

The Embodiment of Fear in Ugaritic and Semitic Literature: Re-examining the Social Dynamic¹

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In the Ugaritic Baal Cycle, it is not uncommon for deities to exhibit human emotions, such as fear. In KTU 1.3 III 32–35, the goddess Anat experiences fear due to concern for the safety of her brother, Baal. In an analogous passage, the goddess Athirat likewise succumbs to fear when she anticipates an attack against herself and her family in KTU 1.4 II 12–20. At the oncoming arrival of different messengers, these individual Ugaritic goddesses become increasingly anxious, and that agitation is embodied in their physiological changes. The identification of this common response to the receipt of news is grounded in the work of Delbert Hillers,² and represents a *topos* in West Semitic literature. This paper draws attention to that comparative type scene and then reassesses the nature of communication created by both humans and deities who exhibit physiological reactions to fear. Through a comparative study of several biblical and Mesopotamian texts, this essay situates the paralyzing panic that grips Anat and Athirat in apprehension of the unknown, thereby generating a relational dynamic between the participants. While the contours of Hiller's argument lay the framework for analysis, a re-examination of the embodiment or lack of embodiment of fear in the Ugaritic corpus sheds renewed light on the social dynamic that develops in the context of the interchange.

1. I wish to thank Professor Mark S. Smith for his critical feedback on an earlier draft of this paper. I also would like to thank Professor Daniel E. Fleming for his encouragement and discussion about pertinent Mesopotamian sources.

2. Delbert R. Hillers, "A Convention in Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News," *ZAW* 77 (1965): 86–90. This *topos* is also interpreted in Umberto Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1971), 82; H. L. Ginsberg, "The North-Canaanite Myth of Anath and Aqhat," *BASOR* 98 (1945): 15, n. 20.

I. Physiological Manifestation of Anxiety

In KTU 1.3 III 32–35, Anat's support is about to be enlisted for asking El's permission to construct Baal's house. The text reads:

32–34

hlm. 'nt. tph. lhm.

bh. p'nm/ tt̄.

b'dn ksl. tt̄br/

'ln. pnh. td'.

There! Anat perceives the gods/
divine beings,

On her, her feet shake/falter,

Around, her [sinews] tremble,

Above, her face sweats.

34–35

t̄gš. pnt /kslh.

anš. dt. ṣrh.

The joints of her loins convulse,

Weak are the ones of her back.³

Standing apart as an individual female deity, Anat is poised to receive a message from the divine beings Gapan and Ugar. However, she does not yet know the content of the message and presumes the worst about Baal's state. At the sight of the gods, Anat's internal plight is conveyed literarily through a description of her external disposition. Her visceral reaction is grounded in fear of familial harm concerning those close to her, and captures a certain progression from her feet up through her upper body.

Analogously, in KTU 1.4 II 12–20, Athirat is presumed to have powers of persuasion with El as his consort and is therefore approached. The narrative explains:

12–14

bnš̄i. 'nh. wtp̄hn/

hlk. b'l at̄{t}rt. kt'n

When she lifts her eyes, she looks

Athirat sees the advance of Baal,

14–16

hlk. btl̄t/ 'nt[.]

The advance of Adolescent Anat,

3. Unless otherwise noted, translations of Ugaritic come from Mark S. Smith and Wayne Pitard, eds., *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*. Vol. 2: *Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.4* (VTSup 114; Leiden: Brill, 2009). Cf. Simon B. Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry* (SBLWAW 9; Atlanta: Scholars, 1997). For the discussion of KTU 1.3 III 32–35 and 1.4 II 12–20, see Smith and Pitard, 238–242, 448–450.

tdrq. ybmt/ [limm].

The approach of the In-law [of the
Peoples.]

16–18

bh. p'nm/ [ttt].⁴
[b']dn. ksl/ [ttbr].⁵
['ln.p]nh. td['].

On her, her feet shake/falter,
Around, her [sinews] tremble,
Above, her face sweats.

19–20

tġš[.pnt. ks]lh/
anš. dt. zrh.

The joints of her loins convulse,
Weak are the ones of her back.⁶

There is a parallel concern for Athirat's children in lines 24–26 as the goddess waits alone in her abode. Here Athirat reacts to the arrival of the divine messengers, in this case Baal and Anat, and she is not in a position of control. However, one notes the reversal of status for Anat, who now has the upper hand in the confrontation that is created between messenger and recipient. The role that Anat plays in this relationship changes, and her identity as a warrior and hunter is not a factor in whether or not she achieves her goal.⁷ Furthermore, Anat issues a verbal reaction like Athirat in which she articulates her concern.⁸

Like the two independent goddesses, Dani'il is the subject of fear who reacts to a report about his son in the tale of Aqhat. The desire for progeny is at the forefront of the narrative in KTU 1.19 II 44–47, when messengers come to deliver the dreaded news to Dani'il. These messengers are identified earlier in lines 27–28 as youths, *ġlmm*. The role of Anat has

4. Cf. KTU 1.4 VII 35: *bmt ar[š] tttn*, “the heights of the earth shook.”

5. Perhaps the N-stem of *tbr*, cf. KTU 1.6 II 54: *l arš ttr*, “[her jar] shattered on the ground.”

6. Note the alternate translation in Moshe Held, “Studies in Comparative Semitic Lexicography,” *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965* (The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Assyriological Studies 16; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 395–406. Held translates as follows: “Behind, (her) tendons do break (i.e., tear), above, her face sweats; loosened are the joints of her sinews, weakened those (i.e., tendons) of her back.”

7. For an analysis of Anat's independence, see esp. Kelly Murphy, “Myth, Reality and the Goddess Anat: Anat's Violence and Independence in the Ba'al Cycle,” *UF* 41 (2009): 525–541.

8. Smith and Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, 241–245.

once again changed in this narrative, and she is now guilty of killing Aqhat. The text states:

44–47

[bh p'nm]/ ttt.

'l[n pnh td'

b'dn]/ ksl. yt[br

yğš pnt kslh]/

anš. [dt zrh

[Below, his feet shake/falter,

Above, [his face sweats],

[Around], his [sinews] tremble,

[The joints of his loins shake],

[The ones of his back] are weak.

