5 THE INCANTATIONS

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5.1 *Introduction*

The incantation can be defined as 'rhythmic or formulaic words of power to accomplish a desired goal by binding spiritual powers'.[1] A number of Ugaritic texts written in alphabetic script unearthed in Ras Shamra and Ras Ibn Hani fit, completely or in part, under this heading. In none of these texts, however, do we find a word specifically denoting the incantation, like Akkadian *šiptu*.[2] This word is attested at the end of a syllabic Akkadian incantation found in Ras Shamra 'against fire' (RS 17.155).[3] We do find the more general indication *mnt*.[4] This has an equivalent in Akkadian *minûtu*. In Akkadian incantations it is used next to *šiptu*. It seems to refer in the first place to the act of reciting and repeating the incantation, because it is derived from the verb *manû*,[5] 'to count' (cf. Hebrew *mnh*). In KTU 1.24 = RS 5.194:46–7, *mnt* denotes the enumeration of goddesses listed in the following lines. It is paralleled by *spr*, 'list'. In KTU 1.82 = RS 15.134:20 and KTU 1.100 = RS 24.244 it is used in texts that as a whole can be labelled as incantations. In other 'pure' incantations, like KTU 1.96 = RS 22.225 and KTU 1.169 = RIH 78/20, this or another general term for the genre is missing.

It appears to be impossible to distinguish the 'Ugaritic Incantations' sharply.[6] Also, the calling of divine beings by their names at the end of KTU 1.24 = RS 5.194 may have had some kind of magical purpose. The same can be said of other parts of some of the mythical or ritual texts. Add to this, firstly, that is often difficult to distinguish

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[1] LUDWIG 1987, 151.

[2] For the much larger corpus of Akkadian incantations see the surveys by FARBER 1981, 1984 and 1987.

[3] Cf. ARNAUD 1995a. Within the context of the incantations' 'fire' can be regarded as a reference to demons; cf. KTU 1.2 = RS 3.367 i 3, where the demoniacal helpers of Yam are described as 'one, two fires'.

[4] See on *mnt* PARDEE 1988, 206–8. According to DE MOOR 1987, 248 the masculine *mn* is attested in KTU 1.19 = RS 3.322+ i 11.

[5] Cf. the expression *manû šiptu*, 'to recite an incantation', in Akkadian, cf. *CAD* Š, III, 89.

[6] Cf. JEFFERS 1996, 18, facing the same problem with regard to the more general theme of magic and divination.

a prayer from an incantation, in the second place, that as a rule magical and related texts are difficult to interpret, and that, finally, many of the tablets concerned are damaged, then it comes as no surprise that in the editions of and commentaries on Ugaritic texts we find different proposals for classification:

- According to Avishur the only texts which 'can clearly be classified as incantations' are KTU 1.100 = RS 24.244; KTU 1.107 = RS 24.251+; and KTU 1.169 = RIH 78/20.[7]
- Xella lists under 'preghieri ed incantesimi': KTU 1.65 = RS 4.474; KTU 1.123 = RS 24.271; KTU 1.100; and KTU 1.107.[8]
- DE MOOR comes to five incantations as 'more or less independent prayers without ritual prescriptions', next to incantations 'embedded in rituals': KTU 1.82 = RS 15.134; 1.83 = RS 16.266; KTU 1.169; KTU 1.93 = RS 19.054; and KTU 1.108 = RS 24.252.[9]
- Dietrich – Loretz come to eight alphabetic texts that in their view are representative of this 'Gattung', leaving out two thematically related but heavily damaged texts. They subdivide these eight texts into four categories:
  (1) 'Evokationen königlicher Ahnen': KTU 1.124 = RS 24.272 and KTU 1.161 = RS 34.126;
  (2) 'Beschwörungen gegen Krankheit, Unfruchtbarkeit, Dämonen, Folgen von Trunkenheit und Totengeistern': KTU 1.13 = RS 1.006; KTU 1.82; KTU 1.114; KTU 1.169;
  (3) 'Beschwörung gegen Schlangengift': KTU 1.100;
  (4) 'Beschwörung gegen die schädliche Naturkräfte': KTU 1.23 = RS 2.002.[10]
- Caquot lists KTU 1.82; KTU 1.114 = RS 24.258; KTU 1.100; KTU 1.107; and KTU 1.169 under the heading 'tablettes mythico-magiques'.[11]

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[7] AVISHUR 1981, 13.

[8] XELLA 1981, 207–50.

[9] DE MOOR 1987, 175–90.

[10] DIETRICH – LORETZ 1988b, 328–7. In *KTU*[2] the following texts are also marked as possible incantations: 1.20–22 = RS 2.[024], 2.[019], 2.[024]; 1.65 = RS 4.474; 1.86 = RS 18.041; 1.96 = RS 22.225; 1.107 = RS 24.251+; and 1.123 = RS 24.271. Apparently, these belong to the 'damaged' or 'related' texts referred to by Dietrich – Loretz.

[11] CAQUOT 1989, 51–123. It is remarkable that he pays no attention to these texts in his survey in CAQUOT 1979b.

