

## DEUTERONOMY AND UGARITIC STUDIES\*

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The discovery of the Ugaritic texts proved to be of great importance for Old Testament Studies. During the last forty-five years, as the first texts have been studied in detail and as new discoveries have been made, more and more light has been brought to bear upon difficulties and obscurities contained in the Hebrew text. But, as is often the case, there has been a tendency in the wake of new discoveries to overestimate their importance and to go to extremes in their application in comparative studies. There have been recently renewed warnings concerning the danger of “pan-Ugaritism”;<sup>1</sup> the purpose of the present paper is to assess that danger on a very limited basis.<sup>2</sup> A number of topics in Deuteronomy, which have been discussed in the light of Ugaritic Studies, are examined critically in this paper, and some provisional conclusions will be drawn as a result of the investigations. In no sense, however, is this paper to be taken as a comprehensive evaluation of all the parallels proposed between the Ugaritic texts and the Hebrew text; such an evaluation would require at the very least a lengthy monograph. The topics which have been chosen reflect to a certain extent the potential wealth and diverse value of the Ugaritic texts for Hebrew studies.

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<sup>1</sup> J. C. Moor and P. van der Lugt, *BO* 31 (1974) 3-26.

<sup>2</sup> This paper is one of a series in which similar critical evaluations are undertaken; see also “The Problem of Parallel Word Pairs in Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetry” *Semitics* 5 (1975) 48-58; “Three Ugaritic Notes on the Song of Deborah” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 2 (1977) 33-49.

## I. COOKING A KID (*Dt. 14:21b*)

The short biblical prohibition against cooking a kid in its mother's milk has always been a source of curiosity. The context of the prohibition in Deuteronomy, provided by the laws concerning permitted and prohibited foodstuffs, might suggest that the legislation is concerned in some sense with diet, yet the precise significance is still not clear. Maimondes had this to say:<sup>3</sup>

Meat boiled in milk is undoubtedly gross food, and makes overfull; but I think that most probably it is also prohibited because it is somehow connected with idolatry, forming perhaps part of the service, or being used on some festival of the heathen . . . This I consider the best reason for the prohibition; but as far as I have seen the books on Sabeian rites, nothing is mentioned of this custom.

Maimonides' suggestion made good sense, though from his time until the early twentieth century, there has been no solid external evidence to support the suggestion. Soon after the first discovery of the Ugaritic texts, however, it appeared that a parallel had been found at last.

In 1933, Charles Virolleaud published a study entitled "La naissance des dieux gracieux et beaux. Poème phénicien de Ras Shamra,"<sup>4</sup> in which he presented the transliteration and translation of a text which is now referred to as *CTA 23 UT 52*. Line 14 of this text, which was difficult to read because of surface damage to the tablet, included the following clause in Virolleaud's *editio princeps*:—

*tb[h . g]d . bhlb*

"Fais [cuire un che]vreau dans le lait"

Although Virolleaud admitted that his restoration of the line was "simplement conjecturale", it was a good attempt. His translation of *tbh* was based on Arabic and modern Hebrew cognates. Virolleaud, however, did not draw any parallels with Biblical texts. W. F. Albright published a study of the text in 1934, but added nothing with respect to line 14;<sup>5</sup> the following year, however, H. L. Ginsberg published a lengthy

<sup>3</sup> *The Guide for the Perplexed* transl. M. Friedländer, Dover Books, New York (1956) 371.

<sup>4</sup> *Syria* 14 (1933) 128-151.

<sup>5</sup> *JPOS* 14 (1934) 133-140.

study of the text,<sup>6</sup> in which essentially he followed Virolleaud with respect to line 14:—

*tb[h g]d . bhlb*

“Coo[k a ki]d in milk”

In a footnote, Ginsberg drew attention to the biblical parallels to the line, and in a postscript to his study (p. 72), he cited this Ugaritic text as giving confirmation of Maimonides’ view of the biblical prohibition.

