

## “The Lord of the Offspring”<sup>1</sup>

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The rituals from Emar are a basic source for the reconstruction of Syrian religion in the second half of the second millennium BC. They represent the major corpus of LBA cultic texts in Syria, and probably can throw some light on the tradition of neighbouring Ugarit at the sea coast. It is well known that Prof. Gregorio del Olmo Lete is one of the best experts on Syrian, and in particular Ugaritic religion. We hope thus that this modest contribution, far from furnishing new data to his broad knowledge, will honour and please him.

In the Emar texts, the term *bukru* appears in the *zukru* festival,<sup>2</sup> a periodical ritual celebrated every seven years which represents the major cultic festival and the most elaborated ritual of the cultic calendar of Emar.<sup>3</sup> The term always appears related to the god Dagan, the main god of the *zukru* festival, as one of his main epithets: <sup>4</sup>kur en *bu-ka-ri*. This epithet has been interpreted in two ways. On the one hand,

1. The abbreviations follow those of *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (RIA) 8 with the following additions: CC = M.E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*, Bethesda 1993. CCC = G. del Olmo Lete, *El continuum cultural cananeo*, Aula Orientalis-Supplementa 14, Sabadell 1996. CS 1 = W.W. Hallo - K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (eds.), *The Context of Scripture*. I, Leiden 1997. DLU = G. del Olmo Lete - J. Sanmartín, *Diccionario de la lengua ugarítica* 1, Aula Orientalis-Supplementa 7, Sabadell 1996. EHRC = M.W. Chavalas, (ed.), *Emar: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Town in the Late Bronze Age*, Bethesda 1996. FM 3 = D. Charpin - J.-M. Durand (eds.), *Florilegium marianum* III. *Recueil d'études à la mémoire de Marie-Thérèse Barrelet*. Mémoires de NABU 4, Paris 1997. GHR = V. Haas, *Geschichte der hethitischen Religion*, HdOr. 1/15, Leiden 1994. Hebat = M.-C. Tremouille, <sup>4</sup>Hebat. *Une divinité Syro-anatolienne*. Firenze 1997. HSS 42 = D.E. Fleming, *The installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar*, Harvard Semitic Studies 42, Atlanta 1992. LAPO 16 = J.-M. Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari* I, Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient 16, Paris 1997. MLC = G. del Olmo Lete, *Mitos y leyendas de Canaán según la tradición de Ugarit*, Madrid 1981. MROA 2/1, 2/2 = G. del Olmo Lete (ed.), *Mitología y Religión del Antiguo Oriente* II/1, II/2, Sabadell 1995/97. Muses = B.R. Foster, *Before the Muses. An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, Bethesda 1996. RAAM = H. Gese - M. Höfner - K. Rudolph, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer*, C.M. Schröder (ed.), *Die Religionen der Menschheit* 10,2, Stuttgart 1970. RAI 35 = M. de J. Ellis (ed.), *Nippur at the Centennial*, Philadelphia 1992. RC = G. del Olmo Lete, *La religión cananea según la liturgia de Ugarit*, Aula Orientalis-Supplementa 3, Sabadell 1992. TSBR = D. Arnaud, *Textes Syriens de l'Âge du Bronze Récent*, Aula Orientalis-Supplementa 1, Sabadell 1991.

2. Emar 6/3 373: 9 and *passim*; see also 374: 20' and the offering list 378: 1, 2.

3. Concerning the *zukru* festival, its structure and origin see D. Arnaud, *MROA* 2/2, pp. 15 f.; D.E. Fleming, *HSS* 42, pp. 229 f.; Id., *UF* 24 (1992) 61 f.; Id., *EHRC*, pp. 91 f.; W. Haas, *GHR*, pp. 571 f. See also a new translation based on a collation of the different manuscripts of the ritual in D.E. Fleming, *CS* 1, p. 431, with some important variations in relation to the *editio princeps* of D. Arnaud in *Emar* 6/3 373. D.E. Fleming announces a new book about this ritual text from Emar, see M. Dietrich, “Die Parhedra im Pantheon von Emar. Miscellanea Emariana (I)”, *UF* 29 (1997) 116 n. 2, with some new transliterations of the *zukru* festival based on Fleming's readings.

