Towards a theology of Baal: revisiting the interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

ABSTRACT

Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

The late Bronze Age tablets from Ugarit in North-West Syria contain many religious texts which feature Baal, one of the main gods in the Ugaritic pantheon, and several studies have been written about him. Since the last major work is now thirty years old, it is valid to re-examine the specifically Ugaritic material and consider the theology of Baal, focusing on the religious ideas behind the texts.

The Review of Literature groups authors’ works into those who support the Seasonal Pattern interpretation of the tablets and those who have challenged that opinion. Since the place of fertility in Baal’s character is a major feature of the putative Seasonal Pattern, this is examined after the Review, followed by a study of Baal’s death, another integral part of the Seasonal position. Neither of these phenomena substantiates the traditional Seasonal understanding of Baal, although his role as provider of rain and thunder is supported by the religious texts. Fertility and death are no longer the main features of Baal’s theology and so other aspects of him are examined.

His role as a warrior is appraised and found to be important but ambiguous, while his endeavour to retain his kingship is found to be a reflection of his important connection to the royal culture within Ugarit. The cult of Baal is reassessed: although the ritual texts remain difficult to interpret, there is presently no evidence of temple prostitution or ritual marriage previously ascribed to the worship of Baal. The iconography of Baal is briefly examined and the material from Ugarit is shown to support the aspects of Baal that are found to be most prominent in the texts, that is his role in weather, war and royal ideology. Finally, the titles of Baal are discussed and their variety confirms the importance of Baal at Ugarit. The descriptions of Baal in the titles support his activity in war, royal ideology, his role in cosmic order and particularly the meteorological theophany of rain and thunder. This indicates a balanced theology between his different roles, but we cannot argue for the importance or precedence of any one of these.

The previous view of Baal was over-influenced by a theoretical vision of religion. As a deity in Ugarit Baal reflected the concerns of his worshippers and although his role in the royal cult and its ideology should not be underestimated, his meteorological significance is affirmed by his titles and by incidents within the Baal Cycle. Altogether Baal’s theology is balanced and complex and this dissertation discusses each aspect of his character in order to provide a full and holistic view of him as expressed through the LBA Ugaritic texts.
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I am unable to count the ways I have been supported by my parents Bob and Hilda Smith, and my husband John; they have listened patiently, encouraged tirelessly, inspired and never doubted me.

Time flies,
Hours die.
New days,
New ways
pass by.
Love stays.

I, Susan Jane Sanders, declare that I have composed this thesis myself, it has not been submitted for any other degree and that the work is all my own.

Signatur  Date 18-11-2002
Introduction

The rediscovery of the kingdom of Ugarit on the Syrian coast in the 1930s allowed the study of a ‘Canaanite’ religion from primary textual and archaeological sources. While previous discussion had depended upon the Old Testament for descriptions of the cult, it was supposed by biblical scholars that the mythic poems of Ugarit provided first hand evidence of pre-Israelite practice in Canaan. The god Baal quickly emerged as one of the chief gods of the pantheon and he was identified as both a ‘dying and rising’ god as well as a ‘fertility’ god. The comparison between Baal and other gods who were placed in these categories, for example Dumuzi, Tammuz and Dionysus, was widely accepted, but these studies tended to depend heavily on material from other ANE traditions or even much later texts.

During the first seventy years of Ugaritian studies, common concepts of the local religion developed:

“Canaanite-Ugaritic mythology is thus a special synthesis ... determined by specific geographic and social factors: a coastal location, a dependence on rain and the monarchic and feudal organization of the state...”

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1 Curtis 1985: 18.
3 Chapter I: the Seasonal Pattern.
4 Attridge & Oden 1981.
5 del Olmo Lete 1999a: 53.
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“This poem was probably part of a religious drama reflecting the rhythm of rainy seasons and dry ones.”

“Baal’s rule guarantees the annual return of the vegetation; as the god disappears in the underworld and returns in the autumn, so the vegetation dies and resuscitates with him.”

While these are still currently held theories, it is the aim of this thesis to determine whether the evidence from Ugarit could support such statements. It is desired to see what could be discerned of Baal from the riches of the Ugaritic evidence alone, rather than reconstructing areas from contemporary material. How much of the picture of Baal commonly recognised is actually Ugaritian and could a theology of Baal be established from the surviving textual material?

It is hoped that by examining the Ugaritic texts and not dwelling on philological issues, the overall ideology of Baal may emerge. While translation of the tablets is by no means uncontentious and new understandings of Ugaritic words are being found even now, this has sometimes been to the detriment of developing a broader, more ‘holistic’ view of the faith of the Ugaritians. This dissertation is not intended to break new philological ground: rather, its purpose is to re-examine those translations of material relevant to Baal and establish their relative strengths and contributions, while also seeking to understand the religious world view of those who worshipped him, in order to perceive the theology of Baal in Ugarit.

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6 Jeffers 1996: 133.
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It is proposed to undertake here a study of the characteristics of Baal, those aspects of his personality and behaviour presented in the texts, and develop a synthetic analysis of those features in order to present a revised theology of Baal.

The study has been limited to the Ugaritic material for several reasons. Firstly, the constraints of time and volume inherent in a doctoral dissertation preclude the depth of study required to include material from the contemporaries of Ugarit. An analysis which also examined Egyptian, Marian, Akkadian or Hittite texts would easily double in length. Secondly, and perhaps most crucially, it is strongly believed that it is vital for the academic community to perceive the nature of Baal in Ugarit before examining Baal elsewhere. Only then is it possible for a study of the internationality of Baal to be undertaken, that is, after his position in Ugarit is fully understood. One cannot appreciate the delicacy or significance of local variations without first grasping a truly Ugaritian theology of Baal. Finally, it is hoped that through examining only Ugaritic material, it is possible to find in Ugarit a balanced and complex theology of Baal and that reliance upon other countries and their deities is in fact unnecessary.

Several clarifications should be made at this point about terminology used and the process through which this study shall be presented.

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Niehr 1999: 134.
Methodology

At all times one must be aware of the over-generalisation common to studies in this area. The confusing of Ugaritian society with that of Canaan is widespread and would have bewildered the inhabitants of Ugarit. They themselves differentiated between the “sons of the Land of Ugarit” and the “sons of the Land of Canaan”. In such a situation, it seems disrespectful and academically unsophisticated to place the two groups under one nationality. One might in such a manner call the modern French nation ‘German’ – both use a similar script, a language derived from similar roots, have similar ethics and social norms but hold themselves apart since they are, in fact, separate nations – they are both European. The high-handed approach of many historians shall not be supported here and although, as Tubb has argued, the Ugaritians formed part of the “cultural continuum” held to be ‘Canaan’ in modern scholarship, to call them and their religion ‘Canaanite’ is a generalisation too far. At the same time, one should not extract them from their context and as such, contemporary texts from their neighbouring empires can be expected to have some resonance with those of Ugarit. Where they speak of events or ideologies not represented among the surviving material from Ugarit, one may suggest a likelihood that a similar ideology or practice may have been found in Ugarit but it cannot be assumed, as it so often has in the past.

9 Tubb 1998: 73-5. One must question both his view of the cult of Ugarit as one of “blood sacrifice” and Anat as Baal’s spouse (both promiscuous and warlike), as well as his ignoring of the self-distinction of Ugaritians from Canaanites.
The term ‘Ugaritic’ is used to describe the language and textual tradition while ‘Ugaritian’ refers to the nationality and overall culture of the state, cf. Arabic and Arabian.

Another set of words requiring careful examination is that of terms commonly applied to the Ugaritic material. ‘Myth’ is one frequently used and a definition is not easily come by. Gibson said that he had “almost given up the attempt to reach even the broadest definition.” One certainly cannot restrict its meaning to ‘stories about gods’ and should not be understood in the modern sense of ‘imagined’. One of the problems with any definition of ‘mythology’ is that it is a term unknown to the actual religious adherents of Ugarit. In this dissertation ‘myth’ or ‘mythic’ does not imply false or untrue. It is a designation of the texts which deal with divine characters and the illud tempus. ‘Epic’ texts are those which are commonly designated as myths, although often are less concerned with deities and rather more with human heroes. They are not, in this context, mutually exclusive designations and in practical terms one cannot offer definitions for more than a particular context. The phrase ‘poetic texts’ should be understood as those religious texts commonly known as mythic or epic. The ‘ritual’ or ‘cult’ texts are those which do not contain a narrative thread, that is those which consist of short instructions and lists of offerings and names of gods. Detailed discussions of terms such as ‘fertility’ ‘kingship’ and ‘cult’ are given before examination of the texts in the relevant chapters.
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The use of the term ‘theology’ is a conscious one, made on the basis of the very sound argument by J.C. Gibson that it

"is the word I use when I am trying on a serious level to assess the thought of the Old Testament ... and I cannot see why I should use it for the one and not for the other. It is the only word I can think of that carries the right nuances of reflection, sincerity, and commitment."\(^\text{11}\)

There is no valid reason why one should be able to study the theology of Indian deities or African deities but not the theology of an Ugaritian deity. The early domination of the field by biblical scholars, some of whom felt an unnecessary reluctance to give value to Ugaritian religion, is perhaps one reason why it has remained a term not often seen in this area. It is hoped that the comprehensive phenomenology of Baal demonstrated here should allow the term to be applied as Gibson wished.

Translations of Ugaritic texts will err on the side of caution and may appear rather ‘literal’. While this may not lead to the elegant poetry which was in fact the real Ugaritic text, it is difficult to produce sophisticated translations while remaining true to the evidence: it has been said that “translations are like mistresses: the most beautiful are rarely the most faithful”.

\(^\text{10}\) Gibson 1984: 203. Wyatt 2001b: 3-56 has queried using ‘myth’ as a literary genre at all.
\(^\text{11}\) Gibson 1984: 204.
In order to distinguish between transliterated words from Ugaritic, Arabic, Akkadian and Hebrew and modern foreign words different fonts have been used: those of the ancient languages are in *italicised* TransRoman, while other foreign words, from French or German, are in simple *italic* script.

The process for exploring the complex texts has been a difficult one to establish. The approach of studying text by text leads to a piecemeal result in which it is difficult to reach comprehensive treatments and conclusions. The method used here, that of the ‘thematic’ exploration, also has difficulties in that it can lead to generalisation or too-dominant theoretical studies. It is probably the most useful for the purposes of this dissertation and is at least the lesser of two evils.

In examining the previous work in the ‘Review of Literature’, a slightly subjective division has been applied, in that they have been divided into those which support the ‘Seasonal Pattern’ and those who have applied a different interpretative model or models to the texts. Since the Seasonal Pattern has dominated scholarship until now, the features of the texts which are taken to support their theory best are examined in the two following chapters – “Baal as a Fertility God” and “Baal and Death”. The aspects of Baal which ‘non-Seasonal’ scholars have focused upon – “Baal as a Warrior and Hunter” and “Baal as an Ugaritian Royal God” are discussed next while the difficult topics of the “Cult of Baal” and the “Iconography of Baal” conclude the survey of the physical evidence.
Unfortunately, Green has arrived too late for me to take his arguments into account.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} Green 2003.
Chapter One - The History of Baal and the Seasonal Pattern

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review the published literature to establish the picture of Baal which was built up in the first sixty years of Ugaritic studies and which could broadly be described as supporting the Seasonal Pattern. This will include works which are largely translations of tablets. While these do not contain long accounts of the theology of Baal, there are often notes on the text or passages of interpretation which illustrate the views held by the scholars who made the translations. These comments are important since their views could have an effect on the translations.

The studies are examined in chronological order to demonstrate the development of patterns in scholarship. Several of these works were written before the publication of important tablets and this fact will be noted as they are discussed.13 One of the challenges in the present work will be to produce arguments that are flexible enough to cope with new evidence and yet rigorous enough to withstand scholarly criticism. Flexibility should not be allowed to create sloppy translation or investigation and, while speculation

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is permissible, it should not lead the overall argument into areas which are not supported at least by the current evidence.

The Seasonal Pattern was a theory which early Ugaritic scholars, for example Virolleaud and Dussaud, concluded was the underlying theme of the tablets they had deciphered. Gaster published what was for many years the definitive account of the Seasonal Pattern in the ancient Near East in his book *Thespis*, following Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* and Jane Harrison’s work on Greek texts, *Themis*. The myth-and-ritual school of Frazer held that gods of vegetation, found throughout the ancient world, died annually to ensure a good harvest or the return of fertility the following year. It was felt that ‘primitive’ cultures were more in tune with their environment and as such their religion was likely to have been linked to the transition between the seasons, the precarious nature of their lives increasing their bond with nature. Nature was embodied in a chief god, although it was believed that in Ugarit the chief god did not lead the pantheon. Baal, the youthful, vigorous and vital storm god was still subject to the judgement of El, father of the gods, but was simultaneously the patron god of Ugarit. A passage which apparently described Baal’s death and later his triumphant return and victory over the god of death, Mot, (KTU 1.5 vi – 1.6 v) came to be regarded by these scholars as an example of Baal as the ‘dying and rising’ god who embodied the triumph of fertility over sterility. Since Baal was the god of rain, this fertility must be the life-giving rains of the Syrian autumn which

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14 Gaster 1950.
16 Harrison 1912.
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replenished the soil dried out by Mot, who they felt held sway during the scorching summer. There were some scholars who disagreed with the theory, but it held prime position in Ugaritic scholarship for many years.

Any analysis of this theory must begin with a brief examination of the work of Virolleaud and Dussaud, before discussing Gaster’s seminal work, *Thespis*.

**Virolleaud and Dussaud**

These men were the pioneers of Ugaritic studies. They translated a previously unattested script into French and perceived the Seasonal Pattern within the texts they had uncovered. While their achievement must not be belittled in any way, it is important to realise that their understanding of both the language and the content of the tablets was rudimentary. Later work, making greater use of cognate languages and a larger selection of texts, has clarified texts which were unclear in the 1930s. Much has been written about the early work of Virolleaud and Dussaud18, and only a summary is necessary here. They saw, through the actions of gods, the progression of the seasons and weather conditions around Ugarit. Hence Charles Virolleaud in 1931 proposed that Mot and Baal could be related to

17 Segal (ed.) 1998 for a full account of the myth-and-ritual school.
18 Smith 1994 for a scholarly assessment.
the well-defined seasons of the Syrian year, and specifically that Mot was the summer and Baal (Aliyan) the winter:\(^9\) -

"If Mot is a pastoral god, he is also the god of vegetation; he is the vegetation itself. Mot is the ear of corn cut to make bread, but he is also the grain of wheat put in reserve, which contains in its fragile envelope the seed of future harvests... Aliyan, on the other hand, the adversary of Mot, commands the clouds, the wind and the rain. He is the god of winter."\(^{20}\)

A few years later, in 1934, he wrote that the death of Baal in KTU 1.5 ii 3-6 "clearly establishes that Baal is, above all, a god of vegetation, and that he disappears when the vegetation withers at the end of the summer..."\(^{21}\) Baal now appeared to be regarded as the god of vegetation and summer. In 1939 Virolleaud wrote "Baal ... represents not eternal life, but intermittent life, life which is born or reborn each spring, which blossoms during summer before withering and finally disappearing in autumn. Baal, in effect, is the life of plants".\(^{22}\) To sum up, Baal was considered to be the god of winter, the god of vegetation and the god of summer, and yet fought twice with Mot, who was also the god of vegetation. The contradiction here is clear but the argument was still quoted approvingly by de Moor in 1971.

Virolleaud's colleague René Dussaud was, according to de Moor, the first to develop a fully fledged 'seasonal' interpretation, based only on CTA 6 (KTU

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\(^9\) De Moor 1971: 9.
\(^{20}\) Virolleaud, 1931b: 211. Quoted in De Moor 1971: 9; translation from French, Wyatt 1996a: 143.
\(^{21}\) Translation Wyatt 1996a: 143.
1.6). He believed that the death of Aliyan (a hypostasis of Baal) caused drought after the rainy winter, but when Anat killed Mot, Aliyan (Baal) was revived and rain returned. Dussaud proposed that "Motu is the spirit of the grain and the rite performed by Anatu is that of the last sheaf at the end of the harvest." He also held that the palace of Baal was erected to regulate the seasons and rain showers, and was consecrated at the time of Baal's triumph, the coming of the autumn rains. Dussaud concluded that

"Aleyin, hypostasis of Baal (Hadad), is naturally the fertilising spirit which contains the rain showers, springs and rivers, and who manifests himself in the grass of the plains and growth of forests. He appears in full force and reigns without contest at the time of the season of rains, to disappear when the rains cease, that is to say, with the hot season which causes withering of the greenery.

Mot, the divine son, succeeds him. He represents more particularly the spirit of cereal vegetation. He supplants Aleyin in the hot season. The harvest is for him a critical moment, menacing because he perishes beneath the sickle of the harvesters. The goddess Anat proceeds to sacrifice the god and she restores to the earth the spirit of cereal vegetation ..."

Once more, Baal and Mot were simultaneously described as gods of vegetation. Neither of these scholars felt that their views contained anything self-contradictory. However, their opinions were based upon a small number of Ugaritic texts and were largely influenced by the prevailing mood of

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22 Virolleaud, AEPHE 1937-38: 9 (present author's translation).
23 De Moor 1971: 10, 11.
25 De Moor 1971: 11.
26 Dussaud 1931: 399 (present author's translation).
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scholarship at the time, which was that fertility cults were prolific throughout the ancient and modern world, from Canaan to deepest contemporary Africa, and Ugarit obligingly fitted into the pattern. The extent of this influence can be seen clearly in the work of Gaster, who wrote twenty years later but had been studying Ugaritic texts since their publication and was naturally influenced by Virolleaud and Dussaud.

**Gaster – *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East* (1950)**

Gaster’s 1950 work is one of the most influential books in the history of Ugaritic studies and it will therefore be discussed in detail. Since its publication it has provided grist to the mill of the majority of Ugaritic scholars who have gone on to promulgate the theory of the Seasonal Pattern and in some cases to take his ideas further.

He began by explaining his view on the fundamental nature of drama and myth and their relationship to ritual in primitive cultures:

“It is hardly an exaggeration to say that when we look back to the beginnings of European literature we find everywhere drama, and always drama derived from a religious ritual designed to ensure the rebirth of the dead world. ... Men could only live in the hope that a living and fruitful world would eventually be reborn. If there was no rebirth, there was famine.”

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Gaster did not, however, provide references for his material evidence. At no point did he justify the above generalisation and this is unfortunately a pattern found throughout his book.

His comment that "the literary products of the past ought not to be approached on a purely verbal level" is however acceptable, and indeed most translations of ancient texts require a certain amount of interpretation if they are to be intelligible to modern readers. Gaster went further and said that "Words are at best shrunken garments ... If we cling to the tattered tailcoats of Speech, we should do so only in order that we may follow in turn in the footsteps of Mind."28 This might possibly have been acceptable, but it points to the way Gaster approached the translation and interpretation of the texts.

His first chapter, "The Components of Drama" was in fact an examination of what Gaster personally felt lay behind drama. He said at the outset: "Drama evolved from seasonal rituals. Seasonal rituals are functional in character. Their purpose is periodically to revive the topocosm."29 He provided no background to the theory, but this can be attributed to the prevalence of the myth-and-ritual or seasonal school promoted by Frazer et al.

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28 Gaster 1950: ix.
29 Gaster 1950: 3. Topos cosmos – whole universe or world.
This was clearly demonstrated when he stated that “All over the world, from time immemorial, it has been the custom to usher in years and seasons by means of public ceremonies ... they follow everywhere a more or less uniform and consistent pattern and serve the distinctly functional purpose.”

This was pure supposition by Gaster, albeit under the influence of Frazer, Harrison et al. Despite the established tradition to which Gaster belonged there was, and still is, no evidence of a ‘new year’ festival of Baal in Ugarit. Also, while ‘new year’ festivals are common, they are by no means uniform in type.

Gaster proposed that all ‘primitive communities’ measured time in cycles and that it was a ‘progression’ from this to linear time which prompted the projection of their cyclical rituals backwards to form a cosmogony and forwards to become eschatology. This is untenable. It was true that cyclical time had an important place in early religious life, just as it does now. However, there was no universal ‘progression’ per se: the Egyptian cult held both cyclical and linear time in tension even before the Ugaritic myths of Baal were written down.

Gaster proposed that the punctual (current) and durative (eternal) nature of the *topocosm* meant that ceremonies connected with seasons were both temporal and transcendent. Myth, or the sacred stories preserved, linked the

30 Gaster 1950: 3.
31 The liturgical calendar still measures time for a large portion of the human race, and is still cyclical. Wyatt 2001a: 301-329 provides a recent discussion.
ritual and the drama. "The function of Myth (so obstinately misunderstood) is to translate the real into terms of the ideal ... Myth is therefore an essential ingredient in the pattern of the seasonal ceremonies; and the interpenetration of Ritual and Myth provides the key to the essential nature of Drama."³² Gaster therefore connected myth with ritual – an essential feature of the old 'myth-and-ritual' school. This not only limits the nature of each element but also limits our potential to understand myth in its fullest sense. Gaster was, it must be said, fairer to myth than many of his contemporaries, who sought to limit myth as a "mere outgrowth of Ritual" or "the spoken correlative of 'things done'."³³

Gaster then expounded his theory of "the Seasonal Pattern in Ritual". After he had made the assertion that "seasonal rituals follow a universal pattern", he proposed that these rites became focused in time on a representative figure, the king. The king came to represent the chief god and his activities were transmuted into the ideal and eternal plane through ritual. In the course of time, the royal duties were regarded as representative of actions of the god "in the beginning."³⁴ Gaster discussed rites which he felt were related to the transition of seasons; rites of *kenosis* (emptying) and *plerosis* (filling), fasting and mourning, feasting and mass-mating.³⁵ At this point, he stated that the *Poem of Baal* (KTU 1.1 – 1.6) was "really the cult-myth of the autumn

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³² Gaster 1950: 5. See also Hooke 1933.
³³ Gaster 1950: 5.
³⁵ He proposed that the rape of the Sabine women and the women of Shiloh were concerned with a "seasonal rite of promiscuity reflected in legend." Gaster 1950: 25.
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festival.” This was made purely in the context of a comment on the role of the sun goddess within the myth and had no other qualification or justification.

In his next chapter, Gaster discussed the “Seasonal Pattern in the Ancient Near East” and began by constructing a synthetic pattern, no doubt made up selectively of features from all the texts which he felt supported the theory. While it is true that many of the features fitted the Baal Cycle, they were also applicable to other ancient myths and should not be taken as proof that they were in any way ‘seasonal’. Common features do not make two stories the same. Gaster illustrated the success of his seasonal model by discussing the Babylonian Akitu festival, the Hebrew ‘Asif festival, the Egyptian rites of Osiris and the Asiatic story of Attis. He proposed that these early stories and rites demonstrated the annual renewal of man’s lease of life, summarised in the Seasonal Pattern particularly when in a ritual form.

He then went on to examine the Seasonal Pattern in myth, that is, in narratives but no longer in rituals. He stated that the progression from rural to urban life meant that the old rites eventually became less urgent and more meaningless. Even the “longer mythological texts ... are likewise but literary adaptations of the Seasonal Pattern ... each incident of the plot being

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37 Gaster 1950: 34.
38 Gaster 1950: 49.

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projected from an element of the original ritual." Gaster unfortunately did not cite his sources. He posited that seasonal rituals fell into the divisions of Combat or Death-and-Resurrection, both of which focused on the activity of a central god, "commonly identified with the spirit of vitality and vegetation", a projection of the king. The ‘Canaanite’ figure that filled this royal role was Baal, “genius of rainfall and fertility” and most of his actions in the Poem of Baal fulfilled aspects of the seasonal pattern. His accession to sovereignty, his new palace, his encounter with Mot and virtually all events of the Baal Cycle, combined motifs from both the Combat and the Death-and-Resurrection rituals.

Gaster suggested that these texts featured motifs of the Seasonal Pattern; this is not surprising since the Seasonal Pattern could be adapted to apply to virtually all ancient myths. Therefore, it is unsurprising that Gaster felt these dramas were “projections from seasonal rituals”. In the Baal Cycle, it was the interpretation of “subordinate episodes” which Gaster said “betray the dependence of the texts upon the canonical pattern of seasonal ceremonies”. In this case, the instalment of Athtar as interrex and the role of Shapsh the sun goddess “proved” a connection to the solstice or equinox. Gaster was, however, only interested in searching for material to support the Seasonal Pattern – the concept of a text which was politically or socially motivated does not seem to have occurred to him.

39 Gaster 1950: 49.
40 Gaster 1950: 49.
41 Gaster 1950: 57.
42 Gaster 1950: 63.
43 Gaster 1950: 67.
Gaster's bias became clear when he stated that "a final point in favour of the view that these texts are really seasonal dramas or, at least, projections from seasonal rituals, is the fact that they tend to depict stock situations of the Seasonal Pattern in virtually identical terms." The circularity of this argument is clear – the reason that the 'stock situations' recurred was that Gaster had picked them out of the texts in the first place in order to support his myth-and-ritual, seasonal theory and one would not expect to find material which did not substantiate his argument.

The second part of Gaster's book, which dealt with textual translations themselves, began by him once more asserting that words alone were inadequate for us to understand the meaning of texts. Gaster felt that we no longer understand the implications of phrases that the audience of the time would have recognised immediately, much like contemporary political or social comment. This is always the case with 'ancient' texts. In the case of modern texts, the reader of the future could presumably research the context from other sources. The paucity of contemporary sources for the Ugaritic texts led Gaster to propose that "such necessary links in the chain can be supplied only by comparative mythology and folklore." He used this method in his translation of the texts and said "We have tried to recognise and point out the presence of motifs in the lore of other peoples – especially other ancient peoples – and to indicate how the assumption of such an

44 Gaster 1950: 71.
45 Gaster 1950: 111.
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element rounds out the narrative and gives it added meaning.”46 Although he recognised the potential pitfalls of such a technique, he failed to see that the same danger applied to his Seasonal Pattern theory. While it is true that there are many significant and intriguing correspondences between Hebrew, Egyptian, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian myths, to impose an overarching hypothesis upon them serves only to diminish their individual nature and the effect of time and culture upon each of them. There may well have been a common source, a common heritage and there may have been a common god or gods. However, the cultural differences between these nations left an imprint upon their myths and it would be insensitive to ignore their national character and perhaps destroy vital information in the process. Our view of what underlies these myths can never be proved, and Gaster failed to recognise this. In his enthusiastic application of ‘comparative mythology’ to texts such as the Baal Cycle, he reduced it to a fulfilment of his own synthetic Seasonal Pattern.

Gaster’s translations of the ‘Canaanite’ texts of the Poem of Baal, Poem of Dawn and Sunset and Poem of Aqhat belong to the early history of interpretation. Gaster stated that he studied all of the texts “afresh from the purely philological angle and that the translations are based on the writer’s independent researches”47 and that they were also “studied for their cultural rather than their linguistic interests and are treated solely as illustrations of our main theme.”48 It would be easy to belittle the achievements of Gaster, a great

46 Gaster 1950: 111.
47 Gaster 1950: 112.
48 Gaster 1950: 112 (present author’s emphasis).
linguist, by ignoring the date of the translations. Our understanding of Ugaritic is now more complete and our perception of the text has improved, just as the study of ancient Egyptian has similarly progressed since the earliest attempts by Champollion. However, to use texts selectively to fulfil a hypothesis cannot be condoned. It is too easy to gloss over weak theoretical points by ignoring their presence.

Gaster prefaced his translation of the texts with a summary of events, using the notation of Virolleaud as well as that of Gordon alongside the actual translations. He introduced his interpretation of the texts by saying that the Baal Cycle appeared to be an exciting story. However, “in reality, it is a nature myth and its theme is the alternation of the seasons,” and he accordingly based his theory upon the names and roles of the protagonists, there being no actual seasonal events in the story.49

Baal was described as the god of rain, lightning and thunder; his voice created cosmic quaking and, according to Gaster, he was a god of the “upper air” with no dwelling on earth.50 Yam, he said, was the god of all waters while Mot was the god of all that lacked vitality or life, who lived in “the sunscorched desert or ... the darkling region of the netherworld.”51

49 Gaster 1950: 122 (present author’s emphasis).
50 Gaster 1950: 123.
51 Gaster 1950: 124.
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These three gods, like Zeus, Poseidon and Hades/Pluto, ruled over the earth – but not just in physical terms. Gaster proposed that this three-fold division was crucial because “what it symbolises and allegorizes is, specifically, the alternation of the seasons in the Syro-Palestinian year.”  

Hence, after defeating Yam, Baal reigned from late September to May, when he was overpowered by Mot, who ruled from May to September. Gaster suggested that the rule of earth was given to those who could “quicken” it. This did not explain how Mot gained control, if quickening was the principle. Nor did the overall theory adequately explain Yam’s position, nor how such an important episode as Yam’s putative defeat of Mot, a corollary of the theory but absent from the text, came to be ‘left out’ of the Baal Cycle. Gaster neglected the difficulties in his theory raised by Mot and did not discuss the relationship between Yam and Mot. Yam was, after all, a cosmic figure, against whom Baal required the help of Kothar and who was given the title “beloved of El.” It would hardly be realistic for him to rule over the land for only a few days before Baal once more returned in the spring!

Perhaps Gaster realised the flaws of the theory since he then tried to point out the importance of the subsidiary characters, especially the god Athtar. Gaster described him as the god of artificially irrigated soil, based on Arabic cognates. He said that Athtar was allowed to reign on earth while Baal ‘died’

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52 Gaster 1950: 125.
53 Gaster 1950: 126. This principle still in theory holds true under Muslim Shariah law.
54 If one supports Gaster’s theory, Yam must defeat Mot for a cyclical movement of power between these three gods.
55 KTU 1.1 iv 20.
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because of the local land's dependence on water. However, that explanation of Athtar's function failed to address the issue of the drought which occurred while Baal was in the underworld. If Athtar could indeed irrigate the farmland, why did the crops wither without Baal?

Gaster did not, however, limit the Baal Cycle to a "literary allegory of the seasons". It was also a product of the Ritual Pattern, based upon divine combat, particularly the ritual battle between Baal and Yam. Gaster ignored the possibility of the Chaoskampf as a political or cosmogonic motif and held instead to his myth and the ritual school. His judgement deserves to be re-evaluated.

There are also arguments against his identification of the 'death' of Baal with the death and resurrection of Tammuz, Osiris and Adonis. This may have resulted from the influence of Frazer, and is dealt with in the examination of Hvidberg's book, which further advanced the argument for correspondences between Baal and these gods.

Finally, after he had discussed the battle of Mot and Baal (once more a projection of 'ritual combat'), Gaster stated: "On both internal and external grounds, therefore, there is every reason for seeing in the Canaanite Poem of

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56 Gaster 1950: 127.
57 Gaster 1950: 128.
58 Hvidberg 1962: 17. See this chapter: 54.

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Baal a seasonal myth based on the traditional ritual drama of the autumn festival."\(^{59}\) Unfortunately he had not established this conclusively. His treatment of the main protagonists was rather simplistic and based upon his belief that their names illustrated their function and role in the Seasonal Pattern, and that the myth was, by its very existence, connected to an important ritual. Based upon his own belief in the 'new year' festivals of the ancient Near East, Gaster unsurprisingly found evidence to connect the Baal Cycle to the pattern which he himself supported. Gaster did not, for instance, discuss why Baal fought two cosmic foes during one festival, nor did he explain the significance of either Athtar’s role on earth or Yam’s place in the division of the seasonal year.

An example of his desire to find episodes that supported the Seasonal Pattern can be found in KTU 1.4 vi 10-15. According to Gaster’s view, Baal refused to place a window in his palace in case Yam should revive sufficiently to steal his two “debutante daughters”.\(^{60}\) Gaster suggested that this related to the ancient idea of the sea-god or dragon claiming boys or girls in tribute, which in turn was a vestigial memory of periodic human sacrifice as “a method of forefending inundation. Such a rite would have formed part of the primitive Seasonal Pattern and thus found a place in the myths which reflect it”.\(^{61}\) This was speculation which has no basis in the Ugaritic material.\(^{62}\)

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\(^{59}\) Gaster 1950: 129.

\(^{60}\) Gaster 1950: 176.

\(^{61}\) Gaster 1950: 176.


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In his introduction to the *Poem of Dawn and Sunset*, Gaster stated: “In the case of the *Poem of Baal*, the contours of the Seasonal Pattern are discernible only beneath the overlay of an essentially literary composition.” Throughout his translation and interpretation of the Baal Cycle texts, Gaster had strongly asserted the features of the Seasonal Pattern and that does not support his later description of an “overlay”. Gaster alluded to an overlay which was in fact the Seasonal Pattern, the idea of an autumnal festival and the inherently seasonal, ritual nature of the myth. It is not difficult to understand the appeal of such a satisfying theory. More than anything, we seek to understand the motivation and religious thought of ancient man through these tantalising texts. The Seasonal Pattern appeared to offer just such an explanation which could be traced down to Greek tragedy and European mummers’ plays. As with many simple theories, there was a fundamental flaw – it all rested upon an unproven hypothesis, which required that texts be translated in a particular way, and myth and ritual understood in a different particular way. Despite these problems, the Seasonal Pattern held sway in Ugaritic scholarship for nearly fifty years, and the following works represent the ‘memes’ of Gaster’s influence.

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63 Gaster 1950: 225.  
64 Gaster 1950: 49. 

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Kapelrud – *Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts* (1952)

Arvid Kapelrud’s 1952 monograph was the first book devoted to Baal at Ugarit. It is a slim volume compared to the later works of de Moor and van Zijl since it does not contain textual translations. At the time it was written it was in agreement with most contemporary academic understanding of Ugarit and Baal.66

Kapelrud began by exploring the *Sitz im Leben* of the tablets, crucial in determining our understanding of the narrative. He decided that they were most probably “cult narratives”, that is, texts to accompany rituals carried out by mask-wearing priests in the performance of “cultic drama”.68 He considered that this was supported by the physical layout of the Baal temple in Ugarit, which had a wide courtyard that he regarded to be ideally suited for public show.69 He was also convinced of the performative nature of Ugaritian religion, quoting KTU 1.3 iii 14-17 and stating again the perceived close link between the texts and ritual. He went so far as to state that the title of the text “The Devourers” of KTU 1.12 i 26-33 was a myth entirely derived from ritual performances, since the creatures described were undoubtedly

65 Kapelrud 1952.
66 De Moor 1968b: 223 disagrees strongly with Kapelrud however.
68 Kapelrud 1952: 23.
69 Kapelrud 1952: 55.
70 Kapelrud 1952: 19.
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mask-wearing priests.\textsuperscript{71} His initial caution about determining the *Sitz im Leben* is commendable, however, since its importance for our understanding of the texts should not be underestimated, even if one disagrees with some of his conclusions. He concluded that

“Baal is the central figure of the AB texts. His life and death are the main themes around which all is centred. It is then likely that also these texts are closely connected with the fertility aspect as well as with the cult. This means just one thing: that the AB texts were cult texts. This is actually so likely that the burden of proof ought to rest on the scholars who maintain that these texts are not cult texts.”\textsuperscript{72}

None of this was established by Kapelrud in a manner which relied solely upon the texts, depending instead on the theories of Frazer *et al*. He next discussed Baal in comparison with other gods of the ancient Near East, citing Tammuz,\textsuperscript{73} Marduk and Aššur\textsuperscript{74} as sharing certain characteristics of Baal, most importantly their being in his view dying and rising gods. However, he was keen to draw attention at this point to the annual festival of Assyria\textsuperscript{75} in which Marduk and Aššur were central figures. This was very like the *Akitu* or *zag-mug* festival\textsuperscript{76} of Sumer, in which Ningirsu played the main role, celebrating the new year with the god’s entry to Lagash and subsequent *hieros gamos*, “characteristic for the fertility cult”.\textsuperscript{77} In fact, he offered the opinion that this Sumerian festival and its texts had important implications

\textsuperscript{71}Kapelrud 1952: 23. Based on a cylinder seal, see Schaeffer 1939: pl. X, fig. 2. Also Engnell 1967: 125ff. This is hardly conclusive evidence for his thesis though.

\textsuperscript{72}Kapelrud 1952: 27.

\textsuperscript{73}Tammuz: deity of Sumer, widely known throughout the ANE. Kapelrud 1952: 28.

\textsuperscript{74}Marduk and Aššur: Assyrian deities developed from and alongside Tammuz. Kapelrud 1952: 28.

\textsuperscript{75}Kapelrud 1952: 29.

\textsuperscript{76}Akitus is the Akkadian title for an earlier Sumerian festival called *zag-mug*. Kapelrud 1952: 27.

\textsuperscript{77}Kapelrud 1952: 29.
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for a correct understanding of the Baal Cycle, which meant that he viewed the Ugaritic texts as a ritual expanded into a separate myth, rather than an extant myth which became ritualised within the cult. There is no textual support for this development, however, and certainly Kapelrud cited none. He similarly stated that the Enuma Eliš was also a ritual text expanded to epic status because of the urbanisation and 'progress' of Babylonian society.\(^7\)

The other god or name which Kapelrud was very keen to compare with Baal was Adad,\(^7\) a West Semitic storm god, regarded by his worshippers as both the creator of fertility through rain as well as a destroyer of crops.\(^8\) He argued that Adad, like Tammuz, Marduk \textit{et al.}, was a dying and rising fertility god\(^9\) whose cult involved an \textit{akitu} or harvest festival, noted on a stela set up in Arrapha\(^10\) many years before the Babylonian festival. Adad was also specifically identified with Baal,\(^11\) since they were both fertility and storm gods. Unfortunately, \textit{akitu} does not mean 'harvest', so Kapelrud's argument was fundamentally weak.\(^12\) Neither did the ancient \textit{akitu} nor the Babylonian festival of Marduk celebrate the death and resurrection of the god. Frymer-Kensky stated that "earlier reports that this was so were based on an erroneous reading of the \textit{Tribulations of Marduk} which related to the Assyrian

\(^{78}\) Kapelrud 1952: 30. Dalley 1991: 231 rightly stated that the Enuma Eliš was read during the New Year (\textit{Akitu}) festival of Babylon but that the form indicated that it was not originally for performance, unlike \textit{Gilgamesh}. On the contrary, it had been incorporated \textit{into} a ritual, reversing Kapelrud's argument.
\(^{79}\) Adad, general ancient Near Eastern deity, especially favoured by the Assyrians and Babylonians in the mid 2\textsuperscript{nd} millennium BCE. Originally Amorite. Kapelrud 1952: 31.
\(^{80}\) Kapelrud 1952: 31.
\(^{81}\) Kapelrud 1952: 34. See also Zechariah 12:11.
\(^{82}\) Kapelrud 1952: 30.
\(^{83}\) Kapelrud 1952: 37.
\(^{84}\) The \textit{Akitu} festival took place in the first and sixth months of the year and was at least partly agricultural. Babylon provides most information, when it took place in the month of \textit{Nisannu} (March or April) for twelve days.

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The next title he discussed was bn dgn or “Son of Dagan”. He stated that the term bn dgn was used only in parallel to b'l, not Aliyn Baal or Hadad. Kapelrud felt this indicated firstly that b'l was the original name of the deity and that he (b'l) was without doubt the son of Dagan, although there were no narrative texts featuring Dagan which were able to confirm the filial relationship. Dagan was well known in Mesopotamia and the Amorite kingdom and was later worshipped by the Philistines. Despite this widespread worship, no myths to illustrate his character have been found. However, Kapelrud said, “there is little doubt Dagan was a vegetation or fertility god, closely connected with the grain ... it is probable that he [Baal] has also got something of the same character”. He went on to say that it was likely that Baal was “an offsplit of this god, the young fertility god”, Baal being the active and present part of the pair, in fact, having “taken over his [Dagan’s] place”. Finally, Kapelrud discussed Baal’s title, Lord of Saphon, the holy mountain where Baal reigned and was buried, modern Jebel el Aqra, and regarded by Kapelrud as another link to Hadad.

Kapelrud then explored Baal’s relationship with the rest of the pantheon. Baal may also have been the ‘son’ of El, perhaps through Baal’s relationship with Anat. Kapelrud was convinced that Baal attempted to oust El from his position as head of the pantheon. This was supported in his view by

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89 Kapelrud 1952: 52.
90 Kapelrud 1952: 53.
91 Kapelrud 1952: 54.
92 Kapelrud 1952: 54.
93 Kapelrud 1952: 54.
94 Kapelrud 1952: 56.
95 Kapelrud 1952: 56.
96 Kapelrud 1952: 57.

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Asherah’s encouragement of Baal’s petition for a temple. Although she was the wife of El, he felt that this support showed that “she is on her way from Il’s side to the side of the stronger, younger god, Baal”97, as befitted a head goddess.

His discussion of the relationship between Baal and Anat was dominated by their purported sexual relationship, as well as by Anat’s devotion to her consort.98 He felt that her religious importance had been transferred to her partner.99

Having established Baal’s relationship with Dagan, El, Athirat and Anat, Kapelrud discussed Baal’s character and task, which he divided into five sections:

   a) rain, storm and fertility god;
   b) Baal as a fighter;
   c) temple builder and cult founder;
   d) his descent into the earth;100 and
   e) as a rising and victorious god, king of Saphon.

He did not discuss Baal’s royal aspect in detail and his overall approach appears simplistic; although almost adequate in terms of Baal’s accomplishments, it did not take into account the full scope of his ‘theology’.

97 Kapelrud 1952: 75.
98 Kapelrud 1952: 69. “There can thus be no doubt that Anat is Baal’s consort”, ‘consort’ in this context meaning husband, wife or partner.
99 Kapelrud 1952: 70.
100 Gaster 1950 heavily influenced this section of Kapelrud’s work.
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His assessment of Baal as a storm god is indisputable: he was a god who appointed the rains and seasons, and his death therefore resulted in a drought.\(^{101}\) However, it is necessary to take issue with his idea that Baal and Anat had an annual *hieros gamos*, coinciding with the "great annual festival".\(^{102}\) There is no evidence within the texts from Ugarit to suggest that there was any great annual festival, and still less that it involved Baal and Anat participating in sex, although there are some texts which could be argued to describe a sexual relationship.\(^{103}\)

Kapelrud flirted with the Seasonal Pattern throughout his book and the section\(^{104}\) discussing Baal's martial aspect is the point at which his views became explicit. When Kapelrud examined Baal "as a fighter"\(^ {105}\) he said that the battle between Mot and Baal was not in fact a serious fight, since Baal was defeated so easily, given his physical prowess. Rather, Mot "is playing his part in the seasonal battle between rain-time and summer-time"\(^ {106}\), a symbolic action rather than a fierce struggle. The fight was therefore part of a Seasonal Pattern, as was Baal's subsequent descent into the earth.\(^ {107}\) He acquiesced to Mot "in season"\(^ {108}\) and his death led to the summer drought.

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101 Kapelrud 1952: 94.
102 Kapelrud 1952: 97.
103 KTU 1.10. Lloyd 1994: 259-68 and Wyatt 1998b: 155, 158-9 agreed that this indicated Baal and Anat having sexual congress, while P. Day 1991 and Walls 1992 disagreed. In the present context we are more concerned as to whether sex (or lack of it) was related to the New Year Festival.
105 Kapelrud 1952: 98.
106 Kapelrud 1952: 100.
107 KTU 1:5:V:5 ff.
108 Kapelrud 1952: 117.
Kapelrud proposed that Mot, as death, "...represents the dry season"\(^{109}\) of summer. However, since "...the summer cannot be truly represented by a character who is only sterility, death"\(^{110}\), Mot was the death of summer and at the same time represented the potential for new life in the autumn, the ripening grain and fruit.\(^{111}\) This view may be contrasted with Kapelrud's earlier assertion that Baal, as son of the grain god Dagan, shared his "father's role" and would therefore have been a god of vegetation or grain.\(^{112}\) The second, abortive battle between Baal and Mot is not discussed at that point.

Kapelrud also said that El mourned the death of his "rival"\(^{113}\) because mourning was the appropriate cult response\(^{114}\) and formed an important part of the new year festival\(^{115}\) rather than a sincere response to the death of Baal. This interpretation relied on the acceptance of Kapelrud's views about the "annual festival". He concluded by saying that all this "fits well"\(^{116}\) with Baal being the dying and rising god of rain, but did not address the issue of Baal as the god of grain and vegetation\(^{117}\) as he had earlier proposed.

Baal's rebirth is another area where Kapelrud was perhaps too decided in his opinion. The texts appeared to say that Mot was dead or absent for seven

\(^{109}\) Kapelrud 1952: 126.
\(^{110}\) Kapelrud 1952: 126.
\(^{111}\) Kapelrud 1952: 126.
\(^{112}\) Kapelrud 1952: 54. cf. the contradictions in the arguments of Virolleaud and Dussaud.
\(^{113}\) Kapelrud 1952: 121.
\(^{114}\) Kapelrud 1952: 121.
\(^{115}\) Kapelrud 1952: 123.
\(^{116}\) Kapelrud 1952: 127.
\(^{117}\) Kapelrud 1952: 56.
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Kapelrud summarised his work by concluding that Baal was the central figure of the Baal Cycle, a group of texts built from a strong cult and its rituals, whose names or titles established him in the Semitic tradition of storm, fertility and grain gods. He stated that a yearly cycle could be the only explanation for the texts, which were cult rituals “clearly connected with fertility and with the crop ... It is the only cycle which can really be the basis for the AB cycle. Any attempt to dismiss this background ... is doomed to failure”. It is clear that throughout the work Kapelrud retained certain assumptions, without stating them openly.

118 In KTU 1.6 v 10, Mot ‘returns’ after seven years.
119 “Baal is a fertility but not a seasonal god; on only one occasion (67:11) do we know he was killed, later to be revived (49:111); the recorded droughts and famines associated with Baal’s misfortune or hostility are calamities lasting seven years, plainly ruling out a yearly cycle of Baal’s death and revival.” See Gordon 1949: 4f and 1953: 79-81.
120 Kapelrud 1952: 129.
121 Kapelrud 1952: 131. He cites text 49-V:1ff. This is problematic since there is no text 49 V – this could be a misprint, and he could possibly be referring to 49 VI. (49 = KTU 1.6 ii – vi).
122 Kapelrud 1952: 133.
123 Kapelrud 1952: 135.
124 Kapelrud 1952: 143.
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He believed Baal to be a fertility god in both sexual and meteorological respects, and that the high point of the cultic year was a ritual drama, the great new year festival. This celebrated Baal’s triumphant return from the grave and ascension to the throne of El, as well as his sacred marriage to Anat. Kapelrud also believed that the texts were derived from ritual. He dismissed out of hand any attempt to interpret the cycle otherwise.

There are several serious problems with Kapelrud’s theories, some of which have already been mentioned. Others relevant to the present study are as follows.

First, the ‘myth-and-ritual’ theory is now discredited, partly through its almost universal acceptance in the past and its frequent misapplication. There are indeed ritual texts from Ugarit but the narrative myths of the AB or Baal Cycle, KTU 1.1 to 1.6, provided no evidence for their being a “cult ritual”, whether expanded into a “legend” or not.

Second, Kapelrud’s view of Ugaritic religion was, to say the least, simplistic. To say that it “was of a decidedly fertility character” and that the “... large and life-like stone phalli and many plaques of the nude goddess of fertility

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give clear evidence as to the character of Ugaritic religion"127 is simply unacceptable scholarship. It is a highly subjective assessment and contained implied censure as well as being without any evidence, particularly since Kapelrud did not tell us where we could find these archaeological gems.

Third, in his discussion of the names of Baal, Kapelrud frequently stated how often a particular name was found in the texts128 and based his theories about the relative importance of these titles upon their frequency of use. This is unreliable evidence for two reasons. Firstly, since the time the book was written, several important tablets have been excavated which mention Baal along with other gods.129 More importantly, the texts to which Kapelrud had access were already seriously damaged and had large lacunae in crucial areas. Given the condition of the first tablets, as well as the additional texts discovered since 1952, it is reasonable to regard Kapelrud's statistical evidence as obsolete.130

Fourth, although Baal was believed by Kapelrud to be a fertility god, in a sexual sense as well as in a meteorological sense, he had only three daughters – Pidray, Taliy, and Arsiy – and their origin is unknown. Moreover, he was only ever attested as having begotten one son, usually in tauromorphic form,

128 Kapelrud 1952: 43ff.
129 see RSO 5 vol 1. Most significantly KTU 1.101, 1.119. This problem also occurred with both van Zijl and De Moor's work.
130 While frequency of occurrence is mentioned in Chapter 9 and Appendix 2 in this dissertation, caveats are given about the extent to which one may base arguments solely upon numerical quantity.
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and we have no idea what became of this 'child'.131 Compared to the 'seventy sons of Athirat', this did not bode well for a god whose relationship to the bull was felt by Kapelrud to symbolise his "prowess and fertility".132 Also, when Danel needed a son, Baal was his intercessor with El, and it was El, the father of Athirat's seventy sons (the gods), who helped Danel to produce his heir. One must therefore seriously question Kapelrud's linking of these two very different aspects of fertility.

Finally, Kapelrud's insistence that Baal attempted to oust El is simply not supported by any of the texts. There is no evidence to suggest that Baal wished to replace El, or was even able to do so. Kapelrud's idea that Athirat, by supporting Baal, was leaving her old and impotent husband for a young and virile god is likewise not supported by the texts. His view that El was not the *de facto* leader because he had no temple may also be questionable, since there has recently been a suggestion that the *Temple aux Rhytons* is in fact the temple of El.

One must admit, however, that there is still some merit in Kapelrud's work. He rightly highlighted the importance of *Sitz im Leben*, even if his placing of them as ritual narratives was misguided. He also asked important questions about the paternity of Baal, as well as his 'function' in the pantheon and in the society of Ugarit. Their value is unfortunately outweighed by the deficiencies in his theories highlighted above, which suggest the need for a

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131 KTU 1.5 v 22 "and she bore a young male"; KTU 1.10 iii 35 "for a bull is born to Baal."

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re-examination of his study. Surprisingly, although there were general translations of Ugaritic material which refer to Baal, the next study of Baal only was not published until 1972.\textsuperscript{133}

\textbf{Gray – The Legacy of Canaan: The Ras Shamra Texts and their Relevance to the Old Testament (1957)}

Gray’s interest in the Ugaritic texts was long-standing, beginning in 1936 in Jerusalem, at which time he felt that Virolleaud’s early views on the connection between the Ras Shamra texts and the Old Testament had been misguided.\textsuperscript{134} When his book was published twenty-one years later, Gray felt that the texts were more likely to have established the cultural context in which the Hebrews found themselves in their conquest of Canaan, rather than having had direct contact with the early Israelites as Virolleaud believed. For this reason Gray considered it vital for those interested in the Old Testament to study the Ugaritic texts.

The title of Gray’s book indicated that he believed Ugarit to be synonymous with Canaan. Largely since it had such a large collection of extant texts, Ugarit came to be regarded as the Canaan of the Old Testament. The validity

\textsuperscript{133} Van Zijl 1972.
\textsuperscript{134} Gray 1957: Preface.

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of this judgement has however been re-examined and it may be suspected of being an over-generalisation.

Gray’s first chapter dealt with “Ugarit and its Records”, although there is somewhat less history and rather more interpretation than one would expect from such a title. He began by noting the intimate connection between biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic, in poetic structure as well as in their actual linguistics. After mentioning the essential nature of Arabic and Aramaic as further sources of cognates, he stated that “this is, however, no field for armchair philologists. The Ras Shamra texts not only challenge a knowledge of the range of Semitic languages; they demand familiarity with anthropology and a sympathy with primitive modes of thought and behaviour”. Once more, there was a suggestion that knowledge of ‘primitive’ modes of thought in general, or knowledge in a modern anthropological sense, would be applicable in the examination of the Ras Shamra texts. It could be argued that man has remained essentially the same and that over the millennia little has ultimately changed in terms of our mode of thought. This would not, however, agree with Gray’s idea of the Ugaritians: they were ‘primitive’, in other words uncivilised. ‘Primitive’ surely here refers to a lack of empirical knowledge. No one, surely, would suggest that peoples who could cast beautifully defined bronze figures, build two- or three-storey houses and temples, form a hub of trade throughout the

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135 See Introduction.

136 Over-generalisation is a common flaw among many scholars of Ugarit: while it is useful to draw comparisons between Ras Shamra and other ancient civilizations, one must not assume that what held true for one city must therefore have held true for another, merely on account of their contemporaneity.
ancient Near East and cultivate an extensive worshipping community – without modern means of production – were ‘primitive’ in the sense of uncivilised? It is perhaps best to simply note the use of an otiose term, one which in modern anthropology is surrounded by ambiguity and is therefore obsolete or even detrimental, and move on.

Gray then made his first mention of Baal. He identified Baal with Hadad, the Amorite storm god, and stated that he preferred to think of the Baal myths as separate groups rather than a single ‘cycle’.\(^{138}\) He justified this by grouping the ‘Baal and Mot’ myths as “reflecting the progress and recession of growth in the Syrian peasant’s year” while the myths of ‘Baal and the waters’ were “probably used at the annual autumnal festival of the agricultural year” and had a different origin.\(^{139}\) Gray assumed that myth was the counterpart of ritual and that there existed an annual autumnal festival connected with agriculture.\(^{140}\) There were unfortunately no citations of texts. Gray also identified Baal with Marduk of the Enuma Eliš in his triumph over the cosmic waters. He then stated that

“It is the Canaanite declaration of faith in Providence, and its regular, probably annual, repetition, probably with ritual acting, served the purpose of relieving the emotional tension felt by the community when the initial autumn rains ... were still pending, and a rite of imitative magic to predispose the

\(^{137}\) Gray 1957: 9.

\(^{138}\) Gray 1957: 9, 19ff infra.

\(^{139}\) Gray 1957: 9.

\(^{140}\) The Akitu festival was held in March and the assumption that it was a new year festival is therefore wrong. See discussion of Kapelrud: 28-40.
cosmic powers to a favourable issue; the community was also reassured.”¹⁴¹

This raises several important questions. What is meant by Providence? Did Gray mean Baal or El – or some other deity we are unaware of? How did Gray know that the performance took place before the rains to induce the cosmic powers, rather than after, as an act of praise or thanks? Just how did he know that the community was reassured? His frequent use of ‘probably’ points to the answer – Gray did not know, nor of course can anyone. His reading of the texts, and therefore his view of Baal, was dominated by his use of ‘maybe’, ‘perhaps’ and unsatisfactory anthropological generalisations. The issue of imitative magic is also highly suspect. Did he mean that priests fought, killed one another and even ate people (as Baal drinks Yam and as Mot kills Baal)? Had sex with heifers? The term ‘ritual’ would have been more appropriate (although still highly speculative) rather than “imitative magic” but one suspects that “ritual” might have been too close to Hebrew practice for Gray to have felt comfortable using the term.

He stated that “the bulk of this mythology is related to various phases in the year of the Syrian peasant”.¹⁴² His use of the term “peasant” suggests that he may not have sufficiently recognised the decidedly urban and specifically royal origin of these texts. Focusing on the actual meaning of the statement, one remains unsatisfied.

¹⁴¹ Gray 1957: 10. Present author’s emphasis.
¹⁴² Gray 1957: 11.
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It is simply impossible to assert that there was an agricultural or climatic connection between the myths of Baal and the livelihood of the local farmers. It is more than likely that his rain-making ability was highly prized and perhaps even called upon but that is not stated in the Baal Cycle myths as it is, for example, in the story of King Keret. It is therefore unacceptable to state that ‘the bulk’ of the Baal myths are related to such events.

Gray returned to his ideology of myth. He stated that it was “the attempt to influence Providence by autosuggestion” and that “such rites of imitative magic, together with an intense sympathy with the powers and processes of nature are features of most primitive agricultural societies, and the Syrian peasants are no exception”. However, just when Gray’s stance on the myth-ritual in Ugarit debate appeared to be clear, he added: “While emphasizing the essential connection of myth with ritual, we recognize, nevertheless, that the myths of Ras Shamra have far outgrown their primitive origins. So far are they, indeed, from being the mere mechanical accompaniments to ritual that they have assumed the style and proportion of epics.” His grudging acknowledgement of the complexity of Ugaritic ‘myth’ was diminished by his suggestion that they had assumed the nature of ‘epics’ rather than actually being epics! Gray was at least willing to accept the complex and multivalent nature of these texts, although without explaining the difference between epic and myth.

143 see KTU 1.16 iii 5-16.
144 Gray 1957: 11.
His next chapter clearly indicated his view of the topic, being headed “The Myths of the Fertility Cult”, that is, those myths generally about Baal. He went back on his previous generous interpretation of myth by stating that myth is “technically the spoken counterpart of ritual actions and has the purpose of making those explicit to the participants...and making those rites as acts of imitative magic doubly effective”. Many exponents of the myth-and-ritual school would have agreed with this statement.

He then discussed Baal more particularly. Gray saw Baal as the most active deity of the pantheon, manifest in thunder, lightning, clouds and the violent rain-storms of early autumn, the “early [autumn] rains” of the HB. Given this tremendous power, Baal was the creator and sustainer of order within the cosmos, the victor of the Chaoskampf, who was yet capable of turning the beneficent rains into dangerous flash-floods which could kill and destroy crops within hours. These observations were valid, but to compare Baal’s victory over the waters to the Akitu festival of the Enuma Eliš was not. This is another example of generalisation. It could more validly be compared to Yahweh’s control of Leviathan and separation of the primordial waters. As it is, the episode under discussion did not require further clarification as it was self-explanatory.

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145 Gray 1957: 11.
146 Gray 1957: 18.
147 Gray 1957: 19.
148 Gray 1957: 20. See also Snaith 1947: 212ff. See discussion of Akitu on p. 32
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Gray then stated that “such a theme, the establishment of Cosmos over primaeval Chaos, was especially appropriate to the principal seasonal crisis, the autumnal New Year”. The objections to this assumption bear repetition. There is no mention of a new year rite in the texts. The agricultural crisis was brought on by the ‘death’ of Baal, which (as far as anyone can tell) occurred only once. The argument for the identification of Baal with vegetation and fertility collides with the identification of Mot with grain, a food staple and the “staff of life”, and renders the theory unstable. Furthermore, why did Baal and Mot fight twice in the course of the tale when, as seasons of the year, they should only have met once?

Gray then pointed out that a major problem of the texts was firstly their order, and secondly that half of the text was missing or damaged. His caution about the order of texts and unity of myths contrasts uneasily with the confidence with which he asserted the connection between the texts and agricultural acts of “imitative magic”.

Even more obscurely, he decided that Anat’s double massacre “anticipates Baal’s rehabilitation and his readiness to consummate his hieros gamos [with Anat] and demonstrate his virility, which would have its counterpart in the fertility of flock and field ... a rite proper to the season of transition between the sterility of the late Syrian Summer and the new season of fertility”.

151 Gray 1957: 36.
Gray supposed that the blood symbolised the life essence, and hence an outpouring of blood would, according to his principle of 'imitative magic', predispose Baal to an outpouring of life. He also suggested that the insertion and opening of a window in Baal's palace\textsuperscript{152} was connected to imitative magic to induce rain (rather than to intimidate the enemies of Baal and confirm his power over the earth by raising his voice, as is actually stated in the text) and that the building of the palace itself was a preliminary to Baal's \textit{hieros gamos}.\textsuperscript{153} This ignored the fact that although Baal had sex with heifers, and perhaps even Anat, at various points in the Ras Shamra texts, these events generally took place outside his temple, in the wilderness. One could argue that events which occurred at the edge of 'the world', i.e. in a 'liminal' space, were representative of something which happened at the cosmic centre, namely, within Baal's temple on Saphon, but that is not made clear in the text. Moreover, the occurrence of a \textit{hieros gamos} is conjectural since the narrative texts and poems dwell on the martial and climatic effects of Baal and do not mention any episode which might suggest a wedding ceremony.

On that topic, Gray suggested that Baal's mating with a heifer in KTU 1.5 v 20 was to leave progeny in case he did not return from the dead. However, his subsequent interpretation of the text was merely a confirmation of his own theory, rather than a further exploration of its significance:

\footnote{\textsuperscript{152} KTU 1.4 vii 25ff.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{153} Gray 1957: 43.}
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"The fact that the actual birth of a calf is mentioned may seem at first sight to deprive the passage of any seasonal significance. The birth, however, seems to be mentioned in anticipation. The conception may have been regarded as the earnest of fulfilment, and as such of value as a rite of imitative magic. Here too we may see a seasonal reference."¹⁵⁴

In other words, the calf would be born in autumnal rains, at the start of the fertile period. Gray was a member of the school of the Seasonal Pattern, although he argued against the excesses of some of its other adherents.¹⁵⁵

This was despite his suggestion that the suffering of Baal "is depicted as the expiation of fratricide", after killing Mot's brothers.¹⁵⁶ This was the result of a misreading of the texts. In fact, Baal was killed by Mot in a lacuna at some point in KTU 1.5 vi, but he did not kill Mot's brothers until KTU 1.6 vi 10-15, after which Mot and Baal fought. During the episode Gray discussed, Baal was guilty only of omitting to invite Mot to his feast. This may be an indication of the importance of commensality in Ugarit: the trust implicit in sharing a meal is frequently overlooked at present but would have been recognised throughout the ANE.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Gray 1957: 51.
¹⁵⁵ Dussaud and Gaster are mentioned. Gray 1957: 150.
¹⁵⁷ Wyatt has suggested, in conversation, that the 'bad fairy' motif in traditional fairytales may be an expression of the vengeful guest uninvited to the feast.

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Gray summarised his view of the mythology of Baal, dividing it into two loose themes. The first was cosmic and primarily involved Baal’s defeat of the "Unruly Waters, by which Baal secured kingship and established Cosmos".\(^{158}\) This theme survived in fragmentary form elsewhere (those monsters mentioned by Anat in KTU 1.3 iii 40ff) and Gray identified it with similar material from the Enuma Eliš and the Hebrew Bible. However, Gray suggested that the Hebrews might have known this material "as the cult-legend of the Baal-shrine of Baal Saphon in the Eastern Nile Delta in the days before Moses led ‘the mixed multitude’ out of the land of bondage".\(^{159}\) This is hardly consistent with his initial criticism of Virolleaud for presuming that the historical Hebrews would have had contact with Ugaritic material at first hand.\(^{160}\)

Texts such as KTU 1.3 connected cosmic themes with agricultural ritual. Gray suggested that the overlap between KTU 1.3 and KTU 1.4 indicated that Anat originally triumphed in the myth, and this was later adapted for use by the Baal temple.\(^{161}\) He proposed, however, that the conflict between Baal and Mot was essentially agricultural within the scope of a year. KTU 1.6\(^ {162}\) was not annual, but still focused on fertility. Finally, in KTU 1.12, "we have the case of a myth centering upon the ritual of the Sabbatical Year as the penalty of Baal’s blood guiltiness. ... The myth is then taken out of the original context of the fertility cult to be used as a myth explaining and authorising the social

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\(^{158}\) Gray 1957: 70.
\(^{159}\) Gray 1957: 71.
\(^{160}\) Gray 1957: preface.
\(^{161}\) Gray 1957: 71-72.
\(^{162}\) UT 62 and 49.
rite of atonement for fratricide." We have already dealt with Gray’s suggestion of the ‘fratricide punishment’ and although plausible, his proposal and the texts he cited did not stand up to examination. Neither, in fact, did most of his proposals for interpreting these texts, based upon (what we hope to demonstrate as the fundamentally flawed) the Seasonal Pattern.

In Chapter 4, he examined the religion of Canaan and dealt with the gods themselves. His identification of Hadad as “the deity who became Baal par excellence in Canaan” is understandable. Gray was keen to point out Hadad’s “simple” origin as a mere storm god of the Amorites who was only later accredited with the vegetation role, when fertility had been stimulated by his winter rain. This again was possible, although such a simplistic approach to the development of a god should be regarded with caution. Gray also used the phrase ‘dying and rising’. Although we have evidence of a ‘return’ of Baal, a ‘rising’ or ‘ascension’ are not attested and though Baal was “numbered among those who go down into the earth”, the language of ‘rising’ or resurrection does not sit comfortably with what appears to be the Ugaritian concept of death.

On the other hand, Gray is to be commended for his refusal to accept the overblown ‘conflict between El and Baal’ proposed by Kapelrud, Cassuto,

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164 Gray 1957: 114.
165 One thinks for instance of the different conceptions of the Christian God between the mediaeval period and today.
166 KTU 1.5 v 15. Present author’s translation.
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Oldenburg and Pope.167 Despite this, however, one would be reluctant to accept his suggestion that upon Baal’s return El “resigns himself gladly to otium cum dignitate”.168 After suggesting that the two gods in fact represented different strands of Ugaritic religion, that of El being the earlier and more primitive, Gray proposed that El was deus otiosus, and this was particularly true in those myths of the fertility cult, “properly Baal’s province”. In the texts that dealt with more societal themes than with nature, El was once more the chief deity.169 This could arguably have been accepted were it not for Gray’s summation. He proposed that this preference (as shown by the amount of text favouring Baal as well as his temple in Ugarit) was evidence of “the natural proclivity of men to materialism, a tendency deplored in Israel by all the prophets”.170 This was subjective and ignored the evidence in the HB pointing out that the obedient man, the holy man, was favoured by Yahweh with many children, livestock, wives and years – distinctly material benefits.171

Gray summed up his view of Baal that he was “first the god Hadad, his power shown in rainstorms and the thunder of autumn and winter, and secondarily the deified principle of fertility manifest in the growing crops”.172 He proposed that the Syrian cult of Baal must have left some impression on the cult of Israel, especially under the influence of Solomon but more

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169 Gray 1957: 118.
170 Gray 1957: 120.
171 Deut. 28.
172 Gray 1957: 120.
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importantly when the tribes left the desert to cultivate the land of Canaan,\textsuperscript{173} once more identifying Ugarit with Canaan.

Gray connected the phrase “a-whoring after the Baalim” from the Book of Judges\textsuperscript{174} with rites of imitative magic “designed to influence Providence by autosuggestion and so to promote prolific vitality in nature”.\textsuperscript{175} This indicated his degree of bias about the cult of Baal in ‘Canaan’ involving sexual activity and its obsession with agricultural fertility. Despite Gray’s attempted break from the Seasonal Pattern, he merely enforced the prejudices of some Old Testament scholars towards Ugaritic texts and failed to raise any new points which might liberate them, along with Baal, from the seasonal, sexualised straight-jacket of twenty years’ standing at that time.


