) whatever
17	*šlm . ˁm*	is good with
18	*ủmy*	my mother,
19	*ˁmy . tṯtb*	to me, send
20	*rgm*	a word.

We have already mentioned this text above when discussing the respective positions of the sender and recipient as an indication of status. The audience with the Hittite king probably allowed Talmiyānu to address his mother from an elevated position.[1308] Whether such a change of status was permanent and also connected to the position of royal guard is difficult to ascertain.

The divine character of the king of Egypt is almost proverbial. However, the situation was far more complex, and the simple statement that the pharaoh was considered to be a god is too simplistic.[1309] Leaving the precise nature of the Egyptian conceptions aside, we may explore several documents from Ugarit that reflect the situation.

Addresses of the Egyptian king go further back in the Ugaritic history. The oldest letter coming from Ugarit has been discovered in the Amarna archives in Egypt – EA 45 from ˁAmmiṯtamru III. There, the Ugaritic king proclaimed the "never-ending" allegiance of his kingdom to the Sun, his lord. The opening statement of Ugaritic Amarna letters is, however, better preserved in EA 49 from the next king, Niqmaddu III, which is here given as an example:

1	*a-na* LUGAL ᴰUTU-*ši* EN-*ia*	To the king, the Sun, my lord
2	*um-ma* ᴹ*níq-ma-*ᴰiškur ÌR-*ka-ma*	thus says Niqmaddu, your servant
3	*a-na* UZU.GÌRᴹᴱˢ LUGAL ᴰUTU-*ši* EN-*ia am-qut*	to the feet of the king, the Sun, my lord, I have fallen.
4	*lu-ú* ⸢*šul*⸣*-mu a-na* ⸢UGU⸣ LUGAL꞉ ᴰUTU EN-*ia*	May all be well with my king, the Sun, my lord,
5	É[ᴴᴵ.ᴬ]⸢*-šu a-na* NITLAM₄⸣*-šu a-na* DAMᴹᴱˢ*-šu*	with his households, his consort, his wives,
6	*a-na* [DUMUᴹᴱˢ*-šu a-na* ANŠE.KUR.RA-*šu*]⸢ÉRINᴴᴵ.ᴬ⸣ *pi-ṭá-ti*	with [his sons, his horses], (his) archer ⸢troops⸣

[1307] This does not properly fit the original of the tablet. Bordreuil & Pardee 2009: 236 are faithful to the original and suggest translation Maʾʾabû as a personal name.

[1308] Pardee 2002b: 89, n. 3.

[1309] See, e.g., Frankfort 1948: 36–139.

7 *a-*⌜*na*⌝[^{GIŠ}GIGIR^{MEŠ}-*šu ... ša* LUGAL]⌜^{D}⌝UTU-*ši* EN-*ia*   w⌜ith⌝[his chariots ... of the king], the Sun, my lord

Here, the king of Egypt is addressed similarly to the king of Ḫatti. The allegiance of Ugarit has changed already during the life of the author of EA 49.[1310] While this change of servitude had distorted the relations with Egypt, they probably never ceased fully,[1311] and in many later sources, they reappear quite positively. The Egyptian culture was always valued and utilised even in religious art.[1312] Furthermore, the Ugaritic texts suggest that virtually the same addressing continued to be used, as demonstrated, for example, in *KTU* 2.81.[1313]

1 [*l . špš .*]⌜*m*⌝*lk . rb . mlk . mṣrm*   [To the Sun] the great ⌜k⌝ing, king of Egypt
2 [*mlk . n*ˤ]*m . mlk . ṣdq*   the [goo]d [king], the just king,
3 [*mlk . m*]⌜*l*⌝*km . b*ˤ*l . kl . ḫwt*   [the king of k]⌜in⌝gs, the lords of all lands
4 [*mṣr*]*m . rgm . tḥm*   [of Egyp]t say, the message
5 [ˤ*mṯtm*]⌜*r*⌝ *.* ˤ*dbk . l . p*⌜ˤ*n*⌝   [of ˤAmmiṯtam]⌜ru⌝, your servant. At the fee⌜t⌝
6 [*b*ˤ*ly ql*]*t . ln . b*ˤ*ly . yšlm*   [of my lord I fal]l, with my lord may it be well,
7 [*l . bhtk*] *. l . inšk . l . ḫw*⌜*tk*⌝   [with your house], with your people, with your la⌜nd⌝
8 [*l . ššw*]⌜*k*⌝ *. l mrkbtk*   [with] ⌜your⌝ [horses], with your chariots,
9 [*l . ṣbik .*] *l kl d iṯ*   [with your troops], with all that belongs
10 [*l . špš . m*]⌜*l*⌝*k . rb . m*⌜*lk mṣr*⌝[*m*]   [to the Sun], the great [k]⌜in⌝g, the ki⌜ng of Egyp⌝[t]
11 [*mlk . n*ˤ*m .*]⌜*m*⌝*l*⌜*k . ṣ*⌝[*dq . mlk*]   [the good king]⌜,⌝ the j⌝[ust] ⌜k⌝in⌜g⌝[, the king]
12 [*mlkm*]   [of kings (may it be well)]

It seems that when the king of Egypt was addressed by the Ugaritians, the imagery of the Sun-God was employed. This is further supported by letters *KTU* 2.76 or *KTU* 2.23. Because these were discovered at Ugarit, they were probably drafts or models for creating the letters in Akkadian, the international language. We may also notice slight differences in the letters addressed to the Hittite and to the Egyptian worlds: the royal titulary of Egyptian kings seems to be slightly more extensive, including expressions like "the great king", "king of kings", "just king", etc. In the case of the Hittite ruler, the simple Sun was usually sufficient.[1314]

[1310] See Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit.*

[1311] Possibly except for a short period of the greatest animosity between the Hittites and Egyptians around the battle of Qadeš; see Singer 1999: 673.

[1312] See Válek 2021: 55–57.

[1313] The damaged state of the tablet may cast doubts about the reconstructed phrases, however, the verso of the tablet contains similar expressions that make it probable; this is especially relevant for the Sun, which is only in lacunae in obvers.

[1314] However, in the case of Šuppiluliuma I, there are also some lengthier designations. For example, in RS 17.340 or 17.396, he describes himself as "My Sun, Šuppiluluima, the great king, king of Ḫatti, the hero"; ^{D}UTU-*ši* ^{M}*šu-up-pí-lu-li-ma* LUGAL GAL LUGAL ^{KUR}*ḫa-at-ti* UR.SAG. Similarly, see also RS 17.334, RS 17.062+ or RS 17.382+ for Muršili (he does not use the title "hero" for himself anymore; however, this title was used for Šuppiluluima when Muršili mentioned him as his father), for Ḫattušili in 17.130 (also without the "hero"), or in RS 17.035 and RS 17.082 for Tudḫaliya (also without the "hero", but he uses references to his father Ḫattušili, his grand-father Muršili, and great-grand-father Šuppiluluima are added).

We have already mentioned the letter RS 88.2158 which talks about the wish to have a statue of Merenptah in the newly constructed *Temple of Baʿal*. There, the language points out to the statue as a divine object (ᴰALAN) but leaves the king himself classified as a man. This letter also refers to Merenptah as the "king, the good son of the Sun",[1315] expressing his divine origin. Similar expressions are employed in other letters, too.[1316] It appears that the Egyptian king does not address himself as the Sun. Similarly, in RS 94.2002+, Merenptah is addressed as "Merenptah, the great king, king of ⌜Egypt⌝."[1317] But the header is neither preserved in RS 88.2158 nor in 94.2002+. Fortunately, we have this information for Sethi II, contemporary of the last king of Ugarit, ʿAmmurāpi, in damaged letter RS 94.2167:

1	[*um*]-*ma* ᴹ*be-el* KUR.KURᴹᴱˢ ᴹ*wa-aš-ša-na-ri-a* ⌜LUGAL⌝ x x⌝	Lord of the land of Waššanaria,[1318] ⌜the king⌝ of ? ...
2	⌜*na*⌝-*ra-am* ᴰ*a-ma-na* DUMU ᴰUTU ᴹ*šu-ta-ia* LUGAL GAL LUGAL ᴷᵁᴿ*mu-uṣ-ri-i*	be⌝loved of Amun, son of the Sun (Re?), Sethi, the great king, king of Egypt
3	LUGAL LUGAL NE NE ⌜X (X) EN?⌝ *gab-be* kur.kurᵐᵉˢ *iʾ/hé-šapʾ-šaʾ-anʾ-niʾ-re*	king of kings, ⌜... ? ... lord?⌝ of all lands ... ? ...
4	*ša* [ᵈiškur *i*-]⌜*ra*⌝-*am-šu a-na* ᴹ*am-mu-ra-ap-e* LUGAL ᴷᵁᴿ*ú-ga-ri*⌜-*it*⌝	whom [Seth(?) lo]ves, to ʿAmmurāpi, king of Ugarit
5	[*qí*]-*bi-ma*	say.

In this header, the relations of Sethi to deities are expressed quite clearly. But we may note that the king does not address himself as the Sun.

In the case of addressing the Hittite and Egyptian kings by titulary reflecting some foreign conceptions, there is a fine line between what was written as a formality and what was perceived as such. On the one hand, we may argue that these fancy addresses were written mainly because the recipients demanded them. It would be politically unwise to ignore the self-presentation of the great kings. On the other hand, we cannot ascertain the perception of these relations from the Ugaritic perspective. The message of Talmiyānu may give us a faint idea about one individual who seems to have taken these conceptions at face value. Anyhow, the relations between the great kings and the petite king of Ugarit were constantly constructed around this imagery. Even when Ugarit wobbled in his attitude towards the king of Ḫatti, trying to play everything to its advantage, they did not do so by manipulating the established addresses. Instead, while proclaiming servitude and dependence, they here and there tried to avoid some demands placed upon them.[1319]

What is usually not visible in text editions and often ignored or discussed separately are seals impressed on the letters. While the primary function of the seals was to authenticate the communication, there were also broader symbolic contexts to which they referred.[1320] In the case of the rulers of Ḫatti, these might have occasionally supported the divine imagery connected with the

---

[1315] LUGAL DUMU SIG₅ ᴰUTU-*a* (l. 9').
[1316] E.g., RS 94.2002+: 19'–20' or RS 94.2176: 2.
[1317] RS 94.2002+: 1': ᴹ*mar-ni-ip-ta-aḫ* LUGAL GAL LUGAL ᴷᵁᴿ*mi-iṣ-ri-i*. His father Ramesses II is addressed in the same manner on l. 15'.
[1318] Reference to one of the names of Ramesses II. See *RSO XXIII*: 87.
[1319] See e.g., Devecchi 2019, or Halayqa 2010: esp. 304–305.
[1320] See, e.g., Bonatz 2007 on the visual representation of Hittite religious power, including references to seals.

office.[1321] Besides the iconography employing divine features and placing the monarchs at the side of deities,[1322] the accompanying inscriptions highlighted the status of the kings, for example, designating him as the "beloved of the Storm-God".[1323]

6.7 RELIGION AND SEALS

Seals and their imprints belong among the most iconic and most numerous objects from the ancient Near East. Hundreds of seals and about a hundred of their imprints were discovered at Ugarit, too.[1324] Seals of various kinds, designs, styles, quality, provenance, and date are a rich source, not only for visual studies. In this chapter, we shall try to briefly explore what the seals can reveal to us about the religious life of Ugaritic society. Despite the large number of these objects, this endeavour is rather complicated and much is revealed only from a comparative perspective. This necessarily entails numerous methodological issues.

To further complicate this issue, we are also stepping out of the delimited timeframe. According to the main publications of Ugaritic seals, the majority of them do not belong to the final level of Ugarit's existence. However, dating seals is very problematic. Due to the extensive reuse and longevity, there are grave discrepancies between their manufacture and later use. Stylistic analysis can hardly reveal the time of use with certainty, and dating based on stratigraphy is very insecure at Ugarit.[1325] We may illustrate this with the seal RS 14.023, inscribed in Ugaritic alphabetical cuneiform.[1326] According to Amiet, the seal is dated to the 15th or beginning of the 14th century, although he notes that "cette date est certainemet trop haute".[1327] Considering the widely accepted hypothesis that the Ugaritic cuneiform was put into use around the mid-13th century,[1328] the supposed date is indeed very high. Therefore, I am convinced that I can hardly follow the dates suggested in these publications as dates corresponding to the final use of the seals. Consequently, the reader should be aware that this chapter merges the available evidence and breaches the delimited timeframe.[1329] Any attempts to follow some developments within the Ugaritic material were therefore abandoned.[1330]

[1321] For the Hittite seals imprinted on tablets from the *Royal Palace* (the *Southern Archive*), see, e.g., *Ugaritica III*: 1–96.

[1322] See, e.g., the seal of Tudḫaliya IV on RS. 17.159; fig. 24 and 26 in *Ugaritica III*: 19, 21.

[1323] See, e.g., inscription on the seal of Šuppiluliuma I on RS 17.227, 17.340, and 17.373; see *PRU IV*: 30.

[1324] I have not been able to follow the exact number of seals discovered up to date. According to Schaeffer 1983: 7, during the campaigns up to 1970, ca. 900 cylinder-seals were discovered: 583 in stone, 214 in faience, 49 in haematite, and 12 in different materials. To these, he adds 90 imprints on tablets. Schaeffer has included the seals in haematite and faience in his volume. Amiet published additional 555 seals (different stones, haematite) in *RSO IX*. *RSO IX* and Schaeffer 1983 are to date the most extensive publications on seals from Ugarit. The number of cylinder-seals has undoubtedly increased during the following campaigns. In additions to the cylinder-seals, a number of stamp seals (more typical of the Hittite and Egyptian world) were discovered, too.

[1325] See, e.g., Amiet 1995: 239, who discusses this problem directly in connection with seals.

[1326] Published as *KTU* 6.17. The inscription reads *måšmn ytn*, "seal of YTN". This is one of very few seals engraved only with an inscription.

[1327] *RSO IX*: 185.

[1328] See Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit.*

[1329] At the same time, I ignore for example seal RS 10.029 (no. 23 in *RSO IX*) which is inscribed with title IGI-DU DINGIR GAL-GAL-E-NE, "the 'leader' of the great gods" which is clearly relevant to religion. However, it is dated to 17th/16th centuries BC, and the title does not correspond to any known priestly titles from our level. Here, it is reasonable to place it aside as too distant material.

[1330] Amiet 1995: 243 notes that during the last 200 years of Ugarit that he takes as the "final phase" as far as seals are regarded, there is no clear discernible development.

This section could have arguably been far broader. The variety of motives of seals, their inscriptions, objects on which they were imprinted, their different uses, materials, styles, and so forth all show the rich potential of seals as sources for historical and cultural discussion. The section could have also made greater use of comparative evidence. Such a broad discussion, unfortunately, goes beyond the limited scope of this thesis.

What can the seals reveal to us about the religious life at Ugarit? First, on the most obvious level, the seals can be used as a rich demonstration of divine iconography,[1331] a visual demonstration of ritual activities,[1332] and possibly even scenes from mythology. Numerous seals include "religious" iconography not as a central theme but as "filling" motives.[1333] Such depictions are not anyhow unique to Ugarit and are widespread across the ancient Near East.[1334] However, the issue of connecting this material to the lived realities is rather complicated. There are at least two perspectives that we should take into account. On the one hand, for many people,[1335] seals were objects encountered in everyday life. Therefore, their iconography was encountered, too, contributing to the construction of the shared visual imagery of the Ugaritic society. On the other hand, the motives depicted on seals quite often did not belong to the immediate cultural context of the city. The seals from Ugarit cover a broad spectrum of stylistic provenance, both spatial and historical. Seals in Mittanian, Hittite, Egyptian, Cypriote, Cretan, Mesopotamian, or mixed styles were unearthed here. This leads us to consider how the depictions could have been perceived and how well they reflected the worldviews of those viewing them. Undoubtedly, seals were part of the broader context of social imageries, presented in various visual works, myths, and so on, and the miniature was often rich in its references.[1336] But to detect these references and to connect them with the immediate cultural milieu seems an impossible case. We will address this problem of "recognizability" of the motives throughout this chapter while outlining the broader contexts in which seals were used.[1337] Once again, it will be useful to perceive these objects as actors,[1338] taking part in the lively interactions of the inhabitants.

[1331] See, e.g., nos. 140–183 in *RSO IX* for LBA seals depicting deities and other "genies".

[1332] See, e.g., nos. 184–256 in *RSO IX* for LBA seals depicting cultic scenes. To these, some of nos. 257–283 may be added, as they present parades, processions etc. which may be occasionally connected with cultic activities. Obviously, the interpretation of such motives may be often dubious.

[1333] As Collon 2005: 119 notes, what we perceive as "filling" motives may indeed have a great value for the owner.

[1334] For a general discussion of these motives on ancient Near Eastern seals, see Collon 2005: 164–171 (deities), 172–177 (temples and ritual ceremonies), 178–181 (myths, epics, legends), 151–153 (dance and music, often as part of ritual activities), or 182–186 (giants, demons, monsters, etc.).

[1335] The number of discovered seals at Ugarit demonstrates how widespread these objects were among the population. This corresponds to the situation in other areas of the ancient Near East of the second half of the second millennium BC. See Collon 2005: 58–74 and 102–103. The spread of seals was possibly connected with the invention of cutting wheel that considerably fastened the procedure, though at the expense of artistic value; see Pittman 2013: 323.

[1336] Ameri, Castello, Jamison, & Scott 2018: 4–5.

[1337] For a general introductory discussion on the use of the seals in the ancient Near East, see, e.g., Collon 2005: 113–119.

[1338] See Chapter *1.1 Remarks on Methodology* and introduction to Chapter *4 Texts and Religion*.

Figure 33 RS 6.277 (AO 17452, RSO IX, no.197). Seal depicting cultic activities(?).
Source: © 2005 Musée du Louvre / Christian Larrieu,
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010142201 [accessed 30th August 2023].

Figure 34 RS 1.[050] (AO 11731, RSO IX, no.143). Seal in Egyptianizing style, inscribed in Ugaritic (*ṣdqn*).
Source: © 2005 Musée du Louvre / Christian Larrieu,
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136458 [accessed 30th August 2023].

Figure 35 RS 6.129 (AO 17477, *RSO IX*, no. 170). Seal in Mittanian style.
Source: © 2012 Musée du Louvre / Antiquités orientales,
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010142226 [accessed 30th August 2023].

Figure 36 RS 6.307 (AO 17438, *RSO IX*, no. 258). Seal employing a pseudo-script(?).
Source: © 2005 Musée du Louvre / Christian Larrieu,
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010142187 [accessed 30ᵗʰ August 2023].

Figure 37 RS 9.273 (AO 19408, *RSO IX*, no. 158). Seal with Baʿal as "giant".
Source: © 2005 Musée du Louvre / Christian Larrieu,
available at https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010144174 [accessed 30ᵗʰ August 2023].

6.7.1   SEALS, IDENTITY, AND PERCEPTION

The "primary" use of seals, i.e., marking of objects – such as sealing of tables or labels,[1339] is well attested at Ugarit. However, this, by far, does not exhaust the purpose of these objects. For most of the seals, this use is not even attested. The vast majority of sealed documents come from the *Royal Palace* and appear on legal documents, for example, the royal grants[1340] or edicts from the Hittite king or the king of Karkemiš.[1341] Here, the seals are an important element in symbolic communication. In marking, seals give authority to documents and authenticate the political power behind them. As we have noted in the previous chapter, the seals on the letter-edicts of the Hittite rules may further communicate the divine status of the office backing the given decision. Unusually, seals imprinted on letters might have also been used to replace the header, as is the case of the seal of ʿAmmiṯṯamru III.[1342] Here, the connection of seals with identity – both of the individual and the office – is clearly visible. The special case of the royal seals is discussed further below. Now, we shall briefly address the issue of identity and seals in general.

[1339] For labels, see van Soldt 1989b. Labels were usually inscribed, indicating the labelled material. Interestingly, some labels were attached to tablets (see van Soldt 1989b: 384–386). Labels were not always sealed.

[1340] See Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities* for a discussion on sealing of the royal legal documents, see eps. Rowe 2006: 184–199.

[1341] See *Ugaritica III*: 1–96.

[1342] *KTU* 2.82.

When we consider seals as authentication documents, it seems clear that they must be somehow connected with the identity of the individual they represent.[1343] From this, one could easily reach a conclusion that the motives depicted on seals may reflect the personal preferences of the owner. In regard to religion, for example, the deities depicted could reveal the owners' devotion to them, the scene depicting a sacrifice or a feast may be suitable for an owner from a priestly class, etc. However, this notion is hard to establish with any certainty and may be somewhat misleading. While there is a great variety of motives, there is also a great uniformity. This suggests that there was more or less limited repertoire available, allowing only restricted space for selection of the seal and motives to reflect individual preferences. On the other hand, the reuse and especially recarving of seals[1344] suggest that personal preferences were indeed reflected in the engravings. The dynastic *Seal of Yaqaru* is an example of this (see below). The inscription of this seal, originating in the Isin-Larsa period, was recarved for King Yaqaru, possibly in the 15th century BC.[1345] In the case of inscriptions, the personalization is clearly visible. In the case of motives, this is far more difficult to follow. Still, there are some cases where reasonable interpretations have been suggested. Analysing changes in figural engravings, J. Smith has argued that traders participating in the long-distance trade have added to their seals' motives of cultures with which they were in contact.[1346] Thus, some motives were recognizable in the trader's homeland, others in his business destination. The practice of reengraving inscriptions and depictions both attest to some level of personalization. Unfortunately for us, inscriptions identifying owners and their occupations are very scarce at Ugarit.

One of the few examples where we are able to follow the synergy between the inscription and the style is the seal of Ṭipṭi-Baʿal, the impression of which is visible on RS 17.325,[1347] 17.086+, and 17.102.[1348] (fig. 38). His name, clearly West Semitic,[1349] is rendered there in Egyptian hieroglyphs. The Egyptian style may be probably connected with his rich relations with Egypt.[1350] Rather than considering this as a marker of "performative ethnicity," as suggested by Boyes,[1351] I would connect it with the just-mentioned phenomenon of seals in long-distance trade relations. Still, this style choice clearly indicates personal preferences, whether these were motivated by pragmatism for recognizability, "ethnic" self-identification, or a liking for Egyptian style. This seal is also informative

---

[1343] Explorations of the connection of identity and seals is not unaddressed problem, see, e.g., Ameri, Castello, Jamison, & Scott 2018: 6–7 with further references.

[1344] See, e.g., Collon 2005: 120–122 for a general discussion and J. Smith 2018 for a more detailed discussion pertaining to the immediate cultural milieu of Ugarit.

[1345] J. Smith 2018: 104, Roche-Hawley 2012: 137–138.

[1346] J. Smith 2018: 95, 97, 115.

[1347] *Ugaritica III*: 85–86, figs. 106, 107. Initially, the seal has been attributed to queen Ṯarriyelli by Schaeffer, because the letters discuss her land transactions. Only later, it has been demonstrated that they refer to Ṭipṭi-Baʿal, her son-in-law and trade ambassador; see *Ugaritica V*: 261, Singer 1999: 696–697.

[1348] *Ugaritica V*: 261–264, 343, nos. 159–161.

[1349] As stressed by Vita & Galán 1997: 712–713, the etymology of the name itself does not need to correspond with the place of origin or ethnicity (if such a concept is even applicable to the ancient material). In *KTU* 4.775: 13, he (if this is the same person) was addressed as *ṯpṯbʿl mṣr*[*y*], "Ṭipṭi-Baʿal, the Egyptian". Does this indicate the place of origin or was is a nickname? We may also consider the possibility that the hieroglyphic inscription naming him as *spd.bʿl* was not a phonetic transference of Ugaritic name to Egyptian writing, but it was the other way around. It is possible that ṯpṯ-bʿl and its ideographic rendering DI.KUD-ᴰU (RS 20.227: rev. 5, see *Ugaritica V*, no. 57) was Ugaritic reinterpretation of an Egyptian name? But this seems less likely to me due to the position of Ṭipṭi-Baʿal at Ugarit.

[1350] Boyes 2021: 202, Singer 1999: 697. See also Vita & Galán 1997 for a discussion on this individual.

[1351] Boyes 2021: 202.

on another level. For the engraving of the theophoric component, Baʿal, the Storm-God, a Seth determinative is used. At least in a hint, this seal is connected with the phenomenon of transcultural understanding of deities. The association of the West Semitic Baʿal and Egyptian Seth has been noted for a long time.[1352] In the case of Ṯipṭi-Baʿal, we may reasonably suppose that he was familiar with both of the cultures between which he was intermediating. Therefore, this seal may represent a case where the intentions, personal preferences, individualization, and understanding of broader cultural and religious contexts was understood by the owner. Still, this case is unique, and such an interpretation cannot be simply extrapolated to more common motives of seals.
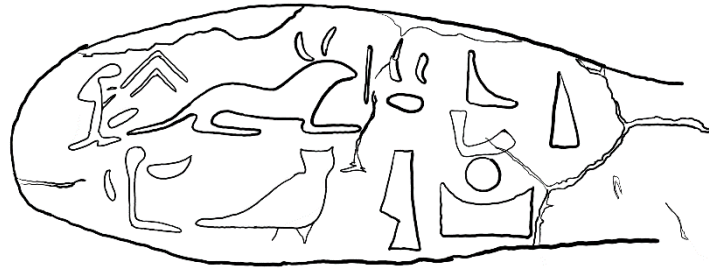
Figure 38 Imprint of the stamp seal of Ṯipṭi-Baʿal on RS 17.325.
Drawing by the author after photo by Ellis (*RSTI photos*),
available at https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/ochre?uuid=6f0995aa-c2b2-476c-a097-a6ebc61e2991&load
[accessed 30th August 2023].

As a counter-example, we may give RS 6.307[1353] (fig. 36) or RS 4.409.[1354] These seals seem to include fake inscriptions, i.e., engraving imitating writing, a content of which cannot be understood. In this case, it may be reasonably argued that the owners wanted to make us of the potency of writing. Whether they were aware of the fictitious character of the script and tried to intentionally fool their colleagues or were themselves fooled by the seal engraver cannot be decided. In any case, the "understanding" of depictions is here shifted to another level. What was probably understood here was the importance and authority of writing itself – even if not what the writing was. This was, after all, the case for any illiterate person encountering any written document. Possibly, this can be extrapolated to other visual representations, too. The seals in foreign styles might have been recognised for their importance and prestige. The recurring motives supported rather than undermined their symbolic relevance. The limited number of motives might have compensated for the need to understand other cultures in complexity. The foreign depictions might have been vaguely understood or even reinterpreted and distorted – but appreciated. Possibly, we can compare the situation with the situation of foreign art in contemporary Western societies. A bust of Buddha, an image of some Indian deity, Egyptian papyrus, a Greek-style bowl, a mandala-themed garment, a dream catcher, and so on and so forth, are objects that are often vaguely recognised but hardly ever anything like in the contexts of their societies of origin. On the other hand, this often does not mean they are only decorative art or markers of wealth, devoid of any symbolic or even religious value.

Yet another approach to exploring the relations of lived practices and depictions on seals may be to follow correlations between deities depicted on seals and ritual texts or onomastics. One could, for example, expect the Storm-God to be overrepresented on the seals. However, this is not the case.

[1352] See, e.g., Válek 2023 for discussion and further references. Note that association is not overall equation.
[1353] *RSO IX*, no. 258.
[1354] *KTU* 6.73, *RSO IX*, no. 403.

Amiet notes that this deity is seldomly depicted, and if so, he is depicted rather poorly (fig. 37).[1355] On the other hand, these unique cases are those which may be understood as reflecting some personal preferences for deity and not for well-known motives or high prestige.

The desire to put seals on display in order to communicate prestige is often mentioned. The materials, motives, style, script,[1356] or quality of artistic workmanship may be regarded as reflections of the social or economic status of the owner. However, we are not able to properly follow such nuances in the material.[1357] To base social status on these traits may be somewhat misleading. For example, the already mentioned seal of King ʿAmmiṯtamru III is, in my opinion, very poorly executed.[1358] Many types of scenes appear both in excellent and poor craftsmanship and on different types of material. The desire and intention to communicate prestige should not be misplaced for the real social/economic standing of the person.[1359]

6.7.2 Seals as Amulets and Votive Objects

There seems to be a substantial difference in the use of inscribed and uninscribed seals at Ugarit. According to the study of Magness-Gardiner, only ca. 4.5 % of seals were inscribed, but 95 % of seal impressions were inscribed.[1360] The vast majority of seal impressions belong to the sphere of royal deeds, international politics, and palace administration. We may ask whether most seals were even intended to be used as "seals" and their applications did not survive[1361] or if their primary purpose was different.

Relatively often, we may encounter suggestion that seals were used as "amulets". Most of the time, such a thesis is not further supported by any arguments. As far as I know, the most detailed discussion on this topic was given by Goff.[1362] She offers examples of medical or ritual texts where seals are mentioned. The uses of seals in such practices are various – their material may be referenced,

---

[1355] Amiet 1995: 243. He gives RS 9.273 (fig. 37) as an example of poorly depicted Storm-God. For this depiction, see also discussion in Cornelius 1994: 172 (BM 5). According to Collon 2005: 183, this kind of depiction is often used for "giants".

[1356] See, e.g., Roche-Hawley 2012: 135–138 for the discussion on palaeographic syllabaries. According to her, the scribes who worked with the "Palaeographic Sᵃ" were better prepared to read (and to create) old or archaizing seal inscriptions. An example of such an archaic seal may be the seal of Yaqaru which employed archaizing script – archaizing already at the time of its supposed recarving.

[1357] Amiet 1995: 240, 243. For comparison, see also Pittman 2013: 338.

[1358] For references to images, see below.

[1359] The saying "cloths make the man" goes or seals the same as for cloths. This proverbial statement was well narrated in the *Poor Man of Nippur*; for translation of this narrative, see e.g., Foster 2005: 931–936.

[1360] Magness-Gardiner 1987: 77–79. She also provides comparisons with Mari and Alalaḫ. Each site shows quite different percentage, suggesting different conventions through time and space. For a general discussion on variety and changes in the use of inscriptions on seals, see Collon 2005: 105–107. Of course, the exact percentage for Ugarit should be updated. As far as I can tell from the publication of seals and sealed tablets, the ratio remains decidedly in favour of uninscribed seals and inscribed impressions, maybe even more than Magness-Gardiner suggested. J. Smith 2018: 108 suggests that vast majority of inscribed seals at Ugarit date back to the Old Babylonian period. However, there are also several seals with the Ugaritic cuneiform. See, e.g., *KTU* 6.5, 6.15, 6.17, 6.63, 6.66, 6.69, 6.73, 6.74, and 6.95, to which we may add impression of the seal of ʿAmmiṯtamru III (e.g., *KTU* 2.82, 6.23, or 6.75) or unpublished seal from the *Great Building* of the *Rampart Area* (see note 639). Sometimes, the seals inscribed in the alphabetical cuneiform bear no further depictions.

[1361] This may easily be the case. For example, seals could have been used to seal transported/stored material and with opening, the seal was broken and discarded. Also, the impressed seals belong in majority to the context of the archives of the *Royal Palace*, where there was a tendency to store the tablets for longer periods and more systematically.

[1362] Goff 1956: 23–37. See also short discussion in Collon 2005: 119.

possibly in connection with the magical connotations of various stones;[1363] they might have been imprinted as part of the ritual; the imagery of sealing may be used symbolically. Interesting are also Kassite seals, many having a prayer inscribed on them.[1364] In addition, there is some evidence that seals were worn, which is sometimes understood as a support for their amuletic value.[1365] This provides us with a broader comparative perspective, demonstrating the possibility of this use. Unfortunately, at Ugarit itself, there is hardly any conclusive evidence to support such practices. Some indications of wearing of seals may be seen in seal-rollers that might have been hung on a string,[1366] but this by itself does not yet indicate wearing for protective/amuletic value as decorative or practical purposes are plausible options, too. These options are, of course, not necessarily exclusive. Next, a stamp seal RS 25.188[1367] portrays a winged composite animal, possibly a kind of sphinx, and bears an inscription interpreted by some as *åld*. This word is then connected with Mesopotamian ᴰALAD, i.e., *šēdu*, the Mesopotamian protective deity.[1368] On the other hand, this connection is very uncertain, and the reading itself is not clear.[1369] We may also argue that the depiction of deities or mythical creatures themselves could have played an amuletic function[1370] and that the very act of imprinting an object included a protective symbolic function. Here, we may actually note a slight double standard for the ancient people and ourselves. But rather than discarding the protective and amuletic interpretation of seals, I would like to point out that signatures actually, in part, work like magic, too. Symbolic communication with all of its social consequences is present in both cases. The administrative and protective uses of seals are two sides of the same coin. However, in regard to depictions, there are numerous seals devoid of any imagery we would connect with religion or possible protective function. Therefore, this function was not dependent on the depictions themselves, even though some additional divine support might have been perceived on occasion. This remains unprovable.

Another connection between seals and ritual practices is sometimes sought in presenting seals as votive offerings.[1371] While there are several seals from Ugarit discovered in the vicinities of the *Temple of Baʿal* and *Temple/Terrace of Dagan*, there are none about which we could claim with any certainty that they were used as votive offerings to deities. Many seals were also discovered in a burial context. We could speculate whether the seals were placed in tombs because of their personal

---

[1363] See, e.g., Collon & Finkel 1997 for a brief exploration of magical connotations of seals, not only connected with their material. This I believe would need far broader examination.

[1364] See also Collon 2005: 119 with examples, or *ORACC*, *Kassite Seal Inscriptions*, available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/csik/kassitesealinscriptions/ [accessed 23rd June 2023].

[1365] Collon 2005: 108–112 and 2001.

[1366] Schaeffer 1983: 71, Collon 2005: 110. See also Boyes 2021: 149 who refers to an inscribed bead RIH 86/[03] as a possible attestation of wearing inscribed objects (the bead is pierced with a loop).

[1367] *KTU* 6.95. For photo, see Dalix 2002: 52.

[1368] E.g., *DUL*: 52.

[1369] Dalix 2002: 47–49 suggests reading *dlq*, connecting the seal with a known anthroponym from Ugarit. The reading depends on the trust in the author of the seal. While *KTU* reads the inscription as written "correctly" on the seal, Dalix reads the text as seen on the imprint. On the seal itself, the signs seem to be written better than on the imprint, therefore, I would assume the engraver did not write the inscription in mirror image as he should have. But both options remain plausible.

[1370] For example,

[1371] E.g., Collon 2005: 131 or Pittman 2013: 320.

connection to the deceased or as special burial gifts.[1372] Both options are possible and non-exclusive. I am not able to prove any of these hypotheses. Possibly, further detailed research of archaeological contexts can reveal more, but this goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

6.7.3   ROYAL SEALS[1373]

We have already mentioned the royal seals several times. These deserve at least a short separate discussion. Several of the kings of Ugarit used the *Seal of Yaqaru*.[1374] In this regard, we may consider it a dynastic seal. It bears an inscription: *ia-qa-rum* DUMU *ni-iq-má-du* LUGAL [URU]*ú-ga-ri-ti*, "Yaqaru, son of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit".[1375] This initially led to the consideration of Yaqaru as the founder of the Ugaritic dynasty to whom this seal was referring. It has also been suggested that the seated figure was (deified) Yaqaru himself, fitting this imagery into the context of the deification of deceased rulers at Ugarit.[1376] This interpretation, however, is by most scholars no longer followed due to the evidence of the *royal genealogy*.[1377] It suggests that in the emic view, Yaqaru was far from being the founder of the Ugaritic dynasty. This seal should, therefore, be seen rather in the context of reuse, recarving, and inheritance of seals. As has been mentioned above, the seal had probably been recarved for Yaqaru himself. Consequently, the iconography does not have to be hastily connected to the divine kingship; it rather makes use of a long tradition of Mesopotamian seals.[1378] The perception of the divine and royal motives at Ugarit remains unclear. This does not anyhow lower its symbolic power; it only shifts its source. The dynastic seal was endowed with authority and connected with the royal office for generations, and it communicated legitimacy.[1379] Its artistic motive might have

---

[1372] There is also a very dubious reference to a practice of sealings of coffins based on the *Epic of Aqhat* (*KTU* 1.19 III: 41). See, e.g., *DUL*: 445, cf. reading of Parker 1997: 74.

[1373] For drawings of Ugaritic royal seals in scale, see Rowe 2013: 226; available at https://www.ub.edu/ipoa/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/20132AuOrMarquez.pdf [accessed 30th August 2023].

[1374] See, e.g., di Paolo 2013, Rowe 2006: 184–199, Auerbach 1991, *Ugaritica III*: 66–77, or *PRU III*: XL–XLIII. This use of the seal may be connected to all the kings of Ugarit since Niqmaddu III, i.e., for all the kings attested in the Ugaritic archives; see Auerbach 1991: 20 and Rowe 2006: 185–186.

[1375] *PRU III*: XLI.

[1376] See, e.g., Wyatt 1997: 788, n. 36[2005: 145]. However, the divine nature of the seated figure is impossible to establish in the cultural context of Ugarit; see also di Paolo 2013: 81. For further discussion, see Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*. It is true that in one royal deed, RS 16.145 (*PRU III*: 169), the (living) king is named as Yaqaru and not by his own name. But this single instance is not enough to suggest that Yaqaru could was used as an honorific title of any king of Ugarit. See also the discussion in Singer 1999: 610–613.

[1377] See discussion in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*. Only severely damaged Ugaritic version of this genealogy (*KTU* 1.113) was known before the publication of the logosyllabic versions by Arnaud in 1998. The previous interpretation was in light of *KTU* 1.113 quite reasonable. Compare the reconstruction of the Ugaritic dynasties in Kitchen 1977 and Arnaud 1998.

[1378] The origins of this scene on seals can be dated back to the Akkadian period; Pittman 2013: 336. It has then been in extensive use during Ur III period and also throughout the Old Babylonian period. In the Amorite world, similar seals were given to high officials by the king. See, e.g., di Paolo 2013: 83–87 with further references and notes on the development of the seal. See also Collon 2005: 123–130, 531–538 or Pittman 2013: 234–238. The history of the motives is only of secondary importance to the active use and symbolic connotations of the seal at Ugarit. Reuse of MBA seals by LBA rulers of Syrian states is not unique for Ugarit; see Auerbach 1991: 19. I also leave aside speculations on how Yaqaru himself came to own this seal.

[1379] Auerbach 1991: 28 would also add "timelessness".

been rather secondary. The creation of a copy[1380] of this seal suggests that the authority and symbolic power were not limited to the original object itself but might have been further transferred. This indicates some balance between the need for continuity and the need for practical use of the seal as an administrative tool.

The dynastic seal is not the only royal seal attested at Ugarit. There are also several seal impressions that belonged to individual rulers. We have already mentioned a stamp seal of ꜥAmmiṯṯamru III, which was engraved only with an inscription in alphabetical cuneiform: *mišmn ꜥmyḏtmr mlk ủgrt*, "seal of ꜥAmmiṯṯamru, the king of Ugarit".[1381] ꜥAmmiṯṯamru himself also used the dynastic seal of Yaqaru. In several cases, he used both of the seals.[1382] The personal seal of ꜥAmmiṯṯamru is devoid of any religious imagery. It is possible that he had it created to promote the use of the new Ugaritic script. It may indeed belong to one of the first documents preserved in this script.[1383] The symbolic power was, in this case, shifted to yet another dimension.

Yet another personal royal seal belonged to Niqmaddu. It is possible that it originally belonged to Niqmaddu III because this seal appears on a royal deed issued by ꜥAmmiṯṯamru III.[1384] The reason for the use of this seal instead of the dynastic one remains unclear. It may indicate that any of the royal seals of Ugarit might have been used as the dynastic one, but the evidence suggests a strong preference for the *Seal of Yaqaru*.[1385] This seal could have been then once again reused by Niqmaddu IV, as it is attested on a tablet inscribed in alphabetical cuneiform.[1386] This kind of reuse by the ruler of the same name is far less problematic.

