

Antanaclasis in the Ugaritic Poetic Epics

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Abstract

In this study I examine the Ugaritic epics for their use of antanaclasis, a literary device involving the repetition of a word in a different sense. The topic has yet to receive comprehensive treatment in either Ugaritic or biblical Hebrew texts, though it has been known in the latter corpus for many years. After looking at two examples from the Hebrew Bible for comparison, I survey thirty-nine examples of antanaclasis in the Ugaritic poems (*Baal*, *Kirtu*, and *Aqhat*). I then explore its possible functions based on insights derived from scholarship on biblical and Indo-Iranian poetics. Afterwards, I examine the distribution of the device in conjunction with evidence from the Hebrew Bible. I offer a few additional thoughts by way of conclusion.

Résumé

Dans cette étude, j'examine les épopées ougaritiques pour leur utilisation de l'antanaclasis, un dispositif littéraire impliquant la répétition d'un mot dans un sens différent. Le sujet n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'un traitement complet dans les textes ougaritiques ou bibliques hébreux, bien qu'il soit connu dans ce dernier corpus depuis de nombreuses années. Après avoir examiné deux exemples de la Bible hébraïque à des fins de comparaison, j'étudie trente-neuf exemples d'antanaclasis dans les poèmes ougaritiques (*Baal*, *Kirtu* et *Aqhat*). J'explore ensuite les fonctions possibles de ce dispositif littéraire en m'appuyant sur des connaissances issues du savoir sur la poésie biblique et indo-iranienne. Ensuite, j'examine la distribution de l'appareil en conjonction avec des preuves tirées de la Bible hébraïque. Je propose quelques réflexions supplémentaires en guise de conclusion.

Zusammenfassung

In dieser Studie untersuche ich die ugaritischen Epen auf ihre Verwendung von Antanaklasis, einem literarischen Kunstgriff, der die Wiederholung eines Wortes in einem anderen Sinne beinhaltet. Das Thema wurde weder in ugaritischen noch in biblischen hebräischen Texten umfassend behandelt, obwohl es in letzterem Korpus seit vielen Jahren bekannt ist. Nachdem ich mir zum Vergleich zwei Beispiele aus der hebräischen Bibel angesehen habe, untersuche ich neununddreißig Beispiele von Antanaklasis in den ugaritischen Gedichten (*Baal*, *Kirtu* und *Aqhat*). Anschließend untersuche ich seine möglichen Funktionen auf der Grund-

lage von Erkenntnissen aus der Forschung zur biblischen und indoiranischen Poetik. Anschließend untersuche ich die Verbreitung des Geräts in Verbindung mit Beweisen aus der hebräischen Bibel. Abschließend möchte ich noch einige zusätzliche Gedanken anbringen.

Keywords: antanaclasis, repair, Baal, Anat, Aqhat, Kirtu, Aqhat, Paghit, Ilhau, Yaṣṣib, Hebrew Bible, Joseph, Qoheleth, Indo-Iranian poetics, Leitwort, keyword, repetition, variation, disambiguation, irony.

The poets of Ugarit were extremely skilled in the many poetic techniques of the wider Near East. Numerous literary devices found in the Hebrew Bible are attested already in the Ugaritic epics.¹ One such tool is antanaclasis. Derived from the Hellenistic Greek term *ἀντανάκλασις* “reflection, echo”, it refers to the repetition of a word in a different sense.² About this device I have remarked:

It can be obtained by use of homonyms or by way of signs, words, and expressions of a single etymological derivation, but with a wide enough semantic range to provide sufficiently different meanings. Therefore, while antanaclasis can have a paronomastic effect, it belongs more properly to the realm of polysemy³.

Though scholars have highlighted individual examples of antanaclasis in the Hebrew Bible for many years, to date no comprehensive study exists.⁴ Cases of antanaclasis have been found periodically in other Near Eastern texts as well, but mostly they have not been defined as such or have been parenthetical to the published research.⁵ Of course, antanaclasis has not escaped the attention of Ugaritologists, but again, no dedicated study has emerged.⁶ Moreover, little headway has been made in establishing the function of the device in any of the aforementioned corpora⁷.

In this contribution, I should like to address this gap and offer an analysis of antanaclasis in the Ugaritic epic poems (*Baal*, *Kirtu*, *Aqhat*)⁸. I divide my study

¹ A few representative studies include: WATSON 1976; 1980a; 1980b; 1982; 1984/1986; 1999: §5.2.10.2; 2000); PARKER 2004; NOEGEL 1995; 2014; 2021b.

² MONTANARI 2015: 189, s.v. *ἀντανάκλασις*; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* IX.3.68.

³ NOEGEL 2021b: 164–65.

⁴ CASANOWICZ 1893: 105–67; GORDIS 1933; SCHÖKEL 1963: 72–7; LYS 1969: 170–71; BÜHLMANN – SCHERER 1973: 19–21; SASSON 1976; CERESKO 1982; MARCUS 1990; CARASIK 2003; NOEGEL 2007; WAZANA 2015; NOEGEL 2021b: 164–71.

⁵ For studies on the device outside the Hebrew Bible, see BALDACCIO 1985; YOUNGER 1986: 102; LANG 2011; NOEGEL 2011: 173, 178, 180–81; 2021b: 164–71. For a thorough treatment of antanaclasis in a single textual context, see RICHTER 2016: 22–6, 33–5, *passim*.

⁶ See NATAN-YULZARY 2009: 593, and n. 43; 2010: 154–55; NOEGEL 2014: 311; 2021b: 167–68.

⁷ An important exception is that of CERESKO 1982, to which I return below.

⁸ Throughout I adopt (with periodic changes) the translations found in PARKER 1997.

into five parts. In the first, I present two examples of antanaclasis from the Hebrew Bible for comparison. In the second, I survey thirty-nine examples of the device in the Ugaritic poems. My third section explores the possible functions of antanaclasis based on insights derived from scholarship on biblical and Indo-Iranian poetics. In the fourth part, I examine the distribution of the device in conjunction with evidence from the Hebrew Bible. I conclude in the fifth section with a few synthetic thoughts on the topic.

I. Examples of Antanaclasis from the Hebrew Bible

A particularly crafty example of antanaclasis studied by DAVID MARCUS enhances the prose story of Joseph and the two prisoners whose dreams he interprets (Gen 40).⁹ In this pericope the expression *וְשָׂא אֶת רֹאשׁוֹ* “lift up the head of (+ pronoun)” repeats three times, always with a different meaning. Joseph first employs it in his prediction that Pharaoh will “lift up his (the cupbearer’s) head” (Gen 40:13), meaning “pardon him”. He next uses it to signify “behead” or perhaps “impale” when interpreting the baker’s dream (Gen 40:19). The narrator references it one last time when mentioning the “exoneration” of the cupbearer (Gen 40:20).

Qoh 4:1 demonstrates antanaclasis in biblical poetry.

וְהִנֵּה דִמְעַת הַעֲשֻׁקִים וְאֵין לָהֶם מְנַחֵם
וּמִיַּד עֲשֻׁקֵיהֶם כֹּחַ וְאֵין לָהֶם מְנַחֵם:

Behold the tears of the oppressed with no one to comfort them;
And the power of their oppressors with no one to avenge them.

As JACK SASSON points out, Qoheleth repeats the same phrase *אֵין לָהֶם מְנַחֵם* first meaning “no one to comfort them” and then as “no one to avenge them”.¹⁰ Qoheleth’s poetic ponderings generally are particularly rich in antanaclasis.¹¹

II. Antanaclasis in the Ugaritic Epic Poems

It is important to note that the Ugaritic writing system in the main does not record vowels and so we cannot be sure that two words that look alike also sound alike. They indeed may have, but the evidence is often wanting. Nevertheless, the existence of antanaclasis is not in question, because all cases of the device in Ugaritic are effective on a visual level.¹² Thus, as in Egyptian texts, some forms of antanaclasis in Ugaritic are primarily morphological in nature.¹³ Moreover, even for those cases in which pronunciations differ, the paronomasia that obtains between the lexemes encourages the same effect. I shall return to this point below.

⁹ See MARCUS 1990, though he does not define the device as “antanaclasis”.

¹⁰ SASSON 1976: 970.

¹¹ See CERESKO 1982; CARASIK 2003; NOEGEL 2007.

¹² On the visual sophistication of Ugaritic poetry, see YOGEV 2015a; 2015b; 2018; YOGEV – YONA 2014; NOEGEL 2021b: 53–9, 321–22.

¹³ See RICHTER 2016.

II.1 *Epic of Baal*

II.1.1. *'nt* “Anat”, “springs”, and “furrows”

The *Epic of Baal* contains twelve cases of antanaclasis, two of which focus on the names of deities. The first is the goddess Anat (*'nt*), whom we meet in *CAT* 1.1 ii 15, when El’s messengers bow down *lp 'n 'nt* “at the feet of Anat”, a phrase containing its own flourish of epanastrophe, the repetition of the final syllable of one word or line in the first syllable of the next. Not long afterwards, we hear of *'nt* “springs” in frequent reference to El’s abode: “Two lengths beneath earth’s springs (*'nt*), three the expanse of the caves” (*CAT* 1.1 iii 20; 1.2 iii 3).¹⁴ The last nouns to evoke the name “Anat” occur in the goddess’ speech to her divine “servants” (*'nm*), just before setting out for Baal’s abode, which is said to lie two lengths beneath the earth’s springs (*'nt*)” (*CAT* 1.3 iv 32–36). El also rhetorically asks whether his appetite is so great that it travels to a “spring” (*'n*) like a hind (*CAT* 1.5 i 17). The poet’s interest in additional paronomasia upon the divine name is apparent in that we often see Anat’s name in conjunction with the verb *'ny* “respond” (e.g. *CAT* 1.3 iv 53; 1.3 v 19, 29 [following Anat as well]; 1.4 iii 32–33) or the verb *'n* “look” (*CAT* 1.3 ii 23–24; 1.4 ii 14–15). On antanaclasis with these verbs, see below (II.1.7). Moreover, Athirat raises “her eyes” (*'nh*) to meet Baal’s approach (*CAT* 1.4 ii 12) and Kothar creates a weapon to strike Mot between “the eyes” (*'nm*) (*CAT* 1.2 iv 22, 25, 40; 1.3 vi 3).¹⁵ Later El makes the following declaration to *'nt* “Anat” (*CAT* 1.6 iv 1–3):

“Parched are the springs (*'nt*) of the fields, O Shapsh,
Parched are the springs (*'nt*) of the grand fields,
May [B]aal restore the furrows (*'nt*) of the ploughed land”.

Here antanaclasis involves a repetition of the plural noun *'nt* for “springs” and also “furrows”.¹⁶ As if to drive home the antanaclasis, Anat repeats El’s speech *verbatim* (*CAT* 1.6 iv 6, 12–14).¹⁷

II.1.2. *b 'l* “Baal” and “lord”

The second deity involved with antanaclasis is Baal, whose name resounds at least 138 times in the epic, far more than context necessitates. In the midst of such

¹⁴ For a discussion on the meaning of *'n* here, see SMITH 1994: 184.

¹⁵ We also see *'n* in an obscure context (*CAT* 1.6 iv 18), where it could stand for “eye” or “spring”.

¹⁶ I concur with the arguments of WYATT 2002: 137–38, and n. 92, which WATSON 2000b: 123, also accepts. Wyatt also reads the repeated imperative verb *pl* as “search” instead of “parched” (ll. 1–2). I have gone with *DULAT*: 168–169, s.v. *'n*.

