

INTERNAL PARALLELISM IN UGARITIC VERSE

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1. Description and definition

As is well known, the commonest form of parallelism in Ugaritic verse (as in many ancient Semitic verse traditions) is the couplet, where line B is parallel in some way to line A¹. With internal parallelism (here abbreviated to I.P.), however, this feature applies to a single verse line. I. P., therefore, is a descriptive term for a line of verse where the second half is parallel to the first half. Parallelism occurs *within* the verse line.

An example is the following passage from the Baal Cycle where dew is described in various ways, beginning with

(1) KTU 1.3 II 39

ṭl. ṣmm. ṣmm. 'arṣ. Sky-dew; terrestrial oil².

We can determine the length of the verse line by comparing it with the lines which follow:

ṭl. ṣmm. ṣmm. 'arṣ.

rbb [r]kb^c rpt.

ṭl. ṣmm. tskh

[r]bb. nskh. kbkbm

The alternation of *ṭl* and *rbb* (which are components of a word-pair, discussed below) and the prevailing length of line combine to show that the first of the set is a single line, not two separate lines, which exhibits I.P.

To my knowledge the topic of I.P. has not been studied in depth as an

aspect of ancient Semitic verse³. However, John Foster has discussed I.P. in ancient Egyptian verse⁴ though he prefers to use the expression "two-element lines" which he defines as "those which...seem to be divided into two clauses or employ paired epithets"⁵. I would place rather more emphasis on the component of parallelism. A fuller impression of I.P., particularly in Ugaritic, will emerge from the illustrations provided in section 3, below.

2. Layout

The present paper will examine the occurrences of internal parallelism in Ugaritic verse against the wider background of related poetic traditions (excluding Hebrew). First, the texts will be set out following the sequence of KTU. Then, after an assessment of distribution, come descriptions of the structure and functions of I.P. in Ugaritic. Next, a brief look at this feature in other (ancient) literature. After some observations of I.P. in relation to verse components come the final conclusions.

3. Ugaritic examples

The texts will be numbered sequentially for ease of reference; example (1) has already been set out, above. Notes on grammatical structure will be provided⁶ but textual and philological comment kept to a minimum.

(2) 1.3 III 22-23 (and par.)

rgm^c ṣ wlhšt 'abn Word of tree and whisper of stone.

The nominal construction in each half is identical: noun in construct + noun.

(3) 1.3 IV 33

'atm. bštm. w'an.šnt

It is difficult to know how this line should be translated. Elsewhere I propose "You in two years, but I in (the space of) sleep"⁷. De Moor recently suggested "You depart but I too am leaving"⁸. Whatever the actual meaning the two-part structure of the line is clear.

(4) 1.3 IV 38⁹

b'alp šd rbt kmn By the thousands š., the myriad k.

The line is formulaic, nominal in construction, and can be expanded to a full couplet¹⁰.

(5) 1.3 VI 7-9

[^c]br. gbl. ^cbr q^cl. Cross crests, cross peaks,
^cbr. 'iht np. šmm. cross the region of celestial summits.

I.P. is present in the first line with the pattern V M // V M. Here I follow del Olmo Lete in taking the nouns as common nouns¹¹ though they are usually understood as place-names¹².

(6) 1.4 I 25-26

yšq. ksp. yšlh. hrš He smelted silver; he cast gold.

The line which can be analysed as V NP₂ // V NP₂, initiates a set of *yšq* repeated four times in as many lines¹³.

(7) 1.4 III 18-20

dbḥ btt. wdbḥ}{dnt a sacrifice of shame and a sacrifice
wdbḥ. tdm 'amht and a sacrifice of debauching maids.

The third *dbḥ* in the first line is evidently a mistake¹⁴; the structure is nominal throughout¹⁵.

(8) 1.4 IV 4-5 (// 1.19 II 3-4)

mdl ^cr smd pḥl Harness an ass; saddle a donkey.

The formula, expanded to a couplet in 1.19 II 8-9 (see below) uses V NP₂ in both halves¹⁶.