According to this passage, the larger *topos* of the physiological reaction of anxiety to imminent news is created and maintained by an unequal relationship between Dani'il and the messengers. The response of physical embodiment generates the relation between participants, and the messenger has influence over the situation. The concomitant fear of the arriving messenger and the receipt of the message actualize this relationship. The ensuing reaction of Dani'il's top part of the body also calls to mind KTU 1.2 I 23, where the assembled pantheon lower their heads when they see the arrival of the messengers, *gly r'iš*.⁹ They do not yet know the speech that the messengers will convey, but there is an immediate, unconscious presupposition that it will be threatening and they exhibit submission. As illuminated by the prepositions that precede each physical reaction, the description of the bodily contortions is precise and delimits specific knee-jerk movements.

In these Ugaritic literary texts, non-verbal communication¹⁰ takes place between two parties in the documented type scene. This is grounded in certain semantic equivalents between the verbs and described body parts. Of primary significance is the parallelism between Ugaritic *ksl*, Hebrew *kesel*, and Akkadian *kislu*, signifying “sinew, tendon.”¹¹ The sinews of

9. Compare the semantically equivalent Akk. *rēša šapālu*, “lower the head.” This refers to an emotion of humility and submission, as in: *ina pān amēlū Bābilī ahhēya lā aššatīma rēšīya lā iššappilā*, “I shall not be humiliated before the Babylonians, nor shall my heads be lowered.” Citation is found in Robert Francis Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters* (Chicago 1892–1914), 283, r. 10–12.

10. This phrase comes from the title of Mayer Gruber's *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East* (Studia Pohl 12/I; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980).

11. Held, “Studies in Comparative Semitic Lexicography,” 401–406.

Anat, Athirat, and Dani'il tremble, *ksl t/yṭbr*, a phrase cognate to the biblical expression, מתנים שברון, in Ezek. 21:11–12. The Ugaritic expression, “breaking/loosening of tendons,” finds a parallel in the Akkadian terms, “loosening,” *patāru/ramû/batāqu*,¹² and “sinews/tendons,” *šir'ānū/riksū/kaslū/matnū*.

While the primary meaning of Hebrew כסל is “sinew/tendon,” its derived meaning underlines “inner strength.”¹³ The parallelism of מבטח and כסל in Job 8:14; 31:24, and תקוה and כסל in Job 4:6, reflects this twofold denotation. To this end, Held rejects the definition of loins for מתנים, due to: (1) the synonymous parallelism of מתנים and שרירים in Job 40:16, and (2) the use of Akkadian *enēšu/unnušu*, “to become weak, to weaken,” with *šir'ānū*, “sinews.”¹⁴ Moving upwards to the face, the root, *td'*, “to sweat,” represents the external facial manifestation of internal fear, a central symptom of anxiety.¹⁵

Of further note is the verb, *nḡṣ*, “to shake, tremble,” which marks a response of fear toward bad tidings in KTU 1.3 III 34, 1.4 II 19, and 1.19 II 46 (restored). Anat calls into question Baal's safety in KTU 1.3 III 37, just as Athirat fears that the approach of those who attacked her children will foreshadow greater harm in KTU 1.4 II.¹⁶ The appropriate response is

12. The primary meaning of *kaslu* as “sinew” stems from a medical text: “If a...baby's sinews from its neck to its backbone are loosened (*kaslūšu puṭṭurū*), it will die.” Note René Labat, *Traité akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux*, I (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 222–241. One recognizes a similar meaning in *Ludlul* II 104 between *kaslū puṭṭurū* and *puṭṭurū riksūa*, “my sinews are loosened.” See Wilfred F. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 44–104. Also see Edith K. Ritter and J. V. Kinnier Wilson, “Prescription for an Anxiety State: A Study of BAM 234,” *Anatolian Studies* 30 (1980): 23–30.

13. Held, “Studies in Comparative Semitic Lexicography,” 402.

14. CAD E, 166a. Held explains, “the substantive *ksl* is attested several times in a stereotyped formula describing fear due to unexpected visitors who might bring bad news” (404–405). The choice of the word “might” is not trivial within this type scene in the literary texts. In these select passages, the reader presumes that the recipient does not know for sure if the message is ominous, although it is believed to be so.

15. Daniel Fleming, “By the Sweat of Your Brow: Adam, Anat, Athirat and Ashurbanipal,” in *Ugarit and the Bible: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Ugarit and the Bible, Manchester, September 1992* (ed. George Brooke, Adrian Curtis and John Healey; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1994), 93–100.

16. Fred Renfroe, *Arabic-Ugaritic Lexical Studies* (ALASP Band 5; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1992), 63, n. 6.

described: *y/tġš pnt kslh*, “His/her joints convulsed.” This statement parallels Yamm’s reaction in KTU 1.2 IV 25, *tnġšn pnth*, and Kirta’s response to her brother’s arrival in 1.16 I 53–55, *[ksl]h. larš. ttbr*, “Her loins to the ground tremble/break.”

The effect on the joints of the loins, *pnt kslh*, is marked in two similar situations in Isa. 21:3 and Nah. 2:11, passages examined below.¹⁷ Additionally, *nġš* is parallel to *dlp* in KTU 1.2 IV 17¹⁸ and 1.2 IV 26,¹⁹ and is cognate with Akkadian *dalāpu*, “to be agitated.”²⁰ It is secondarily parallel to *anš*, “to grow weak,” cognate of Hebrew *’nš* and Akkadian *enēšu*.²¹ Taken together, the combination of these verbs circumscribes “the response of some part of the lower body (perhaps the joints of the lower back) to...anxiety.”²² As such, the enveloping semantic field includes *nġš*, *dlp* “to be agitated,” and *anš* “to grow weak,” the latter of which does not occur elsewhere.

II. Fear Without Embodiment in Ugaritic Literature

Are the emotions of fear and panic ever expressed without a bodily description in the Ugaritic corpus? What language is employed when the literary representation of fear is not embodied? In KTU 1.6 VI 30–31, the deity Mot is afraid due to an intimidating speech by Shapshu. Here the verbs *yr’* and *tt’* stand in parallelism to each other. Shapshu delivers a foreboding statement to Mot that his sovereignty and El’s support will be threatened by a potential battle with Baal. Mot is exhorted not to wage such a fight since El’s backing is not absolute. The content of the speech is threatening, so that Mot’s reaction of anxiety is appropriate in the narrative after he hears the

17. These examples are provided in Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath*, 130; Cf. Julian Obermann, “Yahweh’s Victory over the Babylonian Pantheon: The Archetype of Isa. 21:1–10,” *JBL* 48 3/4 (1929): 307–328.

