

The Structural Analysis of Biblical and Canaanite Poetry

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THE LEGEND OF KIRTU (KTU 1.14-16)

A Study of the Structure and its Consequences for Interpretation

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This well-known Ugaritic text describing the adventures of king Kirtu can be classified as epic poetry.¹ As far as its literary form is concerned, this can be determined from the fact that the text is built up of cola. Ilimilku, the writer responsible for the written form of the text, apparently attempted to adhere to the colometric divisions wherever possible, as is evident from the high degree of conformity between the cola and the physical lines on the tablet. Additional indications of poetic structure are also clearly evident.² Higher poetic units such as strophes, canticles and cantos are discernible.³ This in turn raises the question whether a clear structure has been placed upon these units when taken together, and if so, whether the poet employed the usual means of external parallelism and uniformity of structure. Research into the poetic structure of the book of Ruth has produced positive answers to similar questions.⁴ It has been demonstrated there that a number of cantos taken together can form a clearly delineated unit (or chapter), and that the division of the chapters into smaller units proceeds according to a uniform pattern.

A study of the larger literary units within the legend of Kirtu is seriously impeded by the badly damaged condition of tablets KTU 1.15 and 1.16. Furthermore, we must take into account that at least one tablet is missing.⁵ Fortunately the opening portion of the legend is well preserved. And it is probable that literary principles with respect to form and structure of the higher poetic units established on the basis of a study of this section will supply clues for the reconstruction of lost portions

1 W.G.E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*. A Guide to its Techniques (JSOTS; Sheffield, 1986²) 85.

2 Watson: 1986 gives many examples of this.

3 J.C. de Moor, *UF* 10 (1978) 190-191, 202-205.

4 J.C. de Moor, *Or* 53 (1984) 262-283 and 55 (1986) 16-46.

5 J.C.L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh, 1978) 20.

of the legend.

The scope of this study, with its focus upon literary structure, does not permit discussion of philological problems.⁶ Similarly, the limited length of this article does not allow for a complete reproduction of the text itself. The divisions of the text as here treated are based upon the colometry found in some recently published textbooks of religious Ugaritic literature.⁷ In this article we are necessarily limited to a brief description of the content of each canticle, followed by a statistical summary of the strophes, verses and cola.

Chapter 1

Canto 1 (KTU 1.14:I.2-II.9)

Kirtu laments his childlessness, and is approached in this connection by Ilu.

Determination of the boundaries of this canto affords little problem. There can be no doubt about the beginning, and the termination too leaves little room for doubt because *KTU* 1.14:II.9 marks the beginning of Ilu's monologue, which has been demonstrated in a previous study to be a uniformly structured canto.⁸

Canticle 1 (*KTU* 1.14:I.2-21) describes Kirtu's dire circumstances; he had seven wives but not one of them produced children. Unfortunately the opening lines of the text are damaged. Consequently it is not possible to determine whether the first canticle consisted of four or five strophes. Of the final three strophes, the first consists of two bicola, the second consists of one bicolon, and the final strophe contains three bicola and one tricolon, producing the statistical scheme:

6 See J.O. de Moor-K. Spronk, 'Problematical Passages in the Legend of Kirtu', *UF* 14 (1982) 153-190.

7 J.O. de Moor-K. Spronk, *A Cuneiform Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Semitic Study Series; New Series VI; Leiden, 1987) 78-101; J.O. de Moor, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (NISABA XVI; Leiden, 1987) 191-223. The colometrical divisions in these publications agree almost entirely with that of Gibson: 1978:82-102. For a delineation of the verses see the above mentioned translation by De Moor.

8 J.O. de Moor, *UF* 10 (1978) 202-204.

2+2/2/2+2+2+3.

Thus, the strophe concludes with a tricolon, which frequently marks the beginning, or as in this case the end, of a larger literary unit. This canticle is also characterized by frequent employment of numbers, by the external parallelism formed by *šb'* (l. 8 and 20), and by the qinah pattern in the last strophe.⁹

Canticle 2 (*KTU* 1.14:I.21–35) describes how Kirtu cries himself to sleep, heartsick because of his misfortune. Division into smaller units follows the scheme 2/2/2/2+3/2+2. Characteristic here is the repeated emphasis upon Kirtu's mourning and the qinah pattern in the fourth strophe.

According to canticle 3 (*KTU* 1.14:I.35–50) Ilu appears to Kirtu in a dream and suggests that he should not set his demands too high, that he should rather enjoy those riches which are within his grasp. Schematic division: 3/2/2/2/2+2. In this case the tricolon marks the beginning of the larger unit.

Canticle 4 (*KTU* 1.14:I.50–II.9) forms the conclusion of the canto. It relates Kirtu's response in which he states his preference for sons rather than riches. The canto concludes by introducing Ilu's instructions to Kirtu which are elaborated in the following canto. Schematic division: 1/2+2/2/3. Note once again the position of the tricolon.