(9) and (10) 1.5 II 2-6 (If Mot sets[?])

[špt l'^cd]rš. špt. lšmm a lip to the earth and a lip to the sky,
 [] lšn. lkbkm. (and extends?) his tongue to the stars,
y^crb b^cl. bkbdh Baal will enter his insides,
bph. yrd kḥrr. zt. falling into his mouth like a dry olive,
ybl. 'arš. wpr ^cšm. produce of the earth and fruit of the trees.

Both stichometry and translation are debatable, partly because of the gaps in the text. I follow del Olmo Lete¹⁷ and, with reserve, Margalit¹⁸. I.P. occurs

at both the beginning and end of this stanza, a pattern matched by examples (22) and (23) below.

(11) 1.6 VI 17 = 18-19 = 20

mt ^c_z *b* ^c_l ^c_z Mot was strong; Baal was strong.

The refrain occurs three times; the fourth time there is a variation (next example)¹⁹.

(12) 1.6 VI 21-22

mt. *ql.* *b* ^c_l *ql.* Mot fell; Baal fell.

As noted, this is a climactic variant to (11). The following word (^c*ln*) does not belong here²⁰ but to the next stanza²¹. The NP₁ V // NP₁ V pattern here suggests that the same analysis applies to (11) and therefore ^c_z is a verb, not an adjective.

(13) 1.10 II 29

tr. *blkt.* *wtr.* *bhl* She fled running and she fled leaping.

Whatever the meaning here²² there can be no doubt that I. P. is used since the first half of the line (*tr blkt*) repeats the second half of the preceding line.

(14) 1.16 I 12-13

ybky wyšnn. He wept and ground his teeth.

This and the parallel *tbky. wtšnn.* (II 35) comprise the only use of I. P. in *Keret*. The structure is V // V as in example (19).

(15) 1.18 I 24

'*at.* '*aḥ.* *w'an.* '*a* [*ḥtk*] You are my 'brother' and I am your 'si-
ster'.

This is similar to example (3)²³.

(16) 1.19 I 44

bl. *ṭl.* *bl* *rbb* No dew, no rain.

Example (1) is related; the construction is also nominal.

(17) 1.19 III 4-5 = 19 = 33-34

hm '*it* *šmt* *hm* '*it* ^c_{zm} If there is fat, if there is bone.

Although very long the verse line matches the one immediately before it. The climax refrain in the set (line 39) is a shortened variant: '*it* *šmt* '*it* ^c_{zm}.

(26) 1.161:21-22

'ars rd. w.špl. ^cpr. To the underworld descend and collapse
in the dust.

Exactly as in example (13) the initial half-line is a verbatim repetition of the half-line immediately before. Another rare example of chiasmus (M V // V M)²⁷.

4. Distribution

Distribution of I. P. over the main literary texts in Ugaritic is as follows:

Baal Cycle:	12 examples (1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10.11.12) of which 3 (1.4.8) are formulaic ²⁸ .
Keret:	1 only (14).
Aqhat:	6 examples (15.16.17.18.19) one of which (8) is formulaic.
Šhr wŠlm:	4 (20.21.22.23) ²⁹ .
Others:	KTU 1.10:1 (example 13); KTU 1.24:2 (example 24.25); KTU 1.161:1 (example 26).

Some of these examples recur in different compositions (e.g. 8), others are repeated within the same composition (e.g. 17.18.19). The Legend of Keret is remarkable in only providing one example of I. P., a feature comparable to the relative rarity of strophic chiasmus in the same work³⁰.

5. Structure and Functions

5.1 Structure

Not surprisingly the *grammatical parallelism* in each half of a verse line with I. P. tends to be similar and even identical, as in example (6) where the pattern is V NP₂ // V NP₂. This applies even with nominal clauses.