¹⁷ Many scholars have proposed connecting the etymology of the name Anat with “springs” or “furrows”, or with notions of “answering”, “singing”, and “subjugation” (on antanaclasis involving these meanings, see below), based on the name’s homography with *'nt* and *'ny*. For a convenient discussion of these proposals with bibliography, see LLOYD 1994: 48–62.

frequent attestation is antanaclasis involving *b'l* for “lord, owner”.¹⁸ Often this appears near references to the god’s name making the device quite obvious. See, for example, *CAT* 1.2 i 33, in which the messengers of Yam insolently relate to El “the word of Yam, your lord (*b' lkm* || *adnkm*)”. The missive then immediately demands that he give up “Baal” (*b'l*). El capitulates and declares that Baal is Yam’s slave, making the name’s import ironic in context (*CAT* 1.2 i 35–36 [2x]). We also find the device throughout the epic in the repeated parallelism: *aliyn b'l* || *b'l arš*, i.e. “Mightiest Baal” || “Lord of the Earth” (*CAT* 1.3 i 3–4; 1.5 vi 8–10; 1.6 iii 1–3, 8–9, 20–21; 1.6 iv 4–5, 15–16).¹⁹ We last hear *b'l* in Mot’s proclamation: “Let Baal (*b'l*) be enthroned on [his] royal [throne]” (*CAT* 1.6 vi 33–34).²⁰

II.1.3. *kbd* “honour”, “inside/innards”, and “liver”

The poet similarly was adept at manipulating the root *kbd* for “honour”, “inside/innards”, and “liver”. We see this first in reference to El’s messengers who bow before Anat and “honour” (*kbd*) her (*CAT* 1.1 ii 17). A few verses later, El instructs her to “pour peace into the midst of (*kbd*) the earth, tranquility into the midst of (*kbd*) the fields” (*CAT* 1.1 ii 20–21). Thereafter the epic interlaces several references to the honouring (*kbd*) of other gods with the reiteration of El’s command to pour peace and tranquility “into the midst of” (*kbd*) the earth (*CAT* 1.3 iii 16, 17; 1.3 iv 9, 10, 24, 25, 30, 31). Thus, Kothar honours (*kbd*) El (*CAT* 1.1 iii 3, 25; 1.2 iii 6), Baal’s messengers honour (*kbd*) Anat and Kothar (*CAT* 1.3 iii 10; 1.3 vi 20), and Athirat honours (*kbd*) El (*CAT* 1.4 iv 26). We also hear how Anat goes hunting in the “midst” (*kbd*) of the earth and field (*CAT* 1.5 vi 27, 28; 1.6 ii 16, 17)²¹. Just before Baal’s messengers honour Anat, we learn how Anat’s “liver” (*kbd*) filled with laughter and victory (*CAT* 1.3 ii 25, 26). Mot later threatens that Baal will be devoured and enter his “innards” (*kbd*) (*CAT* 1.5 ii 4).²² Our last exposure to the root *kbd* occurs when Anat honours (*kbd*) El (*CAT* 1.6 i 38).²³

¹⁸ This occurs thirteen times: *CAT* 1.1 iv 6; 1.2 i 17, 33, 42, 45; 1.3 i 4; 1.5 vi 10; 1.6 iii 1, 3, 9, 21; 1.6 iv 5, 16. For antanaclasis between “Baal” and “lord” on the eighth century BCE Phoenician stela of Kilamuwa (KAI 24, 15–16), see NOEGEL 2021b: 170.

¹⁹ SMITH – PITARD 2009: 105, remark: “The second word is the same as Baal’s name and may be regarded as a pun. Or the title could be translated ‘Prince Baal of the Earth’”.

²⁰ The term *b'l* also ends the text’s colophon with an unknown name: *b'l tmm* “Master of PN” (*CAT* 1.6 vi 58). Israelite prophets also found the noun *בַּעַל* useful for its polysemy. There are many examples of this. See Hos 2:15–18, and NOEGEL 2015: 69–94.

²¹ The device is clearly deliberate since the poet could have avoided the preposition *kbd* “inside” in favor of *qrb* “inside” (e.g. *CAT* 1.2 iii 4; 1.4 iv 22; 1.4 v 30, 37, 62, 65; 1.4 vi 6, 9, 31; 1.4 vii 13, 27, etc.) or *btk* “in the midst” (e.g. *CAT* 1.3 iii 29; 1.3 iv 19; 1.4 iii 14, etc.).

²² On *kbd* and its usages in Ugaritic, see SMITH – PITARD 2009: 164–74. On the *kbd* “liver” as a locus for divine oracles, see DEL OLMO LETE 1999: 290–95.

²³ The polysemy inherent in the root *כבד* was also of interest to Israelite poets. See the important study on Gen 49:6 (and *כְּבֹדִי*) by GEVIRTZ 1975: 100–10, who also cites the Ugaritic parallels.

II.1.4. *yṭb* “sit” and “turn/return/turn away”

The use of the roots *ṭb* and *yṭb* is particularly clever in the *Epic of Baal*. Most frequent is the use of the root *yṭb* in its various verbal and nominal forms. Usually it connotes “sit”, and this is how we first see it in reference to Kothar’s “seat” of enthronement at Kaphtor, a reference that repeats later (*CAT* 1.1 iii 1; 1.3 vi 15). The gods El, Baal, Mot, and Athtar, as well as the divine assembly and Yam’s messengers are likewise all said to *yṭb* “sit” enthroned in the text.²⁴ Other variations of the root exist throughout.²⁵ Antanaclasis takes place when the poet periodically employs *yṭb* for “respond” (*CAT* 1.3 iv 21 [*ṭṭb*], 54 [*yṭb*], 55 [*yṭb*]); “return” (*CAT* 1.4 vi 2 [*ṭṭb*], 15 [*ṭṭb*]; 1.4 vii 24 [*ṭṭbn*]); and “turn/turn away” (*CAT* 1.4 v 42 [*ṭb*]; 1.4 vii 8 [*ṭb*]; 1.6 v 20 [*yṭb*]; 1.6 vi 12 [*yṭb*]).²⁶ After Mot “turns to” (*yṭb*) fight Baal on the summit of Şapan (*CAT* 1.6 vi 12), we do not see *yṭb* again in either of its usages.²⁷

II.1.5. *ḡr* “mountain” and “skin”

The first time we find the consonants *ḡr* they refer to a “mountain” (*CAT* 1.1 iii 7),²⁸ a meaning that repeats numerous times (*CAT* 1.1 iii 12, 22; 1.2 i 14, 20; 1.3 ii 5; 1.3 iii 29, 30; 1.4 v 15, 31, 38; 1.4 vii 5, 37; 1.4 viii 2, 3, 5; 1.5 v 12, 13; 1.5 vi 26; 1.6 ii 16). However, near the end of the cycle, we find *ḡr* twice used for “skin” when El and Anat gash themselves in mourning over Baal’s death (*CAT* 1.5 vi 17; 1.6 i 2). The last time we encounter the lexeme it again means “mountain” (*CAT* 1.6 ii 16).²⁹

II.1.6. *šnt* “delay” and “year(s)”

The ambiguous morphology of *šnt* similarly serves the poet’s antanaclastic needs by meaning both “depart” and “year(s)”. We first hear Kothar instruct his servants: “You, you delay, but I will depart (*šnt*)”! (*CAT* 1.1 iii 18). The verb *šnt* derives from the root *šnw* and presumably was pronounced /*šanītu*/, which is paronomastically similar to /*šanātu*/ “years”.³⁰ The narrator then lists the sacri-

²⁴ El (*CAT* 1.1 iv 4; 1.5 vi 12, 13); Baal (*CAT* 1.4 vii 42; 1.6 v 5); Mot (*CAT* 1.4 viii 13; 1.5 ii 16); Athtar (*CAT* 1.6 i 58); divine assembly at a feast (*CAT* 1.2 i 21); and Yam’s messengers (*CAT* 1.2 i 13, 19; 1.5 i 9; 1.5 ii 13).

²⁵ *atbn* “I will sit” (*CAT* 1.6 iii 18); *mtb* “dwelling” (*CAT* 1.3 iv 48, 49, 50, 51, 53; 1.3 v 39, 40, 41, 42, 43; 1.4 i 12, 13, 14, 16 18; 1.4 iv 52, 53, 54, 55, 57); *ṭṭb* “seat/throne” (*CAT* 1.2 iii 17; 1.5 iii 2, 3; 1.6 vi 28); *yṭṭb* “be seated” (*CAT* 1.4 v 47, 1.6 vi 33).

²⁶ The meaning of *ṭb* in *CAT* 1.2 i 2 is unclear, because the passage is broken.

²⁷ Israelite authors also enjoyed antanaclasis and paronomasia between יָשַׁב and יָשִׁיב. See NOEGEL 2021b: 56–7.

²⁸ Usually, the term takes a masculine plural, but here it is marked as a feminine plural.

²⁹ Several passages offer paronomasia on this lexeme by employing *ḡr* for “attack” (*CAT* 1.1 v 12, 14; 1.2 iv 6 [here meaning “sink”]; “heaps” [*ḡrmm*] *CAT* 1.3 ii 11; and derived forms of the verb *nḡr* “guard” *CAT* 1.4 viii 14; 1.6 iv 23, 24). The unknown paronomastic toponym *uḡr* also appears once (*CAT* 1.3 iv 34).

³⁰ *DULAT* 834–835, s.v. *šnw*.

fices at El's feast including "year-old (*šnt*) calves" (*CAT* 1.1 iv 31). The same usage continues in the curse that Baal's messengers deliver to Mot: "May you fall at the height of your years (*šnt*)!" (*CAT* 1.2 i 9). Afterwards the poet repeats Kothar's instructions, this time in the mouth of Anat to her messengers: "You, you delay, but I will depart (*šnt*)!" (*CAT* 1.3 iv 33). Thereafter we only hear *šnt* as "year" (*CAT* 1.4 vi 43 ["year-old calves"]; 1.6 v 9 ["seventh year"]).

II.1.7. *ny/w* "humiliate", "answer/speak", and *n* "see/look"

A particularly skillful case of antanaclasis involves the root *nw/y* for "humiliate" and "answer/speak", and the root *n* "see/look". We first see *ny/w* in Yam's demand to the divine assembly: "Give up Baal, that I may humiliate him (*nmh*)" (*CAT* 1.2 i 18, 35).³¹ The verb does not occur again in the extant text. Instead, just a few lines later, Baal reproaches the gods saying "together will the gods answer (*t'ny*)", adding, "I myself will answer (*ny*) Yam's messenger" (*CAT* 1.2 i 26, 28). The poet enlists the verb with this meaning numerous times afterwards.³² Nevertheless, in the midst of these passages, we find the denominative verb *n* "see/look". Baal "sees" (*y'n*) Pidray (*CAT* 1.3 i 23); Anat "sees" (*t'n*) the battlefield (*CAT* 1.3 ii 23); Baal "sees" (*y'n*) Anat (*CAT* 1.3 iv 39); Baal "sees" (*n*) the East (*CAT* 1.4 vii 40); and finally Baal and Mot "see" (*t'n*) each other (*CAT* 1.6 vi 16). Add to these several references to the gods' "eyes" (*n*) (see II.1.1.), which conclude when Kothar's weapon strikes Mot between the "eyes" (*nm*) (*CAT* 1.2 iv 22, 25, 40; 1.13 vi 3). Interestingly, the battle between Mot and Baal is also the last time we see the root *n* (here as "see/look") in any of its meanings.³³

II.1.8. *dm* "blood", "juice", and "gush, bath"

The epic relates Anat's bloodlust on multiple occasions. We hear how she had slain many warriors and waded in their *dm* "blood" (*CAT* 1.3 ii 14, 27, 31, 34; 1.3 v 2).³⁴ She also threatens to murder El if he does not grant Baal a temple: "I will make your grey hair (*šbt*) run with blood (*dmm*), the grey hair (*šbt*) of your beard (*dqn*) with gore" (*CAT* 1.3 v 24). However, as the narrator increasingly leads us to scenes of Kothar's temple projects and divine feasting, the blood of warriors is replaced with the *dm hṛṣ* "gush of (liquid) gold" (*CAT* 1.4 i 32) and the *dm šm* "juice" (lit. "blood of trees" || *yn* "wine") (*CAT* 1.4 iii 44; 1.4 iv 38; 1.4 vi 59; 1.5

³¹ The first usage of *n* is in a broken context (*CAT* 1.1 v 6). It perhaps means "see", but it is difficult to be certain.