- In his description of Ugaritic religious practices in daily life del
  Olmo Lete mentions as 'conjuros': KTU 1.100; KTU 1.107; KTU
  1.82; KTU 1.96; and KTU 1.169;[12] and as 'recetas mágicas': KTU
  1.124 = RS 24.272:13–5 and KTU 1.114:29–31.[13]
- A recently published survey of documents from the biblical world
  contains as examples of Ugaritic incantations: KTU 1.100; KTU
  1.169; KTU 1.114; and RS 92.2014.[14]

Apparently the old Ugaritic texts on these matters cannot be clearly
classified. It is better in this situation not to put too much weight
on our modern definitions and choose a more general approach to
the Ugaritic texts about human efforts to have an influence upon
the supernatural, from raising one's hands in prayer to binding hos-
tile spiritual powers by magic. This means that the boundaries between
'literary' and 'cultic', and those separating 'myth', 'incantation', 'rit-
ual', and 'god lists' are not always as clear as editors of a handbook
might want them to be.

5.2   *Speaking to the gods in hymns and prayer*

The genre of prayer appears to be rare in the texts of ancient
Ugarit.[15] One should not, however, conclude from this that the people
of Ugarit did not have deep religious feelings or that they were reluc-
tant to address their gods directly. The lack of separate hymns or
prayers is simply due to the fact that praising the gods or seeking
their favours is usually set in a larger context. Recitation of the great
myths can be seen as a means of expressing respect for the gods
and their glorious deeds. For instance, telling each other about Baal's
victory over Yam and Mot with the words of the myth of Baal
expresses one's confidence in the power of the supreme god over
chaos and death. The hymn addressed to the sun-goddess Shapash
at the end of the myth (KTU 1.6 = RS 2.[009]+ vi 45 53) is put
in the mouth of Anat, but it is also a way in which the people of
Ugarit thankfully praise the sun-goddess for watching over the bound-
aries between night and day, the world of the living and the world
of the dead. Hymnic elements can also be found in the second part

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[12] DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 241–60 = 1999, 359–87.
[13] DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 261 = 1999, 388.
[14] HALLO 1997, 295–8; 301–5; and 327–8.
[15] Cf. WATSON 1984a, 360 and MILLER 1988.

of the much debated text KTU 1.108 = RS 24.252,[16] which is dis-
cussed below together with texts related to necromancy. Hymns also
seem to have formed a standard element in Hurrian prayers accom-
panying incense offerings (KTU 1.44 = RS 1.007; KTU 1.51 = RS
1.027; KTU 1.54 = RS 1.034+; KTU 1.128 = RS 24.278; KTU
1.131 = RS 24.285).[17]

In the legend of Aqhat we hear of his father Daniel praying (Ug.
ṣly) for rain (KTU 1.19 = RS 3.322+ i 38–46). He calls on the
name of Baal, as 'rider of the clouds', and on his 'delightful voice',
that is of the thunder heralding coming showers. In a subsequent
scene, Daniel beseeches (Ug. ṣly)[18] the gods that the small stalks in
the dry land may shoot up (KTU 1.19 ii 15 25).

It is more common for prayer to be part of ritual actions, as we
can see in the legend of Keret. The command to raise the hands
(in prayer) is paralleled by a reference to a sacrifice to El (KTU
1.14 = RS 2.[003]+ ii 22–3). We can also find this combination in
the ritual text KTU 1.41 = RS 1.003+, with prescriptions about the
annual celebration of the grape harvest in the month 'First of the
Wine'. The text ends with the same call for prayer as in the legend
of Keret. In KTU 1.87 = RS 18.056, a copy of KTU 1.41, these
last lines containing the reference to the king's prayer are missing.
The action described in KTU 1.41:50–5 is situated in another place:
not in the temple, but on its roof; and it refers to a sacrifice offered
to an unknown deity (prgl ṣqrn). This is probably a deity of Hurrian
origin. So the expansion of the text can be explained as due to later
Hurrian influence upon an older Ugaritic ritual. The king is said (or
prescribed) to offer a recitation (yrgm mlk), but we hear nothing of
its contents. Perhaps building on the assumption of Hurrian influence
one should think here of something like the Hurrian incense prayers
mentioned above. These texts all follow a similar pattern: after the
heading we read the names of the gods to whom the prayer is
addressed, together with a short hymn. The gods are asked to come
and receive the offerings and then to do something on behalf of the
suppliant. The texts end with mention of the messenger and in some

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[16] AVISHUR 1994, 297–8 even speaks of the entire text as a 'hymn in honor of
El', because of the striking similarity with Hebrew psalms and its vocabulary being
reminiscent of that found in hymns.

[17] Cf. DIETRICH – MAYER 1994.

[18] Cf. DE MOOR 1987, 252, n. 190 and MARGALIT 1984b, 140–1; for a different
interpretation of 'aḫl see DEL OLMO LETE – SANMARTÍN 1996, 16.

cases with promises of new offerings and a final doxology. The words
spoken by the king according to KTU 1.41:53, on the roof of the
temple, could have been something like this calling up the gods and
asking their favours. Because the tablet is damaged here, it is not
clear whether this invocation is accompanied by the king wiping his
face (*mḥ pnh*)[19] or by clapping his hands (*mḥ ydh*).[20] The reference to
prayer in line 55, back in the temple, could be related to the clos-
ing hymn in the Hurrian incense prayers.

