

\* author received no proofs.

#### RECENSIONES

Gregorio del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion according to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit. Second English Edition, thoroughly Revised and Enlarged*. Transl. W. G. E. Watson (AOAT, 408), Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014., xxii + 423 pp. – ISBN 978-3-86835-094-4.

In any revised monograph, one typically finds periodic changes in diction and organizational format, and updates to the footnotes, bibliography, and various indices. Certainly this is the case with Del Olmo Lete's now classic work, which first appeared in English in 1999.<sup>1</sup> Yet, one also finds in this volume changes that reflect the author's continued engagement with the discipline and a rethinking of previously held positions on a number of readings and topics. In some cases, the author has bolstered his previous arguments with additional evidence. In others, he has revised or withdrawn his views. Still other changes to the volume represent advances in the field, the publication of new texts, and new technological possibilities.

With regard to the more cosmetic changes, readers will find that the lexical inventory of verbs denoting ritual action has been placed in order of the Roman, rather than Ugaritic, alphabet (p. 16). The deities in KTU 1.139 (unlisted in the previous edition) now appear as: *ilib, b'l, il t' dr b'l, b'l ugrt, g'ltm, pdry* (p. 44). The table that outlines the ways in which cultic activity related to lunar phases is less confusing in the new edition (p. 100). Del Olmo Lete also has abbreviated his discussion of KTU 1.78 (a small text describing a solar eclipse), and he has moved it from the section on extispicy so that it more fittingly begins the section on astrology (p. 295). His analysis of the text describing El's cultic inebriation (KTU 1.114) is now more thorough, and it appears with a complete transliteration and translation (p. 335).

As one might expect, one also encounters many new translations, some of them quite significant. Representative cases include lines 27-28 in the snake charm KTU 1.100: *hlm. y'q. nhš yšlhm. nhš. qšr*. Previously, Del Olmo Lete had rendered the lines: "Then he binds the serpent, feeds the sloughing serpent," but in the revised monograph, he translates: "Oh, ya / So forth, let him take up a serpent, let him throw away a sloughing serpent." Line 61 of the same text (i.e., *bhrn. pnm. trgn {w}*), which he had translated "Hôrānu's face contorted," here is rendered "Hôrānu's face was blazed" (p. 308). Similarly, his treatment of the incantations in KTU 1.82 is now based on new and improved readings of the tablet. Consequently, his translations differ significantly from the previous edition in ways too numerous to list here (pp. 321-326).

Formerly held positions that find additional support include the author's understanding of KTU 1.39 as "a 'sacrificial agenda'; which lists various 'types' of sacrifice related to the funerary cult..." (p. 182). Added here is an expanded consideration of the technical and textual implications of the second portion of the text, especially with regard to the meaning of the expression *šps pgr* in lines 12 and 17, which he translates "Šapšu of the dead," and whether one should read *ršp* "Rašpu" or *šrp* "burnt offering" in line 17 - he opts for the former (pp. 181-182).

An appendix at book's end provides a revised and abridged version of Del Olmo Lete's lengthy review of D. Pardee, *Les textes rituels* (Ras Shamra-Ougarit, 12; Paris: Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2000), first published in *UF* 36 (2004), pp. 539-648.<sup>2</sup> The appendix offers additional support for the author's "funerary" interpretation of the ritual texts, an approach that Pardee largely rejects (pp. 339-415).

1. The English edition was an enlarged version of the author's earlier work, *La religión cananea: según la liturgia de Ugarit: estudio textual* (Aula Orientalis. Supplementa, 3; Sabadell, Editorial AUSA, 1992). The English edition was reprinted in 2004.

2. See also the Del Olmo Lete's remarks in *AuOr* 24 (2006), pp. 265-274.

While Del Olmo Lete remains steadfast in understanding the ritual texts as funerary in nature, his revisions also reflect important changes in perspective concerning numerous texts and topics. Typically informing these changes are improved textual readings and/or the discovery of new texts. Thus, one finds more definitive statements concerning the sequence of the Ugaritic months (p. 19). Now removed from his study on the various types of sacrificial rites listed in KTU 1.27 and elsewhere is any mention of *llym* "the thirty" as a possible type of sacrifice (p. 26). His examination of the function of familial sacrificial rites that continued to be held at sacred locations after burials moved to cemeteries no longer includes mention of the *mrzh* and Greek *thiasos* (p. 30). His analysis of the god list in RS 20.024 is here completed by, and adapted to RS 92.2004 (p. 54). In the older edition, Del Olmo Lete divided the list of sacrifices found in KTU 1.148 into six textual units. Here he has reduced them to five (p. 102). Here he also offers possible explanations for this text's omission of three of the last divine names found elsewhere in the "canonical pantheon" (e.g., KTU 1.47, 1.118, RS 20.024).

We have to accept a suggestion like the one put forward above and assume that the ritual presupposed their commemoration at the ritual end according to the actual political situation and protocol of the moment, for what the suitable victims were however foreseen. Or possibly the traditional ritual practice was still working with an older version of the pantheon, which did not yet include the *mlkm*, while the new canonical copies reflecting the full "royal ideology" (p. 108) (KTU 1.47, 1.118) and their Akkadian versions (RS 20.024; 94.2006 and par.) began to spread rapidly almost like political propaganda. That is to say, we do have to allow for a certain religious evolution during the *Yaqaru*'s dynasty and not consider all Ugaritic religious texts within a neutral time-frame (pp. 107-108).

Previously, Del Olmo Lete also had paralleled his study of this text with RS 26.142. The new edition also incorporates RS 92.2004, which provides new and improved readings and translations (pp. 109-110). Revised more substantially is the author's discussion of the identity of the kings listed in KTU 1.102: 15-28, and his examination of the identity of the figure it names *yrgb'l*. The previous edition offered various hypotheses supporting claims for both Niqmaddu II and III. Here Del Olmo Lete identifies the king as Niqmaddu II, though not definitively (pp. 138-139).

