

Further Comments on Ugaritic Toponyms

Wilfred G. E. Watson
(Independent Researcher)

Abstract

To supplement my previous survey of Ugaritic place-names (in *Aula Orientalis* 2001), here I discuss new alphabetic toponyms, toponyms ending in *-y* and gentilics, and new explanations for several toponyms, including those in syllabic spellings without alphabetic equivalents. In all, the meanings of 35 alphabetic names and of an additional 10 syllabic names are considered.

Keywords

Akkadian, Aramaic, gentilic, toponym, Ugaritic.

Preamble

Ten years ago I compiled a list of almost all the toponyms in the alphabetic Ugaritic texts together with explanations of their names¹. Later, several of these explanations were reconsidered by W. H. Van Soldt². Since then some additional toponyms have been published. All this indicates that further comments on the meanings of Ugaritic toponyms are required. Therefore, here the following are listed: (1) the new toponyms, (2) gentilics and names ending in *-y*, (3) new explanations and (4) suggestions for place-names with syllabic spellings. This note concludes with (5) final comments.

Some personal names are derived from place-names (as gentilics) and conversely, some toponyms were originally personal names³. Also, as van Soldt has correctly stressed, most of the toponyms should be explained either from within Ugaritic or, if that is not possible, from Northwest Semitic languages and dialects, especially biblical Hebrew, Phoenician and Old Aramaic⁴. Derivations from Akkadian, Arabic and South Arabian are less likely, as are explanations based on Hurrian or Hittite. Some names

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¹ WATSON 2001, reprinted – with corrections and the inclusion of references to KTU – in WATSON 2007: 195-206 (note: on p. 205 for “*trdt*” read “*tdrt*” and on p. 206 for “*ygb*” read “*yrgb*”). Over 230 place-names were discussed, including those in the mythological texts.

² VAN SOLDT 2005: 168-188. On *uškn* (KTU 4.27:3, etc.) he commented (2005: 171): “If this toponym is indeed an abbreviation of the longer *ʾUška-^cAttartu/i* ... it cannot be derived from the root *škn*, “to dwell””. However, cf. Afro-Asiatic **Vsuk-*, “(to) dwell” (OREL – STOLBOVA 1995: 38 §153).

³ See VAN SOLDT 2005: 170, 175, 176, 178, 186, 188, etc.

⁴ VAN SOLDT 2005: 168.

may even predate the Ugaritic language, since ancient (prehistoric) toponyms tend to persist in a region⁵.

1. New toponyms

In this section, place-names are discussed that have been published or identified recently⁶. Also included here are toponyms that were omitted from my previous list. They are as follows:

unġ (RS 94.2406:10) – the closest equivalent is the PN *anġn* (KTU 4.418:1) which may have the spelling *a-ni-ġu-ti* (PRU 6, 43 [RS 17.077] rev. 12'). Unfortunately, no meaning can be proposed.

^c*t*, meaning unknown (KTU 4.68:24; cf. 4.250:6); as the /^c/ is uncertain, van Soldt⁷ suggests reading *št* or possibly *tt*. No plausible meaning (apart from “now” or the like) can be proposed for ^c*t*, but for *tt* cf. Aram. *tūtā*, “mulberry” (DJPA: 59a), borrowed as Akk. *tuttu*, “mulberry tree” (CDA: 411b)⁸.

ħqr, “Citadel” (KTU 4.557:1)⁹ – Aram. *ħqr*, “citadel” (JASTROW 1903: 497). An alternative meaning is “Boastful (town)” or the like, based on Syr. *ħqr*, “to boast” (LS²: 485), but this seems less likely.

ħršn, “Mountain” (KTU 1.1 ii 23; 1.1 iii 22)¹⁰ has a good Afro-Asiatic etymology: Eg. *ħ3s.t*, “hill-country, foreign land, desert”¹¹, Akk. *ħuršānu*, *ħursānu*, “mountain(s)” (CDA: 122a), Arab. *ħuršūm*, “big mountain” (cited in HALOT: 358) as well as Aram. *ħwrš*, “forest” (DJPA: 193a) and Heb. *ħoreš*, “forest (area)” (HALOT: 358). Therefore, G. Takács¹², noting that the semantic shift from “mountain” to “forest” is known to occur in Afro-Asiatic, suggests that this word was influenced by Sumerian rather than being borrowed from that language¹³.

kwr, “Slope” (RS 94.2965:7) – whether this name can be explained by Akk. *kawārum*, “ramp” (CDA: 154), which has various spellings¹⁴, remains uncertain.

mlwm, “Enclosed” (RS 94.2406:6): this is possibly a reference to town walls, based on Ug. *lwy* which may mean “to wind around, surround, wrap (up)”¹⁵. See the cognate

⁵ “In dealing with toponyms one has to remember that a number of places already existed before the Late Bronze Age and that the meanings of the names were not always clear to those who lived in them” (VAN SOLDT 2005: 169).