In the older secondary literature KTU 1.65 = RS 4.474[21] has
been interpreted as a prayer to El and the assembly of the gods.[22]
More recently commentators of the text appear to be reluctant to
classify it. Xella points to the resemblance of the first lines (naming
El, the sons of El, the family of the sons of El, the assembly of the
sons of El, and *ṯkmn-w-šnm*) with the repeated address of the ritual
text KTU 1.40 = RS 1.003+. He assumes as a working hypothesis
that KTU 1.65 is some sort of prayer.[23] Dietrich – Loretz take this
text as a scribal exercise.[24] In his elaborate study of this text Avishur
also concludes that the old view (of H.L. Ginsberg) that this text is
a prayer, seems to be closest to the truth. Comparison with the
Qumran War Scroll (chapters 4–6 and 9, about names with *'l* as a
second element to be written on banners and weapons) leads him
to classify it as a list of war banners.[25] Because these banners are
'battle cries intended to arouse the deity to assist the warriors', this
text resembles a prayer. Although much remains uncertain, one
should not rule out the possibility that this is indeed the text of a
prayer, related to sacrifices as mentioned in KTU 1.40, calling up
the gods (lines 1–5), appealing to the consideration of the supreme

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[19] Cf. DE MOOR 1987, 159, 165, and DE TARRAGON 1989, 154, 159.

[20] Cf. LEVINE – DE TARRAGON – ROBERTSON 1997, 299, 301. On the clapping of
hands serving 'to intensify the accompanying words and perhaps even to effectuate
the action' see Fox 1995.

[21] Cf., for instance, BERNHARDT 1975, 239–40: 'Bittgesang an El und die Versamm-
lung der Götter'. See on this text AVISHUR 1994, 308–9, who also lists and discusses
previous research.

[22] Cf., for instance, BERNHARDT 1975, 239–40: 'Bittgesang an El und die Versamm-
lung der Götter'.

[23] XELLA 1981, 213: 'almeno come ipotesi di lavoro, una sorta di "preghiera"'.

[24] DIETRICH · LORETZ 1981, 64–7; in their translation of this text in 1988 they
call it 'Opfer für El und seine Repräsentanten'; note also the problems with classify-
ing this text in *KTU*², 91: 'scribal exercise?, invocation of Il?, prayer?, incantation?'.

[25] AVISHUR 1994, 326, 525,

gods by referring to their noble character (6–9) and naming places and divine attributes in and with which these words have to be recited (lines 10ff.). Del Olmo Lete sees it as a 'cultic invocation of the divine panoply and to its apparent presence in the sanctuary'.[26] In his opinion this primarily concerns Baal's weapons, celebrated in mythology.

A more generally accepted example of a prayer in alphabetic Ugaritic is the end of the ritual text KTU 1.119 = RS 24.266.[27] This text starts as a common prosaic ritual prescription about the right time, place, and sort of sacrifice to the right god. In line 26 there is a transition to a direct address to Baal by referring to the problem of a strong foe attacking the gates of the city. The style changes here from prose to poetry.[28] The prayer (ṣlt, line 34; cf. the verb in KTU 1.19 = RS 3.322+ i 39) is introduced by the command: 'raise your eyes to Baal' (line 27). The request to drive away the enemy is accompanied by a number of vows and sacrifices by the suppliant, in exchange for Baal's help. The text ends with the statement, repeating the words at the beginning, that Baal will hear the prayer.

KTU 1.123 = RS 24.271[29] is probably best described as a benediction,[30] because of the repeated šlm in the opening lines, followed by a number of divine names. The text seems to end in a similar way, the last word being again šlm. Lines 14ff. mention righteousness and mercy. This is reminiscent of KTU 1.65 and can be interpreted in the same way as expressing the hope for and confidence in a positive attitude of the gods towards the one saying these words. However, any interpretation of this text in its present severely damaged state must remain uncertain.

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[26] DEL OLMO LETE 1992c, 255; cf. also DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 228–9 = 1999, 341–3 and WATSON – WYATT 1997.

[27] See on this text XELLA 1981, 25–34; WATSON 1984d, 360–2; DE MOOR 1987, 171–4; MILLER 1988; DEL OLMO LETE 1989; DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 197–205 = 1999, 292–306; PARDEE 1993, 213–7; AVISHUR 1994, 253–6; WATSON 1996b.

[28] On this phenomenon see especially PARDEE 1993a.

[29] Cf. XELLA 1981, 216–3, with references to the older literature.

[30] DE MOOR 1970 312; RAINEY 1974, 191. CAQUOT 1979, 1404 and DIETRICH – LORETZ 1981, 74–5, suggest that it is a scribal exercise. KTU², 135, gives as the possible genre: 'prayer, liturgy?, scribal exercise'.

