

# THE EARTH AND THE WATERS IN GENESIS 1 AND 2

A Linguistic Investigation

David Toshio Tsumura





**JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT  
SUPPLEMENT SERIES**

**83**

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**JSOT Press  
Sheffield**

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Journal for the Study of the Old Testament  
Supplement Series 83



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Published by  
JSOT Press  
JSOT Press is an imprint of  
Sheffield Academic Press Ltd  
The University of Sheffield  
343 Fulwood Road  
Sheffield S10 3BP  
England

Printed in Great Britain  
by Billing & Sons Ltd  
Worcester

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Tsumura, David Toshio

The earth and the waters in Genesis 1 and 2 : a  
linguistic investigation.—(Journal for the study of  
the old testament supplement series, ISSN 0309-0787;  
83)

1. Bible. O.T. Genesis—Critical studies

I. Title II. Series

222'.1106

ISBN 1-85075-208-7

## CONTENTS

Foreword	7
Preface	8
Abbreviations	9
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	13
Chapter 2 THE EARTH IN GEN 1	17
A. Etymology of <i>*thw</i>	17
B. Etymology of <i>*bhw</i>	21
C. <i>tōhû wābōhû</i> and Ugaritic <i>tu-a-bi-[ú]</i>	23
1. Morphological correspondence	24
2. Semantic investigations	26
D. Uses of Hebrew <i>tōhû</i> and <i>tōhû wābōhû</i>	30
1. <i>tōhû</i>	30
2. <i>tōhû wābōhû</i>	36
E. <i>tōhû wābōhû</i> in the framework of Gen 1	41
Chapter 3 THE WATERS IN GEN 1	45
A. Babylonian background	45
B. Canaanite background	50
C. Etymology of <i>*thm</i>	51
D. Uses of <i>*thm</i>	53
1. Non-personified use	53
2. Personification	56
E. <i>*tihām-</i> and <i>*yamm-</i>	58
<i>Excursus: A "Canaanite" dragon myth in Gen 1:2?</i>	62
Chapter 4 THE EARTH-WATERS RELATIONSHIP IN GEN 1	67
A. A "hyponymous" word pair: <i>'rs - thm(t)</i>	67
B. "Heaven" / "earth" / "sea"	72
C. "Heaven" / "earth"	74
D. A flooding of the subterranean waters?	77
<i>Excursus: Structure of Enuma elish I 1-9</i>	81

Chapter 5	THE EARTH IN GEN 2 — Earth in a bare state —	85
Chapter 6	THE WATERS IN GEN 2	93
	A. Rain and 'ēd	93
	B. Etymology of 'ēd	94
	1. Semitic etymology?	95
	2. Sumerian loan word via Akkadian?	97
	a. Graphical or graphemic problems	101
	b. Phonological problems	104
	c. Semantic problems	107
	3. Direct Sumerian loan word?	113
Chapter 7	THE EARTH-WATERS RELATIONSHIP IN GEN 2	117
	A. A flooding of the subterranean waters	117
	<i>Excursus: Time and place of man's creation</i>	119
	B. Etymology of Eden	123
	1. Sumerian loan word via Akkadian?	123
	2. Direct Sumerian loan word?	125
	3. Common West Semitic?	127
	<i>Excursus: Etymology of Tigris and Euphrates</i>	137
Chapter 8	GOD AND THE WATERS	141
	A. God as a rain-giver	141
	B. Watery beginning	143
	1. A "creator" god and the water	144
	a. Marduk, Ea and El	144
	b. Similarity between Ea and El	146
	2. Watery abode	148
	3. Conclusion	153
Chapter 9	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	155
	Bibliography	169
	Indexes	185

## FOREWORD

Every year sees new books and studies on questions posed by the opening chapters of Genesis. The beginning of the Bible attracts linguists and philosophers, scientists and theologians, and a variety of other specialists, yet their studies can only have lasting value if they arise from an accurate understanding of the Hebrew text. The Council of Tyndale House, Cambridge, concerned to encourage accurate exegesis of the book of Genesis in the context of its ancient environment, has promoted research in these chapters.

We are grateful that Dr David Tsumura came from the University of Tsukuba, Japan, to work at Tyndale House on the Genesis 1–11 Project, and pleased that his initiative and diligence have resulted in this monograph. His scholarly study examines evidence from Babylonian, Ugaritic and other ancient Near Eastern texts. He shows that certain long-held views about a primeval chaos and mythological allusions deserve to be questioned. Alternative positions are presented with careful explanation and sober argument. We welcome this inquiry into subjects on which opinions have been strongly held. We believe that Dr Tsumura's research will help to clarify the opening pages of the Bible.

K. A. Kitchen  
A. R. Millard  
D. J. Wiseman



## PREFACE

This monograph is the outcome of my work at Tyndale House as a research fellow of the Genesis 1-11 Project between July 1986 and March 1988. It provides a linguistic discussion in which Genesis 1 and 2 are set in the literary and mythological context of the ancient Near East so that similarities and differences between the biblical tradition and the extra-biblical ones are elucidated.

I thank both the Tyndale House Council for the invitation to participate in the Project and the Project directors, Mr A. R. Millard, Profs. K. A. Kitchen and D. J. Wiseman. Many individuals have assisted my research. In particular I wish to thank successive Wardens and the Librarian of Tyndale House; Profs. W. G. Lambert and R. E. Longacre; and Drs. G. J. Wenham and R. S. Hess. Friends and family encouraged me throughout, especially in Cambridge the late Dr. C. J. Hemer, the Rev. and Mrs. David Coffey, the Rev. Dr. M. Thompson, and in Japan the faculty and students of the Japan Bible Seminary and the congregation of Hamadayama Church.

I thank the Cambridge University Library and the Oriental Faculty Library for access to their collections. The University of Tsukuba granted me almost two years leave of absence. Permission was granted by the editors of *Vetus Testamentum*, *Biblica* and *Ugarit Forschungen* to reuse articles published in these journals. I would like to thank Prof. D. J. A. Clines for accepting this monograph as a volume in the *JSOT Supplement* series.

Finally I want to thank Susan, my wife and my colleague, for her unfailing support and encouragement, for making special "Semitic" fonts for the Macintosh computer, for her constructive criticisms and suggestions as a theoretical linguist and for revising my English. To her I dedicate this book with love.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABZ	R. Borger, <i>Assyrisch-babylonische Zeichenliste</i> , 1978.
AEL	E. W. Lane, <i>An Arabic-English Lexicon</i> , 1863, repr. 1968.
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AFw	H. Zimmern, <i>Akkadische Fremdwörter als Beweis für Babylonischen Kultureinfluss</i> , 1915.
AG	K. Tallqvist, <i>Akkadische Götterepitheta</i> , 1938.
AH	Atra-Ḫasīs Epic
AH	W. G. Lambert & A. R. Millard, <i>Atra-Ḫasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood</i> , 1969.
AHw	W. von Soden, <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> , 1965-81.
AIA	S. A. Kaufman, <i>The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic</i> , 1974.
AnBi	Analecta Biblica
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
ANET	J. B. Pritchard (ed.), <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> , 1950, 1969 <sup>3</sup> .
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ARET	Archivi reali di Ebla, testi
AS	Assyriological Studies (University of Chicago)
ASN	<i>Annali della scuola normale, superiore di Pisa</i>
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BaE	L. Cagni (ed.), <i>Il bilinguismo a Ebla</i> , 1984.
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBVO	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient
BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver & C. A. Briggs, <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> , 1907.
BG	A. Heidel, <i>The Babylonian Genesis</i> , 1951 <sup>2</sup> & 1963 <sup>3</sup> .
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
BN	<i>Biblisches Notizen</i>
BO	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
BS	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>

- BSOAS *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*  
 BWL W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 1960.  
 BZAW Beiheft, ZAW  
 CAD *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*  
 CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*  
 CH Code of Hammurabi  
 CML G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 1956.  
 CML<sup>2</sup> J. C. L. Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*. New ed., 1978.  
 CTA A. Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques*, 1963.  
 DOTT D. W. Thomas (ed.), *Documents from Old Testament Times*, 1958.  
 EA El-Amarna tablets  
 Ee Enuma elish  
 ESP J. J. M. Roberts, *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon: A Study of the Semitic Deities Attested in Mesopotamia before Ur III*, 1972.  
 GAG W. von Soden, *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik*, 1969.  
 Gilg. Epic of Gilgamesh  
 HAL W. Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament*, 1967–.  
 HAR *Hebrew Annual Review*  
 HSM Harvard Semitic Monographs  
 HSS Harvard Semitic Studies  
 HTR *Harvard Theological Review*  
 ICC International Critical Commentary  
 IDB *Interpreter's Dictionary of Bible*  
 JANES *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*  
 JAOS *Journal of the American Oriental Society*  
 JB Jerusalem Bible  
 JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*  
 JCS *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*  
 JNES *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*  
 JPS Jewish Publication Society translation of the Old Testament  
 JSOT *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*  
 JSS *Journal of Semitic Studies*  
 JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*

KAI	H. Donner & W. Röllig, <i>Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften I-III</i> , 1962-68.
KB	L. Koehler & W. Baumgartner, <i>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros</i> , 1953.
KH	Kode d. Hammurabi
KTU	M. Dietrich-O. Loretz-J. Sanmartín, <i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit</i> , 1976.
LAPO	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
LB	Late Babylonian
LdE	L. Cagni (ed.), <i>La lingua di Ebla</i> , 1981.
LSS	<i>Leipziger Semitistische Studien</i>
LXX	Septuagint
MA (mA)	Middle Assyrian
MAD	Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary
MB (mB)	Middle Babylonian
MEE	Materiali epigrafici di Ebla
MIO	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung</i>
MLC	G. del Olmo Lete, <i>Mitos y leyendas de Canaan</i> , 1981.
MMEW	A. Livingstone, <i>Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars</i> , 1986.
MRS	Mission de Ras Shamra
MSL	<i>Materialien zum Sumerischen Lexikon</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NA	Neo-Assyrian
NAB	New American Bible
NABU	<i>Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires</i>
NEB	New English Bible
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIV	New International Version
NUS	<i>Newsletter for Ugaritic Studies</i>
OA	Old Assyrian
OAKk	Old Akkadian
OB	Old Babylonian
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PLMU	C. H. Gordon, "Poetic Legends and Myths from Ugarit," <i>Berytus</i> 25 (1977), 5-133.
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>

- RGTC Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes  
 RHA *Revue hittite et asianique*  
 RIA *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*  
 RS Ras Shamra text  
 RSP *Ras Shamra Parallels*  
 RSV Revised Standard Version  
 SB Standard Babylonian  
 SBH F. I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, 1974.  
 SEb *Studi Eblaiti*  
 SEL *Studi epigrafici e linguistici sul vicino Oriente Antico*  
 SLE P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *Studies on the Language of Ebla*, 1984.  
 SLOBA S. J. Lieberman, *The Sumerian Loanwords in Old-Babylonian Akkadian*. Vol. 1, 1977.  
 SPUMB J. C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba'lu*, 1971.  
 ST *Studia Theologica*  
 SVT Supplements to Vetus Testamentum  
 TB *Tyndale Bulletin*  
 TIT T. Jacobsen, *Toward the Image of Tammuz and Other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture*, 1970.  
 TO A. Caquot, M. Szyner & A. Herdner, *Textes ougaritiques I*, 1974.  
 TOTC Tyndale Old Testament Commentary  
 TRE *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*  
 TrinJ *Trinity Journal*  
 UF *Ugarit Forschungen*  
 Ug *Ugaritica*  
 UT C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, 1965.  
 UTS C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook, Supplement*, 1967.  
 UVST J. Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription*, 1987.  
 VE "Vocabulary of Ebla" in *MEE* 4 (1982).  
 VT *Vetus Testamentum*  
 WAS A. Erman & H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache*  
 ZA *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*  
 ZAH *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik*  
 ZAW *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

In modern critical studies of Genesis it is often suggested that the nature of the "earth-waters" relationship in Chapter 1 is totally different from that in Chapter 2. For example, G. von Rad in his commentary explains the initial states of the cosmos as follows:

Whereas in ch. 1 creation moves from the chaos to the cosmos of the entire world, our account of creation [in Gen 2] sketches the original state as a desert in contrast to the sown . . . . [The] cosmological ideas [of J] . . . are thus very unlike those [of P] . . . Water is here the assisting element of creation. In P and in some psalms it was the enemy of creation.<sup>1</sup>

A similar view is expressed by B. S. Childs, who refers to "the completely different atmosphere prevailing in 1.1-2.4a in comparison with 2.4bff."<sup>2</sup> B. W. Anderson also holds that "In this [J's] story the contrast is not between cosmos and chaos but between a well-watered oasis and the surrounding wilderness..."<sup>3</sup> W. H. Schmidt similarly recognizes the contrast between the "Wassercosmogonie" of Gen 1:2 and the "vegetationlosen Steppe oder Wüste in der Trockenzeit vor dem Regenfall" in 2:5.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, some commentators (e.g., Gunkel, Driver, Zimmerli, Schmidt) have interpreted this dry earth in 2:5 as a dry chaos,

---

<sup>1</sup>G. von Rad, *Genesis* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961, 1963, 1972), 76f. In his recent article, B. Otzen also contrasts the waters of "malevolence and danger" in Gen 1:2 and the "life-conferring" waters in Gen 2:6; see B. Otzen, "The Use of Myth in Genesis," in B. Otzen, H. Gottlieb & K. Jeppesen, *Myths in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1980), 40f.

<sup>2</sup>B. S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1960), 31.

<sup>3</sup>B. W. Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos: the Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967, 1987 [reprint with Postscript]), 40.

<sup>4</sup>W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1:1-2:4a und 2:4b-3:24*. 2. überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 196.

"J's equivalent of P's watery chaos in 1:2."<sup>5</sup>

It is basically clear that the general situation described in Gen 2:5-6 is that of a "not yet productive" earth and an "assisting" water, 'ēd, though the etymology and meaning of 'ēd are still hotly debated. As for the situation in Gen 1:2, there exist some ambiguities about the meanings of the key expressions such as *tōhū wābōhū* and *təhōm* as well as about the nature of the earth-waters relationship. B. S. Childs, who like many other scholars accepts a mythological background for these expressions, explains Gen 1:2 as describing "the mystery of a primordial threat against creation, uncreated without form and void, which God strove to overcome."<sup>6</sup> He expressed this view in more theological terminology a quarter of century ago: "the Old Testament writer struggles to contrast the creation, not with a background of empty neutrality, but with an active chaos standing in opposition to the will of God. . . . The chaos is a reality rejected by God."<sup>7</sup>

Recently, Anderson reasserted the same view, saying "God created out of chaos (not *ex nihilo*), as shown by the prefatory verse that portrays the earth as once being a chaotic waste: stygian darkness, turbulent waters, utter disorder."<sup>8</sup> B. Otzen also accepts the conventional view, saying "Few would deny that elements of a description of chaos are present in v. 2."<sup>9</sup>

However, this view deserves scrutiny. Does Gen 1:2 describe a "watery chaos" which existed before creation? In other words, do the terms, *tōhū wābōhū* and *təhōm*, in v. 2 really signify a chaotic state of the earth in waters and hence "a primordial threat against creation"? Does Gen 2:5-6 also describe a similar chaotic state of the earth, though in a "dry chaos"? Is there any similarity between the "earth-waters" relationship in Gen 1 and in Gen 2? If so, in what sense are they similar? What is the function and meaning of the term 'ēd in Gen 2:6? How are the waters such as "a rain-

<sup>5</sup>Cf. G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 57.

<sup>6</sup>B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (London: SCM, 1985), 223f. It is well known that K. Barth treats this problem under the topic of "das Nichtige", i.e. "Nothingness", in his *Church Dogmatics*. Vol. III: *The Doctrine of Creation*, Part 3 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), 289-368 (§50), esp. 352, where he says: "in Gen. 1:2 . . . there is a reference to the chaos which the Creator has already rejected, negated, passed over and abandoned even before He utters His first creative Word . . . Chaos is the unwillful and uncreated reality which constitutes as it were the periphery of His creation and creature."

<sup>7</sup>Childs, *Myth and Reality*, 42.

<sup>8</sup>B. W. Anderson, "Mythopoetic and Theological Dimensions of Biblical Creation Faith," in B. W. Anderson (ed.), *Creation in the Old Testament* (Issues in Religion and Theology 6; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 15.

<sup>9</sup>Otzen, "The Use of Myth in Genesis," 32.

water", "an 'ēd-water" and "river-waters" related to Eden and the garden of Eden? The purpose of this study is to clarify the initial state of the "earth" in its relation to the "waters" in Gen 1 and 2 by answering these questions.

Emphasis is given in this study to the etymological investigation of various key terms and expressions in the light of cognate languages such as Ugaritic, Akkadian, Eblaite and Arabic. Though methodologically a synchronic and structural study should have priority over a diachronic and comparative one, in the present study more emphasis is given to the etymological investigations, not because they have the last word in determining the meaning of disputed terms, but because many of the errors made in interpreting the Biblical text we are dealing with stem from faulty etymology.

The present work does not intend to give a comprehensive literary analysis of the creation stories in Gen 1 and Gen 2; nor does it aim to solve all the theological problems related to the creation. Since it does not attempt to reconstruct a history of mythico-religious thinking in ancient Israel, it deals with only the poetical passages which have direct bearings on our discussions. The so-called *Chaoskampf* motif in Psalms and other poetical passages is not treated here thoroughly, not because it is irrelevant for the discussion of the creation faith in Israel, but because it does not touch directly the exegetical problems of the Genesis passages themselves.

Instead, the present study tries to present a linguistic analysis of some key terms related to the initial situation of the earth and its relationship with the waters in Gen 1:2 and Gen 2:5ff. Hence the scope of this study is limited to the degree that it includes neither discussions of terms such as *ḥōšek* and *rûāḥ ʿlōhîm* in Gen 1:2 nor a detailed analysis of the Eden story. However, the etymological studies are supplemented by a literary analysis and discourse grammatical investigation of the text in which these key terms appear.



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## Chapter 2

### THE EARTH IN GEN 1

The initial state of the earth is described in Gen 1:2 as *tōhū wābōhū*. This expression is traditionally translated into English as "without form and void" (RSV) or "formless and empty" (NIV). It was translated by various Greek phrases: ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος "invisible and unformed" (LXX); κένωμα καὶ οὐθέν "an emptiness and a nothing" (Aquila); θέν καὶ οὐθέν "a nothing and a nothing" (Theodotion); (ἐγένετο) ἀργόν καὶ ἀδιάκριτον "(became) unworked and indistinguishable" (Symmachus).<sup>1</sup> All but Symmachus rendered it in an abstract sense, though the Hebrew expression seems to have had a concrete sense originally.<sup>2</sup>

#### A. ETYMOLOGY OF \*THW

The term *tōhū* probably means "desert" or "waste" in Dt 32:10 where it appears in parallel with *'eres midbār* "a desert land." Until recently its etymology has been explained in the light of Arabic *tīh*, which Lane defined "desert or waterless desert in which one loses his way."<sup>3</sup> However, the Arabic term, with a second weak consonant, does not explain the final long /ū/ of Hebrew *tōhū*. The Ugaritic term *thw* might be a better candidate for a possible cognate of the Hebrew term.

---

<sup>1</sup>J. W. Wevers, *Septuaginta: Genesis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 75.

<sup>2</sup>See below.

<sup>3</sup>E. W. Lane, *AEL*, 326, cf. also 323, where he lists *tīh* "desert." Cf. W. F. Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology and Philology," *JBL* 43 (1924), 365, who also cites Aram. *twh*, "be distracted."

## Ugaritic

The term *thw* appears in the following Ugaritic text which reads:

14) *p np.s . nps . lbim* 15) *thw* . And my appetite is an appetite of  
the lion(s) in/of the desert(s)  
*hm . brlt . anhr* 16) *b ym* . or a desire of the dolphin(?) in the sea  
(KTU 1.5 [UT 67]:I:14-16)<sup>4</sup>

The same phrase appears also in one of the mythological texts published in *Ug. V* (1968), 559-60: *lbim thw* (Text 4, l. 3-4).

A. Caquot, M. Sznycer & A. Herdner (1974) explain *thw* in the light of Hebrew *tōhū* and Arabic *tīh* "desert",<sup>5</sup> following R. Dussaud, C. H. Gordon, H. L. Ginsberg and U. Cassuto.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, E. L. Greenstein (1973), W. Johnstone (1978), J. C. de Moor (1979) and R. J. Clifford (1987)<sup>7</sup> follow W. F. Albright, T. H. Gaster, G. R. Driver, J. Gray, J. Aistleitner and A. Jirku who connect the term *thw* with Arabic *hawīya* "to desire" and analyze it as a verbal form.

However, instead of *thw* in *Ug. V*, 559-60, Dietrich-Loretz-Sanmartín (1975) read *thwt*:

1) *w y'ny . bn* 2) *ilm . mt* . And the god (lit. son of gods) Mot answered:  
*npšm* 3) *npš . lbim* 4) *thwt* . "Now my appetite is an appetite of  
the lion(s) in/of the desert(s),  
*w npš* 5) *anhr b ym* . an appetite of the dolphin(?) in the sea."  
(KTU 1.133[604]:2-5)

They take both *thw* and *thwt* as nouns from \**hwy* (// Heb \**wh*) and translate *thwt* as "Gier, Verlangen" like Hebrew *ta'āwāh*, "desire, appetite."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup>In this monograph, Ugaritic texts are cited by *KTU* text number with Gordon's *UT* text number in square brackets.

<sup>5</sup>A. Caquot, M. Sznycer & A. Herdner, *TO*, 241, n. m.

<sup>6</sup>Also J. C. L. Gibson, *CML*,<sup>2</sup> 68 & 159: "waste."

<sup>7</sup>E. L. Greenstein, "Another Attestation of Initial *h* > ' in West Semitic," *JANES* 5 (1973), 157-164; W. Johnstone, "Lexical and Comparative Philological Contributions to Ugaritic of Mythological Texts of the 24th Campaign at Ras Shamra," *Ug* VII (1978), 117; J. C. de Moor, "Contributions to the Ugaritic Lexicon," *UF* 11 (1979), 640; R. J. Clifford, "Mot Invites Baal to a Feast: Observations on a Difficult Ugaritic Text (CTA 5.i = KTU 1.5.1)," in D. M. Golomb (ed.), "Working with No Data": *Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 57, n. 6.

<sup>8</sup>M. Dietrich-O. Loretz-J. Sanmartín, "Beiträge zur Ugaritischen Textgeschichte (II): Textologische Probleme in RS 24.293 = UG. 5, S. 559, NR. 4 und CTA 5 I 11\*-22\*,"

Certainly the form *thwt* cannot be a verbal form from \**hwy*. Yet, their view that *hm brlt* is a gloss to *thw* and corresponds in KTU 1.133:4 to *wnpš*, also a gloss, is not convincing. The particles *hm* and *w* should be taken as indicating the beginning of the second colon and as introducing terms, *brlt* or *npš*, which correspond to those in the first colon: *npš* or *npš*.<sup>9</sup>

Based on *KTU*'s reading, B. Margalit (1980) and G. del Olmo Lete (1981, 82) explained *thwt* (KTU 1.133[UT604]:4) as a variant form of *thw*, i.e. a feminine or plural form of *thw*, and again supported the view that Ugaritic *thw* is a cognate of Hebrew *tôhû*.<sup>10</sup>

Contextually, *lbim thw(t)* "the lion(s) in/of the desert(s)" corresponds well to *anh̄r b ym* "the dolphin(?) in the sea", since *npš* and *brlt* are a well-known idiomatic pair (e.g. KTU 1.18:IV:25, 36–37, 1.19:II:38–39, 43–44). As for the image of hungry animals, it is interesting to compare it with that in Jer 5:6, where 'aryēh miyya'ar "a lion from the forest" corresponds to zō'ēb 'ārābôt "a wolf of the desert" in a parallelism. In the Ugaritic texts, the land animal, *lbim thw(t)*, and the sea animal, *anh̄r b ym*,<sup>11</sup> seem to constitute a merismatic pair<sup>12</sup> and express the comprehensiveness of the voracious appetite of the god Mot in the Ugaritic mythology.<sup>13</sup>

In the light of the above, it is probable that Ugaritic *thw* is a cognate of Hebrew *tôhû* and that both have the common meaning of "a desert." If so, they are most probably <qutl-> pattern nouns (<\*/tuhwu/) from the common (West) Semitic root \**thw*.<sup>14</sup>

*UF* 7 (1975), 537 follows Greenstein, "Another Attestation of Initial *h* > *'* in West Semitic," 160, n. 20, who suggested a possible interchange of *'h* in Hebrew *'wh* and Ugaritic *hwy*.

<sup>9</sup>See Clifford, "Mot Invites Baal to a Feast," 58f. for a recent discussion of the *'p . . . hm . . .*' structure in ll. 3–10.

<sup>10</sup>B. Margalit, *A Matter of "Life" and "Death": A Study of the Baal-Mot Epic (CTA 4-5-6)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1980), 97; G. del Olmo Lete, *MLC*, 635 & "Notes on Ugaritic Semantics V," *UF* 14 (1982), 60.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Akk. *nāhiru* "whale" as a "sea-horse" (*sīsā ša tâmtū*) in *CAD*, N/1 (1980), 137. Also note that in a certain text, VAT 8917 rev. 11–13, *ilibu* (anše.a.ab.ba [lit: 'horse of the sea']) "dromedary" is identified with the ghost of Tīāmat (*etemmū tīāmat*) and appears in parallel with *serreṣmū* (anše.eden.na [lit: 'horse of the plain']) "wild ass", the ghost of Enlil; cf. A. Livingstone, *MMEW*, 82.

<sup>12</sup>Olmo Lete, *MLC*, 635 notes that *thw* "estepa, desierto" is antonymous to *ym*.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Hab 2:5. See A. Cooper, "Divine Names and Epithets in the Ugaritic Texts," *RSP* III (1981), 395.

<sup>14</sup>J. Huehnergard, *UVST*, 287 & 84: "\*/tuhwu/ 'wasteland'."

## "Chaos"?

Since the earliest times many translators have felt that the meaning "desert" is unsatisfactory for the context of Gen 1:2, as reflected in the various Greek versions. Hence, English translations such as "formlessness", "confusion", "unreality", "emptiness" (BDB) or "nothingness" have been suggested on a contextual basis. And it has been asserted that the term *tôhû* "should, according to all analogies, mean something like 'chaos'".<sup>15</sup>

Though Albright's etymological explanation that *tôhû* should be regarded as "a blend between *bôhû* and *tehom*, from which the initial *t* was borrowed" is no longer tenable, his conclusion that the phrase *tôhû wâbôhû* signifies a "chaos" and *tôhû* is referring to "chaos as a watery deep, or *tehom*, in the Mesopotamian sense"<sup>16</sup> is shared by many modern scholars. For example, Cassuto thinks that the phrase *tôhû wâbôhû* refers to the "terrestrial state" in which "the whole material was an undifferentiated, unorganized, confused and lifeless agglomeration." He assumes in Gen 1:2 existence of a watery chaos, in which "water [was] above and solid matter beneath, and the whole a chaotic mass, without order or life."<sup>17</sup> Thus, the expression *tôhû wâbôhû* in v. 2 is taken as signifying the primordial "chaos", which means not simply "emptiness", like Greek *χάος* "empty space",<sup>18</sup> but also "disorder" or "disorganization", and stands in direct opposition to the "creation."

Before discussing the biblical usages of the term *tôhû*, the etymology of the term *bôhû* and a possible extra-biblical usage of *tôhû wâbôhû* will be discussed in the following sections.

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<sup>15</sup>Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 365; also F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 323.

<sup>16</sup>Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 366.

<sup>17</sup>U. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah* [Part I of *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*] (Jerusalem: Magness, 1961, 1944 [orig.]), 23. B. K. Waltke, "The Creation Account in Genesis 1:1-3. Part III: The Initial Chaos Theory and the Precreation Chaos Theory," *BS* 132 (1975), 225-228 interprets the phrase *tôhû wâbôhû* as referring to "the chaotic state . . . before the creation." Also G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 16: "the dreadfulness of the situation before the divine word brought order out of chaos is underlined."

<sup>18</sup>Gk. *χάος* "empty space", from *χαίνειν*, "gape, yawn" (cf. the Norse *Ginunga Gap*). Cf. Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 366.

## B. ETYMOLOGY OF \*BHW

*Arabic*

The Hebrew term *bōhû* occurs only three times in the Bible, always with *tōhû*. Its etymology has been explained by the Arabic *bahiya* "to be empty" (BDB).<sup>19</sup> This Arabic term is used to describe the "empty" or "vacant" state of a tent or house which contains nothing or little furniture or goods.<sup>20</sup> Thus, it has basically a concrete meaning rather than an abstract meaning such as "nothingness" or "emptiness."

*Akkadian*

Albright suggested that the Akkadian term *bûbûtu*, "emptiness, hunger", came from *\*buhbuhtu* and is a possible cognate of the Hebrew *bōhû*.<sup>21</sup> However, CAD, B (1965), 301–302 does not list "emptiness" as the meaning of *bubûtu* A, only giving translations "famine, starvation, want"; "hunger"; "sustenance" for the term. AHw, 135 suggests simply "Hunger" for the meaning of *bubûtu*. For a different term *bubu'tu*, the root of which is *\*bw'* rather than *\*bhw*, CAD, B, 300 gives the meanings, "inflammation, boil, pustule."<sup>22</sup> Neither of these Akkadian terms is cognate of the Hebrew *bōhû*.

*Phoenician*

It has been suggested that the term *bōhû* is associated with a Phoenician divine name *Bā'au*, the goddess of "night",<sup>23</sup> which is mentioned by Philo of Byblos. According to Albright, the divine name *Bā'au* "shows that the original form of the noun was *\*bāhu*, like Arab. *bahw*; *\*buhw* has changed

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<sup>19</sup>Lane, *AEL*, 260.

<sup>20</sup>Lane, *AEL*, 269f.

<sup>21</sup>Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 366.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. A. R. Millard, "גָּלוּ 'to exult'," *JTS* 26 (1975), 89 comparing Akkadian *bubu'tu* with *bû'ā'*, *bû'ātā'*, "abscess" (< *bû'ā'* "to swell, to rejoice").

<sup>23</sup>As E. Ebeling noted more than half a century ago, this DN and Heb. *bōhû* have nothing to do with the Sum. goddess *Ba'u*; cf. Ebeling, "Ba'u," *RIA* 1 (1928), 432. See also Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 366, n. 7; Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 22.

a to u under the influence of the labials."<sup>24</sup> Cassuto admits this possibility.<sup>25</sup> Certainly it is phonologically possible to posit an original "Canaanite" form \*/báhwu/ for both Hebrew *bōhū*<sup>26</sup> and Phoenician \*/bah(a)wu/, which was seemingly represented in Greek script as *ba-a-u*. However, there is no evidence that the Hebrew term had any connection with the Phoenician divine name, except for their possible common derivation from the root, \*bhw.

### Egyptian

If, as recent studies show,<sup>27</sup> the material for Philo's cosmogony originated in Egypt, the divine name *Báaw* might have come from an Egyptian word such as *bꜣ.w*.<sup>28</sup> However, even if this should be the case, it is not likely that Hebrew term *bōhū*, with the consonant /h/, is related to these Egyptian terms.

Recently Görg suggested that *tōhū* and *bōhū* should be explained by other Egyptian terms, *thꜣ* "abweichen", "verfehlen" and *bhꜣ* "kopflös fliehen."<sup>29</sup> However, his etymological argument is almost purely speculative. For one thing, there is no evidence for the existence of the nominal forms *t(e/u)hꜣáw.ꜣ* and *b(e/u)hꜣáw.ꜣ*. Moreover, their suggested meanings, "Ziellosigkeit", "Vergeblichkeit" and "Flüchtigkeit", "Nichtigkeit", are pure guesses, especially "Vergeblichkeit" and "Nichtigkeit". Furthermore, no hendiadic combination of them is attested in Egyptian. So it is highly speculative to think that the pair, "haltlos und gestaltlos", refers to "Negativeigenschaften des hermopolitanischen Chaos."

### Hebrew

Westermann recognizes only a stylistic variation between *tōhū* and *tōhū*

<sup>24</sup>Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology," 366.

<sup>25</sup>Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 21f.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. \*/báhwu/ > /búhwu/ > /búhūu/ > /búhū/ > /bōhū/. See below p. 24, however, for a possible original form \*/báhwu/ from a Ugaritic example written syllabically.

<sup>27</sup>R. A. Oden, Jr., "Philo of Byblos and Hellenistic Historiography," *PEQ* (1978), 126.

<sup>28</sup>J. Ebach's position that *Báaw* comes from the plural form of Egyptian *Ba* (*bꜣ.w*) is rejected on a phonological basis by Görg, who suggests that "Bāu" should be connected with Egyptian *bjꜣ* "heaven" or *bjꜣ.w*; cf. M. Görg, "Tohū wabohū — ein Deutungsvorschlag," *ZAW* 92 (1980), 431–434. However, *bjꜣ* is no better than *bꜣ.w*.

<sup>29</sup>Görg, "Tohū wabohū — ein Deutungsvorschlag," 433f.

*wābōhû*. According to him, "בָּהוּ is added only by way of alliteration" and "when תָּהוּ and בָּהוּ occur together there is no real difference in meaning."<sup>30</sup> However, if *bōhû* were added simply as an "alliteration" to *tōhû*, it would be difficult to explain why the conjunction *wā* is used to connect these two terms. Moreover, *tōhû* and *bōhû* seems to be a traditional word pair, which can appear as a parallel word pair (A//B), as in Isa 34:11, or as a juxtaposed phrase (A and B), as in Gen 1:2 and Jer 4:23.

Thus, in the light of the above discussion, Hebrew *bōhû*, though still lacking definite etymology, seems to be a Semitic term based on the root \*bhwh and possibly a cognate of Arabic *bahiya*, "to be empty."

### C. *tōhû wābōhû* AND UGARITIC *tu-a-bi-[û]*<sup>31</sup>

The expression *tōhû wābōhû* appears twice in the Bible, in Gen 1:2 and Jer 4:23, though *tōhû* and *bōhû* appear once as a parallel word pair in Isa 34:11. A Ugaritic counterpart of it has been suggested in one of the "voculaires polyglottes", which were published by J. Nougayrol in 1968, 137 [RS20.123]:II:23:<sup>32</sup>

BAL na-bal-ku-tum tap-šu-ḥu-[u]m-me<sup>33</sup> tu-a-bi-[û(?)]

For this line Nougayrol gives the translation, "renverser, bouleversement" on the basis of Akkadian *nabalkutum*, and he calls scholars' attention, though with reservation, to the similarity between Ugaritic *tu-a-bi-[û(?)]*

<sup>30</sup>C. Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband: Genesis 1–11 (BKAT I/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974), 143 [ET 103].

<sup>31</sup>An earlier version of this section has been published in D. T. Tsumura, "Nabalkutu, tu-a-bi-[û] and *tōhû wābōhû*," *UF* 19 (1987), 309–315.

<sup>32</sup>*Ug.* V, 242–243.

<sup>33</sup>Laroche discusses this term under *tapš-* "bas" as *tapšuh-* "abaïsser, abattre" in his Hurrian glossary, noting the following two lists in multilingual vocabularies:

137 II 15: Sum. SIG = Hur. *tap-ša-ḥal-še* = Ug. *maška [nu]*

"homme de basse classe, pauvre" (cf. Akk. *muškēnu*?).

137 II 23: Sum. BAL = Akk. *nabalkutum* = Hur. *tap-šu-ḥu-um-me*

"renverser, abattre."

Cf. E. Laroche, *Glossaire de la langue hourrite deuxième partie (M – Z, Index)* (=RHA 35 [1977]), 256. Also cf. *Ug.* V, 457 & 461. However, his translation of *tapšuhumme* as "renverser, abattre" is deeply influenced by the interpretation of Akk. *nabalkutu* and Ug. *tu-a-bi-[û(?)]*. See below p. 30.



and Hebrew *tōhū wābōhū*. Recently de Moor also took note of this and said, "It may well be that the Ugaritians knew the equivalent of the Hebrew חָוֵה וְכֶרֶם (Gn 1:2)." <sup>34</sup>

### 1. Morphological correspondence

#### *tu-a-bi-ú(?)*

The morphological correspondence of the Ugaritic *tu-a-bi-ú(?)* and the Hebrew expression *tōhū wābōhū*, can be explained as follows:

(a) The first half of the syllabic spelling, *tu-a*, probably stands for /tuha/, since the grapheme <a> in the syllabic spelling of Ugaritic terms can be used for a syllable /ha/, as in *ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub>* /tahāmatu/,<sup>35</sup> whose alphabetic spelling would be *thmt*.

(b) The second half of the syllabic spelling, *bi-ú*, if the second sign is correctly restored, may stand for /bihu/, since the grapheme <ú> of the syllabic spelling is used for a syllable /hu/ as in *tu-ú-ru* (137:II:1') /tuhuru/ "pure (gem)" and *ú-wa* (137:II:28') /huwa/ "he", whose alphabetic spellings are *thr* and *hw*.

(c) In the light of Ugaritic *thw*, /túhwu/, one might postulate the older form of *tu-a-bi-ú* /tuha bihu/ as *\*túhwu wa-bíhwu*, which experienced the following change:

*\*túhwu wa-bíhwu* > /túhwu-ua-bíhwu/ > /túhwabíhwu/ >  
/túh<sup>w</sup>abíh<sup>w</sup>u/ > /tuhabihu/ : *tu-a-bi-ú*

The Hebrew form *tōhū wābōhū* might be explained as having developed from the same original form as follows:

*\*túhwu wa-bíhwu* > /túhwu wa-búhwu/ > /túh<sup>u</sup>u wa-búh<sup>u</sup>u/ >  
/túh<sup>u</sup> wa-búh<sup>u</sup>/ > /tōhū wābōhū/ : *tōhū wābōhū*

Thus, it is certainly possible that the Ugaritic *tu-a-bi-ú(?)* and the Hebrew *tōhū wābōhū* are two versions of the same idiomatic expression in West Semitic.

<sup>34</sup>J. C. de Moor, "El, the Creator," in G. Rendsburg *et al* (eds.), *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* (New York: KTAV, 1980), 183 & n. 58.

<sup>35</sup>See below p. 52 on this term.

*tu-a-pí-[ku(?)]*

However, according to Prof. W. G. Lambert,<sup>36</sup> the Akkadian *nabalkutum* "to turn over" rather supports the reading of *tu-a-pí-[ku]* for the Ugaritic column in the light of Hebrew \*hpk. The same view is taken by J. Huehnergard.<sup>37</sup> Since the verbal form *hpk* is identified in the Ugaritic alphabetical texts,<sup>38</sup> this suggestion is attractive.

However, there seems to be a morphological difficulty. The form, which can be normalized as /tuhap(p)iku/, is hard to explain as a Ugaritic tD infinitive, "to be upset" (Huehnergard), for if it were a tD infinitive, we would expect in the light of Arabic forms like /tahappaku/ or /tahappiku/, for active, and /tuhuppiku/, for passive.<sup>39</sup> Huehnergard himself accepts this difficulty, saying "A possible difficulty with our proposal is that the form *tuqattil* for the tD infinitive, in view of *quttal* for the D, is rather unexpected."<sup>40</sup> Moreover, his acceptance ("perhaps") of *ta-ga-bi-ra(-yv)* as tD verbal noun /tagabbir-/<sup>41</sup> works against his proposal.

On the other hand, the recently published bilingual vocabulary from Ebla might support this proposal. In this vocabulary M. Krebernik detects two examples of a tD infinitive /tuPaRRis/ form, i.e. *du-za-li-um* /tuZalliHum/ and *du-ša-ne-u<sub>4</sub>* /tuḏanniHu(m)/.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the proposed reading /tuhap(p)iku/ might be morphologically supported, though this form is still rare in Eblaite and almost exceptional in Ugaritic.

Thus, both readings, i.e. *tu-a-bi-[ú(?)]* and *tu-a-pí-[ku(?)]* are possible from phonological and morphological points of view. However, the meaning of the Akkadian counterpart, i.e. *nabalkutu*, is highly disputed. It is not certain that the common meaning of *nabalkutu* is "to turn over" or "to

<sup>36</sup>Orally suggested (15:7:1987).

<sup>37</sup>J. Huehnergard, "Northwest Semitic Vocabulary in Akkadian Texts," *JAOS* 107 (1987), 723; *UVST*, 84, 121, 315 & 322.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. *UT* 19.788: "to upset."

<sup>39</sup>Cf. Gordon, *UT*, 81; S. Segert, *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 67.

<sup>40</sup>*UVST*, 84; cf. also J. Huehnergard, "A Dt Stem in Ugaritic?" *UF* 17 (1986), 402; *UVST*, 271: /tuhappiku/ is against "the existence of a vowel harmony rule around gutturals."

<sup>41</sup>*UVST*, 322.

<sup>42</sup>M. Krebernik, "Verbalnomina mit Prä- und Infigiertem t in Ebla," *SEb* 7 (1984), 208. Cf. K. Hecker, "Doppelt T-erweiterte Formen oder: der Eblaitische Infinitive," *BaE*, 221; B. Kienast, "Nomina mit T-präfix und T-infix in der Sprache von Ebla und ihre Sumerischen Äquivalente," *BaE*, 239, who list the forms /tuḫtarrisum/ and its variants as Dt infinitives.

upset", let alone Huehnergard's "to jump, rebel."<sup>43</sup> The Hurrian counterpart *tapšuhumme* seems to suggest a different meaning for this lexical entry.

## 2. Semantic investigations

What, then, is the meaning of this Ugaritic expression? De Moor assumes that the Ugaritic phrase *tu-a-bi-[ú(?)]* signifies "the state of chaos"<sup>44</sup> in the light of Akkadian *nabalkutu* as well as Hebrew *tōhū wābōhū*. However, while it is possible to render *nabalkutu* as "renverser, bouleversement" in certain contexts like Nougayrol, neither *CAD* nor *AHW* list this as a common meaning.<sup>45</sup>

Since *tōhū wābōhū*, the possible Hebrew counterpart of the Ugaritic *tu-a-bi-[ú(?)]* is always used for describing the state of the "earth" (Gen 1:2, Jer 4:23) or the "land" of Edom (Isa 34:11), it might be profitable for a semantic discussion of this Ugaritic phrase to analyse the Akkadian parallel term *nabalkutu* when it appears with a word like *eṣetu*.

### a. *Atra-Ḥasīs Epic*

#### S iv 49:<sup>46</sup>

[l]i-bal-kat eṣetu re-em-šá  
šam-mu ia ú-ša-a šu-ú ia i-im-ru

Let the earth's womb be ...,  
Let no vegetables shoot up,  
no cereals grow.

#### S iv 58b–59<sup>47</sup>

ib-bal-kat eṣetu re-em-šá  
šam-mu ul ú-ša-a šu-ú ul i'-ru

Earth's womb was ...,  
No vegetables shot up,  
no cereals grew.

<sup>43</sup>UVST, 83.

<sup>44</sup>De Moor, "El, the Creator," 183.

<sup>45</sup>CAD, N/1, 11f.: "1) to cross over . . . ; 2) to slip out of place . . . ; 3) to turn over . . ."; *AHW*, 694f.: "überschreiten."

<sup>46</sup>W. G. Lambert & A. R. Millard, *Atra-Ḥasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 108f.

<sup>47</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 110f.

CAD N/1, 14, following Lambert & Millard who translate *nabalkutu* in this context as "to rebel", classifies the text under the meaning "1. c) 'to rebel against authority.' " However *nabalkutu* with the meaning "to rebel" usually appears with "land or country" (*mātu*), "city" (*ālu*), "man" (*awilū*) or people as its subject.<sup>48</sup> Since it is the "womb" (*rēmu*) that is the real "subject" of the (intrans.) verbs *libbalkat* or *ibbalkat* in the present text, the text seems to describe a womb which does not do its ordinary work, i.e. which is barren or unproductive. Hence the verb might be translated as "to be out of order."<sup>49</sup>

It should be noted that three lines later the "constriction" of the "womb" (*rēmu*) of the peoples is mentioned together with its subsequent state of "no child", i.e. barrenness:

*r[ē]mu* (ARḪUŠ) *lu ku-šur-ma ia ú-še-šēr šēr-ra*

"That the womb may be constricted and give birth to no child" (S iv 51)<sup>50</sup>

*rēmu* (ARḪUŠ) *ku-šur-ma ul ú-še-šēr šēr-ra*

"So that the womb was constricted and gave birth to no child." (S iv 61)<sup>51</sup>

Therefore, "the disfunctioning of the earth's womb" (S iv 49a & 58b) is mentioned in parallel with the state of "no vegetables, no cereals" (S iv 49b & 59), i.e. barrenness or unproductiveness, just as the "constriction of the human womb" (S iv 51a & 61a) is mentioned alongside the state of "no child-birth" (S iv 51b & 61b).

Moreover, this interpretation is confirmed by a parallel text in the Old Babylonian version of this epic, AH II iv 4-6:<sup>52</sup>

*ú-ul ul-da er-še-tum re-e[m-ša]*

*ša-am-mu ú-ul ú-ši-a [ . . ] ni-šu ú-ul am-ra-[tu]*

The womb of earth did not bear,

Vegetation did not sprout [ . . ] People were not seen [ . . ]

The phrase *ú-ul ul-da* in this older version is replaced in the Assyrian

<sup>48</sup>Cf. CAD, N/1, 13–14 & 19 (4.d: "to cause (someone) to rebel").

<sup>49</sup>Cf. CAD's meaning "2. a) 'to slip out of place, to become displaced, to turn upside down (said of parts of the human body, of the exta, and of the moon)'" in CAD, N/1, 16. See also *nabalkutu* used as describing the anomalous shape of a liver in *hepatoscopy*; cf. J.-W. Meyer, *Untersuchungen zu den Tonlebermodellen aus dem Alter Orient* (AOAT 39; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1987), 111–112, 135 & 179–180.

<sup>50</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 108–109.

<sup>51</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 110–111.

<sup>52</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 78–79.

version with *ib-bal-kat*.

This shows that one of the meanings of *nabalkutu* did correspond to that of *ul ūlda*. It may be surmised therefore that, diachronically, the neo-Assyrian phrase *rēmu ibbalkat* "the womb is out of order (lit.)" had experienced its semantic development to become equivalent to and replace the older phrase *rēmu ul ūlda* "the womb does not bear." Or, synchronically, *rēmu ibbalkat* "the womb is out of order" became an idiom meaning "the womb is unproductive." In either case, the term *nabalkutu* might have developed the meaning "to be unproductive", first with "the womb" as its subject and then without it in the process of idiomatization and become able to refer to the state of unproductiveness of the earth (*eršetu*).<sup>53</sup> Thus,

- (1) *rēmu ibbalkat*  
"the womb is out of order" —> "the womb is unproductive"
- (2) *eršetu [rēmu ibbalkat]* —> *eršetu*<sup>54</sup> *rēmša ibbalkat*  
"the earth's womb is unproductive"
- (3) *eršetu ibbalkat*  
"the earth is unproductive"

The passages in the Atra-Ḥasīs Epic should be translated:

Let the earth's womb be out of order,  
Let no vegetables shoot up, no cereals be seen.

Earth's womb was out of order,  
No vegetables shot up, no cereals were seen.

#### b. *The Ritual of Kalû*

This meaning, "to be unproductive", fits in the another text, the Kalû ritual, l. 16, though the expression *eršetu ibbalkit* in this text has been explained as signifying the rolling "of the tremor of an earthquake."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Compare the earth's womb "producing": *rēm-ša[=eršetu] + (w)alādu* and *šēru pal-ku-ú ū-li-id id-ra-na* (AH S iv 58) "The broad plain produced salt" (Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 110–11).

<sup>54</sup>*eršetu* here is a *casus pendens*, i.e. "topicalization."

<sup>55</sup>*CAD*, N/1, 18.

AO.6472:16:<sup>56</sup>

*šumma eršetu inūš tīb nakri šubat māti ul ikân :*

*šumma eršetu ibbalkit (BAL-it) ina māti kalama lā kittu (NU.GI.NA) ibašši  
tēm māti išanni*

Here, the three parts of the second half basically correspond to the three of the first half.<sup>57</sup>

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| (1) <i>eršetu inūš</i>                        | = | <i>eršetu ibbalkit</i>  |
| "the earth shakes"                            |   | "the earth is out of order ( i.e. unproductive)"                  |
| (2) <i>tīb nakri</i>                          | = | <i>ina māti kalama lā kittu ibašši</i>                            |
| "attack of the enemy"                         |   | "there will be falsehood everywhere in the country" <sup>58</sup> |
| (3) <i>šubat māti ul ikân</i>                 | = | <i>tēm māti išanni</i>  |
| "the foundation of the country is not stable" |   | "the status quo of the country changes" <sup>59</sup>             |

However, the fact of simple correspondence should not be taken as a sign of synonymity. Thus it may not be justified to suggest that *nabalkutu* means "to roll" or "sich umwenden" on the basis of the *inūš = ibbalkit* correspondence as *CAD* and *AHw* seem to do<sup>60</sup>, since the second is not an exact translation of the first. Correspondences (2) and (3) rather suggest that the relationship between the first and second halves is that of cause and effect. If this is the case, the sentence *eršetu ibbalkit* refers to some state of the earth caused by the "unstableness" of the earth.<sup>61</sup>

In the light of the above discussion, the Ugaritic *tu-a-bi-[ú(?)]* would be better compared with Akkadian *nabalkutu* "to be out of order", which acquires an idiomatic meaning of "to be unproductive" when it is in

<sup>56</sup>F. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels Accadiens* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1921), 34–35. He translates line 16 as follows:

Si le sol tremble, surrection de l'ennemi,  
l'assiette du pays ne sera pas stable.  
Si le sol se déplace, dans tout le pays il y aura instabilité,  
le pays perdra la raison.

<sup>57</sup>This correspondence is supported also by the presence of "Glossenkeil" (:) between the two halves. These three parts may correspond to the three prime gods, Anu, Enlil and Ea, to whom it is ordered to give sacrifices in the following section, ll. 17–9, of this text.

<sup>58</sup>*CAD*, K (1971), 469.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. W. G. Lambert, *BWL*, 112–3, l. 6; for this idiom, see *AHw*, 1166 & 1386.

<sup>60</sup>*AHw*, 695: "sich umwenden": "v der Erde bei Beben", cites AH S iv 49 & 58 (see above pp. 26f.) as well as the present text.

<sup>61</sup>In our text the disastrous state of the country (*mātu*) is mentioned in (2) and (3) and the verbal form *nabalkutu* in (1) takes as its subject "the earth (*eršetu*)", not "the land/country (*mātu*)."

collocation with *eršetu*, rather than with *nabalkutu* translated as "renverser, bouleversement" or "to turn over, upset." The meaning, "to be unproductive", fits in line 23 of 'voculaires polyglottes' where its Hurrian counterpart *tapšuhumme* most probably means "to be poor", rather than "to be low"<sup>62</sup>, in the light of the other line, 137:II:15: Sum. SIG = Hur. *tapšahālše* = Ug. *maška[nu]*.<sup>63</sup> Hence, this idiomatic meaning of *nabalkutu* has nothing to do with "the state of chaos"<sup>64</sup> and is close to the meaning of *tōhû* "desert" and *bōhû* "emptiness" both of which refer to the unproductiveness of the earth in the biblical context. For the usages of these Hebrew terms and the idiomatic phrase *tōhû wābōhû*, we now turn to the study of the Biblical text itself.

#### D. USES OF HEBREW *tōhû* AND *tōhû wābōhû*

##### 1. *tōhû*

The term *tōhû* occurs twenty times in the Old Testament, eleven of which are in Isaiah. The uses of the term can be classified into three groups: from the concrete meaning "desert" to the abstract "emptiness." According to Westermann, they are:<sup>65</sup>

- (1) "desert" : "the grim desert waste that brings destruction"  
— Dt 32:10, Job 6:18, 12:24 = Ps 107:40
- (2) "a desert or devastation that is threatened"  
("eine Öde oder Verwüstung, die angerichtet wird")  
— Isa 24:10, 34:11, 40:23, Jer 4:23;  
"the state which is opposed to and precedes creation"

<sup>62</sup>Cf. Huehnergard, *UVST*, 84 & 80.

<sup>63</sup>Note that Sum. SIG is explained in Akk. as *enšu ša muškēni* ] "the weak, said of the poor" (Antagal E b 18ff.) — cited by *CAD*, E (1958), 170; *M<sub>2</sub>* (1977), 273 and now published in A. Cavigneaux, H. G. Güterbock & M. T. Roth (eds.), *The Series Erim-huš* = anantu and *An-ta-gāl* = šaqû (MSL 17; Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1985), 211— and corresponds to Ug. *dl /dallu/* "poor" in the polyglot text *S<sup>a</sup>* (cf. Huehnergard, *UVST*, 79) and that *muškēnu* "the poor man" and *enšu* "the weak" appear in parallel to each other in *BWL*, 119, l. 11f. Cf. also *AHw*, 684 & 1193. The latter page lists *muškēnu u šarû* "the poor and the rich" (KAR 26.29).

<sup>64</sup>Even if the Ugaritic column should be read as /tuhappiku/ "to be upset, to be turned over", it would not support the view that the initial state in Gen 1:2 was "the state of chaos."

<sup>65</sup>Westermann, *Genesis* I, 142f. [ET 102f.].

— Gen 1:2, Isa 45:18, Job 26:7.

- (3) "nothingness"<sup>66</sup> — 1Sam 12:21(twice), Isa 29:21, 40:17, 41:29[!],  
44:9, 45:19,<sup>67</sup> 49:4,<sup>68</sup> 59:4.