⁶ See BORDREUIL – PARDEE 2004: 147.

⁷ VAN SOLDT 2005: 37 n. 306.

⁸ I.e. “Mandelbeerbaum” (AHw: 1374b); “mulberry tree” (CAD T: 498b, with the comment: “Meaning based on Aram. *tūtā*, late Heb. *tūt*”).

⁹ Identified by TROPPER – VITA 1998: 691; cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 19 and DUL: 367.

¹⁰ Cf. ^dĤUR.SAG *ħa-zi* (Ugar. 5, 18 [RS 20.024]:14).

¹¹ FAULKNER 1982: 185; “Bergland, Fremdland, Wüste” (Wb III: 234.7-235.21). See the discussion in TAKÁCS 2011: 141.

¹² TAKÁCS 2011: 141 n. 8.

¹³ See also Hamito-Semitic (Afro-Asiatic) **ħoras-*, “mountain”, in OREL – STOLBOVA 1995: 297 §1358.

¹⁴ These are Akk. *kabaru*, *kamaru*, *kammaru*, *kawaru* and *kamru* (see CAD K: 111).

Akk. *lawûm*, *lamû*, “to surround, besiege”; D: “to encircle, etc.” (CDA: 179b; CAD L: 69-77a)¹⁶.

qt, “(Place of) Flax(?)” (KTU 2.36:17): the reading is uncertain (cf. DUL: 719), which is why it was omitted from the previous list. See below on *qty*.

sngr, “Sîn is the Protector” (RS 94.2406:9). At first glance, this name seems to contain the element *gr*, “mountain” (cf. DUL: 324-325) but then the expected sequence would be *gr sn*. Possibly it is to be analysed as *sn + ngr*, “Sîn protects” or the like¹⁷, corresponding to Heb. *šen’ašsar*, which in turn is borrowed from Bab. ^d*Sin-ušur*, “Let Sîn protect” (cf. HALOT: 1597a). Here, the verb is Ugaritic *ngr*, “to pay attention; to protect, guard” (DUL: 624-625)¹⁸. This would be another case of a personal name acting as a toponym¹⁹.

2. Toponyms ending in –y and gentilics

In my previous article, some of the toponyms and gentilics ending in –y were omitted and these are included here for the sake of completeness²⁰.

adny, “(Place of) the Lord” (RS 94.2406:8), clearly based on Ug. *adn*, “lord, master; noble father” (DUL: 18-19). This a new toponym²¹.

agny, “Bowl” (KTU 4.379) – with the spellings ^{uru}*a-ga-na-a* (AnOr 48, 29 [RS Varia 11]:3”) and ^{uru}*a-ga-na* (PRU 4, 148 [RS 17.340] rev. 4; PRU 6, 110 [RS 19.88]:2) – can be explained by Ug. *agn*, “large or cultic bowl” (KTU 1.23:15, 31, 36; 6.70:1)²².

alty, “The Cypriot” (KTU 1.40: [20], 29, 37; 1.84:15, 20; 2.42:8; 4.149:8; 4.343:3; 4.705:9; RS 94.2392+:16; cf. 4.155:3)²³ and *altyy* (KTU 1.141:1; 4.352:2) – cf. the Emar personal names *Alaša* and *Alazaia*²⁴ and note the spellings *aldy* (KTU 4.609:21) and *alzy* (KTU 4.272:1)²⁵. This name has been borrowed from Luwian, as Breyer has shown, and means “Belonging to the Sea”²⁶.

¹⁵ See TROPPER 2000: 590 §74.622.3 under *lwy*, “(um)winden, umgeben, umhüllen”; cf. TROPPER 2008: 66 and 154 (234).

¹⁶ Any connection with the place-names *ul-mu-wa* (PRU 4, 66 [RS 17.062]:12’) or *lwsnd* (KTU 2.40:10) seems unlikely.

¹⁷ With a “shared consonant”, i.e. *n*; for this phonological explanation cf. WATSON 1969.