Ibirānu VI[1387] and ꜥAmmurāpi II[1388] owned their personal seals, too. It is interesting that none of the successors of ꜥAmmiṯṯamru III employed the alphabetical cuneiform on their personal seals. It isn't easy to ascertain the dynamics of the use of the seals by the Ugaritic royalty. What remains clear is that the seals were an integral part of the royal administration, and they possessed symbolic power that had real-life consequences. At the same time, they continuously contributed to the construction of royal ideology, reminding the legitimacy and power of the royal office. This short discussion on royal seals may be further connected with the following chapter, where the construction of royal ideology is discussed.

[1380] See the impression of the original and the copy on RS 16.393A; *Ugaritica III*: 73 and 76. The copy was not an exact replica; J. Smith 2018: 104 suggests it shows signs of a Kassite style. An interesting comparative evidence may be given from Ur III period where an original and duplicate were impressed and confirmed by a judge to confirm the validity; see J. Smith 2018: 105.

[1381] See, e.g., Pardee 2007b: 188 and 194–195.

[1382] E.g., RS 16.270 (see *Ugaritica III*: 83, fig. 104, *KTU* 6.23, and *PRU III*: 41), RS 15.111 (*KTU* 3.2), or RS 16.382 (*KTU* 3.5).

[1383] Pardee 2007b: 188.

[1384] RS 17.174 (*PRU VI*, no. 29). See also discussion in Rowe 2006: 196, n. 66 with further references. It has been suggested that the seal was only a later ratification of the tablet.

[1385] See Rowe 2006: 197.

[1386] *KTU* 3.4. Unfortunately, this redemption document does not name the king who issued it. Its connection with Niqmaddu IV is therefore unclear.

[1387] RS 18.280, see discussion in Rowe 2006: 196.

[1388] RS 96.2042 (= *RSO XVIII*, no. 82 = *KTU* 6.105). The inscription simply reads "seal of ꜥAmmurāpi, king of Ugarit".

7 Politics and Religion

The last chapter of this thesis deals with the domain of politics and its relation to religion. It has already been referred to numerous times – the *Royal Palace*, the centre of political power and city administration of Ugarit, was interwoven with nearly every topic discussed so far. Religion was a part of the international politics of Ugarit – deities were an essential feature of symbolic communication in letters and vassal treaties, and tribute was delivered to Hittite deities. On occasion, cultic issues were also addressed in international correspondence. On the domestic level, the *Royal Palace* has significantly contributed to the organization of cults and was involved in economic relations with priests and temples.

At the same time, we have also observed how the activities of the palace and the royal family were dispersed throughout the city. The cultic activities involving the king were organised and administered from the houses associated with the clergy, namely the *House of the High Priest* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. Numerous trade and political relations of the palace were mediated through non-palatial households, too. Namely, the *House of Urtēnu* yielded multiple international documents of both private and royal nature. It also yielded tablets directly related to the royal ideology, namely *KTU* 1.161, the royal funerary ritual, or copies of the "divine names" of the Ugaritic dynasty.

The connection between religion and politics, as it appears in the sources, is an interesting and complex mosaic where numerous perspectives appear. Van Soldt noted that the king was receiving his power and legitimacy from the deities on the ideological level, but at the political level, he received it from the Hittite king and his deputy in Karkemiš.[1389] The reality was even far more complicated. Now, we may observe only a smaller section of different perspectives and contexts, each portraying the kings differently.[1390] We shall explore this mosaic through three core topics: 1) the royal participation in cults, 2) the role of divinatory practices within the political sphere, and 3) the broad topic of construction of royal ideology. The third issue will be explored particularly from the perspective of the theory of social myths applied to the Ugaritic royal epics narratives and by addressing the problem of the "divine nature" of Ugaritic kings.

7.1 Kings and Cults

We have already mentioned numerous times that the kings of Ugarit participated in the cults of Ugarit. What has not been stressed enough is that cults are the best-documented sphere of interrelations between politics and religion.[1391] In sum, there are thirty texts mentioning the king, his son or daughter, *dbḥ mlk(t)* ("the sacrifices of the king/the queen"), the palace, objects belonging to the king, or deities *mlk* and *mlkm* in ritual contexts. The following table summarises the situation:

[1389] Van Soldt 2010b: 248. See also Hill, Jones & Morales 2013: 6–9 on the summary of the issue of the kingship and its cosmos connotations.

[1390] Similar approach has been chosen by Hill, Jones & Morales 2013; see esp. p. 25–26.

[1391] Among studies on the royal cults of Ugarit, see, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 135–272, 1993, Wyatt 2007a, or Tsumura 1999. There is only a limited overlap among the scholarly conceptions of royal cults. This shows fragility of the suggested interpretations and calls for greater caution.

KTU/RS	*mlk* (as a ritual actor)	*bn(t) mlk* (son/daughter)	*bt mlk* (palace)	*dbḥ mlk* *dbḥ mlkt*	*mlk* (as an owner of a ritual object)	*mlk(m)* (as a deity)
1.23[1392]	7 + *mlkt*[1393]					
1.39			12			
1.40	28'[1394]					
1.41 ("=" 1.87)	[3], [6], [44], [46], 48, 50, ⌜53⌝		20			
1.43	23, 25		2, 10			
1.46	[10], 10					
1.47 (list)						33
1.87 ("=" 1.41)	3, 7, [48], [50], [52], ⌜55⌝, ⌜57⌝		[21]			
1.90	1, 22					
1.91			7, 10, 11	2 (*mlk*)		
1.105	20'[1395]					
1.106	10, 17, 24, 26, 33		10, 12,			
1.109	2					
1.111	3					17
1.112	9, ⌜11⌝, 15–17	6, ⌜6/7⌝				
1.115	1					
1.118 (list)						32
1.119	⌜4⌝, 5, 14, ⌜24'⌝					25'
1.126	⌜17'⌝					
1.132	8				3	
1.139			13'			
1.148			18			no(?)[1396]
1.161	11, 12, 25, 26[1397]	32[1398]			15	
1.164	1, 3, 11					
1.168	1, 8, ⌜23⌝					
1.170				⌜1⌝ (*mlkt*)		
1.171	4', 6'		1'			

[1392] *KTU* 1.23, the so-called *Feast of Googly Gods* may also be cautiously counted among the ritual texts with strong narrative component and with royal connotations. The interpretations vary so much that I have decided to leave it completely aside from the following discussion. For further reading, see, e.g., M. Smith 2006, Tsumura 1999: 228–236, or Foley 1980.

[1393] Their active role in the ritual may be disputed, but they are mentioned.

[1394] Here, Niqmaddu (IV) is mentioned by name – sacrifices are made for his well-being.

[1395] In lines 7' *mlk* is used as an epithet of Rašap and in line 9' as a part of theonym.

[1396] *KTU* 1.148 is in some of its sections parallel to deity lists *KTU* 1.47, *KTU* 1.118, RS 20.024, and RS 92.2004. However, *mlkm* are not present here. Indeed, the ending of the enumeration of sacrifices deviates from the lists. It leaves out *ủṯẖt*, *mlkm*, *šlm*. From the final deities, it keeps only *knr*, the "lyre". Pardee 2002a: 102–103, n. 38 has suggested that these deities are actually sacrificed to, but not mentioned.

[1397] Mentions in this tablet refer to ꜥAmmiṯtamru (III) and Niqmaddu (IV) by name. Both are addressed as *mlk*, while ꜥAmmurāpi is in this tablet bereft of this title. The text also mentions queen Ṯarriyelli by name.

[1398] Sons of ꜥAmmurāpi II (*bnh*) are hailed.

1.173	14'					
RS 20.024 (list)						32
RS 92.2004 (list)						⌜42⌝

In sum, about a third of known ritual texts may be associated with royalty in one way or another.[1399] We may briefly explore what the ritual texts say about the king. The instructions given to him are one of the most elaborate descriptions of ritual activities explicitly mentioned in the Ugaritic tablets. Unfortunately, even these are very austere. Here, we will not consider the precise ritual aspect of these statements or try to reconstruct the rituals. Instead, our attention will be directed to what some of these statements can tell us about the position of the king in relation to cultic activities and vice versa.

Most often, the texts make instructions concerning the ritual purity of the king, preparing him for cultic activities and then releasing him from the consecrated state.[1400] For this, a paired expression is used: *yrtḥṣ . mlk . brr*, "king will wash himself clean"[1401] and *ḫl . mlk.*, "the king will be free (of further cultic obligations)".[1402] These statements indicate that the king was not clean by himself, always ready to be in direct contact with deities, but had to be prepared to engage in ritual activities.[1403]

In several instances, the king is also instructed to perform the sacrificial act: *ydbḥ mlk*, "the king must/is to sacrifice",[1404] or *mlk ynṣl l tᶜy*, "the king will move away to perform the *tᶜ*-sacrifices".[1405] In my opinion, these instructions suggest that the king was not the principal sacrificer. If this were the case, such statements would be superficial because the very act of sacrifice is usually not explicit but only implicit.

[1399] Obviously, the precise number depends on what we will consider "ritual" text. For example, I have included the lists or administrative *KTU* 1.91 in my table, but discarded divinatory texts or prayers, some of which mention the king, too (see below). Tsumura 1999: 216 calculated that nearly 75 % of ritual texts mention the king, but he has worked with a very uncomplete list of ritual texts.

[1400] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 28.

[1401] Following translation of Pardee 2002a, e.g., p. 29. *KTU* 1.46:10; 1.109: 2; 1.112: 10–11, 16–17; 1.105: 20'; 1.119: 5; 1.106: 26–27, 1.87: 3, 55; and 1.41: 3. There are also variant expressions stating the king's purity: *mlk yṯb brr*, "the king remains/returns? clean" (*KTU* 1.87: 7–8; 1.41: 6–7), *mlk brr*, "the king, still clean/pure" (*KTU* 1.87: 48–51; 1.41: 44, 46).

[1402] Following translation of Pardee 2002a, e.g., p. 28. *KTU* 1.46: 9–10; 1.112: 9, 14–15; 1.119: 4, 24'; 1.106: 23–24, 33; 1.87: 52, 57; 1.41: 48, 53; 1.132: 28; and 1.173: 18'.

[1403] An interesting reference to ritual restrictions of access to some sacred spaces may be seen in statement *šˀn⌜m⌝ . l yšt*, "he [the king] will put his sandals (back?) on"; *KTU* 1.164: 2, following Pardee 2002a: 75. However, this understanding should be taken with caution, as other explanations than access restrictions are possible, too. Contrary to my relatively down-to-earth understanding of purification and release, see Wyatt 2007a: 56–57 who sees these as a kind of rites of passage that changes the ontological nature of the king during the ritual. This issue is also further noted in Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*

[1404] Following translation of Pardee 2002a, e.g., p. 52, 66. *KTU* 1.119: 13–14; 1.87: 52; 1.41: 50; 1.115: 1; 1.164: 1, 3.

[1405] *KTU* 1.90: 22–23; following translation of Pardee 2002a: 74. On the other hand, *DUL*: 683 translates this as "the king ceases as an officiant". See also notes in Chapter *6.2.1.2.1 tᶜy*.

The king is also engaged in vocal activities – he is present during recitations,[1406] or himself performs a recitation.[1407] In one instance, the king is even instructed to speak "according to his heart".[1408] Because this part of the ritual took place on a roof, we may speculate this "speech" was directed towards the ritual participants.[1409] However, the possibility that this was a moment of private prayer of the king cannot be excluded.

In several texts, the king is said to look at deities.[1410] This possibly indicates that the king was sometimes allowed to approach[1411] deities very intimately. Once again, the very fact of mentioning this act is, in the context of Ugaritic ritual texts, an indication of the unusual nature of it. In *KTU* 1.43, the king is also portrayed as in direct contact with the deities: *mlk ylk lqḥ ỉlm*, "The king will go take the gods".[1412] A procession of the participants then follows this taking of the gods.

In light of the high proportion of ritual texts belonging to the sphere of "royal cults" and the perceived importance of ritual acts performed by the king, some scholars suggested that the king was the primary sacrificer and officiant of Ugaritic cults.[1413] But there is, in my opinion, nothing in the sources from Ugarit to indicate beyond reasonable doubt that he was thought of as the one who was ideally responsible for all of the cults and who was the mediator between the human and divine realms. The mentions may, quite on the contrary, show how this situation was unusual.[1414]

The archaeology of the texts may corroborate that the king and the palace were not in direct control of the ritual activities. Of the thirty texts mentioned above, six were discovered in the *House*

[1406] *KTU* 1.106: 16–17: *w šr yšr šr pảmt l pn mlk*, "and the singer shall sing a song, several times, before the king"; following Pardee 2002a: 55.

[1407] *KTU* 1.41: 44–45 and 46, 1.87: 48–49 and 50–51: *mlk brr rgm yṯṯb // rgm yṯb mlk brr*, "the king, still clean/pure, will repeat the recitation"; following Pardee 2002a: 61 (reconstruction) and 64 (translation).

[1408] *KTU* 1.41: 52–53: *k lbh / yr[gm] mlᵉkᵓ*.

[1409] Gilbert 2021: 389–390 suggested to connect this activity with the roof of the *Pillared Building* in the *Royal Zone* rather than with the roof of some temple; Pardee 2002a: 57 suggested the (not discovered) temple of Ilu as the locus of this performace.

[1410] *KTU* 1.90: 1–2: *yph . mlk / rᵉšᵓp . ḥgb*, "the king must look at Rašap-ḤGB"; similarly, in *KTU* 1.168, the king looks at Rašap-ḤGB (l. 1) and at ˤAnat-SLḪ/Z (l. 8). The instruction to look at some deity may also appear in destroyed context in *KTU* 1.164: 11.

[1411] *DUL*: 656–657 indicates that the verb *p-h-y* may also be used as "to visit".

[1412] *KTU* 1.43: 23; following Pardee 2002a: 23.

[1413] See, e.g., Kim & Human 2008: 1485–1486, van Soldt 2010b: 249, Wyatt 2007a: 57–58 and more. For example, del Olmo Lete states that *dbḥ*, the sacrificial act, was a peculiar function of the king (1995: 38); that the Ugaritic cult as a whole may be considered royal because the king participated in it (2017b[1993]: 421); or that king assumed his status through a *hieros gamos* ritual which was part of his enthronement (with reference to *KTU* 1.132 mentioning the "bed of Pidray"; 2017b[1993]: 425–426; see also discussion in Wyatt 2007a: 66–68 of 2005[1999a]: 196). Wyatt further connects the priestly role of the king with the "royal titulary", 2007a: 58–62.

The priestly role of the king is also connected to the visual material, namely to depictions on the *Baˤal au Foudre* stela (RS 4.427, see, e.g., Yon 2006: 134–135 and *RSO VI*: 294–299) and on the cultic stand form the vicinity of the *Temple of Rhytons* (RS 78.041+81.3659, see, e.g., Yon 2006: 152–153). The narrative materials may also be invited into the discussion (see, e.g., Wyatt 2007a: 43–54), but these in my understanding do not provide better evidence than the ritual texts themselves. Still, they surely support the image of the king who makes sacrifices and is in contact with the deities. But as far as I understand them, they do not depict the king as the only one who would have access to deities or as the principal sacrificer.

[1414] Del Olmo Lete understands the situation in exact opposition to me; e.g., 2017b[1993]: 428.

of the High Priest[1415] and twelve in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.[1416] Only three come from the *Royal Palace,*[1417] and five from the royal residence in Ras Ibn-Hani.[1418] We may add the *House of Urtēnu* to these locations with two texts[1419] and the *House of Rapānu* with one.[1420] The houses associated with clergy and priestly institutions dominated the royal cult. This also applies to the rituals that explicitly took place in the palace. It is interesting to notice that the palace as an institution actually dispersed many of its activities throughout the city. The dispersion of cults may be compared with the "outsourcing" of diplomatic and trade activities.

KTU 1.91[1421] may further enlighten our understanding of these relations. This administrative text, discovered in the *Royal Palace*, records wine to be consumed during *dbḥ mlk*, "sacrifices of the king". These sacrifices include other known ceremonies, including the *dbḥ ṣpn*, "sacrifices of Ṣapan".[1422] Therefore, this text attests to how broad the category of the *dbḥ mlk* was and strongly links the cultic practices with the royalty.[1423] At the same time, it shows what was the perspective of the palace on ritual activities. It was the perspective of administration and material support. The actual organization and performance of the rituals were delegated to the clergy.

The above-mentioned examples of the ritual activities of the king are not exhaustive. But I believe they are a sufficient indication of the fact that the king must have been instructed on what he was to do, and these actions were not perceived as automatic prerogatives of his. At the same time, he was the persona given special treatment and might have performed acts otherwise limited to the cultic personnel(?).

From the perspective of texts, the king and the palace were indeed very (the most?) important socio-economic actors in Ugaritic ritual practices. As discussed in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*, the palace significantly sponsored the functioning of temple institutions. On the other hand, their functioning seems to have hardly depended only on royalty. I would argue that we can observe a much more complex and nuanced process in which the king may also be perceived as a "client" of temple institutions. Participation in and sponsoring of cults allowed the king not only to be in contact with the deities and make sacrifices or prayers for the benefit of him, his family, the palace, or the kingdom as a whole.[1424] It has also significantly contributed to the construction of his social position.[1425] Public ritual (or the knowledge of private royal rituals) may be seen as a vital social mechanism for reinforcing public support.[1426] This, however, does not mean that

---

[1415] *KTU* 1.39, 1.40, 1.41, 1.43, 1.46, and 1.47.

[1416] *KTU* 1.105, 1.106, 1.109, 1.111, 1.112, 1.115, 1.118, 1.119, 1.126, 1.132, 1.139, and 1.148.

[1417] *KTU* 1.87, 1.90, and administrative 1.91.

[1418] *KTU* 1.164, 1.168, 1.70, 1.171, and 1.173.

[1419] *KTU* 1.161, and RS 92.2004.

[1420] RS 20.024. In this context, this tablet may be probably associated with the scribal education (applicable in practice) than directly with cults.

[1421] Pardee 2002a, no. 58.

[1422] *KTU* 1.148. Pardee 2002a, nos. 1, 3, and 12. For the discussion on ceremonies belonging to *dbḥ mlk* in *KTU* 1.91, see del Olmo Lete 2014a: 211–218.

[1423] This issue was also discussed in Chapter *6.4 Religion, Administration, and Economy*.

[1424] E.g., *KTU* 1.119: 26'–36' includes a prayer for the protection of Ugarit against an enemy attack.

[1425] See, e.g., contributions in Porter 2005. In this regard, it may be useful to do a little comparative excursus into the modern societies. Consider how many politicians participate in ritual and ceremonial activities, some explicitly considered religious. Politician of here and now also have numerous ceremonial roles. See also Bilgin 2018: 37–96 for the study on provincial administration of the Hittite empire, where priestly titles played a very important role, too.

[1426] See, e.g., Porter 2005: 2–3 or Hill, Jones & Morales 2013: 21.

the priests and kings should be readily seen as intentional manipulators of the masses. It may often be rather a by-product of these activities.[1427] The relations between the palace and temple institutions may be seen as mutually beneficial without necessarily giving any one of them the upper hand. The political organization of Ugarit was far from being a theocracy, but neither was it secularised.

This leads us to consider the private-public dimension of the royal cults. It has already been suggested in Chapter *6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults,* that sacrifices made in *KTU* 1.148 were abundant enough to allow the whole city to participate in the feast. This text is headed as *dbḥ ṣpn*, the "sacrifices of Ṣapan" that are mentioned in the administration of *dbḥ mlk*, the "sacrifices of the king". At least in this instance, we may reasonably suppose a broad public dimension to the royal cults. Unfortunately, apart from the number of sacrificed animals, there are hardly any indications about the extent of the rituals in which the king participated. While there are some statements about the participation of other persons,[1428] we cannot tell if these refer only to a selected group of elite persons,[1429] clergy participants, or the general public. Inferring from the varied numbers of animal sacrifices as well as changing locations[1430] and times[1431] of royal ritual activities, I think it is most reasonable to suppose that the private-public dimension of royal cults was varied, too.

7.2   STATE AND DIVINATION

Closely connected to the previous part, this section explores one of the "services" the palace might have wanted from the temple institutions: divination. We have already explored this topic in Chapter *6.3 Divination*. Here, we will focus more on the state dimension of these activities. This topic will be examined primarily via two types of sources set in a comparative perspective.[1432] The first set is the

---

[1427] Still, the intentional manipulation or at least awareness of this social mechanism should not be discarded. This issue is further discussed in Chapter *7.3 Constructing Royal Ideology*. See also Porter 2005: 3.

[1428] See Chapter *6.2.2 Public Participation in Cults.*

[1429] E.g., *KTU* 1.87 ends with a list of personal names with numbers. But there is no indication what was the relation of these persons to the ritual or what the numbers indicate. One of the possibilities is that these are participants who contributed to the performance of the ritual.

[1430] The royal cults were set in numerous locations: *Royal Palace* (*bt mlk, KTU* 1.148: 18; 1.106: 10, 12; 1.41: 20; 1.87: [21]; 1.39: 12; 1.43: 1–2, 10; 1.139: 13'; *KTU* 1.171: 1'), *Temple of Ilu* (*bt il, KTU* 1.119: 14; 1.42:[38] and 1.87: 42), *Temple of Baʿal of Ugarit* (*bt bʿl ugrt, KTU* 1.119: 3, 9–11, 22'; 1.46: [16]; 1.105: 6'; *mdbḥ bʿl*, the "altar of Baʿal" is then mentioned in *KTU* 1.41: 41 and 1.87: 44–45), *Temple of Ilatu* (*bt ilt, KTU* 1.41: 24; 1.87: ⌜26⌝), *Temple of Baʿalatu-Bâtîma-Rāmîma* (*bt bʿlt btm rmm, KTU* 1.41: 37; 1.87: 40–41), *Temple of Ilu-bêti* (*bt il bt, KTU* 1.115: 3), *Sanctuary of Ilu-bêti* (*qdš il bt, KTU* 1.115: 7), *Temple of the Star-Deities* (*bt ilm kbkbm, KTU* 1.43: 2–3), the *sacrificial pit of Rašap-* MHBN (*ġb ršp mhbn, KTU* 1.105: 1'), the *sacrificial pit of Ḫiyyāru* (*ġb ḫyr, KTU* 1.105: 3'), the *sacrificial pit of Ṣapān* (*ġb ṣpn, KTU* 1.105: 21'), *ḫmn-sanctuary* (*ḫmn, KTU* 1.112: 3, 8; 1.106: 13, 1.164: 2–3), *ḫmn-sanctuary of Nikkal* (*ḫmnh nkl, KTU* 1.106: 14), a garden (*gn, KTU* 1.106: 22, 23), and interestingly also the *House of the ṭaʿʿāyu-official* (*bt ṭʿy, KTU* 1.119: 8). Unfortunately, most of these places cannot be archaeologically localised. The discussions quite often place some of the locations within the *Royal Palace*, due to the royal nature of the cults. However, this is usually hard to prove.

[1431] Following moths are mentioned in the corpus: *Ibaʿlatu* (KTU 1.119: 1, by inference also in KTU 1.105), *Ḫiyyāru* (*KTU* 1.105: 15'), *Gannu* (KTU 1.106: 18), *Ḫallatu* (KTU 1.106 (?)), *Rašu-Yêni* (KTU 1.41: 1, 1.87: 1), unspecified (or lost) months (KTU 1.46, 1.109; 1.112; 1.126).

[1432] Note that some scholars would also include necromantic practices into the discussion; see namely del Olmo Lete 2014a: 290–291. As has been stated several times throughout this thesis, I am not at all convinced by his arguments related to this issue. Therefore, I leave this issue completely aside as I do not see any evidence for it, with a possible exception of *KTU* 1.124. However, not as "necromancy" *per se*, rather as ritual consultation of Ditānu with aim of healing. Ditānu may indeed be tentatively connected with the realm of the dead through Rapiūma. See also del Olmo Lete 2014a: 261–265 on this text vs. interpretation of Pardee 2002a: 170–172. See also note 430 above.

divinatory compendia discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest* and in the royal residence in Ras Ibn-Hani. The second are collections of divinatory models from the *Royal Palace* (in ivory) and from the *House of the Hurrian Priest* (in clay).

The topic of divination for the benefit of the state must be considered in the broader cultural milieu of the ANE, where divinatory practices were an essential element in the functioning of the states.[1433] One of the best comparative sources comes from MBA Mari from the time of Zimrī-Lîm.[1434] The correspondence of this ruler clearly and explicitly indicates how important it was to observe any signs the deities may wish to reveal. An excerpt from the so-called *Protocol for Diviners*[1435] may be cited to illustrate this:

> *When inspecting the omens for my lord Zimrī-Lîm, when performing a ritual procedure: whatever are the signs that I observe; or when inspecting the omens for a commoner, when performing a ritual procedure: all that I observe, the bad finding or good, I shall surely report it to my lord, I shall not conceal it.*
>
> *If I observe a bad or good finding when omen-taking for my lord Zimrī-Lîm, whether manifested in an izbum or an izmum, I shall report it to no individual whatsoever.*
>
> *Whatever secret information Zimrī-Lîm tells me on which to take omens, or whatever I hear Zimrī-Lîm tell a diviner, a colleague of mine, or if I observe that finding in the performance of omen-taking allotted to a diviner colleague of mine, I shall surely keep this information secret.*[1436]

This text not only attests to the importance of divination in the state organization but reveals other features, too. The diviners are shown as those who are constantly aware of signs that may be pertinent to the king. Here, we may observe how the divination for private purposes was relevant to the state. This is particularly important regarding the divinatory compendia. As discussed in Chapter *6.3 Divination*, the apodoses of these texts often seem to be related to the matters of the state. Even though these apodoses are usually understood in the context of private divination, not taking the meaning of the apodoses literally but as positive or negative signs, the Mariote comparative evidence shows that they did not lose their relevance for the whole kingdom.

The *Protocol of Diviners* also shows that the diviners were trustees of the king. They promised not to reveal what had been discovered. Oracles were regarded as a state secret. The Mariote reporting of observations to the king may be further corroborated even by much later sources. For example, in the Neo-Assyrian period, the palace collected omens from the whole country to be examined together as a functional whole.[1437] The ominous signs related to the matters of state were a complex issue. None of the observations alone was enough to present a definite statement about the future. Only in complexity a more detailed image appeared. The divine messages communicated with

---

[1433] See, e.g., Maul 2018: 237–252 and 2015 or Lenzi & Stökl 2014.
[1434] See, e.g., Nissinen 2003: 13–92, or Sasson 2015: 271–293 for collection of Mariote correspondence related to divination (including prophecy). See also Válek 2022: 53–55.
[1435] *ARM XXVI*, no. 1. See also the discussions and translations in Lenzi 2008: 42–45, Heimpel 2003: 174–175, or Sasson 2015: 272–273.
[1436] Translation according to Sasson 2015: 272; modified.
[1437] Maul 2018: 39.

humankind were of varied nature – from dreams to prophecies to observations of the sky to induced divinatory practices like extispicy. In the end, however, extispicy was always the most secure divinatory procedure. This method was used to verify any conclusions based on the collection of omens from the kingdom.[1438] Maul stresses that this is not to be conceived as a sign of superstition of the royalty.[1439] No matter how feeble-minded this may seem from the present-day perspective, it has been the state-of-the-art mechanism within the decision process. We may at least appreciate the potential for reflective thought stimulated by consulting oracles. The interpretations of signs may seem like a random generation of everything bad or good that may happen in the kingdom. "Politicians, strategists, and logisticians were always obliged to reflect anew upon their plans when they were confronted with either a particularly promising or an exceptionally unfavourable prognosis."[1440] The kings did not have to follow whatever the oracles revealed mindlessly. They just needed to take it into consideration and do their best to prevent any unfavourable outcomes of their actions.

Unfortunately for us, the material from Ugarit is very limited. We lack the crucial contexts. The letters only seldom refer to divination,[1441] and as far as I know, it never deals with divination for political purposes. Still, as I will argue, the other materials discovered at Ugarit may fit well with the outlined comparative evidence. Before discussing the sources related directly to divination, we may note narrative contextualization of the importance of the following of the divine will. In the royal epics,[1442] the heroes are mostly depicted as following divine instructions. Something bad happens whenever they decide to act out of their own volition. When Kirta stops at the sanctuary of Aṯirat to ensure the success of his endeavours, he deviates from the plan given to him by Ilu, and this consequently leads to his illness.[1443] Similarly, his son Yaṣṣib is cursed when he opposes his father, an act described as based on his own volition.[1444] Even the untimely death of Aqhat may be seen in this light – he opposed, even laughed at, goddess ʿAnat, refusing to follow her will.[1445]

7.2.1 Divinatory Compendia

The archives of Ugarit yielded four divinatory compendia written down in Ugaritic. Two teratological compendia were discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*, a known locus of divinatory practices.[1446] A compendium of dream omens was unearthed in the *Royal Palace*,[1447] and a manual for interpreting lunar omens was discovered in Ras Ibn-Hani.[1448]

[1438] Maul 2018: 246–250. The only possible attestation of the practice of such verification at Ugarit may be *KTU* 1.78. This, however strongly depends on favoured reading and translation. See Chapter *6.3.2 Astromancy, KTU 1.78, and the Question of Solar Eclipses at Ugarit.*

[1439] Maul 2018: 241 or 2015: 131.

[1440] Maul 2018: 241.

[1441] See, e.g., RS 94.2483 and possibly also *KTU* 2.4.

[1442] Discussed below in Chapter 7.3 Constructing Royal Ideology.

[1443] Stop at the shrine: *KTU* 1.14 IV: 32–43. Aṯirat's reaction to the unfulfilled promise: *KTU* 1.15 III: 25–30.

[1444] *KTU* 1.16: VI: 25–58.

[1445] *KTU* 1.17 VI–1.18.

[1446] *KTU* 1.103 and 1.140. See discussion in Chapter *6.3.1 Divination in the House of the Hurrian Priest.*

[1447] *KTU* 1.86; Pardee 2002a, no. 45. The text is fragmentary.

[1448] *KTU* 1.163; Pardee 2002a, no. 44.

What is common to these texts is that their apodoses relate to the matters of the kingdom.[1449] A selection of a few of them may be used as an illustration:[1450]

KTU 1.103

37'	*w iˋn . uˋdn . šmảl .* ⌜*b*⌝[*ḫ* .]⌜*mlkn*⌝[*y*]*šdd ḫwt iˋ*⌜*b*⌝[*ḫ*]	And if [it] ⌜has⌝ no left ear, ⌜the king⌝ [will] devastate the land of [his] eneˋ⌜my⌝
38'	*w yḫslnn*	and will consume it.
39'	*w qṣrt . pˁnh . bˁln yġt*⌜*r*⌝[. ḫ]*rd . w uˋḫr*	And if its (rear?) legs are short, our lord will confronˋ⌜t⌝ [the ḫ]*urādu*-troops and
40'	*y . ykl* ⌜*rš*⌝*p*	⌜*Raš*⌝*ap* will consume the progeny.

KTU 1.140

| 5' | *k tld* ⌜*ảˋ*⌝[*tt ...*] | When a ⌜wo⌝[man] gives birth [...] |
| 6' | *ḫwt iˋb* ⌜*t*⌝[...] | the land of the enemy will [...] |

KTU 1.163

2–3	*ḥm . yrḫ . b* ⌜ˋ*l*⌝[*y*]⌜*ḫ*⌝ *. w pḥm / nˁmn . y*⌜*kn*⌝ [x]*ḫ*	If the moon, when ⌜it rises⌝, is red, / there ⌜will be⌝ prosperity [during] that (month).
11'	[...]*ym .* ⌜*y*⌝*ḫ . yrḫ . kslm . mlkm . tbṣrn*	[If]*ym yḫ yrḫ kslm*,[1451] the kings will keep an eye on each other.
14'	[*ḥm .*] ⌜*k*⌝*bkb . yql . b ṯlṯm . ym . mlkn .* ⌜xxx⌝[...]	[If] ⌜a s⌝tar falls on the thirtieth day, the king [...]

Unfortunately, all of these texts are relatively damaged, especially *KTU* 1.140 and 1.86, where most of the apodoses are not preserved. Fortunately for the contents of this chapter, the contents of the omens are not that important. It is enough to recognise that all preserved apodoses were related to different aspects of the kingdom's matters – the king, enemies, wars, land, inhabitants, cattle, etc.

These compendia relate to the spontaneous revelation of the signs. The birth of a malformed animal foetus cannot be induced by the diviner in order to observe it. The same goes for the observations of human births or the celestial phenomena. All of this leads me to conclude that these texts attest to the practice of constant awareness of the diviner. Sometimes, this attention might have been more directly focused, especially concerning the astromantic observations.[1452] As has already been discussed above, the divination based on these compendia, as well as the extispicy, might have

---

[1449] Apart from dream omens from *KTU* 1.86. The apodoses of this collection are lost in lacuna. Del Olmo Lete does not agree with Pardee and argues that this text is actually a record of domestic animals; see del Olmo Lete 2014a: 290, n. 45 and 374 with further references.

[1450] The given transliterations and translations(±) follow Pardee 2002a, nos. 42–44. Note that readings of *KTU* occasionally differ.

[1451] See Pardee 2002a: 14, n. 8.

[1452] *KTU* 1.78 also attest to the astromantic practices at Ugarit, despite our poor understanding of it; see Chapter *6.3.2 Astromancy, KTU 1.78, and the Question of Solar Eclipses at Ugarit*. Astromancy was possibly more directly related to the state matters than other types of divination. Namely the lunar omens were connected with the danger to the king resulting in the enthronement of the substitute; see, e.g., Frahm 2013: 109. However, there is no evidence for this at Ugarit. On private dimension of astromancy in the ANE, see Rochberg 2004: 98–120.

been performed both for private individuals and the palace.[1453] While only some ominous signs might have pertained to the individuals, everything was potentially relevant for the kingdom. Should the diviner observe anything relevant, he ought to report it to the palace.[1454]

The Akkadian divinatory compendia discovered at Ugarit[1455] may further broaden our understanding of this constant awareness. These texts may not be perceived only in the context of the scribal education or education of professional diviners. Knowing, albeit superficial, of the variety of possible ominous signs might have proven useful. Even if the scribes and other educated persons did not have to be diviners, they might have been able to recognise the importance of signs in the world around them and then report any issues to the diviner or the king to elaborate on them.

7.2.2 DIVINATORY MODELS

The second set of divinatory material that may be related to politics are models of viscera, mainly livers. These were discovered at Ugarit in two locations. Over 20 clay models were found in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.[1456] These, especially the inscribed ones, are well-known and often cited. What is still far less reflected in the discussions is the collection of over 60 liver models in ivory.[1457] While these objects are heavily damaged, especially by fire, their recognition as liver models is now broadly accepted. These models were discovered in the so-called *Southwestern Archive* cluster, together with many Hurrian hymns.[1458] While this association is interesting, I am not sure any relation between the two types of documents can be established.[1459]

I believe their presence in the palace is best understood in the context of ANE divinatory practices for states. These models may have several explanations in this regard. For example, they might have been records of extispicy performed for the palace – be it to answer specific questions or request to confirm some observations made within the kingdom. They might have also been records of extispicy performed within the royal realm that were seen as relevant to the state matters and consequently reported to the palace where they have been explored and contextualised. McGeough suggested that extispicy might have been performed about international affairs.[1460] One of the best-preserved inscriptions[1461] indeed mentions Egypt and may thus be fitted into the global context. Still, I believe the internal matters of the state might have been relevant, too.

The most intriguing fact about these models is their material. As far as I know, no other divinatory models were made of ivory. This may be interpreted as a sign of high value as ivory was

---

[1453] See Chapter *6.3.1 Divination in the House of the Hurrian Priest.*

[1454] Seen in this light, the statement of Cohen 2020: 28 that the meaning of the apodoses was immaterial should be reconsidered (even if his statement applies only to the *šumma immeru* omens). It was important, but this does not mean that it was important in all cases or perceived as a given fact. The oracle always needed further exploration and context; they were often contradictory and their exegesis was complex; see also Maul 2018: 240.

[1455] See note 995.

[1456] See note 965.

[1457] 47 of them were inscribed and are published in *KTU*; see texts *KTU* 6.30[+31]–6.60, and 6.77–94. These ivory objects were recognized as divinatory models by Gachet 1995 and later edited by Gachet & Pardee 2001.

[1458] See discussion in Chapter *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace.*

[1459] One may speculate that it may be somehow connected to the similar situation in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*, where divinatory practices are present side by side Hurrian cultic texts, including hymns, too. But aside these superficial similarities, I have not noticed anything else and leave it to future enquiries.

[1460] McGeough 2007: 235. However, his main concern is that these were unlikely used in basic administration.

[1461] *KTU* 6.84 = *RSO XIV*, no. 19.

a prestigious material. In addition, at least one of these objects was also covered with a golden foil.[1462] In this light, it is reasonable to suggests these were no ordinary objects. This may problematise some of the above-suggested speculations. For example, if these objects related to the extispicy for the kingdom, they were probably not made in ivory by the diviners themselves. Therefore, it seems more probable that these models were related to the divinatory practices directly performed for the palace – both national and international. There is also a possibility that these were only object of value. Indeed, some other luxurious items of international provenance were discovered in this cluster, too.[1463] However, in light of the local administrative texts found here, the suggestion that this place was connected primarily with the administration of international affairs seems rather unconvincing to me.[1464] Also, it seems strange to store a bulk of prestigious items within an archive in an upper story of the palace. The fact that the inscriptions on models were written in Ugaritic also contradicts this line of interpretation. I would opt to see them as practical documents of state affairs, possibly even stored here to be hidden from the eyes of any unauthorised personnel.

The second collection of divinatory models has been unearthed in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*.[1465] As far as we can tell, the inscribed liver models pertain to divinations made for private individuals. However, it is possible that even these texts may be related to the divination in the political context. They may be connected to the statement from the *Protocol for Diviners*: "(…) or when inspecting the omens for a commoner (…) I shall surely report it to my lord, I shall not conceal it". It is possible that these liver models were made because some ominous signs relating to the kingdom were observed when performing extispicy for an individual concerning private matters. The inscriptions noting the personal details – for whom, when, and about what – may be relevant to the state divination, too. With these models, the diviner would record that he observed some omens that may be relevant for the kingdom and that it had happened when he was carrying out divination for a particular individual at a specific time about a special issue. All of this might have served as an essential context for a broader examination reported to the palace. This theory, however, cannot be further supported and remains a speculation.

Apart from the liver models, a clay model of a lung was discovered in this house.[1466] Our understanding of this model is very uncertain. It is inscribed with ten inscriptions. While some of them are similar, in general, they are of unclear relations. Several of them explicitly relate to sacrifice. The link of these sacrifices to the model or any practice of divination is unclear.[1467]

surface 1, inscription 1

1'	*dbḥ kl yrḫ*	Sacrifices of the entire month.
2'	*ndr*	An object vowed,

[1462] Gachet & Pardee 2001: 198, no. 38 (RS 20.399 B[f]; uninscribed).

[1463] See McGeough 2007: 233 and 235.

[1464] See McGeough 2007: 235. I actually see some slight contradictions in the interpretation of McGough. I would agree more with his suggestion to separate the religious (i.e., divinatory and hymnic) texts and administration into separate archives.

[1465] See *6.3.1 Divination in the House of the Hurrian Priest.*

[1466] RS 24.277 = *KTU* 1.127; see Pardee 2002a, no. 40. For photo, see *PA*: pl. LXXXII and LXXXIII.