³² *CAT* 1.2 i 26, 28; 1.2 iv 7; 1.3 iv 5, 21, 53; 1.3 v 19, 25, 29; 1.4 iii 32; 1.4 iv 1, 40; 1.4 v 2, 49, 63; 1.4 vi 1, 14; 1.4 vii 14, 37; 1.6 i 47, 49, 53, 61; 1.6 ii 13; 1.6 iv 21.

³³ The cognate verb ענה is likewise appreciated for its polysemy in the Hebrew Bible. See, e.g. Ps 116:10: הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר אֲנִי עָנִיתִי כִּי אֶאְדָּר "I trust in Yahweh, so I spoke. I exceedingly suffered/spoke". See similar cases of polysemy involving ענה in Isa 25:5; Isa 31:4.

³⁴ The functor or asseverative *dm* "so then, certainly" also exists in *CAT* 1.1 iii 12; 1.2 i 44; 1.3 iii 20; 1.3 iv 13; 1.5 iii 9, 18, 25. The term *tdmm(t)* "lasciviousness" also appears among the things that Baal detests (*CAT* 1.4 iii 20, 22). It is perhaps related to *dm* "blood". See WYATT 2002: 96, n. 113; DULAT 860, s.v. *tdmm*.

iv 16).³⁵ Having averted Anat's attack, El grants Baal his temple. Athirat's response then subtly recalls Anat's threat: "You are great, O El, so very wise; the grey hair (*šbt*) of your beard (*dqn*) instructs you" (*CAT* 1.4 v 3–5).³⁶

II.1.9. *yd* "hand" and "penis/love"

The term *yd* "hand" is common in the text (e.g., *CAT* 1.2 iv 14, 15, 21, 23; 1.3 ii 34; 1.4 vii 40; 1.4 viii 5; 1.5 i 20; 1.6 ii 25). However, after her massacre, Anat sings of the "love" (*yd*) of Baal and his daughters (*CAT* 1.3 iii 6).³⁷ Antanaclasis ensues again when Athirat requests of El a temple for Baal and El mistakes her advances for something more amatory: "Does the 'hand' (*yd*) of El the king excite you, the love of the Bull arouse you?" (*CAT* 1.4 iv 38). As is well known, El's *yd* also can mean "penis".³⁸ After El's *double entendre*, we see *yd* only in the common sense as "hand".³⁹

II.1.10. *alp* "thousand" and "ox"

Throughout the epic, the author uses *alp* for both "thousand" and "ox". We hear it frequently in reference to great distances. Thus, we first observe *alp* in the expression "across a thousand (*alp*) courts" in reference to the span travelled by El's messengers (*CAT* 1.1 i 14). A similar idiom "a thousand fields/acres" recurs describing the great distance to Memphis (*CAT* 1.1 iii 2; 1.3 vi 17), Anat's trip to Šapan (*CAT* 1.3 iv 38, 1.4 v 24), the vast acres of the sea (*CAT* 1.3 iv 45, cf. 1.3 iii 1; 1.4 v 24), Baal's temple (*CAT* 1.4 v 56), and the orbit of Shapsh (*CAT* 1.4 viii 24–25). The number *alp* "thousand" also totals the pitchers that Baal draws from the wine (*CAT* 1.3 i 15) and the "thousand (*alpm*) silver vessels" that Kothar manufactures (*CAT* 1.4 i 27). In the midst of such epic numbers, we enter several banqueting scenes in which Baal offers an *alp* "ox": one to Anat (*CAT* 1.3 iv 41), one to Kothar (*CAT* 1.4 v 45), and another to the gods (*CAT* 1.4 vi 40, 49). The last instance of *alp* draws attention to its antanaclastic capabilities by denoting "ox", while also hinting at its numerical value. This happens at Baal's burial when Anat slaughters *šb m alpm* "seventy oxen" (*CAT* 1.6 i 20).⁴⁰

³⁵ SMITH – PITARD 2009: 417–18, suggest that the expression evokes gold's liquid form and also the colour red. DE MOOR 1987: 51, n. 227, notes the parallel idiom דם-ענבים "blood of grapes" in Gen 49:11; Deut 32:14, and elsewhere. WYATT 2002: 97, n. 120, observes that the vine is classified as a tree in Judg 9:13. See also *dm zt* "olive juice" (lit. "blood of an olive") in *CAT* 1.114.31.

³⁶ Israelite poets similarly exploit the Hebrew cognate דם "blood" for its paronomasia. See NOEGEL 2016: 1–47.

³⁷ The meaning "love" (from *ydd* "love") is clear in that *yd* is parallel with *ahbt* and *dd*.

³⁸ One also could derive it from *ydd* "love", with *DULAT* 954, s.v. *yd* II. SMITH – PITARD 2009: 522, see it as evoking both senses. This usage is found also in *CAT* 1.23:33–34. *DULAT* 953, s.v. *yd* I, renders *yd* as "penis" in this text.

³⁹ A similar understanding of יד as both "hand" and "penis" informs some biblical texts. See Isa 57:8; Jer 5:31; 50:15. DELCOR 1967, sees two different roots operative here. For other views, see SCHORCH 1999: 127–29; PAUL 2002: 491.

⁴⁰ There is evidence for a similar interest in this polysemous term in the Hebrew Bible. See, e.g., the noun יָלָן in Ps 50:10, examined in NOEGEL – NICHOLS 2021: 7.

II.1.11. *npš* “throat”, “appetite”, and “being, life”

The last examples of antanaclasis in the *Epic of Baal* centre upon the term *npš*, which bears at least three different senses⁴¹. The first occurs in Baal’s claim: “like a lion I will descend with my appetite (*npš*)” (*CAT* 1.2 iii 20)⁴². Since the god likens himself to a lion, we naturally translate *npš* as “appetite”, but since he refers to his intention to obtain a temple, we may better render it “desire”. In *CAT* 1.4 vii 48; 1.5 i 7, 33, *npš* refers twice to Mot’s “throat”, the first as a vehicle for speaking and the second for swallowing. Enveloped between the second set of passages is Mot’s query to Baal in which *npš* again signifies “appetite”: “Is my appetite (*npš*) the appetite (*npš*) of the lion in the wild... does my appetite (*npš*) consume like an ass?” (*CAT* 1.5 i 14, 18, cf. 1.2 iii 20; 1.6 ii 17, 18)⁴³. Finally, *npš* occurs as “being, life” in El’s expressed hope that Baal will be found alive: “I can sit and rest, and my being (*npš*) within can rest” (*CAT* 1.6 iii 19)⁴⁴.

II.1.12. *rḥm* “damsel, young girl” and “millstones”

The *Epic of Baal* twice refers to Anat as a *rḥm* “damsel, young girl” (*CAT* 1.6 ii 5, 27). However, almost immediately afterwards, we find *rḥm* used for the “millstones” with which Anat grinds Mot (*CAT* 1.6 ii 34; 1.6 v 15).⁴⁵

II.2. *Epic of Kirtu*⁴⁶

II.2.1. *adm* “humankind” and “rouge”

Of the three epics, the *Epic of Kirtu* contains the greatest number of cases: sixteen. The first entails *adm* for both “humankind” and “rouge”. The former repeats

⁴¹ On the various meanings of this term, see WYATT 2002: 263, n. 56. WATSON 2000b: 119–20, suggests that the verb *rḥš* in *CAT* 1.3 ii 32–35 bears two different senses: “bathe” and “wash”, but I have left this case out since there is no homophony/homography here, only (perhaps) a slight expansion of the verb’s semantic range. However, if one accepts this example, then we have yet another case of antanaclasis in the *Epic of Baal*.

⁴² A few attestations occur in broken contexts, e.g. *CAT* 1.1 v 3, 16; 1.5 v 4.

⁴³ On the various meanings of this noun, see SMITH – PITARD 2009: 689–90.

⁴⁴ The same ambiguity informs the cognate *שָׁנָה* in the Hebrew Bible. See, e.g. Prov 10:3; 13:2–4, 19, 25; 16:24, 26; 18:7.

⁴⁵ Hebrew possesses cognates for both *rḥm* “damsel” (רַחֵם) and *rḥm* “millstones” (רַחֵים).

⁴⁶ The article by NATAN-YULZARY (2023) came to me too late to integrate, though the editor kindly allowed for this footnote. In general, this work gives attention to devices of sound in the Ugaritic texts, though some of this material has been covered already (NOEGEL 2014; 2021b), neither of which are cited. The latter, in particular, provides more precise terminology for the various sound devices gathered therein. The article (2023: 321) also argues that the Ugaritic root *k-r-t* “cut” provides an etymology for the name Kirtu (first suggested by GREENSTEIN 1997: 10), but this is difficult to maintain as this root is not attested in Ugaritic. In Aramaic, it means “divorce”, and in Akkadian, the cognate root *karātu* refers to the “striking” of figurines and the “cutting” of objects, like Tiamat’s tail.

several times in El's title *ab adm* "Father of Humankind" (*CAT* 1.14 i 37, 43; 1.14 iii 32, 47; 1.14 vi 32). Often the poet integrates the phrase with a paronomastic form of chiasm involving *udm* "Udum" (*CAT* 1.14 iii 31–32; 1.14 v 42–43; 1.14 vi 12–13).⁴⁷ Among the many attestations of El's title, El antanaclastically commands Kirtu: *tadm* "rouge yourself" (*CAT* 1.14 ii 9).⁴⁸ In case the audience did not catch it, the narrator relates how he obeyed the command (i.e., *yadm*) (*CAT* 1.14 iii 52). While *adm* and *tadm/yadm* were not identical in sound (the former likely pronounced /'ādāmu/, the latter as /ta'adumu/ya'adumu/), the visual and sonic effects are obvious, especially when chiastically aligned with the alliterative *udm* (i.e., /'udumu/).⁴⁹

II.2.2. *amt* "servant woman" and "elbow"

In *CAT* 1.14 ii 1–3, Kirtu speaks to El in a dream telling him that he does not request riches, only children: "What is to me silver or yellow gold? Together with its slaves, forever mine? A triad of chariot horses from the stable of a servant woman's son"? The term for "servant woman" is *amt*. El responds by commanding him to prepare a ritual offering: "Wash your hands to the elbow (*amt*)" (*CAT* 1.14 ii 10). Here the poet has created antanaclasis between *amt* "servant woman" and "elbow". The offer of horses from the son of a *amt* "servant woman" surfaces again in the mouth of king Pabuli (*CAT* 1.14 iii 25). Afterwards, Kirtu reiterates his plea and fulfils El's command, thus repeating the antanaclasis (*CAT* 1.14 iii 37, 53). Thereafter the term *amt* only designates a "servant woman" (*CAT* 1.14 v 38; 1.14 vi 8, 22).

II.2.3. *tkm* "shoulder" and "alure"

El's command to Kirtu also parallels *amt* "elbow" with *tkm* "shoulder": "Wash your hands to the elbow, [your fin]gers as far as the (*tkm*) shoulder" (*CAT* 1.14 ii 10–11). As with *amt*, the noun *tkm* provided the poet with an opportunity for antanaclasis. It clearly refers here to Kirtu's "shoulder", but a few lines later, El orders him to "Ascend to the top of the lookout, mount the alure (*tkm*) of the city-wall" (*CAT* 1.14 ii 22).⁵⁰ The same sequence "shoulder" and "alure" then repeats when Kirtu carries out the divine command (*CAT* 1.14 iii 54; 1.14 iv 4). The poet last utilizes *tkm* to mean "alure" in El's charge to the herald-god Ilish: "Ascend the alure of a building, to the parapet of a watchtower" (*CAT* 1.16 iv 13).⁵¹

⁴⁷ The Hebrew Bible also contains many paronomastic forms of chiasm. See KSELMAN 1973; 1977; 2002.

⁴⁸ The rouge is likely red ochre. See WYATT 2002: 186, n. 44.

⁴⁹ Paronomasia involving the root אדמ is well-attested in the Hebrew Bible. See NOEGEL 2016.

