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UGARITIC PARALLEL OF JAHWE MELEK 'ÔLĀM

The designation of God as Jahwe *melek 'ôlām* is in OT three times namely in *Ps* 10, 16; 29, 10; *Jer* 10, 10. The idea of God as the King is known at Near East in Egypt as in Mesopotamia¹. Old Testament took possession of the idea of God as the King from Near East except of the divinisation².

The idea of God as the Eternal King expressively is developed in Psalms³ (10, 16; 29, 10; 24, 7. 9; 45, 7; 145, 1. 13; 146, 10) where is in relation to the king, the kingship, the eternity of God.

Beside the idea of God as the Eternal King appears in *Jer* 10, 10; *Mic* 4, 7; *Exod* 15, 18; *1 Kings* 1, 31. This interesting theophoric expression Jahwe *melek 'ôlām* strengthens the immutability of God, who is not dying and not rising from the dead as

¹ H. Gressman, *Altorientalische Texte zum Alten Testament*, Berlin—Leipzig² 1926, pp. 116. 117. 121. 122. 124; H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten*, Berlin 1941, p. 468; J. de Fraine, *L'aspect religieux de la royauté israélite. L'institution monarchique dans les textes mésopotamiens*, Roma 1954; W. H. Schmidt, *Königtum Gottes im Ugarit und Israel*, Berlin² 1966.

² H. J. Kraus, *Die Königsherrschaft Gottes im Alten Testament*, Tübingen 1951, p. 15; G. Widengren, *Sakrales Königtum im Alten Testament und im Judentum*, Stuttgart 1955, p. 69; A. Feillet, *Les psaumes eschatologiques du règne de Yahwéh*, NRT 73 (1951) 244—260, 352—363; E. Lipiński, *Les Psaumes de la royauté de Yahwéh dans l'exégèse moderne*, Louvain 1962; id. *La royauté de Yahwéh dans la poésie et le culte de l'Ancient Israel*, Bruxelles 1965; J. D. Watts, *Jahwe Mälāk Psalms*, ThZ 21 (1965) 341—358.

³ L. R. Fisher, *Ras Shamra Parallels* (Analecta Orientalia 49), Roma 1972, vol. I, p. 266, § 363e.

the deities of vegetation of Near East (Dummuzi, Inanna, Tam-muz, Ishtar, Osiris, Isis) but he lives and reigns in eternity.

What's the pre-history of the theophoric expression Jahwe *melek 'ôlām*? It seems, that in the discovered texts from Ugarit in 1961 and published in 1968 by Ch. Virolleaud⁴ needs to see in the Ugaritic literature the parallel of expression Jahwe *melek 'ôlām*.

The interesting texts are on the tablet nr 24. 252. On the side recto the expression *rp'umlk 'lm* is one and the side verso times.

Recto:

v. 1 — *yšt rp'u mlk 'lm*

Verso:

v. 6 — *rp'umlk 'lm b'z*

v. 7 — *(rpu.m)lk 'lm bdmrh bl*

The expression *rp'u mlk 'lm* it would be the Ugaritic parallel to the Hebraic words Jahwe *melek 'ôlām*, on condition, that *rp'u* designs in referring texts the Ugaritic deity. According to C. Gordon⁵ the root *rpu* designs deity, rephaim, the epithet of Dnīl and to S. Parker⁶ the root *rpu* is the theophoric element in the names of gods.

In the interesting texts *Rpu* is as the epithet of God El. Literally designs "one who is hale"⁷. According to known Ugaritologist Ch. Virolleaud⁸ *rpu* is without doubt the Father of Gods.

Precisely the treating of matter represents the known Ugaritologist J. C. de Moor⁹. According to J. C. de Moor the expression *rp'u mlk 'ôlām* discovered on the table 24. 252 designs:

⁴ Ch. Virolleaud, *Les nouveaux textes mythologiques et liturgiques de Ras Shamra* (XXIV-e Campagne 1961), (in:) J. Nougayrol — E. Laroche — Ch. Virolleaud — C. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica V* (Mission de Ras Shamra XVI), Paris 1968, nr 24, 252, pp. 551—553.

⁵ C. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Analecta Orientalia 38), Roma 1965, nr. 19, 2346.

⁶ S. Parker, *The Ugaritic Deity Rāpi'u*, Ugarit Forschungen 4 (1972) 97—104.

⁷ F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1973, p. 20.

⁸ Ch. Virolleaud, *op. cit.*, p. 553.

⁹ J. C. de Moor, *Rāpi'ūma — Rephaim*, ZAW 88 (1976), pp. 323—345.

1) The national god of Ugarit, the protector of the king of Ugarit.

2) The title *rp'u* applied from Egypt is the translation of the Babylonian expression *šarru dārū*. During the celebration of New Year Festival the *Rp'u mlk'lm* is invited to drink wine as the first of a number of deities.

3) *Rp'u* is identical with Ba'lu.

4) *Rp'u* is a manifestation of Ba'lu in the mythological texts of Ugarit.

5) In the Ugaritic Legend of Aqhātu, king Dānī'ilu is often called *mt rp'u* (the man of Rāpi'u).

6) Frequent *Rp'u* exists in personal names. The subject of West Semitic personal names containing the root *rp'* is quite often the weather — god Ba'lu.

For example:

	Pn with <i>b'l</i>	Pn with <i>rp'u</i>
Ugar.	<i>b'ly</i>	Ugar. <i>rpi'y</i>
Ugar.	<i>b'lyn</i>	Ugar. <i>rpi'yn</i>
Ugar.	<i>bl'n</i>	Ugar. <i>rp'an</i>
Phoen.	<i>'bb'l</i>	Ugar. <i>'arbrp'u</i>
Mari.	<i>ha-mi-iba-al</i>	Ugar. <i>'mrp'i</i>

Recapitulating our deliberations, we state, that the idea Jahwe as the Eternal King has his pre-history in the Ugaritic literature. The Ugaritic expressions *rp'u mlk'lm* transferred in Hebrew is varied in context and meaning.

In context, because in the Ugaritic literature is used for the designation of god *Rp'u*, who with others gods feasted and in Hebrew is used for the designation of God Jahwe, who is not to be compared with the gods of Ugarit.

In meaning, because in the Ugaritic literature is used for designation of god *Rp'u* as one of many gods and in Hebrew is used for designation of One God, who not reigns over the Israelities and others kingships and peoples, who existent on earth (*Jer* 10, 6—7).