Antithetic parallelism is rare, attested only in (3) and (21). Similarly, *chiastic* parallelism occurs only twice (25 and 26). Commonly, each half of a verse line with I. P. begins with the same letter (*alliteration*), as in (3.9.13.14.15.20.22.23). *Word-pairs*, too, often form the basis for the pattern under discussion.

Here is a sample list, in alphabetic order:

'alp // rbt	(4.24)
'arṣ // ᵉpr	(26)
'arṣ // ṣmm	(9.22; reversed in 1) ³¹
ṭl // rbb	(1.16)
ksp // ḥrs	(6)
ᵉs // 'abn	(2)
ṣd // kmn	(4)
ṣmt // ᵉzm	(17.18) etc.

Note, too, the *formulas* in (4) and (8).

Internal parallelism often occurs in *lists*, perhaps to break the monotony (cf. 1.2.5.6.7.16.24). Some one-line passages can be *expanded* into couplets. Example (8), *mdl* ᵉr ṣmḏ pḥl, becomes *bkm tmdln* ᵉr // *bkm tṣmḏ pḥl* in 1.19 II 8-9. Similarly, example (1) is expanded in (16) and 1.4 V 56-57 develops example (4). There is *no clustering* and also *no use of wordplay* (see below).

5.2 Functions

The following structural functions can be noted. *Refrain*: examples (11.12.17 and 18)³². *Envelope figure* (inclusio): in (9-10) and (22-23). To *open* a strophe or longer sequence: I. P. is used to open a couplet (1.5.19) a *tricolon* (4d)³³ and a lengthier section (2.6.7.9.21.22). To *close* a section: I. R. is closural to a couplet (3.4e), a tricolon (4a.b.c), a quatrain (4f) and the longer sections in (10.11.12 and 23).

6. I. P. in other Verse Traditions

Internal parallelism within the verse-line is not confined to Ugaritic, of course. Mention has already been made of its recognition in Akkadian and ancient Egyptian verse. Aramaic, too, supplies material in the form of a double example from the Carpentras Stele (lines 2-3):

mnd^cm b'yš l' bdt wkršy 'yš l' 'mrt tmh

qdm 'wsry brykh hwy mn qdm 'wsry myn qhy

She did no evil at all, nor calumny against
any man did she utter up there.

Before Osiris be (you) blessed; from Osiris
receive water³⁴.

There is a case, too, in Neo-Punic³⁵ and no doubt more will come to light from these traditions, meagre as they are in verse passages. As for Akkadian, Hecker has already provided some data³⁶. Curiously, the few additional texts I have looked at show a marked contrast with the features outlined above for Ugaritic verse.

Specific to Akkadian are *clustering*³⁷, frequent use of *chiasmus*³⁸, a degree of *wordplay*³⁹ and the use of I. P. as a 'call to attention'⁴⁰. Common to both traditions is initial *alliteration*, particularly to begin each half of a line⁴¹, *expansion* into couplet from form one-line I. P.⁴² and the *rarity of antithetic parallelism*⁴³. Of course, my own examination has been restricted to relatively few of the more readily accessible Akkadian texts, so this impression may not be representative. Even so it is worth investigating whether the features of clustering, chiasmus and wordplay are in fact peculiar to Akkadian versification, since aside from two instances of chiasmus they are not found in Ugaritic in conjunction with I. P.

7. I. P. as a Structural Component in Verse

Here, three aspects of the verse-line will be discussed in the light of

the above findings. They are caesura, the verse-line itself and the 'half-colon'. An example will be examined in depth by way of illustration.

7.1 *Caesura*

Recognition of I. P. is tantamount to recognition of both caesura and end-stopping. Caesura is a break or juncture within the line. While it can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint caesura, with I. P. there can be no doubts at all. For instance, in example (21) *hlh tšpl hlh trm*, there is a self-evident pause after the second word, or technically, there is caesura.