18. KTU 1.2 IV 17: *l ydlp tmnh*, “his form did not break up/weaken.”

19. The verb, *nġš* in N-stem: *tnġšn pnth*, “his knees shook/buckled.”

20. Cf. Baruch Margalit, “Lexicographical Notes on the Aqht Epic,” *UF* 15 (1983), 115.

21. Cf. *enēšu*, *CAD* 4: 166 from the first tablet of Gilgamesh: *i-ni-iš-ma ik-ta-mi-us ippalsih*, “he became weak, his knees gave way, he collapsed.”

22. Renfroe, *Arabic-Ugaritic Lexical Studies*, 64.

actual words. That response is reflected in the literary description. The text reads:

yru. bnilm <.m>t.	Divine <Mo>t is afraid,
tt'.y/dd.il.ǵzr[.]	The Beloved of El, the Hero, is scared.

Baal is also presented as fearful of Mot in KTU 1.5 II 6–7, and terrified of what Mot might do to him. The second text states:

yraun. ²³ aliyn.b'l/	Mightiest Baal is afraid,
tt'.nn.rkb.'rpt	The Rider of the Clouds is scared.

It is ironic that the explicit statements of fear in both 1.5 II 6–7 and 1.6 VI 30–31 define the divine subjects through double epithets. As if it were not clear that deities exhibit anxiety, the text emphasizes that the deities in question are none other than El's Beloved and the Rider of the Clouds, respectively.²⁴ These verses represent the two cases in Ugaritic of the word-pair *yr'* // *tt'*.

Similarly, Baal cowers, *ǵwr*, under Yamm's chair in KTU 1.2 IV 6–7. The narrative description of this act uses the verbs “to fear” and “to hide,” verbs that particularly apply since Baal already has begun to hear the language of the warning. The text reads:

[b]ph. rgm. lyša.	Scarcely had the word left his mouth,
bšpth. hwth.	And his speech his lips,
wtn. gh.	When she raises her voice,
yǵr/tht. ksi, zbl. ym.	He sinks beneath the throne of Prince Yamm.

Like Mot, Baal is submissive to the envoy of the message but not because the message originates with El; rather, his obeisance is generated by the transmission of the warning. The interchange yields subordination of Baal, and by virtue of the overwhelming emotion, he places himself in a

23. David Marcus explains that the form, *yraun*, is an infinitive absolute consecutive that functions in this text as a third-person singular preterite. See David Marcus, “The Three Alephs in Ugaritic,” *JANES* 1, 1 (1968): 1, n. 1.

24. According to Paul Sanders, “the fear of the gods is connected with events which seem to constitute a real threat to their position.” See Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (Oudtestamentische Studiën; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 404.

submissive role. Baal's emotional reaction is explicit,²⁵ and unlike Anat and Athirat, Baal is cognizant of what is to follow.

In a manner similar to this literary passage, several letters from KTU 2 also employ the language of fear in encouraging the recipients not to quiver at received news. However, the epistolary injunctions, such as “you should not worry” or “you should not be afraid,” follow after the delivery of the message and come at the end of the written text. The recipient has already received the content of the remarks, and can now internalize the news. This reaction is not conveyed through the physiological manifestation of fear, and marks a contrast to the narrative occurrences. Rather, the information is being processed by the very act of having the letter in hand, so that there is no need for a visceral bodily reaction that presages the receipt of the actual news.

The form of a letter also creates a degree of distance between the recipient and the messenger, who does not have to know the content of the letter. The messenger is not perceived as superior in status since he may know the potentially dreaded information. Contrary to KTU 1.3 III 32–35 and 1.4 II 12–20, the recitation of a speech by the envoy is not part of the message in KTU 2, and the delivery of a letter is not followed by an oral pronouncement in the exchange. Consequently, the presence of that individual in turn does not generate a psychological response by the intended recipient.

Several lines from Ugaritic letters that include directives not to fear reported developments are relevant.²⁶

(1) KTU 2.16:12²⁷

w 'al. tdlhln; Cf. semantic parallel in 1.160:19, *'al tbb riš*

“And may she not fear.”

25. Cf. KTU 1.4 VII 38-9: *lm. thš/ lm.thš.ntq*, “why are you frightened, why do you fear the weapon?”

26. The use of the verb, *dlh*, “to fear, be scared,” appears in these passages. There is one case of the root, *yr'* in KTU 2.31:45, where the form *yritn* suggests the G suffixing form of *yr'* with an enclitic or pronominal *-n*. However, the context of this letter is broken. See *DULAT* 269, 977; *CUW* 1507.

27. See J.-L. Cunchillos, “Correspondance,” in A. Caquot, J.-M. de Tarragon, J.-L. Cunchillos, *Textes ougaritiques*. Tome II: *Textes religieux et rituels; correspondance* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), 297–302; J.L. Cunchillos, “Que Mère se réjouisse de Père! Traduction et commentaire de KTU 2.16,” in *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie*

In KTU 2.16, Talmiyānu sends a letter to his mother, T̄arriyelli, and insists in line 12 that she not be anxious since the Sun has bestowed favour on him. Dennis Pardee offers a different reading of *twhln* in place of *tdhln* from the root *whl*, a hapax in Ugaritic.²⁸ With this alternative, the line may then be translated: “may she not be discouraged.” However, that reading does not change the message that has already been conveyed to T̄arriyelli before she is instructed not to be afraid.

(2) KTU 2.30:21-23²⁹

'at 'umy: 'al. *tdhl* w. 'ap. *mhkm b. lbk.* 'al. *tšt*

“You, my mother, do not be afraid and also do not worry/be distressed.”

