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The Akkadian Great Hymns and Prayers

A Contextualised Edition of the Nabu and Ishtar
Prayers and a Critical Study of the Corpus
SSD: L-OR/3

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ABBREVIATIONS

- 4R² H. C. Rawlinson – Th. G. Pinches, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia IV* (London, 1891)
- Aa The lexical series a-a *A nâqu*
- AbB *Altbabylonische Briefe im Umschrift und Übersetzung* (Leiden, 1964–)
- AfO *Archiv für Orientforschung* (Wien, 1923–)
- AfO Beih. *Archiv für Orientforschung Beihefte* (Berlin, 1933–)
- AHw W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch I–III* (Wiesbaden 1965–1981)
- Ai The lexical series *ki ulutin-bi-šè = ana ittīšu*
- AMD *Ancient Magic and Divination* (Groningen 1999, Leiden 2002–)
- AMI *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran, DAI Tehran 1–9* (Berlin 1929/30–1939)
Fortsetzung: *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran, NF* (Berlin, 1968–)
- ANEM *Ancient Near Eastern Monographs* (Atlanta, 2008–)
- Antagal The lexical series *an-ta-ġál = šaqû*
- AnOr *Analecta Orientalia* (Rom, 1931–)
- AOAT *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* (Kevelaer / Neukirchen-Vluyn; Münster 1969–)
- AoF *Altorientalische Forschungen* (Berlin 1974–)
- AOS *American Oriental Series* (New Haven, Con. 1925–)
- ARM *Archives Royales de Mari* (Paris, 1950–)
- ARM 26/2 D. Charpin – F. Joannès – S. Lackenbacher – B. Lafont, *Archives épistolaires de Mari I/2* (Paris, 1988)
- ArOr *Archiv Orientální* (Praha, 1929–)
- AS *Assyriological Studies* (Chicago, 1931–)
- ASyll W. von Soden and W. Röllig, *Das akkadische Syllabar* (*Analecta Orientalia* 42, Rome 1991)
- ASJ *Acta Sumerologica, Japan* (Hiroshima, 1979–)
- AuOrSup *Aula Orientalis. Revista de estudios del Próximo Oriente Antiguo, Supplementa* (Barcelona)
- BagM *Baghdader Mitteilungen* (Berlin)
- BAM F. Köcher et al., *Die babylonisch-assyrische Medizin in Texten und Untersuchungen*. (Berlin 1963–)
- BASOR *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (Chicago, 1921–)
- BBVO *Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient* (Berlin, 1982–)

- BPOA Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo (Madrid 2006–)
- BSOAS Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (Cambridge 1940–)
- BzA Beiträge zur Altertumskunde (Berlin et. al., 1990–)
- CAD The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago. Herausgegeben von A. L. Oppenheim, E. Reiner et al. Bd. 1–21 (Chicago, 1956–2010)
- CDLI Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (<http://cdli.ucla.edu/>)
- CDLN Cuneiform Digital Library Notes (<http://etana.org/node/6414>)
- CM Cuneiform Monographs (Groningen / Leiden, 1992–)
- CMAWR3 Corpus of Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Rituals, ed. T. Abusch, D. Schwemer, M. Luukko and G. Van Buylaere, vol. 3, AMD 8/3 (Leiden and Boston 2020)
- CCP Cuneiform Commentaries Project (<http://ccp.yale.edu>)
- CRRAI Proceedings of the Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
- CT *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum* (London, 1896)
- CUSAS Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology (Bethesda, MD 2007)
- Diri The lexical series *diri* = (*w*)*atru*
- Ea The lexical series *e-a* *A nâqu*
- Erimḫuš The lexical series *erim-ḫuš* = *anantu*
- ETCSL J. A. Black, G. Cunningham, J. Ebeling, E. Flückiger-Hawker, E. Robson, J. Taylor and G. Zólyomi, *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/>) (Oxford, 1998–2006)
- GAG W. von Soden, *Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik*, AnOr 33 (Rome,³1995)
- GBAO Göttinger Beiträge zum Alten Orient (Göttingen, 2009–)
- GLH E. Laroche, *Glossaire de la langue hourrite* (= *Revue Hittite et Asiatique* 36–37 [1976–77])
- GMTR Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Records (Münster)
- Hg The lexical series *mur-gud* = *imrû* = *ballu*
- Hh The lexical series *ur₅-ra* = *ḫubullu*
- INFC *Incontri di Filologia Classica* (Trieste, 2001–)
- Igituh The lexical series *igi-du₈* = *tāmartu*
- Izi The lexical series *izi* = *išātu*
- HANEM History of the Ancient Near East (Padova, 1996–)
- HdO Handbuch der Orientalistik (Leiden, 1957-)
- HSS Harvard Semitic Series (Cambridge, MA, 1912–)
- Iraq Journal of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (London, 1934–)

- JBL Journal of Biblical Literature (Philadelphia, 1890–)
- JBVO Jenaer Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient (Wiesbaden, 1999–)
- JCS Journal of Cuneiform Studies (New Haven / Boston etc. 1947–)
- JMC Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes (Saint-Germain-en-Laye 2003–)
- JNES Journal of Near Eastern Studies (Chicago, 1942–)
- JGPS Journal for General Philosophy of Science (Wiesbaden, 1970–)
- JSOTSup Journal for the study of the Old Testament. Supplement series (Sheffield, 1976–)
- Kagal The lexical series KÁ.GAL = *abullu*
- KAL Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts. Im Auftrag der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft und des Vorderasiatischen Museums der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz herausgegeben von Stefan M. Maul (Wiesbaden, 2007–)
- KAR E. Ebeling, Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts I–II, WVDOG 28 und 34, (Leipzig, 1915–1923)
- LAPO Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient (Paris, 1967–)
- LTBA II W. von Soden, Die lexikalischen Tafelserien der Babylonier und Assyrer in den Berliner Museen. II. Die akkadischen Synonymenlisten. Mit Einleitung und Wörterverzeichnis (Berlin, 1933)
- Lú The lexical series *lú = ša*
- MAOG Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft. Bd. 1–16 (Leipzig, 1925–1943)
- Malku The lexical series *malku = šarru*
- MC 16 W. G. Lambert, Babylonian Creation Myths, Mesopotamian Civilisations 16, (Winona Lake, IN 2016)
- MCAAS Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences (Hamden, 1810–)
- MSL B. Landsberger et al., Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon / Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon (Rome, 1937–)
- MVAG Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen/Vorderasiatisch-Aegyptischen Gesellschaft. Bd. 1–47 (Berlin / Leipzig, 1896–1944)
- Nabnītu The lexical series *úlutin = nabnītu*
- N.A.B.U. Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires (Paris, 1987–)
- NIN Journal of Gender Studies in Antiquity (Groningen, 2000–2003)
- NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin (Leipzig, 1960–)
- OBO Orbis biblicus et Orientalis (Freiburg, Schweiz, 1973–)

- OIP Oriental Institute Publications (Chicago 1924–)
- OLA Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta (Leuven, 1970–)
- OPSNKF Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund (Philadelphia, 1976–)
- ORA Orientalische Religionen in der Antike (Tübingen, 2009–)
- OrNS Orientalia, Nova Series (Rome, 1932–)
- PBS Publications of the Babylonian Section, University Museum, University (Philadelphia, 1911–)
- QuadSem Quaderni di Semitistica (Florenz 1971–)
- RA Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale (Paris, 1884/85–)
- RIMA The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods (Toronto 1987–1996)
- RINAP *The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period* (Winona Lake, IN, 2011–)
- RIA Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie. Herausgegeben von E. Ebeling, B. Meissner et al.(1932–)
- SAA State Archives of Assyria (Helsinki, 1987–)
- SAAB State Archives of Assyria/ Bulletin (Padova, 1987–)
- SAACT State Archives of Assyria. Cuneiform Texts (Helsinki, 1997–)
- SANER Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records (Berlin and Boston 2012–)
- SBH G. Reisner, Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen nach Thontafeln griechischer Zeit, Mittheilungen aus den orientalischen Sammlungen X (Berlin, 1896)
- SSN Studia Semitica Neerlandica (Leiden, 1951–; Assen Van Gorcum, 1955-2006)
- StP Studia Pohl (Rome, 1969–); SM, Series maior.
- StS Studi Semitici (Rome, 1958–)
- TBC Texts from the Babylonian Collection (Yale, 1985–)
- TCS Trends in Classics (Berlin and Boston, 2009–)
- YOS Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts (New Haven / London / Oxford 1915–)
- WAG Die Welt als Geschichte (Heidelberg 1935–1963)
- WdO Die Welt des Orients (Göttingen, 1947–)
- WMANT Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969–)
- WVDOG Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft (Leipzig and Berlin, 1900–)
- ZA Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie (Leipzig 1886–)

Further abbreviations included:

obv.	obverse
rev.	reverse
l(l).	line
vs(s).	verse
col.	column
ms(s).	manuscript
pl(s).	plate
vol.	volume

All the biblical quotations are taken from:

The Holy Bible, New International Version, 2011, Grand Rapids, MI.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, 2017, Oxford.

The New American Standard Bible, 2020, Anaheim

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The present study focuses on a group of Akkadian literary hymns and prayers, also known as the Great Hymns and Prayers. These texts share various features: they are 200 or more lines long,¹ characterised by many rhetorical figures, and their literary structure shows a number of significant similarities. Furthermore, all these compositions lack any indication as to their use, function or social setting. Their literary style suggests that these texts had a primarily literary purpose, and were never used for recitation in religious practice. The hymns and prayers under consideration deserve detailed study not solely because of their remarkable style and structure, but also for the complexity of the themes and ideas they occasionally reflect. This dissertation provides an overview of the whole corpus, describing the form, language and content of the texts under study (Chapter 1). In addition, I offer new critical editions of the Great Prayers to Nabû (Chapter 2) and Ištar (Chapter 3), comprising transliteration, translation, transcription and philological commentary; copies of the manuscripts preserving the Nabû Prayers are also included. In Chapter 4, I investigate the intertextual connections between the Great Hymns and Prayers and the Lexical Lists, while Chapter 5 is devoted to a poetical analysis of the compositions, listing and explaining the numerous rhetorical devices employed in these texts. In the appendix, a yet unidentified text preserved on a new fragment of the Ištar Prayer is edited.

1.1 MESOPOTAMIAN HYMNS AND PRAYERS

1.1.1 Definition of the genres

Taking as starting point the notion of literature in Mesopotamia provided by Röllig,² who considers as literary only those texts, that may, with respect to their form and contents, be

¹ Scholars have suggested that these texts may originally all have been 200–lines long, but some were expanded through time (see, e.g., Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 162).

² Röllig 1987–1990. For a similar definition, see Livingstone 1989, XVI, according to whom, literary texts are “[...] compositions exemplifying and expressing a creative effort, but not including functional genres such as rituals, incantations, or royal inscriptions, which follow a fixed tradition and format, nor the day to day religious literature.” This concept of literature is vastly different from the one implied in the expression “Stream of Tradition”: coined by Oppenheim (1977, 13), this phrase indicates the Mesopotamian literature in the broadest sense, encompassing every work “that was maintained, controlled, and carefully kept alive by a tradition served by successive generations of learned and well-trained scribes”, thus including, for example, lexical and grammatical texts, or omnia. The tradition of scholarly and literary texts was, however, not fluid and seamless as Oppenheim’s phrase might suggest (on this see Robson 2011). For an overview of the different definitions of literature in Assyriology, see also G. Westenholz 1999, 81–82.

regarded as works of art, it is safe to affirm that the compositions under study are among the finest examples of Akkadian literary texts.

Not only are they literary, they also qualify as poetic, being enriched with many rhetorical devices and figurative images.³

Yet, before describing the most prominent features of these compositions, it is necessary to linger briefly on the problem of literary genres in the Mesopotamian literature.

Vanstiphout has highlighted the difficulties in conducting a generic analysis for the Mesopotamian literature in his works on this subject.⁴ He mentioned six main obstacles, that can be summarized as follows: a) the fragmentary state of preservation of texts; b) the interruption of continuity in their transmission; c) the lack of a Mesopotamian *Ars Poetica*, that is, of a formal organization of literature; d) the relative uniformity of the literary style, which prevents from distinguishing genres simply on the basis of the stylistic features of texts;⁵ and e) the general lack of standard forms or structural schemes in many literary compositions.⁶

In addition, it is often impossible to determine the *Sitz im Leben* of texts: in most cases, scribal schools are the only social and cultural context, to which literary compositions can be ascribed with certainty.⁷

Nevertheless, in spite of the above-mentioned difficulties, there are indications that the learned Mesopotamians perceived some generic differences between compositions. Indeed, although no formal native classification exists,⁸ texts were occasionally labelled according to their function or to the way in which they were performed (e.g., the rubrics *zamāru* for hymns or epic poems, or *ÉN* for incantation and incantation prayers, see below).⁹ In addition, ancient catalogues would list various compositions by their title, occasionally grouping texts with

³ Groneberg (1996) considers imagery as the most defining trait of poetic texts, because it produces a “meta-level” of discourse, in which the expressed meaning transcends the immediate surface of the wording

⁴ Vanstiphout 1986, 1999a and 1999b. Vanstiphout has further investigated the concept of the “life-cycle” of texts, i.e., the evolution of literary compositions, a process which might bring about structural changes and shifts between different generic categories, see Vanstiphout 1999a and 1999b. Cf. also George 2007b.

⁵ Some stylistic poetic traits, for instance a distinctive layout or special grammatical features, can occur in texts normally classified as belonging to different genres, such as incantations and epic narratives, on this see Groneberg 1996.

⁶ Vanstiphout 1986, 2–6.

⁷ Vanstiphout 1986, 4; George 2003, 36–39 and 2007, 5–7.

⁸ See Black 1998, 24–28 commenting on the lack of a Mesopotamian “poetic”, cf. Chapter 5 in the present work.

⁹ For different types of rubrics in hymnic texts, see Groneberg 2003, cf. also Metcalf 2015, 56–58 for rubrics in some Akkadian Old Babylonian Hymns; see also Geller 2000 for rubrics in incantations. Cf. also Vanstiphout 1999b, 81–83; Wasserman 2003, 176; George 2007b, 7–8. On the concepts of the “critical genre”, i.e. the modern classification, and the “ethnic genre”, i.e. the indigenous classification, as applied to the Mesopotamian literature, see Tinney 1996.

shared similarities.¹⁰ These examples of sorting and labelling, however, cannot be understood as a generic taxonomy in our modern sense.

All this considered, whereas one should not force western labels and categories on cuneiform texts, which instead should be considered in their *Eigenbegrifflichkeit*,¹¹ that is, in their own cultural autonomy, some classification is necessary. As explained by Erica Reiner in her essay on Akkadian literature, using terms borrowed from classical literature in order to identify Mesopotamian genres (i.e. the customary classification which employs terms such as hymns, prayer, epics, wisdom texts, etc.) can be justified by the fact that numerous Mesopotamian compositions share similar features, in matters of form and content, with texts of the classical western tradition.¹² Moreover, the use of modern or classical labels, however approximate, can enhance our understanding of Mesopotamian literature.¹³

For the purpose of this study, I will use therefore the terms “hymn” and “prayer” to define the texts under consideration.¹⁴ In the present classification, I follow the criterion of distinction offered by von Soden (1971–1975, 544), that is, I call hymns, those compositions in which the praise to the deities takes the central place, and consider as prayers those texts, whose main purpose is the petition.¹⁵

The developments and the main characteristics of the two genres will be illustrated in the next paragraph.

1.1.2 Sumerian background and Akkadian tradition

Sumerian hymns are numerous and have come down to us from the Early Dynastic period,¹⁶ yet Sumerian hymnic literature thrived in the Old Babylonian period.

¹⁰ See the remarks by Vanstiphout on these “catalogue texts”, in Vanstiphout 1999b, 81–82. See also Groneberg 2003. Cf. Krecher 1976–1980 for Akkadian literary catalogues. An indication of native genre-consciousness is offered, for instance, by the compilation tablets which contained several wisdom texts, a fact that suggests that these texts were perceived as belonging to a similar group and probably reflected a genre, on this see Cohen 2013, 13–14 and 60–62 and 2018.

¹¹ This term was first introduced by Landsberger (1965) who stressed the necessity of affirming the distinctiveness of the Mesopotamian civilizations. It was translated in English as “Conceptual autonomy” (Landsberger 1976, transl. Jacobsen, Foster, & von Siebenthal).

¹² See Longman 1991, 12–13 for a brief clarification of the concept of generic similarity. Cf. Reiner 1992, 294.

¹³ See Longman’s remarks on the utility of an “etic” approach, i.e. an approach which uses modern criteria of classification and identification, for a generic analysis of Mesopotamian literature, in that “[...] the meaning of a text is genre-bound”, and therefore a proper genre identification helps in the textual interpretation (Longman 1991, 15–17). Cf. also George 2007b, 9.

¹⁴ See Streck 2020 for a discussion on Old Babylonian hymns as a literary genre.

¹⁵ On the differences between hymns and prayers, and also between hymns and epic texts, compare also the recent study offered by Streck 2020, esp. 664–665.

¹⁶ I.e. a cycle of Sumerian hymns found at the site of Abu-Salabikh, see Biggs 1974, 45–56 and the recent work by Krebernik and Lisman 2020; cf. Hruša 2015, 109.

Sumerian hymns are characterised by a descriptive style; occasionally, they include narrative episodes. The Sumerian language does not have a specific term for “hymn”, although many Sumerian hymnic compositions end with the subscripts *adab*, or *tigi*, which were types of songs. This corroborates the hypothesis that these texts were composed to be sung. The doxology *za-mì*, “praise” is also attested at the end of hymns.¹⁷

Sumerian hymns can praise deities, kings, temples, cities and even sacred objects. Clear indications on the use and *Sitz im Leben* of these compositions are lacking, although it is possible that the hymns praising the kings were employed in court ceremonies, while those addressed to deities could be used in a cultic context.¹⁸

Up to the Old Babylonian period, no corpus of texts that can be considered as prayers in the strict sense, i.e. petitions directed to a superior entity and used in liturgy, has come down to us: Sumerian prayers in the third millennium only exist as encased in other types of texts, such as royal inscriptions or construction-hymns, which include a petition in the closing section (e.g., the Gudea cylinders). Prayers in Sumerian were also embedded in literary texts, such as myths, epic narratives or city laments; literary prayers to kings are also attested. In addition, a special form of private prayer emerged, in which the addressee would directly communicate with the deities through a message in form of a letter that functioned as a votive offer. These texts are the so-called letter-prayers, and can be dated back to the end of the 3rd millennium.¹⁹

Various types of prayers written in Sumerian were developed during the Old Babylonian and Kassite periods: they were used in the cult, and were occasionally accompanied by musical instruments. Some prayers bear the name of the instrument used in the cultic performance (e.g., the *balaĝ*, which was a type of harp, or the *ér-šè̄m-ma*, that one could translate as “lamentation (accompanied by the) šè̄m-drum”). Most types of Sumerian prayers of the 2nd and 1st millennium were composed in the Emesal dialect.²⁰

Original Sumerian literary texts ceased to be transmitted at the end of the Old Babylonian period, giving way to Akkadian literature, which rose from the Sumerian background partially maintaining the Sumerian literary tradition, but also renewing and transforming previous models.

¹⁷ Metcalf 2015, 17.

¹⁸ Wilcke 1972–1975; Römer 1989;

¹⁹ On letter-prayers see Borger 1957–1971; Hallo 1968 and Hallo 1996, 232–236. See also Hrůša 2015 208–209 for further references.

²⁰ Falkenstein 1957–1971; Römer 1989; cf. Hrůša 2015, 109–111. For the *balaĝ* prayers, see Cohen 1981; for the *ér-šè̄m-ma*-prayers, see Gabbay 2015, and compare Gabbay 2014a for a study on all types of Sumerian prayers in Emesal. Cf. also Maul 1989.

Akkadian hymns and prayers display similar features in both their structure and content, to the point that the two genres might seem to overlap. There are, however, several differences, by which they can be distinguished.

Akkadian hymns are lyrical compositions, which glorify deities,²¹ and are termed *zamāru* or *šēru*, “song”, in Akkadian. Sumerian and Akkadian hymns share a tripartite structure, containing an opening section (*invocatio*), in which the addressed god is identified, followed by the central body of the text in which the praises of the divinity unfold (*laudes*); finally, they end with a petition for the well-being of the supplicant and occasionally with a salutation (*preces*). The structural similarity between Akkadian and Sumerian hymns, which is mostly evident in the stock-phrases and rhetorical devices occurring in the invocation, and in common motifs employed in the praises, clearly illustrates the strong stream of tradition, which runs between the Sumerian and Akkadian literatures.²²

By contrast, the dominant element in prayers is the petition for the personal well-being of the worshipper. Various forms of Akkadian prayers are attested: prayer-like formulations appear in personal names, or might be encased in literary compositions; some prayers are part of commemorative inscriptions, and several royal prayers, that request well-fare and long life for the king and his reign, are also preserved.²³ Furthermore, a large group of prayers, i.e., the so-called “incantation prayers”, were employed in liturgical or cultic contexts; they can be addressed, aside from deities, to the *materia magica* used in ritual practice, for instance tamarisk or salt.²⁴ Incantation prayers can bear the Sumerian label ÉN “incantation” at the beginning and at the end, and the Sumerian introduction to rubrics “ka inim ma” (“wording”). The Mesopotamian scribes used these labels and rubrics to categorise and contextualise these compositions.²⁵

In spite of their variety, Akkadian prayers often share the following elements: the hymnic introduction (*invocatio*, see above), the self-presentation of the worshipper, the description of

²¹Akkadian hymns usually praise deities, although several consist in praises to kings, e.g., the hymnic compositions addressed to the king of Larsa Gungunum (see Hunger & Gronenberg 1978, 522), cf. also Gronenberg 2003, 56.

²²For hymns in Akkadian, see von Soden 1972–1975 and Hecker 1989; cf. also Hrůša 2015, 111–112. I follow here the structure of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns provided by Metcalf 2015, 25.

²³Hecker 1989, 718–783; von Soden, 1957–1971.

²⁴Reiner 1992, 309–310.

²⁵For a study on incantation prayers see Mayer 1976, Zgoll 2003b, Frechette 2012 and Jaques 2015. Cf. also Lenzi et. al. 2011, 24–52 and 2019, 161–167. Cf. also Hrůša 2015, 207–209 for further references.

his illness or troubles (the “lament”), the plea for divine aid, and ultimately the promise to glorify the deity in the future.²⁶

Both Akkadian hymns and prayers underwent structural and formal changes over time. Old Babylonian hymns differ from later hymns in structure and style, usually being shorter and characterised by self-contained lines. First-millennium hymns tend to be linguistically and stylistically more complex, and favour long series of subordinate clauses defining the attributes of the god being praised.

Old-Babylonian Akkadian prayers, in the same way, display a terser and less elaborate language than later prayers, which, moreover, make greater use of rhetorical devices.

The Akkadian Great Hymns and Prayers accord with these general characteristics, being two hundred lines in length or more, and displaying a syntactic and linguistic complexity typical of first-millennium compositions.

1.2 THE GREAT HYMNS AND PRAYERS: DEFINITION OF THE CORPUS

1.2.1 Previous editions and studies

I call the group of texts under study “Great Hymns and Prayers”, borrowing this label by Foster, who has treated these compositions in his anthology of Akkadian literature.²⁷ The corpus so far includes eight texts—four hymns and four prayers²⁸—addressed to several deities:

1. The Great Hymn to Šamaš
2. The Great Hymn to Gula
3. The Hymn to the Queen of Nippur (to Ištar)
4. The Great Prayer to Ištar
5. The Prayer to Anūna (to Ištar of Babylon)

²⁶ This structure is particularly typical of some types of incantation-prayers, such as *šuillas* or *namburbis*, which may include the description of the actions of the suppliant. On the opposite, the *diġiršadabba*-prayers seem to display less structural homogeneity (on this see Jaques 2015, 134–191. Cf. Lenzi 2019a, 167).

²⁷ See Foster 2005³, 583–635 (also below in this paragraph). In Foster’s anthology, however, the corpus is slightly different from the one presented here, as it includes an incantation prayer to Ištar (Foster 2005³, 599–605, §III.27, “The Great Prayer to Ištar”, see also Zgoll 2003a, “Ištar 2”, 41–80) that I have excluded due to its differences from the other compositions, e.g. its length (105 lines) and its clearly ritual purpose. The group identified by Foster, moreover, does not contain The Prayer to Anūna.

²⁸ For the selection of the texts belonging to the corpus, I follow Lambert 1982, 173. Note that many scholars labelled all these texts as “hymns”, making no distinction between them, while others called “hymns” those texts I here refer to as “prayers”, or *viceversa* (see Oshima 2011, 33, fn. 165). In the end, it is, as has been mentioned earlier in the discussion on genre (see above §1.1.1), an approximate classification, which only serves to highlight the general tone characterising the texts, whether more “hymnic” or rather more “penitential”

6. The Great Prayer to Marduk (Marduk 1)
7. The Great Hymn to Marduk (Marduk 2)
8. The Great Prayer to Nabû

In most cases these literary hymns and prayers have been comprehensively edited only once, often accompanied by a translation and brief commentary. Typical examples are Lambert's critical editions of the Gula Hymn of Bullussa-rabi (1967) and the Šamaš Hymn (1960, 121–38) as well as of Marduk 1 and Marduk 2 (1959–60, pp. 55–66) and of the Great Ištar Prayer (1959–60, 50–55). The edition of the Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, noticeable for its composite structure, has also been published by the same author (Lambert 1982). In addition, Lambert also edited the Prayer to Anūna (Lambert 1989), which was recently re-edited by Lenzi in a digital format (Lenzi 2018). Von Soden (1971) published the only edition of the Nabû Prayer. A new fragment of the Šamaš Hymn has been published by George and Al-Rawi in 1998, and Földi (2019b) provided an edition of additional manuscripts of the Gula Hymn of Bullussa-rabi.

Several fragments of Marduk 1, Marduk 2 and the Šamaš Hymn were included in Gesche's study on the Babylonian scribal curriculum (Gesche 2001, see Oshima 2011, 86 and 89 for the list of fragments of these two compositions which appeared in Gesche's book).

The most recent comprehensive editions of Marduk 1 and Marduk 2 have been offered by Oshima (Oshima 2011, 137–190 and 216–270) in his volume on Babylonian prayers to Marduk. An edition of a new manuscript of Marduk 1 has been recently published by Fadhil & Jiménez (2019, 162–177). In addition, new fragments of Marduk 1 (nos. 137–190), Marduk 2 (nos. 97–127), the Gula Hymn (nos. 57–62) and the Šamaš Hymn (nos. 128–142) appeared in George and Taniguchi's edition of Lambert's folios (2019).

In some cases, scholars discussed the formal elements of these poetic compositions: in their analysis of the Šamaš Hymn, for example, both Reiner (Reiner 1985, 68–84) and Castellino (Castellino 1976, 71–74) note the peculiar cyclical structure of the text and other poetic features (cf. Chapter 5). Some formal characteristics of these compositions were also mentioned in several studies concerned with Mesopotamian poetic language and style. In that respect, Vogelzang referred to various forms of repetitions in the Šamaš and Gula Hymns in her study about repetition as an essential poetic device (Vogelzang 1996, cf. also Chapter 5). Wasserman notes a few stylistic features in the Gula Hymn, Marduk 1 and the Prayer to Anūna in his analysis of the style and form of Old Babylonian literature (Wasserman 2003, 124 fn. 143, 85 fn. 111, 76 fn. 72, 23, 67, 85, 95, 123, 125, 150). Furthermore, Groneberg

included numerous examples from the Great Hymns and Prayers in her investigation of the language and style of Akkadian hymnic texts (Groneberg 1987).

Among the authors who offered translations of these hymns (cf. Castellino 1976, Falkenstein–von Soden 1953 and Seux 1976), Foster presents these literary texts as a unified group, setting them apart from other clearly devotional compositions, and naming them “Great hymns and prayers” (Foster 2005³, 583–635).

1.2.2 Manuscript tradition

The following manuscripts preserve the Great Hymns and Prayers:

- 1) **Šamaš Hymn.** Editions: Lambert 1960; George & Al-Rawi 1996. Currently 31 manuscripts. Manuscripts edited by Lambert: A = K 3182+, B = 3650+, C = Sm 1033+, D = BM 98361, E = K 10866, F = BM 98732 (Nineveh, Neo-Assyrian); g = VAT 10174, h = VAT 10071 + VAT 10756 (school tablets, Assur; Neo-Assyrian), i = Si 15 (school tablet, Sippar; Late Babylonian).

Additional manuscript edited by George & Al-Rawi 1996: k = IM 124633 (Sippar; Neo-Babylonian).

Additional manuscripts published in Lambert & Taniguchi 2019, nos. 128–142: BM 37502 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 37122 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 35077 (Sp II 613, school tablet, probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); Si 832+ (probably from Sippar; Neo-Babylonian); VAT 17553 (school tablet, Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 36296 + 38070 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 74197 (probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian); BM 65461; BM 65472+ (probably from Sippar; Neo-Babylonian); Si 832 (probably from Sippar; Neo-Babylonian); BM 134517 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian); K 20637 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian); BM 42652 (probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 40080 (school tablet, probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 33514+ (school tablet, probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 65461 (school tablet; Sippar; Neo-Babylonian). Unpublished manuscripts: BM 38167 (school tablet; Late Babylonian); BM 38061 (school tablet; Late Babylonian); BM 55080 (school tablet; Late Babylonian); IM 148526 (probably from Sippar; Neo-Assyrian); IM 132673 (probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian).

- 2) **Marduk 1.** Editions: Lambert 1959–1960, 55–60; Oshima 2011, 137–190 (see Oshima 2011, 85 for prior editions); Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 162–175. Currently 21 manuscripts. Manuscripts published by Lambert 1959–60: A = A1 = K 3216+, A2 = K 8237, A3 = K 3175+, A4 = K 3158+, A5 = K 3186, A6 = K 9430; B = K 8003 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian); C = DT 239 (Nineveh; Neo-Babylonian).

Additional manuscripts published by Oshima 2011: D = BM 78278 (Babylon, Old Babylonian); E = Ashm. 1924.1820 (probably from Kish, Neo-Babylonian); F = BM 76492 (Sippar, Late Babylonian); G = BM 66652 (now joined to additional fragments, see George & Taniguchi 2019, 5–6, nos. 83 and 87; probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); H = BM

45618 (probably from Babylon, Late Babylonian); I = BM 34366 (Sp I 483) (+) 45746 (SH 81–7–6, 159) (Babylon, it has an Arsacid colophon and can be dated 35 BCE, see George & Taniguchi 2019, 5); J = BM 34218+ (probably from Babylon, Late Babylonian); k = VAT 14642 (school-tablet, Babylon; Late Babylonian), l = BM 33716 (school tablet, Babylon; Late Babylonian), m = BM 36676 (Babylon; Late Babylonian), n = BM 36437 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian), o = BM 37571+ 37931 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian).

Additional manuscripts published in George & Taniguchi 2019, nos. 81-96: BM 72181 (probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); BM 38343 (from Babylon or Borsippa. Neo-Babylonian); BM 54980; BM 38025; BM 36656 (all from Babylon or Borsippa, Late Babylonian).

Additional manuscript published by Fadhil & Jiménez 2019: IM 124504 (Sippar. Neo-Babylonian).

- 3) **Marduk 2.** Editions: Lambert 1959–60; Oshima 2011, 216–270 (see Oshima 2011, 89 for prior editions), currently 38 manuscripts. Manuscripts published by Lambert: A = A1 (K 6906+), A2 (K 3183+), A3 (K 2872 +), A4 = (K 10825), B = K 3459, C = K 9917+ (Nineveh. Neo-Assyrian); D = VAT 11170 + 11152 (Aššur, Neo-Assyrian; unedited fragment: VAT 10313, see George & Taniguchi 2019, 6), E = E1 (K 9918), E2 (K 99178).

Manuscripts published by Oshima (2011): F = K 17797 (Nineveh. Neo-Assyrian), G = K 18397 (Niniveh. Neo-Assyrian) H = BM 61649+ (probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); I = BM 61635+ (Sippar. Late Babylonian.); J = 136878+ (probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); K = Si 851 (probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); L = BM 66558 (probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); M = BM 62292 (Sippar, Late Babylonian), N = Ashm. 1924.1420 (probably Kish, Neo-Babylonian); o = VAT 10174 (school tablet; Aššur. Neo-Assyrian); p= K 20949 (Nineveh. Neo-Assyrian), q = BM 66609 (school tablet; probably from Sippar. Late Babylonian); r = BM 66956; s = BM 87226 (unknown provenience, school tablet. Late Babylonian); t = BM 36726 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); u = BM 54203 (school tablet, probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian), v = BM 37959+ (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian), w = BM 77118, y = 1924.1807 (Babylon; Neo-Babylonian).

Manuscripts published in George & Taniguchi 2019, nos. 97–127: BM 41295 (probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); HSM 6836 (probably from Babylon; Neo Babylonian); F4; F5 (probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian); BM 35285 (Sp II 854) (probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 37659 (from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 37354 (from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); Sm 1751 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian); BM 55300 (school tablet, probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian); BM 37392 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 33811 (school tablet, probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 37692 (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian); BM 55408 (school tablet, probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian); BM 37937+ (school tablet, from Babylon or Borsippa; Late Babylonian).

- 4) **Great Prayer to Ištar.** Previous edition: Lambert 1959–60. Manuscript published by Lambert (1959–60): K 225 + 9962 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian). This prayer is newly edited here in Chapter 3, including the previously unpublished manuscript: BM 35939 (Babylon; Late-Babylonian).

- 5) **Gula Hymn.** Editions: Lambert 1967; Földi 2019b; currently 15 manuscripts and 1 school-exercise tablet. Manuscripts published by Lambert (1959–60): a = Ashm 1937–620 (Babylonian script; provenience unknown, 6th cent.); b = BM 33849; c = BM 34655+ (Babylonia, Late Babylonian); d = 81–7–27, 202 (Nineveh, Late Babylonian); E = K 3225+; F = 13320; G = K 7934; H = K 9258 + 17508; I = Sm 1420+, J = 128029 (Nineveh, Neo-Assyrian).
- Manuscripts published in George & Taniguchi 2019, nos. 57–62: 83–1–18, 430 (Niniveh; Neo-Assyrian); BM 62744 (Sippar, Late Babylonian); BM 54801 (probably from Sippar, Late Babylonian); K 10065 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian); BM 99811 (school tablet, probably from Sippar; Late Babylonian).
- Additional fragments edited by Földi (2019b), nos. 57–62: BM 49157 (Babylonia; Neo-Babylonian); BM 36003 (probably from Babylon; Late Babylonian); BM 36236 (Babylonia; Late Babylonian; it probably belongs to Lambert’s ms. c); Sm. 1036 (Nineveh; Neo-Assyrian; it probably belongs to Lambert’s ms. E).
- 6) **Prayer to Anūna.** Editions: Lambert 1989, Lenzi 2020b (digital edition): currently 1 manuscript: CBS 19842 (Nippur; Old Babylonian).
- 7) **Great Prayer to Nabû.** Previous edition: von Soden 1971, currently 2 manuscripts: A = K2361+, B = K 15248 (Nineveh, Neo-Assyrian). This prayer is newly edited here in Chapter 2.
- 8) **Hymn to the Queen of Nippur.** Edition: Lambert 1982, currently 13 manuscripts: A = Rm II 164+, B = 79–7–8, 182, C = 79–7–8, 181, D = K 995+, E = K 2552, F = K 10725, I = K 8697, J = Rm 939, K = K 18129, L = K 10661, M = K 14194 (Nineveh, Neo-Assyrian), g = K 6100 (Nineveh, Neo-Babylonian), h = Si 9 (Sippar, Neo/Late Babylonian).

The vast majority of the manuscripts available for the reconstruction of these hymns and prayers are first-millennium copies, many of them coming from Ashurbanipal’s library in Nineveh (7th cent. BCE). Nevertheless, the corpus includes also two Old Babylonian copies: one exemplar of Marduk 1, i.e. BM 78728 (ms. D in Oshima’s edition), can probably be dated to the time of Hammurapi;²⁹ and the Old Babylonian manuscript preserving the Prayer to Anūna, which cannot be dated with certainty, but might go back to the early Cassite period.³⁰

The date of composition of these texts is uncertain. Lambert has suggested a Cassite date for most of the Great Hymns and Prayers, because of their sophisticated vocabulary and other stylistic features (the “hymno-epic dialect”, see below §1.2.4).³¹ Furthermore, in his edition of

²⁹ Oshima 2011, 138–139; Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 162.

³⁰ According to Lambert, the manuscript is probably not Old Babylonian. He observes that the name Anūna for the goddess Ištar was used only until the Middle-Babylonian period. Furthermore, he thinks that the Prayer to Anūna might have been originally written in Babylon, and be connected to Marduk 1, which also probably comes from Babylon (Lambert 1989, 323–324).

