

Kirtu's Allusive Dream

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[The author examines El's words to Kirtu in his dream (*CAT* 1.14 ii 24-iii 49) and argues that the Ugaritic bards, like the erudite literati of the wider Near East, employed polysemy and other allusive devices when describing the contents of divine dreams. They then resolved the dream's ambiguities in the narrator's description of the dream's fulfillment. Thus, the narrative strategy constitutes a form of innertextual exegesis and a *mise en abyme* that make the narrator, and by extension, Ilmilku and the divinatory establishment, the omen's authoritative interpreter. As such, the narrative legitimates divinatory hermeneutics, authority, and ideology. Since any recitation of the text would have required an authoritative reading tradition, it is opined further that the ambiguities provided master tradents with educational paradigms for demonstrating to their pupils the relationship between polysemous dream omens and their interpretations.]

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Previously, I have argued that ancient Near Eastern literary texts generally describe dream experiences with ambiguous language and accurately depict a widespread divinatory *techné* that employs polysemy and paronomasia to decipher omens.¹ Since mantic professionals largely composed and transmitted the literary texts, they cast the figures who experience divine dreams as dependent upon divinatory professionals to decode them or upon a narrator to depict a dream's fulfillment. As such, the literary figures, including the narrator, serve to legitimate the ideology of the divinatory profession.²

In my examination of El's enigmatic dream (*CAT* 1.6 iii 1–21),³ I observed that the importance of divination among the literati of Ugarit,⁴ the existence of a dream omen text (1.86), and the presence of polysemy and paronomasia in a variety of liturgical texts and performative charms,⁵ indicate that the mantics of Ugarit shared an understanding of such devices on a par with the divinatory professionals elsewhere in the Near East. Yet, concerning the language of El's dream, I found no examples of polysemy. Though

1. Noegel, 2007a. On the many forms of polysemy (i.e., multiplicity of meaning) and paronomasia (devices of sound), see Noegel, 2013a; 2013b.

2. The same may be said concerning a number of narratives in which animals converse with humans. See Noegel, 2014.

3. Noegel, 2007a, 107-112.

4. See Dietrich / Loretz, 1990; Pardee, 2000, 232–234; Gachet, 2000, 235. On magic in the literary texts of Ugarit, see Smith, 1984, 377–380.

5. See Noegel, 1995; Watson, 1980; 2000; Greaves, 1994. For the charm itself, see Gaster, 1975; 1980.

the pericope contains cases of paronomasia, they are not employed hermeneutically, because the dream required no interpreter. In addition, unlike other literary dreams whose ambiguities find resolve when they are fulfilled, El's dream fulfilled an image he had hoped to see before going to sleep.⁶

However, in the time since my publication, several cases of polysemy have come to light in El's words to Kirtu in his dream (1.14 ii 24-iii 49). The new finds make it necessary to revise slightly my previous conclusion and to close the gap even more between Ugaritic and other Near Eastern dream accounts.⁷ In addition, several examples constitute subtle critiques of the king, and therefore, they bear on the on-going debate concerning the purpose and ideology of the text.⁸

That we should find sophisticated devices in Ugaritic literary texts should not surprise us, for the texts were composed and transmitted by highly erudite ritual professionals adept in Ugaritic, Akkadian, and Hurrian.⁹ In fact, the colophon of the *Legend of Kirtu* attributes its transmission to Ilimilku, whom we know to have been a previous pupil of Attēnu, the diviner.¹⁰ According to Ignacio Márquez Rowe:

What is beyond any doubt is that Ilimilku and his colleagues devoted themselves for a long time to the study of both word-syllabic and alphabetic cuneiform scripts, and that they practiced them with more or less accuracy learning the names of trees, beasts and birds, reptiles and fish, as well as writing down beautiful pieces of literature from both Mesopotamia and Ugaritic traditions. Moreover, some, if not all, of them became teachers, like Attēnu, the master of Ilimilku; and like Attēnu himself they would become seers (in Ugaritic, *purulinnu*), or also viziers of the king.¹¹

It is in this context of divinatory ideology and erudition that I shall examine a number of polysemes in Kirtu's dream. As I intend to show, the ambiguity present in El's words forces one to contemplate its possible meanings and to weigh them against the dream's fulfillment. Further, since a first-time reader could not accomplish this without having studied the entire text, Ilimilku and other tradents could not have recited the text properly without first having obtained its authoritative interpretation from the likes of

6. Noegel, 2007a, 112. El had hoped that his dream would show him "the heavens raining oil, and the wadis running with honey" as a sign that Baal would live (*CAT* 1.6 iii 6-7). Therefore, the dreams of El and Kirtu have opposite purposes. El's dream validates a waking thought, whereas it is Kirtu's waking life that validates his dream.

7. While Egyptian influence upon Ugarit is well known, Ugaritic texts reveal that Mesopotamian divinatory "sciences" had a far greater impact on the literati. See Rainey, 1969; Mack-Fisher, 1990; van Soldt, 1993; Márquez Rowe, 1996; Pardee, 2002, 234-235; Carr, 2005, 52-56.

8. A good deal of attention has been paid to the way the text engages issues of royal ideology, especially as they relate to sacral kingship, e.g., Kleven, 1988; Knoppers, 1994; Wyatt, 1997; 1998b; Margalit, 1995. Yet, to my knowledge, until now no one has considered that the texts might represent the ideological perspective of the diviners responsible for composing and transmitting them. Wyatt, 1999-2000, 134, comes close by averring that the literary features in the *Legend of Kirtu* and *Epic of Baal* have an ideological purpose and "are probably intentional elements on the part of Ilimilku." Parker, 1977; 1999, 211-215, similarly proposes that the legend supports the priesthood of El by portraying Kirtu as dependent upon El. However, Knoppers, 1994, 574, 581, rightly questions why the text contains no reference to El's priesthood. He suggests that the text has its *Sitz im Leben* among the temple scribes. I submit that the text is more subtle in its exercise of mantic authority and influence and that it represents the views of an interdisciplinary lot, whose expertise included divination, ritual, and other performative temple arts, and whose devotion was not restricted to El.

9. See van Soldt, 1995b; Dalix, 1996; Pardee, 1996; Márquez Rowe, 1996.

10. The colophon to the *Epic of Baal* (*CAT* 1.6 vi 54-55) identifies Ilimilku as Attēnu's student. The colophon of the *Legend of Kirtu* does not, which suggests he had finished his training before he transmitted the text.

11. Márquez Rowe, 2008, 103. On the learnedness of Ilimilku and Attēnu, see also Dietrich / Loretz, 1990; Márquez Rowe, 1996; Dalix 1996; van Soldt 1989; 1995b.

Attēnu.¹² In the context of a divinatory education, I posit that studying the relationship between the dream omen and its fulfillment served as a form of instrumental praxis, providing masters like Attēnu with a paradigm for demonstrating the relationship between polysemous omens and their interpretations.¹³

I first draw attention to El's command that Kirtu *qh msrr ʿsr dbh* (1.14 ii 17-18). As Nicolas Wyatt espies, the directive permits "two entirely different approaches."¹⁴ On the one hand, we may read *msrr* as "internal organs," i.e., the choicest portion of a sacrificial animal, and *ʿsr* as "bird."¹⁵ On the other, we may treat *msrr* as if derived from *srr* "remove," and denoting the decanting of dregs from a wine offering,¹⁶ and *ʿsr* as "sap juice, wine."¹⁷ The ambiguity allows us to translate the line: "Take the choicest part of a bird of sacrifice" or "Take dreg-[free] wine as a (drink-)offering."¹⁸ The double polysemy constitutes a case of Janus Parallelism.¹⁹ As a description of a bird sacrifice, it follows nicely upon El's instruction to sacrifice a lamb (1.14 ii 13-15), and as a liquid offering, the verse anticipates the sacrifice of wine and honey-wine in the next verse (1.14 ii 18-19). In essence, the passage's ambiguity calls into question exactly what sort of sacrifice El demands. Since each type of sacrifice served a particular purpose,²⁰ knowing the correct

12. For diviners, the act of interpretation was not just exegetical. It was a performative, curative, and juridical ritual that aimed to demonstrate that cosmic and theological principles, like *lex talionis*, continue to function in the universe (a belief in the efficacy of divination leaves no room for coincidence). It was transformative for the dreamer, because it determined one's fate by reducing an omen's many possible meanings to a single outcome. Indeed, the act of interpretation was an act of illocutionary power that reveals a divinatory preoccupation with rendering ambiguity into a projected and decisive reality. See Noegel, 2007a, 46-50.

