

THE USE OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT
IN THE NEW AND
OTHER ESSAYS

STUDIES IN HONOR OF
WILLIAM FRANKLIN STINESPRING

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A DIVINE BANQUET AT UGARIT

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Among the Ugaritic texts recovered at Ras Shamra in the twenty-fourth campaign of excavations in 1961 is an especially interesting document, RS 24.258, which deals with a feast given by El, the father of the gods. The gods eat and drink to satiety and inebriation, but El goes beyond this to a state of delirium in which he is confronted by an apparition with horns and tail, is stricken with diarrhea and enuresis, and collapses as in death. There is loss of some lines at the bottom of the obverse of the tablet and again at the top of the reverse, but enough is preserved to suggest that the final concern is with medication to relieve the aftereffects of alcoholic excess.

Preliminary reports¹ on this provocative text were given by the late lamented Charles Virolleaud who for four decades prepared the masterly copies of the alphabetic texts from Ugarit, and by the distinguished excavator of Ras Shamra, C. F. A. Schaeffer. Now that the full text has been published in autograph, transliteration, translation, and with brief commentary by Virolleaud,² others may assay to contribute to the elucidation of this intriguing text. The following notes are a purely provisional attempt to supplement the brief, preliminary observations of Virolleaud. Many obscurities remain.

The text is given here in transliteration with presumed stichom-

1. *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* (1962), pp. 105 ff.; *Comptes Rendus du Groupe Linguistique d'Études Chamito-Sémitiques*, 9 (1962), 41, 51 f.; *Bulletin de la Société Ernest Renan*, extract of *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* (1962), p. 25; "El als Gastgeber," *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 20 (1963), 214.

2. Charles Virolleaud, "Les nouveaux textes mythologiques et liturgiques de Ras Shamra (XXIV^e Campagne, 1961)," in J. Nougayrol, E. Laroche, Charles Virolleaud, and C. F. A. Schaeffer, eds., *Ugaritica V, Mission de Ras Shamra XVI*, Institut Français d'Archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique, vol. 80 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1968), pp. 545-606. RS 24.258 is treated as text 1, pp. 545-51.

The first issue of the annual *Ugarit Forschungen* (1969), included three articles on text 24.258: S. E. Loewenstamm, "Eine lehrhaftige ugaritische Trinkburleske," pp. 71-78; J. C. de Moor, "Studies in the New Alphabetic Texts from Ras Shamra," pp. 167-75; Hans-Peter Rüger, "Zu RS 24.258," pp. 203-6. Unfortunately these studies came too late to be utilized in the present treatment.

etry indicated by the caesuras. The translation is arranged according to the stichometry. The parenthetical numbers in the translation correspond roughly to the beginnings of the lines of the transliterated text so that the reader may quickly correlate the translation and the text. Philological notes and commentary follow the translation.

RS 24.258

OBVERSE

- (1) *il dbh.bbth.mšd. || šd.bqrb*
- (2) *hkl[h]. || šh.lqš.ilm. || tlhmn*
- (3) *ilm.wtštn. || tštn y(n) c d šb c ||*
- (4) *trt.c.d.skr. || y c db.yrḫ*
- (5) *gbh. || km [. . .] yqtqt.tht*
- (6) *ilhnt || il.dyd c nn*
- (7) *y c db.lhm.lh. || wdlyd c nn*
d mšd
- (8) *ylmn.hḫm.tht.ilhn ||*
bqr c
- (9) *c trt.w c nt.ymg y ||*
- (10) *c trt.t c db.nšb.lh ||*
- (11) *w c nt.ktp. || bhm.yg c r.tḡr*
- (12) *bt.il. || h!n lm! k!lb t c dbn*
- (13) *nšb. || linr t c dbn ktp ||*
- (14) *b il abh.g c r. || ytb.il.[b(?)]*
- (15) *at[rh] || il.ytb.bmrzḫh ||*
- (16) *yšt[il y]n.c d šb c. || trt.c d skr ||*
- (17) *il.hlk.lbth. || yštql.*
- (18) *lhḫrh. || y c msn.nn.ḫkmn*
- (19) *w šnm. || wngšnn.hby. ||*
- (20) *b c l.qrnm w qnb. || ylsn*
- (21) *b hrih.w tnth. || ql.il.*
- (22) *il.k yrdm.arš. || c nt*
- (23) *w c trt.tšdn. ||*

. . . b
.

REVERSE

-
- (1) ^ct]trt w^cnt[
 (2) w(?)bhm.ttb[]dh[?]
 (3) kmtrpa.h / in n^cr
-
- (4) d yst.llsbh h^cr klb
 (5) [w] ris.pqq.w šrh
 (6) yst.ahdh.dm zt.hrpnt

TRANSLATION

OBVERSE

- I (1) El offered game in his house,
 II Venison in the midst (2) of his palace.
 III He invited the gods to mess.
 IV (3) The gods ate and drank,
 V Drank wine till sated,
 VI (4) Must till inebriated.
 VII He prepared and mixed (5) his *tripe*(?).
 VIII Like [] they tapped under (6) the tables.
 IX The god who knew (7) prepared food (venison)
 for him;
 X He who knew not (8) knocked with staff under
 the table (on the ground).
 XI (9) ^cAstart and ^cAnat arrived.
 XII (10) ^cAstart prepared a *brisket* for him,
 XIII (11) And ^cAnat a shoulder.
 XIV The porter of (12) El's house chided them:
 XV "Lo, for the dog prepare (13) a *brisket*,
 XVI For the cur prepare a shoulder."
 XVII (14) El his father he chided.
 XVIII El sat [in] (15) [his pl]ace.
 XIX El sat in his *mrzh*
 XX (16) [El] drank [wi]ne till sated,
 XXI Must till inebriated.
 XXII (17) El went to his house,

- XXIII Descended (18) to his court.
 XXIV Tkmn(19)-w-Šnm carried him.
 XXV There accosted him a *creeper*
 XXVI (20) With two horns and a tail.
 XXVII He floundered (21) in his excrement and urine.
 XXVIII El collapsed, (22) El like those who descend into
 Earth.
 XXIX ^cAnat (23) and ^cAstart went roaming.
 XXX
 XXXI

REVERSE

-
- XXXII (1) [^cAš]tart and ^cAnat []
 XXXIII (2) And with them they brought back []
 XXXIV (3) As one healed, lo, a lad(?)
 XXXV no dysentery(?)
-
- XXXVI (4) [] one puts to his gullet h^cr
 XXXVII (5) So that heart and head recover (?)
 klb and pqq tops (?)
 XXXVIII (6) Let one administer (it) together with green olive
 juice.

Line 1

Virolleaud observes that since the subject of the verb *dbh*, "sacrifice," is a deity, it can only be translated as the offering of a banquet or feast. In amplification of this appropriate comment, it should be noted that the noun *dbh* is applied to a divine banquet in which some sort of obscene conduct by the female servants so scandalized Baal that he rose and spat in the midst of the assembled gods, saying:

Two banquets Baal hates,
 Three the Cloud Rider:
 A banquet of shame,

A banquet of baseness,
 And a banquet of maidservants' lewdness;
 For therein shame is seen,
 And therein is maidservants' lewdness.³

Just what the divine serving wenches did that so disgusted Baal we are not told. The terms, however, with which Baal characterized the offensive feasts suggest sexual license and are reminiscent of the biblical strictures against the Israelites' lapses into orgiastic pagan rites. In the present text, however, in spite of the drunkenness, there is, unless we miss the meanings of some of the words, no suggestion of sexual activity, apart from the suggestion below with respect to the role of the dog in the festivities.

Anthropologists have long appreciated that a fundamental aspect of the idea of sacrifice is communion with the divine through a sacramental meal. That the meals of the gods are also termed sacrifices reflects the ancient notion that man can and should supply the gods with food and share it with them. The application of the term *sacrifice* to the Christian Eucharist, first attested in the Didaché (14:2-3), was not merely a development from Paul's concept of spiritual sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), but had a very ancient background in pre-Israelite paganism, as illustrated by the Ugaritic use of the term with reference to the gods' eating and drinking among themselves.

Line II

The stichometry of the first bicolon is uncertain. Virolleaud placed the caesura between the words *mšd* and *šd*, construing both as nouns: "(Le Dieu) Il offre dans sa maison un *mšd*, un *šd* dans l'enceinte (2) de son palais." Since there are elsewhere in the Ugaritic mythological texts several bicola that end with the parallel "in his house" || "in the midst of his palace," it might seem preferable to divide the lines thus. Such a division, however, would

3. From the Ugaritic text see A. Herdner, *Corpus des Tablettes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques: Découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1963), text No. 4, Col. III, lines 17-22; hereafter cited as *CTCA*. On the argument for citing the texts according to *CTCA*, cf. M. Pope, "Marginalia to M. Dahood's *Ugaritic-Hebrew Philology*," *JBL*, 85 (1966), 455.

require that *šd* be construed as a verb parallel to *dbḥ* and with the cognate noun *mšd* as its object. The requisite meaning "provide," "supply," or the like, could be supported by the reflexive form *hištayyadnū*, "we provided | supplied ourselves" (Josh. 9:12). This sense, however, is not otherwise attested for the verb in Ugaritic or Akkadian where the word occurs frequently as a verb of motion, "prowl," "roam," "hunt." Accordingly, we follow Virolleaud's stichometry and construe *šd* as a noun. Even if this is mistaken, it does not change the sense of the line in any significant degree.

