

il and *ḥrn*: Divine Power vs. Magic. A New Look at KTU 1.100

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[A partially new translation of KTU 1.100 is offered here, in which the opposition between the “canonical” and the “supra-canonical” conceptions of the power of the gods and of “magic”, comes in the foreground. The text turns out to be a mythical performance of this opposition, disguised as a conflict of competences between the gods of the pantheon and a newcomer, the god *ḥrn* (*Hôrānu*) the only one able to cope with the danger of the snakebite that apparently threatens horses, celestial offspring of the applier, as a general symbol of magic power. The text ends with a theogamy that celebrates the wedding of the chthonic god *ḥrn* and a daughter of the Sun, the mother of horses, allowing in this way the inclusion of the god of magic into *il*’s pantheon and unifying both divine power systems. The text must then be taken not as a specific incantation text, but as an aetiology or foundation myth that complements the Ugaritic conception of the religious universe.]

Keywords: divine power, pantheon, magic, snakes, the Sun’s horses.

The clear aim and meaning of the outstanding text KTU 1.100 are those of a text-ritual that does not attempt to “know” the future through signs, but tries to prevent it are, “a *sui generis* incantation against horses suffering snakebite”. The text is (proto)typical of the genre; eleven times - and it seems that the twelfth has been omitted, according to a marginal note - it repeats the request for a magical incantation addressed to the corresponding number of different deities (*il*, *bsl*, *dgn*, *ṣnt-ṣtrt*, *yrḥ*, *ršp*, (*ṣtrt*), *zz-kmt*, *mlk*, *ktr-ḥss*, *šḥr-šlm*)¹, representative of the Ugaritic Pantheon (cf. KTU 1.47; 1.118), plus the “foreign” god *ḥrn* who does not belong to it. The text has been intensively studied and there is a general agreement on its main significance. Therefore, we shall start from this detailed discussion of the text as provided by different authors, without repeating their arguments, but in our turn arguing briefly for the specific details of our own version and interpretation, which in several points diverge from those given by other scholars.

1. *Text lay-out*

The text is arranged in three parts: 1) the request for the divine “charmer”, able to cast and perform the incantation ritual, actually effective against snakebite, repeated and addressed twelve times to as many deities, with a negative result the first eleven times (lines 1-60);² 2) the positive and effective reaction of the god *Hôrānu* to that request (lines 61-69); 3) a happy ending: the cooperation initiated among the deities ends in a wedding, a divine theogamy which authorizes the efficacy of the power of the magical incantations emitted from the sanctuary of the supplicant deity, now wife of the god who showed he had such power³. The opposition between the first two parts is clear: the passivity and silence shown by the

1. The goddess *Šapšu*, the actual twelfth, must be counted also among the impotent deities in this affair; in fact she is the divine messenger in search of an effective “charmer”, and so the best witness of the impotence of the whole pantheon.

2. See the similar repetitive procedure in KTU 1.16 V 10ff. The repetitive system of magic also occurs, with simple repetition, in the case of *Ba’lu*’s attempts to defeat *Yammu*, KTU 1.2 IV (although not a strict “magical” intervention in this case), or with triple repetition, in the case of *Dan’ilu*’s attempt to find the remains of his son, KTU 1.19 III.

3. See for instance Pardee, D. 1988:227-256; 1997a:295-298; 2002c:179-191; De Moor, J.C. 1987:146; although our interpretation is not necessarily in agreement with their views. An excellent recent survey is provided by Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:85f., 88.

gods invoked contrasting with the sensitive, swift and effective action of the god *Hôrānu*, made evident by the rubric at the end of each of the first eleven repetitions of the “cry for help”, but missing from the last.⁴ The situation strongly reminds us of the request presented by ²*Ilu* to the gods in order to find one able to cure king *Kirta*’s illness (cf. KTU 1.16 V 10ff.).

With regard to form, the first part is in the “message style” (although the formulary is different from the classical formulary of literary texts⁵) and worded at the instant of his “command” and supposed “transmission” by the messenger, the goddess *Šapšu*, as is clear from the second part (*Hôrānu*’s reaction), though in none of these transmissions do we have a “reply”. However, of course, the repetition of the command supposes that the messenger, or perhaps it is better to speak in this case of an “intermediary”, *Šapšu*, has returned; the other deities remain in their “seat-dwelling”, whereas the “charmer”/“exorcist” of snakes (*mlhš*), unable to neutralize them, sits down waiting for the effective incantation, formula and ritual, to be brought to him, in other words, waiting for the assistance of the actual god of magic in their possession. This clause (actually a formulaic syntagm⁶) stages in a rather popular way the failure of *Šapšu*’s successive mediation and the long and useless charmer’s wait for the fitting formula (see Sp. “esperar sentado”), enhancing at the same time *Hôrānu*’s prompt answer.

2. Text and translation⁷

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. <i>ūm.phl.phlt.</i>
 <i>bt.šn.bt.ābn.</i>
 <i>bt.šmm wthm</i></p> | <p>The mother of the stallion (,/and) the mare,⁸
 daughter of spring, daughter of stone,
 daughter of Sky and Deep,</p> |
| <p>2. <i>qrīt.lšpš.ūmh.</i>
 <i>špš.ūm.ql.bl.</i>
 <i>šm³il.mbk nhrm.</i>
 <i>bšdt.thmtm</i></p> | <p>invokes <i>Šapšu</i>, her mother:
 - <i>Šapšu</i>, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to ²<i>Ilu</i>, at the source of the two rivers,
 at the confluence of the two oceans,⁹</p> |
| <p>4. <i>mnt.nṭk.nḫš.</i></p> | <p>(for) an incantation against snakebite,</p> |

4. This opposition, of course, is given different meanings, depending on the interpretation of the whole; see for instance two contemporary opinions: Pardee, D. 1988:207-209, 214, 223 and Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1988:345.

5. Cf. Del Olmo Lete, G. 1981a:54-55.

6. See KTU 1.4 V 46: *tšdb ksu wyṭb*, “a throne was prepared and they sat (him)”. See the same syntagm in the *Namburbi* text found at Hama, which belongs to the Neo-Assyrian period: [GIŠ.GU.Z]A.MEŠ.KUG.MEŠ¹*a¹-na a-šā¹-bi¹-ku-nu ad-di*, “pure [chai]rs I have set forth, on which you can sit”; see Laessøe, J. 1956:62f. In both cases, the deity *Šamaš* is the beneficiary. See in this regard Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:362, n. 95. However, the formulaic nature of the word pair forbids forcing the parallelism too far and proposing *Šapšu* as the subject here also.

7. See Virolleaud, Ch. 1968:564-574; Astour, M.C. 1968:13-28; Caquot, A. 1969:241-154; Caquot, A. 1989: 79-94; Lipiński, E. 1974:169-174; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O.-Sanmartín, J. 1975a.:121-125; Gaster, Th. H. 1975:33-51; Gaster, Th. H. 1980:43-44; Young, D.W. 1977:291-314; Young, D.W. 1979:839-848; De Moor, J.C. 1977:366-367; De Moor, J.C. 1988:105-111; De Moor, J.C. 1987:146-156; Pardee, D. 1978:73-108; Pardee, D. 1988:193-226; Johnstone, W. 1979:44-63; Johnstone, W. 1978:113ff.; Tsevat, M. 1979:759-778; Bowman, Ch. H.-Coote, R.B. 1980:135-139; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1980:153-170; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1988:345-350; Xella, P.1981:224-240; Kottsieper, J. 1984:97-110; Levine, B.A.-De Tarragon, J.-M. 1988:481-518. The text is also given in *KTU*² 112-115. More recently Greaves, I.W. 1994:165-167; Parker, S.B. 1997:219-223; Wyatt, N. 1998a:378-387; Pardee, D. 1997:295-298; Pardee, D. 2002a:172-179; Bordreuil, P.-Pardee, D. 2009:187-194 (+ photograph); Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:263-402 (see rev. art. by Del Olmo Lete, G. 2007:281-183); Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:75-108; Loretz, O. 2011:242ff. This kind of spell was already present in Ebla, see Krebernik, M. 1984:20-24.

8. In the symbolic language used here, “the mother of *phl phlt*” must be a *phlt* herself. The emphasis placed on the disparity between these translations (so Tsevat, followed by Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:315, *passim*) is irrelevant. Of course, an asyndetic construction is likely (on which see Tropper, J. 2012:787f.). But one must bear in mind that quite often in tricola the first colon is semantically and syntactically independent, while the two following cola form the actual parallel pair, as can be seen in the next tricolon (line 2).

9. The residence of the supreme god according to myth, with the variant ¹*dt* for *āpq*; cf. KTU 1.6 I 32-34.

- šmrr.nhš*⁵ *šqr.* (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!¹⁰
lnh.mlhš.ābd. - From/with it the charmer the destruction,¹¹
*lnh.ydy*⁶ *ħmt.* from/with it let him expel the venom!
hlm.ytq.nhš Oh, yea/So forth,¹² let him take up a serpent,
yšlhm.<nhš.>šqr. let him throw away a sloughing <serpent>!
 7. *yšdb.ksā.wytb* He places/takes a chair and sits down.

8. *tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.* She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
špš.ūm.ql.bl - *Šapšu*, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 9. *šm bšl.mrym.spn.* to *Ba^clu* in the heights of *Šapānu*,¹³
*mnty.nṭk*¹⁰ *nhš.* (for) an incantation,¹⁴ yes, against snakebite,
šmrr.nhš šqr. (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
*lnh*¹¹ *mlhš.ābd.* - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
lnh.ydy.ħmt from/with it let him expel the venom!
*hlm.ytq*¹² *nhš* Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
yšlhm.nhš.šqr. let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
*y<š>db.ksā.*¹³ *wytb* He places/takes a chair and sits down.

