

JOTTING ON SOME UGARITIC WORDS

Wilfred G. E. Watson

Here some comments on several lexical items in Ugaritic are set out in alphabetic sequence. Some of the meanings proposed are new while in other cases further confirmation for suggested meanings is supplied¹. The results are set out as a table and there is a final note on two difficult proper names.

1. *aymr*, “Go (and) expel” (KTU 1.2 iv 19)

The word or name *aymr* occurs only once in the expression *aymr mr ym* in the following passage (KTU 1.2 iv 19-20):

<i>šmk. at. aymr.</i>	Your name is Aymr
<i>aymr. mr. ym.</i>	Aymr, drive off Yam,
<i>mr. ym. lksih.</i>	drive off Yam, from his throne
<i>nhr lkht. drkth.</i>	Nahar from the seat of his power

Generally, *aymr* is considered to be composed of the two elements *ay* + *mr* with the meaning “May it banish any(one/thing)” or the like. For example: *aymr* “est composé de l’indéfini *’ay*, ‘n’importe qui’ ... et d’un verbe au jussif, *ymr*... On l’explique généralement par l’arabe *marra*, ‘passer, s’écarter’, mais il faut donner à *mr* une acception transitive”². Similarly: “The second weapon, *’aymr*, consists of two elements: *’ay*, ‘all’ or ‘any’... and *mry*, ‘expel’³. While accepting the usual derivation of *mr*, I suggest instead that *ay* means something like “Go!”. This is based on Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) *’ay*, “to come, run”⁴ or *’iw/iy* “to come”⁵. See also Eg. *jj*, “to come”⁶.

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- ¹ Nicolas Wyatt was kind enough to comment on an earlier draft and provide some references.
 - ² A. Caquot – M. Szymer – A. Herdner, *Textes ougaritiques. Tome I. Mythes et Légendes. Introduction, traduction, commentaire*, Paris 1974, p. 137 n. w.
 - ³ M.S. Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Volume I. Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU 1.1-1.2*, Leiden 1994, p. 343, citing J. Obermann, “How Baal Destroyed a Rival: A Mythological Incantation Scene”, *JAOS* 67, 1947, pp. 195-208 (p. 203 n. 31) and J. Gray, *The Legacy of Canaan*, Leiden 1965, p. 25 n. 3. In similar vein: “¡que ayente/eche a cualquier (enemigo)!” as translated by G. del Olmo Lete, *Mitos y leyendas de Canaán según la tradición de Ugarit*, Valencia / Madrid 1981, p. 512 (i.e. “May it banish/expel any (enemy)!”) and “Let him expel anyhow!”, as given in J.C.L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, Edinburgh 1978, p. 40 n. 1.
 - ⁴ Orel – Stolbova, HSED, pp. 18-19 § 65, where Sem. **i*-, “to go and stay”, as well as equivalents in Bedawi, Cushitic, East Chadic, Omotic, etc. are cited.
 - ⁵ Cf. also Afro-Asiatic **a*-, “to walk, go” (Orel – Stolbova, HSED, p. 1 §1) and **w*-/**iy*-, “to come” (*ibid.* p. 31 §118).

These comparisons indicate that *aymr* could be translated as “Go (and) expel” or the like.

2. *gp*, “basket” (RS 94.2406:27)

In the recently published Ugaritic tablet RS 94.2406, the word *gp* occurs together with *sp*, “bowl”. It may mean “basket” or the like in view of Akk. *gipû*, “date-basket” (CDA, p. 93b); “Dattelkorb” (AHw, p. 291a); “basket (for dates)” (CAD G, pp. 85b-86a) a loan from Sumerian *gi-pa*, also written *gi-pà* and *gi-pad*. Alternatively, see Arab. *guff*, “Hohles, Futteral, Eimer”⁷.

3. *hlt*, “(month-name)” (KTU 4.219:13; 4.220:4)

The name of this month (Ug. *yrh hlt*) also occurs elsewhere. In a pre-Sargonic text found at Mari, the month is called *itu ha-li*, on which M. Lambert comments: “Le nom de mois *ha-li* est certainement à identifier aux noms de mois: *ha-lf-it* attesté à Nuzi, *ha-lf-i* attesté à Lagash, *ha-lu₅-ut* attesté à Tell-Asmar”⁸. Unfortunately, no meaning can be proposed for it⁹.

