

BIBLICAL *REPĀ'ĪM* AND UGARITIC *RPU/I(M)**

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The etymological derivation of the term *rpu/i(m)* - *repā'īm*, and the clarification of its connotation or connotations, remain vexing problems which continue to exercise the minds of linguists, exegetes and comparativists.¹ As is well known, the term is found also in Phoenician and other Semitic languages.² However, those sporadic references have affected the scholarly discussion of the issue only to a minimal degree. The evidence adduced in the quest for a solution of the problem is drawn predominantly from Ugaritic literature, backed up by biblical mentions of *repā'īm* which are deemed to be affiliated with Ugaritic *rpu/i(m)*.

The issue has been dealt with both extensively and intensively over the last decades³ and no new material is available which would shed new light on the etymology and meaning of the term in either setting. If the matter is being picked up here once more, it is solely for one reason, *viz.* to bring some hitherto not (or not sufficiently) noted special features of the biblical employment of the term to bear on the discussion. Our present concern is primarily with the biblical evidence concerning *repā'īm* and its *literary* relation with or dependence upon the Ugaritic use of *rpu/i(m)*, leaving aside any *etymological* considerations.

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1. A survey of the *Stand der Forschung* may be found in L'Heureux (1979, pp. 111 ff). To the publications listed there, one should add: M. Dietrich-O. Loretz-J. Samarin (1976, pp. 45-52); S. E. Loewenstamm (1976); and M. H. Pope (1977, pp. 163-182).

2. The evidence is presented by L'Heureux (1979, p. 112); see Donner and Röllig (1964, 13, 7-8; 14, 8 S.3).

3. See the literature listed by L'Heureux and the additional publications mentioned in n. 1 and below.

The Ugaritic references to *rpu/i(m)* allow for a fairly wide spectrum of interpretations and, in fact, have been interpreted quite diversely by scholars in the field. In contradistinction, the biblical mentions can be neatly arranged under two distinct headings, as was pointed out already before the discovery of the Ugaritic literature:⁴

1. In one cluster of texts it serves as a designation of a group of human beings who inhabited specific areas in pre-Israelite Canaan, and were distinguished by bodily features which put them into a category quite by themselves. Their depiction is somewhat remindful of the portrayal of the *heroes* in the classical Greek tradition, as has been recurrently pointed out.

2. In other biblical metaphors and tropes, the term *repā'īm* unmistakably carries mythopoeic overtones which bring into the fore its relation to the conceptual framework of the netherworld.

Notwithstanding the apparent multifacetedness of the Ugaritic usage and the evident bifurcation of the biblical employment, prevailing scholarly opinion tends to derive all mentions of Ugaritic *rpu/i(m)* and biblical from one common stem. Its exact meaning, though, is yet disputed. The various and varying employments of the term in both literatures is taken to have arisen from diachronous semantic developments and/or to reflect diverse synchronous modes of its application.⁵ Virolleaud's sweeping dismissal of any connection between *repā'īm* and *rpu/i(m)*, and his flat denial of the applicability of the biblical evidence to the clarification of the Ugaritic term or *vice versa*,⁶ has not found acceptance with scholars.⁷

However, even if one does not subscribe to Virolleaud's extreme view, Virolleaud's argument cannot be dismissed out of hand. A close reading of the relevant biblical passages discloses telling differences between the above two types of *rāpā'/h - repā'īm* mentions,⁸ respective to their presumed interconnection with Ugaritic *rpu/i(m)*.⁹ Therefore, in the present paper it will be suggested that the ample additional terminology pertaining

4. See Karge (1925), Gray (1949, p. 128), Jirku (1965, pp. 82-83) and others.

5. See L'Heureux (1979, pp. 111-127) and Dietrich-Loretz-Samartin (1976, n. 1).

6. Virolleaud (1940, pp. 77-83). Also, Virolleaud (1939, pp. 638-640): "... il résulte que les Rephaim de RS ne sont pas les âmes des morts, et qu'ils ne sont pas, non plus, un ancien peuple".

7. See Astour (1973, p. 35): "We must proceed from the premise that the *rpum* of the Ugaritic literature are the same as the *rp'im* of Phoenician texts and the *repā'īm* of the Bible, namely the shadows of the dead . . .".

8. This very obvious fact did not escape the attention of scholars, but was not sufficiently appreciated in the analysis of the *rāpā'/h - repā'īm* issue.

