

KTU 1.82: Another Miscellaneous Incantation/Anti-Witchcraft Text against Snakebite in Ugaritic

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[A fresh treatment is offered of a text usually overlooked by ugaritologists mostly because of its fragmentary state of conservation. A reading of it as a compound miscellaneous text of six (originally eight) concatenated units is suggested, with snakebite as the main referent. Many terms, divine names and idiomatic expression link this text to others dealing with the same issue of the magic incantation practice. They are duly enhanced in order to reinforce the assumed point of view. An interesting aspect that emerges from this text is its aim at fighting the witchcraft activity presumed to be active in this kind of attacks.]

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1. Introduction

Composite or miscellaneous incantation texts are well known in both Mesopotamian¹ and Ugaritic² magical literature. In the case of KTU 1.82 the distribution of the text in different units, separated by empty spaces and ruled lines, leaves no doubt in this regard. Drawing on De Moor-Spronk's pioneering study (1984: 237-249: set of incantations; see also De Moor 1987:175-181: "incantation"), Caquot (1988:31; Caquot-De Tarragon 1989:61-62) stressed this point some time ago, qualifying the text as "un recueil de formules magiques". He even makes what seems to us to be a very significant assertion, namely that in this text, in contrast to KTU 1.100, "il ne semble pas y avoir continuité d'un paragraphe à l'autre, et il n'est pas même certain que dans un paragraphe il y a un enchaînement cohérent de phrases" (Caquot 1988:32; see also Dietrich-Loretz 1988: 336-339: "Sammeltafel", "(VI) in sich geschlossene Beschwörungen"³).

On the other hand, Virolleaud thought that "il s'agit, autant qu'on en puisse juger, d'un dialogue entre Ba^ʿal et ʿAnat, au lendemain de la victoire remportée par Ba^ʿal sur le dragon Tannin" (Virolleaud 1957:3).

1. Leaving aside the large text collections like *Maqlu* and *Šurpu*, for miscellaneous incantation texts see for instance Ambusch-Schwemer 2011:v-viii ("Contents"). For "compendium tablets" in pre-Sargonic period, even specifically against snakes, see Cunningham 1997:23.

2. For the syllabic texts cf. Nougayrol 1978:29f.; Arnaud 2007:77-88 (n° 21: "Collection d'incantations [RS 15.152 // 17.155]"); id., 2007:90-96 (n° 25-26: "Recueil de rituels et d'incantations (RS 25.456 B planche XII)", "Incantations et rituels médico-magiques (RS 94.2067, planche XIII); and perhaps also Arnaud 2007: 98s. (n° 27: "Fragment de rituel magique (RS 25.418) planche XIII). For the consonantic text cf. Del Olmo Lete 2001b: in press).

3. Only the translation of lin. 1-14, 38-43 is offered by these authors, basically following De Moor-Spronk's suggestions.

This mythological perspective was followed by other authors (see Van Zijl 1972:74-85; 1974:85-93; 1975:72-85; Day 1985:16, 106; particularly Clemens 2001:1187f. for a general survey of opinions)⁴.

Following my first provisional interpretation (Del Olmo Lete 1999/2004:373-379) I assume that this tablet contains a miscellaneous text comprising possibly eight⁵ magical incantation formulae against snake bites, a genre of magic literature that is well represented at Ugarit (Clemens 2001:699f.). But unlike texts such as KTU 1.169, also a miscellaneous text, KTU 1.82 does not belong to the category of anti-witchcraft literature, that is, texts to ward off the effects of insidiously induced snakebites (see Abusch-Schwemer 2011:399-424), but rather to the genre of magic prophylactic incantation formulae, much in the line of KTU 1.100 and 1.107 (see Clemens 2001:598, 614ff., 699f., 741ff., 1114 n. 124). As is well known, texts of this kind include many elements of prayer and entreaty to the deities invoked, but also elements of ritual and prescription to cure the harm and of oracle or words of those deities. These elements are usually separated by ruled lines (see Clemens 2001:219). The actual magical texts have a much more developed structure and maybe their prototype is to be found in the rituals against *zikurudū* witchcraft (see Abusch-Schwemer 2011:15f.) and in its parallel the “serpent-*namburbi*” from the 1st century (see Pientka-Hinz 2009:212).

Additional and very significant support for this suggestion is provided by the use of the same vocabulary and the same motifs as those present in the canonical Ugaritic texts of the genre. We will emphasize them in the translation, enhancing the lexical elements that are most important in this regard. For the readings we rely on a new autopsy of the text carried out in early March 2011. The new photos, taken on this occasion, are particularly useful in view of the poor state of the tablet, especially in its burnt black part, which has made its study particularly difficult in the past⁶.

In the following pages we present the new collation of the text along with its lay-out and a brief epigraphic and linguistic commentary, without spending much time on the different interpretations which, as we said above, are mainly the result of the different readings. Those I will try to stress and make clear.

2. Text and version⁷

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. [y] ^l m ^{ll} . ² hš.b ^l l[.bb] ^l t ² y.t ² ā ² n ² t ²
wygl.wynsk ⁶ [-] | [Let] crush Ba ^l lu [in/from my house ²] the ² ,
let go away and be poured out the.... ² |
| 2. [km.m]y.lārš[--]
[id]y.ālt.lāhš.
idy[. ²]ālt.in ly | [like wa]ter (?) to the ground;
Let me not then feel the curse,
let me not then have any curse on me! |
| 3. [hm.-]-t.b ^l l.h ^l z ^l .ršp b ^l n ^l km.
yr.klyth.wlbh | [If hits ²] the Lord of the arrow, Rašpu, your son,
fires his kidneys and heart, |

4. The first collation of this text was offered by Virolleaud (1957:3-7). Van Zijl's set of articles was never finished and dealt only with lin. 1-7. In general in this paper I will not point out the differences in reading and interpretation put forward by the different authors in each case. This is not very helpful in a text as damaged as this one and that encourages guesswork and undemonstrable hypotheses; I am also well aware of the hypothetic character of my own suggestions.

5. The damaged state of the heading on the reverse precludes any definite conclusion.

6. Neither Xella (TRU/1981) nor De Tarragon (CU/1980) take this text into consideration. Nor does Pardee in any of his comprehensive studies (TPM/1988, TR/2000, RCU/2002). It is so not clear to which textual genre these authors assign the tablet. See in this regard Bordreuil-Pardee ABD VI 1972:708 (“mixed” typ). For exhaustive information on this and other questions about this text see Clemens 2001:1361 (index), in particular p. 131 n. 623, 163 (“pararitual”, “incantation”), p. 140 (“mythico-magical/ritual”).

7. Vocalization of the text will not be provided. It is implied in the translation along with a sufficient knowledge of the Ugaritic morpho-syntax and should therefore be taken for granted in research publications. In the case of KTU 1.82 there is an added difficulty: the largely fragmentary state of the text makes fairly reliable vocalization impossible.

4. [---]^[t²].pk.bq²r.
tn.pk.bhlb.
ktgwln.šntk
5. [pk²]wšptk.ltššy.

hm.tq²rm.lmt.brtk
6. [---]^[h/y]p.ân.ârrnn[. ?]
ql.špš.hw.
b¹tnm.d¹gd.b¹l¹m¹
7. [---â]tm.pr¹tl.
lrišh.hmt¹.tmt.
- [make resound] your mouth in the mountains,
your mouth echo in the hills!
That indeed your teeth move/chatter without pause,
[your mouth] and your lips let not be oblivious!
- If your/his constitution is covered with the skin of death/
[let th]en me myself shout /gnawed by *Môt*,
the cry to/of *Šapšu*: “save life”!
The serpents with the coriander *Ba¹lu*,
[let him take/stop away] with the *pr¹tl*-plant,
from his head, belly (and) blood/menses!
-
8. [---]^[y²]dbr.îrmt.âlm.
qhny.šy.qhn¹y¹
9. [---]^[š²]ir.bkrm.
n¹tt.um.¹lt.bâby[. ?]
10. [---]^[---]lt.bk.
lk.lpny.yrk.b¹l[. -]
11. [---]^[---][---y]^[n²]t. q¹zrm.
tš²tšh.km.h¹b/š[. -]
12. [---][-----].
pr.btk.yg¹r[š-----]
13. [---][-----]y².
h¹r¹.hr.bnt.h[rn²-----]
14. [---][â]^[h¹d][---]^[m¹][-----].
ydk.âmš.y¹d¹[k-----]
- [Behold, I] proclaim as offering two rams,
take, please(/ from me), my two rams, take, please!
[Behold²], the flesh of two firstlings
of a shocked mother ascends unto my father,
[-----], ascends unto thee!
Walk in front of me, fire it, indeed, *Ba¹lu* [-],
[-----](?),
may she/they be cleared away like [gravel!],
[---]^[?][-----]
May the dust of your house (be?) evict(ed) [- -],
[---]^[?][-----]!
The entrails, the entrails of the creatures [, oh *Ḥoron²*],
[---]grasp (š), [---] erase (?) [---]
(may) your hand (be) strong, your hand [-----]!
-
15. [-----]bt²š[---]^[n²][---]^[k²][---].
wyhnp[-----]
16. [---]^[m/]yl¹m²š.b¹---]t/â/nk.
šmdm.špk[-----]
17. [---]^[š²]nt[---]t.bk kpt.
k[---]t².bg[t²-----]
18. [---]^[h¹][---]nt.š¹š.
bnt.h[-----]
19. [---][---][l]âhw.
âtm.pr[t¹l]
- [---] [-----]
and he will act perversely [-----].
[---] [---] on your
with an axe shed [-----]
[---] *Anatu*/the fountains [---] on you the palms
.....
[-----] the creatures of terror,
the creatures of [-----]
[---] [---] I will indeed give back life,
take/stop away with the *pr¹tl*-plant [---][-----].
-
20. [---]gnt.[---]p¹n [---]
bdh.aqšr[-----]
21. [---]^[k¹]pt¹h¹y.â[---]nt¹š/b.²
d²m.ml[-----]
22. [---]^[t¹k]ytmt.dlt.
t¹lk.[---].bm[-----]
23. [---][---]qp bn.h¹tt.
bn h¹tt[---][-----]
24. [---]p.km.dlt.
- [---]^[?] [---]
through it the sloughing [(serpent)--]
[---?] my gate [---]
[-----] [-----]
[-----] poor (she-)orphan
she shall go [---][-----]
[-----] the son of terror (?)
son of terror (?) [-----].
[-----] like² a poor woman²,