4. *hlt*, “[an object]” (KTU 1.12. i 19)

There are several possible meanings for this word¹⁰, which occurs in the line *qh ksank h₂dgk hltk*, “Take your stool, your X¹¹ (and) your Y¹²” (KTU 1.12:17-19), addressed to the goddess Athirat in a context relating to childbirth. In spite of this context, the meaning of *hlt* remains uncertain and it may not necessarily denote a cloth or garment¹³. The following meanings have been suggested:

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- 6 See G. Takács, *Etymological Dictionary of Egyptian*, Vol. I, Leiden 1999, p. 79. For the verb see J. Winandy, “Le verbe *iy/iw*: unité morphologique et sémantique”, *Lingua Aegyptia* 1, 1991, pp. 357-387.
- 7 Cited by Tropper, KWU, p. 35, although no meaning is suggested.
- 8 M. Lambert, “Textes de Mari – dixhuitième campagne – 1969”, *Syria* 47, 1970, pp. 245-260 (p. 249, but with no reference to Ugaritic). Note that the Mari text also mentions the West Semitic PN *dan-il* (line 3).
- 9 For Ug. */h/* as corresponding to */h/* see J. Tropper, “Akkadisch *nuhhuu* und die Repräsentation des Phonems */h/* im Akkadischen”, *ZA* 85, 1995, pp. 58-66.
- 10 See previously LSU, p. 120.
- 11 C. Rabin, “Hittite Words in Hebrew”, *OrNS* 32, 1963, pp. 113-139 (p. 121 n. 7) suggests that Ug. *ksan* may mean “back-rest”, based on Arab. *kus*¹⁰⁰⁰, “buttocks”. It may simply be a form of Ug. *ksu*, “seat”.
- 12 Possibly *h₂dg* is “a magical appurtenance for “loosening” the birth-pangs, cf. Ethiopic *hdg*, “to leave, remit, loosen”, according to C. Rabin, “Hittite Words in Hebrew”, p. 121 n. 7. The meaning “birth-stool”, proposed by some scholars, has been considered as “unprovable” by F. Renfroe, *Arabic-Ugaritic Lexical Studies*, Münster 1992, pp. 117-118. It still remains a possibility.
- 13 “Non è tuttavia da escludere che si tratti di un oggetto imprecisato, e non di un tessile”, as noted by S. Ribichini – P. Xella, *La terminologia dei tessili nei testi di Ugarit*, Rome 1985, p. 37.

(a) “baby clothes” - This meaning is based on Heb. *ḥ^anillā*, “swaddling band” (plur. only; HALOT, p. 364) or Heb. *ḥittāl*, “bandage” (HALOT, p. 363)¹⁴. However, see the next paragraph.

(b) “flock of wool” - C. Rabin notes that Heb. *ḥittāl*, *ḥanullāh* and the verb *ḥatal* (passive) “are without cognate and are explained from the context as ‘swaddling band’, ‘to swaddle’”. The verses, however, demand a word for some soft flaky material rather than cloth”. He therefore suggests comparing these Hebrew words, as well as Ug. *ḥtl*, with Hitt. *ḥuttulli-*, “flock of wool”¹⁵.

(c) “a garment” - Alternatively, Ug. *ḥtl* may correspond to Akk. *ḥutūlu*, meaning unknown (CAD H, p. 264; AHW, p. 1562; CDA, p. 123) as S. Ribichini and P. Xella mention¹⁶, or even to OAss *ḥatlunum*, “an object” attached to a garment (CDA, p. 112a; cf. AHW, p. 336; CAD H, p. 150a).

(d) “basket” - Much less likely is the meaning “basket”, corresponding to Eg. *ḥatala*, “basketry” and Aram. *ḥwtl*, “palm-leaf basket for dates”¹⁷. See also Aram. *ḥtyl*, “string”, “mat” or “basket” (DNWSI, p. 413).