### "desert"

The first group of the texts (1) certainly describes *tōhû*, which is synonymous with "a desert land" (Dt 32:10), as "the wasteland" where caravans perish (Job 6:18) and as "a trackless waste" where people wander (Job 12:24, Ps 107:40). Thus, the term refers to the actual desert as "a waste land."

### "emptiness"

As for the third group (3), the term *tōhû* seems to refer to a situation which lacks something abstract that should be there, such as worth, purpose, truth, profit & integrity. The term *tōhû* is used in an abstract sense in these passages where it appears in parallel with other abstract nouns such as *'ayin* (or *'āyin*) in Isa 40:17 & 23<sup>69</sup>, *rîq* "empty" in 49:4 and *'epes* "nothing" in 41:29. The idols and the idol makers are also condemned as *tōhû* which is in parallel with the phrase *lō'-yô'îlû* or *bal-yô'îlû* "unprofitable, worthless" in 1Sam 12:21 and Isa 44:9.<sup>70</sup> In two passages, the term *tōhû* refers to words of the unrighteous, i.e. "false testimony"<sup>71</sup> in Isa 29:21 and "empty argument" (NIV) in 59:4.

In this regard, the term in this category would be better understood as "a lack" or "emptiness" rather than "nothingness." Moreover it should be noted here that this abstract use of *tōhû* seems to be typical of Isaiah and that the only other usage in this sense is in 1Sam 12:21, referring to idols in

<sup>66</sup>"It should be noted that in none of these passages does 'nothing' or 'nothingness' indicate the existence of a material 'nothing'; it is contrasted rather with meaningful existence." (Westermann, *Genesis* I, 143 [ET 103])

<sup>67</sup>Isa 45:19 should be classified as (2). See below pp. 34ff. for a detailed discussion.

<sup>68</sup>Not in ET, but in the German original.

<sup>69</sup>However, Westermann classifies this verse as the second group (2).

<sup>70</sup>E. J. Young translates *tōhû* in Isa 44:9 as "unreality" and explains that the word "suggests an absence of all life and power," *The Book of Isaiah III* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 172.

<sup>71</sup>E. J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah II* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 322: "deceit." He explains that "רר prob. signifies 'lies and falsehoods, anything that is vanity and not based upon truth.'" (p. 329).



a similar fashion to Isa 44:9. Furthermore, it is significant to note that the term in this sense is never used with nouns such as "earth" ('ereš) and "city" ('îr).

*"desert-like state"*

In all but one<sup>72</sup> of the passages classified in Westermann's group (2), the term *tôhû* is used for describing the situation or condition of places such as earth, land or city. Let us examine each passage in detail.

a. *Isa 24:10*

*nišbarāh qiryat-tôhû*

*suggar kol-bayit mibbô'*

The city of chaos is broken down,  
every house is shut up so that none can enter. (RSV)  
The ruined city lies desolate;  
the entrance to every house is barred. (NIV)

The entire chapter of Isa 24 talks about the Lord's devastation of the earth. The beginning and the end of the opening section, vs. 1–3a, refer to the earth which will be "completely laid waste" (YHWH *bôqēq hā'āreš // hibbôq tibbôq hā'āreš*) and thus comprise an *inclusio*. In v. 12, "the city is left in ruins, its gate is battered to pieces" (NIV), the desolation of a city is mentioned in terms, *šammāh* and 'îr, different from those in v. 10 where the term *tôhû* signifies a "desert-like"(or "desolate") state of a city, \*qiryāh. Thus, *tôhû* here is almost equivalent of *šammāh*.<sup>73</sup>

b. *Job 26:7*

*nôṭeh šāpôn 'al-tôhû*

*tôleh 'ereš 'al-bāli-māh*

He stretches out the north over the void,  
and hangs the earth upon nothing. (RSV)  
He spreads out the northern 'skies'<sup>74</sup> over empty space;  
he suspends the earth over nothing. (NIV)

<sup>72</sup>Isa 40:23 belongs to the third group, as noted above.

<sup>73</sup>See below p. 39 on *šammāh* (Jer 4:27).

<sup>74</sup>Cf. Isa 40:22: "He stretches out the heavens like a canopy" (NIV).

Westermann thinks that the term *tōhû* here is "the direct opposite of creation", though he avoids translating *tōhû* as "chaos" here. However, the two verbal forms from \*nṯh "to stretch, spread" and \*tlh "to hang, suspend", seem to require concrete objects. The term *tōhû*, which is in parallel with "a place where there is nothing" (*bəlf-māh*), not with an abstract concept "nothing" or "nothingness" as in the case of the third group (above), would have a concrete meaning. Hence, a translation like "a desert-like place" or "an empty place" might be suggested for *tōhû* in this context.

If the term *šāpôn* (cf. Isa 14:13) should be originally a place name "Zaphon",<sup>75</sup> it may possibly stand, like Ugaritic *spn*,<sup>76</sup> for a high mountain in this context and the idea that the Lord stretches out the high mountains, i.e. the high places of the earth,<sup>77</sup> over an empty place could correspond to the Lord's suspending the earth over a place where there is nothing (*bəlf-māh*), i.e. an empty place. Thus, the following translation might be suggested:

He stretches out the high mountains over an empty place,  
he suspends the earth over a place where there is nothing.

### c. Isa 45:18

<i>lō'-tōhû bərə'āh</i>	he did not create it a chaos,
<i>lāšebet yašārāh</i>	he formed it to be inhabited (RSV) <sup>78</sup>
	he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited (NIV)

Taking *tōhû* as "chaos", Westermann explains that *tōhû* here is "the direct opposite of creation."<sup>79</sup> However, *tōhû* here is contrasted with *lāšebet* in the parallelism and seems to refer rather to a place which has no habitation, like the term *šəmāmāh* "desolation" (cf. Jer 4:27; Isa 24:12),

<sup>75</sup>M. H. Pope, *Job*<sup>3</sup> (AB 15; New York: Doubleday, 1973), 180; cf. J. J. M. Roberts, "Šāpôn in Job 26:7," *Bib* 56 (1975), 554-557.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. *Ug.* V (1968), 44 on RS 20.24 where *ḥuršan ḥazi* "Mount Ḥazzi" corresponds to *spn* in the alphabetic divine list (KTU 1.118:4; cf. 14)

<sup>77</sup>Cf. N. H. Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job: A New Commentary* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1967), 380f.: "the floating land."

<sup>78</sup>"He did not create it a waste,

But formed it for habitation." (JPS)

<sup>79</sup>Westermann, *Genesis*. I, 142 [ET 103].

*ḥārēb* "waste, desolate"<sup>80</sup> and *ʾāzūbāh* "deserted."<sup>81</sup> There is nothing in this passage that would suggest a chaotic state of the earth "which is opposed to and precedes creation."<sup>82</sup> Thus, the term *tōhû* here too signifies "a desert-like place" and refers to "an uninhabited place." The verse might be better translated as follows:

Not to be a desert-like place he created it;  
to be inhabited he formed it.

It should be noted that *lō'-tōhû* here is a resultative object, referring to the purpose of God's creative action. In other words, this verse explains that God did not create the earth so that it may stay desert-like, but to be inhabited. So, this verse does not contradict Gen 1:2, where God created the earth to be productive and inhabited though it "was" still *tōhû wābōhû* in the initial state.<sup>83</sup>

d. *Isa 45:19*

*lō' bassēter dibbartī*  
*bimqôm 'ereṣ ḥōṣek*  
*lō' 'āmartī ləzera' ya'āqōb*  
*tōhû baqqəšūnī*

The term *tōhû* here has been interpreted in basically two ways, in a concrete (locative) sense and in an abstract sense. For example, "Seek me in chaos" (RSV); "Look for me in the empty void" (NEB); "in a wasteland" (JPS); "Look for me in an empty waste" (NAB). On the other hand, NIV translates *tōhû* as "in vain", thus suggesting an abstract sense. A similar interpretation has been given by Westermann, who translates *tōhû* as "im Öden (oder im Nichtigen)" and explains "*Tōhū*, meaning nothingness, that which is empty, can also have the sense of 'futile' ('das Sinnlose') — the meaning would then be, 'Seek me in vain' ('Umsonst suchet mich')." <sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Note the Akkadian cognate, *ḥarbu* "wasteland" and its verbal use in the following passage: *erṣetu šī iḥarrumma ana arkat ūmē uššab* "that land will become waste but it will be (re-)inhabited thereafter" (CT 39, 21:168, SB Alu — cited by CAD, H [1956], 87). Also Ezek 28:19.

<sup>81</sup>See below p. 39 on Jer 4:23ff. for these terms.

<sup>82</sup>Westermann, *Genesis*. I, 142 [ET 103].

<sup>83</sup>See below pp. 41ff.

<sup>84</sup>C. Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja: Kapitel 40–66* (Göttingen, 1966) [ET: *Isaiah 40–66* (London, 1969)], 140 [173]. Cf. also Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 210: "In vain seek

All of them understand the syntax in the same way, following MT's punctuation and taking *tôhû* as an adverbial phrase which modifies the verbal phrase *baqqəšûnî*, thus as part of the direct speech. LXX similarly takes *tôhû* as a part of the direct speech. On the other hand, Symmachus' translation leaves some ambiguity in its understanding of the syntax of *tôhû*.<sup>85</sup>

Those who take the term *tôhû* in an abstract sense assume that *tôhû* corresponds to *bassêter* "in secret" (or "secretly") and hence means "in vain" or the like. BHS's suggestion to read כְּחֵר here seems to take this position. However, the term *tôhû* usually has such an abstract meaning when it appears in parallel with the abstract nouns with a similar meaning such as "nothing" or "emptiness" as noted above.

It may be that *tôhû* is just a part of the sarcastic expression *tôhû baqqəšûnî* "In vain seek me!" (cf. NIV) and has no grammatical correspondence with any preceding phrase. However, since the two verbal phrases *dibbartî* and *'āmartî* correspond to each other, *tôhû baqqəšûnî* "In vain seek me!" could be taken as a direct object of *dibbartî* too. Thus, "Not in secret I spoke . . . 'In vain seek me!'" However, such an understanding is the least suitable to the context.

The most natural explanation structurally would be that *tôhû* is in parallel with *bimqôm* *'eres* *hōšek* "in a land of darkness." In other words, *tôhû* without a preposition directly corresponds either to *'eres* *hōšek* or to *hōšek* and, in the last colon, an element corresponding to *bimqôm* or *bimqôm* *'eres* is ellipsized. The former may be supported by the fact that *tôhû* basically means "desert." On the other hand, the latter might be supported by a similar expression, though in a reverse order, *tôhû wābohû* // *hōšek* (Gen 1:2) and *tôhû wābōhû* // *'ên 'ôr* "no light" (Jer 4:23) as well as *tôhû* // *hōšek* (Job 12:24–25).<sup>87</sup> In this case, the term *tôhû*,

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ye me."; M. Dijkstra, "Zur Deutung von Jesaja 45, 15ff.," ZAW 89 (1977), 221: "Suchet mich vergebens."

<sup>85</sup>For a detailed discussion, see D. T. Tsumura, "*tôhû* in Isa. xlv 19," VT 38 (1988), 361–364.

<sup>86</sup>*bimqôm* "in (lit. in the place of)" here functions almost as a compound preposition like *bətok* or *ba'āšer*. Also cf. *bimqôm* *'āšer* in Hos 2:1, 2 Sam 15:21, etc.

<sup>87</sup>Note that vs. 24a–25b constitute the so-called "AXYB Pattern", in which v. 24a and v. 25b are in a distant parallelism, while v. 24b and v. 25a constitute an "inserted" bicolon; cf. D. T. Tsumura, "Inserted Bicolon", the AXYB Pattern, in Amos 1 5 and Psalm IX 7," VT 38 (1988), 234–236. In this structure, it is clear that *tôhû* and *hōšek* are a parallel word pair. This has never been noticed by commentators: e.g. Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 218f.; Pope, *Job* 3, 95; S. R. Driver & G. B. Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (ICC, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921), 120; E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1967), 180; R.

corresponding directly to *hōšek* "darkness", probably means "desolation."

It is thus probably correct that the term *tōhû* is not to be included in the direct speech, since the verbal phrase *dibbartî*, like *'āmartî*, seems to take *ləzera' ya'āqōb* as an indirect object and *baqqəšūnî* as a direct object, i.e. direct speech. If *dibbartî* should take *tōhû baqqəšūnî* as a direct object, the term *tōhû* would become a redundant element in a structure such as "I did not speak . . . in a land of darkness, 'In a waste land / in a land of desolation (*tōhû*) seek me!'"

Our new translation would be as follows:

I did not speak in secret,  
     in a land of darkness,  
 I did not say to Jacob's descendants  
     (in a land of) desolation,<sup>88</sup> 'Seek me!'

## 2. *tōhû wābōhû*

### a. Jer 4:23

- 23) *rā'itū 'et-hā'ares wəhinnēh-tōhû wābōhû*  
*wə'el-haššamayim wə'ēn 'ōrām*  
 24) *rā'itū hehārim wəhinnēh rō'āšim*  
*wəkol-haggəbā'ot hitqalqālū*  
 25) *rā'itū wəhinnēh 'ēn hā'ādām*  
*wəkol-'ōp haššamayim nādādū*  
 26) *rā'itū wəhinnēh hakkarmel hammidbār*  
*wəkol-'arāw nittəšū*  
*mippənē YHWH mippənē ḥārōn 'appō*

It is often asserted that Jer 4:23–26 pictures a return to the primeval chaos. For example, Bright says that "the story of Genesis 1 has been reversed: men, beasts, and growing things are gone, the dry land itself totters, the heavens cease to give their light, and primeval chaos returns. It is as if the earth had been 'uncreated.'"<sup>89</sup> McKane also expresses a similar

Gordis, *The Book of Job* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978), 141.

<sup>88</sup>Or "(in) a desolate place."

<sup>89</sup>J. Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB 21; New York: Doubleday, 1965), 33.

view in his recent commentary. He thinks that this signifies the "return to the chaos which prevailed before the world was ordered by Yahweh's creative acts."<sup>90</sup> He even says that "According to v. 23 there has been a collapse of cosmic order and an invasion by the power of chaos."<sup>91</sup>

However, this view is greatly influenced by the interpretation of the phrase *tôhû wābôhû* as "chaos" in Gen 1:2 and is not based on the contextual analysis of Jer 4:23ff. itself.

There is certainly no question about the similarity in the terms and phrases between Jer 4:23ff. and Gen 1:2ff. However, it is not so certain as some scholars assume whether the former is patterned after or "modelled on" the latter.

For example, Fishbane<sup>92</sup> finds in Jer 4:23–26 the same order of creation as in Gen 1:1–2:4a and assumes a "recovered use of the creation pattern" in this Jeremiah passage. According to him, the order of creation reflected in Jer 4:23–26 is as follows: *tôhû wābôhû* – "light" – "heavens" – "earth" (:"mountains", "hills") – "bird" – "man" – "his fierce anger." However, the actual order of terms and phrases mentioned in Jer 4:23ff. is as follows: ["earth" – *tôhû wābôhû* ] // ["heavens" – "light"], "mountains" // "hills", "man" // "bird", and ["fruitful land" – "desert"] // "towns." Fishbane thinks that the difference in "the order of creation" in the cases of "earth" → "heavens" and "man" → "bird" in Jer 4:23ff. does not disprove his case, because "the synthetic parallelism progresses from below to above in all cases" and "there is no one fixed order to these traditional pairs."

However, it should be noted that not all the terms of the Jeremiah passage appear in the Genesis passage. Moreover, the order is not the same in both passages despite Fishbane's explanation. For one thing, the "earth" in Jer 4:23 should be compared with the "earth" in Gen 1:2, since both are described by the same phrase *tôhû wābôhû*. If this is the case, his suggestion to reverse the order of "earth" → "heavens" to "heavens" → "earth" so that the order might be the same as that of Gen 1:3ff. is without support.

Also, "light" in Jer 4:23 refers to the light of the "heavens" and it should be compared rather with "luminaries" of the sky in Gen 1:14. Fishbane

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<sup>90</sup>W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, Vol. I (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 106. Cf. also B. S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1960), 42 & 76; H. Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 2. Teilband: Jesaja 13–27 (BKAT X/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 920; R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (London: SCM, 1986), 168.

<sup>91</sup>McKane, *Jeremiah*, I, 107.

<sup>92</sup>M. Fishbane, "Jeremiah IV 23–26 and Job III 3–13: A Recovered Use of the Creation Pattern," *VT* 21 (1971), 152.

thinks that 'ôr "light" in Jer 4:23 should be connected with 'ôr which was created on the first day in Genesis account. On the other hand, McKane explains 'ôr as referring to the "luminaries" of the sky, like *mə'ôrôt* (Gen 1:14).<sup>93</sup> Holladay takes 'ôr (Jer 4:23) as "light" rather than "the light-giving sun and moon and stars", but says: "In Genesis 1:3–5 the creation of light is not associated specifically with the heavens but is thoroughly appropriate here."<sup>94</sup> Thus he notes the difference between Gen 1:3–5 and Jer 4:23.

Recently, Kselman noted that "The chiasmic *thw wbhw // ḥšk* [in Gen 1:2] is echoed in Jer 4:23 (*thw wbhw // 'yn 'wrm*), a poem modelled on Gen 1."<sup>95</sup> Thus he also takes the similarity in the two parallel pairs as a result of the direct relationship between the two documents. However, the similarity between Gen 1:2 and Jer 4:23 exists only in the similar phrases, "darkness" *ḥōšek* (Gen 1:2) and its *negated antonym* "no light" 'ên 'ôrām (Jer 4:23) as well as *tōhû wābōhû*,<sup>96</sup> but not in the subject matter, or referents. In other words, in the Genesis passage it is "earth" // *təhôm* that is referred to; in Jeremiah, "earth" // "heavens."

Moreover, the nature of relationship between the two referents in Gen 1:2 is different from that in Jer 4:23. In the latter it is merismatic, or contrastive; in the former it is hyponymous.<sup>97</sup> While in Gen 1:2 only the "earth", which was totally covered with *təhôm*-waters, is the subject matter, in Jer 4:23 the whole universe, "the heavens and the earth", is the topic of concern. In the light of the above discussion, it is rather difficult to assume that Jer 4:23–26 is patterned after or "modelled on" the creation story in Gen 1:1–2:4a.

Let us place the passage Jer 4:23–26 in a wider literary context and view it in connection with vs. 27–28 where Yahweh's speech is mentioned.<sup>98</sup> For one thing, what Jeremiah saw in vs. 23–26 should be closely related to what Yahweh said in vs. 27–28.

<sup>93</sup>Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah*, I, 107.

<sup>94</sup>W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 1–25* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 165.

<sup>95</sup>J. S. Kselman, "The Recovery of Poetic Fragments from the Pentateuchal Priestly Source," *JBL* 97 (1978), 164, n. 13: "a poem modelled on Gen 1; cf. M. Fishbane, *VT* 21 (1971), 151–67."

<sup>96</sup>See above pp. 35f. on a word pair, *tōhû* and *ḥōšek* in Isa 45:19 and Job 12:24–25.

<sup>97</sup>See below pp. 67-72 for a detailed discussion of a hyponymous relation between the "earth" and *təhôm*.

<sup>98</sup>Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 2, 920 treats Jer 4:23–28 as closely related to Is 24:4 which mentions the "earth" which "dries up" (*'ābəlāh*) and the "whole world" which "withers" (*'umləlāh*).

- 27) *kî-kôh 'āmar YHWH*  
*šəmāmāh tihyeh kol-hā'āres*  
*wəkālāh lō' 'e'ēseh*
- 28) *'al-zō't te'ēbal hā'āres*  
*wəqādərū haššāmāyim mimmā'al*  
*'al kî-dibbarū zammōū*  
*wəlō' nihamtī wəlō'-'āšūb mimmennāh*

Holladay rightly notes that v. 28 corresponds with v. 23 and says, "Here the expression nicely dovetails with the extinguishing of the light of the heavens in v. 23. In a way the whole cosmos is in mourning for itself."<sup>99</sup> Thus, he notes the correspondence between 'ēn 'ōrām (v. 23) and \*qdr "to be dark" (v. 28). However, he does not discuss the other correspondence, i.e. *tōhū wābōhū* and \*' bl "to dry up", with regard to the "earth" in these verses.

From the structural analysis of vs. 23–28 as a whole, it is noteworthy that the word pair "the earth" (*hā'āres*) and "the heavens" (*haššāmāyim*) appears in this order both in the beginning (v. 23) and at the end (v. 28) of this section, thus functioning as an *inclusio* or a "framing" for the section. In other words, "(The earth is) *tōhū wābōhū* " // "(the heavens) are without light" in v. 23 corresponds to "(The earth) will dry up" (\*' bl) // "(the heavens) will be dark" (\*qdr) in v. 28. Here, the phrase *tōhū wābōhū* corresponds to the verbal phrase "to dry up"<sup>100</sup> and suggests the "aridness or unproductiveness" of the earth. This is in keeping with v. 27 which mentions that "the whole earth will become a desolation"<sup>101</sup> (*šəmāmāh tihyeh kol-hā'āres*).

As for the second half of v. 27, *wəkālāh lō' 'e'ēseh*, various suggestions have been made. Most recently, it has been translated as "and I will make its destruction complete" (McKane)<sup>102</sup> or "and none of it shall I (re)make" (Holladay)<sup>103</sup>, by slightly changing the MT reading. On the other

<sup>99</sup>Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 168.

<sup>100</sup>Cf. KB: II 'bl "to dry up" Jer 12:4, 23:10, Am 1:2 and CAD, A/1 (1964), 29f.: *abālu* B "to dry up, dry out"; *Ahw*, 3: *abālu* "(aus)trocknen" which is sometimes used for *šadū* and *eqlu*.

<sup>101</sup>Cf. Ex 23:29, Isa 1:7. Note the term *šəmāmāh* "desolation" has its synonymous variants *hārēb* "waste, desolate" (Jer 33:10, cf. 32:43) and 'āzūbāh "deserted" (Zeph 2:4; Isa 62:4; Jer 4:29, cf. 4:27). For Zeph 2:4, see L. Zalcman, "Ambiguity and Assonance at Zephaniah II 4," *VT* 36 (1986), 368.

<sup>102</sup>McKane, *Jeremiah*, I, 108.

<sup>103</sup>Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 166.



hand Bright has translated the MT as it is: "though I'll make no full end,"<sup>104</sup> thus taking *kālāh* as "full end."<sup>105</sup> However, *kālāh* here as well as in Nah 1:8<sup>106</sup> seems to refer to "total destruction", i.e. destruction brought about by a flood, like *gamertu* which was brought about by *abūbu* "a flood" in the Babylonian Flood story.<sup>107</sup> Thus, the Jeremiah passage mentions a destruction brought about by the lack of water, not by the flood water. This is in keeping with our explanation which takes *tōhū wābōhū* as signifying "aridness or unproductiveness" of the earth.

Since without v. 23 there would be no reason to compare the Jeremiah passage with the Genesis creation story,<sup>108</sup> we might conclude that the two single verses, Jer 4:23 and Gen 1:2, simply share a common literary tradition in their use of *tōhū wābōhū*, which, according to the Jeremiah context, refers to a "desert-like" state of the "earth."

#### b. *Isa 34:11*

*wīrēsūhā qā'at wəqippōd*  
*wəyanšōp wə'ōrēb yiškənū-bāh*  
*wənātāh 'ālēhā qaw-tōhū*  
*wə'abnē-bōhū*

The motif of "desolation" or "Verlassenheit"<sup>109</sup> can be also found in Isa 34:11 where *tōhū* and *bōhū* appear in parallel expressions, i.e. "the line of *thw*" (*qaw-tōhū*) // "the stones of *bhw*" (*'abnē-bōhū*). The text has been again connected with Gen 1:2 and it is often explained, for example, as "Yahweh had reduced the country for ever to a place just like chaos, to a real *tōhū-wābōhū* (cf. Gen. 1.2)."<sup>110</sup> However, as Wildberger rightly says "Aber wie die Stelle aus dem Jeremiabuch zeigt, braucht die Schöpfungs-

<sup>104</sup>Bright, *Jeremiah*, 33. Bright adds the following comment: "the land will indeed be a waste, but it will not be the 'full end' described in vss. 23–26."

<sup>105</sup>Cf. "complete destruction" (BDB, 478).

<sup>106</sup>For this verse, see my article "Janus Parallelism in Nah 1:8," *JBL* 102 (1983), 109–111.

<sup>107</sup>AH III v 42–44, cf. II viii 34 & III iii 38. Cf. Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 158 [a note on II viii 34].

<sup>108</sup>Carroll thinks that "the poem could be a meditation on the creation story . . .", while rejecting Fishbane's view. See Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 169.

<sup>109</sup>H. Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 3. Teilband: Jesaja 28–39 (BKAT X/3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982), 1346.

<sup>110</sup>O. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39: A Commentary* (London: SCM, 1974), 359.

erzählung von Gn 1 nicht vorausgesetzt zu sein,"<sup>111</sup> Isa 34:11 simply means that "the land will become a desolation and waste so that it can no more receive inhabitants."<sup>112</sup> From the context of the Isaiah passage it is rather difficult to see any direct connection with Genesis creation story. It seems that Isaiah inherited the same literary tradition as Jer 4:23 and Gen 1:2 in describing the desolateness of the earth or land by *tōhû* and *bōhû*.

Let us summarize what we have concluded in the above discussion: the term *tōhû* means (1) "desert," (2) "a desert-like place," i.e. "a desolate or empty place" or "an uninhabited place" or (3) "emptiness"; the phrase *tōhû wābōhû* has a similar meaning and refers to a state of "aridness or unproductiveness" (Jer 4:23) or "desolation" (Isa 34:11).

Having studied the etymology and Biblical usages of the term *tōhû* as well as the expression *tōhû wābōhû*, it is now time to place this expression in the Genesis context.

### E. *tōhû wābōhû* IN THE FRAMEWORK OF GEN 1

#### *The earth in a bare state*

In the light of the above, it would be very reasonable to understand the phrase *tōhû wābōhû* in Gen 1:2 as also describing a state of "unproductiveness and emptiness",<sup>113</sup> though the context suggests that this was the initial state of the created earth rather than a state brought about as a result of God's judgment on the earth or land (cf. Jer 4:23; Isa 34:11). In this regard, the earth which "was"<sup>114</sup> (*hāyētāh*) *tōhû wābōhû* signifies the earth in a "bare" state, without vegetation and animals as well as without man.

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<sup>111</sup>Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 3, 1346. Here he changes his previous view on the Jeremiah passage. Cf. *Jesaja*, 2, 920.

<sup>112</sup>Young, *Isaiah* II, 438, who, however, holds that the prophet Isaiah took language from Gen 1:2.

<sup>113</sup>See also Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 381: "in Gen 1:2 . . . [*tōhû*] describes the barrenness of the earth before anything grew on it."

<sup>114</sup>Andersen, *SBH*, 85 thinks that Gen 1:2a means "the earth had become (or had come to be) . . ." as a circumstance prior to the first fiat recorded in Gen 1:3.

*Day 3 (climax) and Day 6 (grand climax)*

This interpretation of *tōhû wābōhû* (lit. "desert-like and empty") as describing a bare state, i.e. "unproductive & uninhabited" state, of the earth fits the literary structure of the entire chapter.

As the discourse analysis of this section indicates, the author in v. 2 focuses not on the "heavens" but on the "earth" where the reader/audience stands, and presents the "earth" as "still" not being the earth which they all are familiar with. The earth which they are familiar with is "the earth" with vegetation, animals and man. Therefore, in a few verses, the author will mention their coming into existence through God's creation: vegetation on the third day and animals and man on the sixth day. Both the third and the sixth day are set as climaxes in the framework of this creation story and the grand climax is the creation of man on the sixth day.<sup>115</sup>

This literary structure<sup>116</sup> might be expressed as follows:

Gen 1:2	the earth as <u>unproductive</u> & <u>uninhabited</u> ( <i>tōhû wābōhû</i> )
[DAY 1] light & darkness	[DAY 4] "sun" & "moon"
[DAY 2] two waters	[DAY 5] fish & birds
[DAY 3] <i>earth</i> & seas	[DAY 6] <u>animals</u> & <u>man</u>
<u>vegetation</u>	on the <i>earth</i>

Thus, the "not yet productive" earth becomes productive when God says *tadšē' hā'āreš deše'* "Let the land produce vegetation" (v. 11) on the third day; the "empty", i.e. "not yet inhabited", earth becomes inhabited when he says *tōšē' hā'āreš nepes hayyāh* "Let the land produce living creatures" (v. 24) and *na'āseh 'ādām bašalmēnū kidmūtēnū* "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (v. 26). Therefore it is by God's fiats that the "unproductive and empty/ uninhabited" earth becomes productive with vegetation and inhabited by animals and man.<sup>117</sup> The story of creation in

<sup>115</sup>Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 6; B. W. Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos: the Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967, 1987 [reprint with Postscript]), 187f. & 191. Young notes that the definite article is used only with the ordinal number "6" in this chapter; see E. J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, n.d.), 99.

<sup>116</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 6f.; I. M. Kikawada & A. Quinn, *Before Abraham Was: The Unity of Genesis 1–11* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), 78, suggest that the first three days [regions] correspond to the second three days [corresponding inhabitants].

<sup>117</sup>B. Otzen, "The Use of Myth in Genesis," in B. Otzen, H. Gottlieb & K. Jeppesen, *Myths in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1980), 39, thinks that "the background of [Gen 1:11f.] is the ancient mythological idea of the 'Earth Mother' who 'gives birth' to the

Gen 1:1–2:3 thus tells us that it is God who created mankind "in his image" and provided for him an inhabitable and productive earth.

In conclusion, both the biblical context and extra-biblical parallels suggest that the phrase *tōhū wābōhū* in Gen 1:2 has nothing to do with "chaos" and simply means "emptiness" and refers to the earth which is an empty place, i.e. "an unproductive and uninhabited place." Thus, the main reason for the author's mentioning the earth as *tōhū wābōhū* in this setting is to inform the audience that the earth is "not yet" the earth as it was known to them. As Westermann notes, "creation and the world are to be understood always from the viewpoint of or in the context of human existence."<sup>118</sup> In other words, to communicate the subject of creation to human beings it is impossible to avoid using the language and literary forms known to them. In order to give the background information, the author uses experiential language in this verse, to explain the initial situation of the earth as "not yet."

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products of the soil." It should be noted, however, that in Gen 1 animals are also the products of the earth and that the existence of both plant life and animal life on the earth is the result of the divine fiat. Note also that there is no single myth in the ancient Near East which treats both plants and animals as the products of the earth.

<sup>118</sup>Westermann, *Genesis*. I, 145 [ET 104]; also O. Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (BZAW 78; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959), 13; W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1:1–2:4a und 2:4b–3:24*. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 86, n. 3.

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## Chapter 3

### THE WATERS IN GEN 1

#### A. BABYLONIAN BACKGROUND

H. Gunkel in his famous book *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (1895) discussed the Babylonian background of *təhôm* in Gen 1:2.<sup>1</sup> He thought it derived directly from Tiamat, the goddess of the primeval ocean of Enuma elish. Ever since, many Biblical scholars have assumed some kind of direct or indirect connection between the Babylonian Tiamat and the Hebrew *təhôm*.<sup>2</sup>

For example, B. W. Anderson holds that "As in the *Enuma elish* myth, Genesis 1 begins by portraying a precreation condition of watery chaos. Indeed, the Hebrew word for *deep* (Gen. 1:2: *Tehom*) appears here without the definite article (elsewhere it is in the feminine gender), as though it were a distant echo of the mythical battle with Tiamat, the female personification of the powers of chaos."<sup>3</sup>

#### *Lexical borrowing*

The earlier scholars who followed Gunkel usually held that the author of

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<sup>1</sup>An abridged English edition of pp. 3–120 is now available as H. Gunkel, "Influence of Babylonian Mythology Upon the Biblical Creation Story," in B. W. Anderson (ed.), *Creation in the Old Testament* (Issues in Religion and Theology 6; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 25–52.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. B. S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1960), 36; B. W. Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos: the Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967, 1987 [reprint with Postscript]), 15–40, esp. 39f.; M. K. Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 86ff.

<sup>3</sup>Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos*, 39; see Gunkel, "Influence of Babylonian Mythology," 42 & 45.

Genesis had borrowed the Babylonian proper name Tiamat and demythologized it. However, if the Hebrew *təhôm* were an Akkadian loan word,<sup>4</sup> there should be a closer phonetic similarity to *ti'āmat*. The expected Hebrew form would be something like \**ti'āmat* > *ti'ōmat* > *tə'ōmát*. This could have been subsequently changed to \**tə'ōmā(h)*, with a loss of the final /t/, but never to *təhôm*, with a loss of the entire feminine morpheme /-at/.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, since the second consonant of Tiamat is /ʔ/, a glottal stop, which often disappears at the intervocalic position so that the resultant vowel cluster experiences the so-called vowel *sandhi* in Akkadian as *ti'ām̄tum* > *tiām̄tum* > *tām̄tum*, it is very unlikely that a west Semitic speaker would represent the second consonant as a fricative [h]. In fact, there is no example of West Semitic borrowing Akkadian /ʔ/ as /h/, except Akkadian *ilku* "duty" as *hlk'* (Aram.) with the word initial /h/.<sup>6</sup> It is almost impossible to suppose that Akkadian *Tiamat* was borrowed by Hebrew as *təhôm* with an intervocalic /h/, for that also tends to disappear in Hebrew (e.g. /h/ of the definite article /ha-/ in the intervocalic position).<sup>7</sup>

However, some recent scholars still assume a mythological connection,<sup>8</sup> though indirect and remote, between *təhôm* and Tiamat and hold that diachronically the term *təhôm* was originally a Babylonian proper noun. For example, Wakeman says that "in view of the accepted etymological relation of the word to Tiamat . . . and given the conservative nature of poetry, we might expect to find echoes of the myth in the poetic clichés or formulas associated with *təhôm*."<sup>9</sup> She thus recognizes the "vestiges of personality"

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Zimmern, *AFw*, 44.

<sup>5</sup>An Akk. term could be borrowed by West Semitic either with or without the /t/: e.g. *askupp/atu* (Akk.), "threshold" > *'skwpt'* (Syr.), *maddattu* (Akk.) "tribute" > *mndh* or *mdh* (Bib. Aram.) & *md't'* (Syr.), cf. *egirtu* (Akk.), "letter" > *'(y)grh/t'*(?). See Kaufman, *AIA*, 37, 67 & cf. 48; cf. Zimmern, *AFw*, 9.

<sup>6</sup>*AHw*, 371; Zimmern, *AFw*, 10; Kaufman, *AIA*, 58, cf. 27.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. A. Heidel, *BG* <sup>3</sup>, 90 & 100, n. 58; O. Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (BZAW 78; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959), 115; W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1:1-2:4a und 2:4b-3:24*. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 80, n. 5; C. Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband: Genesis 1-11 (BKAT I/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974), 146 [ET: 105]; J. Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 50.

<sup>8</sup>E.g. B. Otzen, "The Use of Myth in Genesis," in B. Otzen, H. Gottlieb & K. Jeppesen, *Myths in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1980), 32 & 40.

<sup>9</sup>Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster*, 86f.

in the idiomatic expression such as *təḥôm rabbāh*.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, she thinks that "Though *וַיְהוּם* may be related etymologically to Tiamat, it is nowhere personified in the Bible. However, . . . the idea was in the process of being depersonalized."<sup>11</sup>

Here a certain confusion seems to exist in the use of the term "etymological" by some scholars. When one says that *təḥôm* is etymologically related to Tiamat, no clear distinction is made between the fact that *təḥôm* and Tiamat are cognate, sharing a common Semitic root \**thm*, and the popular supposition that *təḥôm* is a loan word from the Akkadian divine name Tiamat, hence mythologically related. Since the latter is phonologically impossible, the idea that the Akkadian Tiamat was borrowed and subsequently demythologized is mistaken and should not be used as an argument in a lexicographical discussion of Hebrew *təḥôm*. It should be pointed out that the Akkadian term *tī'āmtum* > *tāmtum* normally means "sea" or "ocean" in an ordinary sense and is sometimes *personified* as a divine being in mythological contexts.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the fact that *təḥôm* is etymologically related to Tiamat as a cognate should not be taken as an evidence for the mythological dependence of the former on the latter.

### *Western "origin"?*

While the majority of Biblical scholars assume the Babylonian background of *təḥôm* (Gen 1:2), some Assyriologists have been questioning the alleged connection between Gen 1 and *Enuma elish*.<sup>13</sup> And in recent years Assyriologists like Lambert, Jacobsen and Sjöberg are "extremely careful when dealing with influences from Mesopotamia on the mythological and religious concepts of the peoples living along the Mediterranean coast, and see instead a strong influence from that region on Mesopotamia."<sup>14</sup>

For example, in 1965 W. G. Lambert said "there is no proof that the conflict of a deity with the sea is of Mesopotamian origin." And he

<sup>10</sup>Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster*, 87f.

<sup>11</sup>M. K. Wakeman, "Chaos," *IDB Suppl.* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 144; Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster*, 86ff.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. *AHw*, 1353f. See below pp. 56f. for further discussion on this matter.

<sup>13</sup>For example, see J. V. K. Wilson, "The Epic of Creation," in D. W. Thomas (ed.), *DOTT*, 14: "it seems very probable that the epic has no connections of any kind or at any point with Genesis."

<sup>14</sup>A. W. Sjöberg, "Eve and the Chameleon," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 218.



suggested as a possibility that the Amorites introduced the idea into Mesopotamia.<sup>15</sup> Jacobsen also argues that "the story of the battle between the god of thunderstorm and the sea originated on the coast of the Mediterranean and wandered eastward from there to Babylon."<sup>16</sup> Recently, however, Lambert revised his earlier position and now holds that the motif of the storm-god's conflict with the sea in *Enuma elish* came from northern Mesopotamian traditions.<sup>17</sup> One may certainly have to adjust to the recent advance in the knowledge of ancient Near East, especially that of northern Mesopotamia, during past two decades. However, this does not permit anyone to assume that *tāhōm* (Gen 1:2) has a northern Mesopotamian background.

It should be noted that *Enuma elish* itself incorporates much older Mesopotamian traditions.<sup>18</sup> For example according to Lambert, "not only was *Enūma Eliš* consciously based on *Anzū*, but other items of *Ninurta* mythology were deliberately worked in so as to present *Marduk* as *Ninurta redivivus*."<sup>19</sup> As for *Tiamat*, an Old Akkadian school tablet which predates *Enuma elish* by a millennium mentions *Tišpak*, "steward of *Tiamat*" (*abarak tiāmtim*)<sup>20</sup> and the form *tiāmtim* appears in an Old Assyrian personal name, *Puzur-Tiāmtim*.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the sea had been personified as a

<sup>15</sup>W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *JTS* 16 (1965), 295f. For the relationship between *Enuma elish* and Gen 1, see also W. G. Lambert, "Babylonien und Israel," *TRE* V (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1979), 71–72.

<sup>16</sup>T. Jacobsen, "The Battle between *Marduk* and *Tiamat*," *JAOS* 88 (1968), 107.

<sup>17</sup>Oral communication of 30.7.88.

<sup>18</sup>There is some disagreement on the dating of *Enuma elish* among Assyriologists. Lambert dates *Enuma elish* around 1100B.C., the second half of the second millennium at the earliest. Cf. W. G. Lambert, "The Reign of *Nebuchadnezzar I*: A Turning Point in the History of Ancient Mesopotamian Religion," in *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honour of T. J. Meek* [ed. by W. S. McCullough] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 6. Jacobsen dates it earlier. According to Jacobsen, "*Ti'āmat* represents the Sealand . . . *Marduk's* victory over her its conquest and unification with Babylon and the North under *Ulamuriash* [ca. 1400BC]." (T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976], 189f.)

<sup>19</sup>W. G. Lambert, "Ninurta Mythology in the Babylonian Epic of Creation," in *Keilschriftliche Literaturen: ausgewählte Vorträge der XXXII. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* [Eds. by K. Hecker & W. Sommerfeld] (BBVO 6; Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1986), 56. See also W. G. Lambert, "The Theology of Death," in B. Alter (ed.), *Death in Mesopotamia* (Mesopotamia 8; Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1980), 64f. for the highly composite nature of *Enuma elish*.

<sup>20</sup>In Akkadian the god Sea is usually written as *tiāmtu* or *tāmtu*, and the writing *tī-amāt* (GÉME) appears only once in a gloss. The most common phonetic spellings are *tī-ā-wa-ti* or *ta-ā-wa-ti* and the spelling *ta-ma-[tū]* also appears in a gloss (from oral communication with Prof. W. G. Lambert).

<sup>21</sup>Cf. A. Westenholz, "Old Akkadian School Texts: Some Goals of Sargonic Scribal

divine being since the earliest period of written history in Mesopotamia.

On the other hand, in some later creation narratives in Mesopotamia the sea is not personified and has nothing to do with the conflict theme. In these traditions the creation of the world or cosmos is not connected with the death of a dragon as in *Enuma elish*. For example, a bilingual version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk" from the Neo-Babylonian period describes the creation of cosmos without a conflict theme. In this myth, the initial situation of the world is simply described: "All the land was sea." There the waters alone existed before the creation of the world.<sup>22</sup> However, the non-personified use of the sea (*tâmtum*) in this myth is not a result of depersonification of the divine name.<sup>23</sup>

In the light of the above, one needs to revise Westermann's statement that "the similarity between תהום and Tiamat would go back to a stage in the history of the creation narrative when the story of the struggles between the gods had *not yet*<sup>24</sup> been linked with creation."<sup>25</sup> Since some narratives never associated the creation of cosmos with the conflict theme, there is no reason to assume that the older stage without the conflict-creation connection necessarily developed to a stage with this connection. Clearly more than one creation tradition existed in ancient Mesopotamia and *Enuma elish* inherited some of the older Mesopotamian mythological traditions about the storm god as well as about the conflict of a deity with the sea.<sup>26</sup>

It should be noted however that it is the motif of a conflict of a storm-god with the sea, not a motif of creation, that Lambert and Jacobsen have suggested as having originated in the west. Hence, Jacobsen's assumption does not necessarily support a view that the "primordial struggle in connection with the creation" existed in Ugaritic myth.<sup>27</sup> While in *Enuma elish* the motif of the conflict of a deity with the sea is integrated in the story of creation of the cosmos, in Ugaritic the Baal-Yam conflict is not related to the "primordial struggle in connection with the creation" at all,

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Education," *AfO* 25 (1974/77), 102.

<sup>22</sup>See below pp. 79f.; cf. Heidel, *BG*<sup>3</sup>, 62; J. Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone* (Genève – Paris: Slatkine – Champion, 1985), 303. Thus, even in a myth related to Marduk's creative activity, the motif of *Chaoskampf* is not a prerequisite of creation.

<sup>23</sup>See below pp. 53-56 on this subject.

<sup>24</sup>Emphasis by the present author.

<sup>25</sup>Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband, 146f. [ET: 106].

<sup>26</sup>While Marduk certainly has storm god attributes in his combat with Tiamat, it is not correct to treat him as a storm god as such. See below pp. 133f. on storm gods.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. J. C. de Moor, *SPUMB*, 41, n. 31.

as the following section will explain.

## B. CANAANITE BACKGROUND

Since the discovery of Ugaritic myths, a Canaanite background has been widely accepted for the conflict between Yahweh and the sea-dragons, Leviathan, Rahab, etc. in poetical passages of the Old Testament.<sup>28</sup> And this "Canaanite" conflict motif in these biblical passages where the conflict is considered to be related to "creation"<sup>29</sup> is held to be "a missing link" for positing the alleged *Chaoskampf* in Gen 1:2. Thus, the theme of *Chaoskampf* reflected both in the Babylonian Enuma elish and in the Ugaritic Baal Myth tends to be taken as the basic prerequisite for any cosmogonic story in the Ancient Near East.

### *Creation of Cosmos?*

However, scholars have noted that the myth of a Baal–Yam conflict in the extant Ugaritic texts has nothing to do with the creation of the cosmos as such<sup>30</sup> and the storm-god Baal is not a creator god like Marduk in Enuma elish. Hence, some Ugaritic scholars have assumed the existence of an earlier cosmogonic myth in the missing first column KTU 1.1 or the broken section of 1.2,<sup>31</sup> which they think gives the "missing account" of the victories over Yam, Nahar, the "dragon" (*tnn*)<sup>32</sup>, the "crooked serpent" (*btñ . 'qltn*) etc. claimed by Anat in 1.3:III:38ff. and the victory of Baal

<sup>28</sup>Cf. A. Cooper, "Divine Names and Epithets in the Ugaritic Texts," in *RSP III* [ed. by S Rummel] (1981), 369–383 [on Ym // Nhr] & 388–391 [on Ltn].

<sup>29</sup>For the most recent treatments of this topic, see C. Kloos, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea: A Canaanite Tradition in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 70–86; Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 18–49.

<sup>30</sup>Most recently, see M. S. Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986), 319f; J. H. Grønbæk, "Baal's Battle with Yam — A Canaanite Creation Fight," *JSOT* 33 (1985), 27–44.

<sup>31</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 13: "a primordial battle associated with the creation of the world"; cf. also de Moor, *SPUMB*, 41, n. 31. However, in their review article of Day's book, Korpel and de Moor doubt Day's assumption that "there existed a different Canaanite myth in which the victor over Sea became the creator." M. C. A. Korpel & J. C. de Moor, "A Review of J. Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea. Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament*, 1985," *JSS* 31 (1986), 244.

<sup>32</sup>Read /tunnanu/ (*Ug. V*, 137:1:8'); cf. Huehnergard, *UVST*, 185f.

over *ltn* referred to in 1.5:1:1ff.<sup>33</sup> This is, Gibson believes, "what . . . comprised Ugaritic mythology's primordial battle of the good god with the powers of chaos so well known to us from the Mesopotamian and Biblical parallels."<sup>34</sup>

Recently J. Day suggested that the term *tāhôm* can be traced back to the earlier Canaanite dragon myth which he, like Gibson, thinks is related to the creation theme. He says, "In so far as *tāhôm*'s mythological background is concerned this is not Babylonian at all, but rather Canaanite, as the Old Testament dragon passages show, a point which some scholars still have not properly grasped."<sup>35</sup> Then he argues tautologically that "The divine conflict with the dragon and the sea underwent a process of demythologization and the control of the waters simply became regarded as a job of work. This is found especially in Gen 1. . . (Gen 1's) traditions are ultimately Canaanite."<sup>36</sup> The term *tāhôm* in Gen 1:2 is hence understood as a depersonification of the original mythological divine name in Canaanite, though he holds that "both *tāhôm* and Tiamat are derived from a common Semitic root."<sup>37</sup>

However, is there any reason to think that a term used as a common noun is a depersonification of a divine name when both can go back to their original common noun? In our case, what is the etymology of the Hebrew term *tāhôm*? Is there any direct connection between etymological and mythological similarity?

### C. ETYMOLOGY OF \*THM

Morphologically the Hebrew *tāhôm* corresponds to the Ugaritic *thm* rather than to the Akkadian divine name <sup>d</sup>Tiamat with a feminine ending /-at/.

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<sup>33</sup>For a useful summary and discussion on the narrative continuity of the Baal Cycle (KTU 1.1–1.6), see Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," 324–339. Note also his comment: "The comparative method has perhaps been abused in the case of the Baal cycle, in attempts to fill in the cycle's lacunae according to ideas about what "should" be in the cycle. An early example of this procedure was to fill the gaps with an account of creation." (p. 328)

<sup>34</sup>J. C. L. Gibson, "The Theology of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle," *Or* 53 (1984), 211.

<sup>35</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 50f. & n. 141. However, what Lambert and Jacobsen pointed out is not the Canaanite background of the term *tāhôm*, but the "Canaanite" origin of the storm-sea conflict motif (see above pp. 47f.).

<sup>36</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 61.

<sup>37</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 50.

However, this fact does not support the claim that the Hebrew *təhôm* is specifically Canaanite. Ugaritic also has a feminine form, *thmt*, which is spelled syllabically as *ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub>*/tahāmatu/<sup>38</sup> (*Ug* V 137:III:34") for the name of an ocean-goddess. This reading suggests that the Ugaritic term *thm* was probably read as /tahāmu/.

Akkadian *tīāmtum* or *tām<sub>4</sub>tum*, Arabic *tihāmat* and Eblaite *ti-'ā-ma-tum* /*tihām(a)tum*/<sup>39</sup> together with the above cited forms in Ugaritic and Hebrew indicate that all these forms are the reflections of a common Semitic term \**tihām-*. Thus Hebrew *təhôm* is simply a reflection of the common Semitic term \**tihām*.<sup>40</sup> And, as far as the first vowel is concerned, the Hebrew form *təhôm* reflects an older stage of development from the Proto-Semitic \**tihām-* than the Ugaritic form *thm* /*tahāmu*/ whose first vowel /a/ is the result of a vowel harmony: \**tihām-* > \**tahāmu*.

This etymological investigation shows that the formal similarities are no proof of direct or indirect "borrowing." In other words, the fact that the Hebrew term *təhôm* is related etymologically to the Akkadian divine name Tiamat and the Ugaritic Tahāmu does not support the theory that the Hebrew term is a depersonification of an original divine name. The same can be said for the Hebrew term *šemeš*, "sun", which is related etymologically to the Akkadian divine name *Šamaš*<sup>41</sup> and the Ugaritic divine name *Špš* /*Šapšu*/. Just as the Akkadian common noun *šamšu* is not a depersonification of DN *Šamaš*, so Hebrew *šemeš* is not a depersonification of an

<sup>38</sup>A. F. Rainey reads the last sign as *tu<sub>4</sub>* instead of *tum* (*Ug*. V, 246) and explains that "the vocalization *ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub>* for *thmt* is due to vowel harmony." Cf. A. F. Rainey, "A New Grammar of Ugaritic," *Or* 56 (1987), 393; also J. Huehnergard, "Northwest Semitic Vocabulary in Akkadian Texts," *JAOS* 107 (1987), 725; *UVST*, 184f., 247 & 271. Note that in this multilingual vocabulary text, *Ug*. V:137, an Akkadian sign *a* <a> stands for either /a/ or /a/ or /ha/: e.g. *ma-a-du-ma* /ma'aduma/ (137:II:36'), *ba-a-lu* /ba'alu/ (137:IVb:17?'), *tu-a-bi-ū* /tuhabihu/ < /tūhwu wa bīhwu/ (137:II:23') (see above p. 24), but not for /ā/. Since its alphabetic spelling is most likely *thmt*, the sign *a* in *ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub>* should be read as /ha/. Hence, Nougayrol's reading *tāmatum* (*Ug*. V, 58) is not correct.

<sup>39</sup>The sign 'ā (É) is used for etymological /ha/ or /ha/ in the Eblaite syllabary. Cf. M. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 1," *ZA* 72 (1982), 219f.; J. Krecher, "Sumerische und nichtsumerische Schicht in der Schriftkultur von Ebla," in *BaE*, 157. Thus, I. J. Gelb's view on the Old Akkadian sign 'ā (É) is supported by the Eblaite evidence; cf. I. J. Gelb, *Old Akkadian Writing and Grammar* (MAD 2; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 34. See also E. Sollberger, *Administrative Texts Chiefly Concerning Textiles* (L. 2752) (ARET 8; 1986), 3.

<sup>40</sup>See also Heidel, *BG<sup>2</sup>*, 100; Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, 80, n. 5.

<sup>41</sup>For the early attestation of this DN, see J. J. M. Roberts, *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon: A Study of the Semitic Deities Attested in Mesopotamia before Ur III* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 51f.

original divine name.<sup>42</sup>

## D. USES OF \*THM

### 1. *Non-personified use*

#### a. *Ugaritic*

The Ugaritic counterpart of the Hebrew *təhôm* appears both with a feminine ending *-t* and without it. The shorter form *thm* appears twice in the alphabetic texts. Though it appears once as a proper noun, constituting a part of a compound divine name "Heaven-and-Ocean" *šmm-w-thm* (KTU 1.100 [607]:1), it also appears as a common noun, without any personification, in parallel with another common noun *ym* "sea"<sup>43</sup> in 1.23 [52]:30:

} <i>gp . ym</i>	..... the shore of the sea
<i>wysgd . gp . thm</i>	And roams the shore of the ocean.

The longer form with a feminine singular ending *-t* can be recognized in the divine name *ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub>* (= *thmt*), which corresponds to the Sumerian ANTU in a multilingual vocabulary list (Ug V 137:III:34"), as well as in the dual form *thmtm* /*tahāmat-āmi*/<sup>44</sup>

The plural form *thmt* /*tahāmātu*/ appears in 1.3 [‘nt]:III:25 [22] (cf. [130]:19, 1.17 [2Aqht]:VI:12), where the common nouns, "heavens",

<sup>42</sup>See below p. 60 on the common noun *ym* "sea" in Ugaritic.

<sup>43</sup>The term \*yamm- is a typically North West Semitic term for "sea" and corresponds to the Akkadian *tāmtum*, *tāmtum*. The term *yamu* in an Akkadian plant list, the Uruanna text, is a West Semitic word; cf. *CAD*, I/J (1960), 322. In Amarna Akkadian, the sea is always referred to in forms of *ayabba* (EA 74:20, 89:47, 105:13, 114:19, 151:42, 288:33, 340:6), never spelt as *ta-am-tu* (except in Adapa text [356:50 & 51] which is written in a standard Akkadian). I owe this information to Dr. R. S. Hess. See also *CAD*, A/1 (1964), 221 (also in Mari & SB literary texts); W. F. Albright & W. L. Moran, "Rib-Adda of Byblos and the Affairs of Tyre (EA 89)," *JCS* 4 (1950), 167; cf. J. A. Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln: mit Einleitung und Erläuterungen*. II (Aalen: Otto Zeller, 1915), 1528 on *tāmtu*. It might be postulated that the Sumerian loan word *ayabba* (<= a-ab-ba) in West Semitic experienced the following phonological change: a-ab-ba => *ayabba* > (a)yabba > (a)yamba > yamm- > *yām*. For EA 89, see now W. L. Moran, *Les Lettres d'El-Amarna: Correspondance diplomatique du pharaon* (LAPO 13; Paris: Cerf, 1987), 277–278.