In KTU 2.30, the king reports a message to his mother about his encounter with a Hittite overlord. After assuring her that he is well, the king tells her that the Hittite sovereign has agreed to increase the amount of his vow. He concludes the letter in lines 21–23 by exhorting his mother not to be anxious for whatever reason. Pardee again offers a variant reading of *tdhš* for *tdhl*,³⁰ so that the king states, “do not be agitated.”³¹ Renfroe notes this variant reading in his discussion of *dhš*.³² He states that a comparison between Ugaritic *dhš* and Arabic *daḥṣa*, “overturning, convulsion,” can only be argued if an original root, *dhḍ*, also connoted agitation. In that case, the general meaning then would have been employed metaphorically in the Ugaritic letter. Though the verb is different, the semantic range of *dhš* nonetheless fits the intended effect of the line. This version of the formulary

(JSOT Supplement Series 67; Sheffield: 1988), 3–10.

28. See Dennis Pardee, “Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography,” *AfO* 31 (1984), 220.

Pardee takes the verb as an N-stem or D-stem prefixing form of *yhl* (*whl*) with an enclitic *-n*. This interpretation derives from a reading of the letter /w/, not /r/. He points out that the root has negative connotations in Arabic (“to get into a mess”) and Syriac (“to despair”). The phrase may then be compared to PRU V 59:26–27: *w'alhy mhh b lbh 'al yšt*, “and may my brother not worry.”

29. Cunchillos, *Textes Ougaritiques*: Tome II, 321–324; J.L. Cunchillos, “Le texte ugaritique KTU 2.30,” *Anuario de Filología* (Universidad de Barcelona 5, 1979), 73–76.

30. The emphasis on emotional agitation is maintained by the Aramaic root *dhḥ*, suggesting anxiety and fear. This supports the Ugaritic rendering of *dhḥ* as more contextually appropriate.

31. See Pardee, “Further Studies,” 230, but cf. Renfroe, *Arabic-Ugaritic Lexical Studies*, 94 ff.

32. See Renfroe, *Arabic-Ugaritic Lexical Studies*, 94–95.

“do not fear,” represents the culmination of the received news and suppresses any cause for alarm by the recipient, i.e., the royal mother.

(3) KTU 2.38:27³³

w. 'aly. mhh b. lbh. 'al. yšt

“And so my brother should not worry/be distressed.”

In another instance, KTU 2.38 represents a letter from the king of Tyre to the king of Ugarit, documenting the state of ships sent to Egypt. Unfortunately, a storm off of Tyre had destroyed these ships, but the people, grain, and other food were saved. Now the king of Tyre is ready to bring the people and goods back to Ugarit. This text offers a third statement of support and the lack of anxiety following the delivery of a message. By coming at the end of the letter, the recipient has no need to exhibit an external emotional response since he has already read the content of the message and thereby been reassured. Additionally, one person writes to another irrespective of social status and the relation between these two individuals.

These letters provide a contrast to the reactions of Anat, Athirat, and Dani'il, whose bodily responses precede the conscious realization of what has transpired in the texts. Alternatively, the full message or speech has not been given yet in each case in KTU 1, and the literary depiction does not explicitly use the verb “to fear,” or some variation (*yr'*, *tt'*, *dhl*).³⁴ A study of the larger Semitic *topos* of physiological reaction of panic in biblical literature will illuminate those passages where the corporal manifestation of fear is conveyed, here of humans. However, added also to this comparative evidence are several Mesopotamian examples of both humans and deities who exhibit such responses.³⁵ An examination of those texts follows.

33. Cunchillos, *Textes Ougaritiques*: Tome II, 349-357; Jacob Hoftijzer, “Une lettre du roi de Tyr,” *UF* 11 (1979) 383-88; Daniel Arnaud, “Une lettre du roi de Tyr au roi d'Ougarit: milieux d'affaires et de culture en Syrie à la fin de l'âge du bronze récent,” *Syria* 59 (1982): 101-107.

34. Contrast the distribution of the phrase “fear not” in Near Eastern literature, which underlines justified fear but not anxiety in the context of a threat or figure of authority. See Martti Nissinen, “Fear Not: A Study on an Ancient Near Eastern Phrase,” in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*. eds. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 122-161.

35. It is curious to note that only one biblical text, Deut. 32:27, has Yahweh as the subject of a verb meaning to fear (*gwr*). See Marjo Christina Annette Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Uga-*

III. *Topos* of Physiological Reaction of Fear in Context of a Foreboding Event

According to KTU 1.3 III 32–35 and 1.4 II 12–20 and contrary to the letters in KTU 2, the embodiment of fear is expressed non-verbally in two specific circumstances. On the one hand, there is an expectation of bad tidings, while on the other hand, Anat and Athirat see the advance of a deity or messenger. However, the response of fear in such a *topos* does not have to be confined to divinities. As elucidated in several biblical passages, humans also exhibit parallel responses that mimic the goddesses.³⁶ In the context of impending news, threat, or disaster, the situation engenders a certain subservience of the one who receives the news to the one who transmits the news. In the Hebrew Bible, that actor of the imminent event is notably Yahweh, and the language employed does not solely connote a sense of physical defeat or paralysis. Rather, the social dynamic of the message's deliverance creates an uneven scale for the individuals whose anxiety manifests itself in obeisance to Yahweh. The people are not in control and assume a subordinate role through their embodiment of fear.

The oracle of Nahum 2:11 describes the conquest and destruction of Nineveh, where the siege of the city is imminent. The verse reads:

Desolation, devastation, and destruction?³⁷
Spirits sink,

ritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine (UBL 8; Münster: UGARIT-Verlag, 1990), 178. Yahweh turns away from His anger in Deut. 32:26–27. According to Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy* 32, 403, “He expresses the fear that if he does not put his punishment of Israel to an end the enemies will misinterpret their success.” This should be contrasted with Job 41:17, where other gods appear to fear Leviathan, through the root *gwr*. Note also that the root *gwr* is parallel to the verb *yr'* in Pss. 22:24; 33:8.

36. The human experience of fear as reflected in the Hebrew Bible is the subject of Paul Kruger, “A Cognitive Interpretation of the Emotion of Fear in the Hebrew Bible,” *JNSL* 27/2 (2001): 77–89. Kruger analyzes a variety of conceptual metonymies that point to the physiological manifestations of anxiety, and the subsequent cognitive reactions of the individual. Also see Zoltán Kövecses, *Emotion Concepts* (New York: Springer Verlag, 1990).

37. Translations of biblical passages come from *TANAKH The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1988).

Knees buckle,
All loins tremble,
All faces “turn pale/ashen.”