9. Such a differentiated approach to *rpu(m)* is proposed by L'Heureux (1979, pp. 202ff.), and to *repā'īm* by S. E. Loewenstamm (1976).

to the mythopoeic, unvarying employment of *repā'īm* in the plural indeed gives reason to connect this usage with Ugaritic (epic) literature. In contradistinction, the comparative rarity of mythopoeic elements in the biblical use of *rāpā/h* - *repā'īm* as an ethnic-geographical or geopolitical designation does not display an obvious relation with the *rpu/i(m)* of the Ugaritic myth, and may have to be explained independently of that term.

II

While the bifurcation of the biblical occurrences of *rāpā/h* - *repā'īm* indeed has been noted and stressed in the scholarly debate, to the best of my knowledge, no weight was given to the fact that the two, at best only marginally connected connotations, turn up distinctly apart, and alternatively, in diverse literary types or *Gattungen* of biblical literature:

A. The employment of *rāpā/h* - *repā'īm* as a designation of an ethnic entity (or entities) settled in specific locations in the Land of Canaan, is found exclusively in the historiographies Joshua, Samuel, Chronicles and in historiographical passages in the Pentateuchal books Genesis and Deuteronomy. There, the Rephaim and their territories, at times are juxtaposed to other components of the indigenous population who are of a comparable ethnic-geopolitical character, such as the *perizī*, *'emōrī*, *kena'ānī* (Gen 15:20), *gēšūrī* and *ma'ākāī* (Josh 13:13). A recurrent tradition places them in Transjordanian Bashan, an area which is expressly named "the land of the Rephaim" (Deut 3:13). It included territories which at the time of the Israelite conquest were settled by the Ammonites (Deut 2:20). Og,¹⁰ the Amorite King of Bashan (Deut 4:47; Josh 2:10; 9:10), was considered to be *miyyeter harepā'īm* i.e. a 'remnant', 'survivor' or possibly 'kinsman' (Deut 3:11; Josh 12:4; 13:12; cp. 11:22)¹¹ of the Rephaim.¹² His fabulously large bedstead, at the time of writing, reportedly was yet to be seen in Rabbat Ammon (Deut 3:11). But he is presented as having resided *hayyōšeb*, i.e., ruled in the cities of Ashtarot and Edre'ī (Josh 12:4-5). Tradition relates that in hoary antiquity the great Kedarlaomer, King of Elam,

10. C. Rabin (1967, pp. 251-254) explains this *nom. prop.* to mean '(great) man'.

11. In some instances, like the one under consideration, biblical *yeter* seems to indicate an ethnic connection rather than the notion 'remnant'. The ethnic or familial connotation makes better sense in apocopated theophoric personal names, such as *yeter* (Exod 4:18; Judg. 8:20; 1 Kgs 2, 5:32; 1 Chron. 2:32; 4:17; 7:38); *yitra* (2 Sam. 17:25); *yitri* (2 Sam. 23:38; 1 Chron. 2:53; 11:40). Cp. further *yitre'am* (2 Sam. 3:5; 1 Chron. 3:3); *yitran* (Gen. 36:26; 1 Chron. 1:41; 7:37). A similar dual connotation inheres in the noun *še'ērī* (e.g. Am. 9:12 cp. Isa 15:9; Ps. 76:11), in which *še'ēr* - 'remnant' and *še'ēr* - 'consanguinity' (Lev. 25:49) may have been fused (by way of double entendre?).

12. On Og and his affiliation with the *repā'īm*, see de Moor (1976, pp. 338ff), with a survey of earlier publications on the issue.

had defeated the Rephaim there (Gen 14:5).¹³ The *repā'im* - named *zūzīm*, *zamzumīm* by the Ammonites (Gen. 14:5; Deut 2:20) and *'emīm* by the Moabites (Deut 2:10-11)¹⁴ were reckoned among the *'anāqīm*. They are described as a race of men of exceedingly tall stature (Num 13:33; Deut 2:11, 21; Josh 14:15) compared with whom the Israelites felt like 'small worms' - *hāgāhīm*, literally 'locust' (Num 13:33), so much so that conquering the land which the giants inhabited seemed to be just impossible (Num 13:28; Deut 1:28; 9:2). But with divine assistance, Israel nevertheless vanquished them (Deut 2:21; Amos 2:9).

In all these instances, the term *repā'im* has an obviously ethnic content. Notwithstanding their gigantic size, the pertinent texts do not present them as mythical creatures. While their exceeding tallness may be defined as a 'formulaic' (possibly 'epic') element, it is too thin a basis for defining these traditions as 'mythopoeic'. Therefore, although some passages compare or even link the *repā'im* with the primeval *nepilīm* who are first mentioned in a patently mythical context (Gen 6:1-4), this linkage should not be construed as proof for the identity of the two groups,¹⁵ but rather as a purely literary aggrandizement of those *gigantes* whom the Israelites encountered in Transjordan. The textually somewhat difficult reference to the *nepilīm* in Num 13:33¹⁶ which connects them with the *benē 'anāq* may well be a case of the historization of a myth.