<sup>44</sup>sg. stem + dual ending, cf. Huehnergard, *UVST*, 185.

"earth", "oceans" and "stars", are all used metaphorically.<sup>45</sup> Also in 1.92 [2001]:5: *wtglt thmt* "she roils<sup>46</sup> the oceans", the plural form *thmt* has an ordinary sense without any personification.

In 1.4 [51]:IV:22, 1.6:I:34 [49:I:6], 1.17 [2Aqht]:VI:48, 1.3 ['nt]:V:7 [15], 1.2:III [129]:4 (cf. 1.5 [67]:VI:1): e.g.

<i>idk . l ttn . pnm</i>	Then she surely sets face
<i>'m . il . mbk . nhrm</i>	Toward El at the sources of the two rivers
<i>qrb . apq . thmtm</i>	In the midst of the streams of the two oceans.
	(1.4 [51]:IV:20–22)

and also in 1.100 [607]:3:

<i>'m . <sup>3</sup>il . mbk . nhrm</i>	Toward El at the sources of the two rivers
<i>b'dt . thmtm</i>	In the assembly of the two oceans.
	(cf. Gordon, <i>UTS</i> , 554)

the term *thmtm* /tahāmatāmi/ is a dual form and these dual forms as well as the singular *thm* (1.23 [52]:30) refer to the waters near El's abode. In these mythological contexts, the term *thm(t)* is a common noun "ocean(-waters)" without any personification. Also in KTU 1.19 [1Aqht]:I:45, the term *thmtm* is a dual in form.<sup>47</sup> Here too it is used without personification.

Thus, Ugaritic *thm(t)* normally appears as a common noun in mythological texts. There is no reason why we should think that these non-personified uses of Ugaritic *thm(t)* are the result of *depersonalization* of an original proper noun. If we do not think that other terms such as *ym*, *arṣ* and *šmm* are depersonifications of the original divine entities,<sup>48</sup> we should not treat the term *thm* any differently.

<sup>45</sup>See below p. 69 for this text.

<sup>46</sup>See below pp. 132ff. for a detailed discussion of this term. Note the expression, "(the gods) confused Tiamat" (*CAD*, E [1958], 379) in Ee I 22.

<sup>47</sup>See below p. 134.

<sup>48</sup>In Ugaritic, *ym* is often "personified" and refers to a divine entity, the sea-god Yam. However, the term is used as a common noun without any divine personification even in mythological contexts, as in the cases of *ym* (/ *thm* ) in 1.23 [52]:30, an expression "fish from the sea" *dg bym* (1.23 [52]:62–63) and a divine epithet *rbt arṣ ym* "Lady 'Aṣirat of the sea" (1.4 [51]:I:13–14 [14–15], 21 [22], III:25, 28–29,34; 1.6:I:44, 45, 47, 53 [49:I:16, 17, 19, 25]). Cf. Albright's interpretation of *arṣ ym* as "She Who Treads on the (dragon) Sea": W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (London: Athlone Press, 1968), 166. However, cf. the phrase *arṣ šmm* "'Aṣirat of the Tyrians" (*UT* 19.428).

## b. Akkadian

The Akkadian *tiāmtum*, *tāmtum* also appears in non-mythological texts long pre-dating Enuma elish with an ordinary meaning "sea/ocean" from the earliest times. For example, in an Old Akkadian text the term *tiāmtim* is used in an ordinary sense:

Lagaš<sup>ki</sup> *ātima tiāmtim in 'ar* (SAG.GIŠ.RA)  
*kakkī* (<sup>GIŠ</sup> TUKUL-gi)-su in *tiāmtim imass*<sup>49</sup>  
 he vanquished Lagaš as far as the sea.  
 He washed his weapons in the sea.

In an Old Babylonian letter which reports "the sea,<sup>50</sup> the river and the canal are low" (*tāmtum nārum u ħīritum maṭā*), the term *tāmtum* appears as a common noun.<sup>51</sup> In the Old Babylonian Flood Story, Atra-Ḫašis epic I:15, the expression "the bar of the sea" (*naḫbalu tiāmtim*) appears. It is repeated six times (AH x rev. i:[6], 10, ii:4, 11, 18, 34.) in the Neo-Babylonian version, where another phrase "the guards of the sea" (*maššāru tāmti*) (AH x rev. ii:24, 40) appears also without any personification of *tiāmtim*, *tāmti* "ocean." Also in Atra-Ḫašis epic III:iv:6, *tiāmta* "sea" is in parallel with *nāram* "river", both terms with ordinary meanings.<sup>52</sup>

Even in a certain mythological context which mentions the creation of the cosmos the term *tāmtum* appears without personification. For example, in the bilingual version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk" noted above.

## c. Eblaite

In Eblaite, a language related to Old Akkadian, *ti-’ā-ma-tum* appears also

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<sup>49</sup>Sargon b 1, Vs. col. 2: 49–55 & b 6, Vs. col. 8: 32–38 in H. Hirsch, "Die Inschriften Sargons," *AfO* 20 (1963), 35 & 42; also E. Sollberger & J.-R. Kupper, *Inscriptions Royales Sumériennes et Akkadiennes* (LAP 3; Paris: Cerf, 1971), 97. This practice of "washing of weapons in the sea" continued till the Neo-Assyrian period; cf. *CAD*, K (1971), 52. See also A. Malamat, "Campaigns to the Mediterranean by Iahdunlim and Other Early Mesopotamian Rulers," *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on his Seventy-fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965* (AS 16; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 365–373, esp. 365–367 (on 'Sargon of Akkad').

<sup>50</sup>Or "lake", cf. *CAD*, H, 198.

<sup>51</sup>Also *AHW*, 1353–54 (1979) lists a number of non-mythological and non-personified usages of this term in Akkadian texts.

<sup>52</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 96.



with the ordinary meaning, "sea, ocean": e.g. *a-bar-rî-iš ti-'à-ma-dím* (ARET 5, 6:VII:1-2 & 3) / 'abāriš tihām(a)tim/ "jenseits des Meeres; Übersee."<sup>53</sup> Also it is clear from its context that *ti-'à-ma-tum* (ARET 5, 6:X:4) means the ordinary "sea."<sup>54</sup> In the Sumerian–Eblaite bilingual vocabulary text (MEE 4, 79:r.III:8'–9'), the Sumerian ab-a is identified with *ti-'à-ma-tum /tihām(a)tum/ "sea."*<sup>55</sup>

#### d. Hebrew

Thus, Ugaritic *thm(t)*, Akkadian *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum* and Eblaite *ti-'à-ma-tum* all appear as a common noun, "sea" or "ocean", from their earliest attestation. If all these cognate terms can mean "sea" or "ocean" in the ordinary sense, there is no reason to think that the proto-Semitic \**thm* was not a common noun "sea/ocean." In the light of the above, the Hebrew term *tāhōm* too should be taken as normally a common noun.

### 2. Personification

This common noun \**tihām-* "ocean" is of course sometimes personified to become a divine name.

#### a. Akkadian

It is important to note that scholars have assumed that the divine name Tiamat was a *personification* of the common noun *tī'āmtu*, *tām̄tu* "sea or ocean." For example, H. Zimmern, who took the Hebrew term *tāhōm* as an

<sup>53</sup>D. O. Edzard, *Hymnen, Beschwörungen und Verwandtes* (ARET 5; 1984), 30. Note the Akkadian counterpart: *ēbir tīāmti* (VAB 4, 134, 45) cited in *AHW*, 1353.

<sup>54</sup>Another example *ti-'à-ma-du* in ARET 5, 4:I:6 may also refer to "sea" /*tihāmatum*/. Or "das Durcheinanderwimmeln" [*tihām(a)tum*] (Edzard, *Hymnen, Beschwörungen und Verwandtes*, 24f.) *ti-'à-ma-tum* (MEE 4, 12:V:10), which Pettinato, Dahood and Zurro read as /*tihāmat-um*/, should be read as /*ti'ām(a)-tum*/. See M. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 2 (Glossar)," *ZA* 73 (1983), 3; Krecher, "Sumerische und nichtsumerische Schicht," 154. Cf. G. Pettinato, "I Vocabolari Bilingui di Ebla," in *LdE*, 270; E. Zurro, "La voz y la palabra," in *El Misterio de la Palabra. Homenaje de sus alumnos al profesor D. Luis Alonso Schökel* [eds. by V. Collado & E. Zurro] (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1983), 34ff. esp. n. 84.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie . . . (Glossar)," 43; P. Fronzaroli, "The Eblaic Lexicon: Problems and Appraisal," in *SLE*, 151.

Akkadian loan word, explained that *Tiamat* was a "mythische Personifikation" of *ti'āmtu, tām̄tu* "Meer."<sup>56</sup> T. Jacobsen also notes that "In the case of Tiamat . . . her ultimate identity as a personification of the sea and its powers cannot be in doubt." Hence he explains the name Tiamat as an example of "common nouns used as proper names."<sup>57</sup> The same position is taken by *AHw*, which lists "Meer, See" as the ordinary meaning of this term.

#### b. *Ugaritic*

The same phenomenon of personification of a common noun "sea" is attested in Ugaritic as a proper noun *Yam*. Another Ugaritic term for "ocean", i.e. *thm* appears also as a divine name, once with a feminine ending *-t* and once without it. Here too, the term *thm*, which usually appears as a common noun and is once paired with *ym* in an ordinary sense, is personified as proper noun, *Thm* or *Thmt* in Ugaritic. Therefore, there is no reason why we should take the common noun *thm* as a result of depersonification of the divine name *Tahām(at)u*.

#### c. *Hebrew*

In Hebrew too, some common nouns are used metaphorically with personification in poetic texts. Sometimes they constitute a part of idioms as in the case of the term *təhôm* of the phrase *təhôm rabbāh*, which is treated almost as a definite noun without an article.

It should be noted that several common nouns are used without the definite article in Gen 1: e.g. *təhôm*, *ḥōšek*, *'ōr*, *yôm*, *laylāh*, *rāqīʾa'*, *šāmayim* (v. 8) . . . , while some appear with it — *haššāmayim*, *hā'āreš* (v. 1), *hā'āreš* (v. 2), *hammāyim* (referring to *təhôm*), *hā'ōr* & *haḥōšek* (v. 4–5), *hammāyim* (v. 6), *hārāqīʾa'* (vs. 7–8). Thus, the lack of the definite article with *təhôm* is no proof of personification,<sup>58</sup> since this form (sg.) appears either as a part of an idiomatic expression or in the poetic texts.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup>Zimmern, *AFw*, 44.

<sup>57</sup>Jacobsen, "The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat," 105.

<sup>58</sup>J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*. 2nd edition (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930), 17: "The invariable absence of the article (except with pl. in Ps 106:9, Isa 63:13) proves that it is a proper name."

<sup>59</sup>See also Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres*, 115; Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, 81, n. 5.

The very existence of its plural form, *təhômôt* (or *təhômôt*, *təhômôt*), and its articular usage in Is. 63:13 and Ps. 106:9 suggest that the term is a common noun in Hebrew as in Ugaritic, Akkadian and Eblaite.

Finally, the term *təhôm* is not always a feminine noun as some<sup>60</sup> assume in the light of Akkadian Tiamat. In fact, it appears as a masculine noun with personification in Hab 3:10, a chapter where many scholars allege the existence of the so-called chaos motif.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, the lack of the definite article for *təhôm* in Gen 1:2 has nothing to do with personification or depersonification of the original term.

#### E. \*tihām- AND \*yamm-

While the Common Semitic term \*tihām- appears in West Semitic languages as Ugaritic *thm(t)* and Hebrew *təhôm(ôt)*, it is the term *ym* or *yām* that regularly denotes the sea in these languages. And \*yamm- is typically a Northwest Semitic term (e.g. Ugaritic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic),<sup>62</sup> which is borrowed into Akkadian only as in the case of *kusa-yāmi* (AHw, 514) and into Egyptian as *ym*.<sup>63</sup>

#### 1. Hebrew *təhôm(ôt)* and *yām*

In Hebrew, *təhôm(ôt)* never appears as the term for the third element of the "heaven/earth/sea" structure of the universe. In this tripartite framework, expressed in Ex 20:11, Ps 146:6, Hag 2:6, Ps 96:11, Ps 69:35, Ps 135:6 (cf. Ex 20:4, Dt 5:8), it is *yām* "sea" that constitutes the third part. Also it should be noted that in the passages where the creatures in three divisions are mentioned, (1) "sea"-"heaven"-"earth" (or "field") in Gen

<sup>60</sup>E.g. Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos*, 39.

<sup>61</sup>For a detailed discussion of the relationship between Ugaritic poetry and Hab 3, see my forthcoming article, "Ugaritic Poetry and Habakkuk 3," *TB* 40 (1989).

<sup>62</sup>W. G. Lambert notes that "Yam 'Sea', Baal's enemy at Ras Shamra, does not so far appear in Eblaite documents under that name," cf. "Old Testament Mythology in its Ancient Near Eastern Context," *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986* (SVT 40; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), 132.

<sup>63</sup>A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*. Second edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1927, 1950), 422; WAS, I, 78.

1:26,28, Ezek 38:20; (2) "earth" (or "field")—"heaven"—"sea" in Gen 9:2, Hos 4:3, (Zeph 1:3), Ps 8:8–9, i.e. "birds", "animals" and "fish", the term for "sea" is always *yām*, never *tāhôm(ôt)*.

These characteristics of *yām* correspond to those of the Akkadian *apsû*, which constitutes the third part of the "three-decker universe", i.e. heaven—earth—*Apsû* represented by Anu, Enlil and Ea (Enki) in the Atra-Ḫašis epic (I i 7–18).<sup>64</sup>

At the same time, *yām* is used for the "sea" when it is contrasted with the "land" (*'eres*) in Gen 1:10, etc. In this regard, the Hebrew *yām* corresponds to Akkadian *tiāntum*, *tāntum* "sea" as contrasted with *šadû* "land."<sup>65</sup> Thus, *yām* corresponds to *tiāntu* as well as to *apsû* in the Akkadian language and means "sea" in a general sense.

On the other hand, in the relationship with the term *'eres* "earth", the Hebrew *tāhôm(ôt)* is hyponymous (Ps 71:20, 148:7, Prov 3:19–20, Gen 1:2) and hence what *tāhôm(ôt)* refers to is included in what *'eres* refers to.<sup>66</sup> The Hebrew *tāhôm(ôt)* therefore normally refers to the subterranean water, corresponding to *Apsû* of the Babylonian three earths, upper, middle, and lower, i.e. "abode of men—*Apsû*—underworld",<sup>67</sup> though it can also refer to the "flood" caused by an overflow of the underground water (cf. *'ed* in Gen 2:6) as well as to a huge mass of waters like *tāhôm* in Gen 1:2.

## 2. Ugaritic *thm(t)* and *ym*

In Ugaritic too, the terms *thm* and *thmt* seem to have more specific meanings than *ym*, for, when paired with other terms, they always appear as the second element of word pairs. For example, *thm* appears in the word pair *ym – thm* (1.23 [52]:30) which denotes the waters, "sea" // "*thm*- water", near the abode of the god El. The same watery abode of El is described again by *nhrm – thmtm* (1.4 [51]:IV:22, 1.6:I:34 [49:I:6], 1.17 [2Aqht]:

<sup>64</sup>Cf. Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 166; W. G. Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," in *Ancient Cosmologies* [eds. C. Blacker & M. Loewe] (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1975), 58. Note that the Akkadian expression, "the fish of the *Apsû*" (*nūnē apsû*) [*CAD*, A/2 (1968), 194f.] refers to the fish in lakes & rivers rather than the fish of the sea.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. *AHw*, 1353f.

<sup>66</sup>See below, Ch 4, for a detailed discussion.

<sup>67</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 166; Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," 59; Livingstone, *MMEW*, 87.

VI:48, 1.3 [‘nt]:V:7 [15], 1.2:III [129]:4; 1.100 [607]:3): "(two) rivers" // "two *thmt*-waters." Finally, the term *thmt* signifies a watery area *on* or *in* the earth in *ars̄ – thmt* ( 1.3 [‘nt]:III:25 [22]), in which *thmt* is in hyponymous relation to *ars̄*.<sup>68</sup>

On the other hand, Ugaritic *ym* seems to have a meaning similar to the Hebrew *yām* "sea" in a general sense. Its meaning seems to correspond to Sumerian *a-ab-ba*, which can stand for "lake" as well as for "sea",<sup>69</sup> since its divine personification, Yam, is identified with <sup>4</sup>A.AB.BA in the Akkadian pantheon list (RS 20.24) from Ugarit. This also suggests that Ugaritic *ym* has a much wider semantic field than *thm(t)*.

### 3. Akkadian *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum*

In *Enuma elish* the goddess Tiamat represents "sea" in contrast to the subterranean water god Apsû and these two waters, male and female, are described as being "intermingled as one" (line 5).<sup>70</sup> In the *Atra-Ḫasis* epic, I 15, S v 1, x i 6, etc., Enki (Ea) the god of sweet-water Apsû is mentioned as having "the bolt, the bar of the sea" (*šigaru naḫbalu tī'āmtim*).<sup>71</sup> This "bolt" may have kept Tiam(a)t(um) out, i.e. to stop its waters mixing with the waters of Apsu, as they did at the beginning of *Enuma elish*.<sup>72</sup> Thus, in the cosmological traditions of Mesopotamia, there seems to have existed a distinction between the domain or area of the "sea" and that of the subterranean ocean.

However, the use of terms for these waters was not always as precise as

<sup>68</sup>See below pp. 68f.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. *AHW*, 1353.

<sup>70</sup>For the most recent treatment of the initial section of *Enuma elish*, see H. L. J. Vanstiphout, "Enūma eliš, tablet i:3," *NABU* (1987/4), 52–53. He suggests that "in l. 5 the waters are to be taken as subject of the verb *iḫīqū* . . . 'to be intermixed'." (p. 53) It should be noted here that the verb does not even indirectly suggest the initial state of the primordial oceans as "chaotic." According to Lambert (oral communication), this "intermingling" of these two waters was orderly in itself, i.e. "as one" (*ištēniš*). See pp. 81f. on Ee I 1ff.

<sup>71</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 166.

<sup>72</sup>Jacobsen thinks that Enki's "connections with the salt water, the sea (a-abba[k]), are at best peripheral, the sea playing a very small role in the life of Sumerians." Cf. T. Jacobsen, "Sumerian Mythology: A Review Article," *JNES* 5 (1946), 145; S. N. Kramer, "(Review of) H. and H. A. Frankfort, John A. Wilson, Thorkild Jacobsen, William A. Irwin. The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1946, VI, 401pp.," *JCS* 2 (1948), 43, n. 6 & 48, n. 16.

modern people expect; for example, the term *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum* could refer to both salt- and sweet-waters, i.e. "sea" and "lake", in Akkadian<sup>73</sup> and in southern Babylonia river water is known to be salty. In Sumerian, it seems, there is no evidence for distinguishing the sweet and the bitter sea. For example, at Ebla<sup>74</sup> the Sumerian a-ab is identified once with *tihām(a)tum* "sea" and once with *bū-la-tum* (/bu'ratum/ "well, cistern") in Eblaite.<sup>75</sup> In other words, in Sumerian "the sea [=a.ab.ba] was conceived as a single body of water."<sup>76</sup> It may be that the Mesopotamian Tiamat came to be understood as the representative of only the salt-water sea, particularly as the enemy of the storm-god Marduk in Enuma elish in keeping with the "earlier" Canaanite or "northern" tradition of conflict between the storm and the sea (*ym*).<sup>77</sup>

As for the earlier meaning of Akkadian *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum*, Albright suggested that it was "'the subterranean fresh-water sea', Sumerian ab-zu (Acc. *apsū*)", "as shown by Hebrew and Ugaritic."<sup>78</sup> However, it is more reasonable to think that the Ugaritic *thm(t)* and the Hebrew *təhōm(ōt)* experienced a narrowing down of the semantic field of the proto-Semitic term \**tihām-*, whose meanings and usages are reflected in Eblaite *tihām(a)tum* and Akkadian *tīāmtum* and its Sumerian counterpart ab-a or a-ab-ba, "sea, ocean", which refers both to the salt-water sea and to the

<sup>73</sup>AHw, 1353: "Meer, See." Note that both Akkadian *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum* and Sumerian a-ab-ba could be used for "lake" as well as for "sea." See Jacobsen, "Sumerian Mythology: A Review Article," 145, n. 28; Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, 81, n. 102.

<sup>74</sup>VE 1343' = MEE 4, 79:r.III:8'-9'.

<sup>75</sup>Note that Akk. *būrtu* can refer to the "source" of a river as well as to "well, cistern"; cf. CAD, B (1965), 335-338, esp. 338. However, Akk. *būrtu* normally corresponds to Sum. PU, never to A.AB.BA. Cf. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 2 (Glossar)," 43; Fronzaroli, "The Eblaic Lexicon: Problems and Appraisal," 148.

<sup>76</sup>M. H. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* (SVT 2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), 63; Kramer, "(Review of) H. and H. A. Frankfort . . . The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man . . . , 1946 . . . ," 43, n. 6. Cf. Jacobsen, "Sumerian Mythology: A Review Article," 139f.

<sup>77</sup>However, McCarter's following comment is not convincing: "In contrast to the Mesopotamian situation, the distinction between salt and sweet waters is not important in Northwest Semitic cosmologies. Hence, for example, 'sea' and 'river' may comprise a poetic pair" (P. K. McCarter, "The River Ordeal in Israelite Literature," *HTR* 66 [1973], 405, n. 6). For one thing, even in Mesopotamia the distinction between the salt-water and the sweet-water is not always made clear lexically. Moreover, *tām̄tu* and *apsū* appear as a word pair also in Akk. literary texts. For example, in W. G. Lambert, *BWL*, 136f. l.172 and 128f. ll. 37-38. Cf. J. C. de Moor & P. van der Lugt, "The Spectre of Pan-Ugaritism," *BO* 31 (1974), 15.

<sup>78</sup>Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, 81, n. 102; also W. F. Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology and Philology," *JBL* 43 (1924), 369.

sweet-water ocean. In other words, the Akkadian *tīāmtum*, *tām̄tum* probably has a much wider semantic field than its West Semitic cognate terms, Hebrew *təḥôm*(*ôt*) and Ugaritic *thm*(*t*), which became hyponymous to *'eres* /*ars*, as noted above, semantically corresponding closer to *apsû* than to *tīāmtum* though morphologically corresponding to the latter.

*Excursus: A "Canaanite" dragon myth in Gen 1:2?*

Is there a Canaanite dragon myth in the background of Gen 1:2 as Day assumes?

[1] *təḥôm* — not "Canaanite"

According to Day, "both *təḥôm* and Tiamat are derived from a common Semitic root"<sup>79</sup> and the fact that Ugaritic *thm* (cf. 1.100:1) is "comparable" to Hebrew *təḥôm* supports "the view that the OT term is Canaanite."<sup>80</sup> However, if the Hebrew term is common Semitic, there is no reason why the term should be taken particularly as "Canaanite."

It should be also noted that Hebrew *təḥôm* is a morphologically older form<sup>81</sup> than the assumed Ugaritic form, \**tahāmu*. If the Hebrew term were a loan word from this "Canaanite" divine name and had been depersonified subsequently, one would expect the Hebrew term to be something like \**tāhôm*. It may be possible to postulate that a form like *təḥôm* existed in Southern Canaanite and that the ancient Hebrew borrowed it from this "Southern" Canaanite language. However, there is no evidence that such a form was a divine name. Therefore it is very unlikely that Hebrew *təḥôm* is a borrowing from a Canaanite divine name.

[2] *təḥôm* — not *Depersonification*

Day explains that *təḥôm* in Gen 1:2 is "not a divine personality hostile to God" and it is used "to denote the impersonal watery mass which covered

<sup>79</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 50.

<sup>80</sup>Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 7.

<sup>81</sup>For other words which follow the sound change, \**qitāl* > *qatōl*, see W. R. Garr, "Pretonic Vowels in Hebrew," *VT* 27 (1987), 140.

the world before God brought about the created order." However, he holds that the term did denote "a mythical personality" a long time ago and suggests that the term *təhôm* is a depersonification of the original Canaanite divine name.

However, as noted above, since the Hebrew term *təhôm* is most probably a common noun in origin, like the Ugaritic, Akkadian and Eblaite terms, there is no strong reason why we should take *təhôm* as a depersonification of the original divine name.

[3] *The Canaanite Sea-dragon*<sup>82</sup> *is Yam, not Tahām*

In the attested Ugaritic texts, divine personification of the term *thm(t)* "ocean" appears only twice: once in an incantation text, the "Serpent Charm", as a compound divine name "Heaven-and-Ocean" *šmm-w-thm* (1.100 [607]:1) and once in a multilingual vocabulary list as *Tahāmatu* (= *thmt*) (Ug. V 137:III:34"), the female counterpart of the god "Heaven" *Šamūma* (= *šmm*). Not only is the frequency of the name low, but the types of literature in which the name appears is limited. In particular, the divine name *Tahām* does not appear at all in the major myth, the Baal Cycle, or in other mythological texts. Nor is the term *šmm* ever found personified in Ugaritic myths.

It is especially noteworthy that the goddess<sup>83</sup> *Thm(t)* never appears in the conflict scenes, where it is Yam/Nahar that is the sea-dragon, the antagonist of Baal. There is no evidence in the available Ugaritic mythology that *Thm(t)* was a helper of Yam or that the storm-god Baal ever fought with the ocean-goddess *Thm(t)*. The term does not appear even as a common noun in the context where the enemies of Baal and Anat are listed (KTU 1.3 [‘nt]:III:38ff. [35ff.], 1.5 [67]:I:1ff.). Therefore it is almost

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<sup>82</sup>Ugaritic scholars are unsettled as to whether the sea god Yam and the serpent/dragon should be identified. On an iconographical basis, Williams-Forte argues for the god Mot, rather than Yam, as a serpent in the Ugaritic mythology; cf. E. Williams-Forte, "The Snake and the Tree in the Iconography and Texts of Syria during the Bronze Age," in *Ancient Seals and the Bible* [eds. L. Gorelick & E. Williams-Forte] (Malibu: Undena, 1983), 18–43. However, note the critical remarks by W. G. Lambert, "Trees, Snakes and Gods in Ancient Syria and Anatolia," *BSOAS* 48 (1985), 435–451; D. Collon, "(A Review of) L. Gorelick & E. Williams-Forte (eds.), *Ancient Seals and the Bible*. Malibu, Undena, 1983 (= The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies, Monographic Journals of the Near East: Occasional Papers on the Near East Vol. 2/1.)," *AJO* 33 (1986), 99f.

<sup>83</sup>The short form *thm*, without a feminine ending *-t*, in the compound name *šmm-w-thm* is probably feminine. For a divine couple forming a compound name, cf. *ltpn. w qdš* (1.16:I [125]:11, 21–22).



certain that even if there should be an undiscovered myth<sup>84</sup> in which a "creator" god had to fight a Canaanite sea-dragon, the dragon was not Tahām.

[4] *Baal is not a creator god*

Though Baal is the most active deity in the Ugaritic mythology, he is not a creator-god. There is "no suggestion in the Baal Cycle that, for instance, like Marduk . . . he constructed the firmament out of the defeated monster's carcass."<sup>85</sup> As de Moor notes, "Baal is able to repair (*bny*) the broken wings of birds in a miraculous way (1.19:III:12ff. [1Aqht:118ff]), but except for the lightning (1.3:III:26, par.) he does not create anything new."<sup>86</sup> Baal is thus simply a "preserver and savior" of the cosmos.<sup>87</sup>

In the Ugaritic mythology it is the god El who is a creator god.<sup>88</sup> El is the creator of mankind; he is called "Father of mankind" (*ab adm*). He is a progenitor of various gods and goddesses. For example, in 1.23 [52]:30ff. El appears as the father of a divine pair, Šhr and Šlm, as well as of the "Good Gods" (*ilm n'mm*).<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, if Šnm is a divine name, El's title *ab šnm* "Father of Šnm" suggests that he is also the father of another god.

Another epithet of El, *bny bnwt* "creator of creatures" (KTU 1.6 [49]:III:5, 11; 1.4 [51]:II:11, III:32; 1.17 [2Aqht]:I:24 [25])<sup>90</sup> also suggests that El is the creator-god. De Moor notes similar epithets in Akkadian, *bānu nabnīt* and *bān binūtu*, both meaning "creator of creatures", of the Babylonian god Ea,<sup>91</sup> who is also described as having created "land and

<sup>84</sup>Canaanite myths are also attested outside of Ugaritic literature, e.g. an Egyptian version of "Astarte and the Tribute of the Sea" (translated by J. A. Wilson, in *ANET*, 17f.) and a story of El-kunirsha in a Hittite version, "El, Ashertu and the Storm-god" (translated by A. Goetze in *ANET*, 1969<sup>3</sup>, 519); see also H. A. Hoffner, Jr., "The Elkunirsa Myth Reconsidered," *RHA* 23 (1965), 5-16.

<sup>85</sup>J. C. L. Gibson, "The Theology of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle," *Or* 53 (1984), 212, n. 16.

<sup>86</sup>De Moor, "El, the creator," 186.

<sup>87</sup>Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," 320.

<sup>88</sup>See Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," 320, n. 43 for bibliography.

<sup>89</sup>Note that the text carefully distinguishes the birth of Šhr and Šlm from that of *ilm n'mm*. Cf. D. T. Tsumura, *Ugaritic Drama of the Good Gods* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1973), 22 & 56.

<sup>90</sup>Gordon, *UT* 19.483.

<sup>91</sup>De Moor, "El, the creator," 182f. See below p. 146.

sea" in an Akkadian ritual text (Racc. 46, 30).<sup>92</sup> Therefore, as de Moor says, no other Ugaritic god besides El, the head of the pantheon,<sup>93</sup> qualifies for the role of creator of the cosmos.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, "in Ugaritic mythology creation and the subduing of the monsters of chaos are functions divided among different gods, notably El and Baal."<sup>95</sup> It should be also noted that outside of Ugaritic literature El is considered as a Canaanite creator god: e.g. El-kunirsha (= El, *qn 'rš* "creator of the earth").<sup>96</sup>

[5] *Yām does not appear in Gen 1:2*

Finally, if the Genesis account were the demythologization of a Canaanite dragon myth, we would expect in the initial portion of the account, the term *yām* "sea", the counterpart of the Ugaritic sea-god Yam who corresponds to the god <sup>d</sup>A.AB.BA (= *Ti'āmat* or *Ayabbu*?<sup>97</sup>) in the official pantheon list from ancient Ugarit.<sup>98</sup> However, the term *yām* does not appear in Gen 1 until v. 10 where its plural form *yammîm* appears as the antithesis of the "land" (*'eres*).

In the light of the above discussions, it would be difficult to assume that there existed in the background of Gen 1:2 an earlier Canaanite dragon myth such as a myth in which a creator-god won victory over the chaos-dragon, e.g. Yam, Nahar, "dragon" and "serpent." There is no evidence that the term *təhôm* in Gen 1:2 is a depersonification of an original Canaanite deity as Day assumes. This Hebrew term *təhôm* is simply a reflection of the Common Semitic term \**tihām-* "ocean" and there is no relation between the Genesis account and the so-called *Chaoskampf* mythology.

<sup>92</sup>AHw, 1353.

<sup>93</sup>However, the creator god need not necessarily be head of the pantheon. Enki/Ea was never that. On similarity between El and Ea, see below pp. 146f.

<sup>94</sup>De Moor, "El, the creator," 186.

<sup>95</sup>Korpel-de Moor, "A Review of J. Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 1985," 244.

<sup>96</sup>KAI, II (1968), 42f. Cf. H. Otten, "Ein kanaanäischer Mythos aus Boğazköy," *MIO* 1 (1953), 125–150; H. A. Hoffner, Jr., "The Elkunirsa Myth Reconsidered," *RHA* 23 (1965), 5–16. See also P. D. Miller, Jr., "El, the Creator of Earth," *BASOR* 239 (1980), 43–46, esp. 43f.

<sup>97</sup>See above, note 43, on *ayabba* "sea" in Amarna Akk.

<sup>98</sup>RS 20.24:29 // KTU 1.47 [UT 17]. Cf. *Ug V* (1968), 58.

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## Chapter 4

### THE EARTH-WATERS RELATIONSHIP IN GEN 1

In the previous chapters the etymology and meaning of the terms such as *tôhû wâbôhû* and *tâhôm* were discussed in order to clarify the initial states of the earth and the waters described in Gen 1:2. However, the semantic investigation of these terms is not completed until the "meaning relationship" between the term *'ereš* and the term *tâhôm* in the present context is further elucidated.

In the following sections,<sup>1</sup> we will first discuss some theoretical grounds for investigating the relationship between the meanings of these two terms. Then we will examine the nature of relationship between the referents of these terms, noting other biblical examples, in order to rightly understand the relationship between the "bare" (*tôhû wâbôhû*) earth and the *thm*-waters in Gen 1:2.

#### A. A "HYPONYMOUS" WORD PAIR: 'RŠ – THM(T)

For semantic discussion of any word pair, it is not enough to analyse etymologically the meaning of each word on its own. The meaning relation of such paired words should be investigated thoroughly and placed adequately in their context.

Traditionally, the meaning relation of paired words has been treated in terms either of synonymy or of antonymy. However, for some word pairs it might be profitable to take note of the meaning relation, "hyponymy," which is sometimes explained as "inclusion,"<sup>2</sup> i.e. what the term "A" refers

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<sup>1</sup>The original version of this chapter was published as "A 'hyponymous' word pair: 'rš and *thm(t)*, in Hebrew and Ugaritic," *Bib* 69 (1988), 258–269.

<sup>2</sup>C. R. Taber, "Semantics" in *IDB. Supplement* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 803–804 lists four types of "conceptual relationships between the sense of different forms": i)

to *includes* what the term "B" refers to. But the term "hyponymy" is preferred to "inclusion," for it is "a relation of sense which holds between lexical items" rather than a relation of "reference," i.e. "entities which are named by lexical items."<sup>3</sup> The "inclusion" thus entails "hyponymy," but "hyponymy" can be used also for a relationship between terms that have no "reference."<sup>4</sup>

Our term "hyponym" therefore means that the "sense" [A] of the more general term "A" (e.g. "fruit") completely includes the "sense" [B] of more specific term "B" (e.g. "apple"), and hence what "A" refers to includes what "B" refers to. In other words, when the referent {B} of the term "B" is a part of, or belongs to the referent {A} of the term "A," we can say that "B" is *hyponymous* to "A."<sup>5</sup> Thus, *ymn* "right hand" is hyponymous to *yd* "hand," since what the term *ymn* refers to is normally a part of what the term *yd* refers to.<sup>6</sup>

This approach can guide the interpretation of debated terms. In the case of a word pair such as the Hebrew *'ereš* – *təhôm*(*ôt*) and the Ugaritic *arš* – *thm*(*t*), it is not so easy to determine the meaning relationships, for the specific meaning of each term is not transparent in some instances and the referent of *'ereš* or *arš*, for example, varies from "earth," "land" and "ground" to "underworld" depending on context.<sup>7</sup> However, by a careful analysis of the nature of collocation or word associations within a parallelism one should be able to determine the meanings of paired terms.

For example, in the Ugaritic text, KTU 1.3 [nt] :III:24–25 [21–22]:

synonymy and similarity, ii) inclusion, iii) antonymy and iv) polar opposition.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. J. Lyons, *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 453ff.

<sup>4</sup>The same meaning relation between paired words has been noted by A Berlin, "Parallel Word Pairs: A Linguistic Explanation," *UF* 15 (1983), 11; *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1985), Chap. IV.

<sup>5</sup>This meaning relation should be also noted for parallelism. Berlin's "particularizing" parallelism and Clines' "parallelism of greater precision" are, in our terms, "hyponymous" parallelism. Cf. D. J. A. Clines, "The Parallelism of Greater Precision: Notes from Isaiah 40 for a Theory of Hebrew Poetry," in E. R. Follis (ed.), *Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 77–100, esp. 96, n. 2.

<sup>6</sup>The analysis of meaning relations in terms of "meaning inclusion" (=hyponym) and "meaning exclusion" (=antonym) would be extremely profitable for the semantic discussions of word pairs, for, set in the context of poetic parallelism, the two terms seem to acquire a closer association to each other than in an ordinary prose context.

<sup>7</sup>Note also that "earth" (*eršetü*) in Akkadian can mean both "earth" in the English sense and "underworld." In the ancient Babylonian cosmology, there are three "earths", 1) the abode of men, 2) the *Apsû* and 3) the underworld. Cf. W. G. Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," in C. Blacker & M. Loewe (eds.), *Ancient Cosmologies* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1975), 59; Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 166.

*tant*<sup>8</sup> . *šmm* . 'm . *arš*

*thmt* . 'mn . *kbkbm*

"The murmur of the heavens to the earth

Of the deeps to the stars." (Gordon, *PLMU*, 79)

there are six possible word pairs: (1) *šmm* – *arš*, (2) *šmm* – *thmt*, (3) *šmm* – *kbkbm*, (4) *arš* – *thmt*, (5) *arš* – *kbkbm* and (6) *thmt* – *kbkbm*. But only three combinations of these word pairs are possible from the context.

#### 1. (1) *šmm* – *arš* and (6) *thmt* – *kbkbm*

Grammatically the most natural analysis of the parallel structure would be as follows:

a–b–c–d

b'–c'–d'

The words *šmm* (b) and *arš* (d) as well as *thmt* (b') and *kbkbm* (d'), are connected syntagmatically to each other in terms of the preposition 'm(n) "to" (c // c'). Since *šmm* "heaven" (b) and *arš* (d) are a universally acknowledged "antonymous" pair,<sup>9</sup> the latter term should mean "earth", which refers to everything under the heaven, rather than "land" or anything else. The relationship between *thmt* (b') and *kbkbm* "stars" (d')<sup>10</sup> may

<sup>8</sup>On the recent discussions of this term, D. Pardee, "The New Canaanite Myths and Legends," *BO* 37 (1980), 277.

<sup>9</sup>Among Semitic languages, Heb. has *šamayim* – 'ereš and 'ereš – *šamayim*; Ug., *šmm* – *arš* and *arš-w-šmm* (Cf. *RSP* I, II 71 (p. 126f.), II 208 (p. 190) & II 554 (p. 356)); Akk., *šamû* – *eršetu* as well as Phoen. *šmm* – 'rš and Aram. *šmy'* – 'rq' / 'r'. Cf. Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 603. In non-Semitic languages, Sum. has AN – KI; Japanese, following Chinese, *ten* – *chi*, etc. See p. 76 on *bipartite* cosmology.

It is interesting to note that in a NA mythological explanatory text the initial state of the world described in Ee, ll. 1–2,

"When the heavens above were not (yet) named,

the earth (*ammatum*) below had not (yet) been given a name,"

(*CAD*, N<sub>1</sub> [1980], 34)

is explained as "When heaven and earth were not created" (*kī šamê eršeti lā ibbanûmi*). Cf. Livingstone, *MMEW*, 79ff. Note that the term *ammatum* seems to refer to the "earth" in general (cf. *CAD*, A<sub>2</sub> [1968], 75; *AHW*, 44), which is in contrast with the "heaven", rather than the "underworld" (cf. M. Hutter, "*ammatu*: Unterwelt in Enuma Eliš I 2," *RA* 79 [1985], 187–88.). For the translation "earth", most recently see H. L. J. Vanstiphout, "*Enûma eliš*, tablet i:3," *NABU* (1987/4), 53. R. Labat also translates the term as "la Terre" in R. Labat, et al, *Les religions du Proche-Orient asiatique* (Fayard/Denoël, 1970), 38.

<sup>10</sup>Note a similar pair, *təhômôt* "oceans" // *šəḥāqîm* "clouds", in Prov 3:20.

also be taken as contrastive like pair (1) from this parallelistic structure, though *thmt* and *kbkbm* are not a "parallel" word pair in this context. Both pairs, (1) and (6), are thus "antonymous" (or "exclusive") and the two elements of these pairs refer to two opposite directions, i.e. "heaven" <—> "earth" and "oceans" <—> "stars."

## 2. (2) *šmm* – *thmt* and (5) *arš* – *kbkbm*

In a parallelistic structure like this, the "vertical" correspondence rather than the "horizontal" adjacency<sup>11</sup> might be the dominant factor which "activates word pairs." Thus, *šmm* (b) might better be understood as closely related paradigmatically with *thmt* (b'), rather than with *arš* (d).

This "antonymous" word pair, *šmm* "heaven" and *thmt* "ocean(s)", is certainly a traditional one like *šmm* "heaven" and *ym* "sea"<sup>12</sup> in the ancient Northwest Semitic languages, as is suggested by a divine couple, *šamuma* (= *šmm*) "Heaven-god" and *tahāmatum* (= *thmt*)<sup>13</sup> "Ocean-god" in Ugarit, which corresponds to the Sumerian AN and its female counterpart ANTUM in a multilingual vocabulary text (*Ug V*, 137:III:33"f.). This divine couple appears also as the compound divine name *šmm w thm* "Heaven-and-Ocean" (KTU 1.100 [607]:1) like the divine name *lḫpn. w qds* (1.16:I [125]: 11, 21f.), though the goddess *thm* here lacks the feminine ending *t*.<sup>14</sup>

Hebrew *tāhôm* also stands in an "antonymous" relationship to *šāmayim*.<sup>15</sup> For example, in Gen 7:11, where the beginning of the great flood is mentioned, "the springs of the great deep" (*ma'yānōt tāhôm rabbāh*) and "the floodgates of the heavens" (NIV) (*'ārubbōt haššāmayim*) appear as an "exclusive" pair. The same pair with a slight variation also appears in Gen 8:2 where the closing of *ma'yānōt tāhôm* and *'ārubbōt haššāmayim* is mentioned. Also in Prov 8:27, *šāmayim* is set in contrast to *tāhôm* in parallelism. In Gen 49:25 and Dt 33:13 the same antonymous pair appears in parallelism. Also *šāmayim* and *tāhômôt*, the plural form of

<sup>11</sup>For a grammatical discussion on the problem of adjacency and dependency in poetic parallelism, see my "Literary Insertion, AXB Pattern, in Hebrew and Ugaritic: a Problem of Adjacency and Dependency in Poetic Parallelism," *UF* 18 (1986), 351–361.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. *RSP* I, II 555 (p. 356). For an Akkadian example, see J. C. de Moor & P. van der Lugt, "The Spectre of Pan-Ugaritism," *BO* 31 (1974), 22.

<sup>13</sup>For a discussion of the vocalization of this term and its etymology, see the previous chapter, p. 52.

<sup>14</sup>Heb. *tāhôm*, without an ending -t, appears both as a masculine noun (e.g. Hab 3:10) and as a feminine noun (e.g. Gen 49:25, Dt 33:13).

<sup>15</sup>Cf. *RSP* I, II 560 (pp. 358f.); Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs*, 407.

*tāhôm*, appear as an antonymous pair in Ps 107:26.

The other two words *arš* (d) and *kbkbm* "stars" (d') can also be taken paradigmatically as a word pair like the Ugaritic *arš* – '*rpt* "cloud" in KTU 1.4:V:6ff.[51:V:68ff]. However, the "earth-and-stars" combination is rather unusual.

### 3. (3) *šmm* – *kbkbm* and (4) *arš* – *thmt*

Since the referential direction between "heaven" and "earth" in the first colon and that between "oceans" and "stars" in the second colon are opposite, i.e.

*šmm* [above] => *arš* [below]

*thmt* [below] <= *kbkbm* [above],

a chiasmic structure has been suggested for this parallelism in spite of the formal and grammatical pattern given above.<sup>16</sup>

The parallelistic structure based on this referential correspondence would be as follows:

a–b–c–d

d'–c'–b'

In this structural understanding, *šmm* "heaven" (b) and *kbkbm* "stars" (b') are taken as closely related to each other as a "parallel" word pair. This word pair often appears both in Ugaritic and Hebrew,<sup>17</sup> and its meaning relation is hyponymous, since what the term *kbkbm* refers to is a part of what the term *šmm* refers to. Hence, two terms are juxtaposed in a construct chain as *kôkəbê haššāmayim* (Gen 22:17, etc.) and their order cannot be reversed.

As for the other pair,<sup>18</sup> Dahood thought that the chiasmic arrangement would "favor the meaning 'netherworld'" for *arš* which is in parallel with *thmt* "depths."<sup>19</sup> The meaning relation of these two words is seemingly

<sup>16</sup>M. Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Syntax and Style," *UF* 1 (1969), 25; *RSP* I, 127, followed by W. A. van der Weiden, *Le Livre des Proverbes: Notes philologiques* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970), 37; M. K. Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 101; A. R. Ceresko, "The A:B::B:A Word Pattern in Hebrew and Northwest Semitic with Special Reference to the Book of Job," *UF* 7 (1975), 74; J. S. Kselman, "The Recovery of Poetic Fragments from the Pentateuchal Priestly Source," *JBL* 97 (1978), 163; W. G. E. Watson, "Strophic Chiasmus in Ugaritic Poetry," *UF* 15 (1983), 263; "Essentially, the chiasmus here is *semantic*."

<sup>17</sup>Cf. *RSP* I, II 282 (p. 225f.) and II 556 (p. 357); Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs*, 566.

<sup>18</sup>See Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs*, 353f.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. M. J. Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology and Job," in J. L. McKenzie (ed.), *The*



understood as synonymous, and the "conditional" meaning, "netherworld", has been suggested for *arš*. However, since the meaning relation of *kbkbm* (b') and *šmm* (b) is hyponymous in this parallelistic structure, it seems that the meaning relation of *arš* (d) and *thmt* (d') is also hyponymous. In other words, what the term *thmt* refers to might be taken as a part of what the term *arš* refers to.<sup>20</sup> And the term *arš* which is contrasted with *šmm* in the first colon most probably refers to everything that is under the heaven.

This hyponymous relationship might be supported by the OT examples. For example, Ps 71:20 has the construct chain, *təhōmōt hā'āreš*, which suggests that the term *təhōmōt* is hyponymous to the term *'ereš* rather than synonymous to *'ereš*.<sup>21</sup> In other words, what *təhōmōt* refers to is a part of what *'ereš* refers to. Kraus takes what *'ereš* refers to as the "netherworld" and suggests that *təhōmōt hā'āreš* here refers to "die unterirdischen Chaosgewässer, durch die der Tote zur *שְׁאוֹל* eingeht."<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that, unlike Dahood, Kraus takes the two terms as hyponymous. However, "die unterirdischen Chaosgewässer" would not fit the present context of the Ugaritic text, since *thmt* is contrasted with *kbkbm* "stars."

## B. "HEAVEN"—"EARTH"—"SEA"

Now, it is important to note that in the Old Testament *təhōm(ōt)* never

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*Bible in Current Catholic Thought* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1962), 58; *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 52; "Ugaritic-Hebrew Syntax and Style," 25; M. Dahood, *Psalms* II (AB 17; Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1968), 176, followed by van der Weiden, *Le Livre des Proverbs*, 37; J. J. Scullion, "Some Difficult Texts in Isaiah cc. 56–66 in the Light of Modern Scholarship," *UF* 4 (1972), 122, esp. n. 85; M. H. Pope, *Job* 3 (AB 15; New York: Doubleday, 1973), 91; Ceresko, "The A:B::B:A Word Pattern in Hebrew and Northwest Semitic", 74. Note however that not everyone who suggests the chiasmic structure interprets *arš* as "the nether world" like Dahood. For example, Wakeman and Watson interpret it as "earth", see above.

<sup>20</sup>In the immediately following text KTU 1.3 [nt]:III:26–28, where the term *arš* is again contrasted with *šmm* and "men" (*nšm*) is in parallel with "folk of the land" (*hmlt arš*), the term *arš* means "earth/land", not "the netherworld."

<sup>21</sup>M. K. Wakeman, "The Biblical Earth Monster in the Cosmogonic Combat Myth," *JBL* 88 (1969), 317, n. 18 holds that because *'ereš* and *təhōm* are "synonymous", they "come to form a hendiadys" in Ps 71:20. However, this construct chain is not a hendiadys, though a hendiadys may be broken up to constitute a construct chain. Moreover, her argument for synonymy based on a simple "substitution" in the case of the meaning relation between *hā'āreš* and *təhōmōt* (Ps 77:17,19, etc.) or *hārim* and *təhōmōt* (Ex 15:8) is not convincing.

<sup>22</sup>H.-J. Kraus, *Psalmen*<sup>5</sup>, 2. Teilband: *Psalmen 60–150* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 653.

appears as a term for "sea(s)" in a tripartite description of the world, i.e. "heaven–earth–sea,"<sup>23</sup> though *təhôm(ôt)* is sometimes closely associated with *yām*.<sup>24</sup> The best known passage is Ex 20:11, where "the heaven", "the earth" and "the sea" as well as "all that is in them" are mentioned. The first three of these elements seem to be fixed in Hebrew expression, since they are virtually same in several passages with variants for the fourth, as shown in the following list:

(Ex 20:11)	<i>haššamayim</i>	: <i>hā'āreš</i>	: <i>hayyām</i>	: <i>kol-'āšer-bām</i>
(Ps 146:6) <sup>25</sup>	<i>šamayim</i>	: <i>'āreš</i>	: <i>hayyām</i>	: <i>kol-'āšer-bām</i>
(Hag 2:6)	<i>haššamayim</i>	: <i>hā'āreš</i>	: <i>hayyām</i>	: <i>heḥorābāh</i>
(Ps 96:11)	<i>haššamayim</i>	: <i>hā'āreš</i>	: <i>hayyām</i>	: <i>mālō'ō</i>
(Ps 69:35)	<i>šamayim</i>	: <i>'āreš</i>	: <i>yammīm</i>	: <i>kol-rōmēs bām</i>
(Ps 135:6)	<i>baššamayim</i>	: <i>bā'āreš</i>	: <i>bayyammīm</i>	: <i>kol-təhōmôt</i>

In Ps 146:6 the expression is the same as Ex 20:11 except for the definite articles. In Hag 2:6 and Ps 96:11 the same pattern, "heaven"—"earth"—"sea",

<sup>23</sup>L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World* (AnBi 39; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970), 9f. lists Ps 135:6 & 148:1–7 as examples of the *šmym* – *'rš* – *thwmwt* scheme and Prov 8:27–32 & Ps 33:6–8 as examples of the *šmym* – *tbl* – *thwm(wt)* scheme. However, in Ps 135:6, *təhōmôt* is not the third term (see below) and in 148:1–7, *təhōmôt* refers to a part of the earth (see below, pp. 74f.). In Prov 8:27–32, *təhōm* corresponds to *šamayim* only in v. 27 and the term *tēbēl* appears only in v. 31. Note that the relationship between the earth and the sea is described in terms of *'āreš* and *yām* in v. 29. Ps 33:8 which mentions *hā'āreš* // *yōšabē tēbēl* should be treated separately from vs. 6–7. J. M. Vincent, "Recherches exégétiques sur le Psaume XXXIII," VT 28 (1978), 447 recognizes in Ps 33:5–7 a triad, *hā'āreš* (v. 5), *šamayim* (v. 6) and *mē hayyām* (v. 7), "terre–ciel–mer."

<sup>24</sup>Cf. RSP I, II 236 (pp. 204f.).

<sup>25</sup>Compare the following Greek versions:

145:6(LXX)	τὸν ποιήσαντα τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς,
134:6(LXX)	ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐν τῇ γῇ, ἐν ταῖς θαλάσσαις καὶ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἀβύσσοις;
Rev 5:13	ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς πάντα
Rev 5:3	καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔδύατο ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς
Phi 2:10	ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων

In Rev 5:13 καὶ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς, though some mss omit it, is the third element of a tripartite division in Rev 5:3, which reflects Ex 20:4 and Dt 5:8. The Hebrew *'ereš* seems to be understood as referring both to the ground ("on the earth") and to the underground ("under the earth").

is mentioned before the fourth elements, "the dry land" (*heḥorābāh*) and "all that is in it" (*mālō'ō*). Pss 69:35 and 135:6 have a plural form of *yām* and their fourth elements, as in 96:11, are additional items which are related only to the "sea(s)", i.e. *kol-rōmēš bām* "all that moves in them" and *kol-tāhômôt* "all oceans" respectively. While in 96:11 and 69:35 the additional phrases are hyponymous to *yam(mīm)* in 135:6 *kol-tāhômôt* is either synonymous or hyponymous to the "seas."<sup>26</sup>

Ex 20:4 and Dt 5:8 describe these three divisions as *baššāmayim mimma'al* "in heaven above", *bā'āreš mittāḥat* "on the earth beneath" and *bammayim mittahat lā'āreš* "in the waters below (lit. "beneath the earth")." The creatures in three divisions, i.e. "birds", "animals" and "fish", are never mentioned in this order but in the following two different orders: (1) "sea"—"heaven"—"earth" (or "field") in Gen 1:26, 28, Ezek 38:20; (2) "earth" (or "field")—"heaven"—"sea" in Gen 9:2, Hos 4:3, (Zeph 1:3), Ps 8:8–9. However, in none of the passages cited above does the term *tāhôm(ōt)* appear.

Thus, in the framework of tripartite understanding of the world it is *yām* "sea", not *tāhôm* "ocean", that constitutes the third part and thus corresponds, though not exactly, to the Apsû<sup>27</sup> of the Babylonian scheme of "heaven/earth/Apsû." On the other hand, the Hebrew *tāhôm(ōt)*, which is hyponymous to the Hebrew *'ereš* — hence what *tāhôm(ōt)* refers to — is a part of the "earth" (*'ereš*), probably corresponds to Apsû of the Babylonian scheme of three levels "earth", i.e. "abode of men/Apsû/underworld."<sup>28</sup>

### C. "HEAVEN"—"EARTH"

#### 1. Ps 148

The hyponymous relationship between *'ereš* and *tāhôm(ōt)* in the Hebrew language is also supported by Ps 148:7, which reads:

<sup>26</sup>Y. Avishur takes (*bā*) *'āreš* and (*kol-*)*tāhômôt* in Ps 135:6 as a parallel word pair like those in Ps 148:7, Prov 3:19–20, 8:27–29 and Gen 1:2 as well as in Ps 71:20 and Ben Sira 16:18. Cf. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs*, 353.