¹⁸ The moon-god in Ugaritic religion is *yrh* (Yariḥ), who in one god list (KTU 1.118 [RS 24.264+24.280]:13) is equated with ^d*sîn* in another such list (RS 20.24:13); cf. SCHMIDT 1999: 587b. On the god Sîn see STOL 1999.

¹⁹ For other examples see VAN SOLDT 2005: 170, 175, 176, etc.

²⁰ For a full discussion of the –y ending, with full list of toponyms see DEL OLMO LETE 2010 (esp. 222-225).

²¹ See also the Ugaritic PN *adn*, “Lord” (KTU 4.90:3; 4.122:18; 4.609:33; 6.16:2; 9.418:7).

²² See DUL, 26. As noted in HALOT: 289b: “landmarks in the countryside are often called by names of vessels: kettle, basin, trough”, with a reference to DALMAN 1928-1942, vol. 4: 66.

²³ PN: *alty* (KTU 4.390:1).

²⁴ PRUZSINZSKY 2003: 75, 76.

²⁵ See DIETRICH – LORETZ – SANMARTÍN 1973: 81.

²⁶ “Die zum Meer Gehörige”, or more freely, “die Mitten im Meer Gelegene”, from Luwian *ala(i-)*, “sea” (BREYER 2010).

atqlny, “Ashkelonian” (RS 94.2392+:13) – whether or not the underlying root is Ug. **taql*, “to weigh” is uncertain²⁷.

gt knpy, “Field of Gathering” (KTU 4.243:18; 4.271:1; 4.296:10) – a.šà : *ka-an-na-pí-ya* (PRU 3, 79 [RS 16.239]:7) and a.šà : *ka-na-pí-ya* (PRU 3, 85 [RS 16.250]:11). There is a full discussion of the meaning of this toponym by Huehnergard²⁸, where he discusses and rejects various proposals²⁹ and finally suggests “neighbourhood” or “region”, based on Arab. *kanaf* with the same meaning. Instead, possibly the place-name may be explained by Aram. *knp*, “to be gathered together”, D: “to collect, assemble”³⁰. This may refer either to collecting the harvest of the field or less probably to the group of people living there.

hry, “Mountain” (KTU 4.365:13; 4.546:1), once as a gentilic (KTU 4.398:3), is based on Ug. *hr*, “mountain” (DUL: 345)³¹.

mgdly, “Watchtower” (KTU 4.244:10; 4.684:8)³² and as a gentilic (KTU 4.417:11) has the syllabic spellings ^{uru}*ma-ag-da-la* (PRU 4, 66 [RS 17.62+]:6'; PRU 4, 70 [RS 17.366]:16'; Ugar. 5, 102 [RS 20.207A]:10') and ^{uru}*ma-ag-da-la-a* (PRU 6, 77 [RS 19.032]:2)³³. The root of Akk. *madgaltu*, “observation tower; border post” (CDA: 188a) is *dagālu*, “to see, look” (CDA: 53a), which indicates that Ug. *mgdly* (formed from *mgdl*) derives from Ug. **dgl*, “to see”³⁴, with metathesis³⁵, not from Ug. *gdl*, “broad, wide” (DUL: 294)³⁶. This means that the syllabic spelling here (and probably elsewhere) is not of the corresponding Akkadian word but is an orthographical equivalent of the Ugaritic name.

ptrty, “Threshing-floor” (KTU 4.297:3) has the spellings ^{uru}*pa-ša-ra-ti* (RS 22.399+:28; RS 25.132 iii 15) and ^{uru}*pa-ša-ra-te* (PRU 6, 102 [RS 19.12]:1). It may be explained by Akk. *pašāru*, “to loosen (husks from) grain” (CDA: 269a, meaning 1)³⁷, but this is far from certain³⁸.

²⁷ See BORDREUIL – PARDEE 2004: 203.

²⁸ HUEHNERGARD 1987: 138; see also 11 n. 51.

²⁹ These suggestions are as follows: (1) a non-Semitic name for a field (BOYD 1975: 20); (2) “reaped field” based on Mishnaic Heb. and Aram. *qnb*, “to trim” (SIVAN 1984: 261) and (3) a nisba of Ug. *knp*, “wing, extremity” (KÜHNE 1975: 253-256).

³⁰ LS², 334; DJBA, 588b; JASTROW 1903: 650.