³¹ Note that the name of the alleged author of the Gula Hymn, i.e. Bullussa-rabi, is attested in several Middle-Babylonian sources. This would confirm Lambert’s hypothesis, who argued that this composition might have been composed between the Cassite and Neo-Babylonian period. On this see Földi 2019a. It seems, furthermore,

the Nabû Prayer, von Soden proposed a first-millennium date for the text, on the basis of style as well, but also for reasons of spelling conventions of the manuscript (cf. Chapter 2 for a study of the language and style of the Nabû Prayer). Nevertheless, the Old Babylonian manuscripts of Marduk 1 and the Prayer to Anūna prove that at least these two texts were composed earlier.³²

Judging from the extant portions, none of these poems bears a label in the beginning, e.g., the Sumerian ÉN “incantation”, but in one case a rubric is attested: Marduk 1 closes with the subscript *unnīnu*, “Prayer”;³³ the Ishtar Prayer also had a rubric, which is however lost (cf. Chapter 3 and Appendix). Furthermore, Marduk 1 has a catch-line, which is most likely the opening line of the Šamaš Hymn.³⁴

The richness and the longevity of the tradition testify to how widespread and probably well-known these texts were. The fact that many manuscripts of these compositions were exercise tablets confirms their popularity in scribal circles.

1.2.3 Layout and prosody

Despite the fact that the original format of some of the small fragments is impossible to reconstruct, the majority of sources of the compositions under study are full-text tablets with the standard four-column format.³⁵

The Great Hymns and Prayers are characterised by a distinctive layout. In this regard, the following five compositions exhibit horizontal rulings after every two lines in most or all of their manuscripts: the Prayer to Anūna, the Šamaš Hymn, Marduk 1, Marduk 2 and the Nabû Prayer. The latter text also includes two sets of three verses (see Chapter 2). In some cases, this formal arrangement seems to match the poetic structure. Some of these compositions namely contain the so-called “lyrical repetition”, that is, the identical repetition of a distich, which differs only by the delayed introduction of the name of the invoked god in

that Bullussa-rabi was mostly a female name in the Cassite times, and thus the author of the hymn might have been a woman (Földi 2019a).

³² Oshima 2011, 138; Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 162.

³³ Oshima 2011, 138–139.

³⁴ Oshima (2011, 141) suggests that Marduk 1 and the Šamaš Hymn might have been transmitted in a series. Indeed the Šamaš Hymn also contains a catch-line of an unidentified text. On this aspect, see also George & Al-Rawi (1998, 203), who comment on the colophon in a Sippar manuscript of Šamaš, which contains the expression *ul qati*, “it is not finished”, and therefore indicates that the hymn was probably followed by another composition. Incidentally, one should also note that the colophon of one manuscript of the Great Prayer to Ištar bears the phrase ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.ŠÉ, “completed”, which is found at the end of series, see, e.g., the series of Maqlû, tablet viii (Abusch 2016, 272, 366, 391), and the Gilgameš Epic, tablet xii (George 2003, 737). Cf. the Appendix within the present study.

³⁵ Although also rarer formats are attested, such as the six-column format of a manuscript of the Gula Hymn (ms c), see Földi 2019b, 87.

the second set of lines (cf. Chapter 2 §2.2 for the use of this figure in the Nabû Prayer; see also Chapter 5, § 5.2.2.1.2.1, “Delayed introduction”). This structure follows the Sumerian hymnic model, and is also characteristic of Old Babylonian Akkadian hymns;³⁶ it is employed fairly consistently in the Nabû Prayer, in Marduk 1 and in the first part of Marduk 2 (ll. 1–4), but it is not found in the Šamaš Hymn nor the Prayer to Anūna. Nevertheless, this arrangement into couplets often appears as purely artificial, since the rulings marking the distichs can be put at the wrong places, see, e.g., in the Šamaš Hymn, ll. 174–175, which clearly belong together, but are instead split into two different couplets.³⁷

The remaining three texts of this corpus are divided into poetic strophes. The manuscript of the Prayer to Ištar presents rulings every tenth line, although it is clear that the text is structured into couplets; the manuscripts of the Gula Hymn divide the text into strophes of various lengths, which can include from 8 up to 14 lines. In this case as well, the line division does not always accord with the content of each section.³⁸

The Hymn to the Queen of Nippur is the longest of this corpus, containing more than 300 lines. It was compiled with materials from various sources: different texts were probably manipulated and combined to form a composition, in which different sections can be recognised. The end of each section is marked by horizontal rulings in some manuscripts; not all the manuscripts have marks of division, but those that do, all agree with each other. In addition, rulings are placed every 13 lines throughout the portions of the text that seem to be derived from a hymn in strophes; the hymn was probably entirely incorporated in the composition.³⁹ Lambert postulated a similar process of compilation for the Šamaš Hymn, which also displays a noticeable unevenness between its sections.⁴⁰

The Great Hymns and Prayers can be scanned for the standard Akkadian metre, that is, the so-called *vierheber* verse, which became the predominant metrical pattern since the latter part of the second millennium. In this metrical system, the line constitutes the basic metric unit, and is divided into two hemistichs by a *caesura*. Each hemistich contains two feet, i.e. two smaller metrical units, and the last foot is usually trochaic or amphibrach. The trochaic ending is often the most regular part of the verse.⁴¹

³⁶ Metcalf (2015, 22; 58–59) designates this as *a-a'* structure.

³⁷ Lambert 1960, 123; 2013, 28; the same phenomenon is observed in Marduk 1, see Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 162. Cf. also Groneberg 1996, 64–65 for some observations on the line-division markers in Akkadian literary texts.

³⁸ Lambert 1967, 103.

³⁹ Lambert 1982, 175.

⁴⁰ Lambert 1960, 122–123; 1982, 175 and 178.

⁴¹ On the Akkadian 2+2 metrical structure, Hecker 1974: 113, 130–135; West 1997a; George 2003, 162–165; Lambert 2013, 22–28; Jiménez 2017a, 72–76. For the trochaic ending (also known as *clausula accadica*), see

According to the completely preserved or restored lines, the Great Hymns and Prayers tend to respect this standard prosodic structure. The majority of verses in the Šamaš Hymn display four metrical units and end with a trochee, although there occur also longer lines, whose metrical rhythm is difficult to identify, so that they resemble prose (e.g., l. 105, l. 118, l. 150).⁴² Marduk 1, Marduk 2, the Great Prayer to Ištar and the Great Prayer to Nabû show overall a regular prosodic pattern, employing the 2+2 verse structure in most of the preserved text. Manuscript A of the Nabû Prayer is worthy of particular attention, as it contains a vertical ruling in the first column, that represents the metrical *caesura* (for a detailed analysis of the Great Prayers to Ištar and Nabû, see Chapters 2 and 3).

The Hymn to the Queen of Nippur also displays a fairly regular metrical structure, as far as can be seen from the extant text. In contrast, the Gula Hymn contains *vierheber* verses, but also numerous exceptions, such as shorter lines containing only three or even two units (e.g., 38, 45, 58, 59, 73, 72, 76), or longer lines, with a 3+2 structure (e.g., l. 70 and 140). It includes also long verses, whose metrical pattern is difficult to identify (e.g., l. 71: *ra-ba-a-tú pul-hat-su eli ilī* (UGU DIGIR.MEŠ) *kul-lat ka-li-šú-nu ni-bit šah-tu*, “His fear is great among the gods: everyone of them reverences the name”, see Lambert 1967, 120–121).

The Prayer to Ištar Anūna is too damaged to allow a metrical analysis, but judging from the extant lines, it does not respect the metrical pattern consistently: it includes 2+2 verses with a trochaic ending, but it also displays 2+1 lines (e.g., l. 108). In most lines, however, the metrical structure is too uncertain to be distinguished.

1.2.4 Language and style

The present compositions exhibit several features characteristic of the so-called “Hymno-epic” dialect, a high-register literary style also found in numerous other Akkadian hymns and epic narratives.⁴³ Its earliest attestations are found in Old Babylonian literary texts, but it probably continued to be used until the Late Babylonian period. The hymno-epic dialect involves both grammatical and lexical peculiarities, such as the following: shortened

Landsberger 1926–27, 371; Held 1961, 3, fn. 22; Groneberg 1971, 158; Knudsen 1980, 14; von Soden, 1981, 170–72; Edzard 1993, 149; West 1997a, 183–184; Hecker 2000, 265; Lambert 2013, 18–20; Jiménez 2017a, 74–75. Cf. further in Chapter 2, §2.1.1.

⁴² See Lambert 1960, 122.

⁴³ The term “dialect” first coined by von Soden is in fact a misnomer, and many scholars have suggested different definition, such as “idiom” (Lambert 1959–60, 49; 2013, 34) or “style” (George 2003, 172), on this see Hess 2010, 102–103. Hess further interprets the Hymno-epic dialect as comparable to the Homeric dialect, because it is a combination of archaic, foreign and artificial elements, i.e., a *Kunstsprache*, that is, both an “artificial” and “creative” language (Hess 2010, 114).

pronominal suffixes, rare verbal stems (e.g. ŠD-stem), adverbial endings (i.e., the locative suffix *-um*, terminative suffix *-iš* and their combined form *-uš*), third person singular feminine marker *ta-* in verbs, special forms of the *status constructus*, a special vocabulary. Within the Great Hymns and Prayers adverbial endings are often found, for instance:⁴⁴

Marduk 2, l. 37ⁿ: *qātukka*, “to your hand”.

Marduk 1: l. 41 and l. 63 *uggukka*, “in your anger”; l. 67 *īdiš*, “into mud”; l. 194 *rīštuk*, “in your *celebration*”.⁴⁵

Ištar Prayer: l. 140 *anukki*, “at your consent”; l. 183 *iššūriš*, “like a bird” (cf. Chapter 3).

Nabû Prayer: l. 84 and 192 *qibītukka*, “at your command”; l. 90 *ištarāniš*, “to the goddess” (cf. Chapter 2).

Šamaš Hymn: l. 47 *šītukka*, “at your rising”.

Hymn to the Queen of Nippur: col. iv, l. 5 *malkatuš*, “like a queen”.

Gula Hymn: l. 116, *apiš*, “like reed”; l. 178 *rūqiš*, “from afar”.

Prayer to Anūna: l. 139 *qudmukki*, “in your presence”.

Shortened pronominal suffixes also occur, for example:

Ištar Prayer: l. 153 *iratuš*, “his chest”; l. 161 *kibsuš*, “his path” and *išdūš*, “his foundations” (cf. Chapter 3).

Hymn to the Queen of Nippur: l. 48 *kabattuk*, “your reins”; l. 49 *libbuk*, “your heart”.⁴⁶

Marduk 1: ll. 5/7 *amāruk*, “your stare”.

In addition, verbal forms with the feminine *ta-* prefix (Ištar Prayer: l. 177 *talli*, see Chapter 3), ŠD-stem verbs (Marduk 2, l. 89: *tušpaṭṭar*; Šamaš Hymn, ll. 1/3 *mušnammir*),⁴⁷ and cases of *status constructus* in *-u* (e.g., Gula Hymn, l. 13 [*bē*] *lu abāri*, “possessor of might”; Nabû Prayer, l. 175 *šēru rēšūtīya*, “my morning aid”, see Chapter 2) are attested.

The vocabulary employed in the present texts is also remarkable, as it includes rare literary terms borrowed from lexical lists and *hapax legomena* (see Chapter 2, §2.3. and Chapter 3, §3.3 for the special vocabulary in the Nabû and Ištar Prayers; cf. also Chapter 4).

A further noticeable aspect related to the style of the present compositions is the use of rhetorical devices: parallelism and repetition occur very often, along with various figures of sound, e.g., *homoioleuta*, assonances and alliterations, which are employed both to enhance

⁴⁴ On the standard features of the hymno-epic dialect see Von Soden 1931, 163–227 and 1933, 90–183; Groneberg 1978, 15; Goodnick Westenholz 1997, 26; Krebernik 2003–2004, 11; Hess 2010, 102–22; Jiménez 2017a, 76–79. For further examples of hymno-epic traits in the compositions under study, cf. Groneberg 1987 vol. I and II, *passim*. Cf. also Chapter 2, §2.3.

⁴⁵ On the form *rīš-tuk* see Oshima 2011, 169, but cf. also Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 174 fn. 36, where a different interpretation is suggested.

⁴⁶ Lambert 1982, 204. Cf. Groneberg 1987 II, 3.

⁴⁷ See Lambert 1959–60, 49 for further examples of ŠD-stem forms in Marduk 2.

the rhythm of the verses, and to highlight structural elements. Furthermore, numerous metaphors and similes contribute to the rich figurative language of these texts, which are also characterised by wordplays and puns (cf. Chapter 5).

Many of the manuscripts of the Great Hymns and Prayers display the typical spelling conventions of first millennium texts, including, for instance, irregular case endings in nouns, dropping of final vowels and overhanging vowels in verbal forms. Mimation appears rarely and inconsistently.⁴⁸

The irregularity in case endings was caused by the progressive loss of case distinction in nominal forms during the first millennium. Examples of aberrant word-final vowels are the following:

- Irregular nominative endings: Nabû Prayer, ll. 21/23 *gir-ri*; Šamaš, l. 118 *um-ma-ni* (ms. i); Marduk2, ll. 2/4 *par-ri-ka* (ms. B).
- Irregular accusative endings: Šamaš Hymn l. 48 *ma-a-tum* (ms. B); l. 132 *dum-qu* (ms. A); Marduk1 l. 206 *nak-ru-tu* (mss. A and F); Hymn to the Queen of Nippur col iii, l. 34 *e-pe-šu* (ms. g)
- Irregular genitive endings: Nabû Prayer ll. 54/56 *ina na-ri-iṭ-tu*; Šamaš Hymn l. 127 *ša rug-gu-gu* (ms. A); Gula Hymn l. 10 *mu-da-’i-iš za-’i-ru* (ms. a).

The apocope of final vowels can be observed in substantives, verbs and stative forms, e.g. Šamaš Hymn l. 62 *ina ḥu-bur* for *ina ḥuburi* (ms. B), Ištar Prayer l. 227 [*na-a*]*k-ru-uṭ* for *nakruṭa*, Gula Hymn l. 183 (mss. A and c) *a-ši-pa-ak* for *āšipāku*.⁴⁹

Overhanging vowels are also attested, see e.g. Nabû Prayer l. 88 *i-šá-bi* for *išâb*, Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, l. 16 *i-ša-mi* for *išâm*.⁵⁰

The Prayer to Ištar Anūna is the only text within the present corpus which displays exclusively Late Old Babylonian linguistic and orthographic traits (e.g., a general regularity in case endings, but inconsistent mimation; use of PI for /pi/ instead of the sign BI, see Lambert 1989, 223; cf. George 2003, 160-161), besides some standard ‘hymno-epic’ features, such as shortened suffixes and adverbial endings.⁵¹

⁴⁸ On the phenomenon of the loss of final vowels, see Aro 1975; Streck 2014; Jiménez 2017a, 277. For other examples of irregular case endings in first-millennium manuscripts, see Schwemer 2017, 69–75.

⁴⁹ On the irregular spelling of the first singular stative endings in the Gula Hymn, cf. also Jiménez 2017a, 225, fn. 636.

⁵⁰ On overhanging vowels, see GAG §18a, 82e and 104g. See also Cagni 1969, 146–149; Groneberg 1987 I, 143–144, George 2003, 441–442, cf. Jiménez 2017a, 278 for further references.

⁵¹ See Lambert 1989, 323.

1.2.5 Content and Sitz im Leben

In the Great Hymns and Prayers, several “philosophical” reflections dealing with human sorrow, sin and divine justice are skilfully encased between the standard elements of prayer and praise.

The theme of “theodicy”, meant in the sense of the attempt to understand and explain human suffering and evil, is expressed, for example, in Marduk 1, ll. 105–110. There the poet develops the idea that sin is inevitable, and often unknown: human beings are naturally prone to evil, and not even the ignorance of one’s transgressions counts as a justification.⁵²

¹⁰⁵*mannu ša ittaššaru lā iršû hiṭītu*

¹⁰⁶*ajjû ša ittaḥhid[u] gillatu lā ubla*

¹⁰⁷*lā idānim-ma [šērēt]ūššina lā naṭlā*

¹⁰⁸*ša damqat u masqat ilu muškallim*

¹⁰⁹*ša iṣû ilšu [ku]ššudā hiṭātūšu*

¹¹⁰*ša ilšu lā iṣû ma’dū arnūšu*

¹⁰⁵Who was he, so watchful, so as not to bear crime?

¹⁰⁶Who was he, so care[ful], that he carried no sin?

¹⁰⁷(People) don’t know, and they don’t see their [fau]lts,

¹⁰⁸The god is the one who reveals what is good and what is fo[ul].

¹⁰⁹The one who has his god, his sins are [re]moved,

¹¹⁰The one who does not have his god, his crimes are many.⁵³

⁵² Cf. also the *eršahunga*-prayer 6: LÚ-u-tú UGU SÍG SAĜ.DU-šú an-nu-u-[šá hi-ṭa-tu-u-šá gil-la-tu-u-šá], translated by Jaques in her edition as follows: “L’humanité : ses péchés, [ses fautes, ses transgressions] sont (aussi nombreux) que les cheveux de sa tête.” (Jaques 2015, 92), cf. also Lambert 1974. According to the Mesopotamian traditional outlook, every misfortune that befalls human beings can ultimately be ascribed to a divine punishment sent by an angry deity for the penitent’s sins. To ignore one’s sins does not mean to be innocent, because human beings are born sinners. This concept is abundantly developed, and occasionally questioned, in some first-millennium wisdom texts, which are considered by modern scholars as representative of a more “critical” wisdom genre, the so-called “negative” wisdom. Among these texts, one can mention, for example, *Ludlul* and the *Babylonian Theodicy* (on this see Alster 2005, 30; 265–339, see Cohen 2013, 14–17; cf. also Lambert [1995] 1998, 36–42). The idea of the sinful nature of human beings is also attested in a Sumerian composition labelled by scholars “Man and His God” (see Kramer 1955. For a recent translation see Klein 1997). For a brief survey on the “Theodicy theme” in wisdom texts and the Great Hymns and Prayers, see Rozzi (forthcoming).

⁵³ Own translation. Oshima (2011, 165) translates differently: “Who was so on his guard so as not to bear sin?/ Where is the one, who was so careful (and) carries no guilt?/ Did not they lay their [faul]t on me? Are they invisible? /A god is the one who reveals what is good and what is [b]ad.”

The only possible solution to the theodicy problem is faith. The pious will, in the end, be redeemed, in spite of their crimes.⁵⁴ Within the texts under consideration, deities are indeed depicted as both severe towards those who transgress, and merciful towards the righteous.

The twofold nature of divinities is stressed, for instance, in the opening lines of Marduk 1 (ll. 9–12) and in Marduk 2, l. 81: *urra napšurka šēz[uz]u ušpašš[iḥ(?)]*, “In the morning there is your forgiveness, the furious one relen[ts]”;⁵⁵ see also the Hymn to the Queen of Nippur col iii, ll. 19–22, and the Ištar Prayer, l. 74: *anūna k[u]llumat eṭēra īd[e]*, “She sh[ow]s terror, (but) she kno[ws] how to save” (cf. the note on this line in the commentary in Chapter 3).⁵⁶

The Prayer to Nabû contains the same motif of the deity being first wrathful and then compassionate, and further develops this concept using natural metaphors. Within ll. 177–185 a philosophical passage is found, in which a comparison between human suffering and some natural phenomena is implied, e.g., the ripening of the dates, in the sense that a negative beginning is the necessary condition for a positive development. This thought seems to be offered as an explanation for the seemingly unmerited misfortunes, and also represents a consolation to the theodicy problem, see, e.g., l. 177 *aḥrâtiš pisnuqiš lallāriš udašš[ap]*, “For the future time, what has seemed pitiable, he will swe[eten] like syrup”.⁵⁷

Among the Great Hymns and Prayers, the Šamaš Hymn contains the broadest wisdom section, which stretches for approximately 40 lines (ll. 83–127). In this portion of the text, a series of just or unjust behaviours is listed, together with their respective reward or punishment. The poetic technique used in this hymn is particularly noticeable. The opening hymnic section, in which the Sun-god is lyrically described in his daily journey as traversing the heavens and the mountains, gives way to a stringent depiction of just and wicked judges, honest and dishonest merchants, villains and pious men, all of them subjected to the verdict of Šamaš.

This section perfectly illustrates what scholars define as “the retribution principle”, i.e. the belief that the god-fearing person, who acts honestly towards other people and shows their

⁵⁴ Cf. Lambert [1995] 1998, 32–33.

⁵⁵ For the reconstruction of this verse, see the note on ll. 10/12 of the Nabû Prayer in the commentary (Chapter 2). See also Marduk 2, l. 68: *kī itennu bēlu išta'al irēm ušpašš[iḥ]*, “once the lord has raged, he reflects, has mercy, and relents (Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 173).

⁵⁶ The topic of suffering followed by deliverance plays a central role in the poem of *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*, in which the long hymnic opening section praises Marduk for his being able to destroy, but then eventually to save. This composition bears numerous structural similarities with Marduk 1, so much that it has been suggested that the former might be an expansion of the latter (see Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 156). For some remarks on the dual nature of Marduk in *Ludlul*, see also Sitzler 1985, 89. Cf. Piccin & Worthington 2015.

⁵⁷ On the wisdom passage in the Nabû Prayer and its similarities with *Theodicy*, ll. 260–263, see the introduction to the text in Chapter 2, §2.5.

devotion to the deities, will be rewarded, while the wicked, who deceives others and neglects the religious duties, will be punished.⁵⁸

The *Sitz im Leben* of the Great Hymns and Prayers is difficult to determine. The lack of any clear indication of a cultic or any other ritual context, the *recherché* vocabulary, which includes *hapax legomena* or extremely learned words taken from lexical lists, the hymno-epic features and the occasional wisdom reflections led several scholars to assign a purely literary purpose to this group of compositions.⁵⁹ Whether their scope was to be recited in the cult or for the entertainment of an audience of *literati*, the Great Hymns and Prayer are undoubtedly highly sophisticated works of literature, destined for a small intellectual elite.

⁵⁸ For the concept of divine retribution in Assyriological studies, see Cohen 2013, 244–247 with references to previous literature, and cf. also Oshima 2018. It is precisely this principle that is put into doubt in the poem of the *Babylonian Theodicy*, in which the sceptical sufferer laments the lack of divine justice, inasmuch that evil people often prosper, and, on the opposite, the just ones suffer. The retribution system can be found in the Old Testament as well, and has been defined by the Biblical scholarship as the “Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang” (on this see the presentation of this concept with a concise history of research provided by Freuling 2008).

⁵⁹ Von Soden 1971, 48; Reiner 1978, 190. But, cf. Lambert 1982, who maintains that these texts must have been originally composed for a practical use in the cult. Recently Oshima (2011, 219) has suggested that Marduk 2 might have been used during the *Akītu*-festival in the month of Kislīmu in Babylon, since the ritual instructions of that festival seem to mention part of the incipit of this text (see Çağırğan & Lambert 1991–1993, 96). Nevertheless, there is no conclusive evidence ascertaining that the *Šuilla*-prayer attested in the ritual is really Marduk 2.

CHAPTER 2: THE GREAT PRAYER TO NABÛ

2.1 MANUSCRIPTS AND EDITIONS

The so-called Great Prayer to Nabû is preserved in two manuscripts: K 2361 + 3193 + 14033 + 18434 + Sm 389 + 601 + K 11373 (ms. A) and K 15248 (ms. B). All fragments come from the Nineveh palace libraries,⁶⁰ but no colophon is extant. Both manuscripts are written in Neo-Assyrian script. Ms. A is a two-column tablet; the original format of ms. B cannot be reconstructed.

The first edition of the text dates back to 1889, when Brünnow published copies of K 2361 + 3193 + Sm 389 (1889, 236–42). Brünnow transliterated the text, but did not offer a translation. The first attempt at translating the Great Prayer to Nabû was made by von Soden, who included this text in his *Sumerische und Akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* edited with Falkenstein (1953, 263–66). In 1954, von Soden collated the tablets in the British Museum and identified additional fragments belonging to ms. A (K 14033, Sm 601 as well as K 11373). Based on his collations, von Soden was able to restore some additional lines; he also identified K 15248, a small fragment representing the only duplicate known so far (ms. B).

In 1971, von Soden published a second comprehensive edition of the prayer (1971, 44–71), with a transliteration, translation and philological commentary. Von Soden did not provide new copies of the published fragments, nor of the unpublished fragments. Seux offered a translation with philological notes in his anthology (1976, 181–85). Foster translated the text as well, basing his readings and interpretations mostly on von Soden's previous edition (2005, 621–26). Having been discovered later, K 18434 was not included in any edition.

2.2 LAYOUT AND POETIC STRUCTURE

Both manuscripts share the same layout that is characterised by a ruling after every second line, which led scholars in the past to designate the Great Hymns and Prayers as “hymns in paragraphs” (Lambert 1959–60, 48). This formal feature reflects the poetic structure of the texts that were subdivided into couplets and quatrains. The division into couplets agrees with the typical structure of Akkadian and Sumerian hymns and prayers: a succession of quatrains

⁶⁰ It is difficult to establish a more precise provenance. Manuscript A has low K numbers, and therefore comes probably from the South West Palace (cf. Reade 2000: 422, George 2003: 386). The findspot of manuscript B, though, is unknown.

consisting of two couplets that are distinct only through the “delayed” introduction of the deity’s name:⁶¹ In the first couplet, the deity is usually referred to by epithet (most commonly *bēlu*, “lord”) or not named at all, whereas his or her proper name is introduced in the first line of the second couplet. This *variatio* is normally the only difference between the first and the second couplet. Despite the numerous *lacunae*, the extant text demonstrates that this type of alternation is consistently used throughout the first 56 lines of the Nabû Prayer, and then occasionally in the rest of the text.⁶² The subdivision into couplets runs through the whole text, but is interrupted in lines 175–80, where the ruling is placed after three lines rather than two, thus forming two tercets.

The scribe did not only indicate couplets (and tercets) in the layout of the tablet, but also indicated a division in the middle of the lines: In lines 1–36 he left a *spatium* that subdivided each line into two halves. From line 37 until the end of the first column, he marked two halves of the line with a vertical ruling. These subdivisions of the line mark a metrical break, and each half-line may be considered a hemistich of a poetic line (or verse). Although an indication of the *caesura* is consistently present only in the first column, the poetic lines in the rest of the prayer probably had a similar structure. As far as we can see from the preserved lines, the indication of the metrical break in the layout was probably only executed where the limited length of the line left the scribe enough space to do so.

2.2.1 Prosody

Since many lines are only partly preserved, a comprehensive metrical analysis of the text is difficult. Based on the complete lines, the usage of the so-called *clausula accadica* is apparent.⁶³ We can observe this specific pattern, a *trochaeus* at the end of the line, in almost all complete or restorable poetic lines, as well as in the lines where at least the final word is extant (a total of 98 lines). The sole exceptions are the parallel lines 25 and 27, which end in a long, closed syllable (*nekelmûk*).

The final trochee is also often found at the end of the first hemistich, immediately preceding the *caesura*. If we take into account all lines that allow us to examine their first

⁶¹ Lambert 1959–60, 48; Vogelzang 1996, 71; Metcalf 2015, 22–23; 59–60.

⁶² Von Soden 1971, 47.

⁶³ For several studies on the Akkadian metre, see above Chapter 1, § 1.2.3, fn. 41.

hemistich (103 lines),⁶⁴ we count 86 lines that end in a trochee before the metrical break. The exceptions are:

l. 38, 40: <i>lipšahā</i>	l. 97: <i>imkū</i>	l. 211: <i>šuşê</i>
l. 41, 43: <i>palkū</i>	l. 104: <i>tattadi</i>	l. 212: <i>erbê</i>
l. 77: <i>šūšū</i>	l. 115: <i>šurdū</i>	l. 222/224: <i>tanittaka</i>
l. 79: <i>amū</i>	l. 121: <i>zakā</i>	
l. 93, 101: <i>Nabū</i>	l. 129: <i>qê</i>	

Nevertheless, von Soden does not treat words with final ultraheavy vowels as exceptions to the *clausula accadica*, but instead suggests that they maintain the same accentuation of standard trochaic endings (e.g., *Nábū*).⁶⁵ Huehnergard and Knudsen,⁶⁶ on the other hand, analyse final ultraheavy vowels as containing two syllables, namely a long vowel which bears the *ictus* and a short unaccented vowel immediately succeeding. Contract vowels are hence counted as “virtual trochees”.⁶⁷ According to this reconstruction, a word such *Nabū* should be scanned as *Nabūū*, and accented on the long, penultimate syllable.

Jiménez follows this second interpretation, and furthermore hypothesises that this accentuation might be due to a pseudo-archaizing system of recitation.⁶⁸

Overall, the poetic lines in the Nabû Prayer are structured according to the most common metrical pattern of Akkadian epic and hymnic texts: Four metrical units in each line are divided by a *caesura*, so that a single verse is characterised by a 2+2 structure.⁶⁹ Single words, genitive chains (simple: e.g., l. 176 *šuršurrū ħinzurri*, or composed: e.g., v. 49 *inagipiš edê*), and pairs of words (e.g., standard formulas such as “heaven and earth”, “above and below”, “night and day”, “father and mother”) are taken as one metrical unit.⁷⁰ Genitive chains and word pairs, however, seem to have a variable metrical length and are probably to be considered as *anceps*.⁷¹ Some particles and prepositions do not count as one metrical unit (e.g., *ša, ana, ina, adi, kīma*).

⁶⁴ The following lines are too damaged and have been excluded here: 95–6, 104–113; 130–171, 123–4, 127–8.

⁶⁵ Von Soden states that the Babylonian metrical system was rhythmic; he takes into account not only words ending with ultraheavy vowels at the end of the last foot, but also those within the poetic line (von Soden 1981, 104–105).

⁶⁶ Knudsen 1980, 14; Huehnergard 2011, 395. Cf. Helle 2014, 58.

⁶⁷ Huehnergard 2011, 395.

⁶⁸ Jiménez 2017a, 227.

⁶⁹ Lambert 1960, 66; Hecker 1974, 113; West 1997a, 176.

⁷⁰ Lambert 2013, 23–25; cf. also West 1997a, 175–187.

⁷¹ Lambert 2013, 25.

To provide some examples: a poetic line like *ibli ina qê šibqī // ana parā`i lēmu* (51) will be analysed as composed of two metrical units in the first hemistich (verb + preposition with genitive chain) and two metrical units in the second (preposition with infinitive + adjective), therefore resulting in a standard 2+2 structure. A hemistich like *balāša u utnenšu* (217) will be taken as composed of two metrical units, formed by two nouns connected by a particle. As mentioned above, the indication of the *caesura* in the layout, i.e., the interposed space or the vertical ruling in the middle of a line, is consistent only in the first column. Where the manuscript lacks such a graphic indication, it is still possible to count the words according to the general rules, scanning for four-unit lines. Taking into account lines that are complete or sufficiently preserved to allow an analysis (82 lines),⁷² we count 66 lines of the 2+2 type. Only two parallel lines seem to have a 3+1 structure:

³⁷[*bēlu*] *rēštū nūḥ // ana surri*

[...]

³⁹[^d*Na*] *bū rēštū nūḥ // ana surri*

In this couplet the vertical spacing representing the break was clearly inserted before *ana surri*, implying a single metrical unit in the second hemistich. It is not excluded, however, that the scribe placed the *caesura* in the wrong position. An incorrect division of the poetic line and a mechanical use of the vertical ruling between the hemistichs is a common phenomenon. It is attested both in epics and, in particular, in the long hymns and prayers.⁷³ One could therefore move the *caesura* forward (after *rēštū*), and analyse the line as a standard 2+2. The subdivision in hemistichs in the present prayer does not only follow formal criteria, but also takes into account the semantic structure of the line. It is, however, difficult to see why a subdivision “Supreme lord, be appeased // in an instant” would be preferable over “Supreme lord, // be appeased in an instant”.

Some lines appear to show a hypermeter. Compare for instance the following two parallel lines (first and third line of a quatrain):

⁵³*ahuz qāssu // lā immēs*⁷⁴ *aradka*

[...]

⁷² Restored lines have been excluded, unless the restorations were highly probable. Damaged lines have been considered only if preserved in such a way as to leave no doubt about the number of metrical units per hemistich.

⁷³ Lambert 2013, 20 notices the occurrence of *caesurae* at the wrong place in *Enūma eliš* (I 19 and I 36), and the inconsistent division of couplets in the Šamaš Hymn (Lambert 1960, 123). Reiner 1985, 69 mentions the Hymn to Šamaš on the same subject, and Oshima 2011, 220 observes similar incongruities in *Marduk 2*.

⁷⁴ The spelling actually suggests a form *immessu* with overhanging vowel; see von Soden 1971, 63.

^{55d}*Nabû aḥuz qāssu // lā immês aradka*

We can recognise a 2+2 structure in the first line and a 3+2 in the second. In total, there are eight lines of the 3+2 type (ll. 55, 57, 58, 175, 184, 189, 207, 215). Lines 183, 185 and 186 have a 3+3 structure, and line 103 appears to have a 2+1 structure, being formed by one verb in the first hemistich and a noun and a verb in the second half of the line: [*enu*]n(?)*-ma aradka // tassanabbus*. However, *tassanabbus* might have two accents. If this was the case, the line would have a standard 2+2 metric structure.

2.3 LANGUAGE AND SPELLING CONVENTIONS

Like the other Akkadian hymns and prayers under study, the Great Prayer to Nabû presents some typical features of the so-called *hymnisch-epischer Dialekt*. Von Soden and, in his footsteps, Groneberg⁷⁵ identified the main phonological, morphological and lexical characteristics of this literary idiom as follows:

- Apocope and elision of vowels in enclitic personal pronouns
- Use of specific determinative (e.g., *šāt*, *šūt*), interrogative (*mannu*, *minû*) and indefinite pronouns (*ayyum*, *ayyumma*, *mamman* and *mimma*)
- Special forms of the noun in the *status constructus*.
- Use of the locative and terminative cases.
- Shortened forms of the prepositions *ina*, *ana* and *eli*.
- Use of the prefix (*ta-*) to mark the singular feminine in the verb conjugation.
- Use of the ŠD-stem.
- Use of a high-register vocabulary.

Goodnick Westenholz⁷⁶ adds the inverted word order to these characteristics, and Krebernik⁷⁷ mentions the usage of uncontracted vowels.

⁷⁵ Von Soden 1931, 163–227 and 1933, 90–183; Groneberg 1978, 15; Hess 2010, 102–22. Cf. also Lambert 2013, 33–34, who investigated the usage of this literary style in the *Enūma eliš* and Jiménez 2017a, 76–79, who provided a study of the use of the hymno-epic dialect in the “Akkadian Disputations Poems”.

⁷⁶ Goodnick Westenholz 1997, 26.

⁷⁷ Krebernik 2003–2004, 11.

Only some of these features occur in the present prayer:

Locative and terminative:

l. 84 and 192 *qibītukka*; l. 90 *ištarāniš*; ll. 118/120 and l. 177 *aḫrātiš*; l. 124 *dāriš*; l.177 *pisnuqiš and lallāriš*; l. 178 *daddariš*.

Apocope of personal pronouns:

ll. 21/23 *šagimmuk and lā pādūk*; ll. 25/27 *nekelmūk*; l. 49 *elīš*; l. 50 *nesīš*; l. 54 *šērtuš and šūlīš*;
ll. 100/102 *baluk*; ll. 117/119 *nalbābuk*; ll. 118/120 *rašubbatuk*; l. 173 *illurtaš (si vera lectio)*.

Use of the interrogative pronoun *minû*:

l. 97 *ana minâ (si vera lectio)*.

Rare words and *hapax legomena*:

ll. 21/23 [*šagi*]mmu “roar”; ll.38/40 *tīrānu* “mercy”; ll. 41/43 *mukkalli* “priest” (mng. uncertain) and *ešešti* “knowledge(?)” (*hapax*); ll. 45/47 *šalbābu* “furious”; l.78 *taḫaltu* “homeless(?)” (*hapax*, mng. uncertain); ll. 91/93 *tile’û* “capable”; ll. 92/94 *temēšu* “forgiving” and *annat*, as the stative from *anānu*, poetical variant of *enēnu*, “is forgiven”; l. 104 and 149 *dušmû* “servant”; l. 113 *šinšu* (*hapax*, mng. unknown); l.140 *kingallu* “Leader of the assembly”; l. 44 *zunzunna*, “locust(?)”; 149 *abdu*, “servant”; l. 171 *ḫuburtu* “joyful cry(?)”; l. 173 *qunnabru* “fetter”; l. 176 *šuršurrû* “fruits(?)”, *ḫinzurru* “apple-tree(?)”, *mešḫēru* “young man(?)” (*hapax*), *šīdītu*, “maiden(?)” (*hapax*); l. 177 *lallāriš* “like syrup” (*hapax*); l. 177 *pisnuqiš* “pitiable”; l. 180 *ḫannatu* (*hapax*, mng. unknown); l. 179 *tadmiqu* “high-quality date”; l. 183 *šēzuzu* and *tayyār* “raging” and “merciful”; l.184 *aḫammu* “especially”, ll. 206/208 *nakruṭ*, as infinitive from *nakruṭu*, “to have mercy”,⁷⁸ l. 210 *šingu* “village”, l. 217 *atnu* “prayer”.