<sup>27</sup>On Apsû as a place where fish live, see CAD, A/2 (1968), 194f. See also below pp. 149f.

<sup>28</sup>See above p. 68.

*halālū 'et-YHWH min-hā'āreṣ*  
*tannīnim wəkol-təhōmôt*

"Praise the Lord from the earth,  
 you great sea creatures and all ocean depths" (NIV).

In this context, what *təhōmôt* refers to belongs to what *hā'āreṣ* refers to, and hence the term *təhōmôt* is hyponymous to the term *hā'āreṣ*.

In this passage Dahood took the meaning relation of *haššāmayim* (v. 1) and *hā'āreṣ* (v. 7) as polar opposition and suggested that *'ereṣ* here too should mean "the netherworld", "the opposite extreme" of heaven.<sup>29</sup> However, it should be noted that the following verses, vs. 7bff., never talk about items in the netherworld. On the other hand, vs. 2–4 mention items in the heavens. Dahood's own comment points out a problem for his assumption that the psalmist has a tripartite understanding of the universe: "What does appear singular is the fact that the psalmist dedicates only one verse to the subterranean beings, after having given six verses to celestial bodies, and reserving the next seven for terrestrial creatures."<sup>30</sup>

As recent studies of the literary structure of Ps 148 show, the psalm should be divided into two sections, vs. 1–6 and vs. 7–14.<sup>31</sup> While the first section refers to various items in the heavens, the second mentions those under the heavens. This literary structure suggests that in the present context the psalmist seems to use the term *'ereṣ* in the sense which refers to everything under the heaven, including the sea.<sup>32</sup> It is contrasted with "heaven" in the "exclusive" word pair and both *tannīnim* and *təhōmôt* are treated as belonging to the earth.<sup>33</sup> Thus, in Ps 148, the psalmist's understanding of the world is bipartite, rather than tripartite.

The "logic"<sup>34</sup> which allows the psalmist to include in the second section

<sup>29</sup>M. Dahood, *Psalms* III (AB 17A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), 353.

<sup>30</sup>Dahood, *Psalms* III, 353f.

<sup>31</sup>E.g. D. R. Hillers, "A Study of Psalm 148," *CBQ* 40 (1978), 328; P. Auffret, *La sagesse a bâti sa maison* (Orbis biblicus et orientalis 49; Fribourg 1982), 385–404.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 3. He includes the sea in the "second level of the world" in the "three-leveled structure of the world", heaven – earth – underworld. See pp. 154ff. However, no discussion of the term *təhōm(ôt)* is offered in section C, which deals with the problem of the sea.

<sup>33</sup>Note also that in KTU 1.23 [52]:62–63 the "sea" (*ym*) in an ordinary sense is hyponymous to the "earth" (*arṣ*) which is in parallel with *šmm*, though Dahood suggested here too the translation of "nether world" for *arṣ* (cf. *RSP* I, II 64 [p. 122f]).

<sup>34</sup>Hillers, "A Study of Psalm 148," 328: "We must not demand perfect logic of the psalmist's cosmology; we must permit him to list dragons and deeps, fire and storm-wind under the rubric 'earth'." Note also Auffret's explanation: "il s'agit là à la fois de l'abîme et de la terre." (p. 396) as a criticism of Dahood's position.

several meteorological phenomena, such as "storm-wind" (v. 8), and "flying birds" (v. 10) as well as *tannînîm* and *tāhōmôt* (v. 7) may look strange at first glance. But it might be supported by the "logic" of the ancient Semites as illustrated by *Enuma elish* which, according to Lambert, combines two originally separate cosmologies, the one which is bipartite (heaven–earth)<sup>35</sup> and is "obtained in this story by the splitting of Tiamat's body" and the other which is tripartite (heaven–earth–Apsu) and whose three levels are represented by Anu, Enlil and Ea (Enki) respectively.<sup>36</sup>

### bipartite

heaven  
earth

### tripartite

heaven : Anu  
earth : Enlil  
Apsû : Ea (Enki)

The latter cosmology of "a three-decker universe" can also be identified in *Atra-Ḥasis* epic (I i 7–18).<sup>37</sup> This tripartite cosmology seems to have been transformed to a bipartite one, as the author of *Enuma elish* seems to locate Enlil in *Ešarra* (between heavens and the Apsû), "a lower heaven",<sup>38</sup> thus appointing Anu and Enlil to the heavens, i.e. "the heaven" and "a lower heaven", and Marduk and Ea to the earth, i.e. "Esagila" and "Apsu."<sup>39</sup>

### Enuma elish

heaven	: Anu
Ešarra (= "a lower heaven")	: Enlil
Esagila (= "earth")	: Marduk
Apsû	: Ea

Therefore, it is not surprising to note that in the psalmist's logic the term *hā'āreš* which is in contrast to *haššāmayim* refers to everything under the

<sup>35</sup>See above p. 69 on the word pair, "heaven" and "earth", in various languages.

<sup>36</sup>Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," 58.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 166.

<sup>38</sup>Lambert, "The Cosmology of Sumer and Babylon," 58.

<sup>39</sup>On four divisions of the world, see most recently Livingstone, *MMEW*, 79ff. However, in a text published by R. Borger (BiOr 30 180:72 ii 4), the triad gods, Anu, Enlil and Ea are understood as controlling "heaven and earth" (AN U KI), i. e. the entire universe; see CAD, M<sub>1</sub> (1977), 228; J. Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone* (Genève – Paris: Slatkine – Champion, 1985), 300f.

heavens, including storm and oceans. In other words, the terms *hā'āreš* and *haššāmayim* are mutually exclusive within the framework of bipartite cosmology. They are not in a polar opposition like "heaven" <—> "underworld" which Dahood assumed for this psalm.

For the meaning of *təhômôt* of Ps 148:7, Kraus suggests either "die Urfluten (akkad. *Tiâmat*), die unter der Erde ruhen" or simply "des Meer."<sup>40</sup> However, the waters under the earth are called Apsu rather than Tiamat in Mesopotamian cosmology. Since 'ereš in this verse most probably means "earth" rather than "underworld", its hyponym *təhômôt* in the present context would mean "oceans" in an ordinary sense like Ugaritic *thm*, Akkadian *tiāmtum* and Eblaite *tihām(a)tum*.

## 2. Prov 3

- v. 19 YHWH *bəḥokmāh yāsad-'āreš*  
*kônēn šāmayim bitbūnāh*  
 v. 20 *bəda'tō təhômôt nibqā'ū*  
*ūš(ə)hāqīm yir'āpū-ṭāl*

Now in Prov 3:20, the term *təhômôt* stands in parallel with *šəḥāqīm* "clouds" antonymously. Similarly, in the preceding verse (v. 19) the term 'āreš is put in direct opposition to the term *šāmayim*. Moreover, *šāmayim* and *šəḥāqīm* often appear as a word pair in Hebrew (cf. Dt 33:26, Is 45:8, Jer 51:9, Job 35:5, Ps 36:6, 57:11, 108:5) and such correspondences as *šəḥāqīm* = *niblê šāmayim* (Job 38:37) and *šəḥāqīm* = *daltê šāmayim* (Ps 78:23) indicate that *šəḥāqīm* ("clouds") is hyponymous to *šāmayim*, like *kbkbm* "stars" which is hyponymous to *šmm* "heaven" in KTU 1.3 [nt]: III:24–25 [21–22] and in biblical passages. Therefore, here also the term *təhômôt* should be taken as hyponymous to 'āreš.

## D. A FLOODING OF THE SUBTERRANEAN WATERS?

The meaning relationship between *hā'āreš* and *təhôm* in Gen 1:2 also seems to be hyponymous. The text reads:

<sup>40</sup>Kraus, *Psalmen*<sup>5</sup>, 1143.

- v. 1 *bōrē'sīt bārā' 'ēlōhīm 'ēt haššāmayim wə'ēt hā'āreš*  
 v. 2 *wəhā'āreš hāyotāh tōhū wābōhū*  
*wəḥōšek 'al-pōnē təhōm*  
*wəruāḥ 'ēlōhīm mōraḥepet 'al-pōnē hammāyim*

Here *təhōm* "ocean" is a part of *hā'āreš* since the term *hā'āreš*, which constitutes an antonymous or exclusive word pair together with *haššāmayim* in Gen 1:1,<sup>41</sup> must refer to everything under the heaven.<sup>42</sup> In other words, the cosmology in vs. 1–2 is bipartite as in Ps 148 rather than tripartite, describing the entire world in terms of "heavens and earth."

It should be noted that in v. 2 the term *təhōm* rather than *yām* "sea" appears. The term *yām* would constitute the third division of the tripartite universe, "heaven/earth/sea." On the other hand, the "ocean" (*təhōm*) and its "waters" (*hammāyim*) are never treated as the third division of the tripartite cosmology in the Old Testament, as noted above.

What this hyponymous word pair, *hā'āreš // təhōm*, refers to is described in this passage by another pair of expressions, *tōhū wābōhū // ḥōšek*,<sup>43</sup> "not yet" normal, i.e. "not yet productive and inhabitable and without light."<sup>44</sup> However, the water (*hammāyim*) of *təhōm* seemingly covered all the "earth", as vs. 6ff. suggest, though in a normal situation the ocean is under control and may not pass its limit (i.e. "its edge"<sup>45</sup> *pīw* in Prov 8:29 or "boundary" *gəbūl* in Ps 104:9), as is also suggested by an Akkadian expression, "the bolt, the bar of the sea" (*šigarū naḥbalu ti'āmtim*) in the Atra-Ḫasīs epic.<sup>46</sup> As Millard notes, there is no hint of a

<sup>41</sup>Sometimes it is still suggested that Gen 1:1 is a later addition (by P) to the older source which begins with v. 2. However, if this were the case, it would be strange that a Hebrew creation narrative should begin with the present word order of v. 2, i.e. *waw*+NP VP, without any temporal description. For a useful summary of various positions on the interpretation of the initial verses, see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 11–13.

<sup>42</sup>It is not necessary to posit that *hā'āreš* has different meanings in v. 1 and v. 2 (cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 15: "Compounded with 'heaven' it designates the whole cosmos, whereas in v. 2 it has its usual meaning 'earth'."). J. Sailhammer, "Exegetical Notes: Genesis 1:1–2:4a," *TrinJ* 5 (1984), 77, interprets Gen 1:1–2:4a as "an introduction to the author's view of the covenant at Sinai" and understands *'ereš* (v. 2) as "land", i.e. the *land* to Israel. However, a shift in focus from the totality of universe ("heaven and earth") in v.1 to the "earth" in v.2 does not necessarily result in a change of meaning for the term *hā'āreš*.

<sup>43</sup>V. 2a and v. 2b constitute a chiasmic parallelism; cf. Kselman, "The Recovery of Poetic Fragments," 164, n. 13. See above p. 38.

<sup>44</sup>See above pp. 41ff.

<sup>45</sup>Dahood, "Proverbs 8, 22–31: Translation and Commentary," 513.

<sup>46</sup>AH I i 15–16 (also cf. S v 1, x rev i 6, 10, ii 4, 11, 18, 34). Note that in this context the term *ti'āmtim* is not personified but has an ordinary sense. Cf. Lambert & Millard, *AH*,

battle with the sea in this Akkadian expression, though it implies that "the sea is an unruly element in need of control."<sup>47</sup>

A similar but not identical earth–water relation in the context of creation is also described in a bilingual version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk" on a tablet of the Neo-Babylonian period, where the initial state of the world is described both negatively and positively. In ll. 1–9 the state of "not yet" is explained in concrete terms:<sup>48</sup>

- 1) A holy house, a house of the gods in a holy place, had not been made;
- 2) A reed had not come forth, a tree had not been created;
- 3) A brick had not been laid, a brick mould had not been built;
- 4) A house had not been made, a city had not been built;
- 5) A city had not been made, a living creature had not been placed (therein);
- 6) Nippur had not been made, Ekur had not been built;
- 7) Uruk had not been made, Eanna had not been built;
- 8) The *Apsû* had not been made, Eridu had not been built;
- 9) A holy house, a house of the gods, its dwelling, had not been made;

One may note that l. 1 and l. 9 constitute an *inclusio*, thus grouping this

166. See the previous chapter, p. 60.

A similar flooding situation is mentioned in several Akkadian texts. For example, a Sumerian–Akkadian bilingual hymn to Nergal says:

ta a.ab.ba                    ki an e.da.ab.us:

*minâ ša tâmtu eršeta umallakum*

"Was, womit man das Meer, die Erde für dich gefüllt hat?"

Cf. J. Böllenrücher, "Gebete und Hymnen an Nergal," *LSS I/6* (1904), 43 & 46; *CAD*, M/1 (1977), 176.

<sup>47</sup>A. R. Millard, "A New Babylonian 'Genesis' Story," *TB* 18 (1967), 7. Note also his comment: "If a parallel is to be sought in the biblical narrative it may be found in Genesis 1:9." (p. 7)

<sup>48</sup>Translation is by A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 62. Also cf. L. W. King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation*. Vol. I: *English Translations, etc.* (London: Luzac, 1902) 130–133; R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament* <sup>2</sup> (New York: Abingdon, 1912, 1926), 48; Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone*, 303.



negative "not yet" description<sup>49</sup> as a unified entity.<sup>50</sup> Then in ll. 10–11 the same initial state of the world is described positively as follows:

- 10) All the lands were sea;
- 11) The spring which is in the sea was a water pipe;<sup>51</sup>

After this *double* description of the original state, the "creation" of the world is finally mentioned in ll. 12ff.:

- 12) Then Eridu was made, Esagila was built . . . .
- 14) Babylon was made, Esagila was completed."

Though "the lands" *mātātu* (10) is not the cognate of Hebrew *'ereš* in Gen 1:2, the overall discourse structure between this Neo-Babylonian "creation" story and Genesis 1 is similar:

- (1) Setting: a negative description — the earth/land was "bare" (i.e. unproductive and uninhabited) and "not yet" the same as it exists now;
- (2) Setting: a positive description — the "ocean-water" (*tāmtum* // *tāhôm*) was covering the whole earth/land (*mātātu* // *'ereš*);<sup>52</sup>
- (3) Event: (Then) the earth/land became as it exists now.

However, while there are structural similarities between these two stories, there is also a clear distinction in theme and purpose between the two. In the Neo-Babylonian story, the particular cities such as Eridu and Babylon are treated as the first created things. On the other hand, no

<sup>49</sup>For another myth which describes the initial situation in "not yet" terms, see the so-called "Eridu Genesis", UET VI. 61. lines 1'–17', though this myth as now preserved has no description of a watery beginning like Enuma elish and others. Cf. T. Jacobsen, "The Eridu Genesis," *JBL* 100 (1981), 513–529; P. D. Miller, Jr., "Eridu, Dunnu, and Babel: A Study in Comparative Mythology," *HAR* 9 (1985), 233 & 244. See also below pp. 86ff. on Gen 2:5ff.

<sup>50</sup>Bottéro notes that the order Ekur (of Enlil) – Eanna (of Anu) – Eridu (of Ea) is the reverse of their antiquity. In other words, the oldest city, Eridu, is mentioned last. See Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone*, 305. For the antiquity of Eridu, cf. also W. W. Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," *JCS* 23 (1970), 65–66.

<sup>51</sup>*naphar mātātu tāmtumma // inu ša qirib tāmtim rātumma*. Cf. L. W. King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation*. Vol. I, 132. Note also J. Bottéro's translation, "Tous les territoires ensemble n'étaient que Mer ! Lors (donc) que le contenu de (cette) Mer (ne) formait (encore qu')un fossé (?)" , in Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone*, 303.

<sup>52</sup>Ll. 10 & 11 are sometimes interpreted as "le Chaos originel" like Enuma elish; cf. Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone*, 306f. It is clear from the context that *tāmtum* "sea" is not "the enemy of creation" but simply a term for "a mass of water", which is not personified like Tiamat in Enuma elish. But, even in Enuma elish, the mingling of Apsû and Tiamat was *orderly*; see p. 60, n. 70.

particular city names appear as God's creation in the story of Gen 1, since in the Genesis stories, unlike the Mesopotamian stories, "the building of the cities . . . is a purely human enterprise" (cf. Gen 4:17, 10:10–12, 11:1–9).<sup>53</sup>

*Excursus: Structure of Enuma elish I 1–9*

The discourse structure of the initial section of Enuma elish, Ee I 1–9 may be analyzed as follows:<sup>54</sup>

- 1) When above the heaven was not named;
- 2) below the earth was not called by (its) name,
- 3) But as for<sup>55</sup> Apsû the primeval, their begetter,
- 4) (and) the craftsman,<sup>56</sup> Ti'âmat, she who gave birth to them all,
- 5) their waters<sup>57</sup> were being mingled<sup>58</sup> together;
- 6) But no pasture land had been formed; no reed marsh was seen<sup>59</sup>;

<sup>53</sup>Miller, "Eridu, Dunnu, and Babel," 239.

<sup>54</sup>The translation (with emphases by the present author) given here is based on Heidel's 1951 version but is revised in the light of recent developments. Cf. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*. 2nd ed., 18. For the most recent treatments of these lines, see H. L. J. Vanstiphout, "Enûma eliš, tablet i:3," *NABU* (1987/4), 52–53; W. L. Moran, "Enûma eliš I 1–8," *NABU* (1988 /1), 15–16.

<sup>55</sup>Moran, "Enûma eliš I 1–8," 15–16 notes that the *-ma* of *Apsû-ma* "can only mark the grammatical predicate." This "(existential) predicate" *-ma* may be used here for topicalization like the Ugaritic existential particle *w* ("and"). For a similar understanding of its syntax, see King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation*. Vol. I, 3.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. *CAD*, M/2 (1977), 197. Cf. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*. 2nd ed., 18 who takes Mammu as a separate entity in this line and translates: Mammu, (and) Ti'âmat, she who gave birth to them all." (cf. Ee I:30, etc.)

<sup>57</sup>As Vanstiphout notes, A.MEŠ-šunu "their waters" is to be taken as nominative in the light of a variant reading *mu-û-šu-nu*.

<sup>58</sup>Moran suggests that the Akk. verb *i-hi-qu-û* should be taken as *iḫiqqû* with a durative sense, rather than as *iḫîqû*.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. *AHw*, 1223. Moran, following Held and Wilcke, suggests the verb *šê'u* "to matt, stuff, lay out" and translates the line as follows: "No solid sward was with thickets matted." However, taking *gipāra* and *sušā* as resultatives (objects) of the verbs, the line 6 might be better translated literally as follows:

"(But) into a pasture land they (= their waters) had not yet congealed;  
nor as a marsh land were they recognizable."

Note that the verb *kašāru* can be used with a liquid like "oil" and "blood" (e.g. Ee VI 5 cf. *CAD*, E, 342) in the sense of "to congeal" or "to coagulate"; the same verb is used with

- 7) When none of the gods had (yet) appeared;  
 8) they had not been called by (their) names; (their) destinies had not been fixed,  
 9) (Then) were the gods created within them (*ibbanû-ma ilānū qiribšun*).

Here, as Moran notes, in lines 1–8 predication is through nominals, statives, and the "durative" verb *iḫiqqū*, all of which are "an apt description of event-less flux." Certainly, seven negatives, which may well mark the completeness of "absence and negation", in lines 1–2 & 6–8 are used to describe the initial situation of the universe as "not yet", like other "creation" myths as noted above. In lines 3–5, the same initial situation is described positively, as in lines 10–11 of the Neo-Babylonian version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk." Then, "only in line 9, with the creation of the gods, do we meet a punctive, and it is fronted. With *ibbanû-ma* we enter time and narrative sequence."<sup>60</sup>

To summarize, the overall structure of *Enuma elish* I 1ff. is as follows:

- (1) Setting: a negative description — lines 1–2 & 6–8 (seven times "not yet")  
 (2) Setting: a positive description — lines 3–5 ("waters")  
 (3) Event — "(Then) were the gods created . . ." (line 9).

Thus, the discourse structure of the initial section of this "creation" epic is similar to that of the Neo-Babylonian "creation" story and Genesis 1. However, there is a difference in theme and purpose. While the latter two stories are concerned with the initial state of the earth or land, the initial section of *Enuma elish* is concerned with the creation of gods and goddesses and no reference is made to the earth–water relationship, for the primeval waters, Apsu and Tiamat, in *Enuma elish* are understood as having existed without any relationship with the "earth."

In Gen 1 the earth in v. 2 is simply a part of the created cosmos

"cloud" in Ec V 49; cf. *AHw*, 456f.; *CAD*, K (1971), 260 & 262; B. Landsberger & J. V. Kinnier Wilson, "The Fifth Tablet of *Enuma Eliš*," *JNES* 20 (1961), 158f. Cf. also R. Labat, "Les origines et la formation de la terre dans le poème Babylonien de la création," *Studia Biblica et Orientalia*. Vol. III: *Oriens Antiquus* (AnBi 12; Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1959), 214.

Note that the (marsh) land is understood as a product of the waters in this myth; cf. "Water came first, and gave birth to Earth" (W. G. Lambert, "Kosmogonie," *RIA* 6 [1980–83], 218–222); see below p. 120 on the creation of a marsh land in Gen 2:6f. In an Egyptian creation myth, Atum-Re is described as having begun his creation "upon a primeval hillock arising out of the abysmal waters, Nun" (J. A. Wilson, "Another Version of the Creation by Atum," *ANET*, 3–4).

<sup>60</sup>Moran, "*Enūma eliš* I 1–8," 15.

("heaven and earth" in v. 1) and refers to everything under the heaven, including the subterranean waters. However, the earth was totally covered by waters and the dry land was "not yet" formed (*or* seen) until v. 9 where God said: "Let the waters from under the heaven be gathered to one place and let the dry land appear." Unlike the cosmology in *Enuma elish* and other ancient myths, the land in Gen 1:9f. was not a product of the primeval water, hence a part of the water, but a product of the divine fiat by which God gathered the waters from under the heaven "to one place", i.e. as "seas", which is a part of the earth.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>According to F. I. Andersen, "the time information . . . (Genesis 1:1–2; cf. Genesis 2:4b–6) describes the situation before and up to the moment when the story commences." V. 3 is the beginning of the "story", i.e. the mainline narrative. He says: "*When the story begins* (in verse 3), darkness and water already exist. Nothing is said, one way or the other, about how they came to be there, and no inference whatsoever can be made, *from the text*, that the primal substances were not originally produced by God." Cf. F. I. Andersen, "On Reading Genesis 1–3," in M. P. O'Connor & D. N. Freedman (eds.), *Backgrounds for the Bible* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 141.

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## Chapter 5

### THE EARTH IN GEN 2

It is basically clear that the general situation of the earth described in Gen 2:5–6 is a "not yet productive" earth. Some scholars have interpreted this non-productive earth as a "dry chaos", J's equivalent of P's "watery chaos in 1:2." For example, Schmidt thinks that Gen 2:5 describes "Chaos" before "Schöpfung" in 2:7.<sup>1</sup> However, since according to our analysis in the previous chapters, the initial situation of the earth and its relationship with the *təhôm*-water in Gen 1:2 has nothing to do with a "watery chaos" or a *chaotic* situation as such, explaining the dry earth in Gen 2:5–6 as a "dry chaos" seems to be totally misleading. In the following sections, we will deal with the structure of the Hebrew text of Gen 2:5–6 as a whole and discuss some etymological problems of such terms as *'ēd* and *'ēden*.

### THE EARTH IN A BARE STATE

Judging from the discourse analysis of the narrative story in Gen 2:4–4:26, 2:4 as a whole is a temporal description ("when"), while 2:5–6 is a SETTING for the first stated EVENT (*wayyîšer YHWH 'ēlōhîm* "the Lord God formed") in 2:7, just as 1:1 is a temporal description ("In the beginning") while 1:2 is a SETTING for the first stated EVENT (*wayyō'mer 'ēlōhîm* "God said") in 1:3.<sup>2</sup> Like 1:2, the SETTING in 2:5–6 describes the

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<sup>1</sup>W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1:1–2:4a und 2:4b–3:24*. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 197.

<sup>2</sup>For a brief summary of discourse analysis with bibliographies see W. R. Bodine, "Linguistics and Philology in the Study of Ancient Near Eastern Languages," in D. M. Golomb (ed.), *Working with No Data: Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 51–54; cf. F. I. Andersen, *SBH*, 18f. On the Genesis stories, see Andersen, "On Reading Genesis 1–3," in M. O'Connor &

initial state of the earth, which is in a close relationship with the waters. Before we proceed to discussion of the earth itself, let us analyze the structure of these two verses.

### 1. Structure of Gen 2:5-6

wəkol sîḥ hasšādeh ṭerem yihyeh bā'āreš  
wəkol-'ēseb hasšādeh ṭerem yīšmāḥ  
 kî lō' himṭr YHWH 'ēlōhîm 'al-hā'āreš  
wə'ādām 'ayin la'ābōd 'et-hā'ādāmāh  
wə'ēd ya'āleh min-hā'āreš  
wāhišqāh 'et-kol-pānē-hā'ādāmāh

"No shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth;  
 no plant of the field had yet sprung up.

— The Lord God had not sent rain on the earth —

No man was there to till the land.

'ēd-water was coming up<sup>3</sup> from the earth

and watered the whole surface of the land."

Recent Bible translations are divided between (1) the position which takes wə'ādām 'ayin la'ābōd 'et-hā'ādāmāh "No man was there to till the land" as a part of the kî-clause and (2) that which takes it as outside of the kî-clause.<sup>4</sup> The former position attributes the lack of vegetation not only to the lack of "rain" but also to the absence of "man"; the latter only to the lack of "rain."

Schmidt, for example, takes position (1) and holds that v. 5b presents "eine doppelte Begründung" for the lack of sîḥ hasšādeh "Wüstensträucher" (Gen 21:15, Job 30:4, 7) and 'ēseb hasšādeh "Feldkräuter"

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D. N. Freedman (eds.), *Backgrounds for the Bible* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 137-150.; R. E. Longacre, "The Discourse Structure of the Flood Narrative," in G. MacRae (ed.), *Society of Biblical Literature 1976 Seminar Papers* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 235-262; *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence — A Text Theoretical and Textlinguistic Analysis of Genesis 37, and 39-48* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, in press)

<sup>3</sup>Or "used to come up", taking ya'āleh as having "frequentative force" (cf. S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1892], 128). However, this yqt-form verb may be taken as an old "preterite" and describe a state ("was coming up") in the past in this SETTING.

<sup>4</sup>While NIV, which avoids translating the particle kî, and NAB take the former position (1), NEB and JB take the latter (2).

(Gen 3:18, Ps 104:14, 106:20, Dt 11:15), i.e. "die Wild- und Nutzpflanzen."<sup>5</sup> Westermann goes one step further in discussing the relationship between the lack of vegetation and the double "Begründung" and argues that *šîḥ* refers to wild plants which "need only rain for their growth", while *ʿēšeb* refers to "cultivated plants which need man's care."<sup>6</sup> Wenham however distinguishes between "shrub" and "plant" in "whether they may be eaten or not" and takes the latter as referring to both "wild and cultivated plants", based on the other occurrences in 1:29, 30 and 3:18.<sup>7</sup> Thus the vegetation in Gen 2:5 has been classified as <wild – cultivated> or as <edible – inedible> by recent scholars.

Cassuto<sup>8</sup>, who also takes position (1), thinks that *šîḥ* refers to some type of "thorns" in the light of *qôš wəḏardar* (3:18)<sup>9</sup> and interprets 2:5 as describing the state of "no thorns" because of no rain and "no grain", because of no man. He thus seems to classify the vegetation as <inedible> <wild> "thorns" and <edible> <cultivated> "grain."

However, these explanations based on structural understanding (1) are not without difficulties. For one thing, it is hard to understand why the author described both *šîḥ* and *ʿēšeb* as "of the field" while he described man's function as tilling the "land." In other words, the primary concern of man in his relationship with the earth is *ʾādāmāh*, not *šādeh*. If the term *šādeh* refers to the wild uncultivated "field", in contrast to the "land" (*ʾādāmāh*), the "shrub" and "plant" of the field should be taken as wild plants which grow without man's efforts, regardless of edibility. In this case, the inclusion of "No man was there to till the land" (*wəʾādām ʾayin laʾābōd ʿet-hāʾādāmāh*) in the *kî*-clause would be unnecessary and even contradictory.

Structurally position (2) seems to be the better supported: the clause

<sup>5</sup>Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, 196.

<sup>6</sup>C. Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband: Genesis 1–11 (BKAT I/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974), 272 [ET 199]. Cf. D. Kidner, "Genesis 2:5, 6: Wet or Dry?" *TB* 17 (1966), 109 & n. 1.

<sup>7</sup>G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 58.

<sup>8</sup>U. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah* [Part I of *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961, 1944 [orig.]), 102.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. the Akkadian phrase *giššu daddaru* (C. J. Gadd, "Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud," *Iraq* 16 [1954], 192, ll. 52–53) in a Neo-Assyrian royal annal, which, Gadd observed (p. 195), is "the almost verbal equivalent of *qôš wəḏardar* (Gen. III, 18) in God's curse upon the Garden after the Fall of Man, (also Hosea X,8)." Note that Akk. form *giššu* developed from \**qiššu*, since Akk. words cannot have two of the phonemes, /q/, /s/ and /š/, simultaneously (as pointed out to me by Prof. W. G. Lambert).



*wə'ādām 'ayin la'ābōd 'et-hā'ādāmāh* goes with the sentence *wə'ēc ya'āleh min-hā'āreš wəhišqāh 'et-kol-pənē-hā'ādāmāh*, since both begin and end with the same or similar sounds. On the other hand, both the beginning and the end of the clause *wəkol šīḥ haššādeh ṭerem yiḥyeh bā'āreš* correspond to those of *wəkol-ēšeb haššādeh ṭerem yišmāh kī lō' himṭūr YHWH 'ēlōhīm 'al-hā'āreš*. Moreover, the two subject matters in the second section, "man" and "'ēd-water", are deeply involved with the land ('ādāmāh); those in the first, "shrubs" and "plants", are "of the field" (šādeh) and are supposed to be "on the earth" (bā'āreš).<sup>10</sup>

Thus, structurally vs. 5–6 are better divided into two halves: the first is concerned with wild uncultivated plants, i.e. "shrub" and "plant", on the earth ('ereš); the second with man who tills the land ('ādāmāh) and the 'ēd-water which watered the land ('ādāmāh). In other words, Gen 2:5–6 presents a twofold description of the earth: the first section [v. 5a–5c] speaks broadly about the unproductive and bare "earth" ('ereš) in which even the wild plants were not yet growing because of the lack of rain; and the second [vs. 5d–6b], more specifically about the "land" ('ādāmāh) which has "no man to till it" and<sup>11</sup> is watered throughout by the 'ēd-waters.<sup>12</sup> This structure thus provides a clue to the meaning and purpose of the initial part of this creation story.

## 2. "Earth", "Field" and "Land"

In the present context the "land" ('ādāmāh), which was watered throughout by the 'ēd-waters from the "earth" ('ereš), is seemingly contrasted to the wild uncultivated "field" (šādeh), which requires rain-water for fertilization.<sup>13</sup> Thus Wenham explains: "Gen 2:5 therefore distinguishes two types

<sup>10</sup>A similar "grammatical" structure has been suggested by G. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation selon les textes bibliques et les textes cunéiformes," *Volume du Congress: Strasbourg 1956* (SVT 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), 125–126.

<sup>11</sup>The conjunction *wə* in the beginning of v. 6 is often translated as "but" (e.g. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 44 & 46), in keeping with a positive clause after three successive negative clauses. See Andersen, *SBH*, 183 who lists Gen 2:6 as an example of "Antithesis after negation."

<sup>12</sup>Schmidt thinks that v. 6 is in opposition to v. 5 and is set between "Chaos" (v. 5) and "Creation" (v. 7). Cf. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, 197. However, the shift of focus from the "earth" to the more specific area, the "land", occurs at v. 5d, not with v. 6a.

<sup>13</sup>This threefold distinction of the earth is possibly in parallel with the Akkadian one, i.e. "earth" *eršetu* "field" *šēru* "land" *mātu*. Cf. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation,"

of land: open, uncultivated 'plain' or 'field,' the wilderness fit only for animal grazing, and the dusty 'land' where agriculture is possible with irrigation and human effort."<sup>14</sup>

While these terms are semantically contrasted in Gen 2:5–6, structurally, in the SETTING of this narrative, vs. 5–6, the subject matter (i.e. the participant) switches from vegetation (i.e. "shrub" and "plant") to man and the 'ēd-water, and the location or stage of these participants shifts from the "earth" ('ereṣ) to the "land" ('ādāmāh) rather than from the wild uncultivated "field" (sādeh) to the "land" ('ādāmāh).

The term 'ereṣ appears here right after the merismatic expression "earth and heavens"<sup>15</sup> (v. 4b), like *hā'āreṣ* (1:2) which follows immediately after the expression "the heavens and the earth" (1:1). Hence, contextually, the term 'ereṣ can refer to everything which is under the heavens as in 1:2.<sup>16</sup> Thus, in 2:5–6 "earth" ('ereṣ) has a much wider semantic field than the term 'ādāmāh, comprising both the surface of the earth,<sup>17</sup> which "the LORD God sends rain" (2:5) from above, and the underground, where the subterranean waters "come up" (2:6).<sup>18</sup> In other words, what the term 'ereṣ refers to includes what the term 'ādāmāh refers to — 'ādāmāh is thus hyponymous to 'ereṣ.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, the stage of the narrative setting in Gen 2:5–6 moves from the wider area 'ereṣ to the narrower area 'ādāmāh, from whose "dust" ('āpār) "man" ('ādām) is going to be formed (cf. v. 7). This focusing (or narrowing down) of the geographical area as the setting for the Eden narrative is certainly the primary purpose of Gen 2:5–6. It should be noted that the four "circumstantial" clauses initiated by *wə*-noun phrases are not mentioned in a chronological or sequential order like the *wayqtl* construction but rather in a topical order, i.e. "vegetation"—"man"—"ēd-water", with an emphasis on the 'ēd which watered the whole surface of 'ādāmāh.

121.

<sup>14</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 58.

<sup>15</sup>For the Ugaritic expression, *arṣ wšmm*, which is in the same word order, and other examples, see above p. 69.

<sup>16</sup>See above pp. 77f.

<sup>17</sup>Here, the surface of the earth comprises both the "field" (sādeh) and the "land" ('ādāmāh).

<sup>18</sup>See below, the following chapters.

<sup>19</sup>E. J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, n.d.), 63, n. 51, also notes that the 'ādāmāh is "more restricted in reference" than 'ereṣ. See also Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 58: "'land' comprises but a part of the earth." Note that the "field" (sādeh) is also a part of the earth.

And it is in such a well-watered land ('ādāmāh),<sup>20</sup> specifically in Eden ('ēden),<sup>21</sup> that God planted a garden (*gan* in 2:8).

In the light of the above, in the initial part of Gen 2 one can identify a threefold focusing or narrowing down of the geographical area: (1) from 'ereš to 'ādāmāh, (2) from 'ādāmāh to 'ēden and (3) from 'ēden to *gan*. In other words, the garden, the main stage for this Eden narrative, is a part of Eden, which is a part of the land, which is a part of the earth.

### 3. No Vegetation

Now the two terms for vegetation in v. 5, i.e. "shrub" (*šîḥ*) and "plant" ('ēšeb), may be a merismatic word pair like "plant" ('ēšeb) and "tree" ('ēš) in Gen 1:11.<sup>22</sup> In other words, *šîḥ* and 'ēšeb probably signify the totality of vegetation which normally grows in the "field."

The totality of vegetation edible by man, i.e. "food", which is produced by the earth is expressed in Atr-Ḫašis S iv 49,<sup>23</sup> which reads:

<i>[li]-bal-kat eršetu re-em-ša</i>	Let the earth's womb be out of order,
<i>šam-mu ia ū-ša-a šu-ū ia i-im-ru</i>	Let no vegetables shoot up, no cereals grow.

In this text, *šammu* "vegetables" and *šu'u* "cereals"<sup>24</sup> seem to constitute a

<sup>20</sup>It is interesting to note that Sumerian á-dam, "settlement" (*CAD*, N/1 [1980], 233) or "lieu habité" (*RIA* 6/7-8 [1983], 632), which constitutes a merismatic pair with uru "town" to denote totality of human settlement, refers to a place "which is fructified with water," cf. W. W. Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," *JCS* 23 (1970), 58. The etymology of á-dam is not certain but Sjöberg recently suggested that "a<sub>2</sub>-dam is a 'Canaanite', West-Semitic loanword in Sumerian," in A. W. Sjöberg, "Eve and the Chameleon," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 223. For a recent discussion on 'ādām as "earth", see R. S. Hess, "'ADAM as 'skin' and 'earth': an Examination of Some Proposed Meanings in Biblical Hebrew," *TB* 39 (1988), 141-149.

<sup>21</sup>In other words, Eden is a part of 'ādāmāh. Cf. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation," 122. For etymology of Eden as a "well-watered" place, see below pp. 127ff.

<sup>22</sup>The Masoretic punctuation suggests that *deše'* (Gen 1:11, cf. 12) is a cognate accusative of the verb *tadše'* and means "vegetation" (cf. NIV). This term is then explained by concrete terms, i.e. "plants" and "trees."

<sup>23</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 108f., also cf. 110f.; see above pp. 26f.

<sup>24</sup>Note the term *šu'u* could be an Akk. cognate of Heb. *šîḥ*, though Akk. *šu'u* "grain" is attested only in later times, i.e. LB and NA, and could be an Aram. Lw. Cf. *AHw*, 1294: "eine Getreideart." Also Ug. *šht* (KTU 1.100:65) might be related to Heb. *šîḥ*; cf. M. C. Astour, "Two Ugaritic Serpent Charms," *JNES* 27 (1968), 25; Huehnergard, *UVST*, 96,

merismatic word pair and signify the totality of edible vegetation, which the earth (*eršetu*) produces under a normal situation. Also in *Enuma elish* VII:2, where the god Marduk is called "creator of barley and flax, who causes the green vegetable to shoot up" (*ba-nu-ú še-am u qé-e mu-še-šu-ú ur-qí-t[i]*), the totality of vegetation useful to man seems to be expressed by *še'u(m)*, *qû* and *urqítu*.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, while there is a difference in the nature of vegetation in these examples, it is possible that "shrub" and "plant" in Gen 2:5 are also a merismatic word pair, which signifies the totality of vegetation in the "field", and hence that the first half of vs. 5–6 describes the unproductive and "bare" state of the earth without any vegetation. This state of the "bare" earth is virtually the same as that of the earth which was *tôhû wâbôhû* (Gen 1:2), though in Gen 2:5–6 more concrete terms are used for describing the initial unproductive state of the earth and the water was covering only a part of the earth, i.e. the "land" (*'ădāmāh*).

#### 4. No Man to "Till" the Land

Now it is very interesting to note that the "unproductiveness" of the earth is expressed not only in terms of "no vegetation" but also in terms of "no people" in the Old Babylonian version of the Atra-Ḥasis epic:

#### Atra-Ḥasis Epic II iv 4–6:<sup>26</sup>

4) *u-ul ul-da er-še-tum re-e[m-ša]*

5) *ša-am-mu ú-ul ú-ši-a [ . . ]* 6) *ní-šu ú-ul am-ra-[tu<sub>4</sub>]*

"The womb of earth did not bear,

Vegetation did not sprout [ . . ] People were not seen [ . . ]"<sup>27</sup>

n. 61.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. W. G. Lambert & S. B. Parker, *Enuma Eliš: The Babylonian Epic of Creation — the Cuneiform Text* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), 41; CAD, Q (1982), 286 (on *qû*); AHw, 1222 (on *še'u(m)*) & 1432 (on *urqítu*).

<sup>26</sup>Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 78f. See above pp. 27f.

<sup>27</sup>Though Lambert & Millard analyse l. 6, *ní-šu ú-ul am-ra-[(a)-ma]*, as a monocolon, it seems that l. 5 and l. 6 constitute the second half of bicolon, which as a whole corresponds to l. 4, since the column iv (D) is always composed with bicola and a monocolon normally appears in a transitional point, e.g. II ii 20, in poetry (For monocolon in Ps 18:2, 23:1, 139:1 and in Ug. epics, see D. T. Tsumura, "The Problem of Childlessness in the Royal Epic of Ugarit: An Analysis of Krt [KTU 1.14:1]:1–25," in T. Mikasa [ed.], *Monarchies and Socio-Religious Traditions in the Ancient Near East* [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz,

This "unproductiveness" of the earth has been discussed above in relationship to the term *nabalkutu* in the Assyrian version. In Gen 1 this situation is expressed positively ("still") by *tōhû wābōhû*, which might be indirectly related to *nabalkutu* "to become unproductive." In Gen 2, on the other hand, it is described negatively ("not yet") in more concrete terms, i.e. "no vegetation" and "no man", as in the Old Babylonian version, though the term *'ādām* in the Genesis context bears a more specific meaning than the Akkadian *nišū*.<sup>28</sup>

In conclusion, the initial state of the earth in Gen 2:5–6 is described as unproductive in concrete terms, i.e. "no shrub" and "no plant" as well as "no man to till the land." In other words, the earth in Gen 2:5–6 was also the "bare" earth, which had "no vegetation" and "no man", like the earth in Gen 1:2 which is described as *tōhû wābōhû*, though the earth–water relationship is different in the two passages.<sup>29</sup>

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1984], 11–20). Note the following correspondence: S iv 58b–59: *libbalkat eršetu rēmšal* :: *šammu ul ušā šū ul i'ru* = 8 :: 9 // AH II iv 4–6: *lu ul ulda eršetum rēmšal* :: *šammu ul ušā [ ] nišu ul amrāma* = 8 :: 11.

<sup>28</sup>While the Hebrew *'ādām* refers only to the male "man" in the Gen 2 creation story (cf. v. 15: "to till the garden"), the "man" in the context which describes initial state of the earth (vs. 5–6) may possibly mean "man" in the generic sense, i.e. "mankind." Cf. R. S. Hess, "Splitting the Adam: the Usage of 'ADAM in Genesis i–v," *VT* [forthcoming].

<sup>29</sup>See below pp. 117ff.

## Chapter 6

### THE WATERS IN GEN 2

#### A. RAIN AND 'ēd

It has been noted in the previous chapter that the unproductive state of the earth in Gen 2:5-6, which is described concretely in terms of "no shrub of the field" and "no plant of the field" on the earth, is explained as due to the lack of rain. Rain of course comes from above (i.e. heaven) and is described as being caused by the Lord God (i.e. "The Lord God had not sent rain on the earth"). On the other hand, 'ēd is described as "coming up" (*ya'āleh*) from the earth ('ereš), either from the surface of the earth or from underground.<sup>1</sup> Thus, 'ēd, the water from below, is clearly distinguished from the rain water, the water from above,<sup>2</sup> in Gen 2:5-6.

In the situation of Gen 2:5-6, however, the rain-water does not play a significant role. On the other hand, the 'ēd-"water" is actively involved in the initial state of the earth, which is described negatively in terms of the "not yet" normal (or productive) earth. But, unlike the earth-water relationship in Gen 1:2, the 'ēd-water in 2:6 does not cover the whole earth. The author carefully distinguishes the "land" (*'ādamāh*), which was watered by the 'ēd-water, from the "earth" ('ereš), from which the 'ēd-water was coming up.

The etymology of 'ēd has been hotly disputed by scholars and is not settled yet. Let us examine various suggestions for its etymology in detail and place the term in its proper Biblical context.

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<sup>1</sup>The term 'ereš can mean one of the following: (1) the surface of the earth, (2) the underground, (3) the netherworld. See above pp. 68f.

<sup>2</sup>It is noteworthy that the Genesis account of the garden of Eden (2:4-3:24) does not give to the rain any role in bringing fertility to the land. In Canaanite religion it is Baal, the god of rain and storm, who brings fertility to the land. See below p. 128 for rain-gods who bring abundance to the land.

## B. ETYMOLOGY OF 'ēd

The term 'ēd has been rendered in various ways since the earliest translations; e.g. LXX, Vulg., Peshitta & Aquila translated 'ēd as "spring" or "fountain" (LXX: πηγῆ). On the other hand Aramaic versions rendered it as 'ānānā' "(rain-)cloud" or "vapour, mist."<sup>3</sup>

Modern English versions translate the term as "mist" (KJV; RSV; NEB note; NIV note), "flood" (RSV note; NEB), "water" (JB) or "streams" (NIV). These versions reflect the modern trend in etymological discussions of 'ēd. While the traditional meaning "mist" is still preserved as an option, the emphasis has shifted from "mist" to "flood" and from "flood" to "streams."

*"vapour, mist"*

This has been the traditional rendering of the term 'ēd since the earliest times of Bible translation. For example, the Targumim, both Onqelos and Jonathan, translate it as 'ānānā' in Job 36:27 as well as in Gen 2:6. LXX translates it as νεφέλην "a mass of clouds" in Job 36:27. As Barr points out, "it is, indeed, precisely this passage that caused traditional sources to understand the Gen 2:6 passage as 'mist' from the beginning."<sup>4</sup>

However, not only does this rendering lack any etymology,<sup>5</sup> but it also

<sup>3</sup>Cf. M. Ellenbogen, *Foreign Words in the Old Testament: their Origin and Etymology* (London: Luzac & Co., 1962), 13.

<sup>4</sup>J. Barr, "Limitations of Etymology as a Lexicographical Instrument in Biblical Hebrew," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1983), 50.

<sup>5</sup>Recently M. Görg suggested *yḏ.t* as an Eg. etymology for the term 'ēd and interpreted it as "dew." Cf. M. Görg, "Eine heterogene Überlieferung in Gen 2,6," *BN* 31 (1986), 19–24. However, his view is not convincing either etymologically or contextually. For one thing, Eg. *yḏ.t* involves two consonants, i.e. /y/ and /ḏ/, while Hebrew has only one, and Ar. 'iyād "Dunst", as cited by him, would suggest that the second consonant of the Egyptian term was preserved as /y/ throughout the centuries. On the other hand, if the Heb. borrowed the Egyptian word earlier (i.e. before New Kingdom), it would not have been from Eg. *yḏ.t*, for the Eg. term would have corresponded to Heb. \*yrd or \*yld before New Kingdom. Cf. A. Erman & H. Grapow, *WAS*, I, 36. Note also that they suggest the meanings, "Tau des Himmels" and "Wasser", which should be distinguished from *yḏ.t* "Duft." Moreover, "dew" would not go up from the "earth." Since no rain was yet on the earth, no dew should be expected on the earth; cf. a Ug. expression, *bl . ḏl . bl rbb* "No dew, no rain" (KTU 1.19 [1Aqht]:I:44) and a name and an epithet of one of Baal's

presents some contextual problems. Cassuto for example notes that "it is not *from the earth* but from the water that vapour rises" and "vapour waters the ground only through *rain*."<sup>6</sup> Hence it is argued that "vapour" is not suitable for the initial situation of the earth without "rain", the water from the above. On the other hand, one might suppose that this "vapour, mist" came up ultimately from the subterranean waters, the water below.<sup>7</sup> But, *hā'āreš* does not mean "cosmic reservoir", even though it sometimes refers to the underworld.

Barr suggests that the vapour might have "damped the surface, but it did not provide enough water for the plants to grow." "Perhaps the writer discounted the irrigative value of mist: for him only rain was enough to sustain proper plant life, and especially a garden."<sup>8</sup> But it is hard to hold that the author discounted the "irrigative value" of *'ēd* which he describes as "watering the whole surface of the land."

Three possible etymologies of this term have been proposed, Semitic, Sumerian via Akkadian, and Sumerian directly.

### 1. *Semitic Etymology?*

No satisfactory Semitic etymology has been suggested for the term *'ēd*. BDB simply notes that the derivation is dubious, though it cites an Arabic *'ada* "be strong" as a cognate.

#### *Dahood's proposal*

Recently Dahood argued for a Semitic etymology for *'ēd*, which he proposed to translate as "rain cloud" in the light of Eblaite month name *ī-du*. He translates the verse as "So he made a rain cloud come up from the

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daughters in Ug.: *ḥy bt rb* "Dew-girl, daughter of rain" (KTU 1.4 [51]:I:18 [17], IV:56, etc., see Gordon, *UT*, 406 & 482).

<sup>6</sup>U. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah* [Part I of *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961, 1944 [orig.]), 103.

<sup>7</sup>Dahood thinks that *'ēd* refers to the rain clouds, which "ascend from the cosmic reservoir under the earth," cf. M. Dahood, "Eblaite *ī-du* and Hebrew *'ēd*, 'Rain Cloud'," *CBQ* 43 (1981), 536.

<sup>8</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology as a Lexicographical Instrument," 51.



nether ocean, and it watered all the surface of the ground."<sup>9</sup>

According to him, since the terms 'ēd and ì-du are "associated with rain", the terms should mean "rain cloud" which, he thinks, "admirably suits" the texts where the terms appear, i.e. Gen 2:6, Job 36:27, the personal name *maṭrēd* (Gen 36:39; 1Chr 1:50) and the new calendar of Ebla. And, for etymology, he cites Arabic 'āda ('wd) "to bend, burden, weigh down" and 'awda "burden, load", which he thinks "can easily be reconciled with the proposed definition of 'ēd as 'rain cloud' or 'mass of clouds', which give the impression of an overhanging burden."<sup>10</sup>

However, his argument is not well-founded. First, he ignores the Masoretic distinction between two terms, 'ēd and ēd. The latter is always spelled with yōd and very likely belongs to a "different word type" from the former. And even for ēd ('-y-d), "calamity", this etymology from Arabic \*'wd is nothing but "a conceivable speculation" as Barr notes.<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, his major argument that Eblaite ì-du is "associated with rain" and hence Hebrew 'ēd means "rain cloud" is not certain. For one thing, the reading of the Eblaite month name itu NI.DU as itu ì-du has not been established and a different reading ì-túm is now suggested by Pettinato in his new treatment of the calendar of Ebla.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the correspondence between the names of the old calendar and those of the new is not simple. The fact that itu ga-šúm "Month of Rain" of the old calendar has a "celestial nature" does not support the contention that ì-du in the new calendar also has a "celestial nature."<sup>13</sup>

Thirdly, his translation, "So he made a rain cloud come up . . .", is not syntactically acceptable for Gen 2:6, even though the verb can be taken as hiphil.<sup>14</sup> With this rendering one would expect the Hebrew text to be something like wayya'āleh 'ēd. Also the translation "the nether ocean" for 'ereš is not acceptable; təhôm(ôt) would be expected for that meaning.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Dahood, "Eblaite ì-du and Hebrew 'ēd, 'Rain Cloud'," 536.

<sup>10</sup>Dahood, "Eblaite ì-du and Hebrew 'ēd, 'Rain Cloud'," 538.

<sup>11</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology as a Lexicographical Instrument," 50f.

<sup>12</sup>G. Pettinato, *The Archives of Ebla: an empire Inscribed in Clay* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1981), 150: itu ì-túm "month of the taxes." See also W. H. Shea, "The Calendars of Ebla. Part I. the Old Calendar," *AUSS* 18 (1980), 127-137; "The Calendars of Ebla. Part II. the New Calendar," *AUSS* 19 (1981), 59-69; "The Calendar of Ebla. Part III: Conclusion," *AUSS* 19 (1981), 115-126; D. Charpin, "Mari et le calendrier d'Ebla," *RA* 76 (1982), 2.

<sup>13</sup>Dahood, "Eblaite ì-du and Hebrew 'ēd, 'Rain Cloud'," 537, n. 13.

<sup>14</sup>Dahood thinks that "Yahweh is preferably understood here as the agent." Cf. Dahood, "Eblaite ì-du and Hebrew 'ēd, 'Rain Cloud'," 536.

<sup>15</sup>See above p. 59 on this term.

Moreover, his translation of *lā'ēdō* (Job 36:27) as "from his rain cloud" is based on his interpretation of Gen 2:6 and hence cannot be accepted.

Fourthly, if the Masoretic vocalization *maṭrēd* were the assimilated form from *māṭār + 'ēd* ("Rain from the Rain Cloud"),<sup>16</sup> one would expect the form *māṭārēd* < *māṭār-'ēd* < *māṭār + 'ēd*.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the LXX transcription Ματραειθ in Gen 36:39 may reflect an older spelling, but that would have to be spelling *maṭrā'ēd*, not *māṭār'ēd*.<sup>18</sup> This form *maṭrā'ēd* might change to *maṭrād* (< *maṭrā-ēd* < *maṭrā'ēd*), as reflected in the LXX transcription Ματραδ in 1Chr 1:50, but not to *maṭrēd*.

Thus, the revived claim for a Semitic etymology for the term *'ēd* in the light of Eblaite and Arabic has no solid foundation. The only other possibility is to seek a non-Semitic etymology for this term. In fact, a Sumerian connection has been suggested by many scholars since the end of the last century. Some suggest a Sumerian loan word into West Semitic via Akkadian and others, a Sumerian loan word directly into West Semitic.

## 2. Sumerian loan word via Akkadian?

The Akkadian word *edū* "flood", which is a Sumerian loan word from A.DÉ.A, was the first candidate for the origin of the Hebrew term *'ēd*, adopted by A. Dillmann (1892)<sup>19</sup>, Friedrich Delitzsch (1896),<sup>20</sup> P. Leander (1903),<sup>21</sup> H. Zimmern (1915),<sup>22</sup> H. Gunkel (1917), Gesenius–Buhl.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Dahood, "Eblaite *ī-duand* Hebrew *'ēd*, 'Rain Cloud'," 537.