Reports which are set in the later period of David's wars tell of four giant warriors, presented as *yelidē*, i.e. 'descendants' of *harāpā'/h'*,¹⁷ who

13. The defeat predates Abraham's victorious battle against those allied kings after they had spoiled the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and had captured Lot, Abraham's nephew. For our present concern it is of no consequence whether that tradition is based on historical facts or whether it is but a legend.

14. If *repā'im*, *zūzīm* (*zamzumīm*) and *'emīm* are indeed but alternative designations of one ethnic entity, the stringing of these terms in the report about their defeat at the hands of the allied Mesopotamian kings (Gen 14,5) should be considered a case of textual conflation of synonymous readings (see Talmon (1961, pp. 335-383). But the *'emīm* and *zamzumīm* (*zūzīm*) also could have been subdivisions of the *repā'im* who had occupied territories which the Ammonites and Moabites won from them in the course of history (see: L'Heureux (1979, p. 112), de Moor, (1976), and others).

15. As proposed by L'Heureux, de Moor, and others.

16. The second part of the phrase *וַיַּעַזְבוּ אֶת הַיָּמִים בְּיַד הַיָּמִים* is missing in LXX. The MT most probably exhibits a case of conflated readings. See Talmon (1975, p. 349).

17. The interchange of *harāpā'* - *harāpāh* most probably is but another case of the well-documented variation between 'aleph and hē in (parallel) biblical texts. There is hardly room for listing *rp*' and *rph* as "Hebrew roots of contrasted meanings", nor for the surmise that "אָרַץ may be derived from the meaning . . . 'make strong, heal', or it may be a cacophony 'weak ones' due to a desire to avoid describing them as 'strong' ". as R. Gordis suggested (1936, pp. 55-56).

were affiliated with the Philistines and engaged David's men in face to face combat (2 Sam 21:15-22; 1 Chr 20:4-8). The summary of that combat roster notes that "these four", viz. *Yiṣhw/i* the Nobite (2 Sam 21:16)¹⁸, *Saq/Sippai* (21:18; 1 Chr 20:4), Goliath the Gittite (2 Sam 21:19)—who in 1 Chr 20:5 is given a brother named Lahmi, and an unnamed warrior of 'great stature' (?)—*'iṣ mādīn/ōn* (2 Sam 21:20) or *middah* (1 Chr 20:6)—were all born - *nūlledū* - to *hārāpā/h* in Gath, and were felled by David's fighters (2 Sam 21:22; 1 Chr 20:8). *Hārāpā/h* could be understood as a gentilec *plurale tantum*.

It should be noted that the Bible does not define the descendants of *hārāpā/h* as Philistines. They rather are reported to have fought in the Philistine army, possibly as mercenaries or allies. The best known among them, Goliath the duelist - *'iṣ habbēnayim* - (1 Sam 17:4, 23)¹⁹ whom David himself vanquished (v. 26 ff.)²⁰, indeed was the Philistines' protagonist and issued forth from their camp clad in heavy armour and carrying awe-inspiring weaponry (vv. 4-7). But interestingly enough, initially he is not introduced as a Philistine. Only when he addresses the ranks of the Israelites, he presents himself as a *peḷiṣtī* (v. 8). From then on, the author uses this designation throughout his account of the duel (*passim*). At one point, his Philistinian origin is further highlighted by David's referring to him disparagingly as *'arel* - 'this uncircumcised one' (v. 26), a specific characteristic which Biblical writers employ as a stereotype in reference to the Philistines.

It should further be pointed out that with the exception of these war-tales which all are set in David's days, no other biblical tradition presents the Philistines or a Philistine as being of gigantic stature, as the *yelidē 'anāq* (Num 13:22; Josh 14:15), and the *repā'im* are said to have been. Therefore, it could be surmised that the *yelidē hārāpā/h* by origin were not Philistines, but rather survivors of a component of the autochthonous population of Canaan who had been conquered by the invading Philistines (cp. Josh 11:22) and either were pressed into military service or had joined

18. The MT exhibits a hybrid reading of the *qere* ויִשְׁחָוּ בְּנֵי נֹב with the *ketib* ויִשְׁחָוּ בְּנֵי נֹב. But there is no compelling reason for emending it to ויִשְׁחָוּ בְּנֵי נֹב and transferring it after וְיָמֵי עָמִי in v. 15 (BH). It may be conjectured that originally the text read בְּנֵי נֹב, which reading would not materially affect the meaning of the passage.

