

## 1. THE KINSHIP TERMS FOR LESSER DEITIES IN THE UGARITIC TEXTS

El is known as the *ḥtk*<sup>12</sup>, the “Progenitor” of all individual gods; thus, he is regarded as the *ab bn il*<sup>13</sup>, “Father of the Sons of El”<sup>14</sup>, or the *il bn il*<sup>15</sup>, “El of the Sons of El”. From these facts, lesser deities can be inferred as “sons” of El, with a filial sense.

### 1.1. *ab šnm* “Father of Bright Ones”

Although the phrase *ab šnm*<sup>16</sup> is a designation for the supreme god, it may be suggested as an indication of the kinship relation of lesser deities to El. Whilst it has been variously translated, it may be best taken as “Father of Bright Ones”.

The translation of the phrase as “Père des années”<sup>17</sup> has been rejected because the Ugaritic term for the meaning of “year(s)”, whether it is a sg. or a pl., occurs only in its feminine form *šnt*<sup>18</sup>. O. Eissfeldt’s suggestion, “Vater der Sterblichen”, derived from the  $\sqrt{\text{šny}}$ , to “wechseln, dahinschwinden”<sup>19</sup>, has also been doubted for the  $\sqrt{\text{šny}}$  is never used to denote “mortals”<sup>20, 21</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Ug. *ḥtk*, “progenitor, father” (de Moor, 1971: 241; *DUL* 375 [I], from the  $\sqrt{\text{ḥtk}}$ , to “subdue, control”; cf. Heb.  $\text{חָתַח}$ : *HALOT* 364), occurs at KTU 1.1 ii 18; 1.1 iii 6; and 1.6 iv 11.

<sup>13</sup> KTU 1.40.7, 16, 24, 33, 41; and 1.122.2.

<sup>14</sup> Pedersen (1939: 4) remarks that El is the “father of gods”.

<sup>15</sup> KTU 1.65.1.

<sup>16</sup> KTU 1.1 iii 24; 1.2 i 10; 1.2 iii [5]; 1.3 v 8; 1.4 iv 24; 1.5 vi 2; 1.6 i 36; and 1.17 vi 49.

<sup>17</sup> Virolleaud (1931: 198; 1932: 132, 137); Bauer (1933: 82); followed by Clifford: (1972: 48); Gibson (1978: 53); del Olmo (1981: 165); and de Moor (1987: 16 n. 83): “an epithet describing Ilu as the oldest among the gods”.

<sup>18</sup> Ginsberg (1936b: 164); accepted by Pope (1955: 32–5); Oldenburg (1969: 17). Thus it is not related in any case to the Hebrew divine epithet  $\text{עֲתִיק יוֹמִין}$ , “Ancient of Days”, in Dan 7.9.

<sup>19</sup> Eissfeldt (1951: 30–1 n. 4).

<sup>20</sup> Pope (1955: 33). For other suggestions, see Pope (*ibid.*: 32–3).

However, the second term of the expression *ab šnm* seems to be more explicable in regard to El's absolute authority in the pantheon. When Ug. *mlk* occurs with the phrase *ab šnm* it seems to be somewhat associated semantically with the *šnm*, although it appears to modify the preceding noun *qrš*, "pavilion"<sup>22</sup>: thus, *qrš mlk ab šnm*<sup>23</sup>. Ug. *mlk* and *ab* occur as being paralleled in this case to indicate the two positional characteristics of the supreme god ruling in the pantheon: sc. the ruler of other gods as well as the father of them.

Another plausible connection, suggested by Pope<sup>24</sup>, with Ar. *snw*; *sny*, to "shine, be high, exalted, old", is noteworthy here; hence, it is rendered "Father of Exalted Ones" or "Exalted Father". Whilst accepting Pope's etymological application, Oldenburg renders the translation

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<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, Ug. *šnm* occurs also in a pair of nouns; cf. *trmn* (it should be read as *tkmn*) *w šnm*: KTU 1.65.4; also, KTU 1.39.3, 6; 1.40.[8, 17, 25], 34, 43; 1.41.[12, 15], 31; 1.87.14, 17, 33–4; 1.114:18–9; 1.122.[4]; and 1.123.8. Thus, a DN<sup>1</sup> and a DN<sup>2</sup>. Eissfeldt's view (1945–9; 1951: 66–9), which relates the second term of the *ab šnm* to a DN of a Kassite deity (Shumaliya) is rejected by Pope (1955: 32–3) for its "minor, nondescript, and problematic role in the Ugaritic pantheon". Instead Pope (*ibid.*: 32) refers it to "Shunem", without any definition. Wyatt (1990: 446–8; 1996: 45 n. 54, 227–9; 2002: 46 n. 39, 410 n. 35) hypothetically renders it to "Shanimu", a dawn-goddess of Indian Vedic origin, "brought to Babylonia by the Kassites under the name of *Šumaliya*"; hence, he identifies a pair of DNs with the Kassite deities, Shuqamuna and Shumaliya. With the same etymology of Shumaliya, he translates the *šnm* as "Bright One" (Wyatt, 2002: 46).