<sup>17</sup>There would be loss of /r/ and the subsequent shift of accent.

<sup>18</sup>Baumgartner, *HAL*, 544, citing Meyer. According to Meyer, "מחרר, LXX Ματραειθ. Danach ist Wincklers Deutung מחרר 'Regen der Wolke' (Gesch. Isr. I 193, 1) wohl richtig." Cf. E. Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1906), 375, n. 1.

<sup>19</sup>Dillmann, *Die Genesis* (K. Hb. 11; Leipzig, 1892), 52 cited by E. A. Speiser, "ed in the Story of Creation," *BASOR* 140 (1955), 9, n. 2 [= *Oriental and Biblical Studies: Collected Writings of E. A. Speiser*, eds. by J. J. Finkelstein & M. Greenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1967), 19, n. 2]; O. Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (BZAW 78; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959), 101, n. 71.

<sup>20</sup>Cited by Speiser, "ed in the Story of Creation," 9, n. 2.

<sup>21</sup>P. Leander, *Über die Sumerischen Lehnwörter in Assyrischen* (Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1903; Uppsala: Akademiska Bokhandeln, 1903), 19.

<sup>22</sup>Zimmern, *AFw*, 44: "akk. *edū* Flut, Hochwasser: > viell. hebr. *'ēd* Gen. 2,6; Hi. 36,27 (oder gar < sum. *id* Fluss?)."

<sup>23</sup>Cited by Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres*, 101, n. 71.

However soon after, another term *id* "river" was suggested by scholars such as P. Dhorme (1907)<sup>24</sup> and E. Sachsse (1921).<sup>25</sup> But this view was not so popular as the first view until W. F. Albright (1939)<sup>26</sup> reinforced it with new information. He was soon followed by scholars such as U. Cassuto (1944).<sup>27</sup> However, E. A. Speiser (1955)<sup>28</sup> supported the *edû* connection once again. Since then, there have been two camps with regard to the Mesopotamian connection of the Hebrew term 'ēd.

While Albright's view ('ēd = *id*) is supported by a majority of scholars such as G. Castellino (1957), P. Reymond (1958), G. Fohrer (1963), E. J. Young, G. von Rad, W. H. Schmidt (1967), M. Sæbø (1970), P. K. McCarter (1973), C. Westermann (1974), P. D. Miller, Jr. (1985), G. J. Wenham (1987), etc.,<sup>29</sup> Speiser's view ('ēd = *edû*) is followed by O. Kaiser (1959), M. Ellenbogen (1962), W. von Soden (1965), W. Baumgartner (1967), etc.<sup>30</sup>

*Albright's view (1939): id (ÍD) => 'ēd*

According to Albright, the Hebrew term 'ēd should be identified with *Id*,

<sup>24</sup>P. Dhorme, *RB* (1907), 274, cited by Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 9, n. 2.

<sup>25</sup>Ed. Sachsse, "Der jahwistische Schöpfungsbericht: ein Erklärungsversuch," *ZAW* 39 (1921), 281f. who interprets 'ēd as "Kanalwasser."

<sup>26</sup>W. F. Albright, "The Babylonian Matter in the Predeuteronomic Primeval History (JE) in Gen 1–11," *JBL* 58 (1939), 102f.

<sup>27</sup>Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 104.

<sup>28</sup>Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 9–11.

<sup>29</sup>G. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation selon les textes bibliques et les textes cunéiformes," *Volume du Congress: Strasbourg 1956* (SVT 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), 121f.; P. Reymond, *L'eau, sa vie, et sa signification dans l'ancien testament* (SVT 6; Leiden: Brill, 1958), 169; Young, *Studies in Genesis One*, 62, n. 50; G. von Rad, *Genesis* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961, 1963, 1972), 74; W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1:1–2:4a und 2:4b–3:24*. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 197, n. 1; M. Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd – zwei sumerisch-akkadische Fremdwörter?" *ST* 24 (1970) 130–141; P. K. McCarter, "The River Ordeal in Israelite Literature," *HTR* 66 (1973), 403; C. Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband: Genesis 1–11 (BKAT I/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974), 273; P. D. Miller, Jr., "Eridu, Dunnu, and Babel: A Study in Comparative Mythology," *HAR* 9 (1985), 239; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 6, etc.

<sup>30</sup>Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres*, 102–104; Ellenbogen, *Foreign Words in the Old Testament*, 13; von Soden, *AHw* I (1965), 187; Baumgartner, *HAL* (1967), 11, etc.

"the subterranean fresh-water stream" in the light of "the name of the chief god of the Middle Euphrates region, . . . the river-god Id, perhaps also pronounced *Edda* by the Semites."<sup>31</sup> He supports his view by citing other examples of the name of the river god *Id* in *CT*, XII, 26, 38128, col. IV–VI, 16; *CT*, XXIV, 16, 23; *CT*, XXIX, 46, 23; Assyrian Law-code, col. III, 93, etc., <sup>d</sup>(A-ENGUR) *I-id* as well as the personal name *I-dī-dId*. While he admits that it "is probable that the [divine] name was also read as *Nâru* in Accadian," he says that "there is no clear evidence pointing to this alternative."<sup>32</sup> Thus, he holds that the divine name *ĪD* was read as *Id* in Akkadian.

Then he says, "The deity *Id* appears both as masculine and as feminine; it represents the fresh-water river in the underworld, whence all terrestrial rivers flow and whence the fertility of the Mesopotamian plain is derived." After noting "a hymn to the river of creation" and the "cult of the masculine *Id*" in Mari and in the Euphrates region, Albright concluded: "It is to the *Id*, the subterranean source of fresh water, that the 'ed of Gen 2:6 must be traced."<sup>33</sup> Thus, he sees a close connection between the divine name *Id* and the Hebrew 'ēd, both as the source of fertility.<sup>34</sup>

Soon after, Cassuto (1944) followed Albright's view, claiming that the term 'ēd, like the divine name *Id*, refers to "the waters of the deep generally and to all the springs issuing therefrom." This view, according to Cassuto, accords with the statement in Gen 2:10 where "the garden was watered by a river emanating from a spring, and not by rain." And "this blissful state of affairs prevailing in the garden of Eden and the similar circumstances obtaining in Egypt served as classic examples of a land blessed with fertility . . . (xiii 10)."<sup>35</sup>

*Speiser's view (1955): edû (A.DÉ.A) => 'ēd*

In response to Albright's view, Speiser reiterated the view that the Hebrew

<sup>31</sup>Albright, "The Babylonian Matter," 102.

<sup>32</sup>Albright, "The Babylonian Matter," 102f., n. 25.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>Recently the river goddess *Idu* in the Harab Myth has been identified with Hebrew 'ēd by P. D. Miller, Jr., "Eridu, Dunnu, and Babel," 239. He says: "As in Genesis 2, the first thing that is done in the creation is the creation of water, though in Genesis 2 it is sweet water to water the plants ('ēd) and in Harab it is sea (Tamtu). But in the Harab myth, river, i.e., *Idu* (= Heb. 'ēd), comes in the next generation as daughter of sea (Tamtu)." (p. 238f.) However, Gen 2 has nothing to do with the "creation of water" as such. See below pp. 113ff. on Sumerian etymologies of the Hebrew term 'ēd.

<sup>35</sup>Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 104.

'ēd should be compared with Akkadian *edû*.

(1) First, he points out that generally the Sumerian sign ÍD was read in Akkadian as *nāru*, not as *id*, and "could not, as such, have led to Heb. 'ēd." And "id, when so pronounced, had a specific cultic bearing, notably so in the Assyrian Laws."<sup>36</sup>

(2) Secondly, he notes that "the passage in Genesis suggests subterranean waters, a meaning that is not automatically implicit in the hitherto known values of Akk. *edû*," i.e. "flood, waves, swell." So he tries to show in the rest of his article that *edû* also meant the subterranean waters like *mīlu*, thus supporting the 'ēd = *edû* equation on a semantic basis. In his Genesis commentary (1964) he reconfirms his view and says: "The sense would be that of an underground swell, a common motif in Akkadian literary compositions."<sup>37</sup> He translates Gen 2:6 as "instead, a flow would well up from the ground and water the whole surface of the soil."<sup>38</sup>

Speiser's view has been supported by two major dictionaries, one Akkadian and the other Hebrew. *AHW* I (1965), 187 mentions his article and relates the Hebrew 'ēd to the Akkadian *edû*, which is however defined as "(bedrohliche) Wasserflut, Wogenschwalm." Baumgartner, *HAL* (1967), 11 follows Speiser's view more thoroughly and translates 'ēd (Gen 2:6) as "d. unterirdische Süßwasserstrom, Grundwasser(?)" while he translates 'ēdô (Job 36:27) as "d. himmlische Strom."

### Sæbø

However, Sæbø<sup>39</sup> recently responded to Speiser's view in detail, concluding that the Hebrew term 'ēd should be identified with the Sumero-Akkadian *id*, while the term 'ēd "Unglück" should be connected with the Akkadian *edû*, which has "ein katastrophentypischer Charakter." Through him, Albright's equation 'ēd = *id* has been accepted by Westermann (1974) and other recent commentators.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the recent trend seems to favor Albright's view, but let us examine once more in detail Speiser's argument

<sup>36</sup>Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 9.

<sup>37</sup>E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB 1; Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), 16.

<sup>38</sup>Speiser, *Genesis*, 14.

<sup>39</sup>Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd," 130–141.

<sup>40</sup>Most recently, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 58.

and Sæbø's response in the light of recent scholarly development.

*The issue: id or edû?*

The issue here is threefold: graphical or graphemic, phonological and semantic.

a. *Graphical or graphemic problems*

*Should the Sumerian 𒀩 be read in Akkadian as Id or as Nāru?*

Albright vs Speiser

Albright (1939) argued that the Sumerian 𒀩 should be read as *Id* in Akkadian and that there is "no clear evidence" pointing to the reading *Nāru*, though it "is probable that the [divine] name was *also* read as *Nāru* in Accadian."<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, Speiser (1955) holds that "*id*, when so pronounced, had a specific cultic bearing, notably so in the Assyrian Laws." While he accepts that there are exceptions to this, he says that "we can be sure of Akkadian *id* as distinct from *nāru* *only* when the term is spelled out syllabically; and such explicit instances are relatively rare."<sup>42</sup> He goes on to say, "Generally, moreover, the Sumerian logogram in question was read in Akkadian as *nāru* "river" and could not, as such, have led to Heb. 'ēd."<sup>43</sup>

Sæbø

Sæbø thinks that Speiser's explanation that "the Sumerian Logogram in question was read in Akkadian as *nāru* 'river'" is probably right. However, he questions Speiser's conclusion that it "could not, as such, have led to Heb. 'ēd", for Sæbø holds that the Sumerian 𒀩 was read as *id* in Akkadian, citing *AHw* I, *CAD*, I-J (1960) and *AHw* II uncritically.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Albright, "The Babylonian Matter," 102f., n. 25.

<sup>42</sup>Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 9, n. 7.

<sup>43</sup>Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 9.

<sup>44</sup>Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd," 132, n. 18.

CAD, I-J (1960) & AHw (1965–1972)

According to *CAD*, I-J (1960), the river god <sup>d</sup>ÍD appears as *Id* in the following Akkadian texts: (1) in the contexts referring to the river ordeal – Code of Hammurabi (OB) & others; (2) Maqlu-incantation text; (3) Middle Assyrian laws (written as <sup>d</sup>ÍD<sup>i-id</sup>) as well as in some Sumeru-Akkadian bilingual lexical texts.<sup>45</sup> *AHw*, Bd I (1965) also cites similar texts under "*id* auch *ittu* III? (sum. Fw.) 'Fluß(gott).'"<sup>46</sup> However, *AHw*, Bd II (1972) on *nāru(m)* expresses reservations about the reading of <sup>d</sup>ÍD in Code of Hammurabi (OB), citing there once again the same text, "KH V 39", which was cited under *id* (*AHw* I, 364) before. Three texts (CT 24, 16, 23/5; Šurpu S. 52, 23; mA KAV 1 III 93) are cited as examples for reading <sup>d</sup>ÍD as the god *Id*. However, "Schöpfungsfluß" (DINGIR.ÍD), which refers to a feminine deity,<sup>47</sup> is read as *nāru* in *AHw*: *attī n. bānāt kalāma* (TuL 91, 10 u D).<sup>48</sup> Sæbø seems to misrepresent this explanation of *AHw* by adding his own comment "(vgl. hierzu Gen 2:6 u. 2:10ff)" after *AHw*'s comment: "im Ordal u als Gott. a) <sup>d</sup>ÍD meist wohl <sup>d</sup>ÍD zu lesen . . . b) Schöpfungsfluß."

Lambert (1965)

In 1965, Lambert presented new evidence that the divine name <sup>d</sup>ÍD was read as *nāru* in Akkadian texts. For example, in a PN *na-ru-um-il* ("The-river-is-a-god")<sup>49</sup> of Old Babylonian period the divine river is spelled as *nārum*.<sup>50</sup> And the god of the river ordeal is referred to as *nāru*, not as *Id*, in an Akkadian text from Ugarit: *tā-me-e a-na na-ri* (*BWL*, 116, 3). Furthermore, according to Lambert, "In a *tamītu*-text from the libraries of Ashurbanipal (K 4721 obv. 2, unpublished) there is reference to [*annanna ap*]il *annanna šá ina <sup>d</sup>na-rum a-mat-* . . ."<sup>51</sup> Therefore, Albright's view that the Sumerian <sup>d</sup>ÍD should be read as *Id* in Akkadian and that there is "no

<sup>45</sup>*CAD*, I-J (1960), 8. Based on the "evidence" in this volume, McCarter also held in 1973 that "this name for the cosmic river was normally pronounced *id* in Akk. as well as Sum." Cf. McCarter, "The River Ordeal in Israelite Literature," 403 & n. 4.

<sup>46</sup>*AHw* I (1965), 364.

<sup>47</sup>Note however that there is a variant text which has a masculine *at-ta*. Cf. L. W. King, *The Seven Tablets of Creation* (London: Luzac & Co., 1902), 128f., n. 2 & 200f.

<sup>48</sup>*AHw* II (1972), 748.

<sup>49</sup>This name may simply mean "The river is divine", as suggested by Dr. R. S. Hess.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. *Na-ru-um*-DINGIR (CT 4, 50b:8, also TCL 18, 103:3) cited by *CAD*, N/1 (1980), 374.

<sup>51</sup>W. G. Lambert, "Nebuchadnezzar King of Justice," *Iraq* 27 (1965), 11.

clear evidence" pointing to the reading *Nāru* is no longer tenable. Certainly, as Lambert says, "the glosses in the Middle Assyrian laws (*i-id*) do not prove that for every occasion <sup>d</sup>íd is to be read *id* not *nārum*."

### Hirsch (1968/69) & Roberts (1972)

Hirsch (1968/69) also supports the reading *nāru* for the Sumerian <sup>d</sup>íd. He cites an Old Assyrian title, *ku-um-ri-im ša na-ri-im* "priest of the god River" which is replaced by AḤ.ME *ša íD* in a certain text.<sup>52</sup> Although the DINGIR sign is missing before ÍD, Hirsch thinks that "Fluß-(gott)" is doubtlessly meant in the context. Thus, the reading *nārum* for the (masculine) divine name ÍD is confirmed in Old Assyrian. Moreover, while lexical texts like CT 24, 16 cannot be discounted, the reading *Id* seems to be "eine nachaltbabylonische, vielleicht künstliche, bewußte Differenzierung," as Hirsch holds.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, J. J. M. Roberts included the god *Nāru* in his list of the earliest Semitic gods and goddesses. According to him, *Nāru*, "a genuine Semitic name for the river god", was sometimes replaced by a Sumerian loan word, *Id*, "later than the Old Akkadian period."<sup>54</sup>

### Borger (1978) & CAD, N (1980)

In 1978, Borger mentioned two possibilities: "<sup>d</sup>íd = Flussgott *Íd* oder *Nāru* (AHw 364a, CAD I/J 8 [dazu CAD A/I 150f.], Lambert Iraq 27 11)."<sup>55</sup> After twenty years, *CAD* lists the <sup>d</sup>íd in Maqlu III 62 & 77, which was earlier taken as masculine and therefore was discussed under *id* (*CAD*, I-J, 8), now under *nāru* (*CAD*, N/1, 374). This means that regardless of its gender, <sup>d</sup>íd can be read as *nāru*, thus invalidating *CAD*'s earlier hypothesis that the "logogram <sup>d</sup>íd, because it is constructed as masc., is to be read *id* rather than *nāru*, which is fem."<sup>56</sup> Other examples of the river-god *Nāru* cited by *CAD*, N/1, besides those by Lambert and Hirsch, are *na-ru-um* (RA 44, 43:5 [Old Babylonian extispicy]) and PN *ša na-ri-im* (ICK 1,

<sup>52</sup>I.e. unpublished tablets from Kültepe. See now *CAD*, N/1, 375.

<sup>53</sup>H. Hirsch, "Zur Lesung von <sup>d</sup>ÍD," *Afo* 22 (1968/69), 38. His suggestion has been supported by scholars such as J. Bottéro, *Mythes et Rites de Babylone* (Genève – Paris: Slatkine – Champion, 1985), 290.

<sup>54</sup>J. J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, 46.

<sup>55</sup>R. Borger, *ABZ*, 200.

<sup>56</sup>*CAD*, I-J, 8.



84:9).<sup>57</sup>

### Bottéro (1981)

In his comprehensive treatment of the river ordeal in ancient Mesopotamia, Bottéro reads the <sup>d</sup>ÍD of Code of Hammurabi (e.g. §2) and Ur-Nammu Code (§132) as *Nārum*.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, he acknowledges the reading *Id* as the name of the river god in Middle Assyrian law code (<sup>i</sup>d-*id* in §17:II:71, etc.) and newly published Mari letters (<sup>d</sup>I-*id* in p. 1036, l. 23; p. 1037, l. 29).<sup>59</sup> As for the spelling ÍD.DA in the Mari letters, however, Bottéro reads *Nārum*,<sup>60</sup> as he does usually in the cases of ÍD in other Mari letters.

In the light of the above, the initial question "Should the Sumerian <sup>d</sup>ÍD be read in Akkadian as *Id* or as *Nāru*?" can be answered as follows. While the equation <sup>d</sup>ÍD = *id* is still possible in special cases such as Middle Assyrian <sup>d</sup>ÍD<sup>i-id</sup> with "a specific cultic bearing", the Sumerian <sup>d</sup>ÍD was probably read as *Nāru* under normal situations as in the case of the common noun *nāru* (=ÍD) "river."<sup>61</sup> The fact that the reading of <sup>d</sup>ÍD was specified as <sup>i-id</sup> suggests that that reading was not the normal one for the Sumerian sign. Thus, we can once more support Speiser's view that "we can be sure of Akkadian *id* as distinct from *nāru* only when the term is spelled out syllabically; and such explicit instances are relatively rare. Moreover, the Sumerian logogram in question was read generally in Akkadian as *nāru* 'river' and could not, as such, have led to Heb. 'ēd."

### b. Phonological problems

*Does the 'ēd – edû equation have a phonological difficulty?*

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<sup>57</sup>CAD, N/1 (1980), 375.

<sup>58</sup>J. Bottéro, "L'Ordalie en Mésopotamie ancienne," *ASN*, Serie III, XI, 4 (1981), 1021–1024.

<sup>59</sup>Bottéro, "L'Ordalie en Mésopotamie ancienne," 1024 & 1036f.

<sup>60</sup>Bottéro, "L'Ordalie en Mésopotamie ancienne," 1043, l. 33 & 1044, l. 35, 44. See also n. 53 (above).

<sup>61</sup>Note that in *Ug V* (1968), 238, the sign "i" is used for i<sub>7</sub>(ÍD) and is equated with Akk. *na-a-ru* (Text 135 [RS 21.62]: R: 9'). Also CAD, N/1 (1980), 368; Huehnergard, *UVST*, 66.

Speiser

The second problem is whether it was possible for the Akkadian *edû* to be borrowed into Hebrew as *'ed*. Speiser gave two reasons for defending his view against the criticism that "*edû* should have resulted in some such form as Heb. \**'ēdê*." First, the term *'ed* in Hebrew is a rare term, appearing only twice and the Akkadian *edû* is itself a Sumerian loan word. Second, "even an established \**'ēdê* could have developed an alloform *'ed*." Speiser claims that "Heb. *'ēs* 'fire' which has a well attested alloform *'issê*"<sup>62</sup> supports the possibility of this development.

Sæbø

As a rebuttal to Speiser's explanation, Sæbø, following Hoftijzer,<sup>63</sup> points out that *'issê* is not "Feuer" but a term for offering like the Ug. *'itt* "Gabe."<sup>64</sup> It is certainly difficult to support Speiser's view that *'ed* is an alloform of \**'ēdê* by the analogy of *'ēs* – *'issê*, if the term *'issê* has nothing to do with fire.<sup>65</sup> However, Sæbø's phonological explanation is not without problems either. The examples which Sæbø cited as evidence for the phonological change *edû* > *'ed* "Unglück" are not convincing.<sup>66</sup>

A final long vowel

<sup>62</sup>Speiser, "ed in the Story of Creation," 11.

<sup>63</sup>J. Hoftijzer, "Das sogenannte Feueropfer," *Hebräische Wortforschung: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Walter Baumgartner* (SVT 16; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 133. Cf. also G. R. Driver, "Ugaritic and Hebrew Words," *Ug VI* (1969), 181–184. However, the identification of Heb. *'issê* with Ug. *'itt* has been questioned by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz & J. Sanmartín, "Ein Brief des Königs an die Königin-Mutter (RS 11.872 = CTA 50). Zur Frage ug. *'itt* = hebr. *'sh?*" *UF 6* (1974), 460–462.

<sup>64</sup>Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ed," 134.

<sup>65</sup>Note that in Ugaritic the term for "fire" *ist* is etymologically different from *itt*.

<sup>66</sup>He lists the following examples (see Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ed," 140)

akk. *bulû* (mA *bula'u*) 'Dürrholz' > hebr. *bûl*,

akk. *kutû* > hebr. *kût* (2Kg 17,30) bzw. *kûtâ* (2Kg 17,24),

akk. *qutû* bzw. *sutû* > hebr. *qô'*

The first example might support the interchange of the noun of III weak pattern (cf. mA *bulâ'u*) with that of II weak (\*bwl) in Semitic languages. However, this does not help explain the change *edû* > *'ed*, since Akkadian *edû* itself is a loan word from non-Semitic, i.e. Sumerian. The second example is not valid since it is based on the wrong information on *Kutû* in *KB*, 429, which *HAL* corrects as *Kûtû*. The /t/ – /' / correspondence in the third example is rather hard to explain; we would expect a Hebrew form like *qôt* or *qô'*.

According to S. A. Kaufman, "Akkadian nouns ending in a final long vowel usually appear in Aramaic with final *-ê*, which becomes *-yâ* in the emphatic state, [e.g.] *asû*, *attalû*, *burû*, . . ." <sup>67</sup> And, the Akkadian *edû* was actually borrowed into the Babylonian Talmud as '(y)dw(w)t' "foam of the sea" with the long vowel *-û* preserved. <sup>68</sup> Two exceptions are, according to him, Assyrian terms,

*bārānû* "rebel" => Aram *brywn'*

*šinepû* "two-thirds" => Aram *snb* <sup>69</sup>

However, whether or not the second example had a final long vowel in the Neo-Assyrian period is not certain. <sup>70</sup> These evidences for Akkadian loan words in Aramaic would suggest that an Akkadian word with a final long vowel was normally borrowed into Hebrew, or Canaanite, with the final long vowel.

In fact, the form without the loss of the final vowel is preserved in Hebrew in the form *'ēdô* (Job 36:27), as recently suggested by M. H. Pope. <sup>71</sup> Kaufman even suggests that Hebrew *'ēd* (Gen 2:6) is to be emended to *'ēdô* in the light of Job 36:27. <sup>72</sup>

### Variant forms

It may be that the Akkadian term *edû* entered Canaanite with the long form and subsequently experienced a loss of the final long vowel: /edû/ => /'ed/ > /'ēd/, as in the geographical name Akkad (Heb. *'akkad* < Akk. *akkadû*). <sup>73</sup> In this case, the form *'ēd* is an alloform of *'ēdô*. While Speiser's example, *'ēs* 'fire' - *'iššê*, for explaining the proposed form \**'ēdê* as an alloform of *'ēd* should be given up, his basic assumption of the equation *'ēd* = *edû* is to be supported with minor revision.

<sup>67</sup>Kaufman, *AIA*, 149.

<sup>68</sup>Kaufman, *AIA*, 47, also cf. *HAL*, 11.

<sup>69</sup>Kaufman, *AIA*, 41 & 103. Since the last two are loans from Assyrian, Kaufman conjectures that the Heb. *'ēd*, which is frequently connected with the Akk. *edû*, might be considered "a loan from Assyrian as well." (p. 47, n. 80).

<sup>70</sup>See *AHW*, 1242.

<sup>71</sup>M. H. Pope, *Job*<sup>3</sup> (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1973), 273; cf. F. I. Andersen, *Job* (TOTC; Leicester: IVP, 1976), 263. See below p. 115, for a further discussion of this passage.

<sup>72</sup>Kaufman, *AIA*, 47.

<sup>73</sup>B. Groneberg, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der altbabylonischen Zeit* (RGTC 3; Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1980), 7, listing OB spellings *a-ka-du-um*, *ak-ka-du-û*, etc.

c. *Semantic problems*

*Does Akk edû really refer to a rare and catastrophic event?*

The Akkadian *edû* has often been taken as referring to a rare and catastrophic event, which does not fit the context of Gen 2:5–6. Hence, many commentators have followed Albright's view. The main issue here is this: Does Akk *edû* really refer to a rare and catastrophic event?

Speiser

In order to support the equation 'ēd = *edû*, Speiser first cites a Sumerian–Akkadian bilingual vocabulary, VAT 10270 iv 44 ff., which lists the following entries:<sup>74</sup>

(Sum)	A.GI <sub>6</sub> .A	=	(Akk)e-gu-[u]
	A.DÉ.A	=	e-du-u
	A.SI.GA	=	e-si-gu
	A.ZI.GA	=	me-lu
	A.MAḪ	=	bu-tuq-tum

And he explains that "all these are synonyms for certain bodies of water (=A). . . The character of the group as a whole is indicated by . . . *butuqtum* 'break-through' (of the subterranean water); *mēlu* 'flood, (ground) flow'."<sup>75</sup> Thus Speiser sees here some association of meanings between *edû* and *mīlu* and *butuqtum*.

Secondly, he recognizes one of the common usages of *mīlu* as "the flow that rises from underground springs" in the Atra-Ḫasis Epic and adds the following comment: "Synonymous with it is the term for water that has broken through to the surface (*butuqtum*), and also *edû*." Here too Speiser use the term "synonymous" in a very loose and rather impressionistic way.

Thirdly, he takes a note of another lexical text where "*edû* is defined as *šaḳû ša eqlī* 'watering of the field'" Speiser notes that this equation has long

<sup>74</sup>Cf. CAD, E (1958), 336.

<sup>75</sup>Speiser, "ed in the Story of Creation," 10.

been known<sup>76</sup> and that "both with Hebrew 'ēd and with Akkadian *edû* the same verb (*šqy*) [is] employed to describe the function of the respective nouns." Consequently, Speiser sees the three terms 'ēd, *ya'lē* and *hišqâ* in Gen 2:6 as corresponding to three Akkadian words, *edû*, *mēlu* and *šaqu* and concludes saying, "Plainly, the Biblical verse might have been lifted verbatim from an Akkadian lexical work."<sup>77</sup>

Speiser's argument is certainly semantically loose. Especially his use of "synonymous" and "synonyms" is not precise enough and his examples are not strong enough as evidence for the meaning "subterranean water" for *edû*. Hence he is sharply criticized by Sæbø.

### Sæbø

According to Sæbø, Speiser's comment that "All . . . [are] synonymous for certain bodies of water (=A)" is only conjecture. Though Speiser takes *mīlu* and *edû* as being synonymous, this contradicts the meanings of the two words, since according to *CAD* the "phenomenon referred to by *edû* . . . is a rare and catastrophic event . . . as against *mīlu*, the annual high water."<sup>78</sup> Hence, Sæbø concludes that Speiser's attempt to understand *edû* as "unterirdisches, hervorbrechendes (Grund-)Wasser" is untenable. 'ēd in Gen 2:6 means "ein aufsteigender und bewassernder Wasserstrom" which has "eine lebenspendende Funktion"; it is probably to be connected with "dem kultisch bezogenen *ĪD/id*."<sup>79</sup>

### Barr

Barr<sup>80</sup> also follows *CAD*'s comment without reservation. He says: "As *CAD* (E, p.35f.) makes clear with numerous examples, *edû* means something far more violent and catastrophic than can be related to the Hebrew

<sup>76</sup>Cf. P. A. Deimel, *Šumerisches Lexikon* (Roma: Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1930), 579, 324b; it was cited, e.g., by E. Sachsse, "Der jahwistische Schöpfungsbericht: ein Erklärungsversuch," *ZAW* 39 (1921), 281. (Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 10, n. 10.)

<sup>77</sup>Speiser, "'ed in the Story of Creation," 11.

<sup>78</sup>*CAD*, E (1958), 36: "The phenomenon referred to by *edû* (a.dé.a in contrast to [a.si].ga also in ASKT p. 98:34, Akk. col. broken) is a rare and catastrophic event (cf. the correspondence *mir = edû*) as against *mīlu*, the annual high water. Albright, RA 16 175."

<sup>79</sup>Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd," 135.

<sup>80</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology," 49.

passage." For this Barr gives the following reasons. First, "CAD gives as its main gloss *onrush of water, high water*: it is something like a huge wave that may sink a ship, or again it is 'the high tide of the sea' which can overwhelm a camp." Secondly, "used of rivers, *edû* may be its high flooding, but CAD emphasizes that this is a rare and catastrophic phenomenon." Thirdly, in "a hymn to Marduk . . . *bēl kuppī naqbī e-dī-e u tāmāti* 'lord of sources, springs, high waters and seas', it is the *kuppu* and the *naqbu* . . . that might have fitted the Hebrew passage, while the *edû* is a phenomenon of the high seas."

Thus, Sæbø and Barr depend heavily on CAD's examples and especially on its final remark: "The phenomenon referred to by *edû* (a.dé.a in contrast to [a.si].ga . . . ) is a rare and catastrophic event (cf. the correspondence *mir = edû*) as against *mīlu*, the annual high water."<sup>81</sup>

*mir = edû*

However, a closer look at the evidence shows that the Akkadian term *edû* does not necessarily refer to violent water as such. For one thing, CAD's comment on *edû* as "a rare and catastrophic event" in connection with the "correspondence *mir = edû*" is not well founded. In a bilingual lexical text from the Old Babylonian period, lines 11–12<sup>82</sup>

line 11	mi-ir	//	TÛN-gunû	//	me-ḥu-û-um	"Sturm"
line 12	mi-ir	//	TÛN-gunû	//	e-du-û-um	"Wasserflut"

certainly refer to a similar phenomenon, but other correspondences in the same text show that they are not necessarily synonymous. Note the following "correspondences":

line 7	gi-ém	//	TÛN	//	ši-iq-lum	"Schekel-gewicht"
line 8	gi-ém	//	TÛN	//	pa-a-šum	"Axt"
line 23	ša-a	//	ŠÀ	//	li-ib-bu-um	"Herz"
line 24	ša-a	//	ŠÀ	//	ir-ru-um	"Eingeweide"

Therefore, there is no reason why we should take *edû* as synonymous with *meḥûm* "storm", hence referring to a "catastrophic" event.

<sup>81</sup>CAD, E, 36.

<sup>82</sup>B. Landsberger, *Die Serie Ur-e-a = nâqu* (MSL 2; Roma: Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1951), 149: 11–12.

### High water

Moreover, *edû* (e<sub>4</sub>-dé-a) in contrast to *esigu*<sup>83</sup>(e<sub>4</sub>-si-ga) "ebb, low water" simply implies that the former means "high water." In fact the term *edû* refers to "the annual high water" of spring in the several texts cited by CAD itself. For example, in the text which reads "the Tigris and the Euphrates *ina mîli* (A.KAL) *kiššati edû pān šatti napališ usētiq* I crossed as if it were dry land at the height of the flooding, the high water of spring",<sup>84</sup> the term *edû* appears in apposition to *mîlu* without any implication of it having a destructive power. One other text, which mentions *ina Ajari ūmu adanni edē pān šatti* "in the month of Ajaru, at the season of the high waters of spring [the beginning of the year],"<sup>85</sup> suggests that *edû* sometimes means "the annual high water" like *mîlu*. In another text, irrigation (*šqy*) "with waters as abundant as the huge waves of the (annual) inundation" (*kî gipiš edī mē nuḥšī*)<sup>86</sup> is mentioned.

### Destructive water

It is interesting to note that in the last cited example *gipiš* the attributive of *edû* is used with *mîlu* also in a positive sense, as in *mîlu gapšum illakam* "an abundant [beneficial] flood will come."<sup>87</sup> On the other hand, *edû* certainly appears in a negative context as in the following texts:

*edû dannu ina tâmtim liḫabbīšina* "may a huge wave (in parallelism with *šamru agû*) sink them (your ships) in the sea"<sup>88</sup>

*edû tâmati gapš[īš iš]šamma qirib zarātija ērumma*  
"the high tide of the sea rushed on in great mass and entered my tents"<sup>89</sup>

*edû gapšu ša la iššannanu* MURUB<sub>4</sub>-Šu

<sup>83</sup>CAD, E (1958), 336.

<sup>84</sup>H. Winckler, *Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons*, 44 D 36, cited by CAD, E, 36, b & CAD, M/2, 70.

<sup>85</sup>OIP 2 104 v 70 (Senn.), cited by CAD, E, 36, b.

<sup>86</sup>Lyon Sar. p. 6:37, cited by CAD, E, 36, b.

<sup>87</sup>YOS 10 25:58 (OB omen), cited by CAD, M/2, 71. Note also *mîlu ḫaḫdum illakam* (RA 44 pl. 3 p. 40:22 [OB omen]), cited by CAD, M/2, 71.

<sup>88</sup>Borger Esarh. 109 iv 12 (treaty), cited by CAD, E, 35.

<sup>89</sup>OIP 2 74:74 (Senn.), cited by CAD, E, 35.

"the strong tide whose onslaught cannot be rivaled"<sup>90</sup>

However, it is important to note that the term *edû* itself has nothing to do with violence. It is its adjectives like *dannu* (// *šamru*) and *gapšu* (also *ezzu* and *kaššu* in the following example) that add a "catastrophic" nature to the term *edû*. This is true even in the case of *mīlu*, which is followed by an adjective *kaššu*, in the following example:

*Araḫtu nār* (ÍD) *ḫegalli agû ezzi edû šamru* (var. [a]gû *šamru edû ezzu*)  
*mīlu kaššu tamšil abūbu ibbablamma āla . . . mē ušbi'*

"the Arahtu, river of fertility, (now) an angry wave, a raging tide,

a huge flood, a very Deluge, overflowed and inundated the city (of Babylon)."<sup>91</sup>

It is not just *agû* and *edû* that refer to a catastrophic water in this text. Even the usually "beneficial" flood (*mīlu*) is also used for describing the destructive nature of the river Araḫtu. Therefore, CAD's comment, the "phenomenon referred to by *edû* is a rare and catastrophic event as against *mīlu*, the annual high water," does not apply to the present text either.<sup>92</sup>

While Barr argues for the catastrophic nature of *edû* on the basis of a hymn to Marduk<sup>93</sup> which mentions *bēl kuppī naqbī edē u tāmāti* "lord of sources, springs, high waters and seas", this title simply describes Marduk as the "lord of high waters" and it has nothing to do with *edû* as a negative entity, though Barr interprets it as "the high seas." This text simply puts *edû* "high waters" and *tāmātu* "seas" in a close contact, without specifying whether the former is "high waters" of a river or that of the sea.

### High tide?

The term *edû* sometimes refers to a "high tide" of the sea in texts like the *edû dannu ina tām̄tim* cited above and seems to have a closer association with the sea than *mīlu* (with river).<sup>94</sup> However, the ancient Semites

<sup>90</sup>AKA 223:15 (Ashurnasirpal), cited by CAD, Q (1982), 13.

<sup>91</sup>Borger Esarh. 14 Ep. 7:39, cited by CAD, E, 35; N<sub>1</sub>, 372. See also Nabopolassar & Nebuchadnezzar, cited by CAD, M<sub>2</sub>, 72.

<sup>92</sup>Cf. also *mē mīli rašubbat* ÍD "water of the high flood, overwhelming power of the river" (Maqlu VII 179), cited by CAD, N<sub>1</sub>, 372.

<sup>93</sup>BA 5 393 i 34 (SB hymn to Marduk)

<sup>94</sup>AHw, 187: *edû ša tām̄ti* (Sn 74, 72); AHw, 1353: *tām̄tu*: j). On the other hand, *mīlu* is a "seasonal flooding of the rivers – association with the rivers, rain, and the depth (*nagbu*)," cf. AHw, 652f.; CAD, M<sub>2</sub> (1977), 70–71.



seemingly understood the *edû*-water to have come out of Apsu, the subterranean ocean. In Gilgamesh Epic XI: 297f. Gilgamesh bewails his loss of the plant of life and says to his companion (in von Soden's translation):<sup>95</sup>

- (297) Jetzt steigt zwanzig Doppelstunden weit die Flut  
 (298) Und ich liess, als den Schacht ich grub, das Werkzeug fallen!  
 (299) Welches könnte ich finden, das an meine *Seite ich legte*?  
 (300) Wäre ich doch zurückgewichen und hätte das Schiff am Ufer gelassen!

Albright took this passage as "primarily an aetiological myth explaining the origin of the tides."<sup>96</sup> However, no recent scholars read *tâmta* "sea" in l. 299<sup>97</sup> and hence there is no evidence that *edû* here refers to the tide of the sea. Since it is understood as having risen as a result of the hero's forgetting to replace "the cover of *râtu* which communicated with the *apsû*,"<sup>98</sup> *edû* here refers to the flooding of the subterranean ocean.

### Subterranean water

If Hebrew *edû* should refer to the "river", there is the question why the writer of Genesis should borrow the Akkadian "divine" name *Id* when there was a common Akkadian noun *nâru* for river. In fact, the writer uses *nâhâr*, the cognate of Akkadian *nâru*, in 2:10, a few verses later. This makes it more difficult to suppose that 'ēd is an Akkadian (< Sumerian) loan word with a meaning "river."

On the other hand, *edû*, defined as "water flooding out of the subterranean ocean" seems a better candidate, without philological difficulties.

<sup>95</sup>A. Schott & W. von Soden, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1958, 1982), 105.

<sup>96</sup>W. F. Albright, "Notes on Assyrian Lexicography and Etymology," *RA* 16 (1919), 175. See also Speiser's translation in *ANET* (1950) 96:

And now the tide will bear (it) twenty leagues away!  
 When I opened the *water-pipe* and spilled the gear.

Following Albright, he explains that "the opening of the *râtu* (normally "pipe, tube"), apparently took place in connection with Gilgamesh's dive (cf. also l. 271)." Speiser also notes that the same term is used, "perhaps to a pipe connecting with a source of sweet waters which would nourish the miraculous plant" in the *Eridu Creation Story* (n. 232).

<sup>97</sup>Cf. R. C. Thompson's reading in *The Epic of Gilgamesh: Text, Transliteration, and Notes* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1930); A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*. Second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 92; Speiser, *ANET*, 97; von Soden's translation; R. Labat *et al*, *Les religions du Proche-Orient asiatique* (Fayard/Denoël, 1970), 221: "le flot."

<sup>98</sup>Albright, "Notes on Assyrian Lexicography and Etymology," 176.

Moreover, this interpretation is basically supported by the ancient versions (LXX, Aquila, Vulgate & Peshitta), which translate the term 'ēd as "spring, fountain" (cf. Num 21:17),<sup>99</sup> and fits the Genesis context well.<sup>100</sup> Before we discuss the relationship of 'ēd-water with the earth in its context,<sup>101</sup> let us review another possibility for the origin of the term.

### 3. *Direct Sumerian loan word?*

Already in 1915 Zimmern commented, as an alternative to the 'ēd = edû equation, that the term 'ēd may be a Sumerian loan word: "oder gar < sum. id Fluss?"<sup>102</sup> Some scholars misinterpret Albright's view and imply that the Hebrew 'ēd is a direct loan word from Sumerian. For example, Castellino says, "Pour le sumérien id s'était prononcé W. F. Albright, mais tout récemment E[!]. Speiser est intervenu dans le débat en faveur de l'accadien edû. Mais, peut-être, les arguments en faveur d'une dérivation du sumérien ne sont-ils pas encore entièrement épuisés."<sup>103</sup> Then he suggests that phonetically 'ēd corresponds with the Sumerian<sup>104</sup> id better than the Akkadian edû.

Recently, Barr suggested as one of the options that "'ēd is indeed derived from the Mesopotamian culture but represents not the Akkadian edû . . . but the Sumerian id from which it is said to be derived and which commonly means 'river', being translated into Akkadian as nāru with this meaning. The Hebrew would then be derived directly from the Sumerian." And he admits that this Sumerian derivation is "quite possible purely linguistically."<sup>105</sup>

#### a. *Sumerian id*

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<sup>99</sup>According to Cassuto, "it is hard to imagine that Scripture refers to only *one* spring, since it says: *and watered the WHOLE FACE OF THE GROUND*", cf. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 104. However, if the term 'ēd refers to an unusually huge "fountain", there should be no problem in rendering it thus.

<sup>100</sup>For the usage in Job 36:27, see below p. 115.

<sup>101</sup>See below pp. 121f.

<sup>102</sup>Zimmern, *AFw*, 44.

<sup>103</sup>Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation," 121f.

<sup>104</sup>Note that Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd," 135 cites Castellino's "Sum. id" as the Akk [or "sum.-akk."] *id*.

<sup>105</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology," 64, n.10.

However, it is not so certain that the Sumerian *íd* (A-ENGUR) was borrowed as \**'id* > *'éd* into Hebrew (or rather Canaanite). For one thing, a place name such as *urúíd* could refer to the modern *Hit* on the Euphrates<sup>106</sup> and it might suggest that the Sumerian *íd* was actually pronounced as /*hid*/, though the place name *Hit* possibly means "place where pitch comes" (< *Iṭṭū* "pitch"), while *ÍD* by itself was pronounced as /*i*/, as orally suggested by W. G. Lambert. Moreover, the correspondence, *idig(i)na* (Sum.) // *idigra-um* (Ebla.) // *idiqlat* (Akk.) <—> Hebrew *hiddéqel* (<\**hid* + *iqlu*) "Tigris", supports two possibilities:

- (1) that the Hebrew /*hid*-/ reflects the Sumerian *íd* (or its first element *i*-)<sup>107</sup> or the first element of Sum. *i7-digna*<sup>108</sup>;
- (2) the Hebrew form preserves a pre-Sumerian name.<sup>109</sup>

However, since the name gives a good sense in Sumerian, i.e. "flowing river" (*íd+gina*),<sup>110</sup> the second possibility should be excluded.

The Akkadian form *idiqlat* on the other hand may derive either from the loss of the word initial consonant /*h*/, which an early Sumerian name of "Tigris" might have preserved, or simply reflect the first vowel of the later Sumerian /*idigna*/. Thus, the Hebrew *hiddéqel* could be a reflection of a direct (or indirect, i.e. via a non-Akkadian language) borrowing of an early Sumerian name into Canaanite, and the Sumerian *íd* was possibly borrowed as /*hid*/.

<sup>106</sup>Cf. S. Parpola, *Neo-Assyrian Toponyms* (AOAT 6; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), 172; J. N. Postgate, "(A Review of) Khaled Nashef, Die Orts- und Gewässernamen . . . 1982," *AfO* 32 (1985), 97; A. Poebel, "Sumerische Untersuchungen IV," *ZA* 39 (1930), 145. Cf. also I. J. Gelb, *Old Akkadian Writing and Grammar*. Second ed. (MAD 2; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 26.

<sup>107</sup>Cf. Leander, *Über die Sumerischen Lehnwörter in Assyrischen*, 61: "i(d) A.ÍD *náru*."

<sup>108</sup>Poebel, "Sumerische Untersuchungen IV," 145.

<sup>109</sup>If the Heb. term were a Sum. loan word via Akk., a form like \**'iddiqlāh* (Note the doubling of /*d*/ for preserving the short /*i*/ in the initial syllable.) or \**'ēdiqlāh*, with a fem. ending /-āh/ (or /-at/), rather than *hiddéqel*, should be expected. As far as the ending is concerned, a masculine form in Eblaite *i-di-gi-ra-um* /*idigla-um*/ (VE 1423') is closer to the Hebrew form. However, its initial sign {i} probably stands for the simple vowel /*i*/ (see M. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 1," *ZA* 72 [1982], 219; M. Civil, "Bilingualism in Logographically Written Languages: Sumerian in Ebla," in *BaE*, 80) and the term is masculine as against the feminine form in Akkadian: (Sum) /*idig(i)na*/ — (Ebla) /*idigra-um*/ — (Akk) /*idiqla-t*/. Note that the Eblaite form with an ending /-um/ is a "semitized" form. See below p. 124 on the discussion of the Eblaite sign list B.

<sup>110</sup>See below pp. 137f. on its etymology.

b. Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé

However, it is also possible that the Hebrew 'ēd is a direct loan from Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé, like Akkad (Heb 'akkad) which corresponds to Sumerian a-kà-dè, which, on the other hand, entered Akkadian as *Akkadû*.<sup>111</sup> Phonologically as well as semantically the term e<sub>4</sub>-dé "high water" is a better candidate for the etymology of the Hebrew 'ēd than the Sumerian íd, if we should propose a "direct" borrowing of a Sumerian original.

As we noted above, it is possible that 'ēd is a shortened form of 'ēdô as the result of the loss of the final vowel when or after Akkadian *edû* was borrowed into ancient Canaanite. However, since the Sumerian original of Akkadian *edû* is e<sub>4</sub>-dé as well as A.DÉ.A (= e<sub>4</sub>-dé-a),<sup>112</sup> it is also possible that the short Hebrew form 'ēd is a "direct" loan from Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé, while the long form 'ēdô is a Sumerian loan word via Akkadian *edû* (< Sum /e<sub>4</sub>de/).

Therefore, we would like to make the following suggestions:

(1) 'ēd (Gen 2:6) is a loan word directly (or via a non-Akkadian language such as Hurrian) borrowed from Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé;

(2) 'ēdô (Job 36:27) is a loan word from Sumerian via Akkadian *edû*.

Both 'ēd and its allomorph 'ēdô mean "high water" and refer to the water flooding out of the subterranean ocean.

A final judgment on the meaning and etymology of any term, however, cannot be made until the term is set in its context adequately. Especially "in the case of rare words", as Barr rightly notes, "literary questions are relevant and one cannot proceed purely linguistically."<sup>113</sup>

As for the term 'ēdô of Job 36:27, Andersen, who takes 'ēd to mean "upswell (of groundwaters)", recently notes that "the usage in Job 36:27 can be clarified by comparison with other meteorological passages, notably Proverbs 3:19–20; 8:22–31, as well as Genesis 6–8."<sup>114</sup> After noting more than one "ocean" mentioned in these passages, he suggests that "just as the 'ēd (!) comes up from the ground in Genesis 2, so water from God's 'ēd (!)

<sup>111</sup>See above p. 106.

<sup>112</sup>Cf. Lieberman, *SLOBA*, 215f., n. 161; A. R. Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," *VT* 34 (1984), 104. However, *CAD*, E (1958), 35 and *AHW*, 187 list only a-dé-a for the Sum. original.

<sup>113</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology," 51.

<sup>114</sup>F. I. Andersen, "On Reading Genesis 1–3," in M. P. O'Connor & D. N. Freedman (eds.), *Backgrounds for the Bible* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 139.

comes down to the ground in Job 36."<sup>115</sup> However, it is not certain whether "his 'ēd (!)" refers to "the river of God." For one thing, he has left undecided the etymology of the term 'ēd, i.e. whether it is a borrowing from Sumerian id *ur* or Akkadian *edû*. Moreover, *təhômôt* in Prov 3:20 is better taken as referring to the subterranean waters, as noted above. In Job 36:27, both the "rain" (*māṭār*), the water from above, and the 'ēd-water, in a longer form, are mentioned as in Gen 2:5–6. Therefore, it is most likely that the 'ēd-water in both passages refers to the water from below. The two waters in Job 36:27 might be compared with a meteorological phenomenon described by the Ugaritic expression *sr' thmtm* "surging of the two *thmt*-waters" (KTU 1.19 [1Aqht]:I:45).<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>Andersen, "On Reading Genesis 1–3," 139f., taking -ō as 3.m.s. suffix.

<sup>116</sup>See below p. 134.

## Chapter 7

### THE EARTH-WATERS RELATIONSHIP IN GEN 2

In an earlier chapter we discussed the nature of the relationship between the earth and the waters described in the initial part of Gen 1 and concluded that the *təhôm*-water in Gen 1:2 covered the whole earth, though the *təhôm*-water in the Biblical cosmology is a part of the earth (*'ereš*) under a normal situation. In this chapter we discuss the nature of the relationship between the earth and the waters described in the initial part of Gen 2. This involves a further discussion of the term *'ēd* (2:6) in its proper context and an etymological treatment of the term *'ēden*.

#### A. A FLOODING OF THE SUBTERRANEAN WATERS

In the light of the etymological discussions in the previous chapter, the term *'ēd* most probably refers to the subterranean water which comes up *to* the surface of the earth, rather than referring to mist or vapour which comes up *from* the surface of the earth. However, we should ask how this water from underground was related to the earth after "coming up" from the earth in Gen 2. Did it form a stream like the water of the Sumerian *íd* (=Akkadian *nāru*) "river", or a flooding water like that referred to by the Sumerian *e<sub>4</sub>-dē(-a)* (=Akkadian *edū*) "high water"?

"River"?

Since *nāhār* in Gen 2:10, which corresponds to the Akkadian *nāru*, is the subject of a verbal form of *šqh* "to water", Sæbø thinks that Gen 2:6 and 2:10ff. are exegetically closely connected and that the waters in both these

verses are "a river."<sup>1</sup> However, in Joel 4:18 the subject of this verb is "a spring" (*ma'yān*) and hence *sqh* can have any watery entity as its subject. Therefore the similarity of the verbal forms in Gen 2:6 and 2:10 does not necessarily imply that the subjects have identical meanings, and that 'ēd also means "river."

Moreover, if 'ēd means "a river", why is the river presented in two forms in Gen 2, 'ēd and *nāhār*? To this Castellino, who takes 'ēd as "a river" (sum. id), has answered, "Et qu'on ne dise pas que le *nāhār* fait double emploi avec l' 'ēd de ii 6. L' 'ēd est pour l' 'ādāmāh, le *nāhār* est pour le *gan*, qui sont deux entités distinctes."<sup>2</sup>

However, what is probably more significant than their common verb, *sqh* (Hi.) "to water", and its objects, 'ādāmāh and *gan*, is the difference in the verbs which describe their origin: *ya'āleh* (2:6) and *yōšē'* (2:10). It seems that the author of Genesis purposely makes a clear distinction between the 'ēd-water which "comes up from the earth" and the "river" which "comes out of Eden." The 'ēd-water is that which comes up from underground and waters the whole surface of the land ('ādāmāh). On the other hand, in v. 10 the waters "come out of" one place and "water" a different place, forming a stream or streams, like the "spring" (*ma'yān*) of Joel 4:18.<sup>3</sup>

### *Irrigation of the land*

Again, if the 'ēd-water is a river, why did it not irrigate the soil?<sup>4</sup> The initial state in Gen 2:5–6 is described as without rain but with the 'ēd-water having come up from underground to water the whole surface of the land. Barr thinks that it "is not easy to make good sense of this in the context" but, instead of assuming plural documentary sources as some critics do, he wonders whether 'ēd isn't "after all a mist?"<sup>5</sup> However, as already noted in the previous chapter, the view which takes the term 'ēd as meaning "vapour, mist" has no etymological support, though etymology does not

<sup>1</sup>M. Sæbø, "Die hebräischen Nomina 'ed und 'ēd — zwei sumerisch-akkadische Fremdwörter?" *ST* 24 (1970), 132f.

<sup>2</sup>G. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation selon les textes bibliques et les textes cunéiformes," *Volume du Congrès: Strasbourg 1956* (SVT 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), 123.

<sup>3</sup>In Joel 4:18 a verbal form *yēšē'* is used with the place that the "spring" originates, prefixed by the preposition *min*.

<sup>4</sup>The question raised by J. Barr, "Limitations of Etymology as a Lexicographical Instrument in Biblical Hebrew," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1983), 64, n. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology," 51.

determine meaning.

The situation in 2:5–6 as a whole is simply this: because of the lack of rain there was no plant on the earth, while the 'ēd-water was flooding out of the earth to water, i.e. inundate, the entire surface of the "land" ('āḏāmāh), which was only a part of the "earth" ('ereš). Since this 'ēd-water refers to the water flooding out of the earth, without man's irrigating and tilling activities the land ('āḏāmāh) was not suitable for plants to grow. The problem here was not the lack of water but the lack of adequate control of water by man for tilling purposes.<sup>6</sup> This well-watered situation is certainly in keeping with Eden, the "well-watered place" where God planted a garden (2:8).<sup>7</sup> To the discussion of the etymology of Eden we shall turn shortly.