D. Arnaud related the term with Semitic *bqr* "cattle".<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, D.E. Fleming proposed a new interpretation of the epithet in relation to *bukru* which designates the firstborn. The term is well attested in the Ebla texts, in Akkadian, Ugaritic, Hebrew, Arabic and Ethiopic.<sup>5</sup> D.E. Fleming consistently translates *bukru* as "firstborn", following thus the West-Semitic tradition and also the usual Akkadian translation.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of that, and following CAD, it seems clear that Akkadian *bukru* has a broader meaning since in some cases the term is used to denote the "offspring" as a collective, without a clear reference to a firstborn. This is clear in the numerous attestations of the plural form of *bukru*, and specially clear in relation to the divine offspring, mainly in literary texts. W. von Soden prefers to interpret tentatively these attestations as "vollbürtige Kinder".<sup>7</sup> See the following attestations rendered by the dictionaries:

"Šin has no rivals among the *children* of Enlil"<sup>8</sup>

"They took counsel concerning the gods their *offspring*"<sup>9</sup>

"Was repeated to the gods their *offspring*"<sup>10</sup>

"From among the gods her *offspring*, who composed her assembly"<sup>11</sup>

According to this interpretation of the term as "son" or "offspring", we can reinterpret Dagan's epithet *bukru* as a reference to the sons, viz. the offspring of the god. Dagan would thus be the "Lord of the (legitimate) offspring". In this way, the role of Dagan as a Father of the pantheon of the Middle Euphrates valley would be reasserted. In the *zuku* festival, Dagan is also named "The Lord Creator"<sup>12</sup> and "The very father".<sup>13</sup> These features of god-father are well attested in Mari, too. A bilingual Sumerio-Akkadian text provides a picture of the Mariote pantheon. After enumerating the Sumerian triad *par excellence* (An, Enlil and Enki) and Nintur / Nin-ḫursag,<sup>14</sup> Dagan appears with all the attributes of a

4. See Emar 6/3, p. 357 l. 9 (cf. D.E. Fleming, *CS* 1, p. 432 who reconstructs in this line Dagan [<sup>d</sup>kur]). The interpretation of Arnaud has been followed by M.E. Cohen, *CC*, pp. 347 f.; V. Haas, *GHR*, pp. 571 f.; R. Zadok, "Notes on the West Semitic Material from Emar", *AION* 51 (1991) 116. For the attestations of this term in Ebla, Mari and Ugarit see *DLU*, p. 114 s.v. *bqr*. In the same line D. Arnaud interprets the epithet <sup>d</sup>da-gan ša qī-na-ti (*TSBR* 5 28-29; G. Beckman, *Texts from de Vicinity of Emar*, Padova 1996, text 70 1) as "Dagan du bétail / des troupeaux" (*TSBR*, p. 11, based on Arabic, old and modern South-Arabic), this interpretation is doubtful because of the specialized character of the term and its restricted area of influence (see arabic *qinya'* "sheep or goats, taken for oneself, gotten, or acquired, not for sale", E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Cambridge 1984, p. 2994; see also J.C. Biella, *Dictionary of Old South Arabic. Sabaean Dialect*, Chico 1982, p. 459 s.v. *qny*). The relation with the root /q-n-y/ "to create", is reasonable; see also a good alternative interpretation of this epithet by A. Tsukimoto (*WO* 28 [1998] 189) who reads the epithet *gi-na-ti* (*ginnātu* \*gnn "Garten"; see *DLU*, p. 148 s.v. *gn* (I); G. del Olmo Lete, *CCC*, pp. 103 f.).

5. See D.E. Fleming, *HSS* 42, p. 231, see also *DLU*, p. 107 s.v. *bkr*.

6. *AHW*, p. 137 s.v. *bukru* ("Erstgeborener").

7. *AHW*, p. 137 s.v. *bukru* 1b.

8. *CT* 15 5 ii 4: *Šin ina bukur Enlil šānini lā išu*. (Translation from *CAD* B, p. 309 s.v. *bukru* a).