<sup>22</sup> Ug. *qrš*; cf. Akk. *g/quršu* (*AHW* 299; *CAD* 5[G] 141; a "room" in a private house), *karāšu*, *karšu* (*CAD* 8[K] 210–2; "camp, encampment"). Thus, "pavilion": Vroilleaud (1931: 198); Wyatt (2002: 46 and n. 38); "tent-shrine/tent-frame": Clifford (1972:48, 54); or "camp": Dijkstra-de Moor (1975: 192). This appears as the residence of El in the Ugaritic texts. Yahweh had also been a tent resident (2 Sam 7.6); cf. Wyatt (1996: 28).

<sup>23</sup> KTU 1.1 iii 24; [1.2 iii 5]; [1.3 v 8]; 1.4 iv 24; 1.5 vi 2; 1.6 i 36; and 1.17 vi 49.

<sup>24</sup> It was proposed originally by Thomas (1934: 236–8); but suggested, with some developed ideas, again by Pope (1955: 33–5).

to the “King, the Father of the Luminaries”<sup>25</sup>; or the “Father of the Bright Ones”, which is preferred hereafter. Therefore, El’s epithet “Father of the Bright Ones” may represent the radiant theophany of the lesser deities who are bonded with their filial relationship to their king El<sup>26</sup>.

### 1.2. *bn il(m)*<sup>27</sup> “Sons of El”

The phrase implies evidently the theogony of lesser deities<sup>28</sup>. As other secondary gods lesser deities may be also regarded as “sons” of the supreme god.

<sup>25</sup> Oldenburg (1969: 17–8) construes Ug. *šnm* as a masc. pl. noun form of the  $\sqrt{sny}$  which corresponds to Ar.  $\sqrt{sny}$ , to “gleam, shine”.

<sup>26</sup> El’s Ug. epithet may have been related later to Yahweh’s Gk. designation τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, “of the Father of the Lights” (James 1.17), as Oldenburg (1969: 17–9) points out. Its references go further to other texts: KTU 1.10 i 3–5, which read *bn il [ ]p̄hr kkbm [ ]dr dt šmm*, “Sons of El; || the assembly of Stars; || circle of those of heavens”; cf. Job 38.7; Isa 14.13.

<sup>27</sup> Whilst the expression *bn ilm* appears as the epithet for Mot in 1.4 vii 45–6; 1.4 viii 16, 30, etc., it occurs only once for all the deities of the pantheon at KTU 1.4 iii 14: *p̄hr bn ilm*, the “assembly of the sons of El”; the *-m* occurs as an enclitic at this place. The *m* enclitic is attested in Mari names like *Ab-du-ma-Da-gan*, “Servant of Dagan” (ARM 15: 140; cf. 144), and in a variety of uses in Amarna as well as in Hebrew; for this, cf. Hummel’s work (1957: 87–103).

<sup>28</sup> For the studies on the Ugaritic expression *bn il*, see Cunchillos (1969: 5–17) and Jüngling (1969: 53–6). Cunchillos (1985a: 206) adequately divides the usage of the phrase *bn il* or *bn ilm* into three categories: firstly, for the gods as “sons of El” (KTU 1.40; 1.65; and 1.122, etc.); secondly, for a hero divinised as a “son of El” (KTU 1.16); thirdly, for the theophanic PNs in some economic texts (KTU 4.63; 4.84, etc.). He (Cunchillos, *ibid.*: 209) says also that the Ugaritians believed the kinship of human beings to gods and “des dieux se fait par génération”. However, the expression *ab adm*, “Father of humans” (KTU 1.14 i 37, 43; 1.14 iii 32, 47; 1.14 v 43; 1.14 vi 13 and 32) does not indicate literally El’s paternal relationship to a human being; cf. Ryan (1954: 73): the life and health of Keret, as a normal human, depend on El; and Wyatt (1994a: 147–8): the *ab adm* does not mean “father of mankind” in a