#### *Excursus: Time and place of man's creation*

If the 'ēd-water refers to the water flooding out of the earth to water the entire surface of the land ('āḏāmāh), how could God "form" the man out of the soil of the land ('āpār min-hā'āḏāmāh)? And when and where did it happen? Barr, who takes 'ēd as "vapour", says, "[The vapour] only damped the surface, perhaps thus making the earth pliable for God to fashion man out of the soil."<sup>8</sup> But if, as we think, 'ēd, a "high water", was covering the entire land ('āḏāmāh), it would seem to be difficult to understand how the soil ('āpār) of the land ('āḏāmāh) was used for making the man.

According to our discourse analysis of Gen 2,<sup>9</sup> vs. 7–8 should be

<sup>6</sup>For a description of beginning of irrigation and agriculture in Sumerian society, see J. van Dijk, LUGAL UD ME-LĀM-bi NIR-GĀL: *Le récit épique et didactique des Travaux de Ninurta, du Déluge et de la Nouvelle Création* Tome I: Introduction, Texte Composite. Traduction (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 94–97 (ll. 344–366); also J. van Dijk, "Lugal-e," *RIA* 7 (1987), 134–136.

<sup>7</sup>For a brief summary of various theories on the location of Eden, see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Word Bible Commentary 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 66–67.

<sup>8</sup>Barr, "Limitations of Etymology," 51; cf. H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1902), 5, cited by D. Kidner, "Genesis 2:5, 6: Wet or Dry?" *TB* 17 (1966), 113.

<sup>9</sup>To summarize our basic assumptions,

[1]. a new subparagraph (discourse unit) is begun by every new *wayqtl* with a stated subject; *waw* here is "initial."

[2]. *wayqtl* without a stated subject indicates that this action or event is in sequence with the previous action or event; *waw* here is "sequential."



analysed thus:

[UNIT 1]: wayyîšer (action 1) YHWH 'ēlōhîm . . . wayyip̄paḥ (action 2)

[UNIT 2]: wayyîṭṭa' (action 3) YHWH 'ēlōhîm . . . wayyāšem (action 4)

Here, it is certain that the actual "chronological" order of events is (action 1) – (action 2) – (action 4): the LORD God "formed" and "breathed" and "put." But we do not know when the "planting" (3) of the garden happened. [UNIT 2] simply explains that (3) happened before the LORD God "put" (4) and the actual "chronological" order of events can be either (1)–(2)–(3)–(4) or (1)–(3)–(2)–(4) or (3)–(1)–(2)–(4). Of course, it is also possible that "planting" (3) could happen together with (1) or (2).<sup>10</sup>

However, if the "forming" (1) of the man happened before the "planting" (3) of the garden, the man was certainly created from the "soil" of the land ('ādāmāh) outside of the garden (*gan*), but not necessarily outside of Eden ('ēden).<sup>11</sup>

It may be conjectured therefore that when God planted a garden "in Eden in the east" (*bə'ēden miqqedem*),<sup>12</sup> the 'ēd-water which had been covering the whole surface of the land had receded at Eden and the land there was dry enough for God to make a garden. But, how dry did the land have to be for God to form a man and make a garden?

A. R. Millard suggested orally that "if 'ēd covered the land surface by issuing from below and produced a situation unsuitable for tilling, it was presumably creating a marsh of some sort." This situation accords with that in the initial section of Enuma elish, I:6, which mentions that the waters had "not yet" produced the marsh land.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to think that when God formed the man from the soil of the land before planting the garden, the 'ēd-water had probably created a marshy situation in Eden and, if it was so, lumps of soil could be scooped up for God to

[3]. wayhî should be treated as one level away from the main line of the narrative discourse.

See above p. 85, n. 2 for bibliography of Longacre's works.

<sup>10</sup>As E. J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, n.d.), 74 notes, "a chronological order is not intended here."

<sup>11</sup>Note that the spatial relationship among various locations in Gen 2:5ff. would be suggested in the following scale, from the widest area to the narrowest:

earth ('ereṣ) > land ('ādāmāh) > Eden ('ēden) > garden (*gan*).

<sup>12</sup>Note a Ug. phrase "the city of the East" ('r. d qdm) in KTU 1.100:62; cf. J. C. de Moor, "East of Eden," ZAW 100 (1988), 105ff.

<sup>13</sup>See above pp. 81ff.

form the man.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, when God made the garden at Eden, he must have drained the 'ēd-water to make the land dry enough to plant trees.<sup>15</sup> The garden in Eden, "the well-watered place,"<sup>16</sup> then was naturally drained of the water by rivers, so producing arable land.<sup>17</sup>

*'ēd as hyponymous to 'ereṣ*

In Gen 2:6, the relationship between the "earth" (*ereṣ*) and the 'ēd-water is described by two verbal forms, *ya'āleh* and *wāhiṣqāh*.

The first verb suggests the nature of the water in this passage. While the "river" in v. 10 "comes out of Eden", the 'ēd in v. 6 "comes up from the earth"<sup>18</sup>. In other words, the "water" referred to by 'ēd in 2:6 is different from the water which "comes out of" one place and forms a stream or streams like the "river" (*nāhār*) of Gen 2:10 and the "spring" (*ma'yān*) of Joel 4:18, as noted above. And the phrase *min-hā'āreṣ* itself indicates the 'ēd-water originated underground and hence was a part of the "earth." Thus in Gen 2:5–6 the term 'ēd stands as hyponymous<sup>19</sup> to 'ereṣ, the "earth."

As for the second verb *wāhiṣqāh*, Ellenbogen holds that it refers to "a thorough soaking or drenching."<sup>20</sup> It certainly suggests that 'ēd refers to an abundant water, since it covered all the surface of the land (*'ādāmāh*). However, the verb \*ṣqh (Hi.)<sup>21</sup> is never used in the sense of "destructive" flooding like Great Deluge (cf. Akk. *abūbu*) but usually in a positive

<sup>14</sup>Note that when Ea created man, he pinched off a lump of clay (*ikruṣa ṭidda*) in the *apsū*, i.e. in his abode in the subterranean ocean, in a text cited by CAD, A/2 (1968), 195. See below pp. 143ff. on a "creator" god and his relationship with the waters.

<sup>15</sup>A bilingual version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk" (Heidel, BG, 63, l. 32) mentions that Marduk made a swamp into dry land after piling up a dam at the edge of the sea (cf. l. 31). See A. R. Millard, "A New Babylonian 'Genesis' Story," TB 18 (1967), 8.

<sup>16</sup>For this meaning, see below pp. 127f.

<sup>17</sup>See a similar situation described in Lugal-e, ll. 356–359; cf. van Dijk, LUGAL UD ME-LĀM-bi NIR-GĀL, 96.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Num 21:17. Thus, Aquila's ἐπιβλυσμός "gushing forth" → "gushing water" (or "overflowing water" < ἐπιβλύω "flow over" cf. ἐπιβυλύζω "pour forth"; ἐπιβλύξ "abundantly") and LXX's πηγῆ "fountain, source" (also Vulgate; Peshitta), can be supported rather than Targums' Aramaic translation "cloud."

<sup>19</sup>For this term, see above pp. 67f.

<sup>20</sup>M. Ellenbogen, *Foreign Words in the Old Testament: their Origin and Etymology* (London: Luzac, 1962), 13.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Gen 2:6, 10, Ezek 17:7, 32:6, Joel 4:18, Ps 104:11, Ecc 2:6.

sense.<sup>22</sup>

Since the 'ēd-water flooded out of the subterranean water in Gen 2:6, in this regard it is related to the *təhôm(ôt)*-water, the water of the subterranean ocean. However, the verb \*šqh (Hi) never appears with *təhôm(ôt)* and in Gen 2:6 has the specific meaning "to inundate (the land)". Unlike the situation in Gen 1:2 where the *təhôm*-water seemingly covered the entire "earth" ('ereš), the 'ēd-water was inundating only a part of the "earth", i.e. the "land" ('ādāmāh), in Gen 2:6.<sup>23</sup>

### Two "waters"

It is significant to note that in Gen 2:5–6 both the water from above, rain, and the water from below, the 'ēd-water, are mentioned in the description of the initial state of the earth, though the former is treated negatively, as "not yet", and the latter positively, as "already."<sup>24</sup> This may suggest that the separation between the upper water and the lower water, which is described in Gen 1:6–7 in the biblical context, had already occurred in Gen 2:5–6.

These two waters might be compared with the two *thmt*-waters in Ugaritic. For example, as discussed below, the expression *sr' thmtm* "surging of the two *thmt*-waters" (KTU 1.19 [1Aqht]:I:45) is mentioned in a meteorological context and seems to refer to the waters above in heaven and the waters below the earth as in Gen 7:11, 8:2. Since this upper *thmt*-water is probably the same as the rain-water in the heaven, the lower *thmt*-water may correspond to the 'ēd-water of the "earth" in the context of Gen 2:5–6.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>In Ezek 32:6, which NIV translates "I will drench the land ('ereš) with your flowing blood", "blood" adds a negative sense to the text.

<sup>23</sup>Kidner thinks that "the whole earth was inundated by water," cf. Kidner, "Genesis 2:5, 6: Wet or Dry?" 109–114. See the previous chapter on the relationship between "earth" ('ereš), "field" (*sādeh*) and "ground" ('ādāmāh).

<sup>24</sup>Note that in the Sumerian myth of "Enki and the World Order", "a rain of prosperity" and "a high flood" are mentioned in connection with Enki's activities; see S. N. Kramer, *The Sumerians: their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 175.

<sup>25</sup>See below pp. 133f. on the relationship between "rain" and 'dn in the Ugaritic text and pp. 150f. on El's watery abode "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters."

## B. ETYMOLOGY OF EDEN

We noted in the previous section that, according to the Biblical description, Eden ('ēden), where God planted a garden (cf. Gen 2:8), was located in a part of the land ('ādāmāh) which was once watered by the 'ēd-water, the flooding of the subterranean water. Thus Eden was good land suitable for planting a garden. What then is the etymology of "Eden"?

Until recently scholars commonly accepted a Mesopotamian origin for the Hebrew term 'ēden as a loan word ultimately from the Sumerian edin into Hebrew<sup>26</sup>. For example, Speiser explains that "this word [*edinu*] is rare in Akk. but exceedingly common in Sum., thus certifying the ultimate source as very ancient indeed. The traditions involved must go back, therefore, to the oldest cultural stratum of Mesopotamia."<sup>27</sup> However, since the publication of the Aramaic–Akkadian bilingual text from Tell Fekheriyeh in 1982, several scholars have revived a Semitic etymology.<sup>28</sup>

Theoretically there are three possible explanations for the etymology of the Hebrew term 'ēden, though scholars often do not distinguish between the first two:<sup>29</sup> (1) the term 'ēden is a Sumerian loan word which entered West Semitic via Akkadian, (2) the term is a Sumerian word borrowed directly into West Semitic and (3) the term is a West Semitic word.

1. *Sumerian loan word via Akkadian?*

The scholars<sup>30</sup> who suggest a Sumerian origin for this term usually base

<sup>26</sup>For a brief summary of the Mesopotamian connection, see A. R. Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," *VT* 34 (1984), 103f.; C. Westermann, *Genesis*. I. Teilband: Genesis 1–11 (BKAT 1/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974), 286f. [ET 210].

<sup>27</sup>E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB 1; Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), 19.

<sup>28</sup>A. Abou Assaf, P. Bordreuil & A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Paris: Recherche sur les civilisations, 1982). See Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 103–106; A. Lemaire, "Le pays d'Eden et le Bit-Adini aux origines d'un mythe," *Syria* 58 (1981), 313–330; J. C. Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," in *Orientalia J. Duchesne-Guillemin Emerito Oblata* (Hommages et Opera Minora 9; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984), 219–224. Also, H. N. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative* (HSM 32; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 84.

<sup>29</sup>Westermann, *Genesis*, 286f. [ET 210], for example, does not discuss the possibility of direct borrowing from the Sumerian edin.

<sup>30</sup>A short historical survey is given by Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 103. For a bibliography, see also Lemaire, "Le pays d'Eden et le Bit-Adini," 315, n. 1.

their argument on the following list in Vocabulary S<sup>b</sup>, lines 90–91:<sup>31</sup>

- 90) e-di-in : edin : e-di-nu  
 91) e-di-in : edin : še-e-ru "plain, steppe"<sup>32</sup>

In this list, the "phonetic" reading of the ideographic sign EDIN ("plain, steppe") is listed in the first column and its Akkadian equivalent in meaning is listed in the third column. The scholars have taken the line 90 as evidence for the existence of Akkadian *edinu* and for the Sumerian connection of Hebrew *ēden* via Akkadian *edinu*.

However, since the term *edinu* is a very rare word and is not attested in Akkadian except in this lexical list, Millard suggests that it is "simply a learned scribal transcription of the Sumerian word-sign in the Syllabary."<sup>33</sup> In fact, the third column of some copies of this Syllabary has *e-din*, the same reading as the first column, for line 90.<sup>34</sup> Some might ask in this case where the final *-u* of the variant form *edinu* would have come from. For this, it might be profitable to note that in a recently published text of an Eblaite sign list Sumerian sign names are seemingly semitized with a Semitic nominative case ending *-um*.<sup>35</sup> For example, the B-list (TM.75.G.1907+12680) has the following entries:

- edin : ì-dì-núm /edin-um/  
 ezen : ì-zì-núm /ezen-um/  
 idigna : ì-dì-gì-ra-um /idigra-um/<sup>36</sup>

Hence, the form *edinu* in Vocabulary S<sup>b</sup> might well be a semitized name (with a nominative case ending *-u*) for the Sumerian sign EDIN rather than an Akkadian term for "plain, steppe."<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup>B. Landsberger, *MSL* 3 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1955), 104 [5 copies preserve l. 90; 3 copies, l. 91].

<sup>32</sup>The Sumerian edin is identified in *VE*, No. 1247' with the Eblaite term *ša-lum*, a cognate of the Akk. *šēru(m)* "Steppe."

<sup>33</sup>Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 104.

<sup>34</sup>Landsberger, *MSL* 3, 104, copies A & S<sub>1</sub>.

<sup>35</sup>A. Archi, "The 'Sign-list' from Ebla," *Eblaïtica* I (1987), 91.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. Archi, "The 'Sign-list' from Ebla," 101f.; also K. Butz, "Bilinguismus als Katalysator," in L. Cagni (ed.), *BaE*, 127 on *VE* 1423': idigna<sup>2</sup>-mušen = ì-dì-gì-ra-um.

<sup>37</sup>Note that *edin(u)* and *šēru* are like Japanese "on-yomi" readings (based on the Chinese pronunciation) and "kun-yomi" readings (translation of the meaning of the character into Japanese) respectively. In Japanese most Chinese characters are read as "kun-yomi" only when they appear as independent words, while the "on-yomi" is most often used in compound words.

Even if *edinu* should be a normal Akkadian word<sup>38</sup> which the modern scholars happen not to know except from Vocabulary S<sup>b</sup>, it is still phonologically difficult to regard the Hebrew term 'ēden as a loan word from *edinu*, since the initial syllable of this Akkadian term has no phoneme /ʔ/. In other words, if the Hebrew term were a Sumerian loan word in West Semitic via Akkadian *edinu*, the expected form in Hebrew would be 'ēden like (Sum.) é-kur => (Akk.) *ekurru* => (Aram.) 'gwr<sup>39</sup> and (Sum.) e<sub>4</sub>-dē-a => (Akk.) *edû* => (Heb.) 'ēdô.<sup>40</sup>

Therefore we conclude that the Hebrew 'ēden cannot be a loan word from or via Akkadian *edinu*. However, the possibility remains that it is a direct (or via non-Akkadian) borrowing from a Sumerian word.

### 2. *Direct Sumerian loan word?*

Some might think that the Sumerian edin "plain, steppe" was borrowed directly into Canaanite as 'ēden or the like. However, here too there is a phonological difficulty. Namely, it is difficult to associate the initial sound /e/ of Sumerian edin, written syllabically as <e> (E) in Vocabulary S<sup>b</sup> and as <ì > (NI) in the Eblaite "sign-list" B, with the Canaanite syllable /'e/ of Hebrew 'ēden, since Sumerian presumably has no phoneme /'/.<sup>41</sup> In fact

<sup>38</sup>However, Lieberman, *SLOBA* does not cite *edin* in his list of Sum. loanwords in OB Akk.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. *AHW*, 196. Note that Heb. *hēkāl*, Ug. *hkl* as well as Ar. *haikal* is not Sum. loan words via Akk. (cf. Kaufman, *AIA*, 27), since Akk. *ekallu* does not have /h/ as an initial consonant. In the light of recent developments in Eblaite studies it is probable that these West Semitic terms came from an earlier Semitic form, /haikal/, of the Sum. ha-gal (É.GAL). On É ('à) for /ha/, cf. I. J. Gelb, "Ebla and the Kish Civilization," in L. Cagni (ed.), *LdE* (1981), 20; M. Krebernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 1," *ZA* 72 (1982), 219f.; *Die Personennamen der Ebla-Texte: Eine Zwischenbilanz* (BBVO 7; Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1988), 74; also see above pp. 55f. on Eblaite *ti-'à-ma-tum* /tihām(a)um/. This confirms Falkenstein's explanation (cf. A. Falkenstein, *Das Sumerische* [Handbuch der Orientalistik I, II, 1/2, i; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959], 24 [§7 C e]) that a phoneme /h/ is possible for the old Sumerian from the old LW into Canaanite \**haikal* < \*hai-kal. Cf. É. Lipiński, "Emprunts suméro-akkadiens en hébreu biblique," *ZAH* 1 (1988), 65. See also Gelb, "Ebla and the Kish Civilization," 23f. for the recent controversy about whether the diphthong /ai/ was preserved in Eblaite or monothongized to /ā/. According to Lambert (orally 15.7.87), a recently discovered Hittite-Hurrian bilingual text (to be published by E. Neu) has a Hurrian term *haikal*. Thus, the West Semitic terms might be a Sum. Lw via Hurrian.

<sup>40</sup>See above p. 106.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. M.-L. Thomsen, *The Sumerian Language: an Introduction to its History and Grammatical Structure* (Mesopotamia 10; Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1984), 41; Millard,

Sumerian words such as *ezen* and *idigna*, both written syllabically with the initial sign < ì > in the Eblaite "sign-list" B, were borrowed into Akkadian as *isinnu* or *idiqlat*, showing no hint of an initial phoneme / ' / in their Sumerian originals.<sup>42</sup> Therefore it is not likely that the Sumerian *edin* was borrowed directly into Canaanite as *'ēden* or the like.

An objection has been raised against this Sumerian connection also from a semantic point of view. For example, the meaning "plain, steppe", i.e. the uncultivated land, for the Hebrew *'ēden* does not fit the context of Genesis well, since the term *'ēden* in its context refers to a place which is part of a well-watered land (*'ādāmāh*) rather than part of a field (*sādeh*), uncultivated land.<sup>43</sup>

While it is possible that Hebrew *'ēden* reflects a direct borrowing into the ancient Canaanite from the Sumerian *edin*, if Sumerian possessed the phoneme / ' / in its earlier stage, the evidence for this is very thin. Meanwhile, a more immediate West Semitic origin should be seriously sought.

"The Etymology of Eden," 104; Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, 84 & 98. In Vocabulary of Ebla, VE, the Sumerian sign NI (= *bu* x, *i*, 'a x, 'u x[?], *ni* and *li*[?]) stands for /'i/ or /'i/ in Eblaite (e.g. *i-sa-du* /'išātu/ and *i-ri-sa-tum* /'irištum/). Cf. Krebbernik, "Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 1," 198f. But there is no evidence that / ' / was established as an independent phoneme in Sumerian. Hence, the equation *'irād* (Gen 4:18) = Eridu (*e-ri-du*), suggested by W. W. Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," *JCS* 23 (1970), 64 & 67, is not without phonological difficulty.

<sup>42</sup>Normally in Akkadian the Semitic phoneme \* / ' / is realized as /e/ in the initial position. See below p. 137 (*Excursus*) for the Hebrew *hiddēqel* "Tigris."

<sup>43</sup>Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, 84; U. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah* [Part I of *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961, 1944 [orig.]), 107.

It is interesting to note that in Ebla, in Text Nr. 79 (g): /2/ (*MEE* 4, 98) the Sumerian term *edin* is explained in Eblaite as follows:

ed[in] = g [u ?]- lu [m] sà - [du]m wa da - bī - tum wa gu - zu: zu: um wa ga - za - um.

The Sum. *edin* is thus "paraphrased" as, in Butz' highly speculative translation, "die 'Grünzone der Ebenen', der 'Berg', der 'Wald', die 'abgeernteten Felder' und die 'Ödstellen mit knieohem Gras.'" (Butz, "Bilinguismus als Katalysator," 130f.) Note Jacobsen's view that *edin* is an ancient word for "the sheep country, the broad grassy steppe," cf. T. Jacobsen, "Formative Tendencies in Sumerian Religion," in G. E. Wright (ed.), *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in honor of William Foxwell Albright* (Anchor Books; Garden City: Doubleday, 1961), 360; also G. Castellino, "Les origines de la civilisation selon les textes bibliques et les textes cuneiformes," *Volume du Congress: Strasbourg 1956* (SVT 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), 122, citing Jacobsen's explanation (in *Archaeology* 7 [1954], 54). However, this meaning does not fit the Hebrew context of Gen 2.

## 3. Common West Semitic?

While the Sumerian–Akkadian connection remains popular, some scholars have suggested a Semitic etymology for *‘ēden* in the light of the Ugaritic *‘dn* as well as the Hebrew plural noun \**‘ādānīm* "delights" (Jer 51:34, 2 Sam 1:24, Ps 36:8). For example, G. R. Driver connected the Hebrew *‘ēden* "luxury" with the Arabic *ḡadanu* "delicacy" and the Ugaritic *‘dn* "abundance, delight."<sup>44</sup> Cassuto also accepted this correspondence but explained *‘ēden* in the light of the Ugaritic *‘dn* which he translated "moisture" in KTU 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69]:

*wn ‘p ‘dn mtrh b’l y’dn ‘dn*  
and now also the moisture of his rain  
/ Baal shall surely make moist.

Thus he interpreted the term *‘ēden* "in connection with the watering of the ground" and explained that "Eden" in Gen 2:8 is the place "where there was an exceedingly rich water-supply."<sup>45</sup>

However, though Cassuto's interpretation is contextually attractive, there is a difficulty in phonological correspondence between Heb / *‘*/, Arabic /*ḡ*/ and Ugaritic / *‘*/. Hence, most Ugaritic scholars (Gordon<sup>46</sup>; Gibson; de Moor; Pope *et al*)<sup>47</sup> have sought a different etymology and translated the Ugaritic term *‘dn* in 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69] as "time" or "season" from the root \**y’d* "to appoint (time)."<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, the question has been left unanswered as to why both the verbal form *y’dn* and the nominal form *‘dn* end in /*n*/, though they are possible forms from a purely morphological point of view.

## a. Aramaic: the Fekheriyeh Inscription

In 1982, when the Ugaritic information for the Semitic etymology of Hebrew *‘ēden* seemed unpromising, an important Aramaic–Akkadian

<sup>44</sup>Driver, *CML*, 141 & n. 8.

<sup>45</sup>Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 107. Westermann follows Cassuto and holds that "Ugaritic has a word which corresponds exactly to the Hebrew and has a similar meaning, 'delight.'" (Westermann, *Genesis*, 286 [ET 210]).

<sup>46</sup>*UT* 19.1823 *‘dn* I "season": *‘dn mtrh* (1.4 [51]:V:6 [68]) "his season of rain", *y’dn* . *‘dn* (:7[69]) "he appoints a season."

<sup>47</sup>See below pp. 129f. for the bibliography.

<sup>48</sup>J. C. de Moor, *SPUMB*, 149, following Hoftijzer.



bilingual inscription from Tell Fekheriyeh was published.<sup>49</sup> In this text Hadad, the god of life-giving water, is called the "water-controller of all rivers" (*gwgl nhr klm*) in Aramaic and immediately after is described, both in Aramaic and in Akkadian, as *m'dn mt kln //muṭaḥḥidu kibrāti*. This bilingual phrase is translated as "who makes all lands abound" (Millard<sup>50</sup>); "qui fait prospérer tous les pays" (Abou-Assaf, Bordreuil & Millard); "he who makes all the lands luxuriant" (Kaufman; also Greenfield<sup>51</sup>).

Thus, scholars have recognized here "'dn in a verbal form" and, in the light of the Assyrian verb which means "to enrich, make abundant", suggested a similar sense for the Aramaic parallel "(although the two texts are not absolutely identical in every phrase)."<sup>52</sup> Millard concludes with caution that "Clearly Old Aramaic gave a sense to 'dn which was very similar to its value in Biblical Hebrew . . . this new example . . . reinforces the earlier interpretation" which links Eden with "words with 'dn as their base and the common idea of 'pleasure, luxury."<sup>53</sup>

However, the Akkadian *ṭaḥḍu* "überreichlich" and *ṭuḥḍu* "überreichliche Fülle", whose "denominative" verb in the participial form is *muṭaḥḥidu*,<sup>54</sup> often appears for describing the abundance of "rain" & "high water" (*mīlu*) from Old Babylonian onward.<sup>55</sup> For example, in the Hymn to Marduk, l. 27, the god Marduk is called *bēl ṭuḥ-di ḥengalli?* (. . .) *m]u-šá-az-nin nuḥši* "Herr von Häufung und Über[fluss, der da] Fülle regnen lässt."<sup>56</sup> In another text, the rain god Adad is described as follows: <sup>d</sup>*Adad ú-šá-az-na-an eli niši šamūt ṭuḥdi* "Adad lets it rain copiously for the people."<sup>57</sup> As Lambert notes, "*nuḥšu, ṭuḥdu* and *ḥegallu* . . . refer to abundance of water

<sup>49</sup>A. A. Assaf, P. Bordreuil & A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekheriyeh et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Paris: Recherche sur les civilisations, 1982).

<sup>50</sup>Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 105.

<sup>51</sup>S. A. Kaufman, "Reflections on the Assyrian–Aramaic Bilingual from Tell Fakhariyeh," *MAARAV* 3 (1982), 137–175 161; Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," 221: "who makes the whole world luxuriant."

<sup>52</sup>Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 105.

<sup>53</sup>Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," 104 & 105.

<sup>54</sup>Note that the Aramaic counterpart *m'dn* is also the D. stem in a "factive" sense.

<sup>55</sup>*AHW*, 1378 & 1393.

<sup>56</sup>See W. von Soden, "Zur Wiederherstellung der Marduk-Gebete BMS 11 und 12," *Iraq* 31 (1969), 85–86. For *nuḥšu* "abundance, plenty, prosperity" which refers to water, "the flood of fertility", not simply to "abundance in general", see W. F. Albright, "Notes on Assyrian Lexicography and Etymology," *RA* 16 (1919), 185; *CAD*, N<sub>2</sub> (1980), 320. For *ḥegallu*, see *CAD*, H (1956), 167f.

<sup>57</sup>SEM 117 iii 15, cited by *CAD*, Z (1961), 43. See also *šamū ṭaḥittum iznunma* "it rained hard" (ARM 2, 140:9; also cf. KAR 153 r.(!) 10 [SB]), cited by *CAD*, Z, 42.

and profusion of plant life . . . [and] are often found in association with Adad."<sup>58</sup>

Thus, the Aramaic verbal form *m'dn*, the counterpart of the Akkadian *muṭaḥḥidu* in the present context, probably has the literal meaning "to make abundant in water-supply", though it may mean secondarily "to enrich, prosper, make luxuriant." The Aramaic phrase *m'dn mt kln* "one who makes the whole land abundant in water-supply" as an epithet of the rain god Hadad certainly fits the context of this bilingual inscription very well.

This new evidence could be expected to lead scholars to rethink the possibility of finding a cognate of 'ēden. In fact, Greenfield and others have already reinterpreted the meaning of 'dn in the Ugaritic text KTU 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69] in the light of the Aramaic evidence.

#### b. Ugaritic

##### KTU 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69]

*wn ap . 'dn . mṭrh <sup>69</sup>b\*1 . y'dn .*  
*'dn . ṭk\*t . b glṭ*

The poetic structure of this text is usually understood as an unbalanced bicolon (5:3) and has been translated in various ways: for example,

Now moreover Baal will abundantly give abundance of rain,  
 abundance of moisture with snow. (Driver, *CML*, 97)

Lo Baal sets the season of his rain  
 The season of the ship on the ocean. (Gordon, *PLMU*, 95)

Moreover, Ba'lu should appoint the time of his rain,  
 the time of the *ṭkt*-ship with snow. (de Moor, *SPUMB*, 148)

(*Écoute*) *encore ceci*:  
 Ba'al va fixer l'heure de sa pluie,  
 l'heure du *jaillissement* des flots. (Caquot & Sznycer, *TO*, 207)

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<sup>58</sup>W. G. Lambert, "Trees, Snakes and Gods in Ancient Syria and Anatolia," *BSOAS* 48 (1985), 436.

Now at last Baal may appoint a time<sup>59</sup> for his rain,  
a time for (his) barque (to appear) in the snow. (Gibson, *CML*<sup>2</sup>, 60)

And moreover Baal will provide his luxuriant rain,  
a luxuriant . . . with overflow." (Greenfield<sup>60</sup>)

And now Baal will fertilize with the luxuriance of his rain,  
the luxuriance of watering in turbulence (flow?) (Smith)<sup>61</sup>

De Moor holds that "Regardless whether one connects *b'l y'dn* with l. 68 or with the rest of l. 69, the resulting verse is rather long. This is, however, not without parallels in Ug. poetry."<sup>62</sup> In a recent treatment of this text, de Moor, with Korpel, suggests the 3:5 structure and takes the first line as an independent clause, translating:

<i>wn ap . 'dn . mṯrh</i>	Also it is the prime time for his rains,
<i>b'l . y'dn . 'dn . ṯk*t . b glṯ</i>	Ba'lu should appoint the time of the barque with snow. <sup>63</sup>

On the other hand, Olmo Lete divides the lines differently resulting in a more balanced structure (4:4):

<i>wn ap . 'dn . mṯrh b'l .</i>	Ya que así podrá almacenar su lluvia <i>Ba'lu</i> ,
<i>y'dn . 'dn . ṯk*t . b glṯ</i>	hacer acopio de abundancia de nieve.( <i>MLC</i> , 202)

Margalit, who holds that "the prevalent stichometric arrangement of this text [5:3], found or presupposed in (e.g.) *ANET*, *CML*, and *TO*, is mistaken",<sup>64</sup> has a still different analysis for its structure:

*wnap . 'dn . mṯrh . b'l*  
*y'dn . 'dn . ṯk(?)t .*

<sup>59</sup>Note that it is the god Šamaš in Babylonia who usually appoints a time and provides an omen; cf. *CAD*, A/1(1964), 100; A. R. Millard, "The Sign of the Flood," *Iraq* 49 (1987), 63, l. 86: *adanna dšamaš iškunamma* (Gilg. XI:86).

<sup>60</sup>Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," 221.

<sup>61</sup>M. S. Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986), 314 & n. 5. Cf. M. S. Smith, "Baal's Cosmic Secret," *UF* 16 (1984), 297, where he translated 'dn as "season."

<sup>62</sup>De Moor, *SPUMB*, 148.

<sup>63</sup>M. C. A. Korpel & J. C. de Moor, "Fundamentals of Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetry," *UF* 18 (1986), 180.

<sup>64</sup>B. Margalit, *A Matter of "Life" and "Death": A Study of the Baal-Mot Epic (CTA 4-5-6)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1980), 214, n. 2.

<i>bgl̄t . k!t!tn<sup>65</sup> . qlh .</i>	From the turbulence (?) he lowered his voice
<i>b'rpt . šrh .</i>	From the clouds (he lowered) his flash
<i>larš . brqm</i>	(He lowered his flash) to earth as lightning. <sup>66</sup>

However, the versification 3:2:3 with AXB pattern,<sup>67</sup> in which an A-line and a B-line have an organic unity despite their inserted modifier, X-line, might be suggested for this text:

<i>wn ap<sup>68</sup> . 'dn . mṯrh</i>	Now indeed abundance of his rain
<i>b*! . y'dn .</i>	Baal will supply;
<i>'dn . tr*t . b gl̄t</i>	abundance of (subterranean) water from flooding.

In this structure, *mṯrh* would be interpreted as being in parallel with *tr\*t* or with the phrase *tr\*t . b gl̄t* as a whole (which stands as a "Ballast Variant"<sup>69</sup> to *mṯrh*) rather than with *gl̄t*.

#### tk\*t:

Two possible readings have been suggested, since the second sign can be read either as <k> or as <r>:

(1) *trt* "moisture" (Driver) in the light of Arabic *tarra* "gave plentiful water" or *tariya* "was well-watered."<sup>70</sup>

(2) *tkt* "a kind of 'ship' = New Eg. *sk.ty*" (Gordon);<sup>71</sup> "*tkt*-ship" (de Moor);<sup>72</sup> "bateaux" (pl.) (Lipiński);<sup>73</sup> *takka* "voyager" (Caquot).<sup>74</sup>

As for the second position, there seems to exist a phonological diffi-

<sup>65</sup>This should be read as *wtn /wutina/* (G. passive). See D. T. Tsumura, "The *verba primae waw*, WLD, in Ugaritic," *UF* 11 (1979), 781, n. 21; Olmo Lete, *MLC*, 202.

<sup>66</sup>Margalit, *A Matter of "Life" and "Death"*, 216.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. D. T. Tsumura, "Literary Insertion (AXB Pattern) in Biblical Hebrew," *VT* 33 (1983), 468–482; "Literary Insertion, AXB Pattern, in Hebrew and Ugaritic: a Problem of Adjacency and Dependency in Poetic Parallelism," *UF* 18 (1986), 351–361.

<sup>68</sup>On the comparison of Eblaite term, AB, with Northwest Semitic *ap*, see G. Pettinato, "Il termine AB in eblaite: congiunzione AP oppure locuzione avverbale JES?" *Or* 53 (1984), 318–332.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. Gordon, *UT*, 135–137.

<sup>70</sup>Driver, *CML*, 151, following Gaster, & n. 22.

<sup>71</sup>Gordon, *UT* 19.2680. This is a well attested term for "boat" in the New Kingdom period; cf. A. Erman & H. Grapow, *WAS*, IV, 315.

<sup>72</sup>De Moor, *SPUMB*, 149.

<sup>73</sup>E. Lipiński, "Épiphanie de Baal-Haddu: RS 24.245," *UF* 3 (1971), 86f.

<sup>74</sup>Caquot & Sznycer, *TO*, 207, n.t.

cult, for Egyptian *š* probably corresponds to the Hebrew <s> /s/, and not to the Ugaritic /t/, as Pinehas does to Egyptian *p(ṯ)nhšī*.<sup>75</sup> Also this view does not fit the context well. Pope and Tigay<sup>76</sup> hold that Herdner's copy, i.e. a shaded *k*, could be "only the partial remains of *r* (in fact the following single horizontal wedge could be the tail-end of the *r*, rather than a *t*)." And they suggest accepting "the reading *trt* advocated by Driver, or *tr*." They then conclude that "the word could refer to the subterranean sources of moisture or to the irrigated earth itself." Pope elsewhere translates the term *trt* as "watering."<sup>77</sup> In the light of the structure of parallelism, 3:2:3 and AXB, we also would like to suggest a reading *tr\*t* and a meaning such as "water", either from above or from below.

### *gl̄t*:

Many scholars (e.g. Dussaud, Driver, Ginsberg, Gray, Rainey, Herrmann, Aartun, de Moor, Pope & Tigay, Dietrich-Loretz-Sanmartín, Olmo Lete, etc.) take *gl̄t* as a metathesis of the first and the third consonant of a hypothetical term *tlg* in Ugaritic which they think is a cognate of Hebrew *šeleḡ* and Akkadian *šalgu* "snow".<sup>78</sup> However, the pairing of "rain" and "snow" does not seem to fit in the context which mentions abundance of water-supply given by the storm god Baal together with his thunder, lightning and clouds. In fact, the Mesopotamian rain god Adad is associated with storm, wind, lightning, clouds and rain, but not with snow, in his epithets.<sup>79</sup>

In 1965 Greenfield<sup>80</sup> discussed the term *gl̄t* in the light of MH *glš* and translated *wgl̄t thmt* (KTU 1.92 [2001]:5) as "and the abyss was roiled."

<sup>75</sup>Pointed out orally by K. A. Kitchen.

<sup>76</sup>Pope & Tigay, "A Description of Baal," 129.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. M. H. Pope, *Song of Songs* (AB 7c; Garden City: Doubleday, 1977), 459; also M. S. Smith, "Baal's Cosmic Secret," *UF* 16 (1984), 297; "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986), 314.

<sup>78</sup>Cf. Driver, *CML*, 146; J. C. de Moor, "Studies in the New Alphabetic Texts from Ras Shamra I," *UF* 1 (1969) 180f.; *SPUMB*, 149; M. H. Pope & J. H. Tigay, "A Description of Baal," *UF* 3 (1971), 129; M. Dietrich - O. Loretz - J. Sanmartín, "Stichometrische Probleme in RS 24.245 = UG. 5, s. 556-559, Nr. 3 vs.," *UF* 7 (1975), 534; M. Dahood, *RSP* II (1975), 21; Olmo Lete, *MLC*, 202. Recently again K. Aartun, "Zur Erklärung des Ugaritischen Ausdrucks *inr*," *UF* 15 (1983), 4 discussed similar examples of metathesis.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. Tallqvist, *AG*, 246ff.

<sup>80</sup>J. C. Greenfield, "Amurrite, Ugaritic and Canaanite," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Semitic Studies* held in Jerusalem, 19-23 July 1965 (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1969), 99, n. 36.

Gordon has also suggested a similar view: i.e. "move" or "movement," and translated *tglt thmt* "she moves the Deep."<sup>81</sup> In 1971, Lipiński explained more thoroughly that "le mot *glt* doit évoquer le rebondissement des flots dans la tempête. L'image serait alors semblable à celle que l'on trouve au Ps. 107, 25–27" and translated *wtglt thmt* as "et l'océan rebondissait" (or "et elle [Astarté] fait rebondir l'océan." He also said that "Il apparaît ainsi que *glt* > *gls* qualifie un mouvement oscillatoire pareil au soulèvement de l'eau agitée ou effervescente."<sup>82</sup> Similarly Caquot<sup>83</sup> and Pope hold that the term *glt* "manifestly designates a motion applicable to water."<sup>84</sup> Recently, Greenfield confirmed his earlier view and suggested the meaning "overflow" for the term *glt* in our text.<sup>85</sup>

On the other hand, some scholars have suggested translating the term as "turbulence(?)" (Margalit; also Smith)<sup>86</sup> or "storm tempest" (Weinfeld)<sup>87</sup> in keeping with the nature of the storm god. However, it seems better to take the term *glt* as referring to some kind of water movement caused by the storm-god, rather than to the storm itself, as in a similar context in Akkadian texts which say *amat Marduk asurrakku idallah* "the word of Marduk roils the subterranean waters" (4R 26 No. 4:51f.); *ana utazzumišu iddallahu apsû* "the depths are stirred up at his (Adad's) groaning" (STC 1 205:9 [SB lit.]).<sup>88</sup> While Pope and Tigay suggest that "in the context *glt* probably refers to a meteorological phenomenon like *mtr* in the parallel clause,"<sup>89</sup> it is more probable that *tkt* or *trt* stands directly in parallel with *mtr*, as noted above.

Now, it is important to note that abundant water for agriculture is provided either by rain, i.e. the celestial water, or by the flooding of the subterranean waters like Akk. *mīlu, edû*, etc. and these two waters, both celestial and subterranean, are sometimes understood as being brought about by a rain or storm-god like Adad, Baal or Teshub. For example, as Lambert notes, "the Anatolian storm god controlled springs and fountains"

<sup>81</sup>See *UT* 19.584 & *UTS*, 551.

<sup>82</sup>Lipiński, "Épiphanie de Baal-Haddu: RS 24.245," 86f.

<sup>83</sup>*TO*, 208, n. u: "bouillonner."

<sup>84</sup>Pope, *Song of Songs*, 459f.

<sup>85</sup>Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," 221.

<sup>86</sup>Margalit, *A Matter of "Life" and "Death"*, 216 & 215, n. 1; also Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," 314.

<sup>87</sup>M. Weinfeld, "'Rider of the Clouds' and 'Gatherer of the Clouds,'" *JANES* 5 [The Gaster Festschrift] (1973), 426, n. 43.

<sup>88</sup>Cf. *CAD*, D (1959), 43 & 45.

<sup>89</sup>Cf. Pope & Tigay, "A Description of Baal," 129.

and also "is concerned with thunder, rain and wind" and in order to maintain his northern status "Adad is given 'control of subterranean water (properly Ea's domain).'"<sup>90</sup> Thus, "the storm god would have been involved somehow with terrestrial water."<sup>91</sup> This is certainly in keeping with Hadad's title "water-controller of all rivers" in the Fekheriyeh inscription, as noted above.

Now, a Ugaritic text, KTU 1.19 [1Aqht]:I:45, mentions the storm and rain god Baal along with meteorological phenomena related to him, "dew" (*tl*) // "rain" (*rbb*) and "thunder (lit. Baal's voice)" (*ql . b'l*) and "surging of the two *thmt*-waters" (*sr' thmtm*). The text reads:

<i>bl . tl . bl rbb</i>	Let there be no dew / let there be no rain
<i>bl . sr' thmtm .</i>	Let there be no surging of the two oceans
<i>bl tbn . ql . b'l</i>	Let there be no goodness of Baal's voice!

(cf. Gordon, *PLMU*, 22)

Margalit thinks that the shifting to "the subterranean deep (*thmt*), the source of uprising spring water" in l. 45, after speaking of "heavenly precipitation (*tl*, *rbb*)" in l. 44, and then returning to "the heavenly arena in the third and final allusion to aquatic phenomena," *ql . b'l*, is "poetically . . . anti-climactic; contextually, it is redundant."<sup>92</sup> However, since *thmtm* is dual and these "oceans" seem to refer to both the upper and the lower ocean as in Gen 7:11, 8:2, etc., there is actually no "shifting" in description from heavenly waters to the subterranean water.<sup>93</sup>

In the light of the above, it might be suggested that the immediate context (ll. 70f.) of our text KTU 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69], which mentions "thunder" (*ytn qlh*) & "lightning" (*srh*), supports the combination "rain" (*mtr*) & "(subterranean) water" (*trt*) rather than "rain" & "snow" since the meteorological phenomena referred to in lines 68ff. are those of the storm god Baal, who is less likely to be associated with snow. Hence, the term *gl*

<sup>90</sup>W. G. Lambert, "Trees, Snakes and Gods in Ancient Syria and Anatolia," *BSOAS* 48 (1985), 437, n. 15: cf. *bēl nag-bi ū zu-un-ni* "lord of abyss and rain" (*BBSr*, no. 6 ii 41).

<sup>91</sup>Lambert, "Trees, Snakes and Gods in Ancient Syria and Anatolia," 449.

<sup>92</sup>B. Margalit, "Lexicographical Notes on the Aqht Epic (Part II: KTU 1.19)," *UF* 16 (1984), 131.

<sup>93</sup>It might be conjectured that ancient Canaanites considered the "surging" of two oceans as taking place at or near El's abode; see below pp. 150f. on *thmtm* "two *thmt*-waters" at El's abode. Note that Aartun recently suggested the meaning, "Öffnung/Auftun (des Gewässers) der (beiden) Fluten" for *sr' thmtm* and the etymology from Semitic \**sr'*, instead of the conventional *sr'*; cf. K. Aartun, "Neue Beiträge zum Ugaritischen Lexikon (II)," *UF* 17 (1985), 36f.

probably refers to Baal's involvement with the subterranean water; hence "overflow" (Greenfield) or "flooding" could be suggested for the translation of the term *glt*.

'*dn*:

The Ugaritic verb '*dn* can be explained as meaning "to make abundant in water-supply" in the light of its Aramaic cognate in the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription as well as from the context. Here in KTU 1.4:V:6–7 [51:V:68–69], the literal sense seems to fit the context better than the more abstract sense, since it talks about the meteorological functions of the storm-god Baal.

### c. *Old South Arabic*

The root \*'*dn* appears in a text MTBNṬYN *h'dn*, as one of the titles of Old South Arabic god MTBNṬYN. Biella suggests the meaning of \*'*dn* as to "bestow well-being" in the light of Hebrew '*dn* to "enjoy luxuries" and Arabic *ḡadan* "dainties."<sup>94</sup> However, there is a phonological difficulty in connecting the Hebrew /'/' and the Arabic /ḡ/ with Old South Arabic /'/'.

If the divine name MTBNṬYN, /môtab-naṭiyân/<sup>95</sup> or /mutîb-natyân/, is related to the Syriac root \*nṭ' "to be humid" (Fell)<sup>96</sup> and means "qui assure la fécondité de la terre grâce à l'eau" as Ryckmans suggests,<sup>97</sup> its epithet *h'dn* should probably be translated as one "who supplies abundant water", rather than "([the god] M. who) bestows well-being", in the light of the Ugaritic '*dn*, "to make abundant in water-supply" as well as the Aramaic *m'dn mt kln*, "one who makes the whole land abundant in water-supply", a title of the god Hadad in the Fekheriyeh inscription.

<sup>94</sup>J. C. Biella, *Dictionary of Old South Arabic: Sabaean Dialect* (HSS 25; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), 354. However, there is no entry for '*dn* in A. F. L. Beeston, M. A. Ghul, W. W. Müller & J. Ryckmans, *Sabaic Dictionary (English-French-Arabic)* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Éditions Peeters, 1982).

<sup>95</sup>F. Hommel, *Ethnologie und Geographie des alten Orients* (München: C. H. Beck'sche, 1926), 143.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. A. Jammé, "Le Panthéon Sud-arabe préislamique d'après les sources épigraphiques," *Le Muséon* 60 (1947), 97, n. 345: "celui qui garantit l'humidité?"

<sup>97</sup>G. Ryckmans, *Les Noms Propres Sud-sémitiques* Tome I: Répertoire Analytique. (Bibliothèque du Muséon 2; Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1934), 20.



## d. Arabic

The Arabic term *ḡadanu* "delicacy" was first suggested as a cognate of the Ugaritic *'dn* but, since Ugaritic has a phoneme /g/ besides /'/, the Arabic term does not correspond to the Ugaritic one phonologically. It is possible to take *ḡadanu* as a secondary development in the Arabic language from the root \*'dn, like Arabic *nġm* "to sing" which corresponds to the Ugaritic *n'm*. However, one should search in Arabic for a term based on \*'dn as a possible cognate of the Ugaritic *'dn*, the Aramaic *'dn*, the Hebrew *'dn* as well as the Old South Arabic *'dn*.

In fact, there is an Arabic verb *'adana* "to dwell, abide"<sup>98</sup> from \*'dn, which might be related to the Ugaritic *'dn* and other West Semitic cognate terms. Lane suggests the translation "Gardens of abode, or gardens of perpetual abode" for the phrase *jannātu 'adnin*,<sup>99</sup> which might preserve an ancient tradition about Eden. The sense "(perpetual) abode" in Arabic is perhaps the result of semantic development such as "a well-watered place" > "oasis" > "perpetual abode", like Akkadian *edurû* (Lw from Sum. *é-duru*<sub>5</sub>, "manor or farm on wet ground" or "moistened ground"<sup>100</sup>) which seems to refer etymologically to "a small rural settlement with a permanent water supply."<sup>101</sup>

In the light of the above one might suggest the meaning of *'ēden* as "a place where there is abundant water-supply" (cf. Gen 13:10)<sup>102</sup>; its verbal root \*'dn means primarily "to make abundant in water-supply",<sup>103</sup> and secondarily "to enrich, prosper, make luxuriant." The term \*'ēden (pl. *'ādānīm* in Ps 36:9)<sup>104</sup> which means "pleasure, luxury" has the same etymology as "Eden" with this secondary meaning, though MT seems care-

<sup>98</sup>Olmo Lete, *MLC*, 598 notes van Zijl's suggestion to connect Ugaritic *'dn* with Arabic cognate *'adana*, though with a different meaning, "fecundidad."

<sup>99</sup>Lane, *AEL*, I, 1976.

<sup>100</sup>W. W. Hallo, "Antediluvian Cities," *JCS* 23 (1970), 58 & n. 16.

<sup>101</sup>*CAD*, E (1958), 39.

<sup>102</sup>This etymology is supported by Gen 13:10, which reads: "that it was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord." See Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 108.

<sup>103</sup>Note, however, that no "rain" had yet been involved with Eden in Gen 2:8 and only "the 'ēd-water" was irrigating the whole land.

<sup>104</sup>Cassuto translates Ps 36:9 as "and Thou givest them to drink from the river of Thy watering" and suggests rabbinic examples: i.e. B. Kethuboth 10b "rain waters, saturates, fertilizes and refreshes [*mə'addēn*]; "Just as the showers come down / upon the herbs and refresh [*mə'addānīm*] them", etc. (Sifre' Deut. 32:2). Cf. Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 107f.

fully to distinguish 'ēden from \*'eden.<sup>105</sup> This root is also possibly reflected in the personal names, ḥmy'dn and m'dnh, which appear on ancient Hebrew seals.<sup>106</sup>

### *Excursus: Etymology of Tigris and Euphrates*

#### 1. Tigris

The Sumerian name for the Tigris, idig(i)na, is attested from the pre-Sargonic period onward.<sup>107</sup> Since it is generally true that geographical names preserve much older traditions than personal names, the initial consonant of the Hebrew *hiddēqel* "Tigris" /h/ may preserve a pre-Sumerian or early Sumerian pronunciation.<sup>108</sup> Judging from the correspondence between idig(i)na (Sum.) // *idigra-um* (Ebla.) // *idiqlat* (Akk.) <—> Hebrew *hiddēqel* (< \*hid + iqlu), the Hebrew form is probably an early borrowing of the Sumerian original via a non-Akkadian language.<sup>109</sup>

Delitzsch (1914) proposed the etymology of Sumerian idigna as from \*idigina meaning "running river," which was accepted by Albright & Lambdin.<sup>110</sup> Lambert similarly explains idigina as "flowing river"

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<sup>105</sup>Recently, Lemaire interpreted both 'ēden in Genesis story and 'eden of the geographical name *bēt 'eden* (= Bit-Adini) in Amos 1:5 as referring to a specific location, i.e. "les hautes vallées du Ḥabur, du Baliḥ et de l'Euphrate", which he thinks is the most irrigated and prosperous region of the ancient Near East and corresponds well to the description of Eden in the Genesis story; cf. A. Lemaire, "Le pays d'Eden et le Bit-adini aux origines d'un mythe," *Syria* 58 (1981), 313–330, esp. 327f. His interesting hypothesis however needs to be scrutinized on the basis of other available evidence such as the river names, the stone name *šōham* (2:12) and others. Note also a brief account of the Sumerian 'paradise' myth and its proposed connection with Genesis story in Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 147–149.

<sup>106</sup>F. Israel, "Quelques précisions sur l'ononastique hébraïque féminine dans l'épigraphie," *SEL* 4 (1987), 80 & n. 15 (p. 86).

<sup>107</sup>See D. O. Edzard–G. Farber–E. Sollberger, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der prä-sargonischen und sargonischen Zeit* (RGTC 1; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1977), 216.

<sup>108</sup>See p. 125, n. 39 on the earlier pronunciation of É as /ha/ or /ḥa/ in Eblaite Sumerian.

<sup>109</sup>See above p. 114.

<sup>110</sup>W. F. Albright & T. O. Lambdin, "The Evidence of Language," *The Cambridge Ancient History*. 3rd ed., I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 148. Cf. M. C. Astour, "Semites and Hurrians in Northern Transtigris," in D. I. Owen & M. A. Morrison (eds.), *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians*. Vol. 2:

(id+gina), which is a good Sumerian name. Though the Tigris is sometimes explained as "Swift River", the Sumerian term gina does not mean "swift."<sup>111</sup> Recently, Heimpel gave an entirely new explanation: id "Fluß"+igna "Lazuli",<sup>112</sup> but this is highly speculative. On the other hand, Baldacci attempts to connect Tigris with the divine name <sup>d</sup>NI.DA.KUL, which he reads ì-ta-qul (= Heb. *hiddéqel*). But the reading of this divine name is not established and his argument needs more positive support,<sup>113</sup> since in Eblaite the river Tigris is spelt as ì-dì-gi-ra-um. However, a name for the deified river Tigris appears as <sup>d</sup>Idiglat or <sup>d</sup>idigina.<sup>114</sup>

## 2. Euphrates

The Sumerian name buranun (> Akk *purattu* or *purantu*) of the Euphrates (Heb *pərat*) has been explained as "mighty water source" by Delitzsch<sup>115</sup> or "lordly river" (Lambert).<sup>116</sup> The Euphrates appears in Eblaite as *bù-la-na-tim* /*puran(a)tim*/ (genitive) in ARET 5, 3:IV:3.<sup>117</sup> In Mari texts, the name Euphrates appears both with and without the assimilation of /n/. E.g. *pu-ra-tim* (ARM 24 11 et al) and *pu-ra-an-tim* (ARM 2, 22, 21 & 2, 25, 4. 13).<sup>118</sup> The unassimilated forms also appear as *pu-ra-na-ta* (AH, S i:7) and *pu-ra-*

General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi 9/1 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 19, n. 109. Prof. Lambert orally suggested this meaning (15.7.87).

<sup>111</sup>Note Edzard's comment in his review article, D. O. Edzard, "(Review of) A. Kammenhuber: Die Arier im Vorderen Orient. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1968," *ZDMG* 120 (1970), 313. Cf. Wolfgang Heimpel, "The Natural History of the Tigris according to the Sumerian Literary Composition LUGAL," *JNES* 46 (1987), 312.

<sup>112</sup>W. Heimpel, "Das Untere Meer," *ZA* 77 (1987), 51, n. 92.