13. Carr, 2005, has argued that Near Eastern literary texts generally served as *aide-mémoire* for the performance of their contents and the enculturation of their readers. If he is correct, and I believe him to be, we must ask how the literati handled the presence of polysemy during recitation. I intend to address this matter in a future publication, but for the nonce, I point out that we must ask the same about bards who recited *Enūma eliš* VII, fully cognizant of the numerous esoteric and polysemous readings of Marduk's name, many of which communicate solely on a visual register (see Bottéro, 1977; cf. Livingstone, 1986). The sheer impossibility of transmitting polysemous meanings during recitation, without endless pauses and explanations, strongly suggests the existence of an oral tradition; an educational context in which master tradents passed on the learned readings to their pupils. In this context, the presence of polysemes would have offered teaching/learning moments of pause, reflection, and interpretation, and as items of special focus, they even might have abetted a text's memorization. Therefore, while we may see the learned interpretations contributing to an apprentice's enculturation, the engagement of polysemy had to have taken place prior to performance. The recitation of a text already constituted an authoritative interpretation of its ambiguities. In the context of a divinatory education at Ugarit, pupils like Ilmilku would have studied the entire text closely, and they would have interpreted the ambiguous words of El successfully only after comparing them with the dream's fulfillment. While in the main I concur with Carr's findings, the existence of polysemous devices in Near Eastern literary texts generally suggests that written texts possessed more than a mnemonic function.

14. Wyatt, 1998a, 187, n. 47. Nevertheless, Wyatt does not consider the presence of polysemy.

15. The former with Gordon, 1967, 452; *DULAT* 583, s.v. *msrr*, and the latter with the Akkadian cognate *iššuru*, and Gray 1964, 37; de Moor, 1987, 194; de Moor / Spronk, 1982, 161.

16. With Aartun, 1984, 49; 1985, 11; Wyatt, 1998a, 187; *DULAT* 771, s.v. *srr*.

17. Based on Arabic, Jewish Aramaic, and Syriac cognates. See Wyatt, 1998a, 187, n. 47. See also *CAT* 1.20 ii 12, which lists *tph ʿsr*, perhaps "wine-apple(s)" as one of the refreshments that the dead are invited to consume. On *ʿsr* here as a mistake for *ʿsr*, see *DULAT* 187, s.v. *ʿsr*; 935, s.v. *ʿsr*. On the deified dead as recipients of liquid offerings, see below.

18. The latter with Wyatt, 1998a, 187. Sacrifices at Ugarit included the entrails of animals and wine, among many other items. See Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 40-42.

19. Janus Parallelism is a device found in many ancient Near Eastern literary texts in which a polyseme faces back to a previous line in one of its meanings, and forward to a following line in its other meaning. On this device in Ugaritic, see Noegel, 1995. The interest among Ugarit's bards in having words and phrases do double duty also appears in their use of the "pivot pattern" observed by Watson, 1976b.

20. Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 34-42.

offering was a matter of cultic importance, especially for Ilimilku, who self-identified as a *ṯy* “sacrificial officiant” (1.14 1.16 vi colophon).²¹

A study of Ugarit’s liturgical texts reveals that wine is only seldom used as a libation, and instead, it is primarily consumed by the royal house and participants during royal sacrificial rites (1.41 23 [= 1.87 24]; 1.91) or by the deified dead (1.14 1.108).²² The liturgical texts also show that birds were never offered to El and only very rarely to Baal.²³ On the other hand, birds were offered more frequently to the royal house, which is identified as the *ṯph b l* “family of Baal,” and to the *inš il* “divinized (dead) men” of the royal house.²⁴ Only one ritual text offers a bird (*ṣr*) to Baal (1.119 20-21), and as Gregorio del Olmo Lete observes (1999, 303), it is very peculiar, because all of the offerings are directed to Baal alone, and because its victims (*ṣrm, kbd, ššrt*) belong more properly to divination rituals.

As a sacrificial officiant with divinatory training, Ilimilku would have been aware that interpreting the line as a bird offering to Baal connects it to Kirtu as a member of the “family of Baal” and to divination generally.²⁵ Nevertheless, the narrator’s description afterwards suggests that the correct recitation of the line was as a liquid offering. Though the dream’s fulfillment contains the same ambiguity with regard to the words *msrr* and *ṣr* (1.14 iii 59),²⁶ the narrator has withheld here any mention of a *dbḥ* “sacrifice.” Note that El had instructed Kirtu: *qh imr bydk imr dbḥ bm ymn lla klatnm* “Take a lamb in your hand, a sacrificial lamb in your right hand, a kid in both hands” (1.14 ii 13-15). Yet, the narrator reports: *lqh imr bydh lla klatnm* “He took a lamb in his hand, a kid in both hands” (1.14 iii 55-57).²⁷ Kirtu clearly gathers the animals, but by omitting any reference to a *dbḥ*, the passage draws a sharp distinction between the wine offerings that immediately follow and the two animals sacrifices to El and Baal that come

21. See also *CAT* 1.4 B 1; 1.16 B 1; 1.16 vi 57 *ilmlk ṯy / ṯy nqmd* “Ilimilku, Officiant/Officiant of Niqmaddu.” In 1.6 vi 54-58, he appears as *rb khnm ṯy nqmd* “Chief of the Priests, Officiant of Niqmaddu.”

22. Wine is offered only to *ʿAttartu-Hurri* (*CAT* 1.112 13) and to Rapi’u, King of Eternity (1.108). In the latter text, the king offers wine to the Rapi’u in order to convince Baal to transmit the powers of the Rapa’uma to the living king. In a mythological text, El also imbibes wine with the other gods during his *marzihu*-feast (1.114 4, 16).

23. See the following note in which Baal of Šapunu and Baal of Ugarit receive only the domesticated dove (*ynt qrt*).

24. There are three types of bird offerings found in the liturgical texts: 1) generic (*ṣr*), 2) domesticated dove (*ynt qrt*), and 3) turtle dove (*tr*). The first is offered to kings and queens (*CAT* 1.48 1, 12), the *inš il* “divinized dead” (1.32 17; 1.39 21; 1.41 27; 1.46 8; 1.105 26; 1.107 1, 7; 1.112 5), Šapunu (1.30 8, 10; 1.41 24; 1.105 24), *ʿAttartu-Šadi* (1.48 16), Baal (1.119 20-21), Baalata-Bahatima (1.48 3), Gittu-Ṭarumanni (1.48 17), Ḥebat (1.132 17), a Ḥmn-sanctuary (1.48 12), Kinaru (1.148 9), MZY son of [...] (1.48 14), Rd[...] (1.48 11), Rapa’uma (1.161 26, 30), Ri[dn] (1.41 36), Salḥu (1.48 19), Šmn (1.164 8), an unknown recipient on a mountain (1.48 15), and the Hurrian gods In Atn, Il, Tešub, Kumarbi, Kušuh, In Prz, and Nikkalu as a group (1.111 6). The domesticated dove is offered to the royal house (1.41 21 [= 1.87 23]; 1.119 10), Baal of Šapunu (1.109 6; 1.130 3), Baal of Ugarit (1.119 10), and as a *ṯ*-offering or perhaps to a divinized king (1.30 1, though here without *qrt*). On the latter reading, see Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 298-299. The turtle dove is offered only to the unknown deity Qrh (1.115 5, 13). As Pardee, 2002, 224, 267, observes, birds comprise only 3% of the offerings and they are sacrificed mainly to chthonic deities.