<i>tlk.km.p^ll</i> [-----]	she shall walk like [-----]
25.[---?] ^l <i>r^lkbt.thbt.</i>	[-----] [---] she will perish
<i>km.sq.sb^lr^l</i> [t---][-----]	like someone distressed of the clan (?) [-----]
26.[---] <i>kl.bkl.lpgm.</i>	[---] from everybody, from everybody, yes, the harm,
<i>pgm.l.b^lt²</i> [-----]	the harm from the house (?) [-----]
27.[---]. ^l <i>m^ldbm.</i>	[---] a great flood (?),
<i>lhrn.h^lr</i> [-----]	oh <i>Hôrānu</i> . <i>Hôr</i> [ānu ² ----]
28.[---][-----] ^l <i>h^lm.</i>	[---][-----]
<i>ql.hm</i> [-----]	the cry [-----]
29.[---][-----] ^l <i>m</i>	[---][-----]
<i>ātn.ā</i> [-----]	our wives [-----]
30.[---][-----]	[---][-----?]
[--] <i>ā</i> [-----]	[---][-----]

rev.

31.[-----][--] ^l <i>p^llnt.g²t²</i>	[-----] [---][----] [-----]
32.[-----] ^l <i>h^lmt.</i>	[---?] venom (?)
<i>lql.rp^li</i> [m-----]	at the cry of the <i>Rapa²ūma</i> [-----]
33.[-----] <i>llm.</i>	[-----] the night ghosts.
<i>ābl.mšr.pk.</i> [-----]	I shall remove the sobbing from your mouth [-----]
34.[-----] ^l <i>y²mt.</i>	[-----] a kettle(?)
<i>wth.tb^l</i> . [---][-----]	and may you live (in) good (health)[-----].
35.[-----] <i>b^ltnm wttb.</i>	[--- against] the male serpents and you will repeat /sit,
^l <i>l b^ltn^l.tr^lh^l</i> [-----]	against the female serpents, you shall [---] (?)
36.[-----] <i>t^lb^lh.āht.ppšr.</i>	[--- in] her dwelling (?) the sister of <i>Papašarru</i>
<i>wpps^lr^lt^l</i> . [-----]	namely <i>Papašarratu</i> [-----].
37.[---?] ^l <i>l^lk.drhm.</i>	[---?] of two wild goats (?)
<i>wātb.lntbtk.šm lt</i> [-----]	and I'll return to your path with a branch of [---].

38.[hm. ²] <i>tdrk.brh.ār^lš^l.</i>	[If] you tread on a creeping (creature) on the ground,
<i>lk pn^lh^l.yrk.b^l</i> [l]	run away in front of it (and) let <i>Ba^llu</i> fire it, indeed!
39.[w. ^l] ^l <i>l^lbtk.āp.lphrk</i>	[And for] your abode and also for your family
^l <i>nt tqm. nt.tqm</i>	may ^l <i>Anatu</i> stand up, ^l <i>Anatu</i> yes stand up.
40.[b ² p] ^l <i>h^lrk.ygršk.</i>	[From] your family may he expel (it) for you,
<i>qr.btk.ygršk</i>	(from) the walls of your house may he expel (it) for you.
41.[---] <i>bnt.š^lš.</i>	[---?] the creatures of terror,
<i>bnt.m^lm^l.</i>	the creatures of convulsion,
^l <i>bd.hrn.</i> [---]	the servants of <i>Hôrānu</i> [may expel for you?].
42.[---?]. <i>āgwyn. nk.</i>	[---?]-I am going to strongly cry to your intercessors:
<i>zz.wkmt.ilm.</i>	<i>zz wkmt</i> , the gods,
43.[---?] ^l <i>k^lšm.</i>	[---? who are] like trees,
<i>k^lšm.l ttn.</i>	like trees which do not/emit (sound),
<i>kābnm.l tiggm</i>	like stones which do not/murmur.

3. Epigraphic commentary (Fig. 1A-D)

Lin. 1-2: The initial /m/ is a mere guess: the tablet is erased at this point and the traces do not guarantee this reading⁸ (Fig. 2A-B); in this case, in the lack of epigraphic evidence we rely on contextual congruency (see later on: “2.- *Lexical and linguistic analysis*”). The following sign is correctly read /h/ (see ll. 36-37: *aht*, *drhm*). But what seems at first sight to be a misreading is the word /b^sl/: its first sign appears to be rather a /t/. The normal form of this sign appears in lin. 7 (*prtl*, *tm̄t*), while a clumsy /b/ like this is also seen in the 4th sign of lin. 4 (*bqr*), the *normal* sign form /b/ appearing in lin. 3 (*bn*, *lbh*) and 4 (*bhlb*), making allowances for a certain divergence in the scribal handwriting. The final /l/ is in turn a reconstruction, since we have only two vertical wedges (/s/), the presumed third one actually corresponding to the border of the following erasure. But the reconstruction seems reasonable. So the reading /b^sl/, in spite of the anomalies, can be taken as acceptable.

The final horizontal wedge of a /k/ or /r/ can still be seen (there is space for two signs at least in the erasure), which may be simply read /t/, followed by -y and three other signs. Those are read in Virolleaud’s collation as *tnn*, *Tunnu*. Once again the presumed contextual pre-conception guides the epigraphic transcription. In fact the signs could also be read as /tān/, /ttn/ and even /aan/ (Fig. 2c-d), taking into account the traces of wedges that the three signs show (see the sequence *ltn* in lin. 43 (Fig. 2E) and the writing *tnn* in KTU 1.3 III 40⁹). But to read the second one as a /n/ seems unjustified, since no trace of a triple wedge is to be seen. On the other hand, a fourth ending sign /t/ should not be ruled out. Let us leave the reading open for the moment.

The last complete word is unanimously read as *wynsk*, but the last sign appears to be a /w/, the two series of horizontal wedges being quite visible. But the contextual meaning (see later “4. *Lexical and linguistic analysis*”) argues in favour of the accepted reading. The trace of a separator after *wynsk* is very slight, while the attached line may correspond to a /t/ (?) followed by a wedge read as /^s/; of a /d/ there is no acceptable trace. However, once we accept the mythological reference, a parallel restoration, ^s[*tk*] (see KTU 1.3 III 41/44), the name of another primordial monster, could be suggested¹⁰.

The rest of the text does not present special difficulties. The reconstruction [*i*]^l[*d*]^ly (KTU) is based on the parallel presence of the lexeme later in the line.

Lin. 3-5a: The readings in these lines are quite clear. Nevertheless the reading *hz* is dubious, being based more on the presumed lexico-mythological context (*Rašpu* and the arrows¹¹) than on epigraphic evidence; the sign /z/ is partly erased. On the other hand, there seems to be no clear separator between *bn* and *km* and the first word could also be read as /bt/. The beginning of lin. 4 is also unclear and a reading *bqr* seems epigraphically preferable (see also lin. 40) to *bgr* (Virolleaud, KTU), a reading that the parallelism (/ *hlb*) nevertheless favours.

Lin. 5b-7: epigraphically the reading *brtk* (KTU) is clear and without doubt preferable to the proposed *brqk* (?). The reading *dgd* is also quite clear (the accepted *uḥd* is impossible), but the interpretation very difficult. Taking into consideration the possible parallel pair (*prtl*)¹², we suggest a

8. The sign /m/ is clearly shaped anywhere in the text. Here the traces point rather to a reading /s/, with a separator a little lower than usual.

9. For different writings of *tnn* see KTU 1.3 III 40 (Smith-Pitard 2009, CD) (Fig. 2G) and KTU 1.6 VI 51 (cf. CTA, pl. xii-xiii) (Fig. 2F). As a simple guess, either of the suggested readings could be accepted, both within the semantic field of “sight” (/ā-n-y/) and of mourning (/y-t-n/ <ql>/): For this value of /y-t-n/ see DUL 991 (/ytn g), 652, (*ntn*); see also *tānt*, “groaning” (DUL 855). On the meanings of “voice” for *tnn*, see DUL 873.