<sup>113</sup>M. Baldacci, "Note semitico-occidentali sulla geografia religiosa ad Ebla," *Biblia e Oriente* 24 (1982), 223 & n. 15; P. Xella, "Le Grand Froid: Le dieu *Baradu madu* à Ebla," *UF* 18 (1986), 440, n. 14.

<sup>114</sup>See W. G. Lambert, "Idigina/Idiglat," *RIA* 5/1-2 (1976), 31f. Note also that the Hurrian name for the Tigris appears in a Ugaritic alphabetic text as *aršh* (KTU 1.100:63 & 64); cf. J. C. de Moor, "East of Eden," *ZAW* 100 (1988), 110. On Hurrian names for the Tigris, i.e. *Aranzaḫi* and *Arašših*, see G. F. del Monte & J. Tischler, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte* (RGTC 6; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1978), 524.

<sup>115</sup>Cf. Astour, "Semites and Hurrians in Northern Transtigris," 19, n. 110.

<sup>116</sup>Oral communication (15.7.87).

<sup>117</sup>Cf. D. O. Edzard, *Hymnen, Beschwörungen und Verwandtes* (ARET 5; Roma, 1984), 23.

<sup>118</sup>Cf. B. Groneberg, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der altbabylonischen Zeit* (RGTC 3; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1980), 303.

*na-ti* (KAR 360.7).<sup>119</sup> Its etymology is still unknown.

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<sup>119</sup>Cf. Lambert & Millard, *AH*, 149. For other examples of the unassimilated forms, see G. F. del Monte & J. Tischler, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte* (RGTC 6; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1978), 543f.; I. M. Diakonoff & S. M. Kashkai, *Geographical Names According to Urartian Texts* (RGTC 9; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1981), 111.

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## Chapter 8

### GOD AND THE WATERS

In the previous chapters we have noted that in both Gen 1:2 and Gen 2:5-6 the terms (*təhôm* and *'ēd*) which are normally used for the subterranean waters appear to describe the initial state of the earth. In Gen 1 the *təhôm*-water seems to have covered the whole earth (*'ereš*); in Gen 2 the *'ēd*-water is covering only a part of the earth, the "land" (*'ādāmāh*). In Gen 1, however, the water from above, from which rain comes down, was not separated from the water from below, i.e. the subterranean waters, until the creation of *rāqîa'*,<sup>1</sup> a division in the water, at vs. 6ff. But, in Gen 2, the rain is already referred to, though negatively: "The Lord God had not yet caused it to rain."

In this final chapter we would like to discuss the nature of the relationship between God and the waters in these two chapters of Genesis in comparison with extra biblical materials.

#### A. GOD AS A RAIN-GIVER

The rain-giving god, who is one of the most active deities in many parts of the world, is known not only from written texts such as myths and legends but also from iconographies, for example, in various cylinder seal impressions of the ancient Near East.<sup>2</sup> He is known as Hadda in Eblaite,<sup>3</sup> as

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<sup>1</sup>For a recent discussion of this term, see P. Collini, "Studi sul lessico della metallurgia nell'ebraico biblico e nelle lingue Siro-Palestinesi del II e I millennio A. C.," *SEL* 4 (1987), 19-20 & n. 93-98 (pp. 33-34).

<sup>2</sup>He is represented in Nos. 725-726, 779-780, 782 & 787-792 of D. Collon's list and his consort is pictured as a nude goddess with rainfall in No. 780, cf. D. Collon, *First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East* (London: British Museum Publications, 1987), 170.

<sup>3</sup>In Eblaite, "one of the most frequently occurring gods is Adda, probably pronounced

Adad or Addu in Akkadian,<sup>4</sup> as Baal, Hadad or Haddu in Ugaritic and as Teshub in Hurrian and Hittite.

This deity is often called "a giver of abundant water-supply." In the Akkadian text cited above,<sup>5</sup> the rain god Adad is described as the god who "lets it rain copiously for the people" (*ušaḥḥan eli niši šamûṭ ṭuḥḏi*). The Tell Fekheriyeh text also mentions Hadad, the god of life-giving water, as *m'dn mt kln // muṭaḥḥidu kibrāti*"one who makes the whole land abundant in water-supply." Immediately before that, he is called the "water-controller of all rivers" (*gwgl nhr klm*). Thus, he is sometimes understood not simply as a rain-giving god but also as a controller of the subterranean waters like Ea, the god of Apsû, the subterranean ocean.

Similarly, the LORD God of Gen 2 is understood as a rain-giver as well as the controller of the subterranean waters. While he has not yet sent rain to the earth (v. 5), he supposedly drained the 'ēd-water so that he could make a garden and plant trees in it (vs. 8–9). Though the narrator simply describes as background information<sup>6</sup> that a river was coming out of Eden (v. 10), the LORD God, the single *dramatis personae* in this section of the story, must have controlled the course of the river water from the well-watered place Eden when he planted the garden. Thus, he is the controller of both rain and the subterranean water like Hadad.<sup>7</sup> However, the Lord God is more than a water-controller, who gives abundant water-supply. He is the maker of the total universe, i.e. "earth and heaven" (*'ereṣ wəšāmāyim*)<sup>8</sup> as expressed in the beginning of this story (2:4).

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Hadda, biblical Baal or Hadad, the storm god," cf. W. G. Lambert, "Old Testament Mythology in its Ancient Near Eastern Context," *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986* (SVT 40; Leiden: Brill, 1988), 130.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Roberts, *ESP*, 13f. for the early attestation of Adad or Addu in the old Semitic PNs. Also Tallqvist, *AG*, 246–249.

<sup>5</sup>See above p. 128.

<sup>6</sup>Gen 2:10–14, in which no single *wayqtl* appears, is off the main line story-line, thus constituting an embedded discourse, see above p. 85 for a bibliography.

<sup>7</sup>This is not a place for a detailed discussion of Yahweh-Baal relationship. Note, however, the recent treatment of Ps. 29 by C. Kloos, who argues that Yahweh is presented as an Israelite Baal in this psalm, cf. C. Kloos, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea: A Canaanite Tradition in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1986) and J. Day's review of this book in "(A Review of) *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea: A Canaanite Tradition in the Religion of Ancient Israel*. By Carola Kloos. Pp. 243. Leiden: Brill, 1986," *JTS* 39 (1988), 151–154. For a reappraisal of the alleged connection between God as a warrior king in Hab 3 and Baal, the victor over Yam, see my forthcoming article, "Ugaritic Poetry and Habakkuk 3," *TB* 40 (1989).

<sup>8</sup>For this idiomatic pair, see above p. 69, n. 9.

## B. WATERY BEGINNING

As God is deeply involved with the *təhôm*-water through his *rûḥ* and his word in Gen 1:2, how shall we interpret the nature of the relationship between God and the *təhôm*-water in comparison with other Near Eastern mythologies which deal with a watery beginning?

According to Kramer, "the Sumerian thinkers assumed that before the universe came into being there existed nothing but water, that is, they postulated the existence of a primeval sea."<sup>9</sup> It is significant however to note, with Lambert, that the motif of a "watery beginning" ("der wässriger Anfang") was by no means only a Mesopotamian notion. "The ancient Egyptians quite generally acknowledged the god of the primeval waters Nu (Nun)<sup>10</sup> as the source of all things. In early Greece . . . Ocean is described as the father (γένεσις) of the gods in Homer, and water is the prime element in the cosmologies of Thales and Anaximander. Thus the watery beginning of Genesis is in itself no evidence of Mesopotamian influence."<sup>11</sup>

The "watery beginning" of Gen 1:2 could well be a reflection of the universal understanding of water as a basic element of the cosmos. Certainly the relationship between the earth and the waters is a primary concern of mankind, since on the one hand water is the source of life in a normal physical life and, on the other hand, flooding is a major threat to life on the earth. Therefore, it is no surprise that many ancient traditions are concerned with the initial state of the earth in relation to the water.

However, while there is a similarity between these ancient traditions and the Genesis story in terms of a watery beginning, there are also differences

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<sup>9</sup>S. N. Kramer, "(Review of) H. and H. A. Frankfort, John A. Wilson, Thorkild Jacobsen, William A. Irwin. *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1946, VI, 401pp.," *JCS* 2 (1948), 43; *The Sumerians: their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 113.

<sup>10</sup>For this term, see A. Erman & H. Grapow, *WAS*, II, 214: *nw/nw.w?/nwnw?* Cf. Gk. *Nouv* & Coptic *Nūn*.

<sup>11</sup>W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *JTS* 16 (1965), 293; also "Babylonien und Israel," *TRE* 5 (1979), 71; "Kosmogonie," *RIA* 6 (1980-83), 218-222, esp. 220; "Old Testament Mythology in its Ancient Near Eastern Context," 126. For Egyptian parallels, see J.K. Hoffmeier, "Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 & 2 and Egyptian Cosmology," *JANES* 15 (1983), 39-49.



in the nature of relationship between the water and the creator god as well as in the details of description. In the following section, we will deal specifically with such creator gods as Marduk, El and Ea who correspond in some way to Elohim of the Genesis story.

### 1. A "creator" god and the water

#### a. Marduk, Ea and El

While scholars have noted similarities between the Marduk of Enuma elish and the Baal of the Ugaritic myths in that both are "storm" gods, fight with sea-dragons and become the king of the gods, etc., there is major difference between these two deities: Marduk "created" or rather formed the cosmos, but Baal did not.<sup>12</sup> As noted above, as far as the creation of the cosmos is concerned, in Ugaritic mythology it is the god El, not Baal, that seemingly corresponds to the "creator" god Marduk. Therefore, it is suggested by some that El's relationship with *thm(t)* should be compared to Marduk's relationship with Tiamat and that both should be compared to Elohim's relationship with "the water of *təhôm*" in Genesis.

Recently, de Moor interpreted the "two *thmt*-waters" near El's abode as "Upper and Lower Flood" since, he thinks, "the Ugaritians were acquainted with the idea of a celestial and a subterranean *thmt*."<sup>13</sup> Then he compares the two "Floods" with the two parts of Tiamat divided by Marduk and the upper and lower waters separated by YHWH. And he explains that, like Marduk (Ee IV. 135ff.) and YHWH (Gen 1:6; Prov 3:19f., cf. 2 Sam 22:16), "the Ugaritic god El was held responsible for the separation of the cosmic waters."<sup>14</sup>

However, it should be noted that what Marduk created by dividing the body of Tiamat were "heaven" (Ee IV 137–8) and "earth" (Ee V 62),

<sup>12</sup>See above pp. 64f.

<sup>13</sup>J. C. de Moor, "Studies in the New Alphabetic Texts from Ras Shamra I," *UF* 1 (1969), 182, n. 108. Cf. also his explanation of *qrb.apq.thmtm* "in the bedding of the Two Floods," i.e. in the stream-bed of the Upper and Lower Flood (J. C. de Moor, "El, the Creator," in G. Rendsburg *et al* (eds.), *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* [New York: KTAV, 1980], 183); *b'dt thmtm* "at the confluence of two Floods." See below pp. 151f.

<sup>14</sup>Although these acts of creation ended the state of chaos, the Floods had to be kept under tight control . . . El dwelt at this remote point of the cosmos . . . to maintain the order." (de Moor, "El, the creator," 183).

which do not include the subterranean water, for Ea had already established his abode on Apsû (Ee I 73ff.) when Marduk defeated Tiamat (Ee IV 101–104).<sup>15</sup> Moreover, Marduk's abode is never associated with waters, while the god El in Ugaritic myths is described as dwelling "at the sources of the two rivers", i.e. "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters."

In *Enuma elish*, it is the god Ea who resides at the watery location, Apsû. On the other hand, Marduk's palace Esagila is located on the earth, between Ešarra (= "lower heaven"), Enlil's domain, and Apsû, Ea's domain.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, Ea has a closer similarity with El than with Marduk as regards the relationship between the creator gods and their abodes near or in the waters.

Recently C. H. Gordon summarized a number of common features which Ea, who is the Sumerian Enki,<sup>17</sup> shares with El in Ugaritic mythology. In the following, we will note in detail the similarity between Ea and El in their being "creator" gods and their living in a watery abode.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup>In fact, Marduk was born "within the Apsû." Cf. Ee I 81f.

<sup>16</sup>See above p. 76.

<sup>17</sup>En-ki ("Lord of Earth") is called É-a in Akkadian texts, but since it has supposedly no Semitic etymology, Kramer suggests that "Ea" may be of "Ubaidian" origin (S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer: An Autobiography* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986], 202). However, Gordon proposes a Semitic etymology in the light of the Sumerian-Eblaite bilingual vocabulary:

EN.KI : É-um /ḥay(y)um/ "The Living One"

and compares the god Ḥay(y)a with the Ugaritic god Baal whose epithet is also "Prince, Lord of Earth" (*zbl b'l arš* in KTU 1.6 [49]:I: 42–43 [14–15], etc.) and who is "a dying and rising god, mourned when dead (*mt*) and joyously hailed when again alive (*hy*)." É-a = Hay(y)a is thus the living "Lord of Earth", cf. C. H. Gordon, "Eblaïtica", *Eblaïtica I* (1987), 20; "(A Review of) S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer: An Autobiography*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986," *JCS* 39 (1987), 249. See also Roberts, *ESP*, 20, where he suggests \*ḥyy "to live" as a possible etymology of É-a.

<sup>18</sup>Other aspects which Gordon discusses are as follows:

(1). *wisdom*: "Enki's wisdom matches El's sagacity." (Gordon, "[A Review of] S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer*, 1986," 249).

(2). *god of magic*: "The spell of Enki recalls El's exorcism in the Epic of Kret (1.16 [126]: V:25)." (Gordon, "[A Review of] S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer*, 1986," 249). Note that "as god of ablution magic he was usually called En-uru: 'Lord Reed Bundle', after the reed bundles out of which was constructed the reed hut in which the rites were performed." (Jacobsen, *TIT*, 22).

(3). *drunken god*: "The tipsy Enki is to be compared with the drunken El." (Gordon, "[A Review of] S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer*, 1986," 249). See Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 161.

## b. Similarity between Ea and El

## (1). Creator of creatures

Like El's epithet *bny bnwt* "creator of creatures",<sup>19</sup> Ea has a similar title, *bānu nabnīt* "creator of creatures" in a text which reads:

*Ea . . . bānū nabnīt pātiq kullat mimma šumšu*  
 "Ea, who creates creatures, who forms everything."

(Borger Esarh. 79:4)<sup>20</sup>

This title is used only with the god Ea in Akkadian. Another title of Ea, *bān binūtu*, which is the exact counterpart of Ugaritic *bny bnwt*,<sup>21</sup> appears in the expression, [<sup>d</sup>Ni]nšiku mummy bān binūtu (PSBA 20 158:14).<sup>22</sup> Ea is also called "creator of everything" (*bān kala*) with the title *mummy*, an epithet which is usually used with Ea (and Marduk).<sup>23</sup> Anu and Enlil, the other gods of the triad, were also called *bānū kalāma* "creator of everything"<sup>24</sup> but neither these great gods nor Marduk,<sup>25</sup> the "creator" god, were called *bān binūtu* or *bānū nabnīt*.

## (2). Creator of the cosmos

Ea is also the creator of the cosmos like El. Ea created "land and sea" (*šadī u tāmāti*)<sup>26</sup> and is called *mummy bān šamē u eršeti* "the *mummy*, creator of heaven and earth" (LKA 77 i 29f.).<sup>27</sup> A similar title, "creatress of heaven and earth" (*bānāt šamē u eršeti*), is used with Nammu<sup>28</sup> in whose chamber Ea dwells. Ea is also called *pātiq šamē u eršeti* "creator of

<sup>19</sup>See above pp. 64f., for the fact that El, not Baal, is the creator god in Ugaritic myths.

<sup>20</sup>CAD, N<sub>1</sub>(1980), 28; cf. Tallqvist, AG, 69.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. de Moor, "El, the creator," 182f.

<sup>22</sup>Ninšiku was an epithet of Ea, see Lambert & Millard, AH, 148f., n. to l. 16.

<sup>23</sup>Iraq 15 123:19; etc, cf. CAD, M<sub>2</sub> (1977), 197; CAD, B (1965), 87f.

<sup>24</sup>Tallqvist, AG, 254 & 300. Note a similar title of a river god, *bānāt kalāma*. See above p. 102.

<sup>25</sup>Tallqvist, AG, 366.

<sup>26</sup>Racc. 46, 30, cited by AHw, 1353.

<sup>27</sup>CAD, M<sub>2</sub>, 197. See the Sumerian myth, "Enki and the World Order: the Organization of the Earth and Its Cultural Processes" (Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 122, 171–183 & 294), for a detailed account of Enki's creative activities."

<sup>28</sup>Tallqvist, AG, 71.

heaven and earth" and *bān kullati* "creator of everything,"<sup>29</sup> and as a creator god his name was Nudimmud.<sup>30</sup> Ea is called *zārū māti* "progenitor (or father) of the land."<sup>31</sup> Thus, as the water god,<sup>32</sup> Ea was the creator of cosmos *par excellence*, though Marduk and Samaš were also called "creator" (*bān[û]*) of "heaven and earth" (*šamé u eršeti*).<sup>33</sup>

### (3). *Father of the gods*

Just as El is the "father" of Baal and other deities (*bn ilm*), Ea, the father of Marduk who is "the first born of Enki", is called *abu ilāni* "father of the gods."<sup>34</sup>

### (4). *Father of man*

Like El, the "father of man" (*ab adm*), Ea is called *bānû nišē* "creator of people."<sup>35</sup> Ea as a "creator" fashioned man from the blood of Kingu: i.e. *ina damēšu ibnâ amēlūtu* (Ee VI 33).<sup>36</sup> Ea also created man in Atra-Ḫasīs, or at least it was his idea; he was also the creator of man in the Old Babylonian Ağušaya hymn as well as in the Sumerian myth of Enki and Ninhursag.<sup>37</sup> The "Eridu Genesis" mentions that Anu, Enlil, Enki and Ninhursag fashioned the dark-headed (people).<sup>38</sup>

When de Moor concluded his discussion on "El, the creator" by saying

<sup>29</sup>Tallqvist, *AG*, 289.

<sup>30</sup>Ee I 16, cf. Jacobsen, *TIT*, 22.

<sup>31</sup>Tallqvist, *AG*, 289; cf. Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 175.

<sup>32</sup>Tiāmat is also described by the title *mummu* in Ee I 4 (see above p. 81) but she was never a supreme deity in Mesopotamia. Note that the river goddess appears as a creator in the Harab Myth (see above p. 99, n. 34) as well as in a myth of "Schöpfungsfluß": *Nāru bānāt kalāma* (see above, n. 24).

<sup>33</sup>Tallqvist, *AG*, 69.

<sup>34</sup>Tallqvist, *AG*, 289; Livingstone, *MMEW*, 75. Cf. also *CAD*, A/2 (1968), 195.

<sup>35</sup>Tallqvist, *AG*, 69 & 289. Note a different title, *bānû šalmāt qaqqadi*, for Marduk and Nabū, cf. *CAD*, N/1, 28; B, 87; Tallqvist, *AG*, 69.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, 181.

<sup>37</sup>See Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 149f.; van Dijk, *Acta Or.* 28 — ARM. For the most recent treatment of "Enki and Ninhursag", see P. Attinger, "Enki et Ninhursaga," *ZA* 74 (1984), 1–52. For the goddess Ninhursaga, see T. Jacobsen, "The Eridu Genesis," *JBL* 100 (1981), 514, n. 5; W. G. Lambert, "Kosmogonie," *RIA* 6 (1980–83), 219.

<sup>38</sup>Jacobsen, "The Eridu Genesis," 515. For these four gods, see Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 118–122.

"Like Sumerian Enlil,<sup>39</sup> Babylonian Marduk<sup>40</sup> and YHWH, El, the supreme god of the Canaanites, was thought to be the 'creator of both the cosmos and man,'"<sup>41</sup> he seems to have ignored two other supreme gods in ancient Mesopotamia, Anu and Ea, who were also recognized as creator-gods and were both "father of the gods" (*abu ilāni*). In Mesopotamian mythology, Marduk<sup>42</sup> was a late comer and the triad of deities, Anu, Enlil and Ea (Enki), was already established in the Old Babylonian and Cassite periods<sup>43</sup> before Marduk was exalted among the gods.

In a similar way, the Ugaritic senior deity El had already established his status as the head of pantheon before Baal became a king among the gods. Baal, however, was never called a "creator" and El remained active as the creator god and was "not demoted to less than an honorable position."<sup>44</sup>

## 2. Watery abode

Ea and El are similar not only in being the *senior* creator god and the father of mankind and gods but also in living near or in the waters. On the other hand, Enlil and Marduk as well as Baal are never associated with a watery abode. Gordon notes that "Enki's inhabiting a watery shrine in the Deep corresponds to El's abode at the sources of the two cosmic Rivers or Deeps."<sup>45</sup> However, the nature and location of El's abode is highly disputed by Ugaritic scholars. Before we deal with this problem, let us summarize

<sup>39</sup>Cf. Kramer, *The Sumerians*, 118f. Note also Lambert's study on the structure of the Hurrian pantheon which, according to him, "could well have been modelled on an archaic Sumerian pantheon from the first half of the Third Millennium with Enlil alone at its head." See W. G. Lambert, "The Mesopotamian Background of the Hurrian Pantheon," *RHA* 36 (1978), 134.

<sup>40</sup>For a recent study of Marduk, see W. Sommerfeld, *Der Aufstieg Marduks: die Stellung Marduks in der babylonischen Religion des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr.* (AOAT 213; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982) and Lambert's review article in *BSOAS*.

<sup>41</sup>De Moor, "El, the creator," 186.

<sup>42</sup>Note that Marduk is described as holding "the Anuship, the Enlilship, and Eaship" (cf. Jacobsen, *The Treasure of Darkness*, 234). Cf. P. D. Miller, Jr., "The Absence of the Goddess in Israelite Religion," *HAR* 10 (1986), 242.

<sup>43</sup>Livingstone, *MMEW*, 76. See above p. 76 on tripartite cosmology. Also cf. A. Cavigneaux, H. G. Güterbock & M. T. Roth (eds.), *The Series Erim-huš = anantu and An-ta-gál = saqu* (MSL 17; Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1985), 91, where Anu, Enlil and Ea correspond to <sup>d</sup>en-za, <sup>d</sup>maḥ-za and <sup>d</sup>ki-za-za respectively.

<sup>44</sup>M. S. Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986), 338, n. 129.

<sup>45</sup>Gordon, "(A Review of) S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer*, 1986," 249.

the nature and location of Ea's abode.

a. *Ea's watery abode*

Ea (Enki)'s titles which suggest the nature and location of his abode are Lugal-id(ak) "Owner of the river", Lugal-abzu(ak)<sup>46</sup> =šar apsî "the king of the Apsû" and bēl naqbi "the lord of the source."<sup>47</sup> They present him as the specific power in rivers or the subterranean waters. In a section in a certain late text, Ea is associated with water: *ul-la-nu: dēa* (40): *mu-ū* "Primeval : Ea : water."<sup>48</sup> Here the "water" refers to the primeval Apsû.

Ea's abode is in Apsû, the underground sweet waters.<sup>49</sup> Ea (Enki) lies in the "chamber of Nammu" (*mayālu ša dNammu*), the goddess of the water-bearing strata; these chambers are down in the earth just above the "surface of the underworld" (*ašar eršetimma*).<sup>50</sup> This accords with the description of his abode in the "middle earth" which is between the abode of men and the underworld.<sup>51</sup> Ea (Enki)'s watery chamber with two gate posts is probably depicted in seal No. 760 in the cylinder seal impressions republished in D. Collon's recent book.<sup>52</sup>

Ea is usually pictured with two streams,<sup>53</sup> which Jacobsen thinks are the Euphrates and the Tigris,<sup>54</sup> flowing out of his shoulders or from a vase he holds. However, in Ee V:55, the Euphrates and the Tigris are described as the two eyes of Tiamat,<sup>55</sup> rather than as being related to Ea's abode in

<sup>46</sup>Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, 111.

<sup>47</sup>Livingstone, *MMEW*, 30–31.

<sup>48</sup>RA 62 52 17–18, cited by Livingstone, *MMEW*, 74.

<sup>49</sup>See *CAD*, A/2 (1968), 194–197.

<sup>50</sup>T. Jacobsen, "Sumerian Mythology: A Review Article," *JNES* 5 (1946), 145, n. 28. He also notes that engur is distinguished from a-ab-ba, "sea", in 140, n. 21. This is supported by the Eblaite vocabulary, *VE*, which lists:

1343': ab-a	<i>ti-'ā-ma-tum</i> (79:r.III:8'–9')
1344': dnammu (ENGUR)	<i>šī-nu ḥa-mi-um</i> (63–64:v.III:20–21)

<sup>51</sup>See above p. 74.

<sup>52</sup>Cf. Collon, *First Impressions*, 165; also Kramer, *The Sumerians*, Plate, following p. 160.

<sup>53</sup>Collon, *First Impressions*, 165 & Nos. 760–762 & 673.

<sup>54</sup>Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, 111.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. B. Landsberger & J. V. Kinnier Wilson, "The Fifth Tablet of *Enuma Eliš*," *JNES* 20 (1961), 160f. Also note: "The Tigris: her right eye. The Euphrates: her left eye." in Livingstone, *MMEW*, 82f.; cf. Landsberger & Kinnier Wilson, "The Fifth Tablet of *Enuma Eliš*," 175, and "eyes of Tiāmat" in Livingstone, *MMEW*, 163. On the origin of the

Apsû. Moreover, in seal impressions such as Collon No. 761, fish are pictured in these two "waters." These waters are probably subterranean waters, since fish are usually described as being in the Apsû in Akkadian texts.<sup>56</sup>

#### b. El's watery abode

El's abode<sup>57</sup> is near or in the waters (*mbk nhrm* "at the sources of the two<sup>58</sup> rivers" // *qrb apq thmtm* "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters" or *b'dt thmtm* "in the assembly of the two *thmt*-waters") and this watery nature of El's abode is probably pictured on the "Drinking mug with painted scene."<sup>59</sup>

There have been two opposing views about the location of El's abode. M. H. Pope suggests that "the nature of El's abode is . . . similar to that of the Sumero-Akkadian Enki-Ea who dwells in the *apsû*."<sup>60</sup> And he takes El's abode to be in the underworld like Ea's abode. The same view has been taken by O. Kaiser.<sup>61</sup>

On the other hand, Clifford<sup>62</sup> takes El's abode to be in the mountain (*hršn*) on the basis of internal textual evidences.<sup>63</sup> He is followed by Mullen, who compares El's abode at the "sources of the rivers" with "the garden of God"// "the mountain of God" (Ezek 28:13, 16).<sup>64</sup> He explains

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Tigris river in the Ninurta-Asakku myth, see W. Heimpel, "The Natural History of the Tigris according to the Sumerian Literary Composition LUGAL," *JNES* 46 (1987), 309–317.

<sup>56</sup>CAD, A/2, 194f. and see above p. 74.

<sup>57</sup>For a bibliography on this subject, see Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," 328, n. 83.

<sup>58</sup>N. Wyatt, "The Hollow Crown: Ambivalent Elements in West Semitic Royal Ideology," *UF* 18 (1986), 426, n. 32 suggests that *nhrm* perhaps signifies "four rivers" in accordance with common iconographic and Biblical (Gen 2:10–14) traditions. However, the dual form *thmtm* in the parallel expressions, *qrb apq thmtm* and *b'dt thmtm*, rather suggests that the number of rivers is two.

<sup>59</sup>AfO 20 [1963], 211: Fig. 30, as discussed by M. H. Pope, "The Scene on the Drinking Mug from Ugarit," in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* [ed. Hans Goedicke] (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 400.

<sup>60</sup>M. H. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* (SVT 2; Leiden: Brill, 1955), 71.

<sup>61</sup>O. Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (BZAW 78; Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1959), 54–55.

<sup>62</sup>R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (HSM 4; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 35–57.

<sup>63</sup>These two opposing views are summarized by H. N. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative* (HSM 32; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 94 & 98, n. 88.

<sup>64</sup>E. T. Mullen, Jr., *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (HSM

that "the mount of 'El was the *ḥuršānu*, the place of entrance to both the Underworld and Heaven . . . at the sources of the life-giving rivers."<sup>65</sup> A. S. Kapelrud recently also explained in detail that "(El) is still living on his mountain."<sup>66</sup>

El's living at or near the source of rivers can be compared with Elkunirša's abode, i.e. "tent", at "the source of the Mala-river (i.e. the Euphrates)" in a Canaanite myth from Boğazkoy.<sup>67</sup> However, in the Ugaritic texts no specific name is given for these rivers and there are two rivers and *thmt*-waters.

These two *thmt*-waters<sup>68</sup> might be compared with various Mesopotamian traditions in which heaven and *apsû* are paired and possibly refer to "a celestial and a subterranean *thmt*" as de Moor suggests, though his proposal to compare the two "Floods" with the two parts of Tiamat is not acceptable as noted above.<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note here that the expressions, "the upper sea" (a.ab.ba an.ta = *tāmtu elītu*) and "the lower sea" (a.ab.ba ki.ta = *tāmtu šaplītu*), appear in a MA tablet<sup>70</sup> of mystical explanatory works: while "the upper sea" is connected with Šamaš, "the lower sea of the rising sun" is described as serving Ea, the god of the subterranean ocean.

It is also interesting to note that the two bodies of water were seemingly once personified as a divine couple, *Šamūma* "Heaven(-water)" and *Tahāmatu* "Ocean(-water)" or a composite divine being *Šmm-w-Thm* in Ugaritic religion. This divine pair, "Heaven"-god *Šamūma* (= *šmm*) and "Ocean"-goddess *Tahāmatu* (= *thmt*), corresponds to Sumerian AN and ANTU respectively in *Ug* V 137:III:33"-34." Therefore it seems that these preserve an ancient tradition about the separation of heaven-water<sup>71</sup> and

24; Chico: Scholars Press, 1980), 153. Note that the mountain waters come out of Apsu, the subterranean sweet waters. Cf. J. van Dijk, LUGAL UD ME-LĀM-bi NIR-GĀL: *Le récit épique et didactique des Travaux de Ninurta, du Déluge et de la Nouvelle Création* Tome I: Introduction, Texte Composite. Traduction (Leiden: Brill, 1983).

<sup>65</sup>Mullen, Jr., *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature*, 162.

<sup>66</sup>A. S. Kapelrud, "The Relationship between El and Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts," in G. Rendsburg et al (eds.), *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* (New York: KTAV, 1980), 82.

<sup>67</sup>H. A. Hoffner, Jr., "The Elkunirsa Myth Reconsidered," *RHA* 23 (1965), 8 & 14.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. *ti'amat tu'amtu*, "à deux faces, homme et femme" in van Dijk, LUGAL UD ME-LĀM-bi NIR-GĀL, 26. Also cf. n. 100: "W. von Soden in AHW s. *tu'amtu*[!] = «la double (Ti'amat)?»."

<sup>69</sup>De Moor, "Studies in the New Alphabetic Texts," 182, n. 108; de Moor, "El, the creator," 183.

<sup>70</sup>RA 60 73 8-9, cited by Livingstone, *MMEW*, 77.

<sup>71</sup>Note the artificial etymology of "heaven" (*šamē*) as "of water" (*ša mē*) in a Babylonian mystical explanatory work; cf. Livingstone, *MMEW*, 32f., l. 6. Note the same view held



ocean-water which is reflected in the Genesis Creation story, not in 1:2, but in 1:6ff.<sup>72</sup> as well as in the Flood story (Gen 7:11, 8:2). As de Moor recently pointed out, in a Ugaritic incantation text, KTU 1.100, an older mythological tradition, in which the sun-goddess (*špš*) was "the mother of Heaven (male) and Flood (female)", seems to be presupposed.<sup>73</sup> In a mythological explanatory work from the Neo-Assyrian period,<sup>74</sup> a similar cosmological tradition may have influenced preserving two primeval gods, Anšar ("totality of the upper world")<sup>75</sup> and his "Antu" Tiamat,<sup>76</sup> who are equated with Aššur and Ištar.

A similar tradition may be recognized in a neo-Babylonian ritual text, which describes the initial creation of the universe as follows: "Anu created 'heaven' (*šamē*) // <sup>4</sup>Nudimmud (=Ea) created Apsû."<sup>77</sup> In Enuma elish IV 141–2, it is Marduk who shaped the "heavens" to match the Apsû.<sup>78</sup> The same pair of "heaven" and *apsû*, "cosmic subterranean water", appears quite often<sup>79</sup> and can be compared with Hebrew pair of *šamayim* and *təhôm(ôt)* in Gen 7:11, 8:2, 49:25, Dt 33:13, Ps 107:26.

In the light of the above, El's abode was probably located at the farthest horizon where "heaven" and "ocean" meet together. The biggest difference between El and Ea is this: while El's abode seems to be related to the "two *thmt*-waters", possibly "heaven" and "ocean", Ea's abode is related only to the subterranean ocean. While El is the supreme god in Ugarit, Ea is one of three traditional supreme deities during the second millennium B.C. in the southern Mesopotamia and he controls only one of the three areas of universe, i.e. Apsû. According to Lambert, in the third millennium

by H. Bauer & P. Leander, *Historische Grammatik der Hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (Hildesheim: Georg Olmes, 1922 [1962]), 621. In the Genesis story, however, God called *rāqîʿ* "heaven" (v. 8), not the water above it (as Stieglitz suggests). Cf. R. R. Stieglitz, "Ugaritic Sky-gods and Biblical Heavens," *NUS* 35 (April, 1986), 13.

<sup>72</sup>See Stieglitz, "Ugaritic Sky-gods and Biblical Heavens," 13. This tradition is therefore not "a piece of learning which was picked up in Babylon by the Jewish religious leaders" (C. Kloos, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea*, 85).

<sup>73</sup>J. C. de Moor, "East of Eden," *ZAW* 100 (1988), 106, n. 3.

<sup>74</sup>Livingstone, *MMEW*, 233f.

<sup>75</sup>Cf. Borger, *ABZ*, 160: *šár* = *kiššatu* "Gesamtheit, Welt."

<sup>76</sup>In an inscription of Sennacherib, Anšar is depicted "setting out in battle against Tiamat, followed by a retinue of gods." See Livingstone, *MMEW*, 232.

<sup>77</sup>F. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1921), 46; also cf. *CAD*, A/2, 195.

<sup>78</sup>Marduk made the heavens (*šamē*) "a likeness of the Apsû, the abode of Nudimmud (Ea)" (*mi-iḫ-rit ap-si-i šu-bat 4nu-dím-mud*). Cf. Livingstone, *MMEW*, 80.

<sup>79</sup>*CAD*, A/2, 194–196, esp. b, 1': "parallel to *šamû*."

Sumerian pantheon as well as in the second millennium Hurrian pantheon, which reflects the northern Mesopotamian tradition, Enki-Ea was a second-ranking deity. In this aspect, the Ugaritic god El as a creator is more similar to Elohim of Genesis.

Thus, both creator gods, Ea and El, who have close associations with the waters, have similar characteristics and functions. In Ugaritic, the "two *thmt*-waters" (*thmtm*) and the "Sea" (*ym*) are distinguished and are connected with two different gods, El and Baal, just like Akkadian Enuma elish in which Ea's abode is the subterranean ocean Apsû while Marduk's enemy is Tiamat, the sea-goddess. However, El's abode "at the sources of the two rivers", i.e. "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters", seems to preserve older traditions about the watery abode of a creator god in the ancient Near Eastern cosmologies.

### 3. *Conclusion*

The Biblical Elohim is also deeply involved with the "water of *təhôm*" in the forms of "Spirit"<sup>80</sup>(Gen 1:2) and "Word" (1:6ff.) but the author ascribes to Elohim the creation of the total cosmos, "heavens and earth", which includes the water of *təhôm*. It is true that in Mesopotamian and Canaanite pantheons certain deities were called "the lord or creator of heaven and earth" (e.g. Marduk, Ea and El<sup>81</sup>), but in the Old Testament theology, when Yahweh-Elohim is represented as the creator of heaven and earth (e.g. Gen 1:1, 14:22), it means not only that he is incomparable with other gods but also that he is the only god who can be treated as god, i.e. God.<sup>82</sup>

In conclusion, the Genesis account has more similarities with Ugaritic mythological traditions than with the Babylonian in the area of the relationship between a creator deity and the waters. However, this fact does not prove that Genesis is dependent upon the Ugaritic mythology. The creator god Elohim of Genesis corresponds not to Baal but to El, who has also many similarities in characteristics and functions with Ea, the Babylonian

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<sup>80</sup>The current emphasis on *rûḥ* as "wind" (e.g. R. Luyster, "Wind and Water: Cosmogonic Symbolism in the Old Testament," *ZAW* 93 [1981], 1–10; Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 39 & 107) is seemingly based on the supposition that there is a Canaanite dragon myth behind Gen 1:2.

<sup>81</sup>Cf. P. D. Miller, Jr., "El, the Creator of Earth," *BASOR* 239 (1980), 43–46.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. C. J. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Pretoria Oriental Series 5; Leiden: Brill, 1966).

god of water. As the extant Ugaritic myths seem to presuppose the earlier (pre-historic?)<sup>83</sup> traditions about the creation of the cosmos, probably by El, it seems that both Genesis and the Ugaritic myths reflect much earlier "common" traditions. However, since the linguistic form of Hebrew /təhōm/ is older than the Ugaritic /tahāmu/ as noted above,<sup>84</sup> it is unlikely that the Hebrew term is a depersonification of the earlier Canaanite divine name Tahām.

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<sup>83</sup>Cf. Lambert, "Old Testament Mythology in its Ancient Near Eastern Context," 128: "the creative period of myth lies in prehistory. That was the time of genuine mythic creativity, so that the basic material was spread everywhere from the Aegean to India before our written evidence begins. When the earliest myths and allusions known to us were written down, the basic concern of myth had already lost some of its force." Cf. de Moor's view that "KTU 1.100 and 1.107 . . . presuppose a Canaanite tradition about the Garden of Eden," in "East of Eden," 106.

<sup>84</sup>See above p. 62.

## Chapter 9

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study has been concerned with clarifying the nature of the "earth-waters" relationship in the initial sections of the first two chapters of Genesis. Some scholars have explained that the nature of this relationship in chap. 1 is totally different from that in chap. 2. In Gen 1:2 the earth was a "watery chaos" which existed before creation; in Gen 2:5–6 the original state of the earth was a desert, i.e. a "dry chaos." The water in the former was "the enemy of creation"; the water in the latter was "the assisting element of creation."

However, do the terms, *tōhû wābōhû* and *təhôm*, in Gen 1:2 really signify a chaotic state of the earth in waters and hence "a primordial threat against creation"? What is the function and meaning of the term 'ēd in Gen 2:6? How are the waters such as "a rain-water", "an 'ēd-water" and "river-waters" related to Eden ('ēden) and the garden of Eden?

#### A. ETYMOLOGY

##### 1. *tōhû wābōhû*

The expression *tōhû wābōhû*, which is traditionally translated into English as "without form and void" (RSV) or the like, is often taken as signifying the primordial "chaos" and direct opposition to the "creation." However, Hebrew *tōhû* is based on a Semitic root \*thw and means "desert"; the term *bōhû* is also a Semitic term based on the root \*bhw, "to be empty."

It is possible that the Ugaritic expression *tu-a-bi-[ú(?)]*, which corresponds to Akkadian *nabalkutu* "to be out of order" and Hurrian *tap-šu-ḫu-[u]m-me* (< *tapš-* "to be poor") in a multilingual vocabulary, has the idiomatic meaning "to be unproductive" and is a cognate of Hebrew *tōhû wābōhû*. This idiomatic meaning would have nothing to do with "the state

of chaos." On the other hand, if the expression should be read as *tu-a-pí-[ku(?)]* and means "to be upset", it would have no bearing on the meaning of Hebrew *tôhû wābôhû*, for the Ugaritic term is totally different from the Hebrew expression.

The Hebrew term *tôhû* means (1) "desert", (2) "a desert-like place", i.e. "a desolate or empty place" or "an uninhabited place" or (3) "emptiness." The phrase *tôhû wābôhû* refers to a state of "aridness or unproductiveness" (Jer 4:23) or "desolation" (Isa 34:11) and to a state of "unproductiveness and emptiness" in Gen 1:2, which was the initial state of the created earth rather than a state brought about as a result of God's judgment on the earth or land (as in Jer 4:23; Isa 34:11). The earth which "was" *tôhû wābôhû* signifies the earth in a "bare" state, without vegetation and animals as well as without man.

In conclusion, both the biblical context and extra-biblical parallels suggest that the phrase *tôhû wābôhû* in Gen 1:2 has nothing to do with "chaos" and simply means "emptiness" and refers to the earth which is an empty place, i.e. "an unproductive and uninhabited place."

## 2. *təhôm*

### a. *Babylonian background*

Ever since H. Gunkel's famous book *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (1895), many Biblical scholars have assumed some kind of direct or indirect connection between the Babylonian goddess of the primeval ocean Tiamat in the "creation" poem *Enuma elish* and the Hebrew *təhôm*.

However, it is phonologically impossible to conclude that the Hebrew *təhôm* was borrowed from the Akkadian divine name *Tiamat*. The Akkadian term *ti'āmtum* > *tāmtum* normally means "sea" or "ocean" in an ordinary sense. The fact that *təhôm* is etymologically related to Tiamat as a cognate should not be taken as evidence for the mythological dependence of the former on the latter.

As some Assyriologists have pointed out, one cannot simply assume that the theme of conflict between the storm god Marduk and the sea goddess Tiamat was original to Mesopotamian traditions. At the same time, *Enuma elish* itself incorporates much older Mesopotamian traditions.

The sea has been personified as a divine being since the earliest period of written history in Mesopotamia. On the other hand, in some later

creation narratives in Mesopotamia the sea is not personified and has nothing to do with the conflict theme. Since some narratives have never associated the creation of the cosmos with the conflict theme at all, there is no reason to assume that the older stage without the conflict-creation connection necessarily developed to a stage with this connection. It should be also noted that more than one creation tradition existed in ancient Mesopotamia.

### b. *Canaanite background*

While in Enuma elish the motif of conflict of a storm-god with the sea is integrated in the story of the creation of the cosmos, in Ugaritic the Baal-Yam conflict is not related to the "primordial struggle in connection with the creation" at all. Unfortunately, this theme of *Chaoskampf*, which is reflected in both, tends to be taken as the basic prerequisite for any cosmogonic story in the Ancient Near East. For example, J. Day suggested that the term *tāhôm* in Genesis story can be traced back to an earlier Canaanite dragon myth which he thinks is related to the creation theme. The term *tāhôm* is then understood as a depersonification of the original mythological divine name in Canaanite.

However, is there a Canaanite dragon myth in the background of Gen 1:2? We answered this question negatively for the following reasons:

#### 1. *tāhôm is not "Canaanite"*

If the Hebrew term is common Semitic, there is no reason why the term should be taken particularly as "Canaanite." It is very unlikely that Hebrew *tāhôm* is a borrowing from a Canaanite divine name, since the Hebrew form is morphologically older than Ugaritic *Tahāmu*.

#### 2. *tāhôm is not a depersonification*

Since the Ugaritic, Akkadian and Eblaite cognates are usually a common noun, Hebrew *tāhôm* is also ordinarily used as a common noun. There is no strong reason why we should take *tāhôm* as a depersonification of the original divine name.

#### 3. *The Canaanite Sea-dragon is Yam, not Tahām*

Even if there were an undiscovered myth in which a "creator" god had to fight a Canaanite sea-dragon, the dragon would not be Tahām, but Yam.

#### 4. Baal is not a creator god

Though Baal is the most active deity in the Ugaritic mythology, he is not the creator-god. In Canaanite religion it is the god El who is the creator god.

#### 5. Yām does not appear in Gen 1:2

If the Genesis account were the demythologization of a Canaanite dragon myth, we would expect in the initial portion of the account, the term *yām* "sea", which is the counterpart of the Ugaritic sea-god Yam. However, the term *yām* does not appear in Gen 1 until v. 10.

Thus, it is difficult to assume that an earlier Canaanite dragon myth existed in the background of Gen 1:2. The Hebrew term *tāhôm* is simply a reflection of the Common Semitic term \**tihām*- "ocean" and there is no relation between the Genesis account and the so-called *Chaoskampf* mythology.

#### c. Etymology of \**thm*

Morphologically the Hebrew *tāhôm* corresponds to the Ugaritic *thm* rather than to the Akkadian divine name <sup>d</sup>Tiamat. The Akkadian *tiāmtu*, the Arabic *tihāmat* and the Eblaite *ti-'ā-ma-tum* /*tihām(a)tum*/ together with the Ugaritic *thm* and the Hebrew *tāhôm* are the reflections of a common Semitic term \**tihām*-. The Hebrew form reflects an older stage of development from the Proto-Semitic \**tihām*- than the Ugaritic form *thm* /*tahāmu*/ whose first vowel /a/ is the result of a vowel harmony: \**tihām*- > \**tahāmu*.

Ugaritic *thm(t)* normally appears as a common noun in mythological texts. Akkadian *tiāmtum*, *tāmtum* also appears in non-mythological texts with an ordinary meaning "sea /ocean" from the earliest times, which predate Enuma elish. Even in a certain mythological context which mentions the creation of the cosmos the term *tāmtum* appears without personification. In Eblaite, *ti-'ā-ma-tum* appears also with the ordinary meaning, "sea, ocean."

Thus, Ugaritic *thm(t)*, Akkadian *tiāmtum*, *tāmtum* and Eblaite *ti-'ā-ma-tum* all appear as a common noun, "sea" or "ocean", from their earliest attestation. If all these cognate terms can mean "sea" or "ocean" in the ordinary sense, there is no reason why we should think that the Hebrew term *tāhôm* is a *depersonalization* of an original proper name.

This common noun \**tihām*- "ocean" is of course sometimes personified

as a divine name such as Akkadian Tiamat and Ugaritic *Tahām(at)*. Hebrew *tāhôm* is sometimes personified (e.g. Hab 3:10) but not always as a feminine noun as some have assumed in the light of the Akkadian feminine name Tiamat.

While \*yamm- is typically a Northwest Semitic term (e.g. Ugaritic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic) and corresponds semantically to *tiāmtu* as well as to *apsû* in Akkadian and means "sea" in a general sense, the Hebrew *tāhôm(ôt)* normally refers to the subterranean water, corresponding to Apsû.

The Ugaritic *thm(t)* and the Hebrew *tāhôm(ôt)* apparently experienced a narrowing-down of the semantic field of the Proto-Semitic term \*tihām-, whose meanings and usages are reflected in Eblaite *tihām(a)tum* and Akkadian *tī'āmtum* and its Sumerian counterpart ab-a or a-ab-ba, "sea."

This etymological investigation shows that the formal similarities are no proof of direct or indirect "borrowing." In other words, the fact that the Hebrew term *tāhôm* shares a common Proto-Semitic origin with the Akkadian divine name Tiamat and the Ugaritic Tahāmu does not support the theory that the Hebrew term is a depersonification of an original divine name.

### 3. 'ēd

The term 'ēd has been rendered as "spring" / "fountain" (e.g. LXX: πηγῆ) or as 'ānānā' "(rain-)cloud" or "vapour, mist" (Targum.). Modern versions translate it "mist" (KJV; RSV; NEB note; NIV note), "flood" (RSV note; NEB), "water" (JB) or "streams" (NIV). However, there has been no satisfactory Semitic etymology and the claim revived by Dahood for a Semitic etymology in the light of Eblaite and Arabic has no solid foundation.

#### a. Sumerian Loan-word into West Semitic via Akkadian

Two views for the Akkadian connection have been suggested:

- (a) *edû* "flood", which is a Sumerian loan word from e<sub>4</sub>-dé-a (A.DÉ.A),
- (b) *id* "river", which is written as ÍD.

The latter view (e.g. Albright) has been accepted by majority of recent scholars, but the former view (e.g. Speiser) might be once more accepted with minor revisions.ÍD



The issue here is threefold: i.e. graphical /graphemical, phonological and semantic.

(1) *Should the Sumerian  $d^{\acute{a}}D$  be read in Akkadian as *Id* or as *Nāru*?*

While the equation  $d^{\acute{a}}D = id$  is possible in some cultic settings, the Sumerian  $d^{\acute{a}}D$  was probably read as *nāru* under normal conditions as in the case of the common noun *nāru* (=  $\acute{I}D$ ) "river." The fact that the reading of  $d^{\acute{a}}D$  was specified in the Middle Assyrian  $d^{\acute{a}}D^{i-id}$  might suggest that that reading was not the normal one for the Sumerian sign.

(2) *Does the  $ed\acute{u}$  - 'ēd equation have a phonological difficulty?*

Because there is no phonological difficulty in equating Akkadian *edū* and Hebrew 'ēdō, the shorter form 'ēd may also be treated as a Sumerian loan word via Akkadian *edū* (< Sum /e<sub>2</sub>dea/). While Speiser's example, 'ēs 'fire' - 'iššē, for explaining the proposed form \*'ēdē as an alloform of 'ēd should be given up, his basic assumption of the equation  $ed\acute{u} = 'ēd$  is to be supported.

(3) *Does Akk  $ed\acute{u}$  really refer to a rare and catastrophic event?*

The Akkadian term *edū*, which can be defined as "water flooding out of the subterranean ocean", does not necessarily refer to a violent water as such. Semantically, "river" is also a possible translation of 'ēd in Gen 2:6. However, there is a question of why the writer of Genesis should borrow the Akkadian "divine" name *Id* when there was a common Akkadian noun *nāru* for river. In fact, the writer uses *nāhār*, the cognate of Akkadian *nāru*, in 2:10. This makes it harder to believe that 'ēd is an Akkadian (< Sumerian) loan word with a meaning "river."

b. *Sumerian Loan-word directly into West Semitic*

The Hebrew 'ēd may be a direct loan word from Sumerian. It is not so certain however whether the Sumerian  $\acute{I}D$  (A-ENGUR) was borrowed as \*'id > 'ēd into Canaanite. On the other hand, it is possible that the Hebrew 'ēd is a direct loan from Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé "high water."

Thus, while it is possible that 'ēd is a shortened form of 'ēdō as a result of the loss of a final vowel when or after Akkadian *edū* was borrowed into Canaanite, we would like to make the following suggestions:

- (1) 'ēd (Gen 2:6) is a loan word directly borrowed from Sumerian e<sub>4</sub>-dé;  
 (2) 'ēdô (Job 36:27) is a loan word from Sumerian via Akkadian edû.  
 Both 'ēd and its allomorph 'ēdô mean "high water" and refer to the water flooding out of the subterranean ocean.

#### 4. 'ēden

Theoretically there are three possible explanations for the etymology of the Hebrew 'ēden.

##### a. *Sumerian loanword via Akkadian into West Semitic*

While this has been a common view for the etymology, Hebrew 'ēden cannot be a loan word from or via Akkadian *edinu*, since Akkadian has no phoneme / '/. The term *edinu* might be simply a semitized name of Sumerian edin and not used as an actual Akkadian word.

##### b. *Sumerian loanword directly into West Semitic*

Since Sumerian presumably has no phoneme / '/, it is not likely that the Sumerian edin was borrowed directly into Canaanite as 'ēden or the like. Also, the meaning "plain, steppe", i.e. the uncultivated land, for the Hebrew 'ēden does not fit the context of Genesis well.

##### c. *Common West Semitic*

The root \*'dn, which appears in the Fekheriyeh Inscription, in a Ugaritic text, in the divine epithet *h'dn* in Old South Arabic as well as in the Arabic verb 'adana, probably has the literal meaning "to make abundant in water-supply", though it may mean secondarily "to enrich, prosper, make luxuriant." Hence, Hebrew 'ēden probably means "a place where there is abundant water-supply" (cf. Gen 13:10). The term \*'eden (pl. 'ādānīm in Ps 36:9) which means "pleasure, luxury" has the same etymology as "Eden", though MT seems to distinguish 'ēden from \*'eden.

## B. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

### 1. *Gen 1*

The interpretation of *tōhû wābōhû* as describing a "bare" state, i.e. "unproductive & uninhabited" state, of the earth fits the literary structure of Gen 1. The author in Gen 1:2 focuses not on the "heavens" but on the "earth" where the reader or audience stands, and presents the "earth" as "not yet" being the earth which they all are familiar with. The earth which they are familiar with is "the earth" with vegetation, animals and man. Therefore, a few verses later, the author will describe their coming into existence through God's creation: vegetation on the third day and animals and man on the sixth day. Both the third and the sixth day are set as climaxes in the framework of this creation story and the grand climax is the creation of man on the sixth day.

Thus, the "not yet productive" earth becomes productive when God says *tōs' h'rš dš'* "Let the land produce vegetation" (1:11) on the third day; the "empty", i.e. "not yet inhabited", earth becomes inhabited when he says *twš' h'rš npš hyh* "Let the land produce living creatures" (1:24) and *n'sh 'dm bšlmnw kdmwtnw* "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (1:26). It is by God's fiat that the "unproductive and empty, uninhabited" (*tōhû wābōhû*) earth becomes productive with vegetation and inhabited by animals and man. The story of creation in Gen 1:1–2:3 thus tells us that it is God who created mankind "in his image" and provided for him an inhabitable and productive earth.

### 2. *Gen 2*

The discourse structure of Gen 2:4ff. is similar to that of Gen 1:1ff: [1] a temporal description (1:1, 2:4), [2] a SETTING (1:2, 2:5–6) and [3] the first stated EVENT (1:3, 2:7). Like 1:2, 2:5–6 describes the initial state of the earth as "not yet productive" and as being in close relationship with the waters.

Structurally Gen 2:5–6 is best divided into two halves. The first section [v. 5a–v. 5c] speaks broadly about the unproductive and bare "earth" (*'eres*) in which *even* the wild plants were not yet growing because of the lack of rain and the second [v. 5d–v. 6b], more specifically about the "land"

(*'ādāmāh*) which has "no man to till it" and is watered through by *'ēd*-waters.