Status constructus ending in -u:

l. 175 *šēru rēšūtīya*.

In addition to these characteristics, the Nabû Prayer displays a remarkable inconsistency in the spelling of the case endings.⁷⁹

Nouns in the nominative case mostly show the traditional case ending in -u, but may also end in -a or in -i. Nominative singular forms in -a are not often attested:

ll. 45/47 *šal-ba-ba* (epithet); l. 82 *šà-sur-ra* (uncertain); l. 181 *še-am* (probably subject in an intransitive clause, but the context is obscure; it should be considered a pseudo-logogram).

⁷⁸ See Mayer 2017a, 14, cf. also Hrůša 2010, 116 and 257.

⁷⁹ Cf. von Soden 1971, 46.

The nominative singular in *-i* occurs more frequently:

ll. 17/19 *na-ad-ri* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 21/23 *gir-ri* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 29/31 *ri-i-bi* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 37/39 *reš-ti-i* (epithet); l. 50 *kib-ri* (subject nominal clause).

The genitive endings are irregular as well, and besides the usual *-i*, one finds also nouns in the genitive case that end in *-u*:

ll. 30/32 *šá qin-nu* (uncertain); ll. 42/44 *šu-ka-a-mu* (*āšiš šukāmi*, epithet); l. 52 *ru-šum-du*, *ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu*; ll. 54/56 *ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu*; l. 57 *ina nap-la-qu*; l. 58 [*in*] *a pi-i le-'u-ú*; l. 115 *i-da-at lum-nu*; l. 123 *ša 'mu 'šú* (uncertain); l. 147 *a-na ka-ša-du*; l. 146 *a-na im-mu u mu-šu*; l. 176 *šur-šú-ru hi-in-zur-ru* (uncertain); l. 215 [*ana kal*] *da-ad-mu*.

The accusative singular may end in *-u*:

l. 18 *ta-na-aš-šar hi-iš-bu*; l. 80 *a-šu-uš-tum ni-is-sa-t[um]*; l. 184 *ma-ru áš-ru*; l. 185 *ma-ru la áš-ru*; ll. 186/188 *nap-pa-šu*.

Accusative singular in *-i* occurs too, and can be found in two passages:

l. 20 *ta-na-aš-šar hi-iš-bi*; l. 181 *bil-ti 'ú¹-[ša-aš-ša]* (uncertain).

Also attested are special *status constructus* forms of the noun ending in *-a* and in *-i*:

l. 174 *a-na da-na-na i-ri-a-ti*; ll. 42-44 *a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu*.

The mimation of case endings is normally not expressed in this text, however, we find attestations of the sign TUM in word-final position, employed in nominative, genitive and accusative singular feminine nouns. The majority of the attestations show the use of *-tum* in the nominative:

ll. 25/27 [*u*] *r-pa-tum*; l. 80 *a-šu-uš-tum*; l. 168 *a-la-mit-tum*.

We can note three passages for the genitive:

ll. 41/43 *muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tum*; l. 175 *a-na kal ma-¹tum¹*

The use in the accusative occurs only once:

l. 98 [šu-uš-ši]-i še-tum.

Moreover, the sign LUM for final *-lum* seems to be used only in *bēlum* (*passim*), and the usage of NAM for *-nam* occurs in ll. 79, 85 and 86, yet the context is unclear.

With regard to the verbal forms, it should be noted that second-weak verbs in some cases show overhanging vowels:

ll. 26/28 tu-ka-ni for tukān; l. 88 i-šá-bi for išáb; l. 207 [re]-^re^l-mé for rēm.

In two cases verbs *ultimaefirmae* seem to present an unexpected final vowel:

l. 109 ir-ra-qu for irraqi (uncertain); l. 116 lu-u[q]-qu for l[uq]qi.

The morphological and stylistic features, together with the lexical peculiarities, are typical traits of late manuscripts. The date of composition of this text is uncertain, although scholars have suggested the first-millennium, or the Cassite period.⁸⁰

2.4 STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The fragmentary state of the manuscript prevents a comprehensive interpretation of the prayer. It is nevertheless still possible to identify several thematic sections, which agree with the standard structure of Akkadian prayers:⁸¹ the first eight lines are missing, but we can suppose that the text opened with the conventional invocation, the hymnic opening in which the god was recognised and invoked with standard epithets and names (“Hymnic introduction”,⁸² ll. 1–44). This first section also included the praises of the deity, which probably started from line 9: in this part various divine aspects and prerogatives are listed. From line 37, typical motifs of prayer appear: this portion of the text forms the second section, which is devoted to the lament (“Penitential section”, ll. 45–173). In fact, along with praises and occasional epithets, we can notice lines including pleas (ll. 37, 39, 53, 55, 56) and

⁸⁰ Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 48, Von Soden 1971, 47. On the manuscript tradition and the datation of the Great Hymns and Prayers, see Chapter 1, §1.2.2.

⁸¹ For the basic structure of Mesopotamian prayers, I follow von Soden, 1957–1971, 161, who identifies four sections: 1) “Der Lobpreis des Gottes” 2) “Die Klage” 3) “Die Bitte” 4) “Das Dankversprechen”. Mayer, in his work on Akkadian *Šuilla*, includes yet another element, “Das Tun des Beters”, namely the description of the supplicant’s behaviour (Mayer 1976, 36–37). Cf. Oshima 2011, 14–19, who also provides a structure for Akkadian Prayers, basing his classification on von Soden’s study. The structure of Mesopotamian prayers partially overlaps with that of hymns. Metcalf 2015, 25, for example, divides Mesopotamian Hymns into three basic sections: *Invocatio*, *Preces*, *Salutatio*. Cf. also Zgoll 2003a, 30–31, who also employs a three-part structure in her analysis of *Šuillas*. For the differences between Akkadian hymns and prayers, see Chapter 1, §1.1.1.

⁸² For a more detailed analysis of each section, see below §2.4.1.

descriptions of the sufferer's condition (ll. 48–52). The lines that follow are too poorly preserved to allow a content analysis. However, we can observe the return of a penitential tone from line 91, where a special focus on the sufferer's sins (ll. 91–94) and on Nabû's mercy (ll. 99–102) is apparent. This was probably succeeded by the description of the misfortunes and sorrows that had struck the sufferer, interspersed with new praises of Nabû (117–121; 173–176). In the lines following line 140, other deities and demons are mentioned (e.g., ll. 143 and 145), and more symptoms of the penitent's disease are listed. Between lines 178–186 lamentations give way to a short wisdom section ("Wisdom section", ll. 174–186). With line 187 a new section opens, characterised by pleas for the god's help expressed through a series of precatives in the second hemistich ("Plea", ll. 187–209). This final part of the text contains yet another section, namely the salutation to the deity ("Final salutation", from l. 210): the author glorifies Nabû, stressing his eminence among the other gods and proclaiming the importance of his worship among people (ll. 210–225).

The prayer can therefore be divided into five sections:

- 1) Hymnic introduction (ll. 1–44): possible invocation, and praises of the god, description of his powers and characteristics.
- 2) Penitential section (ll. 45–173): description of suffering and requests for aid. Hymnic break (ll. 117–121).
- 3) Wisdom section (ll. 174–186).
- 4) Plea: requests for pity and salvation (ll. 187–209),
- 5) Final salutation (ll. 210–225).

2.4.1 Analysis of the individual sections: Topoi and use of verbal and nominal forms

In spite of the damaged state of the manuscript, the text appears as generally homogeneous from a stylistic and linguistic point of view. Several typical formal features, however, are used in the different sections, helping the reader to recognise each part not only from the content, but also from the form.

The hymnic introduction (ll. 1–44) shows a clear paratactic structure and consists of numerous nominal phrases that are grammatically and semantically complete within each line. As is always the case in hymnic compositions, participles and nominal phrases prevail in the

lines where invocations and praises are to be found. The usage of these forms aims to highlight the eternal nature of deities, whose attributes are unchangeable.⁸³

Of the finite verbal forms occurring in these lines, almost all refer to the god, and are second person singular present tense verbs and imperative verbs:

ll. 18/20 *tanaššar*, ll. 22/24 *tabarri*, ll. 26/28 [*t*]ukān; ll. 37/39 *nūh* ll. 38/40 *riši*.

Only one precative form is attested: l. 38/40 *lipšaḥa*.

The present tense verbs in these lines are to be considered as atemporal.⁸⁴

The features and powers of Nabû are described in the opening section—particularly his ruthlessness in punishing those who have sinned as well as his mercy towards those who have been forgiven. These two opposite aspects succeed one another until l. 45, when the penitential section starts. In this way, the poet creates an antithetical structure, very similar to the one occurring in the first forty lines of *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi* and in the Marduk Prayer 1, both of which texts also show an alternation of opposite behaviours, namely, the contrast between the cruelty of the god and the punishments resulting from his anger on one hand, and the beneficial consequences of his benevolence on the other.⁸⁵ The syntactic dichotomy that can be observed in the first lines of the Nabû Prayer is used to express the two antithetical aspects of the god (ll. 17–22):

¹⁷[*bēlu ušumgallu(?) uzz*]aka nīrka nadru

¹⁸[*tudašša(?) ḥe*]galla tanaššar ḥiṣba

¹⁹[*Nabû ušumgallu(?) uzzaka nīrka nadru*

²⁰[*tudašša(?) ḥe*]galla tanaššar ḥiṣba

¹⁷[O Lord], your [ang]er is a [lion-dragon], your yoke is furious,

¹⁸[You provide ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.

¹⁹[O Nabû], your anger is a [lion-drage]n, your yoke is furious,

²⁰[You provide ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.

As can be seen from these lines, the poet employs the *a-a'* structure, in which several couplets are repeated in an almost identical way: the “delayed” name of the god—inserted only in the second couplet—is the only variation. This repetitive scheme is an imitation of a stylistic model that is often found in Sumerian hymns.⁸⁶

⁸³ Metcalf 2015, 63; Metzler 2002, 728.

⁸⁴ For the use of present tense as “extratemporalis” see GAG §78 d, β.

⁸⁵ Oshima 2011, 48. For the dual character of deities in *Ludlul* and in the Great Hymns and Prayers, see Chapter 1, §1.2.5.

⁸⁶ Metcalf 2015, 22–23; 62.

The introduction not only has the function of identifying and praising the deity who is being invoked, but also leads to the petitions of the following section. The introduction appeases the god, and makes him disposed to help the penitent. In the Mesopotamian prayers the epithets and the divine prerogatives which appear in the opening section seem to be the result of a conscious choice. The qualities mentioned are indeed usually related to the specific needs expressed by the petitioner, who can in this way better depict and finally actualise those aspects of the divine nature that might help him the most. By openly illustrating the prerogatives of the god, the supplicant emphasises the powers of addressee, and makes his prayers more effective: also the god, indeed, is shown— and almost “reminded of”—his ability to save the sufferer.⁸⁷

The second section (“Penitential Section”, ll. 45–173) includes the enumeration of the miseries afflicting the supplicant and his pleas for mercy. Despite this part of the prayer being severely damaged, it seems that the description of suffering accords with the standard motifs and phrases used in the Mesopotamian penitential prayers and in some wisdom compositions (e.g., The Babylonian Theodicy, *Ludlul*).⁸⁸ The specific nature of the illness is not openly mentioned, and the miseries described in this section seem to indicate a general condition of physical decay and mental distress. The sufferer is said to be afflicted by several feelings of discomfort: depletion and misery (ll. 46/48 *imṭû tănēḫu*), sorrow, wailing and daze (l. 80 *ašuštu nissatu [u kûru (?)]*), and his terrible condition is expressed through the use of similes: he is depicted as being cast in deep water (ll. 49–50), a motif also to be found in the Sumerian tradition,⁸⁹ and stuck in the marshes (ll. 51–52, 54/56),⁹⁰ an expression often taken as a reference to death and the underworld.⁹¹ Metaphors borrowed from the animal kingdom are also typical of Mesopotamian prayers, as the one in l. 57, by which the moaning of the

⁸⁷Mayer 1976, 44–45. Mayer in his division of the Akkadian *šuilā*-prayers calls this action the “Vergegenwärtigung”; cf. Oshima 2011, 15. Cf. Hallo 1968, 77. Cf. also the remarks by Lenzi (2010, 309) regarding the invocation in *diġiršadabba*-prayers: he defines the hymnic introduction as “a protocol analogous to the ones that people used when addressing human authorities”, in the sense that the petitioner, while invoking the deity, makes use of specific models, which resemble those used in certain human relationships.

⁸⁸ Cf. Beaulieu 2007, 11: “The feelings expressed in the prayers are very much the same as the ones we find in compositions about pious sufferers, that is to say, praise of the deity, sense of guilt, ignorance of the fault committed, feelings of dejection, paranoia, abandonment, bodily ailments and disease, and especially a desperate longing for the deity to relent”. On this see also the study on the similarities between the language of *Ludlul* and Akkadian prayers published by Lenzi 2015.

⁸⁹ See for example the bilingual *diġiršadabba*-prayer n. 9, ll. 17–18: a-gin₇ ki al-ġen-na-mu nu-un-zu / má-gin₇ kar ab-ús ġen-na-mu nu-un-zu; Akkadian lines: *kīma mē ašar allāku ul īde / kīma eleppi ina kar innemmidu ul īde*, “Like water I do not know where I am going/ like a boat I do not know at which quay I put in” (for the latest edition see Jaques 2015, 55. The translation used here is that of Lambert 1974, 291. Cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65 and note 152 on p. 191).

⁹⁰ See for example the *diġiršadabba*-prayer n. 11, l. 100: *kīma ārid appari ina rušumdi nadāku*, “Like one who goes down in the marshes, I have fallen in the mud” (for the latest edition see Jaques 2015, 77. Here I use the translation provided by Lambert 1974, 279. Cf. van der Toorn 1985, 65 and note 149 on p. 190).

⁹¹ Van der Toorn 1985, 65.

suppliant is likened to that of a bull being slaughtered (for the similes and metaphors attested in the Great Hymns and Prayers cf. also Chapter 5, § 5.2.3.1.1).⁹²

Further in this section, several damaged lines continue to describe physical suffering of the penitent: ll. 114–115 mention headlice and an unknown disease called *šurdû*.

As far as is attested from the preserved parts of the text, it seems that the verb forms occurring in this second section are mostly finite: third person forms are used in reference to the penitent or to the miseries inflicted on him, especially in descriptions of his illness (ll. 45–58), e.g. l. 46 *ittabšû*, “...have come upon him”, but also first person singular verbs occasionally appear as precatives (see below). Numerous pleas for aid and forgiveness are also embedded in this part of the prayer, expressed through the following verbal forms:

Imperative verbs:

l. 53/55 *aḥuz*; ll. 54/56 *šutbi šērtuš and šūlīš*; l. 97 *mēš*; l. 98 [*šušš*]i and *ukkiš*.

Precative verbs:

l. 76 *lubbabil*; l. 77 *lūšer*; l. 78 *luttaggiš*; l. 116 *l[uq]qi*; ll. 117/118 [*ludl*]ul; l. 123 *lū qī[tu]*; l. 124 *lima* ’irū and *lūšira* (uncertain).

Typical elements of Akkadian penitential prayers are the direct questions to the gods, by which the penitent complains about his suffering and asks for the reasons of his punishment.⁹³

The questions addressed to the deity are expressed through standard formulas, occurrences of which are found in the second section of the Nabû Prayer, in which a penitential nuance can be noticed.

Knowledge of these standard formulas allows restorations to be made, such as l. 97: *a[na minâ i]mkû mēš ara[nšu]* (“[I]n what respect has he been ne]gligent? Disregard his guilt!”), and l. 116: *adi ma[ti ka]la šatti ginâ l[uq]qi* (“How long, a whole year, must I be constantly wai[ting]?”).

The “Wisdom section” (ll. 174–185) stands out from the rest of the prayer for its philosophical content, the difficult vocabulary and the poetic structure. In this section *hapax legomena* (e.g., l. 177 *lallāriš*, l. 180 *ḥannat[u]*) and rare words (e.g., l. 176 *šuršurrū*, l. 177 *pisnuqiš*, l. 179 *tadmiqu*, l. 183 *šēzuzu* and *tay[yār]*, l. 184 *aḥammu*). Parallels to other Mesopotamian texts are also frequently found (see section below, 2.3).

⁹² See for example the *diġiršadabba*-prayer n. 11, l. 12: *adammum kīma summat mūši u urra*, “I moan like a dove night and day” (see the latest edition by Jaques 2015, 67. The translation here is by Lambert 1974, 275. Cf. also Van der Toorn 1985, 65 and note 142 on p. 190 for more attestations of this motif also in Sumerian literature).

⁹³ Mayer 1976, 107.

In addition, the broad use of *parallelismus membrorum* in these lines resembles the structure of the hymnic introduction, and a lyrical tone, similar to the one characterising the opening section, can be observed. The similarity in the stylistic features is also emphasised by the use of verbs. In fact, the wisdom section and the hymnic introduction both display an extensive occurrence of atemporal forms. In this respect, statives are most frequently to be noticed in the wisdom section:

l. 174 *bašim*; l. 179 *mar*, l. 180 *damiq* and *nuḥāš* (uncertain), l. 183 *eklet*; *namrat*; *tayyār*.

In the same way as in the hymnic opening, the finite verbs are always in the present tense:

l. 175 *ušaḥlā* and *umaṭṭa* (uncertain); l. 177 *udaššap*; l. 181 *u[šašša]* (uncertain), l. 184 *ikarrab*; l. 185 *irrar*.

The non-finite verbal forms and the present tense verbs found in the hymnic introduction are to be understood as atemporal, because they describe the divine aspects of Nabû, whose nature cannot change, and can thus only be defined by timeless forms. In the same manner, the verbs of the third section fit its content of wisdom: the aim of the poet was to present some philosophical thoughts, rendered by statives and present tense verbs in an atemporal sense.

Mesopotamian hymns and prayers usually end with petitions and eventually with a salutation to the deity.⁹⁴ The last two sections of the Nabû Prayer accord with this standard feature: in the fourth section petitions for health and prosperity unfold (the “Plea” ll. 186–209), while the fifth section consists in the final salutation to the goddess (ll. 210–225).

The most frequent verbal form appearing in the fourth section is the precative. Third person singular precatives are used to prompt the god to help the sufferer, restoring him to a happy condition, and to show him mercy:

l. 200 *[l]īpuš*; l. 201 *[l]īpuš*; l. 202 *lippaṭir*; l. 203 *[li]mmir*; ll. 204/206 *littarrišū*, l. 208 *litūrā*, l. 209 *likūnā*.

Beside precatives, we can note the occurrence of imperative forms emphasizing the petition:

l. 188 *šu[pte]*; l. 189 *idi and suḥhira*; l. 205/207 *[r]ēmi* (uncertain) and *rišīšu*

The fifth and last section (the “Final salutation”) runs from l. 210 to the end of the text. It is characterised by a hymnic tone: in this part the pre-eminent role of Nabû among the other divinities is stressed; moreover, the petitioner expresses the wish that the whole pantheon of

⁹⁴ Metcalf 2015, 22, 71–72; Mayer 1976, 307.

deities, together with the peoples, will glorify the god (on this concept, i.e. the “public aspect” of praise, see *infra*). Precative forms are used:

ll. 212/214 *lištammar*; l. 213/215 *lištěpa*; ll. 217 *likūn*; ll. 218 *līhuzū*; ll. 219 *liqbū*.

This section has been defined by von Soden as “Dankversprechen”, implying that its scope is mainly to thank the invoked deity.⁹⁵ Indeed, while in the Akkadian language there is no exact word for “to thank”, one can nevertheless interpret this section as an expression of gratitude. The devotee formulates his thanksgiving not only by praising the deity, but also by performing specific symbolic gestures and by providing ritual offerings.⁹⁶ In this respect, we can notice the following couplet in the Nabû Prayer:

²¹⁶[*leq*]e *damāša balāša u utnenšu*

²¹⁷[*kīma qī*]šāti(?) *atnūš likūn tašlissu*

²¹⁶[Ta]ke the prostrating, the bowing and his prayer,

²¹⁷[like donati]ons (take) his petition, may his prayer become true.

Praising has a “public” aspect,⁹⁷ that is to say, it involves not only the individual, but also the whole human society and the divine world. This feature can be observed in the closing section of our prayer: in l. 215 the desire for all the inhabited lands to praise Nabû is formulated ([*ana kal*] *dadmī lištēpā narbūka*, “To all the inhabited regions of the world, may he proclaim your greatness”), and further in this part the poet wishes also the Igigi gods and the Laḥmu gods to show devotion:

²¹⁸[*Igig*]i *gimrassunu līhuzū abūssu*

²¹⁹[*La*]ḥmū *išrassunu liqbū dumuqšu*,

²¹⁸May all the [Igigi g]ods take his side

²¹⁹May the [Laḥmu-go]ds, *in their domains*, put in a good word for him.

The very last lines of the prayer (ll. 220–225) present a doxology: the greatness of Nabû is praised one last time, both among the gods and the people:

^{220/222}[*bēlu/Nabū in*]a *ilī šurbū narbūka*

^{221/223}[*nišū*(?) *t*]anittaka *ušarriḥā ana šāti*

⁹⁵ Von Soden, 1957–71, 161, §4. See also Mayer 1976, 356–357, who further analyses this aspect, maintaining that the praises occurring in the closing section have the function of actualising the glorification of the god. The petitioner promises or wishes to extol the deity in the future, because he is certain that, having diligently fulfilled his religious duty by following the proper worship practice, he will eventually receive the divine help he needs. Thus, he can already praise the deity with confident anticipation of his deliverance. Cf. Westermann 1965, 78.

⁹⁶ Mayer 1976, 308.

⁹⁷ I take this definition from Mayer 1976, 309. Mayer defines it as “Der forensische Charakter des Lobens”. He borrows the term “forensic” (“forensische”) from Westermann, who uses it in the sense of “public” and with respect to Biblical psalms, cf. Westermann 1965, 10, fn. 1a.

^{220/222}[O Lord/Nabû amo]ng the gods your greatness is supreme,

^{221/223}[The people] make magnificent your [pra]ise forever.

Hence the conclusion of the Nabû Prayer illustrates the new condition of the penitent, who has overcome suffering and isolation, and can glorify the deity who restored him to wholeness by proclaiming his power to the gods and to the human society.⁹⁸

The vocabulary that appears in the fifth section fits the standard vocabulary used in Akkadian prayers.⁹⁹ Verbs belonging to the semantic field of “praising” and frequently found in penitential prayers are employed here as well. In almost all the attestations, their objects are nouns in the accusative case, with a suffixed pronoun:

- *šamāru* with acc.+ suffix: ll. 212/214 *lištammar ilūtka*; also in l. 225 [... *lištam*]mar
- *apū* with acc.+ suffix (here Št-stem): ll. 213/215 *lištēpa narbika*
- *qabū* with acc.+ suffix: l. 219 *liqbū dumuqšu*
- *rabū* with acc. + suffix (Š-stem): ll. 220/222 *šurbū narbūka*
- *šarāḥu* with acc.+ suffix: ll. 221/223 [*t*]anittaka ušarriḥā

In addition, l. 213 shows a very common construction recurring in Akkadian prayers that consists in connecting a precative and an imperative in order to form a consecutive sentence:

²¹²[*ahu*]z *qāssu lištammar ilūtka*

²¹²[Tak]e his hand, so that he may extol your divinity.¹⁰⁰

The meaning of this formulation lies in two distinct yet intertwined aspects of worship: on the one hand, the praises are a direct consequence of the supplicant’s prayers. Indeed, the petitioner knows that he must repay the god for his aid, and therefore promises to praise him in the future. This behaviour, however, should not be considered as a mere *do ut des*: the penitent’s commitment to extolling the deity reinforces his prayer, and makes it more valuable.

On the other hand, however, not only the supplicant needs divine help to have his health restored, but also the deity needs a living and healthy devotee, so to receive his praises and offerings.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Mayer 1976, 309.

⁹⁹ Mayer 1976, 319–327

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Mayer 1976, 312, and fn.16.

¹⁰¹ On this aspect see Mayer 1976 (311, with fn. 114) who summarizes these two aspects as follows: a) Das Lobversprechen liegt in der Konsequenz der Bitte: der Betende weiss, dass er der Gottheit etwas schuldet; b) Das Lobversprechen unterstützt die Bitte: es motiviert die Gottheit zum Eingreifen; denn ihr liegt doch daran, geehrt, “erhoht” zu werden”.

The bijective relationship between divinities and human beings is clearly expressed, for example, in Marduk 1, ll. 67-69:

⁶⁷*ša ı̄ı̄ı̄ı̄ı̄ ı̄mû mınû nēmēšû*

⁶⁸*bal̄tum-ma ardu bēlāšu ipallaḥ*

⁶⁹*epru mītu ana ili mīnâ uššab*

⁶⁷The one who turned into clay, what is his profit?

⁶⁸Only a living servant can revere his master!

⁶⁹Dead dust, what is its use to the god?¹⁰²

2.5 THE WISDOM SECTION: CONTENT AND INTERTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES

Beside stereotypical motifs, the Nabû Prayer shows some original passages that deal with philosophical themes. Lines 177–185 of the wisdom section seem to develop the idea that there is an appointed time for everything, thus implying that it is wise to wait patiently for a negative beginning to end positively.

The natural world offers a basis for this theory, since often in nature things have a poor beginning, yet eventually prove to be good, making the waiting worthwhile. The natural order appears to reflect the divine one, and to explain the human condition: although suffering is necessary, happiness will follow as a natural consequence. This idea suggests that the only possible course of action is to submit and wait patiently. The divine justice is not questioned, because through patience and faith the pious sufferer will prosper. In these lines a consolation for the inevitable hardship of human life is provided, being the waiting eased by the expectation of future relief:

¹⁷⁷*ahrâtiš pisnuqiš lallâriš udašš[ap]*

¹⁷⁸*alamittu uḥenša daddariš m[ar]*

¹⁷⁹*arka tadmiqša damiq per'u nuḥ[āš(?)]*

¹⁸⁰*še'u ina ligimîšu immar ḥannat[u(?)]*

¹⁸¹*ikūš ina rabêšūma bilta u[šašša]*

¹⁷⁷What has seemed pitiable, he will swe[eten] like syrup,

¹⁷⁸The fresh date on the date palm is bitter like stinkwort,

¹⁷⁹(but) later its fine date is good, the sprout is luxuriant.

¹⁸⁰The grain in its kernel sees ...

¹⁸¹It lingered in its ripening, (but now) br[ings] yield.

¹⁰² Own translation. Cf. Oshima 2011, 147–148; 162–163, and more recently Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 168 and 170. Cf. also Mayer 1976, 313–314.

The dates still on the date palm are bitter, but they sweeten after their ripening, and the grain needs to mature in full in order to provide a good harvest. The motif of a positive development coming from apparently negative circumstances finds a parallel in the Babylonian Theodicy, ll. 260-263, where the same argument is presented by stating that the first-born is physically inferior to the second one:

²⁶⁰*littu būršu rēštû šapilma*

²⁶¹*ligimûša arkû maši šittīnšu*

²⁶²*lillû māru pānâ i'allad*

²⁶³*le'ûm qardu ša šanî nibīssu*

²⁶⁰In the case of a cow, the first calf is lowly,

²⁶¹The later offspring is twice as big.

²⁶²A first child is born a weakling,

²⁶³But the second is called a heroic warrior.¹⁰³

The same concept of a good ending resulting from a difficult beginning is repeated in l. 184 of the Nabû Prayer:

¹⁸³*ašar eklet namrat šēzuzu tay[yār]*

¹⁸³where it was darkness, there will be light, the ferocious one (will be) merciful

As night is followed by daylight, similarly the anger of the god is followed by his mercy. The image associating divine pity with morning and god's fury with night resembles the one in l. 2 of the *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*:

²*ēziz mūši muppaššir urri*

²The one who is furious by night, (but) lenient by day.¹⁰⁴

In the same way we can read in Marduk 2, l. 81:

⁸¹*urra napšurka šēz[uz]u ušpašš[iḥ(?)]*

⁸¹In the morning there is your forgiveness, the furious one relen[ts].¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Cited from Lambert 1960, 86–87.

¹⁰⁴ Cited from Oshima 2014, 79.

¹⁰⁵ Own translation and restoration from K 9917 + K 17647, see below in the philological commentary, lines 10/12.

The god puts the man to test (l. 187: *tasanniq aradka*), but rewards his patience, like a father would do in helping his obedient son (ll. 184–5). Divine help, like mercy, arrives at daylight (l. 176 *šēru rēšūtīja*). It is possible to find the same in Marduk Hymn 2, ll. 18 and 20:

¹⁸*adi ajjūti š[īt Šamši lā i]llaka usātūka*

[...]

²⁰*Marduk ana šīt [Šam]ši illika usātūka*

¹⁸By which s[un]r[ise] should [not] your help come?

[...]

²⁰Marduk, by sunrise your help came.¹⁰⁶

Similar motifs—i.e. suffering is necessary and patience is worthwhile, the help of the gods comes in the morning—occur also outside the Mesopotamian context, and Old Testament texts in particular offer many passages that are similar to the arguments made in the Nabû Prayer.

A comparative approach between Mesopotamian and biblical texts has been used since the first Akkadian texts were found and translated in the latter part of nineteenth century. The many similarities between Mesopotamian hymns and prayers and the biblical psalms even led some scholars to suggest a direct dependence of the latter on the Mesopotamian texts.¹⁰⁷ It is not my intention here to argue that the Mesopotamian sources had a direct influence on the biblical ones, as a direct contact between the two corpora seems difficult to postulate. However, the similar motives, the formal structure and stock-phrases shared by the Akkadian compositions and the biblical texts constitute interesting parallels between the two literary traditions, in that both were informed by similar ideas and beliefs about the problem of unjust suffering and divine justice.

An example of a biblical passage that resembles the philosophical lines of the Nabû Prayer can be found in Ps. 126, in which the concept of suffering preceding happiness is expressed:

Those who sow with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping,
carrying seed to sow,
will return with songs of joy,

¹⁰⁶ Oshima 2011, 223, 240–241.

¹⁰⁷ Zerneck 2011a, 61–62 and 2014.

carrying sheaves with them.

(Ps 126: 5–6)

In addition, the wisdom book of Ecclesiastes shows an even more striking parallel:

The end of a matter is better than its beginning,

and patience is better than pride.

(Eccles 7: 8–9)¹⁰⁸

The motif that strictly connects divine help with the morning's light also occurs in the Bible. Light is a synonym for closeness to deity and salvation, while darkness is related to abandonment and death.¹⁰⁹ Examples of this association between morning and divine help are numerous, for example: Ps 5, 3–4; 90, 14; 143, 8; 43, 3; 46, 6.

¹⁰⁸ These Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, 2011. For a biblical commentary of the mentioned passages, see Brown et al. 2002, 548 with respect to Psalm 126, and note the observation on v. 5: “The language of planting and growth in these verses suggests a reversal of situation, with tears turned into joy, in language drawn from agriculture”; for some observations on the quoted passage from Ecclesiastes, see Brown et al. 2002, 493 and Christianson 2007, 188.

¹⁰⁹ Janowski 2013, 67. Cf. Janowski 1989.

2.6 EDITION

2.6.1 Text

Content

This prayer is addressed to the scribal god Nabû, and attested in two fragmentary manuscripts (A and B). Manuscript A is a four column tablet written in Neo-Assyrian script; the text falls into couplets marked by horizontal rulings, as frequently occurs in Babylonian poetry. Furthermore, the tablet retains the graphic indication of the metrical *caesura* in the first column, either represented by a blank space left between the hemistichs or by a vertical line drawn in the middle of verses (see ll. 57–58). Manuscript B is a small fragment and preserves very few lines of the prayer (ll. 115–117); it is not possible to define its format.

This 236 lines long composition makes use of the so-called hymno-epic dialect, a high-register literary language characterised by uncommon grammatical traits, rare words borrowed from lexical lists and *hapax legomena*. Numerous rhetorical features enrich this prayer, which depicts a supplicant describing his pitiable state and asking the god for forgiveness and aid. The text also contains a wisdom section (ll. 174–185), in which philosophical reflections on suffering and human condition are found.