25. Korpel, 1998, 103, demonstrates Ilimilku’s use of imagery and language drawn from ritual.

26. Of course, here the fulfillment places the narrative in the past tense (i.e., the line begins with *lqh* “he took”). Kim, 2011, 239, argues that the predominant use of identical orthography to convey the verbs in both the dream and fulfillment pericopes might constitute a device: “All this may subtly allude to the rigor (*sic!*) that is demanded on Kirta as ‘Ilu’s servant in the execution of (*sic!*) divine command and thus may create the impression that the success of Kirta’s mission depends on how literally Kirta translates ‘Ilu’s commands into practice.” I submit that the same rigour of interpretation applies to Ilimilku and other divinatory professionals.

27. The expression *kl ḥmk dnzl* that follows the reference to animals in the dream and its fulfillment (1.14 ii 16; iii 58, i.e., in third person *kl ḥmh dnzl*) is too difficult to help in clarifying which offering is intended, because *nzl* can mean “present (food)” or “pour out.” In addition, *ḥm* can mean “food” or a “bread-offering.” The line probably simply means to present an offering. See the discussion in Watson, 1992.

afterwards.²⁸ In the context of the dream's fulfillment, this places greater emphasis on the wine as the first of Kirtu's offerings. Moreover, that the wine offering took place before Kirtu ascended the temple tower, shows that they were not offerings for El and Baal. Since wine libations were consumed primarily by the king and his divinized ancestors, Kirtu's first offering subtly makes the royal house the first recipient.²⁹ Read in this way, his cultic actions mirror the practices of the royal funerary cult in which the divinized dead received offerings before El and Baal.³⁰ In our text, it is only after Kirtu offers the libations and ascends the tower that the term *dbḥ* twice appears, this time in reference to the offerings to El and Baal (1.14 iv 4-7).

For Ilimilku the learned recitation of the dream and its fulfillment naturally create a performative *mise en abyme* in which he becomes an active participant in the narration, which in essence, places the proper interpretation and fulfillment of Kirtu's dream in his hands.³¹ If, as some have proposed, the text offers a critique of divine kingship, while also justifying Niqmaddu III's claim to the throne,³² then we again may see the dream narrative as reflecting the ideology and influence of Ilimilku and those of his divinatory ilk. After all, they are responsible for reciting, transmitting, and preserving the text, and so they make possible both Kirtu's immortality and Niqmaddu's objective.³³

We next encounter polysemy in El's charge that Kirtu *šrd b'l dbḥk bn dgn bmsdk* (1.14 ii 24-26). Particularly clever is the form *šrd*. Some propose that we read it as an imperative (or perhaps jussive form) of the root *šrd* "serve, honor."³⁴ Others understand it as a *š*-causative form of the root *yrd* "cause to descend/set down."³⁵ In addition, the word *mšd* (1.14 ii 26) can mean "game-offering" (from *šyd*) or a "fortified tower" (from *mšd*).³⁶ Once again we have a case of double polysemy and Janus Parallelism.³⁷ As

28. Wyatt, 1998, 186, n. 45, disagrees with Xella, 1982, 160, who treats the lamb and kid as distinct animals, and suggests that the passage prosodically suggests a single offering. Nevertheless, Kirtu clearly offers a *dbḥ* both to El and Baal (*CAT* iii 4-8). I know of no ritual text from Ugarit in which two gods receive a single offering unless they are a dual-deity. Even when El and Baal receive sacrifices on the same day, separate animals are required. For this reason I see the *imr* as a sacrifice to El, and the *lla* "kid" as an offering to Baal, perhaps representative of their respective ages and statuses in the pantheon.

29. On the similarity between Kirtu's offering to Baal and the theophany-provoking practices of the funerary cult of the palace, see Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 239-240.

30. The festival requires offerings to the tutelary deities of the palace and dynasty and to the royal dead on day one, and to El and Baal of Ugarit on day fifteen. In addition, the chthonic gods *gtrm* descend upon a tower on the fourteenth day (i.e., *yrdn gtrm mšdh*, *CAT* 1.112 18-19), which is reminiscent of Baal's descent in our text (i.e., *šrd b'l dbḥk bn dgn bmsdk*, 1.14 ii 24-26). Of course, a number of differences exist between the pericope in the *Legend of Kirtu* and 1.112. For a discussion of the ritual, see Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 244.

31. The *mise en abyme* creates its deepest set of frames at the very end of the dream, immediately before Kirtu awakens, when we hear: "For in my dream El has granted, in my vision the Father of Man, that she will bear progeny to Kirtu, and an heir to the servant of El" (*CAT* 1.14 iii 46-49). We have here an enveloping of figures in which El tells Kirtu what Kirtu will tell Pabil, and what Kirtu tells Pabil constitutes El's promise to Kirtu. Therefore, the words simultaneously belong to El and Kirtu, and during recitation, they also belong to Ilimilku. Note also the clever reframing of Kirtu's initial response to El's inquiry (1.14 i 51-ii 3) concerning his lack of need for silver, gold, and a charioteer with horses, first in the form of Pabil's offer to Kirtu (1.14 iii 22-25), and then in El's instructions to Kirtu's in how to respond to Pabil (1.14 iii 33-37). On the illocutionary and ideological aspects of narration and the function of *mise en abyme* in ancient Near Eastern texts, see Greenstein, 1998; Noegel, 2007a, 77-82; and now Lenzi 2013, 32-33, though Lenzi does not employ the term *mise en abyme*.

32. Knoppers, 1994; Wyatt, 1997; 1998b; Margalit, 1995, 217.

33. On Kirtu's immortality and deification upon death, see Del Olmo Lete, 1999, pp. 325-328.

34. Virolleaud, 1936, 39; Gray, 1964, 38; Del Olmo Lete, 1981, 297; Wyatt, 1998a, 188; *DULAT* 843, s.v. *šrd*.

35. See Driver, 1956, 31; Xella, 1982, 160; de Moor, 1987, 195.

36. *DULAT* 585, s.v. *mšd* I and II. I thank Shira Jaret for espying the polysemy here.

“honor, serve,” *šrd* follows El’s instructions: *ša ydk šmm* “Raise your hands to the heavens” (1.14 ii 22). As “cause to descend/set down,” it points ahead to the next line: *wyrd krt lggt* “Let Kirtu descend from the rooftops” (1.14 ii 26-27).³⁸ Similarly, as “offering” *mšd* follows “sacrifice,” but as “tower” it anticipates “rooftops.” The double polysemy allows us to translate the passage in multiple ways including “Serve Baal with your sacrifice, Dagan’s Son on the tower” or “Cause Baal to descend on your sacrifice, Dagan’s Son on your offering.” A change in the case endings also allows us to read *dbhk* as the direct object, and translate *šrd b l dbhk bn dgn bmšdk* as “Cause your sacrifice, O Baal, to descend, O Dagan’s Son, from the tower.”³⁹

From a narrative perspective, reading *šrd b l* as “cause Baal to descend” is tantamount to a call for rain, for it is the king’s role as principle cult officiant to ensure fertility through sacrifice. As such, the reading foreshadows the search for Baal during the sympathetic drought caused by Kirtu’s illness (1.16 iii 2-8). In that episode, Baal is summoned to make the land fertile, whereas here Kirtu’s call is to provide a fertile wife.⁴⁰ The polysemous expression also constitutes an ideological statement for it directly connects Kirtu’s act of devotion to its intended result, thereby demonstrating proper sacrifice in word and deed. Similarly, the poem’s use of *mšd* for “offering” and “tower” places the sacrifice properly in the sacred precincts of Baal’s Temple.⁴¹ Since the same orthographic ambiguity remains in the dream’s fulfillment with regard to *šrd* and *mšd*, we must leave the proper interpretation to Ilmilku and his learned associates. If Del Olmo Lete is correct in seeing El’s previous descent in Kirtu’s dream (1.14 i 36) as ruling out the meaning “cause to descend” for *šrd*, then El’s theophany provides a clue for translating *šrd* as “honor.”⁴² Nevertheless, it is used in reference to Baal, not El.⁴³ At the very least, we can imagine the terms *šrd* and *mšd* to have been the focus of discussion between teacher and pupil.