5.3   *Binding hostile supernatural forces by incantations*

The texts discussed under this heading are the ones that best fit the narrow definition of an incantation given at the beginning. It concerns independent texts with words of power used against evil forces from the realm of gods and demons. The interpretation of these texts is very difficult, not only because of the state of conservation of most tablets, but also because of the genre of the texts, with unknown vocabulary and often without a clear structure or line of thought.

The best example of an Ugaritic incantation is KTU 1.169 = RIH 78/20.[31] Although there is much difference of opinion among the interpreters about many details, it is generally accepted that we are dealing here with a spell to drive off evil powers causing sickness, with the help of Baal, Horon and Ashera. It is not clear which disease is meant here,[32] nor which power is causing it; according to some it is indicated by *dbbm* in lines 1 and 9, although it is translated in different ways: 'flying demons' (de Moor), 'tormenters' (Pardee), or 'accusers' (Fleming). Others (Dietrich – Loretz, Caquot) relate it to Akkadian *dabābu*, 'word', and interpret it as a reference to the words spoken to expel the (unnamed) demon. This difference of opinion returns in the interpretation of *kšpm* (line 9) as 'sorcerers' indicating the black magic of demons, but according to others the magic with which one can expel the forces of evil.[33]

There is more consensus about the verbs used in connection with the expelling magic: *ydy* (line 1), 'to drive off', and *grš* (line 9), 'chase away'. Both are used in the legend of Keret in the repeated question 'who among the gods is able to cast out (*ydy*) the disease, to expel (*grš*) the illness?' (KTU 1.16 = RS 3.325+ vi 10–28). In line 10, in close connection with *kšp* and *grš*, we find the root *ḥbr*. This is reminiscent of the use of *ḥbr* in the Hebrew Bible and Akkadian *abāru*, 'to bind', in Mesopotamian incantations. Avishur points to Deut. 18:10–11 and to Isa. 47:9 with the word pair *ḥbrym* ‖ *kšpym*, 'enchantments ‖ spells', and to a similar pair in the Akkadian *Maqlû*-

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[31] Cf. Avishur 1981; de Moor, 255–7; de Moor 1987, 183–6; Dietrich – Loretz 1988, 333–6; Caquot 1989, 53–60; Fleming 1991; del Olmo Lete 1992a, 259–60 = 1999, 385–6; Pardee 1993, 211–3; Fleming 1997; Wyatt 1998c, 442–9.

[32] De Moor 1980b, 257, and 1987, 184, n. 13, assumes that the patient suffered from a 'cataleptic or epileptic seizure', Pardee thinks of 'male sexual disfunction'.

[33] According to Jeffers 1996, 67–8, one can leave open both possibilities.

incantation.[34] So here *ḥbr* would denote the negative influence of evil spells. Avishur translates: 'Horon will expel the binders and the Youth soothsayers', relating the last word (*d'tm*) to Hebrew *yd'ny*. Dijkstra interprets these terms in a similar way, but he assumes a positive meaning: 'Horon be the enchanter, and the Young Man the one who provides knowledge.[35] In the hymn at the end of the Baal myth this word pair *ḥbr* ‖ *d't* (KTU 1.6 = RS 2.[009]+ vi 49–50) would have the same meaning. Most commentators, however, prefer the more common meaning of *ḥbr*, 'friend', and *d't*, 'intimate'.[36]

In the text we hear of the one who has to recite the incantation: 'the *t'y*-priest' (line 3). This title is also used in the colophon of the Baal myth (KTU 1.6 vi 57) and seems to refer to a high-ranking teacher.[37] In KTU 1.40 = RS 1.002:32 we find the related verb parallel to *dbḥ*, 'to sacrifice'. According to some interpreters this officiant used a staff as a magic device,[38] but the meaning of the word *ḥṭ* denoting it (line 5) is, again, disputed.[39] This person executing the incantation by word and probably also by gestures and other ritual activities can be compared to the Mesopotamian incantation priest called *āšipu*. It is interesting to note that this exorcist is often mentioned in the colophon of the incantation texts as a scholar who wrote and checked the tablet.[40]

Other correspondences with Mesopotamian incantations are the use of similar metaphors, especially the spirits being said to leave 'like smoke'[41] and the naming of gods acting on behalf of the oppressed against the evil spirits. In some Mesopotamian rituals the incantation priest even says that it is not he himself who speaks, but that it is an incantation of Ea[42] or Ninkilil, 'lord of the incantation.[43] This

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[34] AVISHUR 1981a, 22–3.

[35] DIJKSTRA 1985, 150.

[36] Cf. DEL OLMO LETE – SANMARTÍN 1996, 126–7 and 172. DIETRICH – LORETZ 1988b, 335 translate 'Genossen ‖ Komplizen'. According to JEFFERS 1996, 33 both suggested meanings of *ḥbr* are related: 'comrades can be linked together by sworn words, oaths and the like'.

[37] Cf. VAN SOLDT 1988 and FLEMING 1991, 146.

[38] Cf. FLEMING 1991, 148–50.