Manuscripts

A ₁	K 2361 + 3193 + 14033 + 18434 + Sm 389 + 601 (+)	ZA 4, 252–55 ZA 4, 256–58	Pls. 1–2	Two-column tablet, Neo-Assyrian script, 7 th cent.	Nineveh, 'Ashurbanipal's Library', probably South-West Palace (Sm collection; Reade 2000: 422, George 2003: 386)
A ₂	K 11373				
B	K 15248	—	Pl. 3	Neo-Assyrian script, 7 th cent.	Nineveh, 'Ashurbanipal's Library'

Previous Editions

R. E. Brünnow, *ZA* 4 (1889) 252–58 (transliteration of K 2361 + 3193 + Sm 389).

W. von Soden, *ZA* 61 (1971) 50–60 (transliteration and translation of A without K 18434).

Transliteration

(8 lines missing)

9	A ₁ obv. i 1'	[<i>bēlu</i>]	sa-bi-['u x x]
10	A ₁ obv. i 2' A ₁	[]	nap-šur-k[a x x]
11	A ₁ obv. i 3'	[<i>Nabû</i>]	sa-bi-'u [x x]
12	A ₁ obv. i 4' A ₁	[]	[n]ap-šur-ka [x x]
13	A ₁ obv. i 5'	[<i>bēlu</i> <i>šu-ud-lu</i>]-pa	ki-ma [x x x]
14	A ₁ obv. i 6' A ₁	[]-ú	sa-ḫir [x x x]
15	A ₁ obv. i 7'	[<i>Nabû</i> <i>šu-u</i>]d-lu-pa	ki-ma [x x x]
16	A ₁ obv. i 8' A ₁	[]-ú	sa-ḫir x x x
17	A ₁ obv. i 9'	[<i>bēlu ušumgallu</i> (?) uz-za]-ka	nir-ka na-ad-ri
18	A ₁ obv. i 10' A ₁	[<i>tudašša</i> (?) ḫé-g]ál-la	ta-na-aš-šar ḫi-iš-bu
19	A ₁ obv. i 11'	[<i>Nabû u-šu-um-gal</i> ² -l]u uz-za-ka	nir-ka na-ad-ri
20	A ₁ obv. i 12' A ₁	[<i>tudašša</i> (?) ḫ]é-gál-la	ta-na-aš-šar ḫi-iš-bi
21	A ₁ obv. i 13'	[<i>bēlu Adad</i> (?) šá-gi]m-mu-uk	la pa-du-uk gir-ri
22	A ₁ obv. i 14' A ₁	[DI]ĜIR.DIĜIR	ta-bar-ri An-šár
23	A ₁ obv. i 15'	[<i>Nabû Adad</i> (?) šá-gi]m-mu- ¹ uk ¹	la pa-du-uk gir-ri
24	A ₁ obv. i 16' A ₁	[D]IĜIR.DIĜIR	ta-bar-ri An-šár
25	A ₁ obv. i 17'	[<i>bēlu šibbu</i> (?) a-ma]-ru-uk	[u]r-pa-tum né-ke-l-mu-uk
26	A ₁ obv. i 18' A ₁	[<i>tušteššer</i> (?)] ¹ i ¹ -šá-ri	[t]u-ka-ni iš-di-šú
27	A ₁ obv. i 19'	[<i>Nabû šibbu</i> (?) a-ma-ru-uk	ur]-pa-tum né-ke-l-mu-uk
28	A ₁ obv. i 20' A ₁	[<i>tušteššer</i> (?) i-šá-ri	tu-k]a-ni iš-di-šú
29	A ₁ obv. i 21'	[<i>bēlu</i> e-de-e]d-ka ri-i-bi	
30	A ₁ obv. i 22' A ₁	[šá qin-n]u tam-ḫu	
31	A ₁ obv. i 23'	[<i>Nabû</i>]	e-de-ed-ka ¹ ri ¹ -i-bi
32	A ₁ obv. i 24' A ₁	[]	šá qin-nu tam-ḫ[u]
33	A ₁ obv. i 25'	[<i>bēlu</i> -ḫ]u-ḫu-um šá-ma-mi	
34	A ₁ obv. i 26' A ₁	[<i>attā</i> (?) rākis kurunnat qinni (?)	k]a-mir i[š-di-ḫ]u
35	A ₁ obv. i 27'	[<i>Nabû</i>] x x	- ¹ ḫu ¹ -ḫu-um šá-ma-mi
36	A ₁ obv. i 28' A ₁	[<i>attā</i> (?) ra ² -k]i-is KURUM ₆ qin-ni	ka-mir iš-di-ḫu
37	A ₁ obv. i 29'	[<i>bēlu</i>] reš-ti-i nu-uḫ	a-na sur-ri
38	A ₁ obv. i 30' A ₁	[<i>bu</i> ² -n]u-ka lip-šá-ḫa	ri-ši ti-ra-a-ni
39	A ₁ obv. i 31'	[^d N]À reš-ti-i nu-uḫ	a-na sur-ri
40	A ₁ obv. i 32'	[<i>bu</i> ² -nu]-ka lip-šá-ḫa	ri-ši ti-ra-a-ni

A ₁			
41	A ₁ obv. i 33'	<i>b[e-lu]m pal-ku-ú</i>	<i>muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tum</i>
42	A ₁ obv. i 34'	<i>rap-^ʿšá¹ uz-ni</i>	<i>a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu</i>
A ₁			
43	A ₁ obv. i 35'	^d NÀ <i>ʿpa¹-ku-ú</i>	<i>muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tum</i>
44	A ₁ obv. i 36'	<i>rap-šá uz-ni</i>	<i>a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu</i>
A ₁			
45	A ₁ obv. i 37'	<i>be-lum šal-ba-ba ta-as-sa-bu-us</i>	UGU <i>ìR-ka</i>
46	A ₁ obv. i 38'	<i>še-riš it-tab-šu-ú</i>	<i>im-ṭu-ú ta-né-ḥu</i>
A ₁			
47	A ₁ obv. i 39'	^d NÀ <i>šal-ba-ba ta-as-sa-bu-us</i>	UGU <i>ʿìR¹-k[a]</i>
48	A ₁ obv. i 40'	<i>še-riš it-tab-šu-ú</i>	<i>im-ṭu-ú t[a-né-ḥu]</i>
A ₁			
49	A ₁ obv. i 41'	<i>ina gi-piš e-de-e na-di-ma</i>	<i>a-gu-ú e-liš it-ta[k-kip]</i>
50	A ₁ obv. i 42'	<i>kib-ri ru-uq-šú</i>	<i>né-si-iš na-ba-l[u]</i>
A ₁			
51	A ₁ obv. i 43'	<i>ib-li ina qé-e šib-qí</i>	<i>a-na pa-ra-`a-a le-e-mu</i>
52	A ₁ obv. i 44'	<i>it-ta-til ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu</i>	<i>ka-li ina ru-šum-du</i>
A ₁			
53	A ₁ obv. i 45'	<i>a-ḥu-uz šU^{II}-su</i>	<i>la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]</i>
54	A ₁ obv. i 46'	<i>šu-ut-bi šèr-tuš</i>	<i>šu-liš ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu</i>
A ₁			
55	A ₁ obv. i 47'	^d NÀ <i>a-ḥu-uz šU^{II}-su</i>	<i>la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]</i>
56	A ₁ obv. i 48'	<i>[š]u-ut-bi šèr-tuš</i>	<i>šu-liš ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu</i>
A ₁			
57	A ₁ obv. i 49'	<i>[k]i-ma le-e šá ina nap-la-qu pal-qu</i>	<i>i-ram-mu-um ši-i[g-miš]</i>
58	A ₁ obv. i 50'	<i>[in]a pi-i le-`u-ú da-ab-ru na-di-ma</i>	<i>ú-kan-na-a[n[?]-x x x]</i>
A ₁			

(end of A₁ obv. i; first sixteen lines of obv. ii missing)

75	A ₁ obv. ii 1'	<i>ki ʿtu² x x [x x x x x x] x [x x x]</i>	
76	A ₁ obv. ii 2'	<i>na-si-ka-ku lu-ub-ba-bil ʿlu¹-x [x x x]</i>	
A ₁			
77	A ₁ obv. ii 3'	<i>ki-i na-ak-mi šu-šu-ú lu-šèr a-[ḥa-tu]</i>	
78	A ₁ obv. ii 4'	<i>ki-i ṭal-ṭal-ti lut-tag-giš i-na k[a-ma-ti]</i>	
A ₁			
79	A ₁ obv. ii 5'	<i>an-nam mi-na-a a-mu-ú i-zi-za [eḷīya]</i>	
80	A ₁ obv. ii 6'	<i>id-da-a a-šu-uš-tum ni-is-sa-t[um u kūru(?)]</i>	
A ₁			
81	A ₁ obv. ii 7'	<i>be-lum at-ta-ma tam-bi [šumī(?)]</i>	
82	A ₁ obv. ii 8'	<i>qí-bi-tuk-ka šà-sur-ra ga-[am[?]-ra[?]-ku[?]]</i>	
A ₁			
83	A ₁ obv. ii 9'	^d NÀ <i>at-ta-ma tam-bi [šumī(?)]</i>	
84	A ₁ obv. ii 10'	<i>qí-bi-tuk-ka šà-sur-ra [gamrāku(?)]</i>	
A ₁			
85	A ₁ obv. ii 11'	<i>i-na an-nam a-bi ʿi¹-[na an-nam um-mi]</i>	
86	A ₁ obv. ii 12'	<i>an-nam AD.MEŠ-šú a[n-nam AMA.MEŠ-šú]</i>	
A ₁			
87	A ₁ obv. ii 13'	<i>ʿul¹ i-n[a</i>	<i>]</i>
88	A ₁ obv. ii 14'	<i>i-šá-bi i-ʿlu²-x [x x x x x x]</i>	

A ₁		
89	A ₁ obv. ii 15'	<i>i-la a-bi-i ka-a-ti mar-ši-iš</i> ¹ ut ¹ x
90	A ₁ obv. ii 16'	<i>gi-na-a mas-da-ri iš-ta-ra-niš i-¹qal¹</i>
	A ₁	
91	A ₁ obv. ii 17'	<i>ti-le-é-a-um be-lum in-ni-ti pa-s[at²]</i>
92	A ₁ obv. ii 18'	<i>ti-mé-e-šú gíl-la-t[u la] ʔa-ab-tú¹ an¹-[nat]</i>
	A ₁	
93	A ₁ obv. ii 19'	<i>ti-¹le-é-a-um¹ [^dNÀ in-n]i-ti pa-s[at²]</i>
94	A ₁ obv. ii 20'	<i>ti-m[è-e-šú gíl-la-tu la ʔa-a]b-tú¹ an¹-[nat]</i>
	A ₁	
95	A ₁ obv. ii 21'	<i>i-na [k]u pa x [x]</i>
96	A ₁ obv. ii 22'	<i>i-na [r]i-bi ma-na-a x [x]</i>
	A ₁	
97	A ₁ obv. ii 23'	<i>¹a¹-n[a minâ i]m-ku-ú me-e-šú a-ra-[an-šú]</i>
98	A ₁ obv. ii 24'	<i>[šú-us-si]-¹i¹ še-tum uk-kiš ʔi-¹ʔi¹-[tu]</i>
	A ₁	
99	A ₁ obv. ii 25'	<i>[e-la k]a-a-ti be-lum ul ib-ba-áš-¹ši¹ [rēmu]</i>
100	A ₁ obv. ii 26'	<i>[ina b]a-lu-uk in-ni-ti gíl-la-ti [ul ippaʔtar]</i>
	A ₁	
101	A ₁ obv. ii 27'	<i>[e-la k]a-a-ti ^dNÀ ul ib-ba-¹áš¹-[ši rēmu]</i>
102	A ₁ obv. ii 28'	<i>[ina ba]-lu-uk in-ni-ti gíl-la-t[i ul ippaʔtar]</i>
	A ₁	
103	A ₁ obv. ii 29'	<i>[e-nu-u]n²-ma ARAD-ka ta-as-sa-na[b-bu-us]</i>
104	A ₁ obv. ii 30'	<i>[i-na² r]it²-ti-ka ta-at-ta-di du-u[š-mu-ka]</i>
	A ₁	
105	A ₁ obv. ii 31'	<i>[x x š]á-niš ʔal-lu-la-a-a DIGIR lem-ni ta-x [x x]</i>
106	A ₁ obv. ii 32'	<i>[x x x] x-la làḥ-mi DU.<DU²>-ku ta-bar-¹ri¹ [x x]</i>
	A ₁	
107	A ₁ obv. ii 33'	<i>[x x x]-¹liš²¹ uš-ʔa-ri-ir i-laq-¹qé¹ [x x x]</i>
108	A ₁ obv. ii 34'	<i>[x x x]¹i¹-ta-šar ig-¹da-mar¹ [x x x x]</i>
	A ₁	
109	A ₁ obv. ii 35'	<i>[x x] x-šú ir-ra-qu kab-¹ta-ta¹ [x x x]</i>
110	A ₁ obv. ii 36'	<i>[tēnšú² it²]-ta-kir-šú iḥ-ši-¹iḥ¹ [x x x x]</i>
	A ₁	
111	A ₁ obv. ii 37'	<i>[x x x] x ig-ga-mir x x [x x x]</i>
112	A ₁ obv. ii 38'	<i>[x x] x ip-pa-ʔir x x [x x x x]</i>
	A ₁	
	(lower edge)	
113	A ₁ rev. iii 1	<i>ši-in-šú i[p²-x x x] x pa-ri-iḥ a-a-x</i>
114	A ₁ rev. iii 2	<i>mut-qu p[u-u]l-ḥu-šú ik-ta-bit UGU-nu-¹šú¹</i>
	A ₁	
115	A ₁ rev. iii 3	<i>i-da-at l[um-n]u šúr-du-ú ú-šab-ra-ár¹ bu¹-n[a]</i>
	B 1'	<i>i-da-at lum-nu šú[r-du-ú]</i>
116	A ₁ rev. iii 4	<i>a-di ma-t[i ka]-la šat-ti gi-na-a lu-¹uq-qu¹</i>
	B 2'	<i>a-di ma-ti k[a-la]</i>
	A ₁ , B	
117	A ₁ rev. iii 5	<i>[lud-l]ul be-l[um n]a-al-ba-bu-uk e-ze-z[u]</i>
	B 3'	<i>lud-lul be-¹lum¹ n[a-al-ba-bu-uk]</i>
118	A ₁ rev. iii 6	<i>[x x] x [ra-šú]b-ba-tuk a-na AN-e aḥ-ra-t[iš]</i>
	A ₁	

119 A ₁ rev. iii 7	[<i>lud-lul</i> ^{d_N}] <i>À na-al-ba-bu-uk e-ze-z[u]</i>
120 A ₁ rev. iii 8	[x x x <i>ra-š</i>] <i>ub-ba-tuk</i> ¹ <i>a-na</i> AN- <i>e aḥ-ra-[tiš]</i>
A ₁	
121 A ₁ rev. iii 9	[<i>É</i> ² <i>ki</i> ² - <i>im</i> ² - <i>t</i>] <i>i-ia e-pir za-ka-a e-pir is-qu-q[u]</i>
122 A ₁ rev. iii 10	[A.ŠÀ(?)] <i>ab-bé-e-a ki-šub-bu šá bi-lat kàs-p[i]</i>
A ₁	
123 A ₁ rev. iii 11	[x x x]- <i>ku-nu-uk-ka sa-an-tak ki-na-a-ti ša</i> ¹ <i>mu</i> ¹ - <i>šú lu</i> ¹ <i>qi-i</i> ² - <i>t[ú</i> ²]
124 A ₁ rev. iii 12	[x x x] <i>lu-ma-a'-i-ru lu-ši-ra da-a-a-r[iš]</i>
A ₁	
125 A ₁ rev. iii 13	[x x] <i>x-ni ḥu-up-šú za-ma-ni ú-šam-q[at</i> ²]
126 A ₁ rev. iii 14	[x x] <i>x-ni ul i-né-'i-i i-na-as-sa-ḥu [še]ḥ-x</i>
A ₁	
127 A ₁ rev. iii 15	[x x] x x <i>ki-i la lib-bi</i> DĠIR <i>im-nu-</i> ¹ <i>ú</i> ¹
128 A ₁ rev. iii 16	[x x x x -s] <i>u bit-re-e ú-nam-ga-ru kar-</i> ¹ <i>ši</i> ²
A ₁	
129 A ₁ rev. iii 17	[x x x x-u] <i>š</i> ² - <i>šú qé-e a-gar-ru-ti</i> ¹ <i>ṭa-ab-ti</i> ²
130 A ₁ rev. iii 18	[x x x x x-n] <i>e</i> ² <i>im ḥu us šá šá</i> [x x x]
A ₁	
131 A ₁ rev. iii 19	[x x x x x] ¹ <i>a</i> ¹ - <i>šá šu-bat nu-uḥ-</i> ¹ <i>ši</i> ²
132 A ₁ rev. iii 20	[x x x x x-h] <i>u ši-in-</i> ¹ <i>du</i> ²
A ₁	
133 A ₁ rev. iii 21	[x x x x x] ¹ <i>x</i> ¹ 2.KAM <i>šu-nu la</i> ² - x
134 A ₁ rev. iii 22	[]- ¹ <i>ú</i> ¹ x[x]

A₁

(manuscript A₁ breaks off, 4 lines of rev. iii are missing)

139 A ₁ rev. iii 1'	<i>li-x</i> []
140 A ₁ rev. iii 2'	<i>kin-gal-lu t</i> ² - []
A ₁	
141 A ₁ rev. iii 3'	<i>uṣ-ši-iṣ-ma an-za-</i> [<i>nun</i> ² - <i>ze</i> ² - <i>e</i> ²] / <i>ul x</i> []
142 A ₁ rev. iii 4'	^d <i>Am-na ina bi-r</i> [<i>i</i>]
A ₁	
143 A ₁ rev. iii 5'	<i>za-qi-qu ina šat m</i> [<i>u-ši</i> ²]
144 A ₁ rev. iii 6'	<i>zu-un-zu-na</i> []
A ₁	
145 A ₁ rev. iii 7'	^d <i>Nin-gùn-nu-a</i> []
146 A ₁ rev. iii 8'	<i>a-na im-mu u mu-šú</i> []
A ₁	
147 A ₁ rev. iii 9'	<i>a-na ka-ša-du me-</i> []
148 A ₁ rev. iii 10'	<i>i-na bu-ul</i> ^d Š[AKAN]
A ₁	
149 A ₁ rev. iii 11'	<i>du-uš-mu-ú-šú</i> ¹ <i>i</i> ¹ -[]
150 A ₁ rev. iii 12'	<i>ab-du-ú-šú ip-pa</i> [<i>l</i>]
A ₁	
151 A ₁ rev. iii 13'	<i>iḥ-ti-dam-m</i> [<i>a maršātuš</i> (?) <i>ibakkīka</i> (?)]
152 A ₁ rev. iii 14'	<i>na-an-gul lib-ba-</i> [<i>šú-ma iḥtammatka</i> (?)]
A ₁	
153 A ₁ rev. iii 15'	<i>uṣ-šar-ri-ip ka-</i> [<i>ba</i> ² - <i>at</i> ² - <i>ta</i> ² - <i>šú</i> ²]

154 A ₁ rev. iii 16'	<i>dī-ma-šú ik-ta-</i> []
A ₁	<hr/>	
155 A ₁ rev. iii 17'	<i>ma-ši be-lí</i> []
156 A ₁ rev. iii 18'	<i>a-paq-qid</i> TI.ME[š]
A ₁	<hr/>	
157 A ₁ rev. iii 19'	<i>tu-šá-ma za-ma-nu-¹ú</i> []
158 A ₁ rev. iii 20'	<i>ù mu-de-e al-ka-[ka-ti</i>]
A ₁	<hr/>	
159 A ₁ rev. iii 21'	<i>a-bar-šá</i> É.Z[I.DA]
160 A ₁ rev. iii 22'	<i>rag-ga la ¹i¹-[šá-ra²</i>]
A ₁ -	<hr/>	
161 A ₁ rev. iii 23'	<i>el i[m-</i>]
162 A ₁ rev. iii 24'	<i>mìn-su[x] x ¹hu¹ [</i>]
A ₁	<hr/>	
163 A ₁ rev. iii 25'	<i>šá rag-ga u x [</i>]
164 A ₁ rev. iii 26'	<i>[x] ¹a-pi¹-lu[m</i>]
A ₁	<hr/>	
165 A ₁ rev. iii 27'	<i>[x x] x [</i>]

(manuscript A₁ breaks off, approximately 2 lines missing between A₁ and A₂)

168 A ₂ rev. iii 30'	[	]	x ¹ KASKAL ^{II} <i>tur-ra¹-</i> []
A ₂	<hr/>			
169 A ₂ rev. iii 31'	[	]	-š <u>u</u> <i>im-ši a-ra-[an-šú²</i>]
170 A ₂ rev. iii 32'	[	]	-i]n-ši DIĠIR <i>i-ki[m²-ma²</i>]
A ₂ -	<hr/>			
171 A ₂ rev. iii 33'	[	]	du-šú <i>hu-bur-ta-šú</i> []
172 A ₂ rev. iii 34'	[	]	x-šú []

(end of A₁ obv. iii)

173 A ₁ rev. iv 1	<i>pu-ṭur qu-un-nab-ra-šu ḫi-pi il-lu-u[r-taš]</i>
174 A ₁ rev. iv 2	<i>a-na da-na-na i-ri-a-ti ba-šim du-¹ú-r[u]</i>
A ₁	<hr/>
175 A ₁ rev. iv 3	<i>a-na kal ma-¹tum¹ um-¹ma-¹tum¹ ú-šah^{-1a}LAL-a ma-ni-tu[m]</i>
176 A ₁ rev. iv 4-5	<i>še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú²]/ mar-tú ma-r[i]</i>
	<hr/>
177 A ₁ rev. iv 6	<i>aḫ-ra-tiš pi-is-nu-qiš lál-la-riš ú-da-áš-š[ap]</i>
178 A ₁ rev. iv 7	<i>a-la-mit-tum ú-ḫe-en-šá da-da-riš ma-a-[ar]</i>
179 A ₁ rev. iv 8	<i>ar-ka ta-ad-mì-iq-šá da-mì-iq pe-er-^u nu-ḫ[áš²]</i>
A ₁	<hr/>
180 A ₁ rev. iv 9	<i>ŠE.AM i-na li-gi-mì-šú i-ma-ar ḫa-an-na-t[u]</i>
181 A ₁ rev. iv 10	<i>i-kuš-šu i-na ra-bé-šú-ma bil-ti ¹ú¹-[šá²-aš²- šá²]</i>
A ₁	<hr/>
182 A ₁ rev. iv 11	<i>[m]u-ú-šu šá lib-bi ú-ru-la-ti-šú ik-kib DIĠIR.MEŠ ka-la-ma ana UN.MEŠ x [x]</i>
183 A ₁ rev. iv 12	<i>a-šar ek-let nam-rat še-zu-zu ta-a-[a-ar]</i>
A ₁	<hr/>
184 A ₁ rev. iv 13	<i>ma-ru áš-ru sa-an-qa a-ḫa-mu za-ra-šú i-ka[r-rab]</i>

185 A ₁ rev. iv 14 A ₁	<i>ma-ru la áš-ru la DIM₄ a-di e-né-šú ir-ra-ár b[a-ni-šú²]</i>
186 A ₁ rev. iv 15	<i>ta-sa-niq ÌR-ka nap-pa-šu šu-u[p-te]</i>
187 A ₁ rev. iv 16 A ₁	<i>i-di let-ka suḥ-ḫi-ra ki-š[ad-ka]</i>
188 A ₁ rev. iv 17	^d NÀ <i>ta-sa-niq ÌR-ka nap-pa-šu šu-[up-te]</i>
189 A ₁ rev. iv 18 A ₁	<i>i-di let-ka suḥ-ḫi-ra ki-š[ad-ka]</i>
190 A ₁ rev. iv 19	^r ul ¹ -li e-ni-is-su la- ^r mas ¹ -su l[^r i-ir-šú ²]
191 A ₁ rev. iv 20	^r qi ¹ -bi-tuk-ka SIG ₅ .MEŠ ^r ba ² 1-[šá ²]- ^r a ² 1 ^r e ² 1-[liš ²]

(lines 192-199 missing)

200 A ₁ rev. iv 1'	[x x x x x l]i-pu-uš ga-nu-un- ^r šú ¹
201 A ₁ rev. iv 2' A ₁	[x x x x x l]i-pu-u-uš si-ma-ak-šú
202 A ₁ rev. iv 3'	[x x x x x] ^r x ¹ -si líp-pa-ṭir zu-mur-šú
203 A ₁ rev. iv 4' A ₁	[x x x x x lí]m-mir ni-ṭil-šun
204 A ₁ rev. iv 5'	[be-lum bu-nu-ka ZALÁG.MEŠ li]t-tar-ri-šu e-li-šú
205 A ₁ rev. iv 6' A ₁	[rēm ARAD-ka na]k-ru-uṭ ri-ši-šú ti-ra-nu
206 A ₁ rev. iv 7'	[^d NÀ] bu-nu-ka ZALÁG.MEŠ lit-tar-ri-šu e-li-šú
207 A ₁ rev. iv 8' A ₁	[re]- ^r e ¹ -mé ARAD-ka nak-ru-uṭ ri-ši-šú ti-ra-nu
208 A ₁ rev. iv 9'	[ḫal ² -qa ²]-a-tum A.ŠÀ.MEŠ li-tu-ra a-nu- ^r meš ¹
209 A ₁ rev. iv 10' A ₁	[x x x]-a-ti GIŠ.ŠUB.BA.MEŠ li-ku-na a-na šá-a-šu
210 A ₁ rev. iv 11'	[ina(?) š]i-in-gi ù šu-še-e liš-te-šer at-man-šu
211 A ₁ rev. iv 12' A ₁	[ina kibrat e]r-bé-e lim-mer nu-par-šu
212 A ₁ rev. iv 13'	[a-ḫu]-uz qat-su liš-tam-mar DIGIR-ut-ka
213 A ₁ rev. iv 14' A ₁	[ana kal] ^r da ¹ -ad-mu liš-te-pá-a nar-bi-ka
214 A ₁ rev. iv 15'	[Nabû a-ḫ]u-uz qat-su liš-tam-mar DIGIR-ut-ka
215 A ₁ rev. iv 16' A ₁	[ana kal d]a-ad-mu liš-te-pá-a nar-bi-ka
216 A ₁ rev. iv 17'	[le-q]é da-ma-šu ba-la-šu ù ut-nen-šú
217 A ₁ rev. iv 18' A ₁	[kīma(?) qi ²]-šá-a-ti at-nu-uš li-kun taš-lit-su
218 A ₁ rev. iv 19'	[^d I-g]i-gu gim-rat-su-nu li-ḫu-zu a-bu-us-su
219 A ₁ rev. iv 20' A ₁	[^d La]ḫ-mu kiš-rat-su-nu liq-bu-ú SIG ₅ -šú
220 A ₁ rev. iv 21'	[be-lum i-n]a DIGIR.MEŠ šur-bu-ú nar-bu-ka
221 A ₁ rev. iv 22' A ₁	[nišú ² t]a-nit-ta-ka ú-šar-ri-ḫa ana ša-a-ti
222 A ₁ rev. iv 23'	[^d NÀ ina DIGIR.M]EŠ šur-bu-ú nar-bu-ka
223 A ₁ rev. iv 24' A ₁	[nišú ² ta-nit]-ta-ka ú-šar-ri-ḫa ana ša-a-ti
224 A ₁ rev. iv 25	[]x x x ^r qu ² 1-lup-ka

225 A₁ rev. iv 26' [*li-iš-ta*]m-mar

(Manuscript A₁ breaks off; no colophon preserved)

Bound Transcription

(8 lines missing)

⁹[*bēlu* ...] *sābi*‘*u* ...]
¹⁰[...] *napšurk*[*a* ...]

¹¹[*Nabû* ...] *sābi*‘*u* [...]
¹²[...] *napšurka* [...]

¹³[*bēlu* ... *šudlu*] *pa* *kīma* [...]
¹⁴[...] ... *sāḥir* [...]

¹⁵[*Nabû* ... *šu*] *dlupa* *kīma* [...]
¹⁶[...] ... *sāḥir* ...

¹⁷[*bēlu ušumgallu*(?) *uzz*] *aka* *nīrka nadru*
¹⁸[*tudašša*(?) *ḥe*] *galla* *tanaššar ḥiṣba*

¹⁹[*Nabû ušumgall*] *u*(?) *uzzaka* *nīrka nadru*
²⁰[*tudašša*(?) *ḥe*] *galla* *tanaššar ḥiṣba*

²¹[*bēlu Adad*(?) *šagi*] *mmuk* *lā pādūk girru*
²²[... *i*] *lānī* *tabarri Anšar*

²³[*Nabû Adad*(?) *šagi*] *mmuk* *lā pādūk girru*
²⁴[... *i*] *lānī* *tabarri Anšar*

²⁵[*bēlu šibbu*(?) *amā*] *ruk* [*u*] *rpatu nekelmûk*
²⁶[*tušteššer*(?)] *išara* [*t*] *ukān išdīšu*

²⁷[*Nabû šibbu*(?) *amā*] *ruk* *ur*] *patu nekelmûk*
²⁸[*tušteššer*(?)] *išara* *tuk*] *ān išdīšu*

²⁹[*bēlu* ...] *edē*] *dka rību*
³⁰[...] *ša qinn*] *a tamḥu*

³¹[*Nabû* ...] *edē* *dka rību*
³²[...] *ša qinna tamḥu*

³³[*bēlu* ...] ... *šamāmī*
³⁴[*atta*(?) *rākis kurummat qinni* *k*] *āmīr i*] *šdih*] *i*

³⁵[*Nabû* ...] *šamāmī*
³⁶[*atta*(?) *rā*] *kis kurummat qinni* *kāmīr išdih*] *i*

³⁷[*bēlu*] *rēštū nūḥ* *ana surri*
³⁸[*būn*] *ūka lipšaḥa* *riši tīrānī*

³⁹[*Na*] *bū rēštū nūḥ* *ana surri*
⁴⁰[*būnū*] *ka lipšaḥa* *riši tīrānī*

⁴¹*b*[*ē*] *u palkū* *mukkalli ešešti*
⁴²*rapša uznī* *āšiš šukāmi*

⁴³*Nabū palkū* *mukkalli ešešti*
⁴⁴*rapša uznī* *āšiš šukāmi*

⁴⁵*bēlu šalbābu tassabbu* *eli ardīka*

⁴⁶ šēriš ittabšū	imṭū tānēḥu
⁴⁷ Nabû šalbābu tassabbus	eli ardīk[a]
⁴⁸ šēriš ittabšū	imṭū t[ānēḥu]
⁴⁹ ina gipiš edē nadīma	agū elīš itta[kkip]
⁵⁰ kibru rūqšu	nesiš nābal[u]
⁵¹ ibli ina qē šibqī	ana parā' i lēmu
⁵² ittatīl ina nāriṭṭi	kali ina rušumdi
⁵³ aḥuz qāssu	lā immēs aradk[a]
⁵⁴ šutbi šērtuš	šūlīš ina nariṭṭ[i]
⁵⁵ Nabû aḥuz qāssu	lā immēs aradk[a]
⁵⁶ [š]utbi šērtuš	šūlīš ina nari[ṭṭi]
⁵⁷ [k]īma lē ša ina naplāqi palqu	irammu ši[gmiš]
⁵⁸ [in]a pī lē' i dabri nadīma	ukanna[n ...]
(end of A ₁ obv. i; lines 59-75 lost or too fragmentary for transcription)	
⁷⁶ nasīkāku lubbabil	... [...]
⁷⁷ kī nakmu šūšū	lūšer a[ḥātu]
⁷⁸ kī ṭalṭaltu	luttaggiš ina ka[māti]
⁷⁹ anna mīnā amū	izziza [elīya]
⁸⁰ iddā ašuštu	nissatu [u kūru(?)]
⁸¹ bēlu attā-ma	tambi [šumī(?)]
⁸² qibītukka šasurra	ga[mrāku(?)]
⁸³ Nabû attā-ma	tambi [šumī(?)]
⁸⁴ qibītukka šasurra	[gamrāku(?)]
⁸⁵ ina anni abi	i[na anni ummi(?)]
⁸⁶ anni abbēšu	an[ni ummātišu]
⁸⁷ ul ... [...]	
⁸⁸ išāb in[a ...]	
⁸⁹ ila abī kāti	maršiš ...
⁹⁰ ginā masdara	ištarāniš iqāl
⁹¹ tile' ū bēlu	ennētī pa[ssat(?)]
⁹² temēšu gillat[u]	lā] ṭābtu an[nat(?)]
⁹³ tile' ū [Nabû	enn]ētī pas[sat(?)]
⁹⁴ tem[ēšu gillatu]	lā ṭā]btu an[nat(?)]
⁹⁵ ina [...] ... [...]	
⁹⁶ ina [...] ... [...]	
⁹⁷ a[na minā i]mkū	mēš ara[nšu]
⁹⁸ [šuss]i šetta	ukkiš ḥi[tītu]

99	[<i>ela k</i>]âti bēlu	<i>ul ibbašši</i> [<i>rēmu</i>]
100	[<i>ina b</i>]aluk ennētī	<i>gillatī</i> [<i>ul ippaṭṭar</i>]
101	[<i>ela k</i>]âti Nabû	<i>ul ibbaš[ši rēmu]</i>
102	[<i>ina ba</i>]luk ennētī	<i>gillat[ī ul ippaṭṭar]</i>
103	[<i>enu</i>]n(?) <i>-ma aradka</i>	<i>tassanabbus</i>
104	[<i>ina rit</i>]tīka	<i>tattadi du[šmûka]</i>
105	[... š]anīš ḥallulāyu	<i>ilu lemnu...</i> [...]
106	[...]... laḥmu muttalliku(?) ... tabarri [...]	
107	[...] ... ušḥarrir	<i>ileqqe</i> [...]
108	[...] ... ūtašar	<i>igdamar</i> [...]
109	[...]... irraqi(?)	<i>kabtata(?)</i> [...]
110	[tēnšu(?) it]takiršum	<i>iḥših</i> [...]
111	[...]... iggamir ... [...]	
112	[...] ... ippaṭir ... [...]	
113	šinšu ... [...] pariḥ ...	
114	mutqu p[u]lhūšu	<i>iktabit elēnuššu</i>
115	idat lu[mu]n šurdē	<i>ušabrar būn[a]</i>
116	adi ma[ti ka]la šatti	<i>ginâ l[uq]qi</i>
117	[<i>ludl</i>]ul bēl[um]	<i>n]albābuk ezēz[u]</i>
118	[...] ... rašubbatuk	<i>ana šamē aḥrât[iš]</i>
119	[<i>ludlul Na</i>]bū	<i>nalbābuk ezēz[u]</i>
120	[... raš]ubbatuk	<i>ana šamē aḥrât[tiš]</i>
121	[<i>bīt kimt</i>]īja (?) epir zakâ	<i>epir isqūq[a]</i>
122	[<i>eql</i> (?)] abbēja	<i>kišubbūša bilat kasp[i]</i>
123	[...] ... santak kināti	<i>ša mūši lū qī[tu]</i>
124	[...] lima`irū	<i>lūšira dār[iš]</i>
125	[...]... ḥupšī	<i>zamānī ušamq[at (?)]</i>
126	[...] ... ul ine`i	<i>inassaḥū ...</i>
127	[...] ... kī lā libbi ili imn[ū]	
128	[...] ... bitrē unamgarū ʾkarši(?) ¹	
129	[...] ... -šú ... qē ... tābti	
130	[...] ... ša ... [...]	
131	[...] ... šubat nuḥši	
132	[...] ... šindu (?)	
133	[...]... šanûm šunu lā (?) ...	
134	[...] ... [...]	

(lines 135-139 lost or too fragmentary for transcription)

140 kingallu ... [...]

141	<i>uṣṣiṣ-ma Anza</i> [<i>nunzé</i>	...	]	<i>ul</i> ...[	...	]
142	<i>Amna ina bīr</i> [<i>i</i>	...]			
143	<i>Zāqīqu ina šat m</i> [<i>ūši</i> (?)	...]			
144	<i>zunzunna</i> [...]			
145	<i>Ningunnu</i> [...]			
146	<i>ana immi u mūši</i> [...]			
147	<i>ana kašādi</i> ... [...]			
148	<i>ina būl Šak</i> [<i>kan</i>	...]			
149	<i>dušmūšu</i> ... [...]			
150	<i>abdūšu ippa</i> [<i>l</i>	...]			
151	<i>iḥtidamm</i> [<i>a marṣātuš ibakkika</i> (?)]					
152	<i>nangul libba</i> [<i>šū-ma iḥtammatka</i> (?)]					
153	<i>uṣṣarrip ka</i> [<i>battašu</i> (?)	...]			
154	<i>dimmašu</i> ...[...]			
155	<i>maši bēlī</i> [...]			
156	<i>apaqqid bal</i> [<i>ūti</i>	...]			
157	<i>tušāma zāmānū</i> [...]			
158	<i>u mūde alka</i> [<i>kāti</i>	...]			
159	<i>abarša Ez</i> [<i>ida</i>	...]			
160	<i>ragga lā i</i> [<i>šara</i>	...]			
161	<i>el</i> ... [...]			
162	<i>minsu</i> [...] ... [...]			
163	<i>ša raggi</i> u [...]			
164	<i>...āpilu</i> [<i>m</i>	...]			

(manuscript A₁ breaks off, approximately 2 lines missing between A₁ and A₂)

168	[	...	]	... <i>ḥarrānu</i> ...[	...	]
169	[	...	]-<i>ma</i>	<i>imši ara</i> [<i>nšu</i>]		
170	[	...	]	... <i>ilu īki</i> [<i>mma</i> (?) ...]		
171	[	...	]	...-<i>šu</i>	<i>ḥuburtašu</i> [...]