During the period of more than forty years since the publication of Ginsberg’s study, almost all scholars (with exceptions noted below) have followed in the view that the Ugaritic text provides a background to the biblical prohibition. Only one example will be provided. In *Ras Shamra Parallels* Vol. I, Anton Schoors notes, after a careful evaluation of the history of research, that the “biblical prohibition is certainly directed against the practice described in this [Ugaritic] text.”<sup>7</sup> For obvious reasons, the Ugaritic parallel to the Hebrew text is appealing, but we must enquire carefully concerning whether it can be substantiated. There are at least three problems related to the proposal.

1. *Text.* The first and obvious problem concerns the text itself and the question concerning whether or not Virolleaud’s conjectural restoration can be maintained. Herdner (in her edition of the text in *CTA*) is more cautious than Virolleaud:—

*tb . (?) [g]d . bhlb*

She notes, however, in footnote, the possibility that a sign could have been omitted:—

*tb (h) . [g]d*

Herdner’s caution is appropriate, for there is very little space in the line for Virolleaud’s restitution, especially if a word divider is included.<sup>8</sup> Before resorting to restoration on the basis of omission, however, one would have to give very careful assessment of other possible readings of the text, and since a number of other readings are possible without

<sup>6</sup> *JRAS* (1935) 45-72.

<sup>7</sup> Pp. 29-32. (Hereafter, the abbreviation *RSP* will be used for the two volumes of *Ras Shamra Parallels* L. R. Fisher (ed.), published in 1972 and 1975.) Note that J. M. Sasson, in *RSP* I 403, is more cautious with respect to the reading of the Ugaritic text.

<sup>8</sup> Thus Ginsberg’s restitution is slightly more plausible than that of Virolleaud, in that the former omits the word divider.

assuming the omission of a letter,<sup>9</sup> one must conclude that Virolleaud's reading of the line is far from certain. This, in turn, means that two of the words which are critical for the parallel with the biblical prohibition are in doubt (*viz.* *ṭbh* and *gd*).

2. *ṬBH*. In spite of the problems mentioned in (1) above, let us assume that Virolleaud's reading of the text is possible and on that basis consider the meaning of the word *ṭbh*.

Virolleaud, in his original proposal, suggested the meaning "cook" on the basis of Arabic and modern Hebrew cognate terms. The most obvious sense of the word, however, both on the basis of other occurrences in the Ugaritic texts and on the basis of the classical Hebrew cognate term, would be "slaughter",<sup>10</sup> and as Loewenstamm has recently demonstrated, there is in fact no good evidence to support the existence of an Ugaritic verb *ṭbh* = "to cook".<sup>11</sup> This conclusion, in turn, further undermines Virolleaud's proposed reading of the text.

3. *GD*. Continuing with the assumption that Virolleaud's reading of the text is possible, let us consider the meaning of the word *gd*. If the meaning of the Ugaritic term is "kid", as claimed, then it must be noted that the normal noun for "kid" in Ugaritic is *gdy*;<sup>12</sup> why then has the present form no final /y/? In fact, it is quite possible that *gd* (if the reading is accepted) does not mean "kid" at all, but "coriander", forming thereby a parallel to the word *'annh* ("mint") in the marginal note to the text at this point.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Thus it is possible to read the earlier part of the line (*contra* Herdner) as: — *grzm g ṭb* (reading /g/ instead of a word divider), translating: "heroes of good voice" or "sweet voiced youth". Here, *ṭb* makes sense by itself without the necessity of adding /h/. Cf. I. Trujillo, *The Ugaritic Ritual for a Sacrificial Meal Honoring the Good Gods* (Dissertation: Johns Hopkins University, 1973) 106-111; J. C. de Moor, *New Year with Canaanites and Israelites* Kampen (1972) Part II 18-19.

<sup>10</sup> Both Godon (*UT* Glossary #1029) and Aistleitner (*WUS* #1111) give the primary sense as "slaughter", but include the sense "cook" with respect to the supposed occurrence of the term in *CTA* 23.14.

<sup>11</sup> S. E. Loewenstamm, *UF* 5 (1973) 209-211.

<sup>12</sup> Plur. *gdm*. Cf. Gordon, *UT* Glossary #560; Aistleitner, *WUS* #631. Aistleitner (*WUS* #629) suggests *gd* may refer to some category of animals such as "muskedeer".