14. *tqrū.lšpš.ū<m>h.* She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
špš.ūm.ql.bl - *Šapšu*, my mother!, take the (/my) cry
*šm*¹⁵ *dgn ttlh.* to *Dagānu* at *Tuttul*,¹⁵
mnt.nṭk.nhš. (for) an incantation against snakebite,
*šmrr*¹⁶ *nhš.šqr.* (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
lnh.mlhš.ābd. - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
*lnh*¹⁷ *ydy.ħmt.* from/with it let him expel the venom!
hlm.ytq.nhš. Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
*yšlhm*¹⁸ *nhš.šqr.* let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
yšdb.ksā.wytb He places/takes a chair and sits down.

19. *tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.* She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
špš.ūm.ql.bl - *Šapšu*, my mother!, take the (/my) cry
*šm!*²⁰ *šnt wš{.}ttrt inbbh.* to *šAnatu* and *šAttartu*, at *šInbūbu*,¹⁶
*mnt.nṭk*²¹ *nhš.* (for) an incantation against snakebite,
šmrr.nhš.šqr. (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!

10. Possibly a zoological specification of the serpent rather than the generic description “twisted”, which in myth is expressed by the adjectives *brh* and *šqltn*; cf. KTU 1.5 I 1-2. For the description and classification of serpents in *Namburbi* incantations see Maul, St. 1994:224, 226, 233.; Cavigneaux, A.-Al-Rawi, F.N.H. 1995.17:75-99; Pientka-Hinz, R. 2009:204ff. (205). The equivalent of Ug. *bṭn* is Akk. *bašmu*, in incantations and in mythical representations as well.

11. See KTU 1.107:7, with the same word pair, although in reverse order, *ħmt/abdy*.

12. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:87: “jetz und hier”; DUL s. v. “as soon as ...”

13. The residence of this god according to myth; cf. KTU 1.3 III 29 and par. See Van Soldt, W.H. 2005:20.

14. Cf. above, line 4 and par. (*mnt*); it is possible to see here an emphatic *-y* rather than the pronominal suffix “my”; see below “commentary”.

15. The Mari texts provide evidence of a famous sanctuary of *Dagānu* in this city located at the mouth of the Balih river.

16. Residence of the goddess according to myth; cf. KTU 1.3 IV 34 and par. The merging of the two goddesses, *šAnatu* and *šAttartu*, which is supposed both there and here, did not actually occur, as shown by the shift to invoking the latter separately according to the colophon, lines 77-79; cf. Pardee, D. 1988:211, nn. 57 and 63.

- lnh.ml²²hš.ābd.*
lnh ydy.hmt.
hlm.ytq²³nhš
yšlhm.nhš.šqšr.
yšdb.ksā²⁴wytb

 25. *tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.*
špš.^lu^l[m.ql].bl.
šm²⁶yrh.lrgth.
mnt.nṭk.^ln^l[h]^lš^l.
šmrr²⁷nhš.šqšr.
lnh.mlhš.ābd.
lnh ydy²⁸hmt.
hlm.ytq.nhš
yšlhm.nhš²⁹šqšr.
yšdb.ksā.wytb

 30. *tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.*
špš.ūm.ql.b<l>.
šm³¹ršp.bbth.
mnt.nṭk.nhš.
šmrr³²nhš.šqšr.
lnh.mlhš.ābd.
lnh ydy³³hmt.
hlm.ytq.nhš.
yšlhm.nhš.šq³⁴š<r>.
yšdb.ksā.wytb

 77. *ātr ršp.šttrt*
 <*tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.*
špš.ūm.ql.bl.>
šm šttrt.mrh
 79. *mnt.nṭk nhš*
 <*šmrr.nhš.šqšr.*
lnh.mlhš.ābd.
lnh ydy.hmt.
hlm.ytq.nhš
yšlhm.nhš.šqšr.
y^fdb.ksā.wytb>
- From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.
- She invokes Šapšu, her mother:
 - Šapšu, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to Yarḫu, at lrgt,¹⁷
 (the one of) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.
- She invokes Šapšu, her mother:
 - Šapšu, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to Rašpu, at Bibita,¹⁸
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.
- After Rašpu, ^fAttartu:¹⁹
 <She invokes Šapšu, her mother:
 - Šapšu, my mother, take the (/my) cry>
 to ^fAttartu, at Mari,²⁰
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 <(against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.>

17. See KTU 1.24, the myth of the wedding of this deity with the goddess *Nikkalu*. This dwelling is otherwise unknown; according to legend, the city of *Yarḫu* is *Abilūma*; cf. KTU 1.18 IV 8. The presence of the place-name *la-ru-ga₁₂-tu* in Ebla goes against seeing this lexeme as a mistake for *ūgrt*, as Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1988:347, n. 27b, propose; but see now, Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:295f-301, 335; also Pardee, D. 1988:211; De Moor, J.C. 1987:149, n. 11.

18. Unknown divine residence which occurs frequently in the cultic texts in connection with this god; cf. KTU 1.105:11; 1.171:3; Pardee, D. 1988:112 (Hitt. GN. *bi-bi-it*); Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:335.

19. According to the colophon, line 77, the formula connected with this goddess is to be inserted here.

20. A traditional divine residence. Mari had already lost its importance at the time this text was composed.

 35. *tqrú.lšpš.úmh.*
špš.úm.ql.bl.
*šm*³⁶ *zz.wkmt.hryt*
mnt.nṭk.nḥš.
*šm*³⁷ *rr.nḥš.šqšr.*
lnh.mlḥš.ābd
*lnh*³⁸ *ydy.hmt.*
hlm.ytq.nḥš
*yšlḥm.nḥš*³⁹ *šq{.}šr.*
yšdb.ksá.wytb

She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
 - *Šapšu*, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to *zz-kmt*, at *hryt*;²¹
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.

 40. *tqrú.lšpš.úmh.*
špš.úm.ql.bl.
*šm*⁴¹ *mlk.štrth.*
mnt.nṭk.nḥš.
*šmrr*⁴² *nḥš.šqšr.*
lnh.mlḥš.ābd.
*lnh.ydy*⁴³ *hmt.*
hlm.ytq.nḥš
*yšlḥm.nḥš*⁴⁴ *šqšr.*
yšdb.ksá.wytb

She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
 - *Šapšu*, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to *Milku*, at *‘Aṭtartu*,²²
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.

 45. *tqrú.lšpš.úmh.*
špš.úm.ql.bl
*šm*⁴⁶ *kṭr.wḥss.kptrh.*
mnt.nṭk.nḥš.
 47. *šmrr.nḥš.šqšr.*
lnh.mlḥš.ābd
 48. *lnh.ydy.úmt*
hlm.ytq.nḥš
 49. *yšlḥm.nḥš.šqšr*
*yšdb.ksá*⁵⁰ *wytb*

She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
 - *Šapšu*, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to *Kôtaru-ḥašišu*, at *Kaptāru*,²³
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,
 from/with it let him expel the venom!
 Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
 let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
 He places/takes a chair and sits down.

 51. *tqrú.lšpš.úmh.*
špš.úm.ql.bl.
*šm*⁵² *šhr.wšlm.šmmh*
mnt.nṭk.nḥš
 53. *šmrr.nḥš.šqšr.*
*lnh.mlḥš*⁵⁴ *ābd*

She invokes *Šapšu*, her mother:
 - *Šapšu*, my mother, take the (/my) cry
 to *Šaḥru* and *Šalimu*, in the Heavens,²⁴
 (for) an incantation against snakebite,
 (against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
 - From/with it the charmer the destruction,

21. Unknown divine residence.

22. See KTU 1.108:2; 1.107:17; 4.790:17, residence of the god *Milku*, the eponym of the *mlkm*. Of course, it cannot be an epithet of *Ba‘lu*, already mentioned earlier, as Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1988:348, n. 41a, prefer; but see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:338.

23. This god’s residence in myth, identified as Crete; cf. KTU 1.3 VI 14 and par.

24. Cf. KTU 1.23, the myth of the birth of this pair of gods, “placed (*šdb*) next to the Great Lady, *Šapšu*, and the stars” (line 54). This god along with *mlk(m)* closes the pantheon (see KTU 1.118:32f.).

<i>lnh.ydy hmt.</i>	from/with it let him expel the venom!
<i>hlm.ylq⁵⁵nhš.</i>	Oh, yea/So forth, let him take up a serpent,
<i>yšlhm.nhš.šqšr</i>	let him throw away a sloughing serpent!
<i>yšdb⁵⁶ksā.wytb</i>	He places/takes a chair and sits down.

57. <i>tqrū.lšpš.ūmh.</i>	She invokes Šapšu, her mother:
<i>špš.ūm.ql.bl</i>	- Šapšu, my mother, take the (/my) cry
58. <i>šm hrn.mšdh.</i>	to Hôrānu, in mšd, ²⁵
<i>mnt.nk nhš</i>	(for) an incantation against snakebite,
59. <i>šmrr.nhš.šqšr.</i>	(against) the poisoning of the sloughing serpent!
<i>lnh.mlhš⁶⁰abd</i>	- From/with it the charmer the destruction,
<i>lnh.ydy hmt.</i>	from/with it let him expel the venom!