The decision to include this final strophe with the first canto might upon first glance appear to be debatable. But the suggested division is confirmed by the clear relationship between the tricolon here and the tricolon which heads the preceeding canticle. Both speak of Ilu's approach (*qrb*) to Kirtu, thereby embracing Ilu's proposal and Kirtu's response. Furthermore, it may be noted that the final strophe of the fourth canticle is connected with the second canticle by renewed mention of the mourning of Kirtu, as is also the case in the second strophe of the third canticle. Other clear examples of external parallelism in this canto include *bn(m)* (I.9 and II.4) and the repeated employment of numbers (in addition to the first canticle, mentioned earlier see I.30,48 and II.2). It is noteworthy that the transition from the one canticle to the next coincides with a

9 J.O. de Moor, in: Y. Avishur–J. Blau (eds.), *Studies in Bible and the Ancient Near East Presented to S.E. Loewenstamm* (Jerusalem, 1978) 136.

change of subject. The first canticle discusses Kirtu's situation, the second canticle describes Kirtu's reaction, the third focuses upon Ilu, and the final strophe once again calls attention to Kirtu. The tricolon mentioned above as forming the conclusion to the final canticle is an exception to this pattern. But a closer analysis will demonstrate that a larger unit more frequently ends with an indication of what is to follow in the next unit. Finally, it appears that there is a certain degree of balance to the number of strophes per canticle; they all consist of four or five strophes.

Canto 2 (KTU 1.14:II.9-III.51)

In this monologue by Ilu, Kirtu is instructed as to how he can win for himself Hariya, the daughter of Pubāla, king of Udimu. She is to bear offspring for him.

Canticle 1 (KTU 1.14:II.9-26). Kirtu must wash himself, make preparations for an offering, and then bring the offering in order thereby to summon the gods. Schematic division: $3/1/2+2+2/3/2+2$. Once again a tricolon marks the beginning. External parallelism is present in *ydk* (l. 10, 13 and 22) and *dbh* (l. 14, 18, 23 and 25). Note too the characteristic employment of verbs indicating coming and going, such as '*rb* (l. 12), '*ly* (l. 20) and *yrd* (l. 24).

Canticle 2 (KTU 1.14:II.26-III.1). Kirtu will mobilize a huge army in which all the subjects of state will participate. Schematic division: $1/2+2+3/2+2+2+2/2+2+3/2$. The transition from the first to the second canticle is marked by the reversal of movement (*yrd* [l. 26] in contrast to '*ly* [l. 20]), and by the shift from Ba'lu to Kirtu as subject of the verb depicting descent. As is the case with the first canticle in canto 1, this unit is characterized by repeated mention of numbers and by the verb *ys*' (l. 32, 34 and 47). Also striking is the neat symmetry by means of which the extensive, central strophe is particularly highlighted.

Canticle 3 (KTU 1.14:III.2-19) describes the journey to place the city Udimu under seige. Schematic division: $3/3/2+2+2/3+2/2+2+2$. A tricolon marks the beginning. A telling characteristic is the twofold mention of a seven day period. After the first week the people outside the city are attacked, and after the second the consequences of the siege are felt in the city itself.

Canticle 4 (KTU 1.14:III.19–32). Pubāla will suggest payment of tribute in exchange for Kirtu's departure. Schematic division: $2/1/2+2+1/2/2+2$. With respect to content this canticle differs from the preceding one by virtue of the fact that here it is Pubāla who speaks. This canticle, which is repeated a few times in the legend of Kirtu, is clearly marked as a unit via the presence of external parallelism, namely *krt* (l. 20, 26 and 28), *mlk* (l. 21 and 27), and by mention of various places of habitation, *mswn* (l. 21), *bt* (l. 27), *h̄r* (l. 28) and *'udm* (l. 30 and 31). Special mention of the fact that the first and last lines of the third strophe begin with *qh* is also warranted. The form of the unit is thereby so firmly established that when it is re-employed elsewhere it is kept unchanged, which stands in marked contrast to numerous other situations where the repetition of a given larger unit does show variation.

Canticle 5 (KTU 1.14:III.32–51). Kirtu will reject Pubāla's offer and demand Hariya instead. Schematic division: $1/2+2/3/2+2+2+2+2/2$. The fourth strophe is exceptional because of its length, which also serves to reinforce the great admiration which it expresses for Hariya. Clear indications of the formal unity of this strophe may be detected in the use of the relative *d* and in the divine names with which it begins and ends. In light of the content of the final strophe, which is a description of how Kirtu awakes, there appears to be little reason to join it to the preceding canticle. As was the case in the termination of the first canto, we have an indication here of a transition to the following major unit. The fact that this strophe does belong to what precedes it, as was also the case in canto 1, is made evident by external parallelism formed by *hlm* (l. 46 and 50), which is confirmed by the fact that the following lines describe the fulfilment of the instructions. Here Kirtu moves into action for the first time, thus marking a clear transition from the preceding section.

We may conclude that the second canto too forms a well-balanced structure. All of the canticles consist of five strophes. Furthermore, the canticles all demonstrate a similarity in composition; they all begin with a strophe consisting of a single verse. With respect to external parallelism within the canto, mention may be made of the repetition of Pubāla's offer (III.22–27) in Kirtu's response (III.33–37), and especially also the repeated mention of animals, *'irby* (II.50), *h̄sn* (III.1), the

animals in Udumu (III.16-19) and *sswm* (III.24 and 36).

Canto 3 (KTU 1.14:III.52-V.12)

Kirtu brings offerings and departs with his mighty army for Udumu to besiege the city. Along the way he makes a vow to Athiratu.