<sup>13</sup> See A. Caquot, M. Szyner and A. Herdner, *Textes ougaritiques I. Mythes et légendes* Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris (1974) 371. The authors, who had previously noted that the Ugaritic text provided a background to the biblical prohibition, have now withdrawn their earlier view; for the earlier view, see R. Labat *et al.*, *Les religions du Proche-Orient asiatique* Fayard/Denoël, Paris (1970) 454.

Let us summarize the proposed parallel data to the biblical prohibition in Deuteronomy 14:21b. First, the text of the proposed Ugaritic parallel is doubtful. Second, two of the three key words in the parallel are questionable as to their meaning. Third, notwithstanding the above criticisms, the proposed parallel makes reference only to “milk”, not to “mother’s milk” as in the biblical text. In other words, whether one accepts or rejects Virolleaud’s proposal concerning the reading of *CTA* 23.14, there is very little ground for arguing that the Ugaritic text contains material relevant to the understanding of Deuteronomy 14:21b. Having said all this, Maimonides’ suggestion remains as convincing today as it was so long ago, but neither Sabeian nor Ugaritic texts can be adduced in support of it!

## II. “CULT PROSTITUTES” (Dt. 23:17-18)?

There are two distinct laws in this short portion of legislation: (a) the prohibition of young Hebrew men and women becoming cult prostitutes (Dt. 23:17); (b) the prohibition of the payment of vows with money acquired through prostitution (Dt. 23:18), either cultic or common prostitution.<sup>14</sup> The unifying theme bringing these two laws together is clearly that of prostitution, something considered to be an “abomination” in ancient Israel, whether in a secular or cultic context. It is assumed that the first prohibition, concerning cult prostitutes, is directed against a practice current in the religions of Israel’s neighbours, and indeed there is evidence of such practices in Babylonian texts. The discovery of the Ugaritic texts, however, may have provided evidence of the practice from a closer geographical and cultural context. In a number of Ugaritic texts, the term *qdšm* is employed which, for the moment, may simply be translated “consecrated ones”.

<sup>14</sup> The “wage of a prostitute” (*zônâh*) suggests a common prostitute. The “hire of a dog” (*keleb*), however, could refer to male prostitution in a cultic context. The Hebrew term *keleb* may not be “dog” but “male prostitute” (synonymous or similar to *qdš*). See J. Gray, *The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Samra*<sup>2</sup> Brill, Leiden (1964) 64, who has made this suggestion with respect to Ugaritic *klb*. A further possible example of the term may be found in *CTA* 114 (*UT* 305) 4: *ḫt. klb*. See further Aistleitner, *WUS* #1313.

Unfortunately, the Ugaritic texts do not provide great illumination as to the precise nature of the *qdšm*. The word occurs in three texts in lists of guilds or corporations and in two of these three texts it follows immediately the word *khn̄m* (“priests”).<sup>15</sup> Two further texts, containing what appear to be lists of temple functionaries also contain the word in the same position, after *khn̄m*.<sup>16</sup> A tiny tablet, thought to be an inventory or census, but probably a bill of lodging, mentions both *khn̄m* and *qdšm* in such a way as to suggest that the two offices were approximately equal in status.<sup>17</sup> And finally, a broken tablet containing a list of personal names classified according to guilds, also contains the word *qdšm*.<sup>18</sup> This is the extent of the sources in the Ugaritic language, and only limited conclusions can be drawn. The principal conclusion concerns the close association between *khn̄m* and *qdšm*, and therefore the natural assumption that the *qdšm* were associated with the temple. Little more than this can be established with any certainty.

At this point, a natural procedure would be to turn to the Hebrew texts for the illumination of the Ugaritic texts, and the legislation in Deuteronomy 23, together with certain other biblical references,<sup>19</sup> is relevant. The biblical evidence might suggest that the Ugaritic word *qdšm* should be translated “cult prostitutes” (male), though the nature of the evidence must make such a claim tentative. In support of the hypothesis is the fact that the content of the mythological texts from Ugarit suggests strongly that the ritual counterpart to the myth would have included the rite of *hieros gamos*; hence the indirect information about the fertility nature of the Ugaritic religion supports the translation of *qdšm* as “cult prostitutes”,

<sup>15</sup> (a) CTA 17 (UT 113) 70-75: *khn̄m/qdšm/nsk.ksp*. (b) UT 169 (=1026) 7-8: *khn̄m/qdšm/pslm*. (c) In CTA 73 (UT 114) the list reads: *qd(šm)/mr'u s(kn)*; it is possible, however, from the condition of the tablet, that *khn̄m* preceded *qdšm*.