This book was originally written in Danish in 1938, soon after the texts were discovered and in the infancy of Ugaritic scholarship, but not published in English until 1962. Lokkegaard noted in the preface that, since the author had died without leaving more than a few pencil marks in the margins of his

\textsuperscript{173} Gray 1957: 121.
\textsuperscript{174} Judges 8: 33.
\textsuperscript{175} Gray 1957: 121.

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Danish text, few alterations had been made to the original. Hvidberg took the unusual approach of attempting to focus on the emotional implications of the autumnal new year festival, for example the weeping over the death of Baal and the laughter at his revival. It was published ten years after Kapelrud’s *Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts*, although written fourteen years before it, but their thought was very similar and showed that things had changed little in the interim.

Hvidberg began with a bold statement about Baal’s character which summarised his whole view of Baal: "Rain, thunder, and grass were the great powers in ancient Canaan. They appear with a bull’s body, in the shape of man – as Ba’al, he who ‘opens the cleft of the clouds’, and ‘lets his holy voice be heard’. " Baal’s worship culminated in an annual sacred feast at which

“one experiences his divine death and resurrection. In the holy ceremony, Ba’al’s death and his rebirth are represented. All this is created. One can in a real sense say that it takes man his whole life to carry out this creation. Therefore it fills man with that horror and joy which can be excited in him only through his own participation. Therefore ‘his mouth is filled’ with tears and with laughter. Man’s tears and laughter and the tears and laughter of the gods and goddesses become sacred rites at the feasts. They become annual traditions".

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177 Kapelrud 1952.
178 Hvidberg 1962: 11.
179 Hvidberg 1962: 11.

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Hvidberg was an early exponent of the Seasonal Pattern, later exemplified by Gaster and de Moor, since in his view the annual festival occurred when Baal was reborn and the grass had sprung with renewed rains. He was certain that the resurrection of Baal was as central to the cult of Ugarit as the resurrection of Christ to the New Testament.\(^{180}\) In his view, this resurrection had important implications on the cult of the northern Israelite tribes who moved into the country and became involved with the indigenous religion.\(^{181}\)

At the annual feast, both gods and goddesses would get drunk and fornicate, actions duplicated on earth by the worshippers of Ugarit: “We must visualize that not only the gods, but the whole population participated in the autumn festival, first with long-drawn wailing and whining-weeping, then with wild hilarity and erotically excited laughter. No doubt the ancient Semites could make the change with greater easiness than we might think possible.”\(^{182}\)

To Hvidberg, the Baal Cycle texts were simply the cultic drama re-enacted every year in the autumn. He placed the texts in the order: KTU 1.5, KTU 1.6, followed by KTU 1.4.\(^{183}\)

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180 Hvidberg 1962: 12.
181 “It seems that an account of Israel’s religion must revolve around this main point: the Israelite tribes’ acquisition of and reaction against that cult and its spiritual content which is concerned with the death and resurrection of the Canaanite god.” Hvidberg 1962: 13.
182 Hvidberg 1962: 56.
183 1 *AB and 1 AB then 2 AB.
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The encounter with Mot came first, followed by Baal’s death and resurrection, and finally the temple-building sequence.\textsuperscript{184} He proposed that these texts were not a myth in the “epical”\textsuperscript{185} sense because they were “characterised by their simplicity”.\textsuperscript{186} There was no motif of world creation, nor fairy tale motifs: “The texts obviously are simply a ‘recipe’ for a cultic drama in ancient Phoenicia-Canaan”.\textsuperscript{187} To describe the Baal Cycle as ‘simple’ now seems rather naive, but it is perhaps understandable considering the lack of linguistic knowledge\textsuperscript{188} along with the prevalent view that Ugarit had been widely influenced by the more ‘sophisticated’ Egyptians and Babylonians at the time.

With regard to Baal’s “inmost being”\textsuperscript{189} Hvidberg began by noting the similarities between the Egyptian Osiris, who also died and was ‘reborn’, and the Sumero-Accadian Bel-Marduk: “In a frequently mentioned dramatic scene in the ritual of the new year festival, Bel-Marduk is caught, wounded, dead and is bewailed by a goddess. The slayer of Marduk is punished, the people of the town are agitated, a general lament over Marduk is held, and he is revived”.\textsuperscript{190} We should not be over-influenced by these other ‘similar’ accounts – for example, Osiris was not ‘resurrected’ to life but transformed into ‘Lord of the Underworld’. Hvidberg’s evident desire to discover deities

\textsuperscript{184} It is interesting that Hvidberg chose not to include KTU 1.2 i, ii, iv (excavated in 1935). It seems more than likely that those texts excavated in 1936, 1937 (KTU 1.3) and 1938 (KTU 1.2 iii) were published too late for Hvidberg to include, since the text from 1938 was not published until 1944.
\textsuperscript{185} Hvidberg 1962: 53.
\textsuperscript{186} Hvidberg 1962: 53.
\textsuperscript{187} Hvidberg 1962: 53.
\textsuperscript{188} See Hvidberg’s own admission of the paucity of linguistic knowledge 1962: 20.
\textsuperscript{189} Hvidberg 1962: 60.
\textsuperscript{190} Hvidberg 1962: 17. This was later discredited by von Soden 1955: 130-166.
which he felt were in parallel with Baal was clear when he described Tammuz as the “soul of vernal vegetation” who was lamented in the summer of his death.\textsuperscript{191}

In his desire to promote the annual autumnal festival theory, he came up against the same difficulties as other Seasonal Pattern supporters. The killing of Mot, the god of summer, the ripe corn, was described as the corn harvest.\textsuperscript{192} This, one would assume, meant that Mot was the god of grain: but how did that relate to Baal being the vegetation deity? Also, according to the Seasonal Pattern the summer was the time of Baal’s death and therefore barren. Yet it is the time of year when throughout Western Syria, as in the rest of the North Mediterranean, fruit and olives become ripe. Hvidberg also suggested that the actions of the early summer (this may have been the death of Baal, but was not indicated) were moved ‘forward’ in order to produce a “full account of the year” at an autumnal festival.\textsuperscript{193} This could have meant that the actions in the texts were brought together to be performed at one time, but this was not fully clarified. Indeed, Hvidberg seems to have become confused in the use of the seasonal terms to denote their ‘European’ sense\textsuperscript{194} as well as to describe those climatic conditions in Ugarit which would correspond to them interchangeably\textsuperscript{195}, confounding both himself and his readers.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{191} Hvidberg 1962: 17.
\textsuperscript{192} Hvidberg 1962: 51, 64.
\textsuperscript{193} Hvidberg 1962: 54.
\textsuperscript{194} i.e. the weather conditions usually understood by those terms in Northern Europe – sun in summer, rain and new growth in spring.
\textsuperscript{195} sun in summer and barren heat, but rain and new growth in autumn, that is, North European spring
\end{footnotesize}
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Leaving those difficulties aside, he went on to say that Baal was also a god of fertility; indeed, Hvidberg called his first chapter: “Canaanite material for the death and resurrection of the fertility god”.\(^\text{196}\) Baal’s return to life meant rain, which brought deliverance from the scorching sun. Before his descent, Baal lay with a heifer on the steppes of death\(^\text{197}\) and, after his defeat of Mot, celebrated the consecration of his temple with “a feast and sexual intercourse”.\(^\text{198}\) To Hvidberg, “these actions represent copulation and birth among human beings and animals, thus the actions [in the texts] ... represent the ordinary functions in the life of an agricultural people all the year round”.\(^\text{199}\) The emphasis on wine and sex in Canaanite religion was mentioned frequently by Hvidberg and formed part of his theory of “laughter”.\(^\text{200}\) This was partly because he thought that the “wedding of the gods”\(^\text{201}\) would also have taken place at the new year festival, an action joined by the whole population with “wild hilarity and erotically excited laughter”\(^\text{202}\) amongst other activities.

He was ahead of many of his contemporaries in acknowledging as early as 1938 the identity, that is, the unity of Aliyan Baal and Baal.\(^\text{203}\) However, this leap forward was hindered by his assertion that

\(^{196}\) Hvidberg 1962: 15.  
\(^{197}\) Hvidberg 1962: 27. I* AB, Col. V 18-25, KTU 1.5 V 15 – end.  
\(^{199}\) Hvidberg 1962: 51.  
\(^{200}\) Hvidberg 1962: 27, 42, 51, 52 55, 56, 79.  
\(^{201}\) Hvidberg 1962: 54.  
\(^{202}\) Hvidberg 1962: 56.  
\(^{203}\) Hvidberg 1962: 58.
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"in what precedes we have all the time anticipatorily assumed that Baal was the soul of rain and vernal [spring] vegetation. We shall now collect some passages which are 'proof' of our assumption. Actually the case of Baal is like that of Tammuz in the Sumero-Babylonian Tammuz songs: all the passages in which something is stated about the nature of the god, tell us that he was the soul of vernal vegetation." 204

This demonstrated that his view of the character of Baal was determined from the outset. It was valid to state that Baal was the "lord of the rain ... [and] as king is the one who possesses all power" 205 but such statements required textual backing and should not, ideally, come preformed from other areas of study. This put Hvidberg in difficulty when he described Baal as "the mown sheaf and the grain" and Mot as "the ripe corn" 206 on the same page.

Hvidberg's theories give rise to many difficulties, although it seems almost churlish to mention them, considering his book was written so long ago and he himself was so cautious about his translations. 207 However, his views have influenced more recent scholars and they therefore require serious examination.

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204 Hvidberg 1962: 60. Present author's italics.
206 Hvidberg 1962: 64.
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On a very basic level, the presumption evident throughout the book is highly questionable.\(^{208}\) Although he noted that “Canaan had its own independently developed cult – just as it had its own independently developed language – parallel to the cult known previously within the old culture areas of Egypt and Babylonia”\(^ {209}\) it was unacceptable to call Ugarit ‘Canaan’ except in a loose geographical sense. Canaan, for better or worse, carries connotations which may confuse an unbiased examination of the textual evidence. He repeatedly stated that “we knew in advance the inmost nature of the chief god Ba’al to be the soul of vegetation ... now corroborated in the most desirable way by the texts.”\(^ {210}\) His prior knowledge could only have come from Hebrew, Egyptian and Babylonian/Akkadian sources. He made little attempt to question whether these sources were valid, useful or merely polemical. It was clear that he identified Baal with Osiris, Bel-Marduk, Tammuz and Adonis, and in far too general a manner. It has already been shown that at least the identification with Osiris and Bel Marduk is unfounded.\(^ {211}\)

It was also unfair to say that the texts were simply ‘cultic’ texts of the festival drama, since this cultic use has never been established conclusively.

Hvidberg then proposed that “when Israelite desert tribes penetrated into the land of Canaan ... they entered ... a world in which all fertility in animal

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\(^{208}\) Hvidberg 1962: 65, third paragraph, is a good example.
\(^{209}\) Hvidberg 1962: 19.
\(^{210}\) Hvidberg 1962: 19.
\(^{211}\) See p. 57 in this chapter.
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and man depended on the same Lord’s, Baṣal’s, love of the “Virgin Anat” (Astarte).\textsuperscript{212} Up to this point, he had only obliquely referred to the ‘wedding of the gods’ at the autumnal festival. It was now clear that Hvidberg presumed that the ‘act of love’ between Baal and Anat helped to provide the fecundity of the land that the Israelites invaded.\textsuperscript{213} He had not “used these texts to elucidate the nature of Baṣal”\textsuperscript{214} after all, but had sought textual proof for those beliefs formed from other ancient Near Eastern (including biblical) literature. That was the point at which Hvidberg became largely irrelevant. The serious points made throughout his work could no longer be accepted at face value, but were perhaps products of ‘presumption’, a technique perhaps liberally sprinkled throughout the book. Although he went on to make some interesting connections between Baal, Yahweh and the bulls or calves of the Old Testament,\textsuperscript{215} one must be wary of the validity of these assertions.

Hvidberg’s work, although containing some highlights and points of interest, along with its influence on other scholars, must ultimately be regarded with caution and as belonging to the “history of Ugaritic studies” than a valuable tool for the modern scholar.

\textsuperscript{212} Hvidberg 1962: 79.
\textsuperscript{213} If indeed they were ever in the same land at all.
\textsuperscript{214} Hvidberg 1962: 77.
\textsuperscript{215} Hvidberg 1962: 86-99.

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van Zijl – Baal: a Study of Texts in Connexion with Baal in the Ugaritic Epics (1972)

Van Zijl’s study\(^{216}\) was written sixteen years after Kapelrud’s work, and much of his effort was expended proving that the latter’s theses were untenable. He noted, like Kapelrud, that since the initial writing of his work new texts had been published, including those in *Ugaritica* V.

Despite another publication having appeared since Kapelrud,\(^{217}\) he quickly justified his work by asserting that the discrepancies in translation and understanding among scholars made it essential for students to return to the texts themselves for an ‘honest’ translation, in which one could be confident of the linguistic choices. He proposed a novel approach to interpretation, namely that grammatical structure was of “primary importance and the endeavour must be to *draw from the structure an understanding of Baal’s role.*”\(^{218}\) This emphasis on the importance of a linguistic study of the texts was hardly new, but his idea that one could ascertain the role of Baal in the religion of Ugarit from the textual structure was unusual.

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\(^{216}\) van Zijl 1972.

\(^{217}\) K.L. Vine 1965.

\(^{218}\) van Zijl 1972: 1. Present author’s italics.
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After discussing the place of Ugaritic within the Semitic languages,219 van Zijl explained his methodology, which as we have seen focused largely on the linguistic structure and meaning of the texts:

"The role of Baal cannot be explained by circumscribing a single area of study and exploring it. Evidence from a variety of sources must be brought to focus on specific problems. This entails careful selection, synthesis and deduction. To succeed in this endeavour, a vigorous linguistic investigation is essential. This analysis will include 1. a determination of the meaningful relationships between the words and combinations of words and 2. a determination of the meanings of the words and word combinations."220

Van Zijl gave a layout of the subsequent chapters, in which texts were grouped by ‘motif’, e.g. the Baal-Yamm motif, the ‘House building’ motif, and so on. He felt that most of these were related to fertility in various forms. In his penultimate chapter, he stated that he would bring together all his considerations and draw conclusions about the grammatical situation and that “from this it is attempted to gauge the role of Baal as conceived of by the people of Ugarit.”221 In each of the later chapters, texts were given in transliteration and then translated by the author. The interesting words and points of structure from each stichos were then discussed independently and his interpretation summarised at the end of each section.

219 He felt that Ugaritic was probably a north Canaanite dialect, connected to Phoenician, 1972: 4.
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In the chapter containing his conclusions about the grammatical situation, van Zijl was confident enough to assert that "it is clear that the role played by Baal, as seen by the people of Ugarit, should be determined from the grammatical situation." He went on to admit that syntax was not the only factor to be examined in determining the meanings of words and that 'logotaxis' should also be studied. The author explained this as follows:

"In contrast with syntax (in which the structural classes are determined by grammatical functions), logotaxis consists of 'a structure in which the classes are determined by meaningful functions'. In order, therefore to form a definite idea, one could group both syntax and logotaxis under a single heading of distribution. The syntactic classes (based on grammatical functions) are usually formally identifiable classes, e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, etc., while the logotactic classes (based on meaningful functions) are identifiable on the basis of the types of meaning which they possess."  

He did not, however, fully establish the relevance of this aspect of linguistics. The chapter was broken down into three parts, depending on whether the verbs of the text treated Baal in the third, second or first person, and in subjective or objective positions.

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In summarising his results, he concluded that military terminology (with thirty-eight verbs in that category) was of "decisive importance" especially for Baal, who was the subject in thirty instances, where he "works the destruction of other beings". The other main 'discovery' from this examination was that the verbs used in reference to Baal came from an extremely wide range of human activities.

Van Zijl stated that this summary showed that the "value of an investigation of this kind lies in the direct evidence from the text itself not based on a pre-conceived idea about what the actions of Baal should be." However, he then went on to discuss the terminology of theophany, stating that the emphasis of the theophanic nature of Ugaritic weather (produced by Baal) is all upon the fertility of the earth. He also felt that it must be significant that Baal had intercourse with a heifer, although he did not examine the reasons he considered this to be important.

In his final summary, van Zijl set out to compare his findings with Kapelrud's study to see whether the latter's conclusions required revision. Rather than concur with Kapelrud's vision of a continuous cycle with various climaxes, van Zijl preferred to regard the myths as different yet

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228 van Zijl 1972: 319.
229 van Zijl 1972: 319. There was no discussion, for instance, of whether Anat could have been understood to be the heifer, or of any other possibility.
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contemporaneous cultic traditions, brought together in epic form rather in agreement with Gray.\textsuperscript{230} Almost all the 'motifs' discussed – Baal-Yam, house building, Baal-Mot, Baal-Cow, Baal-Desert – were regarded to be related to Ugaritic concepts of agricultural fertility in one way or another. 'Baal-Yam' described the renewed fertility of autumn after the heat of summer and not the establishment of Baal as king of the pantheon. 'Baal-Mot' was an agricultural cycle which hinted at the renewed fertility of the earth when Baal was revived, and the 'Baal-Cow' motif was about the fertility of the animal kingdom.

However, van Zijl did refute those aspects of Kapelrud's research which were plainly wrong. He pointed out that there was no textual evidence whatever that Baal stormed into the pantheon to oust El\textsuperscript{231} and neither was there any hint that Asherah left her husband to go to the side of the up-and-coming young storm god.

Van Zijl then proposed that the cry "our king is Aliyan Baal"\textsuperscript{232} was rather one of defiance or rejection of Baal's supremacy. This seems at best unlikely. In the matter of the syncretism between Baal and Hadad, he felt that since both names were used in parallel, they should simply be regarded as two titles for the same god. He also felt that that the expression \textit{bn dgn} should not

\textsuperscript{230} van Zijl 1972: 321-322.
\textsuperscript{231} van Zijl 1972: 325.
\textsuperscript{232} text 51:IV:43.
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be translated literally, still less that Baal had ‘taken over’ from Dagan in matters of fertility.

Interestingly, he pointed out that Kapelrud’s assertion that there was no text describing a battle between Baal and Lotan/Tannin (the serpent) was no longer true, with the excavation of KTU 1.82. This raises the issue that new texts have been found since the publication of his own work in 1972, suggesting that his own conclusions may now require revision.

Van Zijl was quite clear that there was no textual evidence for a new year festival such as that proposed by Gaster and Kapelrud, among others. This did not, however, mean that he was an opponent of the Seasonal Interpretation per se. In his “structural analysis” of the texts translated, he concluded that the inhabitants of Ugarit perceived the phenomena of lightning and rain as symbols of divine power, the theophany of a thunder god. The wonder this produced led to the construction of a temple and development of worship within the city. However, the yearly summer drought was construed as the death of Baal, since in searching for a reason they had developed a mythological story to explain his regular ‘absence’. Van Zijl surmised that Baal’s return from the grave was equated with the

233 Text 1001.
234 RJ0 5 (I): 341-362 lists finds from 1973 to 1988 which could not be examined by van Zijl.

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return of the rains in autumn.\textsuperscript{236} There can be little doubt that this was indeed a seasonal interpretation of the Baal mythology of Ugarit!

Confusingly, van Zijl went on to cite Fensham\textsuperscript{237} who proposed that this meteorological interpretation became religious doctrine in a fixed form:

"Their [the people of Ugarit's] mythological explanation became religious doctrine and assumed a fixed form. They began to hold religious festivals to commemorate for instance the resurrection of Baal when the first rains of autumn fell. They realised that these rains brought nourishment and to symbolise this fertility they brought to their worship all kinds of immoral practices."\textsuperscript{238}

Having only just concluded that there was no textual evidence for a new year festival, van Zijl appeared to support an unsubstantiated and highly speculative theory about the development of Ugaritic worship – which included just such a festival! This was not constructive and further confused the issues being examined.

In discussing the nature of the character of Baal, van Zijl proposed three spheres in which the god was active: the 'human' area, in which Baal exhibited accomplishments such as his involvement in war, his physical

\textsuperscript{236} van Zijl 1972: 326.
\textsuperscript{237} In a lecture which van Zijl attended.
\textsuperscript{238} van Zijl 1972: 326.
abilities of speech and hearing, his emotions of hate, fear and lust\textsuperscript{239}: the 'fertility' area, in which the sphere of weather, seasons and earth all pointed to Baal's important relationship to earthly abundance: and finally the 'animal' area. This was the sphere of which van Zijl exhibited least understanding. He stated that Baal, in passages dealing with "fertility rites"\textsuperscript{240} was shown "loving a cow", and that the image was extended by mention of the horns of Baal, although Baal was not actually described physically in bovine terms. Van Zijl appeared to be entirely ignorant of the divinity or sovereignty normally associated with the wearing of 'horns' (often a horned helmet) throughout the ancient Near East.

Van Zijl was confident of the value of his study, based on the fact that it came from 'direct' evidence garnered from the text. He hoped that this form of structural analysis would be a "stimulus to science and that many new insights will be gained. This study is imperative for both exegesis and stylistic analysis and important results can be reached if the logotactical and functional sphere of a word can be ascertained".\textsuperscript{241} However, some relatively straightforward problems were not addressed adequately in this 'insightful' study.

First, his assumption of the primacy of grammatical structure, while interesting, was not at all borne out by his analysis. In fact, it is possible to

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item van Zijl 1972: 326.
\item van Zijl 1972: 327.
\item van Zijl 1972: 327.
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say that his methodology actually weakened his point because, second, van Zijl insisted on counting instances of different persons and types of verb and then establishing theories based on the frequency of their occurrence. In so doing, he ignored the single most important fact when any theory of Ugaritic theology is proposed – that we only have a sample of the original tablets, and even these are in poor condition. It is simply impossible to claim that texts with up to fifty per cent of their characters missing can prove anything which might be claimed as ‘universal’ to Ugaritic religious belief.

Third, his language was often unclear and confusing. This is especially relevant when discussing the merits of syntax and logotaxis! The student would necessarily have to return to the texts, simply because his discussion was often ambiguous and perplexing.

Fourth, the importance of Baal’s military and destructive prowess sits uneasily with van Zijl’s desire to relate everything about Baal to fertility. While it was true that Baal was in some way responsible for rain and storms, he was also a powerful negative force within the Ugaritic pantheon, at least to our modern eyes. Despite his excitement at the number of verbs which connected Baal to the military realm, van Zijl did not acknowledge the difficulty this posed for the Baalite fertility stance he had decided to adopt early in his work.
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Finally, he appeared confused about whether or not there was a kind of new year or autumnal festival. He quite openly denied it on one page and then proposed it on another. Not only is this confusing, it is a poor example of the scientific clarity he obviously hoped to bring to the muddied waters of Ugaritic translation and theology.

In summary, van Zijl’s work managed to counter some of the theories proposed by Kapelrud, but it succeeded in reigniting some confusion *vis-à-vis* the yearly festival, Baal’s character and, most significantly, given his own emphasis on grammatical structure, the value of a mostly linguistic (and perhaps therefore to be regarded as ‘scientific’?) study of the texts.

**De Moor - The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba’lu according to the version of Ilīmilku (1971)**

De Moor’s thesis was completed in 1970, and was the most comprehensive examination of the so-called Seasonal Interpretation243 theory current at the time. This was before the publication of *Ugaritica VII*,244 and the more recently excavated texts were therefore not yet available to him.

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242 English is, of course, not always an easy language to express oneself clearly, even for native speakers.
243 De Moor defined this as "any interpretation which implies that the whole text or part of it refers to annually occurring climatic agrarian or cultic events". De Moor 1971: 9.
244 *Ugaritica VII* was published in 1978.
He concentrated on the theory that the so-called ‘Baal Cycle’ of texts was related to the annual change of seasons, centred on an autumnal new year festival. De Moor began with a comprehensive review of the previous literature, much of which we have already considered.

He argued for the importance of comparative religion in determining the existence of a yearly festival, but this importance was displaced. One should always be wary of any ‘pan-ancient Near East’ religious theories. However, were that kind of contemporary evidence to be examined, textual sources from Egypt as well as Israel suggest that festivals were not always annual: they often were held every few years, or even every seven years.

His main emphasis was on establishing whether a seasonal interpretation was valid, based on his own textual translation and interpretation, as well as an examination of the climate of the Syrian coast.

He re-ordered the texts, putting KTU 1.3 before 1.1 and 1.2, based largely on his view that the "myth contains large references to climatological and agrarian data which exactly follow the course of the Syrian agroclimatic year when the tablets are arranged in the above-mentioned order". The texts appeared to him to follow a perfect yearly cycle. He prefaced the actual translation of

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245 KTU 1.1 – 1.6.
246 De Moor and van der Lugt 1974.
247 Deut. 28.
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KTU 1.3 – 1.6 with some useful comments on the necessity of a thorough translation, based not only on etymologies but also on comparative Semitic grammar, educated contextual conjecture and on the use of more accurate photographs of the texts instead of drawings.\(^{249}\) He also noted that “a purely linguistic approach cannot explain everything”\(^ {250}\), an interesting comment in the light of van Zijl’s preoccupation with linguistics.

De Moor established the most likely date\(^ {251}\) and place of origin of the tablets before he gave the Sitz im Leben, which he rightly regarded as important in understanding the texts themselves. He decided that the texts were both nature and cult myths,\(^ {252}\) but that the cult was their actual ‘place in life’ and “for that reason some relation with the ritual must be expected”.\(^ {253}\) He therefore continued the connection between myth and ritual proposed by Kapelrud.

De Moor’s cycle began with KTU 1.3, which described a banquet he felt certain was mirrored in cultic life, thereby demonstrating the myth-equals-ritual theory.\(^ {254}\) He then discussed the proposed new year festival, with considerable reference to the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles, which he argued originated in Canaan and the Ugaritic ‘New Wine’ festival.\(^ {255}\) He also

\(^{248}\) De Moor 1971: 42. De Moor’s italics.
\(^{249}\) De Moor 1971: 44.
\(^{250}\) De Moor 1971: 45.
\(^{251}\) De Moor 1971: 50 - Most likely date of tablets between 1380 – 1360 BCE.
\(^{252}\) De Moor 1971: 55.
\(^{253}\) De Moor 1971: 56.
\(^{254}\) In De Moor 1987, he placed KTU 1.101, a hymn to Baal, at the start.
\(^{255}\) De Moor 1968a: 177 n.68 and Nehemiah 8.16.
justified the use of modern climatological data by citing the consistency of the Syrian climate throughout "historic" times.\textsuperscript{256}

The actual translation of selected portions of the texts was followed by a detailed philological examination and a discussion section headed "Seasonal Interpretation". This is crucial in determining whether de Moor's thesis was valid and useful in our examination. Despite exhaustive philological discussion, de Moor limited his reflection on the text, as a coherent text and not merely single words, to support his "Seasonal Interpretation" thesis. This limited his thought and devalued what could have been a seminal examination of the texts.

The cycle began, he argued, in September, with the re-instalment of the revived Baal at the new year festival of the autumnal equinox. This mythic banquet was reflected on earth in the temple of Baal at Ugarit.\textsuperscript{257} De Moor justified his placing of this feast in September by discussion of other ancient Near Eastern festivals as well as "agroclimatic" evidence, such as the suckling pig, new wine and the purple dye that Anat later used as decoration.

When Baal sent a messenger to Anat to summon her for the bestowing of his important secret, he was apparently intending to pass on a message from the

\textsuperscript{256} Although just how one would know this is never quite made clear.

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holy trees or stones “which were standard equipment of the so-called ‘high places’ of Canaanite worship”.258 This tells us nothing about the nature of Baal, nor the cosmolological importance of this passage. De Moor was content to remind us that thunderstorms mentioned in this section occurred mostly in late September on that part of the Syrian coast.259

The building of Baal’s temple also took place in September, once the initial rains had softened the sun-baked earth but before the later autumnal rains made conditions too muddy.260 This was very dependent on placing KTU 1.3 first, and this in turn was a prerequisite of the “Seasonal Interpretation” theory.

In KTU 1.2, the fight between Mot and Baal was described as the annual contest between sea and wind, taking place between November and March.261 De Moor argued that the halt in the growth of vegetation in January indicated to the Ugaritians the temporary defeat of Baal. The later episode where Baal actually descended to the nether world occurred in the summer, at which time the sirocco scorched the earth.262 However, on his way to face Mot, Baal lay with a heifer to beget a “twin-brother” who would in fact die, while Baal only appeared to die.263 This was by far the most imaginative piece

257 De Moor 1971: 78.
258 De Moor 1971: 108.
259 De Moor 1971: 112.
261 De Moor 1971: 141.
262 De Moor 1971: 187.
263 De Moor 1971: 188.

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of thought in de Moor’s work – but whether it can be justified by the text is another matter! It was therefore the body of Baal’s twin-brother or son which the messengers of El found. De Moor connected this to the yearly treatment of corn and barley.\textsuperscript{264} The mourning of Anat was then the mythical prototype of a sacrifice in April on Mount Saphon that preceded the annual new year festival when the original Baal returned “from the dead”.\textsuperscript{265} The cycle could then begin again.

De Moor’s discussion of the nature of Baal was in fact very limited. His view can be summed up by his description of Baal as a seasonal, dying and rising, fertility god. He had influence over the rain, wind and agricultural fertility, but little else. He was controlled by the inevitable turn of the seasons and there was no hint that Baal was connected to either royal or military matters. De Moor did, however, state that the myth deserved a place in the history of science, since it represented an early attempt by man to explain the “mechanisms of the climate in his surroundings”.\textsuperscript{266}

This may seem to be a rather cursory summation of de Moor’s substantial thesis. However, the present dissertation is not concerned only with the merits of the Seasonal Pattern. As previously stated, the texts KTU 1.3 – 1.6 are dealt with in de Moor’s thesis only in respect of their (in)ability to support his seasonal thesis, in which he argued that there was an annual

\textsuperscript{264} De Moor 1971: 195.  
\textsuperscript{265} De Moor 1971: 200.  
\textsuperscript{266} De Moor 1971: 249.
agricultural festival in September, later given a mythological explanation. He thus agreed in this regard with van Zijl and Kapelrud. The effort required to produce a comprehensive translation of these tablets, only to examine them from a single point of view seems rather perverse. De Moor’s thesis was therefore limited in scope from the outset; his initial support of the Seasonal Pattern was not explained and he made little effort to examine the opposing viewpoint. His discussion of the text following the linguistic examination was limited to its support of the Seasonal Interpretation. Hence, one is presented with a picture of Baal which is that of a one-dimensional player in an unchanging annual cycle. This may perhaps have been the case, but it seems unlikely that such a dull character would have inspired the worship which spread (according to de Moor himself) as far as France, Jordan and Egypt by the first millennium BCE.267

It would therefore be reasonable to conclude that de Moor’s thesis did not begin to outline a ‘theology’ of Baal, which is the aim of the present work. What is needed is a re-examination of the texts using a less blinkered approach.

267 De Moor 1971: 54.
Conclusion

This chapter has examined the main works representing the so-called Seasonal Pattern school and has attempted to abstract its main convictions rather than give an exhaustive analysis, which would lie beyond the scope of the present dissertation. This theory had its roots in the very earliest translations of the Ugaritic texts and it is perhaps rather surprising that it has survived until today. When reading books such as the Dictionary of Deities and Demons, the entry describing Baal shows very clearly that the Seasonal Pattern still influences strongly the current academic view of Baal. For example, “Baal’s rule guarantees the annual return of the vegetation; as the god disappears in the underworld and returns in the autumn, so the vegetation dies and resuscitates with him”.268 However, it is now also admitted that “on the whole it seems mistaken to infer from Baal’s role as bestower of natural fertility that he fulfilled the same role in the domain of human fertility”.269 It is to be hoped, however, that following this assessment of the Seasonal Pattern, its prevalence will be questioned and acknowledged to be mistaken.

The concept of a yearly ritual is not in itself wrong, nor is the idea that the gods of Ugarit in some way embodied aspects of nature. To put the two ideas

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268 Herrmann 1999: 134.
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together is, however, entirely without basis. The yearly ritual is not mentioned at any point in the Baal Cycle, KTU 1.1 to 1.6, the main texts which feature Baal. Given that the ‘Seasonalists’ regarded Baal as the main protagonist of the major autumnal feast and its attendant rituals, this seems to be something of an oversight on their part. There are no ‘stage directions’ as can be found in KTU 1.41 or KTU 1.23 R 10-15. The temporal aspects of the tablets do not in any way fit into a year-long pattern. Gaster’s attempt to ascribe three seasons of the year to Mot, Baal and Yam does not work either.\textsuperscript{270} It does not make any kind of sense to ascribe the embodiment of grain to Mot and Baal.\textsuperscript{271} There are, in short, many reasons why the Seasonal Pattern simply cannot be reconciled with the Ugaritic texts. Perhaps Gaster’s attempts to make it work may be compatible with Mesopotamian, Akkadian or even Egyptian texts, but they are not our concern.

What \textit{does} lie within the remit of the present study is the effect this theory has had upon the common perception of Baal. Within the Seasonal Pattern, Baal was regarded quite correctly as the god of rain, storms, thunder and lightning. He was the storm-god \textit{par excellence} of the ancient Near East and he has rightly been accorded this place. Rather more doubtfully, he has also been described as the ‘genius of vegetation and vitality,’ the great fertility god, whose main aim in life is to frolic with heifers (and his sister) and beget calves. He is regarded as a god who follows, like others in the pantheon, a pattern which he is unable to escape. He is, in short, a mythological outworking of an ancient fertility ritual which took place after the coming of

\textsuperscript{270} See discussion of Gaster: 17-29.

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towards the autumn rains, the creation of a cult giving an explanation of the yearly festival to the urban descendants of those primitive peasants – who may have also sacrificed children to the sea to prevent inundation.

What of the martial aspect of Baal? Was he a great warrior? If so, why did he need the help of both Kothar and Anat? Was he a great king, a creator of the cosmos? If so, how could he be defeated by Mot? What of his relationship with Anat? Were they lovers and, if not, what does this imply about his role as a ‘fertility god’? Was he the son of El or Dagan? What implications did his paternity have upon his role in the pantheon? What was the significance of his presence in the underworld, of his chthonic aspect?

These questions were largely ignored, or treated inadequately, by those promoting the Seasonal Pattern. Perhaps it did not really interest them – or perhaps the answers might have weakened their theory.

That is certainly the view taken by another, much smaller, group of scholars who have sought, often with great insight but restricted popular success, to debate and disprove the Seasonal Pattern in recent years. The next chapter

271 See discussion by Virolleaud and Dussaud: 14-17.

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will explore their thought and assess their work in the same way as this chapter has done for the Seasonal Pattern theorists.
Chapter Two - The Non-Seasonal View of Baal

Having discussed the Seasonal Pattern at length, it is now necessary to explain the views of those who have opposed it for various reasons. Again, many of these works are translations, but the commentaries provided illustrate the theories behind the translation and therefore can give their view of the theology of Baal.

The discussions are once more examined chronologically. This is necessary since on occasion one work may argue against the theory presented by a previous author. It should not be thought that, since the Seasonal Pattern has now been rejected as an adequate interpretative model for the Baal Cycle, all who opposed it are agreed on either an alternative meaning of the texts or their view of Baal himself. There has been a wide range of opinion, varying from almost ‘Seasonal’ to historical or political, and these will now be assessed. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine in great detail all the works by these authors. Many, especially Smith and Wyatt, have continued to develop their theories over time and their views may have been modified. Whenever possible, these developments are included in later chapters during discussion of the translations.
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Unsurprisingly, given the huge influence of the Seasonal Pattern, it was thirty years before opposition to it became strong enough for works to be published such as those by Oldenburg and Cross. Even then, the influence of scholars like Kapelrud remained very strong and the arguments against the Seasonal Pattern took many years to develop. The power of the Hebrew Bible, a source many scholars appear to have treated as more authoritative in the study of Ugarit than the Ugaritic texts, should be noted. This is most striking in the work of Ulf Oldenburg but can be detected beneath many of the more derogatory opinions aimed at Ugaritian religion, and Baal in particular. The remarks of Gibson\textsuperscript{272} are most salutary and worth remembering at all times. Quite often the antiquity of the Ugaritic texts was ignored or subsumed beneath theological posturing by those who seemed determined to provide further polemic against Baal worship.

The challenge to break away from the naturalistic model of Ugaritian theology presented many difficulties for early scholars. On more than one occasion, the easy answer offered by the Seasonal Pattern was to prove too tempting as an escape from difficult conclusions, not only about the understanding of Baal and the Ugaritic texts, but also their assumptions on the relationship between Hebrew and Ugaritian religion.

\textsuperscript{272} Gibson 1984

2. The Non-Seasonal View of Baal

Oldenburg’s discussion of the putative conflict between El and Baal relied heavily on the work of Kapelrud for his understanding of the nature of Baal. His view was also heavily influenced by the views of the Hebrew Bible – in his preface he stated: “The more I studied Pre-Israelite religion, the more I was amazed with its utter depravity and wickedness. Indeed there was *nothing* in it to inspire the sublime faith of Yahweh”.273 He also decided that since the gods mentioned in the Ugaritic pantheon were those found in ancient ‘Canaan’, the Ugaritic religion could be classed as Canaanite, reading backwards into the Ugaritic text from the Hebrew Bible, which was a much later text.

Not content to read back from the Hebrew Bible, Oldenburg also felt compelled to rely heavily on the material contained in Philo’s work. Baal was once more Demarous274 as well as Adonis275 and Tammuz.276 El had retired and given rule to the younger gods of whom Baal was the leader and this was the stratum of religion reflected in the Hebrew Bible: hence the great rivalry between Baal and Yahweh, a continuation of the friction with El.277

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277 Oldenburg 1969: 12.
Oldenburg felt that the conflict occurred between El and Baal because they belonged to different familial groups - El’s family was the older and original Ugaritian pantheon, while Amorite invaders brought Baal’s group.278 The conflict in the myth was a mythologisation of the actual ethnic conflict.

El was the subject of a large part of the book and as he is not part of the main focus of our examination, discussion here is limited to his relationship with Baal. However, the foundation of Oldenburg’s argument for the displacement of El was his interpretation of “The Birth of the Gods” myth (KTU 1.23). Oldenburg believed this to be the sacred marriage ritual, which was “the central act performed at the great cult feast at the beginning of every new cycle of seven years ... El alone as the actual giver of fertility for the earth”.279 On the other hand, he also claimed it was Mot who sat with the “sceptre of childlessness” before being pruned, etc.280 Others accept that this is the case, but Wyatt281 believed it to be El. This would certainly make far more sense – after all, it was El’s staff which was lowered later in the text (KTU 1.23 v 40). Despite this confusion, it should be noted that Oldenburg believed that this rite was performed every seven years in order to prevent the “special catastrophe of drought and infertility” brought on by Baal’s death.282 However, he also said that it was Anat’s defeat of Mot which secured the unlimited rule of Baal for the next seven years, until Shapsh

278 Oldenburg 1969: 152, 163.
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brokered a peace between them.\textsuperscript{283} It is not entirely clear how Oldenburg saw these texts fitting together, which presumably they must have done as part of ‘cult’ practice.

In his discussion of Baal, he supported Kapelrud’s thesis that Baal was Hadad, the Amorite storm-god,\textsuperscript{284} supported by the research of Dhorme who said that Dagan, the storm-god and sun-deity had a flourishing cult in the Middle Euphrates in the “oldest time”.\textsuperscript{285} Oldenburg regarded Baal and Hadad as the same god, Haddu being his original name.\textsuperscript{286} He also supported Dossin’s view that Hadad’s alternative title of \textit{ilumer} was the original source of the name of Mari, indicating that the storm-god was very old.\textsuperscript{287} From Mari, he had moved through Babylonia and into the Amorite pantheon.\textsuperscript{288} Here his bloodthirsty and war-like character had been developed along with his meteorological functions.\textsuperscript{289}

Baal at Ugarit was described largely in terms supporting Kapelrud’s views. Baal was an immature, adolescent god, given to fits of pique and passion and only controlled by the mollifying affections of mother-like Anat and

\textsuperscript{283} Oldenburg 1969: 38.
\textsuperscript{284} Oldenburg 1969: 47.
\textsuperscript{285} Oldenburg 1969: 46.
\textsuperscript{286} Oldenburg 1969: 59.
\textsuperscript{287} “Hadad was also called \textit{Ilumer} .. ‘\textit{ilu} ‘god’ and the Sumerian word \textit{mer/war}, signifying ‘wind, rainstorm’... In the prologue to the Code of Hammurapi the city of Mari is spelled \textit{Mrakki}. Thus the name of Mari was spelled identically to the name of the Storm god, from which G. Dossin concluded that the city of Mari was named after the Storm-god, who was the specific god of Mari”. Oldenburg 1969: 50. See also Dossin 1940: 153-159.
\textsuperscript{288} Oldenburg 1969: 60.
\textsuperscript{289} Oldenburg 1969: 63-65.
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Asherah, even though he made “free love” to Anat without their being married. He was stronger than he was wise and did not say a great deal.  

Not only that, Anat’s tears for her brother/lover were like those of the women who wept for Tammuz and “like Baal, Tammuz was described as a lad whose cult was of no ethical value”. Any such judgements of ethical value will be carefully avoided in the present discussion – the comparison with Tammuz has already been refuted.

Baal was protected to some extent by Kothar, who functioned as Hermes (Taautos) to El-Kronos in the Phoenician History, protecting him from the schemes of El. However, Oldenburg had previously compared El-Kronos to El, the god whom Baal castrated and whose throne he usurped.

Oldenburg’s attempts to compare the gods of the Phoenician History to those of Ugarit are, to say the least, convoluted. A short summary of the comparisons will help to indicate just how complicated things were.

In the Phoenician History, El castrated Uranos near the “sources and rivers”. Oldenburg proposed that this site was Afqar, Nahr Ibrahim, translating it as the ancient river Adonis, where Adonis was also castrated. This site later

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293 Oldenburg 1969: 73.  
began a cult centre of Adonis and Aphrodite, “i.e. an hypostasis of Baal-Hadad and Astarte”.

Oldenburg’s theory required that in the fragmentary column v in KTU 1.1, Baal and his cohorts had emasculated El. If similar comparisons were made to the myths just mentioned, El would be called Uranos and Adonis, while Baal would be El-Kronos – but at the same time he would be Adonis too, since it was “his” cult which displaced El from Afqar! This demonstrates the danger implicit in taking myths from different cultures and assuming that one can superimpose them upon one other – or that one can, indeed, “fill in the gaps” in order to make sense of the Ugaritic fragmentary texts.

Oldenburg did not attempt to deny Baal’s storm function – indeed he was “the deified rain” who fought the god of drought and sterility, Mot. The only problem could be Oldenburg’s contention that while Baal initially fought with “flying weapons” he could be a sky god and, after gaining kingship of the earth, he fought Mot hand to hand, demonstrating his earthly dominion. Similarly, Baal became a chthonic deity after his descent to the underworld, his death prompted at the extension of his kingdom from the clouds to the earth. Oldenburg supported the theory that Baal mated with the heifer at his descent to the underworld to take “care of the continuation of his function”, demonstrating his importance to fertility. However, Baal’s

298 Oldenburg 1969: 75.
300 Oldenburg 1969: 75.
301 Oldenburg 1969: 77.
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function had to be left unfulfilled in order to necessitate the ritual marriage ceremony after seven years, in line with Oldenburg’s other theories. The calf-like progeny complicated matters even further.

In his examination of the Hebrew Bible evidence, Oldenburg maintained that biblical בַּל could only mean Baal-Hadad, that is, Baal of Ugarit. Similarly, his view that Anat and Asherah had transferred their affection to Baal was based upon evidence from the Hittite Elkunirša myth, although only Asherah is mentioned there. He also assumed that if Asherah and El had been happily married, they would have shared a home. This was not necessarily true even for European monarchs until the 19th century.

Finally, Oldenburg’s entire theory stands or falls upon the proposition that the Amorite ‘invasion’ of Ugarit, apparently around 2000 BCE, was responsible for the religious revolution depicted in the “vicious conflict” between El and Baal. Since the main support for this theory was the comparison of different myths, demonstrated above to be untenable, one cannot support Oldenburg’s view. The proposed Amorite influx has also not been proved, either from textual or archaeological sources. Moreover, his view of Baal may have been partly accurate, but he tended to impose notions of stupidity and fertility upon Baal which were not attested in the texts.

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502 Oldenburg 1969: 82.
505 Singer 1999: 609-610.

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Cross’s work was largely to connect the so-called Canaanite myths, including the texts of Ugarit, with the religious origins of Israel, in order to redress the idea that Israel was a unique or isolated phenomenon.306 His proposition was that the mythical elements of Israel’s faith were influenced by those of Canaan, and that this produced a tension in Israelite religion between the historical and mythic. However, the ‘epics’ of Canaan, for example Keret and Aqhat, were of “marginal interest” compared to the mythic cycle – he presumably meant KTU 1.1-1.6 – which “provided the libretto to primary rites of the cult”.307 We can already see from this that Cross was influenced by the myth-and-ritual school. To ascribe the title ‘libretto’ to any myth is extremely limiting and points the reader along a very narrow, ritual, pathway.

Contrasting El with Baal, Cross deduced that the title bn il “son of El” was not in fact a biological connection but an established oral description to denote any “son of El” or god.308 He also contrasted their creation myths: those of El presented creation as theogony, whereas those of Baal discussed cosmogony. Unfortunately he did not elaborate on these texts to support his argument, nor did he acknowledge that the existence of any ‘creation’ was


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and is disputed. Likewise, El was transcendent, while Baal was immanent, appearing through thunder, lightning and storms.309

The fixed oral pairings and formulae, the synonym dyads and the parallelismus membrorum indicated that the Canaanite mythic texts of Baal and Anat310 were originally poetic. These are also found within Hebrew poetry, a link which Cross acknowledged.311 In fact, he stated that there must have been a common tradition of oral literature between the two cultures, the mythic themes of Ugarit being found in both the texts of Sanchuniathon and the Hebrew bible.312

He described the outline of the events of the Baal Cycle, and proposed that the events were a cosmogony, the victory of the god of life over chaos and death (embodied in Yam and Mot).313 The difficult interpretation of the cycle was addressed briefly. Cross attributed the many problems of interpretation to confusion between the two types of myth, cosmogony and theogony, and an unconscious prejudice against the material engendered by using the Hebrew creation myth as a yardstick. He considered this narrative to be “radically historicized” to form the beginning of a historical linear sequence.314 However he viewed the combat between Yam, Mot and Baal as

309 Cross 1973: 43.
310 Presumably KTU 1.1 – 1.6; Cross did not specify them, nor why they were no longer “poetic”.
311 Cross 1973: 112. See also RSP.
314 Cross 1973: 120.
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cosmogonic, “primitive in that there is no reference to the beginning”, but dealing with the actual establishment of kingship, a temple cult and rituals - a different type of cosmogony.

The comparison between Yahweh and Baal was also discussed. He was clear that “Yahwism also owes a debt to the myths of Baal” and stated unambiguously that in “the earliest poetic sources the language depicting Yahweh as divine warrior manifest is borrowed almost directly from the Canaanite description of the theophany of Baal as storm god”. He followed this bold statement with a brief description of Baal or Haddu, drawing attention to his mountain home, meteorological weapons and warlike character. He highlighted the international character of Baal, known from Assyria to Egypt, and at one point so powerful that he was compared to Pharaoh Akhenaten.

To Cross the texts seemed to describe two patterns: firstly the divine warrior on his way to battle, bearing his weapons, and secondly the return of the triumphant divine warrior to a (new) temple, his victorious royal aspect manifest in storms, whose ‘roaring voice’ awakened the force of nature: “His rule is manifest in the fertility of the drenched earth, of seed and womb”. Although Cross had not lost sight of the warrior, the royal and the meteorological aspects of Baal, he now seemed to be adding the aspect of

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315 Cross 1973: 120.
316 Cross 1973: 147.
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fertility. The newly moistened earth is attested in the texts, but “seed and womb” is an unnecessary addition, reflecting the unconscious influence of biblical polemic which Cross had highlighted earlier in this work. He went on to discuss the storm theophanies of the Old Testament before taking a brief look at the history of the storm theophany. He pointed out that although the explicit signs of lightning and thunder were used only in a limited way, the themes of divine kingship and new creation became dominant. This indicated that despite the hints at fertility, he still held the main themes of the Baal Cycle to be royal and cosmogonic, a refreshing change from the Seasonal Pattern.

Cross also discussed the conflict between Baal and Yahweh, exemplified in the 9th century BCE prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible. He said that by that time Israel had become vulnerable to “less wholesome” syncretism between Yahweh and Baal, when the storm theophanic language had somehow opened the door to a dangerous identification between the two gods. He argued that the prophets did not suppress the language of the storm systematically but “used a refined or purged language of revelation, because Yahweh, so to say, no longer used the storm as a mode of self-manifestation”[319] although he still controlled the elements of nature.

In Cross we can see that the close connection made by scholars between Baal and the prophetic literature of six hundred years after the fall of Ugarit from

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the Hebrew Bible was still strong, fifty years after the discovery of the Ras Shamra tablets. Baal was regarded less as a sexual fertility god (although that connotation was still present) and more as a god of meteorological manifestation and cosmogonic victory.

L’Heureux - Rank among the Canaanite Gods: El, Baal and the Rephaim (1979)

L’Heureux’s Rank Among the Canaanite Gods could have been written as a refutation of Oldenburg’s Conflict Between El and Baal. Those arguments that Oldenburg put forward, to support his view that Baal was an Amorite intruder into an older Canaanite (sic) pantheon, were knocked down one by one. L’Heureux did a thorough job and only the main points are summarised here.

L’Heureux quickly pointed out that Oldenburg had taken arguments made by others, e.g. Roggia, Cassuto and Pope, and manipulated them into an “extreme form”. He stressed the importance of not imposing on the ancient texts one’s own views of how certain types or ranks of god should act.

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320 L’Heureux 1979: 23 “It is typical of Ulf Oldenburg’s work that caution is abandoned and the tentative suggestions of others are pushed to extremes and become certitudes”.

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Unlike Oldenburg, L’Heureux proposed that El remained head of the pantheon and pointed out that the only evidence against Baal belonging to El’s family was the title bn dgn.\textsuperscript{321} Since it has been suggested that familial titles did not necessarily indicate a genetic or direct biological link, it is not necessary that El is the ‘father’ in the biological sense of any of the gods, nor that Baal should be the biological ‘son’ of Dagan. This would be the natural result of applying Cross’s argument without an intention of proving or disproving Baal’s paternity.\textsuperscript{322}

Following a comprehensive discussion of other ancient material, including Hesiod’s \textit{Theogony}, the \textit{Kumarbi} texts and Sanchuniathon’s material preserved in the \textit{Praeparatio Evangelica}, L’Heureux concluded that “the picture of El that is found in the translatable Ugaritic texts yields good sense on its own so there is no need to introduce hypothetical events into the mythological narrative”.\textsuperscript{323} This approach is so reasonable that one must question why other scholars went to such lengths to provide proofs for their theories from other ancient material. It may also be noted that although material can be described as ‘old’ or ‘ancient’, these terms in no way indicate contemporaneity. On the contrary, a thousand years can separate material which has been regarded as comparable with the Ugaritic texts. L’Heureux himself pointed out that Oldenburg’s case was based upon the assumption that “material recorded by Philo of Byblos around 100 BC is held to preserve

\textsuperscript{321} L’Heureux 1979: 13.

\textsuperscript{322} In Cross 1973: 15. El was called father of Baal in a “fixed oral formula”, while \textit{bn dgn} was read as a statement of actual paternity, although the difference between them which caused this difference of assessment is not explained.

\textsuperscript{323} L’Heureux 1979: 31.

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a situation older than that found in the Ras Shamra texts which were written about 1500 years earlier!”

In a similar fashion the Old Testament evidence may be disregarded, since the view presented in Judges, around the 9th century BCE, occurred a long time after the Ugaritic material and “constitutes a notorious example of the theological reformulation of history”. It would also be unwise to argue that the b’l of the Hebrew Bible was Baal of Ugarit. The Baal whom Elijah fought was “Baal of Tyre, almost certainly to be identified with Melqart. While some authors, eager to draw upon Ugaritic lore ... nonchalantly state that Melqart was another name for Hadad, not many specialists on Phoenician religion would be likely to agree”. The Baal of the story of 1 Kings was not, in fact, Hadad. L’Heureux pointed out that even the biblical scholar Wolf did not suppose Hadad to be one of the many Baal deities manifested in the Bible.

Archaeology failed to support the so-called ‘Amorite thesis’ proposed by Vine and Oldenburg and “if the Amorites were not ethnically, linguistically or socio-economically distinguishable from other West Semites in Syria about 2000 BC, the question as to whether Baal was a Canaanite deity or an

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324 L’Heureux 1979: 37. Presently the tablets are dated around 1100 years earlier.
325 L’Heureux 1979: 59.
327 L’Heureux 1979: 66. See Wolff 1974. הָבָל in the HB always has the article - הָבָל, and it is therefore not seen as a proper name.

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Amorite deity becomes meaningless”.

El was a favoured god of the Amorites and it seems highly unlikely, given their climate, that the Ugaritians would simply wait until the spurious ‘Amorite invasion’ in order to include a storm-god in their pantheon. These are two very simple reasons why the idea that the Baal myths are a response to the incursion of Amorites into Ugarit is simply untenable.

L’Heureux concluded by putting forward his own view of Baal and El. While El embodied those qualities most valued among nomadic cultures at the time—age, wisdom, great authority—Baal embodied the monarchic, urban view of Ugaritians, that he was youthful, war-like and living in a palace, the counterpart of the king who tried to impose his will by force. The gods were not personifications of the two groups, nor was their worship limited to their respective ‘populations’. Rather, L’Heureux carefully suggested, a dynasty with a more rural background might seek to insinuate the supremacy of El by making the rule of Baal, indeed Baal’s life and escape from Mot, dependent on the word of El, to whom they had a strong allegiance.

Although he did not propose anything striking or new, L’Heureux made a valuable contribution to the literature on Baal by thoroughly discrediting the

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328 L’Heureux 1979: 104.
329 L’Heureux 1979: 105-106.
"El versus Baal" theory which had become increasingly popular around that time.


Margalit’s 1980 work focused on the conflict between Baal and Mot, in KTU 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6. His introduction rather misleads the reader. Firstly, he expressed surprise at the divergence of opinions among scholars and the variety of interpretations of the Baal Cycle. Secondly, he launched into what appears to have been a strongly-worded critique of the Baal Cycle itself: “In comparison with the authors of the Krt and Aqht tales, the Canaanite bard in the Baal texts looms feeble-minded. At times his artistic competence may be called into question”.331 In more extreme terms, Margalit stated: “The total picture is that of an inchoate and muddled work, at once banal and inept. ... How do we account for this *prima facie* disparity in the levels of literary achievement? ... Is it possible that Ugaritology has hitherto ‘short-changed’ the subject of its enquiry?”332 This was Margalit’s fundamental thesis.

He proposed that until that time there had been no major step forward since Ginsberg’s *ANET* translation of 1950.333 This was the consequence of an almost intuitive method of translation, based upon a weak theoretical

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331 Margalit 1980: 2.
332 Margalit 1980: 3.
333 Ginsberg 1969.
approach and a narrow focus on philology. This concentrated too much on the grammatical analysis of the words and sacrificed the poetic and prosodic forms of those words. Since 1975, Margalit had published a number of articles\(^{334}\) in which he set out empirical, structuralist theories of prosodic analysis which were universally applicable: "by dissolving ... the notion of parallelism, we were able to separate out its form-relevant aspects".\(^{335}\)

To summarise his procedure, poetry was categorised into levels of line or stichos, verse and strophe, or sequence of verses. Within these levels, rhythms and patterns of alliteration were analysed. He stressed particularly the importance of alliteration, coining the phrase *alliterationis causa* to explain why the author of the poetry had chosen a particular word. He said it was "the single most important methodological presupposition of this monograph, that the combining of insights afforded by an understanding of alliteration ... and prosodic structure ... provides the key to major breakthroughs in Ugaritic philology".\(^{336}\) He applied these principles throughout the study, although his results are not of direct relevance at this stage in the present work.

Several of the 'classic' episodes discussed by Margalit in the actual translation of the texts provide us with an insight into how he viewed Baal, and perhaps shed light on his own particular choices. For instance, in

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\(^{334}\) Margalit 1975 and 1976.

\(^{335}\) Margalit 1980: 3.
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KTU 1.4 iii 10-22, where Baal rejected the spindle of Asherah, he suggested that Baal and Asherah were both "fertility" gods. This incident was related to the cult of Dionysus and the Great Mother, "assumed in classical times to have Anatolian origins".337 Having identified Baal with Dionysus (a 'dying and rising' young fertility god) he likened the banquet to the feasting of Maenad priestesses who made men drunk and then took them into a corner to "work with men the deed of shame" discussed by Euripides. The actual relevance to the Baal cult is not immediately obvious, if one is not convinced by his identification of Baal with Dionysus.338

Equally controversial was his interpretation of KTU 1.4 v 20 - vi 15, the episode in which the installation of windows into Baal’s new palace by Kothar took place. Margalit proposed that after the windows had been opened, "the serpentine henchmen of Mot" almost immediately bit Baal.339 His arm became swollen with poison, though this was Baal’s own fault, having disregarded the advice of the wise Kothar. "This reconstruction seems to be eminently logical in comparison to its counterpart", and Margalit arrived at his conclusions because of an alternative translation of al tšt (citing a positive rather than a prohibitive Hebrew al ) and bl (negative – as in the oracle delivered to Danel). This translation is in fact the opposite of the

336 Margalit 1980: 5. One may note here a faith in the "mechanical" structure of the texts similar to that exhibited by van Zijl.
337 Margalit 1980: 42.
338 See the previous criticism of Kapelrud et al.
339 Margalit 1980: 45.
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consensus view\textsuperscript{340} and also, one has to say, without an obviously compelling reason.

Baal had been struck a mortal blow, his arm swollen with poison “like the resin of cedar”.\textsuperscript{341} He returned to his house to send his servants on a mission to Mot. After their return, he moaned of his impending death, condemning Mot “Thy (poisonous) prick I am ingesting/ In groans and diarrhea I expire”.\textsuperscript{342} Margalit said this was most likely to be a lament from the two messenger deities, which in fact was the appearance of a cult-ritual refrain, part of the complex rites apparently known in the Old Testament as “weeping for Tammuz”.\textsuperscript{343} Once more, Margalit compared the dying and rising god Tammuz, a vegetation deity, to Baal – a storm god who may or may not die and rise. Indeed, Margalit said, “This is not to say ... that the text is itself the script for such rites; only that, since the story is concerned with the dying god of vegetation, the poet-author borrows from what may be assumed to have been a Tammuz-cult centering around Baal”.\textsuperscript{344} Baal was, then, to be identified with Tammuz and was worshipped as Tammuz! Margalit sadly did not give references to any sources in support of this argument.

\textsuperscript{341} Margalit 1980: 63.
\textsuperscript{342} Margalit 1980: 88. This is just his understanding of an admittedly difficult text.
\textsuperscript{343} Margalit 1980: 96.
\textsuperscript{344} Margalit 1980: 96.
In his analysis of the conflict between Mot and Baal, Margalit furthered the identification between Baal and the fate of vegetation. Mot was not only death, he was

"the enemy of green-growth symbolised by Baal. To grow is to overcome Mot; to dry-up and wither is to succumb to Mot ... For it is during the winter, rainy season, when Baal is at the peak of his virility, that the snakes hibernate".345

Baal was therefore the virile god of winter, the equivalent of European spring, who made the earth green and provided rain to defeat Mot, the god of death.

This was confirmed when Margalit discussed the episode when Baal "fell in love" with a heifer, KTU 1.5 v 5b-25.346 Having descended to the 'Elysian' fields of death, Baal mated with a cow, in a text often used as a proof of Baal's fertility status. Margalit did not examine the importance of this act and preferred to dwell on the status conferred upon the dead by inhabiting this part of dbr, an area reserved for the most important, such as kings, warriors and gods.347

Having established the view of Baal as representative of fertility, however, Margalit confounded the theory set up by his own commentary and stated that "the present story is not only, or even primarily, an allegory of fertility.348

346 Margalit 1980: 122.
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It is first and foremost a narrative tale in which the hero is the personification of rain, storms, vegetation, vitality, fertility, etc., and his arch-antagonist the personification of death and decay.348 Despite this, Margalit went on to say that “his return coincides with the beginning of the spring rains and the first sprouting of the grains within the furrows”.349 The reader is left in a state of confusion – Baal is understood to be a god of fertility, and yet the tale about him is not concerned with fertility...

After El’s dreams indicating that he was quite possibly “on the verge of outright senility”,350 Margalit proposed that the epic ended with a truce between Baal and Mot, mediated by Shapsh and El – his involvement being surprising given his advanced mental decrepitude. This was predicated upon the need for a balance. Without Baal’s rain there would be no “pickings” for Mot.351 This, then, was the conclusion: Baal and his kingship, along with life itself, was an intermittent feature, and death could never be defeated outright. While the Seasonal Pattern provided an “undeniable”352 conceptual framework, “the true antithesis is between Interrupted and Continuous”.353 This should not be taken as unconditional acceptance of the Seasonal Pattern by Margalit – he concluded by saying that to reduce the cycle to a ritual re-enactment “is to reduce it to absurdity”, an accusation he levelled also against Hvidberg, Gaster, Gray and de Moor.354 His final word was to

348 Margalit 1980: 150.
352 Margalit 1980: 204.

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recommend a literary approach, recognising above all the narrative quality of the texts – rather at odds with his own linguistic study.

Putting aside the philological aspects of his work, Margalit proposed a fairly comprehensive analysis of Baal, acknowledging the meteorological and fertility (rain) aspects of the deity, but with the unnecessary flourish of vitality and vegetation.

Handy - Among the Host of Heaven: the Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureaucracy (1994)

Handy’s work expressed the theory that the pantheon of the Syro-Palestinian religious world was comparable to a bureaucracy, using the outline of bureaucratic government proposed by Weber in the 19th century.

Handy reasonably prefaced the work with the warning that his own theory, like those of every other scholar, was “built on nebulous rather than firm foundations”, because of a lack of sources. This was not a derogatory remark about the sources that were available. He was most keen to point out

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355 Handy 1994.
the paucity of evidence from Syro-Palestine, given the richness of the material, both physical and textual, which must once have existed.  

Handy said that it was logical to suppose that the nature of government of the city-state would have an impact upon the way the divine government was portrayed. He firmly stated that it was doubtful whether any completely satisfactory description of ANE religion could be constructed upon only one model because of the limited amount of material. His emphasis on the tenuous nature of all theories of these religions is at times overstated, but makes a refreshing change from the complete certainty of many other authors.

A detailed explanation of Weber’s bureaucratic model followed, broken down into three main factors: legal authority, hierarchy and personnel. This was a ‘pure type’ model, and not the kind which Handy found in the Syro-Palestinian pantheon. Neither should we imagine a modern type of bureaucracy – the real power was found in the monarchy of these city-states. In their ideology, the monarchs “served as regents for the gods of the various city-states”. The temple staff, including the scribes, supported this monarch. This provided the bureaucratic nature of the society. The gods of the pantheon were anthropomorphic and as such based upon the characters

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358 Handy 1994: 5.
360 Most notably Oldenburg and De Moor.
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of their bureaucratic human counterparts. Unlike their terrestrial counterparts, the deities held their positions forever. Also unlike earthly bureaucrats, gods were felt to be so uniquely qualified for their posts, they were allowed to act outrageously and yet remain in office.

Handy acknowledged that the Ras Shamra texts were the most important in the Syro-Palestinian genre. No other body of work was so substantial or informative, and he felt that the poor state of the tablets and their limited number meant that they should be treated rather as an uncharacteristic though important sample of literature. Despite this, “the tablets still do form the basis for reconstructing the divine realm as seen in Syro-Palestine … these are the texts … that must form the core literature to which other sources may be compared.”

After Handy had discussed the History of the Phoenicians by Philo of Byblos and the Greek Adonis myth, he examined El and Asherah, the ‘authoritative deities’ of the cosmos. Their role was compared to that of the monarch, the head of the bureaucratic structure, who was responsible for the creation but not the running of the world/city-state, the active administration of which was controlled by a lower stratum of deities.

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362 Handy 1994: 12.
363 Handy 1994: 15.
364 Handy 1994: 123.
Baal, along with Anat, Mot and Yam, belonged to the subsidiary type of "active" deities. This secondary level of government fulfilled the day-to-day functions of rulership. In common with his colleagues, Baal fell under the authority of El but had been given natural, political and abstract spheres to govern. Like their human counterparts, the gods had weaknesses – rivalries and conflicts that prevented the world from running smoothly. Despite this, their superiors did not relieve them of their responsibilities, on account of their unique divine qualities.

Handy held Baal in particular to have serious weaknesses. He acknowledged that the theology of Baal had progressed from the stage at which he had been regarded as a supreme sky-god, whose primary importance had been that of providing fertility. Recent scholarship described Baal now as the thunder and storm-god, but merely one of the gods of fertility, no longer the fertility god, which position scholars felt was in fact held by El. Now the significance of Baal's patronal duty to Ugarit, the political aspect of his theology, could be examined. Beyond controlling rain, a patron god would provide a competent ruler and defence from enemies for his worshippers.

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When one might have expected Handy to discuss Baal’s fulfilment of these duties, he launched instead into a strong criticism of the god and blamed Baal’s dependence on other gods on his stupidity!373 Baal’s challenge to Mot, which required the assistance of Anat, and his capture by Mot after explicitly warning his messengers of this very danger, illustrated his claim that Baal was in fact no more than a “somewhat virile lummox”.374

In the matter of Anat at least, Handy did not propose a ritual mating. In his view it was Baal’s rains, and not the putative sex between Baal and Anat, that led to fertility of the earth.375 Anat was a goddess of war and mayhem, not fertility.