19. In a kind of insert in 1 Sam 17, 23-25, he is again referred to by the epithet *'iṣ habbēnā'im* or by the apocopated form *'iṣ*. At the end of v. 51, the equivalent expression *gibhōr* is used.

20. There is no need to deal here with the vexing problem of whether the Goliath whom David vanquished should be identified with the Goliath who was killed by Elhanan ben Ya'ari, one of David's men (2 Sam 2:19).

their army as mercenaries²¹, not unlike the Judean David. The phenomenon as such is well known from the history of ancient near eastern societies and obtained in other civilizations as well. Suffice it to draw attention to biblical texts which detail at some length the 'population-mix' of which armies mustered by several nations were constituted - Egypt (Jer 46:9 *et al.*), Assyria (Isa 36:8 *et al.*) Babylon (Jer 50:37 *et al.*), the Phoenicians - Tyre (Ezek 27:10-11). Last but not least, mention should be made of the variety of mercenaries who became part of the Israelite royal army in the days of David and Solomon. Amongst them the *kerētî ūplētî* stand out, most probably contingents of conquered Philistines (Sea People). Initially they served as the king's bodyguard and subsequently became the nucleus of a professional army which was loyal to the royal house and freed the king to an increasing degree from his dependence upon the people's *Heerbann* (2 Sam 8: 18; 20: 23; 1 Chr 18:17; 2 Sam 15:18; 20:7; 1 Kgs 1:38; 44).

By way of an interim summary of the argument presented so far, it may be said that:

a. The overwhelming evidence in biblical historiographical literature shows the term *rāpā/h - repā'im* to designate a stratum of the pre-Israelite population of Canaan (Gen 14:5; 15; 20; Deut 3:11; Josh 13:12).

b. Their abnormal height, in comparison with the Israelites and possibly other autochthonous entities, may well be an 'epic' aggrandizement (Deut 2:11; 3:11 *et al.*) of basic actual facts. Under this heading comes also their association with the mythical *nepilim* (Num 13:33).

c. The association of the *yelildē harāpā/h* with the Philistines, mentioned only in reference to David's days, may be of secondary nature, resulting from the conquest of their territories by those invaders (2 Sam 21:16, 18, 20, 22; 1 Chr 20:4, 6, 8).

d. The surmise may be entertained that the nom. propr. *rāpā/h* of one Judean (1 Chr 4:12) and two Benjaminites—one of them a Saulide (8:2,37)—were emulated by the Israelites from the local population that came under their sway after David defeated the Philistines and integrated in his kingdom the territories which they previously had won from the Canaanites.

e. The majority of these mentions of *rāpā/h - repā'im* contain no unequivocal mythical allusions—their outsize stature having been explained as an 'epic-formulaic' element—especially no reference whatsoever to their

21. If this indeed was the case, one would have to conclude that those mercenaries had adopted the combat-techniques and weaponry which the Philistines had introduced into Canaan from the Aegean, as illustrated by Goliath's outfit and tactics. See: Yadin (1956, pp. 68-73).

connection with the 'netherworld'. The one possible exception is the term *'eres repā ĩm*, since in Ugaritic myth and also in Biblical mythopoeic language, the term *'ars/eres* does indicate the realm of the dead. This aspect will yet have to be considered. However, in the compass of the biblical references which have come under scrutiny so far, *'eres repā ĩm* manifestly has an ethnic geopolitical connotation (Deut 2:20; 3:13; Josh 17:15).

III

B. Of an altogether different nature is a cluster of eight biblical phrases in which the term *repā ĩm* is employed—*nota bene*—without exception in the plural. In all these instances, the accompanying terminology, whether by syntactical association or in *parallelismus membrorum* leaves no room for doubting the mythopoeic character of the term and its specific appositeness to the realm of death, the netherworld. In all these instances, the immediate context contains synonymous or 'explanatory' vocables, such as *še ʔl*, *'eres*, *metim*, *yōrde bōr/dūmah*, *šōknē*, *āqār*, *āhadōn*, and a number of verbs and adjectives which serve to underline the 'downward' movements of the human creatures that are the subject matter of these passages.

In contradistinction to the references considered in section II, all the biblical mentions to be discussed in this section turn up in prophetic literature (Isa 14:9; 26:14, 19), Psalms (88, 11) and Wisdom writings (Job 26:5; Prov 2:18; 9:18; 21:16). Not one is found in historiographical literature in which the ethnic, geopolitical mentions of *rāpā/h - repā ĩm* are concentrated.