One notes how the collective change in facial complexion reflects the outward manifestation of fear. The focus is placed on the inhabitants of Nineveh who can only wait in anguish to confront their fate, which Yahweh controls.

Two other passages describe the change in colour of one’s face on account of fear: Joel 2:6 and Jer. 30:5-6. In Joel 2:6, the mighty army has been sent by Yahweh against Judah, and the Day of the Lord will mark the moment when the divine army is ready to strike the vulnerable nation. According to the verse,

People tremble³⁸ before them,
All faces “turn pale/ashen.”³⁹

There is a parallel physiological reaction to fear embodied in the people’s faces as they confront deprivation.⁴⁰ The expression “to acquire paleness or gather a glow”⁴¹ evokes a flushed face or one from which colour has been drained. This “result[s] in a look of anguish...which suggests utter fright brought on by impending doom.”⁴²

The narrative of Jer. 30:5–6 similarly establishes the context of news about the future, where the nation is submissive to Yahweh’s might. Jer. 30:5–6 reads:

Thus said the Lord:
We have heard cries of panic, terror without relief.
Ask and see: Surely males do not bear young!
Why then do I see every man,
With his hands on his loins,

38. Cf. Panic involves trembling in Ps. 48:6–7.

39. Several versions identify *pā’rûr* with *pārûr*, “cooking pot,” and *keqes* for *qibbeṣû*. The Septuagint translates *pān prosōpon hōs proskauma chutras*, “every face like a scorched pot.” Similarly, the Vulgate reads *omnes vultus rediguntur in ollam*, “every face will be made like a pot.”

40. See Paul Kruger, “The Face and Emotions,” *Old Testament Essays* 18:3 (2005): 651–663.

41. HALAT 860; DCH VI, 647 I.

42. James Crenshaw, *Joel* (AB 24C; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1995), 123.

Like a woman in labour?
Why have all faces turned pale?

The passage evokes the palpable fear of Israel and Judah, which is actualized concretely in their subservience to Yahweh. As Mayer Gruber explains, the phrase ונהפכו כל-פנים לירקון “refers to a facial expression of fear,” and is the “Hebrew etymological equivalent of Akkadian *pānū erēqu*.”⁴³

Embedded in this visceral depiction is a reference to the terrifying experience of a woman in labour. The resounding cry of “pains like those of a woman in labour” permeates across several biblical texts that share the specific *topos* of embodied fear in the face of impending news. Such a representation of dismay and consternation specifically echoes in Jeremiah’s rhetoric.⁴⁴

The description of the approach of the northern enemy is explicit in Jer. 6:24:

We have heard the report of them.
Our hands fail;
Pain seizes us,
Agony like a woman in childbirth.

In Jer. 49:23–24, palpable anxiety seizes two individuals due to the plight of Damascus:

Hamath and Arpad are shamed,
For they have heard bad news.
They shake with anxiety, like (in) the sea that cannot rest.
Damascus has grown weak,
She has turned around to flee;
Trembling has seized her,
Pain and anguish have taken hold of her, like a woman in childbirth.

In the following chapter, a report concerning the conqueror of Babylonia causes the king of Babylon to go into a panic. Though he is

43. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication* (vol. 1), 363.

44. Cf. Erhard Gerstenberger, “The Woe-Oracles of the Prophets,” *JBL* 81 (1962): 249–263. In 1QH 3, 7–12, the psalmist associates his torment with that of a woman who gives birth for the first time; see George J. Brooke, “The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception in the Qumran Scrolls,” in *The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception*, eds. A.H.W. Curtis and Thomas Römer, (Leuven: University Press, 1997), 199.

the extolled ruler, the king does not know the content of the message. This situation temporarily places him at the mercy of the messenger or the unnamed individual who transmits the information. Simply hearing about the impending conquest triggers a visceral reaction. The speaker in Isa. 26:17 likewise uses the language of a woman in labour to capture a simultaneous plea for righteousness and punishment of the wicked. The two texts read respectively:

The king of Babylon has heard the report of them,
And his hands are weakened;
Anguish seizes him, pangs like a woman in childbirth. (Jer. 50:43)

Like a woman with child approaching childbirth,
Writhing and screaming in her pangs,
So are we become because of You, O Lord. (Isa. 26:17)

The type scene of embodied fear in the context of impending doom is effectively conveyed in Isa. 13:7–8. With the Day of the Lord imminent, that moment shall yield a day of judgment for the wicked. This passage underlines the notion of conquest by a sovereign being who brings about this event.⁴⁵ The military retinue of Yahweh is ready to act, and the perceived doom is sufficient to induce overwhelming agitation. The exact details of that portended day are not known. Nonetheless, this oracle specifies that the defeat of the Babylonians on the Day of the Lord will entail the punishment of Yahweh's enemies. Though the target here is not Judah like in Joel 2:6, the verse reaffirms that Israel's prophets, the harbingers of the news, anticipate the occurrence. According to Isa. 13:7–8:

And overcome by terror,
They shall be seized by pangs and throes,
Writhe like a woman in travail,
They shall gaze at each other in horror,
Their faces "livid with fright."

45. See Douglas Stuart, "The Sovereign's Day of Conquest," *BASOR* 221 (1976): 159–164.

Finally, the biblical embodiment of fear is encapsulated in the devastating effect that the message of the handwriting on the wall has on Belshazzar in Dan. 5:6, 9–10.⁴⁶ According to this text:

Then the king's countenance changed
And his thoughts alarmed him,
His joints of his loins were loosed,
And his knees knocked together.

The trepidation and alarm of Belshazzar evoke similar imagery of an individual's reaction to negative tidings.⁴⁷ The loosening of the joints parallels the Ugaritic phrase, *pnt ksl*. Furthermore, Aramaic זיוהי שנין in זיוהי שנין is a loanword from Akkadian *zīmu*, “appearance, countenance.” The verb *ewû(m)* marks the semantic equivalent of שנה, “change the countenance, be gloomy.” Taken together then, the three cognates are Akk. *zīmu nakārum*, Heb. שנה פנים and Ugar. *'tq bbt/ap*.⁴⁸ In Dan. 5, the king is panic-stricken and calls upon his advisors to decipher the omen, which has yet to be revealed. The unexpected presence of the written texts is analogous to the unplanned arrival of the divine messengers before Anat and Athirat. The terrifying presence of the handwriting sends Belshazzar into a state of shock, and in doing so, highlights the king's total lack of control.