Canticle 1 (KTU 1.14:III.52-IV.8). Kirtu exercises the rituals as they were prescribed by Ilu in the first canticle of canto 2, which is here repeated virtually verbatim. Schematic division: 3/1/2+2+2/2/2+2. The canticle is slightly shorter than the canticle which it repeats; the first verse of the third strophe is a bicolon instead of a tricolon and the fourth strophe consists of a bicolon instead of a tricolon.

Canticle 2 (KTU 1.14:IV.8-31). Kirtu mobilizes a mighty army in accordance with his instructions. Everyone lends a hand. Schematic division: 1/2+2+3/2+2+2/2+2+3/2. Omission of the second verse of the third strophe once again produces a canticle somewhat briefer than the antecedent parallel (canticle 2 in canto 2).

Canticle 3 (KTU 1.14:IV.31-43). After three days journey Kirtu arrives at the sanctuary of Athiratu, where he makes a vow. Schematic division: 1/3/1/2/2+2. An inclusion is formed by *tn/lt* (I.32-33 and 42-43).

Canticle 4 (KTU 1.14:IV.44-V.12). The journey to, and seige of, Udumu. Schematic division: 2/3/2+2+2/3/2+2+2. The topic here is the fulfilment of the instructions detailed in canto 2, canticle 3.

The transition to the following canto is indicated by the shift from Kirtu to Pubāla as acting subject. *'apnk* (l. 12) clearly serves as a marker. The response of Pubāla is also more clearly introduced than was the case in the parallel passage of the second canto (KTU 1.14:III.19-20), where it does not stand at the beginning of a canto but rather at the beginning of a canticle in the middle of a canto.

An interesting detail is to be noted in the manner in which the conclusion of the third canto is reminiscent of the end of the second; Pubāla cannot sleep, while Kirtu awakes from his slumbers. The third canto repeats large portions of the previous canto, which provides the opportunity to compare the two, and

to observe the way in which the poet introduces new elements. The first striking feature is that in the repetition of previous material from the first two canticles, the poet handles a number of points more concisely here. It is only in the third canticle, where Kirtu's vow to Athiratu is discussed, that new information is added, thereby attracting special attention.

Canto 4 (KTU 1.14:V.12-1.15:I.20)*

As predicted Pubâla makes a proposal. Kirtu conveys the response that he is only willing to leave upon the condition that he should receive Hariya as his wife.

Canticle 1 (KTU 1.14:V.12-29). The text is regrettably damaged here, but it obviously gave a detailed introduction to the message conveyed by Pubâla to his servants. The estimated length agrees with the average number of lines per canticle in this canto.

Canticle 2 (KTU 1.14:V.29-45). Instructions are given to Pubâla's messengers. Kirtu is offered tribute. Schematic division: $2/2/2+2+1/2+1/2$. Repetition of canto 2, canticle 4. The major difference is that the previously brief introduction now appears to be expanded to form a self-contained canticle. Furthermore, in comparison with the previous canticle, the order of the last two strophes is reversed. It is striking that now both the first and the last strophe mention 'going/departing', which is probably the reason for the change of order.

Canticle 3 (KTU 1.14:VI.1*-15) narrates how the messengers deliver Pubâla's words to Kirtu. Schematic division: $1+2/1+1/2+2+1/2+2/2$. As in the previous canticle, an inclusion is formed by repetition of words for 'departure'.

Canticle 4 (KTU 1.14:VI.16-35) contains the by now familiar answer of Kirtu. Schematic division: $1/2+2/3/2+2+2+2$. Comparison with canticle 5 of canto 2, shows that the third verse of the last strophe, which praises Hariya, is here omitted.

Canticle 5 (KTU 1.14:VI.35-15:I.20*) relates the transmission of Kirtu's response. The damaged text is easily reconstructed by comparison with the parallel text. Schematic division: $1+2/1+2/2+2/3/2+2+2+2$.

Canto 4 is an elaboration of the final two canticles of the vision of Kirtu described in canto 2. The expanded introduction and

the double repetition help to produce a complete and balanced canticle. Characteristic of this canto are the repeated introductory formulas at the beginning of the canticles, with reference to the messengers. In this respect the particles 'apnk (V.12) and 'idk (V.29, VI.3* and 36) which function as formal markers of separation are noteworthy. Finally, an inclusion is created via mention of Pubāla's wife (V.13), which corresponds with the reference to Kirtu's future spouse at the end of the canto (I.15:I.9*).

Canto 5 (KTU 1.15:I.20—II.7)*

Although the major portion of this canto is lost, the content can be reconstructed with a fairly high degree of certainty. In view of what later follows we can conclude that Pubāla acquiesces to Kirtu's request, though it is difficult for him to do so, as is evident from the fragment *KTU* 1.15:I.1—17. Presumably Kirtu then summons the gods for the wedding festivities. The following canto is marked by 'apnk, as was the preceding one. This fifth canto would then span approximately 55 cola, which is relatively short but not impossible since the first canto is only slightly longer.

Canto 6 (KTU 1.15:II.8—III.19)

Kirtu coerces a blessing from Ilu, who in turn promises him many children but adds that the youngest will receive the rights of the firstborn.

Canticle 1 (*KTU* 1.15:II.8—20) describes how Kirtu coerces Ilu to bless him. Schematic division: 1+1/2/2/2+2/2+3. A tricolon marks the end of this canticle.