Moreover, most if not all of the pertinent passages do show marked 'mythological' traits. This again sets them apart from the texts adduced in section II. The fact springs to the eye in the 'Oracle against the King of Babylon' (Isa 14), in the proverbs concerning the 'foreign female' seducer (Prov 2:18), 'Dame Folly' (Prov 9:18 cp. 21:16), and in the 'Creation' setting of Job 26:1 ff. The remaining two textually very close mentions of *repā ĩm* in Isa 26:14 and 19, constitute a conspicuous element in the opening and closing lines of a unit which is distinguished from the surrounding text by the literary technique of 'ring composition'. While the supposition cannot be proved, it would appear that the piece (Isa 26:14-19) probably was inserted *in toto* into the present context, and may have had a literary 'pre-history' of its own.

In the ensuing deliberations, the thesis will be explored that the cluster of *repā ĩm* references in non-historographical biblical writings indeed evince an impact of Ugaritic epic tradition on ancient Hebrew literature.

What is more, it will be suggested that the borrowing engendered the generalization of a specific Ugaritic technical term which was assimilated into the Hebrew vocabulary as purely a 'manner of speech'. The transformation was furthered by a 'misunderstanding' or possibly a conscious 're-interpretation' of the Ugaritic term in question, and by the additional impact of the well-known technique of the 'Break-up-Pattern', present in Ugaritic as well as in biblical literature.²²

The point of departure for the following analysis is the recurring epithet of Dan'il in the Aqht texts (19 x): *mt rpi*.²³ Our hypothesis is that the component *mt* which in reference to Dan'il undoubtedly carries the meaning 'man of . . .', in the process of its transfer to biblical Hebrew and literature, erroneously was identified with the Hebrew root *mw* ('dead' or 'death') which connotation the homonym of *mt* also has in Ugaritic. Such a misinterpretation most probably caused some confusion in the vocalization of the pl. form *metim* in Job 24:12. Ms. di Rossi 193 vocalizes the word in question *mētīm*. This pointing may have been implied also in the *Vorlage* of the Syriac translation. But the prevailing massoretic tradition vocalizes it with a shewa: מְתִים חֲלָלִים חֲשָׁוּ (Job 24:11) Because of *halālīm* ('slain') in the second stich,²⁴ commentators argue that "with MT מְתִים 'men', repointed to מְתִים 'the dead'", a better reading and translation of the crucial passage would be achieved: "From the city the dead groan, and the throats of the slain cry out".²⁵ However, the argument hardly stands up to scrutiny. *Halālīm* ('slain') indeed can yet "cry out", since their pertinent Hebrew term connotes also the 'mortally wounded' (e.g. Isa 53:5), especially so in connection with the verb *n'q*. In Jer 51:52; Ezek 26:15; 30:24, it turns up in contexts which recurrently refer to the 'groans' of men caught in the 'throes of death': *qōl ze'āqāh*, *qōl gādōl*, *šēon qōlām* (Jer 51:54-55); *qōl mappaltēk* (Ezek 26:15). As against this, *metim* always indicates that final state in which any vestige of human life has been extinguished. *Per definitionem*, *mētīm* are ultimately silenced, they are utterly voiceless (Isa 38:18; Ps 115:17 *et al.*; contrast Isa 26:19). Therefore, the vocalization *metim* should be retained in the above Job passage. The combination (*mē*)'ir *metim* employed there as a designation of the 'cit-

22. Scholarly literature on the *Break-up Pattern* is rapidly increasing. The following listing of pertinent items in no way aims at presenting a complete roster: Melamed (1961, pp. 115-144); Talmon (1961, pp. 335ff.; 1984); Braulik (1970). See also Avishur (1977).

23. Whitaker (1972, under *rpi*).

24. The same order *metim* || *halalim* is found in Ps 88:6; the inverted pattern *halalim mētīm* is Isa 22:2. Cp. also Isa 34:3 where (*u*)*pigrēhem* takes the place of *mētīm* as the B-word after (*we*)*hallehem*.

25. Dahood, (1972, 374a, h [p. 272]).

izenry' of a township, possibly is a (borrowed?) term, techn, which turns up two additional times in Deut 2:34 and 3:6.