61. <i>bhrn.pnm.trgn {w}.</i>	Hôrānu's face was excited, ²⁶
<i>wtkl⁶²bnwt</i>	for she (pht) will be deprived of offspring, ²⁷
<i>ykr.šr.dqdm</i>	he (the serpent) will undermine ²⁸ "the city of the Old Times". ²⁹
63. <i>īdk.pnm.lytn.</i>	Then he sets face
<i>tk aršh.rbt</i>	towards ² Araššihu the Great,
64. <i>waršh.trrt.</i>	² Araššihu the Mighty. ³⁰
<i>ydy.bšm.šr{.}šr</i>	He rips out a tamarisk from among the trees, ³¹

25. Unknown divine residence, *mšd*. For the various opinions see Pardee, D. 1988:213, n. 69; De Moor, J.C. 1987:152, n. 20 ("fortress"); Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:339f. ("Steppe"). See below.

26. Hôrānu's reaction is one of rage. This seems the most simple option to indicate a passionate reaction according to the fundamental meaning of the base: "to boil" > "to rage" > by semantic shift, Ar. *ragā(w)*, both "mugir" (the typical bedouin bias: AEL 114f., "to grumble, said of a camel ...") and "être couvert d'écume", II "mettre en colère" (DAF 891); "to foam, froth" > II/IV, the same: ²*argā wa-²azbada*, "to fume with rage" (DMWA 403), with energetic *-n*. For the various proposals, some of them very close to the one chosen here, see Astour, M. 1968:13ff.; Caquot, A. 1989:89, n. 276; Pardee, D. 1988:214; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 1988:349; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000c: 353; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:93, n. 92; DUL 735.

27. The cry of help voiced by the supplicant intends to find a magic intervention "to prevent" the snakebite of the celestial horses, not a pharmacological remedy to cure horses already bitten. The verbal predicates are parsed in this way, in spite of their short pattern, as present-future forms; see in this regard Tropper, J. 2012:653, 657. Actually the venom is already present and ready to be inoculated. It will be eliminated by Hôrānu's subsequent intervention. On the other hand, the meaning of *tkl* "to be deprived of sons" is clear and unanimously accepted and fits well the complement *bnwt* as a denomination of the horses/mares as her offspring. For other proposals see Caquot, A. 1989:90, n. 277.

28. The sense of this colon is deduced from its parallelism with the previous colon, recommended also by the significance given in this text to the divine abode of each deity. Therefore, for *ykr* I prefer a derivation from the well-known base **kry*, "to dig" > "to undermine" (see already Del Olmo Lete, G. 2007a:158) in a negative sense, as preferable to any other possible option, including my previous one; see Caquot, A. 1989:90, n. 278; Pardee, D. 1988:214f; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009c:93, n. 94; Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:367, n. 110. In this way, the supposed redundancy *ykr/pnm ytn* is eliminated (see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:94). The anonymous subject cannot be any other than the *nhš. šqšr* mentioned in line 59, the same anonymous object also supposed in lines 65-67, actually the main and universal subject of the text. On the other hand, an inchoative nuance ("to be about to...") should not be excluded.

29. See Caquot, A. 1989: 91, n. 279 ("la ville antique"). Dietrich-Loretz's comment is quite suitable: "Das Ziel der Reise Horons ist die Stadt mit dem Palast der *ūm pht pht*" (see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:93, n. 95). However we prefer the temporal meaning of *šr d qdm*: "the city of Old Times", possibly as an echo of Sumerian URU-UL-LA, the mythical and primordial abode of the god Enlil (²EN-URU-UL-LA). See below.

30. For these and other interpretations of the word pair *rbt/trrt* cf. Del Olmo Lete, G. 1981:645; Del Olmo Lete, G. 1984:20; Pardee, D. 1988:215; Caquot, A. 1989:91; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000c:357.; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:94, n. 103 ("klein").

31. See Heb. ¹*arōš'er* and ¹*ših*; HALOT 883, 1010-1011; and for *ydy* see DUL 178f.: *ydy*, not *ndy*, as in line 5 and par. Perhaps there is an attempt at "wordplay": "to throw/uproot"; in any case, there is great lexical and semantic similarity between the two roots. The importance of the "tamarisk" in the practice of magic is well-known in Mesopotamia; for instance, in the

65. <i>wbšht.šš.mt.</i> <i>šršrm.ynšrn^h</i>	and a deadly plant from among the bushes; with the tamarisk he shakes ³² it (the poison),
66. <i>ssnm.ysynh.</i> <i>šdtm.yšdynh.</i> <i>yb⁶⁷ltm.yblnh.</i> <i>mgy.hrn.lbth.</i> <i>w⁶⁸yštql.lhžrh.</i> <i>tlú.h<m>t.km.nhl</i>	with a palm he removes it (?), with a flowing current he makes it disappear, with a stream he makes it vanish. Then <i>Hôrānu</i> went to her house, proceeded to her mansion. The venom had been drained like a torrent, evaporated like a stream. ³³
69. <i>tplg.km.plg</i> -----	
70. <i>bšdh.bhtm.mnt.</i> <i>bšdh.bhtm.sgrt</i>	Behind her the house of incantation, behind her the house she had closed,
71. <i>bšdh.šdbt.tlt.</i> <i>pth.bt.mnt</i>	behind her she had shot the bolt. - Open the house of incantation,
72. <i>pth.bt.wúbá.</i> <i>hkl.wištql</i>	open the house so that I may enter, the palace so that I may come in!"
73. <i>tn.{km.}nššm.yhr<n></i> <i>tn.km⁷⁴mhry.</i> <i>wbn.btn.itny</i>	- Give me the serpents, oh <i>Hôrānu</i> !, give me (them) as dowry ³⁴ and the offspring of the snake as wedding gift!"
75. <i>ytt.nššm.mhrk.</i> <i>bn btn⁷⁶itnkn</i>	- I give you the serpents as dowry, the offspring of the snake as wedding gift".

(KTU 1.100:1-79)

3. Brief linguistic and literary commentary

Lines 1-7: Since her mother is the goddess *Šapsu*, the mother of horses and mares (*um phl <w> phlt*)³⁵ mentioned here must be also a goddess, as her cosmic origin also hints: she is “daughter of Sky and Deep”. We do not know, however, to which goddess the text refers.³⁶ But if she is the mother of breeding horses, she must be in some way an hippomorphic deity, at least metaphorically or in her attributes,

compendium incantation text, RS 17.155+:35 it says : *ina TU₆ ŠINIG u^uIN.NU.UŠ pu-šur SU-šu₂ tu-u₂-ka ša₂ TILLA*, “Free him by using spell, tamarisk, and *maštaka* plant! Grant (him), your life-giving incantation!” (Ig. Márquez’ version); although Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:361 prefer “Wachholder”.

32. See *nšr*, “to destroy, upset”; KTU 1.132:25. The expressions attempt to mirror the same assonance and emphatic Semitic construction used in the following parallel clauses: *šršr/nšr*, *ssn/ysy*, *šdt/šdy*, *yblt/ybl-bly*. The play on words is repeated in line 69 (*plg/plg*), and the semantics proves the meaning given to the pair *šdt/yblt*: water, as a purifying and nullifying element; whereas the first pair, *šršr/ssn*, expressed the mistreatment of the animal and the extraction of its poison. Even so, the four terms could be understood to denote plants, but the semantics is uncertain; see e.g. Greaves, I.W. 1994:165ff; Pardee, D. 1997:298; Watson 2004:134. Recently, Belmonte, J. 1993:114-116 (his interpretation of the passage as a “ritual manipulation” of healing “vegetable products” by the exorcist is unlikely; it is rather a divine prototype for such an empirical manipulation).

33. The “powerful” and at the same time “ephemeral” nature of wadis can be experienced directly in the Near East and is suitable as symbol to express the drying up of the powerful venom under the magical action of the god.

34. In this way the imbalance of these verses is resolved more easily: the scribe was induced by the following verse to write an extra *km*, which is better than supposing that he omitted the word *mhry*. Also, to assume the reading *yhr[n]* avoids speculations about a lexeme *yhr*, which occurs in no other text and does not occur in the following “fulfilment” bicolon either, resulting in a perfectly formed tricolon. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:101. For other solutions see. Pardee, D. 1988:222; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:368.

35. Here we follow the suggestion put forward by Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:90.

36. See in this regard, Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:390f (“eine Schlangengöttin”; “die Mutter von männlichem Zucht tier [und] weiblichen Zucht tier”, not a “Mare” goddess).

besides being an astral goddess as *Šapsu*'s daughter. In this respect, it is worth recalling “the cows of Sin”, the other great astral deity, a fertility deity in the Sumerian tradition.³⁷ Among the Ugaritic goddesses, ²*Ušharayu* seems to have a special connection, if not with horses, at least with serpents, evident in her look of *πότνια θηρῶν*.³⁸ On the other hand, we know very little about a connection between *Šapsu* and horses.³⁹ In this magic text, the event of snakebite assumes cosmic mythical significance (*bt šmm wthm*), involving the highest divine beings? (the supreme god ²*Ilu*) and becoming a general formulation, far beyond being an answer to an actual attack by a snake. Newly discovered texts, consonantal and syllabic (KTU 1.86:6; 4.790:16f.; RS 94.2415:36), mention horses of certain deities (*Rašpu* [maš.maš], *Milku*, ⁵*Attartu*), but the meaning of their relationship escapes us.⁴⁰ From the point of view of the stichometry, lines 1-2a forms a tetracolon with an inserted bicolon which is followed by a tricolon (in the ongoing repetitions, the introductory tetracolon is reduced to a colon introducing direct speech, followed by a bicolon), three bicola and a final closing colon.⁴¹

In Ugaritic, *ql*, “voice”, usually has the intensive meaning of “yell”, “scream”, “whinny”, “thunder” (*ytn ql, ql bšrpt, ql nhqt*), and in this case is to be understood as a “cry for help”. This mytheme is echoed in the magical text KTU 1.82:6, *p ʾn ʾrnn ql špš hw*, “then let me myself shout (out) the cry to *Šapsu*: ‘save (my) life!’”. The determination “my” is semantically implied.