Handy decided that a great deal of the confusion about Baal’s position in the pantheon and the interpretation of texts was caused by the title mlk. Baal’s kingship was compared to that of Mot and Yam, whose specific realms entitled them to the title mlk but their natural competitiveness led to their contesting for each other’s kingdoms. Similarly, local kings remained mlk although they in turn served an emperor.376 It did not in any way mean ‘sole ruler’, and if this argument were accepted then the evidence for Baal’s usurpation of El’s throne would no longer exist. In Handy’s model El ruled as emperor over Yam, Mot and Baal.377

374 Handy 1994: 103.
376 Handy 1994: 112.
Handy proposed that the main difficulty with these “active deities” was their personalities – they were “self-interested, greedy for more power”. The combats involving Baal demonstrated conflict among deities at the same level, as they tried to add to their own territory. This illustrated the “character flaws” of the gods. Baal in particular was criticised as “a deity who grasped as much of the cosmos as he could, but, having been made ruler of the earth by El, was clearly shown to be a strong, virile dolt.” Once more, Baal was depicted as all brawn and no brains. Handy appeared to condemn Baal in order to ‘promote’ Anat, who “had the brains, knowledge and brashness to use her strength whereas Baal blundered rashly”. Apart from ignoring Anat’s impetuous murder of Aqhat in KTU 1.18 and 1.19, this attitude is too subjective to be appropriate in a scholarly work.

Although Handy summed up his work with a commendable caution about the universality of his theory, his criticisms of Baal created a serious difficulty for our overall acceptance of his work. At the same time, credit should be given for his attempt to provide a fresh interpretation of the Ugaritic material and the censure of spurious theories such as the importance of Baal and Anat’s sexual congress for the fertility of the land.

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This relatively short article demonstrates very clearly the fluid nature of Ugaritic studies. Gibson's previous work, the 1978 edition of Canaanite Myths and Legends, had placed him on the side of the Seasonal Interpretation. The minor misgivings present at that time were eventually developed into this remarkable paper published six years later.

He briefly discussed the interpretation of myth, a most important topic which is difficult to address even in a lengthier work. Gibson managed a summary of his views in a commendably short space, making his position very clear. While it was obvious to him that the cycle consisted of myths, he imposed no strict definition upon that expression. He was also dismissive of those scholars who held fast to the myth-and-ritual school of interpretation, saying it was simply "too limiting," and a practice which scholars in other fields had outgrown. He said that he had "almost given up the attempt to reach even the broadest definition" of myth, and that a myth addressed, or described, those views and principles most precious to its native society.

381 Gibson 1978: 6, 13. This was a revision of Driver (1956).
382 Gibson 1984.
383 Gibson 1984: 203.
384 Gibson 1984: 204.
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In one passage, Gibson attempted to explain both the use of ‘theology’ in his work’s title and pre-empted the ‘mythic mind’ theory of Wyatt.385 As well as justifying his use of the term ‘theology’, he set out the most important characteristics of a student of ancient myth. While linguistic ability is undoubtedly essential, Gibson proposed that the student was attempting, through his work, to enter the “thought-world” of the writers, which required both sympathy, imagination and a respect for the authors. Such respect led Gibson to use the term ‘theology’ in the title, a word notably absent from the majority of books and articles on this subject.386

“It is for that reason that I preface my enquiry into the Baal Cycle with the word Theology. That is the word I use when I am trying on a serious level to assess the thought of the Old Testament, which ... comes within my responsibilities as a teacher of the languages and literatures of the ancient Levant, and I cannot see why I should use it for one and not for the other. It is the only word I can think of that carries the right nuances of reflection, sincerity and commitment”.387

While “thought-world” may not correspond exactly to “mythic mind”, the concept of a student entering the non-physical, spiritual and religious mindset of a contemporary of the texts is common to both Gibson and Wyatt. Likewise, the use of “theology”, a bold step not taken lightly by Gibson, indicated a respect for the material and its authors, as well as the seriousness normally reserved for Old Testament studies. It is hoped that the present thesis will reflect the values Gibson felt were conveyed by the term “theology”.

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385 Wyatt 2001b.
386 Del Olmo Lete 1980: 152 was perhaps the first.
387 Gibson 1984: 204.
On the subject of the Baal Cycle itself, Gibson spent a considerable amount of time refuting ideas which he had earlier supported or proposed. While he had previously regarded de Moor’s re-ordering of the texts with an amount of scepticism, for example, he now objected to it outright: “Such an arrangement puts a heavy strain on the credulity of the reader ... It is also quite noticeable that he is unable in this part ... to adduce the precise seasonal equations of which he properly makes great play in other parts”.

Similarly, Gibson’s earlier view that KTU 1.1 was a kind of summary of the events in the remainder of the Cycle, was also rejected. He now regarded the Cycle as a narrative whole, and suggested that any “visible stutters or dislocations” were more likely to be the result of poor interpretation or a sign of a theory taking precedence over the plain meaning of the texts.

Baal himself was pared down to size. Gibson rejected utterly the view that he was a typical “fertility god”. Although responsible for wind and weather, which had of course an impact on soil productivity, he could not be identified with other youthful gods such as Tammuz or Adonis who were vegetation deities. The death of Baal was the absence of rain in summer, while the deaths of the other gods were the withering of crops and vines in autumn. Gibson astutely pointed out the “congenital confusion” of these two kinds of deity in ancient Near Eastern scholarship, compounded by the use of ‘fertility’ to refer to both Baal and the other kind of deity.

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388 Gibson 1984: 205.
389 Gibson 1984: 207.
Gibson similarly opposed the putative conflict between El and Baal.\textsuperscript{390} In common with Smith,\textsuperscript{391} he proposed a kingship of “vice-regency”, a limited exaltation, in which Baal was king only by permission of El.\textsuperscript{392} He correctly asserted that there was no textual evidence that Baal dared to usurp El’s position – rather, it was Mot’s and Yam’s power he wished to gain. The issue here was the attempt to “maintain an equilibrium” among these three gods.\textsuperscript{393}

Gibson then propounded his views on how the texts were to be interpreted. The six texts formed three pairs, each having a different background. For instance, he proposed that tablets 1 and 2 were originally cosmological but had been given a strong seasonal slant, presumably for Ilimilku’s own purpose.\textsuperscript{394} The opposite had occurred in tablets 5 and 6, while tablets 3 and 4 were “a mixture of the cosmological and the seasonal” and not, as he had earlier suggested, a commemoration of the founding of Baal’s temple in Ugarit.\textsuperscript{395} He had evidently not abandoned the Seasonal Pattern entirely, and still thought that the banqueting scene in KTU 1.3 was probably connected to either a Syrian autumnal or new year festival, celebrating Yam’s defeat heralded by the return of Baal’s rains. Similarly, he upheld the views of Gray and de Moor, who viewed Anat’s slaughter as the killing of Ugaritians,

\textsuperscript{390} See, for instance, Oldenburg 1969.
\textsuperscript{391} Mark S. Smith 1994.
\textsuperscript{392} Gibson 1984: 209.
\textsuperscript{393} Gibson 1984: 210.
\textsuperscript{394} Gibson 1984: 211.
\textsuperscript{395} Gibson 1984: 211.
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mirroring a late summer rite “which may also be reflected in the capering and self-laceration of the prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel”.396 Although this passage will not be discussed in this thesis, one must question why Anat would kill her own worshippers or what grounds there are to maintain the theory of the Ugaritic autumnal/new year festival, complete with feasting. One may also dispute Gibson’s suggestion that El tried to communicate peace and love at the beginning of time and that he sought “to accomplish this [through] the lightning … a secret given by him into the keeping of Baal”397, although Gibson did not provide evidence for this.

Gibson concluded by reiterating his view that Baal was not a “fertility god” but a deity who sought year after year to maintain the fragile equilibrium which preserved life in Ugarit, defending his worshippers from two ancient enemies; Yam was not only a violent sea but a chaotic force, disrupting their lives; and Mot was also “death simpliciter”, the unavoidable foe of all men, with whom Baal battled to prevent the premature capture of his devotees.398

To Gibson, this cycle embodied many high ideals. It contained “an explanation of the divine ways with the world … that is not only mature and subtle, but earnest and realistic; it faces up to the powers that be with both irony and circumspection, aware of the knife edge that separates harmony

396 Gibson 1984: 214.  
397 Gibson 1984: 216.  
398 Gibson 1984: 218.
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from chaos and life from death”.399 He concluded by proposing that the lack of respect normally accorded to this civilisation was largely due to the polemic of the Hebrew Bible and was in fact entirely unwarranted.


One of the most recent textual commentaries published is Mark Smith’s *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary KTU 1.1 – 1.2*.400 Only the first volume has been published so far. When complete, this work will be one of the most detailed commentaries ever published on a group of Ugaritic texts. It raises the examination of these texts to a level of scholarship normally reserved for works on the Hebrew Bible.

Smith has presented us with a fresh study of the Baal Cycle and it is well worthy of examination. It could be said that an overly close textual focus might prevent a comprehensive understanding of the texts in comparison with their other Ugaritic and ancient Near Eastern contemporaries. However, it has enabled a detailed and precise examination of the most influential texts, and those most often referred to beyond Ugaritic studies.

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400 M.S. Smith 1994.
Smith began with a brief overview of his aims in the work. This was followed by textual issues, such as the validity of reading KTU 1.1 – 1.6 as a group or cycle of texts, the literary classification of the texts and their development and dating. He stated boldly that Baal was a warrior god, along with Yam, Mot and Athtar, who ruled different realms of the universe and that scholars had for decades emphasised the kingship of Baal as the main theme of the cycle.

It appeared at this point that he sought to distance himself from the so-called ‘Seasonal Pattern’ so often seen in the history of Ugaritic scholarship. In fact, his thinking was in agreement with Handy’s when he stated that, while extending the political understanding of the cycle, he hoped to demonstrate that the Baal Cycle represented the universe as a single political reality, connected and integrated by Baal’s rule. He pointed to the finite and limited nature of Baal’s kingship and suggested that comparisons with Marduk and Yahweh were less useful than at first thought, because neither of those gods was limited in his rule. This was valid and original compared to scholars who pointed out only the similarities with these gods. He also proposed to correct the relationship between the Baal Cycle and the Hebrew Bible, by acknowledging their interaction but pointing out the detrimental

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403 M.S. Smith 1994: xxv.
effect on the scholarship of authors who took the connection too personally and too literally.405

In his introduction proper, Smith spent a great deal of time establishing the validity of regarding the texts as a cycle, and raised a number of interesting points. For example, he proposed that the correspondences between the Baal/Yam and Baal/Mot episodes may “reflect a thematic symmetry”406 which could perhaps be described as a merismus or chiasmus writ large. He also reflected on Dumuzi, another god often compared to Baal.407 While the similarities were worth noting – both have a consort who mourned and searched for their dead partners – he pointed out that Baal was a far ‘greater’ god than Dumuzi and that, unlike the tale of Dumuzi, there was a great deal of combat in the Baal Cycle. Once more, the value of pointing out the dissimilarity between the gods was highlighted.408 In a short passage to demonstrate his view of Baal, Smith said:

“It may be suggested that if the character of heroes is revealed through the character of their adversaries and the nature of their conflicts, then Yam and Mot reveal aspects of Baal’s character. Yam and Mot are cosmic figures, and they show Baal’s heroism and equally cosmic stature and proportion. Furthermore, as Yam represents the chaotic

405 M.S. Smith is responding to type of view expressed by Oldenburg - “That which impelled me to begin the study of Canaanite religion was my desire to investigate its relationship to Hebrew religion, to see whether the faith of Yahweh was a product of the soil of the Canaanite religion. The more I studied pre-Israelite religion, the more I was amazed with its utter depravity and wickedness. Indeed there was nothing in it to inspire the sublime faith of Yahweh. His coming is like the rising sun dispelling the darkness of Canaanite superstition”. (Oldenburg 1969).
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waters and Mot signifies death in its cosmic proportions, Baal embodies order and life in equal, if not greater, universal proportions”.

The picture Smith built up was a far cry from the grain god ruled by his base passions, described in some earlier works.

Smith classified the Baal Cycle as myth, and certainly did not regard it as being instructions for a cultic performance as Hvidberg had. He noted that ‘myth’ was no longer regarded as a derogatory term, at least in anthropological circles, and that several valid attempts had been made to give a definition of the term, something he felt necessary for the interpretation of the Cycle. He concluded that on the current level of understanding about the ancient Near East, myths were:

“Traditional tales preserved and modified in literary forms, and at least in many cases these texts center on deities. Moreover, the functions of myths in general and ancient Near Eastern texts in particular may have evolved considerably. Beginning with a functional definition may preclude the variety of functions which different myths may have enjoyed over a long period of time.... A text such as the Baal Cycle represents a literary agglomeration of traditional material which functioned in a number of ways...”

410 How far that is true in theological circles remains to be seen. See Wyatt 2001b.
This definition demonstrated Smith's belief that the Baal Cycle comprised a text or texts that had a long pre-scribal history and had been shaped by traditional motifs from the Mesopotamian area, in order to highlight the unique power and supremacy of Baal, for a variety of reasons.

Smith then reviewed at length three major schools of interpretation of the Baal Cycle, from the oldest to the most recent. His division of the interpretations into "Seasonal and Ritual", "Cosmogonic" and "Historical and Political" is very useful and largely accurate, although obviously some books could fall into at least two of the three categories.

Smith felt that those works that were most serious and useful integrated the themes of kingship, temple building and divine conflict, since most interpreters agreed that the Cycle involved a basic story of conflict and resolution as well as Baal's kingship and palace. He also took pains to highlight the royal nature of the story, both in the titles of the gods (none is described as 'shoemaker' or 'fisherman' but as 'lord' or 'prince'), as well as the temple of Baal, which Smith felt might be as politically significant as the Temple of Solomon.

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413 Smith argued that the verbal system of the poetic texts is archaic compared to prose texts and suggests the Baal Cycle is the oldest of the major Ugaritic literary texts. M.S. Smith 1994: 58.
415 M.S. Smith 1994: 60.

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His arguments against the Seasonal and Ritual interpretations of the texts were those already explained. These were in particular the assumption of elements unattested in the texts, speculation about other texts and the complete absence of any such ceremony in the ritual or temple administrative texts so far found. At the same time he offered a defence of those arguments in order to give an even-handed examination of the debate.

While discussing De Moor's "most comprehensive effort", Smith made a surprising yet easily understood claim, namely that it is impossible to accept a "general category of a 'dying and rising god' in the ancient Mediterranean and Levantine world". This was not a throwaway comment to startle the reader. Smith went on to suggest that Baal did not in fact die at all; the descent to the underworld was a reflection of his temporary 'eclipse'. Like Telepinu, he had an "absence" and "sleeps". Indeed, if Baal was such a puny god as to be truly killed by another (unlike the mighty invincible Yahweh), why did Elijah not taunt the priests of Baal with that, instead of "either he is meditating, or he has wandered away, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened!"? He suggested Baal was not a 'dying and rising' god at all, but a god who had a "limited exaltation".

416 See Chapter 1.
419 M.S. Smith 1994: 64.
422 1 Kings 18:27.

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Smith regarded more favourably those interpretations which could be regarded as “cosmogonic”, that is those which saw the defeat of Baal’s enemies as the ordering of cosmic chaos, and therefore a kind of creation. He understood and accepted the ideology of a divine orderer as being a major theme of the Baal Cycle and proposed that it might also point to the underlying unity which connected the cosmogonic and royal perspectives.424 The main problem with this interpretation was the definition of the term ‘cosmogony’ and its dependence or otherwise on some element of primordial creation. Despite this difficulty, Smith pointed out that this view accounted for the whole of the Cycle. The building of the temple could be regarded as a kind of creation, helping to explain how the themes of kingship, temple building and divine conflict were a ‘unity’. Perhaps most importantly, it demonstrated what was unique about this particular ‘cosmogonic’ text, rather than simply what it had in common with others. The fundamental meaning of the Cycle depended on how it combined those elements unique to itself, and the emphasis on each of those elements, rather than on what it shared with other more famous creation accounts.425

Finally, Smith examined those interpretations that he described as “Historical and Political”. Virolleaud, and then Oberman and others, had proposed a background within historical events for the Cycle. This was specifically that it had been written as an aetiology of the successful

424 M.S. Smith 1994: 76.
repulsion by the inhabitants of Ugarit of a people invading from the sea, represented as a battle between their respective gods. Smith pointed out that any historical evidence for this was at best minimal.426

Smith stated that Coogan still advanced these views in 1981. He argued that:

"The transfer of power from an older power to a younger storm god is attested in contemporary eastern Mediterranean cultures. Kronos was imprisoned and succeeded by his son Zeus, Yahweh succeeded El as the god of Israel, the Hittite god Tessub assumed kingship in heaven after defeating his father Kumarbi, and Baal replaced El as the effective head of the Ugaritic pantheon".427

Coogan dated these developments to the latter half of the second millennium BCE, which he described as a time of great political upheaval. He proposed that the societies affected by this turmoil would have become disillusioned with their gods, and perhaps even with their ruling dynasties. They could have replaced them with younger and more effective models, constructing new mythologies to support the incumbents claims.428 Smith thought it possible that a new dynasty in Ugarit (that of Niqmaddu II) could well have "sponsored the scribal production of the Baal Cycle". This meant that the inevitable rise to power of Baal would reflect the inalienable right of Niqmaddu I to rule; this was a predecessor whose name had been adopted

427 M.S. Smith 1994: 89. Coogan 1981 is not in his bibliography and has proved elusive so far.
428 M.S. Smith 1994: 89.

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by the new rulers. Stolz went even further and suggested that the distant El reflected the overlords of other countries who effectively ruled Ugarit from their strongholds in Egypt and Hatti, by economic means if nothing else. Smith questioned why Ugaritians would use an Ugaritian god to represent non-Ugaritian people, but accepted the important point raised.

Smith suggested that all of the above interpretations were relevant and, when combined with his view of the “limited exaltation of Baal”, made a sound and thorough comprehensive interpretation of the Cycle. This was robust enough to withstand the criticism levelled individually against the other interpretations.

The theme of Baal’s kingship, combined with the royal and political language of the Cycle, indicated the overall topic of the text. Baal was the monarch who mediated the blessings of the cosmos to human society and the pantheon. He did this through the medium of his rain, which overcame Death through fertility as well as by physical combat. This explained the use of seasonal imagery without the need for a reconstructed setting. As he defeated death, he (re)created order within the cosmos, using cosmogonic imagery while ruling his country with strength, fulfilling a role that the earthly king also did. All the aspects emphasised by other interpretations were held in balance rather than emphasised out of proportion and Smith

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630 Stolz 1982.

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said, “their importance is not to be underestimated only because they may be subsumed under the rubric of kingship”. Smith was convinced everything in the Cycle was designed to ensure that Baal was the only real candidate for the kingship instead of one among many. Older material was re-used and shaped to promote the rule of the storm god, perhaps the patron god of a new dynasty in Ugarit. Smith also suggested that the remarkably limited nature of Baal’s rule, indicated by his dependence on the help of Anat, Athirat and Kothar-wa-Hasis, was a reflection of the political situation of Ugarit. It lay between the great powers of the ancient Near East, while the victories of Baal were a cosmic recapitulation of the Ugaritic king’s power over his enemies. “In sum, it appears that the Baal Cycle expresses the political exaltation of the divine king, and by implication that of the human king, as well as the limits of their kingship”.

From this refreshing introduction to the texts, Smith proceeded to give a thorough and scholarly interpretation of the first two tablets, which will be discussed in later chapters where appropriate.
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Wyatt - Various articles from the 1980s and 1990s

Wyatt has written numerous articles on the Ugaritic texts since the 1970s and has written and co-edited several volumes in Ugaritic studies. The articles discussed below form a basic survey of his thought about Baal and the Baal Cycle of texts.

Wyatt’s definition of myth was not one of genre. He preferred to see myth as a mindset, finding the definition as “stories about gods” acceptable, if somewhat restricting.438 In addition, he carefully pointed out his opposition to the almost universal comparison between biblical religion and that of Ugarit.439 He again refuted the idea of Ugaritian religion as a ‘fertility cult’ a definition which was “at least on occasion unconsciously designed as a reductionist put-down for ideological purposes”440, while asserting that the strength of polytheism in dealing with the “anomalies of human experience” only became inconsistent when subjugated to the all-pervasive academic urge to systematise.441

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438 Wyatt 1999a: 854 n. 4.
439 Wyatt 1999b: 530.
440 Wyatt 1999b: 540.
441 Wyatt 1999b: 548 n. 62.
The main theme of the cycle was not simply a narrative tale. It was the "operation of cosmic power and inauguration and maintenance of divine rule in heaven and by extension . . . of human rule on earth", in which Baal represented cosmic order. At the same time we are presented with "a vigorous series of interlocking theologies . . . a powerful royal ideology", in which the traditional 'storm' role of Baal was associated implicitly with the "concerns of royal ideology". Wyatt even went so far as to suggest that one could see Baal as "a 'theological reflex' of various aspects of kingship". Firstly, it was possible to view the divine victory as a paradigm of royal success while the obvious parallel between Baal and Keret implied that Baal's resurrection would be mirrored by a similar fate for the dying king. Wyatt did not at that point indicate whether he meant 'resurrection' in the sense of a return to life, or in the sense of a return to an after-life.

Wyatt suggested that in some ways the texts offered a critique of Baal's kingship and therefore of traditional Ugaritic kingship, disguised by Ilimilku in "a traditional theological or narrative form".

One major piece of work dealt with the many titles of the storm god. Wyatt stated that the variety of titles generally ascribed to Baal indicated not only

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Wyatt 1989.
Wyatt 1999b: 540.
Wyatt 1999c: 135.
Wyatt 2002a: 848.
Wyatt 2002a: 849. See also 1999a.
Wyatt 1986: 139.
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his relative importance but also that he possessed an intricate and well-developed theology, showing his comprehensive nature. These titles tended to fall into two basic varieties – military or martial, and meteorological. Of the former, the most prominent were aliyn b'l, rkb crpt, and htk dgn. The meteorological titles included bn dgn, hd, and perhaps even htk dgn again.

Aliyn b'l, one of the commoner titles of Baal, indicated his hero or warrior status, and Wyatt suggested that his role in maintaining order (and perhaps creating) perhaps outweighed his function as a storm-god. Rkb crpt echoed the military peace-keeping connotation of aliyn b'l, if one acknowledged the army terminology of Ugarit, where charioteer teams were led by a spear-wielding warrior very similar to the depictions of Baal.

Htk dgn was something of a cross-over title. Wyatt proposed that dgn denoted ‘rain’ rather than being the proper name of the god Dagan. At the same time, the term htk, ‘ruler’, indicated the royal, and therefore military nature of Baal. At the same time, it could mean ‘scion’, ‘offshoot’ or ‘progeny’. Baal was therefore Lord of the Rains, granting and sometimes destroying the crops. Hd, according to Wyatt, was onomatopoeic for the sound of thunder (it is also sometimes written as hdd ). At the same time, it indicated the

450 See discussion in Wiggins 2000.
453 Wyatt 1992a: 415. These probably have different roots.

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widespread nature of the worship of Baal throughout the fertile crescent.\footnote{Wyatt 1992a: 412.} Further to the possible interpretation of \textit{htk dgn}, where \textit{dgn} can also be interpreted as ‘rain’, the term \textit{bn dgn} can be “the Rainy One”, a functional term rather than one of affiliation.\footnote{Wyatt 1992a: 408.} These titles, along with others, will be discussed in the translation and interpretation of the texts themselves in later chapters.\footnote{See particularly Chapter 9 “The Titles of Baal”.}

Despite the emphasis on the royal nature of Baal, Wyatt was an early supporter of the view that Baal’s kingship was delegated to him by El.\footnote{Wyatt 1989: 453 and 457.} Although one of “the strangest features of the cycle is when Baal was no sooner crowned than deposed and killed”\footnote{Wyatt 1986: 136.}, this indicated that Baal’s kingship was not absolute because, according to the structural model of Peterson and Woodward\footnote{Peterson & Woodward 1977.}, it was microcosmic while El was the macrocosmic ruler.\footnote{Wyatt 1986:136.}

Wyatt also disagreed with the Seasonal Pattern and proposed that the ambivalent ending did not indicate a reversion to the beginning of the story again – rather it suggested the impermanence of the truce between Baal and Mot.\footnote{Wyatt 1986: 140.}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1992a: 412.}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1992a: 408.}
\item \footnote{See particularly Chapter 9 “The Titles of Baal”.}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1989: 453 and 457.}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1986: 136.}
\item \footnote{Peterson & Woodward 1977.}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1986:136.}
\item \footnote{Wyatt 1986: 140.}
\end{itemize}
One may briefly summarise Wyatt’s main thoughts about Baal and the Baal Cycle as follows. A united group of texts, they were not to be regarded as a ‘cycle’ in a circular or repetitive sense. Although the ritual or cultic background of the tablets may be impenetrable, one could with some confidence discuss the important royal and political nature of both Baal and the tablets. Baal was in some ways the apotheosis of the Ugaritian king, both being victorious over chaos and death (perhaps in their resurrection to the world of the Rephaim). At the same time, there was little possibility that the priest Ilimilku was using a traditional narrative to question the royal practice of Ugarit –this could reflect the inauguration of a new dynasty or king whose claim was based on might rather than right. Baal’s control of the weather did not automatically confer upon him the title of ‘fertility god’. He was not a god of vegetation, being rather a sky god, an aerial deity, whose power in the upper realms had definite limits. These limits were those imposed by El who, if not his father, was most definitely head of the pantheon and to be obeyed even in the heat of the fight.

**Conclusion**

As can be seen, certain aspects of the Seasonal Pattern lingered despite the lack of supporting evidence. The idea of a yearly ritual proved tenacious, as did the view of Baal as a ‘dying and rising’ god. The objections to such views
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raised in the previous chapter bear repetition. Firstly, there was no mention of a yearly festival anywhere in the Baal Cycle and, secondly, the crucial pieces of text which would have given conclusive proof of Baal’s death and presumed resurrection are missing.

Baal’s storm function was rightly acknowledged but the view lingered on that he was a sexually active god – particularly in the earlier works. His temperament was also condemned as both adolescent and doltish.⁴⁶³ These claims could easily be made for most of the Ugaritic deities who appeared in the texts, and should not be regarded too seriously.

Some scholars tried to maintain the connection between Baal and the other ‘fertility’ gods of the ancient Near East: Dumuzi, Tammuz, Melqart. It is true that there are similarities between them but, as has been previously pointed out, they are considerably outweighed by the differences. Baal should be assessed on what makes him unique, as well as noting any features he shares with other gods. The contortions required to make him fit other patterns are simply unfeasible.⁴⁶⁴

Additionally, the view of Baal as an Amorite invader deity was finally refuted – thus making the so-called conflict between Baal and El’s familial

⁴⁶² Wyatt 2002a: 851.
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groups unnecessary. Other theories, such as Handy’s bureaucratic model, were suggested and on the whole these are constructive rather than negative. Handy himself was quick to point out the limited nature of his theory, given both the paucity and antiquity of the evidence.

Most significantly, the politico-royal aspect of Baal was explored, particularly by Wyatt and Smith. Baal was a king but one with only a limited and delegated sphere of power. He had to defend his throne and was helped by various allies. How far this could be compared to the situation in the royal courts of Ugarit can only be guessed at, and a firm identification of Baal with the king should (and will) be questioned. However, there is no doubt that the importance of Baal, his throne, his maintenance of power, his influence over the land (of Ugarit, although this was not stated in the texts) and his defeat of enemies, all point to a connection with the most important person of the kingdom; the king himself. This was a far cry from the early view of Baal as one who personified the rain or the vegetation!

The following chapters will set out the main spheres of Baal’s character, as well as the features of the texts which are important for understanding the perception of Baal held by his worshippers, for example his titles. The texts themselves will be of paramount importance and correspondences with other myths or texts, although noted, are not held be more significant than the Ugaritic texts. Through this thematic treatment it is hoped that a clearer

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2. The Non-Seasonal View of Baal
picture of Baal's theology will appear. This clarity does not necessarily imply that there are no contradictions, and these will be examined, rather than treating them as examples of a "crisis of polytheism".\footnote{De Moor 1997: 83-4.}
Chapter 3 - Baal as a Fertility God

The designation ‘fertility god’ has often been attached to Baal, and it could be argued that the interpretation of the Seasonal Pattern hinged entirely on the argument that Baal was a fertility god. As recently as 1985, it was stated:

"The religion of Ugarit was mainly a fertility cult with a direct link between the fertility of the gods and the fertility of the land. ... In the fertility cycle Baal played a prominent part in relation to human procreation, the fertility of flocks and the outpouring of rain."^467

Scholars of Ugarit have been fascinated with the idea of a fertility cult for seventy years and, despite the efforts of many, the fascination has shown little sign of abatement. The kind of fertility most have concentrated upon was sexual, and related to the act of human procreation. These have posited that Baal was in some way a god of human virility. Handy, despite his doubt of whether Baal could be described as the fertility god of Ugarit, went on to state that Baal, despite being made ruler of the earth by El, was presented as "a strong, virile dolt". The textual grounds for this are tenuous, as will be

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467 van Rooy 1985: 231.
469 Handy 1994: 126.
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demonstrated. Baal’s recorded sexual activity was limited – indeed it would be as accurate to describe El, or even Yahweh, as fertility gods.470

The question of what constitutes a fertility cult is a vital initial step, although much of the discussion has been covered in the review of the Seasonal Pattern in Chapter 1.

The word ‘cult’ implies a degree of worship, practice, and by implication ritual. When the terms ‘cult’ and ‘fertility’ are placed together, they form the idea of an act or ritual which would increase the fertility of land, animals or people. These are ‘universal’ human ambitions and therefore it is to be expected that they will be found in every religion, either ancient or modern. Most commonly, the academic mind infers from this the performance of some kind of imitative magic or performance through which fecundity might be improved. The common understanding of a fertility cult is one in which an imitative act of, for example, sexual intercourse or the pouring of water upon the earth as a formal ritual, is performed within a religious context to presage an increase or assurance of reproduction among humans, animals or crops.

Although this classification of religious phenomena has often been proposed, the actual evidence from both iconographic and literary sources is scant. This

470 See KTU 1.12 and 1.23, his often used title ‘Father (of the Gods)’ etc., KTU 1.4 iv 38.
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casts doubt on the validity of its liberal application to many religions, particularly that of Ugarit. The idea that one can demarcate or fully understand a religion as being solely focused on the idea of fruitfulness is an oversimplification, to say the least. Anati has pointed out that one cannot generalise about the religious supremacy of fertility, whether of humans or the land or the sea, since “it may be part of more complex conceptions regarding nature and the supernatural”. Indeed, fertility itself may symbolise other things – for example power, or acceptance.

Nevertheless, there are incidents within the Ugaritic texts which it could be argued are descriptions of acts directly related to a kind of fertility, particularly with reference to the gods or kings. The questions which must be answered here are, firstly, whether this therefore restricts the religion of Ugarit to that of a fertility cult centred on Baal. Secondly, could one then describe Baal as a fertility god? In other words, could it be argued that his primary function was that of a deity who bestowed the fertility of land or creatures upon his worshippers?

Agricultural fertility

According to the supporters of the Seasonal Pattern, the kind of agricultural or seasonal fertility to be found in the Baal Cycle is apparently demonstrated in one short tricolon in KTU 1.4 v 6-9:

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471 Grabbe 1976.
472 Anati 1985: 2.
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"And now,
the time of his rain let Baal appoint,
the time of his storm chariot
and the giving of his voice from the clouds
throwing to earth lightning (bolts)."

Caquot and Sznycer translated this passage in this way:

"Baal shall set the time of his rains,
the time of gushing floods (or streams),
to give forth his voice in the clouds,
to let slip to the ground lightning bolts."\(^{473}\)

They argued that the verb *Jkt* should rather be read as *Jrt*, from the Arabic *Jarra*, 'to make water spout'. The verb *Sr-h*, 'let slip' they suggested, was cognate with the Hebrew *šārāh*, 'to throw (light)' used as in Job 37:3 and corresponding with the Akkadian *šarāru* 'to shine'\(^{474}\) or the Š (hiphil) stem of Hebrew *yra*, 'to rain, to fire arrows, to teach'. Gibson differed, offering the following:

"a time for (his) barque (to appear) in the snow
and for the sounding of his voice in the clouds,
for him to release (his) lightnings on the earth."\(^{475}\)

He compared the barque of the Egyptian Sun-god Re to the storm-chariot or "dn *Jkt* bglt of Baal,"\(^{476}\) while noting the similarities to the sound of Yahweh's voice in, for example, II Samuel 22:14: "The Lord thundered from heaven; the Most High uttered his voice", or Psalms 18:13: "The Lord also thundered in

\(^{474}\) Caquot & Sznycer 1974: 208 n. v.
\(^{475}\) Gibson 1978: 60-61.
\(^{476}\) Gibson 1978: 60 n. 6.

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the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice” along with Jeremiah 10:13 and Joel 2:11.477 These are biblical examples of divine theophany, and are not commonly regarded as illustrating the seasonal nature of Yahweh.

Caquot, Sznycer and Gibson each noted the importance of El’s decision to grant Baal his palace in the operation and timing of his meteorological functions. There was no question that El could not control of Baal’s fulfilment of his duties, and no possibility that El might have been senile or without value.

De Moor agreed with Gibson’s ‘barque’ proposition, but recognised the importance of this episode in supporting the Seasonal Pattern:

“'The goddess is referring to the so-called ‘latter rains’ in early spring (first half of March). The timing of these rains is of crucial importance to the standing crops ... These rains arrive with thunderstorms and occasionally take the form of snow and hail... The holy voice of Ba’lu is the thunder.' 478

However, given the effect that snow and hail storms have on standing crops, one has to query the efficacy of Baal as a god of crop fertility and the ‘seasonal’ view of this tricolon must be regarded with some scepticism. M.S. Smith approached the issue from a different angle and suggested:

“So now may Baal enrich with his rain,

477 Gibson 1978: 60 n. 7.
478 De Moor 1987: 54 n. 240.
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May he enrich with rich water in a downpour.
And may he give his voice in the clouds,
May he flash to the earth lightning."\(^{479}\)

citing the same HB references as Gibson and de Moor. Wyatt preferred the more martial

"the season of his rains may Baal indeed appoint
the season of his storm chariot.
And the sound of his voice from the clouds,
his hurling to the earth of lightning-flashes."\(^{480}\)

He felt that glt should be translated as 'storm' rather than snow or wave. In this he followed Tuell\(^{481}\) and M.S. Smith, while his understanding of jkt as 'chariot' was based upon the Hurrian suhitu / sukitu, although he confirmed that it could indeed be 'ship', based on translations of Ugaritic economic texts e.g. KTU 4.81, 4.366.\(^{482}\) While Wyatt acknowledged that these lines provided evidence for a significant meteorological phenomenon, one can hardly accept that they form the level of support required for the Seasonal Pattern theories posited by Gaster et al. This outpouring of Baal's 'storm' should be understood rather as the theophanic expression of Baal's meteorological characteristics.\(^{483}\) Tuell also suggested that jkt was the noun 'ship', an "ancient word of indeterminate origin"\(^{484}\), and the simplest explanation of the phrase 'dn jkt bglt would therefore be “the season of the ship on the wave”. This was similar to the interpretation given by Dietrich

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\(^{479}\) M.S. Smith 1997b: 129.
\(^{484}\) Tuell 1993: 101.

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and Loretz, and corresponding to that of Lipiński, although in their discussion they emphasised the negative aspect of a tempestuous sea.\textsuperscript{485} This could be accepted, because it is likely there was a connection between Baal and sailors: the number of anchors found as votive offerings within his temple and the immediate environs is strong evidence for some kind of significant relationship between Baal and the sea.\textsuperscript{486} Wiggins followed Loretz\textsuperscript{487} in translation and accepted that these lines supported Baal’s association with weather although that was not explicitly positive.\textsuperscript{488}

Overall, this tricolon is clearly a reference to the ‘storm god’ aspect of Baal and, given the repeated reference to time or season, \textit{dn}, one can safely propose that this would have indicated the beginning of a rainy season, such as that suggested by de Moor \textit{et al.} However, this sole reference to a rainy episode was not repeated in any of the other surviving texts, despite its clear importance in the text we are discussing. A technique found very often in Ugaritic religious poetry is that significant events were repeated, perhaps to give them emphasis and enable memorisation.\textsuperscript{489} It seems highly unlikely that the coming of the rains, if that were indeed the main focus of the Baal Cycle, would be dealt with in such a casual manner. Indeed, the purpose of this tricolon was to confirm to Baal that El had consented to the building of his palace. This would enable him to appoint the times of the rains, since the rest of the passage went on to deal with the materials required for the

\textsuperscript{485} Tuell 1993: 102. Lipiński 1971.
\textsuperscript{486} Frost 1991: 357.
\textsuperscript{487} Loretz 1996.
\textsuperscript{489} The same occurs in poetry of the ANE, undoubtedly as a prosodic device as well as a pleasing form.
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construction of the palace. One must therefore conclude that the most significant point was El’s consent for Baal’s palace, with its tacit acceptance and formalisation of the latter’s kingship.

Another passage suggesting Baal’s importance in terms of agricultural fertility is KTU 1.6 iii 1-17. El described to Anat a vision which appeared to confirm that, despite being consumed by Mot, Baal was indeed alive. In the vision, “the heavens rained oil, the wadis flowed with honey”. This seems likely to contrast sharply with the example of a parched and barren land, and it is possible that this occurred in one of the lacunae, perhaps in KTU 1.6 ii, which is in a very poor state and virtually unreadable.

In their translation of El’s vision, Caquot and Sznycer suggested that “the skies shall rain with oil, the mountain streams shall run with honey”. They cited biblical comparisons, for example Ezekiel 32:14: “Then I will make their waters clear, and cause their streams to run like oil, says the Lord God”, although this was in the context of making Egypt desolate and destroying livestock beside the waters, rather than the bestowing of a fertile paradise. Caquot and Sznycer also quoted the well-known promise in Exodus 3:8 “to deliver them up out of that land [Egypt] to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country…”, in the context of a new homeland blessed by God with natural abundance.

3. Baal as a Fertility God
Gibson proposed that Anat invited ‘Latipan’ (El) to have a vision in which “the heavens rained oil/ the ravines ran with honey”\(^{491}\), as proof of Baal’s return to life. This invited comparison again with “similar images of fertility”:

- **Genesis 27:28**: “May God give you of the dew of heaven/ and of the fatness of the earth” a divine blessing;
- **Exodus 3:8** (quoted above);
- **Job 20:17**: “They will not look on the rivers/ the streams flowing with honey and curds”, referring to punishment of the wicked and godless;
- **Ezekiel 32:14** (quoted above); and
- **Joel 4:18**: “The mountains shall drip sweet wine/ the hills shall flow with milk”, a sign that the Lord dwelled in Zion, his holy mountain.

These frequently quoted metaphors have a variety of backgrounds and implications in the context of both blessing and curses, although it has been argued they are comparable with the positive vision by E, of a land blessed by Baal’s return.

Margalit\(^{492}\) and de Moor agreed with this consensus. De Moor quoted numerous biblical passages to support the inference that šmn ‘oil’ indicated well-watered soil, denoting a fertile land (Genesis 27:28; 49:25; Numbers 13:20, Isaiah 5:1, 28:1, 4; Ezekiel 34:14, Nehemiah 9-25; I Chronicles 4:40 and Psalms 65:11f).\(^{493}\) De Moor also argued that the Ugaritic phrase could be compared with Exodus 3:8, as “a metaphorical description of the fertile, well-

\(^{490}\) Caquot & Sznycer 1974: 261, see also n. 4.
\(^{491}\) Gibson 1978: 77.
\(^{492}\) Margalit 1980: 164.
\(^{493}\) De Moor 1987: 91 n. 440.
watered land of Israel", citing biblical texts mentioned already. Smith concurred with the general translation but made no special comment about it. Wyatt, although agreeing with the translation and even with the dream of a "paradisal restoration" as a portent of Baal's return, referred to Levine (discussing the often quoted HB phrase 'a land flowing with milk and honey') as a cautionary note.

As we can see from an actual examination of the context of the biblical quotation purported to support the 'fertile land equals Baal lives' theory, the reality was rather mixed and on occasion the implication was the opposite of fertility. One cannot therefore make an automatic connection between Baal and a 'fertile land' but, since Baal's life appeared to be the cause of this abundance in El's vision, one could quite reasonably argue that Baal was regarded as the provider or originator of these good things, in that his rain provided nourishment to both the olive trees and flowers which fed the honey bees. This cannot unfortunately be proved by the required contextual contrast (that is, a parched and barren land) which if it existed would have been described in the now damaged and unreadable part of the text. One can only therefore state that the abundance was present in El's vision and this

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494 De Moor 1987: 91 n. 441.
495 Smith 1997b: 158.
496 Wyatt 1998: 137 n. 87.
497 In private correspondence Wyatt has suggested that this is evidence of a primitive subsistence lifestyle rather than one in which agriculture played a part and indicated therefore a level of undesirable hardship. Also, could it be valid to compare 'oil ... honey' with 'milk ... honey'? A straight comparison with Ugaritic material is unwarranted but perhaps more importantly, unnecessary. See Isaiah 7.
498 Levine 1986.
cannot be taken as firm evidence of Baal’s role as the bestower of the fertility of the land.

While there is likely to be a link between Baal’s return from death and a vision of a land of plenty, could Baal have had a role in the fertility of the cattle and flocks of Ugarit? Cassuto certainly argued that Baal was directly concerned with the fertility of livestock by stating that “in the poem on the marriage of the goddess Nikkal⁴⁹⁹... there is a passage in which, despite the uncertain meaning of the details and their consequent untrustworthiness as evidence, one fact stands out clearly – that it contains a reference to the ‘young of the ewes’... in connection with Baal.”⁵⁰⁰ The phrase in question, which Cassuto read as aqrb abk b’l ṣḥpr ’ttrt rlk⁵⁰¹ has been translated in quite a different manner by Wyatt, who follows the now widely accepted reading aqrbk abh. b’l ṣḥtr ’tr. ṿ (rev) rl lk of KTU². He provisionally gave

> “O most gracious of the gods,  
> become son-in-law to Baal;  
> wed Pidray his daughter.  
> *I shall introduce you to her father Baal.  
> *Athtar will intercede.”⁵⁰²

and one cannot argue that within its context – that of the marriage of gods, sexual intercourse and childbirth – it is rather more appropriate than ‘young of the ewes’. It would be just possible to translate the phrase following

⁴⁹⁹ KTU 1.24  
⁵⁰⁰ Cassuto 1962: 84.  
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Cassuto. Athtar was proposed as intercessor, rather than Aštart, because of the (m.) person of ygpr. Baal was therefore presented in the text as the potential father-in-law rather than as a god having intercourse with young sheep.

The question of Baal’s physical relations with heifers has also caused great consternation. Was this really anthropomorphic sex (i.e., the heifer was in ‘fact’ an avatar of Anat), was it bestiality (simply common cows), or did it have an ideological connection to a wider kind of agricultural fertility? Was it an act performed to propitiate agricultural fertility – that is, evidence that Baal was connected to the fertility of the earth, the production of crops and well-being of animals (including heifers)? This is in essence a somewhat less meteorological ‘Seasonal Pattern’. As Baal died, so did the earth during the intense heat of summer, although his seed lived on inside the heifer with which he had mated. The return of Baal in KTU 1.6 signified the return of the autumn rains and, with them the rebirth of the crops and a new generation of cattle, Baal’s life and death being intimately connected to the turn of the seasons and the life of the country. The validity of this theory has now been doubted for several years and has been discounted in the discussion given in Chapter 1 and also in the assessment of Baal’s death.503,504

503 See Chapter 1 and Chapter 4.

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**Sexual Fertility**

Nevertheless, there must have been some significance to the mating of Baal with heifers and we will attempt here to determine what that may have been. One or two other texts have also been held as proof of his libidinous character.

The rather abrupt passage in KTU 1.4 iii 17-22 was rather contrary to what one would have expected, given the lascivious nature generally attributed to Baal. Why, if he had an appetite for the debauching of young women, would the text read:

"Two sacrifices Baal hates
three the Charioteer of the clouds
a sacrifice of shame
and a sacrifice of strife
and a sacrifice of the lewdness of handmaidens
for from it shame is apparent and in it handmaidens are debauched."\(^{505}\)

Unsurprisingly, this passage has alternative translations. For instance, Caquot and Sznycer translated it as follows:

"(But) Ba‘al hates two (kinds of) banquet,
three (he hates), the Rider on the Clouds:
a shameful banquet, a banquet of low quality
a banquet where the servants behave badly.

\(^{505}\) 'It' being the aforementioned sacrifices.

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Does no one see here the shame and misbehaviour of the servants? 506

The bad behaviour (tdmm) of the servants they derived from the Hebrew zimmāh, (evil deed, lewdness, incest, apostasy), 507 as opposed to the translation ‘murmur’ which Gordon, Cassuto, Aistleitner and Rin derived as dmm ‘murmur’ from the Hebrew demāmāh. 508 Caquot and Sznycer explained this outburst as a complaint in which Baal denounced the poverty of his cult on earth, since he did not even have a temple. 509 There is no evidence to support this rather elaborate supposition.

Gibson translated ‘banquet’ as ‘sacrifice’ and ‘servants’ as ‘handmaids’, although there was no explanation given for this in the text or footnotes. He noted that ‘handmaids debauch’ and in support cited the Mishnah Aboth ii:7 where “more maids (means) more lewdness”, 510 despite there being no substantive common ground between the Mishnah and Ugaritic texts. This suggested perhaps that the handmaids had something of a reputation and did not truly object to the debauchery, 511 while Margalit was altogether more confused and somewhat self-contradictory. ‘Sacrifice’ was once more translated as ‘feast’, but he continued:

"Yea, a feast (where) maidens are lewd/abused.

507 BDB: 273.
508 BDB: 199.
509 Caquot & Sznycer 1974: 200-201 n. i.
510 M. Maimonides 1968: 34 “the more women the more witchcraft; the more maidservants, the more lewdness”.
511 Gibson 1978:58 n. 6.
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For from him [Baal] no shame can issue forth,
Nor from him the lewdness/abuse of maidens".  

He suggested that this passage was a “flashback-via-reminiscence” to a banquet which threatened to degenerate into a Bacchanalian orgy. The abuse of maidens was taken from Gordon’s citation of *Odyssey* XX:318-9, in support of the meaning “to sexually abuse”. He explained this passage as proof of Baal and Athirat’s roles as “fertility gods”, based on evidence from the cults of Dionysus and the “Great Mother” goddess from Graeco-Roman religion, which he argued had Anatolian origins. Overall, the passage was a rejection of Athirat’s sexual advances by Baal, who made objections to the behaviour of Athirat’s maidens, the frenzied Korybantes. Quite how Baal’s rejection of a sexual advance would make him worthy of the title ‘fertility god’ is not explained and one must recall the rejection of ‘Classical’ source texts as the means of interpreting Ugaritic material.

De Moor reverted from ‘feast’ to ‘sacrifices’ and had Baal complain about the handmaid’s ‘lewdness’ although in the context of a complaint about being quartered with the lower ranks of El’s household. He argued that:

"Slave girls had a reputation of lewdness because their masters were entitled to disregard their matrimonial status."

513 Margalit 1980: 42.
514 Margalit 1980: 43.
516 Along with the implications commonly suggested by that title, discussed at the start of this chapter.
517 Chapter 1.
518 De Moor 1987: 50 n. 221.
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In this case, the ‘handmaids’ belonged to the family of Ilu meaning that their offensive behaviour was a form of incest, called ‘wickedness’. 519

This interpretation made serious unsupported assumptions which were out of context, not only about the treatment of servants within Ugaritian society, but also supposed that the handmaids at the feast belonged to El rather than Athirat, who it could be suggested was entertaining Baal at her own establishment. 521

Smith agreed that the lewdness belonged to ‘maidens’ and suggested that the “complaint here has the force of a saying”, also citing Pirqe Abot 2.8, following Gibson. Wyatt argued that the handmaids were the victims of debauchery, suggesting that a possible translation could be based upon the √dm II, bloodletting and therefore perhaps ‘deflowering’. 523 Since one cannot imagine that maidens would be eager for debauchery, the term ‘handmaid’ should more properly be translated as ‘servants’ in order to avoid such an interpretative misunderstanding. Whether they were the instigators or recipients of sexual advances it is at least clear that Baal wished to have nothing to do with such behaviour, and this would have rather dented his virile reputation among some academics.

519 De Moor 1987: 50 n.224.
520 There are several Ugaritic texts in which servants were given freedom and treated well. e.g. PRU 3:45, 54; 4:6:45, 6:28:45.
521 Baal’s complaint that all other gods had their own houses, Asherah’s journey to see El (and his delight at her visit) all point to her not cohabiting with El, although this is not explicitly stated.
522 Smith 1997b: 170 n. 111.
524 In the sense of that word denoting virgo intacta.

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We may disregard the outdated arguments for Baal and Asherah to be identified with and comprehended through the later Graeco-Roman ‘fertility’ gods. The passage KTU 1.4 iii 17-22 confirmed that the very last thing Baal wanted was that the sacrifices of shame, strife and lewdness, which led to – or were even led by – debauched handmaids, should take place in front of him.

**Baal and Anat: were they more than brother and sister?**

Did Anat’s title *ybmt limm*, which has been argued to mean ‘beloved of the powerful one’⁵²⁶, suggest something more than just than a fond relationship between brother and sister?⁵²⁷ Is there evidence for a relationship which embodied ‘fertility’ between Baal and Anat?

Anat is first addressed in KTU 1.1 i by the messengers of El as *ybmt limm* when they brought a formal greeting from her father. Both she and El have two titles, Anat’s being *btl tnt* and *ybmt limm* while El’s are *tr il ab* and *ltpn htk* – ‘Bull El, your father’ and ‘the Wise One, your sire’ in this context. These titles are important and denote qualities about the gods

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⁵²⁵ This old idea is a direct relation to the Seasonal Pattern and has been disproved in Chapter 1.
⁵²⁶ See discussion in Chapter 9 “Titles of Baal”.
⁵²⁷ KTU 1.3 iii.
which illustrate their theological character. Understandably, the interpretation of these has taken on great significance for the comprehension of their relationships and the manner in which the gods were perceived by the religious community of Ugarit.

De Moor chose to translate *ybtmt limm* as "... the Wanton Widow of the Nations". He described her as Baal's wife, but admitted that she did not live with him in the way that, for example, the queens of Ugarit usually lived with their husbands. The reason why the gods might behave differently from the royal family of Ugarit was not explained by de Moor. It could be argued that since Athirat did not always share a palace with El, one could accept a similar situation between Baal and Anat, although Anat is less obviously 'married' than Athirat. The term "Wanton Widow of the Nations" he used as a "technical term, describing the goddess of love as the harlot of the world like her Babylonian counterpart, Ishtar."

This description was given to her by de Moor because her 'husband' had died and she had to go far (become internationally available) to seduce the brother of Baal whose duty it was to marry her, which de Moor compared with the Biblical Levirate marriage texts. While one cannot doubt the

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528 See discussion of Baal's title in Chapter 9 "Titles of Baal".
529 De Moor 1987: 13.
530 De Moor 1987: 5 n.22. He also claimed that the battle of Anat was a cultic episode of the New Year festival, like the mock battle from the autumnal Hittite festival. (Deut 32:42, Ps. 68:22 and Ps. 110:6 as well as Gurney, 1967: 27, 31, 40).
531 De Moor 1987:7 n.34.
532 Gen 38:14ff; Ezek. 23:8, Isa 60:16, Rev. 17:2, 15; 18:3,7.
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understanding of Hebrew ybm, denoting either a 'brother-in-law' or 'sister-in-law', its applicability here is questionable. There are no texts describing such a seduction, although there are many fragmentary texts describing Anat in other guises, but not one which explicitly described Anat as Baal's widow, even after his death. Without the required textual proof, which may indeed have been present in one of the lacunae around Baal's death, such a tenuous theory cannot be supported.

Pardee kept "sister-in-law" but argued that limm was in fact Li'mu – "an old divinity of the Amorite world, poorly attested at Ugarit except in this title", 533 indicated by the enclitic m present also in Mot's title bn 'ilm 'Son of El'. However, one questions whether, even if btlt was to be translated as the less ideologically loaded term 'girl' rather than 'virgin' or 'maiden', 534 it would be possible to translate ybmt as 'sister-in-law'. There is no mention of Anat having a husband, only a father. It seems that applying a translation because of an existing cognate Hebrew root in this instance does not make the term any more intelligible.

Wyatt, on the other hand, translated this as "Beloved of the Powerful One" 535 ybmt limm based upon his understanding of lim as an epithet of Baal meaning the 'Potent' or 'Powerful'. 536 He agreed with Pardee and rejected the common

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534 Pardee 1997: 243 n. 11.
536 Wyatt 1992a: 417-419 § 17
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understanding of *lim* as the Ugaritic form of Hebrew יָבִּית 'om 'people' instead regarding it as an alternative title for Baal supported by Marian evidence.\(^{537}\) Taking *ybmt* and *ynmnt* as different versions of the same title\(^{538}\) one could also follow an avian route, which was that *ynmnt* was the primary term and corresponded to the Arabic *yamamat* 'pigeon, dove' and this was given added support by Anat's winged appearance described in KTU 1.10 ii 10, KTU 1.18 iv 21f and perhaps illustrated in an ivory panel from the Ugaritic palace.\(^{539}\) Wyatt understood *Limm* as another variant of √ *l*y', which forms the basis of *aliyn*, the 'Valiant' or 'Powerful'.\(^{540}\) Kapelrud, after examining various suggestions by Albright, Gordon, Driver and Ginsberg, all drawing upon Hebrew and Arabic, suggesting 'progenitress' or 'sister-in-law' of the nations, decided that "in no case can the interpretation of *ybmt limm* be used as a help to understand the character and task of Anat."\(^{541}\)

Walls, on the other hand, after an extremely comprehensive review of previous translations, concluded that

"I can offer no definite translation or interpretation of Anat's epithet *ybmt limm* within the Ugaritic mythological context. ... At present the kinship connotation of this appellative appears to be the most correct since *ybmt* is most easily associated with the BH cognate *ybmh*. This makes little

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537 Dossin Studia Mariana 49f. 'Lim' is a title of Dagan, variously held to be an alternative title for West Semitic Baal or Baal's father. The Ugaritic evidence is not conclusive either way but it supports a connection of some kind between them. See also Pardee 1997: 245.
539 See Yon 1991: 291-3, 329 (fig. 9c).
540 Wyatt 1992a: 404, 419.
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The closest Walls came to making a constructive contribution was to suggest that the title indicated a special relationship between Anat and the people of Ugarit, through her connection to Baal, the patron god of Ugarit.\(^{543}\)

The use of BH, while useful in illustrating possible translations of difficult Ugaritic phrases, should not be regarded as the only route for scholars to take. The Arabic understanding, given the bird-like qualities ascribed to Anat, is just as likely as 'sister-in-law', and perhaps more suitable than an unsupported idea of her as either the widow or sister-in-law of the 'peoples' or the tribe known as the Limites. The translation 'beloved' gives a sense of the relationship between Anat and Baal, and within the context of the surviving texts requires no leap of supposition about the nature of the pantheon and its relationship with the human population.

The physical relationship between Baal and Anat, however, has caused most of the debate. Two viewpoints are most frequently argued, firstly that they simply did not have a sexual relationship, or alternatively, that they very plainly did. The latter view may be slightly modified by adding that Anat may have taken the form of (or been represented by) a heifer during intercourse. The vivid imagery can be found in the following texts:


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KTU 1.10 iii

1[ the cow(s)\textsuperscript{544} bore
an ox\textsuperscript{545} for Virgin Anat
and a heifer\textsuperscript{546} for the Beloved of the Powerful One\textsuperscript{547}
and Valiant Baal said

5"Indeed? like our creator mo\textsuperscript{[unt}
As the generation which he created?"
Baal strode forward [hand ] full
Divine Hadd his fin\textsuperscript{ners } filled.

Virgin\textsuperscript{549} was the mouth of Maiden Anat
and a lovely mouth (had) the Sister of Ba[al]

15to the ox\textsuperscript{550} (his) voice [ ]
to the o[x] (his) voice (he) cried out [ ]
(He) went? and turning [ ]
to the loveliness in the bea[ut]
[ ]
a cow, a cow [ ]

20A bull has been born to [ ]
and a wild ox to [ ]
the c[ow]\textsuperscript{552} embraced [ ]

\textsuperscript{543} Walls 1992: 107.
\textsuperscript{544} \textit{arh} - \sqrt{\textit{arh}} : cow, ox.
\textsuperscript{545} \textit{alp} : ox.
\textsuperscript{546} \textit{ypt } \textit{ypmt} Arab. \textit{yafanatu} 'pregnant cow', hence 'heifer' (a young cow, especially one which has not
had more than one calf. OED).
\textsuperscript{547} \textit{ybut timm} – see discussion previously.
\textsuperscript{548} stylised bicolon. Possible reference to El as creator of \textit{all} gods.
\textsuperscript{549} \textit{b(t)lt} – either virgin or maiden (traditionally held to be synonymous in the ancient world although this
assumes a pattern of society similar to that of the Hebrew Bible.)
\textsuperscript{550} \textit{alp}.
\textsuperscript{551} Possible dittography.
\textsuperscript{552} \textit{arh}.
\textsuperscript{553} or 'she embraced the cow'.

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the cow embraced [ ]

and covered him with (tdh – her teat?)

25 he sucked [ šrh ?? ] his first milk

[ ] the first milk of infancy

the flank she ascended into the mountain
(by the ) stair to the Mount of Victory
and she ascended then to Arur
(and) from Arur to Saphon
in Paradise, in the Mount of Victory

Her voice to Baal she (addressed)
"Good news, O Divine,
Good news, O Baal
and good news to the 'scion' of Dagan 554
For a bull 555 is born to Baal
and a wild ox to the Rider of the Clouds
(Rejoice o Valiant Baal)

Valiant Baal rejoiced.

KTU 1.11

1 [Baal]? stripped556 and grabbed [ ] around the middle
| she? ] stripped and grabbed his testicle(s)?557
[ Ba]al ............... to the bull
[ Mai]den Anat
5[ ] conceive and bore
[ .... the band of the Kotharat
[ Maid]en Anat

554 Wyatt 1998b: 160 n.34
555 ibr.
556 or 'was aroused'.
557 u$kt rather than u$tr following KTU2. Watson 1977: 277 states that it reads u$tr (penis) following Caquot & Sznycer 1974: 289 n. 1. Either translation is possible given the friable edge of the tablet and the possible confusion of 'k' and 'r' since the signs are quite similar.

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[ Valiant Baal
[ ................ lines 10-20 fragmentary and unintelligible

This last text, KTU 1.11, could have provided the decisive proof of the sexual relationship between Baal and Anat but, despite tantalising hints, the fragmentary tablet means that the final interpretation tends to be influenced strongly by one's own view of the deities.

As examples of the divergent views, those of Walls and Lloyd will be briefly examined. Neal Walls' thesis on the goddess Anat necessarily dealt extensively with Anat and in due course the question of her relationship with Baal. He correctly noted that there was a consistency in the Ugaritic material which presented a striking initial difficulty to the theory that Baal and Anat had a sexual relationship. Not only was Baal consistently shown as having a preference for bovine sexual partners but the epithet of tr 'bull' was only ever given to El.\(^558\) The imagery of Baal mating with a heifer would appear to be an obvious indication that he was involved with the fertility of herds in Ugarit. Since there was no explicit identification of Anat with the arḫ 'cow', one could only regard his actions as bestiality, possibly as an expression of his liminal character.\(^559\) Walls concluded that it was very unlikely that the

\(^{558}\) Walls 1992: 122. Although Baal was described with bovine metaphors, they do not identify him as a type of cattle. See KTU 1. 12.51 'Thus fell Baal like a bull/ and Hadd was prostrate like a steer' and possibly also KTU 1.12 30 '[and El said] (Let them be cattle?)/ their horns like bulls and their humps like steers'/ And the face of Baal was on them'.

\(^{559}\) Walls 1992: 126.
heifer mentioned in KTU 1.5 was an avatar of Anat, since she aided Shapsh in searching for his Baal's corpse.\(^{560}\)

In KTU 1.10 Anat was believed to act as the 'procuress' for Baal, rather than as the actual recipient of Baal's lust.\(^{561}\) While acknowledging that it was possible that Baal and Anat had engaged in sex, Walls argued that this was not explicit in the text and that once again there was a clear distinction between Anat and the heifer who gave birth.\(^{562}\) KTU 1.11, which has been subjected to aggressive textual reconstruction in the past\(^{563}\) did not provide irrefutable corroboration for the sexual involvement of Baal and Anat.\(^{564}\) Walls argued that this interpretation was based upon "circular argument and assumption [rather] than proper philological analysis".\(^{565}\) One cannot, as he correctly points out, posit an entire pregnancy upon the mention of the word 'penis' in one line. Walls is therefore of the school of Peggy Day, neither being supporters of the argument that Baal and Anat were lovers as well as being brother and sister. He is supported in this view by his conservative approach to Ugaritic philology and a problem with theological supposition or suggestion. There can be no doubt however that Baal engaged in some kind of sexual activity, resulting in offspring of a non-human nature. There is no description of the appearance of his daughters, although their beauty is several times alluded to.\(^{566}\) Might it be assumed that they were human in

\[^{560}\text{Walls 1992: 130.}\]

\[^{561}\text{Gordon 1977: 120.}\]

\[^{562}\text{Walls 1992: 134.}\]

\[^{563}\text{Pope 1987: 460 described the contents as a text in which Baal and Anat engaged in "torrid lovemaking from which Anat becomes pregnant and gives birth". A rather ambitious translation.}\]

\[^{564}\text{Hvidberg-Hansen 1979 I: 97-8.}\]

\[^{565}\text{Walls 1992: 138.}\]

\[^{566}\text{KTU 1.3 i 20-25, 1.4 i 15, 101 v 20.}\]
form – or did the Ugaritians have an appreciation for the bovine shape that is not recorded elsewhere?

Lloyd on the other hand was convinced that the relationship had a sexual aspect and used the very same texts to support his arguments. Despite his refutation of Anat taking theriomorphic form in KTU 1.5 in order to have intercourse with Baal,\textsuperscript{567} there was the possibility that Anat was known to take a bovine form at times, since Baal anointed her horns ‘against weariness’ in KTU 1.10.\textsuperscript{568} Although there was no explicit identification of Anat and the cow with which Baal mated, there is no obvious change in the poetic subject, since the verbs remain 3 f.s. imperfect. Moreover, Lloyd argued that, were such a change in subject to take place, the person of the verbal form might remain the same but the difference would have been indicated by the mention of Anat’s DN.\textsuperscript{569}

With reference to Walls’ objection that Anat would not have been able to rush and give Baal the good news of her own recent birth-giving,\textsuperscript{570} Lloyd stated that “such an observation completely misses the point that in this text we are dealing with myth and therefore the characters ... are not always constrained by the physical and temporal realities of life.”\textsuperscript{571} In the discussion of a text involving gods, goddesses and cows which bear divine offspring,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{567} Lloyd 1994: 253.
  \item \textsuperscript{568} Lloyd 1994: 261.
  \item \textsuperscript{569} Lloyd 1994: 266.
  \item \textsuperscript{570} Walls 1992: 134.
  \item \textsuperscript{571} Lloyd 1994: 268.
\end{itemize}
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one would hope a view limited by such realities would quickly be exposed as untenable. Lloyd also acknowledged that a straightforward interpretation of KTU 1.11 describing sex between Baal and Anat, such as that proposed by Van Selms,572 could not be supported by the actual text. Their names were present, but without a context clearly illustrating their engagement in sexual activity.573 Lloyd would not argue that KTU 1.11 “provided irrefutable evidence” for such acts, given the difficulties of interpretation, but based his overall thesis upon his translation of KTU 1.10, in which he identified Anat with the cow Baal had impregnated.

It can thus be seen how the same texts often produced arguments which agreed upon the difficulty of the fine points of interpretation but differed completely in their conclusion. While both Walls and Lloyd agreed that the texts discussed did not identify Anat explicitly with the animal with which Baal mated, Lloyd argued that there was no text which meant such an identification had not been implied.574 How then should one proceed to understand these texts when the focus is upon Baal rather than the goddess Anat, whose identification with a heifer is another unresolved Ugaritic riddle?

572 Van Selms 1954: 47.
573 Lloyd 1994: 270.
574 In KTU 1.13 v 21 Anat is addressed as “O Cow ... [Beloved of] the Powerful one”.

3. Baal as a Fertility God
**Baal, the cow and the afterlife**

The most notorious or infamous of the passages dealing with Baal's fertility can be found in KTU 1.5 v, in which Baal had sex with a heifer before (it has been suggested) he descended into Mot's realm and became one of the dead. The actual text illustrated several interesting poetic forms of Ugaritic literature:

> "He loved a heifer in the pasture (land),
> a young cow in the steppe at the shore of death.
> He lay with her seventy seven (times),
> she made him mount eighty eight (times),
> and she conceived and bore a young male."  

The repetition and parallelism is common and yet the pleasing effect remains undiminished – heifer/young cow, pasture land/shore of death. Similarly, the numerical formula $x / x + 1$, is found throughout Ugaritic poetry and was later used by Biblical authors. The question of the purpose of the mating is an altogether more contentious topic than the literary forms which support it.

Caquot and Sznycer proposed:

> "He loved a heifer in the pasturage

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575 KTU 1.5 v 18-22.
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a cow in the riverside field of lounge of the dead ... [She con]ceived and gave birth to a young male”\textsuperscript{577}

and suggested that Baal wanted to provide himself with an heir before he disappeared. The ‘lounge of the dead’, \textit{s}h\textit{l mmt} was derived from the Arabic \textit{s}ā\textit{ḥil} ‘coastal plain’, and is totally incompatible with Aistleitner’s translation ‘lion of Mamitu’.\textsuperscript{578} Gibson too upheld the coastal interpretation, giving “by the shore of the realm of death” and stating that the cow gave birth to a “boy”\textsuperscript{579}, while also suggesting that it could be related to the Akkadian \textit{māṣu} ‘twin-brother’. Such an interpretation, suggested by de Moor\textsuperscript{580}, could not be given when the term was also applied to Baal’s daughters Hurriy and Dantiy in KTU 1.14:43 and 1.17 v 16.\textsuperscript{581}

Margalit chose not to translate \textit{dbr} or \textit{ṣḥlmmt} but focused rather on the “general intent” of the passage.\textsuperscript{582} He rejected the emphasis on possible cultic interpretation and made no comment on the nature of the offspring of Baal, saying that the material should be capable of purely literary comprehension. He also asserted that Baal was already in the ‘Netherworld’, an area reserved for kings and military heroes.\textsuperscript{583} De Moor gave the site for Baal’s intercourse as “the steppe ... the field of the stream of the place of death”.\textsuperscript{584} The entrance

\textsuperscript{578} Caquot \& Sznycer 1974: 249, n. \textit{k}, l.
\textsuperscript{579} Gibson 1978: 72.
\textsuperscript{580} De Moor 1971.
\textsuperscript{581} Gibson 1978: 72 n. 9.
\textsuperscript{582} Margalit 1980: 123.
\textsuperscript{583} Margalit 1980: 123.
\textsuperscript{584} De Moor 1987: 78.
to the Netherworld was, he argued, traditionally depicted as a desolate place and the stream or river he compared to the rivers of death in Mesopotamia, Greece (the Styx) and Israel, for example, in Job 33:18: "To spare their souls from the Pit, their lives from traversing the River". The copulation was, he proposed, part of a plan to spare Baal from actual death at the hands of Mot. The offspring was "a twin-brother, an ox", which was a device to fool Mot. While Baal had been turned into a calf by Shapsh, Mot’s appetite would be sated before he discovered he had not eaten Baal after all. This was dependent upon de Moor’s translation of KTU 1.5 iii, which was in such a poor state of preservation that other scholars have not attempted a reconstruction at all. This tends to cast doubt on de Moor’s view of the heifer episode.