7.2 *Verse-line*

Since the second half of a line with I. P. is modelled on the first half it is equally easy to determine where the verse-line ends (end-stopping). More important is a second corollary which is that two 'halves' of a line with I. P. combine to make up a single verse-line and the lengths of neighbouring lines can also be checked. In (17), while it might be possible to read the six words as two lines

hm 'it šmt
hm 'it czm

the parallel in (19) as well as the lengths of associated lines (e.g. 1.19 III 3-4: *'ibq^c kbdtm w'ahd*, numbering 14 letters) are indications to the contrary.

7.3 *The 'half-colon'*

As has been seen (example 26) the half-line or half-colon is a structural element which can be used to form a full verse-line. While this is transparently obvious in verses with I. P. it is also noticeable elsewhere, particularly with repetitive patterns such as the terrace pattern. (anadiplosis)⁴⁴.

7.4 *A dubious example*

To demonstrate the difficulties involved in recognising I. P. we can

look at a disputed example. The passage in question is 1.2 IV 22-23 (//25-26):

ypršḥ ym (w)yql l'arš Y. collapsed (and) he fell to earth.

It comes in the section 1.2 IV 11-26 (set out in full: see Insert at the end) which divides naturally into two parts: 11-18a and 18bcd-26. Each part comprises the naming of a weapon and the assignment of its task (command). In I the task is carried out to no avail: (lines 17-18a)

^cz ym lmk

ltnḡṣn pntḥ lydlp tmnh⁴⁵

In II a similar command is also fulfilled, this time effectively: (lines 25b-26)

ypršḥ ym yql l'arš

tnḡṣn pntḥ wydlp tmnh

The first line here, which corresponds to *^cz ym lymk* in part I, occurs at the close of the command in part II as well (lines 22b-23). Accordingly, there are strong indicators of I. P. in our example:

- (a) its correspondence to *^cz ym lymk*, a single line;
- (b) its parallelism with *tnḡṣn pntḥ wydlp tmnh*;
- (c) its occurrence within a set of longer lines.

Against is the possibility that both *ypršḥ* etc. and *(l)tnḡṣn* etc. could equally well be full couplets rather than single lines with I. P. Also, the resultant clustering would be rare in Ugaritic. The example, therefore, remains uncertain⁴⁶.

8. Conclusions

If parallelism can be considered as corresponding to end-rhyme in European poetry then internal parallelism amounts to a kind of internal rhyme. Enough examples have been set out - discounting those that are uncertain - to establish the presence of internal parallelism in Ugaritic verse. The distribution table shows there is a marked preference for the form in the Baal Cycle, the Aqhat Tale and 1.24, which contrasts with its almost complete ab-

sence from Keret as well as from the more recently discovered texts of Ugar. V. This may be due to developments within the poetic tradition or may be due to stylistic preference⁴⁷. We cannot say. Of special interest in determining the specific character of Ugaritic poetry has been the difference in usage shown to exist between Ugaritic and Akkadian versification⁴⁸. This has yet to be tested by further examples from Assyro-Babylonian verse not to mention corresponding patterns in classical Hebrew poetry. While recognition of internal parallelism can be of assistance in determining stichometry, there are ambiguous cases where other factors need to be considered, as has been shown. Finally, the relationship between this form and metre needs to be explored⁴⁹. The survey provided here is merely the beginning of further research into one aspect of verse structure in Ugaritic literary texts.

INSERT

- command -

- fulfilment -

I *ktr šmdm ynht**wyp^c r šmthm**šmk 'at ygrš**ygrš grš ym**grš ym lks'ih**nhr lkht drkth**trtqš bd b^cl**km nšr b'ušb^c th**hlm ktp zbl ym**bn ydm tpt^c nhr**yrtqš šmd bd b^cl**km nšr b'ušb^c th**ylm ktp zbl ym**bn ydm tpt^c nhr**^cz ym lymk**ltnšn pnth lydlp tmh*