Canticles 2 and 3 (*KTU* 1.15:II.21—III.4). Hariya will bear two sons. Unfortunately the tablet here is damaged. But it is evident that canticle 2 begins with a tricolon. Furthermore, it is probable that the repeated lines praising Kirtu (*KTU* 1.15:III.2—4 and 13—15) are also employed in the lost portion because they can be viewed as a reaction to the announcement of the birth of one or more children. That is the case in canticle 4 after the announcement of the birth of six daughters. In canticles 2 and 3 that would also have been the case after the announcement of the birth of Yassubu as well as the birth of Iluha'u.

Canticle 4 (KTU 1.15:III.5-19) contains the promise that Hariya will bear Kirtu six daughters, of which the last will receive the birthright. Following the blessing the gods depart. Schematic division: $1/2+2+2/3/1/3$. As in the previous canticle, it is concluded with a tricolon.

Canto 6 is clearly a coherent unit. That is evident in the repeated praise of Kirtu, in the inclusion formed via mention of the arrival of the gods at the beginning (II.9) in correspondence with the notation of their departure at the end (III.17-18), and also in the multiple use of the verb *brk* (II.14,18,19 and III.17).

The number of strophes per canticle is consistent throughout, and like cantos 1 and 3 it is composed of 4 canticles. On closer inspection there appear to be more connections between canto 1 and canto 6. A considerable number of responsions are established, by which it is made evident that the blessing recounted in canto 6 is to be viewed as the solution to the grief so vividly depicted in the beginning. That is evident, among other things, in the repetition of the words *'att* (1.14:I.12, 14 and 1.15:II.21), *šb'/tmu* (1.14:I.8-9, 20 and 1.15:II.23-24).

All of these factors together create the impression that the first six cantos, with respect to content and structural considerations, form a complete and coherent unit, the first chapter. This is confirmed by detection of additional external parallelism within the six cantos, e.g., the summons of the gods, their coming and their departure in cantos 2-3 and 5-6, the use of *lqh* (1.14:I.45; II.13; III.22, 26 + parallel passages and 1.15:II.21-22), and *h̄zr* (1.14:III.29 + par. and 1.15:II.23). Finally, mention may be made of the frequent use of numbers, often consecutively in a row.

One important result of the study thus far is that it has given a fairly clear picture of the poet's methodology. His style is frugal. He makes frequent use of unicola, and a given topic is seldom handled extensively. He strives to attain a balanced structure at the level of the higher poetic units, and ordinarily he employs clear markers of separation to distinguish the larger units and their inter-connections. It is probable that the poet maintained this manner of working in the following sections. Unfortunately the clay tablets are often severely damaged from this point. But it may be hoped that the insights gained thus far with respect to the author's manner of writing will assist in the reconstruction of the text.

Chapter 2 (KTU 1.15:III.20–1.16:IV.?)

The contention that a new chapter begins here is confirmed by the fact that the same topic as in the beginning of the first chapter, is brought to discussion, namely the birth of children. However, while canto 1 depicted Kirtu's childlessness, now we are told how one wife bears eight children in seven years. Also noteworthy is that the role of Ilu is now taken over by Athiratu. This transition was already forecasted in canto 3. The central focus of this chapter is Kirtu's illness.

Canto 7 (KTU 1.15:III.20–IV.40?)

In outrage caused by Kirtu's negligence Athiratu curses him. The arrangements for his funeral must now already be regulated!

Canticle 1 (KTU 1.15:III.20–30). The promise of the gods is fulfilled. Hariya bears Kirtu eight children. Athiratu then reminds Kirtu of the unfulfilled vow to her, and begins to list the consequences. Schematic division: 2/3/2/1/1+2. External parallelism: *ndr* (l. 23, 26 and 29).

Canticle 2 is lost. Most likely it contained a curse directed at Kirtu. He will be plagued with a deathly sickness, and the land will also be subjected to suffering (cf. KTU 1.19:I; Aqhatu's death results in a severe famine). Thus, as in canto 6 it appears that a divine utterance follows after an extensive introduction spanning the length of a canticle. The form thereby also reflects the fact that cantos 6 and 7 stand as polar opposites.

Canticle 3 (KTU 1.15:IV.1?–13). Kirtu has to instruct his wife to prepare a meal and to invite guests. Most likely this is intended to be connected with his own imminent burial. Schematic division: 1?+1/1/2/2+2/2+2. The first line might possibly be reconstructed by comparison with the beginning of canto 4, canticle 1, by virtue of the agreement between KTU 1.15:IV.2–3 and 1.14:V.13–14. It is only the name of the one addressed that varies. The first line of this canticle could accordingly, by analogy to KTU 1.14:V.12–13, have read *'apnk krt ſ'*.

Canticle 4 (KTU 1.15:IV.14–25). Hariya will carry out her orders and the invited guests will come and eat. Schematic division: 1/2/2+2/3/2. A portion of the preceding canticle is repeated verbatim.

Canticle 5 is to a large extent lost. From the introductory strophe may be gleaned that here a description must have been given of Hariya making the reason for the meal clear to the guests.

That marks the termination of canto 7. The following canticle contains the execution of the orders and the fulfilment of what has been forecasted. We noticed a similar progression in the transition from canto 2 to canto 3. Canto 2 also dealt with the words of a god to Kirtu. But the role of Ilu is assumed in this canto by Athiratu, and the role of Pubāla is taken by the leaders of Khuburu, vassals of Kirtu.

Canto 8 (KTU 1.15.IV.41?–VI.15?)