⁵⁰ See DULAT 903, s.v. *tkm*.

⁵¹ While the cognate אֶרְשָׁי "shoulder" is not an architectural term in the Bible, in Gen 48:22 it polysemously projects both "shoulder-portion" and the "slope of a hill".

II.2.4. *tn* “repeat/recite”, “two”, “another man”, and “two parts”

Upon learning that his family had perished, Kirtu enters his bedroom and cries: “repeating (*tn*) his groaning, he shed tears” (*CAT* 1.14 i 27). Here *tn* is a verbal form derived from the root *tny*⁵². We soon hear *tn* in the poet’s description of Kirtu’s infantry, which onomatopoeically evokes the rhythm of the march: *atr tn tn hlk atr tl klhm* “After two, two will march. After three, all of them” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 41). Note how the number “two” fittingly appears twice in immediate succession and just before the number three. A few verses later, El describes the situation of the campaign in which the new groom will depart, driving his wife to a *tn* “another man” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 48). Numerical paronomasia with *tnm* “archers” anticipates the two demonstrations of antanaclasis (*CAT* 1.14 ii 38). A few stichs later, the narrator reports the army’s march initiating the seven-day typology. They “march a day, and then a second (*tn*)...” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 2). The formula repeats when the militia halts: “a day and a second (*tn*)” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 10). The entire sequence of two (*tn tn*) marching, the driving of a wife to another man (*tn*), and the seven-day typology including a second (*tn*) day then recurs (*CAT* 1.14 iv 19, 27, 32), though this time there is no mention of *tnm* “archers”⁵³. At Tyre, Kirtu vows to Athirat that he will make a statue for Lady Huraya that consists of *tn* “two parts” silver (*CAT* 1.14 iv 42)⁵⁴. The marching and halting continues, again repeating the second (*tn*) day each time (*CAT* 1.14 iv 44; 1.14 v 3). After Huraya bears Kirtu children, Athirat reminds the king that he did not fulfil his vow. The column is fragmentary, but she clearly refers to him *tn* “reciting/repeating” his vow (*CAT* 1.15 iii 29). El then “repeats” (*tny*) a second time his request for any god who will dispel Kirtu’s illness (*CAT* 1.16 v 13). Kirtu recovers on the second (*tn*) day (*CAT* 1.16 vi 22).⁵⁵ Near the end of the story Yaššib’s inner thoughts convince him to “repeat” (*tny*) them to his father (*CAT* 1.16 vi 28). Thus, the final and first usages are the same, forming a linguistic inclusio. Nevertheless, the context is now different. Kirtu’s repeated groaning over the loss of his family is now ironically supplanted by his son’s rehearsed rebuke.⁵⁶

II.2.5. *b l* “Baal” and “lord”

The *Epic of Kirtu* similarly exploits the polysemy *b l* for both “Baal” and “lord”, as we saw in the previous epic (see II.1.2.). The name Baal occurs nine times (*CAT* 1.14 ii 24; 1.15 ii 3; 1.16 i 6; 1.16 ii 45; 1.16 iii 5, 7; 1.16 iv 7, 11; 1.16 vi

⁵² *DULAT* 924, s.v. *tny*.

⁵³ On such variations as deliberate devices, see KORPEL 1998: 93–5.

⁵⁴ On this and other cases of numerical polysemy and paronomasia in the text, see NOEGEL 2014: 311–12.

⁵⁵ Actually, *tnnth* “he repeated for a second time” appears in a broken portion of the tablet’s fifth column (*CAT* 1.16 v 8), and is followed in the next line with *tlth* “he repeated for a third time”. Unfortunately, the context is completely lost.

⁵⁶ A paronomastic interest in the cognate שָׁנָה “repeat” is apparent in the Bible as well. In Gen 41:32, the verb is placed just before הִלְדֹם “dream”, thus suggesting שָׁנָה “sleep”: וְעַל הַלְדֹם הַשְּׁנִי הָיָה הַחֵלֶם אֶל־פַּרְעֹה פַּעַמַּיִם. “And pharaoh had the same dream twice”.

56), and in the midst of these references the lady Huraya tells the magistrates of Khubur: “your lord (*b'l*) Kirtu is having a feast” (*CAT* 1.15 iv 28).⁵⁷ This is the only instance in the extant portions of the epic in which *b'l* means “lord”.⁵⁸

II.2.6. *dn* “army” and “storage/silo”

El’s dream message is so steeped in ambiguity and polysemy that it is difficult to ascertain its exact meaning.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it is clear that El orders Kirtu to prepare provisions for an *dn* “army” after he makes an offering to Baal: “Then let the army (*dn*), supplied, go forth, the host of hosts, supplied. Then let the escorting army (*dn*) go forth” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 32–34).⁶⁰ This is the last we see *dn* until the final tablet when ploughmen describe the drought brought on by Kirtu’s illness: “The food is all spent from its storage (*dn*), the wine is all spent from its skins, the oil is all spent from its [casks]” (*CAT* 1.16 iii 13–15).⁶¹ Here *dn* now denotes “storage, silos”.

II.2.7. *alp* “ox” and “thousand”

The antanaclastic use of *alp* for “ox” and “thousand” is found here in an alternating and less sustained sequence than in the *Epic of Baal* (see II.1.10.). In Kirtu’s dream, El predicts that the king will mobilise his troops: “They will march by the thousand (*alpm*)” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 39). He then foresees that king Pabuli will not sleep due to the “lowing of the plough-ox (*alp*)” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 18). The narrator then repeats each of these lines *verbatim* in rather close succession thus continuing the alternation while drawing attention to the antanaclasis (*CAT* 1.14 iv 17; 1.14 v 10). Following these references, the term *alp* never appears again in the extant epic.

II.2.8. *šr* “attack/besiege” and “sing”

In *CAT* 1.14 iii 6, El commands Kirtu to “attack (*šr*) the surrounding villages” of Udum, and the verb repeats when Kirtu carries out the plan (*CAT* 1.14 iv 50). However, later Kirtu tells his daughter Thitmanit to “go, sing (*šr*) on the heights”!

⁵⁷ A near case of antanaclasis involves the repeated verb *atr* “march” (*CAT* 1.14 iv 19–20), which the poet follows by informing us that the march ended at the shrine of *atrt* “Athirat” (1.14 iv 35, 38). Strictly speaking, the two are not identical, so I treat it here as a case of appellative paronomasia. On this device, see NOEGEL 2021b: 91–113.

⁵⁸ Where *CAT* 1.15 v 21 reads *y[]ny* in Huraya’s statement about Kirtu, GREENSTEIN 1997: 29, reads *b'lny* “our lord”. I have adopted the reading of *CAT*.

⁵⁹ See NOEGEL 2014: 304–6, for a discussion of the polysemy in the divine missive, including the term *dn*.

⁶⁰ The second *dn* in this passage perhaps means “abundance”. As such it would refer to both the plentiful rations that Kirtu just prepared (*CAT* 1.14 iv 9–10) as well as the multitude he assembled. See NOEGEL 2014: 305–6. This would then constitute another case of antanaclasis.

⁶¹ See *DULAT* 150–51, s.v. *dn*.

(CAT 1.16 i 43). Enhancing the antanaclasis is the paronomastic reference just a few lines earlier to Kirtu *šr šr* “making a banquet” (CAT 1.16 i 40–41). After this juncture in the epic, the verb *šr* does not appear again in either meaning.⁶²

II.2.9. *qr* “noise” and “flow, well”

In CAT 1.14 iii 16, El predicts that king Pabuli will lose sleep also due to “the noise (*qr*) of his stallion’s neighing”, and this is repeated when it happens (CAT 1.14 v 8).⁶³ When Kirtu becomes ill, his son Ilhau thinks he will die, and so Kirtu pleads with him: “Do not moan (*tdm*) for me, O son! Spend not the flow (*qr*) of your eye” (CAT 1.16 i 26–27).⁶⁴ The usage stands out, because previously the poem has twice employed the byform *mqr* “flow, well” (CAT 1.14 iii 9; 1.14 v 2). Moreover, as EDWARD GREENSTEIN notes, the verb for “moan” in the previous stich (i.e. *tdm*, **dmm*), paronomastically suggests “shed tears” (i.e. *tdm* ‘, **dm* ‘).⁶⁵ Thus, in the same way that *tdm* in the first stich evokes both the tears and sounds of mourning, so also does *qr* in the second stich.

II.2.10. *zbl* “illness/ill person” and “prince”

We first hear the root *zbl* as “illness” when the narrator reports the tragic loss of Kirtu’s family: “a third died in health, a fourth in illness (*zblnm*)” (CAT 1.14 i 17). El then predicts that even the ill person (*zbl*) will take up his bed to serve in the coming campaign, and this prediction is fulfilled (CAT 1.14 ii 45; 1.14 iv 23). Antanaclasis takes place soon afterwards when we hear *zbl* “prince” as an epithet for the gods Yarikh and Resheph (CAT 1.15 ii 4, 6). After Kirtu takes ill, El seeks a cure from the gods of the assembly by asking seven times: “Who of the gods can remove illness? Who can dispel a disease (*zbln*)?” (CAT 1.16 v 12, 15, 18, 21, 28, 50). When the gods fail to answer, El issues a sarcastic, antanaclastic barb: “Stay seated, my sons, on your seats, on your princely (*zbl*) thrones” (CAT 1.16 v 25). He then creates a “Dispeller of Disease (*zbln*)”, who removes the illness (CAT 1.16 v 28; 1.16 vi 9). Just before the poem concludes, Kirtu’s son Yaššib convinces himself to reprimand his father for neglecting his duties due to infirmity: “Your sickbed is your consort, your illness (*zbln*) is your company” (CAT 1.16 vi 36, 52).⁶⁶

⁶² I owe this example to my graduate student CORINNA NICHOLS.

⁶³ The repeated passage reads *ql*, i.e., a mistake for *qr*.

⁶⁴ The text reads here *n* “eye” in the singular. Such a usage can be found in the Hebrew Bible as well. See, e.g. the lament of Job 7:7: לֹא־תִשׁוּב עֵינַי לְרֵאוֹת טוֹב “My eye shall never again see good”.

⁶⁵ GREENSTEIN 1997: 46, n. 116.

⁶⁶ The polysemous root זבל captured the interest of later Israelite poets as well. See, e.g., the name אֵיזָבֵל “Jezebel”, which means “where is the prince (i.e. Baal)”? The Israelite authors liken her name to דֶּמֶן “dung” in 2 Kgs 9:37, because זָבַל also can mean “manure”. See GRAY 1978: 551.

II.2.11. *yšb* “set up” and “Yaššib”

I offered several examples above of antanaclasis involving the divine names Anat and Baal (see II.1.1., II.1.2., and II.2.5.). In the *Epic of Kirtu*, we find antanaclasis on the name of the king’s son *yšb* “Yaššib”. We first hear of the boy when El promises that the king’s wife will bear eight children, including *yšb* “Yaššib” (*CAT* 1.15 ii 25). When Kirtu falls ill, Huraya wastes no time in declaring that “Yaššib (*yšb*) will reign over us”! (*CAT* 1.15 v 21). However, Yaššib’s brother Ilhau tells his sister that their father is not sick. The narrator then tells us that Ilhau’s lance “stands up (*yšb*) on the threshold, its radiance shines in the doorway” (*CAT* 1.16 i 52). This anecdotal detail would appear unnecessary were it not that it anticipates once again at tale’s end the return of *yšb* “Yaššib”, who is convinced that he should sit on the throne (*CAT* 1.16 vi 25, 27, 39). He tries to usurp his father, but instead Kirtu curses him (*CAT* 1.16 vi 54–58).