[1467] The following transcription and translation follow(±) Pardee 2002a, no. 40. The individual inscriptions do not have any clear sequence, the numbering therefore should must not be seen as successive. Compare, e.g., reading and numbering from *KTU* or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 70–74 and 294–295 with alternative translation and commentary.

| 3' | *dbḥ* | a sacrifice. |

surface 1, inscription 2

4'	*dt nȧt*	Sacrifices offered by *nȧt*
5'	*w ytnt*	and gifts for
6'	*ṯrmn w*	(the deity) Ṯarrumannu and
7'	*dbḥ kl*	a sacrifice offered by all;
8'	*kl ykly*	all will eat this sacrifice until it is consumed,
9'	*dbḥ k . sprt*	in accordance with the documents.

surface 1, inscription 3

10'	*dt nȧt*	Sacrifices offered by *nȧt*
11'	*w qrwn*	and Qurwanu;
12'	*l k dbḥ*	(these will be done) like the (preceding) sacrifice.

surface 1, inscription 4

| 13' | [...] ⌜*r*⌝*bt* | [...] ⌜*r*⌝*bt* |
| 14' | [...] *bnš* | [...] personnel |

surface 2, inscription 5

15'	*š* ⌜*ś*⌝[...]	A ram ⌜*ś*⌝[...]
16'	*w* ⌜x⌝[...]	and [...]
17'	*d*[...]	*d*[...]

surface 2, inscription 6

| 18' | *ypy*[...] | *ypy*[...] |
| 19' | *w s*⌜x⌝[...] | and *s*⌜x⌝[...] |

surface 2, inscription 7

20'	*ṯr dg*⌜*n*⌝[...]	A bull for Daga⌜n⌝ [...]
21'	*b bt k .* ⌜x⌝[...]	in the house, according to ⌜the do⌝[cuments],
22'	*w l db*⌜*ḥ*⌝[...]	and to/surely the sacrifi⌜ce⌝ [...].

surface 2, inscription 8

| 23' | *hm qrt tůḫd . hm mt yˁl bnš* | If the city is about to be seized, if a man attacks, the people. |

surface 2, inscription 9

| 24' | [...]⌜x⌝ *ȧṯt yqḥ ˁz* | [...] the women, they will take a goat |
| 25' | [...]⌜xx⌝ | [...] |

surface 2, inscription 10

| 26' | *bt hn bnš yqḥ ˁz* | in/with regard to the house, the (male) personnel will take a goat |
| 27' | *w yḫdy mrḫqm* | and see afar. |

The only statement which may be easily related to state affairs is "if the city is about to be seized, if a man[1468] attacks the people".[1469] Tentatively, del Olmo Lete connected this with the nearing end of Ugarit and described the model as belonging to the national matters.[1470] I agree that we may reasonably suppose that this material belongs to the final stage of the existence of Ugarit, and it actually pertains to the military endangerment of Ugarit. The other actions and sacrifices mentioned on the lung may be a recording of events that have led to or followed the attack. The "following"[1471] two inscriptions mention a goat that is taken somewhere: "[...] the women, they will take a goat [...]"[1472] and "men (from) the house/family will take a goat and see afar".[1473] These mentions may evoke the scapegoat ritual[1474] that could be aimed at protecting the city. But without further context and sources, these remain only speculations. It is better to admit that this text is too enigmatic for us to provide any final conclusions.

7.3 CONSTRUCTING ROYAL IDEOLOGY

This section explores the possibilities of constructing political ideologies. Namely, we shall focus on two narrative compositions – the epics of Kirta and Aqhat. Obviously, the construction of royal ideology was not limited to the narrative compositions. For example, visual materials could have been addressed, too. Namely, the discussion could have included the ivory bed panel in Egyptian(ising?) style from the *Royal Palace*,[1475] showing a king as a hunter, slayer of enemies, or the royal children breastfed by a goddess;[1476] the *Baʕal au Foudre* stela from the vicinity of the *Temple o Baʕal*, showing the king(?) in his priestly(?) office;[1477] the cultic stand from the *Temple of Rhytons*, depicting a similar figure;[1478] or the golden plate from the *Acropolis*, decorated with a scene of royal hunt.[1479] Concerning the visual material, we have only briefly commented on the royal seals.[1480] The focus on seals was motivated primarily by their supposed visibility and authority. Probably only the stela placed close to the temple might have been more visible and accessible than the seals. Another aspect of royal ideology, the divine character of (deceased) kings, is addressed separately.[1481]

[1468] Or Môt, "Death"?

[1469] Surface 3, inscription VIII (according to Pardee 2002a: 131) / line 30 (according to *KTU*): *ḥm qrt tủḫd . ḥm mt yʕl bnš*. Compare, e.g., translations of Pardee 2002a: 131, del Olmo Lete 2018: 38 or 2014a: 295.

[1470] Del Olmo Lete 2018: 38. On the contrary in 2014a: 295, he remains more open, including "all kinds of family matters".

[1471] Note how uncertain the structure of the inscriptions it.

[1472] According to Pardee 2002a: 133, n. 12, it is not the women who take the goat because the grammar is masculine.

[1473] Compare different translations, e.g., Pardee 2002a: 131 and 133 n. 13, del Olmo Lete 2014a: 295, or broader overview of suggested interpretations in Dietrich & Loretz 1990: 32–38.

[1474] See, e.g., Bremmer 2008: 170–171. As he notes, this interpretation is very insecure.

[1475] RS 16.056+28.031; see, Yon 2006: 136–137.

[1476] The research could also consider whether this visual material could have been connected to the narrative tradition, as *KTU* 1.15 II: 26–28 describes son of Kirta Yaṣṣib as being breastfed by ʕAṯtarta and ʕAnat.

[1477] RS 4.427; see, e.g., Yon 2006: 134–135 or *RSO VI*: 294–299. See fig. 29 in Chapter *5.3 Discussion – Problems of Reconstruction of the Religious Environment of the City*

[1478] RS 78.041+81.3659; see, e.g., Yon 2006: 152–153.

[1479] RS 5.031; see Yon 2006: 165.

[1480] See Chapter *6.7.3 Royal Seals.*

[1481] See Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?.*

Admittedly, this section is far more speculative than any other part of this thesis. Therefore, some basic motivations and presuppositions must be made clear. My motives for choosing to explore this particular topic were twofold. First, while working on the *Epic of Zimrī-Lîm*,[1482] I began to wonder whether the epics from Ugarit could be viewed in light of the genre of "royal epics". Second, in accord with the central theme of this thesis that religion was, above all, something that was lived, I wanted to explore how the narratives might have been lived politically. To address these issues, I have been inspired by the theory of "social myths" presented by Gérad Bouchard.[1483]

Generally speaking, I am mainly interested in the processes surrounding the social construction of royal ideology. Obviously, the involvement of the king in the cults of Ugarit, as presented above, is part of this perspective, too, just like the presence of modern politicians in both religious and secular ceremonies. The construction of royal ideology is quite often seen as essentially an unwitting process rooted in culture and traditions, maintaining itself, taken for granted. Here, however, I am especially interested in the possibility of intentionality of this social construction.[1484] Might have the royal ideology been carefully crafted, changed, or reinterpreted? And if so, to what extent? Was it so because of the wishes of the king or someone else? Was it perceived as authentic by the promoters, or were they consciously manipulating the society? To put it bluntly in regard to the next chapter: "Did the kings see themselves as divine (after death)"? If there was an active change in ideology, why would anyone be motivated to change something seemingly working for eternity? More and more questions arise, and only a few can be answered.

I am not the first one to raise such questions. The royal ideology of Ugarit is something which has been thought over and over again.[1485] By far, the *Baʿal Cycle* remains the most discussed narrative source for this line of research.[1486] Even the intentionality of the author's political goals is something already pointed out – for example, by Nicolas Wyatt in his "Ilimilku's Ideological Programme" or "Ilimilku the Theologian."[1487] On the other hand, the often-proposed interpretation that the narratives (straightforwardly) express and promote the political ideology was contested. For example, the *Baʿal Cycle* has been discussed not as simple political propaganda and celebration but as a critical reflection on the political institutions by Aaron Tugendhaft in his "Baal and the Politics of Poetry".[1488] The intentionality and wit of the ancient author are stressed there, too. The epics of Kirta and Aqhat were seen as sarcastic, critical comedies aimed at ridiculing the (divine) kingship and royal ideology by Baruch Margalit.[1489] Natan-Yulzary, on the other hand, propagates that the central theme

---

[1482] A text from MBA Mari; A.3152 + M.5665 + unnumbered fragment; see Guichard 2014, Válek 2022, Miglio 2017, or *ORACC, Near Eastern Royal Epics*, available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nere/corpus/ [accessed 30th August 2023].

[1483] Bouchard 2017.

[1484] See also Hill, Jones & Morales 2013: 5 on the often-occurring problem of ignoring the rational capacities of the ancients.

[1485] See, e.g., Wyatt 1996, 1997, 2002a, 2007b, del Olmo Lete 2012a[2017b: 437–448] Tsumura 1999, Yon 1985. Among recent studies on royal ideologies of the ancient Near East, see, e.g., Portuese & Palladivini 2022, Bach & Fink 2022, Bach 2021 and 2020, or Hill, Jones & Morales 2013

[1486] For a more elaborate description of the history of research, see Tugendhaft 2018: 11–26.

[1487] Wyatt 1997 and 2002a. See also Wyatt 2015: esp. 416–424 or 2007a: 43–54.

[1488] Tugendhaft 2018.

[1489] Margalit 1999: esp. 206, 208–209 and 1989b: esp. 477–482. See also Michalowski 2010: 19 who notes that even the *Epic of Gilgameš* might have in some cases be understood as a parody of divine kingship. He notes particularly the context

of the *Epic of Kirta* was not the royal ideology but "*an instructive lesson which focuses on the ideas of health and long life, prosperity, the human condition and continuity, human-divine relations, righteousness, and the relations of an heir to his father.*"[1490] Liverani then paints imagery of pleasant stories to be told in the royal court, feeling the thrill of hunting and heroism from the comfort of the palace, pondering the qualities of royal care for the people while actually ignoring them. The stories presented what they "*loved to assume as a model for their kingship*".[1491]

A legitimate question arises: is there anything relevant to be added to the discussion? In my opinion, the answer is overwhelmingly positive. The rich and contradictory research shows that we do not understand the *raison d'être* of narratives, while we readily use them as sources and comment on them. Admittedly, it may be that with the extant sources, we may never be able to understand the situation, and the research may be endless. But I hope a solution will arise. It should, however, not be expected from this chapter. It so far only paves the way in a slightly new direction, hopefully, not to a dead end. In addition, I see the topic of political ideology, its change and promotion, and roles of myth in the process, as something relevant for us here and now, especially when set in a historical context of developing crises that resulted in the disintegration of the LBA world and the destruction of Ugarit.[1492]

To begin with, it seems fit to point out several characteristics of Bouchard's approach relevant to my argument. It must be noted that his goal is to understand social myths in present society; for example, national/political myths.[1493] Its applicability to ancient sources is, therefore, not entirely straightforward.

His understanding of "myth" is very different in many ways from its everyday or scholarly use.[1494] Myths are seen as belonging to the class of "collective imaginaries"[1495] – "*the symbols that a society produces and through which its members give meaning to their lives,*"[1496] and "*the first references that lie at the core of every culture and that have a very strong hold on society given that they posses an authority akin to sacredness.*"[1497] Collective imaginaries are internalised through culture and subsequently taken for granted. But they are also rooted in the unconscious and in the mental

---

of Old Babylonian scribal education, where the concept of divine kingship did not have the relevance. See also Gilan 2010: 60 for understanding the Hittite composition *Siege of Uršu* as a comedy rather than heroic epic. However, in relation to royal ideology, it should be noted that whatever criticism or even active revolt appeared, it did not aim to destroy the royal ideology itself. Revolt and criticism are not revolution and as far as we can tell, when the change was sought, it was aimed at taking hold of the throne, not at destroying the system itself; see e.g., Morris 2013: 35 for a perspective on ancient Egypt.

[1490] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 174.

[1491] Liverani 2021[1970]: 25.

[1492] However, we should be aware of the dangers of circular reasoning that may appear here: understanding the past in the perspective of modern problems in order to better understand modern problems through the perspective of history. We may also wonder what present problems do we project into the past – for example, the issue of climate change as will be apparent from the discussion below.

[1493] See e.g., contributions in Bouchard 2013.

[1494] See esp. Bouchard 2017: 23–47.

[1495] See esp. Bouchard 2017: 7–27.

[1496] Bouchard 2017: 13.

[1497] Bouchard 2017: 8.

structures of the human mind.[1498] Thus, while myths belong to the sphere of culture, they are particularly effective when rooted deeper. Myths as collective representations are essentially connected with emotions and are seen as sacred – in the sense of "beyond criticism"; immune, fundamental truths. Myths are seen as powerful social mechanisms – myths "do something". Myths, for better or worse, have the potential to influence behaviour, to base and form an understanding of self, society, values, etc. They have the potential to mobilise people into action, but also to make them resign on the world and life. Myths "*are not the things people see when they look at the world, they are the things they see with.*"[1499] A general premise that myth should not be reduced to something essentially untrue, fictitious, or irrational is hardly surprising in religious studies. Bouchard stresses on numerous occasions the tandem in which emotions and reason cooperate in myths. Unfortunately, designating them as collective *imaginaries* does not exactly help this thesis, and Bouchard puts a great effort into navigating through the various associations these terms can evoke.

It is then a specific type of myth identified by Bouchard that directs the line of my explorations: the *social* myth. Here, the stress is made on "*the role of the actors, their motivations, the power relations in which they are involved, their strategic operations, and the concrete, immediate issues associated with them.*" [1500] The permeability and fluidity of myths allow any of them to become a social myth in the sense of being intentionally used for political goals. This has important implications for our understanding of the mythic and epic narratives of Ugarit. It is not a question of distinction among religious myths taking deities seriously, old traditions of ANE literature, political reflections of the authors, or histories of institutions. These aspects are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, taking a myth deeply rooted in religious beliefs may be very effective in making it into a political myth reflecting different realities.

Here, we should also note that in Bouchard's view, myths are not narratives. Narratives are seen only as vehicles for myths, a form through which they are expressed. This form is not exclusive; visual materials, symbols, catch-phrases, hymns, or other forms can also serve as modes of mythical expression. In this light, we may consider the divine kingship a social myth, even though there is no such narrative. The narratives of Ugarit seen in this light are not myths in themselves. Instead, they are formulated around multiple myths and provide their specific articulation. Applicable here is Bouchard's distinction between "master" and "derivate" myths.[1501] The master myths relate to the most profound truths, are at the core of any society, and are hard to change or change very slowly, but may also end abruptly in crisis or profound social change. Derivate myths are based on master myths but are far more flexible and can react to changing conditions while maintaining the "spirit" of the master myths. It is the sphere of derivate myths where the actors, such as the author of the Ugaritic narratives, are given the most space to promote their intentions.

[1498] On many occasions, Bouchard refers to these "deep mental structures" as cross-cultural archetypes, even comparing them to the theory of C. G. Jung; e.g., Bouchard 2017: 14. Fortunately, his conception is far from the conception of this psychologist. Here I must admit my deep distrust in Jung in this regard, especially considering this a "methodology". As far as I can tell, Bouchard rather works with patterns of thought that are somehow appealing to human mind, maybe even encoded in its structure. This may lead to cross-cultural similarities and recurring patterns in mythology.

[1499] Bouchard 2017: 105–106 borrows this quote from Bennett 1980: 167.

[1500] See esp. Bouchard 2017: 27.

[1501] See esp. Bouchard 2017: 112–115.

I am also particularly interested in what Bouchard calls a "mythification process".[1502] Namely, how are messages intended by the authors formed, and how do they become proper myths themselves? How are emotions transformed into imprints and to the ethos, which then may acquire a sacred status? What strategies may the promoters of specific myths employ to make them accepted by the directed audience? Can a myth "backfire"? And, what are the conditions for a particular articulation of a myth to be effective in its intended goals?[1503] My primary intention is to explore the ideology in making, not necessarily the ideology itself. This, of course, cannot be avoided and is an integral part of the question.

Helpful to my argument is also the observation that social myths, just as any collective imaginaries, are not necessarily coherent,[1504] even though a certain degree of consistency may help their effectiveness.[1505] Of course, the notion that neither religion nor politics are always coherent has been acknowledged for a long time. Still, it is too often ignored – consistencies are sought, and interpretations are discarded because of inconsistencies in the sources. I see this especially relevant to the question of the divine nature of Ugaritic kings and why it leads scholars to such diverse conclusions. The inherent polysemy and polyvalence of myths play a crucial role here. There is also the question of the coherence of the ideology and practice/reality – for example, did the kings act as kings are portrayed to act?[1506] An affirmative or negative answer to this question has been, on occasion, used, for example, to date the compositions to times when the practice and theory were in line[1507] or, on the contrary, to reconstruct the practice from the narrative.[1508] "Allowed" incoherencies problematise these approaches. More than preventing us from conducting these lines of enquiry, they should make us cautious and require more sources to confirm our claims. One may note in light of present politics that such inconsistencies are definitely not a thing of the past.[1509]

Bouchard also works on many occasions with the issue of misfortunes. Sometimes, the stories narrate about the least favourable times of societies – wars, defeats, deaths, sacrifices, treasons, failures, natural catastrophes, etc.[1510] Quite often, myths of these events are connected with the smaller societies,[1511] while the large empires have enough material to boast about and stress their success in conquering, etc.[1512] Defeats, crises, and failures yield strong potential as they are filled with emotions. I believe that the realization that the misfortunes of the heroes are not necessarily indicative

---

[1502] Bouchard 2017: 48–92.

[1503] Bouchard 2017: 93–111.

[1504] Bouchard 2017: 19. See also Wiggins 2020: esp. 65–66, who relates this issue to the conception of deities, an issue particularly relevant to the discussion of divine kingship.

[1505] Bouchard 2017: 94. This is the case especially in societies that value coherency, such as our own. Still, we often ignore (or rather, do not see) inconsistencies of our systems and myths, too.

[1506] E.g., Liverani 2021[1970]: 25.

[1507] E.g., Liverani 2014a: 342; but he notes some LBA updates to the contents.

[1508] The so-called myth-and-ritual school. See, e.g., Gaster 1950 who includes Ugaritic compositions in his comparative Near Eastern analysis. Among other representatives of this approach within Ugaritic studies, we may include de Moor or Korpel; compare, e.g., Korpel 1990: 418 and de Moor 1987: 4–5 who both analyse the massacre of ʿAnat from the *Baʿal Cycle* as a mock fight enacted during New Year's celebration.

[1509] E.g., "the immigrants do not work" × "the immigrants take our jobs".

[1510] See, e.g., Bouchard 2014: 49, 52, or 61–62.

[1511] See, e.g., Chlup 2020, who deals with defeats in the Czech national myths.

[1512] Of course, we can also find numerous myths of victory in smaller societies and myths of defeat in empires.

of "mock-epic",[1513] but may be used in the favour of propagated ideology is an essential factor in analysing the narratives of Ugarit.

Last but not least, we must consider that social myths are about the present, even if they narrate about the past.[1514] One of the most critical questions we must ask is why the discussed narratives were written down at Ugarit. What was the reason? Potential answers are manifold: from scribal education to satire to fun to environmental issues to political goals. Supposing we want to support the theory that these compositions were meant as a political ideology, we need to find how they would be relevant at that particular place, at that specific time. Throughout the following sections, I try to address this issue.

7.3.1 Kirta and Aqhat as Social Myth-Narratives

The narratives we shall consider in this section are the two "epics"[1515] of Ugarit. Surely, these are not the only narratives that can be discussed concerning royal ideology. I have already stated that the most discussed composition in this regard is the *Baʿal Cycle*.[1516] Other often discussed texts are the *Rapiūma*,[1517] which are briefly referred to in relation to the divine character of the kings below, or the *(Birth of the) Goodly Gods*,[1518] which we have noted in the chapter on royalty and cult. I have decided to limit my focus to the problem of the epics for three reasons. Firstly, I wanted to set them within the tradition of the Near Eastern royal epics, focusing on narratives directly concerned with human actors. Second, the interpretations of the *Rapiūma* and *Goodly Gods* seem too wild and far more uncertain to me, and at the same time, I have no better propositions. Third, Aaron Tugendhaft's interpretation of the *Baʿal Cycle* is, in my opinion, excellent, even though it is not final and all-encompassing. In the following discussion, some aspects of his approach are extended to the royal narratives.

I do not intend to explore the history of research of the narratives here – others have already done this.[1519] Interpretative approaches include historical, mythical, political, myth and ritual school, literary (including relations with wisdom literature), allegorical, agricultural/seasonal, astral, psychological, or satirical. These approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive and often may actually work in tandem. To conclude, I do not suggest that all previous interpretations should be discarded (though some definitely should and indeed were) or are irrelevant, and the works are from now on to be related only to strategies of politics. I only choose to follow this line now, trying hard not to be too distracted by many other possibilities, which I also believe to be at work here – thanks to the intrinsic polyvalency of myths.

[1513] As Margalit 1999: 222 describes the *Epic of Kirta*.

[1514] See also Michalowski 2010: 16.

[1515] For the problem of defining the genre of "epic" in ancient Near East, see, e.g., Michalowski 2010 or Martin 2005. For a discussion on genre of "royal epics", see, e.g., Válek 2022: 63–69. Here, I am not particularly interested in these compositions as epics, but rather as narratives in general, therefore, it is not necessary to address this issue in detail.

[1516] See note 1486 for further references.

[1517] *KTU* 1.20–22; for translations, see e.g., Lewis in Parker 1997: 196–205 or Wyatt 2002b: 314–323. It has even been suggested that it could be a continuation of the *Epic of Aqhat*, but this has not been accepted; see Wyatt 1999b: 234 for a short discussion.

[1518] *KTU* 1.23; for translations, see e.g., Lewis in Parker 1997: 205–214 or Wyatt 2002b: 324–335. For studies concerned with royal interpretations, see e.g., M. Smith 2006, Tsumura 1999: 228–236, or Foley 1980.

[1519] See e.g., Margalit 1999: 203–218 for Kirta and Wyatt 1999b: 238–247 for Aqhat.

Before we dive further into the interpretation, it is helpful to outline the plots of both narratives, especially for those unfamiliar with it or need to refresh their memory. This outline obviously cannot replace the careful and detailed reading of the texts in the original. Still, the approach I am adopting does not necessarily need to go into great details, linguistic peculiarities, literary forms, poetic devices, etc. While such features undoubtedly had their indispensable role in the effectiveness of the narrative (see below), the core of the argument is not entirely dependent on them.

7.3.1.1.1   KIRTA (KTU 1.14–1.16)[1520]

The story of Kirta opens with a poetic statement about the misfortunes of the family of Kirta, king of the city of Ḫubur. All of his seven wives have died, and he has no heirs (it is unclear to me if his children died, too, or were even never born). Lamenting over his fate, Kirta cries himself to sleep. In a dream, Ilu approaches him. Seeing the king crying, the god offers power and riches. These, however, Kirta refuses, pointing out their futility: "*what is to me silver, or yellow gold… ?*"[1521] All the king asks is a progeny. In response, Ilu provides Kirta with a plan for a solution. First, the king should sacrifice to Baʿal and Dagan, then gather a great army and set for a campaign to the city of Udum. There, a severe siege must begin, only to be then halted. When the starving in the besieged city becomes unbearable, the king – Pabuli – will be forced to negotiate. Just like Ilu, he will offer riches to the attackers. These are to be refused by Kirta, requesting Lady Ḫuraya, daughter of King Pabuli. She will be the solution to the misfortunes of Kirta.

When Kirta awakens from sleep, he follows these instructions, with one important exception. During the march towards Udum, he and his army stop at a shrine of Aṯirat. There, Kirta makes a vow to this deity, promising to manufacture *her*[1522] statue if his endeavour is successful. Then everything happens just as Ilu promised, and after the negotiation, Kirta leaves Udum with Lady Ḫuraya by his side. Due to the damages on the tablets, we do not know much of the details of her handing-over, but it seems that the people of Udum lament over the loss of the kind and beloved lady.

When returned to Ḫubur, the king makes a feast for deities, inviting (at least) Baʿal, Yariḫ, Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs, Raḥmay, Rašap, and Ilu. Baʿal then appeals to Ilu to bless Kirta. Ilu gladly does so, promising the king eight sons and eight daughters. Of these, he names specifically (the firstborn?) son Yaṣṣib, who will be wet nursed by ʿAṯtarta and ʿAnat, and the last of the daughters – Ṯitmanit, meaning "The Eight One", whom he pronounced firstborn.

Time passes, and all of the promises Ilu gave to Kirta have come true. However, Aṯirat remembers the king's vow to her, which he failed to fulfil. Once again, the text is then largely damaged. From what remains, it seems clear that Kirta summons the city elites and feasts with them, probably announcing his illness, which appears to have befallen him due to the wrath of Aṯirat. A suggestion that Yaṣṣib takes his father's responsibilities is made, but it is not clear if it is taken any further.

[1520] For translations, see e.g., Greenstein in Parker 1997: 9–48 or Wyatt 2002b: 176–243.

[1521] The beginning of KTU 1.14 II including this statement is actually lost in a lacuna, but this reconstruction fits well with the parallels later in the narrative, when the same discussion is made with king Pabuli of Udum.

[1522] Greenstein believes that manufacture of Lady Ḫuraya is meant here; see Greenstein's note 37 in Parker 1997: 43–44. But it is also possible that statue of Aṯirat is meant here. The point here is not really dependant on the identity of the statue, so I leave the interpretation open.

The ill king is then lamented over by his son Ilaḫu, who raises the topic of the mortality of kings, which comes to him as a bit of surprise: "*Is Kirta not called the son of Ilu? ... Do the gods die?*". However, Kirta does not want his son to mourn him and requests him to bring Ṯitmanit, who seems to be a better fit for this. Under the pretext of a feast, Ilaḫu invites his sister to visit their father. She feels deceived when she finds out her father has been ill for several months. She proceeds to mourn him, and just like her brother, she also ponders about the mortality of the king.

Yet again, we get to a gravely damaged part, from which we get a description of the consequences of the royal illness: the land is dry, Baʕal does not bring rain to the fields, and all food supplies are exhausted. Probably after some prayers, Ilu gathered deities and tried to find a god who could cure Kirta of his disease. But no one comes forward. Ilu then takes matters into his own hands, creating Šaʕatiqat from clay – a being who is able to cure the illness. Once again, the king is fit and commands a feast of celebration.

His son Yaṣṣib then ponders the change of the situation, instructing himself to go to the feast and scold his father. In his speech, he points out that the king did not perform his obligations – namely, he did not take care of the weak and poor nor fulfilled his military commitments – and that he was fragile and prone to illness. Yaṣṣib demands to be the king instead.

The narrative then ends rather abruptly. Without hesitation, the king responds by placing a curse upon his son. There are debates on whether the story continued on a fourth tablet, providing some solution to the unpleasant situation, or whether it genuinely ended in an unresolved state.[1523]

7.3.1.1.2   Aqhat (KTU 1.17–1.19)[1524]

The beginning of the narrative is unfortunately lost to us. When the story reappears, Daniil[1525] is described in the process of repeating ritual action: sacrificing to deities and then lying to sleep. Finally, on the seventh day, Baʕal draws to him in his sleep. The god himself immediately recognises the problem Daniil is facing and petitions Ilu to bless the childless hero to procreate. The story repeats a famous passage of "obligations of an ideal son" [1526] several times, pointing out what Daniil loses when he has no child. Ilu answers the request of Baʕal and blesses the hero. Rejoicing, Daniil returns home, invites the Koṯarats[1527] to his house and together with his wife, they beget a son.

A larger part of the narrative is then missing, but from what follows, it seems clear that at least two things have happened: the son named Aqhat was born, and a magnificent bow which he is to be given was manufactured by the god-craftsman Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs. The story resumes describing Daniil performing the obligations of a just ruler – together with the nobles, he is taking care of the cases of the weak and poor. This is when he sees Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs marching towards him, bringing the gift for his son. At once, Daniil calls his wife Danatiya to prepare a feast for the god. During the

---

[1523] The presence of a colophon at the end of KTU 1.16 may indicate that the story ended. However, in the case of the *Epic of Aqhat*, there seems to be a colophon present in the second table, so this argument is inconclusive. See e.g., Margalit 1999: 204 and 210 for a summary of the discussion.

[1524] For translations, see e.g., Parker 1997: 49–80 or Wyatt 2002b: 246–312.

[1525] Unlike Kirta, this character does not seem to be designated directly as a king. However, he should still be recognised as a ruler-character, at least because he is said to reside in a palace and in general acts ruler-like.

[1526] See note 1533 below.

[1527] Goddesses of childbirth and procreation, as can be judged not only from this passage, but also from *KTU* 1.24, where they are associated with birth. See e.g., translation of Marcus in Parker 1997: 215–218. See also *CAD* Š2: 145–146 for similarities with Akkadian *šassūru* A.

banquet, Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs presents the bow as a gift to Daniil and then returns to his dwelling. Daniil then passes the bow onto his son.

Once again, in a largely broken context, the knowledge of the bow reaches the goddess ʿAnat. She approaches Aqhat and offers him silver and gold for the bow. He, however, declines her offer and tells her to give proper material to Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs, who will make her own bow. But ʿAnat is unstoppable and offers Aqhat life akin to gods – immortality. The hero remains unconvinced by this offer and rebukes ʿAnat for offering what she cannot fulfil as he shall inevitably die just as any man. To this, he adds an insulting remark about women hunting. With this talk, he makes the goddess angry and hastens to her father, Ilu, to complain and to seek approval of revenge. Though her approach to the head of the pantheon is at first decent, she then turns to extortion and threats of violence. From this, we infer that the preceding damaged part of the tablet includes Ilu's initial disapproval. Ilu admits she has a mind of her own, and the effort to resist her is in vain, and she may do what her livers[1528] desire.

With this approval, she sets on to hunt Aqhat down. Much of the planning for the revenge is once again lost in a lacuna. The results of her planning are nonetheless clear. She makes an alliance with Yaṭipan, a Sutean warrior. The modus operandi of the murder may then sound a bit peculiar to us: ʿAnat puts Yaṭipan as a bird into her belt, and then (presumably in a birdlike form[1529]) she circles within a flock of birds over Aqhat sitting over his meal in the wilderness where he hunts. She then launches Yaṭipan to attack the hero brutally. The murder is done, but it seems the goddess has not acquired what she wished for, and the bow was damaged or lost.

The story returns to Daniil, whom we see again as fulfilling his obligations. However, he and his daughter Paġit then notice that moisture is becoming lost from the world. For years, there is no rain nor dew and, consequently, no crops. Daniil and Paġit then set into the wilderness and discover new sprouts – an event which Daniil hastily celebrates, embracing and kissing the plants. Even now, Daniil and his daughter do not know about the death of Aqhat and count on him to collect the future harvest. However, their ignorance soon changes when two persons they encounter inform them about the death of their son and brother, as well as about the perpetrator of the deed and the modus operandi.

Daniil then curses the flock of birds. With the help of Baʿal, the wings of each bird are broken one by one, and the ruler explores their entrails. So far as he does not discover his son's remains, Baʿal mends their wings, and the birds go on living. Finally, when inspecting Ṣamal, "The Mother of Birds of Prey", he discovers Aqhat's corpse. The hero may be buried in the end. With this, Daniil does not forget to curse the cities close to which his son was slain.

When they return home, Aqhat is mourned for seven years. After this period, Daniil cast out the weepers, mourners, and flagellants from the palace and sacrifices to deities. Paġit then requests a blessing from her father to avenge her brother – a blessing Daniil gladly gives. The heroine then cloths herself into a warrior's outfit and sets to the camp of Yaṭipan. Her disguise probably deceives the mercenaries into thinking she is ʿAnat herself, and Yaṭipan drinks wine with her.

[1528] At Ugarit, as well as in the rest of the ancient Near East, livers where commonly used in relation to emotions. For the language and vocabulary of emotions in Ugaritic and Akkadian, see, e.g., Burlingame 2023 and Wende 2023. See also other contributions in Sonik & Steinert 2023 for emotions in the ANE.

[1529] This feature may correspond to some of her depictions. For a broader discussion on iconography of this goddess in context of iconography of other goddesses, see Cornelius 2008.

At this point, the tablet unfortunately ends, and so does the story for us.[1530]

7.3.1.1.3 Shared Topics

For my following argument, the crucial point is that both of the narratives cover, to a large extent, the same topics, even though from different perspectives. To some extent, they mirror each other.[1531] The heart of a structuralist rejoices when finding two narratives like these. I would argue that the themes present in both narratives are central to the message intended by the author/client (see below), and their pondering from different perspectives is somehow meaningful. Unfortunately, and I must state this beforehand, we lack crucial context information to be able to find what precisely the message and its meaning might have been. We are left only with more or less informed guesses. These guesses are presented in the next section.

I find the following topics to be present in both texts:

1) problems with dynastic continuity

What I see as the central motive of both narratives is the crisis of dynastic continuity. Both Kirta and Daniil lack progeny.[1532] Seen (not only) from the perspective of ANE societies, the lack of heirs is problematic, even more so in the case of the ruling class. The tale of Aqhat itself reflects on the "duties of an ideal son,"[1533] implying that Daniil would be bereft of such a "service" in lack of a son. Facing this problem, even the power or riches offered to Kirta by Ilu or King Pabuli are futile.[1534]

This problem is covered from two perspectives. In the case of King Kirta, the problem seems to be the loss of all the wives the king has married and all of the children (he might have had?).[1535] The case of Daniil seems to be connected with problems with conception.[1536] Both perspectives were (and still are) relatable to many people.

2) deities provide the solution

Fortunately, deities may offer a solution to such problems. What seems to be an advantage of being a ruler is a close personal relationship with deities.[1537] Kirta is approached by Ilu (of his own volition) in his dream,[1538] and Daniil is able to induce an oneiromantic experience, drawing Baʕal into his night vision.[1539]

[1530] Suggestions that KTU 1.20–1.22, the Rapiuma myth, is a continuation of this story seems very unlikely to me and as far as I know, this suggestion has not been reflected in any of the editions of this narrative; see also Wyatt 2002b: 312, n. 282 or 1999b: 234.

[1531] Cf. Wyatt 2000: 136 who suggests that while the *Epic of Kirta* is ideologically rich, the *Epic of Aqhat* lacks the ideological intentions. This position is in my opinion untenable.

[1532] Kirta: e.g., *KTU* 1.14 I: 7–35, II: 4–5; Aqhat: e.g., *KTU* 1.17 I: 16–33. And throughout the narratives.

[1533] *KTU* 1.17 I: 25–33 and parallels. See, e.g., Majewski 2023 for a recent discussion of this passage.

[1534] *KTU* 1.14 I: 41–42, II: 1–3, III: 21–37, and V: 33–VI: 22.

[1535] *KTU* 1.14 I: 7–25.

[1536] *KTU* 1.17 I: 18–19, 38–43, or II: 24–46.

[1537] See also the discussion in Chapter *7.1 Kings and Cults.*

[1538] *KTU* 1.14 I: 33–43.

[1539] *KTU* 1.17 I: 1–16.

The reaction of deities is, however, a bit different. Ilu is drawn near, seeing Kirta crying, and the first that comes into his mind is power and riches. Kirta must explain himself to the deity.[1540] On the other hand, Baʿalu immediately recognises what the problem of Daniil is.[1541]

The solutions to the problems offered by the deities also differ significantly. Ilu provides Kirta with an elaborate plan and "detailed" instructions on acquiring a new wife.[1542] Baʿal, on the other hand, simply asks Ilu to bless Daniil.[1543] Nonetheless, both of the solutions lead to the desired goal.

3) deities have a close and positive relationship with the rulers

The close association of the deities and rulers is visible in other episodes, too. On several occasions, both Kirta and Daniil (and their wives) invited deities to feast – and they gladly came and feasted with their hosts.[1544] Deities also seem to approach the rulers without any human incentive – Ilu directly approaches Kirta in his dream,[1545] and Koṯar-wa-Ḫasīs closes Daniil with the bow as a gift.[1546] The relationship of Ilu towards Kirta is also reflected in his effort to cure him, resulting in him making the healer character Šaʿatiqat.[1547] The connection of Kirta to Ilu is made even stronger when his approaching demise is pondered in astonishment by his children.[1548] He is called the son of Ilu[1549] and compared to deities in his supposed immortality.[1550]

4) (female) deities have a negative relationship with the rulers

On the other hand, relations with deities are also prone to failure and reveal the mortality of royalty. Kirta forgets to honour the vow given to Aṯirat; consequently, he is befallen by an illness.[1551] Aqhat then opposes the wishes of ʿAnat, refuses her offerings, and even insults her.[1552] In his case, this results in his death. Here, we may also see the direct inversion of the questioned mortality of Kirta: Aqhat directly embraces his mortality and states it as a brute fact that even the goddess cannot change.[1553]

5) seemingly solved dynastic continuity fails …

The problems with dynastic continuity are seemingly solved in the first halves of the stories. Unfortunately for Kirta and Daniil, this presumption is shown as false. Kirta is betrayed by his

---

[1540] *KTU* 1.14 I: 37–II: 5.
[1541] *KTU* 1.17 I: 15–22.
[1542] *KTU* 1.14 II: 6–III: 49.
[1543] *KTU* 1.17 I: 23–33.
[1544] E.g., Kirta: *KTU* 1.17 III: 52–IV: 8, 1.15 II; Aqhat: *KTU* 1.17 II: 24–39, V: 15–31, 1.19 IV: 22–31.
[1545] *KTU* 1.14 I: 33–43.
[1546] *KTU* 1.17 II: 9–33.
[1547] *KTU* 1.16 IV:1–VI:14.
[1548] E.g., *KTU* 1.16 I: 2–23.
[1549] E.g., *KTU* 1.16 I: 20–23. Here, one must not forget the uses of this word, often employed to express the hierarchy between people rather than family relations; see Chapter *6.6.1 Symbolic Communication, Greetings, and Benedictions*. On the other hand, this does not necessarily imply that here the language is also symbolic and Ilu is not meant as a father of Kirta.
[1550] E.g., *KTU* 1.16 II: 43–44.
[1551] Stop at the shrine: *KTU* 1.14 IV: 32–43. Aṯirat's reaction to the unfulfilled promise: *KTU* 1.15 III: 25–30.
[1552] *KTU* 1.17 VI–1.18.
[1553] *KTU* 1.17 VI: 33–38.

firstborn(?) son Yaṣṣib.[1554] Sure, we may see his actions as a rightful criticism of the previous generation. Still, the story makes a different judgement, and Kirta curses his previously longed-for son. The failure of the dynasty of Daniil is even more brutal – his (only?) son is brutally killed.[1555]

6) ... or does it?

One is then left to wonder whether the dynasties have truly failed. The stories, at least in their preserved state, do not offer a clear solution and seem to end rather negatively. In the case of Kirta, other sons are mentioned, at least Ilaḫu by name,[1556] and one may easily suppose these can cover for Yaṣṣib. In the case of Daniil, we know of no other son to replace the dead Aqhat – but the story seems to be unfinished, and thus, we may expect some other solution to present itself. I see one other – hypothetical – key to the problem:

7) strong and positive position of royal women (?)

Women are an integral part of both narratives. First of all, dynastic continuity depends on them for obvious biological reasons explicitly addressed in the texts. From one point of view, however, they are still seen as someone to be acquired and who serves the king and his guest – both human and divine. Thus, the wives of Kirta and Daniil are positive but still in a subservient position.[1557]

The royal daughters are also obedient to their fathers and serve them occasionally. However, Ṯitmanit, the last child of Kirta, is pronounced the firstborn by Ilu,[1558] and Paġit sets on a quest to avenge her brother.[1559] One may thus wonder whether there is a possibility that Ṯitmanit or Paġit were seen as fit candidates for the throne or at least someone who could mediate continuity and bridge the crisis period.[1560] We should also note that there is a paradox expressed in their names: Ṯitmanit means "The Eight One", and Paġit means "Girl" or "Princess". They are quite "general" but yet very important. The poet here uses the names to express the contrast of their position.

8) description of royal obligations

Another theme which appears in both texts is a description of royal obligations. In the case of Kirta, these duties are expressed by Yaṣṣib, who points out that the king failed to act according to them during his illness.[1561] On the other hand, Daniil is mentioned as acting according to them.[1562] These obligations include caring for the liminal people, subsumed under the imagery of orphans and widows, or following military duties.

[1554] *KTU* 1.16 VI: 25–58.

[1555] *KTU* 1.18 IV.

[1556] E.g., *KTU* 1.15 II: 18–III: 25, 1.16 I: 46, 58.

[1557] E.g., *KTU* 1.15 IV.

[1558] *KTU* 1.15 III: 16.

[1559] *KTU* 1.19 IV: 28–61.

[1560] See, e.g., Thomas 2014 or van Soldt 2016c on the position of royal women at Ugarit. It needs to be noted that on many occasions their position seems to be far better, stronger, and influential than may be the commonly held opinion. Still, there is no indication that there was any chance for a queen to hold the office of the king.

[1561] *KTU* 1.16 IV: 29–54.

[1562] E.g., *KTU* 1.17 V: 4–8.