<sup>16</sup> CTA 75 (UT 81) 2; CTA 76 (UT 82) 2. Whether all the categories listed in these texts are actually functionaries of the temple, as Herdner suggests, is open to question.

<sup>17</sup> CTA 77 (UT 63) 3: on the interpretation of this tablet, I follow R. Dussaud, *Les découvertes de Ras Shamra (Ugarit) et l'Ancien Testament* Geuthner, Paris (1937) 55; but neither Dussaud's reading of the text, nor that of Herdner (after Virolleaud), add much to our knowledge of *qdšm*.

<sup>18</sup> UT 2163 (PRU 5, 163) 2.8.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. 1 Ki. 14. 24; 15.12; 22.47. Cf. Ho. 4.14.

there being no other obvious terms to describe the office.<sup>20</sup>

Recently, however, an Akkadian text from Ugarit has been introduced into the discussion by W. von Soden.<sup>21</sup> The text, according to von Soden, describes the promotion of a man (and his son) from the *qdšm* – class to the *maryannu* (warrior) class. Von Soden draws three conclusions from this Akkadian text, one of which is particularly relevant to the subject under discussion: it is this. Since the *qdš* can marry and have a family, he concludes that the customary translation “cult prostitute” of the cognate term *qdš* in Hebrew dictionaries is not very appropriate. Von Soden’s conclusion, however, is open to debate. There is a sense, certainly in which the term “prostitute” is inappropriate. In that the Hebrews used the term with a feeling of abhorrence, the English word “prostitute” may convey that feeling, though clearly, to a member of the Canaanite religion or participant in the fertility cult, the word “prostitute” would be totally inappropriate. But (and this is my point) to conclude that the married status of the *qdš* meant that he could not thereby participate in the sexual rites of the fertility cult is surely to impose modern concepts and values upon ancient societies. There is no more reason why there should necessarily be a conflict between the marital status and professional activities of the *qdšm* (viz. participation in the fertility cult) than would be the case with the *khn̄m*. There is, in fact, a Hebrew text which may be relevant to the discussion:—

*2 Kings 23:7* “And he broke down the houses of the ritual prostitutes (*qdšym*) which were in the temple of Yahweh where the women wove robes for the Asherah-figure.”<sup>22</sup>

Although the text is ambivalent, it may be that the women referred to were the wives of the “ritual prostitutes”, and that

<sup>20</sup> Thus T. Yamashita cautiously suggests the link between *qdšm* and the *hieros gamos*; *RSP* II 67. The suggestion of H. Gese that the *qdšm* were not cult prostitutes but probably cult prophets, has no unambiguous support in either Ugaritic or biblical texts; *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer* Kolhammer, Stuttgart (1970) 178.

<sup>21</sup> *UF* 2 (1970) 329-330. The text is in *PRU* 3/RS.16.132; note that von Soden’s interpretation of the text is based on a reading of line 7 (critical to the whole argument) which differs from that of Nougayrol, who first published the text.

<sup>22</sup> On the translation of the text, see J. Gray, *I and II Kings*<sup>2</sup> S.C.M., London (1970) 730, 734.

both partners in the marriage had a specific role to play in the fertility cult.

In conclusion, the Ugaritic references to *qdšm* have added little direct information concerning the meaning of Deuteronomy 23:17-18. On the other hand, the Hebrew text may have given further insight into the meaning of the Ugaritic term, and it is perhaps salutary to remember, so long after the discovery of the Ugaritic texts, that in the earliest comparative studies Hebrew was invaluable in the interpretation of the Ugaritic materials.

