

AREN M. WILSON-WRIGHT

Athtart

Forschungen
zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe
90

Mohr Siebeck

Forschungen zum Alten Testament
2. Reihe

Edited by

Konrad Schmid (Zürich) · Mark S. Smith (Princeton)
Hermann Spieckermann (Göttingen)

90



Aren M. Wilson-Wright

Athtart

The Transmission and Transformation
of a Goddess in the Late Bronze Age

Mohr Siebeck

AREN M. WILSON-WRIGHT, born 1988; 2016 PhD in Hebrew Bible at the University of Texas at Austin; currently a postdoctoral researcher and habilitation candidate at Universität Zürich.

e-ISBN PDF 978-3-16-155011-9

ISBN 978-3-16-155010-2

ISSN 1611-4914 (Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2. Reihe)

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2016 by Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, Germany. www.mohr.de

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form (beyond that permitted by copyright law) without the publisher's written permission. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.

The book was printed by Laupp & Göbel in Gomaringen on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Nädele in Nehren.

Printed in Germany.

To Grandma Ruth, with love

Preface

This book is a revised version of my 2016 doctoral dissertation of the same name at The University of Texas at Austin. It had its genesis in a conversation with Jo Ann Hackett about the study of goddesses in the ancient Near East and the need for a new paradigm for conceptualizing deities. Further conversations with Jo Ann as well as Na'ama Pat-El helped me settle on the goddess Athtart as the subject of my dissertation and develop the theoretical approach to daily routines and deities employed in it.

This project would not have been possible without the help and support of many people. First and foremost, I would like to thank my dissertation supervisors, Na'ama Pat-El and Jo Ann Hackett, for their mentorship. Together they taught me what it means to be both a careful and cutting-edge scholar. I would also like to thank the other members of my dissertation committee – John Huehnergard, Athanasio (Nassos) Papalexandrou, Thomas A. Tweed, and Betsy M. Bryan – for their feedback and support. A comparative and theoretical project such as this would not have been feasible without the advice of so many experts.

This project also benefitted from the comments and critiques of several scholars outside of my dissertation committee, prime among them Mark S. Smith. His feedback helped me refine the theoretical thrust of my main argument and improve several smaller sections. Sarah Kimball, Michael Weiss, and Christina Skelton helped me with the Indo-European data used in Chapter One and Robert K. Ritner provided several suggestions and Egyptological references for Chapter Two.

I had a wonderful editor in Joshua Sears. He went over the manuscript in painstaking detail and saved me from numerous errors. Thanks are also due to Konrad Schmid, who encouraged me to submit my dissertation to Mohr Siebeck for publication, and Henning Ziebritzki, who coordinated the publication of this book at Mohr Siebeck. I would also like to thank Tom Palaima for providing me with both an office and a stimulating intellectual environment in which to conduct research.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their love and support. My wife, Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley read earlier versions of every chapter and provided helpful feedback in addition to being generally amazing. My grandma, mom, sister, and dad all gave me their unwavering support and were very understanding when I was unable to visit them as long as I would have liked first while

dissertating and then while completing work on the book manuscript. This book is dedicated to my Grandma Ruth, who dedicated much of her daily routine the past twenty-six years to taking care of me and my sister.

Table of Contents

Preface.....	VII
List of Abbreviations	XI
List of Illustrations and Tables	XV
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
<i>A. Review of Previous Scholarship</i>	3
<i>B. A New Method for the Study of Deities</i>	12
<i>C. The Development and Etymology of *ζAttar- and *ζA\bar{t}tart-</i>	16
Chapter 2: Athtart in Egypt.....	27
<i>A. Review of Previous Scholarship</i>	28
<i>B. The Linguistic Data</i>	31
<i>C. The Equestrian Forms of Athtar(t)</i>	37
<i>D. Adaptation of the Equestrian Forms of Athtar(t)</i>	51
<i>E. Syrian Athtar and the “Magico-Medical” Athtart</i>	62
<i>F. Summary and Conclusion</i>	70
Chapter 3: Athtart at Emar	72
<i>A. The History of Emar</i>	73
<i>B. The Linguistic Data</i>	76
<i>C. Evidence for Agricultural Forms of A\bar{s}tart</i>	79
<i>D. Evidence for Urban Forms of A\bar{s}tart</i>	88
<i>E. The Coexistence of Agricultural and Urban Forms of A\bar{s}tart</i>	102
<i>F. Summary and Conclusion</i>	103
<i>G. Excursus: Other Forms of A\bar{s}tart at Emar</i>	104