Smith gave a partial translation of KTU 1.5 iii, but he did not suppose the cow to be Anat. Although referring to KTU 1.10 and KTU 1.11, both of which involved Baal begetting bovine offspring, he made no further comment on the significance of the episode, nor on the setting of events. The translation of Wyatt was very similar to that of Caquot and Sznycer, although he cited Dussaud as the source of the translation “shore of death”.

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586 De Moor 1987: 78.
587 De Moor 1987: 74 n. 352.
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Alternatively, Akkadian šalhu or Hebrew šelah 'channel, stream'\(^{590}\) could offer an alternative translation, although it would not offer the same sense of liminality as 'shore'. The main point, he argued, was a cosmological reference point, the junction of the ocean around the world and the shore, or known world.\(^{591}\) However, the explanation from Akk. šalhu or Hebrew šlah requires metathesis. The offspring of Baal he translated as "a young male", disregarding the self-defeating proposition of Astour, "serpent"\(^{592}\) and following Caquot and Sznycer as the least contentious, avoiding the difficulty when the word was applied to Baal's daughters.\(^{593}\)

This passage seemed to focus equally on the cosmological setting suggested by Wyatt, namely a liminal area between the living and the dead, a 'seashore' which only the dead may cross.\(^{594}\) The mating of Baal with the heifer was rather more obscure in intent, as was the nature of the resulting 'child'. Along with KTU 1.10 and 1.11, Baal's proclivity for bovine mates is obvious and without more textual evidence one cannot conclusively affirm that it was an avatar of Anat. One should perhaps prefer to accept that boundaries of sexuality were less defined for Ugaritian gods, and perhaps future texts awaiting publication will shed more light on its purpose. In the meantime, these shorter fragmentary texts should not be allowed to weigh too heavily in the assessment of the material focusing on Baal's royalty and kingship.

\(^{590}\) Ginsberg 1936b: 53.


\(^{592}\) Astour 1967 suggested that it could be translated following the Sumerian mus 'serpent'.

\(^{593}\) Wyatt 1998: 124 n. 49.

\(^{594}\) Wyatt 2001: 143 § 4(21) 114 § 3(18).
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**Fertility as a theological by-product?**

It should be clear from this discussion that the religion of Ugarit cannot be regarded as merely a fertility cult centred upon Baal. The amount of material alone indicates that it was not held in such high esteem as has been suggested and that one cannot limit the religion of Ugarit to such a narrow focus.

Neither could one describe Baal as a ‘fertility’ god, whose primary function was that of a deity who bestowed the fertility of land or creature upon his worshippers. There is no doubt that Baal was, among other things, regarded as a meteorologically theophanic god, a storm god who controlled the rains which were by turns beneficent and dangerous. Similarly, one cannot doubt the importance of rain to the society of Ugarit. Syria has always had a varied climate, and agriculture would indeed be dependent upon Baal and his rains. However the Baal Cycle does not in itself provide sufficient evidence to support without argument the Seasonal Pattern and its view of Baal as the embodiment of that type of seasonal fertility.\(^{595}\)

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\(^{595}\) See concluding remarks in Chapter 1.
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Neither did Baal's intercourse with cows provide evidence of his propitiatory role in the reproductive efficiency of domestic cattle in Ugarit. Although there were undoubtedly offspring, it would require a major reconstructive leap to reach this conclusion, indeed greater than the present author is prepared to take. It seems more likely that the encouragement of Shapsh in at least one of these episodes was an indication of the importance attached to leaving offspring after one's death. It may in fact be simply the commonly held feeling that a form of immortality may be obtained through one's children and their memory of their parents' existence. Baal's daughters, although forming an intriguing trio, have no theogonic text to illumine their origins and so one cannot assume that they are bovine. Nor are their mothers ever mentioned, and so little can be gained from speculating on their birth or form.

In addition, Baal's sexual relations with Anat remain enigmatic and depend upon the view of the character of the deities held by those translating the texts. The philological evidence is scant, but while not explicitly supporting one view, it does not actually deny the other, and the doubt that such a relationship occurred remains.

It is the present author's contention that Baal was indeed a fertility god, but only in that 'fertility' was a by-product of his meteorological function. Most episodes of sexual activity have been exaggerated by scholars anxious to


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equate him with the Baal of the HB, an embodiment of all that was vile, reprehensible and debauched in ‘Canaan’ in the eyes of the land’s Israelite immigrants.
Chapter 4 - Baal and Death

The general perception of Baal’s death and return

The majority of scholars who have examined the Ugaritic texts have placed Baal in the putative category of ‘dying and rising’ gods.597 This genre of deities was popularised by Frazer598 who argued that many young male gods fell into this category. The views of scholars who support this theory shall be examined first, to establish the context within which other (far fewer) scholars have questioned this diagnosis of Baal’s mortality. After ascertaining the general consensus view of Baal’s life and death, we shall briefly discuss those texts which provide us with some concept of the Ugaritian idea of death and (if applicable) resurrection, before focusing specifically upon those which deal with Baal and his death. Finally, conclusions from these texts shall be drawn together to provide a coherent understanding of Baal’s life and death based upon textual evidence, rather than comparisons with other gods. There will unavoidably be some repetition of material from Chapter 1 and 2, since the material is directly relevant, but it is hoped to keep this to the necessary minimum.

597 Discussed in Chapters 1 and 2: Virolleaud 1937, Gaster 1950, Kapelrud 1952 to name a few already mentioned.
598 Frazer 1987 (reprint).
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What were ‘dying and rising’ gods?

Frazer studied the gods Osiris, Adonis and Attis and his interpretation was either that the god was represented by the king, who took the place of the young (now dying) god, to ensure life for his people in the next year or that the deities were personifications of the agricultural life cycle. This category, although later discredited in other fields, continued to be held in high esteem by scholars working in the study of ancient Near Eastern and Hebrew kingship as well as Hellenistic mystery cults. J. Z. Smith described this category as “a generic appellation for a group of male deities found in agrarian Mediterranean societies who serve as the focus of myths and rituals that allegedly narrate and annually represent their death and resurrection.”

He argued that many other scholars believed them to form a ‘pattern’ of young male fertility figures, that their lives and deaths were bound up with theories about the ‘great mother’ figure, the sacred nature of kingship and hence sacred marriages celebrated in ritual re-enactments which identified their rebirth with that of either their society or certain individuals.

J.Z. Smith thoroughly discredited this category, as well as the placing of Baal into it, since he posited that gods either “die” or “disappear” but did not “die

599 For the reasons that the simplistic equation of Baal with the rotation of the seasons must be rejected, see Chapter 1.
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and rise".\footnote{J.Z. Smith 1987: 522.} By examining modern translations of those texts taken by Frazer and his followers to indicate the ‘dying and rising’ of the gods, Smith clearly showed that this was in fact a misunderstanding and sometimes mistranslation on the part of earlier scholars. However, we must be careful when dealing with such a sweeping argument, since at one point he stated that “there is no unambiguous instance in the history of religions of a dying and rising deity”\footnote{J.Z. Smith 1987: 522.}, only to decide that “whether Aliyan Baal is a dying and rising deity must remain sub judice”.\footnote{J.Z. Smith 1987: 523.}

**Those who believed Baal was a ‘dying and rising’ god.**

This short summary shall represent those who supported the placement of Baal within the category of ‘dying and rising’ gods. It is not claimed to be exhaustive, but is rather a representative sample.

Very early in the history of Ugaritic scholarship Baal was regarded as belonging to the general group of ‘dying and rising gods’. Virolleaud in 1938 wrote “Baal ... represents not eternal life, but intermittent life, life which is born or reborn each spring, which blossoms during summer before withering and finally disappearing in autumn. Baal, in effect, is the life of plants”.\footnote{Virolleaud AEPHE 1937-38: 9. My own translation. Quoted in De Moor 1971: 10.} Dussaud likewise believed that the death of Aliyan (a hypostasis of Baal)
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caused drought after the rainy winter, but when Anat killed Mot, Aliyan (Baal) was revived and rain returned. Gaster also thought of Baal as a ‘dying and rising’ god, since according to his interpretation, the Baal Cycle combined motifs from both the Combat myth and Death-and-Resurrection myth.606

Kapelrud gave a detailed examination of Baal and his common characteristics which he argued were shared with Tammuz607, Marduk and Aššur,608 most importantly their being, in his view, dying and rising gods. However, he was keen to draw attention to the annual festival of Assyria609 in which Marduk and Aššur were central figures. He argued that Adad was like Tammuz, Marduk et al, regarded as a dying and rising fertility god610 whose cult involved an akitu or harvest festival, noted on a stela set up in Arrapha611 years before the Babylonian festival. Adad was also specifically identified with Baal,612 presumably as they were both fertility and storm gods. Unfortunately akitu did not mean ‘harvest’ and Kapelrud’s argument was fundamentally flawed.613 Kapelrud dismissed any opposition to his theory of the annual death and resurrection of Baal614 by saying that he was

606 Gaster 1951: 57-63.
607 Tammuz deity of Sumer, widely known throughout the ANE. Kapelrud 1952: 28.
609 Kapelrud 1952: 29.
610 Kapelrud 1952: 34. See also Zechariah 12:11.
611 Kapelrud 1952: 30.
612 Kapelrud 1952: 37.
613 See discussion in Chapter 1 and Frymer-Kensky 1987: 171.
614 “Baal is a fertility but not a seasonal god; on only one occasion (67:11) do we know he was killed, later to be revived (49:111); the recorded droughts and famines associated with Baal’s misfortune or hostility are calamities lasting seven years, plainly ruling out a yearly cycle of Baal’s death and revival.” See Gordon 1949: 4f and 1953: 79-81.

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“sure” the final battle between Baal and Mot took place yearly.615 This was completely dependent upon his view that there was a New Year festival, which mourned Baal’s death before it celebrated his triumphant return from death and re-enthronement, which cannot be established from the texts. According to Kapelrud, Baal defeated Athtar, regained his throne616 and finally deposed El as leader of the pantheon.617

Hvidberg was certain that the resurrection of Baal was as central to the cult of Ugarit as the resurrection of Christ to the New Testament.618 In his view, this resurrection had important implications for the cult of the northern Israelite tribes who moved into the country and became involved with the indigenous religion.619 He examined Baal’s essential character620 by noting the similarities between Egyptian Osiris, who also died and was ‘reborn’ and the Sumero-Akkadian Bel-Marduk.

Margalit identified Baal with Dionysus621 but the actual relevance to the Baal cult is not immediately obvious if one is not convinced by his identification of Baal with Dionysus.622 Margalit also compared the dying and rising god Tammuz, a vegetation deity, to Baal – a storm god who may or may not die

615 Kapelrud 1952: 129.
616 Kapelrud 1952: 131.
617 Kapelrud 1952: 133.
618 Hvidberg 1962: 12.
619 “it seems that an account of Israel’s religion must revolve around this main point: the Israelite tribes’ acquisition of and reaction against that cult and its spiritual content which is concerned with the death and resurrection of the Canaanite god.” Hvidberg 1962: 13.
620 Hvidberg 1962: 60.
621 See discussion of Margalit in Chapter 2 and Margalit 1980: 45.
622 See the previous criticism of Kapelrud et al in Chapter 1.

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and rise. Indeed, Margalit said “This is not to say ... that the text [the Baal Cycle] is itself the script for such rites; only that, since the story is concerned with the dying god of vegetation, the poet-author borrows from what may be assumed to have been a Tammuz-cult centering around Baal.”

Robertson in his examination of the ritual background for such ‘dying gods’ concluded that Baal’s death and resurrection were part of the larger pattern exemplified by Adonis, Tammuz et al although it must be said that he was working largely from a Classical perspective and, it could be argued, used the Baal myths to ‘fill out’ his own theory.

Taking a rather different approach, Wyatt suggested that one could see Baal as “a ‘theological reflex’ of various aspects of kingship”. Firstly, it was possible to view the divine victory as a paradigm of royal success while the obvious parallel between Baal and Keret implied Baal’s resurrection would be mirrored by a similar fate for the dying king. Wyatt did not at that point indicate whether he meant ‘resurrection’ in a return to life sense, or in a return to an after-life sense.

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623 Margalit 1980: 96
624 Robertson 1982: 357.
625 Wyatt 1997.
626 Wyatt 2002a: 849. See also Wyatt 1997.
Day wisely chose not to dwell too long on the actual process of Baal’s re-emergence, but explicitly stated that “the imagery of death and resurrection in Hosea ... is directly taken over by the prophet from the imagery of the dying and rising fertility god, Baal.”

Those who questioned the ‘dying and rising’ categorisation.

Gibson, in his earlier interpretation of KTU 1.5-6, stated that Anat mourned for Baal’s substitute (the offspring of his “connexion” with the heifer) upon the discovery of the body. Baal was later restored to full health after the lacunae but, since it was his offspring who was buried, he was not in fact a ‘dying and rising’ god. Gibson seemed to change his mind later and rejected utterly the view that Baal was a “fertility god”. Although responsible for wind and weather, which of course have an impact upon soil productivity, he could not be identified with other ‘young’ gods such as Tammuz or Adonis who were vegetation deities. The death of Baal was the absence of rain in summer, while the deaths of the other gods mentioned were the withering of crops and vines in autumn. Gibson astutely pointed out the “congenital confusion” of these two kinds of deity (vegetation and weather) in ancient Near Eastern scholarship, compounded by using the term “fertility” to refer to Baal.

628 Gibson 1978: 16.
629 Gibson 1984: 206.
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De Moor, as a major exponent of the Seasonal Pattern, of course believed that Baal’s ‘death and resurrection’ were intimately connected to the seasons of Ugarit. Baal descended to the nether world in the summer, when the sirocco scorched the earth.\(^{631}\) On his way to face Mot, Baal lay with a heifer to beget a “twin-brother” who would die in Baal’s place. The yearly New Year festival took place when the ‘real’ Baal returned “from the dead”\(^{632}\) and the cycle could then begin again. This ‘twin-brother’ theory neatly avoided accepting that gods could die.

As noted earlier, J.Z. Smith wrote an insightful article about the topic “Dying and Rising Gods” before individually examining each god usually attributed to this genre. It is useful to repeat here that he felt there were in fact only gods who died and those who disappeared, while it was common for gods to die, immortality being usual only in modern Western concepts of deities.

His first examination of Adonis concluded that although the 3\(^{rd}\) and 4\(^{th}\) century texts described Adonis’ resurrection “on the third day”, this was found nowhere in the native texts which we possess, although admittedly the early Semitic mythology of Adonis is not known. He stated that “an indigenous mythology and ritual focusing on the deity’s death and ritual of lamentation, followed by a later Christian report adding the element nowhere found in the earlier native sources, that the god was resurrected”

\(^{630}\) Gibson 1984: 207.
\(^{631}\) De Moor 1971: 187.
\(^{632}\) De Moor 1971: 200.
was a common feature for many so-called ‘dying and rising’ gods. In his examination of the Ugaritic ‘Aliyan Baal’, he began by questioning the certainty of the text order and then reminded the reader of the lacunae at the most crucial points of the tablets which dealt with Baal’s death and return. He gave a short précis of the text and then commented “the text appears to be one of a descent to the underworld and return – a pattern not necessarily equivalent to dying and rising”. However this did not take account of Anat’s burial of her brother’s body.

He likewise suggested that in KTU 1.12 Baal “hid” in a bog for seven years, an example of the disappearing-appearing, rather than dying-and-rising narrative. Smith concluded that “there is no evidence that any of the events narrated in these distressingly fragmentary texts were ritually re-enacted. Nor is there any suggestion of an annual cycle of death and rebirth. The question of whether Aliyan Baal is a dying and rising deity must remain sub judice”, although it is quite clear which way that particular juror would vote. His demolition of the view of Marduk as a ‘dying and rising’ god is extremely well done. First, the misunderstandings constructed around the Akītu festival are shown to be nothing more than tools of the Myth-and-Ritual school. Marduk’s so-called ‘death’, in fact his imprisonment, was described in an Assyrian dialect text, not originating from Babylon and not fitting at all with the OB understanding of their king-god: Smith proposed it was in fact a

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political parody of a lost Babylonian ritual, showing Marduk (Babylon) as a weak god (nation), justifying the Assyrian capture and rule.\textsuperscript{638} The Osirian death and resurrection was given relatively short shrift. While the only full surviving text is Plutarch’s (Greek) \textit{De Iside et Osiride} earlier PTs of the 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} Dynasties demonstrate knowledge of the myth. However, although Osiris dies, without any doubt, his return is to an afterlife to become “the powerful lord of the dead”, not a triumphant return to his previous kingship.\textsuperscript{639} Finally Tammuz or Dumuzi, frequently identified by Kapelrud \textit{et al} as of the same ‘type’ as Baal, was examined – as far as possible. The assessment of this deity has fluctuated enormously but the ritual evidence is “unambiguously negative”, the hymns which survive being part of a “relentlessly funereal cult”.\textsuperscript{640} Only in late Christian texts, where he was identified with Adonis, is there any hint of resurrection. Likewise, the text of the LBA \textit{Descent of Ishtar} did not provide any hint that Ishtar would return to the land of the living with her reluctant lover Tammuz, who was occasionally mentioned as being in the underworld.\textsuperscript{641} Rather, the treatment of Tammuz is funereal – even in the \textit{Epic of Gilgamesh} Ishtar was scorned since all her previous lovers had died!\textsuperscript{642} Surely if Tammuz rose from the dead, Gilgamesh would not have been so harsh.

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{638} J.Z. Smith 1987: 524. The ‘imprisonment’ of Marduk was the theft of his statue from Babylon by Sennacherib, although it was later returned. Frymer-Kensky 1987.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{639} J.Z. Smith 1987: 524.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{640} J.Z. Smith 1987: 525.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{641} Dalley 1989: 160. However, Dalley disagreed with Smith and stated that the Sumerian \textit{Descent of Isuanna} clearly showed that Dumuzi (sic) “periodically died and rose, causing seasonal fertility”. (1989: 154).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{642} Dalley 1989: 78-9.}
\end{footnotesize}
Mark S. Smith wrote an article eleven years later entitled “The Death of ‘Dying and Rising Gods’ in the Biblical World: an update, with special reference to Baal in the Baal Cycle”.\textsuperscript{643} This title neatly outlined the topic covered by J.Z. Smith but also highlighted the large extent to which Ugaritic study has been absorbed or subsumed by Biblical Studies, with scholars of the latter frequently passing comment upon the former from their own particular (and chronologically later) standpoint. M.S. Smith began by lamenting the continued use of ‘dying and rising’ as a category of deity among scholars of the Israelite and other ANE religions, although it had been abandoned by historians of religion.\textsuperscript{644}

On the general topic, he argued that Frazer’s classical background encouraged the systematization of the category while classical authors often ‘equated’ different deities, furthering the confusion for the modern scholar.\textsuperscript{645} Frazer was also influenced by Robertson Smith, who equated Baal, Adonis and Tammuz as incarnations of the “annual withering up of nature ... and the most solemn rites that ancient religions knew sank to the level of scenic representation of the yearly revolutions of the seasons.”\textsuperscript{646} However, Frazer extended the number of gods included and removed the more nuanced understanding exhibited by Robertson Smith.\textsuperscript{647}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{643} M.S. Smith 1998.
\textsuperscript{644} M.S. Smith 1998: 258.
\textsuperscript{645} M.S. Smith 1998: 259.
\textsuperscript{646} Robertson Smith 1889: 393; quoted in Beidelman 1974: 57.
\textsuperscript{647} M.S. Smith 1998: 263.
\end{footnotesize}
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M.S. Smith then undertook a more detailed examination of those gods which had first been discussed by J.Z. Smith in his survey, without Attis and Marduk.648 This survey pointed out most clearly the limited common ground among these gods which were supposedly of one ‘kind’649 However, M.S. Smith praised the attention drawn by Frazer to the importance of concern for the crops and the divinity of most of the figures concerned with the success of the crop, while he highlighted the royal nature of the characters involved.650

In his discussion of the Baal material, M.S. Smith was likewise cautious given the state of the original sources – “it is especially striking that the rich indigenous corpus of Ugaritic ritual texts does not contain a single indication of the death and rising of Baal” demonstrating that one cannot even argue from a (myth-and-) ritual standpoint!651 Smith went on to compare the myth of Telepinu with Baal, seeing seven helpful (for us) similarities as well as significant differences, for example, the Hittite material was less concerned with the god’s kingship and had not the essentially literary nature of the Ugaritic texts.652 He stated that the imagery of Baal’s death was based upon the royal funerary material (see KTU 1.161 discussed below).653

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In his summation of this text and in his opinion its connection to Baal, he suggested that Ugaritic kings underwent death and yet remained alive (within the afterlife). "Baal's death and return to life may represent a theological reflection on reality which incorporates the known conceptualization of Ugarit's monarchy."\(^{654}\)

While Baal's disappearance was involuntary, as far as we can tell, unlike that of the gods of Hatti, his actual death "coheres on the literary level with the weakness which the god manifests throughout the cycle ... likewise cohered on the natural and human levels with the weakness or failing of society as a whole and in particular by the maintainer of societal order, namely the monarch."\(^{655}\) This affirmed Smith's overall belief that the unifying theme of the whole cycle was Baal's kingship, affecting all levels of reality.\(^{656}\) He concluded that there was no evidence for a ritual background to Baal's death and revivification\(^{657}\), the presentation of which was greatly influenced by the royal funerary cult whose 'living dead kings' were embodied in the revitalised god Baal.\(^{658}\) While this depended heavily upon one's interpretation of KTU 1.161 and view of the importance of kingship in the Baal cycle, it cannot be doubted that this paper marked a major shift in the understanding of Baal's life and death.

\(^{655}\) M.S. Smith 1998: 308.
\(^{657}\) M.S. Smith 1998: 310.
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This is of course a necessarily succinct examination of the general consensus about Baal, his life and death. However, it should provide sufficient ground upon which our investigation can take place.

What was meant and implied in Ugarit by death?

Several major religious Ugaritic texts deal, or appear to deal, with death. These will be studied in brief here – because although there has been a great deal written about them, there are limitations of time and space inherent in this kind of work and it must be rather more narrowly focussed than could be desired. Instead, the texts dealing with Baal’s death shall be given more detailed examination. The texts below are mentioned to give a possible illustration of how death was viewed in the Ugaritic religious circles which have left us textual evidence.

KTU 1.161

Following the publication of a new edition of KTU 1.161 by Bordreuil and Pardee,659 “Dead Kings and Rephaim: The Patrons of the Ugaritic Dynasty”660 was published by Levine and de Tarragon and dealt in fair detail with issues


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of the Ugaritic background of the dead and cult of the Rephaim. KTU 1.161 was described as a ‘liturgy’, a funeral rite for the dead king (although exactly which king is still the subject of keen debate). Since it does not mention Baal, it will not be examined in depth here, but the main points are worth mentioning.

The Rephaim, the council of the Didanites and then the departed kings Niqmad and Ammithtamru were summoned, then lamented by the royal footstool and table before Shapsh was asked to ‘shine’ upon the underworld and (we presume) to help locate these two kings as she had Baal, on her journey with Anat. It is assumed by de Tarragon and Levine that a feast ensued with both the former kings, Rephaim and human hosts while the whole ceremony was concluded by a salutation and blessing upon the new king and queen.

The assumption that this took place within the royal palace (based upon the mention of the footstool and table) is not entirely certain – since it is possible to address the divine departed kings without their physical presence, why not a table? However, it is possible that since the royal tombs were located beneath the palace, it is a reasonable assumption. The actual translation of the text varies greatly although the names of the main ‘characters’ remain.

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Levine and de Tarragon 1984: 650.

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Whether “You are summoned, Assembly of Didan”663 is more correct than “You command the Council of the Didanites”664 lies outside the remit of this thesis. In general, Levine and de Tarragon take from this text the notion of the dead as ‘protectors’665 although ‘shade’, another proposition, at least within the ANE carried the connotation of royal or divine protection, from Mesopotamia to much later Israel.666

The vagaries of royal succession had a significant part to play in this text, although recent revision of the king lists may explain these difficulties. The most relevant interpretation here was that

“the cult of dead ancestors, wherever it is practised, inevitably expresses the belief that the dead have the power to affect the living ... it aims to afford the dead what they seek and by so doing ... the dead, in turn, would assure the continuity and security of the royal successors on the throne.”667

There is, however, a fundamental difference between Rephaim and kings which may never be fully explained. If dead kings became Rephaim, why are Niqmad and Ammittamru mentioned separately? De Tarragon and Levine proposed that the difference was temporal, and that kings and warriors did eventually become members of the Rephaim.668 With regard to the mourning

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663 Wyatt 1998b: 434.
664 Levine and de Tarragon 1984: 650
665 Levine and de Tarragon 1984: 651
668 Levine and de Tarragon 1984: 656.
of Shapsh, they had no doubt that it was a reflection of the appropriate human procedures, the common religious theory of 'as above, so below'. After the location of the deceased in the netherworld, they were brought back - in myth, to Mount Saphon and in ritual, through invocation of their names and sacrifice. The footstool in KTU 1.161 was comparable with the footstool of El, onto which he sank before finally weeping on the ground in KTU 1.6 – de Tarragon and Levine proposed that they weep because the human mourners likewise sit upon the ground and leave their foot-stools.669 However, the footstool may have been regarded as a symbol of the dead king or his temporal kingship.

The identification of the phrase “Hail, Ammurapi” with KTU 1.23 7 “Hail O King!” should not be based upon the argument of de Tarragon and Levine who supported the view that this was the greeting of the king and queen at their entrance to the temple for the annual festival.670 It is sufficient to acknowledge that royalty as well as divinity was greeted in this manner.671

Lewis' work Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit concentrated upon Israel but did briefly examine death in Ugarit.672 He set out carefully a distinction between 'popular religions' – referring to a part of society which maintained certain practices (e.g. the cult of the dead) that were ultimately rejected by the type of Yahwism which became normative, i.e. 'normative

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671 see KTU 1.123 as well as KTU 1.23.
672 Lewis 1989.
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Yahwism’, used instead of the more usual term ‘official Yahwism’. This careful handling of titles made a refreshing change to the usual confusion present in, for example, Spronk.

Lewis first examined KTU 1.161 and the translation is generally fair. He preferred ‘hero’ to ‘saviour’ for rapi‘u and followed the Akkadian Koinzidenzfall “in which the words recited represent the very action to which they refer”, understanding qra as “You are invoked...”. This is a common feature of cultic texts throughout the ancient Near East and perhaps finds its finest expression in Egyptian performative rituals. ‘Heroes’ was suggested to him by F.M. Cross who felt that rp’ may have had the same semantic range as Gk hērōs.

KTU 1.161 was a funeral liturgy performed, most likely, at the behest of Amurapi III, last known king of Ugarit, on behalf of his predecessor, Niqmaddu III who had recently died. Lewis proposed that this text dealt ritually with both the long dead (rpum) and recently dead (mlkm), to keep both happy and gain their blessing on the new king, enabling this to be both funeral and succession rite. The role of Shapsh was recognized as vitally important – although a solar goddess, she of necessity spent each night below the earth on her journey towards the next dawn. This was shown in

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673 Lewis 1989: 2
674 Spronk 1986.
KTU 1.6, while her association with death can be found in phrases such as “to reach the sunset” or “to the setting of the sun”\(^ {678}\) referring to the death of Keret and succession of Yasib.\(^ {679}\) Likewise, the similarity of Shapsh to certain aspects of Shamash, the Mesopotamian god of the sun and, to a large extent death, cannot be ignored.\(^ {680}\)

When Schmidt examined KTU 1.161 he argued that it recorded mourning rites for Niqmaddu III, the former king.

> "The rp’um are nowhere described as ‘healers’, ‘gathered ones’ or ‘fertilizers’ ... should not be identified with El or Baal ... nor as Mot, Molek or Resheph ... Our survey indicated that the rp’um were portrayed as a military contingent lacking any inherent royal associations. Royalty only became attached to the name and tradition secondarily. The non-royal nature of the rp’um stands in spite of the depiction of the ruler Danel as mt rp’i for he was renowned for his accomplishments as a warrior hero or gzr. Besides, his supposed royal status has been called into question." \(^ {681}\)

He argued against the interpretation of this as an Ugaritic kispum ritual or a ritual that was regularly performed – it was composed for a specific historical occasion, the coronation of King Amurapi. “At most, funerary or mourning rites are mentioned alongside various coronation rites”, the emphasis being firmly upon the latter.\(^ {682}\) The rp’i ’ars and qbs ddn were part of

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\(^{678}\) KTU 1.15 v 19-20.
\(^{679}\) Lewis 1989: 37. See also Husser 1997.
\(^{681}\) Schmidt 1994: 92.
\(^{682}\) Schmidt 1994: 103.
the assembly for the coronation. They were not, according to Schmidt, explicitly located in the netherworld.

His translation differed from the standard one significantly, opening with the questioning form "Have you called .. Have you summoned" instead of the imperative "you are summoned" (above). Neither did he attribute tears or mourning to Niqmad’s footstool or throne – rather the living king lamented his father before these his symbols of kingship.

Schmidt pointed out that the rp’um (singular or plural) did not occur in the god or sacrificial lists at Ugarit and so could not be regarded as gods. He was likewise unconvinced by the current view of them as the ‘shades’ of the dead, a view with difficulties since prior to the discovery of KTU 1.161, it was based upon Hebrew and Phoenician data which was much later. The connection with Shapsh as psychopompe was tenuous, since she did not ‘descend’ to collect Baal but carried him back with Anat from the ‘steppe’, requiring the burial of Baal who presumably would have already been buried had he been in the netherworld itself. He regarded her title “lamp of the gods” nrt ‘ilm as appropriate to the one who judged both gods and man,

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687 Schmidt 1994: 84.

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rather than being a literal example of her function in the underworld each night.\footnote{Schmidt 1994: 86.}

Schmidt instead proposed that the \textit{rp’um} were the warrior-like counterparts of the \textit{bn rip’iyn}, soldiers required by Ugarit after the loss of Hittite protection during Ammurapi’s reign (amidst the growing turmoil of the LBA ANE).\footnote{See Chapter 5 and Drews 1993.} While the \textit{bn rip’iyn} were living warriors who served the royal court, the \textit{rp’um} were the dead warriors, fallen in the defence of Ugarit and hence gave rise to the necessarily post-mortem view of these characters.\footnote{Schmidt 1994: 90-91.} “What was originally an historical reality and a mythical heroic concept, with a significant increase in war dead at a crucial moment in Ugarit’s history, became affiliated with the underworld.”\footnote{Schmidt 1994: 91.}

E. Bloch Smith and M.S. Smith wrote the piece “Death and Afterlife in Ugarit and Israel” as a review of Spronk’s \textit{Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and the ancient Near East} and provided several pertinent points about the Ugaritic texts which bear mention here. Although Spronk reconstructed an Ugaritic New Year festival (following de Moor \textit{et al}) he added the resurrection of the Rephaim along with Baal-Rapiu.\footnote{Spronk 1986: 196-196; 171, 181.} While Grabbe had already dealt with the case for the proposed festival,\footnote{Grabbe 1976: 57-63.} Smith and Bloch-Smith pointed out that this hypothesis connected features which never appeared together in the material.

\footnotetext[1]{Schmidt 1994: 86.}
\footnotetext[2]{See Chapter 5 and Drews 1993.}
\footnotetext[3]{Schmidt 1994: 90-91.}
\footnotetext[4]{Schmidt 1994: 91.}
\footnotetext[5]{Spronk 1986: 196-196; 171, 181.}
\footnotetext[6]{Grabbe 1976: 57-63.}
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts from Ugarit. Spronk’s “very detailed and somewhat speculative” analysis of the Ugaritic texts supported his supposed New Year thesis but this was not borne out by an independent examination of the evidence. Smith pointed out that Spronk’s second major point hinged upon joining Baal’s revivification and the ‘post-mortem’ activity of the Rephaim, likewise separate events. He also took literally Anat’s offer to Aqhat of a life “like Baal” – either immortal or (so Spronk) a rebirth after death. Likewise, the description of the Rephaim did not reflect his view of the after life as ‘beatific’ – unlike the explicit remark to dining with gods in the text of King Panammu (KAI 214) which mentioned the king’s hope to dine with the god Hadad after death.

The association of Baal with Rapiu is highly contentious and Spronk chose to translate rp’ as ‘to heal’. Whatever the correct translation, the evidence to connect Rapiu with Baal is unlikely but was used by Spronk to support his view that Baal revivified the Rephaim, a highly risky approach to exegesis! His other assumptions likewise undermined the seriousness of his hypothesis – the understanding of the Baal cycle as an annual event is simply untenable, as were his “problematic lexicographical analyses” used to identify verbs referring to the Rephaim with the bird-like sounds of the dead in both Isaiah and Psalms. Smith concluded by criticising Spronk for not addressing the issues of “cultural, temporal and geographical discontinuities

694 Smith & Bloch-Smith 1988: 278.
695 Smith & Bloch-Smith 1988: 278.
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between Ugarit and Israel” – a failing all too common in comparative literature. While it is, on occasion, fruitful to hold the two traditions side by side for means of illumination, the difficulties inherent in this action are too great to remain unacknowledged.700

Smith pointed out that none of the biblical texts mentioning the Rephaim demonstrated any obvious awareness of their ‘Canaanite’ background, or referred to Baal. This rather deflated Spronk’s argument on both counts.701 Smith did acknowledge that there may be some agreement with Spronk’s suggested Canaanite prototypes for HB language – “perhaps the ‘rising(?)' of the dead in KTU 1.22 i 5 formed the Northwest Semitic background to the biblical idea that the dead ‘rise’, expressed ... in Psalm 88:11 (cf. 2 Samuel 13:21, Job 14:12, Ruth 4:5, 10.”702 Smith concluded that the evidence was too sparse to support an idea of a ‘beatific’ (that is, with god) kind of afterlife.703

701 Smith & Bloch-Smith 1988: 280. Spronk’s argument that if a motif appeared in biblical and Ugaritic material it was necessarily a polemic against the Canaanite religion was simply not proven by any of the evidence given, nor was his assessment that folk religion in Israel was a) polytheistic and b) the inheritor of Ugaritic religion. Rather, one would agree with the Smiths that there were two streams of Yahwism – one polytheistic and tolerant of other gods, the other monotheistic and highly intolerant, which left its views within the Old Testament.

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Royal Immortality

Healey also examined the notion of royal death and immortality in a short article. He had discussed his views with Dahood, who had a great deal of influence upon Healey’s own views of the afterlife in the HB and Ugarit, and many of the conclusions in the short piece are as much Dahood’s as Healey’s. In discussion of Anat’s offer to Aqhat of immortality (blmt), eternal ‘life’, hym, the ability “to count with Baal the years”, he pointed out that it was the context which implied the eternal nature of the life on offer to Aqhat. The immortal nature of the life was described by Anat herself as a quality of the gods (Baal and El). While Aqhat scorned her offer, knowing too well that man’s fate was to die and be remembered in rituals and offspring, it is most important here that both El AND Baal had eternal – rather than intermittent – life. The mortality of men in Ugarit reflected the context of other literature from that broad area – Gilgamesh, Adapa and even down to Qohelet and Genesis (far later inheritors of this view). Likewise, in the story of Keret when his children asked “Yet father, how can you possibly die?... Or do gods die?” the words blmt and hym occur again, in the same kind of context, implying immortality and eternal life – but this time in application to king Keret.

[Notes]

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Healey resolved the possible contradiction between the views expressed in *Aqhat* and *Keret* by concluding that *Aqhat* dealt with the more philosophical understanding of human life, immortality in this context being a physical state. *Keret*, on the other hand, dealt with the unending nature of royal ideology, of the eternal kingship of the royal dynasty. This 'royal immortality' he held to be expressed in KTU 1.113 (a king list) and 1.161 (the liturgy discussed previously). Kings long departed maintained a cultic function in Ugarit and could be compared with the *kispum* rituals of Mesopotamia and Mari. Their divinity may be confirmed by the 'pantheon' list of KTU 1.47 as *mlkm* sneak in near the end of the list. Healey concluded that although it seemed unlikely many Ugaritians obtained immortality, the kings at least "could be regarded as immortal if not divinised" which may help our understanding of the life and supposed death of Baal even if Healey's aim was to provide support for the views of Dahood about the HB.

**KTU 1.113**

The king list of KTU 1.113 is discussed by Lewis, although the poor state of the tablet means that it must perforce be dealt with in less depth than

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709 Healey 1984: 249.
711 Healey 1984: 250.
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KTU 1.161 for example. The verso of the tablet gives the divine determinative ‘il before the names of deceased kings. Lewis did not attempt to suggest that Ugaritic kings were physically immortal (preferring the sacral kingship suggested by Miller). According to him dead kings did not become fully deified (i.e. part of the ruling ‘pantheon’ of Ugarit) but rather “became an ilu ...... became a rp’”, terms for the deceased rather than gods. However, although Lewis stated that

“upon death a ruler was grouped with his deceased ancestors and was referred to as an ilu... [they] were not worshipped in the same way that El or Baal were ... Yet, I do not mean to imply that ... was nothing more than an idiom for dying. Referring to the deceased as an ilu was an attempt to describe some type of transcendent character, perhaps what we would call ‘preternatural’. The deceased entered into the revered company of the rp’m and continued to exist in the underworld.”

While this conclusion is not at all surprising (and indeed seems more than logical following the evidence given), he went on to state further that anyone and not only royalty could become an ilu after death, since (in KTU 1.6 vi 45ff) the company of Shapsh did not explicitly include only royalty. This debate cannot be usefully continued here, and so one could only suggest that Lewis was right when he proposed that men (of some rank or other) joined the band of Shapsh in the underworld, along with the rp’um.

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713 Pardee 1996 and 2000b examines KTU 1.113 in great depth but the text is not dealt with here given the constraints of time and word limit.
714 Miller 1985: 219 “the continuing study of the Ugaritic texts confirms a sacral, not a divine, character to the kings of Ugarit.”
715 Lewis 1989: 49.
716 Lewis 1989: 50.
717 Lewis 1989: 51. “mtn are indeed ‘mortals’ or ‘humans’ without explicit royal qualities. It is rather hard to imagine goat-herders being counted along with the rp’m, iligm, and ilin however.
Schmidt's assessment of the king list (which placed il before the names of dead kings) pointed out that it lacked the usual metre of prayer exhibited by other texts, for example KTU 1.119, as well as any ritual 'terminology'. He pointed out that "In spite of the widely accepted position that KTU 1.113 records rites directed to the dead, deified kings of Ugarit, there is, in actuality, no textual basis for this view; that is apart from a predisposition to interpret 'il + RN as a reference to a deified king." He proposed rather that the king list could (and should) be compared to the Eblaite king list, comprising a list of former kings, each associated with a dynastic personal god which was inherited at coronation. "In the light of the text's obvious concern with dynastic continuity, this god in all likelihood was to receive cultic ritual for the purpose of political legitimation".

KTU 1.17 i – Duties of the Ideal Son

In his interpretation of KTU 1.17 i 25-35, the enumeration of the duties of an 'ideal' son sought by Danel, Lewis referred to the role of the pāqidu in the mortuary cult of Mesopotamia. This person would care for the ghost or etemmu of his ancestor by making the appropriate funerary offerings - kispa kasāpu, pouring water - mē naqû and "calling the name" to support their

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718 Schmidt 1994: 68.
720 Schmidt 1994: 70, 79. This may be iššu rather than il but this is rather out of the scope of this topic.
memory - șuma zakāru.721 It could certainly be argued that the son wished for by Danel would fulfil such duties after his death, as did Pope722 while Albright also regarded the sacrificial meal as comparable to the kispum rites.723 Lewis gave his own translation – the picaresque “One who squelches his detractors’ slander”724 although he offered “One who eats his grain offering in the temple of Baal” (l. 32), using one of two senses of ksmh, the other (preferable) understanding of which is ‘share, portion’725 which gives a better parallel to mnth ‘portion’ in the following line. In his commentary upon the text, Lewis pointed out most clearly that this passage in no way presented the Ugaritic version of the pāqidu duties – rather these were “simple admonitions of how a son should behave toward his father, especially while he is living.”726

Rather than a mortuary text, it was a type of Wisdom literature; neither was it explicitly a royal wisdom – this was the role of an archetypal ‘good son’ towards a normal father. Lewis’ textual analysis had, he said, “put a damper on reading too much funerary imagery in this passage” and he doubted the validity of Albright’s early assertions.727 However, the setting up of the skn ilib in the sanctuary is relevant and Lewis regarded the ilib divine

722 Pope 1981.
723 Albright 1944: 35 n.38.
725 See Wyatt 1998b: 259 n.38.
ancestor as extremely important in Ugarit, as evidenced by the presence of
the name at the head of pantheon lists.\textsuperscript{728}

Lewis concluded by stating that this text in no way represented an Ugaritic
\textit{pāqidu}, but that it could be shown Ugarit had norms for the proper care of the
dead while an heir was of the utmost importance in the cult of the dead. However, the son was perhaps most important in helping his father while
still alive.\textsuperscript{729}

Schmidt also discussed the duties of a son listed in KTU 1.17. He was
unconvinced by the overt references some see to a funerary rite in
KTU 1.17 i 27 and concluded that “mortuary connections are simply lacking
in KTU 1.17 i. ... The rites ... refer to those expected of the ideal son. Like
those expected of the ideal king, they were intended for the family gods
rather than for the dead.”\textsuperscript{730} It is however impossible to say whether these
rites may have been carried out by the general populace of Ugarit: they may
or may not have been reserved for the royal family or nobility and so would
have in that case illustrated a restricted kind of worship and ‘afterlife’ open
only to a few.\textsuperscript{731}

\begin{footnotes}
\item 728 Lewis 1989: 70.
\item 729 Lewis 1989: 70-71.
\item 730 Schmidt 1994: 62.
\item 731 One thinks for example of the rites open only to Brahmin families in India and the difference this can
make to their daily lives.
\end{footnotes}

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His view of the "deity 'il'ib" was that there were likely two forms of ilib – a major deity in the pantheon and offering lists but a divinized ancestor in the mythological texts.\textsuperscript{732} However, he acknowledged that interpreters "part company" over the identity of ilib. Healey, as we have seen, concluded that the ancestral ghost of the mythic texts also fits the offering lists, while Lambert proposed a deity Ilaba as a private family god as the subject of the pantheons etc.\textsuperscript{733} Schmidt made an alternative suggestion – that ilib had a 'summarizing' function (such as il spn in KTU 1.47, 1.116) both in the lists and in the Aqhat texts, meaning "fathers collectively", hence 'the gods of the (or 'his' or 'my') fathers'.\textsuperscript{734} Indeed, ilib is treated similarly to other known headings for god lists and cultic lists, but differently from the known individual gods in those lists, supporting Schmidt's argument for the ilib to be a group of gods, 'the gods of the fathers', "the gods worshipped throughout several generations of the royal dynastic line".\textsuperscript{735}

Schmidt concluded his summary of this evidence with the bald statement that "The belief in the supernatural beneficent power of the dead as expressed in ancestor worship or veneration and necromancy is not documented in the texts from Ugarit".\textsuperscript{736} KTU 1.113 had nothing to do with dead deified kings, while 'il'ilb was a collective term, rather than a deified ancestor. The question asked of Keret "do gods die?" "is not reflective of Ugaritic royal ideology. Rather is it the query of a naïve and confused, but

\textsuperscript{732} Schmidt 1994: 55.  
\textsuperscript{733} Healey 1978, Lambert 1981: 299-301.  
\textsuperscript{734} Schmidt 1994: 57.  
\textsuperscript{735} Schmidt 1994: 58.  
\textsuperscript{736} Schmidt 1994: 121.
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desperate, child whose father lies stricken on his death bed.”737 Keret did not “appeal to an afterlife like the gods ... because no such ideological element was readily accessible. Ugaritic kings were not deified after death. Deification was therefore mere Hofstil at Ugarit, for death emptied it of its power.”738 As demonstrated by the tale of Keret and in KTU 1.161, Schmidt argued, what kings hoped for was the recitation of their name, exalted by a living warrior elite, “and the temporary offer of sustenance (tears?) to the recently deceased king while on his netherly journey.”739 Schmidt’s arguments were at least original. They did not, however, answer completely the doubts which he raised nor are they currently supported by other scholars. His assertion about the nature of the rpm was based upon the examination of economic texts from Ugarit740 and one cannot be certain about the relationship between them and the rpm mentioned in religious materials.

Conclusion of Textual Evidence (not dealing with Baal)

KTU 1.161 is clearly a cultic text, that is, one which is neither mythological nor legal. It is also clear that, whether the origins of the Rephaim are a warrior class or not, they are in this case dead beings. Their presence or summoning, during either a funeral or coronation liturgy, indicates to us that the idea of an existence after death was known to the inhabitants of Ugarit.

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737 Schmidt 1994: 121.
739 Schmidt 1994: 122.
740 KTU 4.69 i 1, ii.9; also KTU 4.232 8 and 33.
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The list on the verso of the KTU 1.113 tablet, usually taken to be a 'litany' of deified kings symbolised by their title 'īl , provokes debate even today. It seems more than likely that it does indicate some kind of divinity, although whether that is the membership of a dead king club or the pantheon is unclear. While Schmidt and Liverani's proposal that il was not an indication of the king's divinity, but rather some symbol of a dynastic god, is a possibility, when given in context with the recto text, it seems more likely that the dead king himself is the one who 'has died and is to play his tambourine'. This then is a tentative example of royal 'life after death' – once more in a ritual context, despite Schmidt's objections. To extend it to other humans, following Lewis, is without support though. It is best to be cautious and propose that while it is likely this text indicates some kind of royal activity after death, we cannot be definite.

While it is likely that there is some mortuary aspect to some of the duties of the ideal son listed in KTU 1.17, it is not evidence of a mortuary cult per se. The setting up of a cippus would indicate some kind of memorial and it is also possible that the grain offering in the temple of Baal and El is another act of remembrance.\textsuperscript{741} Beyond that, it is simply hypothetical and should not be pursued. This may suggest to us a funerary cult, but one cannot say if the concept of 'life after death' lay behind this.\textsuperscript{742} It could, on one hand, reflect a

\textsuperscript{741} This is only one translation. Compare Wyatt 1998b: 256 n. 30 and Husser 1995.

\textsuperscript{742} Pardee has distinguished between 'funerary cult', that is the procedures undertaken for a funeral, and 'mortuary cult' that is the 'cult or worship of the dead'. 1996: 273-4.
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need to appease those dead to maintain equilibrium for the living. It might, on the other hand, simply express the need to remember a loved one lost.

The offer to Aqhat by Anat of a longer life, of ‘numbering his years with Baal’, indicates to us that deities were not regarded as having a human life span, the end result of which was a physical death. Aqhat did not mention any afterlife to which normal men were privy and, therefore, this passage can do no more than confirm to us that the fates of gods and men were ever separate.

Texts which mention Baal and ‘death’.

KTU 1.1 - 1.6

There are several places throughout the Baal Cycle where the death of Baal is discussed. The first is in KTU 1.2 iv, where Baal described his impending destruction by Yam. Gibson gave

“and in Yam is the sieve of destruction, in Yam are the lungs of [death]; [(in) judge] Nahar ‘gnawers’ ”.745

745 Gibson 1978: 43 n. 2. Gibson said that worms or maggots did not suit the context, but maggots gnaw dead flesh very nicely.
basing ‘sieve’ on the Arab. munhulu, while de Moor gave the altogether more prosaic (and equally difficult to justify)

“[I am sure I suffered] the state of death, I was unable to extricate the life of (my) s[oul]. When [I] saw the nose, [[I was afraid], and my repose perished in the sea. There are m[aggots] crawling in Yammu, there are worms [in] Naharu!”

Arguing that “… Yammu is depicted as a god who is suffering from the vermin living in his own body, the sea …” while Baal described his situation to ‘Kotharu’ – but at the same time he had taken someone else with him “into the sea”. De Moor tied himself into knots trying to support his translation, while that given by Gibson was, although no more obvious, far simpler and fitted the context much better. Smith agreed with Gibson’s “sieve of destruction” after which Baal described his death, followed by a threat against Yam and his ‘houses’. Wyatt followed Gibson, comparing it also to KTU 1.6 ii <34>, (1.6 v 16) where Anat ‘sieved’ Mot.

Smith agreed with Gibson but also said “in Yamm will be the breast of de[ath?]” following Eth. if ‘breast, chest’ although the broken line prevents

744 De Moor 1987: 38.
745 De Moor 1987: 38 n. 171.
746 De Moor 1987: 39 n.173.
748 Wyatt 1998b: 63.
749 N.B. Wyatt 1998b: 64 “my strength … my power…” makes more sense than Gibson’s 1978: 43 “the strength of us two”.
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understanding more about the word. He pointed out that either Yam or Baal could be speakers, threatening the other's destruction, but that if lines 1-5 “involve single speech, Baal is the speaker, perhaps denouncing Yamm and threatening his destruction.”

The translation has been widely debated with some most intriguing suggestions. I support the translation of Wyatt:

“and with Yam is the sieve? of destruction/
by Yam I shall be worm-eaten/
[thanks] to Nahar (eaten by) maggots”

\textit{mnh l abd} here given as ‘sieve of destruction’ follows Gibson, the Arabic root of ‘sieve’ and the Hebrew of \textit{"am} ‘destruction’, ‘annihilation’ and is fairly straightforward. The translation “I shall be worm-eaten” is more contentious and follows Wyatt, who proposed that \textit{irtm} was the 1 sing. Gt form from Heb. \textit{vay} be full of ‘maggots, swarm’. The passage is still debatable but this translation fits the text better than the complex and heavily reconstructed one given above by de Moor.

The point, however, is the bodily destruction of Baal, his physical body being the embodiment of his divine strength and might. The sieve was possibly to be linked to the methods of destruction employed by Anat in KTU 1.6 ii and, rather than an agricultural or seasonal significance, indicated that the body

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752 M.S. Smith 1994: 331.
753 See also Healey 1983 and 1984b referring to Isa 30:28 RSV ‘sieve of destruction’.
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had been broken up so much it was possible for it to be ‘sieved’ and then fed to worms. This passage indicates then that Baal knew it was possible for him to be killed. Indeed, he shortly went on to “drink Yam dry”, destroying his body which seemed to be aqueous.

The actual death sequence begins in KTU 1.5 i, a bloody description of the destruction and eating of Baal by Mot who appeared to have a huge throat. This was in fact the end of a message to Baal from Mot and the messengers conveniently gave us the missing parts of the text when they repeated the message to Baal himself.

Caquot & Sznycer translated

"(when) the skies burn
(and) drip like the sweat of your gown,
I, moaning, I feast myself on (bird) droppings
and I die"755

While they acknowledged the alternative translation of *drqm* (blood) from the Akkadian šarqu ‘arterial blood’, Hebrew šaroq ‘red’ or ‘blood’ even as they chose the Arab. *darq* ‘droppings of birds’. Gibson gave “The heavens will burn up (and) droop (helpless), for I myself will crush you in pieces, I will

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eat (you) ... ... (and) forearms.”, the crushing literally 'breaking in pieces'\textsuperscript{756} and the untranslated $\textit{útn zrqm}$ corresponded to the text of KTU 1.18 iv 3.

Margalit’s translation was completely original, not being supported by other renditions and in honesty not contributing to the general debate.

  “Be crushed, coiled-one, fleet serpent,
  Be annihilated, tortuous serpent; ... 
  Thy (poisonous) prick I am ingesting,
  In groans and diarrhea I expire.”\textsuperscript{757}

He argued for this translation based upon a different - passive - verbal voice. This was founded upon the uncertainty of the preceding episode (caused by the lacunae) so that a “decisive argument” for the active voice could not be supported contextually.\textsuperscript{758}

De Moor agreed with the consensus of the description of Baal being eaten, although the translation differed in specifics –

  “I, however, will eat (you) in red lumps of two spans, 
  you will go down in two cubit chunks, 
  into the throat of Motu, the son of Ilu, 
  into the gullet of the Beloved of Ilu, the hero!” \textsuperscript{759}

\textsuperscript{756} Gibson 1977: 68 n. 3.  
\textsuperscript{757} Margalit 1980: 88.  
\textsuperscript{758} Margalit 1980: 89.  
\textsuperscript{759} De Moor 1987: 69-70.
but he translated “the skies will be hot, they will shine” as “you were uncovered, the heaven came loose / like the girdle of your cloak!” since being unwillingly unclothed was a great humiliation.\(^{760}\) This was rather a missed opportunity to uphold the seasonal theory since ‘rainy’ Baal’s disappearance would indeed result in empty, burning skies! Wyatt’s translation

> “When I tear you in pieces:  
> I shall devour (you)  
> elbows, blood and forearms”\(^{761}\)

upheld his theory that the “idiom is a corporeal equivalent to ‘lock, stock and barrel’”\(^{762}\) while Smith also acknowledged the very physical aspect of Baal’s imminent death.\(^{763}\)

KTU 1.5 i continued with a description of the massive appetite of Mot, a complaint about what seemed to be his missing invitation to Baal’s party (although all his brothers were invited) and a reminder to Baal that he was not invincible – Mot could “pierce” him. The list of creatures killed previously by Baal was then repeated along with the description of his impending destruction at the hands of Mot. The text breaks off for 30 lines, leaving us with a hole where something very significant has happened, given Baal’s response to Mot in the following column.

\(^{760}\) De Moor 1987: 70.  
\(^{762}\) Wyatt 1998: 116 n. 10.  
\(^{763}\) Smith 1997b: 141.
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Unfortunately the initial dozen lines of KTU 1.5 ii are missing. The first comprehensible text describes the huge size of Mot's mouth through which Baal must enter Mot. Mot had somehow scorched the vegetation and De Moor regarded this as the scorching heat of spring, Baal sacrificing himself to prevent damage to the crops (although since olives are mentioned one must point out that these ripen in the very hottest and driest part of the year).764 Gibson765 offered the translation that Mot had scorched the olives etc., and so Baal was afraid of him. Margalit, in his translation, said that Baal went down into Mot and the land and trees shrivelled in fear for Baal, although this did not explain why Baal's messengers then gave Mot Baal's message - after he had been eaten.766 Parker translated "Into his [Mot's] mouth he [Baal] will descend like a dried olive, Produce of the earth, and fruit of the trees." 767 while Wyatt suggested rather the havoc on a cosmic scale caused by an untimely and unjust death - cf. Aqhat's demise and its effects in KTU 1.19 i 30-31, 42-46.768

Baal's message of submission appeared to have no effect, since in KTU 1.5 v the first fragmentary sentences seem to describe a son of Baal whom Mot was threatening. Baal too was threatened and ordered by Mot to descend into his gullet, along with his company of meteorological phenomena, daughters and divine assistants.

764 De Moor 1971: 180.
765 Gibson 1978: 69.
766 Margalit 1980: 107. Compare Wyatt 1998b: 120 n. 29, who states "some such modal sense is required, because Baal's descent does not occur until some point during the lacuna of KTU 1.5 v-vi."
767 Parker 1997: 143.
768 Wyatt 1998b: 120 n. 32.

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Caquot & Sznycer\textsuperscript{769} suggested that Baal was described as a calf in line 4. In discussing his attendants - “your seven valets, your eight officers” they argued that $hnzr$, ‘officer’ given in parallel to $glmn$ ‘valet’, should be taken as synonymous. The similarity to the Arabic $hzriz$ ‘pig’ could indicate that “certain dignitaries were designated by the name of this animal...” although they referred to Løkkegard (in Hvidberg) who argued for it to be a military title, originally Hurrian.\textsuperscript{770} Gibson reconstructed far less of the text, leaving out references to the cloak, so the text did not resume before the instruction to Baal to descend with his followers.\textsuperscript{771} However, he stated that Shapsh advised Baal to obtain a substitute for himself, whom Mot would kill instead of the ‘real’ Baal. She instructed Baal to descend with his followers to the underworld where he could “assume the condition of the strengthless shades (thus deceiving Mot and eluding his clutches until something can be done to rescue him).”\textsuperscript{772} In debating whether Baal actually died, he stated that if Baal did not die and eluded death, this passage (KTU 1.5 v) had implications for the “widespread theorizing about a dying and rising god in Near Eastern ... religion.”\textsuperscript{773}

Margalit pointed out that 150 lines were missing or badly damaged since the text had been comprehensible, so the ‘wider setting’ of this episode was

\textsuperscript{769} Caquot et al 1974: 248, n. g.
\textsuperscript{770} Caquot et al 1974: 247-8, nn. d and g.
\textsuperscript{771} Gibson 1978: 72.
\textsuperscript{772} Gibson 1978: 15.
\textsuperscript{773} Gibson 1978: 15 n. 1.
He argued that line 17 should be translated with *kmn't* from the Arabic √*kmn*, to hide or conceal rather than *kmnt*, which he objected to because of the change in grammatical subject (Baal to other gods) hence his translation "And you will recognize the gods of Interment (lit. of concealment)". Margalit said *kmn't* was preferable to *ilm ary*, which "the poet was reluctant to use" since it would undo the parallelism paramount to the "metri causa" which Margalit argued determined the poet's word choice. Margalit regarded this passage as a description of the VIP section of the Underworld, similar to that area mentioned in "The Frogs" by Aristophanes - "there is likewise an enchanting flute-girl specially for you, and two or three dancing wenches ... in the prime of life and all freshly depilated" although there is no mention of any dancing women in the Ugaritic underworld.

De Moor proposed that Baal transferred his sovereignty to another by clothing 'him' with his cloak of sovereignty but the 'son' born was an ox, a "twin-brother" because, de Moor argued, Baal was instructed by someone, possibly the sun-goddess, to be transformed into a bull-calf/heifer so that Mot would eat most of the herd and sate his appetite before he ate Baal. M.S. Smith translated (and reconstructed) almost as little as Gibson, but began with "[...] life ... calf [...] I will set him in a great pit in the Earth" indicating some kind of burial and noting the chthonic aspect of the "Earth" in these texts. For line 17, he gave the translation "you will know, O God,
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that you are dead."\(^{780}\) comparable to Wyatt's "you will know, god, that you are mortal."\(^{781}\) arguing for a vocative *ihn* with enclitic *m*. At the beginning of col. v, Wyatt said that Mot was speaking and threatening the son "whom Baal will shortly father".\(^{782}\) Was this divine prescience? It could, perhaps, be compared to the reference in KTU 1.2 i, to Expeller and All-Driver, Baal's weapons which were not given to him by Kothar until KTU 1.2 iv.\(^{783}\) Wyatt suggested "young male" rather than 'twin' as a less contentious translation, following Caquot and Sznycer.\(^{784}\)

The command in KTU 1.5 v for Baal to be accompanied by his followers was reminiscent of the practices of Ur and Egypt and even Ghana more recently for example, that when a king died, those around him died too. This appears to be a command to Baal to submit peaceably to death - most unusual considering that normally death in the Baal Cycle was at the hands of an aggressor. Baal would know that he is mortal - or dead, since that is a mortal condition - because only one who was dead could pass into the lands of Mot. The offspring of his mating may or may not have been a substitute but it is unprofitable (and leads to no definite conclusion) to spend much time on this, although the implications of his mating with a heifer are examined in the relevant chapter.\(^{785}\) However, since Baal was found dead 'on the shore... at the steppe' it may be possible that he never reached Mot's land and was at the edge of life and death, a liminal area where his return was still possible.

\(^{780}\) M.S.Smith 1997b: 148.
\(^{781}\) Wyatt 1998b: 124 n.46.
\(^{782}\) Wyatt 1998b: 123.
\(^{783}\) See Chapter 5 for discussion of this.
\(^{785}\) See Chapter 3.
Also in KTU 1.5 v, Baal was given the direction to “raise the mountain upon (his) hands” as he descended to Mot. Caquot and Sznycer translated the passage “Lift the mountain on (your) hands,/ the hill above on your palms and descend in the residence of underground imprisonment”\textsuperscript{786} while Margalit proposed “Scale the mountain on (your) two hands, the promontory, on both palms.”\textsuperscript{787} He argued that the “consensus view of these lines constitute a parade example of what can only be deemed an uncritical tolerance of absurdity.”\textsuperscript{788} He argued that \textit{sa} has nothing to do with \textit{נשת�} ‘carry’ but is cognate instead with Ar. \textit{שאה} ‘overtake’ and \textit{שא} ‘summit, peak’ hence his translation ‘scale’. This would mean however that Baal ended up on top of the mountain – surely his own domain? The sense of descending beneath the earth is preferable and consonant with Mot’s abode being subterranean.

De Moor, Gibson and Wyatt all concurred with the “absurd” consensus view, although the particulars varied greatly. De Moor proposed that Baal “Lift up a mountain with your hands, a forested hill with your palms, and descend in to the House of Freedom of the earth”\textsuperscript{789}, arguing that ‘Freedom’ was a euphemism for the “Nether World, which in reality was a ‘land of no return’ citing 2 Kings 15:5, where a house of freedom was in fact a place of leper confinement and Ps 88:6 “among the dead I am ‘free’ ”.\textsuperscript{790} However,

\textsuperscript{786} Caquot et al 1974: 248.
\textsuperscript{787} Margalit 1980: 75.
\textsuperscript{788} Margalit 1980: 76.
\textsuperscript{789} De Moor 1987: 78.
\textsuperscript{790} De Moor 1987: 66 n. 304. Hebrew: BHS.
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Tromp examined the possible translation of ‘free’ and suggested the translation ‘couch’, connecting hptt with hopēs from Ez. 27.20, (‘Reitdecken’ or ‘cover’) and which in the context of Ps 88.6 would mean ‘couch’ hence “Among the dead is my couch; among the slain, buried in the grave”.\(^{791}\)

This was not simply a feat of strength, nor was it a command addressed solely to Baal and therefore cannot be an action only undertaken by him. Baal included it in his directions to his own messengers in KTU 1.4 viii and it should therefore be taken as a ‘physical’ direction given to those who were to descend to Mot, the emphasis being upon the subterranean nature of his body and abode. What is important here (and has been obscured by looking too closely at it) is that Mot lived UNDER the earth – under the mountain, just as surely as he ‘was’ the mountain and it was through his gorge (lit.) that Baal must descend. This is surely significance enough, when one considers just how often we are told that Baal lived on top of the mountain. Note also the similarity of the language here to the hymns in the Book of the Dead and the Hebrew Psalms (e.g. Ps. 143).

Before he acceded to this command, Baal mated with a heifer, typically taken to be a signal of his virility and therefore his role as a fertility god which has been discussed in Chapter 3.

\(^{791}\) Tromp 1969: 159.
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There followed a huge gap of about forty lines, during which Baal was generally believed to have descended (in)to Mot and, one assumes, become one of the dead. Whether he was accompanied by his entourage we cannot know. Whether he went without further resistance we cannot tell. His whole manner of death is simply unknowable. The question of whether Baal was actually dead though depends entirely on whether one takes the Ugaritic tablets at face value, accepting the statement “Baal is dead!”, or whether one chooses to try and look further afield. The comparisons which some have sought to make (notably Kapelrud et al) with other ANE documents should largely be regarded as an unnecessary distraction from the Ugaritic sources.

When the text resumes, the action has moved on. Divine messengers were relaying the terrible news to El that they had found Baal dead, fallen to the earth. El responded by collapsing physically, the shock of grief described with poetic accuracy. He took part in mourning rituals – the pouring of ashes and wearing of a loincloth, the unmistakable forerunner of the “sack-cloth and ashes” order of penitents and mourners. El went so far as to lacerate his flesh. Anat responded by going out to search for Baal’s corpse and upon discovering him likewise clothed herself in a loin-cloth. KTU 1.6 i neatly continued the narrative, describing Anat as she performed the rites of self-laceration and moaned against the fate of Baal. She was accompanied in her

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792 See the previous discussion of The Descent of Ishtar and the examination by J.Z. Smith of other ANE gods.
search for his body by the goddess Shapsh who hoisted the fallen Baal onto Anat’s shoulders.

Baal was given burial on Saphon and his passage (or the chthonic gods) was propitiated by the sacrifice of seventy animals from several species.