### III. PARALLEL WORD PAIRS IN DEUTERONOMY 32

One of the most prolific areas of development in the comparative study of Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry is to be found in the matter of parallel word pairs which are common to Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry. Although the study of such pairs has been going on for more than forty years, it has been given considerable impetus by the work of M. Dahood, first in his 3-volume commentary on the Psalms, and more recently in his contributions to *RSP I* and *II* respectively. Dahood's purpose, which presupposes his hypothesis, is to recover from the Ugaritic and Hebrew texts "the Canaanite thesaurus from whose resources Ugaritic and Hebrew poets alike drew."<sup>23</sup> In the following notes, Dahood's contribution to the subject will be submitted to a limited evaluation. The first three notes which follow examine critically a number of Hebrew-Ugaritic parallel word pairs, proposed by Dahood, which occur in Deuteronomy 32. The fourth note evaluates Hebrew-Ugaritic parallel word pairs in Deuteronomy 32 in the light of parallel word pairs drawn from Arabic poetry.

#### 1. Deuteronomy 32:6

Dahood lists a common Hebrew-Ugaritic parallel word pair, occurring in Deuteronomy 32:6 and several other Hebrew texts, as follows (*RSP I* 170):

Ugaritic: *hw // hw*; "he // he"

Hebrew: *hw' // hw'*; "he // he"

The repetitive word pair is not in itself remarkable, but since it (and many like it) are a part of the evidence for the hypothesis

<sup>23</sup> *RSP I* 74.

concerning a “Canaanite thesaurus”, let us examine it in a little detail.

Dahood provides only one text in support of the existence of this word pair in Ugaritic: *UT* 2114:5-6 (= *PRU* 5.137, RS. 19.11). The text is a short epistle, in prose style, which was apparently written in haste. De Moor and van der Lugt simply state with respect to this pair: “No poetical parallelism in Ugaritic.”<sup>24</sup> While in a technical sense this is correct, nevertheless the judgment may be too hasty, for lines 5-7 of the epistle have a proverbial ring to them and may therefore add some credibility to the existence of the word pair in Ugaritic. A slightly better example, but still not strong, could perhaps be adduced from *CTA* 32 (*UT* 2). 16: *hw* // *hw* (“it // it”). This is a ritual text but a text which has a semi-poetic character in parts.<sup>25</sup> In summary, there is tentative, but not convincing, evidence for the existence of the word pair in Ugaritic.

There is no dispute concerning the presence of the parallel word pair in Deuteronomy 32:6. It is the kind of word pair which one would expect *a priori* in any poetry employing some form of parallelism, and in fact this particular word pair is attested in Akkadian,<sup>26</sup> Egyptian,<sup>27</sup> and Arabic<sup>28</sup> poetry, to name but a few. In summary, even if the Ugaritic evidence were stronger for this word, it would not constitute strong evidence for any hypothesis.

## 2. Deuteronomy 32:22

Dahood presents us with the following common parallel word pair (*RSP* I 173):

Ugaritic: *hr* // *'arš* “mountain // earth”

Hebrew: *'rš* // *hr* “earth // mountain”

(Note: the pair, in Dt. 32:22, is in the reverse sequence, but Dahood also notes examples of the Hebrew pair in the same sequence as Ugaritic.)

All of Dahood’s Ugaritic examples of this word pair come

<sup>24</sup> *BO* 31 (1974) 12.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. B. Levine, *JCS* 17 (1963) 105-111.

<sup>26</sup> Akk. *šū* // *šū* (“he // he”): Hammurabi Law Code (Pro. iv. 1, 9). This is distant, but clear parallelism.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. *sw* // *sw* (“he, it // he, it”): Bk. of Dead 17:38-40, 42-45 etc., in the repetitive formulaic expression.

<sup>28</sup> Arab. *huwa* // *huwa* (“he // he”): *Qur’an* 67. 1-2 (hereafter abbreviated as Q. All references to Q follow the Egyptian edition of the Arabic text.

from a single Ugaritic text (*UT* 608=RS 24.251 [Ug. 5]) and all occur in the same formulaic expression. The text in question is extremely difficult to translate and interpret, and as yet no consensus is emerging, either as to the translation of the relevant lines or as to the meaning of the term *hrm*. While Dahood assumes the meaning to be “mountains”, following Gordon,<sup>29</sup> Virolleaud derived the meaning from Arabic *haram* (“couper . . . en petits morceaux”)<sup>30</sup> and Astour derives the sense “weaken” from Arabic *harima*.<sup>31</sup> While I appreciate Astour’s rendering, for the overall sense which it gives to the Ugaritic text,<sup>32</sup> in all fairness it must probably be concluded that the precise sense of the passage is as uncertain today as it was in 1968. Dahood’s translation “mountains” appears to be based primarily on the association with *ars* but the evidence for the existence of the word *hr*=“mountain” in Ugaritic is slender,<sup>33</sup> and hence we must conclude that the existence of the Ugaritic word pair is open to serious doubt.