This section describes how the instructions of Athiratu are executed; the vassals come to the banquet and hear the reason for their invitation. But instead of mourning for Kirtu the attention is actually given to his successor Yassubu, Kirtu's firstborn son.

Canticle 1 (*KTU 1.15.IV.41?–V.8*). The first part of this section has been lost. What is clear, however, is that what has been predicted takes place. The last two strophes, which describe the arrival of the guests and their participation at the banquet, employ the same words as are found in the last two strophes of canto 7, canticle 4.

Canticle 2 (*KTU 1.15.V.9–21*). Hariya announces the reason for the banquet and then ascertains that more attention is paid to the coming king than the departing one. Schematic division: 1/2/2+2+2/2/1. It is noteworthy here that the symmetric structure calls particular attention to the central strophe, in which it is stated that they assume that Kirtu is as good as dead.

Canticle 3 (*KTU 1.15.V.21–?*). Kirtu points out the dangers involved in the appointment of a young king. May Ilu spare them from such a person! Schematic division: 1/1/3/2+?/??. Although the final portion is missing, once again the emphasis seems to fall upon the middle strophe, conspicuous because of its length. Here the dangers of a young king for the populace, and especially for the women, is described.

Regrettably the remainder of the canto is only fragmentarily represented in the few preserved lines of *KTU 1.15.VI*.

Nevertheless, it can be concluded from these lines that apparently no significant change took place in the attitude of the guests; Hariya's rebuke is repeated nearly verbatim (l. 4ff.). It is likely that a new canticle begins with the opening words *u't'n mft hry* (l. 3). This is probably the fifth canticle. It is possible that this canticle ended, as attested more frequently in this text, with a transition to the ensuing canto, in this case by means of an announcement of the arrival of Kirtu's children.

It is tenable to conclude that canto 8 too consisted of five cantos. The inclusion mentioned above places primary emphasis upon Hariya's discourse in the third canticle. Comparison of this canticle with its parallel in canto 3 in the first chapter reveals a number of significant correspondences. Canto 3 centers primary attention upon the vow to Athiratu in the hope of attaining descendants (canticle 3). The fact that this vow entails an exaggerated responsibility for Kirtu himself is already predictive of his imminent jeopardy. Canto 8 once again focuses upon the question of offspring, but now in fear of the danger which can accompany the arrival of the firstborn. The poet later returns again to this theme. Also noteworthy is the exchange of roles between Athiratu and Ilu. In canto 3 hope is invested in Athiratu while Ilu occupies a central position throughout the chapter. But in canto 8 hope is placed in Ilu, in a chapter in which Athiratu is predominant.

Finally, it is significant that Kirtu's caveat concerning his son is strongly reminiscent of the early stages of his own rule as that is described at the beginning of this legend, which is also expressed in the repetition of the words *mlk*, *'aft* and the name Khuburu.

Canto 9 (KTU 1.15:VI.16?—1.16:I.23)

The opening portion of this canto is not preserved. Presumably, in contrast to the reaction of the vassals, the appropriate mourning of Kirtu's children, with the exception of his eldest, is here described. The transition to canto 10 is marked by a change of grammatical subject; from Kirtu's children to Kirtu (cf. the transition from the third to the fourth canto). The preceding canticle is recognizable as the concluding canticle of canto 9 by virtue of its introduction of a new situation, namely that Iluha'u approaches his father. That this canticle must be included with what precedes it can be deduced from the fact that it repeats large portions from there. In light of the

assumed number of lines which have been lost, the portion which has been preserved likely constitutes the fourth and fifth canticle.

Canticle 4 (*KTU* 1.16:VI.?-1.16:I.11) contains the mournful words of Kirtu's children. Schematic division: $7/2/3/2+2/2$. We are concerned here with a portion which is repeated almost verbatim in a few other instances (cf. 1.16:I.14-23 and II.36-49). It is striking that it is precisely here that a higher than average frequency of external parallelism may be detected. It concerns the various references to places of habitation, *bī* (l. 2), *hāt* (l. 3 and 4; in antithetic parallelism with *erry*, l. 5), *hī* (l. 7 and 8), as well as the many references to the gods, *b'ī* (l. 6), *spn* (l. 7), *'il* (l. 10), *ltpn* (l. 11) and *qdš* (l. 11).

Canticle 5 (*KTU* 1.16:I.11-23). Iluha'u comes to his father and laments for him. Schematic division: $3/2/2/3/2+2$. The preceding canticle finds virtually literal repetition. But one strophe is left out, and by contrast, the final strophe is expanded by one bicolon. An expansion of this sort often signifies the end of a larger literary unit.

Canto 10 (KTU 1.16:I.24-III.16)

Kirtu charges Iluha'u to locate his youngest sister to request her to bring an offering for her father. Iluha'u carries out this charge.

Canticle 1 (*KTU* 1.16:I.24-38). Kirtu sends his son to Thatmanatu. Schematic division: $1/2+2/3/2+2/2+2$. Emphasis falls upon the middle strophe, in which Kirtu states that it is his youngest daughter who cares most for him. The circumspect manner in which he approaches her demonstrates that the feelings are mutual.