Although Virolleaud did not translate the words *mšd* and *šd*, he noted in his commentary the parallelism of *mšd* and *dbḥ* in the Keret Epic⁴ and the glossing of the word *lhm*, "food," by *mšd* in line 7, of the present text. The food in question, as Virolleaud noted, is the product of the hunt, "game," or "venison." The savory quality of wild game or venison is emphasized in the story of the patriarch Isaac's partiality to this delicacy (cf. Gen. 27:4, 9, 14). The Aramaic cognate *šdnāṭā*⁵ is applied in rabbinic usage to the tasty dish served to mourners as the funeral meal. This dish was considered so delectable that any opportunity to eat it was seized. It is reported (BT, Šabbat 136a) that Rabbi Dimi ben Joseph had a child who died within thirty days of birth and when he sat and mourned for it—which was not obligatory—his father said, "Do you wish to eat *šdnāṭā*?" Similarly (BT, Moed Qatan 20b) when Mar Uqba's father-in-law's son died, he thought of sitting seven [days of mourning] for him and [continuing to] thirty days, but Rabbi Huna went to his house and found him [in formal mourning]. "Do you desire," he said, "to eat *šdnāṭā*?" (The reading of *r* for *d* by Jastrow⁵ who proposes to connect the word with *šawwā*⁶ *r*, "throat," in the sense of [throat tickling] dainties, is mistaken. The connection with game or venison gives the taste.) The mess of pottage which Jacob prepared and for which Esau traded his birthright (Gen. 25:29), according to the Midrash Rabbah,⁶ was a mourning meal to comfort Isaac at the death of Abraham.

4. *CTCA*, 17, 78-79, IV, 170-71.

5. Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi, Midrashic Literature and Targumin* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903) 2: 1265b.

6. Soncino ed. LXIII 11, p. 566.

Line III

The third colon *šh lqš ilm* Virolleaud rendered "Il crie pour réveiller les dieux," connecting *qš* with Hebrew *q(y)š*. A broken line in the ^cAnat Text⁷ *gm šh lq[. . .]* appears to be nearly identical with the present line and Gordon⁸ accepts the sense suggested by Virolleaud, "aloud he shouts to wake up the gods." The gods of Ugarit regularly shout even in ordinary conversation and there is no intimation that they are given to somnolence or need to be aroused to eat and drink. Moreover, *qš* cannot be connected with either of the Hebrew roots *q(y)š* or *yqš* meaning "to wake" since the original sibilant in both instances is *z* which is distinguished in Ugaritic orthography. The *š* of *qš* may represent either original *š* or *ḡ*, but not *z*. The several occurrences of *qš* in Ugaritic appear to be related to the root *qšš*, "cut." The word occurs at least three times in the cliché descriptive of divine feasting, *bḥrb mlḥt qš mri*, in which it is manifestly a noun in construct relation with *mri* which is in the genitive case. Yasin⁹ related the word to Arabic *qašš* which designates a cut of meat, the breast or outer front part of the thorax. This fits beautifully the parallelism with *td*, "breast," in the ^cAnat Text:¹⁰

ybrd td lḥnwḥ, He proffered a breast before him,
bḥrb mlḥt qš mri, with sharp(?) knife a cutlet of fatling.

But in other instances¹¹ *td* is not in parallelism with *qš* but a component of the term "breast suckers," *mrḡtm td*, a designation of the gods,

tlhm tšty ilm The gods ate and drank,
wtpq mrḡtm td Supplied were the breast suckers,
bḥrb mlḥt qš mri With sharp knife a cutlet of fatling.
tšty krḥnm yn They drank from the jars wine,
bks ḥrš dm ḥšm From cups of gold blood of the vine.

7. CTCA, 1 IV, 2.

8. C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, Analecta Orientalia, no. 38 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), 19.2162, p. 474 a. Cited hereafter as *UT*.

9. Izz-al-Din Al-Yasin, *The Lexical Relation Between Ugaritic and Arabic*, Shelton Semitic Monograph Series, vol. 1 (New York: Shelton College, 1952), p. 69, No. 543.

10. CTCA, 3 I 6-8.

11. CTCA, 4 III 40-45, VI 55-59.

It is not clear whether *qš* in the present line *šh lqš ilm* is to be construed as a verb or a noun. Taken as an infinitive, it would mean "to partake" (of a meal), or the like; as a noun it would be a technical term for a sacril or ritual meal. The rendering "to mess" is intended to reflect the ambiguity of the original.

The consonants *qš* have interesting connections with ritual meals in other Semitic dialects. In Syriac the final weak root *qēšā* is used of the breaking of bread, especially in the celebration of the Christian Eucharist, or Holy Communion (cf. the Peshitta of Isa. 58:7, Jer. 16:7, Luke 24:35, Acts 2:46, I Cor. 11:24). The rare use of the geminated root *qšš* in this connection is presumed to be an error, but one may wonder whether this is actually the case. Syriac *qēšāšā* may be related to the identical form in rabbinic terminology which designates a sort of ritual meal. The rabbinic ruling that a child may be believed who testifies that he ate at someone's *qēšāšā* (BT, Ketubot 28b) called for elucidation of the obsolete term. If a man sold a field, it was explained, his relatives brought vessels and filled them with parched grain and nuts and broke them before the children who collected the tidbits and said: "So and So is cut off from his possession." If, however, the man took back his possession, the same procedure was repeated and the children cried, "So and So has taken back his possession." The same was done in the case of a man who took a wife whom his relatives regarded as unworthy. The children gathered the goodies and said, "So and So is cut off from his family." If later the man forsook the objectionable wife, the ceremony was repeated and the children said, "So and So has returned to his family." The breaking of the vessel full of sweetmeats for the children is strikingly similar to the Mexican custom of breaking the piñata. In Syriac the (pointed) end of a storage jar is termed *qeš*. In the rabbinic illustrations of *qēšāšā* there is intentional play on *qšš*, "cut," as a severing of relations, *niqšaš pēlōnī*, "So and So is cut off." This, however, cannot be the proper sense of the term since the same procedure is used for the restoration of the one who was cut off. Thus, *qēšāšā*, in spite of the rabbinic explanation, appears to be a designation of a ceremonial meal for occasions both sad and joyful. The term applies to the meal and not simply to the special treat for the children who were allowed to participate and who later

may be believed if they testify, "We ate at the *qēšāsā* | *qēšīšā* of So and So."

Lines IV–VI

The gods of Ugarit eat and drink at every opportunity, in accordance with ancient oriental hospitality, but it is not elsewhere explicitly stated that they indulge to the point of inebriation. This must be an extraordinary occasion reflecting a human affair in which it was deemed proper or obligatory to drink to excess. Mourning was such an occasion which allowed for the submerging of sorrow in wine. Ten cups were allowed by the rabbis to be drunk in the house of mourning. Four extra cups were added as toasts to various notables, the religious and civic leaders, and one in honor of Rabban Gamaliel. But when the religious authorities observed that some became intoxicated, the rule was restored to the original ten cups (BT, *Ketubot* 8b; *Soṭah* 14a). At the festival of Purim it was permissible to drink until one could not tell the difference between accursed Haman and blessed Mordecai (BT, *Megillah* 7b). The orgiastic character of pagan rites to which the Israelites were not infrequently seduced is attested by the prophetic protests.

Line VI

Whether the word *trt*, OT *ṭrōš*, is related to Hittite *tuwarsā*, "vine," is uncertain. The derivation commonly proposed, from the root **yrt*, is enhanced by the word play in Mic. 6:15:

You will tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil;
You will tread (*ṭrōš*), but not drink wine.