10. Also De Moor’s reconstruction ^s[*dt*], “menstruation” (Heb. ^s*iddāh*; see below lin. 7), is very pertinent.

11. See Fulco 1976:69; Van Zijl 1974:86-89.

12. For the possible Akkadian word (*piridulus*) see De Moor 19u84:240.

possible scribal mistake or exchange of /d/ for /b/ and to read *bḡd*, “with the coriander-plant”, or even a double mistake for *bḡb*, “on the back” (se. KTU 1.196:5: *ḥṯ ṯḥṯā lḡbk*). Notice in this connection that there are only two horizontal low wedges, not three. For contextual reasons I assume the aforementioned reading *bḡd*. For the reading *āṯm prṯl* see lin. 19¹³.

Lin. 8-14: The preserved script shows no problems, leaving aside the numerous erasures, and the grammatical sense of the clauses is reasonably clear. As in lin. 1, the traces and the congruence of the subject speaking (1 p. sg.¹⁴) would suggest the reading [*i*]dbr: “[behold,] I proclaim: my offering are two rams”. In lin. 11 the reading]*t*.*qzrm*, when amplified (200%), is clear for epigraphic reasons (the traces in the tablet after /t/ cannot be taken as a separator, which appears after the *ṯ*/). Notice, however, the crack in the tablet that prevents a clear image of the sign /q/, while the first traces, usually read *ṯ*n/, are less than sure. There is an erasure that deforms a possible sign /n/. On the other hand, the reading *šzrm* seems quite improbable, epigraphically and semantically, at least as far as the sign /š/ is concerned.

Lin. 15-19: The autopsy and the new contrasted photos, adequately amplified, allow a different reading of the beginning of lin. 15. In contrast, the reading *ḥrp/ḥkp* in lin. 18 and the reading of the rest of the line are mere guesses. Provisionally we assume the first reading and interpretation. For the reading and interpretation of *āṯm prṯl* compare lin. 7.

Lin. 20-30: This section is of special interest because the burned surface does not allow either an easy autopsy or the possibility of clear photography. The photo obtained by a contrast method is especially helpful and allows us to put forward several divergent and more convincing readings. But the general meaning remains beyond our reach.

The reading]*lmnt* supposes that the state of the tablet was different from the present one: the first character seen today is a clear /g/, the presumed /m/ is a reconstruction, and there is no trace of the /l/.

There is no point in insisting on the new readings since the fragmentary state of the text does not allow any semantic validation. An attentive look at the photos provided may help us to decide between them.

Lin. 31-37: The first point to mention regarding this section of the text is that traces of a ruled line between lines 34/35 are very slight; those between 35/36 are clear indeed, but much feebler than those of the lines that separate sections on the obverse and in this face upon line 38. The aim of such ruled lines and the corresponding enhancing of lin. 35 are no apparent¹⁵. For me lin. 31-37 forms a textual unit. This means that the reverse of the tablet most probably had four sections like the obverse, taking into account the upper part of the text that is lost.

Lin. 38-43: the reading variants put forward in this section are not very significant. In lin. 38 *ārṣ* seems to be a scribal correction of a previous *ārṣ* (the two heads of the last sign are still visible). And the /h/ of *pnḥ* is far from clear: the third/middle horizontal wedge is missing. Maybe a /k/ was intended at first but it remained incomplete (see lin. 10 *lpny*). And of the end of lin. 41 there is no trace visible after *ḥrn* and before the /k/ in the edge; at this point there is a crack in the tablet. As for the last sign of *kmṯ*, it should be taken as a variant of /t/ rather than as a sign for /ḡ/.

4. Lexical and linguistic analysis

A highly significant aspect of the text which may help to establish its literary nature is the multiple lexical relationship it shows with other incantation (magical anti-witchcraft) texts of the Ugaritic corpus

13. Mere guess, but see lin. 19; Heb./Aram./Syr, **āṯm*, “to stop up” (HALOT 38).

14. For this vocalization of the 1 p. sg. of the D conjugation see Tropper UG 545.

15. The presence of the predicate *ṯḥ* could suggest that lin. 35 represents an *inter lineas* inserted scribal notation (“...and you shall repeat”) in the style of KTU 1.4 V 42f.

“against snake bites” (KTU 1.100, 1.107, 1.169, RS 92.2014) as well as its abundant contextual and literary connection with the Akkadian texts of the same genre.

Lin. 1-2: To begin with, the opening syntagm which connects a DN with the predicate /mḥṣ/ is not only found here and in KTU 1.5 I 1 (see KTU 1.2 IV 9)¹⁶, as pointed out already by Virolleaud (1957:3), but is also common in the Akkadian incantation texts (*maḥāṣu(m)*: AHW 580 1/j; CAD M/1 75f.; Finkel 1999:226f; Abusch 2002:189)¹⁷. And as a consequence of this divine intervention the enemy is dissolved and carried away like water. The motif is not infrequent there either (see KTU 1.100: 68f.; for “water” as a purifying means in those cases in Mesopotamia see Pientka-Hintz 2009:213; Clemens 2001:734 n. 630; Cunningham 1997:32). In this regard the new anti-witchcraft text against snake bites RS 92.2014:12 offers the most significant parallel to our text: *yšp[k].k mm.arṣ*, “May (the foul-mouthed sorcerers) be poured out like water on the earth (see Del Olmo Lete 2011: forthcoming). On the other hand the subject/object here is a mere guess.

This section introduces a concept, *ālt*, basic in this genre, which has its parallel in Akk. *mamītu* in its double meaning of “oath” and “curse” (AHw 599f.; CAD M/1 189ff.; Abusch-Schwemer 2011:56f., 391 and *passim*; see Van Zijl 1972:79-82 for a pertinent discussion of the semantics of this word in the HB). An exclamatory spell very close to our text can be found in the *Ušburruda Heilmittel Rituals* A₂ obv. 1:49’: *mamītu mamītu ullalki mamītu*, “curse, curse, I have purified you, curse!” (see Abusch-Schwemer 2011:171/188 and *passim*¹⁸). In turn, for /hš/, “to feel” see DUL 374f.; Caquot 1988:33.

Lin. 3-5a: It seems easier to see in *b^ll ḥz* a title of *Rašpu*, according to an old proposal by Virolleaud and Gordon (see DUL 382 and above n. 10 for the different suggestions). The god *Ba^llu* has already

16. In her turn *Anatu* asserts *ištbm tnn* (/ *mḥšt b^ln*). (KTU 1.3 III 40-42), the *b^ln* equated with *ltn* (the monster slain by *Ba^llu*) through the common epithet *šlyt d šb^tt rāšm*. In any case the mythological motive and situation are the same, as is the semantics of /mḥṣ/ and /mḥṣ/.

17. Like in the case of the reading *nt* instead of *nn* in the heading of KTU 1.96 (see Del Olmo Lete 1992:7-16), Virolleaud’s reading of the first signs as [x]mḥṣ.b^ll has determined the mythological bias that has guided the interpretation of the text as a whole. But this reading is far from certain as the autopsy and the photo of the tablet certify.

Had the reading /t/ for /b/ be accepted, as suggested above, *Ba^llu* would disappear from the scene in this line. Also /h/ could be read as a /i/. Conveniently magnified, the first and third horizontal wedges are quite clear, the middle one is also to be seen, although then the wedge would appear somehow compressed, what seems correspond to the way the scribe employs to incise those multi-headed vertical wedges. The resulting text [m^ll.iṣ.ḥṣ] is indeed incomprehensible, so that the alternative reading *iṣ{.}iṣṣ* could be suggested (starting from the dictum “when a Semitic text is not understood it is because badly read”), assuming an erroneously placed separator, a scribal error certified elsewhere in Ugaritic, an error that maybe is also present in the reading *mḥṣ*, since traces of a possible separator before /ḥ/ are visible. This reading may seem strange at the first sight, but it is lexically, morphologically and thematically plainly guaranteed. A nominal base /ṣ-ṣ-ṣ/ is witnessed in Ugaritic and precisely in our text (lin. 18/41) in the context of snake attack (see later). It would be understood as a 1 p.(?) Dt pconj. (or verbal noun) with the corresponding regressive assimilation of /t/ to /ṭ/ in contact with /ṣ/. We have here a reduced form /ṣ-ṣ-ṣ/ of a reduplicate /ṣ-ṣ-ṣ-ṣ/ one, derived from a simple base /ṣ-V-ṣ/. This is well attested in Arabic (*ṣ-w-ṣ/ṣ-y-ṣ) with the basic meaning “to disperse” (AEL 1745, the meaning “to measure, collect”, is denominative) as a result of an sudden attack “from the sides” and the concomitant “frightening” (according to the *Qāmus* and the *Obāb*, as recorded by Lane: “to frighten”); in passive-reflexive forms *taṣawwa^ṣa*, *inṣā^ṣa*, “to be scattered, to go away quickly” (“suddenly”, Sp. “estampida”), *taṣayya^ṣa*, “to become in a state of commotion” > *aṣya^ṣ-*, “to be in an state of commotion, of exceeding commotion”. The reduplicate forms usually reflect better the basic meaning (see Del Olmo Lete, 2010:79): *ṣa^ṣṣa^ṣa*, “dispenser” and “remuer”, *taṣa^ṣṣa^ṣa*, “être remué, agité” (see DAF 1339; De Moor-Spronk 1984:244). Consequently we can assume the meaning “fright, dread, terror” (< “attack”) for *ṣṣ* and that of “to be commotioned by fright, terror” for *yṣṣ*. That reflect a basic category in the anti-witchcraft Akkadian literature where the man’s dread opens frequently its incantations. See in this regard AHW 1238; Van Dijk 1969:540; Von Soden 1974:341f., lin. 4, 13-15; Abusch 1999:87f., 96, 101, 119; Stol 2000:112 n. 17; Schwemer 2007:171-176 (“Angst”); Pientka-Hintz 2009:213: “Die Panik ... wird in Beschwörungen thematisiert”; Abusch 2002:32, 39, 42, 44, 61: Diš NA *gi-na-a šu-dur*, “if a man is constantly frightened ...”; Abusch-Schwemer 2011:405: *lumnu ḥayyattu ... ušḥi ina zumriya*, “remove from my body evil, terror”.