The possible confusion of *metim* with *metim*, may be observed also in the interpretation of a Ugaritic text which is of paramount importance for our present concern, and to which we shall now turn our attention. Also there, *mtm* is used in parallelism with *rpim*: CTA IV. 6.44-48:

špš *rpim thtk* / špš *thtk ilnym*
 'dk *ilm hn mtm* 'dk / *kṛm hbrk whss d'tk*

M. Pope's translation of *mtm*: "Your comrades the gods, the dead your comrades",²⁶ is followed by most commentators. However, the phrase *mtm* 'dk appears to be but an inverted synonymous parallel of 'dk *ilm*, both referring to the 'fellowship' or 'community' of the gods. The trope does not necessarily involve any aspect of death or the 'netherworld', into which, according to Pope, Baal, the addressee of the couplet, had descended. The underlying concept of a 'divine assembly' is further underlined by the term *hbrk* and *d'tk* which could be a miswritten *d'tk* (a fem. alternative of 'dk?). And just as *mtm* parallels *ilm*, in the preceding line, *rpim* parallels *ilnym*, again without any explicit or implied reference to 'death' and the 'netherworld'.

Rpim and *ilnym* in the first two stichoi, should or at least could be seen as apocopated parallels (or even synonymous terms) of 'dk *ilm* and *mtm* 'dk in the ensuing line, all referring to a divine 'assembly', with the following *hbrk* and *d'tk* expressing a similar notion.²⁷ All these tropes bring to mind the Hebrew term *qahal repā'im* found in Prov 21:16, also without an explicit mention of the 'netherworld', but with a fairly obvious threat to the one who 'strays from the way of prudence' that he will ultimately 'lie' (*yānū'ah*) with the *repā'im*, i.e., will be gathered unto them. One is inclined to propose that in the above Ugaritic text *rpim* . . . *mtm* should be seen as an inverted employment of the vocables which make up Dan'il's epithet: *mt rpu/i*. If this argument can be sustained, the presumed *break-up-pattern cum inversio* will demand our attention in the ensuing interpretation of the biblical evidence.

The starting point for the investigation will be those biblical passages

26. (1977, n. 1, p. 176; see also p. 172).

27. In this context we should recall H. L. Ginsberg's contention (1946, 23.41) that "*rp* is a common noun, 'community', from a root *rp*, with the primary sense 'to join', as in Arabic. This meaning is demanded by the parallelism, *rp* corresponding to *qhs* 'a gathering'. The relevant texts are CTA 15.3.2 and 14-14; RS 34.126. See also Pope (1977, p. 177).

in which the pertinent words *mētīm/metīm* and *repāṭīm* turn up in the A/B order²⁸ - in two cola of a parallelismus membrorum:

1. Isa 26:14:

מתים בליחיד רפאים בליקבו
לכן פקדה וחשמים ותאבד כל זכר למי

In neither of the possible vocalizations *metīm* or *mētīm* (MT) does this word ever turn up in a parallelistic structure with *repāṭīm* in any of the biblical passages referred to above in section II, in which *repāṭīm* serves as an ethnic-geopolitical term, whereas in the present case it clearly identifies that latter term unequivocally as pertaining to the realm of the dead, the netherworld. The absolute and final cessation of life of 'men' *metīm*, or 'the dead' *mētīm*, like that of the *repāṭīm* to whom an afterlife or 'resurrection' is categorically denied, is further highlighted by the statement that they will not be remembered (cp. Ps 88:6 *et al.*): "God has annihilated them and wiped out their memory" (contrast Isa. 26: vv. 8, 13). The metaphor undoubtedly refers to the denial of offspring to those *metīm* - *mētīm* and *repāṭīm* in whom a man's life finds a continuation even after his own death. This idea comes most forcefully in the fore in the LXX's rendition *καὶ ἧρας πᾶν ἄρσεν αὐτῶν* which either may reflect an explanatory translation of MT's *zēker* - 'remembrance', or else mirrors the variant reading (vocalization) *zākār* - 'male' (offspring). The latter proposition derives support from the, probably formulaic, combination of *repāṭīm* with 'cessation of the family line', found in a Phoenician *Fluchformel*:

Tabnit, 1.7-8 (KAI 13):

אל יכן למ זרע תחת שמש
ומשכב אח רפאים

'Ešmun'azar, 1.8-9 (KAI 14):

אל יכן למ משכב אח רפאים ואל יקבר בקבר
ואל יכן למ בן חרע

2. A similar apposition of *mētīm* and *repāṭīm* recurs in close proximity to Isa 26:14, in the closing line of the ring-composition for which that verse served as an opening:

Isa 26:19

יחיד מתוך נבלתי יקומן הקיצו ורגנו שבי עפר
כי טל אורח טליך וארץ רפאים תפיל

The verse is fraught with textual difficulties which, though, do not obfuscate its relevancy for our present concern, *viz.* the employment of *mētīm* and *repāṭīm* in parallelism in the A/B order. The 'netherworld' connota-

28. The use of this pattern in biblical literature, has been conveniently surveyed by Yoder (1971, pp. 471-489) and Watson (1972, pp. 461-467), with copious references to earlier discussions of this phenomenon.

tion of those two terms is underlined by the added tropes [זבנלח] and שבי עפר, and possibly also 'eres (*repā ĩm*), a word which also can designate the 'netherworld' both in Ugaritic and in biblical Hebrew.