II *ktr šmdm ynht*

wyp^c r šmthm

šmk 'at 'aymr

'aymr mr ym

mr ym lks'ih

nhr lkht_u drkth

trtqš bd b^cl

km nšr b'ušb^cth

hlm qdqd zbl ym

bn^c nm tpt_u nhr

wyrtqš šmd bd b^cl

km nšr b'ušb^cth

y_lm qdqd zbl ym

bn^c nm tpt_u nhr

ypršh ym wyql l'arš

ypršh ym yql l'arš

tnğšn pnth wydlp tmh

(KTU 1.2 IV 11-26)

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- 1) For parallelism in Ugaritic cf. S.B. Parker, *Parallelism and Prosody in Ugaritic Narrative Verse*: UF, 6 (1974), 283-94, largely a discussion of Keret. My own studies in Ugaritic verse include the following: UF, 7 (1975), 483-92; 12 (1980), 443-47; 13 (1981), 181-92; Or, 45 (1976), 434-42; Or, 48 (1979), 112-17.
 - 2) Also cf. 1.19 I 44 and contrast 1.6 III 6.
 - 3) However, cf. K. Hecker, *Untersuchungen zur akkadischen Epik*, (AOATS, 8), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1974, 130-31.
 - 4) J.L. Foster, *Thought Couplets in Khety's Hymn to the Inundation*: JNES, 34 (1975), 1-29 and *Sinuhe: The Ancient Egyptian Genre of Narrative Verse*: JNES, 39 (1980), 89-117. Incidentally, he reminded us of the distinction between verse and poetry in his second paper (p. 103) which is why I prefer to use "verse" instead of "poetry" in my title. In Foster's own words: "poetry is verse of high quality" (p. 102) whereas the distinction operative here is that between prose and verse (which Foster explains

- very clearly).
- 5) Foster: JNES, 39 (1980), 105.
 - 6) Broadly following T. Collins, *Line-forms in Hebrew Poetry. A grammatical approach to the stylistic study of the Hebrew Prophets* (Studia Pohl, Series maior 7), Rome 1978, 22-70.
 - 7) In *Middle-Eastern Forerunners to a Folktale Motif*: Or, in press.
 - 8) De Moor: UF, 13 (1981), 303; cf. UF, 11 (1979), 647 note 54.
 - 9) For reference later the parallel texts have been identified as follows:
4a: 1.3 IV 38; 4b: 1.3 VI 17-18; 4c: 1.4 V 24; 4d: 1.4 VIII 24-26; 4e:
1.17 V 9-10; 4f: 1.18 I 21-22.
 - 10) In 1.4 V 56-57.
 - 11) MLC, 192 and entries in glossary. So already TOu, 177-78: "Passe par la montagne, passe par la hauteur, passe par les plages du zénith".
 - 12) So Gibson, CML², 54; de Moor, SP, 51, note 52; cf. Lipiński: *Syria*, 50 (1973), 35-37. Another example of I.P. may be 1.3 VI 19-20 (// 1.4 IV 26, etc.).
 - 13) Contrast UT 13.112 (p. 134). Other examples, perhaps, are 1.4 I 33-34; II 24-26. 26-28.
 - 14) I. e. dittography; see the standard works, e. g. KTU p. 16 (footnote).
 - 15) On the meaning of *dnt* cf. del Olmo Lete: UF, 10 (1978), 45-46 and MLC, 198, 538. On *tāmm*, see my remarks in UF, 10 (1978), 401. For the rhetorical device used here (priamel) cf. W. H. Race, *The Classical Priamel from Homer to Boethius*, Leiden 1982, esp. 7-17.
 - 16) I. P. may be present, too, in 1.4 V 20-21.
 - 17) MLC, 216.
 - 18) AMOLAD, 107-13 with very different stichometry.
 - 19) Again, AMOLAD, 187-90, has different stichometry.
 - 20) So, incorrectly, MLC, 233.
 - 21) "Above, the Sun etc."; cf. AMOLAD, 190, 192 and independently, de Moor: ZAW, 88 (1976), 344. Xella, TRU 1, 282 (cf. 286): "da lontano".
 - 22) For a survey of opinions cf. MLC, 470 and glossary (p. 594) under *ntr*.
 - 23) The 'parallel' in Akk. epic, "you be my husband, I your wife", (text: Gilg. nin. vi 9 = Nergal and Ereškigal aA 82, cited by Hecker, *Epik*, 131, note 1) also exhibits I. P.
 - 24) See Xella, TRU 1, 283 for translation.
 - 25) In the same text problematic 'agzr ym bn ym (lines 23.58-59 and 61) may