9) the well-being of the land and the well-being of the royalty

The narratives express a strong relationship between the well-being of the Kirta/Aqhat and the prosperity of the land. When Kirta is ill, a severe drought occurs in the land, which ends up in emptying all stocks.[1563] Drought also affects the kingdom of Daniil after his son is killed.[1564] Fortunately, neither of the critical episodes lasts forever – Kirta is cured, and Aqhat is at least buried. This may be one of the key features of the royal ideology expressed in the narratives.

10) mortality of the rulers

Last but not least, the mortality of the royal family members floats throughout the narratives and is interwoven with the other themes, as noted several times. As we have seen, the wives of Kirta die, the king himself is facing death in his illness, and Aqhat is murdered. The structural opposition is in the acceptance of this human condition. While the children of Kirta are taken by surprise by this fact, Aqhat laughs at the thought of immortality.

7.3.1.2   Intentions behind the Compositions and Means to Achieving them

7.3.1.2.1   Texts in Contexts: Archaeology, Authorship, and History

All six tablets may be localised in the *House of the High Priest*[1565] at the *Acropolis* of Ugarit – in the same context as the *Baʕal Cycle, Rapiūma, Goodly Gods*, and some other narratives. The immediate context is thus cultic rather than royal. On the other hand, as we have seen in the case of royal cultic activities, texts related to it were dispersed over the city: in the *Royal Palace*, *House of the High Priest*, *House of the Hurrian Priest*, and *House of Urtēnu*. It has already been noted that these places worked as a lively network in many ways – covering epistolary relations, economic dependency, or ritual action. In addition, excerpts of the *Baʕal Cycle* were discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*[1566] and the *House of Urtēnu*.[1567]

The authorship of the epics is consensually attributed to Ilimilku, based on colophons. The final tablet of the *Epic of Kirta* preserved a simple "signature" *spr ỉlmlk ṯʕy*, "scribe: Ilimilku, *taʕʕāyu*-official".[1568] The first tablet of the *Epic of Aqhat* has badly damaged signs on its lower edge, of which only the ending […] *prln* is visible.[1569] In comparison with the colophon of the last tablet of the *Baʕal Cycle*,[1570] it is generally restored as [*spr . ỉlmlk . šbny . lmd . åtn .*] *prln*, "[scribe: Ilimilku from Šubbanu, student of Attēnu], the diviner". Although the attribution of the tale of Aqhat may seem dubious at this point, I have not encountered any study disproving it, for example, on palaeographic grounds.[1571]

[1563] *KTU* 1.16 III.

[1564] *KTU* 1.19 I: 38–46.

[1565] According to *TEO*: 26, the findspot of a fragment of KTU 1.14 and KTU 1.17 is "surface" without further specification, but findspots of the rest of the tablets leaves little doubt that even these parts belong here.

[1566] *KTU* 1.133, corresponding to *KTU* 1.5 I 11–22.

[1567] RS 94.2953; published in Arnaud 2007, no. 65, p. 201–202. This text in logosyllabic Akkadian(!) narrates the episode of the construction of the god's palace.

[1568] *KTU* 1.16 left edge.

[1569] *KTU* 1.17 left edge.

[1570] See the discussion below.

[1571] On the other hand, neither have I encountered any palaeographic study confirming the attribution. E.g., Wyatt simply notes that "the script is similar" (1999b: 234) or that the "ductus is consistent" (2015: 412) without providing further references.

The question of authorship opens yet another issue. Was this authorship a creative and active contribution of Ilimilku, or were the narratives only written down according to previous versions? Were they the result of his scribal education, or were they written down later in his career? Not surprisingly, a broader spectrum of interpretations has appeared.[1572] Needless to say, questions of Ilimilku's seniority, his social standing or the originality of his work are important factors in considering any implications of his works, especially when looking for intentions. Once again, we must be aware of the speculative nature of this chapter, and I invite the reader to be very cautious about my arguments.

Therefore, it is now in place to summarise my understanding of Ilimilku.[1573] His status and role are highly relevant to my interpretation. To put it shortly, was he in any position to use myth as a political device? He has left some indices in five colophons preserved to this day.[1574] The lengthiest one is to be found on the final tablet of the *Baʿal Cycle*:

> spr . ỉlmlk šbny / lmd . ảtn . prln . rb . / khnm rb . nqdm / tʿy . nqmd . mlk ủgrt / ảdn . yrgb . bʿl . ṯrmn[1575]

> "*Scribe: Ilimilku from Šubbanu, student of Attēnu, the diviner, chief priest, chief herdsmen, ṯaʿʿāyu-official of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, lord of Yargubu, master of Ṯarimānu.*"[1576]

The first problem of interpretation is structural. Which of the mentioned titles relate to Ilimilku and which to Attēnu or Niqmaddu? The arrangement proposed by Hawley, Pardee, and Roche-Hawly seems the most convincing to me.[1577] Ilimilku described himself at least as 1) a scribe,

---

[1572]E.g., Pitard 2008 and 2012 sees Ilimilku as a fine, but still young scribe who makes a lot of scribal errors in his work. Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 250–251 oppose this interpretation and argue that Ilimilku was rather an author than a copyist. Tugendhaft 2018: 31–34 even places authorial activity of this scribe at the end of his rich political career, reflecting accumulated wisdom rather than youthful sloppiness. Broader exploration of this topic has been done by Wyatt 2015.

[1573] Among studies on Ilimilku, we may note Wyatt 1997, 2002a, Hawley, Pardee, Roche-Hawley 2015: 247–253, or Tugendhaft 2018: 31–37. Dalix has written a dissertation on Ilimilku (1997). Unfortunately, so far, I have not been able to obtain it.

[1574] Two in the *Baʿal Cycle*, (*KTU* 1.4 left edge; *KTU* 1.6 VI 54–58), in the *Epic of Kirta* (*KTU* 1.16 left edge), in the *Epic of Aqhat* (*KTU* 1.17 left edge), and in a mythic/magic text from the *House of Urtēnu* (*KTU* 1.179). For a discussion on the colophons of Ilimilku, see e.g., Wyatt 2015; or Hawley Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 247–249.

[1575] *KTU* 1.6 VI 54–58.

[1576] Following translation of Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 248.

[1577] Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 248. For the summary of alternative sequencing of this colophon with further references, see Wyatt 2015: 405–407; interestingly, he does not consider the version suggested by Hawley, Pardee, and Roche-Hawley. The alternatives range from using all the titles for Ilimilku, making him even more important individual, or on the contrary attributing most of the titles to Attēnu, leaving Ilimilku only the with the Šubbanite origin and a student status. The suggested sequencing seems most probable to me because Ilimilku describe himself as the ṯaʿʿāyu-official is some of his other colophons, e.g., in *KTU* 1.16 left edge, 1.4 left edge (damaged). The titles in question are then for me only the *prln*, *rb khnm*, *rb nqdm*. I would associate at least the title *prln* with Attēnu due to their Hurrian etymology and because in *KTU* 1.179: 40 it seems that *prln* is once again associated primarily with Attēnu. The following two titles may in my opinion belong to both of them. For further discussion of the colophon, see also Pardee 2014, 2012: 112, or 1997: 273, n. 283. Until further evidence is discovered, consensus will not be reached as the data are inconclusive.

2) from the village of Šubbanu,[1578] 3) a student of Attēnu, and 4) *ta^{ʿʿ}āyu*-official[1579] of Niqmaddu. Attēnu is probably the diviner,[1580] chief priest,[1581] and chief herdsman,[1582] but attributing some of these offices to Ilimilku is also possible. I have no doubt the final titles belong to the king.[1583]

What does it tell us about Ilimilku? The position of a scribe is not very informative by itself. It neither confirms nor denies his authorial contribution to the works. While scribes are often considered an elite class, it has been demonstrated that the position may be often comparable to any other craftsman.[1584] The mention of the village of Šubbanu does not help us much to delimit the status of this scribe.[1585] Ilimilku further associates himself with Attēnu, who, judging by his titles, seems to have been a significant person at Ugarit.[1586] I take this above all as a reference to his education in the highest circles, just like a reference to studies at Harvard or Oxford works in today's biographies. Not as a reference to his student status when writing down the narratives.[1587]

The final characterization, *ta^{ʿʿ}āyu*-official of Niqmaddu, may be the most important for us. First, the proximity to the king suggests some level of importance by itself. Unfortunately, the details of this office remain relatively obscure to us, and interpretations differ. Van Soldt has proposed equating this term with SUKKAL in logosyllabic texts, used for senior and high-ranking scribes in a role similar to "royal secretary" or "secretary-of-state".[1588] At the same time, the term has clear cultic connotations. For example, in ritual texts, we may encounter a sacrifice being performed in *bt t^ʿy*, "the house of *ta^{ʿʿ}āyu*-official,"[1589] term *t^ʿ* was used for a specific type of sacrifice and the verb *t-^ʿ-y* was used for the act of performing it. It seems unnecessary to differentiate these two roles because Ilimilku is connected both to the cultic/religious activities (via the archaeological context of the texts and their contents) and to politics and other elite relations.

The understanding of the terms used in this colophon is not without its problems, too; see e.g., Wyatt 2015: 400–405 for a summary of the discussion. As he states: "... *virtually every element in this short text has not only been subjected to intense scrutiny, but has led scholars to widely differing estimates of Ilimilku, as to his importance, the stage of his career as evidenced here, and even, in more recent discussion, his competence.*" (p. 400).

[1578] A village south of Ugarit; see van Soldt 2005: 93–95.

[1579] See the discussion below, and in Chapter *6.2.1.2.1 t^ʿy*.

[1580] See note 1586 below.

[1581] See Chapter *6.2.1.1 Clergy - khnm and qdšm*.

[1582] Probably also a cultic-administrative role.

[1583] E.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 146–148 sees this as a fivefold titulary of the Ugaritic king, following the Egyptian model. I am not particularly convinced by this, but the relations of these titles to the king seem clear enough.

[1584] See, e.g., Sallaberger & Kröss 2019 on the position of scribes (and other) as "elites" in EBA Ebla.

[1585] With the possible exception of not highlighting his patrimonial relations, but the geographical origin instead. I.e., his position was not derived from the position of his father.

[1586] However, the details about the role or *prln* are gravely lacking. See, e.g., Pardee 2015 or van Soldt 1989a, who established the understanding of this term as a "diviner" in comparison with Hurrian *purulini*. I have myself pondered whether this office could have been connected with the Hurrian cults at Ugarit as its etymology suggests. The comparison with the Emar office of "the diviner" who has been an overseer of Hittite-Hurrian cults have been made, but this is far from being conclusive; see Válek 2019: 27 and 2021: 54.

[1587] As has been suggested e.g., by Pitard. See note 1572 above.

[1588] Van Soldt 1988. In this article, it was Attēnu who was attributed with this title. The argument for equating SUKKAL and *t^ʿy* is based on the structure of Ugaritic and Akkadian colophons. This interpretation has been accepted by the scholarly community, see, e.g., Tugendhaft 2018: 31 or Malbran-Labat & Roche 2007: 99.

[1589] *KTU* 1.119. Pardee 2002a: 52 translates in this case "*tā^ʿiyu*-priest".

Apart from colophons, Ilimilku was attested in several other sources.[1590] A famous "double letter"[1591] from the queen and Ilimilku to Urtēnu informs us about his relations with the Ugaritic elite. While precise understanding of the contents of the letter is a subject of discussion, what seems to be clear is that a high level of trust existed among the three actors – Urtēnu must keep the conversation private and secret up until the right time. This letter puts Ilimilku in direct relation with the queen of Ugarit. This association is further strengthened by a letter from Bēlu-būr to Ilimilku.[1592] There, Bēlu-būr asks Ilimilku to deliver a message to the queen, which suggests he had access to her. In yet another letter, Ilimilku appears as an envoy of the king and queen despatched to the Hittite court.[1593] Relations with Urtēnu demonstrated by the letter from the queen are further strengthened by *KTU* 1.179 discovered at *The House of Urtēnu*,[1594] bearing a colophon of Ilimilku. Some letters found at this house place Ilimilku in international relations between Ugarit, Ušnatu[1595] and Sidon.[1596] The *Baʿal Cycle* provides yet another connection with the *House of Urtēnu* – as mentioned above, an Akkadian excerpt has been discovered there. Through *KTU* 1.133, another passage of the *Baʿal Cycle*, Ilimilku is also connected with the *House of the Hurrian Priest*, an essential locus of Ugaritic royal cults.

All of this, in my opinion, suggests that Ilimilku (if the references relate to the same person and not to different namesakes[1597]) was so connected to the political sphere that he indeed was in a position that allowed him to participate in the creation of state ideology. Now, we may ask if he may be considered an author and creative person. In the colophon *KTU* 1.179, Ilimilku(?) states: "no one has taught it (to me)".[1598] Possibly, in this statement, he highlights his authorship, personal involvement, and creativity.[1599] In the colophons of his large narratives, he does not indicate that these would be copies, verified and checked with some "ancient originals".[1600] Instead, he gives his name, relations and status, stressing his involvement in the creation of these tablets. In my opinion, this favours his conscious involvement in creating these texts.[1601]

[1590] The relations of Ilimilku are well discussed in Tugendhaft 2018: 31–35, including graphic visualization.

[1591] *KTU* 2.88. For recent discussions with further references, see e.g., Monroe 2020 and van Soldt 2016c.

[1592] RS 6.198 discovered at the *House of the High Priest*; see Lackenbacher 2002: 297–298 or Thureau-Dangin 1935. This letter also connects Ilimilku with the Assyrian sphere. This is further discussed below in relation to Assyrian narrative propaganda attested at Ugarit.

[1593] RS 19.070 (*PRU IV*: 294).

[1594] Note that the name *House of Urtēnu* is above all a scholarly convention which is sometimes forgotten; see e.g., Calvet 2000: 211, *RSO XVIII*: 8, or *RSO XXIII*: I. The ownership or control over the house operations are still a speculation and someone else might have been the head of this household. Nevertheless, Urtēnu's position was probably very strong.

[1595] RS 94.2445 (*RSO XXIII*, no. 42).

[1596] RS 94.2483 (*RSO XXIII*, no. 56).

[1597] The name was probably relatively common and different bearers of this name are attested; e.g., Ilimilku son of Ilibēlu in RS 16.145 (*PRU III*: 169), or Ilimilku son of Takšanu and Ilimilku son of Ulunari in RS 16.257+ (*PRU III*: 199–204).

[1598] *KTU* 1.179: 42': ... *ind ylmdnn*.

[1599] See Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 251. There, the possibility that this is a parody of Mesopotamian models is mentioned. Nevertheless, the reasons for this inside joke are still to be sought in the context of his personal contribution.

[1600] As could be expected if he followed the Mesopotamian tradition. See Hawley, Pardee & Roche-Hawley 2015: 251.

[1601] As has already been noted above, this is not anything new and several scholars support this thesis. See notes 1487, 1488, or 1489 .

Dating the texts of Ilimilku is yet another essential issue to be considered within the interpretation.[1602] It has long been argued that the Niqmaddu mentioned in his colophons is Niqmaddu III (ca. 1370–1335). However, more recent discussion has shifted the date to the reign of Niqmaddu IV (ca. 1210–1200), together with the shift in the dating of the origins of the Ugaritic alphabetical cuneiform.[1603]

The date of the physical creation of the tablets obviously may not correspond to the creation of the stories themselves. Actually, there is a strong possibility that the stories existed before Ilimilku wrote them down. In the case of the story of the fight between Baʕal and Yamm from the *Baʕal Cycle*, we have direct references that this has been the case. For example, in Mari during the reign of Zimrī-Lîm (around 1780), some texts mention weapons of the storm god with which he defeated the Sea.[1604] In Egypt, Amenhotep II used "the same" story (replacing Baʕal with Seth) for his own propaganda.[1605] However, rather than providing a problem for the authorship, these examples may be used to support the argument. In both cases, the existing story was used for particular purposes – retold and reinterpreted. We will return to this topic below when considering the effectiveness of myths. While the same narratives may well work as political social myths in numerous historical circumstances, I am particularly interested in the specific articulation of these narratives and understanding what might have been the reason for their relevance within the particular time and place.

Therefore, the date of the creation of the narratives is crucial for interpretation. The historical context in which they are set as a lived reality is the base for their relevance.[1606] The general historical overview is given in the introductory chapter.[1607] Here, I only summarise what I see as the most relevant issues. The time of Ilimilku was probably full of paradoxes (what time is not?). On the one hand, Ugarit prospered thanks to its trade relations and its favourable geographical position, providing more precipitation than was the case for some of the neighbouring regions. On the other hand, the end of Ugarit was nearing. The very end of Ugarit might have been an abrupt change caused by a military attack, but the process leading the city to its bitter end was far more gradual. Droughts, hunger, social disruptions, military endangerment, wars, and earthquakes all slowly disrupted the system.[1608] Ugarit was in a vassal position, a petite kingdom, but with great economic potential. The Hittites might have been gradually losing their grip, and Ugarit was trying to get the best of it. Relations with Egypt thrived. The fragile political stability was further undermined by the activities of the Assyrians (see below).

[1602] Tugendhaft notes that the critical thinking about Bronze Age royal ideology in the *Baʕal Cycle* is not dependent on precise historical circumstances or political events (e.g., 2018: 30 or 35). This may be said about the epics, too, but I want to argue that they might have been composed in a specific way (even if largely based on previous sources) because they were relevant to the historical circumstances of Ilimilku's life.

[1603] See the discussion and references in Chapters *2.1 History of Ugarit* and *4 Texts and Religion*. See, e.g., M. Smith 1994: 1–2 and Smith & Pitard 2009: 7–8, or Tugendhaft 2018: 29–30 for discussions on the dating of the text.

[1604] E.g., *FM 7*, nos. 5 and 39. It is usually assumed that letter *FM 7*, no. 39 employed the mythological narrative as part of the royal ideology; see, e.g., Durand 1993 or Sasson 2015: 280–281. However, Tugendhaft 2018 47–61 argued how such a use of myths could have worked not as a straightforward political propaganda of Zimrī-Lîm, but rather as a proclamation of dependence upon the power of Yamḫad.

[1605] pBN 202 and pAmherst 9. For the text and translation, see Collombert & Coulon 2000. The text combines the Egyptian and Levantine cultural realia.

[1606] Contrary to the interpretation of Tugendhaft, the results of my interpretation are heavily dependent on the historical circumstances; see, e.g., Tugendhaft 2018: 30.

[1607] See Chapter *2.1 History of Ugarit*.

[1608] Here, we may particularly point out the "Systemic Risk Theory"; see Kemp & Cline 2022.

We must also consider the position of the king of Ugarit. How strong and stable was it? Here, we face the problem of too broad a timeframe. Even when we focus on the time of the last two rulers of Ugarit, Niqmaddu IV and ʿAmmurāpi II, we are dealing with some 30–40 years, and a lot might have (and probably did) happened in this regard. To which king we may relate the words of RS 34.129: "The king, your lord, is young and does not know anything."?[1609] And during what stage of his rule? During whose reign were the elders and "great men" addressed to discuss the issues of military assistance instead of the king?[1610] And do the two letters coincide in time? I am inclined to place the second letter at the nearing end of the existence of Ugarit.[1611] But by then, ʿAmmurāpi II, the last king of Ugarit, was probably not very young anymore. Still, he might not have been thought of highly by the king of Ḫatti.

I think that the compositions of Ilimilku were created somewhen around the transfer of power from Niqmaddu IV to ʿAmmurāpi II. This transfer is further corroborated by the royal funerary ritual *KTU* 1.161 discovered at the *House of Urtēnu*.[1612] The intense focus on dynastic continuity expressed in both of the narratives may support this thesis. This is where I see the strong relevance of these texts. Unfortunately, we lack sources that would elucidate the context in greater detail. Therefore, the outlined claims can hardly be confirmed with any certainty.

Some arguments may work against the position of Ilimilku as an active "propagandist" and against the consideration of the royal narratives as political myths. These works might have really been written down as old compositions during the scribal education of Ilimilku.[1613] They might have been only a part of the scribal culture; they might have been inside jokes of the scribal or elite communities. Ilimilku may be a composite persona merged by scholars from different individuals. The author of the compositions then might not have been so strongly included in rich political activities and personal relations with the royal family or the city elite. The most pressing issue is the precise historical context, where each detail may heavily shift the motives, intentions, commented issues, etc.

7.3.1.2.2 In the Contexts of Near Eastern Royal Epics?

As mentioned above, my interest in the political potential of the Ugaritic royal narratives arose when I was working on the Mariote *Epic of Zimrī-Lîm*. I think it is worth considering the Ugaritic narratives in connection with other "royal epics."[1614] However, the comparison is far from being straightforward.

Probably the most marked difference is the actions of the heroes. Other royal narratives usually quite directly praise a king – his military achievements, his building activities, his undeniably positive relation with deities, and so on and so forth. These are easy to understand as royal

---

[1609] 34.129 (*RSO VII*, no. 12). This text was discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*.

[1610] RS 88.2009 (*RSO XIV*, no. 2); see also note 1707.

[1611] See also Halayqa 2010: 322–323.

[1612] See Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*.

[1613] See esp. Pitard 2012 who discusses the high percentage of mistakes in the works of Ilimilku, as well as developments in this regard. However, what does the possible "sloppiness" tells us? Was he tired? Was he a student? Were these texts only drafts? Was he a dyslectic? Were these sloppy drafts left at Ugarit and the proper works taken away?

[1614] See note 1515 on the problems of genre definition.

propaganda and social myths. On the contrary, the epics of Ugarit may be characterised as a sequence of ups and downs and end in failure, at least in their extant versions.[1615]

Second, some of the narratives in this stream of tradition deal directly with a living ruler. For example, this was the case with the *Epic of Zimrī-Lîm* or the *Epic of Tukultī-Ninurta*. Other royal epics were copied through generations of scribes, serving, among other purposes, to provide a repertoire of themes and expressions that could be employed in praising the current ruler.[1616]

The Ugaritic epics do not tell the story of a living king. Nor do they narrate the story of some famous dynastic predecessors.[1617] While some motives that may belong to the repertoire for praising the kings appear, most themes reflect a failure. Do the motives of childlessness, illness, drought, famine, failure to keep a promise to a deity, death of an heir, or treason of an heir belong to the repertoire for royal propaganda? The answer may be positive, but usually only when the problems are overcome and work to highlight the ruler's strength and success despite the unfortunate conditions.[1618] In the case of Ugaritic narratives, this issue is complicated by the state of the extant tablets – we do not know if the tales ended with the scales tipping in favour of the monarch.

Some comparisons pertaining to the motive of failure may be made with the *Statue of Idrimi*.[1619] Idrimi also had initial difficulties, losing his throne. However, for the most part, the statue tells a story of his successful reinstalment – even if with the great help and support of the Hurrian king Parattarna, which bears some further political implications of power negotiations.

It may seem that there is not much room for taking the Ugaritic narratives as royal epics *per se* – as works of propaganda. Indeed, when a comparison with the royal epics of the ANE is made, the interpreter faces severe problems on how exactly the Ugaritic narratives should promote the king or his office. It actually surprises me that scholars understanding them as royal propaganda have so often ignored the substantial aspect of unsuccess.

We must consider Ugarit a rich and powerful kingdom but still a petite one – a vassal. Hardly ever in the LBA was Ugarit independent. Mittani, Egypt or Ḫatti always had the upper hand. Describing the king as a mighty conqueror is hard to imagine in this position. Even Kirta's siege of Udum results in obtaining a wife, not in expanding his kingdom or in severe losses on the enemy's side. At the same time, the contrasting strategy – promoting the role of the Hittites (as Idrimi has done with the Hurrians) and deriving the power from them – seems incompatible with negotiating and problematizing the power relations.[1620] Instead, the possibility of weaknesses of the overlords might have been covertly highlighted (this may concern the *Baʿal Cycle*), or they might have simply

---

[1615] Some scholars see the endings differently: "The happy ending of the story is typical of a fairy-tale"; Liverani 2014a: 342 on the *Epic of Kirta*. I just cannot find any reading supporting this view.

[1616] See, e.g., discussion in Válek 2022: 66–69, or Bach 2020a.

[1617] As far as can be judged from the dynastic lists of Ugarit, the heroes of the epics were not seen as dynastic predecessors. However, Daniil is mentioned among the *Rapiūma* in *KTU* 1.20–1.22 so he was a part of the Ugaritic cultural milieu. As a rapiu, he might have been counted among the ancestors, but any direct link to the royal dynasty is missing. Figures of the same name appear in the Bible, too. Some may be connected to the same stream of tradition; see, e.g., Parker 1997: 50–51 with references to Ezek 14: 12–20, 28: 3 and Jub 4: 20. In this regard, I would argue it is better to understand him as a literary/cultural persona well fitting for the role he plays in the narrative.

[1618] See, e.g., Liverani 2021[1970]: 21–22 for some references.

[1619] BM 130738; see e.g., online edition by Lauinger, *ORACC, Statue of Idrimi*, available at: http://oracc.museum. upenn.edu/aemw/alalakh/idrimi/corpus/ [accessed 26th March 2023].

[1620] See note 286 above.

been ignored. It might have been a clever move not to try to promote great power or independence, facing the possibility that the Assyrians may soon be taking over the Hittite sphere. The subordinate position of Ugarit was a political fact. But a fact set in ever-shifting power relations.

The comparison with the royal epics and other propaganda works illustrates that creating propaganda was a practised option in the ANE. This kind of propaganda did not aim to counter cultural patterns[1621] but to use them to promote specific political goals, such as exalting a particular individual as a king. An important factor might have been that Ilimilku had a chance to encounter this kind of propaganda. Apart from the implications of his political and diplomatic career, two sources from Assyria discovered at Ugarit are worth our attention.

A fragment of the *Epic of Tukultī-Ninurta*[1622] was discovered at the *Lamaštu Archive*. This represented an up-to-date example of Assyrian royal propaganda being disseminated across the ANE because Tukultī-Ninurta was a contemporary of several Ugaritic kings, including Ammiṯtamru III, Ibirānu VI and possibly also Niqmaddu IV.[1623] Even though the text has been discovered outside of Ilimilku's attested presence,[1624] the networking of the Ugaritic elite may suggest that Ilimilku might have easily been aware of its existence. In addition to this "living/active" royal epic, we may note that a traditional work of Mesopotamian epics, the *Epic of Gilgameš*,[1625] has been discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*.[1626] It might have been used not only in scribal education for learning the logosyllabic cuneiform script and Akkadian or Sumerian, but it also provided the scribes with cultural knowledge and a repertoire of exalting motives.

A second source is a letter from an Assyrian king, addressed to the king of Ugarit, discovered in the *House of Urtēnu*.[1627] The letter describes the process that led to the battle of Nihriya between the Assyrian and Hittite forces. The Assyrians try to show the Hittite ruler as a weak and manipulative person,[1628] undermining his authority at Ugarit.

It is probably too much to assert that Ilimilku has been directly inspired by these Assyrian works to use narratives to promote Ugaritic political goals. But it seems reasonable to suggest that these sources support the claim that narrative articulation of ideology was a known form of propaganda at Ugarit.

Last but not least, understanding the Ugaritic epics as articulating social myths opens new ways for understanding how a narrative may promote political goals even if its contents speak of

---

[1621] On the other hand, this also does not mean that change of cultural patterns was not present at all. However, the changes were made more or less within the limits set by the culture. This may include, e.g., a promotion of specific deities, cultural appropriations, deifying rulers etc. In some cases, it seems that the limits were over stepped and the proposed change was not accepted, at least in the long run. E.g., the case of propaganda of Narām-Sîn, which included his deification was in later times rather criticised, e.g., through the poem *Curse of Agade*; see e.g., Westenholz 2010: 33.

[1622] RS 25.435 (Arnaud 2007, no. 36); Arnaud identifies the obverse with BM 121033, column VI. The recto does not correspond to any known fragments of the epic and probably goes before what has been preserved in BM 98730. For the edition of the *Epic of Tukultī-Ninurta*, see Machinist 1978.

[1623] As the dating of rule of the kings of Ugarit is imprecise, exact overlaps are difficult to establish.

[1624] For now, I leave aside the question of why the Assyrian narrative was found at the *Lamaštu Archive*.

[1625] RS 94.2066 (Arnaud 2007, no. 42). See George 2007 for broader discussion.

[1626] Mesopotamian compositions, including heroic poetry, were at that time spread across the Near East. See, e.g., Bachvarova 2012: 103–104, Gilan 2010, or Westenholz 2010: 37–39.

[1627] RS 34.165 (*RSO VII* 46). Unfortunately, neither the name of the sender or addressee is not preserved; only the sign Ú of *ú-ga-ri-it* is preserved. Shalmaneser I or Tukultī-Ninurta I were suggested as the relevant Assyrian kings. See, e.g., Tugendhaft 2018: 107–108, Liverani 2014a: 360, Halayqa 2010: 315, or Singer 1999: 689.

[1628] For an interesting contribution on lying and telling tales in international correspondence, see Breier 2020.

failure. I have already mentioned above that Bouchard and others have clearly demonstrated that social and political myths do not need to be about victories and successes to achieve their goal. Myths of failure are also full of potential. Especially in the case of the petite kingdom such as Ugarit, the stories may aim to promote a myth of a ruler who is dependent on the surrounding powers but who is at the same time active and strong enough to negotiate enough power for his kingdom and keep it prosperous. While the stories of Baʿal might have been directed towards a particular understanding of international politics, the epics of Kirta and Aqhat might have been directed inwards, talking about sufferings and failures to address specific problems the politics faced.

7.3.1.2.3 Why?

As referenced above, Tugendhaft has suggested that rather than a straightforward proclamation of royal ideology, the author of Ugaritic narratives critically reflects upon the political system in the *Baʿal Cycle*. We have also noted that Baruch Margalit detects a severe sarcastic tone in both of the epics, aimed at ridiculing the degenerate institution of (divine) kingship. Nicolas Wyatt replies to Margalit's idea: "*I cannot myself believe that Ilimilku was a republican*".[1629]

While both Tugendhaft and Margalit detect a reflective and critical stance towards the politics of that time, Tugendhaft leaves the question of *why would a high-ranking official do so* open. Together with Wyatt, I doubt that Ilimilku was planning to undermine his lords with poetry and then commit treason. Let alone sign a pamphlet aimed at achieving it. Of course, the reasons might have been shallower, for example, to mock the royalty without the royalty noticing. If this is the case, Ilimilku has done a great job, and his joke is on us, too. Only Margalit is laughing with him. In the end, I remain open to this possibility – admitting that Ilimilku was a thinking and creative human being involved in politics allows such an interpretation. Still, I think he was probably too interwoven in the elite relations to undermine and risk his position.

For the sake of my argument, I shall now proceed as if Ilimilku's primary goal was to achieve some pro-regime goals and not to discredit the royalty. In relation to the epics' contents, especially the shared topics, I would argue that the goal was to address some pressing issues the political representation was facing. As has been stressed several times, Ugarit, together with many other sites of the LBA world, were on the brink of destruction. This has not been limited to the last years before their destruction. The history seems to suggest that this process was slow, cumulating one problem after another. In the end, Ugarit could not face the problems successfully, and its allies had full hands of their own problems to help.

At least some of the shared themes of the epics of Kirta and Aqhat seem to address the presented problems. This is especially the case of periods of drought and subsequential food shortages attested both textually and archaeologically. In addition, the royal obligations are explicitly connected to some social problems, subsumed under the imagery of widowhood or orphanhood. While these issues may also be perceived as literary topics and part of long-established tradition, it does not necessarily diminish their relevance for "here and now".

What is important to note is that the narratives presenting social myths do not necessarily need to provide a solution for the problems. The myths are here to give rise to emotions that ultimately lead to a shared ethos. In a more speculative manner, an ethos that might have been in support of a strong king, supported by deities, who listens to the advice of the city elders and great man, who knows what to do in times of crises, who knows how to sort out usurpers, who ensure the

---

[1629] Wyatt 1997: 780.

continuity of his dynasty no matter what. A king whose well-being is integral to the prosperity of the kingdom and who cares about this general prosperity. Let us remember that political campaigns are not necessarily about providing a solution to problems but about highlighting the issues, sometimes providing a strong person who knows how to deal with them.[1630]

In my opinion, the central motive of both epics is royal succession, pondered from several points of view: lack of children for various reasons, death of an heir, or disobedience/treason. As far as I am aware, the sources do not directly indicate problems with royal succession in the period we follow. On the other hand, some indirect evidence may suggest some issues. As we have discussed above, a few letters indicate a weaker position of *a* king. He was described as young and inexperienced by the Hittites, who addressed the sākinu ("governor") of Ugarit via the *House of Urtēnu* instead of him. In another case, the elders and "great man" – not the king – were addressed about military help for Ugarit by the viceroy of Karkemiš. Once again, the message was found in the *House of Urtēnu*. We may see that some political documents bypassed the king or were communicated with him only indirectly. However, the evidence in favour of the strong position of the kings is also rich and indeed prevalent.

The archaeological context of these texts may lead us to conclude that they belonged to the period of the ultimate king of Ugarit, ʿAmmurāpi II or his predecessor, Niqmaddu IV. But the possible timespan is too broad to place any succession problems into the transition period between Ugarit's two last kings or pin them on the last king himself. There might have also been some historical experience with succession issues. Ar-Ḫalba is often connected with a supposed revolt against the Hittite overlords at the beginning of their dominance.[1631] However, it has also been suggested that his short reign may be explained by premature death. His succession by a brother and not a son may have resulted from the lack of heirs,[1632] and the "new" vassal treaty might have been made just to confirm the previous one after the change of kings of both parties. Whatever the historical reality, both problems resulted in succession issues. The omission of Ibirānu VI from the royal funerary ritual *KTU* 1.161 is also suspicious when both ʿAmmiṯtamru III and Niqmaddu IV were invoked there. May we suspect some foul play here? Succession problems were probably connected with the deportation of the brothers of ʿAmmiṯtamru III to Alašiya.[1633] Needless to say, the divorce of ʿAmmiṯtamru III was also a complication for the dynasty.[1634] We may see that royal

---

[1630] Regarding the social problems, it has been suggested that the kings of the LBA did not really care about widows, orphans, people in debt etc. Rather their attitude deepened the problems; see, e.g., Liverani 2021[1970]: 25 or 2014a: 276. Form this, conclusions about a date of origin of the compositions were sometimes made, situating it to the times, when this was true. Liverani 2021[1970]: 25 even calls these motifs "fossil wrecks". But this is not much of an issue for a social myth. Proclaimed ideals and practice may easily diverge. It also seems to me that the claims of brutal alienation of the elites and the general population are a bit exaggerated by Liverani; see, e.g., McGeough 2022 on the issue of debt, including its more constructive factors.

[1631] See, e.g., Singer 1999: 636–638.

[1632] E.g., Foley 1980: 228, Wyatt 1997: 782 and 786; I am more inclined towards the revolt theory as Ar-Ḫalba is left out of the dynastic lists (see Chapter *7.4 Were the Kings of Ugarit Divine?*). Important in regard to royal succession is RS 16.144 (*PRU III*: 76) in which Ar-Ḫalba makes statement about marital possibilities of his wife Kubaba. The opinions differ on whether he forbids his brothers to take her (in the manner of levirate custom) or if he forbids anyone except his brothers to take her. The issue of royal succession is also addressed in this text as it involves malediction related to throne. See also discussion in Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities*.

[1633] See discussion in Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities* on RS 17.352.

[1634] See discussion in Chapter *6.5 Religion and Legal Activities*.

succession at Ugarit was far from seamless, and the narratives were set in this environment. Royal ideology and its construction may, in this light, be seen as a kind of "damage control".[1635]

Apart from addressing issues of crises, we may observe several conflicts of interest in the epics. First, the role of "communal government" is occasionally mentioned. That such institutions were at work at Ugarit is corroborated by several sources.[1636] Could the epics also function to promote their role side by side with the king, especially in times of crisis? Were these institutions subtly promoted by the narratives, taking advantage of the young king? Could this have led to the dispersion of royal activities to "private" households like the *House of Urtēnu*? Second, the role of royal women seems to be stressed in the epics. Is it conceivable to connect it to the relations of Ilimilku and the queen? Could the epics subtly support the position of the queen(s) or even the royal daughters? The queens of Ugarit were indeed quite influential and engaged in politics and economic activities.[1637] While I feel there is more to the queens and epics, I am now unable to proceed with these interpretations further and leave them for further research.

To conclude, there is a plethora of options as to why Ilimilku might have composed the epics. I have outlined some scenarios I deem possible and compatible with other sources. However, all of this remains a speculation, and further research is needed to support or disprove my suggestions.

Also, to connect any narrative to historical events is problematic. In the case of the epics, this has been stressed numerous times. I am aware of this problem and do not claim that the epics describe historical events. However, their "at best parabolic"[1638] character is well in line with them being social myth-narratives. Myths need not be a "history" or "presence"; myths need to be relevant. Just as Biblical parables are made applicable every time they are read and commented on in the church[1639] or when national history is taught at school. The problem is to detect the reasons for the relevancy correctly.

Needless to say, some issues were not addressed in this thesis. For example, I have left aside the possible perspective of a "moral treatise" or a "charter" intended for the king. Stressing numerous obstacles that lie in front of the king may have strong didactic potential for a young monarch or can set up a mirror to an older one. It would also be worth exploring more about how the ancient myths often reflect the internal contradictions of the social systems. They are usually not straightforward. They behave strangely, contradictorily. All of this is, in my opinion, present in the discussed epics, and it is precisely this that leads to such varied interpretations. I also wish to explore this more deeply in the future.

7.3.1.2.4 How?

To further support my argumentation, I try to detect whether the narratives include anything that could be interpreted as persuasion strategies.[1640] In other words, what means did the author employ to ensure promotion and acceptance of the intended message? Once again, the sources very much

---

[1635] See Michalowski 2010: 20, who interprets the ideological activities of Šulgi, the king of the Ur III dynasty, as an extensive attempt to hold the kingdom together after his predecessor died unfavourable death on the battlefield.

[1636] E.g., RS 88.2009 (*RSO XIV*, no. 2) The letter has been sent from Urḫi-Tešub from Karkemiš to Urtēnu, Yabninu and Addu-dīni as well as to the "great men" (LÚ.MEŠ GAL) and "elders" (LÚ.MEŠ *šibu-ti*) of Ugarit.

[1637] See van Soldt 2016c and Thomas 2014.

[1638] Wyatt 1997: 782

[1639] Here, I reference to my experiences with the catholic church.

[1640] Bouchard 2017: 93–111 addresses this topic at length.

limit our understanding of this topic. For example, part of the convincingness was present in the presentation itself (a vivid, passionate, and dynamic recitation or enactment may be far more convincing than dull and slow reading). But we are missing far more critical information: what was perceived as compelling? The present-day readers of ancient literature may often wonder whether anyone has really ever enjoyed these works. But this may be wondered about Shakespeare, black-and-white movies, Indiana Jones, or Star Wars, too. To appreciate the message and the story, the audience must be "attuned" to it on many levels. We are able to follow such attunes in only a very limited way.

First of all, we may follow the use of poetic devices, some of which were shared with the rest of the ANE literature. Their endurance may be seen as a marker of their popularity and, consequently, effectiveness. Natan-Yulzary recently explored such literary features in the Epic of Kirta.[1641] In her opinion, the poetics of the epic are well set in the traditions of the ANE literature, including Biblical poetry. The extensive use of different forms of parallelisms, fixed word pairs, repetitions, etc., are all poetic features that might have been appreciated and expected by the audience.[1642] Her conclusions may be easily applied to the *Epic of Aqhat*, too. Among these, we may point out often used "seven(-eight)-fold" imagery, which seems to have been associated with the feeling of fulfilment and completeness: Kirta's house of seven, nay eight, sons has perished, and he had seven wives all of whom he had lost;[1643] seven/eight children are promised to him;[1644] Baʿal draws near Daniil after seven days of venerating deities;[1645] Kirta's march to Udum should take seven days;[1646] the heavy drafts affecting the country last seven, nay eight, years;[1647] the death of Aqhat is mourned for seven years.[1648] The break in this pattern – the stop of Kirta at the shrine of Aṯirat, leads to a twist within the story and causes trouble for the hero.[1649] Natan-Yulzary notes that Ilimilku was able to diverge from the conventions and thus emphasise some narrative events[1650] or that he was able to build up great expectations that were then unfulfilled and have brought disappointment.[1651] She stresses "the supreme artistry of the Ugaritic poet, and how he draws his audience attention to words, collocations, and entire segments of the narrative and thus affects the audience's interpretation of the work."[1652] She also remarks that "all these elements are created by the artist intentionally, not only to produce an aesthetic experience in the beholder, but also to trigger thought about the meaning of the objects in their own right and within the entire composition."[1653] Last but not least, "the knowledge shared by the poet and his interpretive community allows the poet to manipulate the audience's interpretations".[1654] Albeit her final interpretation substantially differs from the interpretation I am

---

[1641] Natan-Yulzary 2020. See also her other works on the Ugaritic epics, e.g., 2022, which is more focused on the event of Kirta's march to Udum; or 2017, where she focuses on the use of resumptive repetition in the *Epic of Aqhat*; all these articles are relevant in understanding the rich use of literary devices to work with the audience.