3. Ps 88:11: הלמתים חששה פלא אים דפאים יקומו יחדך

provides one more illustration of the employment of *mētīm* - *repā ĩm* as synonymous terms in the A/B order, possibly resulting from the presumed 'break-up' of *mī rpu/i(m)*. The use of (*ha*)*yāqūmū* by way of a rhetorical question which implies a negative reply, gives expression to the same notion of the finality of death which permeates the verse Isa 26:14 (cp. Ps 88:5-6). Again, by way of a rhetorical question - (*ha*)*yōdūka*, the Psalmist reiterates the observation already mentioned, that *mētīm* and *repā ĩm* represent the netherworld where utter silence reigns (cp. Isa 38:18; Ps 88:12-13; 115:17; Job 26:6 *et al.*).

4. A variant of the above A/B pattern in which *mētīm* is substituted for by the general noun *māwet* is found in

Prov 2:18: כי שחה אלמות ביהוה ואל דפאים מעלתה

The inherent idea of perdition which a (foreign) adulteress will bring upon men is underpinned in the following verse which states that whosoever is ensnared by her will lose "the path to (or:of) life" (cp. *ib.* v.22; 21:16) which is apportioned to the righteous who are guided by Wisdom (*ib.* v.1ff., esp. vv.7-9, 13-15, 20) and therefore "shall dwell on earth" (*ib.* v.21).

The latter example indicates that once the parallelism *mētīm*|| *repā ĩm* derived from the presumed 'break-up' of Ugaritic *mī rpu/i(m)*, had been absorbed into biblical imagery, it could be subjected to stylistic and, as will be shown, syntactical variation. By the very nature of things, the explicit connotation of *mētīm* makes for the employment of this vocable as the A-word which defines the meaning of the less transparent vocable *repā ĩm*. While we cannot establish a definite developmental process, it would appear, that in the course of time, a semantic identity evolved which caused the two terms to become completely interchangeable, so much so that their order in *parallelismus membrorum* could be reversed. No definite proof for this hypothesis can be adduced from biblical literature. There is not one instance of the B/A pattern on record in which *repā ĩm* precedes *mētīm*. However, the already referred to text CTA VI. 6:44-48 can be taken to show that at least one such inversion is extant in Ugaritic: *rpim . . . ilnym . . . ilm . . . mtm*. But the inverted B/A pattern pos-

29. The emendation of זבנלח to זבנלחך is widely accepted. The final *kaph* after the *yod* may have dropped out due to a *lapsus calami*: a haplography with ק at the beginning of the next word.

sibly is yet reflected also in biblical literature, albeit with the additional substitution of a synonym for the original A-word *mētīm*, as the following examples seem to indicate. The most obvious substitutes would be vocables which have the very same mythopoeic content which distinguishes *mētīm-māwet*, especially when these terms are employed in conjunction with *repā ṭīm*, first and foremost *še ḏl*:

5. Prov 9:18: ולא ידע כִּי־רפאים שם בעמקי שאול קראה
 6. Job 26:5: הרפאים יחוללו מתחת מים ושביהם
 6: ערום שאול נגד ואץ כסות לאבדון

מים as the opening words of the second stich in the massoretic sentence division is rather awkward, and does not connect well with the ensuing *ושביהם*. It seems to be preferable to link מתחת with the beginning of the verse - הרפאים יחוללו - . Thus a more pronounced parallelism with the first stich of the following verse would be achieved, and concomitantly a connection with שאול, which is remindful of Isa 14:9: שאול מתחת רגלו לך לקראת בואך. In addition, the noun *ושביהם* from שכן brings to mind several passages in which it is employed in apposition to other 'netherworld' terms, such as:

- Job 4:19: אף שכי בתי חמר אשר בעפר יסודם
 Ps 7:6: ירדף ארוב נפשי וישג ירמס לארץ חיי וכבודי לעפר ישכן
 Ps 16:9: לכן שמח לבי ויגל כבודי אף־בשדי ישכן לבטח
 10: כי לא תעזב נפשי לשאול לא־תתן חסידך לראות שחת
 Isa 26:19: יחיי מתוך נבלתי [ך] יקומן הקיצו ודרגו שכי עפר