Another case of double polysemy appears in El’s nocturnal command: *‘db akl lqryt ḥtt lbt ḥbr* (1.14 ii 27-29). Note first the word *qryt* (instead of the expected *qrt*), which one can translate as “city”⁴⁴ or “granary,” the latter based on the Akkadian cognate *qarītu*.⁴⁵ Similarly, while translators render *bt ḥbr* as the city-state “House of Khubur,” we also possess the Akkadian cognate expression *bīt ḥubūri* “beer

37. Of course, the two readings require a slight change in vocalization (e.g., *šarrud* vs. *šārid*, respectively, and presumably also for *mšd*), but this also is the case for some other Janus Parallels. See Noegel, 1996a.

38. With Van Zijl, 1972, 280. It also reverses the direction in El’s command: *w l lṣr mgdl rkb ḫmm ḥmt* “Ascend to the top of the tower, mount the shoulder of the city” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 20-22).

39. On the flexibility of the preposition *b*, see *DULAT* 199-202, s.v. *b*.

40. This fits well the observations of Wyatt, 1997; 1999-2000, 136, that the text invites comparison between Kirtu and Baal. Cf. El’s statement upon learning of Baal’s death: *qtr b l ard b arṣ* “After Baal I shall descend to the ‘earth’” (*CAT* 1.15 24-25).

41. See the architectural features in *CAT* 1.16 iv 13-14. The prayer against foreign siege also reveals that Baal’s temple had a tower: *alp l mgdl b l ugrt* “an ox for the tower of Baal of Ugarit” (1.119 12). On the similarities between Kirtu’s sacrifices and the prayer, see Miller, 1988, 149-151; Knoppers, 1994. For the archaeological evidence, see Yon, 2006, 110-111; Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 32-33.

42. Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 239, n. 72.

43. This simply could be a device that serves to parallel the actions of the two gods. Seen in this way, Baal must descend to reach the tower in the same way that El must descend to reach Kirtu in his dream. Note that Yahweh similarly must descend (77) to reach the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:5).

44. Del Olmo Lete, 1981, 550; de Moor / Spronk, 1982, 163; Wyatt, 1998a, 188 *DULAT* 715, s.v. *qryt*.

45. See Albright, 1943; Driver, 1956, 31; Caquot / Szyner / Herdner, 1974, 515, n. x. *CAD* Q 132-133, s.v. *qarītu*. Herdner notes the odd orthography of *qryt*. As I have noted elsewhere (Noegel 2007a, 19-24), the presence of odd orthography and/or peculiar grammar often serves to signal the presence of polysemy; for diviners an abnormal “sign” constitutes a meaningful “signifier”.

room,”⁴⁶ i.e., a room devoted to the storage and fermenting of grains.⁴⁷ If the meanings “granary” (for *qryt*) and “beer house” (for *bt ḥbr*) were not parlance among the people of Ugarit, then we may understand their clever integration as examples of bilingual polysemy.⁴⁸ In addition, I note that the preposition *l-* twice used here can mean “to, for,” or “from,” as it does elsewhere in the dream (e.g., 1.14 ii 27; iii 28-29). The ambiguity permits us to render the passage as “Prepare rations for the city, wheat for the House of Khubur” or “Prepare rations from the granary, wheat from the beer house.”

From the perspective of the narrative, the double polysemy identifies Kirtu’s capitol as a locus of fertility, and thus, as a fitting place for Hurraya to bear children (1.14 1.15 ii 21-25).⁴⁹ This becomes ironic later when the land falls to drought during Kirtu’s illness. From the perspective of Ilimilku and his cohorts, the passage displays the bilingual erudition of their profession and places its proper interpretation in their purview.⁵⁰

Ambiguity similarly obtains in El’s nocturnal instruction to Kirtu before the campaign: *‘dn ngb wṣyi ṣbu ṣbi ngb* (1.14 ii 32-33). The couplet is difficult and it has been variously translated, e.g., “Let a force be victualled, and let it set out. Let a mighty host be victualled.”⁵¹ The passage’s difficulty rests in the presence of polysemes. For instance, we may read the lexeme *‘dn* as a noun meaning “army” or “abundant grain.” As a verb, it means “assemble, store up.”⁵² The meaning “army” makes sense as it occurs with *ṣbu* “host,” though “abundant grain” also suggests itself, especially following El’s previous polysemes involving granaries and his command to bake bread. Reading *‘dn* as a verb is equally possible either as “assemble” (an army) or “store up” (bread). In addition, the word *ngb* can be read nominally as “a type of bread” or verbally as “supply with bread,”⁵³ but it also can mean “all, entire, totality.”⁵⁴ The only portions of the passage that are unambiguous are the verb *wṣyi* “let it set out” and the superlative construct expression *ṣbu ṣbi* “mighty host” (lit. “host of host[s]”). The presence of two polysemes allows us to understand the passage variously including: “The entire army, let the entire mighty host go out,” or “Store up grain, prepare bread, let the mighty host go out prepared with bread,” or “Assemble the totality, let the entire mighty host go out,” or combinations thereof.

46. Cf. *būt ḥubūri* in *CAD* H 220, s.v. *ḥubūru* A. Albright, 1943, rendered it as “granary”.

47. The passage also constitutes unidirectional polysemy, since *qryt* as both “granary” and “city” points ahead to the next line, the former to *ḥtt* “wheat” and *bt ḥbr* “beer room,” and latter to *bt ḥbr* as “House of Khubur.” On unidirectional polysemy in Hebrew, see Noegel, 2013b, 179-180.

48. On the integration of other Mesopotamian linguistic elements into Ugaritic texts, including a portion of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* into the *Legend of Kirtu*, see Eissfeldt, 1962. One can find examples of bilingual polysemy between many languages of the Near East, including Akkadian and Sumerian, Hebrew and Akkadian, Hebrew and Egyptian, Hebrew and Aramaic, and Hebrew and Greek. For examples in Hebrew, see Noegel, 2013b, 180-181. Ilimilku does not refrain from using foreign words in his texts. See Korpel, 1998, 98-99, 101, who discusses his use of the Hurrian term *khḫ* “throne,” and Hittite word *‘iḫl* “spittle” as attempts to present himself a polyglott.

49. The ambiguity remains in the narrator’s telling of the dream’s realization (*CAT* 1.14 iv 9-10), though there the verb *‘db* must be a preterite.

50. If a single vocalization permitted both readings then it might not have been incumbent upon Ilimilku to choose an interpretation, since both readings are positive and identify Kirtu’s city with fertility.

51. See Wyatt, 1998a, 189.

52. *DULAT* 150-151, s.v. *‘dn* I and II.

53. Dietrich / Loretz, 1980, 193, read as “equipped.”

54. Both are based on Akkadian cognates. See *CAD* N/1 105, s.v. *nagābu*, 111; s.v. *nagbu* B. On *ngb* as “totality,” see Watson, 1979. The Akkadian *nagbu* also can mean “spring, fountain,” *CAD* N/1 108-110, s.v. *nagbu* A. Mesopotamia literati similarly exploited the two meanings of *nagbu*. See Noegel, 2007a, 74-76.

From a literary perspective, the ambiguous passage occurs just after El commands Kirtu to gather grains and prepare bread (1.14 ii 27-31) and just before he orders him to mobilize a fighting force (1.14 ii 35-42). Therefore, the polysemes combine the preparation of bread and the preparation of the army into a unified action, a device well encapsulated in the very next verse: *wysi 'dn m* “let the army/abundant grain go forth as one” (1.14 ii 34). In this way the polysemy functions compositionally like the pivot pattern discovered by Wilfred Watson (1976b).