[1642] For a recent discussion, see, e.g., Steinberger 2022.

[1643] *KTU* 1.14 I: 7–21.

[1644] *KTU* 1.15 II: 23–25.

[1645] *KTU* 1.17 I: 15–16.

[1646] *KTU* 1.14 III: 1–5.

[1647] *KTU* 1.19 I: 44–46.

[1648] *KTU* 1.19 IV: 15–18.

[1649] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 158–159.

[1650] Natan-Yulzary 2020*: 164–165.

[1651] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 170–172.

[1652] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 155.

[1653] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 155.

[1654] Natan-Yulzary 2020: 172–173.

advocating here,[1655] I believe it clearly demonstrates one of the modalities of how social myths may be successfully narrated.

Explorations of the intertextuality of Ugaritic texts with other literary works of ANE may attest to yet another tactic of persuasion.[1656] The use of time-tested literary topoi is a way to success. For example, the above-mentioned seven(-eight)-fold poetic device has also been used across the ANE heroic compositions,[1657] including the fragment of the Epic of Tukultī-Ninurta found at Ugarit.[1658] But this tactic is far more varied and includes many examples. The literary topos of caring for the orphan and widow is also a recurring topic in the ANE literary compositions.[1659]

Narrations of following the divine will are yet another recurring pattern in ANE heroic poetry.[1660] The king should not act by his own volition, and he needs the support of the deities. We have already seen in one of the previous chapters[1661] that divination was probably an integral part of the decision-making process at the palace. The practice of divination is articulated several times in the discussed narratives,[1662] and the royal submission to the divine will is an essential element. The contrast of following the divine will or one's own volition is used as a narrative device to induce plot twists. Kirta pays the price for not following the divine instructions precisely as they were given. Similarly, his son Yaṣṣib fails to be an heir when he acts of his own volition and not by divine instructions.[1663]

We may also note strong structural and thematic similarities between the episode of Aqhat refusing the offerings of life from ʿAnat in exchange for his bow[1664] and the episode from the *Epic of Gilgameš*, where the hero refuses goddess Ištar.[1665] It is not unreasonable to suppose that the knowledge of the *Epic of Gilgameš* served as an inspiration for the poet.

The topic of intertextuality also brings up another issue. Was the audience acquainted with other works that also employed them? Was the story of Gilgameš recalled when some episodes of the Ugaritic epics were heard? We know that Mesopotamian literary works were present at Ugarit, but we do not know how widely spread they were. It is safe to assume that scribes were acquainted with them as these compositions are generally believed to be used in scribal education.[1666] Possibly, we may witness here the application of scribal education in practice. As has already been argued, the royal

---

[1655] "The central themes of the work are not royal ideology or the monarch's duties, such as protecting his state against external and internal threats, to establish justice, and securing cultic order, as Knoppers suggests. The legend of king Kirta is, rather, an instructive lesson which focuses on the ideas of health and long life, prosperity, the human condition and continuity, human-divine relations, righteousness, and the relations of an heir to his father."; Natan-Yulzary 2020: 174.

[1656] The topic of intertextuality is recently gaining more and more attention and provides a valuable line of enquiry. Note, e.g., the recently organized workshop on intertextuality at 68th *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Leiden) by Nikita Artemov, Johannes Bach, and Selena Wisnom. See, e.g., Wisnom 2019 or Bach 2020b.

[1657] For a short overview, see, e.g., Liverani 2021[1970]: 18–19.

[1658] RS 24.435: 26'.

[1659] See, e.g., Fensham 1962.

[1660] See, e.g., Válek 2022: 53–56.

[1661] See Chapter *7.2 State and Divination*.

[1662] The examination of the viscera of birds in *KTU* 1.19 III: 1–45 may be seen as narrative depiction of extispicy. Similarly, the coming of Ilu to Kirta during his sleep may be seen as an oneiromantic experience; *KTU* 1.14 I: 33–III: 51. Daniil then actively induces similar experience; *KTU* 1.17 I: 1–II: 23.

[1663] *KTU* 1.16 VI: 25–29.

[1664] *KTU* 1.17 VI: 25–41.

[1665] Tablet VI of the standard Babylonian epic; see George 2003: 616–631 for texts edition.

[1666] See references in note 322.

narratives, especially those of the long-past kings, were probably used as a source of inspiration for current propaganda.[1667]

Even the argument that the tablets written down by Ilimilku were "only" recordings of old and known stories may fit within this argumentation. As Bouchard comments, the process of creating myths is not easy, and it is often more "through an operation that belongs more to translation or transposition than to construction or invention".[1668] The stories themselves did not need to be created by Ilimilku himself, as this was definitely the case of the conflict between Yamm and Baʕal. His involvement and contribution might have been in *how* exactly he has retold these stories. Building upon a known tradition is a powerful persuasion mechanism.

We may also focus on other features that could have been relevant and persuasive specifically to the target audience. For example, the topos of following the divine will and involvement of deities is quite general, but it was crafted in a way fitting for the audience. We may highlight numerous references to the figures of the local pantheon – corresponding to the evidence of cultic texts. Similarly, the notion of Hurrian-Semitic confluence in the *Epic of Kirta*[1669] might have appealed to the popularity of the Hurrian tradition at Ugarit.[1670] The ritual rouging of Kirta[1671] or Paġit[1672] may relate to the production of the red dye from the sea shellfish.[1673]

Some associations might also be sought in the geographical settings used for the narratives. Tyre and Sidon are mentioned in relation to Atirat.[1674] These cities belonged to the known geography at Ugarit. Unfortunately, we are far more in the mist with the rest of the mentioned toponyms. Where were *qr . mym*, *mrr . tġll . bnr*, or *ablm*, the cities near which Aqhat was slain? Were they real or literary places? We can only suppose they were not selected randomly and might have triggered some associations in the audience, such as the city of Ḫābur and its Hurrian connotations.

The mention of Ḫābur directly opens another issue. So far, we have highlighted what means were employed in the narrative to bring it closer to the audience – both in emotion, literary form, and cultural realia. However, there are also elements distancing the story of the epics from the currently lived reality. One of the main problems of taking the Ugaritic epics as parts of royal propaganda is that they are not actually set within the kingdom of Ugarit. The kings do not belong to the royal dynasty. None of the heroes of the epics is particularly connected with the Ugaritic dynasty, possibly apart from Daniil, who is mentioned in the *Rapiūma* composition. But except for these compositions, there is nothing to further contextualise his role at Ugarit.[1675] Kirta is then, at best,

---

[1667] See, e.g., Válek 2022: 67, Rieken 2001: 583–584, or Vanstiphout 1998, esp. 586.

[1668] Bouchard 2017: 90.

[1669] Kirta is a known Hurrian king, the name of his city (Ḫābur) is an important river in the region of Hurrian homeland, and the wife Kirta obtains for himself is Ḫuraya which may be interpreted as an ethnonymic element, meaning "the Hurrian one".

[1670] See, e.g., Válek 2021: 49–54.

[1671] *KTU* 1.14 II: 9; III: 52.

[1672] *KTU* 1.19 IV: 41–43.

[1673] See Chapter *2 Contexts of Religion at Ugarit*. Sometimes, this is also used as an argument for the use of red in ritual practices.

[1674] *KTU* 1.14 IV: 34–36.

[1675] See also note 1617.

connected with the olden king of Mittani.[1676] This distancing may be, in my opinion, connected with the articulation of failures. Should we use the imagery of crisis in support of the current regime, we are better to distance it from the current administration itself. In this way, the (hi)story may work as a powerful parable – on the one hand, pointing out the problems, on the other hand, not weakening the present ruler by them. The narratives are great didactic tools, where the problems and paradoxes of the present situation may be pondered from a safe distance.

One of the most important means of effectiveness of a social myth is that it must be able to raise emotions. This is obviously something that can hardly be traced in the ancient material. It would be mistaken to simply relate what triggers our feelings with the ancient experience. Still, there are some motives I believe to be emotionally powerful. For example, the problems of dynastic continuity may be fitted within the patrimonial model of society.[1677] The inability to bear children, their premature death, or their betrayal must have been something relatable to a non-negligible part of the population. The loss of a wife or fear of the loss of a father is a situation that may lead one to tears, just as it did with Kirta. The insecurity of food production increased in the context of environmental issues might have also triggered emotions among some inhabitants, as reflected in Ugaritic correspondence.[1678] The hype of a military campaign or fear of one coming near is also emotionally potential. The stakes with emotions are high as they have mobilizing power, creating a powerful ethos and shared collective imaginaries, but also a risk of evoking feelings of hopelessness, leading to pessimistic resignation.[1679] Myths can backfire in this regard.

The persuasiveness of social myths is also closely related to the actors involved in the process and the contexts in which they appear. A story may be convincing because of *who* narrates it, *where* and *when*.

Unfortunately, we know next to nothing about the performance of the royal epics of Ugarit. This is a recurring problem of interpretation of the ANE narratives in general.[1680] Nonetheless, there are at least a few indications that songs, among which royal epics may be tentatively counted, were actively performed at Ugarit. In the Baʿal Cycle, we may read about a song being sung at the feast of Baʿal.[1681] This may be taken as mirroring the reality of earthly feasts, too.[1682] Singing was also a common part of religious rituals, although the contents were probably aimed at praising deities.[1683]

[1676] Liverani 2014a: 291. Apart from the narrative, Kirta may also appear as a personal name in *KTU* 4.391: 15, but the passage is damaged and it may be *kr⌜m⌝*[...], too.

[1677] See Schloen 2001.

[1678] See, e.g., *KTU* 2.104 between Urtēnu and his sister.

[1679] Bouchard 2017: 53.

[1680] There are few exceptions worth mentioning. E.g., *Enūma eliš* was been recited during the *akītu* festival; see, e.g., Bidmead 2014: 63–70. There are also some data on myth performance during Hittite rituals; see, e.g., Gilan 2010: 55–57, Bachvarova 2012: 107–108, or Rutherford 2001. In Mari of Zimrī-Lîm, a letter even mentions a recommendation of a signer to the service of the king so he may extol the king; see Válek 2022: 68, text *FM 9*, no. 8.

[1681] *KTU* 1.3 I: 18–22.

[1682] See Hawley 2015: 73.

[1683] E.g., in *KTU* 1.112, *qdš*-priest is instructed to sing; *KTU* 1.148 includes a Hurrian hymn and numerous Hymns in Hurrian were discovered in the *Royal Palace* (see Chapter *4.2.1.3.1 Royal Palace*); *KTU* 1.106 mentions a singer who sings a song to a king.

Singers are mentioned in several administrative texts.[1684] However, none of this brings us any closer to the details of the performance of the Ugaritic epics.

The target audience is also lost to us. We may speculate that there might have been some general awareness of royal ideology throughout the kingdom. Building upon the "theory of concentric belts" of Mario Liverani,[1685] we could think of different levels of access and understanding distributed among the population of the kingdom. The audience closest to the king knows the details best but is somewhat limited in numbers. As we move away from the king, the level of awareness decreases, but the audience grows. While this theory seems quite reasonable to me, more research is needed to elaborate on the details.

7.3.1.3   CONCLUSION

This section has been rather long in the context of this thesis. The conclusions are far shorter. I hope that I have been able to demonstrate that the epics of Kirta and Aqhat might(!) have been used as narratives within the royal propaganda. The evidence suggests that 1) their author, Ilimilku, was in a position fit to participate in the promotion of royal ideology, 2) they commented upon some critical issues present in contemporary society, 3) they fit within the context of the royal epics of the ANE, 4) the motives of failure present in them may be used to support rather than ridicule the monarchy, 5) they employ numerous features that may contribute to their persuasiveness and raise emotions. All of this together supports the central thesis.

At the same time, this does not mean that the epics were nothing but royal propaganda. We can hardly judge what they were intended for since we do not know how exactly they were present in the Ugaritic community. Different uses are not mutually exclusive; the leisure performing of these works is not anyhow contradictory to its ideological message.

All of the arguments of this section might have been more elaborate, gone into greater detail, detected various nuances, or provided more comparative evidence (both ancient and modern). But as far as this thesis is concerned, the space has been exhausted. I hope that I will return to many of the issues addressed here in the broader context of ancient Near Eastern Royal Epics.[1686]

7.4   WERE THE KINGS OF UGARIT DIVINE?

One of the most intriguing and contradictory topics related to religion and politics at Ugarit is the issue of the divine nature of the kings.[1687] The opinions of scholars about this problem strongly differ. This is a natural outcome of the scarce, unclear, and contradictory source set. These sources are then discussed with different aims, from various perspectives, using many theoretical approaches, and set within different understandings of the cultural contexts. In this light, it may be reasonably stated that this chapter cannot contribute anything new to the discussion, and if so, it will only stir up the already

---

[1684] See Chapter *6.2.1 Cults and Occupations.*

[1685] Liverani 2014b.

[1686] Once again, I can redirect the reader to follow the ongoing project *ORACC, Near Eastern Royal Epics,* available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nere/ [accessed 26th August 2023]. At the time of finishing this thesis, there is still only the *Epic of Zimrī-Lîm*, as it was more than a year ago when I finished my thesis (Válek 2022).

[1687] To select just several works discussing different aspects of the Ugaritic kingship and its relation to the divine sphere: Töyräänvuori 2020, Wyatt 2007a, collected essays in 2005 (including 2002a and 1999a), 2000, or 1996; del Olmo Lete 2012a[2017b: 437–448], 2006, 1996, and 1986[2017b: 407–420], Stieglitz 2015, Haley 1984, Foley 1980: 198–221, or Gray 1969. The divine character is a recurring topic in scholarly discussions, most of which do not directly deal with this issue.

wild waters of interpretation. To be honest, I think that with the sources at our disposal, this problem does not have a solution and remains in the field of speculation, primarily based on the personal preferences of individual scholars. Still, I provide here at least a short reflection on this issue because it simply cannot be missing in the discussion on politics and religion at Ugarit.

7.4.1 COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The discussion may begin with the contextualization of Ugaritic sources within the concepts of divine/sacred kingship in the ANE (and Egypt). It is impossible to shortly summarise this situation as a whole. This is because there is a great variety among these conceptualizations.[1688] With caution, we may only note that the position of the kings was always unique, including their relation to the divine realm. This is rather useless conclusion. Some of the kings of Mesopotamia were indeed deified – notoriously the Narām-Sîn of Agade, or the rulers of the Ur III dynasty. The divine nature of the Egyptian rulers is also a recurring topic,[1689] as well as the position of the Hittite kings.[1690] However, even in the cases where the kings were "divine" this was conceptualised from highly different perspectives. The ideology and practical actualization of kings' divine nature, involvement in cults, or access to deities take on many various forms. In this regard, the comparative material only shows us that practically anything was possible. The cultural boundaries were relatively flexible in this regard. Therefore, in my opinion, the comparative material cannot be used to fill in any uncertainties and gaps in the Ugaritic material. At best, it can be used with caution to support some suggested interpretations – as corresponding to other known conceptions within the ANE.

7.4.2 SOURCES FROM UGARIT

Therefore, it is best to rely solely on the sources from Ugarit and avoid most comparative inferences. The sources used to reconstruct the relations of Ugaritic kings are manifold. In this section, we will briefly comment on those referred most often.

The source most often used to confirm the divine nature of the Ugaritic kings is the "divine genealogy".[1691] This text has been preserved on five tablets, one in Ugaritic (*KTU* 1.113) and four in logosyllabic (RS 88.2012, 94.2501, 94.2518, and 94.2518).[1692] The Ugaritic version has been discovered in the *House of the Hurrian Priest*. The logosyllabic are all associated with the *House of Urtēnu*.

[1688] To select just a few studies for comparative perspectives: the seminal work of Frankfort 1948, or contributions in Brisch 2008. Several contributions in Hill, Jones & Morales 2013 also address these issues, namely those by Bárta, Charpin, Frahm, Morris, or Scurlock. For a broader contextualization of sacred/divine kingship, also outside of the ANE, see, e.g., contributions in Moin & Strathern 2022.

[1689] See, e.g., Frankfort 1948: 36–139, or Morris 2013. We must be aware that the situation in Egypt was also complex and fluid. It was not a matter of one continuous and unchanging tradition.

[1690] See, e.g., Beckman 2012.

[1691] As Wyatt 2007a: 51 notes, this represents rather a legal fiction than historical reality. Still, it must be taken seriously for the emic perspective. See also Vidal 2000 or Singer 1999: 609–614.

[1692] Preliminary published by Arnaud 1998. Arnaud 1998: 153 announced publication of these texts in the *RSO* series, but as far as I know this was never realised. *KTU* 1.113 has been known for a long time, for the initial discussion on the reconstruction of the genealogy, see Kitchen 1977.

rev. KTU 1.113[1693]	RS 94.2518[1694]	dynasty of Ugarit, Arnaud 1998[1695]
	1: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*ú-ga-ra-na*	Ugarānu
	2: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*am-qú-na*	Amqūnu
	3: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*rap-a-na*	Rapʔānu
	4: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*lim-il*-LUGAL	Lim-il-Malik
	5: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*am-mu-ḫa-ra-ši*	Ammu-ḫarrāšī
	6: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*am-mu-ša-mar*	Ammu-šamar
II 28′: [*il* ˤ*m*]⌈*ṯ*⌉*tmᵣ*⌉	7: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*a-mis-tam-ri*	ˤAmmiṯtamru I
II 29′: [*il n*]*qmp*ˤ	8: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaˤ
II 30′: *il mpḫ*	9: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*ma*-AB-*i*	Maphû
II 31′: *il ibrn*	10: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*i-bi-ra-na*	Ibirānu I
II 32′: *il y*ˤ*drd*	11: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢKAR-ᴰIŠKUR	Yaˤḏur-Adu (Eḫli-Tešub?[1696])
II 33′: *il nqmp*ˤ	12: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaˤ II
II 34′: *il ibrn*	13: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*i-bi-ra-na*	Ibirānu II
II 35′: [*i*]⌈*l*⌉ ˤ*mrpi*	14: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*am-mu-ra-pi*	ˤAmmurapi I
II 36′: [*il*] *nqmp*ˤ	15: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaˤ III
II 37′: *il ib*⌈*r*⌉[*n*]	16: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*i-bi-ra-na*	Ibirānu III
(u.e.) II 38′: *il nqmp*⌈ˤ⌉	17: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaˤ IV
II 39′: *il ibrn*	18: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*i-bi-ra-na*	Ibirānu IV
II 40′: *il nqmd*	19: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-ma-du*	Niqmaddu I
II 41′: *il yqr*	20: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*ya-qa-ri*	Yaqaru
	21: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*i-bi-ra-na*	Ibirānu V
	22: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-ma*-ᴰIŠKUR	Niqmaddu II (I)
I 21′: [*il nq*]*mp*ˤ	23: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaˤ V
I 22′: [*il* ˤ*m*]*ttmr*	24: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*a-mis-tam-ri*	ˤAmmiṯtamru II (I)
(u.e.) I 23′: [...]⌈*d*⌉	25: DINGIR ᴰᴵˢ*níq-ma*-ᴰIŠKUR	Niqmaddu III (II)
I 24′: [...]		Ar-Ḫalba[1697]

[1693] According to Pardee 2002a: 201–202. Position of lines 21′–26′ of column I is done according to me, contra Pardee 2002a, esp. p. 197 point 2. Note that KTU has different numbering. While the precise position of column I and II is not clear, in light of the Akkadian texts, we may altogether abandon previous suggestions to read this list in reverse, starting the dynasty with Yaqaru; see brief discussion of this problem in Pardee 2002a: 196–199 or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 145. Consequently, any suggestions taking the seal of Yaqaru as the seal of the founder of the dynasty should be abandoned, too. The Akkadian lists make clear that by the emic conception it was eponymous founder named Ugarānu. However, see Pardee 2002a: 197 point 4, indicating that the genealogy might have continued further in the past up to Ditānu, connecting the genealogy with the names in *KTU* 1.161, the royal funerary ritual. In addition, Ditānu may serve as a link to the Amorite dynasties; see, e.g., Schmidt 1994: 72–82. However, it is hard to say how was this perceived at Ugarit, temporally very distant from the referenced material – the Old Babylonian *Genealogy of the Ḫammurabi Dynasty*. For a broad study on the relation of the Ugaritic royalty to the Amorites, see Buck 2020.

[1694] According to Pardee 2002a: 203–204

[1695] According to Arnaud 1998: 163. Transcription altered in some cases. The numbering in parentheses shows the conventional numbering of the kings of Ugarit. Throughout this thesis, I have used the numbers suggested by Arnaud to reflect on the Ugaritic self-conceptualisation.

[1696] See Arnaud 1998: 163 (n. 36) and 166.

[1697] Ar-Ḫalba, is missing from the lists. Possibly, this may support the thesis about his alleged revolt against the Hittite overlords; see, e.g., Singer 1999: 636–638. This points well to the ideological character of these lists.

I 25′: [...]	26: DINGIR ^{DIš}*níq-me-pa*	Niqmēpaʿ VI (I)
I 26′: [...]⌈*q*⌉		ʿAmmittamru III (II)
		Ibirānu VI (I)
		Niqmaddu IV (III)
		ʿAmmurapi II (I)

The understanding of the sign DINGIR in the logosyllabic texts and the lexeme *il* in the Ugaritic one was the core of disagreement among the scholars. The opinions differ whether we are to understand the statements as "the god RN"[1698] or "the god of RN".[1699] It seems to me that the present discussion is overwhelmingly in favour of the first option, understanding the names as divine.[1700] At the same time, I think it is worth noting that the royal names are also preceded by the DIš sign, indicating their human character. Seen in this light, they participate in both the human and divine realms.

These lists may also be connected to the sacrificial practice. According to Arnaud, RS 94.2518 has a check mark on each entry.[1701] This may be compared with deity lists *KTU* 1.118 or RS 20.024, where similar check marks appear, too. This may reflect the practice of noticing that sacrifices for the intended deity (including the deified kings) were just made.[1702] Receiving sacrifices is one of the distinct features of how a deity is recognised. If our understanding of these marks is correct, the dead kings were divine not only in ideology but also in practice. The only material we are missing to confirm this hypothesis is some ritual text directly mentioning the sacrifices. The ritual character of these lists may also be connected with the obverse of *KTU* 1.113. Due to the damaged state,[1703] the understanding of it is very insecure, but it may be understood with caution as a musical rite in honour of the deceased kings.[1704]

KTU 1.113 and its logosyllabic counterparts thus seem to establish some degree of divinity of the deceased rulers. As such, it is usually contextualised hand in hand with the funerary ritual of Niqmaddu IV(?), written on *KTU* 1.161. This tablet belongs to the cluster from the *House of Urtēnu*, where the Akkadian lists were discovered. However, because these lists end with Niqmēpaʿ VI, it is complicated to establish the relation clearly. It has even been argued that it is better to connect *KTU* 1.113 with the funeral, as it might have continued up to Niqmaddu in the damaged section.[1705] On the other hand, it may lead us to consider the status of ʿAmmittamru III and Niqmaddu IV at the time of the funeral. It seems to me a not-so-far-reaching possibility that they were not yet divine. They were addressed as *mlk* in *KTU* 1.161. This could indicate that death was not the only condition for them to enter the divine realm. Maybe the striking omission of Ibirānu VI could also be seen in this light. But we are left to wonder why his successor would pass him in the queue to divinity. Here, I am stepping over the line with speculations.

[1698] E.g., Wyatt 2007a: 63, del Olmo Lete 2014a: 145, or Pardee 2002a: 202–204. Lewis 1989: 47–52 takes *il* as a honorific title, not as a sign of deification.

[1699] E.g., Schmidt 1994: 69.

[1700] See, e.g., comments in Wyatt 2007a: 63 and Pardee 2002a: 199–200. For example, Liverani 1974: 340–341 previously suggested that the text refers to personal deities, but later reconsidered his position (2014a: 345).

[1701] Arnaud 1998: 168.

[1702] See also Pardee 2002a: 200.

[1703] See plate

[1704] Pardee 2002a: 200–201 or del Olmo Lete 2014a: 143–145.

[1705] See Pardee 2002a: 198–199.

We may also briefly consider the findspots of these texts. The discovery of *KTU* 1.113 in the *House of the Hurrian Priest* is not very surprising. As has been discussed above,[1706] this was a locus well connected with the royal cult. More striking is the discovery of *KTU* 1.161 and the logosyllabic genealogies in the *House of Urtēnu*. The relations between the palace and this structure are well documented. But this mostly concerns economic and diplomatic relations. Religion is only poorly documented in this building. It seems most probable to me to connect this with the elite relations at Ugarit and with the dispersion of the political activities over the city, including ideological works.[1707] The notion of involvement in the construction of royal ideology may explain the presence of these texts here. The archaeological context of the texts also indicates the complexities of the concept of the divine nature of the kings. We realise that it might not have been only a theological conception or a product of the power dual palace-temple, let alone the wishful thinking of conceited kings. Maybe the royal ideology was constructed by actors who did not readily belong among the usual suspects, like a sycophantic merchant. There may be much more to this, and further research may bear interesting results regarding the royal ideology and understanding the elite relations at Ugarit. As stated so many times in this thesis, I hope to return to this issue in the future.

KTU 1.161 – the royal funerary ritual[1708]

1	*spr . dbḥ . ẓlm*	Document: sacrifices of the "shades".
2	*qrⁱtm* ⌜. *r*⌝*pⁱm . å*[*rṣ*]	You are invited, ⌜ra⌝piūma of the Ea[rth],
3	*qbⁱtm . qbṣ dd*[*n*]	you are summoned, Assembly of Didā[nu].
4	*qrå . ůlkn . r*⌜*p*⌝[*ů*]	*Ulkn*, the ra⌜pi⌝[u] is invited,
5	*qrå . trmn . rp*[*ů*]	*Trmn*, the rapi[u] is invited,
6	*qrå . sdn . w* ⌜*.*⌝ *rd*[*n*]	*Sdn-w-Rd*[*n*] is invited,
7	*qrå . ṯr . ʿllmn* [...]	*Ṯr-ʿllmn* is invited,
8	*qrů . rpⁱm . qdmym* [...]	The rapiūma of old are invited.
9	*qrⁱtm . rpⁱ . årṣ*	You are invited, rapiūma of the Earth,
10	*qbⁱtm . qbṣ . dd*⌜*n*⌝	you are summoned, Assembly of Didā⌜nu.⌝
11	*qrå . ʿmṯtm*⌜*r*⌝ *. m*⌜*l*⌝*k*	ʿAmmiṯtam⌜ru⌝, the ki⌜n⌝g, is invited,
12	*qrå . ů . nqm*⌜*d*⌝[*.*]⌜ *mlk*⌝	Niqma⌜ddu, the king⌝, is invited, too.
13	*ksⁱ . nqmd* [*.*]⌜ *ⁱbky*⌝	The throne of Niqmaddu, ⌜be bewept,⌝
14	*q . ydm*ʿ *.* ⌜*h*⌝*dm .* ⌜*p*⌝ʿ*nh*	and may tears be shed over the ⌜fo⌝otstool of his ⌜fe⌝et,
15	*l pnh . ybky . ṭlḥn . ml*⌜*k*⌝	before him, may they weep (for) the kin⌜g⌝'s table,
16	*w .* ⌜*y*⌝*bl*ʿ *. ůdm*ʿ*th*	and may ⌜each⌝ swallow his tears.
17	ʿ*dmt . w .* ʿ*dmt .* ʿ*dmt*	Desolation and desolation of desolations!
18	*ⁱšḫn . špš . w . ⁱšḫn*	Be hot Šapaš, and be (very) hot,

19	*nyr . rbt . ʿln . špš . tṣ⌈ḥ⌉*	the Great Luminary, over us, Šapaš, cries.
20	*aṭr⌈ .⌉ [b]ʿlk . l . ks⌈i⌉ . aṭr*	After your [l]ords, from the thron⌈e⌉, after
21	*bʿlk . arṣ . rd . arṣ*	your lords descend to the Earth, to the Earth
22	*rd . w . špl . ʿpr . tḥt*	descend and bend down to the dust; under
23	*sdn . w . rdn . tḥt . tr*	*Sdn-w-Rdn*, under *Tr-*
24	*ʿllmn . tḥt . rpim . qdm⌈y⌉m*	*ʿllmn*, under the rapiŭma of o⌈l⌉d,
25	*tḥt . ʿmttmr . mlk*	under ʿAmmittamru, the king,
l.e.	*tḥm . u . nq[md] . mlk*	under Niq[maddu], the king, too.
27	*ʿšty . w . t⌈ʿ⌉[y . tn .]⌈w .⌉ tʿ[y]*	One and perform the *t⌈ʿ⌉[y*-sacrifice, two]⌈and⌉ perform the *tʿ[y*-sacrifice,]
rev.	*tlt . w . tʿy . ⌈a⌉[rb]⌈ʿ⌉ . w . tʿ[y]*	three and perform the *tʿy*-sacrifice, ⌈f⌉[ou]⌈r⌉ and perform the *tʿ[y*-sacrifice,]
29	*ḫmš . w . tʿy . t⌈t⌉ . [w] . ⌈t⌉ʿy*	five and perform the *tʿy*-sacrifice, si⌈x⌉ [and] perform the ⌈*t*⌉ʿ*y*-sacrifice,
30	*šbʿ . w . tʿy . tq⌈d⌉m . ʿṣr*	seven and perform the *tʿy*-sacrifice. You shall pr⌈es⌉ent a bird (as)
31	*šlm . šlm ʿmr[pi]*	a peace-offering. Peace to ʿAmmurā[pi],
32	*w . šlm bt/nʾh . šlm . [t]ry⌈l⌉*	and peace to his house/sons. Peace to [T̲a]rriye⌈lli⌉,
33	*šlm . bth . šlm . ugrt*	peace to her house/daughters. Peace to Ugarit,
34	*šlm . t̲ǵrh*	peace to her gates.

The deceased kings as deities are occasionally connected with other known entities (deities?) known from the Ugaritic cult. Especially in light of *KTU* 1.161, the *rapiŭma* are often related to deified kings.[1709] The understanding of this collective differs. While some scholars tend to limit them to royalty, others are more open and consider *rapiŭma* as a general term for the dead.[1710] As has already been discussed in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs,* on the issue of the cults of the dead, this issue is rather complicated, and our understanding of *rapiŭma* is very uncertain. Their exact connection with the royalty, as well as their divine character, are not understood well enough to make any solid conclusions.

Next, the kings are often connected with deities designated as *mlkm*.[1711] This connection seems quite apparent, as these may be translated as "Kings". The collective character of *mlkm* appears as a plausible reference to the sum of the deceased kings. However, in my opinion, it is impossible to decide with certainty if the *mlkm* are equivalent to the list of deified kings, if they were a broader

---

[1709] See, e.g., Wyatt 2007a: 69, 2005[1999a]: 199–200, del Olmo Lete 2014a: 135–137 or 155. *KTU* 1.20–22 is also discussed in this regard, as well as ritual text *KTU* 1.108, where *rpu . mlk . ʿlm*, "Rapiu, the king of eternity" appears on the first line. In the *Epic of Aqhat,* Daniil is designated as *mt rpi*, "man of Rapiu"; e.g., *KTU* 1.17 I: 17.

[1710] See, e.g., Pardee 2002a: 113, n. 123 or the discussion in Schmidt 1994: 71–93 for different interpretations given to the *rapiŭma.* Lewis summarizes given interpretations as follow: minor deities, heroic warriors, tribal group, shades of the dead, or some combination of all. Interestingly, he does not accentuate the royal connotations; see the introduction to his translation of *KTU* 1.20–22 in Parker 1997: 196–204. See also the short discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs.*

[1711] They appear in ritual text *KTU* 1.119: 25', and in lists *KTU* 1.47: 33, 1.118: 32, or as ᴰ*ma-lik*ᴹᴱˢ in the logosyllabic lists RS 20.04: 32 and RS 92.2004: 42. See, e.g., Pardee 2002a: 281, Wyatt 2007a: 69. Note also possible connections with the Hittite ᴰ*šarrena*; see, e.g., Bachvarova 2012: 106–111.

category, or if they were even related to the past kings of Ugarit.[1712] Any possible relation of *mlkm* to the *rapiūma* is also unknown and not addressed in the sources.[1713] *Mlk,* as a singular deity,[1714] does not necessarily have to be connected with the dead kings/specific dead king as this may be an epithet used to designate a separate deity,[1715] similarly to the case of Baˤal, "Lord" or Ilu, "God".

Some scholars also associate other entities with the dead kings. Namely, *inš ilm, ilm, ilnym, ilhm, tˤm, trmnm,* or *gtrm.*[1716] The presented arguments do not particularly convince me.[1717] For example, the perspective of del Olmo Lete is rooted mainly in his conception of the prevalence of funerary cults and cults of the dead at Ugarit. These interpretations are, in my opinion, mostly caught in circular reasoning.[1718] Similarly, this scholar interprets an enigmatic list of names(?) in *KTU* 1.102: 15–28 as a list of divine names of the kings, with further references to *KTU* 1.106: 3–5, 1.6 VI: 57–58, or 7.63, and other sources.[1719] While I do not have a better understanding of these entities myself, I remain unconvinced by his argumentation.[1720]

Narrative texts are also often used to support the thesis of the divine nature of the kings of Ugarit. The most frequently referenced passage is from the *Epic of Kirta*, *KTU* 1.16 I: 1–23. In this episode, Kirta is befallen by an illness caused by Aṯirat and is sick to death. Two particular features of this episode may be noted. First, Kirta is designated as *bn il*, "son of Ilu", and *šph lṭpn w qdš*, "offspring of the Benevolent One and the Holy One". This is used as a core argument for the divine origin of the rulers.[1721] Similar imagery may be seen in the depiction of Kirta's son Yaṣṣib as a suckling of goddesses.[1722] The second element is the articulation of the mortality of the rulers: *u ilm tmtn šph lṭpn lyh*, "And the gods, do they die? The offspring of the Benevolent One, will he not live?". As I have already stated,[1723] one of the core issues of the royal narratives is that the rules, in fact, do die. Del Olmo Lete has suggested that the royal ideology eventually turns this death into exaltation.[1724] While this exaltation does not seem to be reflected in the epics, they – as myths – may indeed work

---

[1712] We may, for example, consider a relatively improbable option that these were the Hittite deified dead kings ᴰ*šarrena*, whose veneration was a part of Ugarit's subordinated position; see the note above.

[1713] Possibly with the exception of *KTU* 1.108: 1, where *rpu* (sg.) is designated as a *mlk ˤlm*, "king of eternity". However, this is better understood as a general epithet than direct connection with the (dead) kings of Ugarit.

[1714] Appears only once in ritual texts, in *KTU* 1.111: 17. This deity is specified as *il mlk*, "the god Milku". Possibly so as not to be confused with the king as the officiant. Note, however, that it may also be understood as "Ilu, the king"; see Rahmouni 2008: 227. *Mlk* as a deity also appears in magico-medic text *KTU* 1.100: 41 as *mlk ˤttrh*, "Milku in ˤAṯtartu".

[1715] Deity of this "name" is well known in the West-Semitic cultural milieu. While epithet *mlk* is used to designate some known deities in myth (e.g., Ilu or Baˤal, see Rahmouni 2008: 226–228), it may also work independently.

[1716] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 137. On the contrary, Wyatt 2007a: 62–66, 69 reduces this list to *inš ilm*. Pardee 2002a: 280 is not sure whether to limit *inš ilm* to the kings or open it to the general population.

[1717] In the case these would indeed relate to the dead deified kings, what would be their relation? How would these collectives overlap?

[1718] See also the discussion in Chapter *5.2.2.4 Household Tombs.*

[1719] See del Olmo Lete 2014a: 136–148 and 192–205, 1996, or 1986[2017b: 407–420]. See also Wyatt 2007a: 58–62 for the support of del Olmo Lete.

[1720] See also, e.g., Schmidt 1994: 74 or Pardee 2002a: 20.

[1721] See, e.g., del Olmo Lete 2014a: 136 or Wyatt 2000: 135–136.

[1722] *KTU* 1.15 II: 26–28; see, e.g., Wyatt 2007a: 67 or 2000: 135–136.

[1723] See Chapter *7.3.1.1.3 Shared Topics.*

[1724] Del Olmo Lete 2014a: 136.

quite well to ponder the inner cultural contradictions.[1725] Kings are distinct, yet the same. Maybe the "double determinative", DINGIR and DIŠ, in the genealogies articulate a similar paradox.

Some structural parallels may indicate "identity" between the kings (whether the king of Ugarit or the kings of the royal narratives) and Baʿal (or ʿAṯtar in some aspects).[1726] The interpretation of structural similarities is, however, a tricky business. Not every parallel establishes identity.[1727] Therefore, the strong claim of the "shared ontology of Baʿal"[1728] may be misleading. While I would not go as far as Wyatt in my understanding, the truth is that such parallels are a vital mode of thinking about the situation, creating "blurring identities".[1729] Structural thinking is excellent in not stating anything firmly and explicitly but in making associations that influence how we perceive the concepts. We can also relate this topic to the previous chapter, where the possibilities of narrative construction of royal ideology were considered.

Wyatt has also elaborated an interesting interpretation of the royal involvement in cults. He has argued that while the kings of Ugarit were not divine during their lifetime, they were periodically deified when participating in cults.[1730] In his view, the statements *yrtḫṣ . mlk . brr*, and *ḫl . mlk*[1731] indication purification and desacralization should be understood as much more – as proclamations of the ontological change of the king as the high priest. He states that "(...) the chief officiant in the cult in some way impersonated the divine presence".[1732]

Wyatt also supports him claim with references to visual materials. He compares the garments of the kings in their priestly role to the robes of deities: "(...) a garment shared by king and deities no doubt represented a mystical identity by which he brought divine blessing down to earth".[1733]

While I am not convinced by this particular suggestion, the visual material may indeed further enrich the discussions on the royal ideology. Namely, we could reflect on the ivory bed panel in Egyptian(izing?) style from the *Royal Palace*,[1734] showing a king as a hunter, slayer of enemies, or the royal children breastfed by a goddess; the *Baʿal au Foudre* stela from the vicinity of the *Temple of Baʿal*, showing the king(?) in his priestly(?) office;[1735] the cultic stand from the *Temple of Rhytons*, depicting a similar figure;[1736] or the golden plate from the *Acropolis*, decorated with a scene of royal

---

[1725] See also Töyräänvuori 2020: 23–25.

[1726] See, e.g., Wyatt 2005[2002a] or summary in 2007a: 48–49.

[1727] For example, structural interpretation of the *Baʿal Cycle* may establish the relations king of Ugarit = Baʿal and king of Ḫatti = Ilu. Consequently, relations of the king of Ugarit and king of Ḫatti may be seen as structurally parallel to those between Baʿal and Ilu. However, as we know from other sources, the king of Ḫatti is more associated with the Sun-Deity (see, e.g., Chapter *6.6.3 Divine Kings of Ḫatti and Egypt*) and the narratives thus do not establish true identity of Ilu and the Hittite monarch. Rather, the narratives are good to ponder these relations.

[1728] Wyatt 2007a: 49.

[1729] I have borrowed this concept from Peltenburg 2016: 145 who applies it to the Eblaite material.

[1730] See Wyatt 1999a[2005: 191–220] and 2000: 136–140; or summary in 2007a: 54–58.

[1731] See also *Chapter 7.1 Kings and Cults*.

[1732] Wyatt 2007a: 58. Similarly also 2005[1999a]: 193–194 and 200–202. He even states that in the divine procession, there was an "apparent inclusion of the king himself as one of the divine images" (2005[1999a]: 202). This seems a great exaggeration to me.