The Jerusalem Targum to Deut. 29:5 renders the Hebrew *šēkār* with *mēraṭ* which presumably is merely another nominal pattern from *yrt* with the same meaning as Hebrew *ṭrōš*. The form *mrt* is now attested in Ugaritic and Gordon's definition¹² as "perhaps a wine product" seems overcautious since it is associated with wine and is potable as indicated by a line in an epistle to the Queen Mother which refers to *mrt.d.štt*, "the *mrt* which I | thou

12. *UT*, 19. 1558.

did | st drink." The rendering "must," rather than the traditional "new wine," is chosen purely on poetic grounds since a single word for a parallel to "wine" is hard to find. It is clear from the Ugaritic use and from the OT (e. g., Hos. 4:11) that the stuff was intoxicating, as was Old English *must*:

Butt thei are drounken, all thes menze,
Of *muste* or wyne, I wolle warande¹³

Line VII

Virolleaud did not translate *yrt gb*, but in his notes suggested *mois complet* as perhaps the name of the festival the beginning of which is marked by this feast. The word *gb*, as Virolleaud noted, occurs in a fragment of the ^cAnat Text,¹⁴ but the context is broken and what is intelligible gives no hint that a feast is in progress. Gordon¹⁵ took *yrt* as the name of the lunar deity Yarih, "(II) makes Y. his Gb." Although the sense of the line is uncertain, we incline to take *yrt* as a verb coordinate with *y^cdb*. The few Semitic roots with the consonants *rh*, Arabic *wariḥ* and *raḥḥ*, Akkadian *reḥū*, are related to moisture and liquids and this seems appropriate for the object *gb* which in Akkadian designates a moist or semi-liquid part of human and animal bodies. Passages from neo-Babylonian texts indicate that the *gabbu* of cattle or sheep was an edible internal part.¹⁶

The drinking of juices from the body of a deceased relative or friend is an ancient and widespread custom¹⁷ and appears to be attested also at Ugarit. In a brief mythological vignette inscribed on the back of a lexical text, the goddess ^cAnat is depicted as consuming the flesh and blood of her brother-consort (Baal) without benefit of knife or cup, because he was beautiful.

13. Cf. *Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia* (New York: Century Co., 1897), 6: 3911, s.v. "must 2."

14. *CTCA*, 1 V 13; cf. *UT*, 19. 548a.

15. *UT*, 19. 1151.

16. Cf. A. L. Oppenheim, ed., *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1956), 5: 5b, s.v. *qabbu* B. Cited hereafter as *CAD*.

17. Cf. James Hastings, John A. Selbie, et al., eds., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, 13 vols. (New York: Scribner's, 1910–27), vol. 5, s.v. "Drinks, Drinking," p. 79b (cited hereafter as *ERE*).

ʿAnat went mad (at) the beauty of her brother,
 And (at) the handsomeness of her brother, for he was fair.
 She ate his flesh without a knife,
 She drank his blood without a cup.¹⁸

We are not told whether her handsome "brother" was dead or alive when she consumed his flesh and blood, but it seems probable that he was presumed dead and that ʿAnat's act was a mourning rite.

Line VIII

The missing word after the comparative particle *k* (with enclitic emphatic *-m*) was, presumably, the noun to which the comparison applied. If the item compared were preserved, we might more easily divine the meaning of the verb *yqtqt* which Virolleaud rendered conjecturally "il cache(?)," but in his comments suggested comparison with Arabic *qatta*, "draw, pull toward oneself." In Syriac *qtt* in the simple stem means "to remain fixed, stuck, motionless" and one might think that the inebriated gods were stiff under the table, but the clue to the meaning of *yqtqt* is supplied by line 8, *ylmn htm tht tlhn*, "he | they knocked with staff under the table." Taking the cue from *hlm*, "beat, strike," *yqtqt* could be related to Mishnaic and Talmudic *qisqēs*, "knock, strike, clap," or the like, which is used of various beating or striking operations such as ringing a bell, kneading dough, plumping one's feet into the water, slapping a person, hoeing the ground, and in the reflexive stem it is applied to the rattling of a nut in the shell, liquid shaken in a bottle, the brain in the skull, or the motion of breasts.

The correlation of lines 5, 6, and 7, 8, suggests a striking explanation of the action under the tables which interpretation is enhanced and confirmed by the gloss of line 9 no matter whether one reads *bqr*. "against the wall" (taking the final wedge as the word divider), or *bqr^c* (taking the wedge as representing the consonant ʿayin). With the reading *bqr^c* one could appeal to *qr^c* used for rending the garments in mourning, or to the Arabic noun *qar^c*

18. For the text and differing interpretations, cf. M. Astour, *Hellenosemitica* (1965), p. 180; E. Lipinski, *Syria*, 42 (1965), pp. 45-73. Cf. W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (London: Athlone Press, 1968), pp. 131 f., and Arvid S. Kapelrud, *The Violent Goddess* (1969), p. 44.

used for knocking or rapping and also meaning "bottom" or "ground." Beating on the ground, or on floors and walls is a common practice in death rites, usually explained as a means of driving away ghosts. The Russian Lapps, for example, beat on the walls with branches after a death and some New Guinea tribes beat on the floor, throw sticks against the wall, or knock on the wall with loud shouts supposedly to drive away the ghosts.¹⁹

Beating on the ground may also be a fertility rite. In the Eleusinian mysteries, according to Pausanias (VIII 15.3), the priest donned a mask of Demeter Cidaria and beat with rods those underground (*τοὺς ὑποχθονίους*) for reasons unknown to Pausanias. J. G. Frazer²⁰ compares this with a ritual of the Guarayos of Bolivia who beat the ground with bamboo and pray for genial rains and plentiful crops and with the ritual beating of the ground with willow-withs and palm branches during the Jewish festival of Sukkot (cf. Mishnah Sukkah III.9 and especially IV.6, "they used to bring in palm branches and beat them on the ground beside the altar, and that day was called 'the Day of the Beating of Branches'"). The prayers for rain and the water-pouring rites of the festival Sukkot suggest that the beating on the ground (*qarqa^c*) was also intended to produce rain.

Line IX

It is not clear whether *il* is bound to the preceding word *tlhnt*, "tables," or is the subject of the verb which follows. In either case, it appears that *il* is here the appellation "god" rather than the proper name of the chief god. If the word is connected with *tlhnt*, it may be taken as superlative. We incline to Virolleaud's interpretation, "Le dieu qui sait prepare un mets de gibier pour lui," except that *dmšd*, written in smaller characters below the line is taken as an explanatory gloss to *lhm*. If *il* is taken as the proper name, it seems necessary to take it as a *casus pendens*, "As for El, etc." The fact that El holds the affair in his house and invites the gods to partake does not militate against the likelihood that he is

19. Uno Holmberg, *Finno-Ugric, Siberian Mythology, Mythology of All Races* (Boston: Archaeological Institute of America, Marshal Jones Co., 1927), 4: 23; J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1927), 3: 168, 170.

20. Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (New York: Macmillan, 1898), 7: 239.

also the central figure for whom the meal of savory venison is prepared. As in Jewish mourning the consolation meal, *šē'ūdat habbērā'āh*, is prepared for the mourner by a neighbor, so here one or more of the gods who had skill prepared the meal while the unskilled beat with staff on the wall or ground.

Lines XI–XIII

The goddesses ʿAštart and ʿAnat come and prepare special cuts of meat for “him,” presumably for El since there is no other antecedent for the singular pronoun. The word *nšb* which stands here in parallelism with *ktp*, “shoulder,” designates some sort of edible meat, presumably a choice cut. It occurs in a list of cuts of beef, geese and goose grease(?).²¹ No etymology or cognate is immediately apparent and the rendering “brisket” is conjectural. Arabic *nasf* in the sense of morsel or bite is a remote possibility as a cognate.

Line XIV

The expression *gʿr b-*, “cry out against,” “rebuke,” is identical with the Hebrew usage, as in Gen. 37:10 and Jer. 29:27. The masculine pronominal suffix *-hm* leaves us in doubt whether its antecedent is the two goddesses who have just arrived or the whole divine company. In line 14 we see that the rebuke also applied to Father El and this may explain the gender of the suffix pronoun which could refer to the two goddesses and to Father El, as well as to the other gods in the company.

Line XV

Virolleaud’s copy and reading, *pn.lmgr lb*, presented considerable difficulty. Akkadian *migr libbi*, “satisfaction of heart,” offers a variety of meanings, such as “obedience,” “free will,” and “propriety.” The latter sense would be suitable here, “Look to propriety.” The porter of El’s house would thus rebuke the goddesses for impropriety in neglecting to provide for the dog the same cuts

21. Cf. *UT* text 1128 line 18 and the glossary, *UT*, 19. 1710.

of meat prepared for their father. Instead of the dubious *mgr lb* one would expect the common Semitic term for dog in view of the occurrence of another word for dog in the following parallel line. The non-Semitic word *inr* (line 13) occurs three times in the Keret Epic (*UT* 125:2–3, 15–17, 100–1) in parallelism with the common Semitic term for dog, *kalb*. It occurred to the writer that the parallelism in the present passage also calls for similar apposition, *klb* || *inr*, but it did not occur to him to question Virolleaud’s copy. The solution was offered by Delbert R. Hillers²² who pointed out that Virolleaud had apparently mistaken similar signs and that instead of *pn.lmgr lb* the reading should be *hn.lm klb*. Perfect parallelism is thus restored:

Lo, for the dog you should prepare a *brisket*,
For the cur you should prepare a shoulder.