IV. Humans and Gods who Fear in Mesopotamian Literature

Several texts from Mesopotamian literature also illuminate the embodiment of fear in the specific setting of receiving foreboding information. These passages represent an analogous set of documents to

46. Cf. Shalom M. Paul, “Decoding a ‘Joint’ Expression in Daniel 5:6, 16,” in *Comparative Studies in Honor of Yochanan Muffs*, eds. E. L. Greenstein and D. Marcus (Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies 22, 1993), 127. For the language of untying knots, see Al Walters, “Untying the King's Knots: Physiology and Wordplay in Daniel 5,” *JBL* 110 (1991): 117–122; Nahum Waldman, “Akkadian *kašāru* and Semantic Equivalents,” *JNES* 28 (1969): 251–252.

47. This passage should be compared with Dan. 10:8, 16–17, where the loss of physical strength is conveyed upon experiencing a theophany. Likewise, Eliphaz expresses fear at the appearance of a theophany of sorts in Job 4:12–15, after receiving a divine message.

48. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication* (vol. 1), 358–362.

consider in the larger analysis. However, the particular narrative contexts widen the scope of inquiry about fear and anxiety in Semitic literature, to include communication between humans, between humans and deities, and between deities.

In a remark by Esarhaddon in his “Gottesbrief,”⁴⁹ the panic and fear of the king is transmitted after hearing Esarhaddon’s message. The text reads:

“(When) he [the king] heard my [Esarhaddon’s] royal message, which burns his enemies like a flame,

His hips collapsed,	<i>qabalšu imqussuma</i> ⁵⁰
His heart was seized,	<i>libbašu šabitma</i> ⁵¹
His legs trembled,	<i>itarrura išdāšu</i>
His countenance looked bad.	<i>zīmūšu ulamminma</i> ⁵²

The external manifestation of internal fear includes a specific focus on the facial expression that reflects the individual’s frightful disposition. This reaction to Esarhaddon’s message calls to mind the change in the king’s countenance in Dan. 5:6, 9–10. Here the context is the submission of a person to someone of superior status. This text should also be compared to Nehemiah 2:3—“but I answered the king: ‘May the king live forever! How should my face not look bad when the city of the graveyard of my ancestors lives in ruins. . .’” While multiple generations are invoked in the reference to a graveyard, the immediate trigger of the subject’s facial response is the subservience directed to the king. Concern for familial bonds is once again at the forefront of the fear, and anxiety is generated by the physical presence of someone perceived in a position of higher standing. Indeed the expression “the face is bad,” פנים רעים, signifies a “gloomy face” in the

49. Riekele Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons Königs von Assyrien* (Archiv für Orientforschung Beiheft 9; Graz: Archiv für Orientforschung, 1956), 102 II i 1–4. This text is cited by Paul, “Decoding a ‘Joint’ Expression,” 122.

50. Cf. *maqātu* in CAD M, 245.

51. Cf. CAD Š, 7.

52. Cf. Paul 123, n. 16; CAD Z, 119–122 and Aramaic זי; Stephen A. Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Assyriological Studies 19; Chicago: University, 1974), 113; *lemēnu* in CAD L, 118.

context of acquiescence and submission to the intermediary figure.⁵³ That individual embodies the potential for individual and familial harm, and conveys this reality without actually uttering a direct injunction.

Similarly, in an oracle to Ashurbanipal of Assyria concerning his future campaign, the goddess Ishtar of Arbela urges Ashurbanipal to remain at home and promises that she will ensure victory.⁵⁴ Ishtar declares:

Your face will not pale,	<i>pa-nu-u-ka ul ur-raq</i>
Your feet will not falter,	<i>ul i-nàr-ru-ṭa GÌR^{mes}-ka</i>
You will not wipe away your sweat,	<i>ul ta-šam-maṭ ṣu-ut-ka</i>
In the midst of battle.	<i>i-na MURUB₄ tam-ḥa-ri</i>

The context of this oracular dream is a military campaign where Ashurbanipal is likely to be defeated. Once again, one notes that the *topos* of news relating to a foreboding situation, here military in nature, is pivotal. However, there is also the factor of obeisance to an individual of higher stature, i.e., the goddess Ishtar. The embodiment of fear is denoted with an emphasis on anxiety-induced sweat. To this end, the progression from face to feet and back to face “describe[s] responses of fear ‘in the midst of battle,’ from which Ashurbanipal will be preserved.”⁵⁵ The use of the verb *narāṭu* often refers to the human state of fear, as seen in a Neo-Assyrian royal text under Sargon. In *TCL* 3, 83, human fear is conveyed by *narāṭu* where the king’s enemy sees the army’s approach and immediately “his whole body start[s] to falter/shake,” *irruṭū šīrūšu*.⁵⁶ The content of the enemy envoy has not yet been transmitted, but the very sight of his approach is sufficient enough to generate a physiological reaction.

Two additional references come from the Epic of Gilgameš. In OB II iv, 36–39, Enkidu exhibits a reaction of panic at the news of Gilgameš’s fate.⁵⁷ According to the narrative:

53. Cf. Paul 122, n. 15. The idiom of a “gloomy face” also conveys sadness and despair, cf. Gen. 40:7; Neh. 2:2. Note the verbal idiom *zīma lummunu*, “to make the face bad (i.e., gloomy),” as in *zīmūšu ulamminma rēšiš ēmēma*, “he assumed the appearance of a lowly person and thus came to look like a slave,” cf. *CAD* Z, 120b; Gruber 365, n. 1.

54. Maximilian Streck, *Assurbanipal* Vol. II (Leipzig 1916), 114–119; “An Oracular Dream Concerning Ashurbanipal,” translated by Robert H. Pfeiffer (*ANET*, 451–452).