Used absolutely, *mnt* could be understood either as in apposition to *ql* as a gloss, referring to its content, or as a genitive complement of specification, as in the translation above.⁴² The implicit appropriation meaning “my” or “for me” is made explicit only in the first repetition of the message (line 9): *mnt-y* (1st pers. accus. suff.). But we do not insist on this point, given the irregular notation of the inflective distribution [Ø/-y] of this personal suffix.⁴³ A version of *mnt-y* as “an incantation, yes/please!” is also possible, assuming a postpositive vocative emphatic -y.⁴⁴

There is wide disagreement on the translation of *lnh* among scholars.⁴⁵ The version “from it” (namely, “from the serpent”, its immediate antecedent) appears the simplest, according to the semantic range of the particle /l-/, confirmed by the parallel text KTU 1.107:45 and par.: *isp (...) l p ntk ʾabd*, “remove (...) from the mouth of the biter the destruction”. But in this case, the morpho-syntax of verb-preposition is not very certain (*ʾabd l, ydy l*).⁴⁶ On the other hand, the new proposal by Dietrich-Loretz (“mit ihrer Hilfe”, namely, “mit der Hilfe der Beschwörung”, its remote antecedent) is very attractive.⁴⁷ But it supposes an instrumental value for that particle which is not sufficiently attested. In any case it is acknowledged that by pronouncing this incantation formula, the charmer/exorcist will be able to neutralize the snake bite.

37. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1992c; also Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:91: “Die Herrin von ‘Hengst (und) Stute’ haben wir uns folglich als ein göttliches Wesen zu denken, das in engster Verbindung mit Pferde and Schlangen sowie mit der Sonne tätig ist”.

38. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:267-269; 1988:58, n. 33, fig. 1-4; Edzard, D.O. 1965:90; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:92.

39. See Caquot, A. 1989:79, who cites “the horses of the sun” mentioned in 2 Kg 23, 1. Gn 49, 17 should also be cited as Hebrew evidence of “snakebite” affecting horses. Nevertheless, for a caution in this regard see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:389f. For *Šapsu*'s role in this and similar texts, and in general in magic literature, see Wiggins, St. A. 1996:327-350.

40. See in this connection Malbran-Labat, Fl.-Roche, C. 2008:251, 259; Loretz, O. 2011:128-137.

41. For a different stichometry see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:101. For the split couplet see Watson, W.G.E. 1997:35.

42. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:320; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:102.

43. See Tropper, J. 2012:215f. A presumed *mater lectionis* -y seems out the question, if an apposition with *ql* (acc.) is accepted; see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:288; 2009:80.

44. For the various opinions on the meaning of *mnt* see DUL s. v.; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, 2009:85, n. 48: *mnt* is a technical term for “incantation” in Ugaritic.

45. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:324f.; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:87, n. 51.

46. See Pardee, D. 1975:340, 359.

47. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:87, n. 51.

However, the real interpretative difficulty is to be found in the last bicolon of this first section of the text. There is a syntactic problem concerning the type of clause beginning *hlm* ... (line 5) and a lexical problem in respect of the etyma and meaning of the forms *ytq* and *yšlh**m*. As for the first, leaving aside other possibilities and proposals, I take the bicolon of line 6 (usually understood as an executive description) to continue the injunctive (imperative) of the previous bicolon pronounced by the supplicant, but now in the indirect form (jussive),⁴⁸ thus complementing the efficacy of the requested incantation formula with a ritual or apotropaic action to be performed by the charmer. The coupling of words and gestures is normal in Mesopotamian incantation texts. But there is no sense in performing a magic gesture when no suitable incantation formula, of divine origin, is at hand from which this performance would derive its efficiency. But this second injunction lies outside the direct request to the respective deity asked from *Šapšu* by the *um p̄hl p̄hlt*, as its absence in the request addressed to *Horānu* in lines 60-81 leaves clear. It is just a common action that must accompany the incantation formula. This syntactic parsing is imposed by the newly proposed and assumed analysis of the verbal form *yqt* (the second mentioned crux of this bicolon) as derived from /*tqy*/, Akk. *šaḡû*, “to be high”, D “to elevate”,⁴⁹ in parallel with /*šlh*/, as proposed by Dietrich-Loretz, that I assume now as the most feasible. Or a descriptive/indicative formulation would require a form *ytqy*, while *ytq* represents normally an abbreviated/volitive verbal form. I am full aware that one cannot force this argument too much.⁵⁰ But in this case the regular verbal morphology seems to make good sense and we can dispense with applying to an irregular use. On the opposite, I cannot accept the semantic interpretation that views this magical action in accordance with the Biblical episode of the Bronze Serpent (Nm 21:8-9). We can think of a bronze or rather a clay figurine used in this gesture, but in no Mesopotamian incantation text of this kind (*Namburbi/Ušburruda*, etc.; and we are surely to be within the Mesopotamian tradition as the Eastern Semitic *hapax* /*tqy*/ would witness) is an alive serpent or its figurine used as a positive apotropaic means to avert the snakebites.⁵¹ On the contrary, it is always used as a magic object to be destroyed, aiming at returning to it the curse it intends to produce.⁵² The Biblical parallels can be found elsewhere.⁵³ Therefore, I take /*tqy*/ D (*ya:uṭaqqī*) to mean “to elevate” = “to lift up” (Sp. “levantar (algo del suelo)”) in coordination with *yšlh-m* (enclitic *-m* of emphasis) as parallel to the Akk. *ina qātiki tanaššî-ma* ... (“you lift (them) up in your hands”) to be found for instance in VAT 8276,⁵⁴ talking about figurines, and Ug. /*grš*/ in an incantation against serpents like KTU 1.82:40. A similar verbal pair can be seen in KTU 1.23:27f.: (*mṭ ydh*) *yšu yr šmmh*, “(the rod in

48. See my own former proposal in Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:362.

49. This is an old proposal already recorded in DUL s.v., but recently put forward by Bordreuil, P. 2007:35-36, and endorsed by Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:75-108, in keeping with the Biblical narrative about the “bronze serpent” and the episode of the plague of serpents in the desert (Num 21:4-9). Nevertheless, it is a lexical *hapax* in Ugaritic with no parallel in any other West- or South-Semitic language, and so a clear East-Semitic loan.

50. See Tropper, J. 2012:695ff.; Verreet, E. 1988:61ff.; also below on line 62.

51. See the texts quoted by Finkel, I.L. 1999:231f (“crush it”). Caplice R.I. 1974:11 sums up the rites to remove the incumbent evil, in this case the snake attack: “we can single out four dominant themes that underline many of them: destruction, obstruction, substitution, and simulation (destructive also)”. On the apotropaic use of figurines/amulets see Braun-Holzinger, E.A. 1999. But these scholars do not deal with serpents in incantation texts and even so only two “mythological” serpents appear in apotropaic amulets found in excavations (pp. 166f.)

52. “[Die Schlange (or das Figürchen der Schlange) he]bt er hoch und ...spricht er: Trage fort das von dir (ausgehende) Unheil ...”; see Maul, St.M. 1994:299. The text has no apotropaic sense, on the contrary the snake is to be forced by word and ritual as an enemy element to yield in his evildoing. The snake always has “to be raised” (Sum. *ĪL*) from the ground where it creeps (see Ex 4:4: *š^elah yādkā we?^ehoz*).

53. See Schipper, B.U. 2009a:419-436.; Schipper, B.U. 2009b:369-387.

54. See Abusch, Tz.-Schwemer, D. 2011:301; and the incantation called: *anaššî dipāra šalmīšunu aqallu*, “I raise the torch, I burn their figurines” (e.g. p. 354). For another example of snake manipulation see Maul, St.M. 1994:275: “legts du jene Schlange auf einen Kotfladen ...”.

his hand) he raised and threw skyward”. Otherwise “hochzuheben” in the biblical sense⁵⁵ and “fortzuschicken” are contradictory and impossible simultaneously as a “magische Begleitungsaktion”.⁵⁶

The section ends with a single colon that describes the frustrated wait of the charmer. He is the subject of these verbs,⁵⁷ in the volitive (*yṭq*, *yšlh*) and indicative modes (*y^fdb* and *yṭb*). On the other hand, the contrast between *Ḥorānu* and the other deities entreated lies in their non-appearance or in their failure to react on behalf of the request in the face of *Ḥorānu*’s rapid reaction. With it we reach the last section of the text, lines 8-60, with eleven word-for-word repetitions of lines 1-7, studied above. Only the names and dwelling-places of the different gods vary.