³¹ Besides West Semitic cognates (for which see DUL, 345), cf. Egyptian *hrw*, “mountain” (DLE I: 291).

³² This supplements the entry *mgdly* in WATSON 2001: 117 and 2007: 201.

³³ See DUL: 530; VAN SOLDT 2005: 29.

³⁴ So already DEL OLMO LETE 1999: 300 n. 24; cf. WATSON 1999: 40.

³⁵ The same applies to Heb. *migdāl*, “watchtower” – cf. TAWIL 2004: 2009, 197.

³⁶ As in ASTOUR 1975: 298-299, DUL: 294 and VAN SOLDT 2005: 177.

³⁷ Alternatively, it may mean “Place of Relaxing” or even “Place of Selling”, cf. Akk. *pašāru*, “to relax; to sell” (CAD P: 236 meanings 3 and 6).

³⁸ For discussion (but not this solution) see VAN SOLDT 2005: 181.

qrty, “(Place of) Fenugreek” (KTU 4.85:1, 6), has the syllabic spelling ^{uru}*qu-ur-tu* (PRU 6, 105 [RS 19.11]:9') and may correspond to Syr. *qr̄t*, “fenugreek” (LS²: 695), although this is no more than a suggestion³⁹.

q̄ty, “(Place of) Flax” (KTU 1.40:[10], [19], 28, 36; 1.84:14, 19; 9.432:22)⁴⁰: the meaning is based on Ug. *q̄t*, “flax, flax seed” (DUL: 719)⁴¹, Syr. *q̄etaw*, “flax” (LS²: 658) and Akk. *kitû*, “flax, linen” (cf. AHw: 495b; CDA: 163a). Note also that in Syriac and Aramaic, *q̄tw* (*q̄twt*) means “gourd, cucumber”⁴² and Syr. *q̄th* (*q̄tt*) means “swallow-wort” and a “kind of moss”. These may be possible alternatives.

stry, “Wild Thyme” (KTU 4.690:15), is based on Aram. and Syr. *str*, “wild thyme” (DJPA: 471b; DJBA: 974b).

3. New explanations

Set out below are some new suggestions for the meanings of place-names, all with the proviso that they require further study and evaluation.

aršh, “River Town(?)” (KTU 1.100:63, 64; 4.629:6), has generally been equated with Hurr. *aranzah(i)*, “Tigris” (GLH: 53)⁴³. However, it is not a river, but a town near a river and the name may possibly be derived from Hitt. *ārš-/arš-*, “to flow”⁴⁴. Even so, it is unusual for a place-name in Ugarit to be derived from Hittite or even Hurrian, so the explanation posited here remains very speculative.

irab, “Place of a(n unspecified) plant” (KTU 4.48:9; 4.553:2), with the spelling ^{uru}*ir-a-bu* (Ug 5, 102 [RS 20.207A]:5'). The only available possibility is comparison with Akk. *ar'abu* or *ar'ibu*, which denotes a plant of some kind (cf. CAD A/2: 209b; CDA: 21b). However, this explanation remains very uncertain.

gn^cy, “Garden of the Winepress” (KTU 4.48:12; 4.68:56; 4.73:11; 4.213:23; 4.365:26; 4.380:17; 4.610 i 29; 4.693:25; RS 92.2001+ i 34) and *gn^c* (KTU 4.382:14) and the gentilic *gn^cy* (KTU 3.3:13; 4.297:4) – syllabically ^{uru}*ga-na-a* (PRU 3, 189 [RS 11.790]:18'; PRU 3, 190 [RS 11.800]:21'; PRU 3, 191 [RS 11.841]:17'; PRU 6, 53 [RS 27.53]: rev. 9'; RS 34.131:27); ^{uru}*gán-na-a* (PRU 3, 190 [RS 11.830]:1) and ^{uru}*ga-ni-a* (PRU 6, 70 [RS 17.50]:17). The analysis as *gn* + *n^c* is indicated by the syllabic spelling ^{uru}*gán-na-a*⁴⁵. Ugaritic. *gn* means “garden”, (DUL: 302) and the element *n^c* may mean “winepress”; cf. Aram. *n^cw*, “winepress, vat”⁴⁶. This is a new proposal.

³⁹ Alternatively, see Syr. *qr̄t*, *qr̄t'* (*qerrāt*, *qerrattā*), “acacia; shell” (LS²: 694; PAYNE SMITH 1903: 518), but the vowel pattern does not match. For other equally uncertain possibilities see VAN SOLDT 2005: 182 n. 107.