[39] Cf. DEL OLMO LETE – SANMARTÍN 1996, 202–3.

[40] See the texts mentioned in *CAD* A, II, 434, s.v. *āšipu* a.

[41] See, for instance, *Maqlû* V:166–169 (translation by FARBER 1987, 265). Cf. AVISHUR 1981, 18; FLEMING 1991, 146; and WATSON 1994b, 405–6.

[42] Cf. *CAD* A, II, 431–2, s.v. *āšipu* a.2; *CAD* Š III, 90, s.v. *šiptu* e.2'.

[43] Cf., for instance, the recently discovered incantation against Lamaštu, discussed by MICHEL 1997.

can be compared to KTU 1.169 = RIH 78/20 beginning with the statement that it is the breath of Baal which drives out the evil spirits. Unfortunately, the text is broken here. Next to Baal a special function seems to be reserved for Horon (lines 9–10) and Ashera (line 16).

A number of these basic elements of KTU 1.169 are also found in another clear example of an incantation in alphabetic Ugaritic script: KTU 1.82 = RS 15.134.[44] This seems to be a collection of six different incantations, to be recited on different occasions, but also sharing common elements (such as the reference to the snake in lines 6 and 35). The fourth part is explicitly introduced as an incantation with the technical term *mnt* (see p. 270) in its first line (= line 20). Like KTU 1.169, this text is difficult to interpret, but it gives us more information about the gods invoked to help and especially about the demons to fight. The benign gods are Baal (lines 1 and 6), his consort Anat (line 11 and twice in line 39), and the sun-goddess Shapash (line 6). The evil forces they have to destroy are:

- Tunnan (line 1), known from the myth of Baal (KTU 1.3 = RS 2.[014]+ iii 40) as a monstrous helper (dragon) of Yam, the god of the sea, one of Baal's prime opponents. According to the myth Tunnan is slain by Anat. He also seems to have been mentioned in the small fragment KTU 1.83 = RS 16.266, next to Yam, 'bound (by 'Anak?) on the heights of Lebanon'.[45] This reference to Tunnan, however, is uncertain, not only because of the poor state of conservation of the tablet, but also because it is based on a correction of the text in line 8, reading *tnn* instead of *t'an*.[46]
- Reshep (line 3), the god of pestilence, who is mentioned next to the 'lads of Yam' in the legend of Keret as the god who caused the death of one of the king's wives (KTU 1.14 = RS 2.[003]+ i 19).
- Mot (line 5), the god of death. Next to Yam he is the other powerful opponent of Baal (KTU 1.5 = RS 2.[022]+).

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[44] Cf. VAN ZIJL 1972, 1974, 1975; DE MOOR – SPRONK 1984; CAQUOT 1988 DIETRICH – LORETZ 1988, 336–9; CAQUOT 1989, 61–70; DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 251–5 = 1999, 373–9.

[45] Cf. PITARD 1998; DE MOOR 1987, 181–2 assumes that this text was part of an incantation.

[46] CAQUOT 1989, 28–30 states that *tnn* is the key term of the text, but he ignores the fact that for this interpretation the text has to be changed.

- Serpents (lines 6 and 35), who are the prime object of another Ugaritic incantation (KTU 1.100 = RS 24.244 and KTU 1.107 = RS 24.251+; see below).
- Creatures of Horon (line 13). This reading is uncertain, but the name of Horon, who is the lord of the demons, returns in lines 27 and 41. Horon is mentioned in the legend of Keret as a threatening power in a curse: 'may Horon break your head' (KTU 1.16 = 3.325+ vi 56–7; this phrase can also be restored in the broken text KTU 1.2 = RS 3.367 i 7–8). In the Ugaritic incantations Horon plays an ambivalent role: on the one hand he is a fearful threat, on the other hand he can be called upon to take the demonic threat away (cf. KTU 1.100 and KTU 1.169).
- In the second part of the text the evil forces are indicated more 'poetically' as 'creatures of agitation' (lines 18 and 41), 'creatures of insanity' (line 18), 'sons of disease (or: terror)' (line 23), 'legions(?)' (line 26; cf. Mark 5:9), 'flies (or: accusers)' (line 26), 'those of the flood(?)' (line 27), 'stupor(?)' (line 28), 'the fugitive' (line 38; cf. KTU 1.5 = RS 2.[022]+ i 1, where it is used as epithet of a sea-monster related to Yam).

It is not clear what is precisely the nature of the distress caused by these evil forces. In the first lines there seems to be reference to problems of a girl with her menstruation, that is with her fertility. The names of the demons in the second part of the text point in more general terms to disease and insanity. What is clear is that these evil forces have to be driven out (*grš*, lines 12 and 40; see also KTU 1.169:9) or have to be bound (*rky*, lines 10 and 38). Both verbs are common terms in this genre.

For the place of this and other incantations within the religion of Ugarit it is important to note the close relation with the myth of Baal. The battle described there of Baal and Anat, supported by Shapash, against Yam, Mot and their helpers does not appear to be something from a distant past. It has its repercussions on daily human life. The victory over the forces of evil has to be gained time and again.