Line XVI

The dog was generally despised as a scavenger, and as impudent in sexual activity. C. H. Gordon’s assertion²³ that dogs were especially favored at Ugarit and even allowed in the palace, as in the Homeric world, cannot be supported by the *Krt* text where the barking dog is mentioned along with other boisterous beasts that disturb men’s morning sleep, the neighing stallion, the braying ass, and the lowing ox, and there is no indication that any of these were palace pets. The dog as a companion of young Tobias (*Tob.* 5:17; 11:4) has been assumed to be a foreign feature, but it is likely that the dog was appreciated for its friendly qualities and loyalty, in spite of its lack of modesty and fastidiousness.

Dogs figure in cultic symbolism in many cultures. Among the Hittites the dog had an important role in religious rites²⁴ and in the Vedas (*Rig Veda* X.xiv 10–12; *Atharva Veda* viii 1, 9) dogs guarded the entrance to the other world. In Persia the dog was thought to guard the Chinvat Bridge over which the dead had to pass. In Parsee funerary rites the corpse is exposed to the dog gaze

22. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 198 (Apr., 1970), 46.

23. C. H. Gordon, *Before the Bible* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 140.

24. Cf. Friedrich Blome, *Die Opfermaterie in Babylonien und Israel* (Rome: Apud Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1934), 1: 125.

(*sagdīd*). A “four-eyed” dog, one with spots resembling an extra set of eyes, is brought near the corpse to frighten away the corpse-demon with his gaze. In Yezd the ordinary street dog is used and morsels of food are strewn around the body, or in older usage placed on the corpse’s bosom, for the dog.²⁵ There are rabbinic references to food for dogs at weddings and funerals (cf. BT, Moed Qatan 28a, Erubin 81a, Midrash Lev. Rabbah xxviii 6) and a particularly provocative story about dogs at David’s death. According to Midrash Rabbah Qohelet V. 10, David died on a sabbath and was left lying in the sun with hungry dogs nearby while Solomon inquired of the scholars at the House of Study what he should do. He was instructed to cut up the carcass of an animal and place it before the dogs and set a loaf of bread or a child upon his father and then the body could be moved. The devious logic of this stratagem, presumably, was that it would be permissible to move the child (or the loaf?) and along with it the corpse. But how could the cutting of the carcass of an animal be condoned on the Sabbath? It may be that we have in this story the echo of a rite older and more urgent than Sabbath taboos. The matter of a choice cut of meat for the dog was of sufficient import to embolden the divine porter in the Ugaritic text under consideration to rebuke the great goddesses and even the head of the pantheon. In the story of David’s demise it may be that the Sabbath motif was introduced to supply a rationale for the custom of placing food on or near the corpse and giving the dog(s) choice cuts of meat.

The role of the dog in the divine banquet may be illuminated by a usage attributed to early Christians in their love-feasts. I am indebted to my colleague, Dr. Ian Siggins, who called my attention to the following item.

Tertullian in his *Apology* (chapters 7 and 8) mentions the accusations against the Christians that in their reprobate feasts they murdered and ate babies and after the repast engaged in adulterous and incestuous orgies. Dogs, “the pimps of darkness,” allegedly procured license for their impious lusts by putting out the lights in a manner which is of particular interest in connection with the

present passage. In ridiculing the idea that Christians could do such things, Tertullian gives further details of the alleged proceedings: “Yet, I suppose, it is customary for those who wish to be initiated to approach first the father of the sacred rites to arrange what must be prepared.” Then he says, “Now, you need a baby, still tender, one who does not know what death means, and one who will smile under your knife. You need bread, too, with which to gather up his juicy blood; besides that, candlesticks, lamps, some dogs and bits of meat which will draw them on to overturn the lamps. Most important of all, you must come with your mother and sister.” As a reward for such crimes, the Christians allegedly promised eternal life and Tertullian retorted: “For the time being, believe it! On this point I have a question to ask: If you believed it, would you consider the acquisition of eternal life worth attaining with such a [troubled] conscience? Come, bury your sword in this baby, enemy though he be of no one, guilty of no crime, everybody’s son; or, if that is the other fellow’s job, stand here beside this [bit of] humanity dying before he has lived; wait for the young soul to take flight; receive his fresh blood; saturate your bread with it; partake freely! Meanwhile, as you recline at table, note the place where your mother is, and your sister; note it carefully, so that, when the dogs cause darkness to fall, you may make no mistake—for you will be guilty of a crime unless you commit incest.”²⁶

Marcus Minucius Felix (*Octavius*, chap. 9) tells us more about the alleged initiation of Christian novices, stories as detestable as they were notorious. “An infant covered with a dough crust to deceive the unsuspecting is placed beside the person to be initiated into the sacred rites. This infant is killed at the hands of the novice by wounds inflicted unintentionally and hidden from his eyes, since he has been urged on as if to harmless blows upon the surface of the dough. The infant’s blood—oh, horrible—they sip up eagerly; its limbs they tear to pieces, trying to outdo each other; by this victim they are leagued together; by being privy to this crime they pledge themselves to mutual silence. These sacred rites are more shocking than any sacrilege.”

25. Cf. *ERE*, 1: 512a, 4: 502a, 6: 738b; Jivani Jamshedji Modi, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, 2nd ed. (Bombay: J. B. Karani’s Sons, 1937), pp. 56–58.

26. Tertullian, *Apology*, trans. Sister Emily Joseph Daly, in *The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation* (New York, 1950), 10: 25–29.

Minucius Felix continues: "On the appointed day, they assemble for their banquets with all their children, sisters, and mothers—people of both sexes and every age. After many sumptuous dishes, when the company at table has grown warm and the passion of incestuous lust has been fired by drunkenness, a dog which has been tied to a lamp stand is tempted by throwing a morsel beyond the length of the leash by which it is bound. It makes a dash, and jumps for the catch. Thus, when the witnessing light has been overturned and extinguished, in the ensuing darkness which favors shamelessness, they unite in whatever revoltingly lustful embraces the hazard of chance will permit. Thus, they are all equally guilty of incest, if not in deed, yet by privity, since whatever can happen in the actions of individuals is sought for by the general desire of all."²⁷

The testimony of Tertullian and Minucius Felix regarding the use of dogs in the incestuous orgies which were alleged to take place in Christian love-feasts is of considerable interest for our present text, particularly in view of the association of dogs with sacral sexual rites and funeral feasts in glyptic art of the Near East. From the Early Dynastic III period of Mesopotamia (ca. 2500 B.C.), we have a representation (fig. 1) of sexual rites showing a copulating pair on a couch and under the couch is a dog. Behind the dog is some object difficult to identify. At the foot of the couch is another couple standing back to front, the forward figure (presumably female) extends the hand backwards grasping the prodigiously long and slender phallus of the figure behind her. It looks as if the member is needle pointed and extends the width of the female's hips on her right side. This could, however, be a matter of crude perspective and the intent may have been to show the female as assisting intromission, as in a plainer representation of a scene in which the female reaches back and similarly grasps or guides the inserted member. The present scene has been characterized as a ritual marriage,²⁸ but the involvement of more

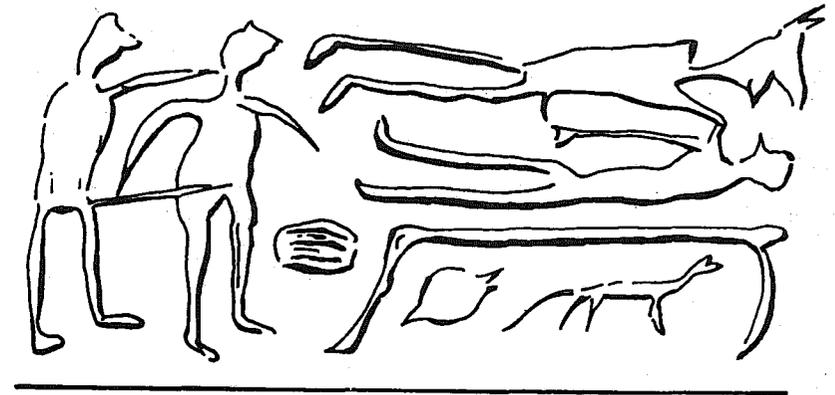


Fig. 1. Dog in Early Mesopotamian "sacred marriage" scene; after P. Amiet, *La glyptique mesopotamienne archaïque*, pl. 91, no. 1202. Cf. n. 28.