Chapter 4: Athtart at Ugarit	107
<i>A. Ritual Transmission and the King</i>	108
<i>B. Orality and Literacy in the Ugaritic Language</i>	121
<i>C. Verbal Transmission, Cult Singers, and Scribes</i>	125
<i>D. Other Forms of Athtart at Ugarit</i>	138
<i>E. Summary and Conclusion</i>	142
Chapter 5: Conclusion	144
<i>A. Further Case Studies</i>	146
<i>B. Theoretical Expansions</i>	148
Bibliography	153
Index of References	169
Index of Modern Authors	173
Index of Subjects	176

List of Abbreviations

<i>AAAS</i>	<i>Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes</i>
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
<i>ADPV</i>	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
<i>AHw</i>	<i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . Wolfram von Soden. 3 vols. Wiesbaden, 1965–1981
<i>AJSL</i>	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
<i>ALASP</i>	Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens
<i>ANESSup</i>	Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series
<i>AnOr</i>	Analecta Orientalia
<i>AOAT</i>	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
<i>AoF</i>	<i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i>
<i>AOS</i>	American Oriental Society
<i>ARM 9</i>	Birôt, Maurice. <i>Textes administratifs de la salle 5 du palais</i> . Vol. 9 of <i>Archives royales de Mari</i> . Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1960
<i>ARM 10</i>	Dossin, Georges. <i>La correspondance féminine</i> . Vol. 10 of <i>Archives royales de Mari</i> . Paris: Librairie Orientaliste, 1967
<i>AS</i>	Assyriological Studies
<i>ASAE</i>	<i>Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte</i>
<i>AuOr</i>	<i>Aula Orientalis</i>
<i>AW</i>	<i>Antike Welt</i>
<i>BaM</i>	<i>Baghdader Mitteilungen</i>
<i>BARIS</i>	BAR (British Archaeological Reports) International Series
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>Berytus</i>	<i>Berytus: Archaeological Studies</i>
<i>BIFAO</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>BPOA</i>	Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>Cuneiform Inscriptions in the Collection of the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem: The Emar Tablets</i> . Edited by Joan Goodnick Westenholz. CM 13. Groningen: Styx, 2000
<i>CAD</i>	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2010
<i>CAH</i>	Cambridge Ancient History
<i>CBQMS</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CdE</i>	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i>
<i>CIS</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum</i> . Paris: E Reipublicae Typographeo, 1881–1962

CM	Cuneiform Monographs
CRAI	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CTH	<i>Catalogue des textes hittites</i> . Emmanuel Laroche. Paris: Klincksieck, 1971
DAE 4	Littman, Enno. <i>Sabaische, griechische und altabessinische Inschriften</i> . Vol. 4 of <i>Deutsche Aksum-Expedition</i> . Berlin: G. Reimer, 1913.
DDD	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden: Brill, 1995
EA	El-Amarna tablets. According to the edition of Anson F. Rainey, William M. Schniedewind, and Zipora Cochavi-Rainey. <i>The El-Amarna Correspondence: A New Edition of the Cuneiform Letters from the Site of El-Amarna Based on Collations of All Extant Texts</i> . 2 vols. HdO 110. Leiden: Brill, 2015
<i>Emar VI</i>	Arnaud, Daniel. <i>Textes sumériens et accadiens, texte</i> . Vol. 3 of <i>Recherches au pays d'Aštata, Emar VI</i> . Synthèse 18. Paris: Éditions Recherches sur les Civilisations, 1986; <i>Textes de la bibliothèque, transcriptions et traductions</i> . Vol. 4 of <i>Recherches au pays d'Aštata, Emar VI</i> . Synthèse 28. Paris: Éditions Recherches sur les Civilisations, 1987
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i> . Edited by Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum. 2nd ed. 22 vols. Detroit : Macmillan Reference USA, 2007
HACL	History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant
HCCT	Tsukimoto, Akio. "Akkadian Tablets in the Hirayama Collection (II)." <i>Acta Sumerologica Japonica</i> 13 (1991): 275–333
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HR	<i>History of Religions</i>
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae. Editio Minor</i> . Berlin: de Gruyter, 1924–
IOS	Israel Oriental Studies
JANER	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JFSR	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
JIES	<i>Journal of Indo-European Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
KAI	<i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> . Hebert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig. 5th ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002
KAR	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts</i> . Edited by Erich Ebling. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919–1923
KBo	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi</i> . Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1923–
Ktéma	<i>Ktéma: Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques</i>