[1733] Wyatt 2007a: 58.

[1734] RS 16.056+28.031; see, Yon 2006: 136–137.

[1735] RS 4.427; see, e.g., Yon 2006: 134–135 or *RSO VI*: 294–299.

[1736] RS 78.041+81.3659; see, e.g., Yon 2006: 152–153.

hunt.[1737] We could also explore in greater detail the royal seals – the dynastic seal of Yaqaru that was used by numerous kings of Ugarit, or the private seals of Niqmaddu IV(?) or ʿAmmiṯtamru III.[1738] However, none of this material attests to the divinity of the kings. It, at best, proclaims their close relationship to deities and communicates their high status and prestige.

7.4.3 REFLECTIONS

In the end, there seems to be a general agreement on some level of divine status of the kings after their death. But the details are far more uncertain. The divine nature of the living kings is at best pondered by Wyatt in the highly specific case of cultic activities, but not as their natural state.[1739] While we may reasonably suppose bringing sacrifices to the deceased rulers, the living kings were not given this privilege.[1740] Nonetheless, the sources help us reconstruct a king as an essential persona, in many ways distinct from all the other inhabitants of the city. However, it must be stressed that we have directed our attention to the "religious" materials. We should not be surprised these are articulated in theological language and with references to deities. But numerous other sources also indicate that the royal ideology was not an ever-present concept pervading all human activity. Surely, the symbolic communication in letters clearly indicates that the monarch and his family were of higher social standing, and the material sources show that the king was wealthy and set himself aside in the extensive *Royal Zone*.[1741] Still, most documents related to the royalty and the palace do not address the noble royal ideology but are far more ground-earthed and practical.[1742]

Those sources reflecting the royal ideology do not seem to articulate it as a single, consistent, and clear concept. Possibly, any endeavour to reconstruct this ideology in any consistent way is destined to fail. Maybe the search for consistency should be altogether abandoned.[1743] The high social standing of the kings of Ugarit was extremely contextual. A lower-class inhabitant of Ugarit might have seen a sacred figure, perhaps even a god(?) when they encountered the king during public ceremonies or on some other occasions.[1744] High officials or city elites, whose contact with the throne was more frequent, might have seen the situation very differently. And completely different were the relations between the royalty of Ugarit and their Hittite overlord.[1745] In addition, a particular situation – like cultic activity from the perspective of Wyatt – might have changed the perception, too. Similarly interchangeable is the issue of the source of power of the king. Does it come from the

---

[1737] RS 5.031; see Yon 2006: 165.

[1738] See Chapter *6.7.3 Royal Seals.*

[1739] Cf. Day 1998: 82 who suggested that Ugaritic kings were divine already when alive.

[1740] See also Wyatt 2007a: 69.

[1741] We may here note that the palace, *bt mlk* was by del Olmo Lete understood as a temple of the deified (dead) kings (e.g., 2014a: 23–24). It may be interesting to note that in the sources, the earthly palace is never designated as *hkl*, "palace". This word seems to be reserved for the palaces of deities (e.g., *KTU* 1.2 III: 7–9 or 1.4 VII: 18) and kings (e.g., *KTU* 1.16 VI: 25) in the narrative compositions. The only exception I know of is *KTU* 4.224: 8–9, where *ṯǧr hkl*, "the guardians of the palace", appear. Could it have been because the term was a scholarly borrowing from Akkadian (*ēkallu*) and Sumerian (É.GAL) and not usually used Ugaritic term?

[1742] See also Liverani 2014a: 345.

[1743] See also Wiggins 2020: 65–66, who reaches similar conclusion in regard to conception of deities.

[1744] If there even was such a possibility. The narratives surely depict the kings as in contact with their subjects and the legal texts attest to the role of the king in legal matters (at least those where the palace was a party). The nature of these encounters, however, is unclear.

[1745] Here, we may note the encounter of Talmiyānu with the Hittite king, described in letter *KTU* 2.16; see Chapter *6.6.3 Divine Kings of Ḫatti and Egypt.*

divine realm or the Hittite overlord?[1746] The ideological statements are hardly ever binary yes-or-no issues.

What has not been much reflected in this regard is that we do not adequately understand the conception of deities at Ugarit.[1747] How can we expect to grasp the peculiarities of the divine nature of the kings when we are not sure how to grasp the peculiarities of the less problematic deities? Our misunderstanding of what a god is at Ugarit may confuse our understanding of divine kingship, and the very notion of divine kingship may strongly bias our preconceptions.[1748] In addition, the discussions often blur together the differences between sacred and divine kingships.

Yet another issue to consider is the possibility that the divine nature of the Ugaritic kings did not have to be a long-established tradition. In the previous section, we have discussed the possibilities of an active construction of royal ideology through narratives. From this, it is only a small step to see the divine kingship in a similar light. Was the position of Ugarit in between two powers whose kings used to call themselves ᴰUTU, the Sun-Deity, an inspiration for the local elites? Could it have been done in the context of negotiating imperial power relations? Were the crises deep enough to need such an ideological boost? It would not be for the first or the last time in history. Maybe we are witnesses to an invention of tradition right in the middle of the process. To conclude the last chapter of this thesis: I hope to explore this issue more in the future.

[1746] See, e.g., RS 17.353 where Muršili II gives the throne to Niqmēpaʕ VI.
[1747] See, e.g., Wyatt 2000: 133–134.
[1748] See already Foley 1980: 98, n. 116.

8 Conclusions

The presented dissertation thesis attempted to cover some aspects of the extensive topic of religion at Ugarit in relation to everyday, social, and political life. It has tried to demonstrate the initial assumption that religion is, first and foremost, a way of living in the world. Religion does not exist as a distinctly separate sphere of life but runs through the whole spectrum of human existence in different forms and with varying intensity. Consequently, the topic has been addressed from a broad spectrum of perspectives through several more or less detailed chapters.

From the beginning, the notion of religion was problematised as a term far more problematic than the general discussion makes it out to be. Throughout the thesis, the discussion attempted to highlight the permeability of this concept within the other spheres of life. These relations were examined through six core chapters. The following notes summarise the outlines of the discussions presented in the thesis.

Chapter 2) Contexts of Religion at Ugarit
This chapter explored the basic contexts in which the religion at Ugarit was lived. The natural conditions, historical circumstances, and social relations were shown as important factors in the formation of religious realia at Ugarit. Many factors, from the presence of mountains and sea to celestial phenomena to varying temperatures and precipitations to the availability of natural resources, to family relations and political dependencies, or cultural heritage of the ANE, contributed to religion's character at Ugarit or issues the religion dealt with. Rather than being a comprehensive list of the factors that participated in the continuous process of the construction of reality, this chapter aimed to highlight the contextual approach to the study of religion.

Chapter 3) Conceptions of Divinity
The next chapter focused on one of the core concepts of religion at Ugarit, the deities. This concept was problematised as similarly non-evident, like the concept of religion itself. The chosen approach was to explore different materials and examine how the deities manifested through them. The material presence and character of deities were highlighted. Gods and goddesses of Ugarit were considered as actors in the social relations who had an essential impact on the lives of the inhabitants of Ugarit. Through their earthly representations, they were present in the city and needed care of sacrifices and other services. Some deities were even present in numerous manifestations, and each of them was an obligation to the city.

At the same time, the explored materials show that the conception of deities included a certain level of playfulness that went hand in hand with seriousness. The roles of deities in the social lives of the inhabitants were highly varied. Some deities were lively present in the city, while others were present only in lists and maybe not even taken seriously by the scholars who "invented" them to fill a position in a list of Mesopotamian origin. The deities of Ugarit were part of a broader cultural milieu of the ANE and were compared with members of different pantheons, but these comparisons were scarcely strict and definite equations.

The issue of anthropomorphism has also been addressed. Although the deities were mostly depicted and described in anthropomorphic terms, they were not bound to the human form. Deities could manifest in natural phenomena or in physical objects without the necessity of being anthropomorphised.

In sum, the "conception" of deities at Ugarit was far from being clear and straightforward. The resulting description is somewhat reminiscent of a mosaic composed of different conceptions changing according to the contexts in which the deities appear.

Chapter 4) Texts and Religion

In the fourth chapter, we have explored the problematics of religion and written sources. The chosen approach was inspired by the Actor-Network theory, and texts were considered actors in the social life at Ugarit that also act as materials beyond their contents. As such, texts worked on many levels. Firstly, the role of individual scripts and languages has been addressed. From this perspective, of particular importance to the lived religion at Ugarit were Ugaritic as the vernacular and Hurrian as specifically cultural/cultic languages. Akkadian or Sumerian religious texts were mostly a matter of scribal culture. Nonetheless, we have tried to demonstrate that even educational activities might have had a profound impact on the social reality.

Texts were then used to explore the hubs, or nodes, of religious life at the tell as manifested in writing. Three main clusters were identified, each with some specific role in religious life. The *House of the High Priest* and the *House of the Hurrian Priest* were the hubs most focused on cultic activities, including the cults with royal participation. The *House of the High Priest* then included a larger number of narrative texts, while the *House of the Hurrian Priest* was more invested in the practice of divination. Still, they both cooperated with the *Royal Palace*. The seat of the Ugaritic king was the third most crucial hub of religious life in writing. There, the majority of texts belonged to the category of divination, represented by ivory models of the liver, and to the category of hymns written in Hurrian, arguably to be used in ritual practice. These three hubs were the primary and heavily interconnected nodes of religious organisation. The other clusters of texts in the city demonstrated different sides of religion, represented mainly by the accumulation of scholarly knowledge of foreign origin. The exception in this regard was the *House of Urtēnu,* which yielded several important religious documents related to the royal ideology.

The chapter has also outlined a preliminary consideration of how texts acted irrespective of their written contents. The very fact of writing changes the character of the society, even in the cases when the vast majority is imagined as illiterates. Writing may, for example, work as an authoritative act in administration, legal activities, or on seals. This authority also affected those who did not precisely understand the written message.

Chapter 5) Religion and the City Environs

The fifth chapter presented the other side of the coin. Here, the archaeological material was given preference in contrast to the texts. The discussion has primarily focused on the temple/sanctuary buildings. Firstly, the ideology and function of such structures were considered in relation to the conception of deities. The temples were shown as households of deities, which facilitated the cult and mediated human contact with the divine. Further, the discussion focused on describing the preserved state and preliminary interpretations of these structures. Here, we have discussed the following structures: *Temple of Baʿal, Temple/Terrace of Dagan, Palatial Temple, Pillared*

Building, Royal Palace, Temple of Rhytons, Court III of the Great Building in the Rampart area, and *Building with the Rock-Hewn Throne.* It has been demonstrated how the religious space permeated the fabric of the city, including the residential area. The historical development of the city was also considered, especially the consequences of an earthquake which damaged sacred architecture.

The second part focused on the religion as represented in the domestic architecture. Here, we have mainly problematised the possibilities of such an endeavour. Several materials indicating the dispersion of religious activities within the domestic space were addressed, namely figurines of deities, "ladles", depots, and household tombs. Largely problematised was the issue of the "cult of the dead". It has been considered a concept that, in many ways, distorts our understanding of the material and may lead us to unfounded conclusions.

Even though the chapter provided some basic and relatively comprehensive overview of the temples and sanctuaries of Ugarit, the general conclusions were not as promising as I had hoped. The final discussion primarily focused on the complications and limits I have encountered. The issue of environmental interconnectedness is articulated primarily in questions rather than in answers. For example, why were some sacred structures given preference in reconstruction to others? How were the stelae dispersed over the city, and how did they contribute to the construction of the religious space? The answers to these questions were limited both by my limited orientation in archaeological material and by the state of the material itself.

Chapter 6) Religion in the Life of the City

The largest part of the thesis was devoted to several topics illustrating how religion permeated different spheres of life in the city. The discussion has begun with the topic of onomastics. The practice of naming, especially people, occasionally attests to religious realia. Individuals included divine names in their own names or otherwise referred to religious practices. A short cross-reference with the cultic preference for deities was considered. The names mostly do not correspond to the cultic practice. This problematises the often-postulated assumption that onomastics may be used as a source for cultic practice. The preferences in naming seem to have been quite different from the official ritual practice. The names also provide a valuable reflection of the conception of deities. While different manifestations of deities might have occupied the cult, the naming practice mostly maintained the unity of individual deities. A short exploration of the clergy's names was carried out to find out if their names could have somehow reflected their occupation. Unfortunately, the data are extremely scarce. The few sources we can explore indicate that a preference for names with theophoric elements or Hurrian names might have appeared. This could indicate a practice of deliberate name change of the priests or the intention of their fathers, who themselves might have already been priests. We also briefly addressed the topic of the symbolic power of names, which may be attested, for example, in the narrative traditions, like naming the weapons of Baʿal or the use of contrasting names of the royal daughters in the royal epics.

The second section was aimed at exploring the place of cultic activities within the society. The case of running the cult was considered from the perspective of occupation categories, namely the clergy: *khnm* and *qdšm*. Unfortunately, the sources do not allow us to properly articulate their precise roles. The care for the temples and cults was not limited to clergy and other "professionals" also participated in it, from singers to the builders of the temples. The position of *tʿy* is considered as a possible mediation between the political sphere and cults. Next, numerous questions related to the public participation in cults were addressed. These included the questions of accessibility of the

temples, participation in public feasts or communal and private contributions to the sacrifices. The community's interactions with the temples were shown as an integral part of the social life. Finally, the issues of private religious activities were briefly explored, mainly by addressing the institution of *marziḥu*.

Next, divinatory practices were considered primarily from the perspective of the *House of the Hurrian priest,* which yielded numerous materials that attest to the lived practices of divination. The issue of divination for private individuals was connected with the sacrificial practice needed for obtaining the animal viscera. It has been argued that the divination for the inhabitants was not entirely disconnected from the divination for the benefit of the kingdom. This was further addressed in one of the following chapters. An astromantic text was then discussed as material for the reflection on the research of Ugaritic materials. The varied approaches applied to this text and its connections to astronomical realia present an interesting case study on the problematics of Ugaritic studies.

The fourth section of this broad chapter discussed how religion was related to the best-attested activity at Ugarit – administration and economy. The ritual texts were considered as administrative texts. It has been argued that their existence might have been motivated by the need for administration, inspired by the similar practice in economic relations outside of the cult. Their specific traits may reflect primarily the particular needs of the cultic administration and not necessarily a clearly distinct genre of ritual texts. The need for material supplies for the cultic activities was then addressed as a complex confluence of state-sponsored, communal, and individual contributions. Even though the "temple economy" is not a fitting description for Ugaritic economic relations, the temples were important economic actors, owned property and were active in this regard. Yet another perspective on the administration of religion is provided by the administration of temple personnel that is well attested from the perspective outside of the cultic context, especially by the *Royal Palace*. From the perspective of general administration, religion was often administered side by side with other categories.

Next, the category of legal activities was explored. There, three core themes were discussed. First, the references to deities as guarantors of agreements were addressed. These references were relatively scarce at Ugarit. They were most importantly used in the case of international treaties or issues where the authority of the king or witnesses was not sufficient. Here, we may truly observe the deities as "antistructural guarantors of the order". Second, the employment of religious imagery in legal texts was explored, together with a consideration of the ritual nature of the legal activities themselves. In this perspective, the legal activities may well be perceived as a complex set of ritualised activities with severe social implications. Last, the few references to religious realia appearing in legal texts were documented. These relate, for example, to the mention of priests, to property issues of temples, or to matters surrounding private religious institutions like *marziḥu*.

The sixth section dealt with Ugaritic epistolary documents. Letters are one of the best attestations of interpersonal communication we possess. Religion appeared in many modalities in these sources. Religion was essential to symbolic communication, especially in addressing deities in many forms of benedictions between the correspondents. However, the issue of the symbolic component is far broader. Some of the letters even attest only to symbolic communication and lack any other message. Thus, the letters are excellent attestations of the constant construction of social realities at Ugarit. Other modalities in which correspondence relates to religion are references to numerous religious realia, either complexly or only in passing. As such, these letters attest to the dispersion of religion into different spheres of life. Last but not least, the references to Egyptian and

Hittite rulers in letters were addressed. The discussion showed how the articulation of their position with the use of imagery of the Sun-Deities worked in constructing the political relations between the kingdoms. In the case of Hittite kings, the religious imagery might have been further supported by the use of seals impressed on the letters.

The final section focused on seals. The creation of many of the seals from Ugarit does not correspond to the timeframe in which they were actively used. This has severe implications for the proposed interpretations. Often, the motives engraved on seals were not of local character but were based on foreign models. We may then ask how the motives were perceived and what they can tell us about the religious practices and ideas. The primary focus has been directed on their potential as objects that express identity and confirm authority. The engraved motives might have played numerous roles, from reflecting personal artistic preference, prestige, or contacts with particular areas of the world. Practised reusing and recarving of seals were detected as an essential feature in the construction of the authority of these objects. Some seals also employed a pseudo-script, a fact that can be further related to the discussion on the materiality of texts. The preserved evidence also indicates that most of the seals were not impressed. Therefore, it was argued that seals were important objects for symbolic communication irrespective of their "primary" use – sealing. The seals could have also worked as objects of adornment, amulets, or votive offerings. The chapter was concluded with a short discussion on royal seals. There, interesting dynamics seem to have been at work between the dynastic seal of *Yaqaru* and the personal seals of individual kings.

Chapter 7) Politics and Religion

The final chapter explored several modalities in which politics interacted with religion. In numerous instances, this topic found its way into the previous chapters. The palace was one of the most important legal, administrative, and economic actors; members of the royal family belonged among the most frequent correspondents, and the state sponsored many of the cultic activities.

The involvement of the king and the palace institution has been explored in the first section. Even though the king, royal family, or the palace have been an integral part of numerous rituals, this cult was still organised primarily from the houses associated with the clergy. We have already encountered this issue within the discussion of the hubs of religious texts in the city. The relatively common conception of the king as the highest cultic officiant or as the primary mediator between deities and humankind was contested. Instead, it was suggested that the *Royal Palace*, *House of the Hurrian Priest*, and *House of the High Priest* functioned as a network that mutually supported the needs of one another. The rituals also show how essential were the religious activities for the palace.

The importance of religion for the palace institution was further discussed in the next section. There, we have directed our attention to divination. The collection of ivory models from the *Royal Palace*, some of which were inscribed, was used as a starting point for demonstrating the importance of divination for the state. These models were further contextualised with the models and divinatory compendia from the *House of the Hurrian Priest,* often regarded as examples of divination for private individuals. In light of the comparative evidence, it has been argued that observations from private divinations might have affected the state. The evidence may point towards a "constant awareness" of diviners and scholars for signs that the gods revealed and which might have been relevant to the palace.

The central part of this chapter has been dedicated to the possibilities of the use of narrative compositions for the construction of royal ideology. The royal narratives of Aqhat and Kirta were

explored from the theoretical standpoint of "social myths". This has led to a broader contextualization of these texts. The discussion included, for example, the social position of the author of these narratives, historical and environmental contexts, political relations, or the presence of Assyrian narrative propaganda at Ugarit. Various strategies of persuasion employed in the narratives were considered. Special attention was paid to the motives of failure described in the stories. The chosen approach was used in an attempt to demonstrate that these failures did not need to diminish the political message of the narratives but might have worked for the political representation. The two narratives seem to work in tandem in order to address some pressing issues the Ugaritic society and the political representation faced. Tentatively, it has also been argued that the position of royal women at Ugarit might have been an important element reflected in the narratives. The discussion was aimed at demonstrating how the epic narratives might have worked as a lived reality and not only as a piece of literature.

The final section of the last chapter addressed the complex issue of the divine nature of the kings of Ugarit. The situation was described as similarly fluid as the conception of deities. While the sources attested to a certain level of deification of the deceased kings of Ugarit, this might not have been a strongly established tradition. There were only a few contexts in which this conception was articulated, but such conceptions were generally ignored. It has also been pondered that this may reflect an emergent tradition and not necessarily a long-established cultural fact.

This short summary of the thesis shows the broad focus that the thesis tried to cover. Consequently, not every topic was explored in the deserved detail. Still, I believe the aim of this thesis has been reached. The "religion" has been explored as a lived reality that was present not only in sacrifices, myths, or prayers but also in mundane life. Religion was encountered on an everyday basis when strolling the streets of the city, wearing seals as adornments, writing a letter, deciding on economic activities via the means of divination, and so on and so forth. At the same time, it has been demonstrated that this does not mean the world of the Ugaritians was permanently permeated by awe and fear of the divine. On numerous occasions, the religion was irrelevant or only of secondary importance. It was an important social reality but not something that was accentuated at all costs.

Despite the broadness of the topics and numerous addressed perspectives, the thesis is far from covering the issue in its complexity. There are numerous prospects for future explorations. For example, the position of royal women at Ugarit in the context of royal ideology, involvement in ritual activities, politics, or economic relations deserves further exploration. It has been tentatively argued that the presence of religion in scribal education was far more influential on the construction of their social reality than is often acknowledged. This, however, deserves further exploration and corroboration. Many of the Akkadian and Sumerian texts were put aside in favour of the texts in Ugaritic script. The topic of magic and medicine was addressed only in passing throughout the other topics of this dissertation, but it would have deserved far greater attention as it is an issue that was probably highly relevant for many individuals. Hopefully, I will have a chance to return to at least some of these issues in the future.

9 List of Figures

10 ABBREVIATIONS

10.1 OBJECTS SIGLA

A.   accession no., Mari tablets

AO   object siglum, Antiquités orientales, Louvre Museum

ARM XXVI   sigla for texts from Mari according to: DURAND, Jean-Marie 1998. *Archives royales de Mari XXVI: Archives épistolaires de Mari I/1*. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations.

BM   object siglum, British Museum

EA   sigla for texts from el-Amarna according to: KNUDTZON, Jörgen A. 1915. *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln*. VAB 2. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche buchhandlung.

Emar   sigla for texts from Emar according to: ARNAUD, Daniel 1986. *Recherches au pays d'Astata – Emar 6/1–4. Textes sumeriens et accadiens*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.

K.   object siglum, Kuyundjik collection, British Museum

KAR   sigla for texts according to: Ebeling, Erich 1919 et 1923. *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen*. Inhalts I/II. WVDOG 28 et 34. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche buchhandlung.

KBo   sigla for texts according to: *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*. Leipzig–Berlin 1916ff.

KUB   sigla for texts according to: *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*. Berlin, 1921ff.

M   accession no., Mari tablets

Msk   object siglum, Tell Meskene (Emar)

RIH   object siglum, Ras Ibn-Hani

RS   object siglum, Ras Shamra (Ugarit)

10.2 ABBREVIATED ONLINE SOURCES

ORACC   *Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus*. Online:
             http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/ [accessed 29th August 2023]

RSTI   *Ras Shamra Tablet Inventory*. Online:
             https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/RSTI/ [accessed 29th August 2023]

10.3 BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS

CAD   *The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago*. Chicago, 1956–2010.

CTA   HERDNER, Andrée 1963. *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques: découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939.* MRS 10. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale–Geuthner.

CUW   CUNCHILLOS, Jesús-Luis, Juan-Pablo VITA, José-Ángel ZAMORA & Raquel CERVIGÓN 2003. *A Concordance of Ugaritic Words.* 5 volumes. Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

DDD   VAN DER TOORN, Karel, Bob BECKING & Pieter W. VAN DER HORST (eds.) 1999. *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in The Bible.* 2nd extensively revised edition Leiden: Brill.

DUL   DEL OLMO LETE, Gregorio, Joaquín SANMARTÍN & Wilfred G. E. WATSON 2015. *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition.* 3rd revised edition. HdO 112. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

FM 7   DURAND, Jean-Marie 2002. *Florilegium marianum VII: Le Culte d'Addu d'Alep et l'affaire d'Alahtum.* Mémoires de N.A.B.U. 8. Paris: SEPOA.

FM 9   ZIEGLER, Nele 2007. *Les Musiciens et la musique d'après les archives de Mari.* Mémoires de N.A.B.U. 10. Paris: SEPOA.

FM 8   DURAND, Jean-Marie 2005. *Florilegium Marianum VIII: Le culte des pierres et les monuments commémoratifs en Syrie ammorite.* Mémoires de N.A.B.U. 9. Paris: SEPOA.

KTU=KTU³   DIETRICH, Manfried, Oswald LORETZ & Joaquín SANMARTÍN 2013. *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten. Dritte, erweiterte Auflage. The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts: from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places. Third Enlarged Edition.* AOAT 360/1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

KTU²   DIETRICH, Manfried, Oswald LORETZ & Joaquín SANMARTÍN 1995. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts: from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places. Second Enlarged Edition.* ALASP 8. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

KTU¹   DIETRICH, Manfried, Oswald LORETZ & Joaquín SANMARTÍN 1976. *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit: Einschließlich der keilalphabetischen Texte außerhalb Ugarits. Teil 1: Transkriptionen.* AOAT 24/1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

MZL   BORGER, Rylke 2004. *Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon.* AOAT 305. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

PA   DEL OLMO LETE, Gregorio 2014. *Photographic Archive: Canaanite Religion: According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit.* Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

PRU series (*Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit*)

 PRU II   VIROLLEAUD, Charles 1957. *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, volume II: Textes en cunéiformes alphabétiques des archives est, ouest et centrales.* Mission de Ras Shamra VII. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck.

PRU III	NOUGAYROL, Jean, G. BOYER & Emmanuel LAROCHE 1955. *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, volume III: Textes accadiens et hourrites des archives est, ouest et centrales*. Mission de Ras Shamra VI. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck.
PRU IV	NOUGAYROL, Jean 1956. *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, volume IV: Textes accadiens des archives sud (Archives internationales)*. Mission de Ras Shamra IX. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck.
PRU V	VIROLLEAUD, Charles 1965. *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, volume V: Textes en cunéiformes alphabétiques des archives sud, sud-ouest et du petit palais*. Mission de Ras Shamra XI. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck.
PRU VI	NOUGAYROL, Jean 1970. *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, volume VI: Textes en cunéiformes babyloniens des archives du Grand Palais et du Palais Sud d'Ugarit*. Mission de Ras Shamra XII. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck.

Excavation reports

report 1929	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1929. Les fouilles de Minet-El-Beida et de Ras Shamra (campagnes du printemps 1929). *Syria* 10/4: 285–297.
report 1930	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1931. Les fouilles de Minet el-Beida et de Ras-Shamra. Deuxième campagne (printemps 1930). Rapport sommaire. *Syria* 12/1: 1–14.
report 1931	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1932. Les fouilles de Minet-el-Beida et de Ras-Shamra. Troisième campagne (printemps 1931). Rapport sommaire. *Syria* 13/1: 1–27.
report 1933	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A., Charles VIROLLEAUD & Pierre MONTET 1934. "Les fouilles de Ras-Shamra. Cinquième campagne (printemps 1933). Rapport sommaire. *Syria* 15/2: 105–136.
report 1934	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1935. Les fouilles de Ras Shamra (Ugarit). Sixième campagne (printemps 1934). Rapport sommaire. *Syria* 16/2: 141–176.
report 1937 II	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1938. Les fouilles de Ras Shamra-Ugarit. Neuvème campagne (printemps 1937). Rapport sommaire. *Syria* 19/4: 313–334.
report 1948, 1949 & 1950	SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1951. Reprises des recherches archéologiques à Ras Shamra-Ugarit. Sondages de 1948 et 1949, et campagne de 1950." *Syria* 28/1–2: 1–21.
report 1988	YON, Marguerite, Jacqueline GACHET, Pierre LOMBARD & Joël MALLET 1990. Fouilles de la 48e campagne (1988) à Ras Shamra-Ougarit. *Syria* 67/1: 1–29.

report 2005 & 2006 AL-MAQDISSI, Michel, et al. 2007. Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la mission syro-française de Ras Shamra-Ougarit en 2005 et 2006 (65e et 66e campagnes). *Syria* 84: 33–56.

report 2007 & 2008 AL-MAQDISSI, Michel, et al. 2010. Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la mission syro-française de Ras Shamra-Ougarit en 2007 et 2008 (67e et 68e campagnes). *Syria* 87: 21–51.

report 2009 & 2010 HAYDAR, Jamal, et al. 2013. Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit en 2009 et 2010 (69e et 70e campagnes). *Syria* 90: 439–478.

report 2012 AL-BAHLOUL, Khozama 2016. Rapport préliminaire sur les travaux de l'équipe syrienne à Ras Shamra – Ougarit en 2012. In *RSO XXIV*: 267–290.

RIH series (Ras Ibn Hani)

RIH I AL-BOUNNI, Adnan, Elisabeth LAGARCE & Jacques LAGARCE 1998. *Ras Ibn Hani, I: Le palais nord du bronze récent: Fouilles 1979 - 1995, synthèse préliminaire.* Beyrouth: Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche-Orient.

RIH II BORDREUIL, Pierre, Dennis PARDEE & Carole ROCHE-HAWLEY 2019. *Ras Ibn Hani II: Les textes en écritures cunéiformes de l'âge du Bronze récent (fouilles 1977 à 2002).* Beyrouth: Presses de l'Ifpo.

RSO series (Ras Shamra – Ougarit)

RSO I CALLOT, Olivier 1983. *Une maison à Ougarit: Étude d'architecture domestique.* Paris, ERC.

RSO II PARDEE, Dennis 1985. *Les textes hippiatriques.* Paris: ERC.

RSO III YON, Marguerite (ed.) 1987. *Le Centre de la Ville, 38e-44e campagnes (1978-1984).* Paris: ERC.

RSO IV PARDEE, Dennis 1988. *Les textes paramythologiques de la 24s campagne (1961).* Paris: ERC.

RSO V/1 BORDREUIL, Pierre & Dennis PARDEE 1989. *La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit, 1: Correspondance.* Paris: ERC.

RSO V/2 CUNCHILLOS, Jesús-Luis 1990. *La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit, 2: Bibliographie.* Paris: ERC.

RSO VI YON, Marguerite (ed.) 1991. *Arts et Industries de la pierre.* Paris: ERC.

RSO VII BORDREUIL, Pierre (ed.) 1991. *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville.* Paris: ERC.

RSO VIII DE CONTENSON, Henri 1992. *Préhistoire de Ras Shamra.* 2 volumes. Paris: ERC.

RSO IX AMIET, Pierre 1992. *Corpus des Cylindres de Ras Shamra-Ougarit, II: Sceaux-cylindres en hématite et pierres diverses.* Paris: ERC.

RSO X	CALLOT, Olivier 1994. *La tranchée " Ville Sud ", Études d'architecture domestique.* Paris: ERC.
RSO XI	YON, Marguerite, Maurice SZNYCER & Pierre BORDREUIL (eds.) 1995. *Le pays d'Ougarit autour de 1200 av. J.C., Actes du Colloque International, Paris, 28 juin- 1er juillet 1993.* Paris: ERC.
RSO XII/1	PARDEE, Dennis 2000. *Les textes rituels d'Ougarit I.* Paris: ERC.
RSO XII/2	PARDEE, Dennis 2000. *Les textes rituels d'Ougarit II.* Paris: ERC.
RSO XIV	YON, Marguerite & Daniel ARNAUD (eds.) 2001. *Études ougaritiques I. Travaux 1985-1995.* Paris: ERC.
RSO XVI	GACHET-BIZOLLON, Jacqueline 2007. *Les ivoires d'Ougarit.* Paris: ERC
RSO XVII	MATOÏAN, Valérie (ed.) 2008. *Le mobilier du palais royal d'Ougarit.* Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée.
RSO XVIII	BORDREUIL, Pierre, Dennis PARDEE & Robert HAWLEY 2012. *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville, III: Textes 1994-2002 en cunéiforme alphabétique de la maison d'Ourtenou.* Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée.
RSO XIX	CALLOT, Olivier 2011. *Les sanctuaires de l'acropole d'Ougarit, Les temples de Baal et de Dagan.* Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée.
RSO XX	MATOÏAN, Valérie, Miechel AL-MAQDISSI & Yves CALVET (eds.) 2012. *Études ougaritiques II.* Louvain: Peeters.
RSO XXI	MATOÏAN, Valérie & Michel AL-MAQDISSI (eds.) 2013. *Études ougaritiques III.* Louvain: Peeters.
RSO XXIII	LACKENBACHER, Sylvie & Florence MALBRAN-LABAT 2016. *Lettres en akkadien de la «Maison d'Urtenu», Fouilles de 1994.* Louvain: Peeters.
RSO XXIV	MATOÏAN, Valérie & Michel AL-MAQDISSI (eds.) 2016. *Études ougaritiques IV.* Louvain: Peeters.
RSO XXV	MATOÏAN, Valérie (ed.) 2017. *Archéologie, patrimoine et archives, Les fouilles anciennes à Ras Shamra et à Minet el-Beida I.* Leuven: Peeters.
RSO XXVI	MATOÏAN, Valérie (ed.) 2019. *Archéologie, patrimoine et archives, Les fouilles anciennes à Ras Shamra et à Minet el-Beida, II.* Leuven: Peeters.
RSO XXVII	ERNST-PRADAL, Françoise 2019. *Scribes d'Ougarit et paléographie akkadienne. Les textes juridiques signés.* Leuven: Peeters.
RSO XXVIII	MATOÏAN, Valérie (ed.) 2021. *Ougarit, un anniversaire. Bilans et recherches en cours.* Leuven: Peeters.
SDB	COURTOIS, Jacques-Claude, et al. 1979. Ras Shamra (Ugarit ou Ougarit). In H. CAZELLES & A. FEUILLET (eds.) *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible.* Paris: Letouzey & Ané: cols. 1126–1466.

TEO   = *RSO V/1*

Ugaritica series

 Ugaritica I   SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1939. *Ugaritica: Études relatives aux découvertes de Ras Shamra*. Mission de Ras Shamra III. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica II   SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. 1949. *Ugaritica II: Nouvelles études relatives aux découvertes de Ras Shamra*. Mission de Ras Shamra V. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica III SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. (ed.) 1956. *Ugaritica III: Sceaux et cylindres hittites, épée gravée du cartouche de Mineptah, tablettes chypro-minoennes et autres découvertes nouvelles de Ras Shamra*. Mission de Ras Shamra VIII. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica IV SCHAEFFER, Claude F.–A. (ed.) 1962. *Ugaritica IV: Découvertes des XVIIIème et XIXème campagnes, 1954-1955, fondements préhistoriques d'Ugarit et nouveaux sondages, études anthropologiques, poteries grecques et monnaies islamiques de Ras Shamra et environs*. Mission de Ras Shamra XV. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica V   NOUGAYROL, Jean, Emmanuel LAROCHE, Charles VIROLLEAUD & Claude F.–A. SCHAEFFER (eds.) 1968. *Ugaritica V: Nouveaux textes accadiens, hourrites et ugaritiques des archives et bibliothèques privées d'Ugarit, commentaires des textes historiques*. Mission de Ras Shamra XVI. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica VI COURTOIS, Jacques-Claude (ed.) 1969. *Ugaritica VI: XXXe campagne de fouilles à Ras Shamra (1968) sous la direction de Claude F.A. Schaeffer*. Mission de Ras Shamra XVII. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

 Ugaritica VII SCHAEFFER DE CHALON, Irène & Antoinette SCHAEFFER-BOEHLING (eds.) 1978. *Ugaritica VII*. Mission de Ras Shamra XVIII. Paris/Leiden: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner/E. J. Brill.

UDB   CUNCHILLOS, Jesús-Luis, Juan-Pablo VITA, José-Ángel ZAMORA & Raquel CERVIGÓN 2003. *The Texts of the Ugaritic Data Bank*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

Bibliography

Abusch, Tzvi & Karel van der Toorn (eds.) 1999. *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives*. AMD 1. Groningen: STYX Publications.

Akkermans, Peter M. M. G. & Glenn M. Schwartz 2003. *The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca. 16,000–300 BC)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Albanèse, Léon 1929. Note sur Ras Shamra. *Syria* 10/1: 16–21.

Amadasi Guzzo, Maria G. & José-Ángel Zamora 2018. The Phoenician Marzeaḥ – New Evidence from Cyprus in the 4th Century BC. *Studia Eblaitica* 4: 187–214.

Ameri, Marta, Sarah k. Costello, Gregg M. Jamison & Sarah J. Scott (eds.) 2018. *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient World: Case Studies from the Near East, Egypt, the Aegean, and South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Amiet, Pierre 1995. Les sceaux-cylindres de Ras Shamra au IIe millénaire. In *RSO XI*: 239–244.

Annus, Amar (ed.) 2010. *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World*. OIS 6. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.

Arnal, William E. 2000. Definition. In W. Braun & R. McCutcheon (eds.). *Guide to the Study of Religion*. New York: Cassell: 21–34.

Arnaud, Daniel 1996. L'édition ougaritaine de la série astrologique "Eclipses du dieu-Soleil". *Semitica* 45: 7–18.
–. 1998. Prolégomènes à la rédaction d'une histoire d'Ougarit, II: Les borderaux de rois divinisés. *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 41/2: 155–173.
–. 2007. *Corpus des textes de bibliothèque de Ras Shamra-Ougarit (1936-2000) en sumérien, babylonien et assyrien*. AuOrS 23. Barcelona: Editorial Ausa.

Assmann, Jan 1998. *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Astour, Michael C. 1995. La topographie du royaume d'Ougarit. In *RSO XI*: 55–71.

Auerbach, E. 1991. Heirlooms, Seals, and Political Legitimacy in Late Bronze Age Syria. *Akkadica* (75–76): 19–36.

Avishur, Yitzhak & Michael Heltzer 2004. The "Great Sin" and Its Punishment: Remarks on the Letter of the King of Sidon to the King of Ugarit, from the Recent Publication, in the Light of the Bible (OT), the Mishna, and the II Targum of the Book of Esther. *Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 10: 207–212.

Ayali-Darshan, Noga 2015. The Other Version of the Story of the Storm-god's Combat with the Sea in the Light of Egyptian, Ugaritic, and Hurro-Hittite Texts. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 15: 20–51.

BACH, Johannes 2020a. Royal Literary Identity under the Sargonids and the Epic of Gilgameš. *Welt des Orients* 50/2, 318–338.

–. 2020b. *Untersuchungen Zur Transtextuellen Poetik: Assyrischer Herrschaftlich-Narrativen Texte*. SAAS 30. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

–. 2021. An Analytical Catalogue of Similes and Literal Comparisons in Pre-Neo-Assyrian Royal Narrative Texts. *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 27, 1–75.

BACH, Johannes & Sebastian FINKE (eds.) 2022. *The King as a Nodal Point of Neo-Assyrian Identity*. Kassion 8. Münster: Zaphon.

BACHVAROVA, Mary R. 2012. From "Kingship in Heaven" to King Lists: Syro-Anatolian Courts and the History of the World. *Journal of Near Eastern Religions* 12/1: 97–118.

AL-BAHLOUL, Khozama 2017. New Evidence on Sanctuaries in Ugarit: Court III of the Recently Discovered 'Great Building' of the Rampart Area. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 48: 613–635.

BALKE, Thomas E. & Christina TSOUPAROPOULOU (eds.) 2016. *Materiality of Writing in Early Mesopotamia*. MT 13. Berlin–Boston: DeGruyter.

BECKMAN, Gary M. 1992. Hittite Administration in Syria in the Light of the Texts from Ḫattuša, Ugarit and Emar. In M. W. CHAVALAS & J. L. HAYES (eds.) *New Horizons in the Study of Ancient Syria*. BM 25. Malibu: Undena Publications: 41–49.

–. 1996. Emar and Its Archives. In M. W. CHAVALAS (ed.), *Emar: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age*. Bethesda: CDL Press: 1–12.

–. 2012. The horns of a Dilemma, or On the Divine Nature of the Hittite King. In G. WILHELM (ed.) *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient Near East: Proceeding of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Würzburg 20–25 July 2008*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 605–610.

BELL, Carol 2012. The Merchants of Ugarit: Oligarchs of the Late Bronze Age Trade in Metals? In V. KASSIANIDOU & G. PAPASAVVAS (eds.), *Eastern Mediterranean Metallurgy and Metalwork in the Second Millennium BC*. Oxford: Oxbow Books: 180–187.

BENNETT, W. Lance 1980. Myth, Ritual, and Political Control. *Journal of Communication* 30/4: 166–179.

BERGER, Peter L. & Thomas LUCKMANN 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City: Anchor Books.