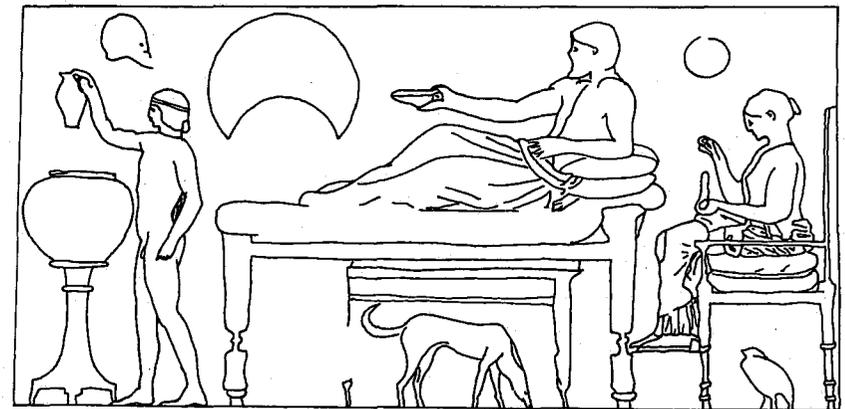


Fig. 2. Anatolian tomb relief; cf. n. 29.

27. Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, trans. Rudolph Arbesmann, in *Fathers of the Church*, 10: 337-38.

28. Cf. Henri Frankfort, *Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region*, University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications, vol. 72 (Chicago, 1955), pp. 34, 38, and pl. 34, no. 340. The dog, according to Frankfort, refers to Gula, as the scorpion under the couch in No. 559 refers to Ishara. "Both are aspects of that great goddess of fertility whose union with a male god, consummated at the New Year's festival, insured the

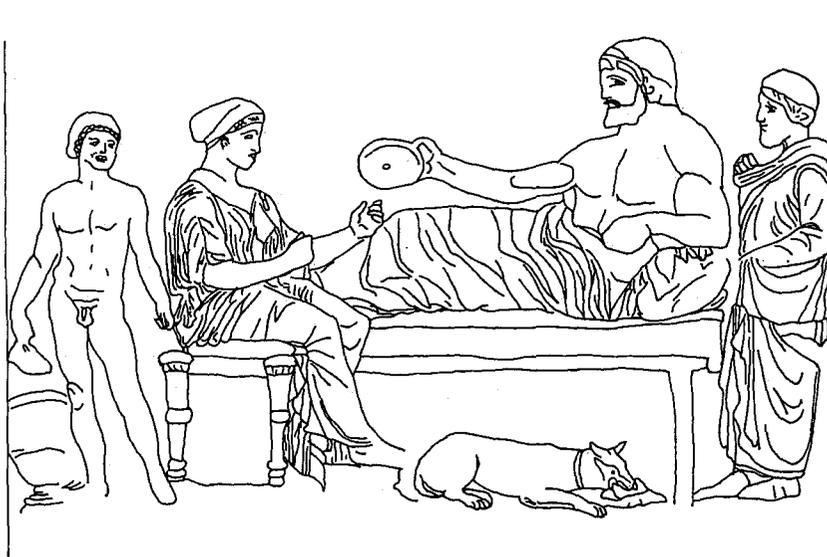


Fig. 3. Funerary relief from Piraeus; cf. n. 30.

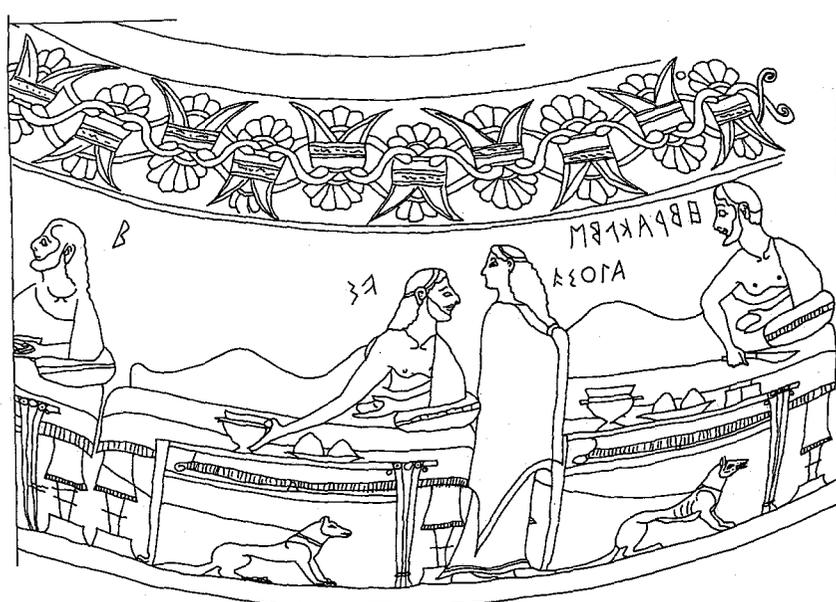


Fig. 4. Early Corinthian crater; cf. n. 31.

than a single pair suggests a communal affair. A canine beneath the couch is commonplace in funerary sculptures. A marble relief (fig. 2) from Thasos dating to the middle of the fifth century B.C., shows under the drinker's couch a dog standing with muzzle to the ground as if eating.²⁹ Another fifth-century B.C. funerary relief (fig. 3) from Piraeus shows the dog reclining under the couch and gnawing at a hefty hunk of meat.³⁰ An early Corinthian crater (fig. 4) exhibits underneath the drinkers' couches dogs leashed to the couch legs.³¹ Tertullian's explanation of the bizarre function of the dogs as the "pimps of darkness" at orgiastic love feasts taxes our credulity, since the mode of extinguishing the lights, apart from the fire hazard, rivals the ingenuity of a Rube Goldberg. Nevertheless, textual evidence coupled with the representations in art indicate that the dog played an important role in such celebrations calling for pieces of meat, either as provocation, pacification, or reward. It is possible that more than one purpose was served by the cur. At any rate, the dog continued to appear on funeral reliefs down to late antiquity, as on the urn of Iulia Eleutheris in the Thermen Museum in Rome which depicts the mourners around the body carrying on the *conclamatio mortis* while beneath the bier reposes the persistent canine.³² The association of the dog with sacral sexual rites and funeral feasts attested over a wide area of the Near East for more than two millennia presents a fascinating problem that calls for further investigation which cannot be undertaken here.

Line XVIII

Virolleaud restored at the beginning of line 15 *at[rt]* and rendered "(Alors) le Dieu s'assied . . . à côté de (15) Aše[rat]." RS 24.252, line 2 *yṯb il b'ttrt* appears to favor Virolleaud's restoration, but see

prosperity of the community; for the fertility of nature depended upon this act" (p. 38). Frankfort, however, admits in advance the possibility that the two figures on the couch in Nos. 340 and 559 represent humans and that no ritual significance attaches to the scene.

29. Cf. Ekrem Akurgal, *Die Kunst Anatoliens* (Berlin: deGruyter, 1961), pp. 272 f., fig. 240.

30. E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), vol. 11, fig. 224.

31. Humfry Payne, *Necrocorinthia, A Study of Corinthian Art in the Archaic Period* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1931), p. 302, pl. 27, no. 780.

32. Cf. A. C. Rush, *Death and Burial in Christian Antiquity* (Ph.D. Diss., The Catholic University of America, 1941), pl. III and pp. 108 f.

the suggestion of B. Margulis.³³ In the present passage, however, the broken word stands in parallelism with *bmrzḥh*, "in his *marzḥh*" which suggests that the restoration might be *baṭrh*, "in his place / shrine." There is no objection to El sitting with his sometime consort and mother of his numerous progeny, but she is not mentioned elsewhere in the text and the parallelism suggests a place rather than a person. Further ground for the restoration of *aṭrh* rather than *aṭrt* is given in the comments on the next line of our text, in connection with the use of *aṭr* in the Rephaim Texts.

Line XIX

The word *marzēah*³⁴ occurs twice in the OT, in Amos 6:7 and Jer. 16:5. The RSV renderings, "revelry" in one instance and "mourning" in the other, suit the respective contexts but reflect the long standing puzzlement as to the precise meaning of the term. The Septuagint in Jer. 16:5 rendered *marzēah* as *θλασος*, i. e. a company assembled to celebrate a festival in honor of a deity. Rabbinic references connect the term with the funeral feast which was often characterized by excessive drinking (see comment on lines IV–VI above) and also with pagan sexual orgies, particularly the Israelite apostasy to Baal Peor when the people began to whore with Moabite girls who invited them to the sacrifices of their gods and the people ate and worshiped their gods (Num. 25:1–2) with sacral sexual intercourse (Num. 2, 5:6–8). The Sifre (Num. 131) identified these banquets or sacrifices as *marzēhām* and Midrashic comment further relates the *marzēah* to the Mayumas festivals (cf. Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 5:3, Numbers Rabbah 10:3, 7); the latter reference informs us that wife-swapping characterized the festivals and that each tribe had its own celebration. Mayumas festivals, we know from Greek and Roman sources, were observed along the Mediterranean, especially in port cities like Alexandria, Gaza, Ashkelon and Antioch, with such licentiousness that Roman

33. "A Ugaritic Psalm (RŠ 24.2525)," *JBL*, 89 (1970), 293 f.