9. *Ee* I 34: *amāti imtallikū aššum ilāni bukrīšum* (Translations from B.R. Foster, *Muses*, p. 354).

10. *Ee* I 56: *ana ilāni bukrīšunu uštannūni* (*Muses*, p. 355).

11. *Ee* I 147: *ina ilāni bukrīša šūt iškunūši puḫra* (*Muses*, p. 358).

12. Emar 6/3 373 88': <sup>d</sup>kur en qu-ū-ni; see also 379 5; 381 15; 382 16 (*qu-ni*). The alternative interpretation of this epithet as "lord of the lamentation" (E.J. Penttuc, "West Semitic Terms in Akkadian Texts from Emar", *JNES* 58 [1999] 95) based on the lengthening of the middle vowel as a trace of a II-weak root (/q-w/y-n/) is quite improbable. This lengthening is easily explicable as a participle with the shift *ā > ō* (*qūni*) well attested in Emar, see R. Zadok, *AION* 51 (1991) 136; see also the PN <sup>ab</sup>kur-ra-pī-i' (*TSBR* 17 38) and *ru-pī-d*da-gan (A. Tsukimoto, *ASJ* 14 [1992] 311 14).

13. Emar 6/3 373 195': <sup>d</sup>kur a-bu-ma; see also D.E. Fleming, *CS* 1, p. 436.

14. Probably Šalaš, the spouse of Dagan, as proposed by J.-M. Durand, *MROA* 2/1. p. 136; Id., "La divination par les oiseaux", *MARI* 8 (1997) 278; Id., *LAPU* 16, pp. 230 f. In Mari, Dagan goes with Nin-ḫursag in the so-called *šakkanakku* texts (*ARM* 19 192 and 383). During the Zimri-Lim period both divinities appear in a list of textile products (*ARM* 23 46 = C. Michel, "Copies cunéiformes d'ARMT XXIII-1", *MARI* 5 [1987] 506); and the texts document the existence of a Nin-ḫursag statue in Terqa (*ARM* 3 43; 13 116 = *LAPU* 16 93 and 94). The only male god who precedes Nin-ḫursag in the offering lists from the

sovereign and supreme deity, he is "Father of the great gods (...) Creator of Heaven and Earth".<sup>15</sup> These titles put Dagan on the same level as the great generator gods of the neighbouring pantheon; in the same text Dagan is named "Father begetter of the gods";<sup>16</sup> similar titles are born by deities of the Babylonian pantheon such as Anšar, Anum, Enlil or Marduk.<sup>17</sup> But the title of father of gods, referring to Dagan, is not exclusive of Mari; a curse from an unpublished OB inscription from Aleppo describes Dagan as "Father of the gods" (*a-bi dingir-ḫi-a*).<sup>18</sup> This attestation from Aleppo is significant because it comes from the major shrine of worship of the traditional son of Dagan, according to the Ugaritic documentation, i.e. the god Ba'al-Addu.<sup>19</sup> All these data make clear that Dagan was the major deity of the Euphrates valley and north of Syria, at least, since the Sargonic period.

This picture of Dagan as the "god-father", well attested in Mari and Emar, reinforce the equivalence proposed by G. del Olmo Lete between Dagan and El.<sup>20</sup> El shares many attributes with Dagan; he is the