5. *kr*, “to be angry” (KTU 1.6 v 9)

The text in which this verb is used, as read by J. Tropper¹⁸, is as follows (KTU 1.6 v 8-10):

[m]k b šb ^c šnt	Behold, in the seventh year
w kr bn ilm mt	Mot, the son of Ilu, was angry
‘m aliyn b’l	with Mightiest Baal ¹⁹

Tropper compares Ug. *kr* with Syriac *kār* (*kwr*), “to grow hot, to grow angry, etc.” and suggests the translation: “Siehe da, im siebten Jahr, wurde der Sohn Els Môt wütend auf den mächtigen Ba^cal”²⁰. Some support for his proposal comes from Mehri *krh*, “to hate, dislike”²¹, Jibbāli *krh*, “to hate, to become angry”²² and Ḥarsūsi *krh*, “to hate”²³.

¹⁴ See, for example, A.S. Kapelrud, “Baal and the Devourers”, *Ugaritica VI*, Paris 1969, pp. 319-332, who refers to Heb. *ḥtl*, “to wrap (a baby)” in Ezek. 16:4 and comments: “The order to the maid to take with her *ḥtl* indicates that a birth is expected” (p. 322).

¹⁵ C. Rabin, “Hittite Words in Hebrew”, pp. 120-121. For Hitt. ^{15e}*ḥuttulli-* “strand of wool”, see now A. Kloekhorst, *Etymological Dictionary of the Hittite Inherited Lexicon*, Leiden 2008, pp. 350-351.

¹⁶ Ribichini – Xella, *La terminologia dei tessili*, p. 37 n. 22.

¹⁷ See J. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, Princeton 1994, p. 237 #327; he also cites Ug. *ḥtl* and Heb. *ḥtl*.

¹⁸ J. Tropper, “ ‘Im siebten Jahr wurde Mot wütend auf Baal’ . Zur Interpretation von KTU 1.6.V:8-10”, *SEL* 16, 1999, pp. 35-37. Instead of *rk*, as in KTU, Tropper reads *kr*, based on the Edinburgh Ras Shamra Project (ERSP).

¹⁹ Note the presence of enjambement here; there is no parallelism.

²⁰ Tropper, “ ‘Im siebten Jahr wurde Mot wütend auf Baal’ , p. 37. See also Tropper, UG, p. 647 and KWU, p. 62 (under *kwr*).

²¹ T.M. Johnstone, *Mehri Lexicon and English-Mehri Word-list*, London 1987, p. 213.

²² T.M. Johnstone, *Jibbāli Lexicon*, Oxford 1981, p. 134.

Further comparative material is to be found in Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) **kor*-, “be angry”²⁴. These comparisons seem to indicate that the verb in Ugaritic is *kr* rather than *kwr*.

6. *m^cbr*, “ford” (KTU 4.243:12)

The word occurs as part of a toponym (*gt m^cbr*) and has the syllabic spelling *ma-ba-ri* (Ugar. 5, 96:6-7, 19-20)²⁵. It has been compared to Arab. *ma^cbar*, “crossing-point, crossing, ford”²⁶. Other cognates are, of course, Heb. *m^cbr*, “ford” (HALOT, p. 609a), Punic *m^cbr*, “passage” (DNWSI, p. 667) as well as Akk. *nēberu(m)*, “crossing, ford” (cf. AHW, pp. 773-774; CDA, 248b; CAD N/2, pp. 145-147) and Akk. *nēbertu*, “crossing(-place)” (cf. AHW, p. 773b; CAD N/2, p. 145; CDA, p. 248b). All these cognates confirm the meaning of the word²⁷.

7. *m^cdb*, “allocation, portion” (KTU 4.573:1,2,3)

Instead of the meaning “fine, compensation”²⁸, I suggest that here *m^cdb* corresponds to Aramaic *‘bd*, “lot” (DNWSI, p. 827). This word occurs in the Sayings of Ahiqar 136: [ʔl tmʔs] zy b *‘bdk*, “[do not despise] what is in your lot”²⁹. Therefore, the Ugaritic expression *yn. m^cdbhm* may then mean “wine as their allocation” (KTU 4.573:1; cf. lines 2 and 3) but the context is too broken for any certainty³⁰.