As was remarked above, Horon takes a central place in KTU 1.100 = RS 24.244.[47] Fortunately, this text is well-preserved. It is in itself not

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[47] See on this text especially the elaborate study of PARDEE 1988, 193–226, with references to previous studies. Cf. also DE MOOR 1987, 146–56; DIETRICH – LORETZ

a pure incantation, but can be classified as a ritual in mythological form. It contains, however, a number of brief incantations indicated as *mnt*. The text tells of a mare, 'the mother of the stallion'. She is probably a goddess acting on behalf of her worshippers. We are told that she seeks support from the great deities of the Ugaritic pantheon against venomous serpents. The sun-goddess Shapash is indicated as her mother and acts as an intermediary. Each request ends with the same incantation in order to charm (*lḥš*; cf. the use of Akkadian *laḥāšu*, 'to whisper', together with *šiptu*, 'incantation',[48] and the use of Hebrew *lḥš*, specifically related to the charming of snakes in Jer. 8:17; Ps. 58:5–6; Qoh. 10:11; and Sir. 12:13), expel (*ydy*) and bind (*yṯq*) the snake and its poison. Apparently, this incantation was repeated eleven times, each time on the basis of another authority. The twelfth, Horon, responds in a different way. With a magical rite, using among other things a tamarisk and 'the tree of death', he succeeds in letting the poison 'become weak and flow away'. This climax of the text is, as is appropriate in magic texts, described with a number of puns.[49] The text ends with a dialogue between a groom and a bride; apparently these are Horon and the 'mother of the stallion'. They speak about marriage with the serpents (a phallic symbol?) as bride-price.

A clearly related text is KTU 1.107 = RS 24.251+.[50] Here the snake is called 'devourer', a common designation of demons (lines 10 and 20).[51] In the more elaborate mythological part of the text Shapash plays a more active role.[52]

There can be no doubt about Horon being viewed here in a positive way, be it that he is clearly not the first choice. The eleven incantations preceding the final invocation seem to be meant to show that no other choice was left than to go to Horon's 'fortress', probably an indication of his hardly accessible residence in the nether-

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1988, 345–0; Levine – de Tarragon 1988; Caquot 1989, 79 -94; Pardee 1997a and Wyatt 1998c, 378–87.

[48] Cf. *CAD* Š, III, 90, s.v. *šiptu* A.e.3'.

[49] Cf. Greaves 1994 and Pardee 1997a, 298, n. 26. See on this phenomenon in Mesopotamian incantations Farber 1986.

[50] Cf. Xella 1981, 241–0; Pardee 1988b, 227–56; and Caquot 1989, 95–100.

[51] Cf. de Moor 1981–2, 110. He refers, among other things, to the clear representation on a Phoenician amulet from Arslan Tash (seventh century BCE) of a demoniacal man-eater.

[52] On this part of the text and a number of resemblances with the story of the Garden of Eden according to the Hebrew Bible, see de Moor 1988b.

world. One can compare this to Jesus being accused of casting out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons (Mark 3.22).

It is also important to note the combination of myth, incantation, and ritual. This appears to be a common feature of the Ugaritic liturgy.

One of the new Ugaritic texts discovered in 1992 is the incantation RS 92.2014,[53] which is in many respects similar to KTU 1.100, KTU 1.107, and KTU 1.169. As in KTU 1.169 the offending evil force remains unnamed: *dy lyd'*, 'the one not known'. He is presented as a foaming snake and as a scorpion and is exorcised in a magic rite with 'bits of sacred wood'. This is reminiscent of the action taken by Horon against snakebite according to KTU 1.100 and KTU 1.107. In this way he prevents the serpent from coming up (*'ly*) and the scorpion from standing up (a new Ugaritic root *qnn*). The second part of the text (lines 8–13) is an incantation against *dbbm* and *kšpm*. These words are also used in KTU 1.169. In RS 92.2014 they are mentioned next to *rš'*, 'the evil man' and *bn nšm*, 'son of man', which seems to be an indication of all possible men. The incantation is directed against any evil word spoken: 'may they pour it to the earth'.

The incantation is dedicated to Urtenu, the holder of the archive to which this tablet belongs: 'for his body (*gb*), for his members (*tmnt*)'. These two words also occur in KTU 1.169:5–6. The incantation has a function in securing the physical well-being of Urtenu.

One final text to be mentioned within this framework of independent incantations is KTU 1.96 = RS 22.225. This is usually interpreted as a short mythological text about Anat literally or, what seems to be more likely, figuratively devouring Baal.[54] The reference to Anat was found in the first word of the tablet. New collations, however, show that the first letters are *'nn*, not *'nt*.[55] In the first edition of KTU it was suggested that *'nn* is a scribal error for *'nt*, but in the second edition this 'rectification' was left out. A number of scholars now suggest that *'nn* is related to the repeated reference to

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[53] It is briefly described by BORDREUIL – PARDEE 1995, 28 and 31; a first translation was offered by PARDEE 1997a.

[54] Cf. DE MOOR 1987, 109–10; and ASTOUR 1988, with a survey of previous research.