18. Other texts that mention the “curse” in the witchcraft context, its origin and effects, can be seen in Abusch-Van der Toorn 1999:120, 136; Abusch 2002:18). In general “on removing sorcery” (*ina pišerti kišpi*) see Schwemer 2007:32f.

supposedly made his appearance in lin. 1. The syntax becomes more fluid. Another interpretation, though less apparent, would be to find here the locative expression “from above”. See in this regard *b^lrpt*, “from the clouds” (KTU 1.4 V 8: DUL 201) and also *bšmm*, “from the sky” (KTU 1.107:9). The astral setting (“before Šamaš, the Ursa Major” and the Zodiac constellations, e.g. Abusch-Schwemer 2011:383ff, 390ff, 405etc.) of those texts is manifest. Moreover the imperfective form *yr* of /yry/ is also witnessed in KTU 1.23:38 (see Tropper 653ff.; De Moor-Spronk 1984:239; Caquot 1988:34, 43), here perhaps in a subordinate (conditional) clause¹⁹. For its part, the predicate /tn/ comes from the well-known base /tn(y)/, “to repeat” > “echo” (DUL 924f.). For its mythological use see KTU 1.4 VII 30: *ytny b^ll š[at] šp^hth*, “Ba^llu repeated the emission of his lips” (De Moor-Spronk 1984:239). In this case the semantics of *p* offers a metonymic change from cause (“mouth”) to effect (“words”) (see Virolleaud 1957:3: Akk. *pā epēšu*, “parler”).

The forms *tgwln/tššy* are certain epigraphically, though not lexicographically. The parallel pair *šnt/špt* places the meaning in the semantic field of word delivery. In this connexion *tgwl* can be parsed as 3 p. pl. (rather than as 2 p. sg.) D of /gl/, Ar. /g(w)l/ (AEL 488f.), whose basic seme seems to indicate “to move round, about”, hence > “to dance” > “to rejoice” > “to shout in exultation” (see Heb. /gyl/, HALOT 189; DUL 297). Also *tššy* can be analysed as 3 p. pl. Š of /nšy/ (CS., Heb. Hi. “to make forget”; De Moor-Spronk 1984:239; Caquot 1988:35)²⁰. The general sense is an invitation not to cease praying and to ask for divine protection against the attack the (mother’s?) house has suffered.

Lin. 5b-7: The reading *brt* implies a lexeme that is new in Ugaritic (see Clemens 2001:154 n. 42), but well known in other Semitic languages, above all in Hebrew (*b^erīt*, “covenant, contract”)²¹. Without religious and social implications in Ugarit, we can assume a more general meaning of “configuration, general state” or maybe “fate”, according to the basic seme of /bry/ (see Arabic. *barā*, “to form, fashion by cutting”; AEL 197f.).

In this regard the reference to *gb/tmnt* in the incantations KTU 1.169:5-6 and in RS 92.2014:14-15 is quite appealing (see Del Olmo Lete 2011a: forthcoming; 2011b: forthcoming). In this context we should interpret the predicate *qrm*, “to cover”, said basically of the human body and its skin²².

To the mention of *mt* makes *pendant* to the cry addressed to Šapšu: *hw*, “save life!” (De Moor-Spronk 1984:240), which has a splendid reconstructed parallel in the anti-witchcraft text from Boğazköi *ana*

19. The interpretation of *yr* as “rain” (see Van Zijl 1974:89) also offers the possibility of a new approach to the text, but it is not easy to justify syntactically.

20. For a thorough discussion of the different possibilities of analyzing *tššy* within the NWS linguistic horizon, see Van Zijl 1975:74-81.

21. In this regard, texts like Is 18:15/18, *kāratnū b^erīt ?et-māwet/w^ekuppar b^erītkem ?et-māwet* are surprising, although the parallelism should not be pushed too far as the context is completely different; see De Moor-Spronk 1984:240 caveat.

22. Akk. *qarāmu* (CAD Q 127: “to overlay”); AHw 902: “übertziehen it”); Aram. *qrm*, “to form a film, crust”, *q^erāmā*, “membrane, thin skin” (DJBA 1043); Heb. *qrm*, “to cover” (HALOT 1144). Cf. in this connection the impressive scene in Ez 37:6-8, with the skin (*šōr*) ‘covereing’ the dry bones. On its turn Ar. *qarama* offers also the meaning “to gnaw”, said of the skin as well (see AEL 1952, 2987); that could be a semantic alternative. - On the other hand, if the reading *grm* is favored, it could be interpreted according to the Arabic semantics “to pay, to become obligatory upon him”, hence > D? “to make one to pay, commit him to” (AEL 2252, quoting *Lisānu-l-^larab*); maybe corresponding to Akk. (*h*)*arāmu*, “auf Tafel in Hülle schreiben” (AHw 323); *erēmu*, “to place a tablet in a clay case” (CAD AII 229f.). In this case Ug. *brt* could be understood as “divination, omen”, Akk. *bārūtu*, what supposes the diviner’s consultation in daily life affairs, well certified at Ugarit: “if yor forecast secretly commits /scribes (you) to *Mōtu*/death...”. See in this connection Malbran-Labat/Roche 2007:63-104: “le roi d’Ougarit écrit au roi de Sidon à propos d’une *bārūtu* pour son bateau qui n’est pas bonne” (p. 92). But also Akk. (*h*)*arāmu* has the more normal meaning “to stretch, place (a membrane) over an object” (CAD AII 229), “bedecken” (AHw 323) like *qarāmu*, so that he proposed vesion or similar could be maintained. In this connection the quotation offered by CAD (AII 229) is interesting: [*ri?*]-*du-ut mūtu i-te-rim panija*, “Death’s persecution has covered my face”.

pišerti kispi, 115: *šu limūt-ma anāku lubluṭ*, “let him (the sorcerer) die, but let me live!” (Abusch-Schwemer 2001:35)²³.

Lin. 8-14: For the offering of lambs see Cavigneaux 1999:259²⁴. In keeping with the analysis of *yr* in lin. 3 and 38, it seems preferable to parse it as a verbal form (imp.) of the base /yry/ and the *k* as an emphatic particle in postposition, although this postpositive use of *k* is not well attested outside the pronominal series (see Tropper 2000:747, 809, 835f.)²⁵. According to the myth, *Ba^llu* is the infallible “firer” (KTU 1.4 VII 40f.), although a reference also to *Ba^llu*’s rain (*yr-k*; see n. 17) would not be out of order here, given the apparent sense of the following line and the motif of water in the texts mentioned above (see later “Text lay out” on lin. 38). In *lṣny* the startled “mother” may be speaking, in the presence of the serpents, appealing to the protective deity to guide her steps (see below lin. 38).

The intervention of the deity is fashioned as a direct magical intervention blandishing a “plant” (cf. lin. 19), like in 92.2014:1-2 (Del Olmo Lete 2011a: forthcoming; RIA 213; Schwemer 2007:196ff.; Abusch-Schwemer 2011:33, 113, 119, 234ff., 412f., etc. *passim*). The syntactic and semantic structure is also much the same as in KTU 1.114:29-31 (De Moor-Spronk 1984:240), also a magical prescription after a mythical narrative, here just an allusion; the enumeration of the body parts affected is also common to both texts (see Watson 1990:265ff.; Del Olmo Lete 1999/2004:387)²⁶. Note the intentional alliteration²⁷ with unusual vocabulary. This enumeration of physiological parts, as it is easy to see, is a linguistic component found systematically in the Akkadian magic and anti-witchcraft texts (see e.g. Cavigneaux 1999:259: “heart/bowels”; Finkel 1999:232²⁸; Schwemer 2007:177; Abusch-Schwemer 2011:405; for the Akkadian of Ugarit see Clemens 2001:1030 n. 1905).

For the meaning of *tštšḥ* see Ar. *saḥā*, “to scrape off, clear away” said of “clay, soil, or mud” (AEL 1322).

Lin. 15-19: Among the unconnected syntagms in this section the pair *bnt š^lš/bnt ḥ[r/k]p* should be pointed out as a characterization of the creatures acting here. Above all, *š^lš* is definitive. However, *ḥrp* (KTU, De Moor-Spronk) or *ḥkp* (Virolleaud) are mere guesses. Provisionally we assume the first reading and interpretation. For the reading and interpretation of *ātm prtl* compare lin. 7.