⁴⁰ As PN: KTU 4.37:4; 4.103:19; 4.236:2; 4.787:9.

⁴¹ See also the PN *q̄ty* (KTU 4.37:4; 4.103:19; 4.236:2 and perhaps 4.787:9).

⁴² DJPA: 485a; LS², 657 PAYNE SMITH 1903: 500.

⁴³ Cf. DUL: 109, with further references, and WYATT 2002: 385 n. 34.

⁴⁴ On which cf. KLOEKHORST 2008: 208-210.

⁴⁵ So already ASTOUR 1975: 274.

⁴⁶ DJBA: 759b; JASTROW 1903: 919. Instead, ASTOUR (1975: 274) had suggested the meaning “Garden of freshly gathered fruit”; see VAN SOLDT 2005: 16 and 172.

ḡn, “Affluent (Town)” (KTU 4.346:3; 4.610 i 25), has the equivalents ^{uru}*ḡa-n[u]* (PRU 3, 190 [RS 11.800bis]:16') and ^{uru}*ḡa-ni* (Ugar. 5, 95 [RS 20.01]:11). Possibly it may be explained by Arab. *ḡān*, “rich, opulent”⁴⁷ and Mehri *ḡ²náy*, “rich”⁴⁸.

ḡl, “(Town with a) Moat” (KTU 4.68:40; 4.186:6; 4.320:8; 4.610 ii 23; RS 92.2001+ ii 24) with the spelling ^{uru}*ḡi-li* (PRU 3, 143 [RS 16.183]:21; Ugar. 5, 12 [RS 17.34+]:12; PRU 6, 94 [RS 17.431]:1, 2; RS 34.131:21), based on Syr. *ḡyl*, “moat” (JASTROW 1903: 555)⁴⁹. The generally accepted meaning of this place-name is “Stronghold”⁵⁰.

ḡmrm, “(Place of) Wine” (KTU 4.244:22): instead of referring to Hurr. *ḡamri*, “cult installation”⁵¹ it seems preferable to keep to a West Semitic etymology. In fact, Ug. *ḡmr* means “winevat” (KTU 1.3 i 16; 1.23:6), a container named after its contents. Further cognates are Heb *ḡemer*, “wine” (HALOT: 330b) and Arab. *ḡamr*- “wine, grape-wine” (AEL: 808-809), borrowed as Akk. *ḡimrum*, “a fermented drink” (CDA: 116). Evidently, this was an area where wine was produced.

ḡmrn, “(Place of) Wine” (KTU 4.638:20): see on *ḡmrm*. There are no spellings for either name (cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 21). Both names are comparable to the toponym *yny*, “(Place of) Wine” (KTU 4.355:20; 4.379:6, 7; etc.)⁵². Equally likely is comparison with Ug. *mšb*, “storage place for wine” (cf. DUL: 584-585)⁵³

mšbt, “Storage Town” (KTU 4.68:39; 4.302:5; 4.345:2; 4.621:7; 4.664:4; 4.693:51; 9.388 ii 22), with the gentilic *mšbty* (KTU 4.85:9), has the spelling ^{uru}*ma-ši-bat* (PRU 3, 190 [RS 11.380]:3). It may mean “Stone Pillar” or “Memorial”⁵⁴, but “one cannot be certain of the exact meaning of the name”⁵⁵.

ḡt, “Pool” (KTU 4.643:18) – spelled ^{uru}*na-ag-ḡa-ti* (PRU 4, 48 [RS 17.340] rev. 5') – may be a byform of Syr. *ḡwh*, “seething flood, pool”⁵⁶. However, this is very uncertain.

pd, “Winepress” (KTU 4.365:2; 4.380:2; 4.683:3; 4.693:2; 4.750:10; 4.784:3; RS 92.2001+ i 24; RS 94.2614:5) with the gentilic *pdym* (KTU 4.40:12) has the spellings ^{uru}*pè-di* (RS 22.233:5), ^{uru}*pi-di* (RS 34.131:2); ^{uru}*pi-dì* (Ugar. 5, 12 [RS 17.34+]:11) and ^{uru}*pi-i-di* (Ugar. 5, 95 [RS 20.01]:18). The meaning may be supplied

⁴⁷ Cf. BIBERSTEIN KAZIMIRSKI II 1860: 512, cited by TAKÁCS 2011: 149.