BESSAC, Jean-Claude & Valérie MATOÏAN 2021. Le programme d'étude des stèles d'Ougarit: Approches technique et contextuelle. Les stèles inscrites et les stèles sans décor. In *RSO XXVIII*: 321–342.

BIDMEAD, Julye 2014. *The Akītu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia*. New Jersey: Gorgias Press.

BILGIN, Tayfun 2018. *Officials and Administration in the Hittite World*. SANER 21. Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter.

BLUM, Jason N. 2018. Belief: Problems and Pseudo-Problems. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 86/3: 642–664.

BOEHMER, Rainer M. 1975. Hörnerkrone. In D. O. EDZARD (ed.), *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie. Band 4: Ḫa-a-a – Hystaspes*. RlA 4. Berlin–New York: De Gruyter: 431–434.

BORDREUILL, Pierre & Dannis PARDEE 2004. *Manuel d'ougaritique* (2 vols.). Paris: Geuthner.
–. 2009. *A Manual of Ugaritic*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

BODEN, Peggy J. 1999. *The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (Mis pi) Ritual: an Examination of some of the Social and Communication Strategies which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual which Transferred the Essence of the Deity into the Temple Statue*. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services.

BONATZ, Dominik 2007. Divine Image of the King: Religious Representation of Political Power in the Hittite Empire. In M. HEINZ & M. H. FELDMAN (eds.), *Representations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 111–136.

BOUCHARD, Gérard 2013 (ed). *National Myths: Constructed Pasts, Contested Presents*. London–New York: Routledge.
–. 2017. *Social Myths and Collective Imaginaries*. Toronto–Buffalo–London: University of Toronto Press.

AL-BOUNNI, Adnan 2000. The Problem of the Identification of the City on Ras Ibn Hani, Syria. In L. E. STAGER, J. A. GREENE & M. D. COOGAN (eds.), *The Archaeology of Jordan and Beyond: Essays in Memory of James A. Sauer*. Leiden: Brill: 81–83.

BOYES, Philip J. 2018. Negotiating Imperialism and Resistance in Late Bronze Age Ugarit: The Rise of Alphabetic Cuneiform. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 29(2): 185–199.
–. 2021. *Script and Society: The Social Context of Writing Practices in Late Bronze Age Ugarit*. Oxford–Philadelphia: Oxbow books.
–. 2023. The Wider World of Writing. Networks of People, Practice and Culture Underpinning Writing in Late Bronze Age Ugarit. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 33/2: 181–192.

BREIER, Idan 2020: 'Had I Been Writing Lying Words to My Lord?' (EA 117:29-30): Telling Tales in the Correspondence Between the Egyptian Ruler and his Syro-Canaanite Vassals in the El-Amarna Archive. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 51: 31–55.

BREMMER, Jan N. 2008. *Greek Religion and Culture, the Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

BRISCH, Nicole (ed.) 2008. *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in The Ancient World and Beyond*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

BUCK, Mary E. 2020. *The Amorite Dynasty of Ugarit: Historical Implications of Linguistic and Archaeological Parallels*. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

BURLINGAME, Andrew R. 2023. Ugaritic Emotion Terms. In K. SONIK & U. STEINERT (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Emotions in the Ancient Near East*. London–New York: Routledge: 197–227.

BURR, Vivien 2015. *Social Constructionism*. 3rd edition. London–New York: Routledge.

CALLOT, Olivier 1986. La région nord du palais royal d'Ugarit. *CRAI* 130/4: 735–755.

–. 2006 Ougarit en 1250: Réflexions sur les palais de Ras Ibn Hani et de Ras Shamra. *Subartu* 17: 57–59. [= P. BUTTERLIN, M. LEBEAU, J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, J. L. MONTERO FENOLLÓS & B. MULLER (eds.), *Les espaces syro-mésopotamiens: dimensions de l'expérience humaine au Proche-orient ancient. Volume d'hommage offert à Jean-Claude Margueron*]

–. 2013. Le bâtiment "au trône", un noveau sanctuaire à Ougarit?. In *RSO XXI*: 89–110.

CALLOT, Olivier & Marguerite YON 1995. Urbanisme et architecture. In *RSO XI*: 155–168.

CALVET, Yves 2000. The House of Urtenu. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 63/4: 210–213.

CALVET, Yves & Bernard GEYER 1987. L'eau dans l'habitat. In *RSO III*: 129–156

–. 1995. Environment et ressources en eau dans la region d'Ougarit. In *RSO XI*: 169–182.

CAPLICE, Richad I. 1974. *The Akkadian Namburbi Texts: An Introduction*. SANE 1/1. Malibu: Undena Publications.

CARBILLET, Aurélie 2016. De l'«idole-louche» à l'«applique murale»: Retour sur une cátegorie d'objet énigmatique découverte à Ougarit. In *RSO XXIV*: 189–265.

CAUBET, Annie 2000. Ras Shamra-Ugarit Before the Sea Peoples. In E. D. OREN (ed.), *The Sea Peoples and Their World: A Reassessment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press: 35–51.

CAUBET, Annie & Marguerite YON 2001. Une coupe inscrite en chyprominoenà Ras Shamra et les "trésors" d'Ougarit. In P. M. FISCHER (ed.), *Contributions to the Archaeology and History of the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Eastern Mediterranean, Studies in Honour of Paul Åström*. Vienna: Osterreichisches Archäologisches Institut: 149–157.

CHANUT, Claude 2008. Palais royal d'Ougarit apport des textes à la connaissance de la pierre des objets: choses vues, choses lues. In *RSO XVII*: 247–260.

CHARPIN, Dominique 2013. "I Am the Sun of Babylon": Solar Aspects of Royal Power in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia. In J. A. HILL, P. JONES & A. J. MORALES 2013. *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology: 65–96.

CHLUP, Radek 2018. On the Nature of the Gods: Methodological Suggestions for the Study of Greek Divinities. *History of Religions* 58/2: 101–127.

–. 2020. National Myths and Rebounding Violence. *Nations and Nationalism* 27: 943–959.

CLEMENS, David M. 2001. *Sources for the Ugaritic Ritual and Sacrifice: vol. I: Ugaritic and Ugarit Akkadian Texts*. AOAT 284/1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

COHEN, Yoram 2007. Akkadian Omens from Hattuša and Emar. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie un Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 97: 233–251.

–. 2013. *Wisdom from the Late Bronze Age*. WAW 29. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

–. 2020. *The Babylonian šumma immeru Omens: Transmission, Reception and Text Production*. dubsar 9. Münster: Zaphon.

–. 2021. The "Hunger Years" and the "Sea Peoples": Preliminary Observations on the Recently Published Letters from the "House of Urtenu" Archive at Ugarit. In P. MACHINIST, R. A. HARRIS, J. A. GERMAN, N. SAMET & N. AYALI-DASHAN (eds.), *Ve-'Ed Ya'aleh (Gen 2:6): Essays in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Edward L. Greenstein*. Atlanta: SBL Press: 47–61.

COLLAZO, Anja 2019. Apotropaic Naming: A Comparative Study of Semantically Transparent Derogatory-, Disguising- and Programmatic Protective Names and Name Transmission as an Apotropaic Custom. In K. SIEWERT, S. HERLING & S. HARDY (eds.), *Namen im Geheimen: Erträge des XI. Internationalen Symposions Sondersprachenforschung Universität Siegen. 11. bis 12. September 2017*. Hamburg–Münster: GSV Geheimsprachen Verlag: 137–166.

COLLINS, Bille J. 2005. A Statue for the Deity: Cult Images in Hittite Anatolia. In N. H. WALLS (ed.). *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research: 13–42.

COLLOMBERT, Philippe & Laurent COULON 2000. Les dieux contre la mer. Le début du «papyrus d'Astarté» (pBN 202). *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire* 100: 193–242.

COLLON, Dominique 2001. How Seals Were Worn and Carried: The Archaeological and Iconographic Evidence. In W. W. HALLO AND I. J. WINTER (eds.), *Proceedings of the XLVe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Part II: Yale University: Seals and Seal Impressions.* Bethesda: CDL Press: 15–30.

–. 2005. *First impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East*. 2nd revised edition. London: British Museum.

COLLON, Dominique & Irving FINKEL 1997. Magic and Jewellery. In D. Collon (ed.), *7000 Years of Seals*. London: British Museum Press: 19–20.

CONNAN, Jacques, Odile DECHESNE & Daniel DESSORT 1991. L'origine des bitumes archéologiques de Ras Shamra. In *RSO VI*: 101–126.

COOLEY, Jeffrey L. 2012. Celestial Divination in Ugarit and Ancient Israel: A Reassessment. Journal of Near Eastern Studies 71/1: 21–29.

–. 2013. *Poetic Astronomy in the Ancient Near East: The Reflexes of Celestial Science in Ancient Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, and Israelite Narrative*. HACL 5. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

CORNELIUS, Izak 1994. *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Baʕal: Late Bronz and Iron Age I Periods (C 1500-1000 BCE)*. OBO 140. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

–. 2008. *The Many Faces of the Goddess: The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qedeshet, and Asherah c. 1500–1000 BCE*. OBO 204. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

CRISCUOLO, Alfredo 2012. Il mrzḥ nel Vicino Oriente antico. In L. MILANO (ed.), *Mangiare divinamente: Pratiche e simbologie alimentari nell'antico Oriente*. Firenze: LoGisima: 311–330.

CROWELL, Bradley L. 2002. The Development of Dagan: A Sketch. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 1: 32–83.

CUNCHILLOS, Jesús-Luis 1979. Ras Shamra (Ugarit ou Ougarit). In H. CAZELLES, & A. FEUILLET (eds.), *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible*. Paris: Letouzey & Ané: 1126–1466.

–. 1984. La religiosité quotidienne dans la correspondance d'Ugarit. *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 201/3: 227–238.

–. 1989. Correspondance: Introduction, Traduction, Commentaire. In A. Caquot, J.-M. de Tarragon & J.-L. Cuncillos. *Textes Ougaritiques. Tome II: Textes religieux, rituels, correspondance*. Paris: Les éditions du CERF: 241–421.

–. 1999. The Ugaritic Letters. In W.G.E. Watson & N. Wyatt (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 359–374.

CURTIS, Adrian H. W 1999. Ras Shamra, Minet el-Beida and Ras Ibn Hani: The Material Sources. In W.G.E. Watson & N. Wyatt (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 5–27.

VON DASSOW, Eva. 2008. *State and Society in the Late Bronze Age: Alalaḫ under the Mittani Empire*. SCCNH 17. Bethesda: CDL Press.

–. 2010. Peripheral Akkadian Dialects, or Akkadography of Local Languages. In L. E. KOGAN, N. KOSLOVA, S. LOESOV & S. TISHCHENKO (eds.), *Proceedings of the 53th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale: Vol. 1: Language in the Ancient Near East*, University Park: Penn State University Press: 895–924.

–. 2015. Genres of Texts and Archives of Texts. *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 110(3): 177–190.

DALIX, Anne-Sophie 1997. *Ilimilku, scribe d'Ougarit au xiiiᵉ siècle avant J.-C.* Ph.D. Thesis. Paris.

–. 2002. Dlq et le sphinx: le cachet RS 25.188. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 34: 45–52.

DAY, John 1998. The Canaanite Inheritance of the Israelite Monarchy. In J. DAY (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*. JSOT Sup 270. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press: 72–90.

DARDAILLON, Ella 2012. The Evidence for Metallurgical Workshops of the 2nd millennium in Ugarit. In V. KASSIANIDOU & G. PAPASAVVAS (eds.), *Eastern Mediterranean Metallurgy and Metalwork in the Second Millennium BC*. Oxford: Oxbow Books: 169–179.

DELNERO, Paul 2020. *How to Do Things with Tears: Ritual Lamenting in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter.

DELNERO, Paul & Jacob LAUINGER (eds.) 2015.*Texts and Contexts: The Circulation and Transmission of Cuneiform Texts in Social Space*. SANER 9. Boston–Berlin: De Gruyter.

DEVECCHI, Elena 2019. A Reluctant Servant: Ugarit under Foreign Rule during the Late Bronze Age. In: J. MYNÁŘOVÁ, M. KILANI & S. ALIVERNINI (eds.), *A Stranger in the House – the Crossroads III. Proceedings of an International Conference on Foreigners in Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Societies of the Bronze Age held in Prague, September 10–13, 2018* :121–135.

DICK Michael B. (ed.) 1999. *Born in Heaven Made on Earth: The Making of Cult Image in the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

–. 2005 The Mesopotamian Cult Statue: A Sacramental Encounter with Divinity. In N. H. WALLS (ed.). *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research: 43–67.

DIETRICH, Manfred 2009. Trumpet Snails and Purple Snails as an Indication of the Transfer of Religion and Technology in the Eastern-Mediterranean Region. In G. Galil, M. Geller & A. Millard (eds.), *Homeland and Exile: Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Bustenay Oded*. Leiden/Boston: Brill: 35–58.

–. 2013. The Orientation of Sanctuaries: A Comparative Study of Cultic Topography and Provincial Culture in Late Bronze Age Syria (Ugarit, Alalaḫ, ꜥAin Dārā, Ekalte, Emar). In T. R. Kämmerer & S. Rogge (eds.), *Patterns of Urban Societies.* AOAT 390/2. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 17–34.

DIETRICH, Manfred & LORETZ, Oswald 1990. *Mantik in Ugarit: Keilalphabetische Texte der Opferschau – Omensammlungen Nekromantie*. ALASP3. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2002. Der Untergang von Ugarit am 21. Januar 1192 v. Chr.? *Ugarit-Forschungen 34*: 53–74.

DIETRICH, Manfred & Walter MAYER 1999. The Hurrian and Hittite Texts. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies.* HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 58–75.

DIJKSTRA, Meindert 1994. The Myth of Astarte, the Huntress (KTU 1.92). New fragments. *Ugarit Forschungen* 26: 113–126.

–. 1999 Ugaritic Prose. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 58–75.

–. 2000. The list of qdšm in KTU 4.412+ ii 8 ff. *Aula Orientalis* 17–18: 81–89.

DOUGLAS, Mary 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.

–. 1996. *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

–. 2007. *Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition*. Yale: Yale University Press.

DURAND, Jean-Marie 1993. Le Mythologème du combat entre le dieu de l'orage et la mer en Mésopotamie. In J.-M. DURAND (ed.), *Mari: Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires 7*. Paris: ERC: 41–61.

DVORJETSKI, Estēe 2016. From Ugarit to Madaba: Philological and Historical Functions of the Marzēaḥ. *Journal of Semitic Studies* 61: 17–39.

EDEL, Elmar 1997. *Der Vertrag zwischen Rameses II. von Ägypten und Hattušili III. von Hatti*. Berlin: Gebr.

ELLIOT, Carolyn 1991. The Ground Stone Industry. In *RSO VI*: 9–99.

ERNST-PRADAL, Françoise 2016. Paléographie des tablettes musicales hourrites de Ras Shamra – Ougarit. In *RSO XXIV*: 73–94.

EVANS-PRITCHARD, Edvard E. 1937. *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

–. 1965. *Theories of Primitive Religion*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

FELDMAN, Marian H. 2006. *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400–1200 BCE*. Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press.

FELIU, Lluís 2003. *The God Dagan in Bronze Age Syria*. CHANE 19. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

FENSHAM, Charles F. 1962. Widow, Orphan, and the Poor in Ancient near Eastern Legal and Wisdom Literature. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 21/2: 129–139.

FERRARA, Silvia 2016. Writing away: Mobility and versatility of scribes at the end of the Bronze Age. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 35(3): 227–245.

–. 2019. "A Top-Down Re-Invention of an Old Form: Cuneiform Alphabet in Context." In Philip J. Boyes & Philippa M. Steele (eds.), *Understanding Relations Between Scripts II: Early Alphabets*. Oxbow–Philadelphia: Oxbow books.

FINCKE, Jeanette C. (ed.) 2014. *Divination in the Ancient Near East: A Workshop on Divination Conducted during the 54th Recontre Assyriologique Internationale, Würzburg, 2008*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

FISHER, Loren 2010. Double Attribution in a Letter from Egypt to Ugarit (RS 88.2158). *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 130/4: 619–621.

FLEMING, Daniel E. 1992. *The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar*. HSS 42. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

–. 2000. *Time at Emar: The Cultic Calendar and the Rituals from the Diviner's House*. MC 11. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

FOLEY, Christopher M. 1980. *The Gracious Gods and the Royal Ideology of Ugarit*. Ph.D. Thesis. McMaster university.

FOSTER, Benjamin R. 2005. *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*. 3rd edition. Bethesda: CDL Press.

FOURNET, Arnaud 2022. Revisiting the Hurrian Section of RS 24.643 (KTU 1.148). *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 22/1: 1–15.

FRAHM, Eckart 2013: Rising Suns and Falling Stars: Assyrian Kings and the Cosmos. In J. A. HILL, P. JONES & A. J. MORALES 2013. *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology: 97–120.

FRANKFORT, Henri 1948. *Kingship and The Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago.

FRANKLIN, John C. 2006. Lyre Gods of the Bronze Age Musical Koine. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 6: 39–70.

GACHET/GACHET-BIZOLLON, Jacqueline. 1995. Les ivoires inscrits du Palais royal. In *RSO XI*: 245–254.

–. 2008. Les ivoires du Palais royal d'Ougarit : bilan de la recherche. In *RSO XVII*: 85–100.

GACHET, Jacqueline & Dennis PARDEE 2001. Les ivoires inscrits du Palais Royal (fouille 1955). In: RSO XIV: 191–230.

GASTER, Theodor H. 1950. *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East*. New York: Schuman.

GEERTZ, Clifford 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

GEORGE, Andrew R. 2003. *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts. Volume I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

–. 2007. The Gilgameš epic at Ugarit. *Aula Orientalis 25*: 237–254.

GEYER, Bernard 2012. Les ressources en eau et les aménagements hydrauliques en Ougarit: état de la recherche. In *RSO XX*: 11–18.

–. 2017. Climate and Its Variability in the Region of Ras Shamra-Ugarit. In *RSO XXV*: 397–398.

GEYER, Bernard & Yves CALVET 2013. Le «pont-barrage» du Nahr el-Delbé. In *RSO XXI*: 1–45.

GEYER, Bernard & Marie-Laure CHAMBRADE 2019a. Hydrography and Catchment Areas in the Region of Ras Shamra-Ugarit. In *RSO XXVI*: 271–273.

–. 2019b. A Simplified Lithology of the Region of Ras Shamra-Ugarit. In *RSO XXVI*: 259–260.

GEYER, Bernard, Marie-Laure CHAMBRADE & Valérie MATOÏAN 2019. The Springs in the Region of Ras Shamra-Ugarit. In *RSO XXVI*: 287–289.

GEYER, Bernard & Nicolas JACOB-ROUSSEAU 2017. The kingdom of Ugarit, Between Sea and Mountains. In *RSO XXV*: 389–390.

GILAN, Amir 2010. Epic and History in Hittite Anatolia: In Search of a Local Hero. In D. KONSTAN & K. A. RAAFLAUB (eds.), *Epic and History.* Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell: 51–65.

GILBERT, Alessandra 2021. Urban Squares in Late Bronze Age Ugarit: A Street View on Ancient Near Eastern Governance. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 80/2: 377–414.

GOFF, Beatrice L. 1956. The Rôle of Amulets in Mesopotamian Ritual Texts. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 19/1–2: 1–39.

GOODY, Jack 1977. *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

GOREN, Yuval, Shlomo BUNIMOVITZ, Israel FINKELSTEIN & Nadav NA'AMAN 2003. The Location of Alashiya: New Evidence from Petrographic Investigation of Alashiyan Tablets from El-Amarna and Ugarit. *American Journal of Archaeology* 107/2: 233–255.

GOREN, Yuval, Israel FINKELSTEIN & Nadav NA'AMAN. 2004. *Inscribed in Clay: Provenance study of the Amarna Letters and other ancient Near Eastern texts*. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University.

GRAY, John 1969. Sacral Kingship in Ugarit. In *Ugaritica VI*: 289–302.

GREEN, Alberto R. W. 2003. *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East*. BJS 8. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

GRØNDAHL, Frauke 1967. *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit*. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico.

GUICHARD, Michaël 2014. *L'Épopée de Zimrī-Lîm*. FM XIV. Mémoires de N.A.B.U. 16. Paris: SEPOA.

HALAYQA, Issam K. H. 2010. The Demise of Ugarit in the Light of its Connections with Ḫatti. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 42: 297–332.

HALEY, John F. 1984. The Immortality of the King: Ugarit and the Psalms. *Orientalia* 53/2: 245–254.

HANDY, Lowell K. 1994. *Among the Host of Heaven: The Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureucracy*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

HAWLEY, Robert 2008. On the Alphabetic Scribal Curriculum at Ugarit. In R. D. BIGGS, J. MYERS & M. T. ROTH (eds.), *Proceedings of the 51ˢᵗ Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale. Held at The*

Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. July 18–22, 2005. SAOC 62. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: 57–67.

–. 2010. Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit. In W. H. VAN SOLDT (ed.), *Society and Administration in Ancient Ugarit*. PIHANS 114. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten: 71–83.

–. 2015. On the Transmission of Knowledge and Lore in the Alphabetic Tradition of Ugarit. In C. ROCHE-HAWLEY & R. HAWLEY (eds.), *Devins et lettrés dans l'orbite de Byblone*. OM 16. Paris: Éditions de Boccard: 67–80.

HAWLEY, Robert & Dennis PARDEE 2012. Les dons royaux en langue Ougaritique: nouvelle étude épigraphique de RS 15.111. In *RSO XX*: 251–273.

HAWLEY, Robert, Dennis PARDEE & Carole ROCHE-HAWLEY 2015. The Scribal Culture of Ugarit. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* 2(2): 229–267.

HEIMPEL, Wolfgang 2003. *Letters to the King of Mari: A New Translation, with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

HELTZER, Michael 1976. *The Rural Community in Ancient Ugarit*. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag .

–. 1982. *The Internal Organisation of the Kingdom of Ugarit: Royal Service System, Taxes, Royal Economy, Army and Administration*. Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert.

HESS, Richard S. 1996. A Comparison of the Ugarit, Emar and Alalakh Archives. In N. Wyatt, W. G. E. Watson & J. B. Lloyd (eds.), *Ugarit, Religion and Culture: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Ugarit, Religion and Culture, Edinburgh, July 1994. Essays Presented in Honour of Professor John C. L. Gibson*. UBL 12. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 75–83.

–. 1999. The Onomastics of Ugarit. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 499–528.

HILL, Jane A., Philip JONES & Antonio J. MORALES (eds.) 2013. *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

HOFFNER JR., Harry A. 1997. *The Laws of the Hittites: A Critical Edition*. Leiden–New York–Köln: Brill.

HOFTIJZER, Jacob & Wilfred H. VAN SOLDT 1991. Texts from Ugarit Concerning Security: and Related Akkadian and West Semitic Material. *Ugarit Forschungen* 23: 189–216.

HOLBRAAD, Martin & Morten A. PEDERSEN 2017. *The Ontological Turn: An Anthropological Exposition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

HORNUNG, Erik 1982. *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: the One and the Many*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

HOYT, JoAnna M. 2010. Justification at Ugarit. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Evangelical Theological Society, November 2010, Atlanta. [available at https://www.academia.edu/1176470/Justification_at_Ugarit accessed 26th August 2023]

HUEHNERGARD, John 1999. The Akkadian Letters. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 375–389.

HUNDLEY, Michael B. 2013a. *Gods in Dwellings: Temples and Divine Presence in the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

–. 2013b. Here a God, There a God: An Examination of the Divine in Ancient Mesopotamia. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 40/1: 68–107.

HUNGER, Hermann & David PINGREE 1999. *Astral Sciences in Mesopotamia*. HdO 44. Leiden–Boston–Köln: Brill.

ICART, Jean-Claude, Claude CHANUT & Valérie MATOÏAN 2008. Le matériel en pierre du Palais Royal d'Ougarit: diagnose, nomenclature, provenance et usage. In *RSO XVII*: 157–190.

IDINOPULOS, Thomas A. & Brian C. WILSON (eds.), 1998. *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, & Explanations*. Leiden: Brill.

AL-JALLAD, Ahmad 2015. Echoes of the Baal Cycle in a Safaito-Hismaic Inscription. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 15: 5–19.

JEFFERS, Ann 1996. *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria*. Leiden–New York–Köln: Brill.

DE JONG, Teije & Wilfred H. VAN SOLDT 1989a. Redating an Early Solar Eclipse Record (KTU 1.78). Implications for the Ugaritic Calendar and for the Secular Accelerations of the Earth and Moon. *Ex Oriente Lux* 30: 65–77.

–. 1989b. The Earliest Known Solar Eclipse Record Redated. *Nature* 338: 238–240.

JUSTEL, Josué J. 2007. El levirato en Ugarit según el document jurídico RS 16.144. *Estudios Bíblicos* 65/4: 415–425.

–. 2020. "Run for Your Lives!" War and Refugees in the Ancient Near East During the Late Bronze Age. In K. RUFFING, K. DROß-KRÜPE, S. FINK & R. ROLLINGER (eds.), *Societies at War: Proceedings of the tenth Symposium of the Melammu Project held in Kassel September 26–28 2016 & Proceedings of the eight Symposium of the Melammu Project held in Kiel November 11–15 2014*. Mellamu Symposia 10. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press: 307–329.

KEMP, Luke & Eric H. CLINE 2022. Systemic Risk and Resilience: The Bronze Age Collapse and Recovery. In A. IZDEBSKI, J. HALDON & P. FILIPKOWSKI (eds.), *Perspectives on Public Policy in Societal-Environmental Crises: What the Future Needs from History*. Cham: Springer: 207–223.

KIM, Jeong Bong & D. J. Human 2008. Nagid: A Re-examination in the Light of the Royal Ideology in the Ancient Near East. *HTS Theological Studies* 64/3: 1475–1497.

KINLAW, Dennis F. 1967. *Study of Personal Names in the Akkadian Texts from Ugarit*. Ph.D. Thesis. Waltham: Brandeis University.

KITCHEN, Kenneth A. 1977. The King List of Ugarit. *Ugarit Forschungen* 9: 131–142.

KNAPP, Bernard A. & Sturt W. MANNING 2016. Crisis in Context: The End of the Late Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean. *American Journal of Archaeology* 120: 99–149.

KOCH/KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, Susanne Ulla 2000. *Babylonian Liver Omens: The Chapters Manzāzu, Padānu and Pān tākalti of the Babylonian Extispicy Series Mainly from Aššurbanipal's Library*. CNI 25, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

KOHLMEYER, Kay 2009. The Temple of the Storm God in Aleppo During the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 72/4: 190–202.

KOITABASHI, Matahisa 1992. The Deification of the Lyre in Ancient Ugarit. *Orient* 28: 106–110.

KONSTANTOPOULOS, Gina 2017. Shifting Alignments: The Dichotomy of Benevolent and Malevolent Demons in Mesopotamia. In S. BHAYRO & C. RIDER (eds.), *Demons and Illness from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period*. MRLLA 5. Leiden–Boston: Brill: 19–38.

KORPEL, Marjo C. A. 1990. *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Description of the Divine*. UBL 8. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag

KOUBKOVÁ, Evelyne 2016. *Washing the Mouth of a Kettledrum*. M.A. Thesis. Prague: Charles University.

LACKENBACHER, Sylvie 2002. *Textes akkadiens d'Ugarit: Textes provenant des vingt-cinq premières campagnes*. LAPO 20. Paris: Cerf.
–. 2008. Quelques remarques à propos des archives du Palais royal d'Ougarit. In *RSO XVII*: 281–290.

LAM, Joseph 2011. Reassessment of the Alphabetic Hurrian Text RS 1.004 (KTU 1.42): A Ritual Anointing of Deities? *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 11: 148–169.
–. 2015. Possible Ugaritic Influences on the Hurrian of Ras Shamra-Ugarit in Alphabetic Script. In: A.M. BUTTS (ed.), *Semitic Languages in Contact*, Leiden: Brill: 267–279.

LAMBERT, Wilfred G. & Alan R. MILLARD 1999. *Atra-Ḫasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

LANERI, Nicola (ed.) 2015. *Defining the Sacred: Approaches to the Archaeology of Religion in the Near East*. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

LATOUR, Bruno 2005. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

LEACH, Edmund 2000a. *The essential Edmund Leach. Volume 1, Anthropology and Society*. Collected by S. HUGH-JONES & J. LAIDLAW. New Haven: Yale University Press.
–. 2000b. *The essential Edmund Leach. Volume 1, Culture and Human Nature*. Collected by S. HUGH-JONES & J. LAIDLAW. New Haven: Yale University Press.

LENZI, Alan 2008. *Secrecy and the Gods: Secret Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia and Biblical Israel*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

LENZI, Alan & Jonathan STÖKL (eds.) 2014. *Divination, Politics, and Ancient Near Eastern Empires*. ANEM 7. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

LÉVI-STRAUSS, Claude 1968. *The Savage Mind*. 3rd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
–. 1978. *Myth and Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

LEVY, Eythan 2014. A Fresh Look at the Baal-Zaphon Stele. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 100: 293–310.

Lewis, Theodore J. 1989. *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit*. HSM 39. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

–. 2005. Syro-Palestinian Iconography and Divine Images. In N. H. Walls (ed.). *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research: 69–107.

–. 2013. The Shaʿtiqatu Narrative from the Ugaritic Story about the Healing of King Kirta. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 13/2: 188–211.

–. 2014. The Identity and Function of Ugaritic Shaʿtiqatu: A Divinely Made Apotropaic Figure. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 14/1: 1–28.

Liverani, Mario 1974. La royauté syrienne de l'âge de bronze recent. In P. Garelli (ed.), *Le palais et la royauté: (archéologie et civilisation): XIXe Rencontre assyriologique internationale organisée par le groupe François Thureau-Dangin, Paris, 29 juin - 2 juillet 1971*. Paris: Geuthner: 329–356.

–. 1979. Ras Shamra II. Historie. In H. Cazelles & A. Feuillet (eds.), *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible*. Vol. 9. Paris: Letouzey & Ané: cols. 1295–1348.

–. 2014a. *The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy*. London–New York: Routledge.

–. 2014b. The King and His Audience. In S. Gaspa, A. Greco, D. M. Bonacossi, S. Ponchia & R. Rollinger (eds.), *From Source to History: Studies of Ancient Near Eastern Worlds and Beyond*. AOAT 412. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 373–385.

–. 2021[1970]. The Ugaritic Epic in its Historical and Literary Context. In M. Liverani (auth., rev.), N. P. Lemeche & E. Pfoh (eds., trsl.) *History, Ideology and Politics in the Ancient Near East and Israel*. Edited by. London–New York: Routledge: 16–27.

Machinist, Peter B. 1978. *The Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta: A Study in Middle Assyrian Literature*. Ph.D. Thesis. Yale University.

Magness-Gardiner, Bonnie S. 1987. *Seals and Sealings in the Administration of the State: A Functional Analysis of Seals in Second Millennium BC Syria*. Ph.D. Thesis. Tuscon: University of Arizona.

Majewski, Marcin 2023. Filial Duties in the Ugaritic Epic of Aqhatu. *Collectanea Theologica* 93/1: 5–43.

Malbran-Labat, Florence 1995. La découverte épigraphique de 1994 à Ougarit (les textes Akkadiens). *Studi Miceni ed Egeo-Anatolici* 36: 103–111.

–. 1999. "Languages et écritures à Ougarit", *Semitica* 49, 65–101.

Malbran-Labat, Florence & Roche Carole 2007. Urtēnu Urtešub. In J.-M. Michaud (ed.), *Le royaume d'Ougarit de la Crèteà l'Euphrate. Nouveaux axes de recherche. Actes ducongrès international de Sherbrooke 2005. (CollectionProche-Orient et Littérature Ougaritique, II)*. Sherbrooke: G.G.C. Editions: 63–104.

Malinowski, Bronislaw 1926. *Myth in Primitive Psychology*. London: W.W. Norton.

–. 1948. *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mallet, Joël 1987. Le temple aux rhytons. In *RSO III*: 213–248.

Mallet, Joël & Valérie Matoïan 2001. Une maison au sud du «temple aux rhytons» (fouilles 1979–1990). In *RSO XIV*: 83–181.

MANNING, Sturt W, Cindy KOCIK, Brita LORENTZEN & Jed P. SPARKS 2023. Severe Multi-Year Drought Coincident with Hittite Collapse around 1198–1196 BC. *Nature* 614: 719–724.

MARCHEGAY, Sophie 1999. *Les tombes d'Ougarit: Architecture, localisation et relation avec habitat*. Ph.D. Thesis. Lyon: Université Lumière.

–. 2007. Les coutumes funéraires à Ougarit à l'âge du Bronze. In J.-P. MICHAUD (ed.), *Le Royaume d'Ougarit de la Crète à l'Euphrate. Nouveaux axes de recherche, Actes du congrès international de Sherbrooke 2005*. Sherbrooke: GGC éditions: 423–447.

–. 2008. Les pratiques funéraires à Ougarit au IIe millénaire: bilan et perspectives des recherches. In M. YON & Y. CALVET (eds.), *Ougarit au Bronze Moyen et au Bronze Récent*. TMO 47. Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux: 97–118.

MARCHEGAY, Sophie & Valérie MATOÏAN 2019. À propos de la Tombe 1 [67] de la « Ville Basse ouest » : des archives inédites documentant l'une des tombes à chambre construite voûtée en encorbellement d'Ougarit. In *RSO XXVI*: 167–185.

MARGALIT, Baruch 1989a. KTU 1.92 (Obv.): A Ugaritic Theophagy. *Aula Orientalis* 7: 67–80.

–. 1989b. *The Ugaritic Poem of Aqhat*. BZAW 182. Berlin–New York: De Gruyter.

–. 1999. The Legend of Keret. In W.G.E. Watson & N. Wyatt (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 203–352.

MARGUERON, Jean-Claude 2000. A Stroll through the Palace. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 63/4. [special issue: *The Mysteries of Ugarit: History, Daily Life, Cult*]: 205–207.

MARTIN, Richard P. 2005. Epic as Genre. In J. M. FOLEY (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Epic*. Padstow: Blackwell.

DE MARTINO, Stefano 2014. Il ruolo politico di Karkemish in Siria durante il perIodo imperIale ittita. In N. MARCHETTI (ed.), *Karkemish: An Ancient Capital on the Euphrates*. Bologna: Ante Quem: 86–92.

MATOÏAN, Valérie 2008. Des roches précieuses dans le Palais Royal d'Ougarit: Les calcédoines rubanées (agates). In *RSO XVII*: 191–213.

–. 2013. Les emplois du bitumen à Ougarit au bronze recent. In *RSO XXI*: 309–320.

MATOÏAN, Valérie & Khozama AL-BAHLOUL 2016. Ras Shamra/Ugarit (Lattakia). In Y. KANJOU & A. TSUNEKI (eds.), *A History of Syria in One Hundred Sites*. Oxford: Archaeopress: 282–286.

MAUL, Stefan M. 1999. How the Babylonians Protected Themselves against Calamities Announced by Omens. In T. ABUSCH & K. VAN DER TOORN (eds.), *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives*. AMD 1. Groningen: STYX Publications: 123–148

–. 2015. Telling the Future: Reflections on the Status of Divination in Ancient Near Eastern Politics. In P. MEUSBURGER, D. GREGORY & L. SUARSANA (eds.), *Geographies of Knowledge and Power*. KNAS 7. Dordrecht: Springer: 123–133.

–. 2018. *The Art of Divination in the Ancient Near East: Reading the Signs of Heaven and Earth*. Waco: Baylor University Press.

MCGEOUGH, Kevin M. 2003. Locating the Marziḫu Archaeologically. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 35: 407–420.

–. 2007. *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit*. Leuven–Paris–Dudley: Peeters.

–. 2011. *Ugaritic Economic Tablets: Text, Translation and Notes*. Ed. by M. S. SMITH. Leuven–Paris–Walpole: Peeters.

–. 2022. Debt and Credit: Entangling the Marginal and Liminal in the Non-monetary Economies of Bronze Age Ugarit. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* 9/2: 243–258.

MCLAUGHLIN, John L. 2001. *The Marzēaḥ in the Prophetic Literature: References and Allusions in Light of the Extra-Biblical Evidence*. Boston: Brill.

MCLUHAN, Marshall & Quentin FIORE 1967. *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. New York: Bantam Books.

MERLO, Paolo & Paolo XELLA 1999. The Rituals. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 287–304.

MEYER, Jan.Waalke 1987. *Unterschungen zu den Tonlebermodellen aus dem Alten Orient*. AOAT 39. Kevelaer–Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Butzon & Brecker–Neukirchen Verlag.

MICHALOWSKI, Piotr 2010. Maybe Epic: The Origins and Reception of Sumerian Heroic Poetry. In D. KONSTAN & K. A. RAAFLAUB (eds.), *Epic and History*. Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell: 7–25

VAN DE MIEROOP, Marc 2007. *A History of the Ancient Near East: ca. 3000–323 BC*. 2nd edition. Malden–Oxford–Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.

MIGLIO, Adam E. 2017. The Epic of Zimri-Lim (A.3152+M5665+) (4.51). In: K. L. YOUNGER, Jr. (ed.), *The Context of Scripture. Volume 4: Supplements*. Leiden: Brill: 231–234.

MILLER, Gerald I. 1980. *Studies in the Juridical Texts from Ugarit*. Ph.D. Thesis. Ann Arbor: Johns Hopkins University.

MINER, Horace 1956. Body Ritual among the Nacirema. *American Anthropologist* 58/3: 503–507.

MOIN, A. Azfar & Alan STRATHERN (eds.) 2022. *Sacred Kingship in World History: Between Immanence and Transcendence*. New York: Columbia University Press.

MONLOUP, Thérèse 1987. Figurines de terre cuite. In *RSO III*: 307–328.

MONROE, Christopher M. 2009. *Scales of Fate: Trade, Tradition, and Transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean ca. 1350–1175 BCE*. AOAT 357. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2020. Informed or at Sea: On the Maritime and Mundane in Ugaritic Tablet RS 94.2406. In A. GILBOA & A. YASUR-LANDAU (eds.), *Nomads of the Mediterranean: Trade and Contact in the Bronze and Iron Ages*. Leiden–Boston: Brill: 205–220.

DE MOOR, Johannes C. 1987. *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit*. Leiden–New York–København–Köln: E. J. Brill.

DE MOOR, Johannes C. & Paul SANDERS 1991. An Ugaritic Expiation Ritual and its Old Testament Parallels. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 23: 283–300.

MORRIS, Ellen F. 2005. *The Architecture of Imperialism: Military Bases and the Evolution of Foreign Policy in Egypt's New Kingdom*. Leiden: Brill.

–. 2013. Propaganda and Performance at the Dawn of the State. In J. A. HILL, P. JONES & A. J. MORALES 2013. *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of*

Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology: 33–64.

–. 2015. Egypt, Ugarit, the God Baʿal, and the Puzzle of a Royal Rebuff. In: J. Mynářová, P. Onderka & P. Pavúk (eds), *There and Back Again – The Crossroads II: Proceedings of an International Conference Held in Prague, September 15–18, 2014*. Prague: Charles University in Prague: 315–351.

Mostert, R. 1989. Dating of the Ugarit Eclipse. *Nature* 341: 112–113.

Müller, Reinhard, Hans Neumann & Reettakaisa S. Salo (eds.) 2022. *Rituale und Magie in Ugarit*. ORidA 47. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Münnich, Maciej M. 2013. *The God Resheph in the Ancient Near East*. ORidA 11. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Mynářová, Jana. 2006. Ugarit: "International" or "Vassal" Correspondence? In P. Charvát, B. Lafont, J. Mynářová & L. Pecha (eds.), *L'État, le pouvoir, les prestations et leurs formes en Mésopotamie ancienne: Actes du Colloque assyriologique franco-tchèque. Paris, 7–8 novembre 2002*. Prague: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Filozofická fakulta: 119–128.

–. 2007. *Language of Amarna - Language of Diplomacy: Perspectives on the Amarna Letters*. Praha: Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Nakhai, Beth A. 2001. *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel*. Boston (MA): American School of Oriental Research.