[55] See now LEWIS 1996a, with excellent photographs and drawings.

ʿn, 'eye', in lines 5–13 and explain the text as an incantation against the evil eye.[56] This is a well-known object of incantations in Mesopotamia.[57] A clear example is also found in a later Phoenician incantation against 'the coming of the big eye' and with many other descriptions of the evil eye, just as in the second part of KTU 1.96.[58] Even more interesting within this comparison is that on the tablet of the Phoenician incantation we see a drawing of a demon devouring the one he attacks. In the heading the demon is called *mẓḥ*, 'sucker', namely of blood. This has a counterpart in KTU 1.96:4–5 which states that the demoniac power eats the flesh and drinks the blood of his victim.

5.4 *Conjuring up the spirits of the dead*

The demons to be driven out with the help of incantations are associated with death and the netherworld. As we have seen above, some of them are represented as helpers or satellites of Yam and Mot (cf. KTU 1.82 = RS 15.134:1, 5, 27, 38). It is very likely that as in Mesopotamia the people of Ugarit feared the influence of malign spirits of the dead.[59] From Mesopotamia we know many incantations with the object of expelling them. In Ugarit we hear more of their positive counterpart: invoking the dead to ask their advice and help.[60] This was also an act of veneration. By offering their sacrifices and honouring them by calling their names, they hoped to prevent hostilities from the dead towards the living.

The interpretation of the texts concerned is a matter of much dispute. According to some scholars there is not enough evidence to speak of a cult of the dead. In their view there was probably no more than a funerary cult intended to offer a good burial for the deceased, helping them on their way to the netherworld; which is to be clearly distinguished from any belief in supernatural power of

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[56] Cf. DEL OLMO LETE 1992a, 255–9 = 1999, 379–84, and 1992b; his interpretation is accepted by WATSON 1992b, 367, n. 5; WATSON 1994b, 237; LEWIS 1996a, 118 and WYATT 1998c, 375–7. The suffixed *-n* is usually explained as a deictic element, comparable to Hurrian *-ne*; cf. DIETRICH – LORETZ 1990a, 104.

[57] Cf. THOMSEN 1992.

[58] On this seventh century incantation from Arslan Tash see DE MOOR 1981–2, 111.

[59] Cf. BOTTÉRO 1983 and 1993.

[60] Cf. SPRONK 1986, 145–206 and LORETZ 1993, 287–30.

the dead.[61] This is not the place to enter that discussion. Many of these texts are already discussed elsewhere in this handbook. Within the present context the survey can be confined to the elements related to the incantation texts.

KTU 1.161 = RS 34.126[62] is a ritual text associated with the burial of a king of Ugarit. It reports the invocation of all possible ancestors, with many names of former kings, but also with more general indications such as 'rephaim of the earth' and 'rephaim of old'. Apparently, one was anxious not to forget any of the important deceased ancestors. This can be compared to a similar phenomenon in the 'Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty'[63] listing all spirits of the dead that are considered important to the well-being of the living king: the royal dead, the heroes and also the spirits who might become hostile, namely 'any dynasty which is not recorded on this tablet, and any soldier who fell while on his lord's service, princes, princesses, all humanity, from the east to the west, who have no one to care for them or to call their names'.[64] The idea behind this was that the dead who remained unnamed and uncared for could become a threat to the living. So especially the unknown spirits of the dead (cf. *dy lyd‘*, 'the unknown one' in RS 92.2014) were feared. Also the fact that in KTU 1.161 of the great gods only the sun-goddess Shapash is mentioned, is reminiscent of the incantations. She appears to be the most important intermediary between the living and the dead.

The Rephaim texts (KTU 1.20–22 = RS 3.348, 2.[019], 2.[024]), only partly preserved, seem to describe a similar invocation and actual gathering of the spirits of the dead. The state of the tablets hardly allows any conclusion on their function.[65] The relation with the legend of Aqhat suggests that the rephaim may have been called up by the father of Aqhat on the occasion of the burial of his son. The fact that the rephaim come together on the threshing floor may indicate that they could be of help in restoring the fertility which was lost at the death of Aqhat.

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[61] Cf. SCHMIDT 1994, 47–131 and PARDEE 1996a.
[62] See on this text especially BORDREUIL – PARDEE 1991, 151–63, and also the recent study of TSUMURA 1993. A survey of recent research can be found with LORETZ 1993, 296–300.
[63] Cf. FINKELSTEIN 1966.
[64] Cf. on this part of the text also LAMBERT 1968.
[65] Note the call for a 'minimalist' approach by PITARD 1992a and LEWIS 1996b.

KTU 1.108 = RS 24.252 can be regarded as an example of the belief in ancient Ugarit that the spirits of the dead could be invoked to help and bless the living.[66] Baal seems to be presented here as the first of the rephaim. Together with Baal and other gods these spirits of the dead enjoy a banquet presented to them in order to propitiate them.

In KTU 1.124 = RS 24.272 we may find another way in which the spirits of the dead could support the living.[67] Through a mediator they give precise advice on how to cure a sick child. If this interpretation is correct, it would offer a good illustration of the spirits of the dead acting according to the probable meaning of their name: *rp'um*, 'healers'.