⁴⁸ JOHNSTONE 1987: 139. For these and other cognates see TAKÁCS 2011: 149, under Arab. *ḡaniya* I.

⁴⁹ A further alternative is Syr. *ḡyl*, which is the name of a plant (cf. LS²: 448).

⁵⁰ See VAN SOLDT 2005: 173, with further references.

⁵¹ WATSON 2001: 115; 2007, 200.

⁵² Or “The (town with the) vineyard”, on which cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 176.

⁵³ Note especially Syr. *nšb*, “to store up” (LS²: 938; cf. DNWSI: 750-751).

⁵⁴ ASTOUR 1975: 302, based on Heb. *maššēbāh*, “memorial stone” (HALOT: 621a).

⁵⁵ VAN SOLDT 2005: 178.

⁵⁶ Cf. LS²: 119; PAYNE SMITH 1903: 35 and DJBA: 266b. For another explanation see WATSON 2001: 118; 2007: 202.

by Syr. *bd* (*baḏ*), “winepress”⁵⁷, but due to the difference in the vowel, this is very uncertain⁵⁸.

qmš, “Mound” (KTU 4.365:14; 4.693:16) has the spelling ^{uru}*qi-im-še* (PRU 6, 78 [RS 19.41]:11)⁵⁹ and “is probably related to the [Ug.] word *qmš* in KTU 1.4 VI:43, which means “heap, pile”..... [but] the meaning of the toponym is uncertain”⁶⁰. Note that Aram. *qmš* can also mean “to close”, said of eyes or mouth (DJPA, 496), although this does not seem relevant here.

smwn (KTU 4.696:8) may be related to the Hurr. divine name *Zumewa* (cf. DUL: 763), but otherwise remains unexplained.

šbn, “Incline” (KTU 4.119:2'; 4.124:2; 4.177:5; 4.288:3; 4.355:23; 4.365:22; 4.369:4; 4.380:28; 4.382:28, 36; 4.414:1'; 4.424:5; 4.610 i 15; 4.629:9'; 4.685:10'; 4.693:20; 4.698:2; RS 86.2213:13; RS 92.022:1) and the gentilic *šbny* (KTU 4.369:16; RS 92.2016:4") – have the spellings ^{uru}*šu-ba-nu* (PRU 6, 70 [RS 17.50]:12; ^{uru}*šu-ba-ni* (Ugar. 5, 96 [RS 20.12]:7, 20; RS 22.428:2, 6); ^{uru}*šub-ba-ni* (PRU 3, 188 [RS 10.44]:9'; PRU 3, 189 [RS 11.790]:14'); PRU 3, 190 [RS 11.800]:8'; RS 34.131:11) and ^{uru}*šub-bá-ni* (PRU 3, 192 [RS 12.34+]:39). The meaning is based on Syr. *šbb*, “to come down; to send down, to lower” (LS², 749) and remains conjectural⁶¹.

šhlmmt, “Entrance to the Realm of Death” (KTU 1.5 v 19; 1.5 vi 7, 30; 1.6 ii 20)⁶². This place-name only occurs in the mythological texts.

šrš, meaning uncertain (KTU 1.91:32; 4.68:1; 4.355:37; 4.365:25; 4.380:30; 4.397:9; 4.414:4'; 4.610 i 18; 4.629:6'; 4.643:15; 4.693:24; 4.777:8; RS 86.2213:16) and the gentilic *šršy* (KTU 4.75 i 2) have the syllabic equivalents ^{uru}*šu-ra-šú* (PRU 3, 191 [RS 11.841A]:19') and ^{uru}*šu-ra-ši* (PRU 3, 188 [RS 10.44]:12'; PRU 3, 189 [RS 11.790]:17'; RS 34.131:43). It has been explained as “foundation” or “offspring”, literally, “root”, based on Ug. *šrš*, Heb. *šereš* and Akk. *šuršu*, which have these meanings⁶³. However, van Soldt comments: “the relevance of these meanings for the toponym is unclear”⁶⁴. Whether or not Nuzi Akk. *šurāšu*, which denotes a type of cloth and may be Hurrian (cf. CAD Š/3: 340b; CDA: 387b), is relevant is uncertain, but it does match the vowel pattern.

⁵⁷ For the interchange *b/p* in Ugaritic see TROPPER 2000: 137-138, esp. §33.112.32. See also the place-name *'Ubur^cā*, which van Soldt (VAN SOLDT 2005: 169) connects with Ug. *pr^c*, “first fruit” (cf. DUL: 679). An alternative meaning would be “lofty”, based on Ug. *pr^c*, “high, lofty” (DUL: 679).