(end of A₁ obv. iii)

172	[	...	]-<i>šu</i>	[	...	]
173	<i>puṭur qunnabrašu</i>			<i>ḥipi illu</i> [<i>rtaš</i>]		
174	<i>ana danān irīyāti</i>			<i>bašim dūr</i> [<i>u</i>]		
175	<i>ana kal māti ummātu ušahlā</i> <i>umaṭṭa mānit</i> [<i>u</i>]					
176	<i>šēr rēšūtija šursurrū ḥinzūri meṣḥēru šīd</i> [<i>ītu</i> (?)]/ <i>mārtu māru</i>					

177	<i>aḥrātiš pisnuqiš</i>	<i>lallāriš udašš[ap]</i>
178	<i>alamittu uḥeṣa</i>	<i>daddariš m[ar]</i>
179	<i>arka tadmiqša damiq</i>	<i>per 'u nuḥ[āš?]</i>
180	<i>še 'u ina ligimīšu</i>	<i>immar ḥa-an-na-t[u]</i>
181	<i>ikūš ina rabēšūma</i>	<i>bilta u[šašša]</i>
182	<i>[m]ūšū ša libbi urullātīšu</i>	<i>ikkib ilī kalāma ana niš[ī...]</i>
183	<i>ašar eklet namrat</i>	<i>šēzuzu tay[yār]</i>
184	<i>māra ašra sanqa</i>	<i>aḥammu zārāšu ikar[rab]</i>
185	<i>māra lā ašra lā sanqa</i>	<i>adi enēšu irrar b[ānīšu(?)]</i>
186	<i>tasanniq aradka</i>	<i>nappaša šup[te]</i>
187	<i>idi lētkā</i>	<i>suhḥira kiš[ādka]</i>
188	<i>Nabū tasanniq aradka</i>	<i>nappaša šu[pte]</i>
189	<i>idi lētkā</i>	<i>suhḥira kiš[ādka]</i>
190	<i>ulli ennessu</i>	<i>lamassa li[rši]</i>
191	<i>qibītukka damqātu</i>	<i>ba[šā(?)] e[līš(?)]</i>
(lines 192-199 missing)		
200	...	<i>l]īpuš ganūnšu</i>
201	...	<i>l]īpuš simakšu</i>
202	...] ...	<i>lippaṭir zumuršu</i>
203	...] ...	<i>li]mmir niṭilšu</i>
204	<i>[bēlu būnūka namrūtu</i>	<i>lit]tarrišū elīšu</i>
205	<i>[rēm aradka na]kruṭ</i>	<i>rišīšu tīrānū</i>
206	<i>[Nabū] būnūka namrūtu</i>	<i>littarrišū elīšu</i>
207	<i>[r]ēm aradka nakruṭ</i>	<i>rišīšu tīrānū</i>
208	<i>[ḥalq]ātu(?) eqlētu</i>	<i>litūrā annummiš</i>
209	<i>[...] ... isqētu</i>	<i>likūnā ana šāšu</i>
210	<i>[ina ši]ngi u šuše</i>	<i>lištēšer atmanšu</i>
211	<i>[ina kibrāt er]bē</i>	<i>limmir nupāršu</i>
212	<i>[ahu]z qāssu</i>	<i>lištammar ilūtka</i>
213	<i>[ana kal] dadmī</i>	<i>lištēpa narbīka</i>
214	^d <i>[Nabū a]huz qāssu</i>	<i>lištammar ilūtka</i>
215	<i>[ana kal d]admī</i>	<i>lištēpa narbīka</i>
216	<i>[leq]e damāša</i>	<i>balāša u utnenšu</i>
217	<i>[kīma qī]šāti(?) atnūš</i>	<i>likūn tašlissu</i>
218	<i>[gig]i gimrassunu</i>	<i>līḥuzū abūssu</i>
219	<i>[La]ḥmū kišrāssunu(?)</i>	<i>liqbū dumuqšu</i>
220	<i>[bēlu in]a ilī</i>	<i>šurbū narbūka</i>
221	<i>[nišū(?) t]anittaka</i>	<i>ušarriḥā ana šāti</i>

222[^d <i>Nabû ina il</i>]		<i>šurbû narbûka</i>
223[<i>nišû(?) tanit</i>]	<i>taka</i>	<i>ušarriḫā ana šāti</i>

224[	...	]<i>...qulupka(?)</i>
225[	...	<i>lištam</i>]

(Manuscript A₁ breaks off; no colophon preserved)

Translation

(8 lines missing)

⁹	[O Lord	...	]	who toss[es ...]
¹⁰	[	...	]	yo[ur] forgiveness [...]
<hr/>				
¹¹	[O Nabû	...	]	who tosses [...]
¹²	[	...	]	your forgiveness [...]
<hr/>				
¹³	[O Lord, who	...	]	the distres]sed like a [...]
¹⁴	[	...	]	... who turns [...]
<hr/>				
¹⁵	[O Nabû, who	...	]	the di]stressed like a [...]
¹⁶	[	...	]	... who turns ...
<hr/>				
¹⁷	[O Lord], your [ang]er is a [<i>lion-dragon</i>], your yoke is furious,			
¹⁸	[You <i>provide</i> ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.			
<hr/>				
¹⁹	[O Nabû], your anger is a [<i>lion-drago</i>]n, your yoke is furious,			
²⁰	[You <i>provide</i> ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.			
<hr/>				
²¹	[O Lord, your <i>ro</i>]ar [is <i>Adad</i>],	...	]	your ruthlessness is fire,
²²	[	...	]	the g]ods, you behold Anšar.
<hr/>				
²³	[O Nabû, your <i>ro</i>]ar [is <i>Adad</i>],	...	]	your ruthlessness is fire,
²⁴	[	...	]	the g]ods, you behold Anšar.
<hr/>				
²⁵	[O Lord], your [gl]are is [<i>a serpent</i>], your frown is a [dar]k cloud,			
²⁶	[You <i>make</i>] the just [<i>prosper</i>], [yo]u strengthen his foundations.			
<hr/>				
²⁷	[O Nabû, your glare is a <i>serpent</i>], your frown is a [dark clo]ud,			
²⁸	[You <i>make</i> the just <i>prosper</i> , you str]engthen his foundations.			
<hr/>				
²⁹	[O Lord,	...	]	your [char]ging is an earthquake,
³⁰	[	...	]	<i>who holds the family.</i>
<hr/>				
³¹	[O Nabû,	...	]	your charging is an earthquake,
³²	[	...	]	<i>who holds the family.</i>
<hr/>				
³³	[O Lord,	...	]	... of the heavens,
³⁴	[<i>It is you, who provides</i> the portion of the family, who sup]plies the p[ro]fit,			
<hr/>				
³⁵	[O Nabû,	...	]	... of the heavens,
³⁶	[<i>It is you, who provides</i>] the portion of the family, who supplies the profit.			
<hr/>				
³⁷	O supreme L[ord], be appeased			in an instant,
³⁸	May your [fac]e relent,			have mercy.
<hr/>				
³⁹	O supreme [Na]bû, be appeased			in an instant,

40	May your [face] relent,	have mercy.
41	O wise L[or]d,	<i>mukkallu</i> -priest of <i>knowledge</i> ,
42	Of vast intelligence,	who masters the scribal art.
43	O wise Nabû,	<i>mukkallu</i> -priest of <i>knowledge</i> ,
44	Of vast intelligence,	who masters the scribal art.
45	O Raging Lord, you have become angry with your servant,	
46	Depletion and distress	have come upon him.
47	O Raging Nabû, you have become angry with yo[ur] servant,	
48	Depletion and distress	have come upon him.
49	He is cast out into huge waves, so that the flood cras[hed] over him again and again,	
50	Far away from him is the shore,	distant is the dry la[nd].
51	He perished in a web of deceptions,	impossible to be cut.
52	He lies in the marsh,	he is stuck in the mire.
53	Take his hand,	may yo[ur] servant not be destroyed,
54	Take away his punishment,	raise him from the mar[sh]!
55	O Nabû, take his hand,	may yo[ur] servant not be destroyed,
56	[Ta]ke away his punishment,	raise him from the ma[rsh]!
57	[L]ike a bull that is slaughtered with a butchering knife, he roars lo[udly],	
58	He is cast [in]to the jaws of a powerful force, and so it will <i>twi</i> [st...]	
(end of A ₁ obv. i; lines 59-75 lost or too fragmentary for translationn)		
76	I am fallen, let me be carried	<i>should I... [...]</i> .
77	Just as <i>pus</i> is removed,	should I go ou[tside?],
78	Like a homeless woman,	should I wander in the op[en country?].
79	Yes, why has the one-handed man	stepped [<i>on me</i>]?
80	He cast sorrow,	wailing [<i>and daze</i>] on me.
81	O Lord, it is you,	who called [<i>my name</i>],
82	At your command, the womb	<i>bro</i> [ught me to completeness].
83	O Nabû, it is you,	who you called [<i>my name</i>],
84	At your command, the womb	[<i>brought me to completeness</i>].
85	<i>Because of the sin</i> (of) the father,	<i>be</i> [cause of the sin of the mother],
86	<i>The sin of his forefathers</i> ,	<i>the s</i> [in of his foremothers],
87	Not ... [...]
88	He will sway, he will ... [...]

89	The god, my father (i.e. my personal god),	you, bitterly, ...
90	Always, without cease,	he attends to the (personal) goddess.
91	O capable Lord,	my sin will be <i>can[celled]</i> ,
92	O forgiving one, crim[e]	(and) tr[e]achery will be <i>for[given]</i> .
93	O capable [Nabû],	my [s]in will be <i>can[celled]</i> ,
94	O forg[iving one, crime]	(and) treac[h]ery will be <i>for[given]</i> .
95	With [...]	[...] ... [...]
96	With [...]	[...] ... [...]
97	[In what respect has he been ne]gligent?	Disregard [his] gui[lt]!
98	[Remo]ve the act of negligence,	expel [the si]n!
99	[Apart from y]ou, O Lord,	there is no [mercy],
100	[With]out you, my sin	(and) my punishment [will not be removed].
101	[Apart from y]ou, O Nabû,	there i[s] no [mercy],
102	[With]out you, my sin	(and) [my] punishment [will not be removed].
103	Your servant [has been punish]ed,	but you continue to be angry,
104	[With] your [<i>hand</i>]	you throw down [your] sla[ve]
105	[...] the <i>other Hallulāju</i> -demon, the evil god you... [...]	
106	[...] ... <i>the roaming Lahmu</i> -monster you observe [...]	
107	[...]... he was numb with fear, he takes [...]	
108	[...] <i>he mustered</i> ,	<i>he made complete</i> [...]
109	His ... [...] <i>hid itself</i>	the insides [...]
110	[<i>His mind has become es</i>]tranged from him, he wanted [...]	
111	[...]...was brought to an end ... [...]	
112	[...] ... was loosened ... [...]	
113	... [...] ...was <i>cut</i> ...	
114	The headlice, h[is terro]r,	has become burdensome for him,
115	The sign of the [<i>šurdû</i> -dis]ease	has flickered on (his) face,
116	How long, a whole year,	must I be constantly wai[ting]?
117	[Let me pr]aise the Lo[rd]:	your anger is fu[ry],
118	Your [aweso]meness [...]	to heaven fore[ver.]
119	[Let me praise Na]bû:	your anger is fu[ry],
120	Your aweso[meness...]	to heaven fore[ver].
121	[<i>The house of</i>] my [<i>famil</i>]y is well provided with clear beer, well provided with fine fl[our],	

¹²²[*The field*] of my fathers: (even) its waste ground is worth one talent of silver!

¹²³[...] ... the associates, continuously...

¹²⁴[...] *may they send*, may I prosper forev[er].

¹²⁵[...] ... the *rabble*, overt[hrows] the enemies,

¹²⁶[...] ... he will not turn away, they will tear out the...

¹²⁷[...] ... *they* recited against the will of the god,

¹²⁸[...] ... the magnificent, they denounce *slan[ders]*.

¹²⁹[...] ... the *nets* ... good ...

¹³⁰[...] ... of ... [...] ...

¹³¹[...] ... the seat of abundanc[e],

¹³²[...] ... the binding,

¹³³[...] ... the second, they ... [...]

(lines 134-139 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

¹⁴⁰O Leader of the assembly ... [...]

¹⁴¹He asked the *Anza[nunzê* ...] / *did not*...[...]

¹⁴²Amna, through divinat[ion] ...]

¹⁴³The Zaiqu during the *ni[ight* ...]

¹⁴⁴The *locust* [...]

¹⁴⁵Ningunnu [...]

¹⁴⁶To daylight and night [...]

¹⁴⁷To arrive at...[...]

¹⁴⁸From the herd of Šak[kan] ...]

¹⁴⁹His servant ... [...]

¹⁵⁰His slave answer[rs] ...]

¹⁵¹He has se[en (suffering) and wails his woes to you]

¹⁵²With his he[art] *throbbing*, [*he burns for you*].

¹⁵³[*His*] *ins[ides]* have been set ablaze, [...]

¹⁵⁴His wailing ... [...]

¹⁵⁵It is enough, my Lord, [...]

¹⁵⁶I entrust the livi[ng] ...]

¹⁵⁷*As if it were the enemy* [...]

¹⁵⁸And he who knows the wa[ys] ...]

159 Certainly Ez[ida ...]
160 The wicked, the *un[just]* ...]

161 On the...[...]
162 Why...[...]

163 Of the wicked and... [...]
164 ...The one who answ[ers] ...]

(manuscript A₁ breaks off, approximately 2 lines missing between A₁ and A₂)

168[...] ...The way... [...]

169[...] and he forgot [*his*] *si[n]* ...]
170[...]...the god *carri[ed away]* ...]

171[...] his... his reed-vessel [...]
172[...]...his [...]

(end of A₁ obv. iii)

173 Loose his fetters, break his ma[nacle]!
174 Against the hardship of cold wind, a w[all] is built,

175 Upon the whole land a gentle bree[ze] *brings solace*,
176 My morning aid, the fruits of the apple-tree, *youth (and) maid[en]/ daughter (and) so[n]*

177 With time, what (seemed) pitiable, he swee[etens] like syrup,
178 The early fruit of the date-palm is bit[ter] like stinkwort,
179 (But) later its fine date is good, the sprout is lux[uriant].

180 The grain in its kernel *sees* the ... [...],
181 It lingers in its ripening, (but) it *b[rings]* yield

182 The discharge of his foreskin is an abomination to all the gods and [*common*] to the peo[ple]

183 Where it was dark, it will be bright, the raging one will be me[rciful],

184 The obedient, disciplined son, his father giv[es] (him) a special blessing,
185 The disobedient, undisciplined son, his *b[etter]* curses (him) until he changes.

186 You test your servant, let a window o[pen] for him to breathe!
187 Incline your face, turn yo[ur head] towards me!

188 O Nabû, you test you servant, let a window o[pen] for him to breathe!
189 Incline your head, turn yo[ur head] towards me!

190 Remove his punishment! May he ac[quire] health,
191 At your command good things *ha[ppen] to h[im]*.

(lines 192-199 missing)

200[	...	]et him build his storeroom,
201[	...	]et him build his sanctuary,
202[	...	]... let his body be released,
203[	...	le]t the sight of his (eyes) be clear.
204[	May your radiant face be tu]rned towards him,	
205[	Have mercy on your servant,	have com]passion, have pity on him!
206[	O Nabû], may your radiant face be turned towards him,	
207[	Have mer]cy on you servant,	have compassion, have pity on him!
208	May the [<i>uncultiv</i>]ated fields	be restored h[ere],
209	May the [...] fortunes	be firmly established for him.
210[	In the vil]lages and in the marshes,	may his sanctuary be in order,
211[	In] the four wo[rld regions],	may his heart become bright.
212[	Tak]e his hand,	so that he may he extol your divinity,
213[	To all] the inhabited regions of the world,	may he proclaim your greatness.
214[	O Nabû, tak]e his hand,	so that he may extol your divinity,
215	To all the inhabited regions of the world,	may he proclaim your greatness.
216[	Acc]ept the prostrating,	the bowing and his prayer,
217[	like donati]ons, (take) his petition,	may his prayer become true.
218	May all the [Igigi g]ods	take his side,
219	May the [<i>Laḥmu</i> -god]s, <i>their contingent</i> ,	put in a good word for him.
220[	O Lord amo]ng the gods	your greatness is supreme,
221[	<i>The people</i>] <i>make</i> (lit. have made) magnificent your [pra]ise forever.	
222[	O Nabû among the go]ds	your greatness is supreme,
223	<i>The people</i>] <i>make</i> (lit. have made) magnificent your [prais]e forever.	
224[	...	] ... your bread-offering,
225[		... may he glor]ify.

(Manuscript A, breaks off; no colophon preserved)

2.6.2 Commentary

9/11. *sa-bi-'u*: the verb *sabā'u*, “to toss, to bound” (*AHW* II 999; *CAD* S 2) is frequently associated with the tossing of the sea and with waves being agitated by storms or gods. The verb here seems to be a G-stem participle, probably to be taken as a divine attribute.¹¹⁰ A poetic image connecting the god with massive waves can be supposed in this line, because it would match ll. 49-50, where the sufferer is said to be cast into the water and hit by waves. It is possible therefore that *sābi'u* describes here the god churning and tossing like a threatening mass of water.

10/12. *nap-šur-ka*: an alternation between the two aspects of the god—his rage and his compassion—runs throughout the opening hymnic section (ll. 9–37). For this reason, we can hypothesise that *napšurka* was used to create an opposition between the god’s anger—perhaps associated with the destructive power of floodwater in ll. 9/11—and his mercy. Moreover, in the *Marduk* 2, ll. 80–81/82–83, we read:

⁸¹*be-lum ug-gu-uk-ka k[i]-i ga-pa-áš a-bu-[bi]*

⁸²*[ur-r]a nap-šur-ka še-z[u-z]u uš-pa-áš-ši[h]*

⁸¹Lord, your anger is [l]ike a massive delu[ge]

⁸²In the morning there is your forgiveness, the furious one relen[ts].¹¹¹

A similar antithetic parallelism can be expected in the *Nabû Prayer*.¹¹²

14/6. The caesura prevents the reading *ú-sa-ħir* suggested in the latest edition by von Soden (see von Soden 1971, 50). The *ú* sign does not seem to belong to the following word, as it is immediately followed by the metrical break.

¹¹⁰ Von Soden 1971, 62.

¹¹¹ Own translation and restoration from K 9917 + K 17647, identified by Oshima as belonging to manuscript C of this text (see Oshima 2011, 88). He restores this line (2011, 229 and 245): *[ur-r]a nap-šur-ka še-z[u-z]u [m]u-ú-š[im]*, and translates (246): “A day is your forgiveness, angry by night (i.e., a night is your anger)”. However, the signs in the second half of the line suggested by Oshima do not fit the traces (photo collation, but cf. also the copy of the tablet recently published in George & Taniguchi 2019, 92, no. 104). Therefore, I offer the following restoration: *[ur-r]a nap-šur-ka še-z[u-z]u uš-pa-áš-ši[h]*. Cf. also *Ludlul*, tablet I, line 2: *e-ziz mu-ši mu-'up`-pa-šir ur-r[i]*, “raging at night, relenting at day”, cf. George & Al-Rawi 1998, 92 and Oshima 2014, 78–79, 281.

¹¹² For the classification of the various types of parallelism, see Bühlmann & Scherer 1994, 37–42; Wagner 2007, 15–16; Streck 2007, 170–175. Specifically for the definition of the antithetic parallelism, see Bühlmann & Scherer 1994, 40; Watson 1999, 170; Wagner 2007, 15–16; Berlin 1979, 13 and 1999, 154; Streck 2007, 171. I will discuss further the different types of parallelisms used in the *Nabû Prayer* and in the other Great Hymns and Prayers in Chapter 5, § 5.2.2.1.1. where I provide examples of this literary device as it occurs in the compositions under study.

17/19. [*u-šum-gal*]-*lu uz-za-ka*: restored on the basis of Marduk 2, line 45: *ú-šum-gal-li uz-za-ka ta-kám-mi še-e-ni* “The *ušumgallu*-dragon is your rage, you overcome the malevolent”.¹¹³ The mythical dragon *ušumgallu*¹¹⁴ is often used in reference to Marduk’s anger, but is also an epithet of both Marduk and Nabû.¹¹⁵ It occurs most often in Akkadian hymnic texts addressed to deities, but is also attested as an epithet of kings.¹¹⁶

18/20. These lines could represent another example of the *parallelismus membrorum* found so often in this prayer. A second-person singular present-tense verb (*tanaššar*), and its object (*hišbu*) are preserved after the break, that occurs at the beginning of both lines, and right after the vertical line representing the *caesura*. The substantive *ḥegallu* (“abundance”), having a meaning very similar to that of *hišbu*, is preserved in the second hemistich. For this reason, a verb corresponding in meaning and form to *tanaššar* can be expected in the first hemistich as well. The result is a parallelism of the synonymous type.¹¹⁷ *tu-da-áš-šá* would fit the given space. Indeed, a similar use of *dešû* is attested in other Akkadian prayers, see for example a *šuilla*-prayer to Marduk (Marduk 5), r. 10: *mu-deš-šu-ú* 𒀭.𒂗.𒂗.𒂗, “The one who supplies abundance”.¹¹⁸ See *CAD* D 130 for other attestations. However, other verbs meaning “you give, you provide, you bestow” and so forth are also possible.

21/23. Restoration based on Marduk 1, l. 87: ^dÍŠKUR *šá-gi-m[u]*.¹¹⁹ The substantive *šagīmu/šagimmu* (*AHW* II 1127; *CAD* Š/I 73, “roar, cry”) is mentioned in von Soden’s study on the Hymno-Epic Dialect¹²⁰ as an example of the high-register vocabulary that characterises this literary style.¹²¹ The same noun is also found in the Prayer to Ištar, l. 8: *šá-g[i]-muk*¹²² (cf. the edition of this text in Chapter 3).

The noun *girru* (“fire”) in the second half of the line is employed as a metaphor for the god’s mercilessness. For this reason another natural phenomenon describing another aspect of the god can be expected in the first half of the line. In this way, the two nouns would form a chiasmic structure within the line: the wind would parallel the fire, and the god’s roar his

¹¹³ Oshima 2011, 226, 242–243.

¹¹⁴ Landsberger 1934a, 55.

¹¹⁵ Tallqvist 1938, 34.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Seux 1967, 355; Oshima 2011, 314 and 335.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Bühlmann & Scherer, 1994, 38–40; Watson 1999, 170; Wagner 2007, 16; Berlin 1979, 13–14 and 1999, 154–155; Streck 2007, 171. Cf. Chapter 5, §5.2.2.1.1.

¹¹⁸ Oshima 2011, 356–357. For a complete edition of this text see Mayer 1993, 313–337.

¹¹⁹ See Oshima 2011, 149, 162–163.

¹²⁰ Von Soden 1933, 90–183.

¹²¹ Von Soden 1933, 168.

¹²² Lambert 1959–60, 50.

ruthlessness. The line seems to display the structure AB//BA: ^dIŠKUR *šá-gim-mu-uk // la pa-du-uk gir-ri*. This would be a “synthetic” parallelism, in which the image expressed in the first part is amplified or completed in the second. In this case, we would have an amplification, being two different aspects of the raging god—his roar and his ruthlessness—mentioned and described.¹²³

The restoration can be further corroborated by the common usage of the verb *šagāmu* as referred to Adad (for attestations see *CAD Š/I* 63–64).

23/25. For the restoration [*šibbu*⁷ *a-ma*]-*ru-uk*, see Marduk 1, ll. 5/7: *šá a-ma-ru-uk šib-bu ga-pa-áš a-bu-šin*.¹²⁴ Some scholars have read *a-ma-ru-uk* as a G-stem infinitive form of *amāru*, “to see”, followed by the pronominal suffix for the second-person singular,¹²⁵ whereas others¹²⁶ consider it to be a borrowing from Sumerian *a-ma-ru*, *a-má-ru*, *a-má-uru*₅, which corresponds to the Akkadian *abūbu*, “devastating flood” (*CAD A/I* 80), “Sintflut, Wasserflut” (*AHw* I, 8). The original Sumerian word passed into Akkadian directly as the rare noun *emaruk(ku)*, taken by von Soden (*AHw* I, 211) to refer to the mythological deluge-serpent (“Sintflutdrache”), but translated by Oshima and other scholars as an equivalent of *šibbu* and *abūbu*, therefore alluding more generally to a destructive rush of water (though the meaning “flood-dragon” is not excluded).¹²⁷ Thus, Oshima bases his reading on the Sumerian antecedent, offering the following translation for ll. 5/7 of the Marduk 1: “He who is the deluge, a *šibbu* dragon, a massive flood”.¹²⁸ Given the learned and high-registered nature of the Great Hymns and Prayers, it is not unlikely that in ll. 5/7 of Marduk 1 both meanings, and indeed both interpretations of *a-ma-ru-uk*—be it G-stem infinitive of *amāru* with pronominal suffix or the Sumerian loan-word meaning “Flood” or “Flood-dragon”—are present as an intentional double-entendre.¹²⁹

¹²³ Bühlmann & Scherer 1994, 41; Streck 2007, 171.

¹²⁴ Oshima 2011, 142, 158–159.

¹²⁵ Lambert (1959–60, 55) translates it as “Your stare”, Mayer (1995, 172) offers: “Du, dessen Blicken eine *šibbu*-Schlange ist”. *CAD A/1*, 93 sub *abušim*: “You, whose glance is a serpent, a massive ...” See also Fadhil & Jiménez (2019, 13 and 15): “[Who]se stare is a dragon, a flood overwhelming”.

¹²⁶ Oshima 2011, 171.

¹²⁷ Oshima 2003, 110; 2011, 171–173.

¹²⁸ Oshima 2011, 159.

¹²⁹ Moreover, Goodnick Westenholz (1996, 197 note 57) quotes these lines of Marduk 1 to observe the refined wordplay between the Sumerian etymology of Marduk’s name and his personification as the water flood. Lambert (*apud* Foster 2005, 682) had already suggested this explanation in relation to Marduk’s prayer BMS 12, l. 7: “Deluge-weapon [hopeless] to combat, [whose onslaught] is furious”. Here Lambert indicates a possible pun based on the exegesis of the name of Marduk, that was probably interpreted as the sum of the Sumerian word for deluge, *a-ma-ru*, and the word for weapon TUKUL: the name would then be etymologized as (A)mar(u)tuku(l).

Similarly, the restoration [*šibbu*² *a-ma*]-*ru-uk* in ll. 23/25 of the Nabû Prayer would allow a comparable pun, yet with a variation: here *a-ma-ru-uk*, if taken with the meaning of “your glare”, would pair with *ne-ke-el-mu-uk*, “your frown”, in the second hemistich, thus creating a synonymous parallelism within the line. The resulting symmetry is both thematic and syntactic, involving the repetition of the same concept in both hemistichs, i.e. the threatening look in the eyes of Nabû, and of the same syntactic structure, i.e. a nominal phrase (substantive – substantive + pronominal suffix // substantive – substantive + pronominal suffix).

Furthermore, the usage of *amāruk* would allow a “multi-layered” reading, as in Marduk 1. Indeed, taking *a-ma-ru-uk* as “your stare” is possible, because *amāruk* belongs to the same semantic field as *nekelmûk*, and would have the same syntactic function within the line. On the other hand, the allusion to the deluge or to the deluge-dragon suits the context as well, as “the storm cloud” (*urpatum*) occurs in the next half of the line. The pair storm/flood is a common literary association in Mesopotamian literature, used to represent a devastating force in the description of, for instance, divine power, battles or catastrophes.¹³⁰

26/28. As in ll. 18/20, a verbal form in the second-person singular seems likely, because it would parallel the same form in the second hemistich. I tentatively restore *tu-uš-te-eš-šer*, on the basis of l. 49 of Marduk 2: *tu-uš-te-eš-šer i-šá-ra tu-šam-ṭa ra-ag-ga*, “You make the righteous man prosper, you diminish the malicious”.¹³¹

[*t*]u-ka-ni iš-di-šú: the redundant vowel at the end of the verb could be the result of an “enriched” *sandhi* spelling (CV-V structure).¹³² However, it can also be an “overhanging vowel”, as suggested by von Soden in the previous edition of this text (von Soden 1971, 62).

29/31. *e-de-ed-ka ri-bi*: is preserved in K 11373, line 1', preserves these signs. I understand *e-de-ed-ka* as an infinitive form of *edēdu* G, “to be/become pointed”, with pronominal suffix; *ri-bi* could theoretically be *rību* I “earthquake”, *rību* II “setting”, *rību* III “replacement”, or even *rību* IV, a type of pot. Contextually “earthquake”.

The phrase probably describes a divine quality, yet the metaphor expressed by it seems confusing, given the fact that an earthquake can hardly be comparable with the action of being or becoming pointed. This perplexing image can be clarified by comparison with *Ludlul* I, line 19:

¹³⁰ Cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 197-8.

¹³¹ Oshima 2011, 226, 242-43.

¹³² Worthington 2012, 176.

¹⁹*id-du-ud-ma ri-ma-šu* (var.: -MU) *ú-gan-na* (var.: -ni)¹³³

This line presents certain difficulties, and has been interpreted differently by various scholars. The verb *ú-KAN-na* is mostly analysed as *kannû* D, “to care for, to look after”.¹³⁴ Oshima,¹³⁵ however, reads *ú-gan-na*, taking this form as a third-person masculine singular from *gunnû*. The G-stem infinitive *genû* is attested in Malku IV 84, bearing the meaning of *nakāpu*, “to butt”, and in Malku IV 86 the D-stem infinitive *gunnû* is explained with *nukkupu*.¹³⁶ Piccin and Worthington,¹³⁷ too, follow this identification of the verb and translate *ú-gan-na* as “he butts”.

Different interpretations have been offered to explain *ri-ma-šu*/MU. George and Al-Rawi,¹³⁸ for example, suggest reading it as *ra'mu*, “beloved”, a verbal adjective from *rāmu*, “to love”. They translate the line as follows: “he hurries to treat his *darling* tenderly”.¹³⁹ Piccin and Worthington, on the other hand, take *ri-ma-MU* as *ri-ma-NĪŠ*, reading MU with its value NĪŠ. The final word, resulting from this “Rebus-Schreibung”, is then the expression *rimāniš*, “like a bull” (*AHw* II, 985, *CAD* R 355),¹⁴⁰ a literary combination formed by the noun *rīmu* plus the adverbial suffix *-āniš* (see GAG §67 c). The variant *ri-ma-šu* in the other manuscript is then a scribal mistake.¹⁴¹

Combining the readings *rīmāniš* and *ú-GAN-na* yields the final translation, with Piccin and Worthington, of the second hemistich as “he butts like a bull”. The first hemistich, however, remains unexplained. The verbal form *id-du-ud-ma* has been mostly taken as deriving from *edēdu* G-stem, present, third-person masculine singular. under the supposition that in this case the G-stem has the same meaning as the D-stem, “to act quickly”. However, there are no attested cases of this meaning for *edēdu* G.

A different understanding of the verb is suggested by Oshima. He maintains the semantic distinction between the meaning of *edēdu* in the D- and G-stem, translating *id-du-ud* as “he becomes pointed”. He adds, however, the additional (and otherwise unattested) semantic nuance of “becoming angry”. Thus Oshima translates the line: “When he becomes pointed

¹³³ Oshima 2014, 78 and 382.

¹³⁴ Foster 2005, 395; George & Al-Rawi 1998, 195 and note to ll. 19–20; von Soden 1990, 115; Annus & Lenzi et al. 2010, 16.

¹³⁵ Oshima 2014, 179–80.

¹³⁶ Hrůša 2010, 96–97, 243.

¹³⁷ Piccin & Worthington 2015, 115.

¹³⁸ George & Al-Rawi 1998, 195.

¹³⁹ This reading has been accepted by Foster (2005, 395: “He is impetuous to cherish the one he loves(?)”) and Annus & Lenzi (2010, 16: “He hastens to treat his beloved(?) kindly”). Von Soden (1990, 115), instead, takes this noun as *rēmu*, “womb” or “pity, compassion”, and translated: “Er eilt hin und pflegt ihren Mutter-leib.”

¹⁴⁰ Cf. also Mayer 1995, 170.

¹⁴¹ Already Foster (1981, 189) tentatively suggested this reading, though without providing an explanation.

(i.e. becomes angry³) he butts his (var.: my) wild bull.”¹⁴² Piccin and Worthington are ambivalent about the D-stem/G-stem distinction, giving in their article two different translations of *id-du-ud-ma*: “He *hastens* to butt like a wild bull” (p. 115) and “He *looks sharp* and butts like a bull” (p. 122).

Thus far, neither translation of *id-du-ud-ma* is satisfactory. It seems to me that *edēdu* in this context cannot simply mean “to be or become pointy” or “to hasten”, but should instead express a nuance of greater violence – something equal to the aggressive movement described by *ú-gan-na* in the next half of the line. Moreover, most previous interpretations do not explain the usage of the same verb in the Nabû Prayer, in which the action warrants comparison with an earthquake.

Foster’s translation of *id-du-ud-ma* as “He charges forward (?)”¹⁴³ is an exception, though previously dismissed for lack of evidence.¹⁴⁴ The meaning of *edēdu* G-stem “to charge”, however, can now be corroborated by means of lexical lists. In Proto-Izi II 146 (MSL 13, 45) the Sumerian verb *du₇-du₇* is glossed by the Gtn infinitive form of *edēdu*: *du₇-du₇^{a-ta-du-du}*. Since *du₇* is equated, among other verbs, with *nakāpu* “to butt”,¹⁴⁵ one can assume that *edēdu* in Proto-Izi II 146 should have a similar meaning. Thus, *Ludlul* I 19 can be translated: “He charges forwards and butts like a bull”.

This interpretation also suits ll. 29/31 of the Nabû Prayer, in which an analogous use of *edēdum* as *verbum movendi*, and with the meaning “to charge”, can be suggested: in this way, *e-de-ed-ka* can be translated as “*your charging*”. The metaphor probably depicts the god as a wild animal, likely a goring bull,¹⁴⁶ whose violent charge shakes the earth, thus producing the same effect as a powerful earthquake.

33/35. [*h*]u-*h*u-um *šá-ma-mi*: the first hemistich is lost, but a few signs are preserved after the break. *h*u-*h*u-um seems to be an unknown word, but one would expect a noun in construct chain with *šamāmī*, possibly an epithet of the god.

¹⁴² Oshima 2014, 78.

¹⁴³ Foster 1981, 189.

¹⁴⁴ Moran 1983, 260.

¹⁴⁵ See CAD/I 156–157 sub *nakāpu* A, lex.sec. The reduplication of the Sumerian verbal base expresses the iterative aspect corresponding to the Gtn-stem in Akkadian.

¹⁴⁶ The bull was often used in similes and metaphors to represent an overpowering force. As Goodnick Westenholz points out, the wild bull used to symbolize “kinetic energy and power out of control” (Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 191). We can find this image for example in Gilgameš Epic Tablet I I, 30: *ri-i-mu mut-tak-pu* “butting wild bull” (George 2003, 438–439) or Tablet I, 212: *ù ki-’i’ rīmi* (AM) *ug-da-áš-šá-ru eli* (UGU) *eṭlūti* (GURUS.MEŠ), “and lords it over the menfolk like a wild bull” (*ibid.* 550–551, cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 192). The same association was used in reference to a king: *ri-mu-um ka-ad-ru-um mu-na-ak-ki-ip za-i-ri*, “goring bull, who attacks the enemies” CH col. iii, 8 (cf. Oshima 2014, 179).

34/36. [*attā*(?) *ra*²-*k*]*i-is* KURUM₆ *qin-ni: ra-ki-is* fits the traces, and the participle *rākis* accords in meaning with the second half of the line (*ka-mir iš-di-ḥu*), forming a synonymous parallelism.

The usual pair *be-lu* and ^dNÀ occurs in the couplet immediately following (ll. 37/39), therefore a different short appellative or epithet can be expected in the first half of ll. 34/36. I tentatively suggest the independent pronoun *attā*, because it would fit the available space in the break expressing emphasis.

41/43. *muk-kal-li*: This substantive is attested in Malku IV 8–9, as a synonym of *apkallu* “expert” (l. 8), *pašišu* “anointed” (l. 8a) and *āšipu* “exorcist” (l. 9):¹⁴⁷

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (8) | <i>mu-kal-lu₄</i> | <i>ap-kal-lu</i> |
| (8a) | [<i>mu-kal-lu₄</i>] | [<i>p</i>] <i>a-ši-šu</i> |
| (9) | <i>mu-kal-lu₄</i> | <i>a-ši-pu</i> |

Cf. also a “Practical Lú-List” in MSL 12, 233, col. I 18: LÚ *mu-^rkal¹-lu*. It is generally translated as “a priest or exorcist” (see *CAD* M/II 187; *AHW* II 670 offers: “Ein Priester oder Gelehrter”). It comes from the Sumerian *nun.gal*, equated in Lu III 6” to the word *apkallum* (MSL 12, 121). See also the group in Erimḥuš V 7–9: NUN^{ab-gal}.ME= *ap-kal-lum*, ^{i-ši-ib}ME= *a-ši-pu*, ME^{MIN}-gal= *i-ši-gal-lum* (MSL 17, 67). The same noun is also attested in a ritual text,¹⁴⁸ which, however, does not offer any further information about the specific role of the *mukkallu*-priest.

e-še-eš-tum: This word is a *hapax*, and its exact meaning is obscure. It creates a wordplay with *a-ši-ši* in the succeeding lines (ll. 42/44), and could be a feminine nominal form derived from *ašāšu/ešēšu* (*AHW* I 79; *CAD* A/II 424–425), “to catch”. It seems to be a PIRIST noun, possibly to be understood with a passive nuance, namely “what is caught”. It is possible that this word yields a meaning corresponding to that of *iḥzu*, “knowledge”, derived from *aḥāzum* “to take”, but also “to understand, to learn” (*AHW* I 19; *CAD* A/I 177).

42/44. *rap-šá uz-ni*: This epithet is an example of the so-called *Damqam-īnim* construction, i.e. a nominal construct chain formed by two components: an adjective or a substantive displaying the ending *-am*, and a noun, that can be either declined in the genitive or be in *status absolutus*. Our case represents the most common type of *D-ī.*, namely the compound

¹⁴⁷ Hrůša 2010, 92–93, 239, 379.

¹⁴⁸ Falkenstein 1959, 40, l. 5’.

that has an adjective as its first element.¹⁴⁹ This construction only occurs in literary texts, personal names or lexical lists, and is often attested in first-millennium Akkadian hymns in standard expressions, like: *našā rēši* “with the head held high”, *rapša irti* “strong”.¹⁵⁰

a-ši-ši: I take *a-ši-ši* as a participle of *ašāšu* IV, “to catch” (*AHw* I 79; *CAD/A* II 424–425), in the broader sense of “to gather”, “to collect”.¹⁵¹ For this meaning of *ašāšu*, which is closer to the Sumerian *ur₄*, “to gather”, “to collect”, see the Commentary of the *Babylonian Theodicy* on l. 200: ‘*ka¹-[áš-šá]-a-tú : ḥa-am-ma-a-tú : ur₄ : a-šá-šú : ur₄ : ḥa-ma-mu* “‘You embrace’ means ‘you encompass’, (since) *ur₄* means ‘to catch’ (and) *ur₄* means ‘to encompass’”.¹⁵² For the precise sense of *āšiš*, as the participle form of *ašāšu* IV, see the Commentary of the *Theodicy* on l. 1, which explains the noun as: *a-š[i]š <: it-pe-šú : MIN¹ : ma-li-ku*, “‘Encompassing’ means ‘competent’, ditto means ‘prudent’.”¹⁵³

šu-ka-a-mu: “scribal skill” (*AHw* III 1202; *CAD Š/III* 213;), cf. a *šuilla*-prayer to Nabû (Nabû 4) l. 6: *er-šu pal-ku-ú ha-mi-im šu-ki-am-mu*, “wise, of wide knowledge, who masters the scribal art”.¹⁵⁴ Another manuscript of the same prayer presents the variant *šu-ki-a-am*. Considering the two spellings *šu-ki-am-mu* and *šu-ki-a-am*, one could hypothesise a contraction of the diphthong and a development of *šukiāmu* into *šukāmu*.¹⁵⁵ The origin of this noun is unclear, but probably Semitic.¹⁵⁶ Cf. also *Theodicy*, l. 205, [...*tu*]p-pa-ni ma-li šu-ka-mi, “...tablets, filled with scribal skill”.¹⁵⁷ See *CAD Š/III* 213 for more attestations of this noun.

45/47. *šal-ba-ba*: There are two meanings attested for this word (*AHw* II 1147; *CAD Š/I* 241). The first one is “fierce”, entered in AnŠ 44 as a synonym of *qarrādu*, “warrior”: *šal-ba-bu* = MIN(*qar-ra-du*).¹⁵⁸ The second meaning is “wise”, attested in the Commentary of the *Theodicy*, l. 11': *šal-ba-ba* = *né-me-qa*.¹⁵⁹ See also Sm 463, Rev. i 20' (CT 19, 11): [nam-

¹⁴⁹ Detailed studies on this topic have been offered various scholars, see for instance von Soden 1960, 163–171; Reiner 1966, 125–7; 1970, 274–303; 1984, 177–182; see also Wasserman 2003, 45–60, with further bibliography.

¹⁵⁰ Groneberg 1987 I, 89.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Lambert 1960, 303.

¹⁵² For the transliteration and translation of this line see the *Theodicy* Commentary edited online by Jiménez 2017b, accessed on 12/06/2019 at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h. Cf. also Lambert 1960, 82; Oshima 2014, 454. For specific remarks on this line see Lambert 1960, 302.