Lines 61-69: The message charged to *Šapšu* and supposedly delivered by her to the addressee, in this last case *Ḥorānu*, is interrupted obviously by him, in “reaction” to the bad news implied in it: the prospective attack by serpents against the progeny of the *ūm pḥl pḥlt*. As usually happens in this literary form, the subject’s face “is undone, contorted”, always introduced by the preposition *b* + *-h/PN*.⁵⁸ It is illogical to assume here a reaction of fear on behalf of the being who asked the messenger to take the message to the god, whose supposed inimical behaviour toward her sons she had already experienced.⁵⁹ Why then apply to this deity? If in terms of form we have *Ḥôrānu*’s “reaction” to bad news in the first bicolon, in terms of content it is the beginning of a mythological fragment in verse, the aetiological mytheme of the incantation gesture against serpent venom. It will be preferable, therefore, to translate it as a narrative, using mythological syntax and dividing the whole section into a sequence of three moments: 1) lines 61-62a: psychological reaction to the message; 2) lines 62b-67a: prompt reaction by *Ḥôrānu* to assist the supplicant, approaching the place/town where the danger threatens and developing the actual and prototypical way of facing such threat; 3) lines 67b-71a. 71b-74: *Ḥôrānu* approaches the dwelling-place of the supplicant to confirm his resolve to provide from now on the fitting means of deliverance, making her palace “the house of the incantation” looked for, taking the supplicant, the *ūm pḥl pḥlt*, as his wife, accepted on condition of giving her his own power over serpents. This closing theogamy seals the myth of *Ḥôrānu* and wife (we do not know her name) as the patron gods of this kind of magic activity.

The subject of *ṭkl* is obviously the supplicant *ūm*, “mother”, and her “creatures” cannot be other than the *pḥl/pḥlt*, which focus the attention of the moment. In turn, the city *d qdm* must be the dwelling-place of “*Šapšu*’s daughter”, who is, consequently, an astral deity. In this context may be placed “the horses of the Sun” and of other deities mentioned above (see n. 39). Like the bulls and cows are attributed to the moon god *Sin* in Mesopotamian mythology,⁶⁰ horses seem to belong in the circle of the other great astral deity, *Šamaš/Šapšu*, through her unknown daughter, the *ūm pḥl pḥlt*.⁶¹

The “reaction” would thus be limited to the first colon of the tricolon and the other two cola would explain it, according to the pattern of cause/effect. On the other hand, the mention of the “City” (*ṛ*) is *proleptic* and gives way to *Ḥôrānu*’s intervention by coming to the rescue of the supplicant, that opens

55. See Bordreuil, P. 2007.

56. Instead, Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:98 speak of “die mit **ṭqy* D ‘erhöhen, hochheben’ verbundenen negative Konnotation”.

57. Were it not for the quoted formulaic character of the phrase, one could speculate with an impersonal version: “one prepares a chair (for *Šapšu*) and it is repeated”, assuming that the goddess comes back from her mission and the new request is introduced in this way; in this regard see Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:362, n. 95.

58. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1981a:55-57

59. See in this sense Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:93: “Wegen *Ḥoron* wurde sie im Gesicht traurig ...”.

60. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1992:70.

61. See Loretz, O. 2011:131ff., 242ff. On the topic see now Koch, I. 2012. In their turn Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:312 describe this “göttliche Gestalt” as follows: “Es handelt sich um eine weibliche Figur aus dem Kreis der Sonne, die in besonderer Weise mit den aufgezählten drei Bereichen der Natur (*pḥl/pḥlt*, *ṛn/ābn*, *šmm/thm*) verbunden ist, sozusagen als Personifikation der jeweiligen Bereiche gelten darf”.

with the well-known clause of travelling (in the “fulfilment” moment),⁶² specifying by name the city approached, *āršh* (*ʿAraššihu*) and here reproduced by a standard tricolon. The city was of course well-known to all the gods of the pantheon. I do not think it necessary to take this section as a quotation introduced as a “redaktionelle Einschub”.⁶³ In fact it represents the climax of the text inasmuch as it provides the actual model of the “incantation/ritual” that the *um phl phlt* was asking for and that the charmer/exorcist was awaiting, while sitting down. It is so to be credited with a primordial significance in the aim, structure and development of the text, incompatible with the character of “eine Einschub”. The pattern developed here prototypically is the one found in this type of magic intervention: striking with a rod or a branch of a special plant and dissolving the venom in water or carrying it away by a flood (see KTU 1.16 VI 8; 1.169:5; 1.178 [RS 92.2014]:1-3). This statement forms an *inclusio* with the theme of venom at the beginning of the text. It is now a question of transmitting to the supplicant the power manifested and exercised by means of a magic formula which encapsulates it. This is dealt with in the following section.⁶⁴

Having cleared the City of serpents and their venom, *Hôrānu* approaches the palace of the supplicant from whose environs the danger had also disappeared following his crushing intervention and in which her titular has enclosed herself (possibly out of fear?). With this scene we reach the last episode of the text. A ruled line singles out this last motif of the third section which shows a thematic correspondence to the rubric in line 7 in the first section, in respect of the petitioner’s behaviour (note the *inclusios*: *db, mnt, nhš*). But now, instead of receiving the god who has responded and removed the poison, the door is closed. However, the gesture is not one of rejection, but the typical hiding/bargaining of courtship and nuptial agreement, expressed by means of an exchange of dialogue. The understanding between both deities ends in a wedding, a divine theogamy, the particular saving act, as a permanent condition achieved by the deities who cure snakebite. *Hôrānu* asks the palace to be opened to him, a building he defines as “the house of incantation”, showing in this way his desire to make it the seat of an effective fight against snake attacks and the place where to look for the effective incantation formula, depositing in it his power in this respect.⁶⁵ But the inhabitant of the palace, surely the *um phl phlt* of the opening lines, wants to have a formal guarantee and formalise the meeting as a permanent wedding agreement, offering herself as *Hôrānu*’s wife, which will without any doubt assure her a share in his power. The god accepts and the divine patronage against snakebite is canonically fixed in this field of magic and the structure of its procedure determined as a token of the universal magic power against any kind of evil, with its seat now in the “City of Ancient Times”, the new abode of the god *Hôrānu* who may be supposed to abandon his ancient residence in *mšd* (?). By this hierogamy, this god ascends to Heaven, to the Sun’s ambit, “the Sky and the Deep” (*šmm w thm*) unite and the magic power is incorporated into the universal divine sphere of religion under the patronage of a daughter of the Pantheon as well.

4. *KTU 1.100 in a Comparative Perspective: Ugarit and Beyond*

To our surprise one can find these same motifs glossed and developed in RS 92.2016:30-35, as was already pointed out by the editors of that text.⁶⁶ There the house (*bt*) is mentioned, more explicitly “the house of her ‘price’” (*mhrh*), that recalls the *mhr* given to her by *Hôrānu* (KTU 1.100:75); in this case the

62. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1981:54f.

63. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:89, 94, 103. The interpretation of the section by these scholars is nevertheless correct: “eine Beschwörung gegen Schlangengift in die Tat...die Darstellung eines Rituals”.

64. For the use of “water” as a destructive element in incantations see the Akkadian parallel cited by Farber, W. 1981:52.; also Maul, St.M. 1994:286.

65. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:88, 90.

66. See Caquot, A.-Dalix, A.-S. 2001:401.

god can also enter the house, otherwise closed, but not before asking loudly (*ytn gh w yšh*) “who is in the house?” (*m bbt*). From inside comes the answer of the lady: “Here I am, ‘the Queen of the Incantation’” (*ānk mlkt mntn*).⁶⁷ This was already known from KTU 1.100:70-71, where the house addressed by the god was called *bt mnt*, “the incantation house”. In both cases we have a certain bestowing of gifts in a context of a courtship encounter. From its close, it seems that this recitative text (*mspr*) was composed to celebrate this *mlkt mntn*. It is impossible to deny a relationship between both texts.

But before getting into a more detailed comparative perspective, let us first touch on a small question related to classification. It has been suggested that our text belongs to the category of Mesopotamian *Namburbi* incantations.⁶⁸ Certainly some of these actually aim at preventing and “solving” snake attacks, but possibly the coincidence stops there. KTU 1.100 not being a particular text to be used in the practice of magic as such (see on the contrary KTU 1.82, 1.96, 1.178), but rather a “foundation” or aetiological myth, its structure is very different, although both models share some motifs. The *Namburbi* genre is actually preventative and future-oriented, but it depends on a previous “omen” that it searches to invalidate,⁶⁹ while our text and the concrete model it prefigures do not operate on actual episodes of snake attacks nor depend on a previous omen. A simple comparative look at the texts leaves it clear.⁷⁰

In fact the question of the literary genre of KTU 1.100 must be viewed from a wider religio-historical perspective. It is in this context that the text may reveal its whole significance. In this connection, W. van Binsbergen and F. Wiggermann, in their significant study on magic in the Ancient Near East,⁷¹ have made explicit the duplication of powers that encompasses the “religious” life of the Mesopotamian people; a diagram that continues into our own times in many societies. In order to cope with the difficulties and oddities of any kind that they encounter in their lives, people have recourse to the gods and their powers and to magic and its mechanisms. It seems that “at the beginning” they were two independent transcendent power systems⁷² and that later, “magic” was in some way subsumed under the “divine”, in this way gaining access to the cult and temple.⁷³ But even so, magic remained the exclusive domain of certain patron deities while the rest of the pantheon had no access to it, either positively to activate it or negatively to fight against it.