### 3. Deuteronomy 32:14

The following word pair was suggested initially by U. Cassuto<sup>34</sup> and is listed by Dahood (*RSP* I 182);

Ugaritic: *h̄lb* // *h̄m’at* “milk // butter”

Hebrew: *h̄m’h* // *h̄lb* “butter // milk”

(The Hebrew pair in Dt. 32:14 is in the reverse sequence, though Dahood also notes Hebrew examples in the same sequence as the Ugaritic pair.)

At first sight, this common word pair is convincing, though de Moor and van der Lugt make the terse comment: “No poetical parallelism has been detected in Ugaritic”,<sup>35</sup> with no further explanation. The only Ugaritic textual evidence for this word pair is *CTA* 23 (*UT* 52).14, and an examination of this text may clarify the reason for the scepticism of de Moor

<sup>29</sup> Supplement to *UT* #19.790.

<sup>30</sup> *Ugaritica* 5 (1968) 577.

<sup>31</sup> *JNES* 27 (1968) 31.

<sup>32</sup> There are, nevertheless, difficulties with Astour’s interpretation; see M. J. Mulder, *UF* 4 (1972) 90-91; J. C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba’lu* AOAT 16 (1971) 224.

<sup>33</sup> Gordon, *UT* Glossary #789 suggests some evidence, but see Aistleitner, *WUS* #856, with respect to the relevant text.

<sup>34</sup> In *Tarbiz* 13-14 (1942-43), reprinted in Cassuto, *Biblical and Oriental Studies Vol. 2: Bible and Ancient Oriental Texts* Magnes Press, Jerusalem (1975) 50.

<sup>35</sup> *BO* 31 (1974) 13.

and van der Lugt.<sup>36</sup> The last part of line 14 reads as follows:

[g]d . *bh̄lb* . 'ann̄h̄ *bhm'at*

The reading is clear, but the last two words are written on the side (margin) of the tablet. There are a number of possible reasons for this: (a) the scribe accidentally omitted the words, and inserted them in the margin; (b) the words may be an explanatory gloss with reference to *gd . bh̄lb*, or even (c) an alternative ritual prescription to *gd . bh̄lb*. In the latter two cases, *h̄lb* and *hm'at* would still be approximate synonyms (in a poetic sense), but there would no longer be clear evidence for the existence of the parallel word pair. One again, we must conclude that the evidence for the Ugaritic word pair is in doubt.

#### 4. *Parallel Word Pairs in Deuteronomy 32 and in Arabic Poetry*

A word of explanation may be helpful before presenting the data in this section. It is a reasonable assumption that in any poetry in which parallelism is employed, regardless of the language in which that poetry is written, similar parallel word pairs will be employed. As George Adam Smith put it many years ago: “‘Deep calleth unto deep’, tree to tree, bird to bird, all the world over. The heart of the poet is full of such natural antiphons . . . We need not, therefore, seek a Babylonian or an Egyptian origin for the parallelism of Hebrew poetry.”<sup>37</sup> The same might be said with respect to seeking an Ugaritic or Canaanite origin for the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. If the first assumption is correct, then a second would naturally follow: the parallel word pairs common to the poetry of a variety of languages would involve a high percentage of *cognate* terms if the languages under comparison were close linguistic relatives, fewer cognate terms if the respective languages were less close linguistically, and no cognate terms if there was no linguistic relationship. Thus the repetitive parallel word pair “brother // brother” occurs in Ugaritic, Hebrew and Finnish poetry; it comes as no surprise to find that cognate terms are employed in Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry, but not in Finnish poetry.<sup>38</sup> The recent

<sup>36</sup> For further comments on this text, see section I (above).