Canticle 2 (*KTU* 1.16:I.38-45). Iluha'u has to inform Thatmanatu of Kirtu's present situation and request her to bring an offering in mourning for her father. Schematic division: $1/2/2/1/2$. The canticle is conspicuously brief, and concerns terse but hefty requests. Inclusion is formed by mention of an offering in the second and the fifth strophe. The time stipulated in the preceding canticle for the rendezvous (at night), and the offering here specified (gold and silver), are reminiscent of the vow to Athiratu in canto 3, canticle 3. The hint of a possibility to yet pay the debt is thereby raised.

Canticle 3 (*KTU* 1.16:I.46-55). Iluha'u goes and meets Thatmanatu. Schematic division: $1+2/1/1/2+2/2$. Characteristic is the external parallelism established by *ab(t)* (l. 51, 53 and 55) and the inclusion formed by mention of mourning in l. 47-48 and l. 55.

Canticle 4 (*KTU* 1.16:I.56-II.2?). In response to Thatmanatu's question Iluha'u relates Kirtu's illness and his request. Schematic division: $2/1/2/2/2?$

In canticle 5 (*KTU* 1.16:II.2?-16) the charge is further carried out and mention is also made that Thatmanatu is caring for her father. This transition marks the end of the canto. The termination of the canto receives extra emphasis via employment of an extra long verse, the tricolon. Just as canto 9 ended with the announcement of Iluha'u's arrival at his father, so too canto 10 concludes with Thatmanatu's coming to visit Kirtu.

Canto 11 (*KTU* 1.16:II.17-?).

Thatmanatu utters grief-stricken lament for her father. Upon approaching him, he charges her with a particular duty.

Canticle 1 (*KTU* 1.16:II.17-25). In response to her inquiries Iluha'u informs his sister of the seriousness of Kirtu's illness. Schematic division: $1/1/2/1/2+2$. The conclusion of the canticle is indicated by the relatively lengthy final strophe. Characteristic is the external parallelism generated by *mrs/dw* (l. 19-20 and 22-23).

Canticle 2 (*KTU* 1.16:II.25-36) describes Thatmanatu's bitter mourning. Schematic division: $2/2/2/2+2+2$. Once again the end of the canticle is indicated by the lengthy final strophe. The extreme imbalance within the canticle can be associated with its content. An obvious inclusion is formed by the elaboration in the final strophe of elements introduced in the first strophe.

Canticle 3 (*KTU* 1.16:II.36-49) is a somewhat modified repetition of the complaint of Kirtu's children mentioned already in canto 9, canticles 4 and 5. Schematic division: $2/2/3/2/2+2/2$. It is noteworthy that while the preceding canticle, since it consists of four strophes, is one strophe short of the usual number of strophes per canticle, this canticle, with six strophes, has one extra. We could compare this to the phenomenon of the qinah pattern which also occurs intermittently in this text at the level of the verses.

In canticle 4 is stated that Thatmanatu visits her father. She likely expresses her complaint, as was previously done by Iluha'u at the end of canto 9. Whether that also marks the end of the canto here is not possible to determine with certainty. We may assume, however, that Thatmanatu also receives a commission. This results in the termination of the famine which was connected with Kirtu's illness. All of this is likely taken up in the description which ensues in the following canto.

Canto 12

Merely a fragment is preserved (*KTU* 1.16.III.1-17). On the basis of what preceded, it is logical to conclude that this canto corresponds with canto 10. Both canto 11 and canto 9 are elaborate introductions to the formulation of a particular charge, along with its execution, which are narrated in the following canto. Accordingly, in canto 12 the charge is given to Thatmanatu. She too, like Iluha'u previously, would have to enlist the assistance of a third party. In the fragment which is preserved we are told how the third party, with recourse to magical actions, is able to bring back the rain. That results in a partial retraction of Athiratu's curse. We may assume that this marks the end of another chapter. As in the first chapter it begins with a problem and concludes with the mention of a possible solution. The enactment of that solution follows in the subsequent chapter.

A formal or structural justification of the supposed divisions in chapter 2 is hampered by the damaged state of the tablets. But what is noteworthy in this respect is that chapter 2 differs from the other chapters by virtue of the repeated mention of mourning, and in the detail that here it is people rather than gods who are assembled.

Chapter 3

Canto 13 (KTU 1.16:IV.?-V.9)

Virtually nothing remains of this canto. Nevertheless, from what follows we can determine that here a request is made to assemble the gods. According to *KTU* 1.16:IV.1-16 that takes place in the same manner as the vassals of Kirtu were summoned in canto 7. In canto 7 Athiratu charges Kirtu to

have Hariya summon the vassals. In canto 13 it appears to be Ba'lu who orders Ilu to instruct Ilishu to assemble the gods. Another notable parallel with canto 2 is evident in the need for Ilishu to go onto the roof (*KTU* 1.16:IV.14). According to *KTU* 1.14:II.20-22 Kirtu must do likewise to summon the gods. To an extent the same words are employed. In this manner the beginning of the third chapter is connected with the beginning of both the second and the first chapter. It is probable that canto 13 ended with a description of the arrival of the gods, at which time Athiratu would be promised the reward which Kirtu had vowed to give. This too is reminiscent of the commencement of the second chapter (cf. canto 7, canticle 1). It was already foreshadowed by mention of a comparable offering from Thatmanatu to her god, likely Ba'lu (cf. canto 10, canticle 2). All obstacles to Kirtu's healing are thereby removed.

Canto 14 (KTU 1.16:V.9-VI.14)

Ilu takes personal charge of the healing of Kirtu. He creates Sha'tiqtu, who in turn dispels death from Kirtu.