II.2.12. *n* “see/look”, “eyes”, and “furrow”

Antanaclasis involving *n* for “see/look”, “eyes”, and “furrow” recalls similar cases as found in the *Epic of Baal* (see II.1.1.). In Kirtu’s description of Huraya, her *n* “eyes” transfix him like the beauty of *nt* “Anat” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 41–45). Later, it is Ilhau’s *n* “eyes” that Kirtu forestalls from crying (*CAT* 1.16 i 27). The imperative verbal form *n* “look/see” repeats twice in a broken section in which an unknown figure addresses El: “Look (*n*), scout both earth and sky, scan the far reaches of earth for emmer...! Look (*n*) to the earth for Baal’s rain, to the field for the Most High’s rain”! (*CAT* 1.16 iii 2–8). The speaker then praises Baal’s rain and adds “So good for the wheat in the furrow (*n*)”! (*CAT* 1.16 iii 9). Adding an alliterative touch is the adjective *n m* “pleasant” twice placed between lines 7 and 9.⁶⁷

II.2.13. *ny/w* “answer/speak”, “humiliate”, and *n* “see/look”

Integrated with the last set of antanaclastic terms is another related form that involves the repeated final weak verb *ny/w* for “answer/speak” and “humiliate” and the root *n* “see/look”. We have seen this fluidity already in the *Epic of Baal* (see II.1.7). Of the three usages, the most frequently attested in this poem is “answer/speak”⁶⁸. Nevertheless, the first time we hear *n* it means “see/look”. This is how the narrator introduces Kirtu’s disaster: “He sees (*y n*) his progeny, Kirtu, he sees (*y n*) his progeny ruined” (*CAT* 1.14 i 21, 22). The story then continues tablet after tablet, always preferring the verb *ny* for “answer/speak”, until the very last line of the story when Kirtu imprecates his son Yaššib for trying to assume

⁶⁷ Israelite authors were aware of the polysemous possibilities of עַיִן “eye” and “spring”, but did not have the usage “furrow”. See, e.g., Jer 8:23: מִי־יִתֵּן רֹאשִׁי מַיִם וְעֵינַי מְקוֹר דְּמָעָה “Oh that my head were water. My eyes are a fountain of tears”.

⁶⁸ It occurs fourteen times: *CAT* 1.14 vi 16; 1.15 i 8; 1.15 ii 12; 1.15 iv 26; 1.15 v 9; 1.15 vi 3; 1.16 i 58; 1.16 ii 21; 1.16 iv 9; 1.16 v 13, 19, 22, 23; 1.16 vi 54.

his throne: “May you be humiliated (*wt ‘n*) while you still make a fist (*hpn*)”! (*CAT* 1.16 vi 58). Compare this with the *Epic of Baal*, in which the poet employed the verb *‘ny* “humiliate” only at the start of the story. When we add to these passages the frequent references to *‘n* as “eyes”, and “furrow” (see II.2.12.), we can only marvel at the poet’s lingual virtuosity.

II.2.14. *pḥr* “totality”, “assembly”, and “clay”

The root *pḥr* first describes the entirety of Kirtu’s loss: “So all his descendants have perished. In sum, the totality (*pḥyr*) of his heirs” (*CAT* 1.14 i 25). We are reminded of his loss soon afterwards in El’s repeated blessing which exalts Kirtu “among the shades of the netherworld and the assembly (*pḥr*) of the gathering of Ditanu” (*CAT* 1.15 iii 4, 15). We do not hear the term *pḥr* again until El pinches off some *pḥr* “clay” and forms an entity with it to dispel Kirtu’s illness (*CAT* 1.16 v 30). The usage bears special antanaclastic nuance as El performs this magical ritual while standing before the divine “assembly”⁶⁹.

II.2.15. *npš* “breath” and “throat”

In the *Epic of Baal*, we have seen antanaclasis on the term *npš* (see II.1.11.). The interest in this noun continues in this epic at first for “breath” (*CAT* 1.16 i 35) and then as “throat” (*CAT* 1.16 vi 11). In the first passage, Kirtu instructs his daughter Thitmanit not to waste her “breath” mourning his death since he will live. In the second, the entity El creates to exorcise Kirtu’s illness opens his “throat” to receive sustenance. We last see *npš* in Yaššib’s repeated complaint that his father no longer takes up the claim of the “weak” (*[qsr npš]*, lit. “short of breath”) (1.16 vi 34, 47)⁷⁰.

II.2.16. *yṯb* “return” and “sit”

We have seen antanaclasis between the verbs *yṯb* “return” and *ṯb* “sit” above (II.1.4.). The narrator introduces us to it here too, starting with his description of Kirtu’s catastrophe: “his dynasty (*[ṯbth]*, lit. “seat”) was utterly sundered” (*CAT* 1.14 i 23). He next tells us that king Pabuli “returns” (*ṯṯb*) messengers to Kirtu (*CAT* 1.14 iii 32). The messengers then “verily return” (*lyṯb*) (*CAT* 1.14 vi 35). Soon after this, Khubur’s magistrates visit Kirtu and enter “the area of sitting (*mṯb*)” (*CAT* 1.15 iv 22)⁷¹. El then commands the divine assembly “stay seated (*ṯb*) my sons on your seats (*mṯbt*)”! (*CAT* 1.16 v 24). After curing Kirtu of his illness, antanaclasis continues when the being that El created “returns” (*ṯṯb*) and washes

⁶⁹ A similar case of polysemy informs the noun פְּהָר “clay” in Dan 2:41. See NOEGEL 2021b: 192.

⁷⁰ See HAAK 1982: 161–67, who studies the Ugaritic phrase in conjunction with the parallel biblical expressions קָצַר רִיחַ and קָצַר נְפֶשׁ.

⁷¹ The noun *mṯb* then repeats in a broken context (*CAT* 1.15 v 6).

the sweat from him (*CAT* 1.16 vi 10). A few lines later, we are treated to a brilliant display when the narrator places the two roots in close succession in his report of Kirtu's resuscitation: "And Kirtu returns (*yṭb*) to his prime, he sits (*yṭb*) on the throne of his kingship" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 22–23). While the former is not written directly over the latter on the tablet, their close proximity is visually striking⁷². Antanaclasis last occurs when Yaššib twice declares "I will sit (*atb*) on the throne" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 38, 53). Kirtu's curse then twice repeats the verb "smash" (*tbr*), thus paronomastically responding to Yaššib's threat (*CAT* 1.16 vi 54–55).

II.2.17. *šnt* "sleep" and "year(s)"

The last case of antanaclasis in the epic involves the term *šnt*, which occurs slightly differently than in the *Epic of Baal* (see II.1.6.)⁷³. Here the poet uses *šnt* only three times – the first at the very start and the last at the very end. In the beginning, the narrator describes the process of Kirtu's incubation: "sleep (*šnt*) overwhelms him" (*CAT* 1.14 i 33). After his family has been restored, the narrator states that Kirtu's vow to Athirat was still neglected though seven years (*šnt*) had passed (*CAT* 1.15 iii 22). We do not hear again of *šnt* until the very end when Kirtu curses his son: "May you fall at the peak of your years (*šnt*)!" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 58). The antanaclasis thus forms an inclusio for the entire story.

II.3 *Epic of Aqhat*

II.3.1. *ym* "day" and "sea"

The *Epic of Aqhat* contains nine cases of antanaclasis⁷⁴. The first involves *ym* "day", which occurs nineteen times throughout the text starting in *CAT* 1.17 i 5⁷⁵. However, near the end of the epic, we hear *ym* "sea" repeated three times in quick succession in the poet's description of Paghit as she prepares to avenge her brother's death: "[...] in the sea (*ym*), she washes [...] and [...], rouges herself with

⁷² A similarly masterful juxtaposition of these verbs aesthetically reinforces the centre of the Mesha stela. See NOEGEL 2021b: 56–7.

⁷³ Another possible example involves the root *glm* for "youth" and "concealment". In the *Epic of Kirtu*, it appears several times for a young man or woman (*CAT* 1.14 i 19–20, 40–41; 1.14 ii 8–9; 1.14 iv 41; 1.15 ii 16, 20, 22, 25). However, in *CAT* 1.16 i 50, we find it in the stich: [*a*]ḥr mgyh wglm. GREENSTEIN 1997: 33, renders it "by the time he arrives, it's grown dark". However, DULAT 319, s.v. *glm*, translates "he reached did the lad". Similarly, DULAT 321, s.v. *glmt*, understands *bn glmt* in *CAT* 1.4 vii 55 as "in thick fog", whereas SMITH – PITARD 2009: 651, 695, argue for "Sons of the Lass". If either of the texts contains antanaclasis involving this root it is difficult to be certain.

⁷⁴ MARGALIT 1989: 157, 344, 348, and n. 13, treats the two cases of *hrš* in *CAT* 1.19 i 8–11, as first meaning "incise" and then "lime". However, the passage is obscure and defies easy interpretation. PARKER 1997: 67, 79, n. 24, leaves the section untranslated. DULAT 369, s.v. *hrš*, sees two homophonous roots, but nowhere translates it as "incise". If one accepts Margalit's reading, then we have another case of antanaclasis in the *Epic of Aqhat*.

⁷⁵ *CAT* 1.17 i 5, 8, 11, 15, 32, 33, 48 (2x); 1.17 ii 7, 8, 22, 23, 32, 34, 37, 39; 1.17 v 4; 1.19 iv 13.

II.3.4. *yṭb* “sit” and “turn/return”

As in the *Baal* and *Kirtu* epics, here again there is exchange between *yṭb* “sits” and *ṭb* “turn/return” (see II.1.4. and II.2.16.). When Danel learns that he will be a father, he declares: “Now I will sit (*atb*) and rest” (*CAT* 1.17 ii 12). He also “sits” (*yṭb*) counting the months of his wife’s pregnancy (*CAT* 1.17 ii 43) and “sits” (*yṭb*) adjudicating legal cases at the city gate (*CAT* 1.17 v 6–7; 1.19 i 21). Shortly after this, Anat twice demands that Aqhat “return” (*ṭb*) to her after he rejects her (*CAT* 1.17 vi 42, 43).⁸¹ The poet then displays additional antanaclasis in reporting Anat’s directions to her assassin Yaṭpan: “Let Yaṭpan turn (*yṭb*)... to the town of Abiluma” (*CAT* 1.18 iv 7, 16). The poet then returns to the former usage when reporting that Aqhat “sat down” (*yṭb*) to dine before he was murdered (*CAT* 1.18 iv 18, 29). We find antanaclasis one last time when Danel “returns” (*yṭb*) to cease the mourning rites for his son (*CAT* 1.19 iv 20).

II.3.5. *alp* “ox” and “thousand”

We have seen antanaclasis with *alp* already in each of the previous epics (see II.1.10. and II.2.7.). However, in this text the device does not alternate usages, but instead starts with one and leaves it for the other for the remainder of the poem. Thus, Danel slaughters an “ox” (*alp*) for the Katharat (*CAT* 1.17 ii 29), and afterwards, he sees the coming of Kothar at a “thousand” (*alp*) rods (*CAT* 1.17 v 9). The second passage parallels the first well as it also paronomastically connects the “Katharat” (*ktrt*) to “Kothar” (*ktr*). We then hear that Anat set her face at a “thousand” (*alp*) rods (*CAT* 1.18 i 21). At the end of the story, Yaṭpan proclaims to Paghit: “The hand that slew Aqhat the hero, slays foes by the thousand (*alp*)” (*CAT* 1.19 iv 59).

II.3.6. *kbd* “honour”, “mind/liver”, and “innards”

As in the *Epic of Baal*, this text too shows an interest in the antanaclastic root *kbd* (see II.1.3.). We first hear *kbd* when Danel tells his wife Danatiya to prepare a meal for Kothar-and-Hassis: “Dine and wine the gods. Uphold and honour (*kbd*) them” (*CAT* 1.17 v 19–20). The narrator reports that she did so, thus repeating *kbd* as “honour” (*CAT* 1.17 v 30). We then hear how Anat came before El planning to denounce Aqhat, but shielded her intentions by adopting proper decorum: “she prostrates herself and honours (*kbd*) him” (*CAT* 1.17 vi 51). After threatening El with violence, he then replies: “Go off daughter, haughty of heart. [Lay] hold of what is in your mind (*kbd*)” (*CAT* 1.18 i 18). After Anat murders Aqhat, his sister Paghit perceives signs that he might have died and “weeps in her liver (*kbd*)” (*CAT* 1.19 i 34). Afterwards, Danel searches for Aqhat’s remains in the innards (*kbd*) of a series of birds until he locates them (*CAT* 1.19 iii 3, 10, 18, 24, 33, 38). The six-fold repetition in the scene and its reference to *kbd* drive home the

⁸¹ Anat’s demand implies that Aqhat already had turned his back and begun to depart, though the narrator simply leaves us with his parting words.

antanaclasis. The device contrasts the genuine honour (*kbd*) that Danel paid Kothar with the honour (*kbd*) in gesture only that Anat showed El. It similarly contrasts Paghit's sad mind (*kbd*) over her brother's death with the wickedness that filled Anat's mind (*kbd*), while identifying her inner machinations (*kbd*) with the innards (*kbd*) of the bird she sent to kill him.