- also constitute I. P.
- 26) In *Strophic Chiasmus in Ugaritic Poetry*: UF, 15 (1983), in press.
 - 27) Xella, TRU 1, 283 translates "discendi nell'aldilà e sprofonda nella polvere".
 - 28) Plus other dubious examples (footnotes 12, 13, 15 and 45) and section 7.4.
 - 29) See also footnote 25.
 - 30) As shown in section 2.2 of my paper cited in footnote 26.
 - 31) On reversed word-pairs cf. UF, 13 (1981), 189-92.
 - 32) See already Gordon, UT 13.114.
 - 33) See footnote 9.
 - 34) Text and translation follow J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions. Vol. 2 - Aramaic Inscriptions*, Oxford 1975, 120-22.
 - 35) s]r tyl' hkyrt r^cqm by^ctn š^cbt, "(When) he hanged the rebel / cut off the seditionists - our terror came to an end" (Mactar A I 2) as translated by Krahmalkov: RSF, 3 (1975), 177-78, who comments "the members of the hemistich exhibit a functional parallelism that facilitates the reconstruction" (p. 180).
 - 36) See footnote 3.
 - 37) Couplets: Atr. III i 22-23; Gilg. XI 21-22; Erra I 109-113. 115; IV 71-72. 73-74 (cf. V 57-58); Theodicy 76-77. 292-293; Great Šamaš Hymn 145. Sets of three: Ludlul IV 37-39; Theodicy 27-29. Note 14 consecutive lines in Erra IID 4-12a. However, there is *no* clustering in Ee.
 - 38) Erra I 144; IIc 13.17; IV 93. 123; V 14. 57-59; Atr. I iv 171; v 243 vi 289; Ludlul III 12; IV 39; Theodicy 76-77. 292; Great Šamaš Hymn 151; Ee III 9 (= 134); IV 102.
 - 39) Erra IIc 13; Ludlul III 12; Theodicy 292.
 - 40) Erra V 27; Gilg. XI 21-22; Theodicy 25-26.
 - 41) Atr. I v 243; S iv 59; Ludlul IV 94; Theodicy 135; Great Šamaš Hymn 180; BWL 102: 61.
 - 42) E. g. Atr. I v 240-241 from I i 2.
 - 43) Erra V 58; Great Šamaš Hymn 180.
 - 44) As in 1.17 VI 35b-36a and often in 1.10.
 - 45) For this difficult line cf. J. C. de Moor, *The Anatomy of the Back*: UF, 12 (1980), 425-26.

- 46) Also difficult is *mlkt*. []*hm*. *lmlkt* (1.2 III 22). Gibson, CML², 38 restores *mlkt 'an hm lmlkt 'an*, translating "Am [I indeed] king or am I not king?", which would certainly be I. P. For other opinions cf. MLC, 168.
- 47) In the Babylonian Theodicy it would seem that I. P. is set largely in the mouth of the 'Sufferer' (lines 25-26. 27-29. 76-77. 135. 292-293). However, the 'Friend' appears to use this form of parallelism in stanza XX (lines 214. 218. 219) and since there are several gaps in the text as a whole (see BWL, 63-91. 302-310. 345) any definite conclusions are precluded. It is worth mentioning, too, that there is only one example in the 'Dialogue of Pessimism', i. e. line 78.
- 48) See my paper, *The Character of Ugaritic Poetry*: JNSL, forthcoming.
- 49) The most recent paper on Ugaritic metre is J. Wansbrough, *Metra ugaritica: pro et contra*: BSOAS, 46 (1983), 221-34.