KTU	<i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places.</i> Edited by Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquin Sanmartín. 3rd enl. ed. AOAT 360. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013
KUB	<i>Keilschriftkunden aus Boghazköi.</i> Berlin: Akademie, 1921–
LANE	Languages of the Ancient Near East
LAPO	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
LuBM	Lundin, A. G., and S. A. Frantsouzoff. “An Inscribed Sabaeen Bronze Altar from the British Museum.” <i>St. Petersburg Journal of Oriental Studies</i> 9 (1997): 384–91
MAD	Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary
MAM	Mission archéologique de Mari
MARI	<i>Mari: Annales de recherches interdisciplinaires</i>
MEE	Materiali epigrafici de Ebla
MRS	Mission de Ras Shamra
MTSR	<i>Method and Theory in the Study of Religion</i>
Mus	<i>Muséon: Revue d'études orientales</i>
NABU	<i>Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires</i>
ND	Field Number of Texts Excavated at Nimrud
NEA	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
<i>OrAnt</i>	<i>Oriens Antiquus</i>
PAe	Probleme der Ägyptologie
PE	<i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i>
PRU	<i>Le palais royal d'Ugarit</i>
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RAI	Rencontre assyriologique internationale
RC	<i>Religion Compass</i>
RE	<i>Texts from the Vicinity of Emar in the Collection of Jonathan Rosen.</i> Gary Beckman. HANE/M 2. Padova: Sargon, 1996
RES	<i>Répertoire d'épigraphie semitique.</i> Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900–1968.
RGG	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.</i> Edited by Hans Dieter Betz. 4th ed. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2007
RGTC	Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes
RIE	<i>Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite.</i> E. Bernard, A. J. Drewes, and R. Schneider. 2 vols. Paris: de Boccard, 1991
RSO	Ras Shamra-Ougarit
Ry	Ryckmans, G. “Inscriptions sud-arabes. Quinzième série.” <i>Le Museon</i> 70 (1957): 97-126
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SCCNH	Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians
<i>Sem</i>	<i>Semitica</i>
SKL	<i>The Sumerian King List.</i> Thorkild Jacobsen. Assyriological Studies 11. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939
SMS	<i>Syro-Mesopotamian Studies</i>

<i>TA</i>	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
TAVO	Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 15 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
<i>Transeu</i>	<i>Transeuphratène</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>Ugaritica</i> 1	F. A. Schaeffer, Claude. <i>Études relatives aux découvertes de Ras Shamra</i> . Vol. 1 of <i>Ugaritica</i> . MRS 3. Paris: Geuthner, 1939
<i>Ugaritica</i> 5	Nougayrol, Jean, Emmanuel Laroche, Charles Virolleaud, and Claude F. A. Schaeffer. <i>Nouveaux textes accadiens, hourrites et ugaritiques des archives et bibliothèques d'Ugarit commentaires des textes historiques (première partie)</i> . Vol. 5 of <i>Ugaritica</i> . MRS 16. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale; Paris: Geuthner, 1968
<i>Ugaritica</i> 7	F. A. Schaeffer, Claude. <i>Ugaritica VII</i> . Vol. 7 of <i>Ugaritica</i> . MRS 18. Paris: Geuthner; Leiden: Brill, 1978
<i>Urk.</i>	<i>Urkunden der 18. Dynastie</i> . Kurt Sethe. Vol. 4 of <i>Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums</i> . Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1906–1909
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
<i>WO</i>	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
YOS	Yale Oriental Series, Texts
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