¹⁵³ Jiménez 2017b, accessed on 12/06/2019 at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h. Cf. Lambert 1960, 70, 302; Oshima 2014, 343.

¹⁵⁴ Mayer 1990, 461.

¹⁵⁵ Mayer 1990, 465. Cf. Beaulieu–Mayer 1997, 178.

¹⁵⁶ For a more detailed discussion, see von Soden 1960, 166.

¹⁵⁷ Own translation. Cf. Oshima 2014, 160–161, 360.

¹⁵⁸ Hruša & Weiershäuser 2020, 214. Cf. also see LTBA II, 2, obv. i 44.

¹⁵⁹ See Jiménez 2017b accessed on 14/06/2019 at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h; cf. Lambert 1960, 82 and Oshima 2014, 455.

kù]-zu = *šal-ba-bu* “wise = *šalbābu*” (Lanu B 20 according to CAD Š/1 241 *šalbābu* lex. sec.; restoration *ibid.*) The first meaning suits our line better, as *tassabus*, “you have become angry”, follows in the second hemistich. This adjective is also found in Marduk 1, ll. 192/4: *be-lum šal-ba-bu li-nu-uḥ riš-tuk*, “May the furious Lord rest in your celebration”.¹⁶⁰

49/50. The same conventional image of the sufferer being cast into the flood can be found in Marduk Hymn 2, line 75: *šu-la-aš-šum-ma iš-tu šà-bi e-de-e ra-bu-t[e] ZALÁG-[k]a li-mur*, “Raise him from the midst of a massi[ve] flood, so that he can see [you]r light”.¹⁶¹ See, too, the restored passage in Marduk 1, ll. 42/44 *qab-lu-uš ta-¹ma-tú¹ né-su-[ú na-ba-lu]*, “in the midst of the seas, far away are [*the dry lands*]”.¹⁶²

In addition, another parallel is found in a penitential prayer to Marduk, l. 11: *ru-qa-an-ni [kib-ri] na-ba-lu né-sa-an-ni*, “[The beach] is far from me, the dry land is remote from me”.¹⁶³

This example confirms von Soden’s hypothesis that interprets the pronominal suffixes in *ru-uq-šu* and *né-si-iš* (l. 50 of the Nabû Prayer) as accusatives of relation.¹⁶⁴

e-liš can be interpreted as *elišu*, “over him”. Von Soden suggests that the final vowel could have been dropped due to the following *i*-vowel in *itta[kkip]*.¹⁶⁵

51: Contrary to what was suggested by von Soden, I read *a-na pa-ra-a’-a le-e-mu*, and not *a-na pa-ra-a’ a-le-e-mu*. I take *le-e-mu* as *lēmu*, which occurs in the lexical lists as *le-e-mu* and *le-em-ma*: Erimḥuš IV 95 (146): *nu-še = le-e-mu*, “to disagree = he is unwilling” (MSL 17, 61); Malku V 154: *le-em-ma = la ma-ga-ru*, “he is unwilling = not to approve”.¹⁶⁶ The word *lēmu* has led to different interpretations: *CAD* lists it under *lemû* (*lēmu*, *lemmu*) (*CAD* L 125–126), and analyses it as an adjectival form possibly derived from a defective verb *lemû*, exclusively attested in the stative (cf. *AHW* II 543 “Ungehorsamer”).¹⁶⁷ According to Veenhof, however, *lēmu* is to be connected with the verb *mu’ā’u*, “to want”, and is the compound of a finite form of this verb and the negative particle *lā*.¹⁶⁸ Veenhof suggests that the resulting word be treated as a “pseudo-stative”. He explains the form *lemma* (see *CAD* L 126a) as *lēm* + vowel, namely a spelling variant of *lemmu*.

¹⁶⁰ Oshima 2011, 168–169; cf. note for these lines, 189.

¹⁶¹ Own translation. For the edition of the text, see Oshima 2011, 244–245 and 75.

¹⁶² Oshima 2011, 160–161.

¹⁶³ Van der Toorn 1985, 141 and 143, von Soden 1987, 71. Cf. Jaques 2015, 257.

¹⁶⁴ Von Soden 1961, 156–162; 1971, 63.

¹⁶⁵ Von Soden 1971, 63. Cf. Groneberg 1987 I, 127.

¹⁶⁶ Hrůša 2010, 118–119, 404.

¹⁶⁷ See the remarks in *CAD* L 126. Cf. Hrůša 2010, 257–258.

¹⁶⁸ Veenhof 1986, 241.

A passage in the *Gilgameš* Epos (IX, ll. 173–174) can clarify the grammatical category of *le-e-mu* in the Great Nabû Prayer:

^{173 na4} *sāmtu* (gug) *na-šá-at i-ni-ib-šá*

¹⁷⁴ *is-ḫu-un-na-tum ul-lu-la-at ana da-ga-la ḫi-pat*

¹⁷³ A cornelian (tree) was in fruit,

¹⁷⁴ Hung with bunches of grapes, lovely to behold.¹⁶⁹

The syntactic structure of these lines corresponds to that of l. 51 in the Great Nabû Prayer, thus proving that *le-e-mu* within the present context must be taken as a stative, probably referring to *qû* (the web)—which is “unwilling”, that is, difficult to cut; *a-na pa-ra-a'-a* must be interpreted as *ana parā' i*.

52. The literary motif of the supplicant stuck in the swamp can be found also, for example, in the *diḡiršadabba*-prayer no. 9, l. 27'–28': GIN₇ *a-ri-id ap-pa-ri ina ru-šum-d[e]-^fe¹ na-da-ku*, “like one who goes down in the marshes, I have fallen in the mud”,¹⁷⁰ in an Akkadian prayer to Marduk: *ki-i GUD.MEŠ na-da-ku ina ru-šu-un-tam-m[a]*, “like oxen, I was cast into mud”,¹⁷¹ and in a *eršahunga*-prayer: *i-na me-e ru-šum-di na-di qa-as-su ša-bat*, “he was cast into the mud, take his hand!”¹⁷²

The morass mentioned in these examples is to be interpreted as a metaphor for the underworld, which is often described as miry in the ancient near Eastern literary tradition.¹⁷³ Incidentally, we note that ll. 51–52 form a synthetic parallelism that pairs the metaphorical web (*qé-e šib-qi*, “a web of deception”) and the marsh, both trapping the sufferer.

54/56. [*š*] *u-ut-bi šèr-tuš šu-liš ina na-ri-i[t-ṭu]*: Marduk 1, l. 154 has a similar passage: *šu-ut-bi-ma šer-tuk-ka ina na-ri-ṭi eṭ-ra-ás-sú*, “Remove your punishment, and from the morass, save him”.¹⁷⁴

58. [*in*] *a pi-i le-'u-ú da-ab-ru na-di-ma*: Von Soden¹⁷⁵ hypothesises that *le-'u-ú da-ab-ru* might be some sort of demon, but the expression remains obscure. Similar expressions are found in Marduk 1, ll. 13/15: *ti-de ina pi-i šèr-ti pa-na ba-ba-la* “You know (how) to forgive

¹⁶⁹ George 2003, 672–673. My thanks to I. Hrůša who kindly pointed out these lines to me.

¹⁷⁰ Lambert 1974, 278–279, l. 100; cf. also Jacques 2015, 77, 100. Cf. Oshima 2011, 280, note to line 15'.

¹⁷¹ Oshima 2011, 278–279, l. 15'

¹⁷² See Maul 1988, 240 and 243, l. 38 (rev.); cf. van der Toorn 1985, 190, note 149.

¹⁷³ Watson 1999, 187. Cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65.

¹⁷⁴ Oshima 2011, 166–167, 187; cf. Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 12 and 15.

¹⁷⁵ Von Soden 1971, 64.

in the *mouth* of punishment”, and l. 153: *ina pi-i ka-ra-še-e na-di ìr-ka* “Your slave is cast in the *mouth* of annihilation”,¹⁷⁶ and in the Prayer to Ištar, l. 163: *pa-iš ka-ra-ši pi-di-šú* “Save him from the mouth of annihilation”.¹⁷⁷ While *ina pī šerti* is generally understood in a prepositional sense, and thus translated “in the face of sin/guilt”, the expression *ina pī karašê* has been taken as a metaphor for the open grave.¹⁷⁸ Due to the breaking, it is unclear whether the formulation in our line should be interpreted in a similar sense, that is to say metaphorically, or in a concrete sense —i.e. indicating the mouth of a demon or the like.

77. *na-ak-mi*: The precise meaning of this noun is uncertain; von Soden considers *nakmu*, and its variant *nakimtu*, as a verbal adjective from the root **nm*, translating it as “aufgehäuft” (*AHw* II 722 *nakmu* I; *CAD* N/I 189). With regard to the attestation of this term in our Nabû prayer, von Soden proposes to take *nakmu* as some sort of disease (“etwas Krankhaftes am Leibe”, *AHw* II, 723 *nakmu* I, 2), and translates “das *Ausgesammelte*”.¹⁷⁹ Farber, instead, considers *nakmu* and *nakimtu* as two variants meaning “pus” or “abscess”, emphasising the frequent use of both nouns in connection with the verb *wašû* in the Š-stem, “to release”. He translates *nakmu* as “Angespeichertes”.¹⁸⁰ Cf. also Malku VIII 38: $\text{[na}^1\text{-AK-ma } \text{[i-ni}^1\text{ = } \text{š}u\text{-u}h\text{-}h[u\text{-tú}]$ “Person mit einem bestimmten Augendefekt = ausgepresst (= mit hervortretenden Augen?).¹⁸¹ I follow this second interpretation.

a-[ha-tu]: The restoration fits the traces and provides a parallelism with *ina ka[mâti]*, “in the open country”, in the next line.

78. *tal-tal-ti*: This *hapax* has been interpreted by von Soden as a loanword from the Targumic Aramaic *tl̄wl*, “migration, exile”, derived from the root *tl̄l*, “to move, to shake”. The Akkadian *tal̄altu* could then be a foreign word meaning “homeless”. Despite the etymology being uncertain, I translate here “homeless woman”, due to the presence of the feminine ending (cf. *AHw* III, 1379, “Heimatlose”, *CAD* T 45 “fugitive woman”).¹⁸² The motif of the supplicant wandering around is well attested in literary texts. Often used to describe the suffering of the supplicant, this *topos* implies the abandonment from the gods, and a feeling of

¹⁷⁶ Oshima 2011, 166 e 186;

¹⁷⁷ Lambert 1959–60, 53. Cf. Chapter 3.

¹⁷⁸ For a more detailed study on this expression see Oshima 2001, 14–19.

¹⁷⁹ Von Soden 1971, 46, 77.

¹⁸⁰ Farber 1977, 83–85.

¹⁸¹ Hrůša 2010, 141, 273 and 423.

¹⁸² Cf. also Abraham–Sokoloff 2011, 55.

loneliness and despair.¹⁸³ See for example *Ludlul* I, 49-50: *iš-šak-na-nim-ma i-da-at pi-rit-ti uš-te-ši É-ja ka-ma-a-ti ar-pu-ud*, “Fearful omens beset me, I am got out of my house and wander outside”.¹⁸⁴

79. *a-mu-ú i-zi-za*: For the meaning of *amû* “einhändig”, see *AHW* 45b;¹⁸⁵ we note here the stereotypical motif of the supplicant complaining about being surpassed by weak or disabled individuals, also attested for example in the Babylonian Theodicy, l. 76: *il-an-nu ku-uš-šu-du pa-na-an-ni lil-li*, “A cripple surpasses me, a lunatic outstrips me”,¹⁸⁶ and in a *šulla* prayer to Ištar (no. 2), ll. 59–61: *a-di ma-ti* ^dGAŠAN.ĜU₁₀ *lil-lu a-ku-ú i-ba-a’-an-ni*, “How long, my mistress, will imbeciles and weaklings surpass me?”¹⁸⁷

80. *ni-is-sa-t[um u kûru(?)]*: These two nouns are frequently found in penitential prayers.

They belong to the standard repertoire of expressions used in prayers to describe the difficult condition of the supplicant and form a fixed pair.¹⁸⁸ See for example a restored line in *Marduk* 1, l. 124: [] x x *ni-is-sa-ta ù k[u-ri]*, “...wailing and daze”;¹⁸⁹ a *šulla*-prayer to Nabû (no. 4), l. 12 (obv.): *ina ku-ú-ru u ni-[is-sa-ti x x x]a-a-ni*, “With wailing and daze...my [fig]ure”;¹⁹⁰ a prayer to Šamaš (no. 18), l. 19, obv.: *i-na ku-ú-ri u ni-is-sa-ti ra-ma-ni ú-tan-niš*, “I have become weak for depression and wailing”¹⁹¹ and also the *Babylonian Theodicy*, l. 30: *ku-ù-ru u ni-is-sa-tum ú-qát-ti-ru zi-mu-[ú-a]*, “Depression and grief have blackened [my] appearance”.¹⁹² *kûru* and *nissatu* often occur in parallelism with *qûlu*, “silence, stupor” (see *CAD* Q 304).¹⁹³

82/84. *qi-bi-tuk-ka*: This form is an example of the locative-adverbial case, a typical feature of the hymno-epic dialect.

šà-sur-ra: This word indicates the womb, but can be also a personification of the mother goddess. It is translated more generally as “mother”; see *Malku* I 122–124: *ba-an-tu, a-ga-ri-*

¹⁸³ Cf. Barré 2001 for the usage of this *topos* in literary texts and even in letters to express despair. Cf. Rozzi 2019, 187.

¹⁸⁴ The latest edition of *Ludlul* is by Oshima 2014; the translation used here is that of Lambert 1960, 33.

¹⁸⁵ Von Soden 1971, 65.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Lambert 1960, 76–77, Oshima 2014, 154–155 and 448. I base the translation on l. 28 of the Theodicy Commentary, see Jiménez 2017b, accessed on 10/08/2019 at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h.

¹⁸⁷ The latest edition is by Zgoll, 2003, 42–59. The translation here is that offered by Foster 2005, 603.

¹⁸⁸ Mayer 1976, 83.

¹⁸⁹ Oshima 2011, 164.

¹⁹⁰ Mayer 1976, 477.

¹⁹¹ Schollmeyer, 1912, 97–98.

¹⁹² Oshima 2014, 150–151.

¹⁹³ Cf. also Oshima 2014, 351.

in-nu, *šá-^ras^l-su-ru* = *um-mu*¹⁹⁴ and Antagal B 85-88, where *šassurru* appears as an equivalent of the Sumerian *ab.sín* (“furrow”) and is listed in a group with *ummu*, *bāntu* and *agarinnu* (MSL 17, 192). This noun is also found in Marduk 1, l. 103 *i-na bi-na-at šá-sur-[r]i²*, “Among the creations of the womb/mother goddess...”.¹⁹⁵ Within the present context, however, the first meaning “womb” seems the most probable.

The tentative restoration *ga-[am²-ra²-ku²]* fits the traces and the available space, and can clarify the line: the god is the one who forms the child still in the mother’s womb, shaping him into a human being. For other attestations of *šassūru* in similar contexts, see *CAD Š/II* 146, meaning b.¹⁹⁶

85-86. The restoration of these lines is based on the *šuilla*-prayer to Marduk BMS 11, ll. 22-24:

²²*an-na* AD-MU AD.AD-MU AMA-MU AMA.AMA-MU

²³*[an-na ki]m-ti-i*-MU ni-šu-ti-MU u ša-la-ti-MU

²⁴*a-na ra-ma-ni-ia a-a iḫā*(TE-a) *a-ḫi-tam-ma lil-lik*,

²²The sin of my father, of my grandfather, of my mother, of my grandmother,

²³[the sin] of my [fa]mily, of my kith and of my kin,

²⁴may not approach me, and instead may it go away from me!¹⁹⁷

A similar enumeration occurs in the Akkadian *diġiršadabba*-prayer (no. 11), ll.115-118:

¹¹⁵*ár-ni* AD.MU AD.AD.MU AMA.MU AMA.A[MA.MU]

¹¹⁶*ár-ni* SES.MU GAL-*i* NIN₉.MU GAL-[*tu*]

¹¹⁷*ár-ni* NÍ.RI.A.MU NÍ.RI.A.MU u NÍ.RI.A.[MU]

¹¹⁸*ša ki-ma sa-ba-si ki-mil-ti* DIGIR.MU ^dXV.MU / *iš-ni-[q]u-ni ia-a-ši*

¹¹⁵The sin of my father, of my grandfather, of my mother, of my grandmo[ther],

¹¹⁶the sin of my elder brother, of my eld[er] sister,

¹¹⁷the sin of my family, of my kith and of [my] kin,

¹¹⁸which has approa[che]d me because of the anger of my god and of my goddess¹⁹⁸

Other comparable passages are found in *Šurpu* III 3-5: *ma-mit* AD u AMA LÚ *ša-ba-t[i]*/ *ma-mit* AD AD *ma-mit* AMA / *ma-mit* ŠEŠ u NIN, “The oath of father and of mother he is under, the oath of his father’s father, the oath of his mother’s mother, the oath of brother or sister”, and IV, l. 58: *ar-rat* AD u AMA ŠEŠ.GAL u NIN.GAL, “The sin of father and of mother, of the eldest brother

¹⁹⁴ Hrůša 2010, 310–311, 204.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Oshima 2011, 164 and 182–183.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. also Psalm 139, 13: “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb”, translation taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, 2011.

¹⁹⁷ For the edition of this text see Mayer 2004, 198–214. Cf. Oshima 2011, 346–352.

¹⁹⁸ Jaques 2015,79. Cf. 101 for a comment on this lines.

and eldest sister”.¹⁹⁹ I interpret these lines in the Great Prayer to Nabû as referring to the wrongdoings committed by the supplicant’s ancestors.²⁰⁰

89. *i-la a-bi-i* is to be understood as *ila abī*, and designates the personal god, commonly defined as “father” or as “god of the father” in Mesopotamian prayers and letter-prayers.²⁰¹ Cf. for instance an Old Babylonian letter-prayer, which opens as follows: ¹*a-na diġir a-bi-ja* ²*qī-bi-ma*, “Speak to the god, my father”.²⁰² The personal god in this verse parallels with *ištarāniš* in the following line (l. 90). The last two signs of l. 89 are too damaged to reconstruct, but the first one could be UD. A verb meaning “to pray” or “to supplicate” can be expected here, because it would parallel *iqâl*, occurring at the end of l. 90.

91/93. *ti-le-é-a-um*: archaising writing for *tele’um*, “capable” (*AHw* III, 1344; *CAD* T 327-328). The aleph sign is expressed through the sign A. Cf. also *rē’ûm* (“to tend cattle”), occasionally spelled as *re-é-a-um* (*ASyll.*⁴, 12*, 174c; cf. *AHw* II, 976; *CAD* R 300. See von Soden 1971, 65).

97. Tentative restoration based on the Literary Prayer to Ištar, l. 158 *ana mi-na im-ku-ú tu-am-mé-šú an-n[a’-šú’]*, “In what respect has he been negligent? *You can disregard his sin*”.²⁰³

98. [*šū-us-si*]-*i*: The restoration follows *CAD* Š/II 340.

100/102. [*ina b*]a-lu-uk: I follow von Soden (1971, 57–58) in this restoration. The preposition *ina* would be pleonastic, as *baluk* is another example of the locative-adverbial ending followed by the shortened form of the pronominal suffix. However, such a pleonastic usage of the prepositions *ina* or *ana* with the locative case is often attested already in Old Babylonian sources.²⁰⁴

103. [*te-nu-u*]n²-ma ARAD-ka ta-as-sa-na[b-bu-us]: the space at the beginning of the line suggests that three signs can be restored in the break; the last one, still partially visible, ends

¹⁹⁹ I follow the translation given by Reiner (1970, 19 and 26) in her edition of the text.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Seux 1976, 171, note 22; Mayer 2004, 210. Cf. also *CMAwR* 3, text 8.60, 220–223.

²⁰¹ See Streck 2003, 425, cf. Steinert 2012, 127. For the concept of personal gods as parental figures, see Bosworth 2015.

²⁰² Stol 1981, 88–89, no. 141.

²⁰³ Own translation, reading and restoration. Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 52.

²⁰⁴ Mayer 1996, 434. *GAG* §66, c.

with four vertical wedges, and could be UN. I follow Mayer in restoring *tēnun*,²⁰⁵ preterite from *enēnu* (verbal root i/u), which is entered in *AHw* as *enēnu* II “bestrafen” and III “sündigen” (*AHw* 217b and 1553b), and in *CAD* E 194 as *enēnu* B, “to punish”. Mayer, however, provides a different translation of this verb, namely “to rage”, “to let one feel one’s wrath”, taking *enēnu* as a synonym of other, more common intransitive verbs for “to be furious” as *kamālu*, *agāgu* and *šalbāsu*.²⁰⁶ *enēnu* often occurs in prayers and literary texts, see for example a *šuilla*-prayer to Marduk (Marduk 5), l. 41: *šá i-nu-nu-šú* DIĜIR-šú, “He, whose god has let him feel his wrath”, or Ludlul I, 41: *ištu ūm(i) bēlī i-ni-na-an-ni*, “On the day when my lord let me feel his wrath”. The substantive *ennettum* is likely to be derived from this verb (see below the note on line 103).

104. [*i-na’ r*]it²-ti-ka ta-at-ta-di du-u[š²-mu²-ka²]: The first part of the line is partially broken, but the partly visible sign at the beginning can be *rid/t*. I suggest restoring *dušmû* at the end of the line, because it would parallel *aradka* in the immediately preceding line. The resulting couplet (ll. 103-104) then forms a synthetic parallelism, amplifying the previous image, and depicting the angry god who does not forgive the penitent, but keeps rejecting him.

The learned noun *dušmû* also appears in l. 149. It is attested—together with its feminine form *dušmētu*—in Malku I 177-178 as a synonym of the more common *ardu*.²⁰⁷

105. *šá-niš ḫal-lu-la-a-a*: Restoration based on a parallel in Erimḫuš I 213-216 (MSL 17, 19):

²¹³ maškim₂ gi₆ lu₂-ḫar-ra-an = *ḫal-lu-la-a-a*

²¹⁴ maškim₂ gi₄ a-ri-a = *šá-niš* MIN

²¹⁵ diĝir ki-šu tag-ga nu-tuku = DIĜIR *lem-nu*

²¹⁶ diĝir [zag] ḡar-ra = DIĜIR *šá šu-ut-ti*

The use of *šá-niš* for the adverb *šaniš*, “again”, “similarly”, is attested four times within the preserved manuscripts of *Erimḫuš*, and always introduces the sign MIN, indicating the exact repetition of the Akkadian entry occurring in the preceding line.²⁰⁸ The scribe of the Nabû Prayer has possibly misinterpreted *šá-niš* in the lexical source, taking it not as a gloss, but as part of the name of the *ḫallulāju*-demon mentioned in the list. While the term *ḫal-lu-la-a-a*

²⁰⁵ Mayer 1993, 233, fn. 11.

²⁰⁶ Mayer 1993, 232–233 and 2016/3, 205–206.

²⁰⁷ Hrůša 2010, 313–314; cf. Lambert 1968, 130 and Caplice 1974, 349.

²⁰⁸ For the use of *šaniš* in lexical lists, see Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 9-10.

can generally indicate the name of an insect,²⁰⁹ the parallel with the lexical text—which clearly lists four demonic beings—proves that in our context *hal-lu-la-a-a* denotes the *hallulāju*-demon, a female demon that enters houses and frightens young brides.²¹⁰ The spelling A-A found in *hal-lu-la-a-a* can be used in Akkadian to express the diphthong *aj-/ajj-* or *āj-/ājj-* with any following vowel.²¹¹ In this case, this spelling could express the form *hallulāju*, *hallulāja* or *hallulājj*.

The last clearly visible sign of the line is TA, hence a second-person singular verbal form may be expected. Since *ta-bar-ri* occurs in the succeeding line (106), we assume that a verb meaning “to look at”, “to inspect” was used in line 107 too. Nevertheless, the end of the line is too damaged to allow a restoration.

106. The fragmentary state of the line prevents a clear understanding. However, the mention of the *lahmu*-monsters suggests that this line—as the previous one—involves demonic beings, and, possibly, the exercise of power over them by the god, expressed here by *tabarri*, “you watch over”, “you keep an eye”.

I tentatively emendate DU.<DU>-ku for *muttalliku*, “roaming”, “restless”. For attestations of this participle used in descriptions of demons see *CAD* M/2 306.

109. The verbal form *ir-ra-qu* might be an irregular form from *raqû*, present N-stem; *kab-^rta-ta¹* is a poetical variant for the more common *kabattu* (cf. von Soden 1971, 65).

110. This line belongs to a severely damaged set of verses (ll. 104–115) that probably deal with the distress of the supplicant, whose miseries are listed and described in this portion of the prayer (the “Penitential section”, ll. 44–173, see the Introduction to the Nabû Prayer, §2.2.1). Therefore, I tentatively restore here [*tēnšu it²*]-*ta-kir-šú*, because this kind of suffering, i.e. mental confusion and unrest, is a recurring theme in Akkadian prayers;²¹² see for example the *eršahuğa*-prayer 4R² 19 n.3, rev. ll. 15-16 :

¹⁵ *dimma nu-mu-un-dab ní-mu numu-uš-tuku-mèn*

¹⁶ *tè-e-mì ul šab-ta-ku ra-ma-ni ul ha-sa-ku*

²⁰⁹ The term has been translated differently: Landsberger takes it as the mole cricket (Landsberger 1934a, 135), Ebeling thinks instead of an ant-lion (Ebeling 1937, 69), and finally Farber suggests translating it as “Scolopender” (Farber 1987, 102–103. Cf. also Weiershäuser & Hrůša 2018, 166.)

²¹⁰ Farber 1987, 103. See also *CAD* H, 36 for the attestations of *h.* as a demon.

²¹¹ Mayer 2003, 303; GAG §22b.

²¹² Van der Toorn 1985, 65–66.

I didn't keep my reason, I forgot myself.²¹³

For several attestations of *tēmu* with *nakārum*, see *CAD* N/I 163. A similar motif can also be found in other Great Hymns and Prayers, as in the Ištar Literary Prayer, l. 157: *ṭè-em-šú ul ḥa-sis ma-ši ra-ma[n-šú]*, “He has lost his mind and forgets himself”,²¹⁴ and in Marduk 2, l. 12': *tu-ut-ter-ra-áš-šú ṭa-a-bi šá it-ru-ru ṭè-en-šú*, “You made healthy again the one, whose mind has trembled”.²¹⁵

The expression that employs the words *tēmu* and *nakārum* to describe mental derangement occurs very often in medical texts.²¹⁶

113. *ši-in-šú*: This word is a *hapax*, von Soden (1971, 66) suggests it may be a verbal noun deriving from *sanāšu*, “to insert, to infix”. The rest of the line is too damaged to allow an understanding.

115. *šu-ur-du-ú*: Substantive form from the verb *redû* Š-stem, “to flow out”. The meaning of this noun is uncertain, but is probably to be understood as a kind of disease, possibly an overflowing of bodily fluids (see *AHw* III, 1283, *CAD* Š/III 343).

116. *a-di ma-ti*: this is a conventional expression, often to be found in Akkadian penitential prayers. After the symptoms of suffering have been described, similar formulations are used in rhetorical questions addressed to the deity, who is considered responsible for the penitent's pitiable condition.²¹⁷

*lu-ṛuq-qu*¹: I accept here the restoration offered by von Soden (1971, 66). If the restored form is correct, then *luqqu* constitutes another example of the inconsistency of final vowels in this text—both in nominal and in verbal forms. The expected form would be *luqqi*.

121–122. [*É² ki²-im²-t*]i-ia: I follow Foster in reconstructing *kimtīja*.²¹⁸ For reasons of space, however, I also restore *É* at the beginning of the line. The restoration *bīt kimtīja*, “my family house”, is made on the basis of *CAD* K 377, usage g.

²¹³ Maul 1988, 353–354.

²¹⁴ Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 52.

²¹⁵ Own translation. Cf. the last edition by Oshima 2011, 232, 246–247.

²¹⁶ Arbøll 2019. Cf. Stol 2009.

²¹⁷ Mayer 1976, 106–107. See also the Introduction to the Nabû Prayer, §2.4.1.

²¹⁸ Foster 2005, 626.

[A.ŠÀ] *ab-be-a*: The restoration *eql abbēja* is tentative. The noun *kišubbû*, “fallow”, “uncultivated land” (see *AHw* II, 493; *CAD* K 463–464) is commonly attested together with *eqlum* “field”, which here would parallel *bītu* found in the previous line.

The sense of this couplet is uncertain: it could constitute a praise to the god, meaning that abundance and wealth are bestowed upon those who worship Nabû.

123. *sa-an-tak* stands for the adverb *santak*, “constantly” (*AHw* III 1023–1024; *CAD* S 148–149), and *ki-na-a-ti* is probably to be taken as an adverbial form from *kittu*, “certainly” (*AHw* I 494–495, usage c); cf. *CAD* K 383–384 under *kinātu* usage c). Von Soden suggests two possible readings for *šá mu-šú*, namely *ša mūši*, “Of the night”, or *šamūšu*, “second string” (*AHw* II 1160; *CAD* Š II 364). Both interpretations are doubtful. Furthermore, he interprets *lu qi-i-t[ú]* as *lū qītu*, “may be the end”. See von Soden 1971, 66. The meaning of this line remains obscure.

124. *lu-ma-a'-i-ru*: *luma''irū* is the expected Assyrian form of the precativ D-stem, see GAG §81c. I follow von Soden and consider it as derived from (*w*)*áru*, D-stem, “to send” (*AHw* III 1472; *CAD* A/2 320, mng. 2). Due to the fragmentary state of the context, the meaning of the verse remains uncertain.

125. The first damaged sign could be PA, though the line is too broken to allow a reconstruction. I suggest to read *hupšu*, “rabble” (*AHw* I 357, *CAD* 241–242), because of the following *za-ma-ni*, “enemy”. Cf. von Soden 1971, 67.

128. *ú-nam-ga-ru kar-ʿšī*²¹⁹: The sign *ši* seems to fit the traces at the end of the line, and *karšu*, “calumny” (*AHw* I 450, *CAD* K 222–223) would be a possible object for *unamgarū*; cf. Malku IV, 34 [*mu-na-gi*]-*ru* = *a-kil kar-ši*, “calumniator”.²¹⁹ The rest of the line is too damaged to allow a clear understanding of the context.

129. *qé-e* could also be read as *ke-e*; *a-gar-ru-ti* could also be taken as *a-šá-ru-ti*. *agarrūtu* could be a rare, yet attested, plural form of *agru*, “hired man” (see *AHw* I 16, *CAD* A/1 151), though it makes little sense within the present context. *a-šá-ru-ti* is unknown (cf. von Soden 1971, 67).

²¹⁹ Hrůša 2010, 94–95, 241 and 381. The author restores this passage in Malku on the basis of *CAD* M/2 198b.

141. *uṣ-ši-iṣ-ma an-za-[nun²-ze²-e²]*: This section of the hymn (ll.140–150 ca.) is severely damaged, though the context seems to hint at some divinatory practice (see l. 142, in which *bīru* “divination” is found). The last visible signs of the line are AN and ZA, indicating perhaps the name of a god—e.g., as von Soden suggests, of *Zaqīqu*, who is mentioned further in l. 143.²²⁰ However, there is no divine determinative preceding *Zaqīqu* in l. 143, hence a different reconstruction can be suggested for l. 141. In this regard, I tentatively restore *anzanunzû*. This was the name of the subterranean water (see *AHw* III 1510–1511, *CAD* A/II 152, and also Malku II 52: *an-za-na-an-zu-ú* = A.MEŠ *šap-lu-tu₄*²²¹), but also, according to von Soden, a possible epithet of the god of wisdom Ea (see *AHw* III, 1511). Here I follow von Soden’s interpretation and take it as an epithet of the god.²²²

The conventional *topos* of the supplicant looking for the reasons of his suffering through divination and rituals—invoking several different deities and yet failing to receive an answer—seems to unfold in this part of the text (ll. 140–150).²²³ A similar passage occurs in *Ludlul* I, ll. 49–54 or II, ll. 6–9,²²⁴ and in other Akkadian prayers (see for example the *šuilla*-prayer to Marduk no. 5, ll. 57–58: *lem-na ḥa-ṭa-a/ Á.MEŠ-ú-a [ter-r]e-tu-ú-a dal-ḥa-a-ma ul i-šá-a EŠ.BAR kit-ti*, “My signs are bad (and) faulty, the omina are so confused, that they have no firm verdict”).²²⁵

142. *za-qi-qu*: The term *zaqīqu/zīqīqu* has various nuances.²²⁶ It derives from the verb *zāqu*, “to blow”, and is found in lexical lists equated to words for wind (see *CAD* Z 58, lex. sec.).

Thus, it can denote a wind or a breeze. It can also refer to a category of wind-demons or ghosts, who are said to dwell in the underworld, and it is also the name of the Mesopotamian Dream God. Moreover, *zaqīqu/zīqīqu* is often found in passages that describe a communication between deities and men.²²⁷ In this regard, Butler, following Couprie,²²⁸ suggests that the term under discussion might also indicate a ritual expert involved in the incubation of dreams. She notes the occurrence of *zaqīqu* in *Ludlul* II, l. 8 *za-qi-qu a-bal-ma*

²²⁰ See von Soden 1971, 68.

²²¹ Hrůša 2010, 332. Cf. also Horowitz 1998, 310.

²²² Cf. also the epithet of Ea *Apsû* in Tallqvist 1938, 287.

²²³ Cf. Mayer 1976, 104–106; Van der Toorn 1985, 60–61; 64–65.

²²⁴ Oshima 2014, 80–81; 86–87.

²²⁵ Mayer 1993, 313–337.

²²⁶ Butler 1998, 79–81. Cf. Jacobsen 1989, 267–276.

²²⁷ See Oppenheim 1956, 234 and Oshima 2014, 229. See also *CAD* Z, 60.

²²⁸ Couprie 1960, 86

ul ú-pat-ti uz-ni, “I prayed to the *Zaqīqu*, but he did not instruct me!”). She interprets the word as parallel to *šā’ ilu*, “dream-interpreter”, in the line immediately preceding (Ludlul II, 7).²²⁹

Within the present context, however, *zaqīqu* is probably to be taken as the god of dreams, as it seems to parallel Amna in the previous line.²³⁰

143. *zu-un-zu-na*: the noun *zunzunu* is only attested in lexical lists, and indicates a type of locust, see *AHw* III 1538, *CAD* Z 163, cf. Hg A II 269: BURU₅ tur-tur = *zir-zir-rum* = *zu-un-zu-^rnu*¹ (MSL 8/2, 45:269). Even though this section of the prayer is too fragmentary to allow a clear understanding of the context, *zunzunu* seems to occur within a list of divine names (see ll. 142–145). Considering the mention of the *ḫallulāju*-demon in line 107, *zunzunu* might indicate here some sort of demon. The reading *zunzunna[tu]*, “shoe”, offered by von Soden, appears less convincing within our context (see von Soden 1971, 57 and 68).

144. ^dNIN.GÙN.NU: this is one of the names of Inanna/ Ištar. It is also attested in several god lists, where also the variant ^dNIN.IGI.GÙN can be found.²³¹

151-152: Lines restored on the basis of Marduk 1, ll. 129-130: *iḫ-ti-dam-ma mar-ša-tuš i-[ba]k-ki-ka / kab-ta-as-su na-an-gul-lat-ma iḫ-[ta]m-maṭ-ka*, “He muttered as he wailed his woe to you, with his insides *throbbing*, he burns for you”.²³² For a similar passage see also another composition belonging to the Great Hymns and Prayers, namely the Babylonian Prayer to Anūna, l. 83: *iḫ-ti-dam-ma al-ka-ta-šu i-b[a-ak-ki-ki-im]*, “He has spoken forth, tearfully telling [you] his way of life.”²³³

iḫ-ti-dam-ma: I follow Lambert’s reading and take this form as derived from *ḫi’ ādu*, “to speak”, “to utter” (*AHw* I 342, *CAD* Ḫ 128a), *contra* von Soden and Oshima who read *iḫ-ti-ṭam-ma*, from *ḫiāṭu*, “to watch”, “to inspect” (*AHw* I 342, *CAD* Ḫ 159-162). While verbs meaning “to see” (e.g. *amāru*) do indeed occasionally occur with the substantive *maruštu(m)*, “trouble”, “hardship” (cf. *AHw* II 618, *CAD* M/1 317-319) in the sense of “experiencing trouble”,²³⁴ the *topos* of the suppliant confessing his sins and painfully describing his

²²⁹ Butler 1998, 81. Cf. Oshima 2014, 86–87, 396.

²³⁰ Butler 1998, 82.

²³¹ For a more detailed discussion see Cavigneux–Krebernik 1998.

²³² Own translation. Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 58 and Oshima 2011, 151, 164–165, 184–185.

²³³ Lambert 1989, 326 and 330.