The bountiful granaries of Khubur and Kirtu’s ample military rations will come into stark contrast not long afterwards when Kirtu’s illness brings a drought upon the land. At that time, the people will recall with hunger the “emmer in the furrows, and wheat crowns in the tith” (1.16 iii 9-11), and cry out to Baal: *kly lhm bm 'dnhm* “spent is all the bread from their storage” (*'dn*)!⁵⁵

It also may be that the passage employs a literary topos found elsewhere in the Near East in which the appearance of bread in a dream signals catastrophe for the dreamer.⁵⁶ Observe that not long after obtaining Hurraya from Udum, Kirtu becomes deathly ill, and despite his success in having a son, he ironically dies without a male heir.⁵⁷

Interestingly, when the narrator recounts these actions as realizations of Kirtu’s dream, he removes some of the ambiguity: *'dn ngb wysi šbu šba ngb* (1.14 iv 13-14). Note in particular, that the expression *šbu šba* cannot now be a superlative construct formation, for the nominative case of *šbu* and accusative case of *šba* force us to treat them as subject and object, respectively. Consequently, we cannot render *šbu šba* as “host of host(s).” In turn, this suggests that *ngb* must be the verb “supply with bread,” and that *šba* “host” must be its object, since otherwise *šba ngb*, as “entire host,” lacks a transitive verb. If we consider also that the narrator’s account has changed El’s imperatives to preterite (or perhaps passive) forms, then we now can render the line: “The army he supplied (with bread), and the host goes out, the host supplied (with bread).”⁵⁸ The removal of ambiguity constitutes an act of interpretation that clarifies El’s command in the unfolding events of Kirtu’s life.

We find polysemy at work again in El’s description of the Kirtu’s militia as *wlrbt kmyr* (1.14 ii 40). At first, one is encouraged to render the phrase “in myriads like the early rains,” because it parallels *hlk lalpm hdd* “march by the thousand (like) a downpour.”⁵⁹ However, the mention of “archers beyond number” just prior (1.14 ii 38), suggests that we understand *kmyr* to mean “like arrows.”⁶⁰ Indeed, a metaphorical description of rain as arrows is not without analogs. See, e.g., Ps 77:18: *עֲבוֹת קוֹל נִתְּנָו שִׁחֲקִים אֶרֶץ-חֲצִצְדִּיךָ יִתְהַלְּכוּ*: “The clouds poured down water, the heavens resounded with thunder, your arrows went back and

55. The use of *'trrt* “crowns” in this passage allusively underscores the irony that normally it is the king’s responsibility to ensure the land’s fertility through sacrifice to Baal.

56. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* XI 45-47 (signals the coming deluge), Gen 40:16 (baker’s death), and Judg 7:13 (destruction of the Midianites). I discuss the dreams and their operative polysemes in Noegel, 2007a, 68-69, 130-131, 141-143. Cf. *שָׁבַר*, which can mean “grain” (Gen 42:1) or “decipher a dream” (Judg 7:15). Though not in the context of a dream, see also the discovery of blood in the bread ration of a Macedonian soldier, which causes Aristander to predict that Tyre would fall to Alexander’s siege (Quintus Curtius Rufus, *Historiae*, 4.12.14). I intend to examine the topos more thoroughly in a forthcoming article.

57. The text also hints at the possibility of an unsuccessful mission when the narrator omits the line *hptl dbl spr tnn dbl hg* “Soldiers beyond number, archers beyond count” (from *CAT* 1.14 ii 37-38) in his description of the dream’s actualization (1.14 iv 16-17). The omission leaves Kirtu with a diminished militia that is no longer innumerable.

58. Of course, *'dn* remains allusive. I have rendered it “army” based on parallelism with *šba*, but it also suggests “grain.”

59. The proposal is that of Gaster; discussed in Caquot / Sznycer / Herdner, 1974, 517, n. c.

60. Cf. *DULAT* 983, s.v. *yry*. One can imagine an active participle (i.e., “shooters”) or passive participle (i.e., “those things being shot”) serving this function. The mention of arrows appears explicitly in El’s instruction to Kirtu as he reaches Udum: “Do not fire your arrows (*hz*) upon the city” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 12-13). This verse does not repeat in the dream’s fulfillment (1.14 v 5-6).

forth.”⁶¹ If we follow Watson in reading *ḥdd* as “lightning,” then the proposed reading of *yr* as “arrows” is also apt.⁶² The combined polysemy allows Kirtu’s army to take the form of a storm, a poetic strategy attested widely in the ancient Near East.⁶³

One finds more polysemy shortly afterwards, when El mentions a number of individuals who normally would be exempt from service, but who nevertheless will join Kirtu’s expedition. He begins by predicting that *yhd bth sgr* “the sole survivor will lock his house” (1.14 ii 43). The term *yhd* designates someone, like a widow or orphan, who is bereft of family. Yet, technically speaking, Kirtu too is a *yhd*, since he also has lost his family. This allows us to read El’s words as an allusive critique of the king, for they bring into contrast the sole survivor, who must lock his house and enter military service, and Kirtu, who conscripts him, risking his life, for the very purpose of finding a wife and starting his own family.⁶⁴ Interestingly, when the narrator describes the actualization of the event (1.14 iv 21), he instead employs the numeral *aḥd* “one,” which removes any allusion to Kirtu.

El then predicts that *zbl ršm yšu* “the sick man will lift his bed.” Like the sole survivor, the sick normally would be exempt from service, but Kirtu demands that he too join the campaign. However, El’s words are again polysemously potent. On the one hand, they forecast the extremes Kirtu will go to assemble his force. On the other, they predict Kirtu’s own future. Note that the word *zbl* is polysemous and can mean “sick man” or “prince, ruler,” and that the verb *yšu* can mean “lift” or “take.”⁶⁵ Therefore, we may understand El’s words also to mean “the ruler will take his bed.” Since Kirtu is healthy when the conscription occurs, we must translate the fulfillment of the dream as “the sick man lifted his bed” (1.14 iv 23-24).⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the alternative reading is realized later when Athirat punishes Kirtu with a deadly illness for neglecting his vow. The connection between the conscription and Kirtu’s sickness is brought to the fore, when Kirtu’s son Yaššib chides him in a way that recalls El’s words. Perceiving that his father’s illness had caused him to neglect his royal duties, including those affecting those previously conscripted by him (!), he berates him: *km aḥt rš mdw anšt rš zbln* “illness has become your lover, sickness a bed companion” (1.16 vi 35-36),⁶⁷ also utilizing *zbl* for its allusive charge. Therefore, El’s ambiguous words to Kirtu find a double fulfillment.

El similarly employs ambiguous language to describe the impact of impending war upon the newlywed, who also normally would have exempt status: *wysi trḥ ḥdt yb r ltn aṯth lm nkr mddth* (1.14 ii 47-50). At

61. Note that the Ugaritic cognate *hlk* (for *ḥlḳ* here) also appears in *hlk lalpm ḥdd*. The Hebrew cognate *ירה* also occurs for shooting arrows (e.g., 1 Sam 20:36; Prov 26:18) and rain (e.g., Hos 6:3; 10:12). The root *רבב* similarly denotes a “militia” (e.g., Deut 33:2), “shoot arrows” (e.g., Gen 49:23; Ps 18:15), and “copious showers” (e.g., Deut 32:3; Jer 14:22).

62. Watson, 1976a, 441, and cf. Hebrew *וַיִּזְרַח* in Job 28:26; 38:25. See also Zech 9:14: *וַיִּהְיוּ עֲלֵיהֶם יְרָאָה וַיִּצָּא כְבֹרֶק* “And Yahweh will appear above them, and his arrow will go forth like lightning, and the Lord Yahweh will sound the shofar, and he will advance by means of southern storms.” The Akkadian cognate apparently means only “roar” (*CAD* H 22, s.v. *ḥadādu*). Despite scholarly quibbling as to the exact definition of *ḥdd*, the variation among the cognates suggests that it denotes thunder, lightning, and a downpour as a combined phenomenon.

63. See the examples gathered in Tsumura, 2005, 182-192. The identification persists into the modern world, e.g., “Sturmtruppen,” “Blitzkrieg,” and “Operation Desert Storm.” As discussed above regarding *CAT* 1.14 ii 27-29, it might not have been necessary for Ilmilku to remove the ambiguity of this passage since it serves to empower Kirtu’s army by embodying it as a storm. Nevertheless, since the narrator omits the mention of the archers (1.14 ii 37-38) in the fulfillment of the dream (1.14 iv 16-17), the expression *kmyr* in iv 18 is more suggestive of “like the early rains” than “like arrows.”