⁵⁸ For other possibilities see VAN SOLDT 2005: 181 and n. 99.

⁵⁹ See VAN SOLDT 2005: 39.

⁶⁰ VAN SOLDT 2005: 182. For a discussion of other cognates see there and 182 n. 106.

⁶¹ Otherwise, see perhaps Syr. *šyb'*, “aquatic plant” (LS²: 749; DJBA: 1131a). For discussion of other solutions see VAN SOLDT 2005: 183 and n. 116.

⁶² For a recent explanation see WATSON 2010: 838.

⁶³ ASTOUR 1975: 334 §106; SIVAN 1984: 276 and WATSON 2001: 122; 2007: 204.

⁶⁴ VAN SOLDT 2005: 185; he adds (n. 125) that the meanings “base, foundation” of Akk. *šuršu* mentioned by Astour (ASTOUR 1975: 334) do not occur in Ugaritic, although they are found in biblical Hebrew.

tbq, “Wild Vine” (KTU 4.177:4)⁶⁵, may correspond to Aram. *šbq*, “undressed vine” (DJPA: 536a).

4. Syllabic spellings

The place-names discussed here have no alphabetic equivalents as toponyms, but most probably reflect what would have been the alphabetic spellings had they been transmitted to us.

^{uru}*ḥa-la-ni*[...], “Sandy (place)” (PRU 6, 96 [RS 19.91:3])⁶⁶, if it can be explained by Syr. *ḥalān*, “sandy” (LS², 458). Similar is *bšmy*, “Sandy (place)” (KTU 4.408:4)⁶⁷.

^{uru}*ḥar-ga-na-a*, “(Town of the) Conifer” (PRU 6, 77 [RS 19.32]:5), based on Akk. *argānum*, *argannu*, *ḥargānum*, “a conifer” (CDA: 23)⁶⁸.

^{uru}*ḥe-en-zu-ri-ya*, “(Place of the) Apple-tree” (PRU 4, 66 [RS 17.62+]:13) – Akk. *ḥinzūru*, “apple(-tree)”⁶⁹.

^{uru}*ku-mu-ri*, “Mound” (PRU 6, 194 [RS 19.90]:3', 10', 16')⁷⁰, may be explained by Akk. *kummurū(m)*, “heaping up” (CDA: 167a), in spite of the absence of doubling. Alternatively, see Aram. *kwmr*, “vat for fermenting grape juice into wine” (JASTROW 1903: 621).

^{uru}*ma-ti-'ilu*, “Place of the god” (PRU 3, 131 [RS 15.118]:6) – spelled ^{uru}*ma-ti-dingir* – may comprise Akk. *mātu*, “land, country, home country, territory, flat country, etc.” (CDA: 204; CAD M/1: 414-427) followed by the ideogram for “god”. Its location is unknown⁷¹.

^{uru}*mu-ur-ša-a*, “Estate” (PRU 6, 78 [RS 19.41]:7, 8), very probably corresponds to Ug. *mrt*, “estate” (DUL: 579)⁷².

^{uru}*na-bal-ṭ[u]*, “Safe Place” (PRU 6, 80 [RS 19.111]:5), may correspond to Heb. *n^eballāṭ* (HALOT: 664b), a place-name⁷³. The verb **blṭ*, “to live” (Akk. *balātu*) does not occur in Ugaritic, or indeed in North-West Semitic. Therefore, this may be a form of Ug. *plṭ*, N: “to be safe” (DUL: 673)⁷⁴.

⁶⁵ VAN SOLDT 2005: 46 reads *tbq[ym]* in KTU 4.40:3, which may be a plural of the gentilic; cf. DUL: 897.

⁶⁶ The reading is uncertain; cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 21 and n. 147.

⁶⁷ As explained in WATSON 2001: 113; 2007: 198. It is unclear whether this also applies to *yrml* (cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 176 n. 67).

⁶⁸ Similarly, CAD A/2: 253b-254.

⁶⁹ Cf. AHw: 347b; CAD H: 170; CDA: 117a. This cannot be the same as Ug. *ḥndrt*, “apple tree (?)” (cf. DUL: 398) because the corresponding place-name is *mē ḥunduraši* (PRU 4, 63 [RS 17.62+237]:4), as recognised by NOUGAYROL, PRU 4, 11 and n. 6; cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 56.