The question of why the animals were sacrificed has excited a great deal of speculation. Caquot & Szynecer examined the crucial word kgmn in detail, and described it as “an enigmatic expression kgmn which must surely break up as k-gmn.” but stated that “… No satisfactory etymology has been given for the hapax gmn.” After examining the options – funerary offering, recompense, to repair his strength, they stated that they preferred the translation of gmn as a perfect verb (with k as conjunction) and found de Moor’s use of an Ethiopic root doubtful. In their own translation, however, kgmn was left blank.793

Margalit took a different route and suggested “as nourishment (?) for Puissant Baal”, elaborating that the animals were part of “the lavish funeral wake, … part of which is to provide sustenance for the deceased on his way down, part of which is to be consumed (though this is nowhere spelled out explicitly) by Anat (and Baal’s daughters?) by the graveside.”794 This was

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794 Margalit 1980: 140.
entirely inferred and Gibson merely said that the meaning of *kgmn* was unknown.\textsuperscript{795}

De Moor argued that Anat slaughtered the animals because “Ba’lu the Almighty had been defiled”.\textsuperscript{796} The problem with de Moor’s citation of many biblical instances is that in those verses it was the corpse which defiled the living person. From his translation, it appeared that Anat made the sacrifice because Baal had somehow been defiled. If one were to uphold the biblical comparison, it could more easily be argued that Anat slaughtered the animals because *she* had been defiled by contact with Baal’s body. If that was the intention of de Moor then it was not apparent. If that was not the case, however, one wonders why he took such pains to cite all the biblical references.\textsuperscript{797}

He went on to argue that

“This episode reflects an actual sacrifice on Mt. Sapanu. ... The exact date of this festival is known from ancient sources:

\textsuperscript{795} Gibson 1987: 74 n. 7.
\textsuperscript{796} De Moor 1987: 83 n.405 The list of references given by De Moor includes (NRSV translations)
  - Lev 21:1 No one shall defile himself for a dead person among his relatives;
  - Num 5:2 Command the Israelites to put of the camp everyone who is leprous, or has a discharge, and everyone who is unclean through contact with a corpse;
  - Num 6:9ff. If someone dies very suddenly nearby defiling the consecrated head, then they shall shave the head on the day of their cleansing;
  - Num 9:10 Anyone of you ... who is unclean through touching a corpse
  - 19:11ff Those who touch the dead body of any human being shall be unclean seven days.;
  - Hag. 2:13 Then Haggai said ‘If one who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean? Then the priests answered ‘Yes...’” (in the Ethiopic Bible the root *gmn* corresponds to Heb. *tm* “be ritually unclean”).
\textsuperscript{797} De Moor 1987: 83 n.405.
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the 23rd of April. Of course the macrocosmic size of the sacrifices mentioned in the myth could not be matched in reality, but the correspondence with the actual numbers is arresting: seven bulls, seven rams and again seven bulls for Ba'lu. Cf. KTU 1.148:2-4, 10f with AOAT 16,201.798

There are several problems with this argument, not least of which is that de Moor did not oblige by listing the ancient sources which give such precise dating. Likewise, the seven bulls ‘for Ba'lu’ mentioned in KTU 1.148 are listed in such a way that, in fact, seven b'ilm are mentioned, each one having an ox and ram.799 As will be argued in Chapter 9, it is by no means definite that each of these ‘Baals’ was Baal of Saphon or the deity whom we are wont to assume is the Baal of the Baal Cycle.800

Smith translated gmn as “an offering”801 but stated that the meaning was inferred from context, following Watson802, while Wyatt wrote “as a funeral offering”, a tentative suggestion following del Olmo Lete803, from the Akk. kamanu. He suggested that caution should be exercised given the difficulty of translation here.804

Similarly, the fate of the animals after their killing has been debated. The text is badly damaged and Caquot and Szynicer leave much blank. One word,

798 De Moor 1987: 84 n. 407.
800 See Chapter 7 and Chapter 9 for further discussion.
801 M.S. Smith 1997b: 152.
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*ybm*, which has been given widely differing translation, they regard as “unintelligible in this mutilated context. Is it the equivalent of the Hebrew *yāḥām*, ‘marriageable brother-in-law’ denoting the position of Baʿal vis-à-vis ʿAnat?”.

Gibson also left much blank –

“*She put his [   ] in [   ]   [   ] him (as befitted) a brother-in-law of the gods.*”

but he described her actions as “a fitting memorial to one who had been the brother-in-law of the gods.”, suggesting Baal was her husband and therefore a brother-in-law to the gods, who were the sons of Athirat and El. Margalit thought that Anat placed something which belonged either to herself or Baal into the “furrows ... perhaps to ‘bribe’ the gods of the Netherworld ... so as to ensure good treatment for her beloved brother.”

De Moor stated that Anat did not bury the sacrifices, rather

“*[In] his [c]lan ʿA[natu] proclaimed herself a nubile widow, [so that] his [fellows would fulfill the nuptial duty for the gods.*”

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806 Gibson 1978: 75.
807 Gibson 1978: 16.
808 Margalit 1980: 142.
809 De Moor 1987: 84. n. 408 citing Gen. 38; Deut 25:5-10; Ruth 4; Matt 22:23f.
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making comparisons to the Hebrew Levirate marriage. This was based solely upon his view of Anat as a ‘wanton’ widow and does not fit well with the previous sacrificial context. Smith meanwhile suggested that

"[ ] ... she drinks ... [ ]
[ ] In-law to the gods."

since if the “word means ‘to drink’ and not ‘to place’, Anat perhaps consumed either part of the sacrifice or perhaps less likely even some of her deceased brother in an act more explicitly described in KTU 1.96:4-5”. This was made tentatively and is to be considered a possible understanding of the procedure if not one that could be supported either by much Ugaritic or contemporary evidence. Wyatt gave a straightforward translation which followed Margalit more than Gibson or de Moor but with no note of explanation

"Her [sacrifice]ce she placed in the fu[rrows],
her [off]ering (?) as a gift for the god(s)".

The number of animals could possibly be regarded as a ‘round’ or symbolic number, signifying many rather than a numerical exactitude. It appears that Anat buried the results of the pyres and returned to El. This section of the text may explain something of funeral rites and the duties that were felt owed to the dead by their grief-stricken relatives. The outward signs of mourning were not enough perhaps to ensure the safe progress of their loved

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810 M.S. Smith 1997b: 152.

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one's soul. An alternative may be that once burned - cooked? - the animals were buried as sustenance for Baal on whatever journey he then took. Bloch-Smith surveyed a great deal of evidence and found that it was believed “the dead required continued sustenance”, demonstrated by the ubiquity of jars of food in all kinds of burial.814 Admittedly based upon IA evidence (12th century at the earliest), this is a suggestion which cannot be discounted until the precise meaning of gmn is determined.815

The question of Baal’s resurrection is likewise perplexing. Caquot and Sznycer continued with the consensus view of forty scholarly years and likewise presumed Baal had returned to life during the lacuna but suggested also that “The beginning of column V shows ... the revival of Ba’al re-enthroned in his palace of Saphon. The combat which he engages in with his enemies is probably a transposition of the storms which have recommenced”
816 - an unexpected reference to the ‘seasonal’ interpretation of these events but unsurprising given the prevalence of that interpretation among their academic forbears, which Gibson also followed.817

There was no doubt in Margalit’s mind that the text presented “a revived and revitalised Baal as he wreaks vengeance on the (serpentine!) sons of Asherah”818 while De Moor carefully avoided stating at what point Baal

815 Watson 1989: 131 suggests ‘grief’ as another alternative although it is not attested elsewhere in Ugaritic.
816 Caquot et al. 1974: 205 n. o.
817 Gibson 1978: 79.
818 Margalit 1980: 175.
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returned from the underworld.\textsuperscript{819} Although he said that Anat did not regard Baal’s death as definitive “remarkably”\textsuperscript{820}, he said no more than that in the 38 missing lines the poet perhaps described “the period of suspense, waiting for the outcome of the Sun-goddess’ quest.”\textsuperscript{821} and that “a speaker” was predicting Baal’s slaughter of Athirat’s sons \textit{when} he returned, so it was therefore clairvoyance, as well as a ritual or cultic episode.\textsuperscript{822}

Smith suggested that the missing lines “presumably include Shapsh’s successful discovery of Baal returned to the realm of life.”\textsuperscript{823} and this belief was present in Wyatt’s translation, which continued as if Baal had returned and was present to do the killing himself.\textsuperscript{824} This made more sense given the rest of tablet KTU 1.6 and avoided the complicated prevarication to which de Moor subjected himself.

\textsuperscript{819} De Moor 1987: 90-94.
\textsuperscript{820} De Moor 1987: 87 n.423.
\textsuperscript{821} De Moor 1987: 93.
\textsuperscript{822} De Moor 1987: 94 n.452.
\textsuperscript{823} M.S. Smith 1997b: 160.
\textsuperscript{824} Wyatt 1998b: 140.
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KTU 1.12: The Devourers

This text, badly damaged in places, is on two main themes. The first is a theogony, in which El sends two handmaids to the desert where they bore two sons, of unusual appearance, possibly bovine. Almost immediately the offspring of El are the focus of the desire of Baal. He goes out to hunt them and the plan goes awry. From this point the interpretations of the text diverge. On the one hand, they capture Baal and, so it appears, he is slain, lying in the swamp near his hunting ground for seven years, before his brothers retrieve him. The other interpretation, proposed by Caquot and Sznycer, was that Baal was victorious and the punishments described were meted out to the Devourers. Thereafter, following the 'long time' of drought, Baal knelt willingly in the swamp. The rite following was a doxology to Baal the Victor (despite there being little support for this theory). There are several points on which the translation hinges – does Baal indeed die or was it a 'disappearance' as J.Z. Smith would have it?

The first thirty lines of the second column are fragmentary and give no sense. However, once the text resumes Baal's fortunes were seriously reversed.

ii 31 the eye(s) of Baal they seized [ ]
(his) back they seized
(his) b[ow they seized ]
Baal's foot they seized
and the thirsters? vanquished [Baal?]
35 the eaters seized [ ]
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This translation follows Wyatt, who gave Baal or parts of him as the object of 3 pl qatal verbs825, while del Olmo Lete826 suggested Baal was subject to various emotions. Caquot, Szncyer and Herdner827 made no attempt to disguise the mutilated state of the text in column ii, the scene of Baal’s fight, with barely a dozen clear words over the first 30 lines.828

They suggested that while “sont décrites ici les ‘tortures’ infligées à Ba’al par les ‘Voraces’ ”829 they preferred the view that these were the methods by which Baal attacked the beasts. Likewise, the descriptions of heat following were of the “fureur destructrice” of Baal.830

The verb šmt ‘silence, vanquish’ does not give an explicit sense of death but the text following indicates at least a serious illness.

[Baal?] fell into the swamp
his nostrils were feverish
in his loins was fever
his horns as with malaria832
he as with a fever

De Moor proposed that while Baal had been successful in his hunting of these creatures he fell into the marsh where Mot “sent fever into his loins”

826 Del Olmo Lete 1981: 484.
827 Caquot et al 1974: 318-351.
830 Caquot et al 1974: 347.
832 following Driver Ar. gibbu ‘tertiary fever’.
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and that "[he consumed] his horns like branches". Here, as in the Baal Cycle, Mot had consumed Baal, causing the death of vegetation for a similar length of time as in KTU 1.6 v 7-9. However, the insertion of Mot’s name into a lacuna should not be accepted – he is mentioned nowhere else in the text and is unnecessary since the animals born earlier are those who attack Baal. The consumption by Baal of his own horns was not explained by de Moor.

The [and] dried up entirely [ ? ]
The growth of the steppes became par[ched]
(for) seven years El filled
and eight cycles of time

de Moor proposed that the ‘eight cycles of time’ during which Baal was absent and the earth suffered were the autumnal equinoxes which occurred around the time of the New Year festival when “the return of Baal was expected”. The explanation of Caquot and Szynicer is preferable in this respect. They regarded the seven/eight time period as neither a sabbatical pattern nor a reference to ‘eight months’ but simply (as one would expect with the $x / x + 1$ pattern) “l’indication d’une longue période, marquée par la progression: sept-huit.” Likewise, the “for seven [ ? ] his seventy brothers were $ym [gyh]$” and eight for his eighty” one should not look for an explicit example elsewhere of Baal having seventy or eighty brothers. Rather, it could be an indication of the might of his family, and one must conclude a larger family is being viewed as a more powerful family.

833 De Moor 1987: 133.
834 De Moor 1987: 133 n. 39.
After his disappearance and the drought caused by Baal’s disappearance, we learn that

the leader of his kinsmen found him
and find him did the leader of his kinsman

Thus fell Baal like a bull
and Hadd was prostrate like a steer
in the middle of the swamp, Baal...\[^{837}\]^\[^{838}\]

Caquot and Sznycer’s translation, based upon the Akkadian \(^{\prime}k\text{ssu}\) ‘to buckle, squat’, suggested that the prostration of Baal in the swamp fitted well with the context of the narrative but unfortunately preceded yet another lacuna.\[^{839}\]
However, Baal had fallen voluntarily and the following ‘doxology’ was to Baal the Victor.\[^{840}\] After Baal had captured the beasts or les voraces, his fury was as a fire\[^{841}\] although they hesitated to translate the more dubious text after line 40.

de Moor concluded that Baal suffered the same fate as the creatures he had hunted and that it was Baal who was poured out by the king during the ritual, his “life-giving sacrifice” providing stability for the kingdom, in a rain charm rite.\[^{842}\]

\[^{837}\] Baal may in fact have been lying insensible and the following ritual could be for the king to provide water until he returns or even water to revive Baal.
\[^{838}\] lines 56 and 57 – make little sense. See Wyatt 1998b: 167 n.36
\[^{839}\] Caquot \textit{et al} 1974: 349 n. n.
\[^{840}\] Caquot \textit{et al} 1974: 350 n. x.
\[^{841}\] Caquot \textit{et al} 1974: 347, n. k.
\[^{842}\] De Moor 1987: 134 n. 43-45.

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Gibson had not come to any firm conclusion about the texts. In a short note he pointed out the idiosyncrasies of spelling and phonology as well as the general disagreement about the interpretation of the myth – Gaster: seasonal, Gray: fratricide and atonement, Kapelrud: a ritual to guard against locust plague. The text itself was only given in transliteration, Gibson being too uncertain of a translation.

What are the points relevant to Baal from each of these texts?

In the Baal Cycle, Baal’s actual death is ‘missing’. After the instruction to descend to Mot, the text breaks off. The narrative resumes when Baal was found dead and lamented, first by messengers and then by Anat and El. His body was found by the shores of death and then buried. His reappearance, following Anat’s destruction of Mot, is never truly explained, since it may be that his resuscitation or return takes place during a lacuna. It is, therefore, impossible for any certain interpretation to be given.

In KTU 1.12, Baal was attacked by the Devourers. Unlikely as it may seem that Baal would simply become quiet and acquiesce, surely this is all that we have evidence of in KTU 1.6. Although Baal is later declared dead in KTU 1.6, we have no such declaration here in KTU 1.12. While it was not explicitly stated that he died, this may be inferred from the effects upon the

843 Gibson 1978: 32.
844 Gibson 1978: 134.

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landscape. Thus Baal had, to all intents and purposes, been physically killed by those animals born in the first column.

Despite the attempts of others (notably de Moor and Gibson845) to argue that Baal had procured some kind of twin, who was killed by Mot, this is not borne out by the texts themselves. Rather, Anat proclaimed loudly "Baal is dead!" as unambiguous a statement as one could hope for in these tales. The text which remains gives no hint of Baal's survival until El's vision and it is reasonable to assume that Baal's death is physical and - from what little evidence we have - complete. There is no mention of Baal wandering about in the underworld here. KTU 1.12 is again rather more prosaic but Baal’s failure is physical (his collapse into the swamp) and from the climatic effects, so similar to those of KTU 1.5-6, there is no suggestion of his survival.

There is no evidence from the text that Baal had been changed or had become 'lord of the dead' as for example Osiris had. He was successful in his battle with Mot but only because of the interference of Shapsh - who is to say he would have won the second time? It is unlikely therefore that he had become a 'super-warrior' and the notion of a yearly resurrection belongs to the scholarship of those such as Spronk. There is no textual evidence to suggest either that Baal’s return was celebrated ritually or that if such a putative event took place, it would occur annually. These are the constructions of superficial scholarly efforts and are not founded upon fact.

845 Gibson 1978.

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**What can be concluded about Baal and death?**

The Ugaritian view of death, from what little evidence we have, seems to have been both practical and hopeful. While Aqhat exemplified pragmatic notions, accepting that man’s lot was death and perhaps some ritual treatment or commemoration after the final breath, the sons of Keret were philosophical in their approach to royal death. Was the king not the son of the high god, who was immortal? In that case, why was his son not also immortal? In brief, at this point one may suggest the author of Keret was attempting to ask serious questions which we are no longer able to answer, having lost any explicit answers which may at one time have been written down.

KTU 1.161 and 1.113 do, in my view, indicate that there was some notion of post-mortem existence for the kings of Ugarit. How long it took for kings to become rephaim, whether rephaim were necessarily royal or were loyal warriors is to an extent unimportant. The people of Ugarit had some idea of life after death and whether it was a life of banqueting with the gods or of dark days sitting in empty chambers we can no longer guess.

The gods, however, had a different fate. Mot, Yam and Baal are all killed during the Baal Cycle and yet all return. One could attribute to them some kind of cartoon-like elasticity, the ability to survive those events which
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humans cannot. After all, the dismemberment of Mot is no less fatal than the fate of Aqhat’s broken body, consumed by eagles. Mot, however, returns. He is divine, a son of El, member of the divine family (albeit one of the less popular ones). The same is true of Baal – though he is *bn dgn*, he is also a member of the divine family, created by El⁸⁴⁶ and brother of Anat.

The simple fact is that, at KTU 1.6 v, forty lines are missing, which most likely contained Shapsh’s search for Baal and his ‘resurrection’. It is quite possibly the most frustrating and significant lacuna in the whole of the Baal Cycle and it is also the most surprising considering how many people have carried on with their theories despite its absence! One would hardly know that we are not entirely certain of just how or when or where or if Baal was resurrected when reading many of the previous interpretations of this group of texts.

In conclusion, from the fragmentary evidence we have, one cannot doubt that Baal dies and then returns. Anat’s heart-rending cry “Baal is dead!” resounds in our ears – our hero is dead, stricken down, his body (apparently) lifeless. His burial and the ensuing sacrifice would indicate to the Ugaritian worshippers⁸⁴⁷ that his life was ended. And yet, somewhere in more than 80 lines of text which can no longer be read, Baal returns. He may, indeed, have descended into the ‘cracks of Doom’ and destroyed Mot’s hold upon him, or

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⁸⁴⁶ KTU 1.3 v 35.
⁸⁴⁷ Whether heard in performance or liturgical recitation, the literary character of these texts lends themselves to reading. The locus of that reading we cannot know.
perhaps more sacrifice was made which gave him the ability to return. It is impossible to know. However, the idea of a ‘resurrection’, along with the baggage implied by such a term at the beginning of the 21st century, is rash to say the least. Rather, one should speak of Baal’s ‘return’. There can be no doubt he perished – perhaps more than once – but of his return we know almost nothing, other than the reversal of the terrible agro-climatic symptoms his absence has caused. Baal is therefore not a ‘dying and rising’ god simply because we do not have the information which would enable him to enter that dubious category. Rather, he is outside of J.Z. Smith’s genres – he is a god who died but a god who returned – a mixture of both his ideas and this indicates once again, how impossible it is to systematise Baal and his tales.
Chapter 5 - Baal as a Warrior and Hunter

While a great deal of time has been spent by scholars examining the so-called ‘fertility’ aspect of Baal or his apparent ‘dying and rising’, comparatively little time has been given to the examination of his martial and hunting activities. This is surprising since a thorough understanding of these is essential for comprehending the original theology of Baal and his place within Ugaritian society. This chapter aims to examine the textual evidence and in doing so establish a view of Baal and his war-like activities which is clear and yet not over-simplistic in its assessment of the significance of that behaviour.

Just what is a ‘war god’?

The concept of ‘war gods’ is one which deserves a thesis alone. The treatment here is necessarily brief as it must be restricted to its relevance to Baal. A god whose sole characteristic is the aggressive behaviour which would lead to their designation as a ‘war deity’ is rare indeed. More often, in fact, the behaviour is part of a complex personality which has been exaggerated perhaps for polemic purposes. Moreover, there is more than one kind of ‘war’.

848 See Chapter 4.
Kapelrud described three types of fight found within ANE mythology: the first was the type which overthrew the head of the pantheon and resulted in the victor becoming ‘king’ of the gods; the second was the ‘creation-fight’ exemplified in Marduk’s treatment of Tiamat, and the third was a retaliation of the dethroned god, in an attempt to regain his kingship with the aid of another deity.849 It has been argued that each of these fights is represented in the mythology of Baal but, as will be seen in our examination of the texts, an imposition of ‘mythemes’850 from other religions must be treated with great care. However, the very existence of these myths indicates that making war, fighting and behaving aggressively were common divine attributes and not restricted to ‘war gods’ alone.

For instance, in the examples given by Kapelrud, Kumarbi was a Hurrian god who claimed the throne of heaven through a battle victory, defeating Anu (who had in turn defeated Alalu, Kumarbi’s father). Kumarbi was not merely a war god – he was a god of the netherworld, who was eventually defeated by a weather god, Teššub.851 Marduk’s battle with Tiamat, although vicious, was not motivated by blood-lust alone: he fought to establish justice and create world order. After the battle, Tiamat’s dismembered body formed the world and Marduk became the ruling god. Interestingly, Marduk was

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849 Kapelrud 1952: 99.
850 That is, a type of personality, common motif or theme found in a myth: it is the mythic counterpart of the ‘meme’ proposed by Richard Dawkins.
later known simply as Bēl – ‘Lord’.\(^ {852}\) Another story in which an attempt was made to regain a throne featured Kumarbi, when he refused to accept the leadership held previously by the weather god in the Hurrian *Myth of Ulikummi*.\(^ {853}\)

It is evident that a problem of terminology is emerging. While the gods mentioned above do indeed take part in war, they were not, or at least should not be regarded as, ‘war gods’. This holds true for other deities.

Resheph was a West Semitic deity found also in Ugarit, Ebla, Egypt and Phoenicia, from the 3\(^{rd}\) millennium BCE. He was described as a “lord of battle and of diseases, which he spreads through his bows and arrows”.\(^ {854}\) However, his character was both benevolent and dangerous. Like Kumarbi, he was chthonic, while his Egyptian iconography presented him as the protector of Pharaoh, leader of Egypt’s army and also a healer.\(^ {855}\) His ‘archer’ characteristic was shared by Baal, as well as his dangerous side.\(^ {856}\)

Another dangerous deity associated with war and fighting was the Egyptian god Seth. A byword for confusion and chaos, the Seth-animal

\(^{852}\) Black *et al* 1992: 128. Although this could indicate a similarity to Baal, Marduk’s personality is not like Baal of Ugarit’s. As supreme god, it was in fact, rather unspecific, the most noticeable traits being those of wisdom, judgement, water and vegetation. Teššub – the weather god who defeated Kumarbi - was far more like Baal.


\(^{854}\) Xella 1999: 701.

\(^{855}\) Xella 1999: 701.

\(^{856}\) Xella 1999: 702.
determinative\textsuperscript{857} is found in many words for atmospheric disturbances – storm, thunder and the name of the storm god himself – while the animal itself was an “unpleasant rowdy and disturber of peace”.\textsuperscript{858} However, Seth was not simply a god associated with violence – he was far more associated with rule-breaking in general, particularly ignoring boundaries of widely accepted norms.\textsuperscript{855} Despite this, the sexual misconduct described in “The Contendings of Horus and Seth” is understood not as “an erotic game with the inevitable conflicts this implies .... (but) ... of a warlike nature” in which the victor would gain kingship, rather than sexual satisfaction.\textsuperscript{860}

In terms of biblical religion, the view of Yahweh as ‘divine warrior’ battling the enemies of Israel was one of the strongest images of the Hebrew Bible, particularly in its oldest poetry.\textsuperscript{861} Significantly, the deity was described as a storm god with a chariot of clouds\textsuperscript{862}, armed with thunder, winds\textsuperscript{863} and lightning bolts.\textsuperscript{864} This divine warrior devastated nature on earth while his enemy was often identified as another natural element – the sea or a river.\textsuperscript{865} There is no doubt that this imagery was based not only upon Ugaritic, but also on Mesopotamian, myths. The biblical understanding of this violence was that of the ‘activity within history’ of their deity as he fought along with

\textsuperscript{857} Gardiner 1927: 32 n.3, 451 sign 20: Determinative of ‘turmoil’, ‘to be in confusion’.
\textsuperscript{858} te Velde 1967: 25.
\textsuperscript{859} te Velde 1967: 24-5.
\textsuperscript{860} te Velde 1967: 39.
\textsuperscript{861} ABD(vol. 6) 1992:877. See particularly Exodus 15, Deut. 33, Judges 5, Habbakuk 3.
\textsuperscript{862} Judg. 5:4, Hab. 3:8, Ps. 68:4, 7-9, 33.
\textsuperscript{863} Exod. 15:8-10.
\textsuperscript{864} Hab. 3:9-12.
\textsuperscript{865} Judg. 5:4-5; Hab 3:6, 16-17. Exod 15:4-10; Judg 5:19-21; Ps 68:22-23 etc.
the soldiers of Israel against their earthly enemies, rather than titans of the pantheon, stories of whose earlier defeat we have only hints.

Finally one cannot overstate the intimate connection between the effective aggressiveness required of royalty and divine warriors – kings, like gods, were required to be powerful enough to maintain a strong and ordered rule while a weak king would soon be overthrown. This bond shall be examined in Chapter 6, when Baal and his connection to the kings of Ugarit shall be dealt with.

In summary, one cannot describe any deity simply as a ‘war god’ – rather this may have been one aspect of their personality and was usually part of a larger motif – the gaining of divine kingship, the setting up of cosmic order, the protection of a people or other deity. The motif was common to many gods throughout the ANE, not least Baal, as we will see below, and reflected a popularly held view that gods, like kings, took action to uphold their rule and maintain the status quo. It made sense that their gods would be active and if necessary violent, much like real kings and warriors. This has been transformed by scholars into their being ‘war gods’, an unhelpful simplification.

5. Baal as a Warrior and Hunter
How did ‘divine violence’ relate to the reality of life in Ugarit?

Did this divine violence, which we have suggested may have been a reflection of the violence of kings and warriors required for the maintenance of their rule and society’s order, have a counterpart in Ugaritian society?

At the time Ilimilku committed the Baal Cycle to writing, the ANE was apparently in turmoil. The decades of the 12th century BCE have been described as “the Crisis Years”\(^{866}\) - the troublesome transition between Bronze and Iron Age, and a time when the so-called Sea Peoples wreaked havoc among the prosperous coastal cities of Syria.

Ugarit, it seems, was particularly vulnerable. Not only was the last king young and relatively inexperienced, but society had become increasingly urban and less balanced, with a far greater emphasis on proximity to the king, who increasingly embodied power. The real problem for Ugarit was not its military inefficiency or reluctance to send troops to its liege.\(^{867}\) While other coastal cities protected by the empire of Egypt survived the incursions of these ‘enemies from the sea’, Ugarit fell prey to their attacks because their

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\(^{867}\) Ugarit’s neighbours were likewise reluctant to aid them and neither Cyprus, Hatti or Carchemish were able to send soldiers.
own suzerain was under siege simultaneously from nomadic warriors in the East, wreaking havoc in Anatolia and eastern Syria.\textsuperscript{868} The king summed up Ugarit’s predicament in his letter to the king of Alashiya: “enemy boats arrived, the enemy has set fire to the cities and wrought havoc. My troops are in Hittite country, my boats in Lycia and the country has been left to its own devices”.\textsuperscript{869} A grim picture indeed and one which highlighted the need for the aid of a god like Baal who may have been defeated but was ultimately victorious. However, since Ugarit had been secure in the past, one must be wary of attributing too much theological development to the last twenty or thirty years of its existence. How far the king and scribes would alter the traditional stories of Baal to support their aims (whether it was for increased royal importance, the need for allies in Egypt or even the military prowess of their god) is impossible to ascertain at the moment. At the same time, these tablets were written in the last days of Ugarit: they were abandoned as enemies overcame the city and its inhabitants fled. They therefore represent either a desire to preserve the traditional tales of Baal or a swift re-emphasis upon those aspects which supported the royal aims best in difficult times. Which is the correct one cannot be told from examination of the tablets, sadly.

With this tumultuous background in mind, it is appropriate to begin our survey of the religious texts which feature Baal in his war-like moments.

\textsuperscript{868} Arnaud 1987: 10.  
\textsuperscript{869} RS 20.238.

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Texts: ‘War’

Baal and Mot

The fight between Baal and Mot forms the climax of the Baal Cycle. It represents the culmination of a long exchange involving the gods and their messengers.870 The communications included both threats - “I shall devour (you), elbows, blood and forearms”871 (from Mot) - and toady ing - “your servant am I, and ever so” (from Baal)872 prompted apparently by Baal’s failure to invite Mot to a banquet, held following the completion of his palace in KTU 1.4 vi. This appears to have been a terrible offence; after all, it could have signalled that he did not recognise the superiority of Mot (representing death) or that Baal felt he was above the kind of protocol which no doubt governed the lives of gods and kings.873 Mot was excluded from the otherwise comprehensive banquet and after several incidents missing from the tablets, responded to Baal’s initial message with a threat detailing the extent of his hunger and ability to defeat Baal.874 The text then becomes fragmentary, containing the highly disputed ‘death’ scenes, parts of Mot’s rough treatment by Anat and the apparent return of Baal.

870 KTU 1.4 vii – 1.5 iv.
871 KTU 1.5 i 6.
872 KTU 1.5 ii 20.
873 His outburst against the messengers of Yam provoked Anat and Athtar t to restrain him, warning of the wrath of their master at his uncouth behaviour. KTU 1.2 i 40.
874 KTU 1.5 i.

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Finally, after a large lacuna of around 40 lines, the two protagonists met. Mot aired his grievance at the treatment he received from Anat and demanded recompense in the form of Baal’s kin for a meal. Somehow (the text is alas mutilated) Baal tricked Mot into eating his own brothers and this was the ultimate humiliation. Mot could endure no more and they ‘squared up’ to fight. This text, KTU 1.6 vi, is a wonderful example of the combative nature of Baal as well as the poetic force of the Ugaritic language. Both gods were compared to a variety of aggressive and vicious animals – wild bulls, serpents, and hunting dogs. Their fight was not resolved since Shapsh broke it up, but one feels that it would have gone on since the gods appear equally matched in the text.

16 They glowered at each other like burning coals (kgmrm)
    Mot was strong,
    Baal was strong
    they gored like wild bulls
    Mot was strong
    Baal was strong
    they bit like serpents
20 Mot was strong
    Baal was strong
    they pulled like dogs (klsmnm)
    Mot fell, Baal fell on top of him875

875 KTU 1.6 vi 16-23.
876 M.S. Smith 1997b: 162.

The variety of translations attests the difficulty of the words, some of which are *hapax legomena*; in particular *kgmrm* and *lsnn*. For *yt*n *kgmrm* Smith suggested “they eye each other like fighters”876 but noted the possibility of

5. Baal as a Warrior and Hunter
their being compared to a fierce creature such as a hippopotamus\textsuperscript{877} and for kls\textit{mm} preferred "drag each other like runners", possibly animals or a group of men, to Gibson's "tugged like greyhounds" sc. at the hare; from the more literal 'runners'.\textsuperscript{878} Margalit's translation "they eye each other like burning coals" was derived from the Arabic cognate \textit{gamr} 'live coal'\textsuperscript{879} but rather than runners or greyhounds he wrote "they stamp like steeds" from an Akkadian root \textit{las\textbackslash{a}mu} run, gallop, hence "horses".\textsuperscript{880}

The translation which fits the context of \textit{kgmrm} best is likely to be "they eyed each other like burning coals", indicating the burning glances exchanged as their animosity boiled up, although it is perhaps possible that the 'animal motif' began at this point.

De Moor compared the gods to fighting-cocks,\textsuperscript{881} having emended his earlier translation "they eyed each other like glowing coals".\textsuperscript{882} However, he had noted in his early work that \textit{gmrm} could be animals, the simile conforming to the animalistic patterns of the later ones.\textsuperscript{883} His 'Seasonal Pattern' demanded that he interpret the fight as a conflict between "hot dry east winds and moist

\textsuperscript{877} M.S. Smith 1997b: 162 n.198 suggested some sort of animal e.g. Eth. \textit{gom\textasciitilde{r}} 'hippopotamus', following Caquot \textit{et al.} 1974: 268 n. b.
\textsuperscript{878} Gibson 1978: 80.
\textsuperscript{879} Margalit 1980: 188.
\textsuperscript{880} Margalit 1980: 189.
\textsuperscript{881} De Moor 1987: 97.
\textsuperscript{882} De Moor 1971: 229.
\textsuperscript{883} De Moor 1971: 235.
west winds in September\(^8^{84}\) despite the clear connection to kingship (and personal dignity) given by Mot and Shapsh.

Good took a very interesting approach from a different angle. He developed further the argument of Dietrich and Loretz\(^8^{85}\) that this was not simply a combat – it was a sporting event: LBA wrestling to be precise.

He translated the terms \textit{kgmrm} and \textit{klsmm} as “wrestlers” and “runners”\(^8^{86}\) based upon “original” etymologies of Dietrich and Loretz. Good surveyed all of the proposals given by other scholars but while accepting that the alternatives (e.g. fighting cocks, beasts, champions, burning coals) could be correct, preferred the term ‘wrestlers’ based upon Akk. \textit{gamaru} “terminators” and \textit{gamiru} “strong men”. He dismissed Korpel’s attempt to support ‘prize fighter’ on biblical evidence.\(^8^{87}\) \textit{Ism} ‘to run’ provided the root for \textit{klsmm}, becoming ‘athlete’, a sense supported by many but not without some dissenters whose alternative options did not fit the context or etymology.\(^8^{88}\) Most authors turned ‘runners’ into a species of swift animal and Good chose ‘gazelles’ as the most fitting, who both kicked and ran quickly. He felt that the dog was not an animal the author would compare to a god given their

\(^{84}\) De Moor 1987: 97 n. 470: “This 'fight' was vividly described by Dalman, \textit{AuS ["Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina, 7 Bde, Gütersloh 1928-1942"],} I 105. See also AOAT 16,238f. and on the strength of death: KTU 2.10:12f.; Song of Songs 8:6. It is noteworthy that neither the god of death nor the god of life is strong enough to overpower his opponent. The struggle is only decided as a result of the intervention of the sun-goddess. Cf apparent contrast to this in Isa. 25:8, 1 Cor. 15:54f. …”.


\(^{86}\) Good 1994: 150.

\(^{87}\) Korpel 1990: 504-7.

\(^{88}\) Lokkegaard 1953: 231 n. 122. Dussaud 1932: 259 n.2.
traditional lowly position in society. The animalistic similes used in the text were, he felt, those that would have been natural to the author and did not necessarily exclude the more human terms he preferred.

Certainly, when one examines the relevant verbs – bite, gore, pull – the idea of a wrestling match is particularly apt. Good cited Poliakoff’s work on the Greek *pankration* which outlawed both biting and gouging (or goring in our context), a cross between boxing and wrestling but generally a ‘free-for-all’: the outlawing of these activities showed without doubt that they had been practised by the combatants. Most intriguingly, Good referred to a Cypriot cylinder seal which showed two imaginary beasts in combat. The beasts were in a mutual wrist-lock, meaning that biting, goring, and kicking were the main forms of attack available. Could that seal show an echo of the Baal versus Mot combat?

Shapsh cried to Mot
“Listen, pray, O Divine Mot
25 How can you fight with Valiant Baal?
How will Bull El your father not hear you?
Surely he will tear down the pillars of your dwelling
surely he will overturn the throne of your kingship
surely he will break the sceptre of your rule.”

30 Divine Mot was afraid;
the Beloved of El, the hero, was (filled with) dread
Mot was startled at her voice
he raised his voice and cried
“Let Baal be restored to the throne of his kingship

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889 Poliakoff 1987: 54-63.
890 Schaeffer-Forrer 1983: 67. Seal probably dates to MBII.
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to the seat of the siege of his dominion."^891

This passage, which immediately followed the combat described above, has been included to demonstrate two things. The first is that this combat was between two gods who were still subject to the authority of El, the father of the gods. The combat ceased when reminded of the veto that El could use to remove their power. All power depended upon El’s approval. This utterly refutes the theory of some scholars who have suggested that Baal had deposed El, who they have argued had become both senile and otiose. If that had been the case, there would have been no need to fear his wrath. Mot, however, was most definitely afraid and both gods stopped fighting. This fight could not be of the kind described by Kapelrud, in which the victor became king since that position which was always kept by El. More interesting, in light of the next chapter, was Mot’s pronouncement – “Let Baal be restored to the throne of his kingship, to the seat of the siege of his dominion”. The purpose of the fight, albeit one initiated by animosity at Baal having fooled him, would have determined Baal’s possession of his kingship. Mot had not admitted defeat, but had given his acquiescence. Through this he maintained his own rule, at the cost of allowing Baal to continue in his.

One may ponder (yet again) whether we are missing, in the large lacunae of KTU 1.5-6, an account of a similar struggle but one without the intervention of Shapsh, which resulted in Baal’s descent to Mot’s kingdom. We can conclude that although their behaviour may be described as ‘warlike’, their motives were those of physical supremacy and possession of kingdoms; not unlike, it could be argued, the very motives that still drive countries to war.

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^891 KTU 1.6 vi 24-35, following Wyatt 1998b: 143.
^892 Kapelrud 1952: 99.
Baal and Yam

Valiant Baal replied
5 ['I shall drive you from the throne of your kingship
[from your back-rest]
[from the siege of ] your dominion

[Expeller will strike you] on the head [Yam]
[All- Driver will smite you on the skull] Ruler Nahar
May [Horon] smash [O Yam]
May Horon smash] your head
Athtar the na[me of Baal your skull]
May you fall down in the prime of life
[empty-handed and humiliated].

Early in the Baal Cycle, in KTU 1.2 i, Baal threatened to smash Yam's skull with two maces. In doing so he invoked 'Horon', in a bicolon restored from KTU 1.16 vi 55 in which Keret threatened his son Yasib with deposition from the throne. Most commentators have focused upon Baal's foresight in the naming of his clubs, however De Moor argued that Yam spoke and called upon Horon to attack Baal. His attribution of this speech to Yam was baed entirely on a restored passage and common consensus maintained it was Baal who uttered the curse, for example Smith, Ginsberg and Del Olmo Lete. Smith pointed out that the mention of Astarte, a well-known ally of

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893 Restored from KTU 1.2 iii 17-18.
894 Bicolon from KTU 1.16 vi 54-58.
895 KTU 1.2 i 4-9.
897 De Moor 1987: 30.

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Baal, showed that the curse was directed against an enemy of Baal, rather than against Baal himself.\textsuperscript{899} De Moor's contention that Baal was the recipient of the 'Curse of Horon' is unfounded since, in the text of KTU 1.16 vi 54-56, it is quite clear that the name of Baal is part of the invocation, rather than the subject of it.

Then Prince Baal was weak with fury -
he seized a deadly axe in his hand
in his right hand a weapon.
The divine assistants he [attacked]
40 his right hand Anat seized
his left hand Athtart grabbed
"Why would you strike [the messengers of Yam]
the envoys of Ruler Nahar?"
The messenger holds a staff of office
the messenger between his shoulders carries the word
of his master.
Then Prince Baal was enraged...\textsuperscript{900}

Later in the same column, Baal launched an attack on the divine assistants of Yam after El submitted to Yam's demand for the surrender of Baal. He was forcibly restrained by Anat and Athtart, who warned him that his behaviour could provoke the god whose standard of office the envoys carried.\textsuperscript{901} His emotional state before the attack has been disputed, although the problem can be settled by my proposed translation. For instance, Smith suggested "Then Prince Baal is shaken"\textsuperscript{902} and van Zijl "was weak"\textsuperscript{903} while most others

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[900] KTU 1.2 i 38-42.
\item[901] KTU 1.2 i 42.
\item[902] M.S. Smith 1997b: 100.
\item[903] Van Zijl 1975: 504.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
translated more simply as “was angry.” The idea of weakness is based upon Akk. *enešu* and Heb. *'nš* “to be weak, sickly, shaky” but these hardly describe Baal’s behaviour. The same root occurs in KTU 1.3 v 27 and is translated as “pitiless, short tempered or irascible.” The phrase “weak with anger” avoids possible conflict of translation by using two senses of the word and giving a graphic illustration of the physical effects of strong emotion.

Later, in KTU 1.2 iv, Kothar urged Baal to fight and “take his everlasting kingdom” with the help of two flying maces that he had produced – Expeller and All-Driver. Baal let fly with the weapons and Yam’s strong form finally gave way.

and Kothar-wa-Hasis spoke
“I say to you Prince Baal
I repeat to the Charioteer of the Clouds
Now your enemy O Baal
Now your enemy you shall fight
Now you shall vanquish your foe.
10 Take your everlasting kingdom
your eternal dominion.”
Kothar produced two maces and proclaimed their names
“You, your name is Expeller:
Expeller, expel Yam,
expel Yam from his throne,
Nahar from the seat of his dominion.

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507 see Caquot et al 1974: 132. After all, common idioms include ‘sick with fear’ ‘faint with shock’ etc.
508 KTU 1.2 iv 25-32.

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(You) must leap from the hand of Baal
like a falcon from his fingers
Strike the shoulders of Prince Yam,
the chest of [Rul]er Nahar”.

15 The mace leapt from the hand of Baal
like a falcon from his fingers
It struck the shoulders of Prince Yam
the chest of Ruler Nahar
(but) Yam was strong!
he did not flinch-
his joints did not tremble
his form did not crumble.

Kothar produced two maces and proclaimed their
names
“You, your name is All-Drivers:
All-Drivers, drive out Yam
20 Drive out Yam from his throne
Nahar from the seat of his dominion.
Leap from the hand of Baal
like a falcon from his fingers.
Strike the skull of Prince Yam
Between the eyes of Ruler Nahar.
Let Yam collapse
and let him fall to the ground.”

and the mace leapt from the hand of Baal
like a falcon from his fingers.
It struck the skull of Prince Yam
25 between the eyes of Ruler Nahar.
Yam collapsed
he fell to the ground
his joints trembled
his visage crumbled.
Baal gathered and drank up <Prince> Yam
he made an end of Ruler Nahar.
By name Athtart rebuked him -
“Dry (him) up O Valiant Baal
Dry him O Charioteer of the Clouds!”
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Our captive is Prince Yam
30 Our captive is Ruler Nahar."
and B[aal] went out
Valiant Baal dried him up and [ ]
Yam is (indeed) dead!909

Notice that both weapons were needed to defeat powerful Yam, whom Baal proceeded to drink, that is destroy, at Athtar's command. It seemed that Baal had yet to become king on Saphon, as would be the literal interpretation of Kothar's urging, although Yam's designation of Baal as "the one whom the gods obeyed" could negate this. Apart from the apparently subservient position of Baal beneath Yam's throne, there are hints that Baal had previously lost his kingship and in KTU 1.1 iv 23 Baal's kingship was given by El to Yam, as in KTU 1.2 iii 19ff Athtar's kingship was given to Yam. This divine game of 'musical thrones' indicates that kingship was not held indefinitely - although Mot appears to have been immune from this in the surviving evidence - and force, or 'war' if preferred, was one of the main means by which this transfer was achieved. This text does at least illustrate Baal's martial aspect, demonstrating his masterful use of weapons as also shown in the hunting episodes of KTU 1.10 and 1.12. The instructions by Kothar could be a reflection on the 'youthful' character of Baal, meaning that he still required some guidance.

Several passages from the Hebrew Bible seem to contain parallels firstly to Baal's smiting of Yam and also to the nature of his kingdom. In Judges 5:26, it

909 KTU 1.2 iv 7-32.

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is said that the woman Jael “put her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen’s mallet; she struck Sisera a blow, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple.” This graphic description of a fatal blow is reminiscent of the Ugaritic text although the weapons were more earthly. In Ps 145:13 the Psalmist wrote “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and your dominion endures throughout all generations” while in Dan 4:3 “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and his sovereignty is from generation to generation.”

Divine kingdoms aspired to be eternal, but in the Ugaritic evidence we know that they were not.

An interesting image is presented when Baal wails from below Yam’s throne, prior to Kothar giving Baal his weapons. If Baal was the supreme, royal warrior, what is suggested by his subservient position? Biblical evidence would seem to suggest that one’s position at a king’s table reflected not only one’s social status but also the position within that king’s favour: in 2 Kgs 25:28-29 “... he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the other seats of the kings who were with him... every day of his life he dined regularly in the king’s presence.” 1 Kings 2:7 and 2 Sam. 9:11 also show that a seat at the royal table was a sign of high favour. We find that the opposite held true as well – Ps. 110 begins “The Lord said to my lord, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool’.” and Adoni-Bezek in Judges 1:7 boasted “... Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table...”. These texts may provide some clue as to what had happened to Baal in KTU 1.2 iv. De Moor suggested that “defeated

910 Also Dan 7: 14 “His dominion is an everlasting dominion”.

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kings had to crawl under the furniture of their victors to pick up the crumbs”
912 referring to KTU 1.114:5ff "(any god) whom he did not know he beat/ with a stick under the table”913, a phrase similar to the HB material.

Smith proposed that Athtart cursed Baal - “May he sink beneath the throne of Prince Yam” but this does not fit the following context.914 Ginsberg suggested that a third party had cursed Baal915 but again this has tenuous textual support. Since the preceding column, perhaps two columns, are missing, it is impossible to guess accurately the sequence of events leading up to this point of the narrative. Whichever god spoke, the salient point was Baal’s apparently subservient position, along with any implications of that subservience.

One must also challenge the view of Baal as a ‘master-warrior’ since he required the help of Kothar and the encouragement of Athtart to escape and depose Yam. Baal may have been attacked by Yam beforehand and therefore was not at full strength, but this is hypothetical and cannot be regarded as fact. Yet, if we are to believe that Baal was a great warrior as appears to be the case from other Ugaritic texts, why would he require the help of other gods? Here one may again suggest a comparison between Baal and a king: kings required both faithful servants and weapons to maintain their kingdoms;

911 KTU 1.2 iv 7.
913 De Moor 1987: 135.
both Kothar and Athtart, although divine, filled those positions admirably. One cannot presume to know the position of the worshippers of Baal but one may safely presume that they were part of the courtly circle of LBA Ugarit, at a time when there is evidence to suggest society had become more centred upon the royal family and proximity to the king, along with the service which this implied.916

It should also be noted that once more Baal’s apparently aggressive action took place in response to a threat or injury of which we have lost the detail, and resulted in his being a step closer to divine kingship. While this text may demonstrate his martial capabilities, it does so in the context of royal motifs – as was demonstrated in the examination of the conflict between Baal and Mot.

Finally, an understanding of the battle between Baal and Yam can be found on a cosmic level. Baal was the god of storms, while Yam was undoubtedly the god of the sea and waters. These deified phenomena are found throughout the ANE and whenever they were embodied as gods, they were to be found at war. Baal’s defeat of Yam and the monsters associated with him has generally been taken as a protective type of combat, symbolising particularly his control over the wild seas which threatened the sailors who were the life blood of Ugarit’s port917 while Gibson stated that Baal was responsible for keeping order, keeping “at bay the unruly waters of chaos

916 Yon 1992b: 114.

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that surrounded their universe"\textsuperscript{918}, with the unspoken notion of combat which this implies. He likewise accepted that it was through his defeat of Yam that Baal became king.\textsuperscript{919}

Durand has argued that the battle between Marduk and Tiamat from the \textit{Enuma Eliš} – another battle between the storm god and sea god – should be regarded also as the battle between ‘Installer of world order’ and ‘Primordial Chaos’.\textsuperscript{920} There are several striking similarities between the battles of Baal/Yam and Marduk/Tiamat\textsuperscript{921} and therefore the combat of Baal and Yam may be regarded as evidence not only of Baal’s martial prowess (sic) but also a remnant or suggestion of the Ugaritic ‘cosmogonic’ myth which – although undoubtedly extant at the time the tablets were written – has so far not been found.\textsuperscript{922} The connection between the weapons with which the storm god Adad defeated the sea and thereby created order from chaos, however, with the weapons used by the king to defeat his enemies and maintain his borders is explicitly stated in the text \textit{ARM A.1968}.\textsuperscript{923} Although this example will be appraised in greater detail in the Chapter 6, it should be mentioned in passing here as further support for our theory that Baal cannot simply be described as a ‘war god’ because of the complexity of his motives for his attacks.

\textsuperscript{917} Herrmann 1999: 135.
\textsuperscript{918} Gibson 1978: 6.
\textsuperscript{919} Gibson 1978: 13.
\textsuperscript{920} Durand, 1993: 42.
\textsuperscript{921} Both battle sea-like gods; in both instances kingship is the goal and reward; however, Wyatt argues successfully against the \textit{Enuma Eliš} deriving from Ugarit: instead, an Amorite influence within Mesopotamia is far more likely. Wyatt 1998: 849 n. 42 following Jacobsen and Day.
\textsuperscript{922} Supported by Bordreuil & Pardee 1993: 69. See also RS 4.474 (CTA 30) \textit{verso}.
\textsuperscript{923} Durand 1993: 45.
So spoke Addu: ‘I have given all the land to Yahdun-Lim and, thanks to my weapons, he had no rival in combat. ... I have placed you upon the throne of your father [Yahdun-Lim, king Zimri Lim being addressed] and the weapons with which I have battled against Temtum, I have given them to you. I have anointed you with the oil of my victory and none can stand before you.”

This oracle alluded to a well-known belief: that the king was the heir of Addu (that is Hadad, the storm god) and that he was also the heir and beneficiary of that god’s defeat of the sea god Temtum (Tiamat) which enabled the establishment of his kingdom. Bordreuil and Pardee have no doubt that the combat between Baal and Yam was that of the storm god and sea god as also attested in this text of Mari. Wyatt carried out a comprehensive survey of this Chaoskampf material from the third and second millennia throughout the ANE in “Arms and the King”. As the title suggests, this piece focused largely upon the royal aspect of the battle between ANE storm gods and sea gods and shall be discussed further in Chapter 6. However, it is further support for the view that Baal was no mere pugilist.

Baal fought Yam not only to gain his kingship, but also to provide order for the world and particularly for the prosperous port of Ugarit, to calm the chaotic waters and give safe passage to the sailors who thanked him with

924 Durand 1993: 45.
925 See further discussion of this text in Chapter 6.
926 Bordreuil & Pardee 1993: 63, 69, 70. For the equivalence of Baal and Addu of Aleppo, see RS 24.643 and RS 26.142.
927 Wyatt 1998b.
votive anchors in his temple. The proposal that this was the ‘creation myth’ of Ugarit does not at present have enough supporting material for it be rigorously examined and supported but should be kept in mind as potential background for our understanding of the myth.

**Baal and others**

Much later in the Baal Cycle, in KTU 1.4 vii, Baal had been given his palace. The preceding column described a divine banquet given by Baal for the gods, after which the text became fragmentary for seven lines. When the narrative resumed, Baal was at large in the countryside, and the text appears to imply a massacre in each city he visited.

"He passed from [city] to city
He went from town to town
Sixty-six cities he seized
Seventy-seven towns
Eighty Baal smo[te]
Ninety Baal [captured]."

Upon his return to the palace he ordered Kothar to install palace windows so that his voice, the thunder, might be heard throughout his new kingdom. One of the outcomes of Baal’s “holy voice” thundering across the land is that his enemies fled to the hills and forests. The consensus view of this passage is that it reflected a kind of royal progress. Gibson compared it to the journey

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929 KTU 1.4 vii 50-52.
of Yahweh from Sinai in Deut 33:2\textsuperscript{930} while de Moor equated it to 2 Chron. 30:10 and Deut. 33:2, where first messengers and then Yahweh 'marched' from place to place, as in Judg. 5:4.\textsuperscript{931} Smith described it as Baal's "victory parade"\textsuperscript{932} while Wyatt was explicit in his comparison of it to the 'royal progress' of a king, riding his boundaries.\textsuperscript{933}

There is no evidence that there was a retaliatory or pre-emptive motive behind these attacks, if they were a royal accession rite or whether they were a form of sacrifice which completed the building of his palace.\textsuperscript{934} In fact, the text does not indicate that any people were killed and it is theoretically possible to capture a town without the slaughter of the inhabitants, if the representatives of the town collectively submit, or give allegiance, to their attacker. The arguments for a ritual sacrifice are too closely connected to unattested rituals and therefore the myth-and-ritual school. Whatever the possible reason for this passage, it demonstrated Baal's victorious and martial character most convincingly, as well as providing another possible element of the behaviour of Ugaritian kingship.

"Though you smote Litan the twisting serpent, 
finished off the writhing serpent, 
Encircler-with-seven-heads..."\textsuperscript{935}

\textsuperscript{930} Gibson 1978: 64. see also Exod. 15. 
\textsuperscript{931} De Moor 1987: 61 n.275. 
\textsuperscript{932} M.S. Smith 1997b: 135. 
\textsuperscript{933} Wyatt 1998: 108 n.150. 
\textsuperscript{934} Killing to ensure firm foundations carried on for a long time – a dead cat was recently found in a 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Edinburgh tenement! 
\textsuperscript{935} KTU 1.5 i 1, 1.5 i 29.
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This message at the beginning of KTU 1.5 i 1, repeated later at KTU 1.5 i 29, contains a description of an enemy Baal had slain (since it was he whom Mot addressed immediately afterwards). However, this should be compared to the passage in KTU 1.3 iii, when Anat said it was she who had slain “the dragon ... the writhing serpent ... Encircler-with-seven-heads”, an almost identical (but longer) description. Was Baal claiming victory over the creature Anat had killed? Was this a fragment of some battle perhaps fought by Baal and Anat together but no longer extant in the tablets?936

Gibson suggested that some of those slain (understanding the list to contain several creatures) by Baal could be attendants of Yam or even different names for one creature – Yam himself.937 Margalit argued for a first person narrative, repeated as part of Mot’s reply to Baal’s message from KTU 1.4 viii, and interpreted the passage as an accusation by Baal that Mot938 or his assistant had attacked him, and stated that there was no evidence for Baal having killed Leviathan, unlike Anat.939 The sole support for Anat having killed the creature was her own statement in KTU 1.3 iii, but Margalit’s translation prevented Baal making the same claim in KTU 1.5 i (he proposed an imperative instead of 2 sg. verb with concessive k). Smith and Wyatt compared the passage to Isa. 27.1, Yahweh’s killing of Leviathan, which contains a strikingly similar description of “Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will kill the dragon that is in the

936 Wyatt 1987b attempts to answer this.
938 Margalit proposed that Yam and Mot were allies, perhaps even alter egos. 1980: 90.
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Although it is possible that Itn, the creature Baal is credited with slaying, may have lived in the sea, it is not stated explicitly here. Neither can one find conclusive evidence that Yam and Itn are the same being. One may state, then, that there are thematic similarities between Yam, Itn and Leviathan of the HB and the treatment that each of these ‘persons’ receives at the hand of either Baal or Yahweh, but a complete identification of them as one is misleading. Rather, they conform to the ‘mytheme’ proposed by scholars for many years, that of the combat between Storm God and divinised Sea (representing Chaos).

Likewise it is useless to speculate whether Anat or Baal was the original dragon slayer and, as it stands, (despite Margalit’s translation) this description confirmed Baal’s martial aspect, his love of the fight, while the question over Anat’s claim to these victories will remain unresolved.

Perhaps one of the most illustrative passages of Baal’s character can be found in KTU 1.6 v. A large lacuna followed the search for Baal by Anat and Shapsh, and KTU 1.6 v begins with a returned Baal attacking the sons of Athirat, who appeared to fall into three categories – great, ‘brilliant’? and small.

1 Baal seized the sons of Athirat
the great ones he slew with a blade

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941 Following Wyatt 1998b: 140 n. 102 kdp ‘weapon (scimitar) or scapula’.

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the brilliant\textsuperscript{942} ones he slew with a mace
the small ones he slew to the earth
5 and (then) Baal went up to the throne of his kingship
to the [se]at of the throne of his dominion.\textsuperscript{943}

Gibson connected the sons to both Asherah and Mot, translating it as "the great ones ... the pounders of the sea... the yellow ones of Mot" but disputed the involvement of Yam\textsuperscript{944} while Binger suggested that Baal killed those who resembled Yam and the underlings of Mot.\textsuperscript{945} Smith however included "... the young of Yamm" among the victims.\textsuperscript{946} The connection to Yam is derived by splitting the word \textit{dkyrn} – a highly subjective procedure. The translation 'brilliant ones' follows Gaster and Driver based on the Arabic \textit{dakiyu} 'brilliant'.\textsuperscript{947} It should be noted though that all translations of this phrase are tentative and this is the best of those proposed so far. Once more, this was connected to Baal's ascent of the throne, indicating that the attacks of the storm god were not without a strong motivation.

\textit{Texts: 'Hunting'}

Examples of Baal's hunting prowess can be adequately demonstrated by examining KTU 1.10 and 1.12, although the episodes do not form the central passages of either text.\textsuperscript{948}

\textsuperscript{942} Conjectural. note the sequence from great - ? - small.
\textsuperscript{943} KTU 1.6 v 1-6.
\textsuperscript{944} Gibson 1978: 79.
\textsuperscript{945} Binger 1997.
\textsuperscript{946} M.S. Smith 1997b: 160 n. 188.
\textsuperscript{947} Gaster 1961: 224, Driver 1956: 154.
\textsuperscript{948} KTU 1.92 provides an example of a goddess hunting (Ahtart) followed by a possible seduction by Baal. Wyatt 1998b: 370-74.
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and the divine messengers of Baal replied
‘Baal is not within his mansion
5 the Divine Hadd within his palace.
He took his bow in his (left) hand
and his arrow(s) in his right (hand).
Then indeed he set his face
toward the shore of Shamak, filled with oxen.’\(^{949}\)

The rest of this text deals with Baal and his mating with a heifer, at the very least watched by Anat.\(^{950}\) The actual translation is relatively uncontroversial and is supported by others.\(^{951}\) We have a clear example of Baal hunting with bow and arrow, with many inscribed arrowheads\(^{952}\) attested from Ugarit indicating it was a popular competitive sport and not entirely utilitarian in nature. Neither was it the usual weapon of Baal – in his defeat of Yam he fought with mace or club like weapons, such as that shown on the *Baal au Foudre* stela.\(^{953}\) Archery was not necessarily used to quell the enemy or to supply game, but as a test of one’s skill and an enjoyable pastime and although a number of arrowheads were recovered from the last stage of Ugarit following what appears to have been an enemy attack, we have no way of knowing whether these were Ugaritian or enemy arrows.\(^{954}\)

And the face of Baal was on them\(^{955}\)
Baal went and hunted
35 he came to the edge of the desert

Now he came upon the Eaters

\(^{949}\) KTU 1.10.ii.4-9
\(^{950}\) see Chapter 3.
\(^{952}\) Good 1994: 162.
\(^{953}\) Schaeffer 1939: pl. XXXII: 2
\(^{954}\) Yon 1992b.
\(^{955}\) This could be a reference to the bovine image of El but may just indicate ‘Baal looked at them’. Compare KTU 1.11.
and found the Devourers
Baal desired to ‘covet’ them
Son of Dagan greatly fancied them

40 Baal sought them on foot
and Divine Hadd on tiptoe

This text has posed rather more challenges to translators. The initial phrase “Baal’s face was on them”, with the preposition b meaning “on” as in, to be interested or looking at them, has also been regarded as an indication of hostile intent by Caquot & Szynier. Ginsberg, del Olmo Leite and de Moor have all suggested that the creatures in fact looked like Baal, perhaps influenced by the previous description of them as having “horns like bulls and humps like steers”. Although bovine imagery is more commonly associated with ‘Bull El’, in KTU 1.10 Baal’s mating with the heifer produced bovine offspring and some scholars have connected this to the creatures in KTU 1.12. Given that the first thing Baal then did was to set off and hunt them this seems an unlikely understanding and the impression of Baal watching them intently is more fitting.

Baal’s motivation is not entirely clear in this text either. He seems to be greatly attracted to them – could it be that these bovine creatures have roused him to lust? This sequence of hunting and lusting was explicit in

956 Baal desires them as Anat covets Aqhat’s bow. He hunts them with skill as she traps and kills Aqhat.
957 Following Wyatt 1998b: 164 n.13 Other explanations ignore parallelism and require more interpretation.
958 KTU 1.12.132-41.
KTU 1.10. Perhaps these divine offspring were more troublesome than the heifers of Shamak and so we find, in the fragmentary column following, that Baal has been attacked, no doubt by the very creatures he hunted. His sexual mores are discussed elsewhere\textsuperscript{961} and do not detract from the presence of the archery motif. It could also be the kind of desire aroused in Anat when she beheld the bow of Aqhat, whom she later trapped and killed in the same way as one suspects Baal intended to do with these creatures.

These texts reflect a tradition of hunting which was found throughout the ANE as both a sport and a method of testing the prowess of heroes – both divine and royal. This type of hunting required great skill on behalf of the archer but was also dependent upon the co-operation of natural elements such as the wind – that it did not carry the arrow off course or the scent of the hunter to the animal before the arrow reached its quarry – as well as the good will of the gods.

Good discussed these texts at length, placing them in context and examining them in detail. He confirmed that these texts described hunting as sport rather than an activity of necessity.\textsuperscript{962} An important caveat was placed upon the use of Assyrian iconographic evidence.

\textsuperscript{961} Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{962} Good 1994: 157. Better support for this can be found in HUS: 593 in which the king is shown hunting.
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Although the palace wall reliefs\(^{963}\) do indeed show the king hunting lions, Good stated that these were animals which had previously been caught and were later released as "captive quarry" for the king who shot from a chariot.\(^{964}\) While it has been argued that an Ugaritic 'war chariot' does exist\(^{965}\), the explicit reference to Baal's approach on foot indicates that we are dealing with a different kind of hunting altogether and one which was predicated upon the fitness and skill of the participant rather than the necessity of a successful hunt for a religious celebration.\(^{966}\) Baal's hunting was therefore sport, rather than aggressive behaviour and does not support a characterisation of him as a 'war god'. Rather, I will argue in Chapter 6 - "Baal as a Royal God" that this instead was essential for the view of him as a divine royal figure. For the moment, I would cite contemporaneous examples of royal sporting activity from Egypt\(^{967}\) of the kind found in Ugarit and Assyria.\(^{968}\) The famous scenes of Minoan bull-leaping also 'leap' to mind and evidence is found in Greece and Cyprus throughout the Bronze Age that many kinds of competitive sports were practised.

We may conclude, along with Good, that "it makes perfect sense to describe Baal as a sportsman. Athletic achievement gave evidence of the sort of greatness required of kings, whether human or divine or both".\(^{969}\)

\(^{963}\) Some of which are currently in the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum, New York.
\(^{964}\) Good 1994: 156-7.
\(^{965}\) Discussion of KTU 4.392 in del Olmo Lete 1984: 50.
\(^{966}\) Good 1994: 159.
\(^{967}\) Decker 1987 and Herb 1993.
\(^{968}\) see Redford 1992: 149.
\(^{969}\) Good 1994: 163.
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Baal, Anat and violence

Baal and his sister had a highly unusual relationship, one that involved violence. To recognise the importance of this pairing, it is here given independent discussion in an effort to redress some earlier dismissal of the significance of these events. It should be noted, however, that this is a discussion of their involvement in combat – an examination of their so-called ‘fertility’ aspect has been provided in Chapter 3.

The first passage examined is KTU 1.3 iii 36-42.

She lifted up her voice and she cried
"why have Gupan and Ugar come?
What enemy has arisen against Baal?
(what) foe against the Charioteer of the Clouds?

Surely I slew the Beloved of El, Yam?
Surely I destroyed Nahar, the great god?
Surely I lifted up the Dragon?
Surely I slew the writhing serpent,
Encircler-with-seven-heads?

I slew the Beloved of El, Arsh
I silenced the calf of El, Atik
45 I slew El’s bitch, Fire
I consumed the daughter of El, Flame.

970 Xhbm following Wyatt 1998b: 79 n. 48.
971 Ars is mentioned en passant at the end of 1.6 vi.
As mentioned above, Anat initially feared that Baal’s enemies had “returned” to threaten him. The list of those killed is most impressive, including a few of El’s offspring who are not attested elsewhere. This, I believe, indicates that we are missing a sizeable portion from the mythological texts of Ugarit among which we would find the tale of Anat fighting these creatures on behalf of Baal, her brother and beloved.

Caquot and Sznycer proposed that the “persons listed ... were very probably supporters of Yam (the same as Babylonian Tiamat is escorted by monsters according to the *Enuma Eliš*)” while Gibson said “it is not clear whether these are attendant monsters of Yam whose destruction could therefore have been related in the long gap between 2 i and iv or (Gaster) in a missing tablet between CTA 2 and 3”. This is a possibility. However, Anat’s worry argues against de Moor’s ordering of the texts since, in his sequence, she made this claim before Baal killed Yam in KTU 1.2 iv - de Moor only asked us to ‘compare’ it with KTU 1.5 i ff, although he noted that in Syrian seals Anat appeared to witness the killing of the dragon.

Why would Anat claim to have slain some of those victims attributed by Mot to Baal in KTU 1.5 i? Had they defeated Baal before? Unfortunately none of those possible battles is written on extant tablets and we are left only with

974 De Moor 1987: 11.
975 De Moor 1987: 70 n. 325.
tantalising hints at the diversity of lost tales. I am inclined to think that it is most likely a symptom of the complex mythic background and history out of which Illimilku constructed the ‘cycle’ and should not therefore be regarded as an outright hint that Baal was in need of his sister’s protection. It also indicated that Baal was not the sole ‘war god’ of Ugarit – he had a sister who fought either alongside or on behalf of him. May one suggest, perhaps, in his stead?

The notion that Anat may fight alongside Baal is perhaps the background to the next example.

20 “Life, sister, and longevity!
The horns of your strength, Maiden Anat
The horns of your strength may Baal anoint.”

Baal anointed them against? weariness?
“Let us plant\textsuperscript{976} in the earth my enemies
and in the dust (those who) stand against your brother.”\textsuperscript{977}

This mention of war is at odds with the rest of the surviving text, which detailed the ‘romantic’ involvement of Baal with a heifer, resulting in bovine offspring. De Moor suggested that Anat’s head-dress was anointed while in flight but also translated “We shall pierce my foes into the earth, the adversaries of your brother into the dust!”.\textsuperscript{978} However he made no comment upon the notion that they fought together, being rather more interested like

\textsuperscript{976} “plant”, lit. pierce
\textsuperscript{977} KTU 1.10 ii 20-25.
\textsuperscript{978} De Moor 1987: 113.
many other scholars, in the sexual episodes described, although no consensus has been reached on whether Anat is the sexual partner of Baal or not.979

Lloyd argued that Anat’s warrior characterisation was less important in the theme of Baal’s palace than it was in the combat with Mot, although overall she is shown as a ‘warrior goddess’.980 This argues perhaps for the ‘bringing together’ of different tales in Ugarit to form this ‘cycle’ which could have existed for many years as separate myths at independent temples although they read very well as a group of texts. There is no copy of a different ‘recension’ of the cycle and so this cannot be proved. However, the different characterisation of Anat, along with the hints at battles she and Baal have fought and won together, indicates that this was almost certainly the case.