55. Fleming, “By the Sweat of Your Brow,” 96.

56. See *Textes cunéiformes*, Musées du Louvre (Paris 1910 ff.).

57. A. R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and*

“By divine consent it is ordained;	<i>i-na mi-il-ki ša ilim(dingir) qá-bi-ma</i>
At the cutting of his (Gilgameš’s)	<i>i-na bi-ti-iq a-bu-un-na-ti-šu</i>
umbilical cord,	
His (Gilgameš’s) fate was decreed.”	<i>ši-ma-as-súm</i>
At the man/fellow’s words,	<i>a-na sí-iq-ri eṭ-li-im</i>
His (Enkidu’s) face turned pale.	<i>i-ri-quí pa-nu-šu</i>

In this social encounter, the paleness of Enkidu’s face embodies his fear and astonishment following his dialogue with a “civilized” individual. That visible rejoinder comes to a climax only after Enkidu has heard the man’s message. He comes face-to-face with a divine being and turns pale, i.e., yellow or green, while confronted with an emotionally difficult situation.

An analogous facial response to fear is expressed by Gilgameš in OB VII iv 14–19. After dreaming on his journey to see Huwawa, Gilgameš awakens from his dream and shares the content of the dream with Enkidu. He says:

[My friend], I saw a dream last night:
 The heavens [moaned], the earth responded;
 [...] I stood [alo]ne.
 [...] his face was darkened.
 Like unto [...] was his face.
 [...like] the talons of an eagle were his claws.

In this pericope, one notes that Gilgameš’s reaction follows after the negative portent echoed in the moaning of the heavens.

Various deities also exhibit a facial reaction in accounts that parallel Enkidu’s response. These texts portray the gods as the subjects of fear, whose faces pale at the sight of a messenger. Such a reply on the part of deities should be contrasted with Deut. 32:27, the single biblical passage where Yahweh is the subject of a verb meaning to fear, *gwr*, when He turns away from His anger.⁵⁸ By contrast, several Mesopotamian deities more frequently exhibit fear.

Cuneiform Texts. Vol. 1 (Oxford University Press, 2003), 178–179; Cf. Georges Dossin, *La Pâleur d’Enkidu* (Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste, 1930).

58. Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 178; Cf. Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy* 32, 403–405.

These texts include:

(1) The description of Ereškigal's face in the Descent of Ištar is noted when Ereškigal hears the news that her sister, Inanna, is at the gate.⁵⁹ The text reads: *kīma nikis GIŠ bīni arāqu panūša*, her face "turns as pale as the stump of a tamarisk tree."

(2) Likewise, there is a similar reaction by Namtar, queen Ereškigal's messenger in the Late Version of Nergal and Ereškigal, 3:211. At the sight of a visitor to the palace, Namtar's face changes: *[kī]ma ni[kis] GIŠ bīni arāqu panūš*, (his) face "turns as pale as the stump of a tamarisk tree."

(3) In *Atraḥasis*, after seeing how the younger gods have rebelled against the senior deities, namely Anu, Enlil, and Enki, Enlil is ready to punish them. Even though this younger generation has defied the authority of the older gods, Ea intervenes and convinces Enlil not to act. However, Enlil's advisor, Nusku, also had persuaded him not to enact revenge. Nusku decries:

O my lord, your face is [sallow as] tamarisk!
 Why do you fear your own sons?
 O Enlil, your face is [sallow as] tamarisk!
 Why do you fear your own sons?⁶⁰

Nusku pleads with his master, Enlil, precisely at the time when Enlil's house is surrounded with opposition. It is the physical presence of this confrontational party that generates a reaction of panic, which is literarily represented through Nusku's remark. The noise of the Igigi gods provokes fear in the great divine beings that remain subservient to the Igigi in this context. Enlil and Nusku, his vizier, stand at an impasse, just as Enkidu reacted at the news of Gilgameš's fate. The metaphor of one's "face is

59. Erich Ebeling, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1919-23), 1/29; Cf. *pānū arāqu*: "the face pales," in CAD A/2, 232 s.v. *arāqu*, "to turn pale, to become green or yellow."

60. Stephanie Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 11. The relationship between the older and younger generation of gods and the rhetoric of fear is examined in Rivkah Harris, *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature* (University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2000), 77.

[sallow] as tamarisk” evokes the analogous idiom in the Descent of Ištar, and in Nergal and Ereškigal.⁶¹

(4) Maqlû III 101 reveals another example of the paleness of one’s face as an expression of fright. In the third tablet of the anti-witchcraft ritual ceremony, the language of the incantation to undo the episode of witchcraft ends with the following line:

kaššāptu kīma siḥir kunukki annê lišūdu li-ri-qu panūki

So that, O witch, like the rim of this seal, Your face melt (and glow) and become pale.⁶²

(5) Finally, in tablet II of the Poem of the Righteous Sufferer,⁶³ a demon has taken hold of an individual who reacts with immediate fear. The physiological response of fear is described through language that progresses across the body, which echoes the role that the presence of another being has upon an individual. That person is constrained from any movement by the overpowering force of the demon, which has entered the person’s body. As a result, the verse describes how he loses physical control:

(75) Numbness has spread over my whole body,
Paralysis has fallen upon my flesh.
Stiffness has seized my arms,
Debility has fallen upon my loins,
My feet forgot how to move.

61. Cf. The lament for Unug: c. 2. 2. 25: “All the great gods paled at its immensity,” *ba-an-sig₇-ge-eš* (“to be green”).

62. This text is taken from Tzvi Abusch’s translation in preparation, distributed Fall 2010 at Brandeis University in a course on magic and witchcraft in the ancient Near East. I wish to thank Professor Abusch for his permission to include this translation. See also the German translation of Maqlû in I. Tzvi Abusch (with Daniel Schwemer), “Das Abwehrzauberritual Maqlû (‘Verbrennung’),” in *Omina, Orakel, Rituale und Beschwörungen, Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments, Neue Folge*, vol. 4, eds. Bernd Janowski and Gernot Wilhelm (Guetersloh: Guetersloher Verlagshaus, 2008), 128–186, esp. 150.

63. Benjamin R. Foster, *From Distant Days: Myths, Tales and Poetry from Ancient Mesopotamia* (Bethesda: CDL Press, 1995), 306. Note also the abstraction of fear compared to garments and clothing. In *Enūma eliš* IV 57, awe-inspiring terror surrounds Marduk as if he were clothed in a garment: *naḥlapti apluḥti pulḥāti ḥalip*, “(Marduk) is enveloped in an armoured garment of fear.” See Nahum Waldman, “The Imagery of Clothing, Covering and Overpowering,” *JANES* 19 (1989): 161–170.