In Ugarit, this situation becomes apparent both in the “atheistic” character of the magical texts, which do not include reference or recourse to any deity⁷⁴ and in the explicit and almost provocative way that the gods of the Ugaritic pantheon are treated in KTU 1.100. As is well known, all the great gods of this pantheon (including its head, the supreme god *il*, and the skilful *ktr whss*) are discredited as incompetent to heal or prevent snakebite. It is extremely surprising in this connection to see the goddess *Anatu*, who in the Baal myth boasts of having slain primordial monsters, including the *btm sqln*, *šlyt d šbšt rāšm* (KTU 1.3 III 41-44), is unable, like the other great gods, to accept *Šapšu*’s request to prevent snakebites. In the “Epic of *krt*” this “theological” provocation is solved to some extent (healing illness): here it is the god *il* who acts as the god of magic, the rest of the silent gods again confessing themselves unable to intervene (KTU 1.16 V 10ff.). Also a correction of this attack on the canonical system and the

67. For this version see also Márquez, Ig. 2008:471.

68. See the references in Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000a:266ff. (to Astour, Young), 383.

69. See Caplice, R.I. 1974:7ff.; Maul, St.M. 1998-2001; Maul, St.M. 1999.

70. In this regard I would rather suggest the rapprochement to the *zikurudû* incantation genre. See Caplice 1974:9; Abusch, Tz.-Schwemer, D. 2011:407ff

71. See Van Binsbergen, W.-F. Wiggermann. 1999:1-34.

72. An echo of this duplication of powers can be also heard in the story of Gn 2-3 in the functionality of both, the “serpent”, God’s creature and his adversary (Gn 3:1-5), and in the “tree of life”, that even if planted by Yahweh (Gn 2:9), can produce its effects against his will and decision (Gn 3:22). See below.

73. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 2013: forthcoming.

74. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:63ff.

preeminence of the supreme father god supposed in KTU 1.100 is provided in another text, this time of magical praxis against snakes biting (KTU 1.107:38). The litanic invocation of deities asked “to remove the poison” is opened by *il whrn* as the first couple of the series. It may be seen here as an attempt to harmonise the two power systems, “divine” and “magic” (the main “thesis” of our text), as such a coupling is completely alien to the canonical mythological system of Ugarit. In it, the supreme god couples only with his consort, *ātrt* (cf. KTU 1.65:5), the mother of the gods (her “seventy sons”) or presides in first position in the sequence of Ugaritic deities, in the pantheon lists and in the ritual texts as well.⁷⁵ In this connection also, a text like KTU 1.82, although very fragmentary, becomes particularly interesting. In line 6, the same afflicted person proffers the “Sun’s cry” (*ql špš*): *ḥw*, “live safe”, directed towards the god *Ba’lu* so that “the serpents, with the coriander, *Ba’lu*, [let him take them away] with the *prt*-plant”. In other words, *Ba’lu* is accorded here the same role and magic technique that are *ḥrn*’s in KTU 1.100:64ff., a role for which *Ba’lu* was unable to give a positive answer in lines 8-13. One gets the impression that the issue of the assimilation of magic into religious praxis was not settled at Ugarit and *Hôrānu*’s exclusive patronage did not easily get the upper hand.

In KTU 1.100, on the contrary, the only god able to respond to the request for intervention is *ḥrn*, a god who does not have a place in the Ugaritic pantheon, which means that he is not recognized as a referent in the canonical religion and cult of Ugarit. In fact, he is neither invoked nor included in *any cultic text*. On the contrary he is invoked in different incantations (besides KTU 1.100:58ff. (cf. KTU 1.82:27, 41; 1.107:31, 38; 1.169:9; also KTU 1.124:6 and RSO 14 53[KTU 9.432]:33) and as the subject of the curse formula (KTU 1.16 VI 55; cf. 1.2 I 7), a classic instrument of magic with immediate and autonomous effect. He is nevertheless a “god”. But even so, like *il* in KTU 1.16 (*krt*’s illness), he also has to make recourse to some magical “instrument” (cf. KTU 1.100:64ff.) that is what really detents the power. The deity has the “know-how” to put in motion the process, but the power is not his but the instrument’s (plant or figurine-genius).

Therefore, *ḥrn* represents a primordial situation, parallel to the one that *il* sires and commands. Consequently, we are invited to interpret KTU 1.100 in a mythical setting⁷⁶ and to take it not merely as an incantation against empirical snake bites but rather as a canonical mythical text, as becomes clear by the theogamy that closes it.⁷⁷ In this myth, the chthonic god *ḥrn*⁷⁸ gets as his wife a daughter of the astral goddess *špš* (the “Sun”), uniting in this way sky and earth, Heaven and Underground, the astral and the chthonic, and receiving the “serpents” as her wedding gift. These consequently acquire the significance also of a primordial threatening power, able to attack the Sun’s offspring⁷⁹ as a symbol/token of any other pernicious attack they are able to carry out at an empirical level. In fact, most of the anti-magic Ugaritic texts appear in the form of incantations against snakebite (KTU 1.82; 1.107; 1.178 besides 1.100). As in many a religion, in Ugarit also, this primordial evil power has a serpentine shape (*ltn*/Leviathan).

Another aspect that certifies the mythical character of KTU 1.100 is the question of *ḥrn*’s abode. It is unmistakably called a *mšd*,⁸⁰ while the dwelling of the supplicant daughter of the Sun has the name

75. See Del Olmo Lete, G. 1999/2004:66ff., 71ff.

76. See Dietrich, M.- O. Loretz. 2009:75-108 (“Der altorientalische Kontext von KTU 1.100 – mythisch-göttliches Urbild – menschliches Abbild – KTU 1.100 als Beschwörungs(text)”) (99f.).

77. Cf. Young, D.W. 1977: 291-314; but I do not share his version of the text.

78. On the chthonic character of the god Horon see Pope, M.H.-Röllig, W. 1965:288f. (Hōron); Gese, H. 1970: 145f. (Hōron); Xella, P. 1992:219f.; Rütterswörden, U.1999:425f.; Garbini, G. 2011:53.

79. The text does not speak of the “Sun’s horses”, although this is a “logical” conclusion if the supplicant, the “Sun’s daughter”, is the “mother of the stallion (and) the mare”. On the “Sun’s horses” in Mesopotamia and among West-Semites, see Loretz, O. 2011:131-137, 351.

80. The TN *mšd* is, like the rest of the divine abodes cited in KTU 1.100 (*mbk nhrm*, *špn*, *imb*, *lrgt*(?), *bbt*(?), *ḥryt*(?), *štrt*, *šmm*), a mythical or mythologized TN, except for the real, ancient place-names (*ttl*, *kptr*, *mr*) and also the mythologized TNN

aršh.⁸¹ Both these divine abodes, like all the rest, must belong to mythical geography and do not occur in empirical sources. Moreover, *um phl phlt*'s abode (which will become *hrn*'s also), is qualified as *ʿr d qdm*, frequently translated as “the city of East”,⁸² a suitable residence for the offspring of the Sun. But *qdm* may have also a temporal meaning: “the City of Ancient? Times”, bearing in mind that we are dealing with a primordial confrontation of power in a time (and space) outside the empirical one.⁸³ In this aspect, space and time coincide and such a qualification could well correspond to the *uru-ul-la* of the Sumerian pre-*Anu* god-list of TCL 15 10 (I:33), present in the DN ^DEN-UR-UL-LA,⁸⁴ “the lord of the city of old times” (see also *u₄-ri-a*, “in illo die”). Such a designation would correspond to the primordial character (“pre-*Anu*/²*Ilu*”,⁸⁵ before the creation/generation of the acting gods of the pantheon) of the god *hrn*, “the one of the Underground/Chaos”,⁸⁶ superior in power (at least in the specific field of magic/“Serpent”, element of the primordial universe, as was stated⁸⁷) to all the gods of the canonical pantheon, *il* and *bšl* included. We are here face to two independent transcendental power system our text search to harmonise.

The primordial Serpent(s) was(were) well-known to the Ugaritians: it(they) appear(s) in the Baal myth under the image of the primordial “Dragon(s)” helping *ym* in his fight with *bšl* (KTU 1.5 I 1-3: *btn brh/šqltn*) and of whose destruction *šnt* boasts (KTU 1.3 III 40-46: *tnn* ...), as was pointed out above. Their creation or filiation is not accounted for and they appear to belong to the primordial Chaos prior to the divine procreation of the pantheon. The primordial serpent will appear also in the biblical story of the *gn šdn*: it is incomprehensibly a “creature” and at the same time a slandered “adversary” of *yhwh* (Gn 4:1ff.): the unification of the two systems (this time in an ethical disguise) remains clumsy. This primordial “conflict of Yahweh with the Dragon” (the classic “Chaos-Kampf” motif) will be solemnly commemorated in Hebrew lyric (Ps. 24:1-2; 74:12-17; 89:10-13).⁸⁸ Also the enigmatic figure of the *nhštn*, incorporated in the Yahwistic temple cult, is a reflex of a primordial power, historicized like any other element of the Canaanite religion adopted by biblical religion, by the linking reference to an episode of the wandering in the wilderness, connaturally centered in the empirical snake biting, as was also the case in Ugaritic anti-magical praxis. Does it imply that this danger was so prominently significant at the moment as to conceal other dangers? In an urban civilization, that is not easily to be presumed. Such a

denoting the abodes of foreign (*dgn*, *ktr*) or interpolated (*štrtr*) deities. In keeping within the chthonic character of the deity, it must be considered as a designation of the Underworld. It has been interpreted either as “fortress” (cf. Heb. *m^cšūdāh*) or “steppe” (cf. **syd* (?)); see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:339ff.; Pardee, D. 1988:213 n. 69; Caquot; A. 1989:89 n. 275; a connection with Akk. *mašādu*, “melting pot”, is unlikely, taking into account the Semitic conception of the “Underworld”.

81. Apparently, this TN corresponds to Hurr.-Akk. *Araššihu*, the river Tigris. But seems unlikely that such a well-known real name of a river should be applied to a mythical city (see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:342, 356f.). This TN, of artificial formation, is possible modelled on the phonetic pattern of the Sumerian wording: UR-SAG(-AN-NA), “pristine (heavenly) city” and UR-SAG(-MAH), “ancient capital”. Cf. Hallo, W.W. 1996:15. In Mesopotamian tradition, the abode of Nin-girima, the incantation goddess, is called *mu-ru^k*, also Išhara’s palace. See Krebernik, M. 1984:259f.