archive of Asqudum is Dagan (see ARM 21 22 4-5; ARM 23 283 = B. Lafont, "Copies cunéiformes d'ARMT XXIII-3", *MARI* 5 [1987] 386: 10-11; ARM 23 318: 1-5; ARM 23 60: 1-5; ARM 23 320 = B. Lafont, *MARI* 5 [1987] 389; ARM 23 334: 1-5). See also the cry of Iūr-Mer in ARM 26/1 230: 7 *Dagan u Nin-ḫursag šimē* ("listen to Dagan and Nin-ḫursag"). The key for the reading of Nin-ḫursag could be in a letter which shows Dagan together with Šalaš (<sup>10</sup>*ša-la-aš*) and Hebat in a *pagrā'um*-ceremony celebrated in the palace of Aleppo, during the mourning (*idirtum*) for Sumu-epuš (A.2428: 3-4 = J.-M. Durand - M. Guichard, "Les rituels de Mari", *FM* 3 [1997] 35 n. 91). Hebat appears in this text as spouse of Addu, the local patron (M.-C. Trémouille, *Hebat*, p. 19), and Šalaš follows Dagan as his paredra. On the other hand, Nin-ḫursag is one of the well known traditional spouses of Enlil (D.O. Edzard, *WBMyth*, p. 104; T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, New Haven 1976, pp. 104 ff.; M. Krebernik, *RIA* 8, p. 508 § 4.2.4), specially during the third millennium when the identification between Dagan and Enlil as the sovereign gods of both pantheons had been established. In this line see the insertion of Dagan of Tutul between Enlil of Nippur and Nin-ḫursag of Keš in the Bāsetkī inscription of Narām-Sîn (D.R. Frayne, *RIME* 2 1.4.10. [p.114]: 29-36); and compare the sentence *inu Dagan dīn Narām-Sîn dannim idīnu* in *RIME* 2 1.4.26: ii 29- iii 1 (p. 133 f.) with the similar sentences with Enlil as a subject in the Sargon inscription *RIME* 2 1.1.6: 10-13 (p. 19) and with Ištar-Annunītum in the inscription of Narām-Sîn (*RIME* 2 1.4.6: ii 14'-16' [p.105]). Only these three deities "determine the verdicts": Enlil as the traditional executor deity, Ištar-Annunītum as a patron goddess of the Sargonic dynasty, and Dagan as the major god of the Middle Euphrates valley –the new conquered territory by the Sargonic kings– and because of his identification with Enlil.

15. a-a dingir gal-gal-e-ne / *abi ilāni rabūtīm*, an ki mu-un-dū / *bāni šamē u eršetīm* A.1258+: 9 and 10 (= D. Charpin, "Les malheurs d'un scribe ou de l'inutilité du sumérien loin de Nippur", *RAI* 35, p. 9 = M. Guichard, "Copie de la supplique bilingue suméro-akkadienne 'Les malheurs d'un scribe'", *FM* 3 [1997] 81 f. = J.-M. Durand, *LAPO* 16 22 = Id., *MROA* 2/1, pp. 146 f.).

16. A.1258+: 10: a-a ugu dingir-e-[ne] / *abum mu[wallid ilī]*. This text is specially interesting for the elucidation of the real character of Dagan. In spite of its Babylonian influences (cf. J.-M. Durand, *MROA* 2/1, p. 146) the text draws a profile of each deity according to the well known attributes of the different gods. After quoting Nunamnir at the beginning of the text (for the relation of this classical Enlilian epithet with Dagan in Mari see ARM 26/1, p. 475; D. Charpin, *RAI* 35, p. 20) the first deities are An and Enlil who appear related with the kingship; then appears Enki in relation to destiny; Šalaš as mother goddess, Šamaš related with justice and Addu and Ištar with power and war. Dagan thus appears in this text as a father-god, probably his main character.

17. K.L. Tallqvist, *AGE*, pp. 68 f. (*bān binūti, bānū ināni, bān kalā*).

18. D.E. Fleming, "Baal and Dagan in Ancient Syria", *ZA* 83 (1993) 88 n. 5.

19. The father-son relation between Dagan and Ba'al / Addu is well attested in the Ugaritic myths where Ba'al is named son / offspring of Dagan (*bn / ḫtk dgn*). Probably this relation was already established in the OB period (cf. J.-M. Durand, *MROA* 2/1, p. 174). Specially outstanding is the storage of the divine weapons of Addu of Aleppo in the Dagan temple in Terqa to celebrate the coronation of Zimrī-Līm and the battle between the Sea and Addu (cf. D. Charpin - J.-M. Durand, "'Fils de Sim'al': les origines tribales des rois de Mari", *RA* 80 [1986] 174; J.-M. Durand, "Le mythologème du combat entre le dieu de l'Orage et la Mer en Mésopotamie", *MARI* 7 [1993] 43 f., 52 f.; Id., *MROA* 2/1, pp. 174 and 288 ff.). Probably the role of Dagan in this ritual was the father and host who blessed the ceremony and legitimize it. See also H. Niehr, "Zur Frage der Filiation des Gottes Ba'al in Ugarit", *JNSL* 20 (1994) 165 ff.