⁷⁰ See VAN SOLDT 2005: 27 and n. 203. No meaning is proposed there.

⁷¹ VAN SOLDT 2005: 113.

⁷² See ASTOUR 1975: 358 §169; however the connection with Ug. *mrt*, “(wine) must” that he posits is incorrect.

⁷³ See ASTOUR 1975: 359 §170.

⁷⁴ For the *b/p* interchange, see on *pd*, above.

^{uru}*tu-na-a-na*, “(Place of) the Serpent” (Ugar. 5, 95 [RS 20.01]:20), corresponds to the alphabetic Ugaritic noun *tnn*, “dragon, serpent” (KTU 1.3 iii 40; 1.16 v 31, 32; 1.82:1; 1.83:8), which in turn has the spelling *tu-un-na-nu* in a polyglot list (Ugar. 5, 137 [RS 20.123+] i 8’)⁷⁵. The toponym *tnb* (KTU 1.131:8) may be a Hurrian form of this name⁷⁶.

^{uru}*ya-a-li*, “(Place of) Deer” (PRU 4, 66 [RS 17.62]:11’) may be a variant form of *a-ia-la* (RS 25.132 iii 7), *a-ia-li* (PRU 4, 66 [RS 17.62]:20’) and alphabetic *ayly* (KTU 4.643:17; 4.645:2) in view of the Assyrian spelling *ya’alu* of Akk. *ayyālu*, “stag, deer” (CDA: 32b).

^{uru}*zi-bi-ḥa*, “(Place of) Sacrifice” (Ugar. 5, 102 [RS 20.207]:8’)⁷⁷ is the probable meaning, based on Ug. *dbḥ*, “sacrifice” (DUL: 262-263) and Northwest Semitic *zbḥ*, “sacrifice” (cf. HALOT: 262-263; DNWSI: 301-302).

5. Final comments

Several towns have names connected with vineyards or wine: *gn^cy*, *ḥmrm*, *ḥmrn*, *mšbt*, *pd* and *yny*⁷⁸ as well as ^{uru}*kumuri*. Evidently, there was a strong tradition of growing vines and making wine in this country. More significantly, there seem to be cognates in Aramaic and Syriac for many Ugaritic toponyms (*gn^cy*, *ḥl*, *ḥqr*, *knpy*, *ngḥt*, *pd*, *qrṯ*, *štry*, *šbn*, *tt* and *tbq*). Others have equivalents in Akkadian (*kwr*, *pṯrty* and *šrš*)⁷⁹, perhaps. However, several of the toponyms discussed here have inner-Ugaritic etymologies: *adny*, *agny*, *atqlny*, *hry*, *ḥmrm*, *ḥmrn*, *mgdly*, *mlwm*, *sngr*, *qmš* and *qt*) and the same applies to the syllabic names (*muršā*, *nabalṯu*, *tun(n)ana*, *ya’ali* and *zibiḥa*). This is an indication that toponyms, like personal names, can make a contribution to our understanding of the Ugaritic lexicon⁸⁰. Unfortunately, many toponyms, whether in alphabetic or syllabic spelling, still remain opaque.

⁷⁵ See HUEHNERGARD 1987: 85-86; DUL: 873; VAN SOLDT 1991: 307.

⁷⁶ See DUL: 874 and ASTOUR 1975: 335-336 §109 and 366 §193.

⁷⁷ See VAN SOLDT 2005: 17, who comments that the reading is not certain.

⁷⁸ See also the Ugaritic toponym *gpn*, “(Town near a) Vineyard” (KTU 4.358:7), as a gentilic: *gpony* (KTU 4.125:17), with the spelling ^{uru}*gup-na* (RS 34.131:5); see WATSON 2001: 114; 2007: 199; VAN SOLDT 2005: 16 and 172. Whether the toponym *ull* (KTU 4.68:19; 4.244:12) may be explained similarly in view of Aram. *’ll*, “wine vat” (JASTROW 1903: 71) is no more than a guess.

⁷⁹ Also the syllabic names *ḥar-ga-na-a*, *ḥe-en-zu-ri-ya* and *ku-mu-ri*.

⁸⁰ An example is *Ḥupatā(yu)*, “The (town on the) shore”, which derives from Ug. *ḥp*, “shore” (cf. VAN SOLDT 2005: 174; WATSON 2001: 115; 2007: 200; 2008: 552, 564).

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