Lin. 20-30: The clear *āqšr* takes us back to KTU 1.100:12 and par. The word is taken to be an allophone of *š^lqšr*, said only of snakes: *nḥš š^lqšr* (DUL 94, 177), the exact equivalent of the Ar. form *ʿaqšar-*. This *hapax*, like the one in the next section, applied only to snakes, serves to confirm the characterization of the text as an incantation against snake bites. The rest of the lexemes refer to a domestic setting (*ytmṭ*, [?] *dlt*, *att*) with the added reference to the liquid element (*mdbm*) as a possible

23. The reading *ḥr bṭnm*, epigraphically unlikely, has been held to reproduce Heb. *ḥur peten* (Is 11:8) ever since Virolleaud’s collation. But Heb. *ḥur* corresponds to Ug. *ḥr*, “hole, cave”, while the meaning of Ug. *ḥr*, “intestines” is lexicographically clear; cf. DUL 367, 402. The danger is supposed to come out of the snake’s “entrails”. See lin. 41 below for their characterization as *bnt m^lm^l* (De Moor-Spronk 1984:244).

24. In *qḥny* we see the double emphatic morpheme *-n-y* as an adverbial complement; cf. Gordon 1965:37, 102; Aartun 1974/1:44ff., 61ff., rather than considering it a case of *scriptio plena* for */-nī:nā/*. Tropper 2000:220, 227, 295 sees here a pronominal (“mich, uns beide”), but p. 628: “Bestimmung unsicher” (also De Moor-Spronk 1984:241). The use of a *dativum commodi*, so close to the Spanish morpho-syntax: “tómame esto” > “taken that from/for me, please”, could be another possibility (see Caquot 1988:37: “prends pour nous deux”).

25. Caquot’s version (“Que Ba’al tire sur toi”) is highly feasible, but then a general arrangement of the personal referents would be needed (“on parle à l’ennemi”).

26. For *ḥmt* see CS /ḥmš/ (Heb. *ḥomeš*, “belly”; HALOT 331, with the many Semitic correspondences); for *ṭmt* see Arab. *ṭamt*, “blood”, “flux” (said chiefly of menstruation, “menses”, AEL 1878); Aram. *ṭmš*, “to dip, submerge, soak” (Sokoloff DJBA 507f.), Syr. /ṭmš/, “to dip, immerse”, *ṭmš²*, “dipping, immersion” (Brockelmann-Sokoloff LS 537f.). See De Moor-Spronk 1984:241.

27. On this phenomenon in magic literature see Ford 1998:244.

28. “Take ‘snake stone’, crush (it), (and) heap (it) on the head of the bitten man ... its venom will come out for the man”.

remedy and the presence of the god *Horānu* as the divine patron (see also KTU 1.100:61-69). As for the syntagm *bn h̄tt* we can accept Caquot-De Tarragon's suggestion "terreur" (Caquot-De Tarragon 1988:40; 1989:89 n. 199: Akk. *hattu*, Heb. *hat*), synonymous so to *bnt šš* (lin. 18, 41). Also for *pgm* see Aram. /*pgm*/, "to damage" (DJBA 886; Caquot 1988:40). For the meaning of *thbt* (lin. 25) see Huehnergard 2008:391²⁹.

Lin. 31-37: Very little sense can be obtained from these lines, although epigraphically the reading is quite clear. Nevertheless they offer interesting hints about the genre of the text with the probable mention of the "venom" (*hmt*) and above all with the explicit mention of the snakes (*b̄tnm*, *b̄tn̄t*). In this regard motifs like "life" (*wtū*), "dread, pain" (*m̄sr*), "cry to the gods" (*lql.rpī[m]*), may be also those of offering (*dr̄hm*) and the path (to the god's temple) (*ntbtk*; see KTU 1.119:33) are very significant (for the semantics of *llm* see De Moor-Spronk 1984:247). In this regard, the possible connection between the wording *b̄tnm w̄ttb* and *n̄hš ... w̄ȳtb* (KTU 1.100:6-7 and par.) and the consequent determination of the semantics of /*tb*/ in this text remain uncertain. But above all the presence of PNN in this almost last section of the text brings it near to RS 92.2014. We will come back to this issue later on.

Lin. 38-43: Like the mention of *āqšr* in lin. 20, that of *br̄h*, the qualification of the mythical serpent *lt̄n b̄tn br̄h* in Ugaritic (see KTU 1.5 I 1; De Moor-Spronk 1984:248; Caquot 1988:42), aids to put the text into context. In addition, the mention of the *bd hr̄n* reminds us of KTU 1.169:9-10 (*ygr̄š hr̄n h̄br̄m w̄ lm d̄tm*) (Del Olmo Lete 2011b: forthcoming). For this assumed meaning of /*qm l*/ "to be at the side of someone" > "to support" cf. Ar. *qāma la*, "to rise in honor of s.o." (DMWA⁴ 934) and also the equivalent Ugaritic syntagm *qm l*, "to stand at the side of" (KTU 1.2 I 21), in a more locative sense. On the other hand the presence of snakes and scorpions in houses and walls is a frequent motif in Akkadian texts of this genre: *qr.btk.ygr̄šk* (lin. 12: *pr.btk.ygr̄šk*; cf. Mayer 1976:510-515: "Rituals against *zikurudū* sorceries that have appeared in a man's house").

For the meaning of *bnt šš/m̄m̄* cf. *supra* n. 15. The interpretation of *m̄m̄* as "convulsion" partially rests on a parallelism and partially on etymology: cf. Ar. *m̄m̄t*, "confusion, jumble, uproar" (see DMWA⁴ 1073f.).

In the oracular structure of this section we can see here worded the commitment of the speaking deity to intervene with, "to turn himself to" (*aḡwy-n*), the supplicant's patron gods: /*ḡwy*/ (see Aram. *wy*, "to bend"); or better yet, taking into account the following lines, the commitment of "strongly (-*n* emph.) crying to (them)" (see Aram. *wy*, Pa "to cry, shout"; cf. DJBA 847: *wy wy wlyk² d²šgh byh*, "he cried on and on, and there was no one who paid attention to him", Yom 77^a). In this kind of text the divine intercession "cry" (*ql*; see above) appears constantly in the Akkadian as well as in the Ugaritic texts. Actually this is the main theme of the canonical text KTU 1.100: *Šapšu* is asked to convey the "cry" (*ql*) to twelve different deities, who prove unable to answer in a satisfactory way. See also KTU 1.16 V10ff., where no god is able to answer (*in b ilm nyh*) *Ilu*'s request to heal *Kirta*. Here the supplicant's "replier" deities (*nk*: "your repliers or intercessors") are in the first place *zz wkm̄t*, a double deity who is also invoked in other texts of this genre (KTU 1.100:36; 1.127:41)³⁰. Those deities are described rather ambiguously (negative/positive) in their hieratic affectation that echoes the famous mythical motif of 1.3 III 22-24: *rgm š w lh̄št abn* (already Virolleaud 1957:7). For this elliptical use of (*l̄ttn* (*g/ql*)) (cf. KTU 1.16 I 4; DUL 652, 991f.). On the motif see later.

29. I thank Prof. Tropper for calling my attention to this reference.

30. This double deity appears as active only in this context. She can be invoked as representative of the "pantheon of prayer and magic" (see Del Olmo Lete 1999/2004:63-66). In this connexion, this binomial god appears also in the letany/prayer KTU 1.123:5, just after the supreme triada *Ilu/Dagānu/Bašlu*, what enhances his significance in the quoted pantheon and in its function.

5. Text lay-out

In terms of form, this multiple incantation has an almost stichometric structure, as is the case in other Ugaritic compositions (see Veldhuis 1999:35-48), with an even distribution of *bicola* and *tricola*. Found in the royal palace, it is clear proof of urban society's concern with snakebites. It is also possible that KTU 1.107 is an incantation/prescription against snake bite (see Del Olmo Lete 2012a: in press), but its condition is so poor that no further definition is possible. It could be considered a Ugaritic composition in the wake of the Mesopotamian incantation/ritual text against *zikurudû* witchcraft, which uses small rodents as a vehicle for its evil-doing: *zikurudâ ša šēri šikki arrabi pirurûti*, “(Lebens)abschneidung mit Hilfe einer Schlange, mit Hilfe eines Mungos, mit Hilfe eines *arrabu*-Maus, mit Hilfe eines *pirurûtu*-Maus ...” (Maqlu IV 61; Schwemer 2007: 63, 155; Abusch-Schwemer 2011:15f.).

As in the case of the Akkadian texts, the main sections of this series of miscellaneous texts are indicated by a ruled line separating them (see Clemens 2001:219 and 742ff. for the thematic sequence). In turn, each section is formed by several sub-sections that are homogeneous in length and stichometric structure (protasis/apodosis, *tricola*, *bicola*), sometimes introduced by the conditional/temporal functor /*hm*/ (Akk. *šumma*), as far as it is possible to verify its presence in the preserved text (see Caquot 1988:35 for lin. 5b; see also in this regard KTU 1.127).

1.- The first section (lin. 1-7) is formed by three subsections (the conjunction /*hm*/ is only extant in the second) which show a thematic progression.

According to the general opinion that we accept here (with the remarks mentioned above) the first part (lin. 1-2) appears to open, with a generic reference to a mythological motif (the victory of *Ba'lu* over the serpentine monster *Tunnānu/Lôtānu* (?) (KTU 1.5 I 1-3); see *Anatu*'s victory over the same primordial animal; see also KTU 1.114). This intervention is the best way to avert the impending danger and its effects: the (divine) curse as a punishment for the culpability induced by an act of witchcraft, presumably in this case the presence of a reptile in the house³¹. Mythological introductions and allusions of this kind to anti-witchcraft series are frequent in the Mesopotamian literature of the genre.