II.3.7. *dm* “blood” and “juice”

Above I examined cases of antanaclasis involving the term *dm* for both “blood” and “juice” in the *Epic of Baal* (see II.1.8.). This text uses *dm* first in the idiom *dm šm* “juice” (lit. “blood of trees” || *yn* “wine”) when describing Anat's feasting: “She drinks the wine by the flagons, juice (*dm šm*) from goblets of gold” (*CAT* 1.17 vi 6). The expression fittingly suggests Anat's bloodthirst. Thereafter *dm* only applies to actual blood, but always in reference to her⁸². Thus, Anat threatens El: “I will make your grey hair run with blood (*dmm*)” (*CAT* 1.18 i 11). Later she enjoins her assassin Yatpan to murder Aqhat: “spilling his blood (*dm*) like a butcher, down to his knees, like a killer” (*CAT* 1.18 iv 24), which the narrator repeats when Yatpan carries out his mission (*CAT* 1.18 iv 35).

II.3.8. *ny* “speak/answer”, “sing/praise”, and *n* “see/look”

As in the previous two epics, the *Epic of Aqhat* exhibits antanaclasis involving the roots *ny* and *n* (see II.1.7. and II.2.12.). However, it differs in that it not only conveys “speak/answer” and “look/see”, but also “sing/praise”. Most often *ny* means “say/answer”. This is how we first see it⁸³. Thus, Aqhat “speaks” (*y n*) to Anat (*CAT* 1.17 vi 20, 33); she “answers” (*t n*) him (*CAT* 1.17 vi 25–26); and Anat “speaks” (*t n*) to El (*CAT* 1.17 vi 52; 1.18 i 6). However, in the midst of these exchanges, we hear the verb *n* “see/look” twice in immediate succession, though throughout the text the author prefers the verb *phy* “see/look”⁸⁴. Thus, Danel “sees (*y n*) the coming of Kothar, sees (*y n*) the march of Hassis” (*CAT* 1.17 v 10, 11)⁸⁵. Punctuating the antanaclastic manipulation of the roots *ny* and *n* are frequent references to the eyes of various figures including Danel (*CAT* 1.17 v 9; 1.19 i 29; 1.19 ii 56; 1.19 iii 14, 28), Anat (*CAT* 1.17 vi 10), and Paghit (*CAT* 1.19 ii 27). Then, in a turn of genius, the poet subverts our expectations by using *ny* for “sing/praise”: “As Baal revives, then invites, invites the revived to drink. Trills and sings over him, with pleasant tune they sing (*t nynn*)” (*CAT* 1.17 vi 30–32)⁸⁶. After this point, the poet uses *ny* only for “speak/answer”: El to Anat

⁸² There is one case of the asseverative *dm* “so then, certainly” in *CAT* 1.17 vi 35. It perhaps suggests blood as it appears in Aqhat's rejection of Anat.

⁸³ The poem also features the introduction of direct discourse without formulae by Baal (*CAT* 1.17 i 16–17), El (*CAT* 1.17 i 34–36), and Danel (*CAT* 1.19 ii 15).

⁸⁴ See *CAT* 1.17 v 9–10; 1.17 vi 10; 1.19 i 28–29; 1.19 ii 19–20, 27, 56–57; 1.19 iii 14–15, 28–29. The poet also uses the verb *hdy* “see” (*CAT* 1.19 iii 4, 19, 24, 32–33, 38).

⁸⁵ The verb perhaps means “see” in *CAT* 1.19 i 12, but the passage is obscure.

⁸⁶ See *DULAT* 173, s.v. *ny*.

(*CAT* 1.18 i 15); Anat to Yaṭpan (*CAT* 1.18 iv 16); Danel to the mourners (*CAT* 1.19 iv 18, 35–36); Paghīt to Danel (*CAT* 1.19 iv 28); and finally Yaṭpan to Paghīt (*CAT* 1.19 iv 56–57).

II.3.9. *ʿnt* “Anat” and “now”

We have seen how the *Epic of Baal* integrates antanaclasis on the names of deities (see II.1.1. and II.1.2.). Here too the device operates in conjunction with *ʿnt* “Anat”, who plays a central role in the epic,⁸⁷ and with the aforementioned cases of antanaclasis involving *ʿny* for “speak/answer”, “sing/praise”, and *ʿn* “see” (see II.3.8.). Antanaclasis occurs near the end of the text when Danel uses *ʿnt* “now” in a series of curses against towns near which his son was slain. The device is particularly pronounced because *ʿnt* is fronted each time (*CAT* 1.19 iii 47–48, 53–56; 1.19 iv 5–6).

“May El clothe you with leprosy,
Now (*ʿnt*), a fugitive, and forever,⁸⁸
Now (*ʿnt*) and all generations...

May your root not sprout in the earth,
Your head drop as you are plucked,
Now (*ʿnt*), a fugitive, and forever,
Now (*ʿnt*) and all generations...

May Baal strike you blind
From henceforth and forever,
From now (*ʿnt*) and all generations”!

After the curse, we no longer hear of Anat again. She is essentially written out of the story.

II.3.10. *šnt* “year(s)” and “death”

As in the previous two epics, here again we find antanaclasis involving *šnt* (see II.1.6. and II.2.17.). However, here it does not signify “depart” or “sleep”, though one might expect sleep in the incubation scene that opens the tale. Instead, the poet first places *šnt* in the mouth of Anat when promising Aqhat immortality: “I will let you count years (*šnt*) with Baal” (*CAT* 1.17 vi 29). This usage continues after Anat’s murder of Aqhat, which brings about a drought.⁸⁹ As the narrator laments: “seven years (*šnt*) Baal is absent” (*CAT* 1.19 i 42). Antanaclasis then

⁸⁷ See *CAT* 1.17 vi 26, 41, 53; 1.18 i 14, 20, 22; 1.18 iv 4, 5, 12, 16, 32, 38; 1.19 ii 43.

⁸⁸ I have rendered this stich in line with *DULAT* 237, s.v. *brh*.

⁸⁹ We also find *šnt* in *CAT* 1.19 i 9, but this section of the text is extremely difficult. WYATT 2002: 287, n. 166, notes: “The first few lines of KTU 1.19 i are in extremely poor condition, the difficulties this entails being compounded by the number of unparalleled words, making a coherent sense based on known lexemes a hazardous enterprise”. PARKER 1997: 67, leaves lines 8–13 untranslated and remarks (79, n. 24): “No study to date has elucidated it sufficiently to justify a continuous translation”.

occurs when Danel tracks down his deceased son and curses any bird that might fly over his grave to deprive him from “sleep” (*šnt*) (*CAT* 1.19 iii 45). Here, of course, “sleep” is a euphemism for death (cf. Jer 51:39; Job 14:12). After this point in the story, we only find *šnt* for “year”. Thus, Danel mourns for his son “from months to years (*šnt*), to seven years (*šnt*)” (*CAT* 1.19 iv 14, 15), and in the seventh year (*šnt*), he ends the mourning period (*CAT* 1.19 iv 18). Instead of Aqhat counting years (*šnt*) with Baal, Danel now mourns his death (*šnt*) for years (*šnt*)⁹⁰.

III. The Functions of Antanaclasis in the Ugaritic Epics

The thirty-nine cases of antanaclasis in the epics demonstrate that the learned device was as well-known to the Ugarit’s poets as it was to the later Israelite bards⁹¹. Moreover, though beyond the scope of this study, the device is found elsewhere in the corpus as well.⁹² It thus remains here to investigate what function(s) antanaclasis serves in the epics.

SASSON opines that antanaclasis in the Hebrew Bible “promoted a certain aura of ambiguity, which was intended to excite curiosity and to invite a search for meanings that were not readily apparent”.⁹³ In his examination of antanaclasis in Qoheleth, ANTHONY CERESKO maintains that the poet created a “connecting web” between the various applications of an antanaclastic term.

Whatever those connections, even though they may not be immediately obvious, the mysterious pattern of which they are a part is at least pointed toward by the oneness of the

⁹⁰ For a similar biblical case of paronomasia involving “years” and the “sleep” of death, see Ps 90:4–6: “For in your sight a thousand years (אֲלֶפֶס) are like yesterday that has passed, like a watch of the night. You engulf them in ‘sleep’ (נִשְׁנָה). At daybreak they are like grass that renews itself. At daybreak it flourishes anew; by dusk it withers and dries up”.

⁹¹ NATAN-YULZARY 2010: 155, suggests that we include the negative particle *al* and *il* “god” in *CAT* 1.4 viii 15–17. However, the two do not sound alike nor are they visually identical. Only in Hebrew does this work.

⁹² PARDEE 1988: 13–76, observes that *klb* means “dog” and a type of “medicine” (lit. *š r klb*, “hair of the dog”) in *CAT* 1.114:5, 12, 31. See *DULAT* 438–39, s.v. *klb*. On the plant *š r klb* and its Akkadian cognates, see WATSON 2004: 135. However, the readings in ll. 5 and 12 are far from certain. DEL OLMO LETE 1999: 264, n. 71, points to *mr* as both “myrrh” and “illness” in a medical-magical consultation involving a sickly royal child (*CAT* 1.124:5–9, 6, 7, 16). See also *DULAT* 569, s.v. *mr* I and III. Both texts are cited by WATSON 2000b: 132. To these I add *CAT* 1.10 ii 13, 14, 15, which records *n* “eyes” (2x), *y n* “see”, and *nt* “Anat” in close succession. See similarly *n* “eyes”, *nt* “Anat”, and *wt n* “sees” (2x), as well as the sequence *nt* “Anat” (31), *nm* “our eyes” (33), and *nt* “Anat” (35) in *CAT* 1.10 ii 26–35. *CAT* 1.23, also features *yd* as both “penis” (obv. 33, 34, 35, rev. 35) and “hand” (rev. 37, 40, 44, 47). In this last text the antanaclasis might have a performative function. The same text also features *ym* for “day” (2x) (rev. 61) and “sea” (63). For another possible case of antanaclasis, see *CAT* 1.96, which begins with a reference to *mn* “the Eye” (1) or perhaps “Anat” by emendation, and then follows it with *n* “spring” ten times afterwards (5, 6, 7, 8, 9 [2x], 10, 11 [2x], 12). See similarly *CAT* 1.100, which contains *n* “spring” (1) and *nt* “Anat” (19).

⁹³ SASSON 1976: 968.

word used to express the diverse actions. The reader or listener is invited to probe that pattern further.⁹⁴

Thus, with regard to the verb 𐤍𐤍𐤍 in Qoheleth, CERESKO observes:

...he uses it eight times with nuances which require four different words to express in English (grasp – find – learn – reach). Qoheleth exhausts the possibilities of the verb *mš*’ as he exhausts all avenues of investigation to try to *understand* (*mš*’) “what God is doing under the sun.” Despite his skill in the language in his rigorous search (Qoh 12:9–10) he cannot *find* (*mš*’) the answer; in honestly admitting such, he marks the boundaries for human wisdom beyond which one dare not attempt to *reach* (*mš*’) in order to *grasp* (*mš*’) the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and bad.⁹⁵

The poets of Ugarit certainly also created a web of connections. Words with different meanings that look identical naturally force one to compare and contrast them and their literary contexts. Even if we suppose that the lexemes in question did not sound identical, e.g. *amt* (*l’amtul*) “servant woman” and *amt* (*l’ammatul*) “elbow”, their similarity in sound would have encouraged the same result. This is borne out by a close look at the reconstructed pronunciations of the antanaclastic terms treated herein.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, it is possible that the device produced a different effect whether one heard the text recited or read it with one’s own eyes. Indeed, we should acknowledge the possibility that, from a scribal perspective, antanaclasis served to demonstrate erudition. This would fit with Ilimilku and Attēnu’s mastery of foreign words and bilingual polysemy, and with the deployment of such devices as found elsewhere in the Near East.⁹⁷ Indeed, the scribes of Ugarit were a very multilingual, learned lot.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, when antanaclasis

⁹⁴ CERESKO 1982: 568.