34. Several scholars have recently discussed the term in considerable detail. Cf. Y. Kutscher, *Words and their Histories* (in Hebrew) 1965, pp. 167–71; Otto Eissfeldt, "Etymologische und archäologische Erklärung alttestamentlicher Wörter," *Oriens Antiquus* 5 (1966), 167–71; "Kultvereine in Ugarit," *Ugaritica VI* (Paris, 1969), pp. 187–95.

rulers felt constrained to ban them. Rabbi Hanan apparently alluded to these rites in his comment that "it was done in the cities of the Sea what was not done in the generation of the Flood" (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 20:8). The equation of *marzēah* and Mayumas is also made by the mosaic map of the sixth-century church at Madeba which labels the Trans-Jordanian area in which the Baal-Peor apostasy occurred as "Betomarseas [i. e. Beth Marzēah] alias Maioumas."³⁵

Considerable data on the *marzēah* comes from Palmyra³⁶ whence we have dedicatory inscriptions by principals in such affairs and numerous tesserae decorated with a banquet scene and bearing an inscription mentioning a *marzēah*. The participants were termed "members [lit. sons] of the *marzēah*," *bny-mrzḥ*, and a specific deity was usually designated, for example, *bny mrzḥ Nbw*, "members of the *marzēah* of Nabu." The most popular *marzēah* at Palmyra was apparently that of Bel (Baal), to judge from the numerous tesserae which mention "the priests of Bel." Each *marzēah* had a chief, *rb mrzḥ*, who served for an unspecified term, although one inscription erected "on the occasion of the leadership of the *marzēah* (of / by) Yarḥai Agrippa" indicates that he served for a whole year and provided the priests with old wine for a whole year.

In the Greek of some of the bilingual inscriptions from Palmyra, the leader of the *marzēah* is called the symposiarch and we know something of the Greek symposia and the role of the symposiarch as king of the feast. The symposiarch was usually chosen by lot and he decided the mixture of the wine, the number of drinks and the general rules of the affair. The portions were small at the beginning but grew larger as the drinking progressed, and each had to be downed without breathing between swallows, *ἀπνευστί*. The feasts were often held at the houses of celebrated *hetairai* and served by beautiful girls as waitresses and musicians; the affair, understandably, often ended in sacrifices to Aphrodite Pandemos.³⁷

35. V. R. Gold, "The Mosaic Map of Madeba," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 21, no. 3: 50–71, does not treat "Betomarseas alias Maioumas," on which see the literature cited by Eissfeldt, pp. 167 ff.

36. Cf. Eissfeldt, pp. 172 f., and Porten, pp. 167 ff.

37. Cf. E. Guhl and W. Koner, *The Life of the Greeks and Romans*, trans. from 3rd German edition F. Hueffer (New York: Appleton, 1876), pp. 266–69 and fig. 304, p. 268.

We may assume at least rough similarities between the *marzēah* and the symposia.

The Akkadian documents from Ras Shamra³⁸ which mention *marzēah* indicate that it was an important institution. The king Niqmepa bequeathed "a house of the *marzēah*-men" to the *marzēah*-men and their children. A house of the *marzēah*-men of (the god) Šatran was taken over for official use, but another house was given in its place. A vineyard of Ištar was divided between the *marzēah*-men of the city of Ari and those of the city of Siyanni. In a fragmentary Ugaritic alphabetic text³⁹ in five of the six lines there is the phrase *mrzḥ^cn* [. . .], but in the second line occurs *šd kr[m. . .]*, "field vineyard." Eissfeldt proposes the restoration *mrzḥ^cn* [t] and suggests that the text may deal with the bequest of several vineyards to the *marzēah* (Kultverein) of ^cAnat.⁴⁰ This suggestion could have been strengthened by appeal to the phrase *šd ilm šd aṛṛt wrḥm*(y) in lines 13 and 28 of the Birth of the Beautiful Gods⁴¹ where *rḥm*(y) is an epithet of ^cAnat. Viticulture is manifestly vitally connected with the *marzēah* as a bacchanalian celebration.

The so-called Rephaim Texts,⁴² fragments apparently belonging to the Aqht Epic, also deal with a *marzēah*, but in this instance with the variant spelling *mrz^c*.⁴³ In spite of the numerous lacunae and lexical and grammatical difficulties, the burden of the fragments is that Danel, presumably in mourning for his murdered son Aqht, invites the Rephaim, the deified dead, to a *mrz^c*. The word *aṛṛ*, "place," occurs several times apparently in the sense of "shrine" and presumably as a designation of the locale of the feast; see comment on line XV above. In the last of the Rephaim fragments, the phrase *bn bn aṛṛk*,⁴⁴ "among the sons of your place," may refer to the participants in the cult feast. The puzzling term "your little hand," *ydk ṣḡr* (with masculine adjective),⁴⁵ occurs in the next line

38. Eissfeldt, pp. 174 f., Porten, p. 180.

39. *UT*, text 2032.

40. P. 174.

41. *CTCA*, 23, the original editors' designation SS, and text 52 in Gordon's system.

42. *CTCA*, 20, 21, 22, *UT*, texts 121-124.

43. Cf. *UT*, 19. 2313.

44. *CTCA*, 22, Col. B. 3, *UT*, text 124: 3.

45. As a paired bodily member, *yad*, "hand," is regularly feminine in grammatical gender. It is apparent, however, that both in Hebrew and Ugaritic the word is sometimes a circumlocution for "phallus" (e. g., Isa. 57:8 and Song of Songs 5:4 and in

following a slight lacuna, and then come several words that make sense together, *tnšq šptk tm* (5). *tkm bm tkm*, "she / they will kiss your lips there, shoulder to shoulder." A love-fest of some sort seems to be envisaged. After several lines which are almost perfectly preserved but quite enigmatic, ^cAnat⁴⁶ prepares fowl, beef, veal, pours several different kinds of wine, the Rephaim eat and drink for six days, and then just at the climactic "Behold on the seventh [day]" the text again breaks off.

From the various strands of information, we gather that the *marzēah* was a social and religious institution which included families, owned property, houses for meetings and vineyards for wine supply, was associated with specific deities, and met periodically, perhaps monthly, to celebrate for several days at a stretch with food and drink and sometimes, if not regularly, with sacral sexual orgies. The biblical and rabbinic correlation of the *marzēah* with both mourning and licentious pagan revelry may seem incongruous and even contradictory from our puritan and Victorian perspective, but not from the viewpoint of a fertility religion which recognized life and death as integral natural process and confronted death with the assertion and reaffirmation of life.

The etymology of *marzēah* remains uncertain. Joseph Qimḥi, followed by his son David, connected it with Arabic *mirzih* which is alleged to signify a vehement voice, sound, or noise and thus *marzēah* would designate a loud cry whether of mourning or revelry. This etymology, however, is questionable. There is no sure basis for positing a root *rzḥ*, "to cry," and still less for a second homonymous root with the meaning "unite oneself" to support a presumed meaning *Kultverein*.⁴⁷ The basic meaning of *rzḥ* in Arabic is to fall down from fatigue (or other weakness) and remain prostrate without power to rise; it may be used of a man, a camel, or a grapevine. A *marzah* is a place where a camel collapses from fatigue and a

the poem called the "Birth of the Beautiful Gods" on which cf. Marvin Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955], pp. 39 f.), and as such would presumably, have masculine grammatical gender. We cannot, however, be too confident of this logic because of striking reversals such as the masculinity of the word for "breasts."

46. *CTCA*, 22, Col. B. 11-25.

47. Cf. Otto Eissfeldt, "Sohnespflichten im Alten Orient," *Syria*, 43 (1966), 45 f., and "Etymologische und archäologische Erklärung," pp. 176 f. Porten, p. 186 n. 147, also considers Eissfeldt's distinction between the two supposed homonyms *rzḥ*, "shout," and *rzḥ* "unite," to be arbitrary.

mirzah is a prop for a fallen grapevine.⁴⁸ The assured meaning of Arabic *rzḥ* thus seems highly appropriate to the aim and end of a marathon bacchanal and suits the state in which we find El at the end of his *marziḥ* in the text under consideration. Nouns of the pattern of *maqtil* may designate either the locale or the nature of the action, or both, as seems to be the case with **marziḥ* > *marzēah*.

Lines XVII–XXIII

These lines are puzzling. The banquet began in El's house and there is no mention of a move to another locale unless the statement that "El sat in his *marzēah*" presumes that everyone knows that a *marzēah* is separate from one's house. Unless the clear statement that "El went to his house / descended to his palace" has some metaphorical or hidden meaning that eludes us, we have to conclude that El's *marzēah* was not in his house where the banquet began and to which El returned after toping in his *marzēah*.

The spelling *ḥtr* for *ḥzr* is exceptional and puzzling. In the Nikkal Poem original *t* is represented by *z*, perhaps under Hurrian influence. The use of *t* for original *z* here corresponds to later Aramaic practice, as in *ḥūtrā*, "enclosure."