The second sub-section (lin. 3-5a) seems to allude to a divinely caused illness affecting a member of the household (protasis bicolon). Prayer to the gods is proposed as the way to avert this calamity (two *bicola*, apodosis); another possibility would be to look for remedies (cf. KTU 1.114:22ff.; see later for the use of plants to this effect). The use of prayer and plant remedies is also common in the Akkadian literature of this kind.

The third sub-section (lin. 5b-7) supposes that the situation has become desperate (colon, protasis). Divine intervention by the deities charged with this task, the gods *Šapšu* and *Ba'lu*, is called for (apodosis; bicolon+tricolon). The text strongly recalls the language of KTU 1.100:2ff., the canonical texts against snakebites (*ql l špš...*; *b'l ...*; see also Abusch-Schwemer 412: *murū libbika ana Šamaš taqabbi*: “tell Šamaš your distress”), while the reference to the “serpents” (*bṭm/nḥš*) makes plain the situation and context of the incantation, which in the first two sub-sections remained concealed.

For the mention of *hw* in lin. 6 see lin. 19 (*aḥw*). For *ql špš* see KTU 1.100:1 as already pointed out. From this text and from KTU 1.107, the special intervention of the deity *Šapšu* in incantations against snake bite is evident³². Assuming the haplography of [*l*]špš, the expression is remarkably similar to: *qrit lšpš ... ql bl...* (see KTU 1.100:2). In fact, we need not assume this omission or a coalescence if we parse *arrn* as a factitive form with a double accusative or else we analyze *ql špš* as a syntagm in the construct state: “the cry for help of/to *Šapšu*”, as a prototype of resorting to magic which KTU 1.100 develops (cf.

31. See Abusch-Schwemer 2011:15: “another feature particularly associated with *zikurudû* is the interpretation of rodents as evil-portending messages of witchcraft sent by the witch”. Also Abusch 1999:83-121.

32. See Clemens 2001:918 n. 1392 for the general intervention of this deity in human affairs.

the Hebrew construction *w^ešidqātēkā y^rrannēnū*, Ps. 145, 7). Also relevant is the rendering of Gilg. XII:199(27) proposed by Tournay-Shaffer 1994:258: “le cri vers le dieu Soleil s’emparetrait de toi”³³. It is a “cry” for assistance addressed to the divine judge Šapšu in times of difficulty.

2.- The next section (8-14), which can be taken as a concomitant ritual (offering) and prayer addressed to the patron deities, asks for their favour against the impending danger³⁴. We have already pointed out this alternation of incantation formulas and ritual actions. The subject seems to be, as in the first section, the “mother” who takes care of her “house”, as formerly she prayed for her “son”. She is qualified as a “startled mother”. “My father” is the god summoned by the faithful person who utters the incantation, as is immediately made clear: “onto you”³⁵. Possibly we have here (“in front of me”) a reference to the startled “mother”, in the presence of the serpents, appealing to the protective deity to guide her steps (cf. below, lin. 38, for a similar clause). A mother resorting to her (divine) father has already been exemplified for us by KTU 1.100:1-2. And to resort to *Ba^llu* it was necessary “to go up” (*ly*) to his temple (cf. KTU 1.119:33), as supported by archaeology. She asks for the help of *Ba^llu* to open up the way so that he may deliver her from a danger connected with “dust”, since dust is supposed to be able to convey witchcraft. In this connexion the relationship of snakes with dust in the spells and anti-witchcraft incantations of this genre is well known (see Schwemer 2007:136). As mentioned above, the possibility of translating *yr-k*, “(with) your rain” should be taken into account: *Ba^llu* with his rain may clear up the scene (for water as a means of resolution see KTU 1.100:66-69).

The restoration *h[rn]* is too easy and fits too well, and so seems suspect. Nevertheless it may be a direct reference to KTU 1.100:61: *bhrn... bnrw*, and to line 41 below, where these *bnt* are supposed to be eliminated by the *bd hrn*³⁶. But other reconstructions are possible (e.g. *h[r hr bnt ...]*). If we assume this, *Ba^llu* (or *Horānu*) would be asked to take hold of the “creatures” and lin. 12-14 would be a continuation of the previous prayer; or more probably a continuation of the divine oracle/answer (or just instruction), asking the faithful mother to clean the dust in her house in order to chase out the “creature” (lin. 12; see for similar clause later on lin. 40: *qr btk ygršk*). The last lin. 12-14 seem to be a prayer of the faithful or an injunction of *Ba^llu*, asking for the definitive intervention of the god of serpents, *Horānu*, to take hold³⁷ of them and carry them away (?). But the text is too fragmentary to be able to decide whether these lines continue the previous section or shape a separate subunit.

3.- From such a fragmentary text (lin. 15-19) very few sure deductions can be drawn. At the beginning there is a description of an evil-doer with effects in the forehead (*qn*) and palms of the hand (*kpt*) of the addressee or praying person. This evil-doer is characterized as *bnt š^s/bnt hrp* (see lin. 41), which refers us back to lin. 13 and to the certified context of snake attack. In response to that a life insurance, so central in this kind of texts and here alluded to already in lin. 6, is coupled with the commitment to carry out the apotropaic magical action already presupposed in lin. 7.

4.- In this last section of the obverse of the tablet (lin. 20-30) the terminology (*āqšr*) again places the text in the context of a snake bite incantation. Its first part seems to deal, as always in those incantations, with the pernicious effects of a dangerous enemy on the household and the supplicant. The intervention of

33. Sum. *iutū* (i-^dUtu) is the equivalent to Akk. *tazzimtu*; cf. *AHW*, p. 408. The Assyrian version reads *tazzimtu eršetim* here.

34. The text has to be understood as an offering made to the divinity. The whole incantation has the construction of an invocation directed to her.

35. Also the later *btk* could refer to the mention of the mother’s house as the house of her god also, in order to make the prayer more cogent.

36. According to the text quoted, this god takes hold of the serpents and is able to “donate” them as a nuptial dowry. In our text, however, he functions as the “god of the serpents”, not as their exorcist, a role which seems instead to belong to *Ba^llu*. For the presence and function of these deities in this genre of texts see Clemens 2001:738, 1103 n. 68, 1105, n. 79.

37. For this similar use of *yd* see KTU 1.10:13: *yd ilm ... š^s mid*; this recalls the *yad ḥazzāqāh* of the God of the Exodus and of his messenger who also played with snakes and took hold of them (Ex 4:2ff.).

Horānu, the great god of serpents, is called on, maybe through the devastating and purifying power of water (*mdbm*) in his hands (see KTU 1.100:66-69; above lin. 1-2, 10).

5 (7).- The reverse of the tablet is badly damaged and the two possible first sections have disappeared. So the first extant section of the reverse, namely the fifth (lin. 31-37) in the series, would actually be the seventh section of the original tablet. It is also very fragmentary but offers some new interesting data that fit quite well into the assumed composition frame. The speaker seems to be the invoked deity (*Šapšu?*); so the text is an oracle/response, quite normal in this sort of texts. But now “the cry of the *Rapa’ūma* (*ql rpīm*)” is added, which recalls “the cry of/to *Šapšu*” (lin. 6) and introduces the call to the ancestors and the corresponding cult of the dead into the list of divine protecting entities against this danger. They can take away the “anguish” (*mšr*) and fear (see above) it causes and procure “life” (see Caquot 1988:41: “et elle vivra heureuse”). But above all, it is now clear who the attacking enemies are the serpents (*bīnm/bīnt*). Against them a water ritual (*mīnt*) may also be applied in this case.

But another surprising novelty of this text is the mention of a person, *Papašarratu*, *Parašarru*’s sister (see Caquot 1988:41), who may be the addressee of this anti-witchcraft incantation/spell³⁸. That is no longer surprising after the appearance of the text RS 92.2014, a incantation of this kind recorded for the benefit of the Visir *Urtēnu* (see Del Olmo Lete 2011a: forthcoming). The section closes with what seems to be the promise of an animal offering (*drīm*) and pilgrimage to the temple of the addressed god, going its own path (*ntbt*, see KTU 1.119:33) and holding in one’s hand the proper apotropaic plant (see KTU 1.100:64-66; RS 92.2014:1-2).

6 (8).- The last section (lin. 38-43) is perhaps the best preserved and deals with the extreme situation of having trodden upon a serpent (*brh*) characterized again as of the *bnt šš* (cf. lin. 41). In this case only the direct divine intervention (*‘Anatu*’s, *Horānu*’s servants’) can be of help and can expel the animal, while the suppliant is invited/ordered to leave the house and its walls (?) to escape/remove the danger/attack. However the meaning of *qr btk ygršk* is not clear; perhaps the person concerned is to be excluded from his vicinity for fear that the curse might affect him (see lin. 2; Virolleaud 1957:6).

In turn, the invoked deity is ready to intervene beside other deities who may also aid in this case, making a rather cryptic reference to a well-known motif in the Baalic myth (cf. KTU 1.3 III 22-23: *rgm šš w lhšt abn*), although here it is not clear if it refers to the deities who are not usually engaged in interventions of this kind and may even be unable to carry them out, the silent deities, or on the contrary, the deities that hold the voice of nature, namely, the power of magic³⁹; there may also be a reference to the apotropaic instruments used to remove the danger.