Natan-Yulzary, Shirly 2017. The Use of Resumptive Repetition for the Construction of Time and Space in the Ugaritic Epic of Aqhat. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 48: 373–390.

–. 2020. Kirta's Pitfall Rhapsody – A Literary Reading in Kirta. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 51: 153–179.

–. 2022. Reading Ugaritic Narrative-Poetry: The Epic Description of Kirta's Expedition to Udum in KTU 1.14. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 35: 82–120.

Niehr, Herbert 1994. Überlegungen zum El-Tempel in Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 21: 419–426.

–. 2007. The Topography of Death in the Royal Palace of Ugarit: Preliminary Thoughts on the Basis of Archeological and Textual Data. In J.-M. Michaud (ed.), *Le Royaume d'Ougarit, de la Crète à l'Euphrate. Nouveaux axes de recherche, Actes du Congrès International de Sherbrooke 2005, Faculté de théologie, d'éthique et de philosophie, Université de Sherbrooke, 5-8 juillet 2005*. Sherbrook: GGC éditions: 220–242.

Nissinen, Martti 2003. *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Nogel, Scott B. 2006. He of Two Horns and a Tail. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 38: 537–542.

del Olmo Lete, Gregorio 1986. The 'Divine' Names of the Ugaritic Kings. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 18: 83–95. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 407–420]

–. 1988. Ug. tʿ, tʿy, tʿt: Nombre divino y acción cultual. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 20: 27–33.

–. 1989. El sacrificio de expiación nacional en Ugarit (KTU 1.40 y par). In *La Paraula al servei dels homes: XXV Jornades de biblistes catalans (1963–1985)*. Barcelona: Editorial Claret: 46–56.

–. 1993. Royal Aspects of the Ugaritic Cult. In J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference Organized by the Katholieke*

Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to the 20th of April 1991. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oriëntalistiek: 51–66. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b]

–. 1995. The Sacrificial Vocabulary of Ugarit. *Studi epigrafici e linguistici sul Vicino Oriente antico* 12: 37–49. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 61–74]

–. 1996. Once Again on the 'Divine' Names of the Ugaritic Kings. A Reply. *Aula Orientalis* 14: 11–16.

–. 1999. The Offering Lists and the God Lists. In W.G.E. Watson & N. Wyatt (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 305–352. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 277–316]

–. 2004. Ugarit e Israel: la religión de la vida y la muerte. In J. CAMPOS SANTIAGO & V. P. JULIÁN (eds.), *Congreso internacional "Biblia, memoria histórica y encrucijada de culturas"*. Zamora: Asociación Bíblica Española: 149–156.

–. 2012a. Littérature et pouvoir royal à Ougarit sens politique de la literature d'Ougarit. In *RSO XX*: 241–250. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 437–448]

–. 2012b. Rašpu-Mars, the Red Planet: A New Reading of KTU 1.78:5. *Aula Orientalis* 30/2: 365–367. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 249–252]

–. 2013. KTU 1.107: A Miscellany of Incantations Against Snakebite. In O. LORETZ, S. RIBICHINI, W. G. E. WATSON & J. Á. ZAMORA (eds.) *Ritual, Religion and Reason: Studies in the Ancient World in Honour of Paolo Xella*. AOAT 404. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 193–204.

–. 2014a *Canaanite Religion According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit*. AOAT 408. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2014b. *Incantations and Anti-Witchcraft Texts from Ugarit*. SANER 4. Boston–Berlin: DeGruyter.

–. 2015. The Marzeaḥ and the Ugaritic Magic Ritual System: A Close Reading of KTU 1.114. *Aula Orientalis* 33/2: 221–241. [reprinted in del Olmo Lete 2017b: 237–348]

–. 2017a. (bn) aġptr̠ / (Binu) Agapt̠arri's House: A Functional Analysis of an Ugaritic "Archive" (PH Room 10). *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 137/3: 483–503.

–. 2017b. *Studies in Ugaritic Linguistics*. AOAT 432. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2018. *The Private Archives of Ugarit: A Functional Analysis*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona.

ONG, Walter J. 2005. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. 1st ed. 1982. London–New York: Routledge.

OPPENHEIM, A. Leo 1956. *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East: With a Translation of an Assyrian Dream-Book*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society.

ORNAN, Tallay 2009. In the Likeness of Man: Reflections on the Anthropocentric Perception of the Divine in Mesopotamian Art. In B. N. PORTER (ed.), *What is a God?: Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Chebeague: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute: 93–151.

OTTO, Rudolf 1923. *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*. German original 1917. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PADEN, William E. 1994. *Religious Worlds.* Boston: Beacon Press.

PALS, Daniel L. 2006. *Eight Theories of Religion*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

DI PAOLO, Silvana 2013. Changing Space, Time, and Meaning: The Seal of Yaqaru from Ugarit—A Reconversion? In: L. FELIU, J. LLOP, A. MILLET ALBÀ & J. SANMARTÍN (eds.), *Time and History in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 56th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Barcelona, July 26th-30th, 2010*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 79–90

PARDEE, Dennis 1981. A Further Note on PRU V, No. 60. Epigraphic in Nature. *Ugarit Forschungen* 13: 151–156.

–. 1988. An Evaluation of the Proper Names from Ebla from a West Semitic Perspective: Pantheon Distribution According to Genre. In A. ARCHI (ed.), *Eblaite Personal Names and Semitic Name-Giving. Papers of a Symposium Held in Rome July 15–17, 1985*. ARES I. Rome: Missione Archeologica Italiana in Siria: 119–151.

–. 1991. The Structure of RS 1.002. In A.S. KAYE (ed.), *Semitic Studies: In Honor of Wolf Leslau on the Occasion of His Eighty-fifth Birthday, November 14th, 1991*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz: 1181–1196.

–. 1996. Marziḥu, Kispu, and the Ugaritic Funerary Cult: A Minimalist View. In N. WYATT, W. G. E. WATSON, & J. B. LLOYD (eds.), *Ugarit, Religion and Culture: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Ugarit, Religion and Culture, Edinburgh, July 1994. Essays Presented in Honour of Professor John C. L. Gibson*. UBL 12. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 273–287.

–. 1997. The Baʿlu Myth (1.86). In W. W. HALLO & K. L. YOUNGER, JR. (eds.), *The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World. Volume 1*. Leiden: Brill: 241–274.

–. 2000. Animal Sacrifice at Ugarit. *Topoi. Orient-Occident. Supplément 2. Les animaux et les hommes dans le monde syro-mésopotamien aux époques historiques*: 321–331.

–. 2001. Ugaritic Science. In P. M. M. DAVIAU, J. W. WEVERS & M. WEIGL (eds.), *The World of the Aramaeans III, Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-E. Dion*. JSOTSup 326. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press: 223–254.

–. 2002a. *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

–. 2002b. Ugaritic Letters. In W. W. HALLO & K. L. YOUNGER, JR. (eds.), *The Context of Scripture: Archival Documents from the Biblical World. Volume 3*. Leiden–Boston–Köln: Brill: 87–116.

–. 2003. La traité d'alliance RS 11.772+. *Semitica* 51: 5–31.

–. 2007a. RS 15.039 remis sur pied. *Journal of Near Eastern Religions* 7/1: 67–85.

–. 2007b. The Ugaritic Alphabetic Cuneiform Writing System in the Context of Other Alphabetic Systems. In C. L. MILLER (ed.), *Studies in Semitic and Afroasiatic Linguistcs Presented to Gener B. Gragg*. SAOC 60. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: 181–200.

–. 2009. A New Join of Fragments of the Baal Cycle. In J. D. Schloen (ed.), *Exploring the Long Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 377–390.

–. 2012. {G} as a Palaeographic Indicator in Ugaritic Texts. In E. DEVECCHI (ed.), *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*. PIHANS 119. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten: 111–126.

–. 2014. L'Autorité littéraire au XIII e siècle av. J.-C.? 'Ilîmilku d'Ougarit: Scribe/Auteur? In: M. GOREA & M. TARDIEU (eds.), *Autorités des auteurs antiques: Entre anonymat, masque et authenticité*: Brepols: Turnhout: 35–57.

–. 2015. Nouvelle attestation de prln «devin» en Ougaritique. In C. ROCHE-HAWLEY & R. HAWLEY (eds.), *Devins et lettrés dans l'orbite de Byblone*. OM 16. Paris: Éditions de Boccard: 171–176.

PARDEE, Dennis & Robert HAWLEY 2010. Les textes juridiques en langue ougaritique. In S. DÉMARE-LAFONT & A. LEMAIRE (eds.), *Trois millénaires de dormulaires juridiques*. Genève: Droz: 125–140.

PARDEE, Dennis & N. SWERDLOW 1993. Not the Earliest Solar Eclipse. *Nature* 363: 406.

PARKER, Simon B. (ed.) 1997. *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

PEDERSÉN, Olof 1998. *Archives and Libraries in the Ancient Near East, 1500–300B.C.* Bethesda: CDL Press.

PELTENBURG, Edgar 2016. Mortuary Practices and Embodied Identity in Northwest Syria in the 3rd Millennium BC. In C. FELLI (ed.), *How to Cope with Death: Mourning and Funerary Practices in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Workshop, Firenze, 5th–6th December 2013*. Pisa: Edizioni ETS: 133–156.

PENNER, Hans H. 1989. *Impasse and Resolution: A Critique of the Study of Religion.* New York–Bern–Frankfurt am Main–Paris: Peter Lang.

PITARD, Wayne T. 1994. The "Libation Installations" of the Tombs at Ugarit. *Biblical Archaeologist* 57/1: 20–37.
–. 2008. Watch that Margin! Understanding the scribal peculiarities of CAT 1.4 Obverse. *Maarav* 15/1: 27–37.
–. 2012. Nodding Scribe and Heavy Thumb: The Scribal Errors in CAT 1.14 III 52–V 8. In M. J. LUNDBERG, S. FINE & W. T. PITARD (eds.), *Puzzling out the Past: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures in Honor of Bruce uckerman*. CHANE 55. Leiden: Brill: 135–154.

PITTMAN, Holly 2013. Seals and Sealings in the Sumerian World. In H. Crawford (ed.), *The Sumerian World*. New York–London: Routledge: 319–344.

POLLACK, Martin 2010. *Kaiser von Amerika*. Vienna: Zsolnay.
–. 2014: *Americký císař*, Brno: Větrné mlýny.

PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, Beate 2009. Reflections on the Translatability of the Notion of Holiness. In M. LUUKKO, S. SVÄRD & R. MATTILA (eds.), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*. SO 106. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society: 409–427.

PORTER, Barbara N. (ed.) 2000. *One God or Many?: Concepts of Divinity in the Ancient World*. Chebeague: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute.
–. 2005 (ed.). *Ritual and Politics in Ancient Mesopotamia*. AOS 88. New Haven: American Oriental Society.
–. 2009a. Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum: Were There Non-Anthropomorphic Deities in Ancient Mesopotamia? In B. N. Porter (ed.), *What is a God?: Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Chebeague: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute: 153–194.
–. 2009b. *What is a God?: Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Chebeague: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute.

PORTUESE, Ludovico & Marta PALLAVIDINI 2022. *Ancient Near Eastern Weltanschauungen in Contact and in Contrast: Rethinking Ideology and Propaganda in the Ancient Near East.* wEdge 2. Münster: Zaphon.

PYYSIÄINEN, Ilkka 2001. *How Religion Works: Towards a New Cognitive Science of Religion.* Leiden: Brill.

–. 2009. *Supernatural Agents: Why We Believe in Souls, Gods, and Buddhas.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PYYSIÄINEN, Ilkka & Kimmo KETOLA 1999. Rethinking 'God': The Concept of 'God' as a Category in Comparative Religion. In Tore AHLBÄCK (ed.), *Approaching Religion: Part I.* Turku: Åbo Akademi University Printing Press: 207–214.

RADCLIFFE-BROWN, Alfred R. 1922. *The Andaman Islanders: A Study in Social Anthropology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

–. 1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society: Essays and Addresses.* Glencoe: The Free Press.

RAHMOUNI, Aicha 2008. *Divine Epithets in the Ugaritic Alphabetical Texts.* Leiden: Brill.

RENFREW, Colin & Paul BAHN 2016. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice.* 7th revised and updated edition. London: Thames & Hudson.

RIBICHINI, Sergio & Paolo XELLA 1991. Problemi di onomastica Ugaritica: Il caso dei teofori. *Studi epigrafici e linguistici sul Vicino Oriente antico* 8: 149–170

RICHTER, Thomas 2012. *Bibliographisches Glossar des Hurritischen.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

RIEKEN, Elisabeth 2001. Der hethitische šar-tamḫāri-Text: archaisch oder archaisierend?. In G. WILHELM (ed.), *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie, Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999.* Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag: 576–585.

ROCHBERG, Francesca 2004. *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy, and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ROCHE-HAWLEY, Carole 2012. On the Palaeographic 'Syllabary A' in the Late Bronze Age. In E. DEVECCHI (ed.) *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age.* PIHANS 119. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten: 127–146.

–. 2015. Mesopotamian Cuneiform at Ugarit: Learning versus Using. In C. ROCHE-HAWLEY & R. HAWLEY (eds.), *Devins et lettrés dans l'orbite de Byblone.* OM 16. Paris: Éditions de Boccard: 59–66.

ROCHE-HAWLEY, Carole & Robert HAWLEY 2013. An Essay on Scribal Families, Tradition, and Innovation in Thirteen-Century Ugarit. In B. J. COLLINS & P. MICHALOWSKI (eds.), *Beyond Hatti: A Tribute to Gary Beckman.* Atlanta: Lockwood Press: 241–264.

ROWE, Ignacio M. 1999. The Legal Texts from Ugarit. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies.* HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 390–422.

–. 2003. Anatoli and the Levant: Ugarit. In R. WESTBROOK (ed.), *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law I.* HdO 72/1. Leiden–Boston: Brill: 719–735.

–. 2006. *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Diplomatics.* AOAT 335. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2013. Personal Seal of King Ammurapi of Ugarit. *AulaOrientalis* 32/1: 221–226.

RUTHERFORD, Ian 2001. The Song of the Sea (ŠA A.AB.BA SÌR): Thoughts on KUB 45.63. In G. WILHELM (ed.), *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz: 598–609.

SAADÉ, Gabriel 1979. *Ougarit: Métropole Cananéenne*. Beyrouth: Impr. Catholique.

SALLABERGER, Walther & Katja KRÖSS 2019. Who is the Elite? Two Exemplary Cases from Early Bronze Age Syro-Mesopotamia. In G. CHAMBON, M. GUICHARD & A.-I. LANGLOIS (eds.), *De l'argile au numérique : mélanges assyriologiques en l'honneur de Dominique Charpin. Tome 2*. Leuven–Paris–Bristol: Peeters: 893–922.

SALLES, Jean-François 1995. Ritual Mortuaire et Rituel Social à Ras Shramra/Ougarit. In S. CAMPBELL & A. GREEN (eds.), *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East*. Oxford: Oxbow Books: 171–184.

SALVINI, Mirjo 1995. Ougarit et les hourrites. In *RSO XI*: 89–97.

SANMARTÍN, Joaquín 2000. Sociedades y lenguas en el medio sirio-levantino del II milenio a.C.: Ugarit y lo hurrita. *Aula Orientalis* 17–18: 113–123.

SASSON, Jack M. 2015. *From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

SAWYER, J. F. A. & F. R. STEPHENSON 1970. Literary and Astronomical Evidence for a Total Eclipse of the Sun Observed in Ancient Ugarit on 3 May 1375 B. C. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 33/3: 467–489.

SCHAEFFER(-FORRER), Claude F.–A. 1966. Nouveaux témoignages du culte de El et de Baal à Ras Shamra - Ugarit et ailleurs en Syrie - Palestine. *Syria* 43/1–2: 1–19.
–. 1983. *Corpus des cylindres-sceaux de Ras Shamra-Ugarit et d'Enkomi-Alasia*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.

SCHLOEN, David J. 2001. *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East*. SAHL 2. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

SCHMIDT, Brian B. 1994. *Israel's Beneficent Dead*. FAT 11. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr–Paul Siebeck.
–. 2000. Afterlife Beliefs: Memory as Immortality. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 63/4: 236–239.

SCURLOCK, Jo Ann 2014. *Sourcebook for Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine*. SBL 36. Atlanta: SBL Press.

SEGERT, Stanislav 1995. Ugaritic Names. In E. EICHLER, G. HILTY, H. LÖFFLER, H. STEGER & L. ZGUSTA (eds.), *Namenforschung / Name Studies / Les noms propres: Ein internationales Handbuch zur Onomastik / An International Handbook of Onomastics / Manuel international d'onomastique. 1. Halbband*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

SEGERT, Stanislav & Marguerite YON 2001. Une inscription phénicienne trouvée à Ras Shamra (fouille 1963). In: RSO XIV: 231–234.

SEYMOUR, Timothy P. 1983. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. *UCLA Historical Journal* 40: 108–120.

SHEDLETSKY, Lauren & Baruch A. LEVINE 1999. The mšr of the Sons and Daughters of Ugarit (KTU2 1.40). *Revue Biblique* 106/3: 321–344.

SINGER, Itamar 1999. A Political History of Ugarit. In W. G. E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 603–733.

–. 2011. The Calm before the Storm: Selected Writings of Itamar Singer on the Late Bronze Age in Anatolia and the Levant. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

SMITH, Joanna S. 2018. Authenticity, Seal Recarving, and Aduthority in the Ancient Near East and Eastern Mediterranean. In M. AMERI, S. K. COSTELLO, G. M. JAMISON & S. J. SCOTT (eds.), 2018. *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient World: Case Studies from the Near East, Egypt, the Aegean, and South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 95–124.

SMITH, Mark S. 1994. *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle: Volume 1, Introduction with Text, Translation & Commentary of KTU 1.1–1.2*. Leiden–New York–Köln: Brill.

–. 2001. *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

–. 2006. *The Rituals and Myths of the Feast of the Goodly Gods of KTU/CAT 1.23: Royal Constructions of Opposition, Intersection, Integration, and Domination.* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

–. 2010. *God in Translation: Deities in Cross-Cultural Discourse in The Biblical World*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

SMITH, Mark S. & Wayne T. PITARD 2006. *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Volume II: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.4*. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

VAN SOLDT, Wilfred 1989a. ʾAtn prln, "Attā/ēnu the Diviner". *Ugarit-Forschungen* 21: 365–368.

–. 1989b. Labels from Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 21: 375–388.

–. 1990. Fabrics and Dyes at Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 22: 321–357.

–. 1991. *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit. Dating and Grammar*. AOAT 40. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag.

–. 1995. Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts and Scribal Education at Ugarit and its Implications for Alphabetic Literary Texts. In M. DIETRICH & O. LORETZ (eds.), *Ugarit: Ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient. Ergebnisse un Perspektiven der Forschung. Band I: Ugarit und seine Umwelt*. ALASP 7. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 171–212.

–. 1999. The Syllabic Akkadian Texts. In W. G. E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 28–45.

–. 2000. Private Archives at Ugarit. In A. C. V. M. BONGENAAR (ed.), *Interdependency of Institutions and private Entrepreneurs (MOS studies 2), Proceeding of the Second MOS Symposium (Leiden 1998).* Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten: 229–245.

–. 2003. The Use of Hurrian Names at Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 35: 681–707.

–. 2005. *The Topography of the City-State of Ugarit*. AOAT 324. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 2010a. The Akkadian Legal Texts from Ugarit. In S. DÉMARE-LAFONT & A. LEMAIRE (eds.), *Trois millénaires de dormulaires juridiques*. Genève: Droz: 85–124.

–. 2010b. The City Administration of Ugarit. In L. E. KOGAN, N. KOSLOVA, S. LOESOV & S. TISHCHENKO (eds.), *Proceedings of the 53th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale. Vol. 2: City Administration in the Ancient Near East.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 247–261.

–. 2010c. Ugarit as a Hittite Vassal State. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 37/2: 198–207.

–. 2011. Some Remarks on RS 34.141: A Letter from the Urtēnu-Archive. In B. S. DÜRING, A. WOSSINK & P. M. M. G. AKKERMANS (eds.), *Correlates of Complexity*. Leiden: Nederlands Intituut voor het Nabije Oosetn: 193–199.

–. 2012. The Palaeography of Two Ugarit Archives. In E. DEVECCHI (ed.), *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*. PIHANS 119. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten: 171–183.

–. 2016a. Divinities in Personal Names at Ugarit. In *RSO XXIV*: 95–107.

–. 2016b. School and Scribal Tradition in Ugarit. In S. YAMADA & D. SHIBATA (eds.), *Cultures and societies in the Middle Euphrates and Habur Areas in the Second Millennium BC. Vol 1: Scribal Education and Scribal Traditions*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz: 145–156.

–. 2016c. The Travelling Queen of Ugarit. In *RSO XXIV*: 109–117.

SOMMER, Klaus G. 2016. *Der 21. Januar 1192 v. Chr.: Der Untergang Ugarits?* München, Herbert Utz Verlag.

SONIK, Karen & Ulrike STEINERT (eds.), 2023. *The Routledge Handbook of Emotions in the Ancient Near East*. London–New York: Routledge.

SPIRO, Melford E. 1966. Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation. In M. BANTON (ed.), *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*. London: Tavistock Publications: 85–126.

STAHL, Michael 2016. Ḥērem-Warfare at Ugarit? Reevaluating KTU 1.13 and KTU 1.3 II. *Ugarit Forschungen* 47: 265–299.

STEINBERGER, Clemens 2022. Parallelism in Ugaritic Poetry. *Project REPAC* (ERC Grant no. 803060), 2019–2024, at https://doi.org/10.25365/phaidra.365 [accessed 24th August 2023].

STEPHENSON, F. R. 1970. The Earliest Known Record of a Solar Eclipse. *Nature* 228: 651–652.

STIEGLITZ, Robert R. 2015. The Ideology of Divine Kingship at Ugarit. In C. GOTTLIEB, C. COHEN & M. GRUBER (eds.), *Visions of Life in Biblical Times*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press: 225–234.

STUCKY, Johanna H. 2002. The Great Goddesses of the Levant. *Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies* 37: 27–48.

DE TARRAGON, Jean-Michel 1995. Temples et Pratiques rituelles. In *RSO XI*: 203–210.

–. 1998. Le rituel ugaritique KTU 1.40: quelques réflexions. In M. DIETRICH, I. KOTTSIEPIER & H. SCHAUDIG (eds.), *"Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf": Studien zum Alten Testament und zum alten Orient*: festschrift für Oswald Loretz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres mit Beiträgen von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen. AOAT 250. Münster: Ugarit Verlag: 727–732.

THOMAS, Christine N. 2014. *Reconceiving the House of the Father: Royal Women at Ugarit*. Ph.D. Thesis. Harvard University.

THUREAU-DANGIN, 1935. Une Lettre assyrienne à Ras Shamra. *Syria* 16: 188–93.

TÖYRÄÄNVUORI, Joanna 2020. The Cult of the Royal Dead at Ugarit: Poetics, Politis, and Praxis. In A. K. GUDME DE HEMMER & K. VALKAMA (eds.), *Approaching the Dead: Studies on Mortuary Ritual in the Ancient World*. Helsinki: Suomen eksegeettinen seura: 11–30.

T̄RABOULSI, Myriam 2019. Apreçu sur le climat du litoral Syrien. In *RSO XXVI*: 223–241.

T̄SOUPAROPOULOU, Christina 2016. Deconstructing Textuality, Reconstructing Materiality. In T. E. BALKE & C. TSOUPAROPOULOU (eds.). *Materiality of Writing in Early Mesopotamia*. MT 13. Berlin–Boston: DeGruyter: 257–275.

T̄SUKIMOTO, Akio 1985. *Unterschungen zur Totenpflege (kispum) im alten Mesopotamien*. AOAT 2016. Kevelaer–Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Butzon & Brecker–Neukirchener Verlag.

T̄SUMURA, David T. 1999. Kings and Cults in Ancient Ugarit. In by K. Watanabe (ed.), *Priests and Officials in the Ancient Near East*. Heidelberg: Universtiätsverlag C. Winter: 215–238

T̄UGENDHAFT, Aaron 2010. On ym and ᵈA.AB.BA at Ugarit. *Ugarit Forschungen* 42: 697–712
–. 2016. Gods on Clay: Ancient Near Eastern Scholarly Practices and the History of Religions. In A. GRAFTON & G. W. MOST (eds.), *Canonical Texts and Scholarly Practices: A Global Comparative Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 8–182.
–. 2018. *Baal and the Politics of Poetry*. London: Routledge.

T̄URNER, Victor W. 1969. *The Ritual Process Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
–. 1974. *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
–. 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.

U̇YECHI, Roy 1961. *A Study of Ugaritic Alphabetic Personal Names.* Ph.D. Thesis. Waltham: Brandeis University.

V̇ÁLEK, František 2019. *Foreign Influences in Religion of Ancient Syria: Non-Semitic Traits in Syrian Culture in the Late Bronze Age*. M.A. Thesis. Prague: Charles University.
–. 2021. Foreigners and Religion at Ugarit. *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 9(2): 47–66.
–. 2022. *The Epic of Zimrī-Lîm*. M.A. Thesis. Prague: Charles University.
–. 2023. Cultural Transfer in Light of Seth Baʿal and Their Relationship. In R. ROLLINGER, I. MADREITER, M. LANG & C. PAPPI (eds.), *The Intellectual Heritage of the Ancient Near East. Proceedings of the 64ᵗʰ Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale and the 12ᵗʰ Melammu Symposium, University of Innsbruck, July 16-20, 2018*. Melammu Symposia 12. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press: 443–458.

V̇ANSTIPHOUT, Herman 1998. Comparative Notes on Šar Tamḫāri. In H. ERKANAL, V. DONBAZ & A. UGUROGLU (eds.), *XXXIVème Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale – XXXIV. Uluslararasi Assiriyoloji Kongresi – Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari XXVI. Dizi – Sa. 3*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 573–589.

V̇ELDHUIS, Niek C. 2011. Levels of Literacy. In K. RADNER & E. ROBSON (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 68–89.

V̇ERSNEL, Henk S. 1991. Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion. *Numen* 38/2: 177–197.

V̇IANO, Maurizio 2016. *The Reception of Sumerian Literature in the Western Periphery*. Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari - Digital Publishing.

Vidal, Jordi 2000. King Lists and Oral Transmission: From History to Memory. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 32: 555–566.

–. 2004. The Sacred Landscape of the Kingdom of Ugarit. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 4: 143–153.

Virroleaud, Charles 1951. Six textes de Ras Shamra provenant de la XIVe campagne (1950). *Syria* 28/3–4: 163–179.

Vita, Juan-Pablo 1999. The Society of Ugarit. In W. G. E. Watson & N. Wyatt (eds), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 455–498.

–. 2009. Hurrian as a Living Language in Ugaritic Society. In: D. B. Fracaroli & G. del Olmo Lete (eds.), *Reconstructing a Distant Past: Ancient Near Eastern Essays in Tribute to Jorge R. Silva Castillo.* Barcelona: Sabadell: 219–231.

–. 2013. Interactions à Ougarit entre textes administratifs, et textes d'un autre genre (lettres, textes juridiques, rituels, étiquettes). In *RSO XXI*: 403–416.

–. 2018. Defining the Corpus of Legal Documents in Ugaritic. *Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 24(1): 125–135.

–. 2019. Remarks on the Chronology and the Overall Total of Administrative Texts from Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 50: 397–418.

–. 2021. Administrative Texts in Ugarit between Tradition and Innovation: Analysis of Two Instanced. In I. Kottsieper & H. Neumann (eds.), *Literaturkontakce Ugarits: Wurzeln und Entfaltungen. Internationale Tagung Münstar, 13.–15. Oktober 2015.* Kasion 5. Münster: Zaphon: 189–198.

Vita, Juan-Pablo & José M. Galán 1997. Šipṭi-Baʿalu, un "égyptien" à Ougarit. *Ugarit Forschungen* 29: 709–713.

Vita, Juan-Pablo & Valérie Matoïan 2019. Textiles in Ritual and Cultic Practices in Ugarit. In S. Gaspa & M. Vigo (eds.), *Textiles in Ritual and Cultic Practices in the Ancient Near East from the Third to the First Millennium BC: Proceedings of an International Workshop in Copenhagen (6th to 7th October 2015)*. AOAT 431. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 99–108.

Walker, Christopher B. F. 1989. Eclipse seen at ancient Ugarit. *Nature* 338: 204–205.

Walker, Christopher B. F. & Michael B. Dick 1999. The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian mīs pî Ritual. In M. B. Dick (ed.), *Born in Heaven Made on Earth: The Making of Cult Image in the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 55–121.

–. 2001. *The induction of the cult image in ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mīs Pî ritual*. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.

Walls, Neal H. 1992. *The Goddess Anat in Ugaritic Myth*. SBL DS 135. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

–. 2005 (ed.). *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research.

Watson, Wilfred G. E. 1990a. Ugaritic Onomastics (1). *Aula Orientalis* 8: 113–127.

–. 1990b. Ugaritic Onomastics (2). *Aula Orientalis* 8: 243–250.

–. 1993. Ugaritic Onomastics (3). *Aula Orientalis* 11: 213–222.

–. 1995. Ugaritic Onomastics (4). *Aula Orientalis* 13: 217–229.

–. 1996. Ugaritic Onomastics (5). *Aula Orientalis* 14: 107–126.

–. 2002. Ugaritic Onomastics (6). *Aula Orientalis* 20: 231–238.

–. 2003a. Ugaritic Onomastics (7). *Aula Orientalis* 21: 243–248.

–.2003b. Daily Life in Ancient Ugarit. In R. Averbeck, M. Chavalas & D. Weisberg (eds.), *Life and Culture in the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda: CDL Press: 121–152.

–. 2007. *Lexical Studies in Ugaritic*. Barcelona: Editorial AUSA.

–. 2012. Ugaritic Onomastics (8). *Aula Orientalis* 30: 323–351.

–. 2016. Ugaritic Onomastics (9). *Aula Orientalis* 34/2: 335–358.

WEIDNER, Ernst F. 1924/1925. Altbabylonische Götterlisten. *Archiv für Keilschriftforschung* 2: 1–18 and 71–82.

WENDE, Janine 2023. Akkadian Emotion Terms. In K. SONIK & U. STEINERT (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Emotions in the Ancient Near East*. London–New York: Routledge: 150–170.

WESTBROOK, Raymond (ed.) 2003. *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Two volumes. HdO 72/1–2. Leiden–Boston: Brill.

WESTENHOLZ, Joan G. 2010. Historical Events and the Process of Their Transformation in Akkadian Heroic Traditions. In D. KONSTAN & K. A. RAAFLAUB (eds.), *Epic and History*. Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell: 26–50.

WHITT, William D. 1993. *Archives and Administration in the Royal Palace of Ugarit*. Ph.D. Thesis. Duke University.

WIGGINS, Steve A. 2020. Gods on the Mind at Ugarit. In A. J. FERRARA & H. B. HUFFMON (eds.), *Some Wine and Honey for Simon: Biblical and Ugaritic Aperitifs in Memory of Simon B. Parker*. Eugene: Pickwick Publications: 65–87.

WILSON-WRIGHT, Aren M. 2016. *Athtart: The Transmission and Transformation of a Goddess in the Late Bronze Age*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

WINTER, Irene J. 1992. 'Idols of the King': Royal Images as Recipients of Ritual Action in Ancient Mesopotamia. *Journal of Ritual Studies* 6/1: 13–42.

WISNOM, Selena 2019. *Weapons of Words: Intertextual Competition in Babylonian Poetry: A Study of Anzû, Enūma Eliš, and Erra and Išum*. CHANE 106. Leiden: Brill.

WYATT, Nicolas 1996. *Myths of Power: A Study of Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugaritic and Biblical Tradition*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

–. 1997. Ilimilku's Ideological Programme: Ugaritic Royal Propaganda, and the Biblical Postscript. *Ugarit Forschungen* 29: 775–796. [reprinted in Wyatt 2005: 133–150]

–. 1999a. Degrees of Divinity: Some Mythical and Ritual Aspects of West Semitic Kingship. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 31: 853–887. [reprinted in Wyatt 2005: 191–220]

–. 1999b. The Story of Aqhat (KTU 1.17–19). In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 234–258.

–. 2000. Just How "Divine" Were the Kings of Ugarit? *Aula Orientalis* 17-18: 133–141.

–. 2002a. Ilimilku the Theologian: The Ideological Roles of Athtar and Baal in KTU 1.1 and 1.6. In O. LORETZ, K. A. METZLER & H. SCHAUDIG (eds.), *Ex Mesopotamia et Syria Lux: Festrschrift*

für Manfried Dietrich zu seinem 65. Geburstag. AOAT 281. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag. [reprinted in Wyatt 2005: 221–230]

–. 2002b. *Religious Texts from Ugarit: The Words of Ilimilku and His Colleagues.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

–. 2005. *'There' such a Divinity doth Hedge a King': Selected essays of Nicolas Wyatt on Royal Ideology in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature.* Aldershot–Burlington: Ashgate.

–. 2007a. The Religious Role of the King in Ugarit. In K. L. YOUNGER JR. (ed.), *Ugarit at Seventy-Five.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 41–74.

–. 2007b. *Word of Tree and Whisper of Stone: And Other Papers on Ugaritian Thought.* Piscataway: Georgias Press.

–. 2015. The Evidence of the Colophons in the Assessment of Ilimilku's Scribal and Authorial Role. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 46: 399–446.

XELLA, Paolo 1999. The Omen Texts. In W.G.E. WATSON & N. WYATT (eds.), *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies.* HdO 39. Leiden: Brill: 353–358.

YON, Marguerite 1984. Sanctuaries d'Ougarit. In G. ROUX (ed.), *Temples et sanctuaires: Séminaire de recherche 1981-1983.* Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et Presses Universitaires de Lyon: 37–50.

–. 1985. Baal et le roi. In J.–L. HUOT, M. YON & Y. CALVET (eds.), *De l'Indus aux Balkans, Recueil à la mémoire de Jean Deshayes.* Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations: 177–190.

–. 1987. Les rhytons du sanctuaire. In *RSO III*: 343–350.

–. 1992a. The End of Kingdom of Ugarit. In W. WARD & M. JOUKOWISKY (eds.), *The Crisis Years: 12th Century B. C. From Beyond the Danube to Tigris.* Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company: 111–122.

–. 1992b. Ugarit: The Urban Habitat: The Present State of the Archaeological Picture. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 286: 19–34.

–. 1996. The Temple of the Rhytons at Ugarit. In N. WYATT, W. G. E. WATSON, & J. B. LLOYD (eds.), *Ugarit, Religion and Culture: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Ugarit, Religion and Culture, Edinburgh, July 1994. Essays Presented in Honour of Professor John C. L. Gibson.* UBL 12. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag: 405–422.

–. 1997. *La cité d'Ougarit, sur le tell de Ras Shamra.* Paris: IFAPO-ERC.

–. 2006. *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra.* Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns.

YON, Marguerite, Pierre LOMBARD & Margo RENISO 1987. L'organisation de l'habitat: les maisons A, B et E. In *RSO III*: 11–128.

ZAMORA, José-Ángel 2000. *La Vid y el Vino en Ugarit.* Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas.

ZEMÁNEK, Petr 2006. Language and State in Ancient Near East: The Case of Ugarit. In P. CHARVÁT, B. LAFONT, J. MYNÁŘOVÁ & L. PECHA (eds.), *L'État, le pouvoir, les prestations et leurs formes en Mésopotamie ancienne: Actes du Colloque assyriologique franco-tchèque. Paris, 7–8 novembre 2002.* Prague: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Filozofická fakulta: 129–136.

de Zorzi, Nicla 2014. *La serie teratomantica šumma izbu: testo, tradizione, orizzonti culturali.* 2 volumes. HANE/M 15. Padova: S.A.R.G.O.N. Editrice e Libreria.

–. 2011. The Omen Series šumma izbu: Internal Structure and Hermeneutic Strategies. *Kaskal* 8: 43–75.

10.4 Online References

Academia.edu. Cunchillos, Jesús-Luis, Juan-Pablo Vita, José-Ángel Zamora & Raquel Cervigón 2003. *A Concordance of Ugaritic Words.* 5 volumes. Piscataway: Gorgias Press.
available at: https://www.academia.edu/500138/A_Concordance_ of_Ugaritic_Words_CUW_all_versions_
accessed 29th August 2023

Academia.edu. Cunchillos, Jesús-Luis, Juan-Pablo Vita, José-Ángel Zamora & Raquel Cervigón 2003. *The Texts of the Ugaritic Data Bank*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press.
available at: https://www.academia.edu/500096/The_texts_of_the_Ugaritic_data_bank_Ugaritic _Data_Bank_The_Text_with_english_commentaries_all_english_versions_
accessed 29th August 2023

Academia.edu. del Olmo Lete, Gregorio 2014. *Photographic Archive: Canaanite Religion: According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit.* Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.
available at: https://www.academia.edu/8708344/Photographic_Archive_Canaanite_Reli gion_second_revised_and_enlarged_English_edition
accessed 29th August 2023

Blender
available at: https://www.blender.org/
accessed 2nd August 2023

DGAM. *The Museum (2020)/Official Trailer/Documentary Film/EN subtitles*
available at: http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2547
accessed 29th April 2020 [the video is no longer available at this address]

DGAM. *The reopening of the National Museum in Aleppo*
available at: http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2524
accessed 29th April 2020 [this reference is no longer available]

Forbes. Smith, Kiona N. 2018. People Recorded a Total Solar Eclipse for the First Time 3,241 Years Ago. *Forbes* 5th March 2018.
available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/kionasmith/2018/03/05/people-recorded-a-total-solar-eclipse-for-the-first-time-3241-years-ago/?sh=2a7008337a55
accessed 21st August 2023

GitHub. *UgariticReligion*
available at: https://github.com/valekfrantisek/UgariticReligion
accessed 30th August 2023

Google Earth
available at: https://earth.google.com/web/
accessed 19th August 2023

Louvre Collections
available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/

accessed 29th August 2023

Louvre Collections. *RS 4.458 = AO 25.162*
available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010149844
accessed 18th August 2023

Louvre Collections. *AE 86865 and 86867*
available at: https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010419229
accessed 4th December 2022

Mapy.cz
available at: https://mapy.cz/
accessed 4th May 2020

Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit. *Les activités de la mission*
available at: https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/la-mission/les-activites-de-la-mission/
accessed 29th April 2020

Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit. *Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit.*
available at: https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/la-mission/historique/
accessed 29th August 2023

Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit. *Vidéos*
available at: https://www.mission-ougarit.fr/medias/videos/
accessed 30th August 2023

NASA. *NASA Atlas of Solar Eclipses*
available at: https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEatlas/SEatlas.html
accessed 21st August 2023

ORACC. *Kassite Seal Inscriptions,*
available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/csik/kassitesealinscriptions/
accessed 23rd June 2023

ORACC. *Near Eastern Royal Epics*
available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nere/corpus/
accessed 30th August 2023

ORACC. *Statue of Idrimi*
available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/aemw/alalakh/idrimi/corpus/
accessed 26th March 2023

ORACC. *Ugarit*
available at: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/aemw/ugarit/corpus
accessed 29th August 2023

RSTI. *Texts with Photos by John "Jay" Ellison*
available at: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/RSTI/photos.html
accessed 29th August 2023

Simulation Curriculum. *SkySafari 6*
available at: https://skysafariastronomy.com/skysafari-6-professional-astronomy-telescope-control-software-for-android.html

accessed 22nd August 2023

Tyndale House, Cambridge. *Robert Marineau*

available at: https://tyndalehouse.com/about/staff/robert-marineau/

accessed 30th August 2023

Universitat de Barcelona. ROWE, Ignacio M. 2013. Personal Seal of King Ammurapi of Ugarit. *AulaOrientalis* 32/1: 221–226.

available   at: https://www.ub.edu/ipoa/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/20132AuOrMarquez.pdf

accessed 30th August 2023

Unreal Engine

available at: https://www.unrealengine.com/en-US

accessed 2nd August 2023

YouTube. *Société et religion à Ougarit (4) - Thomas Römer (2015-2016)*. Recording of Khozama al-Bahloul, New Evidence on Sanctuaries in Ugarit: The Court III of the Building Recently Discovered in the Area of The ″Rempart″.

available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjJZGQ1W_do

accessed 31st August 2023