Line XXIV

Tkmn and Snm are the Kassite deities Sukamuna and Sumaliya who also found their way into the Babylonian pantheon where Suqamuna is equated with Nergal or Nusku, but Sumaliya is associated with the equally obscure Kassite deities Sibarru and Sugguru.⁴⁹ The position and role of Tkmn and Snm in the Ugaritic pantheon remain obscure.⁵⁰

48. Cf. E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, pp. 1075 f., s.v. *rzḥ*.

49. Cf. D. O. Edzard, s.v. "Kassitischer Götter," *Wörterbuch der Mythologie*, ed. H. W. Haussig (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1965–), 1: 1. H. Gese, "Die mythische epische Überlieferung Ugarits," in *Die Religionen der Menschheit*, ed. Christel Matthias Schroder (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960–), vol. 10, pt. 2: 97 f., suggests that the compound name means "Träger und Gipfel" and corresponds to Atlas in Greek myth. That lifting of the drunken father seems scant support for attributing to *tkmn wšnm* the function of Atlas as bearer of the world.

50. Cf. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts*, p. 90.

Lines XXIV–XXVI

Virolleaud rendered "et il rencontre le *ḥby* (20) du Ba'al à deux cornes et la queue," simply transliterating *ḥby* for which he could find no acceptable sense. The citation of Dan. 8:6 should have prevented the mistaking of *b^l* as the proper name of the great Storm God rather than the common noun *owner* which could have been otherwise expressed simply with the particle *d*, as in the Arabic epithet of Alexander the Great, *dū²l-qarnain*, "He of the two horns." Gordon⁵¹ properly renders "possessor of horns and tail" but takes *ḥby* as a proper name. Virolleaud suggests that we have here a prefiguration of Satan, perhaps the god Ršp, the Nergal of the Babylonians, who afflicts humanity with all kinds of evils, and he notes that in Hab. 3:5–6 the Vulgate translates *rešep* by *diabolus*. Ršp was an important deity and we have a representation of him wearing a helmet with small cervine head and horns,⁵² but he is never depicted with a tail. Many deities were horned or wore horned headdresses. The word *ḥby* may be connected with the meaning "hide," as in Hebrew, or with Arabic *ḥbw* / *ḥby*, "crawl, creep"; a Hider, or a Hidden-One might be an appropriate designation for a sudden or furtive apparition, and a creepy creature, especially one with horns and tail, is suitably bizarre for a fit of alcoholic *delirium tremens* (cf. Prov. 23:33). It is not clear whether the subject of the verb *ngš* (*wngšnn* is presumably an error for *wyngšnn*) is El or the *ḥby*, but it does not matter greatly who confronted whom in this instance since the interest is in El's state rather than in the phantom of his delirium. Considering El's condition, that he is being carried or supported by Tkmn and Snm, it seems more likely that the *ḥby* is the subject of the verb and that the *-nn*, "energic," ending hides the object suffix referring to El, as the translation indicates.

Line XXVII

Again it is uncertain whether the subject of the verb is El or the *ḥby*. It seems more likely that the line concerns El's reaction to the

51. *UT*, 19. 831a.

52. Cf. J. B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East in Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), fig. 476.

encounter rather than the action of the creature with horns and tail, imaginary or otherwise. It is improbable that the verb *ḡlšn* is denominative from the word for tongue since it is hard to see how any of the attested meanings would relate to excreta. Virolleaud rendered "il pautage," from *l(u)š*, "knead." Arabic, as usual, offers several possibilities: *l(w)š*, "taste food by turning it about in the mouth"; *l(w)š*, "be excessively tired, out of breath, and unable to move on"; *lšš*, "lick, pluck (grass) with the lips"; and *lšš* which in the reduplicated form *lašlaš* means to be seized with fear so as to drop excrement," "run to and fro in fear." The latter possibility seems most plausible in view of the explicit involvement with excreta and the common association of involuntary defecation and urination with sudden and intense fear as well as with excessive alcoholic intoxication.

The sad plight of the father of the gods prostrate in his own filth is reminiscent of Isaiah's description of the sacral feasts of the religious leaders of the Northern Kingdom, in Isa. 28:7-8.

These too with wine stagger;
 With drink they totter.
 Priest and prophet stagger with drink,
 Befuddled with wine.
 They stagger in _____,
 Reel in _____,
 For all the tables are full
 Of vomit (and) excrement,
 Without a place

One may suspect that this text has been doctored to eliminate offensive words. The meaningless *br²h* vocalized *bārō²eh*, "in the seer," in verse 7h could be easily restored to read "in excrement," *bhr²*. The following stich 7i is also confused but more difficult to reconstitute. In any case, enough is preserved to set a scene similar to that in which we find El at the end of our Ugaritic document.

The reference to excrement is interesting in the light of the rabbinic derision of the depravity associated with the cult of Baal Peor who was allegedly worshiped with ceremonial defecation (BT, *Abodah Zarah* 44b). A Jew was forbidden to relieve himself before Baal Peor since this was the regular mode of worshiping the idol

(BT, *Sanhedrin* 60b, Mishnah *Sanhedrin* VII, 6). There is a story about a certain Jew who hired his ass to a gentile woman and accompanied her. When they came to Peor, she asked him to wait while she went in. When she came out, he asked the same of her: "But are you not a Jew?" she asked. He replied: "What is it to you?" and he entered and defecated before the idol and wiped himself on the idol's nose while the acolytes praised him saying, "No man ever served this idol thus." The sage opinion on this resort was that although the intent was to degrade the idol, the act constituted worship (BT, *Sanhedrin* 64a). It is difficult to assay how much of this story may derive from direct knowledge of the pagan cult and how much from play on one of the meanings of the word *p^cr*.

Line XXVIII

El is down⁵³ and, at least temporarily, out, "like those who descend into Earth," i.e. into the netherworld.

Lines XXIX-XXXIV

In spite of the losses at the bottom of the obverse and the top of the reverse of the text, it seems clear that ^cAstart and ^cAnat went roaming and brought back something with them. What they fetched presumably was the material mentioned in the following lines which appears to be medicine for El to bring him out of his comatose state and relieve his acute distress.

Line XXXV

Whether one takes *kmtrpa* as composed of the particle *k-* and the reflexive-passive participle *mtrpa* or as *k-* with enclitic, emphatic *-mā* before a finite verbal form *trpa*, it is at least certain that the matter involves healing and concerns El who needs it.

Virolleaud read *hn n^cr* and translated "Voici l'enfant." In support of this reading and interpretation one might adduce the reference to recovery from illness in Job 33:25,

53. On the meanings of *ql*, cf. Gordon, *UT*, 19. 2231.

His flesh becomes plump as a boy's,
He returns to the days of his youth.⁵⁴

The reading *hn*, however, is not certain and could as well be seen as the negation *in*. The vocable *n^cr* in this context might also suggest something other than a boy or young man. Among various meanings of *n^cr* as a verb we find "stir," or "rouse," used in connection with rising from sickness or from death, and "empty," "evacuate," used of emptying a dish or pot, or of making a flock discharge excrement on the area one wishes to have manured. Thus *n^cr* in the present context, whether construed as a noun or verb, might have reference either to El's ailment or to the recovery therefrom.

Lines XXXVI-XXXVIII

The remainder of the text below the colophon line is a medical prescription similar in form to those in the hippiatric texts⁵⁵ which give the medication and the mode of administering it. Here we have a sick god rather than a horse and the medicine is given orally instead of through the nose. The materials here prescribed for the god are those regarded as beneficial to humans in similar state.

Line XXXVII

The verb *yšt* here is probably from *š(y)t*, "put, place" rather than *šty*, "drink." The word *lšb* occurs sometimes in the cliché *yprq lšb wyšhq*, "he parted the jaw and laughed"; thus it designated the mouth, oral cavity, or throat. In Arabic the word is connected with the notion of narrowness, used for example, of a sword sticking tight in the scabbard, while the noun *lišb* applies to a cleft in mountains, a narrow pass or valley. Accordingly, it has been suggested that the precise reference is to the narrow opening between the upper and lower dentition.⁵⁶ It is not clear, however, how much depth is envisaged for the narrowing opening. In any case, medicine administered by way of the *lšb* will get to the seat of the trouble.

54. Cf. Marvin Pope, trans., *Anchor Bible* (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1965), vol. 15, *Job*.

55. *CTCA*, 160 and 161.