5.5   *Elements of incantations in other texts*

We have already come across the phenomenon of incantations embedded in other texts. Some of these also deserve our attention.

KTU 1.13 = RS 1.006 is interpreted by Dietrich — Loretz as an incantation against infertility:[68] a hymn to Anat is followed by a prayer for fertility, which is answered by a mythological fragment about Anat and Baal solving a similar problem. In particular, the urgent call for supernatural assistance (lines 23–29) can be regarded as an incantation. Note also the special role in this context of 'messengers from heaven' (*ml'ak šmm*, lines 21–22). They belong to the class of divine beings who, standing in between humans and the great gods, often play a prominent role in incantations, either as helpers or as offenders.

A combination of myth and ritual can also be found in KTU 1.23 = RS 2.002. Although there is no consensus about the interpretation of this text, there can be no doubt about the relation to the question of fertility.[69] The text is associated by Dietrich — Loretz with the incantations because of its beginning: *'iqr'a*, 'I invoke (the

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[66] See for a survey of previous research on this 'Zankapfel der Ugaritologen' LORETZ 1993, 293–5; cf. also PARDEE 1988b, 75–118, and AVISHUR 1994, 277–307.

[67] See on this text DIETRICH — LORETZ 1990a, 205–40; LORETZ 1993, 289–93; and, for a different interpretation, PARDEE 1988b, 179–92.

[68] DIETRICH — LORETZ 1988b, 339–42 with a reconstruction of the ritual; cf. also DE MOOR 1980a. For a different interpretation see DEL OLMO LETE 1981b and MARGALIT 1995, 231–8.

[69] Cf. SEGERT 1985 and DE MOOR 1987, 117–8.

gracious gods)'. In their opinion it is an incantation against malign forces of nature.[70] Also the part of the text dealing with *mt w šr*, 'death and evil' (lines 8–11) resembles the incantations; in particular the reference to the binding (*smd*, line 10) of the demon-like god points in this direction.

KTU 1.114 = RS 24.258 is labelled by Dietrich – Loretz as an incantation for the medical treatment of drunkenness.[71] The text describes El drinking himself nearly to death and two goddesses finding a remedy to cure his sickness. The remedy seems to be described in the last lines as a recipe for humans with the same problem.[72] This and similar texts (cf. KTU 1.23; KTU 1.100; KTU 1.107) can teach us something about the use of myths in the daily life of ancient Ugarit. Apparently, it was believed that reciting the right story on the right occasion, combining it with the right prayer and cultic acts, had magical power. Interpreted in this way, KTU 1.114 is related to 'pure' incantations. To this can be added that in lines 19–20 we hear of a demon-like figure threatening El in his drunkenness (lines 19–20). This *hby* is described as 'the one with two horns and a tail'. The name itself can be translated as 'crawler' and seems to refer to a scorpion.[73] In Ugaritic incantations this is a common indication of the evil force to be expelled.

In the myth about the moon-god Yarikh obtaining his bride Nikkal (KTU 1.24 = RS 5.194) we find some elements related to the incantations in the second section of the text (lines 40–50), which is separated from the rest of the text by a horizontal line. It concerns a hymn to goddesses called the Kathirat, daughters of the new moon Hilal. They are described as birds settling down on the trees. The singer calls them by their names, stating that 'their list' (*mnthn*; cf. the use of *mnt* in KTU 1.82:20 and KTU 1.100) is on his lips. According to this text the Kathirat can be regarded as lower goddesses who are especially related to marital affairs. Their status is comparable to that of demons and (deified) spirits of the dead, who just like the Kathirat, are often compared to birds.[74] Calling their

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[70] Dietrich – Loretz 1988b, 350–7.
[71] Dietrich – Loretz 1988b, 342–5; cf. also Pardee 1988b, 13 74; Pardee 1997a; and Cathcart 1996; Wyatt 1998c, 404–13.
[72] Cf. Watson 1990a.
[73] Cf. Cathcart 1996, 5.
[74] Cf. Spronk 1986, 100.

names at the end of the myth about a divine wedding probably functioned as a way to invoke their blessings on the occasion of a human wedding.

For the sake of completeness another two texts deserve some attention. In the second edition of KTU the genre of tablet 1.86 = RS 18.041 is indicated as 'myth?, ritual?, incantation?'.[75] Recently, it has been demonstrated that it is likely that we are dealing here with a hippiatric text about breeding.[76]

KTU 1.93 = RS 19.054 is listed by de Moor among the incantations, interpreting it as a prayer to Anat for help in reciting his incantation properly, that is, without stammering.[77] If this interpretation of the short and damaged text is correct,[78] then it would illustrate the importance of incantations in the religious life of the people of Ugarit.

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[75] *KTU*², 106.
[76] Cf. DEL OLMO LETE -- MÁRQUEZ ROWE 1995.
[77] DE MOOR 1987, 186-7.
[78] For other interpretations see CAQUOT 1989, 37-9 and the literature listed there.