List of Illustrations and Tables

Figure 1: The development of * ^ʕ Aṭtar- and * ^ʕ Aṭtart- in the Semitic languages	26
Figure 2: Broken relief from the royal stables at Qantir	40
Figure 3: Stele from the tomb of Nefersekheru	42
Figure 4: Stele from Buhen	43
Figure 5: Graffito from the shrine of Sety I at Kanais.....	44
Figure 6: Stele from the Turin Museum	45
Figure 7: Stele from Tell el-Borg	47
Figure 8: Wall painting from the tomb of Nebamun.....	49
Figure 9: Wall painting from the tomb of Paheri	49
Figure 10: Quarry relief from Tura	52
Figure 11: Relief from the temple of Ptah at Memphis	57
Figure 12: Royal stele from the Louvre	59
Figure 13: Broken Relief from a Saqqara tomb	59
Figure 14: Relief from Abu Simbel.....	60
Figure 15: Relief from the temple of Horus at Edfu	62
Figure 16: Ny Carlsberg stele	63
Figure 17: Cylinder seal from Bethel	69
Figure 18: Map of Egypt.....	71
Figure 19: Map of the city of Ugarit	110
Figure 20: The layout of the central palace at Ugarit.....	111
Table 1: The reflexes of * ^ʕ Aṭtar- and * ^ʕ Aṭtart- in the semitic languages	18
Table 2: The various spellings of Aṭtart in group writing during the New Kingdom.....	32
Table 3: The forms of Aštar and Aštar at Emar	77
Table 4: Comparison of the deities in the initial ritual and the first list.....	105

Chapter 1

Introduction

Goddesses with names deriving from the root $\text{ṣ}tr$ (e.g., Akkadian *Ištar*, Ugaritic $\text{ṣ}trt$, Emarite *Aštar*, Phoenician $\text{ṣ}trt$) appear through the ancient Near Eastern and ancient Mediterranean worlds, from Shuruppak (Farah 3: 110 i 3)¹ to England (*IG* 14: 2553–54) and from the twenty-sixth century BCE to the Roman era (30 BCE–395 CE). No doubt the wide geographic and temporal dispersal of these deities resulted from countless acts of cultural and inter-cultural transmission. Yet the process of transmission receives little attention in the scholarly literature on these goddesses. Instead, most scholars combine evidence from different periods and places to create a compound picture of a single goddess named Athtart, of whom the historical forms are mere manifestations. Such an approach assumes continuity between goddesses with cognate names, glosses over cultural differences, and ignores the dynamic and transformative processes of transmission.

To begin to solve these problems, I will propose a new model for studying deities in the ancient world and then illustrate the utility of this model by applying it to the study of Athtart in the Late Bronze Age. The key insight of my model is that the representations of deities vary with the daily routines of their worshippers: what people do in their daily life corresponds to the types of deities they worship.² Furthermore, certain daily routines, such as those associated with trade, transportation, and technology, privilege the transmission of associated deities and thus shape the outcome of cultural transmission. To substantiate these claims, I will study the forms of Athtart³ at three Late Bronze Age (1500–1180 BCE) sites – Egypt, Emar, and Ugarit – and demonstrate how they correspond

¹ Cited in W. G. Lambert, “The Pantheon of Mari,” *MARI* 4 (1985): 537.

² Throughout this study I will use the phrases “correspond to,” and “associated with” to describe the relationship between the representations of deities and the daily routines. I do so in part to suggest that daily routines are not wholly determinative of religious content in a manner reminiscent of the relationship between the base and the superstructure posited by Karl Marx in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S. W. Ryazanskaya (Moscow: Progress, 1977), 2. Rather, to borrow a phrase from Max Weber, I see an “elective affinity” between the representation of deities and the daily routines of the devotees. For Weber’s use of the term “elective affinity” see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the “Spirit” of Capitalism*, trans. Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 36.

³ For the sake of grammatical simplicity, I will use “Athtart” in the singular as shorthand to refer to all of the different forms of Athtart attested in the ancient Near East. I do not believe there was a single entity lurking behind all of the historical forms of Athtart.

to the daily routines of different individuals and social groups at these sites.⁴ I will also examine how daily routines influenced the intercultural and interpersonal transmission of Athtart. My analysis will unfold over three chapters, each dedicated to a single site.

Using the transmission of Athtart to Egypt from the Levant as a case study, the first chapter argues that the everyday routines of the individuals involved in cultural contact can indelibly affect its outcome. I first demonstrate the existence of an equestrian form of Athtart associated with the elite routine of horse training and chariot warfare. Then, I suggest on the basis of the surviving sources that Semitic-speaking horse trainers brought this form of Athtart with them to Egypt, where Pharaoh Amenhotep II (1427–1400 BCE) adopted her as a tutelary goddess. Athtart's association with chariots within Egypt persisted into the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (332 BCE–395 CE), long after chariots ceased to be used in battle, and the daily routines of horse trainers had shifted to reflect this technological development. In addition to equestrian Athtart, this chapter will examine two other forms of Athtart found in Egypt: Syrian Athtart and “magico-medical” Athtart, a form of Athtart found in incantations.