In summary, Anat was presented as a female ‘war god’ – as far as that term is tenable – in the texts concerning her and Baal. Their relationship, whether sexual or not, extended to them fighting together against mutual enemies. This is unusual and has, so far, not been adequately researched. Unfortunately there is no space in this thesis for that research to take place and so it must wait a while longer. One should consider Baal and Anat as ‘comrades in arms’ as well as brother and sister before moving their relationship on to other, less explicitly attested, ground.

979 Lloyd 1994: 259.
Summary of textual evidence

The battle between Mot and Baal in KTU 1.6 is without doubt extremely significant. Not only did Baal in this episode resist Mot’s clamour for victims, but he actively fought against him. This is a very different attitude to the earlier instance when Baal appeared to submit to Mot and descended into his gullet.\textsuperscript{981} The fragmentary text of KTU 1.5 would permit another battle like this to have taken place and now be missing but one should not attempt to reconstruct a defeat of Baal on such hypothetical ground. Rather, one may conclude from the well preserved fight that survives in KTU 1.6 that Mot and Baal were able to fight, that is, Mot was not exempt from such physical struggles\textsuperscript{982} and Baal did not always need to use weapons supplied by Kothar. Good’s proposal that this scene echoed an Ugaritic sport, similar to wrestling, bears up to examination although it must be stated that using metaphors or similes perhaps used of sportsmen in no way trivialises this passage. Rather, one should regard the use of that motif as a device to engage the reader or community who lived in Ugarit and worshipped Baal. The significance of their fight is not merely revenge for Baal’s trickery of Mot. It is explicitly stated that Baal shall remain on his throne – Mot will not challenge him further: it could be said that Mot holds his own throne too dear to risk it merely to defeat Baal once more.

\textsuperscript{981} KTU 1.5. See Chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{982} As confirmed by Anat’s treatment of him in KTU 1.5.
The combat between Baal and Yam is similarly complicated. On one level the gods are rivals for a throne which El seems to dispense regularly to whichever god is in favour. On another, Baal and Yam are conforming to the mytheme of the Storm god fighting the Sea god in order to establish order from chaos. It could be argued that on yet another, far more tenuous level, they represent rival families within the pantheon and perhaps even dynasties upon earth or among the priesthood. Baal’s victory however indicates that at least the first two are successful and carried out to completion: Baal regains his throne, which he appeared to have lost because of some belligerence towards El, and at the same time upholds the created order of the world and Ugarit. Sailors may continue upon important trade routes and the royal family will maintain their position as rulers of Ugarit – the divinely ordained status quo has survived another combat with chaos.

Likewise Baal’s enjoyment of archery and hunting supports a view of him as young, athletic and worthy of kingship – rather like Ugarit’s own king at the time. Since it has been demonstrated that this is neither the manner in which he defeated enemies (viz. his club and lightning rod on the stela) nor likely to have been the main way of obtaining game for his table, the only option available is that Baal hunted for sport. We should not be surprised that the upper echelon of divine society and we may presume human society had time for such pastimes and a denial of this reflects rather a modern understanding of ANE society.

\footnote{See KTU 1.1 iv 24-26, 1.2 iii 19-20.}

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This may also explain the difficulty of Anat and her war-like nature. She is in fact more aggressive than Baal in the Baal Cycle and demonstrated her fierce character again in the story of Aqhat. The modern, systematic mind would perhaps argue that there can be only one ‘war god’ in a pantheon and be unnecessarily concerned about the implications of this for Baal. However, the episodes in which Baal and Anat appear together in ‘hunting mode’, along with Anat’s claim of having slain the enemies of Baal indicates rather that they are allies, who fought alongside each other with Anat perhaps defending Baal’s weak left arm. It is quite possible for Ugarit to have had several gods who take part in war, since it is hoped that we have shown, that the designation ‘war god’ is as inapplicable as the term ‘dying and rising’ as a restrictive label.

**Conclusion**

In all of his war-like actions, Baal’s violence was undertaken with a greater goal in mind - it was a brutal type of divine Realpolitik no doubt reflecting the reality of political life. The discovery of the stele ‘Baal au Foudre’ supported the view of Baal as warlike, depicting him with a club and lightning-like rod in a smiting posture. However Baal was also a sportsman, an athlete who wrestled and hunted. These activities were more significant in the ANE and were arguably intrinsic to the royal nature of Baal which is explored in the next chapter. While the king must demonstrate that he was strong, skilled at

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hunting and capable of maintaining the kingdom against enemies, so must the royal god, Baal. Given the troubled era in which the last king of Ugarit found himself, one can easily conclude that among the texts written by Ilimilku were those which would give succour and hope to the troubled royal family and court in difficult times. By portraying Baal as a strong god who defended himself mostly successfully, the king may have been able to enjoy the reflected glory.

Baal was without doubt capable of acting with aggression – even when under Yam’s throne he was belligerent, reluctant to give up his power, and was easily persuaded by Kothar to fight. His occasional defeat did not necessarily suggest he was not ‘war-like’; for example, the tears of warriors in the Iliad did not indicate that they were weak. Taken together with his storm-function and his royal aspirations one could reasonably agree with Smith that Baal was indeed a “divine warrior” 985 but not necessarily a ‘war god’.

985 M.S. Smith 1990: xix.
Chapter 6 - Baal as an Ugaritic ‘Royal God’

The view of Baal as a ‘royal god’ has been suggested as an addition to the understanding of him as both a ‘fertility’ and ‘war’ god. What is the evidence for this?

An initial definition of the title, while necessary, is not at all easy and cannot be made at this point. Our understanding of the title hangs upon two main issues: firstly, was Baal a cipher, reification or avatar of the king of Ugarit, that is, were Baal’s actions in religious texts held to be the divine counterpart of the earthly king’s and his characteristics likewise? Secondly, was there a particularly ‘special’ relationship between the Ugaritic king and Baal of Ugarit? Could one argue for a bond in which the king was closer to Baal than to the father of the gods, El? These questions cover the understandings of the term ‘royal god’ from both the divine and earthly points of view.

With regard to the first point, there are those who have argued that gods were manifestations or projections of certain roles within society, even those who would support the view of the pantheon as a bureaucratic model.

986 See Chapters 3 and 4 for our discussion of these designations.
987 The identity of Baal of Ugarit is discussed in Chapter 9.
of the city kingdoms common at the time.\(^{989}\) Baal, in Handy’s archetype, would have represented a certain level of authority and it is more likely that El would be the overall king, while Baal would be a lower ranking authority, perhaps some kind of civil servant. Therefore, if one were to liken the Ugaritic pantheon to a bureaucratic system, Baal would not be at the head of the overall hierarchy. Since Baal was still given the title mlk, most often translated as ‘king’ in the religious texts, the model would require alteration before being applicable to Ugarit.

Others have argued that Baal was in some way a representation of the king - his wars were representative of those of the king and therefore his victories were also those of the king.\(^{990}\) This theory is very plausible, given the supporting evidence from Ugarit’s neighbours – apart from Hatti and Ebla, one thinks particularly of the Egyptian pharaohs, whose mothers coupled with gods to produce the Crown Prince and who were suckled after birth by goddesses – but the Ugaritic evidence for this is ambiguous. An initial survey including diplomatic and ritual texts may frame a picture of Ugarit’s human royalty supported by written evidence.

References to rulership within the religious texts relating to Baal are those which one would expect in reference to the city’s patron god.\(^{991}\) Is it possible, indeed valid, to infer from them a view of Baal as a ‘royal’ god? The royal

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\(^{989}\) Handy 1994: *passim*.

\(^{990}\) Wyatt 1996a and 1998: *passim*.

\(^{991}\) They are the religious form (henotheism) of the ‘polite hyperbole’ found in correspondence with foreign rulers. Singer 1999: 626.

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references and titles were given to most deities mentioned, including Baal’s enemies, Yam and Mot, along with his putative successor, Athtar, although there are several henotheistic passages\textsuperscript{992} which have been regarded as cultic anthems inserted into the text. Are these then evidence of a divine and royal nature? Are these titles and functions, together with the other roles that Baal possesses, enough to present Baal convincingly as a ‘royal’ god?

It can be seen that so far, all of the complications inherent in yet another attempt to place Baal into an ideological ‘pigeon-hole’ hang upon the two main questions put earlier. Was Baal an avatar of the Ugaritic king and did Baal have a particular bond with the king of Ugarit, not shared by other divinities mentioned in the religious texts?

Before we can support theories relating to royalty and divinity, we must examine and assess the textual evidence.\textsuperscript{993} Could, in fact, the concept of Baal as a ‘royal’ god, whatever that may be defined as, be another attempt to codify Bronze Age Baal as a cipher which is easier for the Judaeo-Christian, Post-Enlightenment (or even Post Modern) mind to categorise, perhaps even to dismiss as irrelevant, since so few of us are royal? Is the phrase ‘royal god’ a valid term at all? Would the existence of other Ugaritic gods designated as

\textsuperscript{992} E.g. KTU 1.3 v 32-35.

\textsuperscript{993} Although this is also problematic: “It is very likely that the emphasis on the throne and the royal legitimacy of the gods did concern the Ugaritic monarchy. But the texts themselves say nothing directly about it … it is highly probable that this was the interpretation at Ugarit … But it cannot be proved from within the Baal texts.” Wyatt 1996a: 142.
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‘royal’ have an effect upon our understanding of what it meant to be a member of the Ugaritic royal family?

To understand the available evidence and marshal the facts in order to provide a clearer concept of the relationship between Baal and the notion of a ‘royal god’, the current understanding of earthly royalty in Ugarit shall be examined initially, followed by a survey of the religious texts which mention the ‘royal nature’ of Baal. Contextualization of both aspects, the earthly and divine, is important, since it can be noted at this point that Baal was not the only god of Ugarit given the accoutrements and titles appropriate to a member of a royal family. Finally, an attempt must be made to summarise and comprehend what consequence this information has for the term ‘royal god’, the notion of Baal as a ‘royal god’ and how his conforming (or not) to this role affects our overall theology of Baal.

**Ancient Near Eastern kingship – a brief overview.**

“As the apex of human society, the king represented his people before the gods. To his people, he was the representative of the gods. Standing at the mid point between the divine and human realms, he shared in both natures. ... As the mediator of divine realities to human society, the king was believed to act out in his life the mythological acts of the gods. Thus their warfare and their erotic activities are in effect the paradigms of royal warfare and the king’s sexual life. This is generally accepted as a fair
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description of what went on throughout the ancient near east."994

This is to be understood as placing Ugarit within its "cultural continuum"995 rather than equating it with a generalised 'Canaan'.996 Following Wyatt's brief resumé of the role of the king, what evidence can be found in the contemporary (or very nearly contemporary) texts from Ugarit's neighbours?

The connection between kingship and the gods was confirmed by the bestowing upon the king of divine weapons, often those used in the defeat of a primaeval foe, the sea monster. For example, one finds an explicit example in an early text from Mari:

"When you (Zimrilim) sat on the throne of your father, I (Hadad) gave you the weapons by which I fought the sea"997 Likewise, the delivery to a temple of the divine weapons was confirmed by the priest Suma-Ila "The weapons of Addu of Aleppo have arrived here. I shall keep them in the temple of Dagan at Terqa, to do with them according to the instructions my lord writes to me."998

Note that this is a passing reference to an already well-known story and not the explicit narration of Adad's defeat of the sea. The divine power of the god was given to the king via the weapons, presumably as a validation of his

994 Wyatt, 1996: 120.
995 Tubb 1998: 73-5. One must question both his view of the cult of Ugarit as one of 'blood sacrifice' and Anat as Baal's spouse (both promiscuous and warlike), as well as his ignoring of the self-distinction of Ugaritians from Canaanites.
996 Discussed in Introduction.
997 Durand 1993: 45.
998 Durand 1993: 53.

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wielding of governmental power (the earthly prevention of chaos comparable to Adad’s defeat of the sea).

An Assyrian contemporary of King Ammittamru II, Shalmeneser I, described himself as

"prefect of Bel, priest of Aššur, the holy, viceroy of the gods, favourite prince of Ishtar, who restores (purifies) the cult and the freewill offerings, who increases the bloody sacrifices and the offerings for all the gods ... strong warrior, mighty in battle, who burns up the enemy, thunders (like Adad) among his foes ... When the lord Aššur chose me for his legitimate worshipper, and, for the ruling of the black-headed people, gave me sceptre, sword and staff, he presented me the diadem of legitimate rulership."999

His long-reigning successor, Tukulti-Ninurta, the end of whose reign coincided with Ugarit’s fall, likewise claimed to be

"king of the universe, king of Assyria, king of the four quarters (of the world), the Sun of all peoples, the mighty king ... king of the mountains and the wide (desert) plains, ...the king whom the gods have caused to attain unto his heart’s desire and who, through the splendor of his might, has made himself ruler of the four regions (of the world) am I."1000

Not only this, he was also the “favourite of Aššur, priest of Aššur, the king whose pious works are well pleasing to the gods of heaven and earth, and to

1000 Luckenbill 1968: 50.
whose sceptre they gave command to rule the four quarters of the earth”.\textsuperscript{1001} Tukulti-Ninurta I was certain of not only the protection of the gods in battle, but also of his own kingship, bestowed on him by the gods which made him second only to a divinity upon earth. There are more texts which could be used to support the brief summary of kingship described by Wyatt above but this is a sufficient demonstration of its validity for the moment.

\textit{What was the understanding of ‘kingship’ in Ugarit?}

The kings of Ugarit figure briefly in religious and cultic texts but are more present in the diplomatic records stored within the Palace archives. Several letters from the kingdom of Ugarit were also found among the ‘Amarna letters’ discovered in Egypt from the reign of pharaoh Akhenaten, or Amenophis IV. Here we find evidence for the international stage upon which Ugarit was a vital, if not major, player in its role as an axis of trade. Nearly four hundred texts of widely varied cuneiform dialects contain several letters from the royal family of Ugarit to the king of Egypt.\textsuperscript{1002} However, there is little one can gather from them about the Ugaritian king, other than his role as a communicator with the kings of other countries. This could, of course, be regarded as an earthly parallel to his role as a communicator with the gods.\textsuperscript{1003}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1001} Luckenbill 1968: 52.
  \item \textsuperscript{1002} EA 45, 49, possibly 46-48 also.
  \item \textsuperscript{1003} KTU 1.41 contains instructions for the king as he ‘communicates’ (via sacrifice) to many of the gods of the pantheon.
\end{itemize}

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In *EA* 45, the pharaoh was addressed as “the Sun, my lord” and after greetings and a prostration, appears to detail the sending of troops (perhaps of an enemy of Egypt) to the king.\(^{1004}\) There was no difficulty for the Ugaritians to transfer the Hittite honorific of ‘Sun’ to an Egyptian and given the frequent use of the ‘sun’ to refer to kings throughout the Near East, one cannot doubt the importance bestowed by such a title.\(^{1005}\) Most significant, perhaps, was text *EA* 49, a request for an Egyptian physician and palace attendants from the king of Ugarit, most likely Niqmad II, in response to an unspecified (but no doubt significant) gift.\(^{1006}\) The Ugaritic king was a vassal of Egypt, a participant in the international field of royal relations and once again, the pharaoh was called “the sun, my Lord”.

**Religious, ritual and diplomatic textual evidence from Ugarit**

It is sensible to begin with the concrete evidence of kingship from Ugarit: I have here been most ruthless, ignoring the long tradition of inference from Engnell, Widengren and Hooke, most of whom were adherents of the schools of a ‘Seasonal Pattern’, the *hieros gamos* or a type of pan-Semiticism. Despite their claims for clear evidence of all of these phenomena in Ugaritian religion and even the indubitable concept of “divine kingship”, found throughout the area and therefore also in Ras Shamra, the evidence provided

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\(^{1006}\) Moran 1992: 120.
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came from many sources other than Ugarit.¹⁰⁰⁷ In an attempt to curb the rather expansive tendencies common in this area of scholarship, I have erred on the side of caution and restraint.¹⁰⁰⁸ A more detailed explanation of why these generalisations and misunderstandings of the Ugaritic material have been rejected, is given in Chapter 1.

In ritual texts, some evidence may be gained from those which mentioned the dead kings of Ugarit. KTU 1.113 and 1.161, the former containing a list of deceased kings, each with the divine prefix il before his name and the latter a funerary service for the last King Niqmad of Ugarit.¹⁰⁰⁹ The invocation of ancestral names, along with the attribution of il to each indicated that at least after death, the king attained a level of divinity. However, one cannot claim that this was so for the living monarch on this evidence alone.

The king was the head of government, ruler of the city and country, head of the ruling classes, who flocked around the king particularly toward the end of the city’s history.¹⁰¹⁰ His role in diplomatic correspondence has already been demonstrated with the Amarna texts but is further examined below.

¹⁰⁰⁷ See for example Engnell 1943: 76-90 in which Ugarit is often mentioned but never quoted. When the Ugaritic texts are finally approached, the ‘dramatic performative’ understanding characteristic of Gaster et al. is preferred and the poetic repetition is ascribed to the “stylistic effect” of iteration common to “primitive plays” (103). “We are thus ... not concerned with ‘myths’, not even cult-myths, but with what ought rightly to be called cult-rituals. ...We are dealing with cult-dramas accomplished in cues, narrative passages, gestures, and ritual actions, words and actions supplementing each other.” (104).

¹⁰⁰⁸ Discussed in Introduction and analysis of the Seasonal Pattern in Chapter 1.

¹⁰⁰⁹ See Singer 1999: 732 for a comparative chart of the contemporary neighbouring kings, regarded as the most current chronology.

As far as it is possible to tell, he was also the titular 'head' of Ugaritian religion, an honorary priest in whose name the priest Illimilku wrote, the apex of a hierarchy within the cult. This was exemplified in KTU 1.14 ii, when El instructed Keret on how to proceed into the sanctuary to pray for descendants. The rituals of purification, sacrifice and libation, ascent, divine feeding and ritual descent, could be performed only by the king, as these actions took the participant close to the gods, a position in which the king had previously been honoured during his enthronement. A ritual equivalent may be found in KTU 1.41, a calendar of cultic obligations performed by the king which included purification, sacrifices, libations and eventually a ritual desacralization, along with KTU 1.87, 1.119 and 1.43. The king had an important role in these rites and, on textual evidence, these duties were not performed by a priest of the temple.

This is in opposition to the argument of de Tarragon who stated that:

"in order to make out the concrete practice of the kings of Ugarit as it is revealed in the liturgies, one would not have to go far afield: in a certain number of rituals the king acts as the principal agent of the cult. What he does is relatively limited. He proceeds to the rite of purification by means of

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1011 In the subscription of KTU 1.6, Illimilku concluded his signature with “Sacrificer of Niqmad king of Ugarit, Lord of Yargab and Ruler of Sharrman.”

1012 This ritual confirms Keret's royal status and compared with ritual texts from Ugarit, it is clear that only the king is permitted to perform such rituals. One may therefore understand Keret to be a king, although he is not stated to be the king of Ugarit itself.


1014 One should not automatically assume that the king would not be present or perform the rites based upon our understanding of the cult of other countries, for example Egypt.
illustration, he is desacralized at the setting of the sun; one brings before him, in the royal palace, statuettes of certain deities, ... and he worships them by visiting them and grasping them. One cannot be more precise. ... It is with such facts as I have summarized here that the theory of 'sacral kingship' should be confronted."

His argument for the diminution of the role of the king within the cult was not, however, based upon his understanding of the ideology of sacral kingship as had been expressed in the literary texts: rather it could be said that the literary texts were of an earlier age and thus the discrepancy between ideology and actuality was ascribed by de Tarragon to chronological rather than cognitive dissonance. He had not, in fact, grasped the ideology expressed within and through the rituals: the king alone may ascend, once purified, to the level of the divinity. Rather than indicating his limited importance, it merely highlighted just how unique his position as pontifex was. Similarly, when Keret's children were all dead and we are told he "went into his chamber (and) wept" before a visitation from El.

The role of temple builder is not currently supported in the ritual texts of Ugarit for the human king. There was certainly a pattern found in the tale of Solomon's temple, Gudea's temple and the building of the temple of Baal: a victorious or powerful god, often after a battle seeks his own temple or palace. Once permission was gained from the leading god, a master builder (either human or divine) set to work with the finest of materials often

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1016 de Tarragon 1980: 141. de Tarragon did not, however, explain the grounds for this chronology.
1017 KTU 1.14 i 27.
1018 Although it may be inferred from KTU 1.4.
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obtained from the distant heights where the best trees grow. The temple being finished, offerings or thanks were given and quickly followed by a great banquet.\textsuperscript{1019} Since this procedure was followed by both kings and gods (explicitly by Baal in the Ugaritic texts), whether the duty can be ascribed to either royalty or divinity is debatable: the two designations seem, in this role at least, to be largely interchangeable.

While this may have been the ideology behind the tales of temple building, the reality was far more political: the centres of cities were the palace and the temple, both of which became large administrative centres and often significant land holders which had important implications for the economics of the country or city-state.\textsuperscript{1020} The building of temples by kings furthered their function as \textit{pontifex maximus}, connecting themselves more closely with the ruling divinity of their country. Peterson described kingship as "administrative in character" and argued that the king was part of a "political and social game; his power is limited by powers from above, from the court milieu and from below".\textsuperscript{1021} Likewise he was titular defender of the country, the warrior given the weapons of the gods with their divine power.

In Ugarit we have at least one religious text published which gives details of 'divine weapons' comparable to those mentioned in Mari and Assyria.\textsuperscript{1022}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{1019} Kapelrud 1963: 62.
\textsuperscript{1020} Ahlström 1982: 2. For the amazing logistics of Egyptian economic involvement of the cult, see Kemp 1998: 195.
\textsuperscript{1021} Peterson 1998: 100.
\textsuperscript{1022} This is the interpretation of Wyatt 1998a and del Olmo Lete 1992.
\end{flushright}
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KTU 1.65 is a prayer for the security of Ugarit addressed initially to the entire pantheon, more specifically to El and declaims

"Help, El!
Peace, El! ...

For the sake of Saphon,
for the sake of Ugarit!

By the divine spear,
by the divine axe
by the divine mace
by the divine $dtm$-weapon ..."^1023

Del Olmo Lete has argued that these weapons were those kept in the temple for important rituals (perhaps the sacrifices of KTU 1.119 etc.) and were analogous with those mentioned in the texts from Mari.1024

The Ugaritic epistolary texts provide frequent mentions of the king but, most surprisingly, even more frequent mentions of the queen. This vernacular correspondence is most often formulaic in construction, with very standardised forms of address, followed by wishes for the health and protection of the addressee and often similar contents.1025 The commonest letters can be summarised: "Everything is well here, I hope that everything is well there, please send me a word in return to confirm this."1026 It is hardly

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1023 Following Wyatt 1998b: 364.
1026 For example KTU 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.24, 2.30. Even in longer letters, this forms a part of the body of the text before news is exchanged or demands are made.
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on the same level of expression as the religious texts! However, there are a few points which can be gleaned from these rather meagre notes.\textsuperscript{1027}

KTU 2.13 is a letter to the queen, from “the king, your son”. It is a brief report of his meeting with a superior queen or king.\textsuperscript{1028} It should be noted that the titles “mother” and “father” are often bestowed upon the queen or king by those who are patently not physically related to them\textsuperscript{1029} – while this letter is explicit in the relationship between the king and rabitu, one can conclude that filial relationships were often claimed for reasons of respect and obedience. The king’s business had been concluded and “the face of the King shines upon us”, that is the foreign king, compared here to the sun, was favourable to their suit. There was no further detail and no closing salutation. This letter may be taken as an example of the diplomatic involvement of Ugarit’s royal family with the surrounding city-states and even an argument for the necessity of good relations between them, possibly for business or military alliances.

KTU 2.17 is a memo about the supply of ‘stamps’ and money, most likely between tradesmen. It hints at the close involvement of the king with trade, since the departure of his chargé d’affaires meant the aforementioned supply or sale could not go ahead. We know that the king often confirmed land

\textsuperscript{1027} Indeed, the frequent mentions of the queen are perhaps chance survivals and there could have been an archive specifically of king’s correspondence which has been lost.

\textsuperscript{1028} Cunchillos 1989: 289 n.9 and 11. The question of the sex of the other monarch is debated on grounds of whether a horizontal stroke can be seen upon the tablet.
sales\textsuperscript{1030}, and other merchants acted as commercial agents of the king.\textsuperscript{1031} The role of the king involved acting as a man of trade and challenges some of our modern ideas of traditional royal behaviour.

KTU 2.23 contains several astonishing lines. It contained a plea addressed to

"Great King, my [Lord], and for
the life of [your] soul I have asked
before Baal Saphon, my Baal,
the prolongation of the days of my Lord,
before Amun and before
the gods of Egypt that they will protect
the soul of the Sun, the Great King, my Lord."

The next fourteen lines are completely illegible. What can one understand from this letter? Found among the central archives\textsuperscript{1032} it is addressed to the king of Egypt rather than the King of Ugarit or Hatti (based upon the inclusion of the gods of Egypt in the deities supplicated). The most significant phrase is "Baal of Saphon, my Baal" - since the writer was the king of Ugarit, this implied a relationship between him and the patron god of Ugarit which was closer than the king and El (father of the pantheon), and comparable to the relationship of Pharaoh and Amun. Amun was a primaeval deity, a supreme god of the pantheon, commonly depicted as a king enthroned, his plumed crown a symbol of his association with the sky.

\textsuperscript{1029} It was common for monarchs to be regarded as the parents of their nation. Both the Russian Tsar Nicholas II and even Saddam Hussein claimed that right during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textsuperscript{1030} Heltzer 1976: 48-51.

\textsuperscript{1031} Liverani 1979: 495-503, but note 495 n.2 where Liverani argued that the distinction between public and 'private' employment of merchants is anachronous.

\textsuperscript{1032} Cunchillos 1989: 309.
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His name was a common theophoric element of royal names and kings often called themselves *Mery-amun* or "beloved of Amun". Given the connection between pharaoh and Amun, it could even be possible to argue for a connection between the pharaoh and Baal, given that Ramses II was called "Seth great of strength and Baal himself" at the battle with Kadesh, while Ramses III had a war cry compared to the voice of Baal thundering in the sky.\(^{1033}\)

The epistolary texts examined so far provide evidence from which it can be deduced that the royal family of Ugarit was connected to the surrounding royal families, had an interest and keen involvement in trade and for whose protection Baal Saphon was invoked. In addition, the *PRU* 3-6 texts, kept in the royal palace, provide an invaluable resource with records of international correspondence in the diplomatic language of the time, Akkadian. Hundreds of texts and fragments were kept for generations in caches and there are several subjects which tell us particularly significant points about the concept of royalty in Ugarit.

Most common are the texts recording the king’s grants of land and houses to named individuals.\(^{1034}\) While relatively large amounts of silver are occasionally mentioned (as a payment to the king) it is by no means uniform and it is possible that the king gave these gifts as rewards or payments for loyalty in a kind of Ugaritian feudalism. The king was therefore able to

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\(^{1033}\) Hart 1986: 4-17, 50.
\(^{1034}\) *PRU* 3:77, 142 (to an Egyptian). Numerous other examples.
dispose of lands under his control, much as El did for the kingships of Baal, Yam et al.\textsuperscript{1035}

The king was also used as a witness of treaties and adoptions\textsuperscript{1036} and acted as judge in domestic cases of injustice.\textsuperscript{1037} His wisdom and fairness were called upon like that of Solomon or Danel.\textsuperscript{1038} In cases of international disputes, however, the judgement was passed by the king of Hatti, more commonly called “the Sun, the great king”.\textsuperscript{1039} This ranking was apparent also in the titles used by the kings. While the emperor of the Hittite empire was, as has been mentioned, called “the Sun” and “great king”, the king of Ugarit never used any title other than ‘son of X, king of Ugarit’. He was only ever addressed as “the Sun” or “father” by Ugaritians without titles – either merchants or nobles. The king of Ušnātu called him “father”, while he was called “son” by the King of Amurru. One may assume from this that they were not related by blood, but by the bonds of royalty and government, with inter-marriage cementing these bonds further.

The practice of levirate marriage could perhaps have been practised in the royal family from the text of Arhalbu, which promised the curse of Baal upon his brother if he were to marry Arhalbu’s wife, Kubaba, after his death.\textsuperscript{1040} His brother Niqmepa did succeed him but there is no record of his marriage

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{1035} Watson 2001.
\item\textsuperscript{1036} PRI 3:45, 54; 4:6:45; 6:28, 45.
\item\textsuperscript{1037} PRI 3:153.
\item\textsuperscript{1038} KTU 1.17 v 5-10 gives a list of qualities valued in kings of Ugarit.
\item\textsuperscript{1039} PRI 4:118, 126, 153.
\item\textsuperscript{1040} PRI 3: 76.
\end{itemize}
to Kubaba. However, Arhalbu was a most unusual king not only because of this, but also because he actively opposed the Hittite influence upon his country and most of his international correspondence seems to have disappeared. One cannot therefore argue that all royal marriages following this 'levirate' model.

Another king, Ammistamru II, suffered not only intrigues against him by his brothers, who were banished, but also a divorce in which he resorted to a large payment of gold for the return of his ex-wife from her homeland. This blood payment freed him from potential judgement by her family and he was told to do with her "as he pleased, even so far as throwing her into the sea".

One can summarise the qualities expected of the king from the epistolary and palace texts as wisdom, impartiality and fairness (in cases of contracts), power to uphold international treaties and agreements, kinship with other royal families, participation in international royal marriages and the maintenance of social status quo, both at home and internationally. It is now valid to see whether these values were reflected in the religious literary texts which dealt with Baal as well as earthly kings.

1041 PRU 4:57-59.
1042 PRU 4:120.
1043 PRU 4: 139, 144.

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Evidence from the Religious Texts

Before assessing material about the nature of human kingship from the religious texts of Ugarit a very important point must be noted - neither Keret nor Danel were said to be kings of Ugarit itself. Given their presence in the corpus of texts found in Ugarit however, it is legitimate to argue that while one cannot draw specific conclusions about Ugaritic kingship from these examples, one may at least argue for the establishment of "general principles about the way in which a king’s status and role was perceived in the West Semitic world".1044

The king was often credited with divine wisdom. It has been suggested that Keret was described as being ‘wise like El’ in KTU 1.16 iv 1-31045, although the subject of the description is not universally agreed to be the beleaguered king.1046 However, he was granted a dream or vision which foretold of his gaining a family and the gift of oracular vision was previously associated with El.1047

The story of Keret, arguably modelled upon the Ugaritic perception of kingship, provided subtle clues to the understanding of what it meant to be

1044 Wyatt 1996: 219. This is not the same as including material from Mari, Ebla or even Israel. These texts are Ugaritic source material, although one cannot be conclusive about the origin of the characters.
1046 Wyatt 1998b: 232 n. 257 for various proposals, including Wyatt’s.
1047 El’s vision in KTU 1.6 iii of Baal’s return.
king in Ugarit, at least for humans. Keret was given the title bn il, translated as either "son of El" or simply "a god" (therefore implying sonship from the high god). This divine quality was reinforced when his son Yasibu was described as being suckled by goddesses; an action found in Egypt, which reinforced the divinity conferred upon the king by his status. Likewise, Keret's death was prematurely lamented by his son who called out in apparent disbelief and anger:

"How can it be said that Keret is the son of El, the offspring of the Wise and Holy One? Or do the gods die, the offspring of the Wise One not live?"\textsuperscript{1048}

Given the events of the Baal Cycle, one must question whether this was a serious theological revolution\textsuperscript{1049} or emotional hyperbole from the heir presumptive. It confirmed, whatever the eschatological fate of Keret, that he was regarded within the 'official' cult recorded in surviving texts as the offspring of El, a god, with the privileges that would imply - in this instance immortality. Likewise, the implicit connection of his death to the death of Baal (including the 'search' motif) suggested that as Baal rose from death, so Keret would rise also.\textsuperscript{1050} This is contrary to the interpretation of Gray, who decided that Keret's weeping in KTU 1.14 i 38-43 could be regarded as frustration at his distance from godhood!\textsuperscript{1051} These motifs connected the ideology of kings and gods, making irrelevant the debate as to whether the Keret story was also to be read as a critique of royalty. Thus one could argue

that while the institution of monarchy was regarded as divine in both origin and nature, the physical person of the king could be fallible (in fulfilment of religious duty) and mortal (in its inevitable death). Keret provided an example of the human frailty and divine blessing inherent in the dissonant concept of the earthly institution of kingship.

Neither should it be thought that the concept of king as a god denied the possibility of other kings or gods. By the time of Ilimilku, Ugarit was a vassal state: the king of Ugarit was a king, but it was recognised that there were other powerful kings whose actions had implications for the fate of Ugarit and its king. It is known from the Harris Papyrus that there were nine towns throughout ‘Canaan’ which belonged to the estate of Amun\textsuperscript{1052} and the later royal texts indicate the displeasure of Hatti with the tributes from Ugarit.\textsuperscript{1053} Likewise, Baal was a god whose ambitions were affected by those of the other gods. It was therefore possible to sustain a view of the universe which contained many kings and many gods simultaneously. The leap required for the modern European, accustomed to monotheism and the solitary rulers of Britain for example, was simply not required for the Ugaritians of the LBA. Ugarit and its rulers trod a delicate line between the divine rulers of both Hatti and Egypt for hundreds of years with variable success. They were keen to appease both sets of kings and gods, while at the same time retaining their sense of their own royal independence.

\textsuperscript{1052} Ahlström 1982: 11. While Egypt’s rule did not include Ugarit, there were strong trading links early on. see Singer 1999: passim.
\textsuperscript{1053} PRU 4:192.
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This presents the Ugaritian world view as a complex, sophisticated model and implies that the concept of a ‘royal god’ could be viewed as a tautology. “Would it have been possible for Baal to be a ruling god and not connected to the royalty of Ugarit?” is a more appropriate question to be examined in this chapter.1054

Baal as a divine king

The essential themes in the Baal Cycle are indeed concerned with Baal’s rulership: his palace, his enthronement, his rule over the land. The actions taken to ensure his success in this area provide the movement of the stories, for example the fights with Yam and Mot, his begging of favours from Athirat, but the actions are carried out to fulfil the theme of his kingship. This is a reflection of the Chaoskampf motif found throughout man’s earliest myths: Wyatt has noted five or six elements which support the interpretation of the Baal cycle in terms of the Chaoskampf and an implicitly royal ideology.1055 The first is the repeated enthronement motif, the second is the cultic battle suggested in KTU 1.2 iv 8-9, the third the annihilation in fact and in ritual of Baal’s enemies, the fourth the commitment of the Baal cycle to writing in this form by the scribe of Niqmad III-IV motivated by a particular ideology, and the connection between the weapons used by Baal to defeat Yam and those mentioned in KTU 1.65. These motifs taken together argue convincingly for an interpretation of the Baal Cycle founded upon an appeal

1054 Baal along with other gods may be classified as a ‘ruler’ since their kingdoms and palaces are mentioned within the texts.
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by the earthly king to a divine mythological precedent, and one could therefore reasonably expect to find features expected of an earthly king reflected in the portrayal of Baal.

For instance, in KTU 1.1 iv 20-25 there is a brief passage in which El promised Yam the throne

"from the hands of Valiant Ba[al]
Since he has scorned me
drive him from the throne of his kingship"

and this implies that Yam was Baal’s successor, before he (Baal) reversed El’s decision and reclaimed his throne.1056

Also, in KTU 1.2 iv, Kothar urged Baal to “take your everlasting kingdom, your eternal dominion”. From this it is reasonable to conclude that Baal, possessing a kingdom, is a king, mlk. However, to fill his position properly, he must drive Yam from his throne – is this then a coup? Should Baal’s titles include “Baal the Usurper”? There is also the slight possibility that this reflects a change in dynastic line of Ugarit.1057 The tension between the kingship of El and the struggle for power of Baal, portrayed as the most vigorous and ideal god for kingship, could be an echo of the arrival of the

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1056 Wyatt 1998b: 50 n.55.
1057 Wyatt 1998a: 857. Wyatt revises the assessment (based on Dietrich’s and Klengel’s view that Niqmad II usurped the throne) in the light of the revision of Ilumilk’s period to the reign of Niq. III-IV. See Wyatt 2002a.

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Amorites and their gods in the area of Ugarit.\textsuperscript{1058} However, given that conflict can arise within the most homogenous of communities and taken with a consistent lack of real evidence, the theory of rival ethnic pantheons cannot be argued for conclusively.\textsuperscript{1059}

The short verse in KTU 1.3 v 32-34 and 1.4 iv 43-45

"Our King is Valiant!
Baal is our ruler!
there is none above him.
Let us all bring his chalice
all of us bring his cup"

has provoked several points of discussion. First, why would Athirat, the wife of El and mother of the “seventy” proclaim Baal to be her king? One could understand such an outburst from Anat who was his avowed supporter, but from the goddess whom Anat accused of rejoicing at Baal’s death? The claim that “there is none above him” likewise appears spurious, given the obvious authority of El above all the gods within these texts. Henotheism seems the most likely cause and illustrates the flexibility, rather than the so-called “crisis of polytheism” in Ugarit.\textsuperscript{1060} It was also a reflection of the situation of the king of Ugarit – that he was a king among kings could be confirmed from the diplomatic texts already discussed. The position of Baal in some way manifested the position of the Ugaritian king. It was also phrased in a more

\textsuperscript{1058} However, see Singer 1999: 614 who, while acknowledging the potential arrival of a new ethnic group evidenced by the discovery of a cuneiform abecedary arranged similarly to a South Semitic alphabet, stated that the “marked continuity” of Ugarit’s culture argues against any invasion or mass immigration.


\textsuperscript{1060} De Moor 1997: 83-4.

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formal ‘cultic style’ of declamation than the rest of the text: it is possible that here is an example of a hymn to Baal being included in the Baal Cycle.\textsuperscript{1061}

The reason for its inclusion need not necessarily be to provide a divine or mythic origin for a well-known hymn or phrase, nor need it have an ulterior motive other than that it was a phrase known to all who would read or hear the Baal Cycle as told by Ilimilku and would evoke that feeling of familiarity and comfort which occurs in most people when the familiar is presented in the midst of something new. One cannot, at the same time, discount entirely the possibility that it was a cultic element incorporated into the text. It is yet another question which cannot be answered categorically based on textual or archaeological evidence alone from Ugarit. The most significant part of the phrase is the title given to Baal – mlk – he is a king, as well as zbl b'l arş ‘Prince, Lord of the earth’ and aliyn b'l ‘Valiant Baal’. Note that mlk is given in parallel with the other titles: the connotation is of rule and maintaining order, rather than indicating ultimate royal mandate given only to the ‘king of kings’, El.\textsuperscript{1062}

Another example of the possibly ‘royal’ nature of Baal can be found in KTU 1.4 vii:

“He passed from [city] to city
He went from town to town

\textsuperscript{1061} Wyatt 1998b: 87 n. 74.
\textsuperscript{1062} Handy 1988: 59. See the discussion of Baal’s titles in Chapter 9.
sixty-six cities he seized
seventy-seven towns
eighty Baal smo[te]
ninety Baal [captured]”.

Wyatt has argued that this is similar to the royal progress of a king.\textsuperscript{1063} It is reminiscent of both an aggressive campaign of subjugation as well as a reinforcing of his borders; certainly the following repeated motif of his ‘palace’ and ‘mansion’ indicates that Baal’s residence was a place worthy of a king.\textsuperscript{1064}

‘Baal is not within his mansion
the Divine Hadd within his palace.
He took his bow in his (left) hand
and his arrow(s) in his right (hand).
Then he set his face
toward the shore of Shamak, filled with oxen.’\textsuperscript{1065}

Baal went up upon the mountain
and the son of Dagan to the [recesses ]
Baal sat upon the seat of his kingship
the Son of Dagan upon the throne of his dominion\textsuperscript{1066}

These two texts contain the tangible symbols of Baal’s kingship: his mansion or temple and his throne, two items without which he could not rightly hold his rulership. At the beginning of the Baal Cycle, when El bestowed upon Yam a throne, he gave him “a house of silver, [a palace] out of [gold] from the hands of Valiant Baal.”\textsuperscript{1067} This was not a ‘seasonal motif’ but indicated

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\textsuperscript{1063} Wyatt 1998b: 108 n. 150.
\textsuperscript{1064} A fire in the enormous and lavish Ugaritic palace was such a significant event that it was reported to the Egyptian pharaoh. \textit{EA} 151.
\textsuperscript{1065} KTU 1.10 ii 4-9.
\textsuperscript{1066} KTU 1.10 iii 11-14.
\textsuperscript{1067} KTU 1.1 iv 21-22.
\end{flushright}
that kingship was given sequentially to all of the ‘junior’ gods – Athtar, Baal, Yam and (logically) Mot after the earlier rejection by El of Baal. The text continues:

"Since he has scorned me [ ]
drive him from the thr[one of his kingship],
[....] from the siege of] his dominion."

Once more, Baal’s throne is described as being of “his kingship” – his rule and the throne from which he exercised power are intimately connected. When Yam drove him from the throne, he drove Baal from his position of power.

Wyatt argued convincingly that the Baal cycle of myths were concerned essentially with “royal ideology”, founded not only on the principle of ‘as above, so below’ but also on the more recently discovered evidence from Mari, dating from around 1760 BCE, which is without doubt based upon the same paradigm as the Baal and Ugarit material, making firm connections between the king as avatar of the god, even so far as using the same weapons. The connection between the ritual and military weapons used by the kings of Eshnunna and Mari with the weapons used in the Chaoskampf tales of Baal, Adad and Tishpak provides a concrete link between royal reality and divine power: we cannot dispute the validity of the connection made by the writers based upon our own view of whether it was physically

1068 Wyatt 1998b: 49 n.55.
1069 Wyatt 1999a: 854.
possible to possess such world-shaking arms in concrete form or whether one can make such an explicit link between myth and reality expressed in the form of these weapons. The difficulties of equating divine and cultic weapons are entirely subjective problems created by our lack of a "mythic mind".\textsuperscript{1070} While one must at all times attempt to be academic and objective in approaching this material, using the accepted method of \textit{epoche}, it would be unwise to discount significant motifs because to comprehend them required a mindset which was not strictly academically empirical.\textsuperscript{1071} While this process of linking the motifs of weapons-royal equipment-ideology of kingship may appear less obvious in the so-called 'literary' texts, it can also be found in the ritual texts where "it cannot be so easily written off".\textsuperscript{1072}

Finally, the evidence found in the examination of the titles of Baal – \textit{zbl b'l arỹ, aliyn b'l}, etc., should be compared with the titles of the other gods – many are royal in origin and inference. The gods are lords, princes and judges but was the title of king reserved for one god alone?

Peterson has argued that the \textit{Sitz im Leben} of the Baal Cycle should not automatically be taken as cultic, that is, part of the temple rituals of Ugarit. Indeed, there is no proof whatsoever of its use within rituals, and I agree that if one were to examine any potential enthronement ritual one should take the ritual texts of Ugarit as a point of departure rather than the 'epic' material

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Wyatt 2001b.
\item See Gibson 1984 and Introduction here for a methodology of understanding the Baal Cycle.
\item Wyatt 1999a: 855.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
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presented in the Baal Cycle. However, his argument for the "anti-cultic potential" of the story, that it serves to explain that certain climatic events, e.g. drought or flood, are beyond the control of mankind and that cultic practices carried out to remedy such disasters are superfluous, is extremely dubious and one which even he admits is "extremely Protestant". One must question whether the application of Reformed theology is consistent with an honest attempt to understand the Sitz im Leben of the Baal Cycle!

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1075 Gibson 1984.

6. Baal as an Ugaritic Royal God
Could the term ‘king’ be applied to gods other than Baal?

If one is to understand the term ‘royal’ in the sense of having those attributes which are normally ascribed to a king, e.g. a palace, a throne, a title and perhaps even a special role in both religion and war, or special abilities, can this be applied to other gods within the Ugaritic pantheon?

Yam

Yam was crowned by El in KTU 1.1 iv, having been instructed by El to drive Baal from his kingship after Baal had somehow ‘scorned’ El.1076 Later, in KTU 1.2 iii, Kothar was ordered to erect a temple or palace for Yam, which could be contrasted with Baal’s cry to El for reparation based upon his own lack of palace or mansion. Yam was called “Prince Yam, Ruler Nahar”1077, both titles which reflected his royal status, along with the mention in KTU 1.2 iv 20-21 of Yam’s “throne, ... the siege of his dominion”. The same phrase also indicated the kingship of Baal, which had been passed on to Yam and could therefore be understood as symbolic of a royal-divine mandate to rule.

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1076 KTU 1.1 iv 21-22.
1077 KTU 1.1 – 1.6 passim.
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Mot

Mot, Baal’s greatest enemy in the Baal Cycle, was king of the underworld – we are told that his kingdom was “a pit the seat of his enthronement, a crevice the land of his inheritance” in KTU 1.4 viii 13-14. The language here reflected a different kind of throne, one that was subterranean, but nevertheless the throne of a king. Mot, also, was a king. He was most often called “divine Mot, Beloved of El” indicating both his divinity and a position of favour with El whom we have seen distributed kingships to other gods. Yam was also the “beloved of El” and it has been argued that this was a specifically ideological formula and part of a five-fold titulary bestowed upon those gods whom El chose as ruler or champion.\textsuperscript{1078} Like Yam, Athtar and Baal, Mot sat upon a throne but not concurrently with the other gods: the pantheon of Ugarit was not a democracy and kings, both divine and earthly, were killed or defeated, not voted out of office. All sat upon the same throne, that of El, Saphon, but not at the same time.\textsuperscript{1079}

Athtar

Athtar was an ambiguous character – while initially passed over in favour of Yam, he was regarded as the appropriate successor to the apparently deceased Baal and yet he was described as too small for Baal’s throne. Physical size need not indicate a parody – while David was too small for the throne of Saul, he still defeated him through the blessing of his god. Athtar

\textsuperscript{1078} Wyatt 1985b.
\textsuperscript{1079} The subterranean nature of the mountain on which Mot sits could be viewed as a concave ‘mirror-image’ of El’s mountain Saphon.

6. Baal as an Ugaritic Royal God
and Baal were linked together in that both appeared to vie for the same throne and yet although we were nowhere told Baal had a wife\textsuperscript{1080}, the reason indicated for Athtar’s first exclusion from succession is that he did not have a wife. In this passage (KTU 1.2 iii 10-25) he was given the title of \textit{dmlk} which, it has been argued, means ‘royal one’\textsuperscript{1081} and Shapsh asked him

"[How will] Bull [E]l your father listen to you?
He will surely pull up the [sup]port of your seat;
he will surely [overturn the throne of] your kingship;
He will shatter the sceptre of your rule!"

Athtar already possessed the physical accoutrements of kingship and yet this was not sufficient to ensure a favourable treatment by El, who could easily deprive him of his position. Athtar lamented his treatment by El, who deprived him of his palace in favour of Yam.\textsuperscript{1082} His lack of a palace, in common with Baal at this point, made him unacceptable for kingship.

KTU 1.6 i 44-67 described the temporary replacement of Baal by Athtar, following Mot’s defeat and killing of Baal. One cannot support the translation followed by Greenfield which implied that there were two potential candidates, the first called \textit{ycf ylhn}.\textsuperscript{1083} Athirat was asked for the ‘first’ of her sons – the first son of El’s chief wife, the ‘crown prince’, rather than the simply first of her many sons who was acceptable. See instead the proposed translation by Wyatt, who suggested “Shall we not make king one

\textsuperscript{1080} See chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{1082} KTU 1.2 iii 18-25.
\textsuperscript{1083} Greenfield 1985: 194. See also Margalit 1980: 143, 145.

6. Baal as an Ugaritic Royal God
who has knowledge and wit?" implying that Athtar was the correct choice. This also supported the amendment of the following phrase, which had been proposed as a list of the reasons whereby Athtar was unable to sit upon the throne. Following Virolleaud, the text described his ascent of the throne and ritual anointing rather than a critique of Athtar. When reviewing Athtar's subsequent descent from his heavenly throne to rule 'over all the earth', Wyatt has suggested that

"this is a metaphor for a double transformation of the king, which allows him to hold the dual status (both divine and human) which is so puzzling to the modern commentator. By going up and sitting on Baal's throne, Athtar participates in Baal's status and therefore his order of reality... But this also serves as a means of conferring divinity on the king at the time of his elevation. ... He is thus made divine for the duration of the rites, before resuming his normal status."

El

The role of El has caused great debate in the past, but it is to be hoped that those who suggested that the "father of the gods" had become senile have been soundly refuted by scholars such as Wyatt and Smith. El is called mlk in KTU 1.2 iii 5, as is Baal in KTU 1.3 v 32. This should not necessarily be understood in the modern sense of 'king', that is, a single monarch of sole authority. To follow this line of translation logically would imply that either

1086 Wyatt 1999a: 137.
El was king but had been defeated by Baal or that he had become rather old and irrelevant, ‘otiose’ being the more polite scholarly term, and although still accorded the title mlk was no longer effective.\textsuperscript{1088} Neither of these need be argued for, if one were carefully to re-define the concept of kingship amongst both humans and gods within the complicated context of the LBA kingdom of Ugarit and, indeed, to reassess the translation of mlk.\textsuperscript{1089} El is the supreme god, with the ability to bestow ‘thrones and principalities’ upon the gods below him – Yam benefited from his generosity but at a cost to Athtar and Baal.\textsuperscript{1090}

Significantly, his home was described as at the centre of the world, “at the source of the river[s], [amid]st the [sprin]gs of the two [deeps] ... within the seven [cham]bers, [through the e]ight façade[s of the closed] rooms.”\textsuperscript{1091} The imagery of the centre implied both power and sovereignty and El was the only god in the text who did not travel to visit or pay homage to other gods, supporting his superiority. Might one argue for a comparison with the king of Hatti, who regularly sent messengers to his vassals (including Ugarit) but did not travel there in person?

El was also given significant royal honorific titles: for example, the question of Baal’s paternity aside, El is called “his father ... El the king who begot..."
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him.”¹⁰⁹² In discussing the epistolary texts, it has already been recognised that “father” and “mother” were titles of honour and allegiance rather than necessarily consanguinity. This is another correspondence between the treatment of the human royal family (of Ugarit and its contemporaries) and their divine counterparts.

**Baal’s royalty and relationship with the king of Ugarit**

One can now attempt to summarise the implications of this information for the term ‘royal god’, the notion of Baal as a ‘royal god’ and how his conforming (or not) to this role affects our overall theology of Baal.

**A ‘royal’ god?**

The relatively scant evidence about the nature of kingship as practised in Ugarit indicated that their concept of kingship was intimately connected to ideas of wisdom and justice, power in military and religious spheres, the disposition of lands and property, as well as kinship with other royal dynasties in neighbouring countries within the framework of a hierarchy. These bonds were often strengthened by intermarriage between ruling families in the LBA. Although Ugaritic kings were not described with the

¹⁰⁹² KTU 1.3 v 35.
titles common to Akkadian or Egyptian kings, their roles would support the attribution of such names, even if not noted in texts.

Most of the gods mentioned in the mythological or literary texts were, at one point or another, given royal titles; most of the gods mentioned had palaces in their own land or gained them during the course of the texts; most had a particular role or ability important in the texts for their maintenance of power. This can be summarised by saying that El, Baal, Yam, Mot, Athtar and associated goddesses were regarded as royal because of their possession of thrones or palaces, titles, behaviour and influence. Gadd, discussing human kings of the ANE, summed this up succinctly when he stated that "God and king are two conceptions so nearly coupled in the oriental mind that the distinction is constantly blurred."\(^{1093}\)

**Baal as a royal god**

Baal in particular conformed to this idea of a ‘royal’ god, since his struggle for kingship and a palace formed one of the central motifs of the cycle of texts given his name: he was in fact depicted as the essence of kingship in Ugarit. While not the supreme king (El, the father of gods and “creator of creatures”) nor even the “beloved of El” (Yam and Mot), he was nevertheless the owner of a richly built palace, a throne, divinely powered weapons with which he defeated his foes and (re)gained his throne, a relative – through

\(^{1093}\) Gadd 1948: 33.
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blood or not – of the gods and a god who interceded with El for those who prayed to him, particularly when they were the kings of Ugarit. Could one in fact compare the king to Baal, since the king alone among men was capable of interceding with the divine?

**Baal and the king of Ugarit**

It appears that it is possible to argue then for a particularly close relationship between Baal and the king of Ugarit. The other gods of the pantheon were all given the royal attributes which Baal possessed, so why then would one propose there to have been an exclusive nature of the connection between Baal and the king?

From the epistolary texts, one may suggest that the king was given to the care of ‘his’ Baal, although the context in question was one addressed to the Egyptian pharaoh. If the protection of Baal was commonly given to the king of Ugarit it would make absolute sense for the same god to be invoked for the care of their superior in Egypt. Even the title b’l ugrt ‘Baal of Ugarit’ suggested that his relationship with the city, embodied in the person of the king, was different from that of other gods who were not given this locative element in their titles.

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1094 See in particular KTU 1.119.
1095 KTU 2.23.
Note also the conclusion of the Baal cycle: Baal was granted kingship and was accepted reluctantly as a king by Mot, but only at the urging of Shapsh. His kingship was provisional, not the ultimate power exerted and apparently held without effort by El. In this he was more like the kings of Ugarit than the kings of Hatti or Egypt, the liege lords of Ugarit upon whose goodwill the dynasty of Ugarit depended for both defence against foreign incursion and also protection from the potential threats of other aristocratic groups within the upper echelons of Ugaritic society.

If, as Wyatt has argued, the story of Keret linked the king with the god Baal, at the same time it was censorious of his failure to uphold his religious duty and his line was ended, with justification, by El. This could have been a means of separating the king of Ugarit at the time of writing (Niqmad III or IV) from the rather unsatisfactory royal line represented by ‘Keret’ but the most significant implication from the tale of King Keret for our understanding of Baal was in the implied theology of the story. Keret was expected to live forever, or at least return from his death. He was given his power and his family by El, who could, when he chose to do so, remove it. Keret was also a military leader, who carried off his wife from a neighbouring king of whom he had previous knowledge, perhaps from the kind of diplomatic embassade reflected in the epistolary texts of Ugarit. All of these characteristics can be found in the Baal Cycle and are further connections between Baal and the kingship found in Ugarit.

1096 KTU 1.6 vi 25.
1097 RS 20.238, discussed previously in Chapter 5.
1098 PRU 4: 120.
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These connections are by no means as explicit as some have argued and the liturgical role of the king as pontifex is, from available literature, not as explicit as argued previously. However, in combination with evidence of the nature of royalty from the religious texts, the dialogue between king and gods, the identification of royalty and divinity as similar, if not indistinguishable natures, indicates that there is substantial ground for stating that Baal was regarded as a ‘royal’ god and that he had a closer relationship with the Ugaritic dynasty at the time of the texts than other deities within the pantheon.

This should not be regarded as an argument for Baal being the sole ‘royal’ representative among the pantheon of the king of Ugarit. The importance of El cannot be overestimated, even if he is not felt to correspond to the political exigencies of LBA Ugarit since he was frequently appealed to in both the literary and ritual texts.

Indeed, it has been suggested that what is present in the Ugaritic material is the layering of two distinct pantheons, the first the axis of El-Athirat-Athtar being the ‘older’ and arguably more representative of indigenous royalty and the second consisting mainly of Baal and perhaps Anat, bringing with them the Chaoskampf, the struggle for supremacy and the ‘might is right’ ethic

6. Baal as an Ugaritic Royal God
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found throughout the ANE as the argument for 'new' dynastic takeovers. One should not overstate this argument since there is, as Singer has stated, a remarkable continuity of archaeological material found in Ugarit which argues against any dramatic power or cultural shift. While there is no proof of an Amorite invasion or attack, it is generally thought that the kingdom of Ugarit and, most likely, the current religious texts, had their foundations within the “context of the Amorite expansion in Mesopotamia and Syria at the turn of the second millennium BCE”. The foundations of the city of Ugarit long predate the 14th-13th centuries from which the dynastic seal and King List originate and there is nothing to oppose the hypothesis that Baal and the Chaoskampf arrived with the Amorites not in a forceful rush, but — as did the Albanian population of Kosovo — over such a long time span that the previously dominant population became a blended minority without noticing it. The Amorite gods became part of the Ugaritic pantheon, as was the nature of religion in the ANE, and their myths became blended along with the population. This would be an alternative explanation for the presence of so many kings among the gods, but cannot be more than a hypothesis until, if ever, archaeological or documentary proof is found.

1100 Chapter 5.

6. Baal as an Ugaritic Royal God
Until that time, Baal was to remain a royal god of Ugarit, along with those other deities also struggling for power and the throne but one for whom the relationship with the king of Ugarit was particularly close.
Chapter 7: - The Cult of Baal - the Ugaritic textual evidence for the worship of Baal in LBA Ugarit

It is generally held as inauspicious to begin a chapter with a disclaimer of its content but in the case of the study of the ritual and cultic material relating to Baal, just such a warning is given here. The comprehensive treatments presented by Pardee\textsuperscript{1103} and Clemens\textsuperscript{1104}, regarded as the most authoritative recent writings on the ritual texts of Ugarit, are fundamentally different in both purpose and character from this short study. It is important to note that this chapter is necessarily restricted: its focus is that of the cult or worship of Baal and is therefore incomparable with those in-depth treatises. As an example, from the eighty texts Pardee examined in the course of two volumes, only twenty-four mentioned Baal and most of those twenty-four only refer to the DN in passing.\textsuperscript{1105} At the same time, the number of offerings made to Baal under his several titles in those mere twenty-four texts reached six hundred and one, more than double those offered to El, despite Pardee identifying twenty forms of the high god.\textsuperscript{1106} It cannot be denied that there is a need, therefore, to undertake a survey of the ritual texts which mention Baal within this dissertation as an attempt to understand the ‘temple

\textsuperscript{1103} Pardee 2000a and 2000b (TR).
\textsuperscript{1104} Clemens 2001.
\textsuperscript{1105} Texts from TR which mention Baal: KTU 1.39, 1.41, 1.46, 1.47, 1.48, RS 1.[064+], KTU 1.65, 1.28, RS 15.130, KTU 1.86, 1.87, 1.91, 1.105, 1.109, 1.112, 1.118, 1.119, 1.123, 1.130, 1.134, RS 24.294, KTU 1.148, RIIH 78/4, 78/11, KTU 1.162. From these 24 texts, only KTU 1.119 contains an extended address to Baal; in the majority of the other texts, the DN formed part of a list of names and offerings.
\textsuperscript{1106} Pardee 2000b: 909.
worship’ of Baal in Ugarit, which is often overshadowed by the better known mythological epic texts.

The examination of only those ritual texts which mention Baal will therefore be a much narrower study and this is exacerbated by the nature of the material. The problem of what may or may not be reasonably understood from the relevant tablets will be addressed in the course of this discussion and will inform the concluding assessment of the Ugaritian cult of Baal.

It is also necessary to make a few comments upon the understanding and interpretation of both Ugaritic and modern terms required to discuss this material but not widely attested elsewhere in the Ugaritic texts. This ‘technical’ discussion forms the main commonality between the grand sacrifices of Pardee and Clemens and this humble offering.

**Technical terms and their importance for common understanding**

Here is the first problem which will strike all those who have attempted either to translate, comprehend or even comment upon the so-called ‘ritual’ texts of Ugarit. Firstly, that there are specific technical terms given in the Ugaritic texts which are generally present only in these ‘ritual’ texts. These are translated using other technical terms for the modern reader, for example ‘ritual’, ‘sacrifice’, ‘offering’, ‘cult’, ‘liturgy’. Secondly, that those who read these technical terms will find a different interpretation or nuance given to
the same term by one writer at different points of their work, by different writers or even by their own understanding of that term. It is not necessary to examine all Ugaritic ‘technical terms’ from the tablets since the majority of offerings to Baal were made as šlmm and šrp and further philological debate is widely available.1107 Perhaps more significant are the terms used in giving a translation: just what is a ‘ritual’? what (if anything) is the difference between a ‘sacrifice’ and an ‘offering’? How else could one describe a type of gift to a deity and can we understand the fine differentiation of meaning implied by the different Ugaritic terms?

Clemens complained that

"Usually the meaning ascribed to terms such as 'sacrifice' and the manner in which they are contrasted or equated with others such as 'offering', must be inferred from the way in which they are used: formal definitions are seldom included. The distinction between 'offering' and 'sacrifice', and between their related verbs and adjectives, is seldom maintained consistently by writers on the subject, so that they usually emerge as overlapping equivalents rather than as differentiated elements within a cultic hierarchy of gifts to a deity."1108

Certainly within Ugaritic scholarship there has sometimes been a certain infelicity of terms used in translation, partly caused, it must be admitted, by the limited vocabulary available from the texts and partly because of this

equivalence between terms which often exists for authors without their awareness of it.

Among those who have spent many years translating Ugaritic ritual texts are del Olmo Lete and de Tarragon. In attempting to categorise sacrifice in Ugarit, de Tarragon stated that "la principale catégorie est celle du langage sacrificiel, c'est-à-dire d'une part les rites comportant la mise à mort d'une victime et l'offrande rituel de l'animal, et, d'autre part, les offrandes rituelles de consécration de divers biens aux divinités". It is unclear here whether 'ritual offering' is being equated with 'sacrifice' or 'consecration' which surely have two different meanings. This unintentional obfuscation is the real problem for Clemens (and others) rather than the complexity of material examined. Del Olmo Lete decided that 'offering' differed from 'sacrifice' in that sacrifice appeared to indicate the death of the thing offered. But he also stated that sacrificial rituals comprise either animate or inanimate offerings - it may be that del Olmo Lete meant inanimate offerings also underwent a "sacrificial death" through an unspecified means of "consumption" but this attempt at a definition hardly clarifies the matter and is not attested in the texts.

It may be that Ugaritic scholars (and others within the sphere of the ancient Near East) are simply too involved with the subject material to establish a definition of 'ritual', 'offering' or 'sacrifice' which would be agreeable or

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1111 Clemens 2002: 11.
consistently upheld. In this area, the work of anthropologists may be of assistance.

J.Z. Smith wrote that

"ritual is, above all, an assertion of difference... ritual represents the creation of a controlled environment where the variables (the accidents) of ordinary life may be displaced precisely because they are felt to be so overwhelmingly present and powerful. Ritual is a means of performing the way things ought to be in conscious tension to the way things are. Ritual relies for its power on the fact that it is concerned with quite ordinary activities placed within an extraordinary setting, that what it describes and displays is, in principle, possible for every occurrence of those acts."1112

This may at first seem hardly relevant to the skeletal textual material from Ugarit but could the "ordinary" activity Smith cited be the common occurrence of death? What if the implicit killing of those animals offered to the gods was given a meaning beyond that of the everyday slaughter for food and other resources to which they were destined?1113 We are not told in the ritual lists what occurred to those bodies after their offering, the action of donation being suggested by the prepositional / before the DN and it seems unlikely that the bodies would have been thrown away having been offered to the gods. They would, perhaps, have become the property of the gods and

1113 *dbh* was used both ritually and profanely, that is both the act of sacrifice and the feast which accompanied it. Pardee 2002: 271.
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towards the royal temple cult.\footnote{1114 It is worth recalling that all material surviving is from only a part of Ugaritic culture, namely that of the 'official' royal cult. see Wyatt 1999b: 579.} However, ‘ritual’ seems to imply more than a formalisation of death in Ugarit.

Grimes succinctly stated that “as ritual traditions become literate, ritual manuals are written. Their aim is not so much to study ritual as to aid its enactment. Ritual manuals record what is to be done and said. Seldom do they interpret the actions and words of a rite.”\footnote{1115 Grimes 1982: xi.} Such a description of ‘ritual’ sits very well with the surviving evidence of Ugarit and explains the paucity of detail within the ritual texts.

However, what is meant by the term ‘ritual’? While arguing that “most definitions of ritual are disappointing because they define the word too narrowly or lack fruitful images”\footnote{1116 Grimes 1982: 55.} Grimes has also commented that “someone recently compared the search for an adequate definition of ritual with the search for the holy grail”\footnote{1117 Grimes 1990: 12. Much the same could be said for an adequate definition of myth!} and that rituals contain a series of qualities which function as “family characteristics” which prevent the problem of too dense formal (or “hard”) definitions. He lists the characteristics as including: enacted and dramatic; formalized and patterned; repetitive; collective; standardized; invariant, and paradigmatic; traditional; meaningful and symbolic; referential; idealised; conscious; deliberate.\footnote{1118 Grimes 1990: 14.}
Many of those characteristics certainly apply to the 'ritual' action described in the Ugaritic texts and perhaps the urge to find a solid definition of ritual, that is, "an abstractly stated consensus established by a tradition of usage and calling attention to what is in bounds" is inappropriate to the material from Ugarit: the "soft" definition which "typically congeals around nascent phenomena" and operates "as a 'model for' attending to what is relatively unknown about them ... surveying and connecting adjacent fields"\(^{1119}\) would be more appropriate. To study the 'ritual' texts of Ugarit and acknowledge what is unknown or unknowable may be equally as valuable as debating what little fact can be known or defined.

Bell suggested that ritual "is tangible evidence that there is more to religion than a simple assent to belief: there are practices, institutions, changing customs and explanatory systems"\(^{1120}\) but was at pains to point out there are many types of ritual behaviour. She gave six (not exhaustive) examples:—rites of passage; rites of commemoration or calendrical rites; rites of exchange and communion; rites of affliction; rites of feasting, fasting and festivals; and finally political rituals.\(^{1121}\) These rituals or ritual acts have characteristics which enable their identification as rituals or ritual behaviour, including formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism and performance.\(^{1122}\) While not every 'ritual' contains all of these

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\(^{1119}\) Grimes 1982: 55.
\(^{1120}\) Bell 1997: 22.
\(^{1121}\) Bell 1997: 94, 95-137.
\(^{1122}\) Bell 1997: 139-169.
characteristics, it is again possible to identify features within Ugaritic ritual texts which enable them to be identified as part of the ‘ritual culture’ of Ugarit.