<sup>37</sup> *The Early Poetry of Israel in its Physical and Social Origins* Oxford University Press, London (1912) 16-17.

<sup>38</sup> On parallelism in Finnish epic poetry, see G. B. Gray, *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry* reprinted by KTAV, New York (1972) 39.

study of de Moor and van der Lugt (fn. 1) and J. Khanjian's contribution to *RSP II* (pp. 394-400) have demonstrated the existence of parallel word pairs in Akkadian poetry which also occur in Hebrew Poetry. The following notes list word pairs occurring in Arabic poetry and in Deuteronomy 32; as one would expect, there are many cognate terms in the Arabic parallel word pairs, but fewer than would be the case with common Hebrew-Ugaritic parallel word pairs.

(a) *Deuteronomy 32:1*

- (i) Hebrew: *šm' // h'zyn*; "hear // give ear"
- (ii) Arabic: No precise parallel, though note the following:  
*sami'a // sami'a*; "hear // hear" (Q. 30. 52)  
*'adhina // 'adhina*; "give ear // give ear" (Q. 84. 2-5)
- (ii) Ugaritic: *šm' . . . 'udn*; (*RSP I 361*), though de Moor and van der Lugt (*Op. cit.* 23) reject this example.

(b) *Deuteronomy 32:1*

- (i) Hebrew: *šmym // 'rš*; "heaven // earth"
- (ii) Arabic: *samā' // 'arḍ*; "heaven // earth" (Q. 91. 5-6)
- (iii) Ugaritic: *šmm // 'arš*; "heaven // earth" (*RSP I 356*)
- (iv) The word pair occurs also in Akkadian (*RSP II 399*) and in Egyptian (*ANET 365a*, line 4).

(c) *Deuteronomy 32:2*

- (i) Hebrew: *k // k*; "like // like"
- (ii) Arabic: *k // k*; "like // like" (Q. 70. 8-9)
- (iii) Ugaritic: *k // k*; "like // like" (*RSP I 223f.*)
- (iv) Note: the parallelism of prepositions is not remarkable, but Dahood's tables include more than 30 examples; for that reason, Arabic examples are included in these notes.

(d) *Deuteronomy 32:2*

- (i) Hebrew: *'ly // 'ly*; "upon // upon"
- (ii) Arabic: *'ala // 'ala*; "upon // upon" (Q. 67. 22)
- (iii) Ugaritic: *'l // 'l*; "upon // upon" (*RSP I 292*)

(e) *Deuteronomy 32:6*

- (i) Hebrew: *h- // h-*; (interrogative)
- (ii) Arabic: *'am // 'am*; (interrogative) (Q. 52: 35-36)

(f) *Deuteronomy 32:6*

- (i) Hebrew: *hw' // hw'*; "he // he"
- (ii) Arabic: *huwa // huwa*; "he // he" (Q. 67. 1-2)
- (iii) Ugaritic: see the discussion in III.1 (above).

(g) *Deuteronomy 32:6*

- (i) Hebrew: *qnh* // 'šh "create // make"
- (ii) Arabic: *ḥalaqa* // *ja'ala*; "create // make" (Q. 76. 2).
- (iii) Note: The Hebrew text has the triple sequence, "create, make, establish" of which the first two members most clearly constitute the parallel word pair. Dahood, in *RSP I 327*, cites here the Ugaritic word pair *qny* // *knn*, corresponding to the first and third elements in the Hebrew sequence. If the comparison is to be less exact, one might note also the following sequence in Arabic: "created // shaped // wrought // composed" (Q. 82. 7-8).

(h) *Deuteronomy 32:8*

- (i) Hebrew: *b* // *b*; "when // when" (in conjunction with the infinitive)
- (ii) Arabic: *'idha* // *'idha*; "when // when" (Q. 82. 1-3)
- (iii) Ugaritic: *b* // *b*; "when // when" (*RSP I 135*)

(i) *Deuteronomy 32:11*

- (i) Hebrew: *knp* // *'brh*; "wing // pinion"
- (ii) Arabic: *janāh* // *qawādim*; "wings // pinions"<sup>39</sup>

(j) *Deuteronomy 32:13*

- (i) Hebrew: *mn-* // *mn-*; "from // from"
- (ii) Arabic: *min-* // *min-*; "from // from" (Q. 113. 2-5)

(k) *Deuteronomy 32:22*

- (i) Hebrew: *'rs* // *hrym'* "earth // mountains"
- (ii) Arabic: *'ard* // *jibāl*; "earth // mountains" (Q. 78. 6-7)
- (iii) On the Ugaritic word pair, see the discussion in III.2 (above).