82. See Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:342, 356.

83. This temporal/primordial value of *qdm* may be found also in the creation story of Gn 2:8. See in this regard Stordalen, T. 2000:261ff.: “Standing alone – as in Gen 2:8 – the phrase simply means “beginning” or “old days”” (p.268). Also Mettinger, T.N.D. 2007:14.

84. See Hallo, W.W. 1996:13ff.; Horowitz, W. 1998:277.

85. See in this regard the basic systematization carried out by J. van Dijk of the different Sumerian tradition of primordial origins according to the text TCL XV 10: “1. Préexistence d’un univers embryonnaire dans le sein duquel vivaient les numina, les dieux chtoniens. 2. cet univers était conçu comme une ville, le ‘uru-ul-la’, la ‘cité de jadis’”. Cf. Van Dijk, J. 1996:1-59 (13).

86. In this regard see n. 77 above; Horowitz, W. 1988:277: “be exorcised by Enurulla and Ninurulla of ‘The Earth of No Return’”.

87. See Van Dijk, J. 1996:39-41 (AO 4153/NFT 180:1).

88. See Day, J. 1985; Mettinger, T.N.D. 2007:29f., 80ff.

textual witness is only acceptable under a prototypical value of its elements, above all that of its main actant, the “Serpent”.

But in any case it is clear that the primitive two powers system is incorporated, more or less, in the religious conception: in Ugarit, by accepting an independent magical power; in Israel, by rejecting it, although for centuries it remained active in the religious praxis and engrained in their conception of origins and of the ensuing ethical world: the origin and persistence of “evil” is affirmed through the assumption of a primordial agent/system that cannot be easily reduced to a unique divine protagonist. In its turn, Ugarit also reestablished the “orthodoxy” of the mythological system, as has been pointed out above, on the one hand, by making *ilu* the main and only magician among the gods (KTU 1.16 V 10ff.) and on the other, by coupling him with *hrn* (KTU 1.107:38-44) as the deity to be invoked, along with the rest of the deities, although in KTU 1.100 they are all declared powerless in this respect, i.e. against the biting “snake”. It is difficult not to see here a polemical textual contraposition.

KTU 1.100, then, is much more than a simple incantation⁸⁹ for “use” in magic: it is the actual “myth of magic”, the unveiling of the power of incantation: its *hieròs lógos*, its mythological aetiology, “das göttliche Urbild/Vorbild” from which the incantation’s efficacy depends.⁹⁰ The power of these incantations is the power of a god, now conferred on a goddess, the patron of such acts, who reigns over any “serpent” and can prevent their attacks and neutralize their venom when her sons (the prototypical horses), are bitten. The mytheme is important, for it shows that in Canaan magic was not considered as a force completely independent of divinity, but in some way linked to it, although not just simply available to any god. It was what the activity of the craftsman god *Kôtaru* led to suppose, whose weapons were decisive to resolve the *Ba’lu-Yammu* conflict in favour of the former (KTU 1.2 IV 11ff.), but was also impotent in case of snakebite, i.e. magic in general, according to lines 45-46. “Divine” and “magic”, originally each one with its independent and opposite myth, arrive thus to an agreement in presenting magic as tied to divine power and in some way to his will, which can be reached by prayer, exactly as shown by *phlt*’s repeated plea to the gods. The fact of the matter is that not every god is able to do everything.

This, then, is a magico-mythical record (like KTU 1.114, and to some extent like KTU 1.23 and KTU 1.24) in which the magical activity of the incantation is to the fore, so justifying its inclusion among texts of this kind. Now, leaving aside long distance perspectives that would take us too far away and would not solve the philological problems which beset our text,⁹¹ it is unavoidable to refer to the near Mesopotamian ambit where the magic power system is from old incorporated into the general religious system. In it the magic activity is the specific field of the divine couple *Enki-Asalluhi*/(Marduk) in the II millennium,⁹² while in the III millennium, the goddess *Nin-girima*, from *Enlil*’s circle, is the actual deity

89. See already in this regard Tsevat, M. 1979: 759-778 (767ff.).

90. See in this respect Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000:263-402, *passim*; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2008:119-140; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:89, 99f. On the difficulty of the classification as an “incantation” and its relationship to “ritual” see Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2009:78, 104: “KTU 1.100 macht uns mit einem Text bekannt, der ausführlich die Notwendigkeit göttlicher Präfiguration für das magische Handeln eine (akk.) *āšīpu* / (ug.) *mlḥš* in Ugarit bewusst macht”. But I do not find it appropriate to speak in this connection of a “historiola”; see Pardee, D. 2002b:167; Kutter, J. 2008:106, 121-122. On the characterization of this text as “myth” had already been insisted on by Young, D.W. 1979:839-848. In turn, Stordalen, T. 2000: 205 speaks of a “primeval tale” as an equivalent characterization.

91. From various indications in the text, it has been suggested that its immediate origin is recognisably Hurrian, probably connected with the care and cult of “horses”, which the Hurrians probably took from the Indo-Aryan stratum of its population and transmitted to the Hittite world; see Loretz, O. 2011:126ff. This means that the many parallels with Indian literature provided by the text are justified, apart from other possible Mesopotamian and Egyptian influences. See Pardee, D. 1988:224; Dietrich, M.-Loretz, O. 2000b:377-387. I believe, nevertheless, that the form of the text is typically west-Semitic, built “in parallel” to the east-Semitic model, texts of which were well-known at Ugarit. Other parallels may be coincidental.

92. See in this regard Dietrich, M. 2012:183-223 (216f.):

of magic.⁹³ This conflict of competences will be solved as usual by making her the daughter of Enki and so the sister of *Asalluḫi*.⁹⁴ Her magical activity is still recalled in the Ugaritic text RS 17.155:18,⁹⁵ along with *Enki* and *Asalluḫi*, as the “lady of incantations” (nin.girima.ereš.mu₇.mu₇.ke), that recalls the function of *um pḫl pḫlt* in the *bt mnt* quoted above (KTU 1.100:71) and the title *mlkt mnt* (RSOu 14 53 [KTU 9.432]:34). Nevertheless, the pair *Asalluḫi-Nin-girima* is not easily comparable with Ugaritic *hrn-um pḫl pḫlt*. On the one hand, according to the canonical interpretation, *hrn* in parallel with *Asalluḫi* cannot be the son of Enki, who in Ugarit was equated with *ktr* (RS 20.24:15) a deity discredited by KTU 1.100:45-49 for this role. Definitely, *hrn* is an outsider at Ugarit.⁹⁶ On the other hand, *um pḫl pḫlt* is defined as “daughter of *špš*”, a deity prominent in the Mesopotamian incantation texts. But *hrn*, her prospective husband and Underworld deity, without a known genealogy as a primordial chthonic god, cannot claim such filiation either. Nevertheless the points of contact between *Nin.girima* and *um pḫl pḫlt* as deities of magic are evident. Of the three “Wesenmerkmale” that distinguish the Mesopotamian deity (“Bezug zum Wasser, Bezug zur Beschwörung, Bezug zu Schlangen”), the last two are clear and the first can be included in the third.⁹⁷ In this connection, an analysis of the possible relationship of *um pḫl pḫlt* to *ušḫry* (RS 20.24:24, ^d*iš-ḫa-ra*) is worthwhile considering, taking into account both deities’ connection with serpents as well as with *Nin-girima*.⁹⁸ Only through theogamy could *hrn* go into the Ugaritic religious and theological system.

A more detailed inquiry into the relationship of the two religious systems will be left for another occasion. However, in spite of all these approaches, the Ugaritic religious system proves to be independent and unique.

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93. A thorough description of the personality of this goddess can be found in Krebernik, M. 1984:233ff.

94. See Krebernik, M. 2003:365.

95. See Krebernik, M. 2003:239.

96. The difficulty of inserting the Mesopotamian deity of magic, well-known at Ugarit, into the Ugaritic pantheon is well appreciated by Dietrich, M. 2012:217: “Die Tatsache, dass Marduk (*Asalluḫi*) anders als sein Vater Enki/Ea in Ugarit keine Bedeutung erlangen konnte und ihm folglich auch kein eigener Kult eingerichtet wurde, hing wohl davon ab, dass er in der neuen Heimat kein geistig-theologisches Pendant, kein Numen gefunden hat, mit dem ihn die Ugariter verbunden konnten”.