The second chapter examines how the shift from pastoral to urban life, and the change in daily routines this shift brought, affected the representation and transmission of Athtart at Emar. Emar started out as a village, but was rebuilt as an urban, military outpost after being captured by the Hittite king Muršili II (1321–1295 BCE) in the fourteenth century BCE. Accordingly, the ritual texts from Emar attest to a shift from forms of Athtart associated with pastoral routines, like hunting and the harvest, to forms of Athtart associated with urban ones like warfare, monumental architecture, and kingship. Of these later forms, Athtart of Battle proved particularly popular.

The third chapter considers the physical processes of cultural transmission in more detail, using the different forms of Athtart at Ugarit as an example. At Ugarit, the king transmitted information about Athtart *hurri* and Athtart of the Fields primarily through bodily participation in ritual as part of his daily routine as city ruler. Cult singers and scribes, on the other hand, combined formulae, type scenes, and plot structures to create compelling and memorable narratives about forms of Athtart as part of their daily routine. But while their daily routines were indispensable for the transmission of information about Athtart, they had little effect on the forms of Athtart that they transmitted: all of the surviving narratives about Athtart from Ugarit depict her as a warrior or a huntress. In addition, a few non-narrative texts found at Ugarit associate Athtart with incantations. Overall,

⁴ The Late Bronze Age is the first period to yield significant textual and material evidence pertaining to Athtart, including visual representations from Egypt, ritual texts from Emar, and mythological texts from Ugarit. This material thus forms the foundation for understanding the transmission of Athtart in later periods.

such an approach to the goddess Athtart marks a significant departure from previous scholarship.

A. Review of Previous Scholarship

Only a few scholars have produced article-length treatments of the goddess Athtart. Instead, most of the work on Athtart in the ancient Near Eastern and ancient Mediterranean worlds consists of brief notices in works on Ugarit, Phoenician, and Canaanite religions and entries in reference works and biblical dictionaries. Many of these works depict Athtart as a wanton sex goddess – accepting Classical polemics against “oriental” religion – or as a rather colorless deity – transmuted a lack of evidence into a character trait.⁵ Furthermore, and more importantly for my work here, most of these works treat Athtart as a single, unitary goddess, of whom the historical forms are both manifestations and reliable indicators of timeless and general traits.⁶ The unarticulated model of transmission in these works seems to be duplication, as if different cultures received identical copies of one original Athtart. While it is beyond the scope of this introduction to review all of the scholarly work on Athtart (much of which is short and derivative), I will survey the general methodological trajectory of research starting in the late nineteenth century.⁷

The earliest scholarly work on Athtart dates to the late nineteenth century and is largely bound up in comparative projects intended to unearth the origin of religion, such as James George Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* and William Robertson Smith’s *Religion of the Semites*. Although now discredited as an account of religious origins, Frazer’s work shaped the trajectory of later work on ancient Near Eastern deities through the work of W. F. Albright.⁸ In the fourth chapter of *The Golden Bough*, Frazer proposes a three step evolutionary scheme in human thought from magic to religion to science that took place at different times in

⁵ Theodore J. Lewis, “Athtartu’s Incantations and the Use of Divine Names as Weapons,” *JNES* 70 (2011): 225.

⁶ This emphasis on Athtart’s immutable nature reflects the problematic assumption that goddesses – and the human women on whom they modeled – are unchanging and interchangeable. Jo Ann Hackett, “Can a Sexist Model Liberate Us? Ancient Near Eastern ‘Fertility’ Goddesses,” *JFSR* 5 (1989): 65–66.

⁷ Rüdiger Schmitt collects a more comprehensive bibliography in his article “Astarte in Ugarit, Kanaan und Ägypten,” *UF* 45 (2014): 509–24, translated as “Astarte, Mistress of Horses, Lady of the Chariot: The Warrior Aspect of Astarte,” *WO* 43 (2013): 213–25.

⁸ For a cogent critique of Frazer, see J. Z. Smith, “When the Bough Breaks,” *HR* 12 (1972): 342–71; and Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 19–35.