⁹⁵ CERESKO 1982: 569. The italics are original.

⁹⁶ Compare: *anatu* (Anat), *ēnātu* (springs/eyes), *inātu?* (furrows), *antu* (now) – *ba’alu* (Baal), *ba’alu* (lord), *yab’ulu* (he makes) – *yakabbidumu* (he honours him), *kabidu* (inside/innards), *kabidu* (liver) – *gūru* (mountain), *gōru* (skin) – *šanītu* (I depart), *šantu/šanātu* (year/years), *šinātu* (sleep/death) – *yōmu* (day), *yammu* (sea) – *yaṭību* (he sits), *yaṭūbu* (he returns/turns), *ya’annīna* (he humiliates), *ya’nī* (speak/answer), *ya’īnu*, (he sees/looks), *ya’annī* (he sings) – *raḥamu?* (damsel), *rēḥāma* (millstones) – *ādām* (humankind), *ādama* (he rouged) – *amtu* (servant woman), *ammatu* (elbow) – *adānu?* (army), *adannu?* (storage) – *yašīru?* (he attacks), *yašīru* (he sings) – *qaru?* (noise), *qāru?* (flow/well) – *zebulu?* (disease), *ziblu?* (prince) – *yaššibu* (he will set up/Yaššib) – *puḥayaru?* (totality), *puḥru* (assembly), *paḥru?* (clay).

⁹⁷ Ilimilku avails himself of Akkadian, Egyptian, Hittite, Hurrian, and Mycenaean words, just to name a few of the languages represented in his works. See WATSON 1995; 1996; 1998; 1999; 2000a; 2007; 2009; 2011. For bilingual polysemy, see NOEGEL 2014: 304–5. On such devices as demonstrations of erudition generally, see NOEGEL 2021b: 143–45.

⁹⁸ On the learnedness of the Ugaritic authors/transmitters Ilimilku and Attēnu, see VAN SOLDT 1989; 1995; MANFRIED–LORETZ 1990; DALIX 1996; MARQUEZ-ROWE 1996; 2008; WATSON 2021.

involves words whose sounds were identical, e.g. *alp*, *b l*, *dm*, *npš*, *tkm*, *yd*, the web of connections would have been even more accessible to an attentive listening audience. As such, antanaclasis resembles a *Leitwort*, but one whose meaning changes as the story unfolds.

While biblical scholars have provided useful models for understanding how antanaclasis might have functioned to invite a search for potential meanings and/or create a web of literary connections, I aver that we may obtain additional insight into the device from scholarship on Indo-Iranian poetics.⁹⁹ In particular, I propose that we look to “antanaclastic repair”, a feature coined by ELIZABETH THORNTON,¹⁰⁰ based on the notion of “poetic repair” as defined by STEPHANIE JAMISON.¹⁰¹ THORNTON’S explanation, as it pertains to Sanskrit texts, is worth citing in full. “Poetic repair” refers to a poet’s

tendency to “introduce a linguistic puzzle early in a hymn, and ‘solve’ it later in the hymn”.¹⁰² The cases I am treating here involve lexical puzzles, but syntactic and morphological riddles can also fall under this rubric. “Antanaclasis,” derivationally a ‘breaking-up-against’, literally a ‘reflection’, is a rhetorical term referring to the conflict between the sameness of sound and difference in sense of two-word forms. Its most trivial applications are puns. However, as its etymology would suggest, this figure of speech need not be a simple funhouse mirror: it can also alter the significance of a given string of sounds to better suit – and/or subvert – a dominant discourse. Antanaclastic repair, then, refers to the “repairing” (within a structuring device) of an idiosyncratic, infrequent usage of a lexical element with one that is more in keeping with Rigvedic phraseological norms. Such deployments and modifications of Rigvedic phraseology can be closely connected to the renegotiation of relationships between interlocutors.¹⁰³

Of course, not every case of antanaclasis in the Ugaritic epics is placed in direct discourse. Still, as THORNTON observes, the device sheds light on the poet/narrator as well:

...antanaclasis within formal structuring devices is used to clarify terms whose first appearance is shrouded in (intentional) ambiguity. These clarifications contribute to the resolution of the hymn’s fundamental crisis, insinuating a proposed solution’s success where the poet lacks the power to (unilaterally) declare it.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ On the influence of West Semitic traditions on Indian literature and mythology, see the brief discussion with bibliography in SMITH 1994: 113–14, n. 224, 340.

¹⁰⁰ THORNTON 2014: 215–36.

¹⁰¹ JAMISON 2006: 133–40.

¹⁰² JAMISON 2006: 133.

¹⁰³ THORNTON 2014: 230.

¹⁰⁴ THORNTON 2014: 234.

While the cases THORNTON cites from the *Rig Veda* often repair unusual usages, the process still applies to the examples cited herein, which typically settle on a particular meaning as the story concludes. In this way, the device resembles the use of polysemous words in Job whose meanings appear unequivocal when appearing at the end in the speech of Yahweh¹⁰⁵. Though the Ugaritic epics contain a number of missing portions that might influence my results, the observations of the aforementioned Hebrew and Sanskrit scholars generally apply to the Ugaritic corpus. Several examples will demonstrate.

Consider the web of connections created by the antanaclasis concerning *yšb* in the *Epic of Kirtu*. After the narrator introduces the king's son and Huraya proclaims him as the future king (*CAT* 1.15 ii 25; 1.15 v 21), we encounter *yšb* in reference to an altogether different son who, unlike Yaššib, never enjoys his mother's support, but nevertheless receives the epithet *ğzr* "hero, warrior" from the narrator (*CAT* 1.16 i 46).¹⁰⁶ The antanaclasis forces us to contrast the two sons and their behaviours towards their father, much like the *Epic of Aqhat*, which encourages us to contrast the daughters Anat and Paghit.¹⁰⁷ Whereas Ilhau, the hero, cries before his father and runs lance in hand to his sister's side to assuage her fear concerning his illness, Yaššib, the boy,¹⁰⁸ is no warrior,¹⁰⁹ never comforts his sister, and sheds no tears over his father. Instead, he reprimands him for being too sickly to rule and demands that he step down, apparently unaware that El had cured him.¹¹⁰ Ilhau's "setting up" (*yšb*) of his heroic lance also recalls the verb's usage in reference to the proper filial duties for one's father. As the *Epic of Aqhat* reminds us, a rightful heir is expected "to set up (*nšb*) his ancestor's stela" (*CAT* 1.17 i 27). In fact, Yaššib's expected role in setting up his father's memorial likely gives us the etymology of his name.¹¹¹ His name's inherent irony becomes apparent at the end of the epic. Yaššib (*yšb*) is "set up", so to speak, as a literary foil. His mother introduces him as the future king, despite his shortcomings, only to be cursed at the very end of the text by his father (*CAT* 1.16 vi 39–58). Thus,

¹⁰⁵ See NOEGEL 1996: 134–35.

¹⁰⁶ *DULAT* 329, s.v. *ğzr*.

¹⁰⁷ See NATAN-YULZARY 2012.

¹⁰⁸ Yaššib is only called the "boy" (*ğlm*) in the narrative about his birth and then again just before he castigates his father (*CAT* 1.15 ii 25; 1.16 vi 39). Elsewhere the narrator refers to him by name only (*CAT* 1.15 v 21; 1.16 vi 25, 27). When his father curses him, he only uses the vocative *ybn* "O son"! (*CAT* 1.16 vi 55). The discipline lacks a thorough study of human epithets in the Ugaritic texts. See provisionally, KIM 2021.

¹⁰⁹ Yaššib is never said to wield a weapon. According to the *Epic of Baal* (*CAT* 1.6 i 50–52), one who cannot handle a lance is deemed *ktmsm* "buckled over", the very opposite of *yšb*.

¹¹⁰ Scholars differ on whether Yaššib was unaware of his father's cure or whether the apparent inconsistency is the result of a later editorial insertion into the cycle. See PARKER 1977: 167–68, who surveys the views and posits the latter.

¹¹¹ GREENSTEIN 1997: 44, n. 65, suggests this etymology. However, WATSON 1979, derives the name from the root *našābu* "suck", which fits well his birth narrative in *CAT* 1.15 ii 26–29. I posit that we should envision multiple etymologies at work. Israelite authors also entertain multiple etymologies for important people and places. See ZAKOVITCH 1980a; 1980b; GROSSMAN 2017.

the final *yšb* repairs the narrative tension that exists concerning the problematic nature of Yaššib's potential rule and contributes to the resolution of the text's crisis of kingship, with THORNTON, "insinuating a proposed solution's success where the poet lacks the power to (unilaterally) declare it".¹¹²

The *Epic of Kirtu* also illustrates antanaclastic repair after Huraya nourishes her husband back to health. As the narrator recounts: "Kirtu returns (*yṯb*) to his prime, he sits (*yṯb*) on the throne of his kingship" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 22–23). The inherent ambiguity of *yṯb* "return" or "sit" repairs in the very next line in which the narrator reintroduces Yaššib, whom Huraya, and *only* Huraya, has asserted as the heir apparent: "Yaššib too, sits (*yṯb*) in the palace" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 25). The reference juxtaposes Kirtu's righteous rule with Yaššib's arrogant ambition, as Yaššib's inner dialogue makes clear: "Step down, and I will be king! From your rule, I will sit (*atb*) on the throne"! (*CAT* 1.16 vi 37–38, 52–54). The narrator's point is perspicuous: Yaššib also sits (*yṯb*) in the palace, but he will not sit (*yṯb*) on the throne.

In line with the previous two cases, the *Epic of Kirtu* similarly illustrates antanaclastic repair with regard to *zbl*. However, in this case, the meanings frequently shift back and forth. The root first references the death of Kirtu's progeny from "illness" and the "ill person" who takes up his bed in conscription. It next marks the epithet "princely" for Yarikh and Resheph in a list of gods. It shifts back again when Kirtu takes "ill" and El seeks a god to cure him. El again twists the usage of *zbl* when he tells the ineffectual gods to remain seated on their *zbl* "princely" thrones while he forms a being to dispel the "illness" (*zbl*). The text repairs at the end of the story when Yaššib reprimands his father, making Kirtu's "illness" ironic – the reason why Yaššib claims Kirtu failed as king is the very reason why his family has died at the start of the poem. Yet Kirtu is no longer *zbl* in this sense (though he retains his *zbl* "princely" throne). Furthermore, the placement of *zbl* in Yaššib's mouth forces one to contrast his berating of his father with El's criticism of the divine assembly, which imparts another sense of irony to our web of connections. Unlike El, who cures Kirtu's *zbl* "illness" despite the failings of the gods seated on their *zbl* "princely" thrones, Yaššib fails to sit on his own princely throne,¹¹³ despite his father's *zbl* "illness". The repair of *zbl* toward "illness" is thus crucial to the story's ironic conclusion.

Bolstering the last three cases is antanaclastic repair involving the root *'nwy/w* "speak/answer", "humiliate", and *'n* "see/look". The narrator first uses *'n* for "look", when describing the loss of Kirtu's family, but thereafter, and far more frequently, it means "speak/answer". The repair thus comes as something of a surprise in the very last word of the story (!), when Kirtu curses his son with "humiliation" (*CAT* 1.16 vi 58).