Clemens has argued that there are several main features described by anthropologists which pertain to material described as ‘ritual’ in Ugarit: “repetition; prescription and pattern; enactment; relational orientation within a communal context; and elliptical formulation. ... That these and other texts such as divination records or votive offerings imply enactment is self-evident.”\(^{1123}\) He then suggested an hypothesis of a working or “soft” definition of ritual to be used examining texts from Ugarit, that

“ritual denotes a coherent and standardized sequence of actions articulating and expressing (in the case of religious ritual, such as sacrifice) a meaningful relationship between human and divine participants. A ritual text, which will embody these characteristics, functions to provide a succinct written reflex of such a sequence.”\(^{1124}\)

The emphasis upon written material is unavoidable when dealing with Ugarit since, unlike the evidence available to anthropologists, there is no other evidence available apart from the archaeological finds of anchors or figurines which are more enigmatic than the texts. One cannot observe an Ugaritic ritual and practise *epoche*. Likewise, one must accept that although we assume that a ‘meaningful’ relationship took place between officiant and

\(^{1123}\) Clemens 2002: 124.
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deuity, it cannot be proven, and similarly although a text may appear to
conform to a standard pattern, there is – again – no way to establish without
doubt that these texts were manuals for repeated acts rather than records or
"crib notes" for acts which occurred only once.

Having established a broad brush definition which may be applied to ritual,
can one argue the same for 'sacrifice', widely construed as the noun from the
Ug. term dḥḥ? Again, pragmatism must prevail. There is limited evidence
from Ugarit in the form of texts, most of which function as lists alternating
between the type of animal sacrificed and DN. Clemens suggested
"Sacrifice within the Ancient Near Eastern context represents the dedication
of an object to a deity or supernatural entity." It must also be pointed out
that within the texts which mention Baal, there are very few sacrifices (out of
601) which are not animal: ḫk -tax1127, one of a shield1128, although Baal is one
among many deities in this text, cereals1129 and, exceptionally, wine.1130

One cannot therefore support the view of James that sacrifice broadly
requires the death of "a victim for the purpose of maintaining or restoring a

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1124 Clemens 2002: 126.
1125 Note also that the syntax frequently appears to alternate: animal/DN or DN/animal with no
prepositional indication of how to construe it other than the translator's own understanding. One
cannot determine a purpose behind this alternation. The insertion of prepositions during translation
could be misleading but often is simply necessary for a readable text.
1126 Clemens 2002: 5.
1128 KTU 1.162.
1129 offered to the bī/m in RS 1.001, RS 1.003 and RS 18.056.
1130 RS 19.015.

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right relationship of man to the sacred order."  

Despite the predominance of various livestock as those listed among the ritual texts, there are sufficient instances of other substances for one to argue that Ugaritic sacrifice was not entirely based upon animal killing. Nevertheless, del Olmo Lete proposed that “We consider 'sacrifice' as the basic cultic rite of the great rituals of the Ugaritic Liturgy” while Pardee concluded that “le coeur du culte ougaritique était constitué par l'offrande de divers objets aux divinités, soit comme dons, soit comme sacrifices consumés par le feu en l'honneur des dieux, soit comme sacrifices servant au moins en partie à un festin sacré.”

As a generalisation, one can conclude that at Ugarit, 'sacrifice' was a broad term for the offering of various types of goods within the official cult to a divinity who may, or may not, have been the 'patron god' of that temple. Within the term 'offering' it is also generally accepted that the death of an animal (if that was the gift to the deity) is implied, although this is only once explicitly described.

Similar generosity is given to the translation of the Ugaritic dbh, generally regarded as indicating both the sacrificial action and also for the divine

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1132 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 37.
1133 Pardee 2000b: 930.
1134 The texts rarely give the location of the ritual, e.g. bêt bêt ugrt or bêt il.
1135 KTU 1.48.
1136 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 37 "The development of the sacrificial act is never described explicitly, only a number of generic predicates (to sacrifice, offer, burn, pour down, etc.)."
feasting implicit after such action.\textsuperscript{1137} Although \textit{dbh} is the most frequent denomination in Ugaritic for an offering (whether in noun or verb form) according to del Olmo Lete\textsuperscript{1138} it is not the most common term connected with Baal.\textsuperscript{1139} By far the most frequent type of offering to Baal was \textit{slmm} although this was most popular for Baal of Saphon. Baal of Ugarit, although having a sizeable proportion of \textit{slmm} offerings, was given more offerings of an unknown type.\textsuperscript{1140}

\textit{slmm} is either a “sacrifice of well-being”\textsuperscript{1141} (although presumably not for those animals slaughtered in its execution, as only 7 non-bloody \textit{slmm} are listed in \textit{TR}) or “sacrifice of communion, a peaceful offering”.\textsuperscript{1142} Dussaud suggested that a ‘peace-offering’ was one in which man was reconciled to God or \textit{slmm} may be understood as a ‘welfare offering’, which featured a communal meal.\textsuperscript{1143} There is little evidence of this commensality in Ugaritic ritual texts but Gray suggested it could be implied from the root \textit{slm} or \textit{nr} “the making whole of the relationship between the community and its God.”\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{1144}} \textit{srp} or ‘holocaust’ was also a common term used in reference to sacrifices to Baal but had nothing like the prevalence of \textit{slmm}.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{1137} Clemens 2002: 22.
\textsuperscript{1138} Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 38.
\textsuperscript{1139} When using the DN Baal in this context, one should also understand the specific forms of Baal to be included, e.g. b'l ugur, b'l spn, b'l knp, etc.
\textsuperscript{1140} Pardee 2000b: 901.
\textsuperscript{1141} Pardee 2002b: 911.
\textsuperscript{1142} Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 44.
\textsuperscript{1143} Dussaud 1941: 301-313.
\textsuperscript{1144} Gray 1957: 144.
\end{footnotesize}
Despite these terms (ṣlm, šrp and dbḥ) having quite distinct implications, they are all in a general sense ‘sacrifice’ and could in fairness be translated as such. Although a philological/linguistic root may indicate ‘peace-offering’ or ‘holocaust’ there is no precise explanation of how such a sacrifice was to be performed. As Clemens argues, “in the absence of Ug. informants and of a systematic Ug. treatise on their offering rituals to define the principles of their inner coherence (if such existed), the merit of a definition that is clear and not at odds with conventional usage more than offsets, it would seem, an arbitrary element within it”.¹¹⁴⁵ A clear definition of sacrifice, then, should be as simple as possible: the offering of objects within the official cult to gods or a god, with the implicit understanding that offering an animal meant its death. This is, in reality, all that could be said about the material from Ugarit, known for its opacity. It often takes the form of a list of actions and animals, with no hint of the motivation behind the great number of offerings made.¹¹⁴⁶

It should also be noted that much of the problem here is one of correspondence between Ugaritic and modern terms: dbḥ means both slaughter, sacrifice and the context of the meal in which this action occurred. Perhaps the answer is for those who translate to be aware of the tensions implicit in any translation and for the reader to be aware of the potential for discontinuity between terms of Ugaritic and modern scholarship, with a clear explanation and attempt at consistency made by the writer when translating particular words.

¹¹⁴⁵ Clemens 2002: 23.
¹¹⁴⁶ Noted by Cunchillos 1989: 129.
In this dissertation, the term ‘ritual’ indicates a formalised action within a religious context, while ‘sacrifice’ implies the giving by a ritual participant to the deity named. Particular kinds of sacrifice, discussed above, will be noted wherever possible and implications of the different kind used remarked upon. It can only be repeated though that the actual implementation of these terms is currently little understood and we can only draw conclusions cautiously and with as little invention as possible.

**The cult of Baal**

The cult of Baal has often been credited with debauchery, blood-thirstiness and cultic prostitution\(^{1147}\) and quite often regarded as a fertility cult\(^{1148}\) founded upon "imitative magic". Indeed, Gray compared the massacre by Anat to "a rite of imitative magic to stimulate a liberal outpouring of fresh vitality, the blood being to the ancient Semite the life-essence" in order to "rehabilitate" Baal, who would return ready to "consummate his hieros gamos and demonstrate his virility".\(^{1149}\) Much of this 'fertility cult' interpretation was based upon extrapolations from the mythological texts, the 'ritual' material being discovered later and then regarded as less interesting or too opaque for fruitful study.

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\(^{1147}\) Oldenburg 1969: ix.

\(^{1148}\) Gray 1957: 150. See Chapter 3 for further references and discussion.

\(^{1149}\) Gray 1957: 33-34.
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In recent years a comprehensive survey of cultic texts excavated so far has been undertaken by Pardee. While the *Textes Ougaritiques* II volume contained translations of many texts, the encyclopaedic nature of Pardee’s two volume *Textes Rituels* placed the hundreds of tablets within a systematic framework of interpretation.\(^{1150}\) He stated explicitly that “la ‘fertilité’ que recherchent les participants au culte dont parlent ces textes est celle que donneront les dieux satisfaits par les dons qu’on leur fait. On ne trouve aucune trace certaine de pratiques sexuelles dans le culte même qui auraient pour but de faire agir les dieux de la fertilité”.\(^{1151}\) As has been previously established\(^ {1152}\) there is no evidence in the mythological texts to support the view of Ugaritic Baal-worship as a fertility cult and this refutation is further supported by the material found in the ‘ritual’ texts. Surely these would indicate at which point sexual acts would occur if required? None has so far been found and even the text of the NIN.DINGIR from Emur does not support an earthly consummation of divine marriage.\(^ {1153}\)

Before the comprehensive translations of Xella, Pardee and Clemens gathered the texts into a more easily referenced format, the widespread theological view of the cult of Baal was often that described in Oldenburg for example, comparing the actions of the priests of Baal in 1 Kings 18\(^ {1154}\) with the worship of Baal in Ugarit.\(^ {1155}\) The emphasis upon their blood-drawing actions

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\(^{1150}\) Pardee 2000, 2002. Xella 1981 is also worth note, but is written in Italian.


\(^{1152}\) See Chapter 3.

\(^{1153}\) Fleming 1992: 293.

\(^{1154}\) Although the aim of that text (1 Kings 18) was polemic and an attack upon ‘heathen gods’ rather than a scholarly exposition of the non-Israelite cult

\(^{1155}\) This is maintained by Gray 1957: 37.
in that text was explored by McCarthy. A survey of the ANE revealed that although blood occasionally had significance in anthropogenic myths\textsuperscript{1156} it was important mainly in Hebrew rituals\textsuperscript{1157} while Hittite, Egyptian and Ugaritic sacrifices did not place great, or should one say obvious, emphasis upon blood itself – the emphasis appeared to be propitiating, honouring, feeding and caring for the gods without necessarily feeding them blood. “Sacrifice is offering food to the gods and blood as such had no special, explicit part in it.”\textsuperscript{1158}

Although certain purificatory rites indicated the use of blood, the body of the sheep was used to purify the Babylonian temple at New Year rather than its blood – the Heb. נجمهورية, atonement based upon “(cover), pacify, make propitiation”\textsuperscript{1159}, may correspond to Akk. kupāru(m) ‘to wipe clean [cultically]’\textsuperscript{1160}, but it was the exsanguinated remains which acted as purifying objects in Babylon, unlike Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{1161}

One should not, however, give too much credence to McCarthy’s comparisons of the rituals of “Canaan and Greece” – his misunderstanding of the θυσία and ἁμμὸν “with their peculiar allocation of parts of the victim to the god”\textsuperscript{1162} is serious but understandable given the paucity of Ugaritic

\textsuperscript{1156} Dalley 1989:260-1, the Enûma Elī vi 1-36.
\textsuperscript{1157} McCarthy 1969: 167.
\textsuperscript{1158} McCarthy 1969: 168-9.
\textsuperscript{1159} BDB 497.
\textsuperscript{1160} Black et al 2000:147.
\textsuperscript{1161} McCarthy 1969: 169-70.
\textsuperscript{1162} Note that in Ugarit it was a rare occurrence for only part of an animal to be sacrificed: Pardee himself was struck by this in TR. Pardee 2000b: 922.

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ritual texts popularly translated and debated at that time in wider scholarly circles.\footnote{1163} And although he did suggest the parallel between Ugarit and Israel was “all the more striking when a sacrificial tariff combines them with an offering of two birds” he did not hesitate to point out that there was discontinuity in the importance of blood in Ugarit, at least so far as one can tell from the rather tersely written tablets.

He maintained the connection that “The theory that drought was connected with the death of the rain god explains the actions of the Baalist prophets in I Kings 18.28 in this light. Blood is connected with death.”\footnote{1164} That does not seem consistent with the other popular scholarly view of blood, that it had to the Semitic peoples an intimate connection to life! One cannot, on the basis of arguments by McCarthy or on explicit evidence found within the texts, support a view that blood was an important element of sacrifice within Ugarit.

Most Ugaritic scholars are agreed that the cult or ritual worship was central to the Ugaritian religion which we can study. Eissfeldt, Caquot & Sznycer, de Tarragon and del Olmo Lete\footnote{1165} all concurred on the fundamental importance of the sacrificial act - “we consider ‘sacrifice’ as the basic cultic rite of the great rituals of the Ugaritic Liturgy (New Year, National Atonement,
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Sacrifice to all the Gods, etc.) and it is recorded in them as the essential element".1166 1167

The evidence from Ugarit is very often damaged, although one or two duplicated tablets have enabled reconstructions of almost complete texts. However, as Pardee has pointed out one should remember that these represent a particular form of Ugaritic worship, specifically "royal concerns, either from the sacrificial cult, where the king himself was the primary actor, or from various groups that surrounded the king and who were guardians and transmitters of the royal ideology and its accompanying theology.”1168 This ‘royalist’ understanding1169 has been supported by Wyatt and del Olmo Lete. Also, the ritual and cultic material is mostly written in prose. Poetry, whose forms strongly influenced the shape and character of the literary material, is left behind in these eminently practical tablets which often appear to be no more than liturgical ‘crib notes’. Nevertheless, they provide an insight into the religious daily life of Ugarit in a way unavailable from a study of only the literary material.

In the meantime, it is important for the purpose of this dissertation to survey those ritual texts which mention Baal under his various titles to ascertain whether there is any evidence about the actual form of worship undertaken

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1167 For a thorough and exhaustive discussion of the issues surrounding ritual and sacrifice in Ugarit, Clemens 2002: 5-144.
1169 The tablets in question coming from the palace.

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in Ugarit. It is hoped that the manner of worship, the offerings given, prayers or songs written and directions for royal or priestly actions may all further inform our understanding of the god.

Ritual texts

It has already been remarked that the ritual texts are in prose form, rather than the more widely known poetic style. It should also be noted that a majority of the rituals involve the offering of animals, wholly or in part. Liturgical texts are almost all sacrificial in character\textsuperscript{1170} and those which do not offer flesh replace it with items such as grain, clothing, wine and oil or, more rarely, precious metals. This chapter will not attempt to provide the depth of reading given previously by Pardee but will mention those in which Baal forms part of a list of gods, focussing on KTU 1.119 in which Baal is the centre of ritual worship.

Texts in which Baal is part of a list of deities

KTU 1.39: 6, 10, 14.
KTU 1.41: 15, 33, 34, 35.
KTU 1.46: 3, 6, 8, 12.
KTU 1.48: 2, 8, 9.
KTU 1.27: 4.
KTU 1.65: 10, 11.

\textsuperscript{1170} Pardee 2002:3 KTU 1.23, although 'mythological' clearly contains ritual instruction and El placing a bird upon coals. Wyatt 1998b: 331, following De Moor, interpreted this as consummation of a divine marriage.
The majority of these texts mention Baal or one of the Baals (of Ugarit, of Saphon) in passing, part of a list alternating between deity and offering, offering and deity. Often there is not so much as a preposition to indicate whether the deity should be associated with the offering before or after its name. This has been mentioned before but should be remembered when a translation is given: the text presented is at most a ‘best guess’ as to the order, particularly when a text is damaged. Some texts obviously repeatedly refer to Baal and his avatars or have a particularly unusual offering.

KTU 1.46 is such a tablet, a rather sparsely detailed text. It mentions days of an unspecified month twice, once with reference to the day of the full moon. Most of the text is in fact a list of deities and sacrifice accorded to them. This is plain on the obverse, where first El, then Baal and Dagan are offered rams on the same day of the month. At the time of the full moon, a feast was held for Baal of Saphon, which Pardee suggested took place most likely within the
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temple of Baal of Ugarit although that is suggested in a reconstructed part of the tablet.\textsuperscript{1171} Selected lines (those which refer to Baal) are given below.\textsuperscript{1172}

**KTU 1.46**

\begin{verbatim}
3 [ ] š 'il š. b'1 š. dgn
6 [ ] 'i ] š. b'1 š., atrt. š. ym š. <b> 1 knp <g> [ ... ]
16 [w b bt. b'1. 'ugrt. ] <k> k <m. w npš

3 [ ] a ram to\textsuperscript{1173} El, a ram to Baal, a ram to Dagan
6 [ ] E]l a ram, to Baal a ram. to Athirat a ram, to
Yam a ram, to Baal ‘of the wing’...
16 [and in the temple of Baal of Ugarit] as a .... and a lung
\end{verbatim}

Much of the text has been reconstructed using KTU 1.109:1-14, although in KTU 1.109 Baal is offered ‘a bull and a ram’ - from lines 10-38 is unreadable and Pardee has left 19-37 blank. Pardee’s attribution of a feast “[for Baal of Sa[punu” in KTU 1.46 1.12 is, I feel, contentious since in KTU 1.109 we are presented with the titles “‘nt spn” as well as “b’l spn”, the text he has used to largely reconstruct KTU 1.46\textsuperscript{1174} especially since Anat was offered two rams and a bull at the beginning of the text. It could in fact be a feast for either deity and this ambiguity is not presented in his translation. The whole line is almost entirely reconstructed and letter signs are difficult to discern.\textsuperscript{1175}

\textsuperscript{1171} Pardee 2000a: 27-8.
\textsuperscript{1172} See Pardee 2000a: 265-288.
\textsuperscript{1173} The addition of the attributive ‘to’ is only for the benefit of the translation. There is nothing in the text to give this sense other than context. The preposition /will be translated as ‘for’ throughout ritual texts, denoting its presence, since to insert ‘to’ when there is no letter and ‘to’ when a letter is given would, I feel, obfuscate the actual text present in the tablet.
\textsuperscript{1174} Pardee 2000b: 1267 fig. 5.
\textsuperscript{1175} Pardee 2002: 27, 29-30.
KTU 1.48 contained the single occurrence of the phrase

"a bull in the fire
for Baal one has placed."\textsuperscript{1176}

This directive is quite striking and raises an important question: does the singularity of this instruction mean that other offerings were \textit{not} placed ‘in the fire’? Or, rather, was it uncommon for a \textit{tr} to be sacrificed and therefore an extra instruction was necessary? Certainly the other offerings within the text are birds, clothing and – perhaps – sandals, so one is not presented with a typical offering list. It may be that this was an exceptional rite requiring explicit detail for the treatment of the bull, as it may have been part of the cult as practised outside of Ugarit’s palace.\textsuperscript{1177} An unusual phrase in KTU 1.48 is \textit{jph b’t}\textsuperscript{1178} which Pardee has translated as the ‘family of Ba’ilu’ to whom an illegible number of birds are offered is also uncommon among ritual texts.

There is no doubt however that Baal was adequately worshipped with offerings in the ritual texts since he is mentioned more frequently than all other gods. For example, in KTU 1.130 the deities were offered the following number of animals:

\begin{verbatim}
Baal \textit{spn}  2 ewes  city dove  2 kidneys  2 bull  3 ram
Baal \textit{ugrunt}  1 ram
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{1176}1.8 \textit{tr}, \textit{b išt}
\textsuperscript{1177} Pardee 2000b: 1320-336.
\textsuperscript{1178} Pardee 2002: 118.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baal</th>
<th>Anat</th>
<th>Pidray</th>
<th>Yarihu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hlb</td>
<td>spn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ram</td>
<td>1 bull</td>
<td>2 ram</td>
<td>1 ram</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This demonstrated a significant bias towards Baal and one that is often found in these sacrificial lists. Most interesting are the ‘varieties’ of Baal to whom sacrifice was offered, although these will be examined in more detail in the chapter discussing the titles of Baal. At the moment it should be noted that there were several hypostases or denominations of Baal which were regarded as separate enough to require individual worship or attention, implying a complex theology difficult to discern from the ritual texts alone.

This is well illustrated in KTU 1.148 2-5 and 10-13, in which the sacrifice of a bull and a ram is offered firstly of Baal of Saphon and then to seven ‘more’ Baals; it is reasonable to assume that these are the same Baals mentioned in the list of deities in RS 92.2004 and whose separate identities or functions are as yet unexplained.

KTU 1.109 was used in the reconstruction of the text of KTU 1.46 but also contains repeated references to Baal. It is a ‘full’ moon ritual, beginning on

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1179 See Pardee 2000b: 901, 909.
1180 Chapter 9.
the day of the full moon two weeks after the king had been purified. There are a limited number of deities compared with, for example, KTU 1.148, and yet Baal remains one of a group, rather than one separated. Sacrifice did occur in \textit{bt b'l ugr} 'the palace of Baal of Ugarit' (11) and the types of Baal dominate the group of gods involved: however, one cannot support a view that it was particularly for ‘the family of Baal’ since other gods, including El, are offered worship. It is always possible that this text is the second part of a month’s worship and the focus on Baal and Baals is because the other half of the month was written on another tablet. This is less far-fetched than it sounds because it has already been shown that KTU 1.46:10-17 are by and large a copy of KTU 1.109:1-14.

There is no mention of Baal in the so-called contemplative rituals, for example KTU 1.90 and he is not part of the rite of entrance in KTU 1.43. Neither does he appear in the divination texts, whether those using animal organs, teratology or astrological phenomena.\footnote{\textsuperscript{1183}}

Baal was mentioned in the dream omen\footnote{\textsuperscript{1184}} of KTU 1.86, a badly preserved tablet, but no serious gains can be made in our survey of Baal from this fragmented evidence. He also played a significant role in the text KTU 1.100 for “ridding the land of serpents”, which Pardee has placed in the category of “historiolae”.\footnote{\textsuperscript{1185}} He was among several gods who were invoked by the

\footnote{\textsuperscript{1183} See KTU 1.141-1.45, 1.103, 1.145, and 1.78 respectively.}\footnote{\textsuperscript{1184} According to Pardee 2002: 146, 2000a: 242-3.}\footnote{\textsuperscript{1185} That is a text which joins myth with magic. Frankfurter 1995. Pardee 2002: 172-9.}
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delivery of a message to them. Most importantly he was invoked after El but before any other god, indicating either a notion of high divine rank or perhaps even efficacy in the expulsion of serpents. However in KTU 1.107 he was paired again with Dagan among a litany of gods and after El and Horon.\textsuperscript{1186}

KTU 1.119

This hymn to Baal is one of the most significant texts found both in terms of its description of the worship and beliefs held about Baal of Ugarit and its forming a calendar for a ritual month's worship by the king. It is commonly held to be in two parts, the first a ritual description of the actions of the king on certain days in which Baal and Baal of Ugarit were offered sacrifices\textsuperscript{1187}, and in the second part, a rare poetic section in which the worshippers were both addressed and spoke. Baal is explicitly stated to be the defender of the city of Ugarit and to be repaid for his divine protection by the sacrifice of a bull in the sanctuary of Baal.\textsuperscript{1188}

\begin{verbatim}
1 in (the) month Ibaalat on day seven
a ram for Baal \textsuperscript{rkt}
and temple of Baal of Ugarit [ ] a ram [ ]
at (the) setting of sun and the king is desacralised on day seven(teen?)
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{1186} dgn \textsuperscript{w} b'l.
\textsuperscript{1187} Other divinities were offered sacrifices but by far the greatest number are for Baal and Baal of Ugarit.
\textsuperscript{1188} 1. 26-35.
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5 the king washes and is purified  
a heifer (to) the sanctuary of El 
a heifer for the Baalim  
a heifer for the divine messenger?  
two ewes and a heifer  
for the glmtm temple of f'y  
and (they) shall be burnt in the altar-room of the temple of Baal  
10 of Ugarit. A lamb and a pigeon (as) oblation  
on eighteenth of Ibaalat  
an ox for the tower of Baal of Ugarit  
both urm and snpt indeed the king will sacrifice  
(in) the temple of El. A Lung for Isharra  
15 a lung for Baal [ ]  
and donkey for [ ]  
.... (rev).  
18 [ ] for the previous day [ ]  

7ml ykb[d]  
20 on day four two birds; on day five two birds;  
.... and liver and ram as holocaust for Baal  
of Ugarit in the temple. On day seven ‘the purifiers  
approach’  
at the setting of the sun  
the king is desacralised (with/by?) the ‘oil of peace’  
25 (of) Baal. A libation (by/for) the ‘head’ queen*  
If a strong one attacks your gate  
a warrior your walls, raise your eyes to Baal (and cry)  
‘O Baal!’  
Surely he shall remove the strong one from your gate  
the warrior from your walls  

30 a bull (to) Baal we shall sanctify, a vow to Baal  
we shall complete: a (male) one to Baal we shall  
consecrate  
a propitiation (to) Baal, a feast to Baal we [offer]  
(to the) sanctuary of Baal, we shall go up the paths of

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1189 htp a type of sacrifice.  
1190 srt a ‘feast’.

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the temple of Baal
(we shall walk) and Baal shall hear your prayers
35 He will drive the strong one from your gate
the warrior from your wall.

del Olmo Lete stated clearly that KTU 1.119 was not only the key text of the "royal liturgy of the word" but also "unique in the whole cultic literature of Ugarit".1191 Despite his cautionary remark that the text is broken at the bottom and so may constitute in fact two different passages, he described the combination of both offering list and Baal-directed prayer as comprising "the essence of cult"1192 and being "in verbal form an urban monthly liturgy that takes place in the two sanctuaries confirmed by archaeology from ancient times on the city acropolis, with the Baal cult dominating."1193

Pardee has described the second section as a prayer appended to a ritual,1194 poetic in form owing to the prayer addressed to Baal embedded within it. His translation was accordingly more poetic than the very literal translation I have proposed and, although it may not be entirely kosher, it certainly caught the tone of a supplicatory canon.1195 The important information on this tablet is not the timing or even the duration of the ritual 'month' – it is, rather, the conjunction between a relatively limited offering list and a direct supplication of the god Baal.

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1191 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 292.
1192 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 293.
1193 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 294.
1194 Pardee 2002: 249.
1195 Translation is discussed in Chapter 1: 'Introduction' in 'methodology'.

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I propose therefore that the most significant points which can be stated with confidence from KTU 1.119 are that:

- it is without doubt a unique text in the body of Ugaritic literature extant at this time;
- the god Baal was regarded as the particular protector of the city of Ugarit:1196
- the king was, in this text as in many others, the chief cultic mediator between his people and their god:
- and finally, this text provides the proof that sacrifice within a ritual setting could be offered as supplication and thanksgiving, regarded as directed to and accepted by (perhaps demanded by?) particular deities, in this instance Baal in his role as patron and protector.

This should be qualified by the remark that these statements are of course true only in a limited context. This is one of a hundred or more ritual fragments and yet it is the only example of this ritual. Should one question its importance because of this uniqueness or does that merely highlight its significance? Despite the wish to regard this text as confirmation of both the special relationship between Baal and Ugarit and the king and Baal within Ugaritic religion per se, caution is required and reluctantly given. KTU 1.119 is alone in form and content at least until further evidence emerges.

1196 Perhaps one should qualify this with comparing KTU 1.119 to KTU 1.40, a rite of atonement for the inhabitants of Ugarit whenever they have been accused by their international neighbours, sinned, become angry or failed to perform the correct sacrifices. See Wyatt 1998b: 342-7, Pardee 2000a: 92-142. There is, surprisingly, no mention of Baal. Because of that it has been omitted from this chapter but it raises the question once more of the scope of these ritual texts. Should one regard them as texts for single rituals, exceptional occasions, indicating that perhaps Baal was regarded as a god who acted

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The main mythological texts have been examined previously and any possible connection to the ritual practices of Ugarit noted there. However, one or two comments are possible after examining the ritual texts from this chapter.

Jeffers has suggested that the discovery of model livers and lungs at Ugarit\textsuperscript{1197}, used for some type of divination, is a reflection of the episode in KTU 1.19 iii 38 in which Baal brings down and opens the birds in order to help Danel "to seek an omen concerning the death of his son".\textsuperscript{1198} There is no evidence in the mythological material that Baal sought any kind of information about Aqhat – Danel was quite clearly looking for the remains of his body. Any attempt to impose a Hittite influence upon the myth\textsuperscript{1199} is entirely gratuitous.

Pardee has argued that Baal of Ugarit was a hypostasis of the weather god Baal or Hadd commonly described in the mythic texts.\textsuperscript{1200} It is true that the most frequently mentioned titles in the ritual texts are simply Baal, Baal of Saphon and Baal of Ugarit, those which commonly signify the deity featured in the mythological texts. There is therefore some coherence between the mythic and cultic material but it cannot be made stronger simply on the basis of titles. There are other titles given to Baal in the ritual texts which do not

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1197 Xella 1978: 329 n.52.
1199 Apparently there was a strong link between Hittite liver models and divination.
1200 Pardee 2002: 104 n.49.

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appear within the mythic or epic material and one would not wish to argue that they could not therefore be ascribed to the same deity. Day has argued that the different titles of Baal were rather like the different manifestations of the Virgin Mary in modern Roman Catholicism; the same person but a different aspect of them, with recognition of the difference implied in their title.

The building of the temple of Baal in KTU 1.4 vi took place upon Mt. Saphon rather than in Ugarit itself, the site of the *bt b'l ugrt* mentioned in several ritual texts unlike the *bt b'l spn*. Whether one would argue for a syncretistic approach to these temples, the mythic and the concrete, depends entirely upon one's view of the cult: the 'as above, so below' approach has much to commend it. However, there is no explicit connection between the two temples within the ritual texts and KTU 1.119, in which worshippers ascend to the temple of Baal does not mention Saphon, site of the mythic great temple and one may reasonably regard the climb as much as a spiritual as physical action.

The importance of the return of Baal from his sojourn with Mot has been addressed in the Chapter 4 'Baal and Death', while the relationship between role of the king and the worship of Baal has been addressed in Chapter 6 'Baal as a Royal God' and the interpretation of Baal's worship as a 'fertility

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1201 Chapter 9 and appendix 2.
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cult' has been dealt with in Chapter 3 'Baal as a Fertility God'. The reader is referred to those chapters for discussion of cult within those areas.

Conclusions:

On the basis of the information gathered from the above ritual texts, one may make several general assessments of the worship of Baal at Ugarit.

The main form of worship was that of sacrifice, that is, the offering of an animal to the deity. The act in which this offering took place was rarely described in terms which would allow the replication of an act of worship today. One cannot definitively say that the cult at Ugarit was based upon the 'feeding' of the gods since there is no explicit evidence of the gods eating the sacrificed animals. It is reasonable, however, given the quantity of cloth and garments given that there may have been an element of 'dressing' or caring for the gods. This is very rarely done in connection with Baal, however, whose main form of worship consisted of animal offering.

1203 It is unwise to connect directly the divine feasting in the Baal Cycle to a ritual practised in Ugarit.
1204 The assertion that the 'holocaust' offering sent the entire animal to the deity in the form of smoke may make sense based upon Israelite texts but there is no description of how to perform any of the types of sacrifice mentioned in Ugarit upon which I would be happy to base a reconstruction of the Ugaritic cult. Any attempt to equate one unspecified type of sacrifice with one which is attested in another nation's cult is to be regarded with caution and even suspicion since the motivation and physical actions behind the Ugaritic cult are only tenuously apprehendable.
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Neither can a view of the cult consisting of “blood sacrifices” be supported, since blood is never mentioned in ritual texts. The fate of the body was perhaps held to be coherent with that of the blood. At the same time, other goods were offered to Baal on an exceptional basis, perhaps dependent upon what was available rather than upon any other criterion. Again, there is not enough evidence to argue for anything other than the most basic of assessments.

Baal and his main forms are attested in both the mythic and ritual material, although there are other forms of Baal which appear only in ritual texts and therefore without any information to describe their characteristics other than their names. Despite his subordinate position within the pantheon described in the mythological texts, Baal emerges as the ‘recipient’ of most sacrifice in Ugarit, even taking into account the various forms of other gods which likewise only appear in ritual texts.

Several important questions cannot be answered however, for instance the true form of worship implied by the terms *slmn* and *srp*. It is unreasonable to assume that one may understand the character and theology of Baal from texts which are often little more than lists and while important, the ritual evidence has a limited amount to offer in our understanding of the cult beyond the realms of conjecture.

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1.205 See chapter 9.
1.206 Pardee 2000b: 901,909.
The encyclopaedic data and exhaustive appendixes from *Textes Rituels* give an outline of bare facts and the numbers of sacrifices, terms used and proportions given to Baal all influence our view of the cult but there is also very little to explain these numbers: we can only state them and draw conclusions which cannot be definitively supported.

For instance, we have here examples of the official cult, which was practised and recorded in the temples and palaces of Ugarit. There is little evidence from outside the capital or from the everyday houses of Ugarit to demonstrate the form of worship which may have taken place there. Since there are only a few mentions of cultic personnel within the ritual texts we likewise have no evidence to suggest that the vast population of the city took part in a corporate ‘liturgy’ to Baal within the temple or palace.

Neither do we have any real evidence of the procedure or form of worship within the rituals – were they joined by choristers, was incense involved, were there ritual processions with the animals before or after their death? Likewise, the fate of the offerings is unknowable. In Egypt, the temple priesthood had a very good livelihood from those animals and crops offered to the gods – could the same practice have occurred at Ugarit? We cannot tell

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1207 Del Olmo Lete 1999a: 55.
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from the ritual material which survives. As Pardee has stated "the great number of unknowns make it impossible to move beyond generalities."\(^\text{1208}\)

Having begun this chapter with a negative, it would be good to end here with a positive. Despite the foregoing declarations about generalities, unsupportable theories and paucity of explanatory material, it should be remembered that these are only part of the evidence found in Ugarit. While having to restrict this dissertation largely to the tablets which have survived, there are a wide range of archaeological artefacts which may well have functioned within the temple or palace cult and which cannot be adequately examined here. As a few examples, one would cite of course the stelae considered as part of the iconography of Baal\(^\text{1209}\) but also the gold bowl and plate, described by M. Yon as "offerings" for the Baal temple, various bronze deposits (late 3rd millennium) from the area around the temple, metal bull figurines from the same area,\(^\text{1210}\) what has been identified as a "votive chariot" from the temple\(^\text{1211}\); votive anchors from the acropolis\(^\text{1212}\) and of course the magnificent images of the smiting god which even today are impressive works of religious art.\(^\text{1213}\) While some of this evidence will be mentioned in the chapter of the Iconography of Baal the implication of all these gifts – not mentioned in the so-called ritual texts – on our perception of the cult of Baal is one of enrichment. It reminds us that we must not limit the

\(^{1208}\) Pardee 2002: 232.
\(^{1209}\) See Chapter 8.
\(^{1210}\) Which Schaeffer 1949 described as 'offertes par les fidèles sans doute en guise d'ex voto à la divinité'.
\(^{1211}\) Caquot & Szmycer 1980: 27 and plate 27b.
\(^{1213}\) See Appendix 1.
reality of Ugaritic religion only to the textual evidence remaining and that it must necessarily have been far richer than we can imagine.
Chapter 8: the Iconography of Baal of Ugarit

While this dissertation is based upon the written LBA evidence of Baal from the religious texts of Ugarit, it would be a serious mistake to ignore the accumulated pictorial or iconographic evidence that has survived in greater abundance than the textual material. It must be pointed out immediately that the art of Ugarit, in common with most West and North Syrian art, does not name the god whom it pictured. This is a frustrating trait, especially when compared to the effective labelling practised by their Egyptian neighbours! Despite this I believe it is possible to say several important things about Baal and the manner in which he was depicted in the graphic relics of Ugarit, not least of which is a reassessment of the famous Baal au Foudre stele, discovered by Schaeffer in 1932 amidst rubble from statues near the Temple of Baal.\footnote{1214 Schaeffer, 1949: 121.}

Baal au Foudre: possible reinterpretations

Schaeffer bestowed the title Baal au Foudre\footnote{1215 Yon 1991: 331 fig.11a.} on the stela soon after its excavation, because of the forked upper end of the spear or lance which the larger figure holds. This personage has been widely identified as Baal, although similarities with Resheph cannot be denied.\footnote{1216 Cornelius, 1994: 33 BR2.}
Physical description

The stela is 1.42 m tall, between 0.48 and 0.50 m wide and 0.28 m in depth. Carved in white limestone, it has a mass of roughly one ton and is almost intact. There is a fairly large chip at the top of the stone, while the sides and (most importantly) base show evidence of chips missing and general abrasion. Yon has convincingly argued that the stela cannot be dated either from the situation of its discovery, weaponry shown or even the figure’s pose (which is documented in Egypt from the late 4th millennium BCE and thus should not influence our dating) and so it is only possible to state that the carving perhaps took place sometime between the 18th century BCE and the end of the main urban inhabitation of Ugarit in around 1180 BCE.1217

Description of the carving

The central figure is drawn to a scale which is almost too large for the stone and its head is disproportionately large for the body, which is itself positioned most uncomfortably in a classically Egyptian pose: the right foot was placed in front, in line with the left, hips squarely forward (one can just see the trace of a divine right buttock beneath the fine fabric of the kilt) while the upper torso was twisted to face forward onto the plane of the tablet. The


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right arm was raised behind the head, wielding what appeared to be a round-headed club (the top is missing) and the left arm planted a large spear firmly in the ground. This weapon has caused endless discussion: does it depict a lightning shaft or a plant? The long and vicious-looking tip extended to the earth, while the shaft is gripped just below the beginning of the forked area. This is not a typical ‘staff’ by any means – its upper part illustrated an almost chevron-like pattern and the top seemed to ‘flower’ outwards. If one were to ignore, for a moment, the textual evidence of Baal’s penchant for wielding thunderbolts, the plain visual evidence would argue for a stylised tree, such as was often found on cylinder seals. However, contra Cornelius I would argue that in this instance, it is appropriate to recall the very vivid language of KTU 1.4 vii 40 - “Baal spoke: the axe his (left) hand ... the cedar in his right hand” and KTU 1.101 line 4 - “Baal sits ... a tree-of-lightning [in his] r[ight hand].”

This is an exception to the very wise rule proposed by Cornelius that when examining iconographic evidence, one should not search for images that support those texts describing events or the appearance of deities. Rather, one should accept that the view of the deity held by the populace could have differed significantly from that which was written down by the priesthood or royal scribes. After all, the Ugaritic texts were only comprehensible to a minority of Ugaritians - whether they were then disseminated to the

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1218 Gorelick and Williams-Forte 1983: 40 fig. 9, plate 1:2-4. Pritchard 1954: 19 fig. 858, 859.
populace is unknowable - and so the common view of their deity may have been quite different from the one we know.

In this particular instance, however, it is acceptable to suggest that this stela depicted not only Baal but also evoked the triumphant king of Ugarit and so would support a royalist ideology. It cannot be certain that the king depicted was the same monarch whose scribes committed to writing the surviving texts of Ugarit, since neither date of carving nor identity of king can be established from the stela and so this is an issue which will remain unresolved.

The god’s kilt of fine linen was held up by a belt into which was thrust a short sword, and seemed to have either bands of a pattern or was made up of several layers of linen, giving the appearance of a wrapping. The helmet was tall, finely moulded and similar to the white crown of Upper Egypt which Seth and Resheph were frequently shown wearing though its top is distinctively elongated.1221 Aside from his long and Syrian or naturalistic beard, the figure also had two long ‘locks’ of hair, one behind his head and the other draped over his shoulder, curling at the ends and quite thick. It should also be noted that while physically uncomfortable, as well as an artistic and ideologically conventional pose, the twisting torso and firmly planted legs would provide powerful momentum for bringing the club crashing onto the victim’s head.

1221 Cornelius 1994: 247 pl. 4-17.
Previous interpretations of the carving and its significance.

Schaeffer’s original interpretation of the stela was at the time a masterstroke of inspired understanding and has not been greatly improved upon. He dated the carving to between 1900-1750 BCE based upon the three other stelae found at the same time, although it is of far superior quality. All were found amidst ancient demolition debris and so he felt the possible difference in age between the four relics would not have been considerable.\textsuperscript{1222} For Schaeffer the strong Egyptian influence supported this dating and he suggested that the proportion of head-to-body of the main figure could have been an artistic convention rather than a fault of proportioning.\textsuperscript{1223} However, the significant emblems of this deity were, he argued, particularly Syrian: the long and distinctive helmet, well-formed lips, almond eyes and carefully drawn beard, as well as the cornes des taureau.\textsuperscript{1224} The belt and fabric of the kilt, he argued, were influenced by the strong Aegean connection of Ugarit at this time.\textsuperscript{1225}

The lance provided another clue for dating: the broad base and long point of its blade were typical of ancient weapons – the deity carried an archaic

\textsuperscript{1222} Schaeffer 1949: 122. 
\textsuperscript{1223} Schaeffer 1949: 123. 
\textsuperscript{1224} Schaeffer 1949: 124. 
\textsuperscript{1225} Schaeffer 1949: 125-6.
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weapon, which to Schaeffer confirmed the antiquity of the stela.1226 "The wood of the lance must probably be considered as a stylised bush or tree" and yet at the same time, Schaeffer argued that it also represented lightning "in the form of a lance which the god seized in the middle of a wood" and which "then announced the rain upon which the fertility of the area depended."1227 By combining the imagery here, one could show the branch of a sacred tree and evoke also the beneficial effect of lightning, which was followed by rain and announced by the thunder – the voice of the god, despite the terror that it could cause. Given the position of the stela upon discovery, its proximity to the Temple of Baal1228 and the agreement between textual descriptions of Baal and the depiction of him upon the stela, Schaeffer identified the main figure as Baal with little difficulty.

However, Schaeffer's interpretation of the 'lignes ondulées' has been most often discounted. He argued that they were representative of mountains, "derived perhaps from the ideogram or hieroglyphic determinative which signified a mountainous region, and by extension, a foreign land."1229 In a pre-emptive response to those who questioned why Baal did not stand directly upon the mountains, Schaeffer suggested that the sculptor wished to give "the majestic divinity a more stable pose by placing him upon a base" or

1226 Schaeffer 1949: 126.
1227 Schaeffer 1949: 127.
1228 Yon 1991: 320, p.t. 1161 (1932). The discovery of the anchors (Frost 1991) provides further evidence to identify the temple.
1229 Schaeffer 1949: 129.

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even that “in reality, Baal did not reign on the mountains but in the sky above the summits.”

Yon had an alternative view of these lines. She noted that few of the stelae found in Ugarit surpassed a metre in height and so the *Baal au Foudre* piece was unique. Although displaced, most of the statuary found was excavated in the vicinity of temples and so may reasonably be regarded as originally votive, with several having the name of their donors inscribed upon them. One stela had “Baal” written upon it in Egyptian, while four others may be interpreted as representations of the Syrian storm-god. Yon stated that the base of the stone was not carved deeply on the front because the sculptor had not wished to make the base of such a heavy stone too fragile, the curves forming part of “*un piédestal complexe*”. Yon examined the composition in some detail (although focusing rather more upon geometric lines of composition and massing than Schaeffer) and concluded that while it gave an impression in general of strength, at the same time it reflected a harmonious equilibrium, despite the pose of the deity as the “*dieu combatant*.”

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1230 Compare this with depictions of the Syrian storm-god in Dijkstra 1991: 138-140, where the deity is depicted with feet firmly planted upon mountain tops themselves.


1233 Yon 1991: 279. No’s. 1, 2, 4-5.


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Yon was convinced of the similarity between the double registered, moulded cornice-type pedestal of the large figure and that of the small figure in front of him, although we cannot see if the smaller figure's base was similarly carved. Yon stated that the two sets of lines, lower and upper, had different meanings because of the difference in the method of their carving. The lower had been incised, represented water, following an extremely widespread convention, from Egyptian hieroglyph to modern road sign, that Yon argued was a universal symbol. The upper, however, was carved in light relief, with slight traces of an incised line below the main one. These, she suggested, resembled "des sortes d'écailles" corresponding to schematic representations of mountains found on numerous Syrian artefacts. Yon repeated Schaeffer's suggestion of the evocation of the Egyptian hieroglyph for mountains and hence, a foreign land. This led Yon to modify previous comments in which she had insisted that the representation of water had been unrecognised: she now proposed that the stela showed both water and mountains.

She supported Schaeffer's general interpretation of the iconography of the stela: the common smiting pose, the figure dressed for combat, the presence of the king as the secondary figure, but disputed Schaeffer's interpretation of the horns. While she acknowledged that they represented his "vital

1236 Gardiner 1927: 479 N35 (water) is not similar to this carving however. See Appendix 1: fig. 5.
1237 See sketch by Fenton 1996: 54.
1239 Gardiner 1927: 477 N 25, 26, 27.
1241 Contra H. Frankfort 1948: 148 n. 58 "probably a goddess allied with him".

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towards the 'arcs', the term he used for the lines on the 'base' of the stela. Fenton had been disappointed by Yon's change of mind about the significance of the 'arcs', the term he used for the lines on the 'base' of the stela. He had no reservations about using the textual evidence to support an understanding and interpretation of the iconography of the stela. The focus of his assessment of the tablet concentrated upon the interpretation of these lines and he dismissed in short order the 'mountain' suggestion of Schaeffer, while admitting that it could not be conclusively argued against on the basis of either artistic economy or formalism. He accepted the

power", their position would initially signal a more caprid appearance: this however did not sit easily with their proportions and so she eventually agreed upon their bovine significance, citing textual and contemporary evidence. Likewise, his weapons were those with which he fought Mot but the pointing of the lance downward was noted as contrary to the regular scheme. Even if the weapon had been real, Yon preferred to regard it as the branch of a tree, an "élément vegetal", rather than representative of lightning. Finally, the base was decorated in this manner as the sculptor played with the ambiguity of symbols present, to illustrate a divine hierarchy in which the god was superior to the king, whose pedestal was simpler than that belonging to the god.

1242 That is 'goat like'.
1246 Yon 1991: 298.
1247 Fenton 1996: 52.
1248 Given the reasonable suggestion that if the second figure is royal, it would be legitimate to conclude that the same societal group who commissioned the writing of the religious texts of Ugarit also paid for the exquisite carving on this stela, perhaps at different periods in the history of Ugarit.
argument of Yon that the lower line may represent water but pointed out
that the continuous upper line prevented a view of the upper panel as
showing ‘scales’, present in other Ugaritic artefacts.  
On the contrary, the
apparently parallel lower arcs indicated to Fenton the depiction of a serpent,
upon whom the god trampled in victory, mentioned very briefly by
Williams-Forte, who commented that the line represented either “rounded
mountainous forms or ... writhing serpent”. 

Fenton argued that the difficulties of interpretation were due to the abrasion
of the lower stone and its inferior original manner of carving, which would

“indicate that the base of the stela was not accorded the same
treatment as the upper part ... it may, nevertheless, be worth
remarking that the limited area of the pedestal and its
separation from the main composition by ruled lines do
indicate a degree of subordination: what appears on the
pedestal is additional to the main theme and not an essential or
integral part of it.”

His proposal, however, that the lower part of the stela was not more finely
carved because the sculptor had not remembered before beginning that he
would have to reach that ‘far down’ is not acceptable: a craftsman and
artist capable of such fine work would, it is to be expected, be capable of
planning work before beginning... He then set out at some length both a

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1250 See for instance the skirt of 'La Dame aux Bouquetins', Pritchard 1954: no. 464.
1251 Gorelick and Williams-Forte 1983: 30.
description of these lines and the methods used in obtaining clearer images of them.

By moving the light source around, Fenton was able to obtain an image which appeared to him to show a snake, its belly resting upon the lower ruled line of the base, with four parallel arcs, two with double lines on the lower edge. The poor quality of these incisions was supported by the conjectured original working conditions. He argued that these parallel lines could not have represented mountains since “mountains do not have gaps or arches beneath them” and the poor quality of the serpent did not worry him overmuch, being convinced of the generally “undistinguished” portrayal of snakes throughout ancient Western Asia. However, his proposed illustration of the head of the serpent is insupportable. Given that one can barely make out the lower line at all, and that the line at the “head” end is doubled, to try and see any kind of head is impossible.

And this was the main problem with Fenton’s argument; while it may “always” have been apparent to him that this base illustrated a snake it is a view that is almost entirely subjective – perhaps more so than the interpretation of the lines as mountains or water. It was true that Baal was, in the textual evidence, described destroying a serpent in KTU 1.5. However,

1254 However see KTU 1.5 v.
1255 Fenton 1996: 56.
1256 Fenton 1996: 57.
1257 Fenton 1996: 57.
given that Anat was also credited with the destruction of this serpent, one must – as Cornelius correctly argued – be very careful about inferring the illustration of a stela from textual evidence: particularly when it remains possible that they are separated by nearly a thousand years. Fenton supported the view of Schaeffer that the lance of Baal could represent both lightning and a tree “in the world of consubstantiality”\(^\text{1259}\) which was acceptable – indeed one might argue, a prerequisite - in understanding the Ugaritic religious material. He did not dispute the interpretation of the second figure as the king of Ugarit and concluded that the stela showed Baal as the “invincible defender against the forces which threaten ... and as the provider of all ... necessary sustenance. It also stated that the two functions are in fact one”, a point not stated so explicitly before.\(^\text{1260}\)

It is clear from this brief assessment of previous interpretations of the *Baal au foudre* stela that there were several important points that require resolution, not least of which was to establish just what the god was standing upon.

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\(^{1259}\) Fenton 1996: 61. ‘consubstantiality’ is understood here to mean ‘capable of representing two or more items at the same time’, that is the lance can represent both tree and lightning with no conflict of meaning.

\(^{1260}\) Fenton 1996: 62.
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Reassessing the evidence

The suggestions that I wish to make are of subtle interpretation, rather than a dramatic volte-face, including examining our understanding of the lignes ondulées or arcs which decorate the 'base' of the stone.

It is clear that the top of the stone is narrower than the base (by several centimetres). The depth of champlain around the top accentuated this narrowing, which is noticeably deeper at the curbed area before the break in the surround. While the figure itself 'breaks through' this surround with his hands and right elbow, the shape is reminiscent of the 'shrines' within which Egyptian gods are depicted and were held in statue form in their temples. Overall it is most like the Egyptian hieroglyph for 'stela'. Although shallow, the line carries on down the right hand (en face) side of the tablet, forming an enclosure around the two figures.

The placing of this within the Temple of Baal would have had the effect of the god being inside his own space and also existing in the human realm, as well as reflecting the influence and importance of the Egyptian presence and aesthetic in Ugarit. While this 'shrine' could also have been the by-product of the style of carving, I believe that the sculptor accentuated this result and did
so having seen the Egyptian ‘shrine’ or stela motif on other carvings or papyri brought from Egypt or executed by Egyptian sculptors in Syria. This Egyptian influence could also be seen in the pose of the figure and other scholars have not disputed this. However, the undulating lines below the double lines upon which Baal stands have provoked a very serious dispute: do they represent mountains\textsuperscript{1262}, mountains and water\textsuperscript{1263} or a snake\textsuperscript{1264}?

While I am not convinced by Fenton’s description of the serpentine head nor entirely won over by Schaeffer’s ‘foreign land’, I am intrigued that the practicality of how this stone was displayed which, I will demonstrate, has an implication for our interpretation of these lower lines, has been inadequately dealt with. Yon’s assertion that the base of the stone is similar to the ‘pedestal’ upon which the small second figure in the carving stands is entirely correct\textsuperscript{1265} and it is clear that at the base of these topmost wavy lines, just under the second set of straight double lines, the sides of the stone had been cut inwards to form a tenon. A tenon required a socket, and therefore the stone must have been inserted into a base or plinth (also of stone). However, the ‘tenon’ that survives is very short to stabilise a stone of such dimensions and at first sight would seem to have been broken off. On further examination, the base of the stone shows some evidence of rough tool marks, creating a more even edge (which is not entirely horizontal). This subtly rounded edge would not have enabled the stone to stand alone but would

\textsuperscript{1261} Gardiner 1927: 483 O26.
\textsuperscript{1262} Schaeffer 1949.
\textsuperscript{1263} Yon, 1991.
\textsuperscript{1264} Fenton 1996.
\textsuperscript{1265} Yon 1991: 294.
have been more practical for its insertion into a plinth with socket, since sharp edges would most likely have caused damage to the base during insertion.

Another reason it would not have rested upon this ‘evened up’ stone is that the lines upon which the figure stands, and which are echoed in the placing of the lower edge of the decorated stone before the indentation of the tenon, are seen to tip slightly down to the right in comparison with this ‘base’ edge. The feet of the figure, the lines upon which it stands and the lines below the ‘waves’ are all parallel with the cuts of the tenon: this demonstrates that the stone was intended by its maker for insertion and display upon some base or mount. It is likely to have stood against a wall. This argument is supported by the tooling on the back of the stela, a rough evening off found on the wall-side of almost all statuary.1266 This would have meant that the statue in situ would easily have stood 2 metres tall, well above the average height of men today and certainly in MBA Ugarit. Schaeffer made no mention of a ‘socket stone’ nearby and here one may present an (extremely inventive!) hypothesis: that this venerated and beloved representation of Baal was removed from its temple at a time of upheaval, either by worshippers who wished to preserve it or by conquerors who wished to steal it. It was taken from the plinth upon which it had stood but was abandoned nearby perhaps when the weight proved too much to carry. While it is impossible to provide

1266 See Appendix 1: fig. 4

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proof for this suggestion, it is a possible explanation of its present appearance and also the situation in which it was discovered.1267

How does the assertion that this stela stood upon a plinth have implications for our interpretation of the wavy lines though? It had been suggested in the past1268 that the stone proved difficult to carve at the base and hence it was left with relatively simple decorations. This was not a satisfactory explanation, since the stone was quite soft (sedimentary limestone is at least as soft as sandstone; hence the stratification of the stone and fine quality of detail in the carving) and was, we have demonstrated, raised up to a level where it would have been easy to remedy any deficiency in decoration. This also results in the "poorly carved snake" theory being discounted, since it would have been easy to carve a clearly visible and more recognisable snake in such soft and accessible stone. Neither was it likely that the lower set of wavy lines was visible – if one carried across the line of the base stone from the top of the tenon across, then these lines would not have been visible. Instead, one would be able to see the lowest straight lines below the "waves", and perhaps the beginning of another pedestal. The final result showed a single level pedestal with double upper line and narrowed base, the same as below the smaller, secondary figure.1269

1267 P.t. 1161 (1932).
1268 See discussion of Fenton and Yon.
1269 See Appendix 1: fig. 1.

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It is clear, however, that there are parallel marks below the most visible curving line – on two sides one can just distinguish a further line, as shown by Fenton and illustrated in his article.\(^\text{1270}\) These did not, however form a snake. It cannot be disputed that the form of the pedestal the deity stands upon is identically shaped to that of the smaller figure. The left-hand side being chipped off has resulted in much confusion and also (perhaps) the “snakes head” theory.\(^\text{1271}\) However, another possible interpretation of these lines appears when examining the tablet from a visual as well as ideological point of view.

The four upper curves on this pedestal are very reminiscent of mountains visible on the horizon from Ugarit, two pairs forming a position of power for the storm-god.\(^\text{1272}\) In Egypt, a person at their death was said to “go to their horizon”, “go into the West”, into the mountains which marked the edge of the living world and down into the land of the dead. Baal, as a cosmic deity, had defeated death both physically (in his return from the land of Mot) and personified (in his victory over Mot, death \textit{simpliciter}). These ‘bumps’ or ‘arcs’ or ‘wavy lines’ may have illustrated the mountains that bound the living world or the ‘known’ kingdom of Ugarit as it was perceived, and perhaps represented Baal’s very own ‘horizon’ or death. They could have signified his triumph over death and return to the land of the living, among his worshippers – not physical mountains in Ugarit or Syria. Baal was shown

\(^{1270}\) Fenton 1996: 56.  
\(^{1271}\) See Appendix 1: fig. 2 and fig. 3. These photographs illustrate that what has been obscured by the chip on the left hand side but can be discerned by a strong back light (the curve from pedestal surface in to the second straight lines) is copied on the right hand side, although the curved line is shallower. It can still be seen but is more visible in the lower pedestal shape, below the second straight lines.  
\(^{1272}\) Dijkstra 1991: 138-140.
standing upon the straight lines, the surface of a pedestal clearly shown in the smaller image and also visible at the sides of the stela, but beneath his feet were the mountains at the edge of the world, separating this world and Ugarit from death and chaos, from which only Baal had returned.

This was not a copy of the Egyptian hieroglyph for “horizon” (a setting sun rather than mountain range) but rather the Ugaritic understanding of this same concept. I would also propose, if one accepted this suggestion, that the lines below the ‘mountains’ were not only intentional but significant: they showed the underworld, the realm of Mot, which we were repeatedly told was beneath mountains, a subterranean land of mud and darkness:

"Raise the mountain on your hands, 
the hill on top of your hands, 
and go down into the house of the couch of the earth, 
be numbered among those who go down into the pit. ... 
a pit the seat of his enthronement, 
a crevice the land of his inheritance."\textsuperscript{1273}

Another possibility, which has not been argued before, is that these lines were a simple decoration. Fenton admitted that they were “additional” to the main theme of the tablet, but did not go so far as to state they were not representational. While this may at first glance appear unlikely, given the extent to which the figure filled the upper part of the stone and how the smaller figure was squashed neatly up against the larger, it could, on closer

\textsuperscript{1273} KTU 1.4 viii 5-15.
examination, be quite convincing. The stone was a very good shape for depicting a figure – note the similarity of the shape to the MBA feathered god figure shown in Plate XI in Caquot & Sznycer.\textsuperscript{1274} While the level of skill shown in the \textit{Baal au Foudre} stela is evidently greater than that of the "feathered god" stela, there is much that is similar. The relevant point here is that the second stela demonstrated the proportion of figure to stone that I believe the sculptor in the \textit{Baal au Foudre} stela was aiming for. The feet of the figure were just above the edge of the stone that was worked once more in \textit{champlevé} and the edge of the spear was parallel with the edge of the stone.

In comparison, the \textit{Baal au Foudre} stone demonstrated several problems in perspective. The weapon of the right hand would, if not first deliberately curved by the sculptor and then chipped by damage, have gone right off the top of the stone. If the rest of the body were in proportion to the head, then the feet would indeed reach just above the level of the proposed base. However, in order to be in proportion to the height, the shoulders would have been too wide for the arms to appear on the stone. While it was more than likely that the craftsmen of Ugarit would have marked out their lines before beginning to carve, one cannot exclude such problems of execution, however well thought-through their planning may have been. Since this stone was by far the largest piece of sculpture found on site, one should not be surprised that there may have been difficulties for the craftsmen in enlarging their pattern. The result was a beautifully carved figure that was too short for the stone. Given the time invested in quarrying, carving and

\textsuperscript{1274}Caquot & Sznycer 1980: Pl. XI. Appendix 1: fig. 8.
moving the stone to the required position, one cannot be surprised at their reluctance to discard this stela. Rather than begin again, one might argue, the sculptor decided to embellish the bottom of the stone with the a pedestal perhaps echoing the one in which the stela would be placed and upon which his king would also be shown, with curved lines which could perhaps also have had the significance I have argued for above.

In conclusion, while we have in this stone not only the largest piece of sculpture surviving from Ugarit but also one of the finest, it was executed with certain difficulties which not only tell us about the skill of the craftsmen but have a direct implication for the interpretation of the decoration at the base of the stone, which has been given perhaps undue importance. However, the understanding of these marks cannot conclusively be limited to only one theory: the enigmatic power of these symbols is in no way diminished by suggesting a decorative motivation. Overall, the stela stands as a testament to the power and character of Baal and a reminder of his relationship with the state of Ugarit.

**Other Pictorial Evidence from Ugarit**

As stated earlier, the greatest difficulty with the iconography of Baal from ancient Ugarit and the surrounding 'Canaanite' area is that the deity represented was almost never named. While there are a considerable number of stela, seals and so on from Egypt which depicted either Baal, Seth or a
deity combining both of them (since both were regarded as rather unpredictable ‘weather’ gods), Seth with Syrian accretions (in terms of shape of crown, weapon and beard, etc.) I am certain that these cannot be included in our present survey which is necessarily very narrowly focused. Cornelius has written a most comprehensive study on the iconography of both Resheph and Baal which included Egyptian material and cannot be bettered in this short space.\textsuperscript{1275}

Given the uncertainty of the identity of the god illustrated and lack of space, it is proposed to give several examples which can preferably

- be connected to Ugarit no earlier than the MBA and obviously no later than the LBA,
- be most likely to depict Baal given the identification of features found on the \textit{Baal au Foudre} stela and
- have enough visible material to enable an identification, since some seals are identified on evidence which is \textit{extremely} tenuous.\textsuperscript{1276}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure9.png}
\caption{Baal of the ‘Disk’ (RS 9273: Aleppo Museum) fig. 9.}
\end{figure}

This small seal of black stone is from Ugarit and dated between 1600 and 1350. Despite its diminutive scale, it demonstrated a similarity of motif which enabled as close to a positive identification of the figure as possible with Baal of Ugarit. The figure, facing left, was shown with legs akimbo, wielding a long ‘mace’ type weapon behind his head, while the right arm planted firmly

\textsuperscript{1275} Cornelius 1994.
\textsuperscript{1276} For the conditions required for the identification of gods, see Cornelius 1994: 14-18.
in the ground a long spear, with what appeared to be a small shrub or plant on its end. This supported the interpretation of the Baal au Foudre lance as more likely to illustrate vegetation than lightning. The figure sported an unusual helmet (perhaps the constraints of size limited the rendering of a conical hat or it is to represent the Egyptian blue (war) crown?) and the long curling lock fell between Baal’s shoulders. The kilt appeared to have folds but no short dagger or sword was shown attached to a belt. The calf muscles and quadriceps were rendered by a single line, giving an impression of strength and movement which confirm the power of the deity in this aggressive pose. The decoration above his head, which was like a sun-disk, had been interpreted as such by Cornelius and Williams-Forte.127 This could be due to the influence of Egyptian art, and as such would indicate the presence of a deity being blessed and even protected by the sun-disk.1278

Baal au Foudre II (Borowski 217. Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem: BLMJ 6876). Fig. 10.

Despite its unknown provenance, this small carved serpentine seal1279, provisionally dated to around 1600-1300, appeared to show an identical copy of the Baal au Foudre figure. A male deity faced right, right leg forward beneath his short kilt and belt holding up a short sword. His right hand was lifted behind his head, while his left hand held a lance pointing to the earth, the end of which was decorated with a branched or forked ‘tree’. The helmet was almost pointed just like Baal au Foudre, and decorated with one visible

1278 Discussion of EA 45 etc. in Chapter 6.
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horn. The comparison may not appear so striking given the size of our illustration, but when the comparative size of the original was noted, the similarity was surely deliberate. The only differences in the figures represented were the lack of weapon in the right hand and addition of a large tassel from the belt hanging between the calves.

These differences aside, it would seem most reasonable to assume that we have here an Ugaritic or perhaps even Canaanite seal, illustrating the royal god of Ugarit as represented in the official temple cult on the *Baal au Foudre* stele.

Baal the Serpent Slayer (MMA 1985.357.6 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). Fig. 11.

This is another seal of ‘unknown provenance’. Fashioned in steatite, it is slightly larger than *Baal au Foudre II* and this seemed to have enabled rather finer carving. \(^{1280}\) A deity is shown facing left. His left hand holds a mace-like weapon raised behind his head, the right arm comes forward with a long spear pointing towards a serpent which is twice as long as the figure (in length). Although the spear does not actually pierce the snake, there can be little doubt of the hostile intent when facing a creature of such prodigious size. Cornelius argued that the figure wore a pointed head-dress with a lock

\(^{1279}\) 1.9cm (l) x 0.85cm (dia.).

\(^{1280}\) 2.64cm (h) x 1.21cm (dia.)
at the back. It is difficult to tell, but the head of this figure is less anthropomorphic than other representations of Baal and could, in fact, be the head of the ‘Seth’ animal the Egyptian god most often identified with Baal in Egypt. Despite this, the pose, weapons and even short kilt are extremely reminiscent of Baal. The Egyptian ankh symbol at the god’s feet and sun-disk in a crescent above the serpent confirmed this was less likely to be Ugaritic in inspiration. However, it is a neat demonstration of not only the combination of Ugaritic iconography with Egyptian motifs (in a Syrian setting) but also the inclusion of a motif mentioned briefly in KTU 1.5 i, when Baal slew the serpent. The serpent illustrated does not have seven heads, but those familiar with the myths would understand the inference. Its provisional dating is between the 14th and 13th centuries.

The ‘Mami’ Stela (Louvre AO13176) Fig. 7.

This extremely ‘Egyptianised’ stela was in fact found in Ugarit, in the Temple of Baal. It can be dated to around 1500-1200 BCE (LB) and was executed on red Egyptian sandstone. Excavated by Schaeffer’s team in several pieces, this stela is remarkable for two reasons. The first was the competent Egyptian style craftsmanship. Although the greater part of the body had been destroyed, finely drawn feet stand facing left upon a base-line, while the shoulders, head and left arm, of similar quality, appeared on the top section surviving. The conical crown found in the Baal au Foudre stela was here decorated with a long streamer common to Reshef images, which ended in a

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1282 Stadelmann 1967: 38 proposes that the sandstone was imported from Egypt.
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'flower' almost at the feet, while the chin had a distinctive Egyptian beard. The 'plant' spear had become an Egyptian ḫ's sceptre and behind an offertory table with gifts, an Egyptian figure gave praise to the figure who was named, in the rather damaged hieroglyphic inscription, as "Seth of Saphon". Baal of Saphon was most likely to be the Baal about whom most of the religious texts are written.1283 He was listed ahead of the other 'seven Baals' of KTU 1.47 and in KTU 2.23 (RS 16.117) was given parity with Amun in a letter from the King of Ugarit to the Pharaoh. He was, then, the imperial god of Ugarit and most likely to be the god of Baal au foudre as well as the deity to whom the Egyptian Mami prayed and made offerings. The readable inscription says "To Baal-Saphon, for the royal scribe, overseer of the treasury, Mami the Justified"1284) as part of a mortuary stela. It seems likely, however, that this was carved by an Ugaritian craftsman: although the outward form of Egypt is present, it does not possess the quality of line or expressive stillness found in stelae of similar size (c.29cm) and quality in Egypt. Likewise, the hieroglyphs are rather crudely executed.