56. Cf. E. Ullendorff, "Ugaritic Marginalia," *Orientalia* 20 (1951), pp. 271 f.

For *hš^cr* there are several possibilities. Akkadian *hašurru*, Sumerian *GIŠ.ĤA.ŠUR*, denotes a kind of cedar used for perfume, but the oil also served as a vehicle for crushed herbs to be drunk on an empty stomach.⁵⁷ Sumero-Akkadian *hašhur*, "apple," might be the original of our word *hš^cr*, the second *h* being altered to ^c. In Mesopotamian magic and medicine *hašhuru*, with various modifiers, such as *hašhūr-abi / api*, "swamp apple," was prescribed for gastric and urinary troubles, for instance for a disease called picturesquely "red water."⁵⁸

Line XXXVII

It is not clear whether *klb* is the word for "dog" or the particle *k* plus *lb*, "heart." There is in Akkadian a medicinal plant called *šēr kalbi* which was mixed with oil and taken internally for intestinal and urinary problems.⁵⁹ The transformation of *hašhur* to *šēr* might be explained, if there were need, but the matter is not urgent in view of the uncertainty. If *klb* is analyzed as *k-lb* then the restoration of the symbol before *riš*, "head" at the beginning of the line might well be the conjunction *w-*, "and," *klb [w]riš* perhaps meaning "so that heart and head. . . ." The following word *pqq* might be taken as the name of some pharmaceutical. Akkadian *piqū*, *piqqūtu* is a plant identified as colocynth, the tops of which plant were used as a cathartic, while the seeds were boiled in oil and taken as a remedy for debility.⁶⁰ (Colocynth is still used as an ingredient, along with other substances, such as calomel and rhubarb, in pink, pleasant purgative pellets). There is, however, a consideration which excludes the equation of *pqq* in the present text with Akkadian *piqū* or *piqūtu*, "colocynth," viz. that the word had originally a final ^c, *pq^c*, which would be preserved in the Ugaritic cognate, as it is in Hebrew and Arabic. It is unlikely that the Akkadian form of the word with loss of the laryngeal would be borrowed by Western Semites among whom the word must have been in common use with the laryngeal intact. It is possible that *pqq* is a verb. The hollow

57. *CAD*, 6: 147b.

58. *CAD*, 6: 140 a (1) (b).

59. R. C. Thompson, *A Dictionary of Assyrian Botany* (London: British Academy, 1949), p. 23.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

root $p(w)q$ has several interesting connections with drunkenness and the recovery from the same; it is used of drunken reeling and collapse, as in the passage Isa. 28:7 cited above. At the end of a long section in the Talmud dealing with the effects of intoxication and the cure (BT, 'Erubin 65a), Rabbi Hanina made a multiple word play on Job 41:7 and the roots $p(w)q$, 2pq , and npq in connection with the action of a man who in a state of drunkenness still has enough consciousness, reverence and sense of unworthiness to stand up during the Prayer of Benedictions. Without going into the complicated puns,⁶¹ it appears that $p(w)q$ in the causative stem may denote recovery from intoxication. This sense is confirmed by Arabic usage where the verb in the factitive (D or II) stem may mean "recover one's senses" and in the causative (IV) stem "recover (from illness or a swoon)." In the Vth stem there is further evidence of connection both with drinking and recovery from its effects, in the meanings "to drink from time to time one after another" and to "remember or try to remember." It is hard to see how meanings could be found more suitable to the present context. The form pqq may be explained as the L form, $pôqêq$, like $qômêm$ and $rômêm$, used in Hebrew and Ugaritic for the D stem of "hollow" verbs.⁶²

If one seeks for srh as a noun a botanical or pharmaceutical meaning, there is Sumerian ŠE.RU.A (Akkadian $ser^2u?$), "licorice," the tops of which were used as medicine for gastric and urinary problems.⁶³ It seems more likely, however, that srh is a verb coordinate with pqq , for which there are some plausible possibilities. Elsewhere in Ugaritic⁶⁴ srh occurs as a verb meaning to "flash" (lightning), as in Job 37:3, but this sense is unsuitable to the present context. Arabic srh , "be greedy for food or drink," is a possibility despite the deviation from the usual permutation of s and $š$. In the Krt Epic,⁶⁵ when $š^c tqt$ healed the ailing monarch "she washed him of sweat / his appetite for food she opened / his yen for meat." Arabic srw , meaning in the II stem "to rid someone of worry, grief, fear, or the like, to regain one's composure and feel again at peace

61. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 1154b. s.v.

62. Cf *UT*, 9. 32, 26, pp. 81 f.

63. Thompson, pp. 133 f.

64. *CTCA*, 4, V, 71.

65. *CTCA*, 16, VI, 10-12.

after a period of disquiet," offers sense appropriate to the present context. The final $-h$ of srh might be the suffixed object pronoun referring to El as the recipient of the healing. Akkadian $šurrū$ and Hebrew and Aramaic $šarā$ in the sense "begin, loosen, set free, etc.," also offers a suitable range for the passage in question.

Line XXXVIII

Here also, as above, $yšt$ must be from $š(y)t$, "put," rather than $šty$, "drink," because of the similarity to the formulas in the hippiatric texts which direct that the materials be mixed together and poured in the horse's nose, $ydk aḥdh wyšq baph$.⁶⁶ The final $-h$ of $aḥdh$ is the adverbial ending which has directive force with words like $šmnh$, "heavenward," and perhaps here too since the meaning may be "into a unit." The Ugaritic $aḥdh$ is analogous to Akkadian $ištēniš$.

Olive juice, $dm zt$, is literally "blood of the olive," as wine is termed $dm šm$ "blood of trees." The adjective $hrpnt$ which modifies the olive juice is from a common Semitic root which seems to have the basic sense of "early," as applied to fruit, harvest, rains, and so on. Early olives would be green or unripe.

The life situation of our text we can roughly divine, although many puzzling questions remain. El's experience in his $marzēah$ mirrors that of his worshipers in theirs. "Wine which cheers gods and men" (Judg. 9:13), after a certain point brings also woes. The creepy creature with horns and tail encountered by El and the bizarre images reported by delirious drunks confirm the warning of the biblical moralist (Prov. 23:33), "Your eyes will see strange things." The father of gods and men floundering in excrement and urine was emulated by princes and people, priests and prophets, even among the Israelites, who reeled and tottered among tables full of vomit and fecal matter (Isa. 28:7). Dignity was scarcely a concern here and those who have admitted El's otiose character but compensated by emphasizing his dignity, *otium cum dignitate*, will have difficulty maintaining the dignity of a deity smutched with ordure. The crapulent deity's worshipers, in their devotional drinking, shared the god's distress and the medicine which was

66. *CTCA*, 160, 161, *et passim*.

prescribed for the god was doubtless what had been found helpful for restoring mortals to consciousness and relieving the lingering distemper. The worshipers must have been sympathetic with their god whose plight they understood and shared. There is no hint of moralizing or disapproval of the divine deportment since it was human behavior projected to the realm of the gods.

The drinking of intoxicating liquors by gods and men is common in myth and cult. The Vedic gods attained their immortality by drinking the soma and the Homeric deities by drinking nectar and eating ambrosia. Intoxicating liquors were used in earliest Brahmanism and the modern Saktas still include as prime components of proper worship intoxicating beverages and sacral sexual intercourse. Liquor drinking continues to be a part of most Parsee ceremonies. In the early Christian love-feasts and in the Eucharist the drunkenness which St. Paul tried to curb was doubtless a survival of oldtime religion which always dies hard. The Cup of Blessing in the Jewish Qiddush has much the same background as the Christian Eucharist and both are chastened and purified transformations of ancient communal feasts. Sacral drinking in connection with funeral celebrations is attested among many peoples in different parts of the world. The Irish wake has analogues in the funeral celebrations of many societies of Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. To bring the random comparative comments up to date, a Texas tycoon has recently announced plans to create a multi-million-dollar fund to provide in perpetuity free cocktail parties as a memorial to himself. This philanthropist is probably not aware of the historical antecedents of his idea, seeing that he left school in the third grade, but certain aspects of his plan comport with venerable custom and tradition.

The Ugaritic text here discussed is nearly a millennium older than the earliest data on the *marzēah* previously available to us and approximately two millennia older than the remarks of the rabbis on the subject. In spite of the great gap in time, the evidences, early and late, conform to clarify our understanding of the puzzling term *marzēah*.

A note of apology may be in order for the unedifying features of the text here treated. A more salubrious subject might have been selected, but it happened that this was the text that engaged my

attention at the time of the invitation to contribute to this volume in honor of my beloved teacher. In dealing with some of the documents from Ugarit one may feel constrained to explain that he did not compose the text but seeks only to understand it. Among the many valuable lessons taught me by Professor Stinespring was the importance of honesty in dealing with a text. Candor dictates the confession that many of the suggestions here offered are highly uncertain and tentative, but it is hoped that some may prove helpful in the ongoing effort to understand this puzzling text.

I am happy for the opportunity to express to Professor William F. Stinespring my profound gratitude for the lively introduction he gave me to the Hebrew language and the study of the Bible and its background, for his encouragement and help in the pursuit of this interest, my respect for him as a scholar, and above all my admiration and affection for him as a man. *yāsar kōhō*.