64. The irony is noted by Kim, 2011, 224, who also points out the cognate in Ps 69:7.

65. *DULAT* 998, s.v. *zbl* I and III; 648-649, s.v. *nša*.

66. Though *yšu*, rather the preterite *nša*, remains problematic. Perhaps we should render as a jussive.

67. Kim, 2011, 224, observes the irony, but not the polysemy.

first blush, the passage suggests that we translate: “The new-groom will go forth, he will abandon his wife because of another, on account of a foreigner his beloved.” This reading typically understands the foreigner to be the enemy.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, at least three lexemes in the passage are polysemes. The first is the verb *bʿr*, which can mean “abandon, leave,” but also “burn.”⁶⁹ The second, is *tn*, which can mean “another” (lit. “a second”) and “claim, repeat” (from *tny*).⁷⁰ The third is *nkr*, which means “foreign, strange,” “acquire,” and “to know (sexually).”⁷¹ The polysemes permit us to translate the tricolon as: “The new-groom will go forth, he will burn to claim his wife, to acquire (or know sexually) his beloved.” The ambiguity forces us to contemplate whether El predicts no exemptions from Kirtu’s draft or if he subtly alludes to Kirtu and his mission against Udm, i.e., “The new-groom-to-be will go forth, he will burn to claim his wife, to acquire his beloved.” The ambiguity brings into contrast the newly-wed, who must forego exemption, abandon his wife, and risk the loss of his own family, and Kirtu, who orders him to do so, so that he might obtain a wife and start a family.⁷² Like the references to the solitary and sick men, El’s description of the newlywed delivers a polysemous barb.⁷³

The next time we hear this passage it occurs in the mouth of the narrator, who again repeats it to show that the events played out as El had predicted. Yet, a close look at the passage reveals two variations: *wybl trḥ ḥdṭ ybʿr ltn atth lm nkr mddt* (1.14 iv 26-28).⁷⁴ The first is *wybl* “he was taken,” rather than *wyṣi* “he will go out.” The second is *mddt* instead of *mddth*. The former change clarifies that the new groom was conscripted, and so the line can no longer allude to Kirtu’s mission.⁷⁵ The word *mddt* is likely a variant permitted by ellipsis with *atth* “his wife,” though additional cleverness perhaps is at work.⁷⁶ While the ambiguities inherent in *ybʿr*, *tn*, and *nkr* remain, the narrator’s use of *wybl* restricts the passage’s interpretation to a description of war. Indeed, from the perspective of the narrative, the fulfillment of the dream cannot allude to Kirtu’s mission, because it is now underway.

Double polysemy appears again in El’s description of Kirtu’s destination as *udm rbm wudm trrt* (1.14 iii 5-6). The name Udm is clear enough, even if its whereabouts remain unknown, but there has been much discussion on how to render the words *rbm* and *trrt*, and each of the proposals is equally possible. The word *rbm* can mean “great” or “abounding in rain”⁷⁷ and *trrt* can mean “small,” “powerful,” or “well-

68. So Bernhardt, 1955-1956, 107; Watson 1979, 113; Del Olmo Lete, 1981, 294; Wyatt, 1998a, 192. However, Dietrich / Loretz 1980, 196; Caquot / Sznycer / Herdner, 1974, 519; de Moor, 1987, 196, read *nkr* as “recognize,” and as representing someone of acquaintance with whom the conscripted leaves his wife.

69. *DULAT* 212, s.v. *bʿr* I and II; 631 s.v. *nkr*. Ugaritic authors exploited this polyseme also in *CAT* 1.4 iv 16. See Noegel, 1995.

70. *DULAT* 921, s.v. *tn*, 924, s.v. *tny*.

71. *DULAT* 630-631, s.v. *nkr*; Gordon, 1938. Cf. Hos 3:2.

72. The irony, but not the polysemy, is observed by Kim, 2011, 223.

73. On polysemy in the service of political critique in Akkadian texts, see Noegel, 1996b.

74. Both are noted by Greenstein, 1997, 43, nn. 33, 34. However, he treats them as scribal errors. Elsewhere I have referred to repetition with slight variation as “polyprosopon,” see Noegel / Rendsburg, 2009, 107-127.

75. On *ybl* “conscript,” see Lichtenstein, 1970; *DULAT* 949, s.v. *ybl*. Of course, the variant does not remove the irony.

76. The word *mddt* can mean “beloved” or “dispenser (of carnal delights).” See *DULAT* 526, s.v. *mddt* I and II. Cf. the *Legend of Aqht*, *CAT* 1.17 ii 41, where *mddt* refers to one who gives the “dispensers of the delight of the fertile bed, the pleasure of the bed of childbirth.” Is it possible that the narrator’s statement aims to evoke this meaning? We would then translate, “The new-groom was taken, he left his wife to another, (and) he acquired the pleasurer.”

77. Most render *rb* as “great,” though Wyatt, 1998, 193, n. 79, argues for “abundant in rain.” That *rb* appears as *rbt* in the dream’s fulfillment (*CAT* 1.14 29-30; v 40-42), suggests to some the need to emend *rb*. Perhaps the change in orthography draws attention to the polysemy. Nevertheless, both *rb* and *rbt* can suggest both “great” and “abundant in rain.”

watered.”⁷⁸ The polysemes create alternative opportunities for interpretation, including: “Udum the great, and Udum the small,” or “Udum the great, and Udum the powerful,” or “Udum abounding in rain, and Udum the well-watered.”

Assuming that the various readings required different vocalizations, Ilimilku would have known the authoritative interpretation when reciting the text, though it is possible that his interpretation differed depending on the context.⁷⁹ Coming to *udm rbm wudm trrt*, he would have realized, like Kirtu, that it is a city whose power lies in its abundant fertility, both within and beyond its walls.

From a literary vantage, each of the interpretations finds support in the narrative that ensues. As “great” and “small,” the epithets form a merism that encapsulates all of Udum, from its outlying villages to the walled citadel. Support for this reading appears in the next few verses that describe Kirtu’s attack of Udum’s towns and villages (1.14 iii 6-7) and his stop at the citadel (1.14 iii 12-14). The reading “great” and “powerful” creates a synonymous parallelism that increases the narrative’s tension by underscoring the difficulty of Kirtu’s quest. Support for the power of Udum appears in Pabil’s ability to offer Kirtu silver, gold, slaves, charioteers, and horses, in addition to many peace-offerings (1.14 iii 22-27). The understanding of Udum as “abounding in rain” and “well-watered” characterizes Udum as city associated with fertility, and thus, a fitting place to obtain a wife.⁸⁰ It also anticipates the next few verses in which Kirtu finds men cutting wood, and women working the threshing floor and drawing water from a well (1.14 iii 9-10). It is noteworthy that the text applies the same epithets to Kirtu’s city Khubur, but only after Hurraya enters Kirtu’s household and bears him children (1.15 iv 8-9, 19-20; v 25-26). In essence, after Kirtu obtained the fertile Hurraya, Khubur became what Udum once was.

Another example of double polysemy appears in El’s instruction to Kirtu for his approach to Udum: *s’ t bnk šibt bbqr mmlat* (1.14 iii 9-10). Scholars typically render the line: “sweep from the wells the women drawing water, from the spring the women filling (jars),” based on the way the line appears in the dream’s realization. However, there the text is slightly different: *s’ t bnpk šibt bmqr mmlat* (1.14 v 1-2). Usually, the variations between *bnk* and *bnpk*, and between *bbqr* and *bmqr*, are treated as scribal errors, though some have understood the last two forms as allomorphs.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the presence of women at a well in a foreign land, coupled with Kirtu’s stated desire to obtain a wife, provide the necessary components for seeing the passage as a Near Eastern type-scene preceding betrothal.⁸² Further, the orthography does not allow us to determine whether either or both stichs refer to one woman or several. In addition, we may read the expression *bnk* as “from among you,” and the form *bbqr* as a temporal infinitive of the verb *bqr*

78. De Moor / Sprong, 1982, 166, read it as “small,” *DULAT* 933, s.v. *trrt*, adopts the reading “powerful,” whereas Astour, 1973, 32; Wyatt, 1998, 193, n. 80, understand it as “well-watered.”