8. *qdh*, “saucer” (KTU 5.23:19)

This term occurs (as *qdhm*) as the last word in what appears to be a scribal exercise, essentially a list. The meaning proposed here is based on Syr. *qdh* and *qh*ʔ, “saucer”³¹ and Arab. *qadah*, “drinking bowl, cup”³². It is certainly a plausible alternative to “fire-lighter, tow” (“briquet, étoupe”) as proposed by A. Caquot and E. Masson³³.

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- 23 T.M. Johnstone, *Harsūsi Lexicon and English-Harsūsi Word-list*, London / New York / Toronto 1977, p. 69.
- 24 Orel – Stolbova, HSED, pp. 323-324 §1482 **kor*- “be angry”.
- 25 See already DUL, p. 520 with further references, although neither Akk. *nēbertu* nor Akk. *nēberu* is mentioned there.
- 26 Tropper, KWU, p. 68.
- 27 This word was not included in Watson, LSU, p. 201.
- 28 As in DUL, p. 520.
- 29 Cf. DNWSI, p. 827. Similarly, “[Non disprezzare una piccola co]sa che è nella tua spettanza”, as translated by R. Contini, “Il testo aramaico di Elefantina”, in R. Contini - C. Grottanelli, *Il saggio Ahiqar*, Brescia 2005, pp. 113-139 (p. 129).
- 30 Another possibility is “gift”; cf. M. Dietrich – O. Loretz, in M. Dietrich, eds., *Orbis Ugariticus. Ausgewählte Beiträge von Manfred Dietrich und Oswald Loretz zu Fest- und Gedenkschriften anlässlich des 80. Geburtstages von Oswald Loretz*, Münster 2008, p. 60 (*‘db* = “Gabe”).
- 31 Cf. C. Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*, Hildesheim 1966, II, p. 646.
- 32 H. Wehr - J.M. Cowan, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 745a. See also Afro-Asiatic **ḳad*- “vessel” (Orel – Stolbova, HSED p. 334 §1534; and cf. p. 343 §1579).
- 33 A. Caquot – E. Masson, “Tablettes ougaritiques du Louvre”, *Semitica* 27, 1977, pp. 5-19 (p. 18); cf. also HALOT, p. 1067 and DUL, p. 693.

9. *rbt*, “kingship” (KTU 1.4 i 30)

The word *rbt* occurs in a long description of Ilu’s throne or palanquin in the phrase *kt il dt rbtm* and is usually equated with *rbbt*, “twenty thousand” (as in KTU 1.4 ii 43, cited below). This gives a translation such as “a giant frame of twenty thousand (shekels)”³⁴. However *rbtm* is not the same as *rbbtm*. In view of Akk. *rubûtu* “kingship” (CDA, p. 306), it seems better to posit the meaning “kingship” for Ug. *rbt* (here with enclitic *-m*). The line can then be translated:

kt il dt rbt-m a giant podium of kingship

Or more idiomatically: “a giant royal podium”³⁵. This proposal is supported by its use in a similar context, in Akkadian, in the Epic of Creation: *iddûšumma parak rubûtu*, “(the gods) set up for him (Marduk) a throne of kingship”³⁶, i.e. a royal throne.

10. *sknt*, “drinking cup” (KTU 1.4 i 42)

Usually, Ug. *sknt* is considered to mean “form” or “decoration”³⁷. It occurs in the first line of the following tricolon:

<i>šc. il. dqt. kamr</i>	A huge bowl ³⁸ whose handle ³⁹ is like Amurru
<i>sknt. khwt. yman</i>	a drinking cup like (one from) the country of Yaman
<i>dbh. rumm. lrbbt</i>	on which are wild oxen by the myriad