The *Epic of Baal* offers a particularly fascinating case of antanaclastic repair involving *dm* "blood", "juice", and "gush, bath". At first it simply denotes

¹¹² THORNTON 2014: 234.

¹¹³ El's command that the gods *ṯb* "stay seated" on their thrones (*CAT* 1.16 v 24) strengthens the tie to Yaššib "sitting" (*yṯb*) in the palace (*CAT* 1.16 vi 25).

“blood”. Thus, it registers Anat’s savagery, describing the gore of the slain in her wake and her violent threat against El. However, as one moves increasingly towards the resolution of Baal’s temple request, we never hear of “blood” again. Instead, we first hear of *dm hrš* “gush of (liquid) gold” covering the canopy and throne that Kothar creates for Baal’s house. Afterwards, we only see *dm šm* “juice” in contexts involving wine drinking – first when Baal and Anat ply Athirat with their request, then when El offers wine to Athirat, and when Baal invites the gods to his banquets. We last hear it just before Baal descends to the underworld. Thus, the absence of “blood” coincides with the receding presence of the blood-thirsty Anat. This fits well the antanaclastic use of *rhm*, first as Anat’s epithet “damsel” (*CAT* 1.6 ii 5, 27), and then for the “millstones” with which she grinds Mot before scattering his flesh for the birds to devour (*CAT* 1.6 ii 34; 1.6 v 15). The antanaclasis here underscores the tension that exists in the person of Anat who combines compassion and violence. If missing portions of the epic do not contain additional references to *dm* “blood”, it is noteworthy that *dm* occurs only in conjunction with Anat’s violence towards others, though the narrator reports El and Anat’s self-laceration while mourning (*CAT* 1.5 vi 17–22; 1.6 i 2–5) and the ferociousness of the battles between Anat and Mot (*CAT* 1.6 ii 30–37), and between Baal and Mot (*CAT* 1.6 vi 16–22), contexts in which one expects to find blood. We thus have antanaclastic resolution that moves from a commonly attested meaning to a more specialised usage.

Compare this with antanaclasis on *dm* in the *Epic of Aqhat*, which repairs in the opposite direction. We hear it first as “juice” in the flagon from which Anat drinks (*CAT* 1.17 vi 6). The reference is powerfully allusive given the goddess’ thirst for blood. Afterwards *dm* only registers actual blood, as in Anat’s threat to El, and then in the account of her murder of Aqhat (*CAT* 1.18 iv 24, 35). In this poem antanaclasis repairs to the more common usage of *dm* as scenes of Anat’s violence escalate.

To these examples one may add the cases of antanaclastic repair involving the divine names Baal and Anat. The *Epic of Baal* and *Epic of Kirtu* both demonstrate an interest in *b’l* as “lord”. Nevertheless, in both poems the name Baal is far more frequent. Consequently, when the messengers apply the title *b’l* “lord” to Yam, it becomes ironic, calling into question Sea’s status before Baal (*CAT* 1.2 i 35–36 [2x]). When Huraya applies the title to Kirtu, she reinforces his royal status before Khubur’s magistrates (*CAT* 1.15 iv 28). Nevertheless, both texts always repair to the higher power. It should not surprise us those cases of antanaclasis involving Baal repair toward the god. The poetic move reflects piety and deference, especially in a text devoted entirely to him.¹¹⁴ These cases underscore the notion that regardless of how the term *b’l* might have enjoyed use in common parlance, its most significant import for the poet lies in its name for the god.

¹¹⁴ A similar motivation perhaps informs the antanaclasis involving *alp* “ox” and “thousand” in the *Epic of Baal*. The poem oscillates between the two, but repairs to the meaning “ox” in its final attestation, which reports how Anat offered seventy oxen to commemorate Baal’s death (*CAT* 1.6 i 20).

Repair transpires very differently with regard to Anat in the *Epic of Baal* and *Epic of Aqhat*. In the former text, *'nt* can convey “Anat”, “spring”, and “furrow”. In the latter it occurs for “Anat” and “now”. However, in neither poem does *'nt* repair to the goddess. Instead, in the former it ends in a description of El’s dwelling beneath the earth’s *'nt* “springs” (*CAT* 1.3 iv 36).¹¹⁵ In the latter, Danel utters the performative adverb *'nt* “now” in a string of curses after Anat killed his son. The fronting of *'nt* so many times after Aqhat’s death only calls attention to the goddess’ absence. In fact, the curse alludes to Anat’s disappearance: *'nt brh p 'lmh 'nt pdr dr* (*CAT* 1.19 iii 55–56; 1.19 iv 5–6). Translators usually render the couplet: “now, a fugitive, and forever, now and all generations”. However, a lettered reader of the text also could understand the stichs to mean: “Anat, flee! Yes, forever! Anat, yes, (for) all generations”!¹¹⁶ Aqhat rejected Anat directly and paid with his life. For killing and shaming his son,¹¹⁷ Danel imprecates the goddess indirectly.¹¹⁸

IV. Antanaclasis and Its Distribution in the Ugaritic Epics

This brings me to the topic of distribution. It is of particular interest that some words were favorites for antanaclasis as they occur in more than one poem (i.e., *alp*, *'nt*,

¹¹⁵ The poet similarly subjugates Anat via antanaclasis with *kbd*, whose meanings shift back and forth until settling in the end on the “honour” that Anat pays El (*CAT* 1.6 i 38). Such observations add weight to the observation of PARKER 1977: 175: “This literary study has resulted in a view of Krt that sees in it a unique testimony to a development in the cult of El that has not been brought into focus by studies of El that have concerned themselves primarily with philological, mythological, theological or religio-historical aspects of the subject. It is hoped that the preceding argument will make some contribution to the ongoing discussion of the character of the cult of El and its relationship to Israelite religion”.

¹¹⁶ This understands *'nt* as “Anat”, *brh* as the f.s. verbal imperative (i.e. */buruḥī/*), and *p* as the asseverative functor. The differences between recited “authoritative” texts and the erudite ambiguities embedded in them were likely exploited for their didactic functions in scribal circles. See NOEGEL 2014.

¹¹⁷ Anat shamed Aqhat by not providing him with a proper burial. It is Danel who interts him (*CAT* 1.19 iii 40).

¹¹⁸ Some scholars explain Danel’s cursing of the three places near where Aqhat died as reflecting a belief that a corpse defiles the land on which it is discovered (as ritually defined in an Israelite context in Deut 21:1–9). Thus MARGALIT 1989: 307–8, n. 252. However, the parallels are not identical. In the biblical tradition, the assailant is unknown, only the nearest town is involved, and the elders of that town must bring forth a sacrificial animal for the Levites to offer. Since Danel knows who murdered his son, such a practice would be unnecessary. Indeed, the locations and their populations in the Ugaritic poem are innocent of the homicide. Is it possible that Danel’s curses instead serve as euphemistic deflections, emotional and illocutionary pronouncements that allow Danel to avoid cursing the goddess directly? Lest one think that cursing a god was never attempted, the prohibitions against cursing God in Exod 22:27 and Deut 24:15–16 demonstrate that some people must have done so. See also the euphemistic words of Job’s wife (Job 2:9). The author of *Enki and Ninhursag* (ll. 220–227) elevates this to a divine plane in having Ninhursag curse Enki. Moreover, Ugaritic texts often depict Anat in a negative light regardless of the existence of her cult. Thus, El calls her *anšt* “sick (with rage)” and *hnp lb* “impious/perverse of mind” (*CAT* 1.18 i 16–17).

‘ny/w, b’l, dm, kbd, npš, šnt, ytb) – though in some cases they have slightly differently nuanced and emphases (i.e., ‘nt, b’l, ‘ny/w). Each of them is common in the language, but all are especially effective, three of them because of their flexible semantic ranges and/or idiomatic usages (i.e. b’l, dm, npš), and six due to their orthographic ambiguity (i.e., alp, ‘nt, ‘ny/w, kbd, šnt, ytb). A similar situation obtains in the Hebrew Bible with regard to certain roots preferred for their polysemous and paronomastic capabilities¹¹⁹. Moreover, as I have noted at the end of most of the entries, virtually every antanaclastic term in the Ugaritic epics has a polysemous cognate in the Hebrew Bible, except those not found in the Hebrew lexicon.¹²⁰ Apparently, some words were simply more felicitous for certain poetic functions at Ugarit. Their polysemous usages have transcended geographic and cultural boundaries.

It is also worth noting that at least six cases of antanaclastic repair occur at the end of epics (*tn, zbl, ‘nwly, npš, šnt, ym*), three of them (*tn, zbl, šnt*) form an inclusio with the story’s start. All but one of these (*ym*) is found in the *Epic of Kirtu*. Thus, antanaclastic repair can sometimes contribute to a text’s structural cohesiveness.

Finally, I note that it is somewhat surprising that the *Epic of Kirtu* should exhibit antanaclasis so many more times (seventeen) than the other two texts (*Epic of Baal* [twelve], *Epic of Aqhat* [ten]). Apparently, length has no bearing on the subject since the *Epic of Kirtu* is the shortest of the three poems. Indeed, given the poets’ general interest in the device, one might expect to discover more examples in a longer text. I submit that the abundant engagement with antanaclasis in the *Epic of Kirtu* enhances the epic’s narrative strategy, which I have described elsewhere as constituting “a form of innertextual exegesis in which the narrator, and by extension also Attēnu and his colleagues, take on the role of the interpreter”¹²¹. In fact, much of the tale revolves around Kirtu’s dream and its resolution, a process conveyed by way of polysemes and their disambiguation. The concatenation of so many cases of antanaclasis and repair perfectly fits this context. It forces one to participate in the process of disambiguation, to contemplate the possible meanings of the divine missive (and by extension the narrator’s [and Ilmilku’s] directions), and to check them against eventual outcomes. The repairs and inclusios at tale’s end encourage one to compare the king’s early tragedy and cry for an heir with his latter reign and curse of his son. The device reminds us that things are not always what they appear to be, or at least,

¹¹⁹ See NOEGEL 2021b: 317–18.

¹²⁰ The Bible makes no mention of the goddess Anat, except in the personal name Shamgar-Anat (Judg 3:31; 5:6). Hebrew possesses the term אַמָּה “servant woman” (Ug. *amt*), but not “elbow” (Ug. *amt*). It only has the related term אַמְתָּה “cubit”. There are no cognates for *šnt* “delay”, *‘dn* “army/storage”, or *qr* “noise/flow” (only מְקוֹר “spring”). Hebrew also does not contain the personal name *yšb* “Yassib”, though the language does feature the cognate verbs נָצַב and יָצַב “set up”. The term *gr* “mountain” appears in Hebrew as צִיָּר, and thus, cannot occur antanaclastically with עוֹר “skin”.

¹²¹ NOEGEL 2014: 312.

have the potential to turn out differently.¹²² El's world and his message are beyond our comprehension. We cannot truly know what the missive means until the events it predicts have come to pass.

V. Conclusion

There can be no doubt that antanaclasis was a well-known poetic tool in the hands of the wordsmiths of ancient Ugarit. The thirty-nine cases examined herein are essentially a form of repetition and variation – keywords with a twist – that invite one to search for potential meanings, explore the web of literary connections they create, and seek resolution through disambiguation. Often they lend a sense of irony to the narrative.

While we may obtain insights into the device's function from previous scholarship on biblical texts, recent work on Indo-Iranian poetics provides an exciting new direction for understanding the literary purpose of the device, especially as it concerns antanaclastic repair. Antanaclasis in the Ugaritic epics encourages us to compare and contrast the poem's figures and pericopes, and thus, to draw inferences concerning behaviours and consequences. It nuances the text with ingenious turns that keep us attentive while illustrating the incredible erudition of the poet.

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¹²² See the apposite remark of KNOPPERS 1994: 582: "The Kirta legend demonstrates that even for those who, with the best of intentions, strive to achieve the goals of royal ideology – vitality, continuity, stability, health, and justice – the reality can be the antithesis of the ideal".

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