Here the subject matter (i.e. participant) switches from vegetation (i.e. "shrub" and "plant") to man and the *'ēd*-water, and the location or stage of these participants shifts from the "earth" (*'ereṣ*) to the narrower place, the "land" (*'ādāmāh*), from whose "dust" (*'āpār*) "man" (*'ādām*) is going to be formed (cf. v. 7).

A threefold focusing of the geographical area can be identified: (1) from *'ereṣ* to *'ādāmāh*, (2) from *'ādāmāh* to *'ēden* and (3) from *'ēden* to *gan*. In other words, the garden, the main stage for this Eden narrative, is a part of Eden, which is a part of the land, which is a part of the earth.

The first half of vs. 5–6 describes the unproductive and "bare" state of the earth without any vegetation. This state of the "bare" earth is virtually the same as that of the earth which was *tōhū wābōhū* (Gen 1:2), though in Gen 2:5–6 more concrete terms are used for describing the initial unproductive state of the earth.

In conclusion, the initial state of the earth in Gen 2:5–6 is described as unproductive in concrete terms, "no shrub" and "no plant" as well as "no man to till the ground." The earth in Gen 2:5–6 was also the "bare" earth, which had "no vegetation" and "no man", like the earth in Gen 1:2 which is described as *tōhū wābōhū*, "unproductive and uninhabited."

### C. EARTH-WATERS RELATIONSHIP

#### 1. Gen 1: a "hyponymous" word pair: *'rṣ* - *thm*

In Gen 1:2, *tāhôm* "ocean" is a part of *hā'āreṣ* since the term *hā'āreṣ*, which constitutes an antonymous word pair with *haššāmayim* in Gen 1:1, must refer to everything under the heaven. The cosmology in vs. 1–2 is bipartite, rather than tripartite, describing the entire world in terms of "heavens and earth."

What this "hyponymous" word pair, *hā'āreṣ* // *tāhôm*, refers to is described in this passage by another pair of expressions, *tōhū wābōhū* // *hōšek*, "not yet" normal, i.e. "not yet productive and inhabited and without light."

Vs. 6ff. suggest that the water of *tāhôm* in Gen 1:2 covered all the "earth", as in a Neo-Babylonian bilingual version of the "Creation of the World by Marduk." While there are structural similarities between these

two stories, there is also a clear distinction in theme and purpose between the two. The discourse structure of the initial section of *Enuma elish* is also similar to that of Gen 1. However, there is a difference in theme and purpose between them also.

## 2. Gen 2: Rain and 'ēd

In Gen 2:5–6, unlike 1:2, both the water from above, rain, and the water from below, the 'ēd-water, are mentioned in the description of the initial state of the earth, though the former is treated negatively, as "not yet", and the latter positively, as "already."

Here, the rain-water does not play a significant role. On the other hand, the 'ēd-"water", which is a flooding water from underground, is actively involved in the initial state of the earth. But, unlike the *tāhôm*-water in Gen 1:2, the 'ēd-water in 2:6 was covering the "land" ('ādamāh), only a part of the "earth."

It should be noted that careful distinction is made between the 'ēd-water which "comes up from the earth" and the "river" which "comes out of Eden." The 'ēd-water is that which comes up from underground and waters the whole surface of the land ('ādamāh). On the other hand, the river-waters (2:10) "come out of" one place and "water" a different place, forming a stream or streams.

The situation in 2:5–6 as a whole is simply this. Because of the lack of rain there was no plant on the earth, while the 'ēd-water was flooding out of the earth to water, i.e. inundate, the entire surface of the land, which was only a part of the earth. The problem here was not the lack of water but the lack of adequate control of water by man for the purpose of tilling. This well-watered situation here is certainly in keeping with Eden, the "well-watered place" where God planted a garden (2:8).

These two waters in Gen 2:5–6, i.e. "rain" and "flooding water", might be compared with the two *thmt*-waters in a Ugaritic expression which seems to refer to the waters above in heaven and the waters below under the earth as in Gen 7:11, 8:2. This upper *thmt*-water is probably associated or identified with the god "Heaven", while the lower *thmt*-water may well correspond to the goddess "Ocean" in Ugaritic religion.

## D. GOD AND THE WATER

In Gen 1 the *tāhôm*-water seems to have covered the whole earth (*'ereš*); in Gen 2 the *'ēd*-water was covering only a part of the earth, i.e. the "land" (*'ādāmāh*). In Gen 1, however, the water from above from which rain comes down was not separated from the water from below, the subterranean waters, until the creation of *rāqā'*, a division in the water, at vs. 6ff. But, in Gen 2, the rain has been already mentioned, though negatively: "The Lord God had not yet caused it to rain."

1. *God as a rain-giver*

A rain-god such as Adad, Hadad and Baal in various parts of the ancient Near East is called "a giver of abundant water-supply." In the Fekheriyeh Inscription, for example, he is described not only as a rain-giver but also as the "water-controller of all rivers." Similarly, the LORD God of Gen 2 is presumably understood as a rain-giver and as the controller of the subterranean waters. When he planted a garden in a well-watered place, Eden (2:8ff.), he apparently drained the *'ēd*-water there. Thus, he is also a controller of both rain and the subterranean water. However, the Lord God is more than a water-controller. He is the maker of the total universe, i.e. "earth and heaven" (*'ereš wəšāmāyim*; 2:4).

2. *Watery beginning*

The "watery beginning" of Gen 1:2 could well be a reflection of the universal understanding of water as a basic element of the cosmos. However, while there is a similarity between ancient traditions and the Genesis story in terms of a watery beginning, there are also differences in the nature of the relationship between the water and the creator god as well as in the details of description.

### 3. A "creator" god and the water

#### a. *Marduk, El and Ea*

Marduk and Baal are similar in that both are storm gods. However, there are differences between these two deities: Marduk "created" the cosmos but Baal did not. It is suggested by some that El's relationship with *thm(t)* should be compared with Marduk's relationship with Tiamat, and both should be compared with Elohim's relationship with "the water of *təhôm*" in Genesis.

However, what Marduk created by dividing the body of Tiamat were "heaven" and "earth", which do not include the subterranean water. Marduk's abode is never associated with waters, while the god El in Ugaritic myths is described as dwelling "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters." In *Enuma elish*, it is Ea who resides at the watery location, Apsû. Thus, Ea has a closer similarity with El than with Marduk as regards to the relationship between the creator gods and their abodes near or in the waters.

#### b. *Similarity between El and Ea*

Ea, who is the Sumerian Enki, shares a number of features with El in Ugaritic mythology. For example, they are both:

- (1). Creator of creatures
- (2). Creator of cosmos
- (3). Father of the gods
- (4). Father of man.

El and Ea are similar not only in being *senior* creator gods and fathers of mankind and gods but also in living near or in the waters.

#### c. *El's watery abode*

El's abode is near or in the waters, *mbk nhrm* "at the sources of the two rivers" // *qrb apq thmtm* "in the midst of the streams of the two *thmt*-waters" or *b'dt thmtm* "in the assembly of the two *thmt*-waters." "The two *thmt*-waters" might possibly refer to "a celestial and a subterranean *thmt*."

The divine pair, "Heaven"-god *Šamūma* (=šmm) and "Ocean"-goddess *Tahāmatu* (=thmt) in Ugarit seems to preserve an ancient tradition about the separation of heaven-water and ocean-water which is reflected in the Genesis Creation story, not in 1:2, but in 1:6ff. as well as in the Flood story (Gen 7:11, 8:2).

#### d. *Ea's watery abode*

Ea's abode is in Apsû, the underground sweet waters. Ea (Enki) lies in the "chamber of Nammu" (*mayālu ša 4Nammu*), the goddess of the water-bearing strata; these chambers are down in the earth just above the "surface of the underworld" (*ašar eršetimma*).

While El's abode seems to be related to the "two *thmt*-waters", possibly "heaven" and "ocean", Ea's abode is related only to the subterranean ocean. While El is the supreme god in Ugarit, Ea is one of three traditional supreme deities in Mesopotamia and he controls only one of the three areas of universe, Apsû. In this aspect, the Ugaritic god El as a creator is more similar to Elohim of the Genesis account.

Both creator gods, El and Ea, who have close association with the waters, have similar characteristics and functions. In Ugaritic, the "two *thmt*-waters" (*thmtm*) and the "Sea" (*ym*) are distinguished and are connected with two different gods, El and Baal, just as in the Akkadian *Enuma elish* in which Ea's abode is the sweet water Apsû while Marduk's enemy is Tiamat, the salt water sea-goddess.

The Biblical Elohim is also deeply involved with the "water of *təhôm*" in the forms of "Spirit"(Gen 1:2) and "Word" (1:6ff.) but he is the only God, the creator of the total cosmos, "heavens and earth." To the author of Genesis, the entire cosmos was thus the created order; there are no items that Elohim did not create.

## E. CONCLUSIONS

### *Similarities*

The nature of the "earth-waters" relationship in Gen 1 has certain *similarities* with that in Gen 2. In both chapters the earth was "not yet" normal, i.e. unproductive and uninhabited, and was covered by flood-



waters. This "bare" earth became productive and inhabited by God's creative actions.

Also, both in Gen 1:2 and in 2:5–6 the waters play a significant role, positive and potential. The water in Gen 1 was not destructive or threatening, as some scholars have assumed. The expressions such as *tōhū wābōhū* have nothing to do with the chaotic state of the earth. And the relationship of the *tāhôm*-water with the earth was not negative. The water then had remained neutral as a potential power to "form" as a result of God's fiat and creative actions.

### *Differences*

However, the "earth-waters" relationship in Gen 1:2 is certainly *different* from that in Gen 2:5–6. In Gen 1, the *tāhôm*-water, which is usually under control and comprises only a part of the earth, was then covering all over the earth and no separation of the water had happened. On the other hand, in Gen 2, two waters are already separated as the upper water in heaven and the lower subterranean water in the earth. However, the *difference* exists, not in the two different cosmologies, but in the two different stages of creation based on the same cosmology. Gen 1:2 concerns the situation before the separation of the water, while Gen 2:5–6 refers to the situation after the separation of the water.

In 1:2 the initial situation of the "world" is described positively in terms of the "still" unproductive and uninhabited (*tōhū wābōhū*) "earth" totally covered by the "ocean-water", while in 2:5–6 the initial state of the "earth" is described negatively in terms of the "not yet" productive "earth" in more concrete expressions, "no vegetation" and "no man." And the "underground-water" was flooding out to inundate the whole area of the "land", but not the entire earth as in Gen 1:2. At Eden, a well-watered place, the eastern part of this "land" God planted a garden.

There are both similarities and differences in the nature of the relationship between the earth and the waters in the two passages. It is not adequate to emphasize only the difference (e.g. "completely different atmosphere") in the cosmological ideas between the two creation stories in Genesis as von Rad and other scholars do. Since no motif of "chaos" exists in Gen 1:2, it is totally misleading and unacceptable to assume in that passage "a primordial threat against creation" and hence a sharp contrast to the cosmology of Gen 2:5–6.

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## Indexes

### AUTHORS

- Aartun, K. 132, 134n  
Aistleitner, J. 18  
Albright, W.F. 18, 20-1, 22n,  
54n, 61n, 98-101, 108n, 112-  
3, 128n, 159  
Albright, W.F. & Lambdin, T.O.  
137  
Albright, W.F. & Moran, W.L.  
53n  
Andersen, F.I. 41n, 83n, 85n,  
88n, 106n, 115  
Anderson, B.W. 13-4, 42n, 45,  
58n  
Archi, A. 124n  
Assaf, A.A. *et al* 123n, 128  
Astour, M.C. 90n, 137n, 138n  
Attinger, P. 147n  
Auffret, P. 75n  
Avishur, Y. 69n, 70n, 71n, 74n  
  
Baldacci, M. 138  
Barr, J. 94, 95n, 96, 108-9, 111,  
113, 118n, 119  
Barth, K. 14n  
Bauer, H. & Leander, P. 152n  
Baumbartner, W. 97n, 98, 100  
Beeston, A.F.L. *et al* 135n  
Berlin, A. 68n  
Biella, J.C. 135  
Bodine, W.R. 85n  
Bollenrucher, J. 79n  
Borger, R. 76n, 103, 152n  
Bottéro, J. 49n, 76n, 79n, 80n,  
103-4, 103n  
Bright, J. 36, 40  
  
Butz, K. 124n, 126n  
  
Caquot, A. 133  
Caquot, A. & Sznycer, M. 129,  
131  
Caquot, A. *et al* 18  
Carroll, R.P. 37n, 40n  
Cassuto, U. 20, 21n, 22n, 87, 95,  
98-9, 112n, 126n, 127, 136n  
Castellino, G. 88n, 90n, 98, 113,  
118, 126n  
Cavigneaux, A. *et al* 30n, 148n  
Ceresko, A.R. 71n  
Charpin, D. 96n  
Childs, B.S. 13-4, 37n, 45n  
Civil, M. 114n  
Clifford, R.J. 18, 19n, 150  
Clines, D.J.A. 68n  
Collado, V. & Zurro, E. 56n  
Collini, P. 141n  
Collon, D. 63n, 141n, 149-50  
Cooper, A. 19n, 50n  
Cross, F.M. 20n  
  
Dahood, M. 71-2, 75, 77, 78n,  
95, 96n, 97n, 132n, 159  
Day, J. 46n, 50n, 51, 62, 142n,  
153n, 157  
De Moor, J.C. 18, 24, 26, 49n,  
50n, 64, 65n, 120n, 127, 129-  
30, 131n, 132, 138n, 144,  
146n, 147-8, 151-2, 152n,  
154n  
De Moor, J.C. & van der Lugt,  
P. 61n, 70n

- Deimel, P.A. 107n  
 Del Monte, G.F. & Tischler, J. 138n  
 Delitzsch, F. 97, 137-8  
 Dhorme, E. 35n  
 Dhorme, P. 98  
 Diakonoff, I.M. & Kashkai, S.M. 138n  
 Dietrich, M. *et al* 18, 105n, 132  
 Dijkstra, M. 35n  
 Dillmann, A. 97  
 Driver, G.R. 18, 105n, 127, 129, 131-2  
 Driver, S.R. 13, 86n  
 Driver, S.R. & Gray, G.B. 35n  
 Dussaud, R. 132  
 Dussaud, R. *et al* 18
- Ebach, J. 22n  
 Ebeling, E. 21n  
 Edzard, D.O. 56n, 138n  
 Edzard, D.O. *et al* 137n  
 Ellenbogen, M. 94n, 98, 121  
 Erman, A. & Grapow, H. 94n, 131n, 143n
- Falkenstein, A. 125n  
 Fishbane, M. 37, 38n, 40n  
 Fohrer, G. 98  
 Frankfort, H. & H.A. *et al* 60n, 61n, 143n  
 Fronzaroli, P. 56n, 61n
- Gadd, C.J. 87n  
 Gardiner, A. 58n  
 Garr, W.R. 62n  
 Gaster, T.H. 18, 131n  
 Gelb, I.J. 52n, 113n, 125n  
 Gesenius, W. & Buhl, F. 97  
 Gibson, J.C.L. 18n, 51, 127, 130  
 Ginsberg, H.L. 132  
 Goetze, A. 64n  
 Golomb, D.M. 85n
- Gordis, R. 35-6n  
 Gordon, C.H. 25n, 54, 64n, 69, 95n, 127, 129, 131-2, 134, 145, 148  
 Gorelick, L. & Williams-Forte, E. 63n  
 Görg, M. 22, 94n  
 Gray, J. 18, 132  
 Greenfield, J.C. 123n, 128-30, 132-4  
 Greenstein, E.L. 18, 19n  
 Grønbaek, J.H. 50n  
 Groneberg, B. 106n, 138n  
 Gunkel, H. 13, 45, 97, 119n, 156
- Hallo, W.W. 80n, 90n, 126n, 136n  
 Hecker, K. 25n  
 Heidel, A. 46n, 49n, 52n, 79n, 81n, 112n, 121n  
 Heimpel, W. 138, 150n  
 Held, M. 81n  
 Herrmann, S. 132  
 Hess, R.S. 53n, 90n, 92n, 102n  
 Hillers, D.R. 75n  
 Hirsch, H. 55n, 103  
 Hoffmeier, J.K. 143n  
 Hoffner, H.A., Jr. 64n, 65n, 151n  
 Hoftijzer, J. 105, 127n  
 Holladay, W.L. 38-9  
 Hommel, F. 135n  
 Huehnergard, J. 19n, 25-26, 30n, 50n, 52n, 53n, 90n, 104n  
 Hutter, M. 69n
- Israel, F. 137n
- Jacobsen, T. 47-9, 51n, 57, 60n, 61n, 80n, 126n, 147n, 148n, 149n  
 Jamme, A. 135n  
 Jirku, A. 18

- Johnstone, W. 18
- Kaiser, O. 40n, 43n, 46n, 57n,  
97n, 98, 150
- Kapelrud, A.S. 151
- Kaufman, S.A. 46n, 105-6,  
125n, 128
- Kidner, D. 87n, 119n, 122n
- Kienast, B. 25n
- Kikawada, I.M. & Quinn, A. 42n
- King, L.W. 79n, 80n, 81n, 102n
- Kitchen, K.A. 131n
- Kloos, C. 50n, 142n, 152n
- Knudtson, J.A. 53n
- Korpel, M.C.A. & de Moor, J.C.  
50n, 65n, 130
- Kramer, S.N. 60n, 61n, 122n,  
137n, 143, 145n, 147n, 148n,  
149n
- Kraus, H.-J. 72, 77
- Krebernik, M. 25, 52n, 56n,  
61n, 114n, 125n, 126n
- Krecher, J. 52n, 56n
- Kselman, J.S. 38n, 71n, 78n
- Labat, R. 69n, 82n
- Labat, R. *et al* 112n
- Labuschagne, C.J. 153n
- Lambert, W.G. 25, 29n, 47-9,  
51n, 58n, 59n, 60n, 61n, 63n,  
68n, 76, 82n, 87n, 102-3,  
114, 125n, 128-9, 133-4,  
137-8, 142n, 143, 147n,  
148n, 152-3, 154n
- Lambert, W.G. & Millard, A.R.  
26n, 27, 28n, 40n, 55n, 59n,  
68n, 76n, 78n, 90n, 91n,  
138n, 146n
- Lambert, W.G. & Parker, S.B.  
91n
- Landsberger, B. 109n, 124n
- Landsberger, B. & Wilson,  
J.V.K. 82n, 149n
- Lane, E.W. 17, 21n, 136
- Laroche, E. 23n
- Leander, P. 97, 114n
- Lemaire, A. 123n, 136n, 137n
- Lieberman, S. 115n, 125n
- Lipiński, E. 125n, 131-3
- Livingstone, A. 19n, 58n, 69n,  
76n, 148n, 149n, 151n, 152n
- Longacre, R.E. 86n, 120n
- Luyster, R. 153n
- Lyons, J. 68n
- McCarter, P.K. 61n, 98, 102n
- McKane, W. 36-9
- Malamat, A. 55n
- Margalit, B. 19, 130, 133-4
- Meyer, E. 97n
- Meyer, J.-W. 27n
- Millard, A.R. 21n, 78-9, 115n,  
120, 121n, 123n, 124, 125-  
6n, 128, 130
- Miller, P.D., Jr. 65n, 80n, 81n,  
98, 99n, 148n, 153n
- Moran, W.L. 53n, 81n, 82n
- Mullen, E.T., Jr. 150n, 151n
- Nashef, K. 113n
- Nougayrol, J. 23, 26, 52n
- O'Connor, M.P. & Freedman,  
D.N. 83n, 85n
- Oden, R.A., Jr. 22n
- Olmo Lete, G. del 19, 130, 132,  
136n
- Otten, H. 65n
- Otzen, B. 13n, 14, 42n, 46n
- Pardee, D. 69n
- Parpola, S. 113n
- Pettinato, G. 56n, 96, 131n
- Pettinato, G. *et al* 56n
- Poebel, A. 113n, 114n
- Pope, M.H. 33n, 35n, 61n, 72n,

- 106, 132-3, 150  
 Pope, M.H. & Tigay, J.H. 132-3  
 Pope, M.H. *et al* 127  
 Postgate, J.N. 113n
- Rainey, A.F. 52n, 132  
 Rendsburg, G. *et al* 24n  
 Reymond, P. 98  
 Roberts, J.J.M. 33n, 52n, 103, 142n, 145n  
 Rogers, R.W. 79n  
 Ryckmans, G. 135
- Sachsse, E. 98, 107n  
 Sæbø, M. 98, 100-2, 105, 108-9, 113n, 117-18  
 Sailhammer, J. 78n  
 Schmidt, W.H. 13, 43n, 46n, 52n, 57n, 85-6, 87n, 88n, 98  
 Schott, A. & von Soden, W. 111n  
 Scullion, J.J. 72n  
 Segert, S. 25n  
 Shea, W.H. 96n  
 Sjöberg, A.W. 47, 90n  
 Skinner, J. 57n  
 Smith, M.S. 50n, 51n, 64n, 130, 132n, 133, 148n, 150n  
 Sollberger, E. 52n  
 Sollberger, E. & Kupper, J.-R. 55n  
 Sommerfeld, W. 148n  
 Speiser, E.A. 97n, 98-101, 104-5, 107-8, 112n, 123, 159-60  
 Stadelmann, L.I.J. 73n, 75n  
 Stieglitz, R.R. 152n
- Taber, C.R. 67n  
 Tallqvist, K.L. 132n, 142n, 146n, 147n  
 Thompson, R.C. 112n  
 Thomsen, M.-L. 125n  
 Thureau-Dangin, F. 29n, 152n
- Tsumura, D.T. 23n, 35n, 40n, 58n, 64n, 70n, 91n, 130n, 131n, 142n  
 Tur-Sinai, N.H. 33n, 35n, 41n
- Van der Weiden, W.A. 71n, 72n  
 Van Dijk, J. 119n, 121n, 151n  
 Van Zijl, P.J. 136n  
 Vanstiphout, H.L.J. 60n, 69n, 81n  
 Vincent, J.M. 73n  
 Von Rad, G. 13, 98, 168  
 Von Soden, W. 98, 111, 112n, 128n, 151n
- Wakeman, M.K. 45n, 46-7, 71n, 72n  
 Wallace, H.N. 123n, 126n, 150n  
 Waltke, B.K. 20n  
 Watson, W.G.E. 71n, 72n  
 Weinfeld, M. 133  
 Wenham, G.J. 20n, 42, 78n, 87n, 88-9, 89n, 98, 100n, 119n  
 Westenholz, A. 48n  
 Westermann, C. 22-3, 30, 31n, 32-4, 43n, 46n, 49, 87, 98, 100, 123n, 127n  
 Wevers, J.W. 17n  
 Wilcke, C. 81n  
 Wildberger, H. 37n, 38n, 40-1  
 Williams-Forte, E. 63n  
 Wilson, J.A. 64n, 82n  
 Winckler, H. 110n  
 Wyatt, N. 150n
- Xella, P. 138n
- Young, E.J. 31n, 34n, 41n, 42n, 89n, 98, 120n
- Zalcman, L. 39n  
 Zimmerli, W. 13  
 Zimmern, H. 46n, 56-7, 97, 113

## BIBLICAL TEXTS

<i>Genesis</i>		<i>1 Chronicles</i>		108:5	77
3:8	87	1:50	96, 97	134:6	73n
4:17	81			135:6	58, 73-4
6-8	115	<i>Job</i>		145:6	73n
7:11	70, 122, 152, 167	6:18	30-1	146:6	58, 73
8:2	70, 122, 152, 167	12:24	30-1	148	74-8
9:2	59, 76	12:24-5	35, 38n	148:1-7	73n
10:10-12	81	26:7	31-3	148:7	59, 74n
11:1-9	81	30:4, 7	86	<i>Proverbs</i>	
13:10	136, 161	35:5	77	3	77
14:22	153	36	115	3:19f	144
21:15	86	36:27	94, 96-7, 100, 106, 112n, 115-6, 161	3:19-20	59, 74n, 115
22:17	71			3:20	69n, 115
36:39	96-7	38:37	77	8:22-31	115
49:25	70, 152			8:27	70
<i>Exodus</i>		<i>Psalms</i>		8:27-29	74n
15:8	72n	8:8-9	59, 74	8:27-32	73n
20:4	58, 73n, 74	29	142n	8:29	78
20:11	58, 73	33:5-7	73n	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	
23:29	39n	33:6-8	73n	2:6	121n
		36:6	77	<i>Isaiah</i>	
<i>Deuteronomy</i>		36:8	127	1:7	39n
5:8	58, 73n, 74	36:9	136, 161	14:13	33
11:15	87	57:11	77	24	32
32:10	17, 30, 32	69:35	58, 73-4	24:4	38n
33:13	70, 152	71:20	59, 72, 74n	24:10	30, 32
33:26	77	77:17,19	72n	24:12	33
		78:23	77	29:21	31
<i>1 Samuel</i>		96:11	58, 73-4	34:11	23, 30, 40-1, 156
12:21	31	104:9	78	40:17	31
		104:11	121n	40:22	32n
<i>2 Samuel</i>		104:14	87	40:23	30-1, 32n
1:24	127	106:9	57n, 58	41:29	31
15:21	35n	106:20	87	44:9	31-2
22:16	144	107:25-7	133		
		107:26	71, 152		
		107:40	30-1		

45:8	77	51:34	127	<i>Habakkuk</i>
45:18	31, 33-4			2:5 19n
45:19	31, 34-6,	<i>Ezekiel</i>		3 58n
	38n	17:7	121n	3:10 58, 70n,
49:4	31	28:13,16	150	159
59:4	31	28:19	34n	
62:4	39n	32:6	121n,	<i>Zephaniah</i>
63:13	57n, 58		122n	1:3 59, 74
		38:20	59, 74	2:4 39n
<i>Jeremiah</i>				
4:23	23, 30,	<i>Hosea</i>		<i>Haggai</i>
	34n, 35,	2:1	35n	2:6 58, 73
	41, 156	4:3	59, 74	
4:23-6	36-40	10:8	87n	
4:23-8	38-40			<i>Philippians</i>
4:27	32n, 33,	<i>Joel</i>		2:10 73n
	39n	4:18	118,	
4:27-8	38		121n	<i>Revelation</i>
4:29	39n			5:3 73n
5:6	19	<i>Amos</i>		5:13 73n
12:4	39n	1:2	39n	
23:10	39n	1:5	137	
32:43	39n			
33:10	39n	<i>Nahum</i>		
51:9	77	1:8	40	

## UGARITIC TEXTS

<i>KTU</i>		:28-29	54n	6:I:34	54, 59
1.2:III:4	54, 59	:32	64	:42-43	145n
3:III:24-25	68, 77	:34	54n	:44	54n
:25	53, 60	:IV:20-22	54	:45	54n
:26	64	:22	54, 59	:47	54n
:26-28	72n	:56	95n	:53	54n
:38ff.	50, 63	:V:6-7	71, 127,	:III:5	64
V:7	54, 59		127n,	:11	64
4:I:13-14	54n		129, 134-	14:I:1-25	91n
:18	95n		5	16:I:11	63, 70
:21	54n	5:I:1ff.	51, 63	:21-22	63, 70
:II:11	64	:14-16	18	:V:25	145n
:III:25	54n	:VI:1	54	17:I:24	64

:VI:12	53	92:5	54, 132	135:R:9	104n
:48	54, 59	100	152, 154n	137:I:8	50n
18:IV:25	19	100:1	53, 63, 70	:II:1	24
:36-37	19	:3	54, 59	:15	23n, 30
19:I:44	94n	:62	120n	:23	23, 23n,
:45	54, 116,	:63	138n		30, 52n
	122, 134	:64	138n	:28	24
:II:38-39	19	:65	90n	:36	52n
:43-44	19	107	154n	:III:33f.	70, 151
:III:12ff.	64	118:4	33n	:34	52-3, 63
23:30	53-4,	:14	33n	:IVb:17?	52n
	54n, 59	133:2-5	18		
:30ff.	64	:4	19		
:62-63	54n, 75				
47	65n	<i>Ug. V</i>			

## AKKADIAN TEXTS

<i>Atra-Ḥasis Epic</i>		ii:4	55, 78n	16	147n
I i 7-18	59, 76	11	55, 78n	22	54n
15	55, 60	18	55, 78n	73ff.	145
15-6	78n	24	55	IV 101-4	145
II ii 20	91n	34	55, 78n	135ff.	144
iv 4-6	27, 91,	40	55	137-8	144
	91n,			141-2	152
	92n	"Creation of the World		V 49	82n
viii 34	40n	by Marduk"		55	149
III iii 38	40n	1-9	79	62	144
iv 6	55	10-11	80, 80n	VI 5	81n
v 42-4	40n	12ff.	80	33	147
S i 7	138	31	121n	VII 2	91
iv 49	26-7, 90	32	121n		
51	27			<i>Gilgamesh Epic</i>	
58	28n	<i>Enuma elish</i>		XI 86	130n
58b-9	26-7	I 1ff.	60n	XI 297ff.	111f.
61	27	1-2	69n	XI 271	112n
v 1	60, 78n	1-9	81		
x rev. i 6	55, 60,	1-8	81n, 82	<i>Hymn to Marduk</i>	
	78n	4	147n	27	128
10	55, 78n	6	120		



*Hymn to Nergal*

LSS I/6, 43 & 46	<i>Lugal.e</i>	151n	<i>Vocabulary S<sup>b</sup></i>	
79n	356-9	121n	90-91	124

*Kalû ritual (AO.6472)*

16	<i>RS 20.24</i>	33n, 60,
28f.		65n

## EBLAITE TEXTS

<i>ARET 5</i>	12:V:10	56n	<i>VE 1247</i>	124n
3:IV:3	138	63-64:v.III:20-21	1343-4	149n
4:I:6	56n		1423	114n,
6:VII:1-3	56	79:g:2		124n
:X:4	56	:r.III:8-9		
		56, 61n,	<i>Sign list B</i>	114n,
		149n		124
<i>MEE 4 (= VE)</i>				

## SELECTED TERMS

## HEBREW

- '*ādāmāh* 86-91, 89n,  
90n, 93, 118-22,  
120n, 122n, 123,  
126, 141, 162-5  
'*akkad* 106, 114  
'*ēd* 59, 85-6, 88-9,  
93-101, 94n,  
95n, 97n, 98n,  
99n, 104-7,  
106n, 112-23,  
112n, 136n, 141-  
2, 155, 159-65  
'*ēd* 96, 100, 105,  
105n  
'*ēdō* 97, 100, 106,  
115, 125, 160-1  
*bēt 'eden* 137n  
*bōhū* 20-3, 30, 40-1,  
155  
*glš* 132  
*hēkāl* 125n  
*hiddēqel* 114, 114n,  
126n, 137-8  
*hmy'dn* 137  
*hōšek* 35-6, 35n, 38,  
38n, 57, 78, 163  
*m'dnh* 137  
*mātār* 97, 115  
*nāhār* 112, 117-8,  
121, 160  
'*ēden* 85, 90, 117,  
120, 120n, 123-  
7, 129, 136,  
136n, 155, 161,  
163  
'*īrād* 126n  
*pərat* 138  
*qōš wədarkar* 87, 87n  
*rāqīʿ* 141, 152n, 165  
*rūʿh* 143, 153n  
*šīʿh* 86-7, 90, 90n  
*šeleg* 132  
*šoham* 137n  
*ta'āwāh* 18  
*təhôm rabbāh* 46, 57,  
70  
*təhôm(ōt)* 20, 38, 38n,  
45-8, 51-3, 51n,  
56-9, 61-3, 65,  
69n, 67-8, 70,  
70n, 72-8, 72n,  
73n, 74n, 75n,  
80, 85, 96, 115,  
117, 122, 141,  
143-4, 152-9,  
163-8  
*tōhū* 17-23, 30-6, 31n,  
35n, 38n, 40-1,  
41n, 155-6  
*tōhū wābōhū* 17, 20,  
23-4, 23n, 26,  
30, 34-43, 67,  
78, 91-2, 155-6,  
162-3, 168  
*yām* 53n, 58-60, 65,  
73-4, 73n, 78,  
158

## ARAMAIC

- '*gwr* 125  
*gwgl nhr klm* 128, 142  
*m'dn* 128n, 129  
*m'dn mt kln* 128-9,  
135, 142  
'*ānānā'* 94, 159

## UGARITIC

- ab adm* 64, 147  
*ab šnm* 64  
*arš w šmm* 69n, 89n  
*ilm n'mm* 64, 64n  
*itt* 105, 105n  
*bny bnwt* 64, 146

<i>b'dt thmtm</i> 144n, 150, 150n, 166	127n, 130n, 131, 135-6, 135n, 136n	56-63, 63n, 68- 72, 77, 122, 122n, 132-4, 134n, 144-5, 150n, 151-3, 158-9, 164, 166- 7
<i>bṭn 'qltn</i> 50	<i>qrb apq thmtm</i> 144n, 150, 150n, 166	<i>tnn</i> 50
<i>gl̄t</i> 129-33, 135	<i>rb(b)</i> 94n, 95n, 134	<i>tu-a-bi-[ū]</i> 23, 23n, 24-6, 29, 52n, 155
<i>hkl</i> 125n	<i>šht</i> 90n	<i>tu-a-pi-[ku]</i> 25, 156
<i>hpk</i> 25	<i>šmm</i> 54, 63, 69-72, 69n, 72n, 75n, 77, 151	<i>?tuhap(p)iku</i> 25, 25n, 30n
<i>wtn</i> 130n	<i>šmm w thm</i> 53, 63, 63n, 70, 151	<i>tunnanu</i> 50n
<i>zbl b'l arš</i> 145n	<i>špš</i> 152	<i>tkt</i> 129-31, 133
<i>ḥršn</i> 150	<i>sr' thmtm</i> 116, 122, 134, 134n	<i>tr̄t</i> 131-4
<i>ym</i> 18-9, 19n, 50n, 53-4, 53n, 54n, 57-61, 70, 75n, 153, 167	<i>ta-a-ma-tu<sub>4</sub></i> 24, 52-3, 52n	<i>?t̄lg</i> 132
<i>*y'd</i> 127	<i>tahāmu</i> 62, 154, 158	
<i>lt̄n</i> 50n, 51	<i>thw</i> 17-9, 19n, 24, 155	
<i>mbk nhrm</i> 150, 166	<i>thm(t)</i> 51-4, 52n, 54n,	
<i>mtr̄</i> 127, 127n, 129- 31, 133-4		
<i>nhr</i> 150n		
<i>n'm</i> 136		
<i>'dn</i> 122n, 127-9,		

## ARABIC

<i>'ada</i> 95-6	<i>n̄gm</i> 136	<i>tariya</i> 131
<i>bahiya</i> 21, 23	<i>'adana</i> 136, 136n, 161	<i>tarra</i> 131
<i>jannātu 'adnin</i> 136	<i>gadan(u)</i> 127, 135-6	
<i>haikal</i> 125n	<i>tihāmat</i> 52, 158	
<i>hawiya</i> 18	<i>takka</i> 131	

## OLD SOUTH ARABIC

MTBNṬYN 135

## AKKADIAN

<i>abu ilāni</i> 147-8	<i>akkadū</i> 106, 106n, 114	<i>ammatum</i> 69n
<i>abūbu</i> 40, 111, 121		<i>apsū</i> 61-2, 61n, 112,

- 121n, 133, 150-2, 159  
*ayabba* 53n, 65, 65n  
*bān binūtu* 64, 146  
*bānū nabnīt* 64, 146  
*būrtu* 61n  
*edinu* 123-5, 124n, 161  
*edū* 97-100, 97n, 104-13, 105n, 106n, 108n, 111n, 115, 117, 125, 133, 159-61  
*edurū* 136  
*ekallu* 125n  
*ekurru* 125  
*eršetu* 26, 28-30, 28n, 29n, 34n, 68n, 69n, 88n, 90-1, 91n, 146-7, 149, 167  
*esigu* 107, 109  
*giššu daddaru* 87n  
*ḡegallu* 111, 128, 128n  
*ḡuršānu* 151  
*idiqlat* 114, 114n, 126, 137  
*isinnu* 126  
*kašāru* 81n  
*kiššatu* 152  
*mīlu* 100, 107-11, 108n, 111n, 128, 133  
*muṭaḥḥidu* 128-9  
*muṭaḥḥidu kibrāti.* 128, 142  
*nabalkutu* 23, 23n, 25-30, 27n, 29n, 92, 155  
*naḥbalu ti'āmtim* 55, 60, 78  
*nāru* 55, 100-4, 104n, 112-3, 117, 160  
*nuḥšu* 128, 128n  
*puran(a)tu* 138  
*purattu* 138  
*rātu* 80n, 112, 112n  
*šēru* 124, 124n  
*ša mē* 151n  
*šalgu* 132  
*šamaš* 130n  
*šammu* 90-1  
*še'u* 91, 91n  
*su'u* 90, 90n  
*tāmtu elītu* 151  
*tāmtu šaplītu* 151  
*ti'ām(a)tu, tāmtu* 46-9, 48n, 52, 53n, 55-7, 56n, 59-62, 61n, 77, 78n, 80, 80n, 108, 110-12, 111n, 146, 147n, 156, 158-9  
*ti'āmat tu'amtu* 151n  
*ṭaḥḍu* 110n, 128  
*ṭuḥḍu* 128, 142

## EBLAITE

- bù-la-na-tim* 138  
*bù-la-tum* 61  
*ì-dì-gi-ra-um* 114n, 124, 138  
*ì-dì-nūm* 124  
*ì-du(?)* 95-6, 95n  
*idigra-um* 114, 114n, 124, 137  
*puran(a)tim* 138  
*ša-lum* 124n  
*ti-'à-ma-tum* 52, 55-6, 56n, 125n, 149n, 158  
*tihām(a)tum* 61, 77, 125n, 158-9

## SEMITIC

- ap* 131n  
*bhw* 155  
*bīhwu* 22n, 24, 52n  
*būhwu* 22n  
*ḡay(y)um* 145n  
*ḡyy* 145n  
*'dn* 135-6, 161  
*šr'* 134n  
*tihām-* 52, 56, 58, 61,

65, 158-9  
túhwu 19, 19n, 24,

52n  
tuqattil 25

yamm- 53n, 58, 159

### HURRIAN

aršḫ 138n  
tapš- 23n, 155

tapšuhumme 23, 23n,  
26, 30, 155

### SUMERIAN

A 107-8  
A.AB.BA 60, 61n, 65  
A.DÉ.A 97, 99, 107,  
108n, 109, 115,  
115n, 159  
A.ENGUR 99, 113, 160  
A.SI.GA 107, 108n,  
109  
AB 131n  
AN 70, 151  
ANTU 53, 70, 151  
E.GAL 125n  
EDIN 124  
EN.KI 145n  
ENGUR 149n  
<sup>d</sup>íd 98-104, 104n, 108,  
111n, 159-60  
ID.DA 104  
  
AN u KI 76n  
E-a 145n  
E-um 145n

a-ab 61  
a-ab-ba 60-1, 61n,  
149n, 159  
a-ab-ba an-ta 151  
a-ab-ba ki-ta 151  
a-kà-dè 114  
á-dam 90n  
ab-a 56, 149n, 159  
ab-zu 61  
buranun 138  
e-duru 136  
e-kur 125  
e<sub>4</sub>-dé(-a) 109, 114-5,  
117, 125, 159-60  
e<sub>4</sub>-si-ga 109  
edin 123-6, 123n,  
124n, 126n, 161  
En-ki 145n, 147  
En-uru 145n  
ezen 124, 126

gina 137-8  
ha-gal 125n  
hai-kal 125n  
íd 97n, 98, 100-2,  
102n, 104, 108,  
113-5, 113n,  
117-8, 137-8,  
159-60  
idig(i)na 114, 114n,  
124, 126, 137-8  
itu ga-šum 96  
itu ì-túm 96n  
itu NI.DU 96  
Lugal-abzu(ak) 149  
Lugal-id(ak) 149  
mir 108n, 109  
nammu 149n  
šár 152

### GREEK

νεφέλην 94  
Νουν 143n

πηγή 94, 121n, 159  
χάος 20, 20n

## SUBJECT INDEX

- Adad 128-9, 132-3, 142, 142n,  
 165  
 Adda 141n  
 Addu 142, 142n  
 Agušaya hymn 147  
 Akkad 55n, 106, 114  
 Akkadian 21 *et passim*  
 alliteration 23  
 alloform 105-6, 160  
 allomorph 115  
 Amarna 53n, 65n  
 Amorite 47  
 Anat 50, 63  
 Anatolia 133  
 Anšar 152, 152n  
 Antu 152  
 Anu 29n, 59, 76, 76n, 80n, 146-  
 8, 148n, 152  
 Anzu 48  
 Apsû 59-60, 59n, 68n, 74, 74n,  
 76-7, 79, 80n, 81-2,  
 81n, 111, 142, 145, 145n,  
 149-50, 151n, 152-3, 152n,  
 159, 166-7  
 Aquila 17, 94, 112, 121n  
 Arabic 17-8, 21, 23, 25, 52, 94n,  
 95-7, 125n, 127, 131, 135-  
 6, 136n, 158-9, 161  
 Araḥtu 111  
 Aramaic 46, 46n, 58, 69n, 90n,  
 94, 105-6, 121n, 123, 125,  
 127-9, 128n, 135-6, 159  
 Aranzahi 138n  
 Arašših 138n  
 Asakku 150n  
 Ashurbanipal 102  
 Ashurnasirpal 110n  
 assimilation 138  
 Assur 152  
 Assyrian 27, 92, 99-101, 106,  
 106n, 128  
 Astarte 64n, 133  
 Atirat 54n  
 Atra-Ḥasīs epic 26-8, 55, 59-60,  
 76, 78, 90-1, 107, 147  
 Atum-Re 82n  
 AXB pattern 70n, 131-2, 131n  
 AXYB pattern 35n  
 Ba'u 21n  
 Baal 49, 50, 58n, 63-5, 93n, 94n,  
 127, 129-35, 142, 142n,  
 144, 145n, 146n, 147-8,  
 153, 157-8, 165-6  
 Baal Cycle 51n, 63-4  
 Baau 21-2, 22n  
 Babylon 48, 48n, 80, 111, 152n  
 Babylonian 27, 40, 45-7, 50-1,  
 59, 64, 68n, 74, 82n, 105,  
 129n, 148, 151n, 153, 156  
 Balih 137n  
 ballast variant 131  
 bilingual 79n, 107, 109, 121n,  
 123-4, 124n, 125n, 126n,  
 128-9, 128n, 145n, 149n,  
 163  
 bipartite 75-8, 163  
 Bit-Adini 137n  
 Boğazkoy 151  
 borrowing, lexical 45-7, 46n, 52,  
 62, 104-5, 112-3, 115,  
 123n, 126, 137, 157, 159-  
 60  
 Canaanite 22, 50-2, 51n, 61-5,  
 64n, 90n, 93n, 106, 113-5,

- 125-6, 125n, 134n, 148,  
151, 153-4, 153n, 154n,  
157-8, 160-1
- Cassite 148
- casus pendens 28
- chaos 13-4, 14n, 20, 20n, 22, 26,  
30, 30n, 32-4, 36-7, 40, 43,  
45, 51, 58, 60n, 65, 72,  
80n, 85, 88n, 144n, 155-6,  
168
- Chaoskampf (cf. conflict theme)  
15, 49n, 50, 65, 157-8
- chiasmus 38, 71, 71n, 72n, 78n
- climax 42, 162
- cognate accusative 90n
- collocation 30, 68
- conflict theme 45, 48-51, 51n,  
61, 63, 156-7
- Coptic 143n
- creation *ex nihilo* 14
- darkness 35-6, 38, 42
- demythologization 46-7, 51, 65,  
158
- desert 17-9, 19n, 20, 30-5, 37,  
40-2, 155-6
- dew 94n, 95n, 134
- discourse analysis 42, 80-2, 83n,  
85, 85n, 119, 119n, 120n,  
142n, 162, 164
- dragon 49-51, 54n, 62, 63n, 64-  
5, 75n, 153n, 157-8
- Ea 29n, 59-60, 64, 65n, 76, 76n,  
80n, 121n, 134, 142, 144-  
53, 145n, 146n, 148n, 152n,  
166-7
- Eanna 79, 80n
- Earth Mother 42n
- Ebla 61, 96, 126n
- Eblaite 25, 52, 52n, 55-6, 58,  
58n, 61, 63, 77, 95-7, 114,  
114n, 124-6, 124n, 125n,  
126n, 131n, 137-8, 137n,  
141, 141n, 145n, 149n,  
157-9
- Eden 89-90, 90n, 93n, 99, 118-  
21, 119n, 120n, 123, 127-8,  
136, 136n, 137n, 142, 154n,  
155, 161, 163-5, 168
- Egyptian 22, 22n, 58, 64n, 82n,  
94n, 131, 143, 143n
- Ekur 79, 80n
- El 54, 59, 64-5, 65n, 122n, 134n,  
144-8, 144n, 146n, 150-4,  
158, 166-7
- El-kunirša 64n, 65, 151
- ellipsis 35
- Elohim 144, 153, 166-7
- emptiness 20-1, 30-1, 35, 41, 43,  
156
- Enki 59-60, 60n, 65n, 76, 122n,  
145, 145n, 146n, 147-50,  
147n, 153, 166-7
- Enlil 19n, 29n, 59, 76, 76n, 80n,  
145-8, 148n
- Enuma elish 45, 47-9, 48n, 50,  
55, 60-1, 60n, 76, 80n, 81-  
3, 91, 120, 144-5, 152-3,  
156-8, 164, 166-7
- Eridu 79-80, 80n, 112n, 126n,  
147, 147n
- Esagila 76, 80, 145
- Esarhaddon 111n, 146
- Ešarra 76, 145
- etymology 15, 17, 20-3, 41, 46-7,  
51-2, 52n, 67, 70n, 85, 90n,  
93-4, 94n, 95-7, 99n, 105n,  
114n, 115, 117-9, 123, 127,  
134n, 136-8, 136n, 145n,  
151n, 155-6, 158-9, 161
- Euphrates 99, 110, 113n, 137-8,  
137n, 149, 149n, 151
- Fekheriyeh inscription 123, 127-  
8, 134-5, 142, 161, 165

- Flood 40, 55, 152, 167  
framing 39
- Gilgamesh epic 111, 112n, 130n  
Glossenkeil 29n  
grand climax 42, 162  
grapheme 24, 101, 159  
Greek 20, 20n, 22, 143, 143n
- Ḫabur 137n  
Hadad 128-9, 134-5, 142, 142n,  
165  
Hadda 141, 142n  
Haddu 142  
Hammurabi 102, 104  
Harab myth 99n, 147n  
Ḫay(y)a 145n  
hendiadys 72n  
Ḫit 113-4  
Hittite 64n, 125n, 142  
Hurrian 23n, 26, 30, 115, 125n,  
138n, 142, 148n, 153, 155  
hyponym(ous) 38, 38n, 59-60,  
62, 67-8, 68n, 71-2, 74-5,  
75n, 77-8, 89, 121, 163
- Id 98-9, 101-4, 112, 160  
Idiglat 138  
idiomatization 28  
Idu 99n  
*inclusio* 32, 39, 79  
inclusion 67-8, 68n  
inserted bicolon 35n  
inundation 110, 119, 122, 122n,  
164  
irrigation 95, 110, 118-9, 119n,  
132, 136n, 137n  
Istar 152
- Jonathan (Targum) 94
- Kalû ritual 28
- Keret 145n  
Kingu 147  
Kültepe 103n  
kun-yomi 124n
- Lagaš 55  
Late Babylonian 90n  
Leviathan 50  
literary structure 39, 42, 75, 81-  
2, 86-7, 130, 162  
literary tradition 40-1  
loan word 46-7, 53n, 57, 62, 90n,  
97, 103, 105-6, 105n, 106n,  
112-5, 114n, 123, 125,  
125n, 136, 159-61  
logogram 101, 103-4  
Lugal-e 119n, 121n, 150n, 151n  
LXX 35, 94, 97, 97n, 112, 121n,  
159
- Mala-river 151  
Maqlu 102-3, 111n  
Marduk 48-9, 48n, 49n, 55, 61,  
64, 76, 79, 82, 91, 108,  
111, 111n, 121n, 128, 133,  
144-8, 145n, 147n, 148n,  
152-3, 156, 163, 166
- Mari 53n, 99, 104, 138  
marsh 82n, 120  
Masoretic 90n, 96-7  
merismus 19, 38, 89-91  
metathesis 132  
Middle Assyrian 102, 104, 105n,  
151, 160  
mist 94-5, 117-8, 159  
monoclon 91n  
Mot 63n  
MT 35, 39-40, 136, 161  
Mummu 81n, 146, 147n
- Nabopolassar 111n  
Nabu 147n  
Nahar 50, 50n, 63, 65



- Nammu 146, 149, 167  
 Nāru 99, 101-4, 102n, 160  
 Nebuchadnezzar 111n  
 negated antonym 38  
 Neo-Assyrian 28, 55n, 69n, 87n, 90n, 106, 152  
 Neo-Babylonian 49, 55, 79-80, 82, 152, 163  
 Nergal 79n  
 Ninhursag 147, 147n  
 Ninšiku 146, 146n  
 Ninurta 48, 150n  
 Nippur 79  
 nothingness 14n, 21, 31, 31n, 33-4  
 Nudimmud 147, 152, 152n  
 Nun 82n, 143  
  
 Old Akkadian 48, 55, 103  
 Old Aramaic 128  
 Old Assyrian 48, 103  
 Old Babylonian 27, 55, 91, 92, 102-3, 106n, 109, 110n, 128, 147-8  
 Old South Arabic 35-6, 161  
 on-yomi 124n  
 Onqelos 94  
  
 parallelism 19, 33, 35, 37, 40, 40n, 68-72, 68n, 70n, 75n, 77, 78n, 110, 130, 131n, 132-3  
 Peshitta 94, 112n, 121n  
 Philo of Byblos 21-2  
 Phoenician 21-2, 58, 69n, 159  
 Pineḥas 131  
 poetic cliché 46  
 pre-Sargonic 137  
 pre-Sumerian 137  
 preterite 86n  
 Puzur-Tiamtim 48  
  
 Rahab 50  
 rain 86-9, 93, 93n, 94n, 95-7, 95n, 99, 111n, 115, 118-9, 122, 122n, 127-34, 128n, 134n, 136n, 141, 141n, 155, 159, 162, 164-5  
 rain-god 93n, 128, 132, 134, 141-2, 165  
 resultative 34, 81n  
 river 98-9, 99n, 101, 102n, 104, 111-3, 111n, 115, 117-8, 121, 134, 136n, 137-8, 137n, 142, 148-9, 150n, 151, 155, 159-60, 164-5  
 river-god 99, 102-4, 146n, 147n  
 river ordeal 102, 104  
  
 Šamaš 52, 129n, 147, 151  
 Šamūma 63, 70, 151, 166  
 ṣandhi 46  
 Šapšu 52  
 Sargon 55n  
 sea-dragon 50, 63-4, 144, 157  
 sea-god 48n, 54n  
 Semitic 19, 23-4, 46-7, 51-2, 56, 58, 61-2, 61n, 65, 69n, 70, 95, 97, 103, 105n, 123, 125n, 126n, 127, 134n, 142n, 145n, 155, 157-9  
 semitized form 114n, 124, 161  
 Sennacherib 110n, 152n  
 sign list 124-6  
 sound change 62n  
 storm-god 48-50, 49n, 61, 63, 64n, 93n, 132-5, 142n, 144, 156-7, 166  
 Sumerian 21n, 23n, 30, 30n, 53, 53n, 56, 61, 61n, 69n, 70, 79n, 95, 97, 97n, 99n, 100-5, 102n, 105n, 107, 112-5, 113n, 114n, 115n, 117-8, 119n, 122n, 123-7, 123n, 125n, 126n, 136-8, 137n,

- 143, 145, 146n, 147-8,  
 148n, 150-1, 153, 159-61,  
 166  
 syllable 24  
 Symmachus 17, 35  
 Syriac 46n, 135
- Tahām(at)u 52, 57, 63-4, 70,  
 151, 154, 157-9, 166
- Talmud 105  
 Tantu 99n  
 Targum 94, 121n, 159  
 tD infinitive 25  
 Teshub 133, 142  
 Theodotion 17
- Tiamat 19n, 45-9, 48n, 49n, 51-  
 2, 54n, 56-8, 60-2, 65, 76-  
 7, 80n, 81-2, 81n, 144-5,  
 149, 149n, 151-3, 151n,  
 152n, 156, 158-9, 166-7
- Tigris 110, 114, 126n, 137-8,  
 138n, 149, 149n, 150n
- Tišpak 48  
 topicalization 28, 81n  
 tripartite 73-6, 78, 148n, 163
- Ubaidian 145n  
 Ugaritic 17 *et passim*  
 Ulamburiash 48  
 unproductive 27-30, 39-43, 80,  
 88, 91-3, 155-6, 162-3,  
 167-8
- Ur-Nammu 104  
 Uruk 79
- vowel harmony 25n, 52, 52n, 158  
 Vulgate 94, 112, 121n
- watery abode 122n, 145, 148-50,  
 166-7  
 watery beginning 80n, 143, 165  
 watery chaos 20, 45, 85, 155  
 waw initial 119n  
 waw sequential 119n  
 wayqtl construction 89, 119n,  
 142n  
 West Semitic 46, 46n, 53n, 58,  
 62, 90n, 97, 123, 125-7,  
 125n, 131n, 136, 159-61  
 word pair 19, 23, 35n, 37-9, 59,  
 61n, 67-71, 68n, 69n, 74n,  
 75, 76n, 77-8, 90-1, 132,  
 142n, 152, 163, 166
- Yam 49-50, 50n, 54n, 57, 58n,  
 60, 63, 63n, 65, 142n, 157-  
 8

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