(cp. further Prov 21:16). Not once do we find in these texts a mention of *mayīm*, even not in the negative connotation of 'water of the abyss'. As against this, they are replete with imagery which pertains to the dead who are buried or lie in the earth 'eres (Isa 26:19; Ps 7:6) 'āpār (Job 4:19), *šahat* and *še ḏl* (Ps 16:20). Viewed against this background, the poss. pron. pl. in *ושביהם* (Job 26:5) must be taken to refer to *še ḏl* and 'abādōn in the following verse, and the conjecture may be entertained that the present MT reading resulted by scribal mistake from an original מחים, due to the elision of the *taw* (by haplography with *mem*?). If the proposed restoration of *mētīm* can be sustained, Job 26:5 would exhibit the one biblical instance of the (inverted) B/A pattern *repā ṭīm* || *mētīm*.

The employment of *še ḏl* and 'abādōn³⁰ with *repā ṭīm* as substitutes for *mētīm* in the A/B or rather B/A pattern in Prov 9:18 and Job 26:5-6 MT, evokes the expectation that other synonyms or variants of *mētīm* may turn up conjoined with *repā ṭīm* in biblical passages which display a similar ap-

30. Cp. Prov 15:11:

IQH 3.19-20:

and see Avishur, (1977, n. 22, p. 113).

שאול ואבדון נגד ה' אף כילבוה כיראום
 כי מריחה נפשי משחת ומשאול ואבדון העליתי

position to the concepts of death and the netherworld as the above texts. Such an enlargement of the pertinent vocabulary indeed is exemplified by:

7. Isa 14:9:

שׂוֹל מִתַּחַת רִגְזָה לְךָ לְקִרְיַת בְּרָאךְ
עֲזָרוּ לְךָ רִפְאִים בְּלִשְׁתֵּי אֶרֶץ הַקִּיָּים מִכִּסְאוֹתָם כָּל מַלְכֵי גֹרִם

The idiom 'attūdē 'ares is employed here by way of *double entendre*³¹: on the one hand, it hearks back to the preceding mythopoeic term *repā ĩm*; on the other hand, it refers proleptically to the 'earthly kings' - *malkē 'ares* who are depicted as having been already transferred to the netherworld.

A further stage in the process of literary development in the suggested biblical Break-up-Pattern *mētīm repā ĩm* of the Ugaritic construct *mi rpu/i(m)*, may yet be discerned in a verse which contains but an allusion to the component *mētīm*:

8. Prov 21:16:

אִם תִּצְדֵּק מִדֶּרֶךְ הַשֶּׁמֶל בְּקֹהַל רִפְאִים יָמוּ

In contradistinction from the prevalent 'positive' connotation of *nwh* in biblical Hebrew, in the passage under consideration the verb *yanu'ah* is given a 'negative' sense by its being conjoined with (*qehal*) *repā ĩm*, exactly as in the passages quoted above, the prevailing favorable or beneficial notion that goes with *škn* in biblical phraseology, was turned round completely and was invested with a sense of detriment and adversity by binding it up syntactically with 'netherworld' terminology.

To sum up. The analysis of the eight occurrences of the plural form *repā ĩm* in non-historiographical biblical texts to the exclusion of the singular *rāpā'/h* which is found in historiographical literature, its presumed original apposition to *mētīm*—and in ensuing stages of literary development to synonymous expressions of that term - supports the hypothesis presented at the outset of our investigation, *viz.* that this special employment of *repā ĩm*, in specific texts only, may disclose an impact of the mythopoeic Ugaritic terms *mi(m)* and *rpu/i(m)* on biblical literature and phraseology. As in Ugaritic, in biblical Hebrew the mythical overtones of these terms are also accentuated by their apposition to vocables which pertain to the realm of the dead, the netherworld, such as *še'ōl*, 'eres, 'āpār, *bōr*, *šahar*, 'ahādōn and the like.

As against this, such mythopoeic vocabulary is conspicuously absent from the historiographical biblical texts in which *rāpā'/h* - *repā ĩm* in the singular and in the plural has a pointed, and practically exclusive ethnic-geopolitical connotation. This employment should therefore be discussed on its own.

31. Ugaritic *rpu(m)* exhibits a comparable duality of meaning. Next to its 'divine' dimension, as in *rp' mlk ĩm* (UT 5.2), it has a purely human connotation as in Dn'il's epithet *mi rpm*.

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