79. On the abundant use of antanaclasis elsewhere in the text, see below.

80. Note the related adjective *trry*, see *DULAT* 933, s.v. *trry* II.

81. *DULAT* 568, s.v. *m/bqr*. Cf. *šph* “offspring” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 48; vi 33) and *šbh* (1.14 vi 25). I prefer here to follow the rule of *lectio difficilior praeferenda est*. Note similarly the odd form *wld* “and bear” in 1.14 iii 48, often emended to *ktld* “and she will bear,” though it appears again in 1.14 vi 33, and the expression *šlmm šlmm* “peace-offerings galore,” which many see as dittography, but which occurs again in 1.14 vi 10. I do not deny the presence of scribal errors elsewhere in the text, but the fact that repetition and variation are fundamental to Near Eastern narrative generally should encourage us to be more cautious in assuming that repetition is always meant to be verbatim. Korpel, 1998, argues that such variations represent the creative style of Ilimilku. On “polyprosopon,” see above n. 74.

82. Espied by Kim, 2011, 231, who cites Alter, 1981, 52, but does not discuss the variations.

“examine, scrutinize.”⁸³ This permits us to understand El’s instruction to mean: “sweep off from among you a woman drawing water, when examining the women filling (jars).”

In the context of the narrative, this reading makes perfect sense. At this point in the dream, Kirtu realizes that he has reached his appointed destination, but he knows nothing of Hurraya.⁸⁴ Therefore, the passage serves as a literary foil to lend the drama an allusion of resolve. Had we not possessed the remainder of the text, we might plausibly conjecture that he had obtained a wife at the well.⁸⁵ Yet, it is precisely at this juncture, that the text places our expectations on hold by interjecting El’s command to be still and wait: “Then be still, a day and a second, a third day, and a fourth, a fifth day, and a sixth” (1.14 iii 10-12).

From the perspective of a diviner’s apprentice, El’s command cannot be read against the dream’s fulfillment unless, like the composer (and those who propose to emend the text!), he already knew the dream’s fulfillment. Upon first reading, it is only after learning that El instructs Kirtu to obtain Hurraya that one can dismiss the event at the well as meaningless to the king’s marital future. Here again the dream’s resolution constitutes an interpretation of the event in hindsight, one that Ilmilku and his peers knew to perform during the text’s recitation.

Polysemy also occurs in Pabil’s message to Kirtu when he arrives at Udum. Both in the dream and in its fulfillment Pabil tells him: *al tšr udm* (1.14 iii 29-30; v 40-42). Polysemous here is *tšr*, which can mean “harass, vex” (from *šrr*) or “besiege” (from *šwr*).⁸⁶ Consequently, we may understand the phrase as “do not harass Udum” or “do not besiege Udum.” As “harass,” the line follows the narrator’s ironic statement that Pabil could not sleep,⁸⁷ because of the animal sounds stirred by Kirtu’s army (1.14 iii 19), and Pabil’s request that Kirtu “go away” (1.14 iii 27-29). As “besiege” *tšr* anticipates the mention of the citadel and its outlying land in *udm rbm wudm trrt*, when read as “Udum the great, and Udum the small” (1.14 iii 30).⁸⁸ Hence, another Janus Parallelism.

From a literary perspective the device ties Kirtu’s arrival at Udum to Pabil’s vexation, thereby making Kirtu’s campaign a personal attack on Pabil. This plays out in the narrative. Note that what Pabil first thought was Kirtu’s attempt to take the city, soon becomes a personal demand to have his firstborn daughter.⁸⁹

Though one cannot be certain whether “harass” or “besiege” was the authoritative reading, that Kirtu obtained his objective without taking the city, suggests that it was read as “harass.” Further, in the dream El commanded Kirtu not to assault the citadel with arrows or slingstones (1.14 iii 12-14). Since no mention of arrows or stones appears in the dream’s fulfillment (1.14 v 6-8), we may assume that he obeyed El’s

83. Unlike the Hebrew cognate יָנַח, the proposition *bn* “between” is not repeated for both parties. Fittingly, the verb *bqr* also appears in divinatory contexts.

84. Kirtu’s initial request to El does not specify a person: “Let me procreate sons, let me produce a brood” (*CAT* 1.14 ii 4-5). However, these words are replaced in the dream when El instructs Kirtu to tell Pabil: “You must give me Lady Hurraya” (1.14 iii 39).

85. A similar foil in which a betrothal type-scene remains unfulfilled appears in the narrative of Elijah and the widow in 1 Kgs 17:8-16. Observed by Garsiel, 2014, 37-38.

86. For the former, see de Moor / Spronk, 1982, 168, and for the latter, see Wyatt, 1998, 195.

87. The irony rests in that Pabil could not sleep in Kirtu’s dream.

88. For these polysemous epithets, see above.

89. That Pabil took the attack personally also is apparent in his use of the first person suffixes in his message to Kirtu: “Depart, O king, from *my* house, be distant O Kirtu, from *my* court” (*CAT* 1.14 iii 27-29; v 39-45). Observe also that in the fulfillment scene, but not in the dream, the text follows Pabil’s lack of sleep with a private scene in which Pabil calls to his wife, though the passage is broken (1.14 v 12-17).

instruction. Moreover, conquering Udum was never Kirtu's aim. The dialogue between Pabil and Kirtu underscores this. Kirtu responds to Pabil's claim that Udum is the *ytnt* "gift" of El, by repeatedly using the same root *ytn* "give": "What is not in my house, you must give (*ttn*) me, You must give (*tn*) me Lady Hurraya"... "Whom El has given (*ytn*) in my dream" (1.14 iii 38-39, 46; vi 22-24, 31). El's use of *tšr* becomes clearer only in the light of the dream's fulfillment.

Another case of polysemy appears in the final statement in Pabil's missive: *udm ytnt il wušn ab adm* "Udum is the gift of El, a present of the Father of Man" (1.14 iii 31-32).⁹⁰ From a narrative perspective, the claim appears as Pabil's attempt to make Kirtu realize that Udum is El's city, and thus, undeserving of an attack by El's son.⁹¹ However, since here it is El who speaks these words to Kirtu in the dream, we may read them as El's omen to take the city, i.e., Udum is now El's gift to his son Kirtu, a present from the Father of Man. It is noteworthy that in the fulfillment scene, Pabil's words appear in a different order, so that the mention of Udum as El's gift no longer summarizes the message.⁹²

In addition to the aforementioned cases of polysemy, the dream account contains a number of fine examples of antanaclasis, a specific type of polysemy that involves the repetition of the same root, word, or expression, each time with a different meaning.⁹³ For example, in 1.14 ii 3 and 1.14 iii 37 the lexeme *amt* means handmaid, but in 1.14 ii 10 it is used for "elbow." In 1.14 ii 11, El uses *tkm* to refer to Kirtu's "shoulder," but in 1.14 ii 22 he uses it for the city "wall."⁹⁴ El uses *adm* for "man" in 1.14 ii 33 and 1.14 iii 32, 47, but in 1.14 ii 9, he uses it as a verb meaning "rouge," and in 1.14 iii 4-5, 29-31, he uses the root for the city *udm* "Udum."⁹⁵ Note also that in 1.14 ii 39 *alp* is used for a "thousand," but in 1.14 iii 18 it means "ox." The various uses of *dn* discussed above (e.g., 1.14 ii 27, 32) also might constitute cases of antanaclasis. The repeated use of antanaclasis creates a web of intertextual connections that demonstrates the erudition behind the text while keeping the reader alert for additional cases of polysemy.

Another feature exhibited in the dream account is that of numerical polysemy. This device exploits the names of numbers for non-numerical meanings.⁹⁶ One often finds this device near numbers and/or

90. The dream scene records *ytna* (not *ytnt*). If it is a deliberate device like other peculiar orthographies discussed herein, I have not been able to understand its meaning.