In view of its parallelism with *šc*, “bowl” here, *sknt* may denote a drinking vessel, as recently proposed by J. Tropper. According to Tropper: “Deutung unsicher: ‘Form, Gestalt’ od. ‘Kelch, Trinkgefäß’”⁴⁰. In support of his proposal one can mention Mari Akk. *šakku*, “a vessel” (CDA, p. 349b); “(designation of a cup)” (CAD Š/1, p. 177)⁴¹. Alternatively, one could compare Eg. *skn*, “e. Gerät (aus Metall)” (GHWb, p. 774b) or else Eg. *stj*, “Krug (bes. für Bier)” (GHWb, p. 783b), Eg. *stj*, “Krug” (Wb 4, p. 350)⁴², Eg. *styw*, “vases, jars” (DLE II, p. 96), Eg. *st.t*, “Krug für Bier” (Wb 4, p. 346.12), “jar for beer” (CDME, p. 255).

³⁴ N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, London / New York 2002², p. 91. For Ug. *kt* = Akk. *kittu*, “stand, support”, see Watson, LSU, pp. 91, 150.

³⁵ For the meaning of Ug. *kt* in the light of Akk. *kittu*, “stand, support”, see Watson, LSU, pp. 91, 150-151.

³⁶ *Enūma eliš* IV 1; cf. CAD R, p. 401b.

³⁷ DUL, 760; Watson, LSU, p. 104 §2.2.02.1 (#247).

³⁸ See W.G.E. Watson, “Some Akkadian and Hittite Equivalences”, *NABU* 2008/68.

³⁹ See W.G.E. Watson, “Akkadian Cognates to Some Ugaritic Words”, *SEL* 25, 2008, pp. 57-62 (p. 59 §8).

⁴⁰ Tropper, KWU, p. 110.

⁴¹ For Ug. */s/* as Akk. */š/* see Ug. *sprt* – Akk. *šipirtu*, “instruction” (Watson, LSU p. 106 § 2.2.02.1 (#258) and Ug. *ššrt* – Akk. *šisurru*, “gizzard” as proposed by W.G.E. Watson, “Examining the entrails”, *NABU* 2006/46.

⁴² All references to Wb (A. Erman – H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, 7 vols., Berlin 1926-1963) are courtesy of the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* website.

11. *št*, “a measure” (KTU 1.72:13 and *passim*)

The word has already been discussed⁴³ and has been explained as a measure of capacity corresponding to Akk. *sūtu*, “a capacity measure” (cf. AHw, p. 1064; CAD S, p. 420; CDA, p. 329b), with the variant spelling *sūtu* (AHw, p. 1064; CAD S, p. 420, CDA, p. 329b) as used in Nuzi and Boğazköy as well as in Ebla⁴⁴. In addition, note also Eg. *sr*, “e. Maß (für Früchte)”⁴⁵ or simply “a measure”⁴⁶. Yet another possibility is that it corresponds to Akk. *šutu*, which in the Nuzi texts may denote a metal drinking vessel (CDA, p. 391a)⁴⁷, used as a measure.

12. *tu*, “gate” (KTU 4.195:10)

The accepted meaning for this word is “guardroom” (DUL, p. 855) based on Heb. *tāʔ*, “guard chamber” (HALOT, p. 1672) and more remotely, Phoen. *tw*, “cella, shrine” (DNWSI, pp. 1204-1205). In addition, Akk. *tāʔum*, “Innenraum” (AHw, p. 1340b) or “inner room” (CDA, p. 402b) has also been cited, but that seems to be a ghostword⁴⁸. Instead, there may be a closer connection with Eg. *t3*, “Tor (im Tempel)” (Wb 5, p. 230.15), “Tor, Tür” (GHWb, p. 915)⁴⁹. If so, then Ug. *bt tu* would mean something like “house of the gate, gatehouse”. Essentially, “gatehouse” and “guardroom” are interchangeable, given that a city gate is likely to have an adjoining guardroom. The line from the text in question (which lists other types of *pth*, “door”) may then be translated: [L]n. *pthm. b. bt. tu*, “two doors in the gatehouse” (KTU 4.195:10).