The text ends with the general intervention of the gods: *Ba’lu*, *‘Anatu*, *Horānu* and their servants, implying furthermore the entourage of the supreme god *Ilu* in a fight against a dangerous enemy who acquires so cosmic relevance. In this regard the reading of the Baalic myth in lin. 1 has a contextual justification, and even a structural one.

6. Conclusion

We have made frequent use of Akkadian anti-witchcraft literature, mainly texts dealing with serpents and similar animals, in order to elucidate KTU 1.82. They represent an extremely abundant corpus that was copied and imitated all over the Ancient Near East, as witnessed by the presence of texts in Boğazköi, Emar and Ugarit itself. It is impossible (and irresponsible) to ignore this evidence, which ascertains at the same time the strong significance of the Akkadian script and culture at Ugarit. We can be fairly sure that

38. The possibility that this is a West Semitic form of Bab. *Papsukkal*, the vizier of the Underworld, is less likely in my opinion; cf. De Moor-Spronk 1984:248.

39. See on the deities *zz wkmī* above n. 27.

the scribes and magicians from Ugarit followed the steps of their elder Akkadian brothers, and may even have translated, or in some cases accommodated, the texts of those scribes into their own religious framework. On the other hand the small number of Ugaritic texts and their extremely poor state of preservation makes this use unavoidable. Linguistically Ugaritic may have been an Arab-type language (see Del Olmo Lete 2012b), but culturally Ugarit, via his master Hatti, was under Mesopotamian influence (see for a contrary view Pardee 2008:19-20; but see Del Olmo Lete 2010:51).

However neither the outer prototypes nor the inner parallels are sufficient to warrant a trustworthy translation of a text as fragmentary as this one. Consequently the present attempt has been to try to provide the general contextual setting into which the text may become comprehensible rather than to present a literal translation based on its lexis and grammar.

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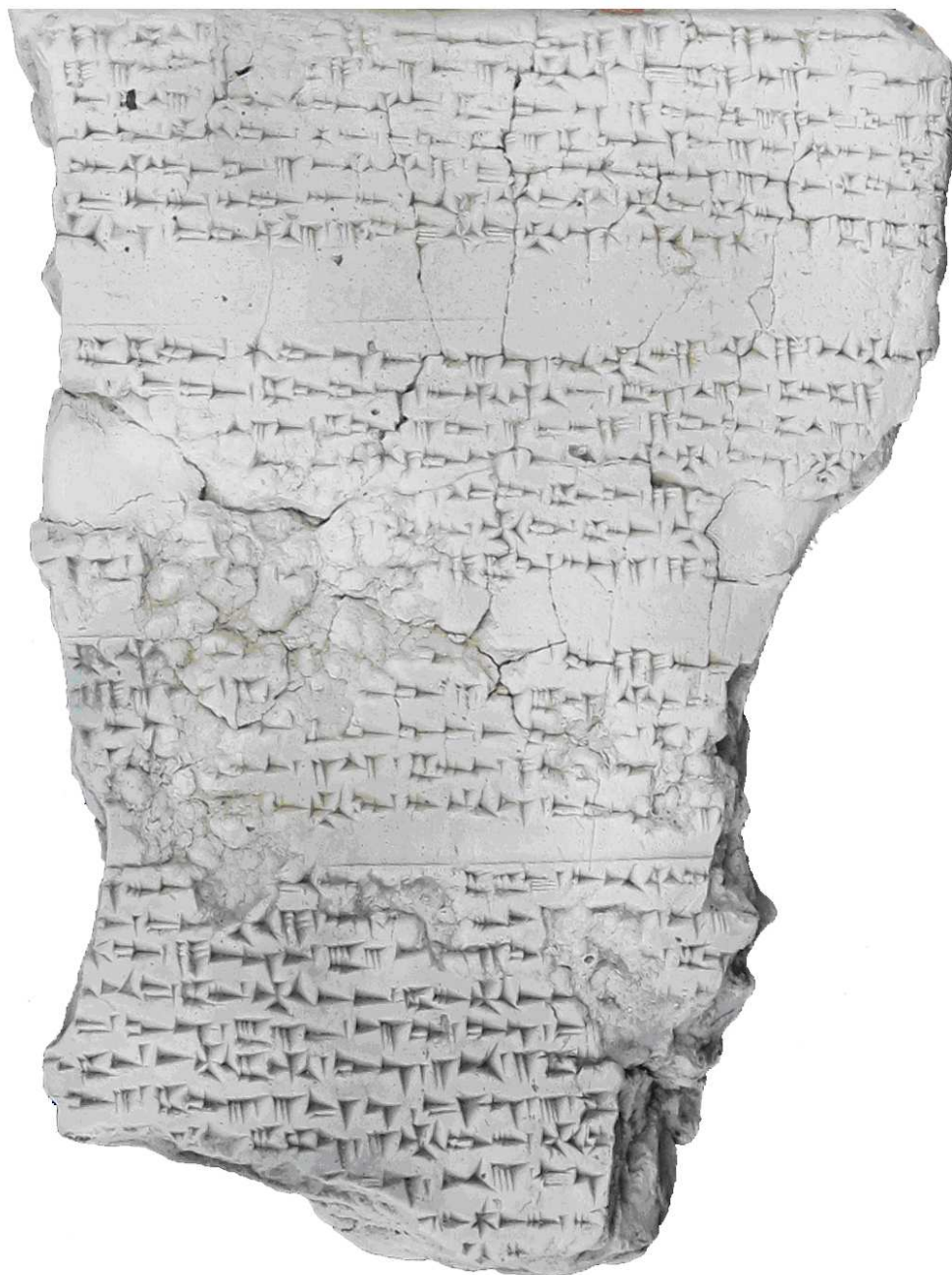


Fig. 1A. KTU 1.82 obv. (photo D. ed-Dibbo, 03-03-2011)

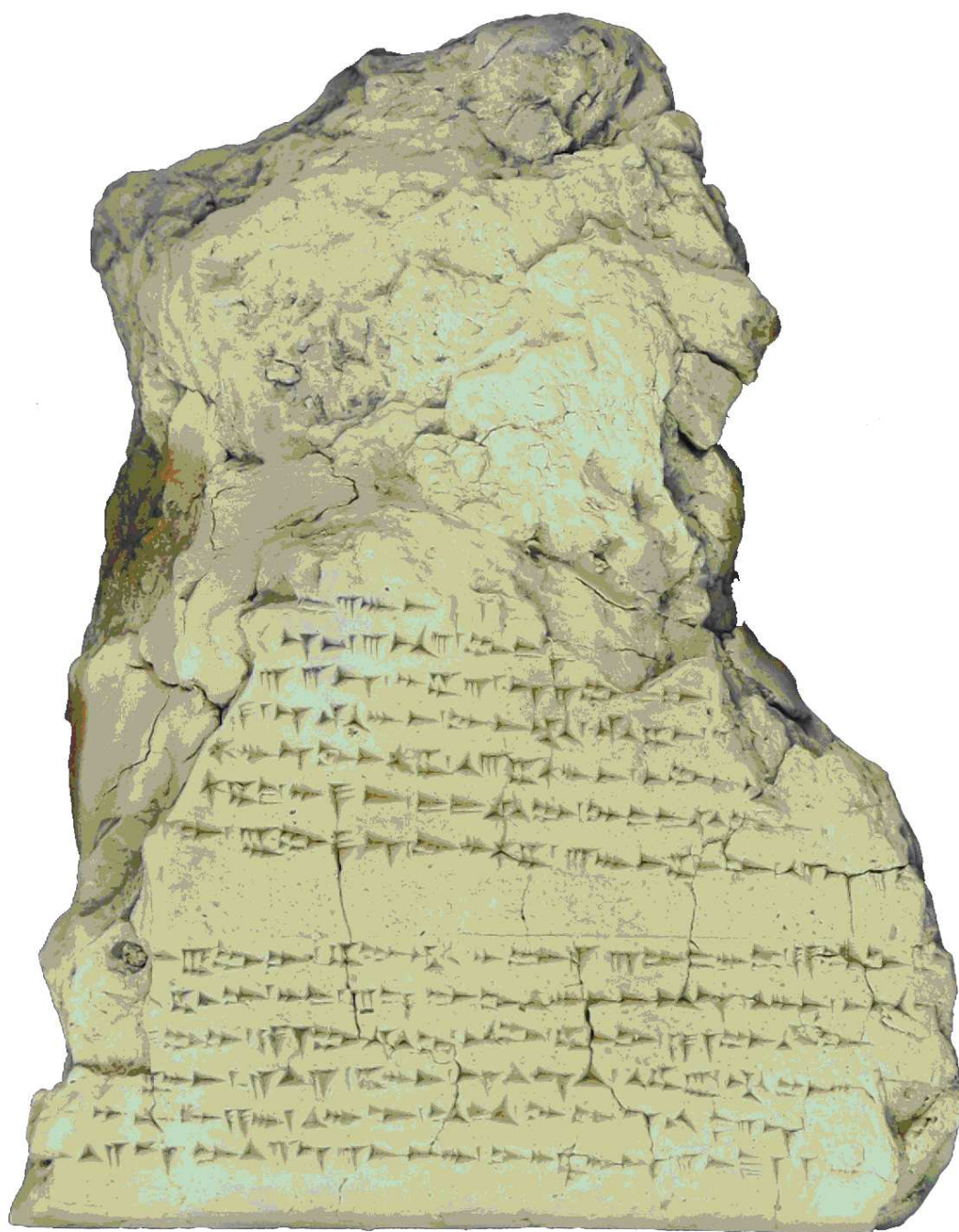


FIG. 1B. KTU 1.82 rev. (photo D. ed-Dibbo, 03-03-2011)