Baal aux montagnes (Damascus 3565, Damascus National Museum). Fig. 12.

This seal was definitely found in Ugarit, excavated in 1953 and dated to between 1275 and 1250. The impression itself had been preserved and been identified as the seal of Ini-Teshub, king of Carchemish.1285 Since it was not of Ugaritian origin, there were several features not shown on previous seals. The first was a very fine guilloche pattern at the top and bottom, along with

1283 Chapter 9.
1284 Stadelmann 1967: 38.
cuneiform inscriptions and Hittite hieroglyphs as well as animals. The rather busy scene contained at least two gods, one of whom on the far left stood with mace upon right shoulder atop two mountains, while wearing a short kilt and a pointed, horned head-dress. The second god on the far right of the scene rode atop an animal which Cornelius argued was a bull, similarly dressed to the first god but with a long plain-ended spear which was being used to kill a lion in a rampant position.

Cornelius argued that the figures on the left were Anatolian weather gods but that the one upon the bull was Baal, because he stood upon the bull.\textsuperscript{1286} Note also the curving border, which, if more inexpertly executed, would be rather similar to the \textit{Baal au Foudre} decoration discussed above. In his discussion of the storm god and the bull, Vanel argued that the storm and the bull were images which came from the West, introduced into Mesopotamia through the Amorites.\textsuperscript{1287} However, most of the southern, Mesopotamian cylinders which showed the storm god on a bull also had him dressed in a long robe, while still generally holding the 'lightning branch'. Although the image of a 'bull' upon which the god rides could have come from the north west, there is very little evidence of this in Ugarit, either in iconography or texts.\textsuperscript{1288}

\textsuperscript{1286} Cornelius 1994: 219.
\textsuperscript{1287} Vanel 1965: 32.
\textsuperscript{1288} Vanel 1965: 34-35.
Baal the hunter (RS 68.30.259 Aleppo Museum) Fig. 13.

This steatite seal depicted an unusual trio. Dated to around 1500-1300 and slightly larger than Baal au Foudre II,\textsuperscript{1289} it was more finely carved. It showed Baal in a typical pose - legs striding out to the left with pointed but not horned cap, mace raised in one hand and long spear in the other, but this time the massive blade attacked a beautifully drawn lion, whose fore-claws were holding firmly a horned animal of some kind. Cornelius saw a winged sun-disc above the scene\textsuperscript{1290} but it was not clear and could have formed part of the twig and point decorations possibly symbolising wild scrubland.

It also illustrated the Egyptian concept of a royal figure as both defender of the kingdom and successful hunter.\textsuperscript{1291} While other stelae demonstrated the smiting of enemies (their presence can be inferred from the main figure's pose) this showed his prowess with spear and the defeat of animals regarded as dangerous to man (in this instance a lion). Snakes, lions and hippopotami were widely held to be representatives of chaos and were therefore opposed by Baal, the upholder of cosmic order.\textsuperscript{1292}

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\textsuperscript{1289} 2.3cm (h) x 1.1cm (dia.).
\textsuperscript{1290} Cornelius 1994: 219.
\textsuperscript{1291} Teissier 1995: 191.
\textsuperscript{1292} Miller 1973: 24.
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Theology illustrated by Iconography?

The important questions, after identifying the common features which enable us to identify the deity represented as most likely to be Baal of Ugarit and Saphon, the deity held to be described in the literary LBA texts are "what do these features mean to the people for whom they were carved? Why was he shown with this lance or that axe or this head-dress? Does this information change or support our understanding of Baal?". For this interpretation, we must perforce enter an area which contains elements of supposition and hypothesis, since we were left no Treatise on Iconography by the sculptors of Ugarit! This is acknowledged therefore as hypothetical.

Stance

The most common feature of all the iconography examined was that of the physical pose - the smiting\textsuperscript{1293} stance, albeit often without a foe below or opposite. Many metal deities in this stance have been discovered in Ugarit and most were in this pose.\textsuperscript{1294} It had previously been mentioned that this pose was taken from the depiction of a victorious pharaoh\textsuperscript{1295} and in Syria this pose was principally used by the so-called weather god and rulers. Here

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1293} Cornelius 1994 preferred another term but the stance suggested by 'smiting' is recognised by a wider community.
\item \textsuperscript{1294} Negbi 1976: 29.
\item \textsuperscript{1295} Collon 1972: 128.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
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is the significant issue for our understanding of Baal. It has already been shown that Baal was a god associated with the royal dynasty, and his rule and order were vital not only for Ugarit, but also the royal family.\textsuperscript{1296} By showing Baal in the same pose as a victorious Egyptian ruler the connection was made with victory, power and royal rule, all of which were vital in the textual material from Ugarit that survived from a later period than much of the iconography. It symbolised both royalty and divinity, the power embodied in each, and illustrated the victorious nature of kingship within the ancient Near East, and Ugarit in particular.\textsuperscript{1297}

**Helmet**

While the *casque* may have indicated an Egyptian influence, the naturalistic beard was most definitely Syrian. The long and narrowing conical shape of their headgear was similar to the Egyptian white crown\textsuperscript{1298} but the addition of horns was not solely Mesopotamian in influence since ram’s horns were added sometimes to the Atef crown.\textsuperscript{1299} The examples of Baal’s crown with horns were more bovine in shape. This, one could argue, was not a symbol of his so-called affinity with bulls\textsuperscript{1300} but another symbol of power and not necessarily one of fertility. It was also likely to be connected to the Mesopotamian horned cap, although that sometimes showed many pairs of

\textsuperscript{1296} See chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{1297} Teissier 1995: 116.

\textsuperscript{1298} Negbi 1976: 31.

\textsuperscript{1299} Teissier 1995: 122.

\textsuperscript{1300} cf. Schaeffer.

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horns piled atop each other, as the symbol of divinity in the standard iconography of Achaemenid art. It had not become the unique symbol of any one deity and the style of cap varied, which is unsurprising since it had been in use since the third millennium BCE. Black and Green suggested that it was perhaps derived from the massive horns of wild cattle (as opposed to domesticated herds) still present in north-western Mesopotamia up until the Neo-Assyrian period. Since these beasts had a six feet horn-span, their proportions must have been truly awe inspiring and could easily become a symbol for power and strength among the gods. It would not be necessary then for Baal to be identified particularly with these animals for the imagery of power conveyed by these horns to be present in his iconography.

**Weapons**

There were usually two but occasionally three weapons carried by Baal in these illustrations. The first, the long lance, had been described as both lightning and tree. Williams-Forte described it as a "vegetal weapon" and stated that it was closely associated with the heavenly symbols of wings, clouds and rain. The weapon represented not only a type of vegetation but also the lightning which the god of storms would have sent to earth in rain and branching forks of lightning. Williams-Forte suggested that "perhaps the mysterious flaming lightning created by the weather god was compared

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1303 However El is more commonly described as 'Bull El' and one should not overemphasise the connection between Baal and bulls, despite his copulation with a heifer in the literary texts.
1304 Williams-Forte 1983: 27, 29.
1305 Williams-Forte 1983: 27. These are described also in KTU 1.4 v 5-10; 1.5 v.
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in ancient people's mythopoeic thought with a visually related but familiar earthly manifestation of that god's creative force, the branching tree."\textsuperscript{1306} This understanding of the lance enables us to come closer to the 'mythic understanding' of symbols held by the Ugaritians rather than demanding a single interpretation of the weapon. The large 'mace' or 'fenestrated axe'\textsuperscript{1307} was not shown consistently on smaller seals and yet it appeared that both Baal and Anat regularly fought with both spear and bludgeon. Not only was it mentioned in the literary texts (e.g. KTU 1.3 iv 11) but the cast figurines found in Ugarit at the height of the sculptor's skill generally had two pierced hands into which weapons could be inserted.\textsuperscript{1308} The combination of two weapons would have been most effective in battle: an enemy would be pierced with the lance, either thrown or stabbed, pinning them down, while the mace was brought down upon their skull, à la Egyptian pharaoh. The short, stabbing sword or dagger was most likely to have been either a ceremonial weapon or a last resort, used for close hand-to-hand combat (as the Scots sghian-dubh would be not only a useful and ready tool but a final chance for survival). The combination of all three weapons in the \textit{Baal au Foudre} stela indicated that the portrayal of this god as serious warrior was uppermost in the mind of the patron and sculptor of it. The notion of a god who fought to gain and maintain his kingdom was intrinsic to the Ugaritian understanding of Baal and could be argued as equally significant to his royal nature.

\textsuperscript{1306} Williams-Forte 1983: 27.
\textsuperscript{1307} Wyatt 1998a: 856-861
\textsuperscript{1308} Seeden 1980: 105-6, Plates 97-98.

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Dress

Baal always wore the short pleated kilt, sometimes with a belt which held a dagger or short sword. His helmet often had horns and hair in long locks, curled at the ends.\textsuperscript{1309} This was the dress of a warrior: when not about to fight, he would wear a cloak or cape.\textsuperscript{1310} Taking this off would have freed the arms and given liberty to the limbs for fighting, which he would be expected to do with vigour and success. It also demonstrated a level of homogeneity between Egypt, Syria and the Aegean during this period (MBA-LBA), when it was a common style of male dress.\textsuperscript{1311} While the Anatolian and Hittite skirt was generally folded, the Egyptian was simpler. Likewise, the wearing of a dagger in the belt is more common in Hittite figures than Egyptian.\textsuperscript{1312}

Conclusion

The function of the combination of these attributes was to present Baal as both warrior, king and god. It has been shown in previous chapters that he was all of these things to his worshippers, and more besides. The long lance was both tree and lightning, earthly and cosmic, fertility and destruction. Baal was not a god of sexual fecundity and this has been one of the most common misunderstandings of his personality.\textsuperscript{1313} The iconography would illustrate this if it was, in fact, a part of his character. Instead, the nature of

\textsuperscript{1309} Schaeffer-Forrer 1983: 69.
\textsuperscript{1310} Schaeffer 1949: 126.
\textsuperscript{1311} Schaeffer 1949: 124-6.
\textsuperscript{1312} Negbi 1976: 34.
\textsuperscript{1313} Chapter 3.
Baal was about power and influence – order, rule and plenty rather than chaos, fear and scarcity of crops. His titles and iconography, if not always the texts about his exploits, presented him as a divine warrior of might. All of these attributes could be seen in his portrayal as a royal, divine warrior in the iconography of Baal, which presented a character recognisable from the texts of Ugarit but obviously with a wider worship and history than could previously be argued from textual remains alone. The sheer number of depictions in both metal and stone of the powerful warrior in Ugarit indicate his popularity, a counterpart to the frequency of his representation in text.

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1314 Miller 1973: 39, 41.
Chapter 9 – The Titles of Baal

This chapter does not seek to give a definitive linguistic analysis of the words which form the titles of Baal. Rather, it is anticipated that a discussion of the titles, their widely accepted interpretation and their relationship with the theology of Baal which has been established from the studies in previous chapters will further our understanding of the deity and the view of him held by those who committed these texts to writing. While there are many titles of Baal, scholarly opinion is in agreement on the translation of most of them and so a consensus view will be maintained, although not unquestioningly, unless it is held that there are strong grounds for a reassessment.\footnote{Kapelrud 1952 and Wyatt 1992a discussed all of Baal’s titles while others attempted to examine only one at a time: see Brettler 1992, Maier 1992, Niehr 1999.}

The importance of divine titles

The naming of any object indicates a recognition of its existence and therefore, it could be argued, its relative importance within our world. A name may reveal the perceived nature of the object as well as its role and character. Titles are words with a specific function and are not only names but often include adjectives, this being found most recently with reference to kings and queens, e.g. Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Charles the Bold. In other cases the titles can be called ‘honorifics’, that is they are bestowed at a
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coronation, such as the Egyptian Pharaoh’s five-fold titulary\textsuperscript{1317} or names in the Hebrew Bible being changed to indicate divine blessing or vocation, for example \textit{Abram} to \textit{Abraham} (or occasionally with a negative connotation, viz. \textit{Ben-Oni} ‘Son of my Sorrow’ changed to \textit{Ben-Yamin}, a name of good omen). In the ANE names were believed to be important and even today naming a child is fraught with tension, hence the popularity of compendiums of names, giving his or her origin and meaning. The titles of a god in particular would reflect his or her status, antecedents and theology.\textsuperscript{1338} Since this is undoubtedly the case in Ugarit, it is important to recognise that Baal was given an unusually high number of titles, even compared to El, head of the pantheon.\textsuperscript{1339} Baal was also mentioned far more frequently than other gods, reasonably since many of these texts came from around what is believed to be the site of the temple of Baal\textsuperscript{1320}, and perhaps this is the reason for his ubiquity. One should remain aware of this potential bias when assessing the theological significance of Baal in Ugaritic religion on the basis of the surviving material and his dominance of the same.

\textsuperscript{1317} Discussed at length in Gardiner 1927: 71-76. In “The Royal Ascent of King Tuthmosis III” (ANET 446-71) we are told that the god Ra raised the king to heaven and bestowed upon him the titles

1. (Horus) the Mighty Bull appearing in Thebes...
2. (The Two Goddesses) Enduring in Kingship like Ra in heaven...
3. (Horus of Gold) powerful of strength, August of appearances ...
4. (King of Upper and Lower Egypt) Lord of the Two Lands, Men-kheper-Ra ...
5. (Son of Ra) Thusmosis-United-of-Being, living forever and ever."

The same structure can be found in the titles of other kings, including
Sesostris 1 (12\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty) 1. Life of births 2. life of births 3. Life of births 4. the Ka or Ra comes into being 5. Man of Wosret.
Hatshepsut’s titulary is particularly poetic (18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty) 1. Powerful of Kas 2. Fresh in years 3. Divine of diadems 4. Truth of the \textit{ka} of Ra 5. Joined-with-Amun Foremost of ladies.

\textsuperscript{1318} Wyatt 1992a: 403.
\textsuperscript{1319} Wyatt 1992a: 403.
\textsuperscript{1320} See Appendix 2.

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This is an area of study that can generate unanswerable questions. For example, if Baal was also called *hd*, does this mean that they were two gods who became one or one god with two titles? While such topics will be highlighted, those solutions which would rely upon a high degree of speculation or conjecture will not be accepted: while they remain possibilities and provide a kind of resolution to these difficult questions, they cannot be proved with the degree of academic rigour required for this dissertation.

It should be noted that the discussion in this chapter will not include those mentions of the title ‘Baal’ from the HB. While it is possible that they are relevant, this thesis has had to limit itself to the Ugaritic texts and it would be illogical to begin introducing material from the HB into the examination of the Ugaritic texts at this point. In our discussion of the titles of Baal, the name ‘Baal’ itself will be used to designate the god in question, although it will be studied along with other titles.

**What are the names of Baal and where are they found?**

A summary of the number of occurrences of the titles of Baal is presented here, following the analysis of KTU 1.1-1.120 presented in Appendix 2. Two names which have been disputed in their application to Baal (or indeed their function as appellations at all) have been included in order to assess their validity.
It should be immediately apparent that the most common designation for the deity in question is simply $b'l$, transcribed as the proper name 'Baal'. It should also be noted that some of the titles are not found outside of the rather broad genres 'myth' or 'ritual'.1321

I have omitted from this list $bn$ il (KTU 1.17 vi 28), $gmr$ $hd$ (KTU 1.2 i 46 - damaged), $hmllt$ (KTU 1.5 vi 23-25)1322 and 'ly (KTU 1.16 iii 6 and 8), along with "other dubious titles"1323. $Bn$ il is discussed in the study of $bn$ $dgn$ while $gmr$ $hd$ occurs only once in a damaged tablet. Wyatt proposed $hmllt$ as an innovative title occurring as a parallel of $liy$.1324 The constraints of both the area of study

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1321 For a comprehensive and far-reaching linguistic analysis suggesting interpretations for such infrequent and disputed titles, see Wyatt 1992a, e.g. 'ly (Wyatt 1992a: 419) $gmr$ $hd$ (Wyatt 1992a: 410) and $b'l$ $knp$ , $rup$ , $hd$ $r'y$ (Wyatt 1992a: 424).
1322 Proposed by Wyatt 1992 and dependant on new stichometry and recognition of $lim$ as a title).
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and length of dissertation allowed mean that only those titles which are frequently used or can be supported without conjecture can be included here. The exception is *dmrn* which is discussed because its attribution to Baal forms an interesting junction between the analyses of Baal presented in the Review of Literature and a fundamental study of Baal based upon the Ugaritic material.\(^{1325}\)

**The meaning of the titles**

\*b'l - "Baal"

The title ‘Baal’, the common Semitic noun for ‘lord, master, owner, husband’, is found throughout the Ugaritic texts while its Hebrew equivalent occurs in the HB\(^{1326}\) most often attached to a locality. It has been argued that originally this was a title given to the deity to indicate his position within Ugaritian religion but that it gradually became regarded as his proper name. This is entirely possible, given the fluid nature of religion in general and the malleable nature of deities found at Ugarit in particular.\(^{1327}\)

However, Baal as a proper name is attested as early as the third millennium deity list of Abu Salabikh\(^{1328}\) amongst a list of the personal names of other deities. Therefore it was not conclusive that it was being used as a title or appellative. It is not suggested that this god was the same ‘Baal’ as found in

\(^{1325}\) See note in ‘Introduction’: 6.

\(^{1326}\) DDD\(^2\): 132 stated that Baal occurred 90 times in the HB.

\(^{1327}\) Wyatt 1992b: 408.

\(^{1328}\) Biggs 1974: no. 83 v 11 = no. 84 obv. iii 8.

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Ugarit, but it provides an early counter to the argument that b‘l was not a proper name but rather an appropriated appellative. While accepting the use of Baal as a proper name, it should not be forgotten that a more literal translation of Baal ('lord', 'master', etc.) would be entirely appropriate given this god's role in the texts examined from Ugarit.¹³²⁹ He functioned in them as a royal god, a god with a realm and (eventually) a palace. Kapelrud went so far as to argue that Baal in Ugarit was regarded as the leading god.¹³³⁰ It would be entirely proper then that his name would mean 'lord' or 'master'. It is also appropriate that worshippers of a deity hold their god in such regard that their 'personal name' is believed to be a sacred word and not uttered; this has been the practice of Jews for centuries and one should not be surprised had it been found among the Ugaritians. Calling Baal 'lord' did not exclude other gods from holding positions of rank (e.g. Prince Yam, Ruler Nahar) and it is possible that the term Baal implied both a personal name as well as a title of rank.¹³³¹

The so-called b’lm of the pantheon lists¹³³² have been variously interpreted but, it must be conceded, with little possible resolution, given the paucity of evidence of their identity or any theology pertaining to them. Wyatt stated that they were hypostases of the same god (either b’lm or ‘adad bel huršan ḥazi ) although he cautioned that there remained the possibility "that any individual forms 'b’lm' may be quite independent of the

¹³²⁹ For example, Yam is called b’lk in KTU 1.2 i 17, 33, 45.
¹³³⁰ Kapelrud 1952: 45.
¹³³¹ Kapelrud argued that as soon as the term was used in the sphere of religion the word became the personal name of the deity. This did not necessarily mean the implication of respect or rank was removed. Kapelrud 1952: 43-44.
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multiple manifestations of the storm-god”.1333 Day has posited that the Ugaritians may have acknowledged differentiated manifestations of the deity commonly called Baal.1334

b'l spn - “Baal of Saphon”

The attribution of this to the Ugaritic storm god follows on from the use of Baal as both a proper name and title of lordship. This title has been found in foreign texts and royal treaties1335 and indicated the holy mountain Saphon (Jebel-el-Aqra)1336 described as the site of the divine throne and dwelling place of the gods. This title enabled Baal to be both a local deity as well as the god of a significant and powerful mountain. Although the mountain was described as Baal’s home in the mythic texts, the actual title b'l spn is only found in ritual texts.1337 One may reasonably assume that it referred to the same deity found in the mythic narratives, given the repeated references within those same tablets to the abode of Baal being upon mount Saphon. Clifford argued that its use in RS 16.078+ ('before Baal Saphon, my Lord') should be viewed in parallel with the corresponding Egyptian phrase ‘before Amun and before the gods of Egypt’ and it indicated that Baal Saphon was "the national god of the city of Ugarit, just as Amon seems to be the chief god

1334 J. Day 2002: 68.
1336 spn vocalised as 'Spunu' for example by Smith 1994 and Pardee 2002: 284, although Pardee has acknowledged Wyatt’s proposal of 'Saphon' (Wyatt 1995b). In Hittite spn is Hazzi, giving the Latin 'Casius', Gk Καζινος.
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of the Egyptian pantheon". Kapelrud argued that the term *spn* in the ritual texts indicated Baal personally but little evidence can be marshalled to support this. Indeed, given the popularity of the mountain among the gods as a place of assembly, it was unlikely that *spn* would be used as a title only for Baal. Van Zijl also suggested that it referred to Baal, citing a connection between Zeus Kasios and Baal, Zeus being the patron deity of ships and seafaring men, as well as a storm and rain god. It should be noted that an equation between Zeus Kasios and Baal using such late evidence is also used for the identification of Δημαροὺς *demarous* with Baal, based upon Philo and Eusebius. The dangers of cross-pantheon deity-equation have been discussed in previous chapters and also apply here.

*b'l ugri* - "Baal of Ugarit"

Baal of Ugarit is an important title in that it confirmed the patrimony and protection of Baal towards the kingdom of Ugarit. There are other instances of this kind of title e.g. *b'l lnmn* 'Baal of Lebanon' (KAI 31:1-2) and *b'l sdn* 'Baal of Sidon' (KAI 14:18) as well as those from the HB. However, one cannot argue that the same god was being invoked in each of these cases, partly because of limited information and also because (as has been mentioned above) the title *b'l* can be translated as "lord" and it is impossible to state that the same deity was found in these disparate places. The concept of a "local deity", particular to a city but perhaps with characteristics

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1338 Clifford 1972: 64.
1339 Kapelrud 1952: 57.
1340 van Zijl 1972: 333.
1341 Kapelrud 1952: 59.
1342 It is likely that *b'l lmn* was El.

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of another more internationally known god is a characteristic of the complex nature of polytheism which is itself a scholarly classification of a type of faith and a description not known by its LBA Ugaritian worshippers. One should, perhaps, accept that this title referred to a local hypostasis of Baal and although likely, one that cannot be firmly identified as exactly the storm god of the poetic texts particularly since it is found only in the ritual texts.1343

*aliyn b'l - "Valiant Baal"

'Valiant' or 'mighty' Baal is the second most common appellation of Baal and although simple numerical frequency alone should not be regarded as an indicator out of context, its frequency and ubiquity indicate that it was a significant title of Baal. It very often formed the first of a pair of titles, and it was paired variously with *aliy qrdm, rkb c'rtpt and zbl b'l ars. Derived from the √ l'y - 'to be strong, vigorous', the honorific *aliyn always preceded b'l and cannot therefore be regarded as a viable independent proper name. The adjective is more indicative of youth and power than victory and so 'mighty', 'valiant' or 'vigorous' is preferable to 'victorious'.1344

Kapelrud stated that KTU 1.6 clearly indicated that Baal and Aliyan Baal were the same god and that the titles "interchange freely again and again in the texts, and the result would indeed be curious if we should try to draw a

1344 Dijkstra 1999: 19.
line between two gods."\textsuperscript{1345} Van Zijl also agreed that KTU 1.6 identified Baal and Aliyan Baal as the same god, but added support from KTU 1.4.\textsuperscript{1346} There is an analogous use of the titles b$^\flat$I and aliyn b$^\flat$I, indicating their identity as one god.\textsuperscript{1347}

Wyatt proposed that in two instances, aliy appeared alone, at KTU 1.3 v 32f and 1.4 iv 43f. In both cases, the usual correction to form the more common aliyn b$^\flat$I was disputed and instead aliy became an independent title.\textsuperscript{1348} He himself did not wish to "press" such a claim and it would in fact be an exception to the general rule of the two words forming a specific title.\textsuperscript{1349}

The title aliyn b$^\flat$I was often used by other gods when speaking about or to Baal and in particular in the text of KTU 1.6 i 20-30, the list describing the sacrifices offered by Anat for the deceased aliyn b$^\flat$I - using this title is an expression of belief in his vigour or valour in the face of apparent defeat. Certainly his role as the maintainer of order would justify the use of this title and given its predominance would suggest this was regarded as more significant than his meteorological function. However, the occurrence of it mostly within mythological texts could indicate that it was important within

\textsuperscript{1345} Kapelrud 1952: 47.  
\textsuperscript{1346} Van Zijl 1972: 342.  
\textsuperscript{1347} Kapelrud 1952: 49.  
\textsuperscript{1348} Wyatt 1992a: 404.  
\textsuperscript{1349} Wyatt 1992a: 404. The question of the stichometry of this passage is not within the remit of this chapter, but Wyatt's argument makes sense in terms of poetic forms known in Ugarit.
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the context of these narratives, while within the sacrificial cult of Ugarit other aspects of Baal might be addressed.1350

_aliy qrdm_ - “Mightiest of heroes”

This epithet occurs only in a fixed formula preceding messages of Baal1351 and only in the mythic texts. There is no mention of this title in any of the sacrificial lists translated so far from Ugarit. Dijkstra suggested that _qrdm_ was a plural noun related to the Akkadian _qarradu_ or _quradu_, ‘warrior’ or ‘hero’, also an epithet of Adad the weather-god.1352 Gordon suggested that it could also be connected to the term _qrdm_ ‘axe’ (cognate with Heb. _qardêm_, ‘axe’), an acceptance of which may intentionally be invoked by the title _qrdm_.1353 Since this is a specifically ‘declarative’ title, that is, it is only used when carrying a message of Baal’s to other gods, one must regard it as a title which indicated how the authors of the text wished the god to be viewed by others. By declaring himself _aliy qrdm_ Baal was linguistically ‘drawing his line in the sand’. It hinted at his battles with Yam and Mot. This is synchronous with the pugilistic and ambitious god presented by his messengers and is not necessarily to be taken as an altogether accurate picture of the ‘real’ god.1354 Given the dominance of the Chaoskampf motif within the Baal Cycle the title ‘mightiest hero’ is ideal for the deity at the centre of this myth.

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1350 See in particular _b'l spn_ and _b'l ugrt_ and the discussion of the cult of Baal in Chapter 7.
1351 KTU 1.3 iii 13-14; 1.3 iv 7-8; 1.3 vi 24-25; i.4 viii 33-34; 1.5 ii 10-11, 17-18.
1352 Dijkstra 1999: 19.
1353 Gordon 1951: 480 n. 2271; see also Wyatt 1992a: 405.
1354 See Chapter 5.

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The title hd, ‘Thunderer’, often transliterated as Had, Haddu or Hadad, is also the name of the Mesopotamian storm god Adad who was widely known throughout the Semitic world. The term is probably an onomatopoeic form alluding to the sound of a thunder clap, such as the Arabic ‘hadda’ - ‘to thunder, crash, make a big noise’. It occurs in the Ugaritic texts only in reference to Baal and then most often in the form of a bicolon paired with Baal. It is given several times as part of the epithet il hd, Divine Hadd. The question has often arisen about the consubstantiality of Baal and Hadd. While there is no specific text which cited them as different deities, there are several factors which argue for hd being attributed secondarily to Baal.

Firstly, his character as the ‘thunderer’ or weather god would allow the Ugaritians to identify the Mesopotamian god as a deity cognate to their own god Baal. Secondly, the title ‘thunderer’ would be ideal for use in the highly stylised poetic context of the Ugaritic mythic texts to qualify the name Baal. Finally, hd is not mentioned in the sacrificial or ritual texts and therefore one cannot argue that he was a separate Ugaritic deity from Baal, since even the seven b’lm were offered individual sacrifice and they shared the divine name b’l itself. It is perhaps an allusion to Baal as an internationally recognisable deity and certainly did not indicate another

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1355 KTU 1.4 VI 38, 39; KTU 1.4 VII 35, 36; 1.5 I 22, 23; 1.5 IV 6, 7; KTU 1.10 II 31, 33. KTU 1.12 II 53, 54; probably also KTU 1.4 VII 38 (Aliyan Baal ... Hadd) and 1.9 17, 18.
1356 Greenfield 1978 argued that by the first millennium BCE, Hadad was the god of the Arameans, while Baal was the deity of the Phoenicians and Canaanites.

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It should be acknowledged that in other countries the title *hd* may, however, indicate a different deity, which was identified explicitly within the Ugaritic religious context with their god *bšt*. Nevertheless, one must assert conclusively that in the material which survives from Ugarit, Baal and Hadd were identified as the same deity and one cannot therefore separate the two this study.

*rkb* 'rpt - "Charioteer of the Clouds"

This title was undoubtedly a reference to the meteorological aspect of Baal’s nature. He was repeatedly called *hd* - ‘thunderer’ and, Wyatt has argued, ‘Rainy One’ and ‘Tempest’. The title ‘Charioteer of the Clouds’ or ‘Rider of the Clouds’ would therefore be entirely consistent with this theology of Baal. However, it is not a title used in sacrificial texts and one may therefore argue it was a poetic or mythological title, used to reinforce the view of Baal as god of the heavens and arbiter of weather, both good and bad. De Langhe argued that this title had great theological significance, on a par with Yahweh’s titles ‘Lord of Heaven and Earth’. One may gain a general sense of movement and ascent from *rkb*, especially given its cognate Akkadian *rakābu* ‘to mount, ride on’. The particular sense of whether the clouds are driven or ridden cannot be established from the form of the term *rkb*, and the

1358 Kapelrud 1952: 50.
1359 Kapelrud 1952: 52.
1360 Van Zijl 1972: 348.
1363 De Langhe 1954: 83-84.
1364 Black, George and Postgate 2000: 296.
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general sense is ‘to mount and ride’.\textsuperscript{1365} It is known that animals were certainly ridden at the time: in the Ugaritic texts Asherah herself rode upon a donkey to visit El\textsuperscript{1366} and there are several illustrations of the goddess Athtart riding upon a horse.\textsuperscript{1367} However, there are many illustrations of the weather god in a chariot or standing upon the back of an animal rather than sitting in a more recognisable riding position.\textsuperscript{1368} Similarly, we are told that Keret, while on his mission to gain a new wife, arrived leading an army which contained _tlt sswn nrkbt_ ‘charioteers with horse-drawn chariots’.\textsuperscript{1369} It is most likely that Baal was imagined riding in such a chariot formed from the clouds, charging about the sky and rumbling with thunder on his progress.\textsuperscript{1370}

\textit{bn dgn} – “Son of Dagan”

‘Son of Dagan’ or perhaps ‘Rainy One’.\textsuperscript{1371} This title occurs in parallel with _b’l_ rather than any other appellation and indicates that it was a title given only to Baal in Ugarit. The conventional interpretation of this title is summarised by Brettler:

\begin{quote}
"it is more likely that Dagon is understood to be literally his [Baal’s] father, and that Baal was also the ‘son’ of El in the sense that he was a descendant of El (his grandson?), a
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1365} Wyatt 1992a: 420.
\textsuperscript{1366} KTU 1.4 iv 1-15.
\textsuperscript{1368} Vanel 1965: fig. 5,6, 8, 10, 11.
\textsuperscript{1369} KTU 1.14 ii 2f, etc.
\textsuperscript{1370} Wyatt 1992a: 422 argued that there was statuary evidence from Hazor.
\textsuperscript{1371} Wyatt 1980: 375-379.
\end{footnotes}
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member of the pantheon of gods which had its ultimate origin in El.1372 1373

This interpretation has been disputed and its translation has caused a deal of speculation about the ultimate 'origin' of Baal. However, general understanding of the term bn may perhaps simplify matters. Familial designations in the ANE were in many ways less literal than in the modern era: St James was commonly referred to as 'the brother of Jesus' and yet it was the firm belief of the early church that Jesus' mother Mary had not borne any other children. Instead, it was possible for the term 'brother' to mean 'kinsman' and it is entirely imaginable for this loose understanding to be applicable to the term 'son' in the current context. In such a cultural context Christ was also given the title 'Son of David': not a literal filial relationship but one of kinship, blood and divine origin. This, it should be noted, was also found in Egyptian royal religion.1374

Most confusingly Baal was also described as bn il 'son of El' in the texts.1375 Since there is a question over whether the title bn dgn should be translated literally, there should also be a doubt about whether this was also a 'literal' term of sonship. It is likely that it had a familial implication and perhaps even one of subordination.1376 How could Baal belong to both the families of Dagan and El? Fontenrose has gone to the centre of the debate and resolved

1372 Brettler 1992: 545.
1373 This conclusion is also reached by Day 2002: 90.
1374 See the earlier titles given to Egyptian kings, conferring divine sonship even upon Hatshepsut.
1375 E.g. KTU 1.3 iv 40, particularly the phrase first found in 1.3 v 35 - "... he cries to Bull El his father, to El the king who begot him."
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it by identifying Dagan and El as one god\textsuperscript{1377}, and one must acknowledge that there are no extant descriptions of the relationship between Baal and Dagan. In fact, Dagan is not mentioned in the mythic texts apart from this title, being named only briefly in the ritual texts.\textsuperscript{1378}

While this ‘non-literal’ understanding of sonship would not deny kinship or divinity to Baal, it would relieve the pressure to pigeonhole him as belonging to one or another dynasty as evidence of putative contending mythologies or pantheons. The familial interpretation has been described as a “dead metaphor”\textsuperscript{1379} and it is admittedly at any rate a dead end. One must allow for a ‘functional’ understanding of the term $bn$ and conclude that it conferred upon Baal an association with the deity Dagan\textsuperscript{1380} and whatever characteristics may have accrued to him following this relationship.\textsuperscript{1381}

Wyatt’s proposition that the term be understood as ‘The Rainy One’ has been dismissed by others\textsuperscript{1382} who argued that Dagan was regarded as the god of crops (and was therefore related to fertility in that way). Day made this suggestion but also wrote it was most likely that the word $dgn$ came to mean cereal because of the god, rather than vice versa.\textsuperscript{1383} However the

\textsuperscript{1377} J. Fontenrose 1957 Oriens 10: 277-279.
\textsuperscript{1378} He is offered sacrifice in KTU 1.148, 1.46, 1.109 and 1.107.
\textsuperscript{1379} Wyatt 1992a: 407.
\textsuperscript{1380} Healey 1999: 217.
\textsuperscript{1381} Kapelrud 1952: 55-56 argued that Baal was the ‘active’ fertility deity, having taken over the public part of his father’s role. He concluded however that “it still leaves open the question of the relationship between Dagan/Baal and the other gods of the Ugaritic pantheon.”
\textsuperscript{1383} Day 2002: 88.

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continuation of Day’s argument, that since Dagan was first regarded as a storm god his connection to ‘fertility’ would be through crops rather than rain, is slightly confusing. There is evidence from other contemporary cultures that Dagan was primarily regarded as a storm god and one may rightly follow Albright and Montalbano that his name is connected to the words dagana, dagga and daga ‘to be cloudy, rainy’.\(^{1384}\) It would therefore seem more logical that a storm god would be associated with agricultural fertility through the rains which dropped from his clouds onto the dry and therefore infertile earth, although it is possible that the emergent crops might be regarded as an extension of him. Nevertheless, while dgn at Ugarit can be translated as ‘grain’ it has not yet been found to indicate ‘rain’ and, Day has argued, there is no evidence for a metaphorical use of the term bn in Ugarit.\(^{1385}\)

The most reasonable understanding of this term therefore must be ‘Son of (the god) Dagan’ and by extension ‘Son of El’. Other translations are possible but do not have sufficient support for them to be accepted at the moment. Wyatt stated that the literal translation does not “resolve the problem of an apparent dual paternity”\(^{1386}\) but in the light of ‘royal’ language of polite hyperbole used in the correspondence of the palace archives\(^{1387}\) it should perhaps be seen as another link between the ideology of Baal and the kings of Ugarit. Van Zijl is quite correct in his assessment of the potential

\(^{1384}\) Albright 1920: 319 n.27 and Montalbano 1951: 396.
\(^{1385}\) Day 2002: 90. This is slightly confusing given the use of familial terms between royal correspondents. See Chapter 6.
\(^{1386}\) Wyatt 1996a: 42 n.44.
\(^{1387}\) Chapter 6.
complexities of the relationship between Baal and Dagan and one should also note this potential kinship has not yet been attested outside of Ugarit, although this would be an interesting line of future research.\textsuperscript{1388}

\textit{htk dgn - “Scion of Dagan”}

This term should, by extension of the foregoing argument, be interpreted as ‘Scion’ of Dagan rather than ‘Lord/Ruler of the Rain’.\textsuperscript{1389} The derivation of \textit{htk} is clear (from \textit{htk} ‘parent’ in parallel with \textit{ab} ‘father’). Vine has argued that the root \textit{htk} means ‘to beget’ with the participles being (active) \textit{hatik} ‘the begetter, father’ or (passive) \textit{hatuk} ‘the begotten, son’.\textsuperscript{1390} However, \textit{hatik} can also be passive and this argument is not conclusive. Our understanding of the deity Dagan in Ugarit is extremely limited, consisting only of listings within the so-called ‘pantheon’ lists, and therefore it is unwise to extrapolate any extended meaning of his name on the basis of Ugaritic evidence.

\textit{zbl b’l - “Prince Baal”}

This title is the shortened version of \textit{zbl b’l ars} discussed below. Its relationship to any deity mentioned in the HB or other localised deities is not relevant to the discussion of Baal in Ugarit.\textsuperscript{1391}

\textsuperscript{1388} van Zijl 1972: 339.
\textsuperscript{1389} Wyatt 1992a: 415-6.
\textsuperscript{1390} K.L. Vine 1965: 61 and also Gordon 1951: 399 n.911
\textsuperscript{1391} Kapelrud identified the Ekronite oracle with a title of Baal of Ugarit but this is doubtful: Kapelrud 1952: 60. Most scholars now believe that the title was more likely to indicate a localised form of Baal in Ekron. Raabe 1992: 554. At any rate, it is not relevant to our current investigation.
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*zbl b’l ars* - “Prince, Lord (Baal) of the Earth”

Baal’s title *zbl b’l ars* ‘Prince, Lord of the Earth’ one might imagine to be an epithet based upon his relationship with the earth or its fertility. However, it could also mean “Prince Baal of the underworld” that is, the *ars* in question is the ‘underworld’ from which Baal returned.\(^{1392}\) The title is found most often in KTU 1.6, that is, after Baal’s return is confirmed.\(^{1393}\) Kapelrud suggested that the repeated cry “Dead is Aliyan Baal! Perished is Prince, Lord of the Earth!” was an “ancient cult cry, ... used at that dramatic point in the performance”.\(^{1394}\) Since this cry occurred before Baal’s return from the dead, one cannot argue that Baal had conquered death in some way, unless one were to view *ars* as synonymous with the underworld. Beyond Baal’s return from a visit to the kingdom of Mot (explicitly from the realm of the dead) the text is too damaged to elucidate our understanding of the Ugaritic underworld and any extrapolation from the Hebrew *Sheol* is unwise. One is left then with an ambiguous understanding of *ars* or earth. The title is mainly used in KTU 1.6 but also occurs in KTU 1.3 i 3 and KTU 1.5 vi 10, after Baal’s victory over Yam is assured. It seems unlikely that Yam was contending with Baal for the title of ‘Lord of the Underworld’ and I concur with Wyatt that the most likely understanding is that Yam and Baal compete for lordship over the earth.\(^{1395}\) The implication then is of a cosmological rather than chthonic domain, supporting the view that Baal and Yam were intimately

\(^{1392}\) Dietrich and Lorentz 1980: 392.

\(^{1393}\) Wyatt 1992a: 416.

\(^{1394}\) Kapelrud 1952: 60.


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towards the world of living beings, including that of the contemporary Ugaritians.

\textit{ipt} - “Ruler”

Baal is only called \textit{ipt} - “Ruler” rather than ‘judge’ - twice but it is worth notice since it is a title more frequently given to Yam.\textsuperscript{1396} This translation is based upon an understanding of the role of the king in Ugarit, one who was called upon to judge in disputes and thereby give a ‘ruling’ or law. It is used in parallel stichometry with \textit{mlk} and its connotation of governance and authority should be understood from this. However, it is an honorific rather than a sacrificial title, that is it has the possessive suffix (our) rather than the absolute and it occurs nowhere outside the bicolon

\begin{displayquote}
“Our King is Valiant,
Baal is our Ruler”
\end{displayquote}

which it has been argued constitute a liturgical excerpt used in a ‘mythic’ context.\textsuperscript{1397} One may conclude that it is used in support of the ‘royal’ or authoritative aspect of Baal’s nature.

\textit{limm} - “Powerful One”

This term has been generally understood to mean ‘the people’ (\textit{f‘om}) and formed the latter part of the phrase ‘\textit{ybtl limm}’, translated as ‘sister-in-law of

\textsuperscript{1396} Note the competition between Baal and Yam for the title ‘Prince of the Earth’ above.

\textsuperscript{1397} Wyatt 1992a: 422.
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the peoples’1398 or ‘Wanton Widow of the Nations’.1399 Wyatt argued that limm
should rather be interpreted as a title of Baal1400, since Anat was undoubtedly
his sister. Dossin viewed the Marian deity Lim as the Amorite persona of
Dagan1401 and while de Moor rejected his own insight that lim alluded to a
deity because of the enclitic m of limm, there appeared to Wyatt no reason
why this should be so.1402 Indeed, given the stichometry of the passages in
which ybmt limm occurred, it would make no sense to deny that limm formed
a title of Baal and indeed would enable a more believable translation of
ybmt/ymmt limm.1403 In translation, limm should be understood as a further use
of the √ l’y, and would therefore be ‘powerful’ or ‘potent’.

**dmrn - “(The) Mighty One”**

This is a possible title of Baal which some scholars do not accept.1404 There is
only one secure reading of the word1405 and it occurs in a bicolon which
appears to refer to Baal:

> “Enemies of Hadd, why do you fear?
> why do you fear the weapons of dmrn ?”

The key to understanding dmrn is widely held to be the name ‘Demarous’ in
Eusebius’ *Praeparatio Evangelica* 1.10. A short summary of the relevant story

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1401 Dossin, *Studia Marianâ* 49f.
1403 For an analysis of Anat’s title, see the Chapter 3 and Wyatt 1992a: 418, for a convincing reason behind
the ‘avian’ and ‘beloved’ aspects of the title, which make sense if we accept limm as a title of Baal.
1405 KTU 1.4 viii 39.

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follows. The concubine of Ouranos, pregnant with his child, was given to Dagon and then gave birth to Demarous. Demarous was later described as the father of Melkathros (Melqart) and was described as having fought Pontos (or Yam) in a coalition with Ouranos. Finally, in another passage Astarte, Zeus Demarous and Adodos (Hadad) were called rulers of the country with the sanction of Kronos.\textsuperscript{1406} One can readily see why scholars have recognised the similarities between motifs in Ugaritic religion and these particular passages. The name also appears to be of Semitic rather than Greek origin. However, this is a third hand account of Phoenician religion\textsuperscript{1407} and it could reasonably be regarded as a product of the ‘Chinese whisper’ effect. The paternity of Baal (commonly identified as Demarous) is neatly resolved by the addition of a step-father and while other situations could be interpreted as Ugaritic or Semitic in origin, it is difficult to accept that Demarous and Adodos are both hypostases of Baal, ruling at the same time.\textsuperscript{1408} It may be true that \textit{dmm} and \textit{hd} are both epithets of Baal, although the former is still debatable. It has not, though, been the approach of this thesis to use such late evidence as Philo in essaying to compile a ‘snap-shot’ of the theology of Baal at the time the Ugaritic religious texts were written down and it would be unwise to begin to do so at this late stage. A linguistic survey of possible origins may be found in Wyatt’s study and there is no purpose to repeating this since there is no conclusive argument to support the required transition from \textit{d} to \textit{d} required for the Arabic and Hebrew cognates cited.\textsuperscript{1409}

\textsuperscript{1406} Attridge & Oden 1981: 51-55.
\textsuperscript{1407} From Sanchuniathon, through Philo of Byblos, then through Eusebius. These accounts are all separated by time as well as geography.
\textsuperscript{1408} Wyatt 1992a: 411.
\textsuperscript{1409} Wyatt 1992a: 412, that is Akk. and Heb. \textit{zimri} and Arabic \textit{dimr}.
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*mlk - “King”*

Baal was called ‘king’ several times\(^{1410}\) and this may be regarded as the logical outcome of his defeat of Yam as well as his proud ownership of a fine temple. While his royal nature has been fully examined in Chapter 6 it is worth mentioning here once more that Baal was indeed a ruler, as it is part of his nature and indicated by this title.

It is clear that the titles of Baal do not readily divide into neat categories and one may regard this as evidence of the complex and well developed theology which has been illustrated in previous chapters. Most surprisingly, the locative titles (\(b\ell\) spn and \(b\ell\ ugrt\)) occur only in the ritual texts: one would have imagined they would appear in the mythic texts about Baal and his activities but they are reserved for the lists of offerings and rituals. This does not necessarily mean that they denoted gods other than Baal who figured prominently in religious narrative texts. Those titles which occur mostly in mythic texts - aliyn \(b\ell\), aliy qrdm, hd, rkb crpt, bn dgn, htk dgn, zbl \(b\ell\), zbl \(b\ell\ ar\), limm - are surprising by their expressiveness of the qualities of Baal and their apparent absence from ritual worship in the translated and published texts at the moment.

\(^{1410}\) KTU 1.4 iv 43 and following.

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The implications of the titles of Baal

One may summarise as follows: the picture of Baal from the titles used throughout the mythic texts is consistent with the deity charged with influencing the weather and maintaining a balance of power between himself, death and the waters of chaos, represented by Mot and Yam. His origins are mysterious, with a paternal line possibly different from those other gods who took part in the epic texts. The titles also suggest that his remit included a cosmic role in governing the earth as a whole, with a possibility of a chthonic role, perhaps as a counterpart to his role upon the earth which his clouds watered above.

Those titles which are found only in ritual material present a localised but no less powerful deity, aspects of whose character may have been appropriated from an internationally recognisable storm-god figure.1411

In conclusion, the titles of Baal support the idea that Baal was the Ugaritic god most closely associated with stormy weather, the rule and government of the relevant sphere and also physical might, which enabled him to combat

1411 The international storm-god is of course excluded from this study which is founded upon the Ugaritic evidence. There remains a need for the study of Baal internationally.
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two of the other chief gods, a further indication of the presence of the Chaoskampf motif in Ugarit.

One might also remark upon the titles that are ‘missing’: the common assumption that Baal was patron of sailors following his defeat of the unruly sea/Yam is not confirmed by a corresponding epithet. This does not however mean that Baal was not regarded as the protector of sailors: the proliferation of votive anchors found at the temple of Baal\(^\text{1412}\) provides a different type of easily substantiated evidence of this relationship and reminds us that in some cases ‘absence of evidence is not evidence of absence’. Likewise, the common and incorrect view of Baal as overseeing the sphere of sexual fertility is unsupported by a survey of his titles. Indeed, the fertility aspect of Baal is only attested in his connection with clouds and by implication, rain. While the titles found in Ugarit are of undoubted significance, they should not be allowed to impose limits upon our understanding of the theology and activity of Baal and must be interpreted in conjunction with the other available evidence from Ugarit.

\(^{1412}\) Frost 1991. See also Brodie 1998.
Conclusion

The picture of Baal established from translations of the Ugaritic texts has often appeared contradictory in the past: he was a god of fertility and life but also a god of death, he was a god of kings as well as a god of war. This is not necessarily a problem given the divine capriciousness evident in both ancient and modern religions. The dominance of the Seasonal Pattern in the interpretation of Ugaritian religion substantially affected the perception of Baal and despite the comprehensive dismantling of its basis by Grabbe\textsuperscript{1413} the view of Baal by the academic community is still largely influenced by the understanding of Baal as a dying and rising seasonal god whose life-cycle was reflected in the crops.\textsuperscript{1414} It was also common for evidence from other religious traditions to be used in order supposedly to widen our knowledge of Baal and although this can be a useful technique when used in moderation, a surfeit of external evidence can in fact be deleterious in obtaining an accurate picture of Baal as he was worshipped in Ugarit.

In this dissertation it has been possible to re-examine the Ugaritic texts and through them gain an understanding of Baal as those who wrote the tablets saw him. The texts provide evidence of Baal which forms a 'holistic theology' not reliant on other traditions and therefore provides a sound starting point from which to examine Baal in other ancient Near Eastern traditions. The

\textsuperscript{1413} Grabbe 1976.
\textsuperscript{1414}Niehr 1999 is a very recent example.
dissertation has therefore provided an untangling of threads and a clarification of what one could say with qualified confidence about Baal of Ugarit. It was difficult to predict how much of the popular vision of Baal would disappear without the use of material from other traditions or indeed how far it would be possible to examine Baal solely based on Ugaritic material. While restudying texts already dealt with in detail by philological experts and capitalising upon their expertise, the information founded upon 'foreign' religions has been excluded in order to take a different approach to Baal than has been attempted before.\textsuperscript{1415}

How far this removal has been possible or successful can be seen from the results of the foregoing study. While it is difficult to overstate the international nature of trade in both gods and goods during the LBA, it is a worthy undertaking to represent the indigenous character of a god before going on to paint an international view.

One of the first problems to confront any study of Baal in Ugarit is found in the archaeological evidence itself. The fragmentary tablets are friable and letter signs are presently less clear than upon excavation nearly seventy years ago. Likewise, the ordering of tablets has not been without controversy: de Moor's understanding of the seasons reflected in the narrative of the Baal Cycle depended largely upon his reordering of them.\textsuperscript{1416} Despite its fragility,

\textsuperscript{1415} Even Kapelrud 1952 was heavily influenced by material from all over the Near East in spite of its title \textit{Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts}.

\textsuperscript{1416} De Moor 1972.
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the volume of readable material is daunting. Therefore, in order to focus more upon the phenomena that characterise Baal, rather than positing another argument for a particular ordering of the texts, the approach here has been to examine specific aspects of Baal and incidents of their appearance in the texts. Although this risks an element of generalisation, care has been taken to highlight those texts which both support as well as challenge hypotheses, for example those of Baal as a god of war and his connection to the royal family. During the examination of aspects of Baal, patterns have emerged which would have been difficult to see had a text-by-text approach been used. This enabled information which one could argue was contradictory to emerge: for instance Athirat and Anat declare “Our king is valiant Baal! There is none above him!” but other gods were also given the title and accoutrements of kingship. There is definite value in a phenomenological approach and the findings justify this method.

It is perhaps no surprise to find that the so-called Seasonal Pattern can no longer be maintained as a valid theory of interpreting the Ugaritic texts. While one cannot dispute that Baal’s preferred theophany was meteorological, this did not support the framework required for KTU 1.1-1.6 to be an annual cultic performance in the temples of Ugarit recited by priests. The alternatives proposed to the Seasonal Pattern are often closer to it than one would expect. Notable exceptions include Handy, Smith and Wyatt. These alternative suggestions have provided a basis for acknowledging aspects of Baal which had been at least de-emphasised by the

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1417 KTU 1.3 v 32 and 1.4 iv 43.
Seasonal Pattern, for instance the relationship between Baal and politics or kingship in Ugarit and the function of his role in war and hunting.

While it has been mentioned that Baal's favoured theophany was meteorological – “the sound of his voice from the clouds, his hurling to earth of lightning bolts”\(^{1419}\) “Baal opened a rift in the clouds, his holy voice Baal gave forth”\(^{1420}\) - one cannot support the hypothesis that he was a god of fertility in its usual connotation (one which is hardly ever clarified, it might be added). Baal did have an effect upon the growth of crops, particularly after his death when we are told that “Baal has forsaken the furrows of the ploughland”\(^{1421}\). The argument that he himself represented the crops is not supported by the texts. Rather, Baal was immanent through his rain and clouds, which had an impact upon the ability of crops to grow. This feature forms part of the narrative flow of the events and is not the main focus of the tablets. Neither can it be argued that he represented sexual fertility. Although it is mentioned that he had three daughters and also a possibly tauromorphic son, this hardly supports the proposed view of him as a “virile dolt”\(^{1422}\) who saw no further than the next heifer. There is nothing here or in the cultic texts specifically from Ugarit published to date which can support the proposal of a 'depraved' cult involving at least cultic prostitution.

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\(^{1418}\) Chapter 1: discussion of Kapelrud: 30-42.
\(^{1419}\) KTU 1.4 v 5-10.
\(^{1420}\) KTU 1.4 vii 29-30.
\(^{1421}\) KTU 1.6 iv 4. Wyatt 1998a: 138 n. 92.
\(^{1422}\) Handy 1994: 126.
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His categorisation as a 'dying and rising' god is troublesome. J.Z. Smith argued against the very existence of such gods, citing a possible misunderstanding of the 'dying and reappearing' and 'going away and returning' gods by scholars. While this is possible, Baal appears from the evidence to fall into a singular group. Although his disappearance takes place within a lacuna, the cry of Anat that "Baal is Dead!"¹⁴²³ is quite clear. Likewise, his burial and the mourning practices of Anat and El indicate that his disappearance was regarded as a result of death, most likely at the hands of Mot. The manner of his reappearance is slightly more esoteric. El's vision¹⁴²⁴ of a land restored to vitality by the presence of Baal - or it could be argued by the correction of an injustice which had caused the upset of the natural order - preceded a crucial fragmentary area¹⁴²⁵ and then Baal's return in a mood to fight and regain his throne. Therefore one cannot really dispute his death but his return may or may not have been understood as a 'rising'. Since its supporters poorly define the category itself, it is most prudent to state that Baal appeared to die but returned to life, with little obvious damage (unlike Osiris, frequently cited as a counterpart to Baal). Until the excavation of a duplicate of the crucial passage that is less damaged, no more can be stated with confidence.

The argument for Baal's warlike nature has been likewise overconfidently stated.¹⁴²⁶ There is clear evidence that while he attacked Yam it is also possible that he is shown at another point to be underneath Yam's throne in

¹⁴²³ KTU 1.6 i 6.
¹⁴²⁴ KTU 1.6 iii 1-15.
¹⁴²⁵ KTU 1.6 iv 25-end, about 38 missing lines.
¹⁴²⁶ Chapter 5.

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an apparently subservient or subdued position. While he berates the gods for their submission to Yam's envoys, he requires encouragement by other gods to finish off his foe with the divine weapons. He sets out hunting in KTU 1.12 and yet ends the text lying fevered in a swamp after being attacked by his prey.

This presents an ambiguous character, and one which cannot be easily reconciled with the popular vision of a warrior god. Unlike Anat, Baal is shown defeated. Unlike Anat, his final battle with Mot is halted by the intervention of Shapsh rather than outright victory. Baal is oddly human in his varying fortunes and only speculation could suggest why. One may at least conclude that he is no more warlike than other Ugaritic gods but that he is not as given to martial activity as others, for example Anat.

The necessity of his attempts to wrest power from others by military action could be a result of his identification with the Ugaritic king. There has been a suggestion that he was to be identified with the Ugaritic king in previous studies but this was based upon a putative re-enactment of the hieros gamos at the annual cult celebration. More recently others have suggested that Baal could be regarded as a figure sympathetic to the Ugaritian king on grounds of his own kingship and struggle to maintain cosmic order. Evidence garnered from the textual material is ambivalent and certainly not explicit.

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1427 KTU 1.2 iv 5-10.
1428 Like Anat's annihilation of Mot KTU 1.6 ii.
1429 Kapelrud 1952: 29.
One cannot argue that they are categorically identified as one another but there is certainly an affinity between them which can be supported by material from non-poetic narrative texts. Among the correspondence archives, the Ugaritian king identifies Baal with Amun, the patron deity of the Egyptian king.\(^{1431}\) Likewise Baal is credited with having the capacity to deliver Ugarit from danger in his role as specific patron of the kingdom. One may reasonably suggest that these connections argue for a link between Ugaritic king and Baal, particularly since this is not echoed with other gods even though they are also given the title of king and have a limited kingdom.

The infamous ‘cult’ of Baal, so often connected to the practice of the prophets in 1 Kings 18, is not to be found among the ritual texts of Ugarit. Those texts explicitly cultic in content tend to consist of a list of deities and the animals sacrificed to them, often without an attributive / to maintain order within the list. The episodes referring to formal cultic worship within the narrative texts likewise demonstrate a dependence upon animal sacrifice, but this should not be regarded as the limits of Ugaritian practical religion. While it is conceivable that other references to cultic worship appear within the narrative texts, it has been decided to remain on ground that is not unnecessarily contentious within this dissertation. Episodes of possible cultic worship which do not include Baal have not been examined since it would no longer be an examination of the theology of Baal and become much longer if that had been done. One can state that the surviving evidence indicates that while Baal was a popular deity within formal worship at the temples

\(^{1431}\) Chapter 6.
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which left these records, little more detail can be found than that Baal was offered many types of animal. Whether these animals were killed within the performance of a ritual cannot be proven, neither can it be determined whether the bodies were burnt, cooked or left exposed. Exceptional instances suggest that commensality may have been practised. One may conclude that the sacrificial cult of Baal, while one of considerable size and economic worth, cannot be clarified further from the textual evidence. It is unlikely that the narrative texts were performed in the manner argued by the Seasonal Pattern supporters and this reassessment of the worship of Baal has disproved their argument.

No survey of the evidence in Ugarit to attest to the category of Baal would be complete without examining his iconography, in particular the monumental *Baal au Foudre* stela. In order to examine this statue adequately, a study trip was undertaken to the Musée de Louvre in August 2002 and new photographs taken. These provide evidence that the *lignes ondules* at the base of Baal's feet were neither a snake nor scales of a primordial monster. The most intriguing result of this study was that the pedestal upon which the smaller royal figure stood was found to be identical to that of the god. Both provide a position of power and both were indications of their superiority. However, it seems that the god had two of these stands beneath him and that some recarving took place over the statue's lifetime, given the inclusion of cuts to form a tenon to be inserted into a large socket. The iconographic clues

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1432 KTU 1.48 discussed in Chapter 7.
1433 Appendix 1: Fig. 1-4.
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to the character of Baal most recognised suggest he was regarded as a victorious and rather aggressive deity, given to holding aloft spear or club in the classic 'smiting' pose. The lance is reminiscent of the meteorological language used of the hurling to earth of lightning bolts.\(^{1434}\) They also indicate that Baal was an international deity because of the very strong Egyptian influence upon both the style and form of the images.

Finally, the survey of the titles of Baal focussed more upon their significance than their etymology, choosing to take a consensus interpretation of most of them while examining those that had been offered radical options, for example \(bn\,dg\,n\), \(hm\,lt\), \(dm\,rn\). Several were excluded on grounds of their tenuous nature, while \(dm\,rn\) was examined but found to be an example of eisegesis and one which require much more detailed study than possible in this dissertation.\(^{1435}\) The most common titles of Baal, like the iconography, suggest a popular image of the deity as vigorous and valiant. It is noteworthy that the locative \(b'd\,ug\,rt\) and \(b'd\,sp\,n\) are found only in ritual texts. They do not appear in the narrative material, but it would seem odd to argue that this indicated a reference to a totally separate deity. Likewise, those aspects of Baal which one would expect to be attested - his predilection for heifers or his 'rainy' nature are not, currently, found among the list of his titles.\(^{1436}\) None of this should be taken as explicit evidence that a characteristic of Baal did not exist if it were not to be found among his titles. There is no title 'Baal of the sea' or 'Baal of the waves' and yet numerous

\(^{1434}\) KTU 1.4 v 5-10.

\(^{1435}\) For example, the Heb. \(tm\,tn\) 'warrior' could be a root of \(dm\,rn\) but it would require a philological exposition of the validity of the metathesis of \(t\) to \(d\) and this is not the aim of this study.

\(^{1436}\) See Appendix 2 and Wyatt 1992 who argued for a precipitatory god.
anchor stones have been found and interpreted as votive offerings in his temple.143 One may conclude that this supported the approach taken of sampling the Ugaritic texts and iconographic in order to arrive at a 'holistic' theology of Ugaritian Baal.

It has been shown that Baal was not a seasonal deity, nor was he explicitly one who 'rose' from the dead like Osiris. He was not sexually promiscuous and his predilection for bovine animals is not adequately explained in the texts. He presented an ambiguously martial figure - aggressive and yet needy, a warrior who could not win alone. This may have been an echo of the vassal nature of Ugarit at the time, dependent upon help from other nations and yet still defining itself as Ugaritian rather than Canaanite. To that extent he depicted the position of the king and his connection to the ruling family was confirmed in administrative texts and the reliance upon Baal in times of trouble. The formal worship of Baal remains difficult to investigate simply because of the nature of the texts which survive and yet one may make negative affirmations as to its nature: it did not include prostitution, child-sacrifice or - overtly - sacred sex. Rather, it appears to have been conducted along with animal offerings to other deities as part of an inclusive sacrificial worship. The iconography and titles of Baal both sought to present a deity powerful and vigorous - this may have been in fact a refutation of the powerlessness felt by the people or king of Ugarit at the time. By impressing the importance of their god upon both their own people and visitors, their own prestige would be enhanced.


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This is a different and more political understanding of Baal and yet it is one that acknowledges the importance of his connection to natural phenomena which express his power and presence. It is a rebalancing of previous attempts to understand him and at the same time it has removed much that was accredited to Baal on grounds of divine cognates. The overall result is one of a holistic and balanced theology which can, after all, be supported by Ugaritian texts and archaeological evidence, without any reliance upon the Hebrew Bible or epics of Philo.

Baal emerges from the Ugaritic texts as a deity capable of embodying the contradictions inherent in the human condition while remaining a captivating divine figure whose place in the Ugaritic pantheon suggests that of the contemporary king: imperious, defiant and yet curiously dependent upon his neighbours.
Appendix 1: Iconography of Baal of Ugarit

Fig. 1 - Baal au Foudre: lower base of stone.

Fig. 2 – Baal au Foudre: lower left facing (curve shows pedestal).

Fig. 3 – Baal au Foudre: lower right detail (bottom pedestal)
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Fig. 4 – Baal au Foudre. Tool marks on back of stone.

Fig. 5 – Egyptian waves. BM 124823. Pritchard 1954: 32.

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Fig. 6 – 'Narmer' Palette. Cairo Museum. Pritchard 1954: 92.

Fig. 7 – Mami stela. Louvre Museum. Pritchard 1954: 167.
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Fig. 8 – ‘Feathered God’ stela. Louvre Museum. AO 13174. Pritchard 1954:168.

Fig. 9 – ‘Baal of the Disk’

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Fig. 10 – Baal au Foudre II.

Fig. 11 – ‘Baal the Serpent Slayer’

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Fig. 12 – *Baal aux Montagnes*

Fig. 13 – *‘Baal the Hunter’*

Appendix 1. Iconography of Baal of Ugarit
Appendix 2: The Titles of Baal

The following is a table giving the position and then designation given to Baal from texts KTU 1.1-1.120. If no such title occurs in a tablet then the tablet number will not be given. The titles are given in their transcribed Ugaritic form, rather than an English translation.

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Appendix 2. Titles of Baal
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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| 1.4 | I  | 9  | b'l |

| II  | 13 | b'l |
|     | 15 | liim * |
|     | 22 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 37 | aliyn b'l |

| III | 10 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 11 | rkb crpt |
|     | 17 | b'l |
|     | 18 | rkb crpt |
|     | 23 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 37 | aliyn b'l |

| 1.4 | IV | 19 | b'l |
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|     |    | 44 | tpt |
|     |    | 50 | b'l |
|     |    | 62 | b'l |

| V   | 12 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 22 | b'l |
|     | 35 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 48 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 59 | aliyn b'l |
|     | 60 | rkb crpt |
|     | 63 | aliyn b'l |

| 1.4 | VI | 2  | b'l |
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|     |    | 7  | aliyn b'l |
|     |    | 15 | b'l |
|     |    | 36 | aliyn b'l |
|     |    | 38 | [b'l] |

Appendix 2. Titles of Baal 419
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Appendix 2. Titles of Baal
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Appendix 2. Titles of Baal 424
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Appendix 2. Titles of Baal
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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1438 Incipit on handle, votive.

Appendix 2. Titles of Baal

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Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Appendix 2. Titles of Baal 427
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

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Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

Abbreviations

General

Akk. Akkadian
ANE Ancient Near East
AO Louvre catalogue prefix: ‘Antiquités Orientales’
Ar. Arabic
Aram. Aramaic
BCE before Common Era
BH Biblical Hebrew
BLM Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem
DN Divine Name
EA El Amarna
Ethp. Ethiopic
HB Hebrew Bible
Heb. Hebrew
Hitt. Hittite
Hurr. Hurrian
IA Iron Age
LBA Late Bronze Age
MBA Middle Bronze Age
MMA Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.
OB Old Babylonian
OT Old Testament
OUP Oxford University Press
Phoen. Phoenician
PN Personal Name
PT Pyramid Text
R recto
RIH Ras Ibn Hani
RN Royal Name
Sem. Semitic
Ug. Ugaritic
V verso

Reference works

Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts

BHS Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.
PRU Palais royal d’Ugarit:
RSO Ras Shamra-Ugarit

Abbreviations
Towards a Theology of Baal: Revisiting the Interpretation of the Ugaritic Texts


*TEO* = RSO 5/1.

Ugaritica


**Serials and Periodicals**

*AAAS* Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes
*AEPE* Annuaire de l’Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des sciences religieuses.
*ALASP* Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Paléstinas und Mesopotamiens
*AnOr* Analecta Orientalia
*AOAT* Alter Orient und Altes Testament
*Arch Or* Archiv Orientální
*ARM(T)* Archives Royales de Mari (Textes)
*AuOr* Aula Orientalis
*AuOrS* AuOr Supplementa
*BA* Biblical Archaeologist
*BAH* Bibliothèque Archeologique et Historique
*BASOR* Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
*BM* Bibliotheca Mesopotamica
*BJSUCSD* Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego.
*BO* Bibliotheca Orientalis
*CB* Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series
*CBQ* Catholic Biblical Quarterly
*CRAI(BL)* Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions (et Belles Lettres)
*CSF* Collezione di Studi Fenici

**Abbreviations**

431
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<td>Hebrew Bible</td>
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<td>HSM</td>
<td>Harvard Semitic Monographs</td>
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<td>Harvard Semitic Studies</td>
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