One also finds that the author has abandoned his previous interpretation of the royal genealogy text (KTU 1.113) as retrograde or ascending, based on the more recent discovery of RS 94.2518, which he also transliterates, translates, and examines in greater detail (pp. 145-146). He similarly appears to have altered his view concerning the language of KTU 1.111, since he has removed the following statement: "Here the language belongs to the semantic field of 'astrology' and has to be interpreted as such" (p. 168, previous edition, p. 206).

With regard to the extispicy tablet KTU 1.142, Del Olmo Lete now adds the possibility that the name that appears in the text (restored as *Attartu*), might not be that of a deity, but rather a theophoric element in the name of a deceased citizen of Ugarit (p. 292).

Other revisions that represent changes in theoretical perspective include the description of KTU 1.100 as a "magical-mythical record" rather than "ritual myth" (p. 315), and the change of title for the category previously labeled "magical prescriptions" to "magical-mythical prescriptions" (p. 334). Similarly, his former description of KTU 1.169 as an incantation against a demon who causes illness, now appears as a "conjuration against agents of black word sorcery (*dbbm*) who may harm young people" - the operative change here being his interpretation of the term *dbbm*, formerly as "demons," now as "foul-mouthed (sorcerers)." (p. 331).

The tablet RS 92.2014, undiscovered when the first edition appeared, here receives a complete discussion, transliteration, provisional translation, and an interpretation as a private incantation for the diviner-priest Urtenu (p. 319).

A most welcome addition to the new edition is one made possible by advances in technology: the inclusion of high quality images of numerous tablets. These include: KTU 1.118 (p. 54), 1.47 (p. 56), 1.116 (p. 65), 1.48 (p. 69), 1.162 (p. 75), 1.41 (pp. 83-84), 1.87 (pp. 86, 88), 1.148 (p. 104), 1.40 (p. 117), 6.13 and 6.14 (p. 131), 6.62 (p. 133), 1.102 (p. 141), 7.63 (p. 142), 1.113 (p. 144), 1.108 (p. 152), 1.161 (p. 158), 1.111 (p. 163), 1.132 (p. 171), 1.39 (pp. 177, 179), 1.106 (p. 192), 1.112 (pp. 203-204), 1.105 (p. 207), 1.91 (p. 214), 1.115 (p. 221), 1.109 (p. 228), 1.46 + 7.41 (pp. 232-233), 1.130 (p. 234), 1.43 (pp. 239-240), 1.119 (p. 248), 1.104 (p. 259), 1.124 (p. 264), 1.164 (p. 268), 1.168 (p. 270), 1.190 (p. 271), 1.65 (p. 286), 1.123 (p. 288), 1.141-1.144 (p. 293), 1.127 (p. 294), 1.78 (p. 296), 1.163 (p. 298), 1.103 + 1.145 (p. 300), 1.140 (p. 304), 1.100 (pp. 309, 313), 1.107 (p. 317), 1.178 (p. 320), 1.82 (pp. 322, 325), 1.96 (p. 330), and 1.114 (p. 336).

This accomplished study remains the most complex and convincing collection of evidence and arguments for the existence of a royal and necromantic cult of the dead at Ugarit. It thus also remains as important to Ugaritology and research on ancient Near Eastern religions generally, as it did when it first appeared, and its many revisions and additions now will ensure its currency for another generation of scholars.<sup>3</sup>

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Daniel E. Fleming, *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors. Mari and Early Collective Governance*, Cambridge University Press, 2004. xxiii pp., 3 maps, 359 pp. - ISBN: 0-521-82885-6.

Mediante el análisis de los textos de Mari, nombre antiguo de Tell Hariri, en la actual Siria, el autor se ha impuesto el objetivo de encontrar trazas de un cierto carácter “democrático” de las políticas en los pequeños reinos próximo orientales antiguos. La obra se presenta con un marcado carácter divulgativo, esto quiere decir que, si bien es cierto su indudable interés e importancia en el seno de la asiriología más académica, también lo es que, en aras de esta deseada divulgación el autor se extiende en exceso en explicar cuestiones que para el asiriólogo bien informado resultarían del todo innecesarias. En la Introducción el autor repasa la historia de las excavaciones en Mari, que dio lugar, entre otros muchos hallazgos de interés, al descubrimiento de varios miles de textos cuneiformes; historia de la publicación de los textos; análisis de la lengua y la escritura de estos textos; resumen de la historia del reino de Mari. En el apartado D de la Introducción, el autor propone un análisis general del sistema político de Mari, tal y como se vislumbra a partir de las fuentes escritas. El autor, en este punto, hace también un repaso a la historiografía sobre el tema de la “democracia” en el Próximo Oriente Antiguo (POA), comentando los trabajos sobre el tema realizados por T. Jacobsen y P. Steinkeller.

El autor también pone de manifiesto dos modalidades del poder en el POA, individual, representado por la figura del rey, o colectivo, corporativo, representado por una asamblea de notables, ancianos, etc. La siguiente cuestión es intentar describir el fenómeno del poder en Mari, para, finalmente en el punto E, presentar uno de los problemas más comunes en el estudio de documentación antigua, escrita en lenguas

3. I found very few errata: “to easy their view” for “to ease their view (?)” (p. ix); *dbh* for *dbḥ* in the citation of KTU 1.15 iv, 26-28 (p. 26); “As an description...” for “As a description...” (p. 160); l. 65. “He rippes...” for “He rips...” (p. 312); “...does not presents...” for “...does not present...” (p. 321); and l. 8 “bier” for “beer” (p. 332).