V. Generating the Reaction of Fear: Re-examining the Social Dynamic

As these biblical and Mesopotamian examples elucidate, the literary *topos* of physiological response to anxiety is provoked in a specific narrative context. With the onset of undefined news or an unspecified event, the visible reaction of fear causes an imbalance in social relations. The exact reality of the news is not yet known although it is preemptively deemed disastrous. A contrast is thus created between the conscious and unconscious elements of fear. While the embodiment of fear indicates an apprehension of the unknown, there is a lack of embodiment when the object is known. The limited explicit references to fear by Ugaritic deities link the use of a specific verb to the event that poses a threat, as in KTU 1.5 II 6–7 and 1.6 VI 30–31. Contrary to the letters in KTU 2.16, 2.30, and 2.38 where fear is not embodied, the content of the portended information in the analyzed type scene is only divulged by the messengers after the physiological description of anxiety. This messenger may be defined as an individual or prophet, deity, divine emissary, or collective unit. Such conspicuous anguish encompasses the trembling of feet, convulsing of joints, and sweating or altered colour of one's face.

However, the receipt of news or the recognition of an imminent event does not have to stimulate fear. It could just as well yield rejection of the news or oppositional behaviour. This does not appear to be the case in numerous comparative examples.⁶⁴ By contrast, the embodiment of fear engenders a social dynamic due to the participatory nature of the exchange. By reacting to bad news through outward physiological responses, the subject perpetuates a relationship with the harbinger of the news. This is localized in the facial reaction, since the face is the body part that acknowledges the presence of the other being and visualizes the foreboding event.

64. Cf. Anat and Athirat do not accurately perceive the type of message that is brought to them. Similarly, David awaits news of Absalom in 2 Sam. 18:19–33, and Adonijah awaits word about the crowned king in 1 Kgs. 1:41–49. They do not correctly detect the reason for the messenger's arrival. For a comparative analysis of the role of the messenger in the ancient Levant and the messenger's arrival, see Samuel Meier, *The Messenger in the Ancient Semitic World* (HSM 45; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 131–134.

In this way, the language of anxiety in Semitic literature is grounded in social relations,⁶⁵ a point that draws on the relationship between fear and communication within the field of psychology. Current research in the neuroscience of emotion has its roots in the James-Lange theory, which raises the connection between unconscious physiological behaviour and the conscious cognitive response of emotion. Of note is the claim that cognitive recognition of an emotion comes after people manifest the physiological component of the emotion, in this case, that of anticipatory anxiety.⁶⁶ William James and Carl Lange maintained, “That the conscious experience of emotion occurs only *after* the cortex has received signals about changes in one’s physiological state.”⁶⁷

Argued differently, unconscious physiological changes in muscular tension or blood pressure precede the human awareness of the defined feeling.⁶⁸ The amygdala, a brain structure, plays a central role in the interaction between bodily states and cognitive reactions to the physiological responses. The James-Lange theory was subsequently confirmed by the work of Joseph LeDoux, who examines this coordination by the amygdala of the physiological expression of fear and the conscious realization of the fear. His work documents the manner in which “a frightening stimulus can cause our hearts to race and our palms to sweat before we consciously realize”⁶⁹ what is happening. Such an unmediated initial response to a

65. Note that Hebrew *yr'* and Akkadian *palāḫū* both are recognized as meaning “to revere” and “to be frightened,” cf. Mayer Gruber, “Fear, Anxiety and Reverence in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew and Other Northwest Semitic Languages,” *VT* 40 4 (1990): 411–422. The scope of the term *palāḫū* lies outside the analysis presented in this paper.

66. William James argued, “We first act instinctively and then invoke cognition to explain the changes in the body associated with that action.” See Eric R. Kandel, *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 340–341.

67. Kandel, *In Search of Memory*, 340. Cf. William James, “What is Emotion?” *Mind* 9 (1884): 188–204; repr. in Wayne Dennis, ed., *Readings in the History of Psychology* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948), 290–303.

68. See also Robert Plutchik, *The Psychology and Biology of Emotion* (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1994); Ralph Hupka, Zbigniew Zaleski, Jurgen Otto, Lucy Reidl, and Nadia Tarabrina, “Anger, Envy, Fear and Jealousy as Felt in the Body: A Five Nation Study,” *Cross-Cultural Research* 30/3 (1996): 243–264.

69. Kandel, *In Search of Memory*, 344; Cf. Joseph LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993); A. Etkin, K.

stimulus effectively captures the panic that seizes Anat and Athirat in KTU 1.3 III 32–35 and 1.4 II 12–20.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates how the embodiment of fear by two goddesses, Anat and Athirat, generates a social dynamic between the participants. An analysis of several Mesopotamian literary accounts reveals how a relationship is created between the one who communicates news and the recipient of the news when an individual approaches or an oracle is transmitted. By expanding on the corpus of Mesopotamian texts that bolsters Hiller's initial argument, this discussion underlines how the embodiment of the anticipation of the message propels a sustained hierarchical interaction between the participants.

A comparative social dynamic occurs within a similar *topos* in the Hebrew Bible. Through fear of Yahweh and anticipation of the Day of the Lord, the people show their subservience as well as their obeisance to Yahweh. They thereby maintain the hierarchical disparity between themselves and Yahweh. The text's use of the language of physical embodiment to convey their reaction of panic recognizes that Yahweh is the one in charge. The type scene emphasizes the fact that the people do not have control over oracles transmitted by the prophets. To this end, the above analysis argues that the visceral display of anxiety in Ugaritic and Semitic literature is manifest in the recipient's visage and embodies the threat that the participant perceives. Ultimately, the Baal Cycle appends the goddesses' spoken, conscious responses to their physiological reactions. However, before that can happen, Anat and Athirat must break into an anxiety-induced sweat as they await the expected news.

C. Klemenhausen, J. T. Dudman, M. T. Rogan, R. Hen, E. R. Kandel, and J. Hirsch, "Individual Differences in Trait Anxiety Predict the Response of the Basolateral Amygdala to Unconsciously Processed Fearful Faces," *Neuron* 44 (2004): 1043–1055.