Here, new meanings have been proposed for *aymr*, *gp*, *m^cdb*, *qdh*, *rbt* and *tu*. Further cognates and corroborative material have been supplied for previous suggestions for *hlt*, *kr*, *m^cbr*, *sknt* and *št*. The word *hlt* remains difficult. These twelve lexical items can be set out in the form of a table (see *infra*, end of the text).

Finally, some comments on two very obscure words in Ugaritic – *šrgzz* and *trgzz* – which seem to be proper names. The first, *šrgzz*, occurs in a text relating a story about snake-charming (KTU 1.107:8, 11)⁵⁰ and seems to be a personal name. The second, *trgzz*, is apparently the name of a mythical mountain, in parallel with another mountain called *trmg* (KTU 1.4 viii 2-3). Some scholars think that they are variants of the same name. This may be borne out by Akk. *šerhazu* (or *šer^a(z)zum*)⁵¹, which has a variant in

⁴³ In Watson, LSU, p. 71 §2.2.01.2 (#23).

⁴⁴ See DUL, p. 851 for details.

⁴⁵ GHWb, p. 777b; Wb 4, p. 325.11

⁴⁶ DLE II, p. 90.

⁴⁷ However, the meaning is uncertain (cf. CAD Š/3, p. 408a) and this term is not discussed by H. Schneider-Ludorff, “Metallgefäße aus Nuzi nach den schriftlichen Quellen”, in G. Wilhelm, ed., *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi 11/2. in Honor of David I. Owen on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday October 28, 2005* (SCCNH 18) Bethesda 2009, pp. 491-529.

⁴⁸ Entries for this word really belong to *daiš* – see CAD T, p. 301a. However, see F.M. Fales, “*uanu*: an Aramaic Loanword in Neo-Assyrian”, *NABU* 2003/103, who still accepts that Akk. *tāʔū* means “inner room”, following W. von Soden.

⁴⁹ See also Afro-Asiatic **ta'*-, “gate, house” (HSED, p. 493 §2342, with references to Chadic).

⁵⁰ See Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, pp. 391-394.

⁵¹ See AHw, p. 1216a (“ein Baum”); CDA, p. 367b (“a nut-tree”). Its origin is unknown.

the form of *turʾazu* (also as *tarʾazu*), “a nut tree” (CAD T, p. 485a)⁵². However, whether the Akkadian terms can explain these two Ugaritic names remains undecided.

Ugaritic word	meaning	Semitic cognates/loans			non-Semitic loan from	
		Akk.	Arabic	Other	Egypt.	Hitt.
<i>ay-</i>	to go		ʾyʾ		<i>ij</i>	
<i>gp</i>	basket	<i>gipû</i>	[<i>ǧuff</i>]			
<i>hlt</i>	month	<i>hali(t)</i> <i>halut</i>				
<i>hul</i> (a)	baby clothes			Hb. <i>ḥatullāh,</i> <i>hitûl</i>		
(b)	wool					<i>ḥuttulli-</i>
(c)	garment	<i>ḥatlunum</i> <i>ḥutûlu</i> <i>ḥatulu</i>				
(d)	basket			Aram. <i>ḥtyl, ḥwtl</i>	<i>ḥatala</i>	
<i>kr</i>	to be angry		OSA <i>krh</i>	Syr. <i>kār</i>		
<i>mʿbr</i>	ford	<i>nēberu</i> <i>nēbertu</i>	<i>maʿbar</i>	Hb., Pun. <i>mʿbr</i>		
<i>mʿdb</i>	allocation			Aram. <i>ʿdb</i>		
<i>qdh</i>	saucer		<i>qadah</i>	Syr. <i>qdh</i> (?)	[<i>qd</i>]	
<i>rbt</i>	kingship	<i>rubātu</i>				
<i>sknt</i>	cup	<i>šakku</i>			<i>skn, stj</i>	
<i>št</i>	measure	<i>s/šūtu,</i> <i>šutû</i>			<i>st</i>	
<i>tu</i>	Gate(house)				<i>t3</i>	

⁵² Or else “a type of nut”; see M. van de Mierop, “Wood in Old Babylonian Texts from Southern Babylonia”, *Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture* 6, 1992, pp. 155-161 (p. 159).