Canticle 1 (*KTU* 1.16:V.9-22). Seven times Ilu asks in vain whether one of the gods will dispel Kirtu's sickness. Schematic division: $1/2+1/1+2+1/1+2+1/1+2+1$. This canticle is characterized by the seven motif which has also been employed a couple of times in the first chapter (canto 1, canticle 5 and canto 2, canticle 3).

Canticle 2 (*KTU* 1.16:V.23-38). Ilu takes the responsibility upon himself and out of clay creates a healer. Schematic division: $1/2/3/2+3/?$. Characteristic of this canticle are the various verbs referring to creating and forming.

Canticle 3 (*KTU* 1.16:V.39-5?). Ilu gives Sha'tiqtu the power and the charge to heal Kirtu. Schematic division $2/3/2/3/?$. External parallelism: *yd* (l. 39 and 44).

Canticle 4 is mostly lost, with only the end preserved. Apparently Ilu's charge to Sha'tiqtu ends here with the prediction that he will triumph over death.

Canticle 5 (*KTU* 1.16:VI.2-14). Sha'tiqtu heals Kirtu. Schematic division: $2/2/2/3+2/2$. The last strophe corresponds with that of the preceding canticle. An inclusion is formed by the name Sha'tiqtu in l. 2 and l. 13.

The entire canto is typified by the repetition of the words *mrs/zbl* in canticle 1 and in V.27-28, 31, 42-43, 50-51 and VI.9.

Canto 15 (KTU 1.16:VI.15-?)

Physically restored, Kirtu once again assumes his position as king. His oldest son, Yassubu, appears and demands the throne. Kirtu curses him.

Canticle 1 (*KTU 1.16:VI.15-21*). Kirtu charges Hariya to prepare a meal. She complies and Kirtu dines. Schematic division: 2/1/2/1/2.

Canticle 2 (*KTU 1.16:VI.21-29*). Kirtu reigns once again. Yassubu approaches, and his soul induces him to speak. Schematic division: 1/3/1/1/3. The tricola determine the emphasis upon Kirtu's rule and Yassubu's approach. The final tricolon also serves to indicate the end of the canticle.

Canticle 3 (*KTU 1.16:VI.29-40*). Yassubu must demand the kingship from his father because Kirtu has become too weak. Schematic division: 1/2+1+2/2/2/2. The extra-long second strophe describes Kirtu's shortcomings as king.

Canticle 4 (*KTU 1.16:VI.40-54*). Yassubu relays what his soul tells him. Schematic division: 1/2/2+1+3+2/2/2. The imputations concerning Kirtu's deficiencies as king receive further expansion here; the last bicolon is expanded into a tricolon and a bicolon is added.

Canticle 5 (*KTU 1.16:VI.54-?*). Kirtu answers with a curse. Schematic division: 1/3/2+?. The text breaks off here. Canto 5 probably ends with this extensive curse upon Yassubu.

This once again brings a blemish upon what appeared to turn out so well. This repeats what happened in chapter 2. Joy initiated by the fulfilment of Ilu's promise is tempered by Athiratu curse. The first hint of this was already alluded in chapter 1. Kirtu's curse of his son accordingly casts a shadow over his own healing. Nor does this come entirely unexpected when one observes Kirtu's thoughts concerning his son expressed already in canto 8, canticle 3.

The logical conclusion to all of this would seem to be that Kirtu's curse would not go without effect. In this way he loses the son for whom he had longed so desperately (canto 16?). In

light of Ilu's prophecy that the youngest will become the firstborn (*KTU* 1.15:III.16) we must assume that Iluha'u and the five oldest daughters also die by one means or another (canto 17?) leaving Thatmanatu to take the throne of her father (canto 18?). That concludes the third chapter, and likewise the entire legend of Kirtu.

Accordingly, it is quite possible that the third chapter also consisted of six cantos. Unfortunately the damaged state of the texts and the absence of the last tablet make it difficult to undergird the asserted inner cohesion of the chapter with arguments based upon form and structure. Support for the threefold division of the text is provided, however, by the fact that the third canticle draws undeniable correlations with the first chapter. Both chapters summon the gods (chapter 2 by contrast has people assemble), Ilu stands central (compared to Athiratu in chapter 2), Kirtu's kingship is in question (*mlk/drkt* in *KTU* 1.14:I.41-42 and 1.16:VI.37-38; in contrast to the kingship of Yassubu in *KTU* 1.15:V), and the seven motif is employed.

Conclusion

Our closer investigation confirmed the previously made assumption that the writer of these texts worked a deliberate structure into the arrangement of his story. The entire legend is arranged in three chapters written in a similar manner, with the first and last having a special correspondence. The structure is very uniform; the chapters all appear to consist of 6 cantos, and the cantos consist almost exclusively of 5 strophes.

The style is rather sober when compared, e.g., with myth the Ba'lu, though this was written by the same hand. The strophes are often very brief and external parallelism is minimal. What is striking is that the few portions which do contain a more detailed description are often repeated one or more times in nearly verbatim form. Examples of this are the offer of riches to Kirtu (*KTU* 1.14:III.22-27 + par.), the preparations for the army's departure (*KTU* 1.14:II.27-50 + par.), the description of Hariya (*KTU* 1.14:III.38-49 + par.), the complaint of Kirtu's children (*KTU* 1.16:I.2-11 + par.) and the description of Kirtu's deficiency as king (*KTU* 1.16:VI.30-34.43-50). Whether the lengthy complaint of Thatmanatu (*KTU* 1.16:II.25-36) is repeated cannot be determined with certainty. It is also noteworthy that

all of these repetitions take place within the same chapter.