91. El calls Kirtu his *glm* "lad," and refers to himself as *abh* "his father" (*CAT* 1.14 ii 40-41). When Kirtu awakes, the narrator labels him the *'bd il* "servant of El" (1.14 iii 51). Later, Kirtu's captains refer to him as *šrk il* "associate of El" (1.15 v 17). When Kirtu nears death, he is called *bnm il šph ltpn wqdš* "son of El, scion of the Gentle and Holy One" (1.16 i 10-11).

92. In Kirtu's dream and in its realization, Pabil opens his message by telling him to take silver, gold, charioteers, and horses, as well as peace-offerings (*CAT* 1.14 iii 22-27; v 34-40). However, the order of the rest of his missive differs in a way that changes the tenor from one of beseeching to one of bravado. In the dream, Pabil's next words soften the imperative by adding the copula, i.e., *wng* "but depart" (1.14 iii 27), whereas in the fulfillment, his next words are more direct: "Do not harass/besiege Udum" (1.14 v 40-41). Also, in the dream's fulfillment, Pabil's missive concludes with a demand to leave the region: *rhq mlk lbty ng krt lhžry* "Be distant, O king, from my house, depart O Kirtu, from my court" (1.14 v 39-45). This time, no copula appears to soften the imperative and the change in tenor is signaled by reversing the order of the verbs (*ng / rhq > rhq / ng*). This order appears verbatim when Pabil's messengers deliver his message (1.14 vi 10-15).

93. While the device can have a paronomastic effect, it does not involve homonyms, but rather words or expressions of a single etymological derivation. It properly belongs to the realm of polysemy. On this device in Hebrew, see Noegel, 2013b, 179.

94. El's use of *tkm* for "wall" is immediately preceded by his use of *zr* (lit. "back") for the "top" of the lookout tower (*CAT* 1.14 ii 20-21, the verse appears twice). As such, both constitute the clever integration of body parts. On this device in other Near Eastern texts, see Noegel, 2011.

95. If we may read the broken description of Hurraya in *CAT* 1.14 iii 44 as a reference to *udm* "carnelian, rubies," then we have yet another case. Note also the use of "Udum" and "man" in close proximity in *udm ytnt il wušn ab adm* "Udum is a gift of El, a present from the Father of Man" (1.14 iii 31-32; v 42-43; vi 12-13).

96. Noegel, 2013b, 181; 2007b, 26-27; Garsiel, 1994, 326; Vermeulen, 2012.

numbered sequences, which creates a textual environment that numerical polysemy exploits. Such is the case here. The dream account contains many references to numbers. For example, El commands Kirtu to make provisions that will last five (*hmš*) or six (*tdt*) months (1.14 ii 30-31). He then describes Kirtu's army as "soldiers beyond number, archers beyond count" (1.14 ii 37-38), who "march by the thousand (*alpm*) (like) a downpour, in myriads (*rbt*) like the early rains" (1.14 ii 39-40). Following the description is the counting of marchers: "After two (*tn*), two (*tn*) will march, after three (*tl̄t*), all of them" (1.14 ii 41-42). A numerical topos continues in column iii with the description of the march in a seven day typology: "March a day, and then a second (*tn*), a third (*tl̄t*), and a fourth (*rb*), a fifth day (*hmš*), and a sixth (*tdt*), then at sunrise on the seventh (*šb*)" (1.14 iii 2-4). After attacking the environs of Udum, El then instructs Kirtu to "halt, a day and a second (*tn*), a third (*tl̄t*) day, and a fourth (*rb*), a fifth (*hmš*) day, and a sixth (*tdt*)... then at sunrise on the seventh (*šb*)" (1.14 iii 10-12, 14-15).⁹⁷

The concatenation of so many numerical references within such a short pericope offers a rich context for numerical polysemy. For instance, in 1.14 ii 2-3, Kirtu mentions a "charioteer (*tl̄t*, lit. "third") with chariot horses," a phrase that repeats twice more within the narrative frame (1.14 iii 24, 36).⁹⁸ Note similarly the description of Kirtu's army as containing *tl̄t mat rbt* "a million charioteers" (1.14 ii 36). After describing the march of the soldiers, El tells Kirtu that "the sole survivor will lock his house," using *ahd* (lit. "only") for "sole survivor," but when the narrator describes the fulfillment of this event (1.14 iv 21), he uses *ahd* "one."⁹⁹ The archers are referred to as *tnn*, a word that naturally evokes the number *tn* "two," as the second man in the chariot.¹⁰⁰ Note also *tn* "another man" (lit. "second") in 1.14 ii 48, which, as observed above, also serves a polysemous function. El's two-fold reference to "Udum of the rains" (*rbm*) in 1.14 iii 4, 29 also recalls the myriads (*rbt*) of soldiers (ii 40),¹⁰¹ in a similar way that the lowing of the *alp* "ox" in 1.14 iii 18 recalls the "marches by the thousand (*alpm*)" (1.14 ii 39). The use of numerical polysemy gives the orthographic impression that the text's soldiers, like its numbers, are beyond count.

The evidence examined above demonstrates that, like the literati of the wider Near East, the bards of Ugarit employed polysemy and other allusive devices when describing the contents of divine dreams. Since El speaks directly to Kirtu in his dream, the text does not state that the king required an interpreter. Nevertheless, the presence of numerous ambiguities in the dream's contents requires one. As in other Near Eastern dream narratives, the ambiguities are resolved by the narrator in his description of the dream's fulfillment. This strategy constitutes a form of innertextual exegesis in which the narrator, and by extension also Ilimilku and his colleagues, take on the role of the interpreter.¹⁰² In the same way that the text integrates and affirms the use of a sympathetic charm for rain (1.16 iii 1-16), the conjured creation of a living being from clay (1.16 v 25-52), and magical techniques for curing sickness (1.16 vi 1-14), it

97. Eissfeldt, 1962, 39-40, argues that the seven day typology represents the influence of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* XI 142-145, specifically the account of the boat resting on the mountain.

98. On "charioteer" as related to the "third man" in a chariot, see Wyatt, 1998a, 190, n. 62, who notes the Hebrew cognate *שליש*. To this cognate I add Akkadian *tašlišu* "third-man-in-a-chariot," who held the reins and whip. See *CAD* T 291, s.v. *tašlišu*.

99. For a convenient collection of such variations in the text, see Lichtenstein, 1970, 95-96, who refers to them as "orthographic inconsistencies". I prefer the term "polyprosopon", see above nn. 74, 81.

100. See Wyatt, 1998a, 190, n. 64. According to Gordon, 1967, 504, the term is cognate with the Egyptian *snm* "officer," which I add, is written with the hieroglyphic arrow sign (a). On geminate roots and their connection to narratives involving "two" in biblical texts, see Vermeulen, 2012. This would be the first example known from the Ugaritic corpus.

101. Though the text reads *rbm* "rains," when the passage repeats in the context of the dream's fulfillment it appears as *rbt* "great" (*CAT* 1.14 iii 30; cf. 1.14 iv 47; 1.14 vi 11). Clearly *rbm* evoked also *rbt*. On the reading "rains," see Wyatt, 1998a, 193, n. 79.

102. Noegel, 2007a, 77-82, 256-263.

integrates and affirms the efficacy of incubated dreams and the divinatory *techne* for interpreting them.¹⁰³ Therefore, it is the erudition of diviners that is on display in the legend's ambiguous use of dream language, and it is their hermeneutics, authority, and ideology that the narrative preserves and legitimates. The text's subtle critique of Kirtu's kingship by way of allusive barbs, also must be understood in this context. When read from this perspective, the text offers additional evidence for the widely-attested tensions between kings and mantics; tensions informed by the co-dependency of both players: the king by way of his need for divine legitimation, and the diviners by way of their need for royal patronage.¹⁰⁴

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103. As Del Olmo Lete, 1999, 327, observes, the text employs entreaties, oracles, blessings, curses, and magical incantations as literary forms. Only those with the training of Ilimilku would possess a working knowledge of these literary forms.

104. I concur with Knoppers, 1994, 582: "For all the problems, gaps, and contradictions the Kirta legend discloses within the mythology of human kingship, it ultimately reaffirms the institution it complicates."

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