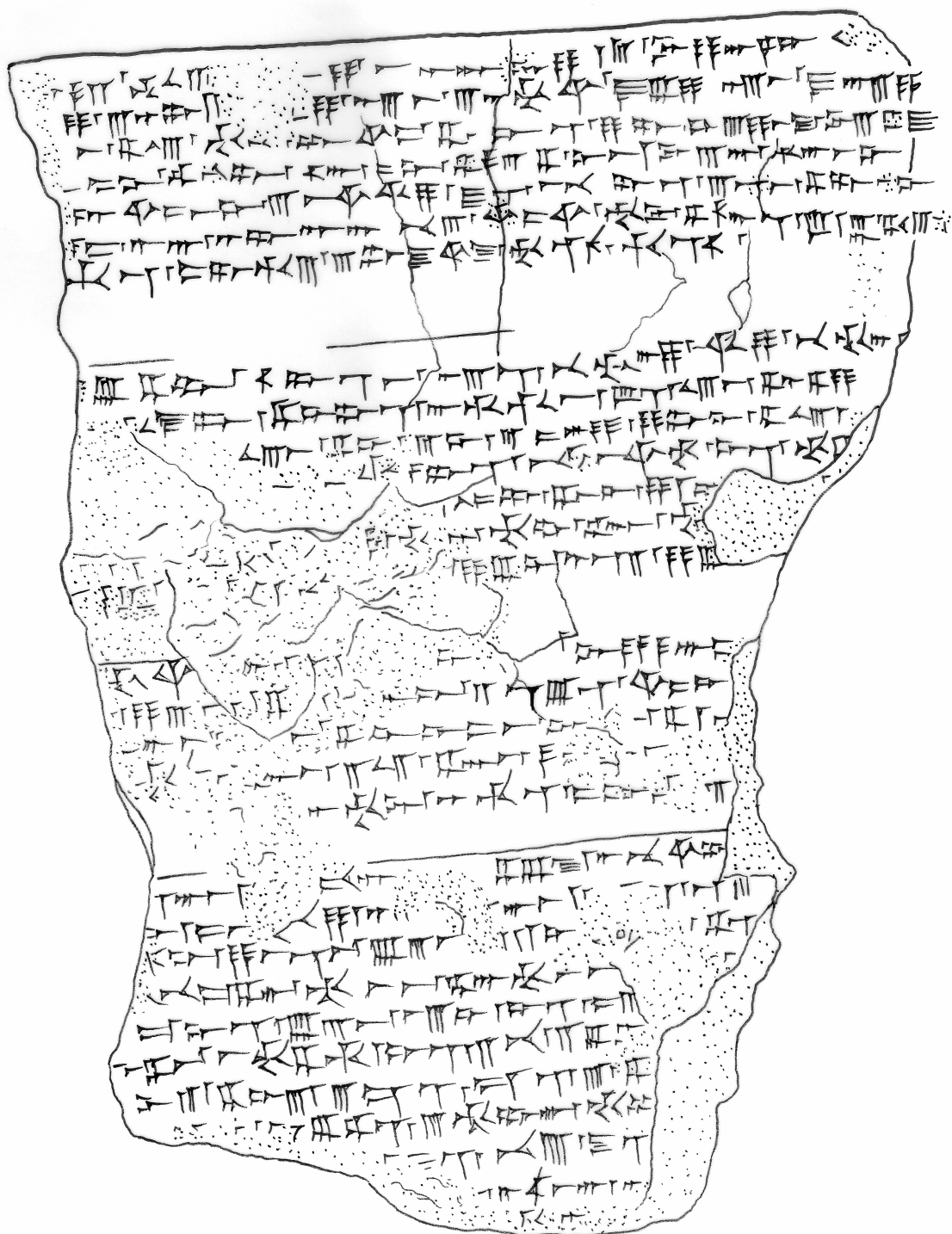


FIG. 1C. KTU 1.82 obv. (handcopy by Lluís Feliu)

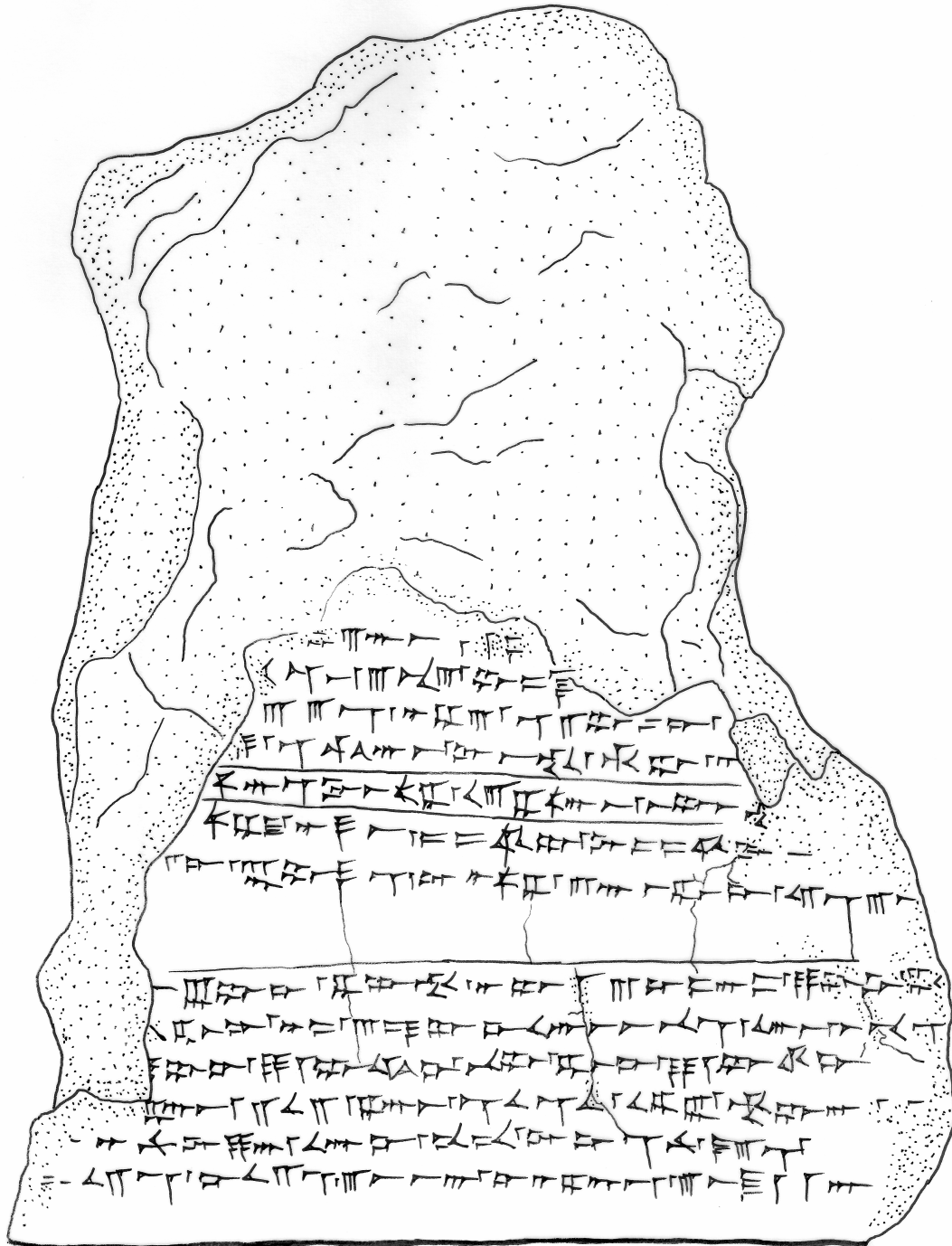


FIG. 1D. KTU 1.82 rev. (handcopy by Lluís Feliu)



FIG. 2A. KTU 1.82:1^a: *mḥṣ.b^ṣl* (photo Ch.Virolleaud, PRU II, pl. IV)



FIG. 2B. KTU 1.82:1a: *-ḥṣ.b^ṣl* (?) (photo D. ed-Dibbo)

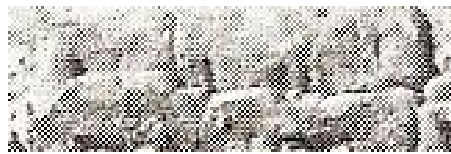


FIG. 2C. KTU 1.82:1b: *tnn* (photo Ch. Virolleaud, PRU II, pl. IV)



FIG. 2D. KTU 1.82:1b: *t/aan/t* (?) (photo D. ed-Dibbo)



FIG. 2E. KTU 1.82:43: *ltn* (photo D. ed-Dibbo)

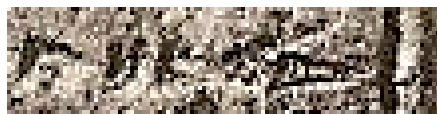


FIG. 2F. KTU 1.6 VI 51: *tnn* (photo CTA, pl. XIII)



FIG. 2G. KTU 1.3 III 40: *tnn* (photo Smith-Pitard *Baal II* CD)