²³⁴ Cf. Oshima 2011, 184.

suffering is nevertheless a typical feature of Akkadian prayers,²³⁵ see for example Marduk 1, l. 133–134:

¹³³ *ki-i lal-la-ri qu-bé-e ú-šá-aš-rap*

¹³⁴ *du-lup-šú i-qab-bi ina te-ni-ni*

¹³³ Like a professional mourner he utters bitter cries,

¹³⁴ He speaks his lack of sleep in his prayer.²³⁶

This motif is also found in several wisdom texts, as in the Babylonian dialogue “Man and his God”; ll. 10–11:

¹⁰ *be-li-iš-šu du-ul-li iḫ-bu-tu i-ma-an-nu*

¹¹ *in-ḫi i-na-ḫu-ʿúʿ i-pa-aš-ša-ar eṭ-lu-u[m]*

¹⁰ He recounts to his lord the toil he has gone through,

¹¹ The man explains the suffering he is enduring.²³⁷

The verb *ḫi'ādu* is attested in lexical sources, together with its derivative *ḫittu* (a kind of utterance, perhaps “riddle”,²³⁸ *CAD* H 208, under *ḫittu* C, lex. sec.), see Izi V, 30'–32' (*MSL* 13, 150):

^{30'} *i-bi-lu = ḫi-it-tu*

^{31'} *i-bi-lu = te-el-tu*

^{32'} *i-bi-lu-du₁₁-ga = ḫi-a-du*

^{30'} *i-bi-lu = utterance*

^{31'} *i-bi-lu = saying*

^{32'} *i-bi-lu-du₁₁-ga = to speak*

(Cf. also Nabnītu V 6–12: *i-bi-lu = ḫi-it-tim*, *MSL* 16, 95).

nangullat: the stative *nangul* is derived from the verb *nagālum* (see *AHW* II 709, *CAD* N/I 107) whose exact meaning remains doubtful, and which is attested mostly in the stative. Meissner interprets it as meaning “to glow”, “to scintillate”, “to be bright”, basing his translation on a variant gloss *nen-gu-la = nin-bu-ṭa* (see also *CAD* N/I 107, which leaves

²³⁵ The description of the symptoms belongs to the penitential section, an element which is identified as “die Klage” by Mayer (1976, 35–37 and 67–118), following the structure of Akkadian prayers given by von Soden 1957–1971, 161, §4. See the Introduction of this prayer, §2.4.1 For the confession of sins as a recurring *topos*, used in order to appease an angry god, see Oshima 2011, 16–17, Lenzi et. al. 2011, 42–45.

²³⁶ Oshima 2011, 152, 164–165.

²³⁷ Lambert 1987, 190.

²³⁸ Alster 1996, 7.

nagālum untranslated).²³⁹ The verb is attested in the stative G-stem as referring to stars, hair of animals and, in one uncertain case,²⁴⁰ to human skin (see *CAD* N/I 107 for the attestations).

The meaning “to be bright” or “to scintillate” can indeed easily be attributed to celestial bodies, and perhaps to the shimmering quality of hair or skin in a certain light. Furthermore, *na-gi-il*, “gleaming”, is used once in the divination series *Šumma ālu* to describe the canopy of a house, as opposite to *eṭū*, “dark”.²⁴¹ The translation suggested by Meissner, however, does not fit all the occurrences. In fact, the stative N-stem of *nagālum* also occurs as referred to *libbu* “heart” and *kabattu*, “liver” (as in the text under consideration). *nagālum* seems also to be used in association with grieving and mourning, as in the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no. 11, l. 14: *na-an-gu-la-ku-ma a-bak-ki šar-piš*, translated by Jaques in her edition as “Je suis enfiévré et pleure amèrement”²⁴² (cf. *CAD* N/1 107, usage b, 2’-3’), or in an Old Babylonian love poem, rev. l. 10: *na-an-gu-la at-ku-la ku-a-ši-im sa-ap-da*, which Lambert translates as: “Women are in anguish, mourning and lamentation for you”, yet leaving the form *nangulā* unexplained.²⁴³ Moreover, in the literary text, the “Fable of the Fox”, the verbal adjective *uggulu*, derived from *nagālum*, describes a reed: [*am*]-*mi-ni a-na ki-rim a-pi ug-gu-li ta-za-ar-ru nab-li*. Lambert translates this passage: “Why do you spread flame to the glowing reed...?”.²⁴⁴

Contrary to previous translations, which evoke a supposed sense of “burning” or “glowing”, I suggest a second possible meaning of *nagālum* N-stem, namely that of “to tremble”, “to shake”, or “to throb”, which might be applied to the human heart—or to the insides—, to someone sobbing in mourning, or to a reed shaking in the wind. This meaning would parallel that of another Akkadian verb, (*w*)*amālum*, translated in the dictionaries as “to be nervous”, “to be agitated” —if applied to *kabattu*—, but “to scintillate” if denoting celestial bodies (see *AHW* III 1459, *CAD* U/W 401). The attestations of (*w*)*amālum* in the lexical lists, nevertheless, clarify the primary meaning of this verb: AnŠ 269–273 enters (*w*)*amālum* in D-stem among various synonyms for *ra’ibu*, a kind of trembling, derived from the verb *ra’ābu*, “to tremble” (*AHW* II, 444, “Zittern-Krankheit”; *CAD* R 81: “Probably a disease characterized by trembling”). Hence, the equation *ummulu* = *ra’ibu* in AnŠ 270

²³⁹ Meissner 1932, 47–48.

²⁴⁰ The attestation seems to occur in the Babylonian Love Lyrics (Lambert 1975, 105): *maš-ku nag-lat ki-ma di-q[a-ri]*, which *CAD* leaves untranslated. Lambert, however, read *naq-lat* and translates the line: “Her skin was burnt, like a pot”.

²⁴¹ For this attestation see Freedman 1998, 110–111, l.14.

²⁴² Jaques 2015, 67 and 87.

²⁴³ Lambert 1966, 55–56.

²⁴⁴ Lambert 1960, 195. Lambert explains this form as a case of dropping of the *n*, which occurs also in other verbs I n. See Lambert 1960, 335.

(LTBA II, 2 rev. I 56 and LTBA II, 3 rev. 6')²⁴⁵ associates (w)amālum with a flickering movement, that may metaphorically describe an emotional state of agitation, as well as the glint of stars. It is therefore possible to hypothesise a similar double meaning also for nagālum, which would mean both “to twitch” or “to tremble”, and “to scintillate”.

153. uš-šar-ri-ip ka-[ba²-at²-ta²-šú²]: for other attestations of šarāpu with kabattu see CAD Š 102, mng. 2.

157. tu-šá-ma za-ma-nu-¹ú¹: The adverb tušāma is the lengthened form of tuša, the function of which was to express *irrealis*. tuša appears moreover to convey a nuance of subjectivity, and it is indeed in two instances attested together with adverbial forms as *ina tašīmātī-ja* “(as if) in my judgement”, or *ana īnī-šu* “to his eyes”.²⁴⁶ It is difficult to ascertain its etymology, but it could be related to the noun tuššum, “hostile talk”.²⁴⁷ For similar passages in literary texts, cf. for example *Ludlul I*, 83: *tu-šá-ma nak-ra-ti na-an-dur-ti ma-a-ti*, “As if it were enemies, my land is furious”²⁴⁸ or in the narrative *Sargon the Conquering Hero*, *tu-ša ge-ri-ma qí-iš-tum ig-re-e-šu* “As if it was an enemy, the forest had become hostile towards him”.²⁴⁹

169. The first sign after the break seems ŠU and not, as von Soden suggests, MA. The object of *imši* is probably *arnu* (following CAD M/II 41).

170. *i-kim-[ma²]*: Restoration based on the Great Prayer to Anūna, l. 31 *e-ki-im-ma*, “[...] was taken away”.²⁵⁰

171. *ḥu-bur-ta-šú*: This substantive is translated in the dictionaries as a sort of basket or a reed container (see CAD H 220 “a container for beer; a kind of basket”, *AHW I*, 352 “Rohrhülle”).

However, the *hapax ḥuburtu* is attested in *Malku V*, 92-93, as a synonym of *ḥabāšu/ḥabātu*, “happiness”, and *ḥašāšu*, “to rejoice”, and is probably to be explained as the feminine variant of the more common noun *ḥubūru*, “din”.²⁵¹ Therefore, *ḥuburtu* can indicate

²⁴⁵ Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 225 and 245.

²⁴⁶ Krebernik & Streck 2001, 67.

²⁴⁷ Krebernik & Streck 2001, 68.

²⁴⁸ After Krebernik & Streck 2001, 72. Cf. Oshima 2014, 82–83.

²⁴⁹ After Krebernik & Streck 2001, 71. Cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1997, 70: 59.

²⁵⁰ Lambert 1989, 325.

²⁵¹ See Hrůša 2010, 114–115, 256 and 401.

a joyous clamour. Our text is here too fragmentary to allow a complete understanding of the line, and it is difficult to define which one of the two possible meanings, i.e. “reed basket” or “din”, “clamour”, is meant.

173. For a very similar phraseology see Marduk Prayer1, l. 61: *ru-um-me il-lu-ur-ta-šú pu-ṭur ma-ak-[si-šú]*, “Release his manacles, loosen his bonds”,²⁵² and l. 155 *ḫi-pi qu-un-nab-ra-šú il-lu-ur-ta-šú pu-ṭur ma-ak-si-šú*, “Break his fetters, his bonds, loosen his manacles”.²⁵³ The representation of the sufferer as constricted or imprisoned is a well-known image in the Mesopotamian prayers, see for example the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no.9, ll. 15’–16’: *bi-ti ana É dim-ma-tim i-tur-ma i-li ana-ku ka-ma-ak-šu ina libbi-šú tu-še-ši-b[a-an-ni]*, “My house has become a house of weeping, my God, I am its prisoner, you made [me] dwell in it”,²⁵⁴ and *Ludlul* II, 96: *a-na ki-suk-ki-ia i-tu-ra bi-tu*, “My house has become my prison”.²⁵⁵

175. ¹ú¹-šah^{1a}-lal-a: I follow *CAD* M/I 212 for the interpretation of this verbal form, and I analyse it as a present Š-stem from *alālu/ḫalālu*, “to suspend”, “to hang”. The expected form would be *ušahlal*, and the final *a*-vowel might be explained as a ventive suffix. However, the use of the sign LA before LAL remains unclear. It might be explained as a phonetic gloss, or as a scribal mistake.

This line is parallel to the preceding one, probably describing the god through a metaphor: Nabû is first compared to a wall which protects against the cold of winter (l. 174), and then to a gentle breeze which alleviates the heat of summer.²⁵⁶

176. *še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú’]/mar-tú ma-r[i]*: it is difficult to ascertain the meaning of this line, as it lacks verbal forms and, moreover, shows rare words borrowed from lexical lists.

šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru: The word *šuršurru* is attested exclusively in Malku II, 128B, as a variant of *šuršašmu/šuršašnu*, and equated with *nurmû*, “pomegranate” (*AHW* II, 804-805; *CAD* N/II 345–347, mng. 2),²⁵⁷ the word *ḫinzūru* —derived from the Hurrian *ḫinzuri*, “apple”— is also entered in Malku II 129²⁵⁸ and exp. Malku III, 210 as a synonym of

²⁵² Oshima 2011, 147, 160–161.

²⁵³ Own translation. See Oshima 2011, 154, 166–167.

²⁵⁴ For the edition of the text see Jaques 2015, 53–60.

²⁵⁵ Lambert 1960, 44–45. Oshima 2014, 90–91, 408.

²⁵⁶ Incidentally, cf. Isaiah 25:4: “You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat”, translation taken by the New International 2011.

²⁵⁷ Hrůša 2010, 60–61, 341.

²⁵⁸ Hrůša 2010, 60–61, 341.

ḥašḥūru, “apple-tree/apple” (see *AHw* I, 333-334; *CAD* H 139–140; cf. GLH 106).²⁵⁹ It is worth noticing that the two words *šuršurru* and *ḥinzūru* occur in immediate succession in Malku, as well as in our text. Furthermore, the noun *marratu*, “the bitter one” (following *AHw* II, 612 “Das Bittere”, a name of a date-palm) is found in the following line of Malku (Malku II, 130²⁶⁰), and *alamittu*, “a palm-tree” (see *AHw* I 35, *CAD* A/I 333) follows in the next line (Malku II, 131²⁶¹). Line 178 of the Nabû Prayer reads: *a-la-mit-tum ú-ḥe-en-šá da-da-riš ma-a-[ar]*. Hence, the vocabulary in ll. 176 and 178 of the Nabû Prayer seems to be informed by Malku II, 128-131, and indicates a conscious use of the lexical list by the author of the prayer.

meš-ḥe-ri ši-d[i-tú²]: These two nouns are *hapax legomena*. I take *meš-ḥe-ri* as the elsewhere unattested word *mešḥeru*, probably a nominal form derived from the root *šhr*, “small”. It could be a literary noun indicating a boy or a young man (cf. the well attested *mešḥeriš*, “in childhood” and *mešḥerūtu*, “childhood”, see *AHw* II 648; *CAD* M/II 36).

The restoration *ši-d[i-tú²]* fits the traces and the space at the end of the line. I interpret it as the feminine form of *šedû/šēdu*, “offshoot”, as in AnŠ 198: *še-e-du* = ŠE.IM²⁶² and in Hh III 195: *giš.še.dù.a* = ŠU-ú(*šedû*). The term *šēdītu* would parallel *mešḥeru*, representing its feminine counterpart, possibly indicating a girl or a young woman.

Both these poetical nouns form a *parallelismus* with *mārtu* and *māru* occurring in the same line.

Line 176 of the Nabû Prayer lists words and word-pairs referring to the god and his work. The initial expression *še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia*, “my morning aid”, is probably to be taken as a metaphor for Nabû, whose compassion is compared to daylight (cf l. 183, see also the Introduction of the Prayer to Nabû, §2.3). Moreover, the mention of fruits and fruit-producing trees evokes images connected with fertility: the ‘apple’, or the pomegranate —Akkadian *ḥinzūru* (in our text), or its synonym *ḥašḥūru*— is often used in figurative language in Akkadian poetry as a symbol of sexual potency.²⁶³ The common term for “fruit” in Akkadian, *inbu*, can indeed be interpreted as “offspring”, “child” (see *AHw* I 381, mng. 6; *CAD* I 144–147, mng. 2). In this line, the metaphorical expressions are further clarified through the chiasmic combination of word-pairs: *mešḥeru šīd[ītu(?)]/ mārtu māru* “the boy and the girl, the daughter and the son”. The resulting synonymous parallelism amplifies the same thought,

²⁵⁹ Hrůša 2010, 182–183, 452.

²⁶⁰ Hrůša 2010, 60–61, 341

²⁶¹ Hrůša 2010, 60–61, 341

²⁶² Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 221. Cf. LTBA II, 2, obv. iii 198.

²⁶³ Lambert 1987, 27–31. The translation “apple” for *ḥašḥuru* and its Sumerian antecedent *ḥašḥur* is uncertain. For a detailed discussion see Lambert 1987, 30–31.

namely that of fertility and progeny: the god is the one who can ensure descendants for the pious worshipper.

179. *nu-ḥ[áš²]*: There is room for one or maybe two signs at the end of the line. The sign before the break shows traces of two horizontals and a Winkelhaken, and looks like ZIG. I suggest to read *nuḥāš* as a stative from the rare adjective *nuḥāšum*, “prosperous” (*AHw* II 800, *CAD* N/II 313), which appears in personal names and derives from *naḥāšum*, “to prosper” (*AHw* II 713, *CAD* N/I 133–134). The phonetic value *ḥáš* for ZIG is rare, though it is not uncommon to find seldom used sign values within the corpus of Great Hymns and Prayers, see for example the Great Literary Prayer to Ištar, l. 146: *lâl-la-ru-šú kim-ta-šu i-ḥáš-[šá-šú]*, “his mourners gathe[r] his family”, in which the form *i-ḥáš-[šá-šú]* also displays the sign ZIG with the value *ḥáš*,²⁶⁴ or within our Nabû Prayer, l. 116 *šúr-du-ú*, which shows the rare value *šúr* for DÜL, otherwise only attested in Old Akkadian (cf. von Soden 1971, 66, and *AkkSyll.* 4, 34, n° 179).

181. *i-kuš-šu*: I interpret this verb as a preterite G-stem derived from *kāšu*, “to delay” (*AHw* I 463, *CAD* K 394–395 under *kāšu* A). The expected form would be *ikūš*, and the final *u*-vowel is possibly to be considered as a ventive in *-u*. The use of the ventive form in *-u* instead of in *-a(m)* is a consequence of the confusion between *u* and *a* progressively spreading in first-millennium Akkadian.²⁶⁵

¹ú¹-[šá²-aš²- šá²]: I suggest this restoration following Foster’s translation,²⁶⁶ *contra* von Soden, who restores instead ¹ú¹-[*ma-at-ta*]. The meaning of this line is that there is a right time for everything, and grain too needs time to mature in order to provide a good harvest. For more on this wisdom thought, see the Introduction to the Great Prayer to Nabû, §2.3 and chapter 1, §1.2.5.

182. The tablet shows traces of a vertical wedge before the break. The space in the break suggests that two signs are missing at the end of the line. Basing on the present context, one might hypothesise the line to mean that something abhorrent to the gods—such as a bodily discharge—is indeed common among men. The physical imperfection of human beings would be then compared and opposed to the perfection of deities. This line seems to suggest the

²⁶⁴ Von Soden 1971, 49. Cf. Chapter 2 of this dissertation, in which I provide a new edition of this text.

²⁶⁵ See Schwemer 2017, 77 for other examples of ventives in *-u*.

²⁶⁶ Foster 2005, 624.

same idea found in the *Babylonian Theodicy* (ll. 276–280)²⁶⁷ and in other Mesopotamian literary and religious compositions, namely that men are impure and sinful by nature.²⁶⁸ For similar wisdom themes in the Great Hymns and Prayers, cf. also Chapter 1, §1.2.5.

183. *ek-let nam-rat*: This is a recurring apodosis in omens. It is explained in a commentary to *Šumma ālu* 22–23 (BM 129092, l. 17) as a reference to a “humble man” (*a-na muš-ke-ni qa-bi*), who supposedly rises in society.²⁶⁹ It appears that the author of the Nabû Prayer knew this idiomatic phrase and used it for arguing that a negative beginning has a positive outcome. The author reinforces this idea in the second half of the line: *še-zu-zu ta-a-[a-ar]*, “the raging one will be merciful”. The concept of the angry god who eventually relents is often found in the apodoses of omens, cf. for example the following Old Babylonian omen:

DIŠ LÚ *it-ti ra-ma-ni-šu-ma qú-lum i[m]-qú-us-sú*
e-ze-ez i-lim ta-ia-ar-tam i-šu
 “If silence falls upon a man without any reason,
 the wrath of deity will change into mercy”.²⁷⁰

This theme finds numerous parallels in the wisdom genre, see the Introduction to the Great Prayer to Nabû, §1.2.3.

184-185. The interpretation of this couplet is made following *CAD* A/1 169a and Seux (1976, 184). On the contrary, von Soden takes *ma-ru* as nominative case and *za-ra-šú* as accusative, therefore inverting the subject and the object. He translates: “Der demütige, disziplinierte Sohn segnet besonders noch seinen Erzeuger; der nicht demütige, disziplinlose Sohn verflucht ...[seinen Vater]” (von Soden 1971, 59). Von Soden’s translation better agrees with the grammar, though seems less convincing.

a-di e-né-šú: probably derived from *enû*, “to change”, see von Soden 1971, 70.

a-ḥa-mu stands for *aḥammu*, a variant of the adverb *aḥamma* (*AHw* I 18, *CAD* A/1 168-169), see Malku III 90, which equates *aḥamma* to what appears to be a derivative from the adverb *warkum*, “afterwards” (*AHw* III 1470): *a-ḥa-am-mu = ár-k[a]*.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ See Lambert 1960, 88–89. Cf. Oshima 2014, 164–165 and 462.

²⁶⁸ For this interpretation see also Foster 2005, 625.

²⁶⁹ See the “Commentary on *Ālu* 22–23 (*CCP* 3.5.22.A.a)” edited online by Jiménez, 2015, accessed 2/09/2019, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P461301>. DOI: [10079/zgmsbr9](https://doi.org/10.1017/zgmsbr9).

²⁷⁰ Köcher & Oppenheim 1957–1958, 64, ll. 29–30. Cf. also Rahmouni & Lev 2016, 239.

²⁷¹ Hrůša 2010, 80–81, 233, 365.

190. *e-ni-is-su*: von Soden (1971, 70) takes this noun as derived from the feminine form of *ēnû* “substitute” (*AHw* I 221, *CAD* E 180). The word would denote here someone to suffer in place of the supplicant. This interpretation is followed by Foster²⁷² and Seux.²⁷³ However, I read this word as *ennētu* (var. *ennettu*, *elinnintu*, see *AHw* I 219; *CAD* E 169-170). This substantive derives from the verb *enēnu*, “to rage”, “to let one feel one’s rage” (l. 103 within this text), cf. Mayer 2016/3, 205-206, who translates *ennētu* with “gegen jem. gerichtete(r) Zorn/Zornesäußerung”. The broader meaning provided by *CAD*, namely “divine punishment” seems also possible (see *CAD* E 169b and 170a); *ennettu/ennētu* is a nominal form of the PARRĀST pattern (cf. Mayer 2016, 206 and *GAG* §55 o N.). For a similar formulation see the bilingual prayer to the Sun-god in 4R² 17, col. i, l. 57: *šul.a.lum.bi ḫé.du.du nam.tag.ga.bi ḫé.zi.zi / en-ne-es-su lip-pa-ṭi-ir a-ra-an-šu li-in-na-siḫ*, “May his punishment be loosened, may his sin be eradicated”, also quoted in *CAD* E 170.

191. The signs preserved in the second half of the line are badly damaged. The two visible horizontal wedges after MEŠ could correspond to the beginning of BA. The spacing of the signs within the line suggests probably two signs in the break, the second of which is still partially visible and might be A. The sign immediately following the A-shaped trace begins with two horizontals and a vertical wedge and could be E. There is only enough space on the tablet for one more sign. The tentative reconstruction $\lceil ba^{\text{a}^2} \lceil \acute{s}a^{\text{a}^2} \lceil a^{\text{a}^2} \lceil e^{\text{a}^2} \lceil li\acute{s}^{\text{a}^2}$ fits both traces and context.

205/207. The restoration is based on Marduk 1, l. 206 *ri-ši-šú re-[e]-mu nak-ru-ṭu a-na ìr-ka*, “Have mercy on him, (have) pity on your servant!”²⁷⁴ The form *nakruṭu* is to be analysed as an infinitive N-stem from *karātu*, “to have mercy” (*AHw* I 448, *CAD* N/I 195–196 *sub nakruṭu*. Cf. also Mayer 2017a, 139).²⁷⁵ *nakruṭu* is listed in Malku and equated, together with *tirānu*, with *rēmu*, “compassion”, see Malku V 80: *nak-ru-ṭu = re-ṭe¹-mu*.²⁷⁶ Cf. also the word group in Erimḫuš, ll. 12-14: *na-ás-ḫu-ru, ti-ra-nu, e-pe-qu* (MSL 17, 81).²⁷⁷ *nak-ru-ṭu* is also

²⁷² Foster 2005, 625.

²⁷³ Seux 1976, 184.

²⁷⁴ Oshima 2011, 157, 170–171.

²⁷⁵ The conjugated forms of the verb *karātu* are rarely attested, and occasionally written as **qrt*. Indeed the two variant radicals **qrt* and **krṭ* tend to oscillate, sometimes alternating within the same manuscript. On this see Jiménez and Adalı 2015, 178-179 who postulate a root **qrt*, on the basis of an attestation of this verb in a line of the “Prostration Hemerology”, which has *ig-GĀR-rit*. The writing GĀR is used more often to express the value *qar* and not *kār*.

²⁷⁶ Hrůša 2010, 114–115, 401.

²⁷⁷ Hrůša 2010, 255.

attested in the Commentary of the *Babylonian Theodicy*, l. 17: *na-ak-ru¹-[tu : xx x (x x)] : xx x (x x)] : MIN : na-as-*hu-ri*, “‘Mer[cy] means [...], ditto means ‘favor’”.²⁷⁸*

The form *[re]-e¹-mé* in the Nabû Prayer is probably a spelling for *rēm* with an overhanging vowel. The writing *nak-ru-uṭ* seems to be a defective spelling for the accusative singular *nakruṭa*, with the dropping of the final short vowel.²⁷⁹

208-209. The couplet belongs to the final section of the prayer, devoted to petitions (see the Introduction to the Great Prayer to Nabû, §2.4.1). Within this line, a request is made that supplicant’s financial losses be recovered. I tentatively restore *[*hal²-qa²]-a-tum*, from *halqu*. For the use of this adjective in similar contexts see *AHW* I 312, usage 4; *CAD* H 50, usage 3).*

217. *[*kīma(?) qī²]-šá-a-ti*: Restoration based on *Marduk* 2, l. 25’’: *ki-ma qī-šá-a-ti ik-ri-b[u-ú la-ba]n ap-pu*, “‘Like donations, pray[ers and the gestu]re of respect”.²⁸⁰*

at-nu-uš: The substantive *atnu*, here parallel to *taš-lit-su*, is a learned word for “prayer”, only attested in lexical lists: *Malku* V 66²⁸¹ and *An* VIII 76 share the same equation: *at-nu = ik-ri-bu*, cf. also *An* IX 90: *[at]-nu = šu-ke-nu*. See *CAD* A/2 499 lex.sec.

220. The expression *iš/s-rat-su-nu* is uncertain. The meaning “their plan” (from *išratu*, “Plan, design” *AHW* I 389, *CAD* I 206) yields little sense within the present context. Indeed, one would expect *iš-rat-su-nu* to have the same meaning as *gim-rat-su-nu*, “in their totality”, that appears in the preceding line (l. 219). Ll. 219-220 form a couplet, in which the Igigi gods in l. 219 parallel the Laḫmu-monsters in l. 220.

In l. 1 of tablet VII of *Enūma eliš* *iš/sratum* occurs in *parallelismus* with *mēreštum*, “cultivation” (*AHW* II 645, *CAD* M/2, 24–25): *ḏasar-re šá-rik mé-reš-ti šá is-ra-ta ú-kin-nu*, “Asarre, the giver of arable land who established plough-land”.²⁸² Moreover, on the fragment K 13866 l. 6’, identified as a commentary of *Enūma eliš*, *iš/sratum* is explained as a synonym of *tamirtu* “(arable) land” (*AHW* III 1341, *CAD* T 119–122): *is-ra-tum = ta-mir-tú* (this equation is also mentioned in *AHW* I 389).²⁸³

The same word is found in the *E-sagil* commentary:

²⁷⁸ Jiménez 2017b, accessed 4/09/ 2019, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h.

²⁷⁹ If, however, one follows the reconstruction offered by Jiménez and Adalı 2015, 178-179 (see fn. 275 above) and consider a root *qrt instead of *krṭ for this verb, the present form could be read as *naq-ru-tú*, thus presenting no drop of final vowel, but a –u ending for the accusative case (cf. Jiménez and Adalı 2015, 178).

²⁸⁰ Own translation, cf. Oshima 2011, 238, 250–251.

²⁸¹ Hrůša 2010, 114–115, 255, 400.

²⁸² Lambert 2013, 124–125.

²⁸³ Lambert 2013, 482 (Pl. 38).

⁹[é.sa₄.ki].¹il¹ bītu na-bu-ú nap-ḫar IS-ra-a-t[i]

¹⁰sa₄ na-bu-ú ki.il nap-ḫa-ru ša IS-ra-a-ti

⁹E-sagil House which calls into being all meadows(?)

¹⁰[sa] = call ki.il = all ša = meadows(?)²⁸⁴

iš/sratum also appears in the Fable of Nissaba and the Wheat in broken context, l. 7: IS-ra-tum
u [...].²⁸⁵

The meaning “cultivated land”, however, does not fit our context.

The reading KIŠ-rat-su-nu, derived from *kiširtu*, “contingent” (*AHw* I 488; *CAD* K 435–436), and understood as “their contingent”, “their band”, might suit better the present line. This reconstruction would respect the parallelism with the following verse, indicating the whole group of the *Laḫmu*-gods..

224. *qulpu*: the restoration provided by von Soden ¹qu¹-lup-ka is tentative, but fits the traces (1971, 71). The substantive *qulpu* is listed in Hh XXIV 144 as a type of barley: [še DIM-BAR?] = *qul-pu*,²⁸⁶ see also *AHw* 219, 927 and 1148; *CAD* Q 301. Cf. the note on this word in von Soden’s edition of the Nabû Prayer (1971, 71). The restoration *l[u]d-lul-ka* offered by Oshima cannot be not reconciled with the extant traces, as the preserved sign before LUL cannot be DUG.²⁸⁷

There are few traces preserved in the line before QU, but the tablet is too damaged to allow a reconstruction.

225. The final lines of the prayer probably correspond to the typical closing section of Akkadian prayers, defined by von Soden “Das Dankversprechen” and by Mayer “Gebetsschluss”.²⁸⁸ Final petitions are normally found in this part, followed by praises of deities. This ending reflects the public character of praising within Mesopotamian prayers (see above, §2.3.1): the supplicant extols the addressed god before all the other deities, and before the whole human community as well, thus showing his gratitude, in anticipation of future salvation.²⁸⁹

I accept the restoration offered by von Soden, who further suggests that a first-person precative could also be a possible reconstruction. A third-person form is nevertheless more

²⁸⁴ See George 1992, 80–81 and 387. According to George, the equation with the Sumerian ša is otherwise unattested.

²⁸⁵ Lambert 1960, 169. Cf. the note on this word in the latest study on the fable: Jiménez 2017a, 67.

²⁸⁶ Weiershauser & Hrůša 2018, 205–206.

²⁸⁷ Oshima 2011, 19.

²⁸⁸ Soden, 1957–1971, 161, Mayer 1976, 307. For the structure of this prayer see the introduction, §2.1.1.

²⁸⁹ Mayer 1976, 309.

likely, if one considers the third-person singular suffixes occurring in the preceding lines (ll. 216–217) which all refer to the penitent. The verb *šamāru* Gtn is often found in the final salutation, together with other verbs meaning “to praise”, “to commend”, for example *karābu* Gtn, *dalālu*, *nādu* Dtn.²⁹⁰ The verbal forms are often followed by the object of praising, namely a noun in the accusative case. The nouns that commonly appear in this final section are *ilūtu*, “divinity”, *dalīlu* “praise”, *narbû*, “greatness”, *qurdu*, “strength”.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ Mayer 1976, 319.

²⁹¹ Mayer 1976, 320.

CHAPTER 3: THE GREAT PRAYER TO IŠTAR

3.1 MANUSCRIPTS AND EDITIONS

The Literary Prayer to Ištar is preserved in two manuscripts: K 225+9962 (ms. A) and BM 35939 (ms. B). Ms. A contains the largest number of lines, it is written in Neo-Assyrian script, and was found in the Nineveh palace library. The low number of the fragments suggests the find-spot were rooms 40–41 of the Southwest Palace.²⁹²

Ms. A is arranged in a two-column format. The columns are divided by two vertical lines, which mark the beginning and the end of each line on the right and on the left side. The manuscript is partially defaced on column I. Although no colophon is preserved, there is a trace between two division-lines at the end of column IV. Unfortunately this is too damaged to allow a complete reconstruction, but constituted the rubric of the prayer.

Several “firing” holes are visible on both the obverse and the reverse side of the manuscript: five holes are positioned in vertical order on the upper part of the obverse side, in the empty space between the two columns, while four more holes appear on the first column in the middle of the text. The second column shows a single hole in the third strophe. On the reverse side, one hole is placed on column III in a large gap between words at the end of the third strophe. The purpose of these holes is uncertain. Judging from their position, it does not seem likely that they were employed as decorations, nor were they probably used to prevent textual changes in the empty spaces, where alterations could have been made.²⁹³ There are many blank portions that do not display any hole (see the last strophe on column IV).

Ms. B is a small fragment whose original format cannot be reconstructed. It belongs to the Babylonian collection of the British Museum (Sp-III), and probably comes from Babylon. The fragment can be dated approximately to the Hellenistic period. It is written in Neo-Babylonian script: the obverse contains an unidentified text, while the reverse duplicates the end of the Ištar prayer (ll. 235–237). It also includes a colophon, in which the common technical expression ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.ŠÈ (“completed”) is found; the term MU.BI.IM (“its lines

²⁹² Reade 2007, 422; George 2003, 386.

²⁹³ The theory that maintains that firing holes were made for preventing tablets from bursting while being baked has been dismissed (see Walker 1987, 24). More recent theories suggest that holes might have been employed to fill empty gaps on the tablets, in order to avoid additional writing to be inserted (Jeyes 2000, 371; Fincke 2003, 126, note 124), or that they had a decorative use (Robson 2008, 191). It seems that firing holes progressively became a traditional feature in the copying process, and several manuscripts of literary compositions even show holes in the same position (Walker 1987, 24; Fincke 2003, 126, note 124). Cf. Taylor 2011, 16 and Panayotov 2016, 1. Incidentally, a research project on the function and use of firing holes is being currently conducted in Ca' Foscari University of Venice, by P. Corò and S. Ermidoro.

are”) is also visible on the fragment.²⁹⁴ This expression was preceded by the total number of lines in the text. The number is, however, only partially visible and impossible to reconstruct. The prayer was first edited in *AfO* 19 (1959–1960) by W. G. Lambert, who published K 225 (ms. A), offering a transliteration and translation of the text. Copies of the fragments were also included in Lambert’s edition (pl. VIII–XXIII). In the same article, the author provided the first edition of the Marduk Prayers 1 and 2. The Ištar Prayer—together with the two Marduk Prayers—was identified already in Lambert’s article as belonging to the category of the Great Hymns and Prayers. BM 35939 (ms. B) was only recently discovered,²⁹⁵ and therefore not included in any edition.

More recent translations of the Literary Prayer to Ištar were provided by Seux in his anthology of Akkadian hymns and prayers (1976), and in Foster’s collection of Akkadian literary texts (2005).

3.2 LAYOUT AND POETIC STRUCTURE

While most of the manuscripts preserving the Great Hymns and Prayers are arranged into couplets by rulings, thus displaying a distinctive layout which even helped scholars to identify them, the principal manuscript (ms. A) of the Literary Prayer to Ištar is divided into what has been interpreted by Lambert as poetical strophes, marked by a horizontal ruling after every tenth line.²⁹⁶

The layout of the tablet, however, does not match the ten-line units throughout the whole text. Indeed it is clear that despite the ten-lines marking, the text is written in couplets and not in ten-line strophes.²⁹⁷ The strophes do not always correspond to the semantic units. On the contrary, thematically related verses can belong to different units. The ruling occasionally splits parallel couplets, thus disrupting semantic structures (e.g., ll. 140–141, 200–201) and this suggests a mechanical text-division. While the artificial division of texts through rulings is common among first-millennium literary compositions, and also found within the Great Hymns and Prayers,²⁹⁸ the lack of correspondence between the ten-line strophes and the sense of the verses can be explained by considering the ten-line rulings not as poetical dividers, but as librarian marks: the ten-line division often occurs in Akkadian literary texts, expressed

²⁹⁴ For more attestations of the term ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.ŠÈ in colophons see Hunger 1968, 181; cf. also Schmidchen 2018, 152. For the term MU.BI.IM cf. the remark by Proust 2012, 127, fn. 17.

²⁹⁵ My sincere thanks to E. Jiménez for bringing BM 35939 to my attention. Incidentally, E. Jiménez is preparing a copy of this fragment.

²⁹⁶ Lambert 1959–60, 48.

²⁹⁷ Lambert 1959–1960, 48.

²⁹⁸ Groneberg 1996, 66; Lambert 1960, 124.

through inserting the wedge for ‘ten’ every tenth line. Such decimal mark can be found, for example, in some manuscripts of the OB Akkadian version of *Innin-ša-gur₄-ra*,²⁹⁹ and also among epic compositions and wisdom texts (e.g., *Ludlul IV*, *Anzû N*, *Atramḫasīs A*; C1+; D, and in the Babylonian “Man and his god”).³⁰⁰

In addition, the extant text does not display the typical poetic pattern of Mesopotamian hymns and prayers, namely the almost literal repetition of two distichs, only diversified by the postponed introduction of the divine name (“Delayed Introduction”, cf. Chapter 2, §2.2 and Chapter 5, §5.2.2.1.2.1).³⁰¹ Nevertheless, it is still possible that such structure was employed in the lost invocation section.

Unlike the Great Prayer to Nabû, there is no clear graphic indication of a metrical *caesura* within the Ištar Prayer. Whereas spacing within the lines commonly occurs, it does not seem connected with rhythm or metre. Empty spaces are inserted between words sparsely, and while they do occasionally appear to match the presumed metric division (e.g., l. 77 or the parallel couplet formed by ll. 222–223), more often they seem to respond to a merely aesthetic criterion, namely the physical justification of the text.³⁰² Such layout involves stretching the words across the tablet so that they fill the entire line: l. 74, for example, is written *a-nu-na(space) k[u]l-lu¹-mat(space) e-te-ra(space) i-d[i]*. Moreover, spacing might occur even within a single word: e.g., l. 224 *ur-ša¹-nu-(space)tú*. The inconsistent use of spaces throughout the text makes it difficult to establish the number of the missing signs in the breaks.