The difference of the above mentioned segments in comparison to the rest of the text with regard to style, and the exceptional place that they are given, is suggestive that they are traditional, established phrases which the poet has reworked in his edition of the story.

The results of this study also produce greater clarity with respect to major and minor emphases in the legend. To begin with, the story of Kirtu focuses upon his succession. That is where it begins, and that is likely also where it ends. The manner in which it ends is foreshadowed by Ilu's blessing at the end of the first chapter; Kirtu will receive offspring, but the youngest will be the firstborn (*KTU* 1.15:III.16). The youngest is Kirtu's eighth child. The writer seems to play upon this conclusion with the frequent employment of the parallelism 'seven'/'eight', and in the seven motif of the first and last chapter.

In the Old Testament too there appear to be examples of the eighth child receiving the rights of the firstborn.¹⁰ Another interesting parallel is found in the Sumerian myth 'Enki and Ninhursag', situated in Dilmun, which is also the focus of its description. The text concludes with a summary of the eight children of Enki and Ninhursag. The eighth one, Enshag, becomes king of Dilmun.¹¹ This emphasis upon the eighth member in the genealogy could refer to an important transition; once the unit seven is complete something totally new begins.¹²

10 See in this respect *UF* 14 (1982) 176. In addition to the examples given there of David (cf. 1 Sam. 16:10) and Solomon (cf. 2 Sam. 3 and 12), mention may also be made of Joseph in light of the fact that he was Jacob's eighth child, not counting the children of the concubines (cf. Gen. 30:20-24), and is exalted as the one 'chosen above his brothers' (Gen. 49:26). Isaac too can be added to this list. From Gen. 25:1-15 can be deduced that Isaac was Abraham's eighth child (cf. the observation by W. Zimmerli, *1. Mose 12-25: Abraham* [ZB 1.2; Zürich, 1976] 136, that the list of six sons from Keturah actually belongs in the period prior to the birth of Ishmael and Isaac).

11 See *ANET* 41 and B. Alster, in: D.T. Potts (ed.), *Dilmun: New Studies in the Archaeology and Early History of Bahrain* (Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient, Band 2; Berlin, 1983) 52-65.

12 For this meaning of the number eight see W.E. Filmer, *Cod Counts: A*

In addition to this central concern, each chapter entertains a separate theme, introduced in each case by a new problem. Chapter 1, Kirtu's childlessness; chapter 2, Kirtu's illness; chapter 3, Kirtu's disagreement with his firstborn. The progression is always such that a chapter ends with an initial indication of the solution to the problem. The following chapter then begins with an extensive description of the solution of the problem, followed by the arising of a new difficulty. This too is often forecasted already in the preceding chapter (e.g., the vow to Athiratu in chapter 1, and the appearance of Yassubu in chapter 2). A similar observation is valid with respect to the solutions to the problems (e.g., the offering of Thatmanatu in chapter 2 which foreshadows the settlement of Kirtu's debt to Athiratu at the outset of chapter 3).

It is possible to compare the structure of the legend of Kirtu with that of the Book of Ruth. The central theme of this Biblical book is similarly the problem of the continuation of the family name. This is jeopardized by the premature death of Elimelek and his sons, as delineated at the outset. The book ends with the solution, Ruth bore a son 'to Naomi'. In each of the chapters, which in themselves constitute a self-contained literary unit,¹³ a secondary problem is raised and then in principle is solved again. In chapter 1, the famine; in chapter 2, the question of whether anyone in Naomi's family will become involved in her plight; in chapter 3, the question of whether Boaz will marry Ruth; and finally, in chapter 4, the problem of Boaz's potential to act as kinsman redeemer.

Comparison with the Book of Ruth also calls attention to the great difference between the role of the God of Israel and the role of the gods in the legend of Kirtu.¹⁴ That too is made evident in the structure of the story. In the first chapter Ilu arises as Kirtu's helper. In the second chapter Athiratu turns against Kirtu, while in the third chapter Ilu finally comes to Kirtu's assistance once again. Thus, the gods work against each other, as is also evident in the unwillingness of any of the gods to assist in the healing of Kirtu. Furthermore, Ilu's assistance appears to be half-hearted. He must continually be urged on by

Study in Bible Numbers (Croydon, Surrey, 1947) 20-21.

¹³ See the articles by De Moor mentioned in n. 4 above.

¹⁴ Cf. J.C. de Moor, *OTS* XXIV (1986) 14.

another god. An his blessing is darkened by the foreshadowing of what will happen with respect to the birthright of the firstborn. Man appears to be a victim of the capricious gods. On the other hand, sometimes it seems possible to coerce things from the gods, which often results in playing off the one god against the other. Ultimately, however, man is unable to rise above his fate in life; no sooner had Kirtu disentangled himself from the curse of his childlessness (chapter 1), and the illness deriving from Athiratu's curse (chapter 2), than he finds himself forced to utter a curse which reinstates the original problem (chapter 3).

The results attained from a structural study of the legend of Kirtu inspire admiration for the technical expertise of the poet, but consternation concerning the negative view upon life pervading his beautiful artistry.