20. G. del Olmo Lete, *MLC*, pp. 69 ff.; Id., *RC*, pp. 40 and 56; Id., *MROA* 2/2, p. 52, with previous literature. For a different point of view cf. the proposal of N. Wyatt ("The Relationship of the Deities Dagan and Hadad", *UF* 12 [1980] 375 ff.; Id., "The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm-god", *UF* 24 [1992] 408; Id., "Baal, Dagan, and Fred: a rejoinder", *UF* 24 [1992] 428 ff.) who attempts to demonstrate the identification between Dagan and Ba'al according to a common attribute as Storm-God of both deities

father of the first generation of deities, well attested in the title *bn il[m]*<sup>21</sup> and he holds the paternity of different gods,<sup>22</sup> viz. he is "The Creator of the creatures" (*bnw bnwt*)<sup>23</sup> and "The Creator of earth"<sup>24</sup> and he also possesses the title of king (*mlk*).

In the light of these facts we can assume that Dagan was put on the same level as the main (father-)gods of the neighbouring pantheons, with the special paternity of the Storm-God, who was to become one of the most powerful deities in the second half of the second millennium.<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, the picture of the different pantheons would look as follows (the gods rendered in italics are father / generator gods):

Sumero-Babylonian	Hurrian	Syrian-Euphratian-Semitic	Syrian-Coastal-Semitic
<i>An</i>	<i>An</i>		
Enlil -----	<i>Kumarbi</i> -----	<i>Dagan</i> -----	<i>El</i>
	Tešup -----	Addu-Ba'al -----	Haddu-Ba'al

The existence of two Semitic pantheons in Syria, the coastal one and the Euphratian one, is quite clear according to the data outlined above. Two different Father-gods and two Storm-gods who join in the Ugaritic texts. The pantheon of El, the main and traditional one on the coast, and the pantheon of Dagan, of Euphratic origin,<sup>26</sup> "filtered" in the El-coastal pantheon.

(based on the etymology of Dagan in relation to Arabic *dağana* "to be cloudy", "rainy") and the sharing of Šalaš as spouse between the two deities. Nevertheless, this proposal of etymology is far from certain, cf. in this line H. Gese, *RAAM*, p. 111 n. 112; J. Sanmartín, "Isoglosas morfológicas eblaitico-ugaríticas: la trampa lexicográfica", *AuOr* 9 (1991) [Fs. M. Civil], p. 186; J.F. Healey, "Dagon", K. van der Toorn - B. Becking - P.W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, Leiden 1995, p. 407; J.F. Healey, "Grain and Wine in Abundance. Blessing from the Ancient Near East", N. Wyatt - W.G.E. Watson - J.B. Lloyd (eds.), *Ugarit, religion and culture*, Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur 12, Münster 1996 [Fs. J.C.L. Gibson], p. 69.

21. G. del Olmo Lete, *RC* 37; Id., *MROA* 2/2 50; Id., *Mitos leyendas y rituales de los semitas occidentales*, Madrid 1998, p. 21.

22. See the quotations in D.E. Fleming, *ZA* 83 (1993) 88 n. 3.

23. G. del Olmo Lete, *RC*, p. 37 n. 12.

24. *KAI* 26A iii 18 'l qn 'ry; see also the Biblical epithet "Creator of Heaven and Earth", H. Pope - W. Röllig, *WBM* 1, p. 280; H. Gese, *RAAM*, pp. 113 ff.

25. The Storm-God had become the Lord (*Ba'al*) in the Middle Euphrates region during this period, cf. D.E. Fleming, *HSS* 42, pp. 216 ff.; Id., *ZA* 83 (1993) 90 ff.

26. The Euphratic origin of Dagan was never forgotten in Ugarit, see the two references of Dagan of Tuttul in the Ugaritic texts KTU<sup>2</sup> 1.24: 14 and 1.100: 15.