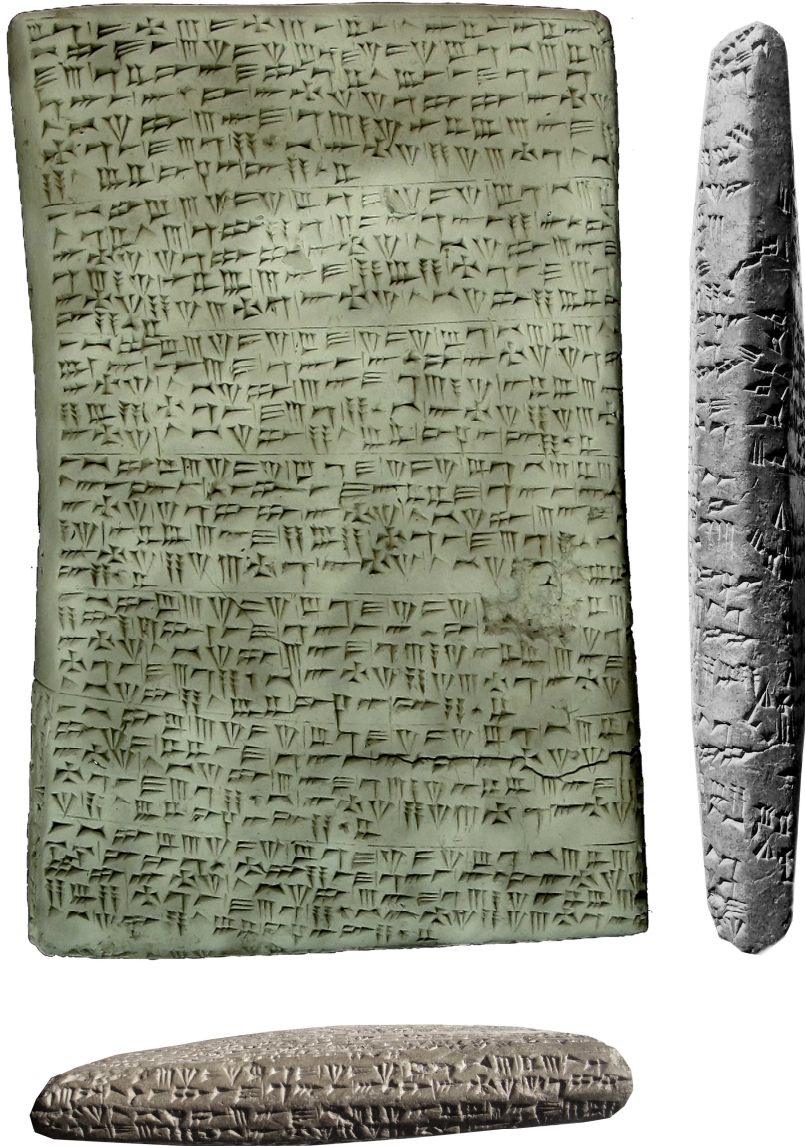
97. See Krebernik, M. 2003:365.

98. See in this regard the remark of Krebernik, M. 1984:255: “Als Stern ist Ningirima, die ‘Herrin der Reinigung’ (*bēlet tēlilti*), ... mit Išḫara geglichen”. For representation in the plastic arts see Del Olmo Lete, G. 1988:58, n. 33, 62f.

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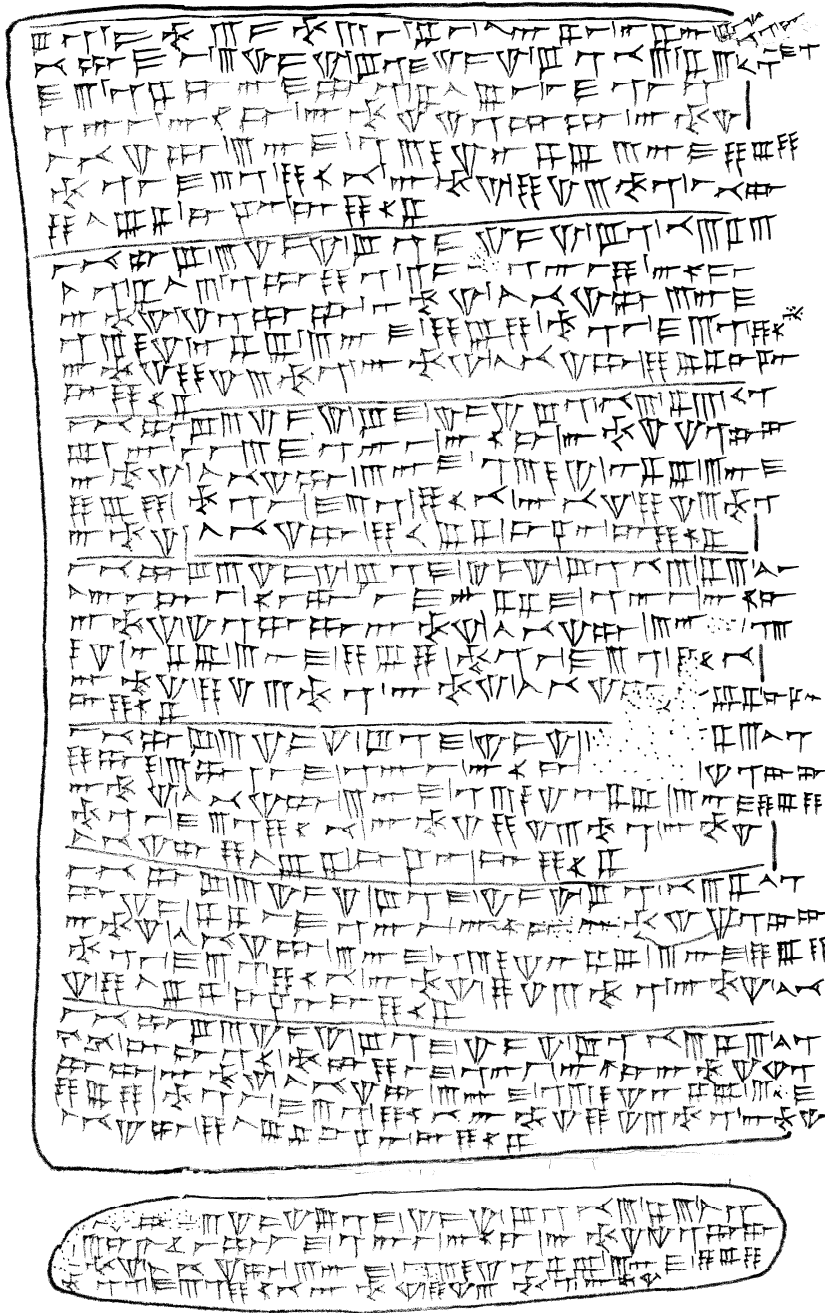
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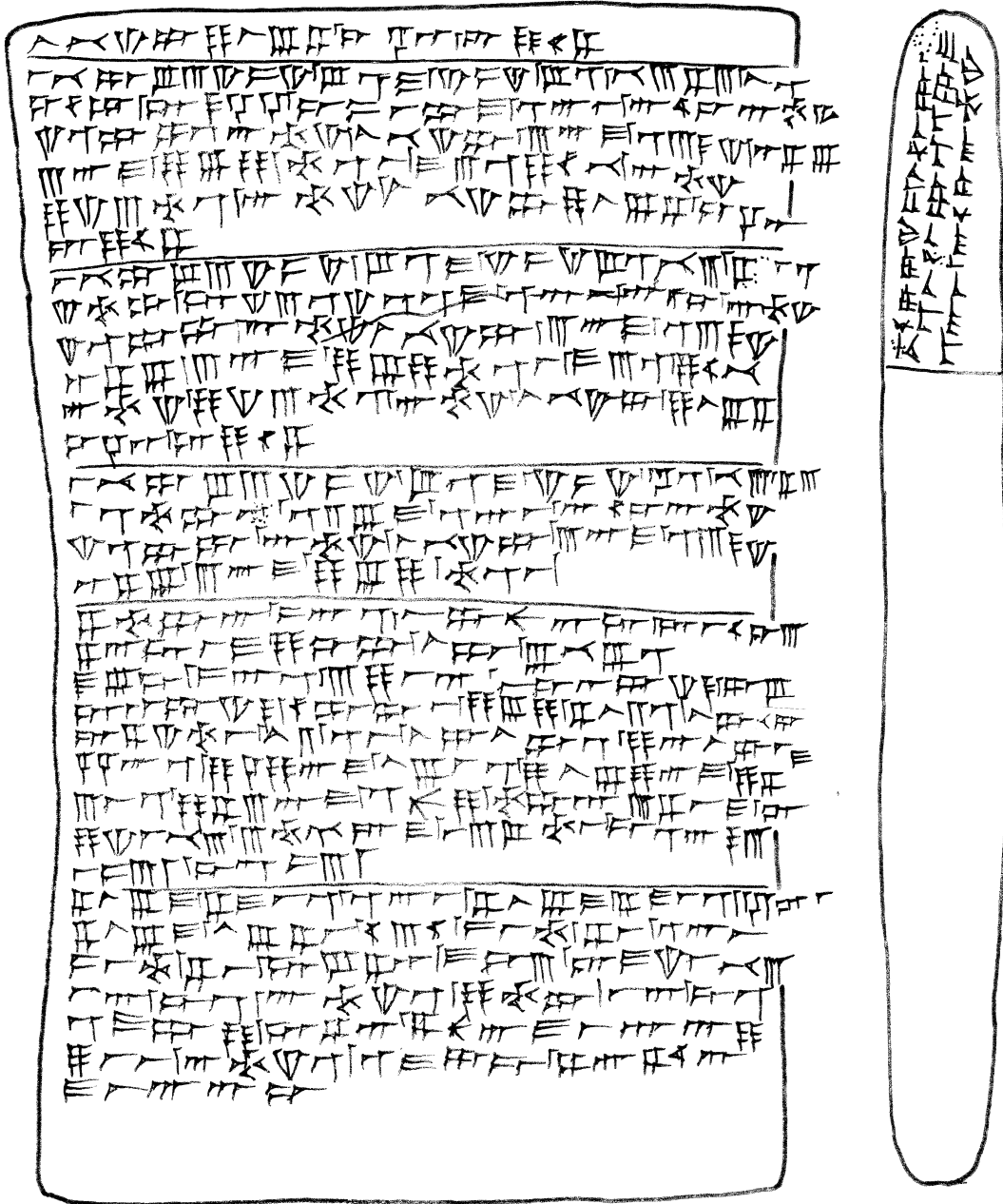
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