(l) *Deuteronomy 32:30*

- (i) Hebrew: Note the numerical parallelism: 1 // 2 and 1,000 // 10,000 (myriad).
- (ii) Arabic: General similarities can be seen in Q. 8. 65-66, with the following examples of numerical parallelism: 20 // 100; 200 // 1,000; 200 // 2,000
- (iii) Ugaritic: *'alp* // *rbt*; "thousand // myriad" (*RSP I 114*)

(m) *Deuteronomy 32:38*

- (i) Hebrew: *'kl* // *šth*; "eat // drink".
- (ii) Arabic: *'akala* + *shariba*; "eat + drink". (Q. 77. 43; see also Q. 52. 19).
- (iii) Ugaritic: *'kl* // *šty*; "eat // drink". (*RSP I 108*).

(n) *Deuteronomy 32:39*

- (i) Hebrew: *hēmîth* // *hiyyāh*; “to kill // to make alive”
- (ii) Arabic: *’amāta* // *’ahyā*; “to kill // to make alive” (Q. 53:44).
- (iii) Note: One might compare Ugaritic *mt* // *hy* (“to die // to live”) cf. *RSP* I 270, but the Ugaritic verbs do not carry the causative sense present in both the Hebrew and Arabic word pairs.
- (o) *Deuteronomy* 32:41
  - (i) Hebrew: *l* // *l*; “to(against) // to(against)”
  - (ii) Arabic: *li* // *li*; “to // to” (Q. 92. 7-10).
  - (iii) Ugaritic: *l* // *l*; “to // to” Cf. *RSP* I 240-242; several entries.

The evidence gathered above, together with similar evidence of word pairs common to Hebrew and Arabic poetry<sup>40</sup> appears to confirm the initial assumptions, namely that any poetry employing parallelism will tend to contain similar word pairs, and that the percentage of cognate terms in the word pairs will vary in proportion to the linguistic relationship of the respective languages in which the poetry is written. This evidence does not disprove Dahood’s hypothesis, but it seriously undermines the hypothesis in its present form. Consequently, the utility of the hypothesis for Biblical textual criticism, which is rated very highly by Dahood,<sup>41</sup> should probably be expressed in more cautious terms.

#### IV. SUMMARY

Ugaritic studies have made considerable progress since the publication of the earliest findings in 1930. Their value for the study of the Old Testament is beyond question, and at many points they have shed new light on the Hebrew text and on the background to the world of the Hebrews. If the notes in this paper have a somewhat negative tone, then that may serve as a reminder that the use of Ugaritic in the study of the Hebrew text is not without difficulties of a practical nature. But there

<sup>39</sup> This word pair is from line 25 of an ode by al-Mutanabbi, one of the few Arabic poets to employ a form of parallelism; for the text see A. J. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry* University Press, Cambridge (1965) 84-91.

<sup>40</sup> In my article in *Semitics* 5 (1975), see footnote 2; and in a paper entitled “Parallel Word Pairs in the Song of Deborah” *JETS* 20 (1977) 15-22.

<sup>41</sup> *RSP* I 78-86.

are many points in the text of Deuteronomy where the Ugaritic resources have proved to be invaluable in clarifying our knowledge of the text and in increasing our knowledge of the ancient world.<sup>42</sup> If, indeed, the community of biblical scholars is currently suffering from a mild dose of “pan-Ugaritism”, no doubt that will eventually pass, as did pan-Babylonianism and other afflictions of the early part of the century. And when the affliction passes, the result can only be healthy. The enthusiastic outpourings of Dahood, and the critical nagging of conservatives such as myself, may both contribute in the long run to an increased appreciation for the text of the Bible.

<sup>42</sup> Many other Ugaritic parallels are examined in my *Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy* (NICOT, 1976).