Examples of this arrangement are also found in other Akkadian literary texts, as in Gilgameš OB II, l. 237,³⁰³ in which spacing occurs within the name of the goddess Ninsun, written ^d*Nin-sún-(space)na*. This arrangement makes the word long enough to reach the right edge of the column.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁹ Groneberg 1996, 65–66, and fn. 43.

³⁰⁰ Hess 2015, 263; cf. Lambert 1987, 189. See also George 2007a, 59 for the use of decimal marks in a fragment containing a passage of the Babylonian Gilgameš Epic. With regard to this aspect, George observes that: “The use of such marks speaks for the serious intentions of the writer to produce a permanent copy fit for consultation”.

³⁰¹ Lambert 1959–60, 48; Vogelzang 1996, 71; Metcalf 2015, 22–23; 59–60.

³⁰² Hess 2015, 268–269.

³⁰³ For the edition of the text see George 2003, 180.

³⁰⁴ More examples of this practice are provided by Hess 2015, 267–270. Hess suggests that such spacings between words or even syllables might not be due to poetic, but could be a choice dictated by purely aesthetic reasons (Hess 2015, 268).

3.2.1 Prosody

The fragmentary state of the manuscript makes the analysis of verse uncertain. Nevertheless, it seems that the *clausula accadica* was generally respected.³⁰⁵ Out of a total of 105 analysed lines, it is possible to count 36 lines that end in a trochee, and 67 that contain an amphibrach in the last foot.³⁰⁶ The only exception seems to be represented by one line. However, even this is in doubt, as it is partially restored in the second foot: l. 153 *itg[urat]*.

Judging from the extant text, it appears that the standard *Vierheber* verse, namely the 2+2 structure also used in epic compositions,³⁰⁷ is most commonly employed within the prayer (49 out of 57 analysed lines).³⁰⁸ Indeed the preserved lines mostly contain four words, and it is therefore possible to look for the standard four units in each verse (for the Akkadian metre see Chapter 1, §1.2.3 and the Nabû Prayer in Chapter 2, §2.2.1). Such an analysis indicates that the text usually respects the supposed *caesura*—even though, as has been said, the metrical break is not explicitly marked—because most preserved lines can be easily divided into two halves, according to both grammar and sense. Closely related words, for example construct chains or nouns with adjectives, do not appear in the second or third place within the verses.³⁰⁹

Nevertheless, there are several exceptions, and lines with an irregular metrical structure are also present. Indeed, some of the extant lines only contain three words, and do not allow a four-unit scansion. These irregular lines are: 68, 77, 82, 146, 164, 165, 167 and 168.

Line 68 seems to use two metrical units in the first hemistich and only one in the second, hence resulting in a 2+1 pattern:

l. 68 *kalīšin ḥiātūa u gillātū[a]*.

In this case, the *caesura* must be put after *ḥiātūa*, as *kalīšin* is in apposition to it.³¹⁰ While *kalīšin* probably refers to both nouns, in the metric analysis it belongs with the first

³⁰⁵ For some references on the *clausula accadica* see Chapter 2, § 2.2.1.

³⁰⁶ My analysis was conducted by examining entirely preserved lines or lines that can be restored with a high degree of probability. More specifically, the count of the *clausula accadica* kept into consideration only those lines whose second hemistich is complete or sufficiently restored. Hence, the metrical scansion included the following lines: 8, 10–22, 25–26, 32, 37–42, 47–51, 64–78, 82, 102–103, 145–155, 157–162, 164, 168, 174–175, 197–202, 205–237.

³⁰⁷ Lambert 1960, 66; Hecker 1974, 113; West 1997a, 176; Jiménez 2017a, 73

³⁰⁸ With respect to the verse pattern, I examined lines preserved in both hemistichs, and lines whose metrical structure can be clearly identified, in spite of possible reconstructions. The analysed lines are the following: 65–78, 82, 84, 86, 90, 145–155, 157–165, 167–169, 171, 174–176, 200, 206–207, 209–210, 212–213, 218, 232–236.

³⁰⁹ Cf. Lambert 2013, 21–22.

³¹⁰ Words in apposition are considered as strictly connected in the metrical analysis, cf. Lambert 2013, 22.

substantive only.³¹¹ The final *ictus* falls on the second-last syllable, thus producing a regular trochaic ending.

Not only grammatical, but also logical criteria can help determine the position of the metrical break when it is not graphically marked on the tablet. One line displays what appears to be a 2+1 structure:

l. 77 *ummad pāliḥša // ina t[esp]ī[ti]*

The verb and its object are probably to be taken as belonging to the same metrical unit, whereas *ina tēspīti* could form the second half of the verse.

Occasionally, however, there is no clear grammatical nor logical reason for coupling the units in one way or another, and it is difficult to decide where the *caesura* must fall. In some cases, for example, the line might be considered as 1+2 or 2+1:

l. 146 *lallarīšu kimtašu iḥa[ššaš(?)]*

If the restoration of this passage is correct,³¹² this line is made up of three metrical units; its metrical structure is, however, difficult to analyse.

A similar case is represented by ll. 164–165, which consist of a parallel couplet with a chiasmic structure. Each line displays three units, since the negative particles *aj* and *lā* do not represent metrical units and are not to be considered in the count:³¹³

¹⁶⁴*lā uqatti ensû sir[qīšu]*

¹⁶⁵*taqqāti bārû aj ī[kul(?)]*

The first verbal form appears at the beginning of the verse and parallels the verb in the second line, which in contrast, appears on the end. It is uncertain where the metrical break should be put.

An ambiguous metrical division is also found at lines 167–168: l. 167 is damaged in the second hemistich, but judging from the space on the tablet and from the context, it seems to share the same structure with the line immediately following. Hence, the two lines seem to form a parallel couplet:

¹⁶⁷*aj uzabbil napištašu i[rtaššu(?)]*

¹⁶⁸*aj ibā' ša lā kâti u[ruḥšu]*

³¹¹ The word *kalûm* is normally found after the substantive to which it refers, but in poetry the order can often be inverted. Cf. *GAG* §134 h.

³¹² Own restoration. A different reconstruction was offered by von Soden 1971, 49. See further in the commentary on l. 146.

³¹³ Lambert 2013, 23, cf. Chapter 2, §2.2.1.

From this reconstruction, it appears that only three metrical units are contained in each line. Just like the negative particles *aj* and *lā*, the relative particle *ša* must not be counted in the metrical scansion.³¹⁴ Theoretically both lines could be of the 1+2 or the 2+1 type, yet the grammatical correspondence between the first hemistich in both lines, which displays a verb, together with the seeming chiasmus occurring in the second half of the lines hints towards a 1+2 division. The *caesura*, therefore, should probably be put after the verbal forms (l. 167 *aj uzabbil* and l. 168 *aj ibā'*).

Some lines can be scanned in various ways, because they contain units that might be considered as *incipites*.³¹⁵ For example, construct-chains can be scanned as one or two metrical units:

¹⁵¹*ina lā ṭābi šār ili mahḫūtiš tab[la(?)]*

If one considers the phrase *šār ili* as composed of two distinct units, the line would be a 3+2; however, since our text tends to respect the 2+2 pattern, I take *šār ili* as a singular foot, and scan this line as a standard 2+2.³¹⁶

One line seems to consist of five metrical units (if correctly restored) and might be scanned as a 3+2:

⁸²*ul irši aba ema // [umma(?) emēta(?)]*

From the comprehensive analysis of the preserved lines, the second hemistich appears to be the most regular part of the verse. It displays standard metrical units formed from entire words and not from phrases (construct chains, word pairs³¹⁷), prepositions or particles, which are normally found instead in the first halves of the lines (e.g., l. 78, l. 109, l. 147, l. 149, l. 151). The general regularity of the second hemistich is a typical characteristic of the Akkadian metre.³¹⁸

Although numerous lines are broken, one can observe that synonymous parallelism is used extensively throughout the whole text. Clearly parallel couplets are ll. 67–68, 69–70, 71–72, 73–74, 75–76, 77–78, 79–80, 81–82, 89–90, 102–103, 146–147, 156–157, 164–165, 167–168, 172–173, 174–175, 200–201, 206–207, 208–209, 212–213, 214–215, 216–217, 227–228, 229–230, 232–233.

³¹⁴ Lambert 2013, 23, cf. Chapter 2, §2.2.1.

³¹⁵ Lambert 2013, 23–25, cf. also Jiménez 2017a, 226.

³¹⁶ Construct chains can count as one or two metrical feet, as confirmed by the metrical analysis of *Enūma eliš* provided by Lambert. The same ambiguity is also found in some manuscripts of *Theodicy*. See Lambert 2013, 25, Jiménez 2017a, 226, fn. 238. Cf. Chapter 2, §2.2.1 and Chapter 1, §1.2.3.

³¹⁷ Following Lambert's definition of "phrases", Lambert 2013, 23.

³¹⁸ Lambert 2013, 25; Jiménez 2017a, 73.

3.3 LANGUAGE AND SPELLING CONVENTIONS

The composition is written in an elevated language and clearly draws from the Mesopotamian literary tradition, being characterised by the stock-phrases and themes typically found in Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and penitential prayers. In addition, the text occasionally displays traits of the so-called hymno-epic dialect (cf. Chapter 1, §1.2.4, and see also Chapter 2, §2.3 for the attestations of these features in the Great Prayer to Nabû).³¹⁹

- Adverbial endings (locative and terminative cases):

l. 8 *šagīmuk*; l. 86 *manūššu* (uncertain); l. 93 *summeš*; l. 97 *sīqiš, kasīš*; l. 98 *ezziš*; l. 102 *ištariš*; l. 103 *ullīš*; l. 140 *anukki*; l. 141 *qībukki*; l. 151 *maḥḥūtiš*; l. 153 *iratuš*; l. 163 *pāiš*; l. 170 *turturreš* (*si vera lectio*); l. 81 *abdukki*; l. 183 *iššūriš*; l. 187 *lē'īš*; l. 188 *lemnīš*; l. 199 *rigmuški*; l. 201 *šītiš*; l. 202 *ina naluš* (uncertain); l. 221 *šadūšin*; ll. 222, 223 *ēdiš*.

- Apocopated possessive pronouns:

l. 8 *šagīmuk*; l. 14 *kubukkuk*; l. 139 *libbuk*; l. 161 *kibsuš, išdūš*; l. 169 *arkatūš*; l. 221 *šadūšin*; l. 227 *nišīšin*; l. 230 *zībīkin*, l. 235 *[kur]unniš* and *rēšīš*.

- Use of the interrogative pronoun *minū*

l. 158 *ana minā*

- Rare words and *hapax legomena*:

l. 8 *šagīmuk*, from *šagīmu* + locative and pronominal suffix, “your roar”; l. 72 *mikītu*, “negligence” (*hapax*); l. 74 *anūna*, “terror”; l. 77 *ina tespīti*, from *tespītu*, “with petition”, l. 80 *rubbu*, “anger”; l. 81 *abdukki*, from *abdu* + locative and pronominal suffix, “your servant”; l. 88 *se'āma*, from *se'ū*, “bowed down”; l. 103 *qadmīšu*, from *qadmu* + pronominal suffix, “his god”; l. 136 *natat/tiš* (*hapax* (?), mng. unknown); l. 139 *rabbu*, “soft”; l. 144 *elilūšu*, from *elilu* + pronominal suffix, “his song”; l. 148 *ūtakkak* from *ekēku*, “he scratches himself” and *inaḥḥis*, from *naḥāsu*, “he weeps”; l. 147 *nubēšu*, from *nubū* + pronominal suffix, “lamentation for him”; l. 151 *maḥḥūtiš*, from *maḥḥūtu* + terminative suffix, “(he is driven) to madness”; l. 153 *ittahbaš* from *ḥabāšum*, “he has been shattered”. The N-stem of this verb is elsewhere unattested; l. 159 *ina karri u malī*, from *karru* and *malū*, “in the mourning garment and (with) unkempt hair”; l. 163 *pāiš karāši*, (*pī karāši* + terminative suffix, “from the mouth of destruction”; l. 164 *ensū*,

³¹⁹ Von Soden 1931, 163–227 and 1933, 90–183; Groneberg 1978, 15; Hess 2010, 102–22. Cf. Jiménez 2017a, 76–79.

“diviner”; l. 165 *taqqāti*, from *tanqītu*, “libations”; l. 166 *ne’ellīšu*, from *ne’ellû*, “come to his help”; l. 206 *kīšīja*, from *kīšu*, “my pains”; l. 214 *enēnša*, from *enēnu* + pronominal suffix, “her compassion”; 215 *napšurša* from *napšuru* + pronominal suffix, “her forgiveness”; l. 224 *uršānūtu*, “heroism”; l. 226 and 233 *kāša*, from *kāšu*, “to help”; l. 226 *azāra*, from *azāru*, “to aid”.

- Status constructus ending in *-u*: l. 72 $m[i^? -im^? -m]u^? -ú$ for *mimmû*.
- Archaising third person feminine with *ta*-prefix:

l. 174 *taqbi*; l. 177 *talli*.

- Nominal form PARSAT of feminine nouns:

l. 92 *napšassu*; l. 138 *kabta[tuk]* (*si vera lectio*).³²⁰

Contrary to what has been observed in the Nabû Prayer (see Chapter 2, §2.3), the main manuscript preserving the Ištar Prayer generally respects the standard triptotic declination: the extant text presents very few variations in the case endings.

Besides the regular ending in *-a*, there are two attestations for the accusative singular in *-u*:

l. 175 *taš-ši-tú* for *taššīta*; l. 132 *e-ṭe-ru* for *eṭēra*.

The accusative singular in *-i* is twice attested:

l. 66 *e-’e-li* for *e’ēla*; l. 82 *a-bi* and *’e-e-mi* for *aba* and *ema*.

One line displays a genitive singular in *-u*:

l. 72 $m[i^? -im^? -m]u^? -ú$ *mi-ki-tú* for $m[imm]ē(?)$ *mikīti*.

Irregular endings might appear also in plural forms and two occurrences of accusatives plural in *-ū* are found:

l. 71 $[ka^? -l]a^?$ *an-nu-ú-a* for *kala annīja*; l. 72 *ma-la-a gil-la-tu-ú-^la^l* for *mala gillatīja*.

The nominative singular is apparently respected throughout the manuscript, while one line presents two nominatives plural ending in *-ī*:

l. 220 [...*su*] $k^?$ -*ki* for *sukkū* (if correctly restored) and ^l*pa^l-rak-ki* for *parakkū*.

Occasionally the text seems to show the apocope of final vowels:

l. 153 *iratuš* for *iratuššu*; l. 210 [... *bu[?]-ul[?]-l]u[?]* (*si vera lectio*, substantivised infinitive), for *bulluṭa*; l. 227 [... *na-a*]*k-ru-uṭ* (substantivised infinitive), for *nakruṭa*.

³²⁰ George 2003, 431–432; cf. also Jiménez 2017a, 77.

Two examples of a paragogic vowel is found: l. 17 *pa-ni* for *pān*; l. 162 *si-qi* for *sīq*.

The mimation of case endings is never attested within the present manuscript.

The text displays apparent scribal mistakes. Cases of aberrant spelling result in non-existent forms:

l. 158 *tu-am-mé-šú* for *temeššī* (*si vera lectio*); l. 204 *lis-su-pa-'i-i*, uncertain, perhaps a form from *wapû* Š-stem.

Four assyrianisms are found:

l. 39 *šá-ma-me* for *šamāmī*;³²¹ l. 67 *i-šeṭ* for *ešēṭ*;³²² l. 91 *ta-pat-t[e...]* for *tepette*;³²³ l. 185 *še-la-ti* for *šilāti*.

One line shows an error of syllable inversion: l. 159 *i-tab-nak-[ki²]* for *ibtanakki*.³²⁴

An error of sign incompleteness can be noticed in l. 175, where the scribe wrote MA *ši-na-a-ti* for *lā šināti*.³²⁵

An error of omission is found in l. 229: [...*sa-r*]*a-¹qa-ki¹* for *sarāqakin*.³²⁶

3.4 STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

This literary composition addressed to Ištar overall follows the standard structure of Akkadian prayers, only occasionally altering the conventional sequence.³²⁷ The composition displays the typical motifs and formulas found in penitential prayers.

The first portion of the text is lost. However, it can be assumed that it originally contained the traditional hymnic introduction, typically characterised by a brief invocation, praises of the deity and a catalogue of the divine prerogatives (ll.1-40).³²⁸

From the fifth strophe, the section devoted to the description of the supplicant's suffering seems to follow (the "Penitential section", ll. 41-50).³²⁹ This passage occupies most of the composition, apparently unfolding until the end of the third column (l. 189). Within the "Penitential section", a short portion of praise also occurs, thus interrupting the description of illnesses and symptoms of despair (ll. 71–80). This part of the text is followed by the

³²¹ Cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2000, 78–79; Huhnergard 2011, 600.

³²² See Parpola 1993, 48.

³²³ Cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2000, 157

³²⁴ For a description of this type of error and for other occurrences of this phenomenon, see Worthington 2012, 111–112.

³²⁵ Worthington 2012, 106–10.

³²⁶ Worthington calls this error "lipography" (Worthington 2012, 104–105).

³²⁷ For the conventional structure of Akkadian prayers see Chapter 1, §1.1.2, Chapter 2, §2.4, esp. fn. 81, and §2.4.1. For a detailed description of each section see below, §3.4.1.

³²⁸ Cf. Mayer 1976, 39–45; Metcalf 2015, 22 and 59.

³²⁹ Cf. Mayer 1976, 67–118.

conventional pleas:³³⁰ between ll. 197–210 various prayers to the goddess appear, who is asked to show mercy and to save the penitent. This portion is characterised by the use of precatives and imperatives.

The closing section represents the final salutation and it expresses a thanksgiving to the deity.³³¹ It runs from l. 211 to l. 237 and shares some traits with the hymnic opening: also in this last passage the divine qualities of Ištar are described. Further in this section, the supplicant wishes that all the gods and the people will glorify the goddess. A brief prayer for the well-being of the penitent is also included (ll. 227–228).

Hence, it is possible to divide the prayer into four sections:

- 1) Hymnic introduction (ll. 1–40)
- 2) Penitential Section (ll. 41–189)
- 3) Plea (ll. 197–210)
- 4) Final salutation (ll. 211–237)

3.4.1 Analysis of the individual sections: *Topoi* and use of verbal and nominal forms

The Ištar Prayer is written in a consistent style, showing the conventional formal traits of the so-called hymno-epic dialect. In addition, the author of the prayer makes use of numerous *topoi* and formulas borrowed from other prayers and literary texts.

The first lines are lost or too broken to allow a complete analysis, yet the extant text shows some elements that are typical of the opening section of prayers, i.e., the hymnic introduction,³³² which contains the invocation of the deity and the description of the divine prerogatives. This section serves to identify the deity to whom the prayer is addressed: the supplicant invokes the deity directly via second person singular forms. Indeed two second person singular verbs in the present tense are found in the first fragmentary portion of the Ištar Prayer:

l. 13 [tu]ḥaššiṣī (if correctly reconstructed); l. 21 *taba'ī*

Present tense verbs commonly occur in the hymnic opening, together with statives and nominal sentences, and are connoted with an atemporal nuance, which aims to convey the

³³⁰ Cf. Mayer 1976, 210–306.

³³¹ Cf. Mayer 1976, 307–362; Metcalf 2015, 22, 72–73.

³³² For a more detailed analysis of each section, see below § 3.4.1

everlasting value of the divine qualities. One can assume that the verbal forms appearing in the initial part of our prayer bear the same “atemporal” meaning.³³³

Moreover, the opening part of the present text displays the use of the second person also in nominal forms. This can be seen in the following substantives that are all followed by a second person pronominal suffix:

l. 8 *šagīmuk*; l. 12 *qūki*; l. 15 *šēpīki*; l. 22 *anūnki*; l. 25 *malāki*

The conventional hymnic opening of Akkadian prayers contains epithets, attributes and specific poetic structures, as the so-called “lyrical repetition”, a poetic device already used in Sumerian prayers (see above §3.1). The divine attributes described in this part often relate to the specific petitions and wishes further expressed in the “Plea”-section, and are therefore purposefully selected by the supplicant to render the prayer more effective for his personal needs. In this regard, commonly occurring *topoi* are the deity’s benevolence and forgiveness.³³⁴ Praises, moreover, might also stress the importance of the deity among the other gods in the pantheon, and his or her relevance to the whole of mankind. Indeed, deities can be praised not only for their divine powers, but also for their capacity to bestow prosperity on people, providing them with abundance and general well-being.³³⁵ Praises are often hyperbolic, and emphasise the uniqueness of the deity to whom the prayer is directed.³³⁶

The text under study seems to contain the aforementioned typical motifs. Judging from the words preserved in the first portion of the Prayer to Ištar, it is possible to notice several elements that evoke the divine might of the goddess:

l. 8 *šagīmuk*, “in your roar”; l. 10 *meṭl[ū]ti*, “excellence”; l. 12 *šadid qūki*, “your net is stretched”; l. 14 *kubukkuk*, “your strength”.

In l. 25 the adverbial phrase *malāki*, “as much as you”, might be interpreted as an expression used to underline the relevance of the goddess among the other deities. For the attestation of this *topos* in our text, see for example l. 75, in which *malāki* is also used with this sense: *ajjū ina ilī imša malāk[i]*, “Who, among the gods, is as powerful as yo[u]?”

³³³ Metcalf 2015, 63; Metzler 2002, 728. See GAG §78 d, β for present tense as “extratemporalis” and cf. the same usage of this tense in the hymnic section of the Nabû Prayer, Chapter 2, §2.4.1.

³³⁴ Cf. Mayer 1976, 44–45; Oshima 2011, 15; Hallo 1968, 77. See Chapter 2, §2.4.1.

³³⁵ These *topoi*—i.e. the eminence of the deity in the Pantheon and the deity’s role as provider of life and well-being—are typically found in Mesopotamian hymns, frequently amplified in the section defined by Metcalf as the “Laudes”-section (Metcalf 2015, 22; more specifically for Sumerian sources: 31–49; 73–78 for Akkadian sources). They are, nevertheless, not exclusive to purely hymnic compositions and appear also in prayers. For various examples of prayers in which these motifs are attested see some of the first-millennium Akkadian prayers included by Foster in his anthology (Foster 2005): to Ea 643, ll. 1–11; to Ištar 674, ll. 1–20; to Marduk 686, ll. 1–9, 688–689, 693, ll. 1–9; to Nabû 695, ll. 1–8; to Ninurta as Sirius 715, ll. 1–7.

³³⁶ Metcalf 2015, 40–41, 76–77.

The hymnic introduction is followed by the second and longest section of our text, namely the “Penitential” section. This part contains the lament of the supplicant, who lists the symptoms of his suffering, and also confesses his own sins. It appears clear from the extant text that the negligent conduct of the penitent is identified as the cause for his misfortunes.

As already remarked with regard to the “Penitential” section in the Nabû prayer, the images and themes appearing in this portion of the Ištar prayer can also be ascribed to the traditional representation of suffering in the Mesopotamian penitential prayers, and occur in several wisdom texts in which the figure of the “righteous sufferer” is found.³³⁷ In fact, conventional descriptions of physical and mental illness appear in our text, together with references to other kinds of misfortunes, namely social isolation and divine abandonment.

Typical symptoms of physical illness which are found in the present text are paralysis (l. 49, l. 86), debility (l. 87, l. 152, l. 154, l. 176), convulsions (l. 152, l. 155, l. 176) inability to speak or to hear (ll. 64–65, l. 153), breathing difficulty (l. 154) and impotence (l. 155). Among the signs of mental distress, insomnia and panic can be noticed (l. 148, l. 182, l. 184). In addition, the penitent is said to feel constricted and confused (ll. 156–157), and is further described as severely depressed (ll. 144–145, 159). His condition is so critical that his family calls the hired mourners to wail for him, as if he were already dead (ll. 146–147). This particular motif, i.e. the preparation of the funeral of the supplicant in anticipation of his death also occurs in *Ludlul* (II, ll. 114–115), and in the prayer to Marduk labelled by modern scholars as Ugaritica 5, n° 162 ll. 9’–12’.³³⁸

The images of physical and mental suffering are occasionally rendered through commonly attested motifs, e.g., the sufferer is described as moaning “like a dove” (l. 94). Similar metaphors and similes inspired by the natural world and the animal kingdom often occur in Mesopotamian prayers.³³⁹

Besides illness, social adversity (e.g., isolation or sudden hostility from friends and family) was perceived by Mesopotamians as a possible consequence of divine wrath and often used as a *topos* in penitential prayers.³⁴⁰ Examples of the petitioner experiencing social difficulties can be seen in l. 82 *ul irši aba ema* [*umma(?) emēta(?)*], “He has no father, (no) father in law, [(no) mother, (no) mother in law]” and in l. 171 *ištīssu tappû ru ’û uš*[*širūšu(?)*],

³³⁷ See Chapter 2, §2.4.1.

³³⁸ For the passage in *Ludlul* see the latest edition by Oshima 2014, 92–93; for the editions of Ugaritica 5, 162 see Oshima 2011, 205–215 and Cohen 2013, 165–175. Cf. Oshima 2011, 188.

³³⁹ See Chapter 2, fns. 31 and 32 for other examples of similar metaphors. Cf. also Chapter 5, § 5.2.3.1.1.

³⁴⁰ See for example the eršahunga-prayer no. 16, ll. 35–37: ³⁵*aštane ’ēma mamman qātī ul iṣabbat* ³⁶*abkī-ma itatēja ul iṭṭu* ³⁷*qubē aqabbi mamman ul išemmanni*, “I would constantly seek (for help), but no one would help me/ I cried, but they did not approach me/ I would give a lament, but no one would hear me” (edition by Maul 1988, 236–246, the translation used here is taken from Zernecke 2011b, 283); cf. van der Toorn 1985, 63–64.

“Companions and friends *le[ft him]* alone”. The same *topos* of orphanship also appears in the Babylonian Theodicy ll. 9–11,³⁴¹ while *Ludlul* provides more examples of social adversities affecting the sufferer, who is slandered and abandoned by his friends, see for example *Ludlul* I, ll. 79–98.³⁴²

Divine abandonment is another standard theme that characterises Mesopotamian prayers and compositions of “pious sufferers”. It is expressed through typical images, such as the perplexity of the experts—unable to discern the illness of the petitioner and to find the cause of his troubles—bad or confused omens, and frightening dreams.³⁴³ In our Ištar Prayer there are some references to these conventional scenes (see for example ll. 164–165 and l. 169) in which the unsuccessful divinatory practices and the lack of clear omens are mentioned.

The “Penitential section” combines first, second, and third person verbs. First person singular verbs reflect the voice of the petitioner, who speaks of his suffering and admits to have sinned. The confession of guilt makes use of the standard vocabulary found in the Akkadian penitential prayers. In this respect, the sequence of verbal forms found in l. 67 follows the conventional enumeration in prayers: *ēgi aḥṭi ešēṭ ugalli[l]*, “I have been negligent, I have sinned, I have done wrong, I have commit[ted sacrilege]”. Furthermore, the substantives appearing in the following line (l. 68) form a fixed pair: *kalīšin ḥiātūa u gillātū[a]*, “All my sins and my crimes!”³⁴⁴

The sufferer speaks again in the first person in a short passage at the end of this section, in which another confession appears (ll. 174–177).

From l. 71 to l. 173, the third person singular is mostly used: third person finite verbs either refer to the sufferer or to the adversities striking him. Occasionally, third person singular finite verbs are used in reference to the goddess. This can be seen in the brief hymnic passage that interrupts the lament (ll. 71–l. 80), in which Ištar is extolled for her mercy and ability to save the supplicant (*e.g.*, l. 71 *ukabba[s]*, l. 73 *ile’i*, l. 74 *īd[e]*).³⁴⁵

Second person verbs rarely appear in the “Penitential” section, and always refer to Ištar:

l. 81 *tamšī*, l. 158 *temeššī* (uncertain).

³⁴¹ See Oshima 2014, 150–151.

³⁴² See Oshima 2014, 84–85.

³⁴³ See for example *Ludlul* I, ll. 51–53 (Oshima 2014, 80–81) and *Ludlul* II, 109–111 (Oshima 2014, 92–93). For attestations of these theme in prayers, see Mayer 1976 104–106; cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65–65.

³⁴⁴ See Mayer 1976, 111–116 for examples of passages in penitential prayers, in which the stereotyped usage of these verbs and terms can be noticed. The *šigū*-prayers (Mayer 1976, 112) especially display similarities with our text.

³⁴⁵ If the restoration in l. 79 is correct, the imperative form *piqdī* would be the only exception.

Besides finite verbs, numerous staves appear in this portion of the prayer, the majority of which refer to the supplicant and to his body parts, stricken by illness and evil agents (e.g., l. 65 *lamâni*, l. 87 *muqqā*, l. 88 *se'âma*).

Laments in form of questions are also found in this part of the text:

l. 86 *manûššu ana mîni mangu [išbassu(?)]*, “In his bed, why [*has*] paralysis [*seized him*]?”;

l. 158 *ana minâ imkû temeššî(?) ann[ašu(?)]*, “In what respect has he been negligent? *You can disregard [his] gui[lt]*”.

This rhetorical construction often occurs in *diġiršadabba*-prayers.³⁴⁶

The “Penitential section” serves as an introduction to the third section, the “Plea”, which runs approximately from l. 197 to l. 210, and is devoted to the pleas of the supplicant. The petitions found in this part of the extant text accord with the typical phrases present in the Akkadian prayers, which include, among others requests for getting the deity’s attention and appeals for mercy.³⁴⁷ In our prayer these two particular motifs are expressed through standard formulas, which make use of imperative and precative verbs:

l. 206 [*leqî unn*]îni(?) *puššihî kišîja*; l. 207 [*muhrî*](*?*) *kadr*]êa *kâši ludlulki*; l. 209 *rišî rēma*

Moreover, l. 207—if correctly restored—represents a typical formulation of Akkadian prayers, already found in the Nabû Prayer (Chapter 2, §2.3.1). This phrase consists in the use of an imperative-precative sequence, that expresses a logical chain of events, and can be translated with a consecutive phrase: “[*accept*] my [*prese*]nts, so that I may praise you!”³⁴⁸

By this formula, the supplicant means to repay the deity for the aid by promising future praises. Furthermore, a second thought is implied, namely that the god needs a healthy devotee to be properly worshipped.³⁴⁹

The last section of our text, the “Final salutation”, seemingly unfolds from l. 211 to the end of the text, and mostly employs imperative and precative verbs. This closing section has the purpose of showing gratitude and faith to Ištar by extolling her qualities and powers.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶ Mayer 1976, 92. For examples of similar expressions, see e.g. the *diġiršadabba*-prayer n° 11 in Jaques 2015, 60–108, l. 1, *Ea Šamaš u Marduk minû annîja*, “Ea, Šamaš and Marduk, what are my sins?” (Jaques 2015, 60 and 87).

³⁴⁷ Mayer 1976, 210–306.

³⁴⁸ Mayer defines this specific conventional formulation, which is characterised by the use of the first person, as “*Lobversprechen*”, meaning that the supplicant promises that he himself will glorify the addressee (Mayer 1976, 310).

³⁴⁹ For more on the meaning of the imperative-precative structure, see Chapter 2, §2.4.1. Cf. also Huehnergard 2011, 147.

³⁵⁰ Praises in this part of the prayer are considered by Mayer as expressions of gratitude from the petitioner, and also as a way to actualise what has been promised and anticipated in the prayer, namely the future glorification (Mayer 1976, 356–357). For more on the meaning of praises in the last section of prayers see Chapter 2, § 2.4.1.

The tablet is severely damaged at this point, but some passages can still be reconstructed: the extant text contains praises to the goddess and wishes for her to be glorified in the future.³⁵¹

The wish of future praising is a typical motif of Mesopotamian hymns and prayers, and is related to the “forensic” character of praising in Akkadian prayers, that is the public manifestation of devotion.³⁵² This particular aspect has already been observed in the Nabû Prayer (cf. Chapter 2, § 2.4.1), and is characterised by the use of stock-phrases and formulations which engage, beside the supplicant himself (see above l. 207 in the “Plea”-section: *ludlulki*, “I want to praise you”), other entities: the petitioner shows his own faith by praising—or promising to praise—the addressee in front of all gods and people,³⁵³ and wishing for everyone to glorify the deity as well. In the extant text, numerous plural imperatives and one precative (l. 217) express this public engagement:

l. 216 *šukennāši*; l. 217 [*a*]ppakina libnāši; l.219 kitrabāši; l. 227 *dullā*; l. 231 [*šuk*]ennā(?), *šuqqā*, *ħussāši*.

Since the final portion of the present text shows numerous lacunas, it is difficult to ascertain to whom precisely these verbs refer; nevertheless, in some cases the use of pronominal suffixes can offer a clue: numerous pronouns appearing in these lines are second or third plural feminine (see also for example l. 229 [... *sar*]āqakin muħrāni, “accept (pl.) your (f. pl.) libations from me!”), and must thus refer to feminine plural subjects.

Possible feminine subjects might be a group of goddesses, or also groups of people, indicated by feminine substantives such as *nišū*, or by its poetic variant *tenēšētu*.³⁵⁴

In the so-called Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, the goddess Ištar is said to be venerated by goddesses, who pray to her and kneel in front of her (col. iv, ll. 21–22):

²¹*kam-sa-ši kul-lat-sin* ^diš-tar^{me} *ni-ši-i-ma*

²²*ut-nin-na-ši mit-ħa-riš šá-pal-šá ka-am-sa*

²¹All the goddesses of the peoples bow down to her,

²²They pray to her without exception and bow beneath her.³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ Whereas the “*Lobversprechen*” (see above, §2.4.1) involves the supplicant himself, and only employs first person forms, the wish for other entities to extol the deity is expressed through third person forms and defined by Mayer as “*Lobwunsch*” (Mayer 1976, 310).

³⁵² Mayer 1976, 309.

³⁵³ Cf. Chapter 2, § 2.4.1.

³⁵⁴ Cf. Foster 2005, 606 and 609 fn. 4, who maintains instead that the text might address a group of women devotees.

³⁵⁵ Lambert 1982, 202–203.

The mention of the people can occur at the end of prayers as well,³⁵⁶ see for example the Great Prayer to Nabû, ll. 220–223 (cf. above, the philological commentary on these lines in Chapter 2):

^{220/222}[*bēlu*/^d*Nabû in*]a *ilī šurbû narbûka*

^{221/223}[*nišû*(?) *t*]anittaka *ušarrihā ana šāti*

^{220/222}[O Lord/Nabû amo]ng the gods your greatness is supreme,

^{221/223}[The people] make magnificent your [pra]ise forever.

Another element which commonly appears in similar passages is the land itself, occasionally paired with the heavens.³⁵⁷ The mention of mountains in l. 221 (*šadûšin*, “In their mountains”) suggests that the subject of this line might indeed be *mātātu* or another feminine substantive for “land”.

The numerous praises occurring in this section contain some of the stock-phrases that have been identified and listed by Mayer in his study on Akkadian penitential prayers.³⁵⁸

Final praises can be distinguished into three types. The first type follows a Sumerian model, and is called by Mayer the *kūmma/u*-type. It consists of presenting one or more prerogatives of the addressee through the usage of the adjective *kūmma/u*. In our text, for example, this type of formula occurs in l. 236: [*suppû*(?) *su*]llū *šutēmuqu kūmma Ištar*, “[*Supplication*, pet]ition, prayer are yours, o Ištar!”³⁵⁹

The second and third type involve the presentation of the divine attributes as well: they both describe the divine being, but differ from each other by the use of grammatical forms. The former uses second person singular verbs, and addresses the deity directly (the “Du-bist”-type). In contrast, the latter uses third person singular verbs (the “Gott x ist/kann”-type).

Examples of the type 3 occurring in our text are the following:

l. 210 [*mīta*(?) *bu*]luṭ(?) *puššuḥa ile*’ ’ *i*, “(She can) [*rev*]ive [*the dead*], she can soothe”; l.

212 [*šabta umaššir k*]asā *urammi*, “[*She frees the captive*], she releases the *ma*[*n in bonds*]”; l.

213 [*ana ša bīt šibitti*]m *ukallam nūra*, “[*To the one who is in pris*]on she shows light”; l. 222

ēdiš šīrat, “She is supreme”; l. 223 *ēdiš gašrat*, “She is powerful”.

³⁵⁶ Mayer 1976, 327, “Typ 1”.

³⁵⁷ Mayer 1976, 327, “Typ 1” and “Typ 3”.

³⁵⁸ Mayer 1976, 250–255.

³⁵⁹ Cf. Mayer 1976, 351.

Another common motif that can be noticed in the closing section of the present text is the so-called *elatio*.³⁶⁰ This rhetorical strategy is a typical trait of Mesopotamian hymns, but can also characterise hymnic passages in prayers. It is employed to explain the origin of the divine attributes mentioned and praised in the composition. Indeed, the qualities by which the god is extolled are often said to have been given by other gods:

²³²[*iqāssi(?)*] *Enlil šūzuba eṭēra*

²³³[*kā*]š*a u napšura išīmši Šalaš*

²³²Enlil [*granted her*] (the power) to save and rescue,

²³³Šalaš endowed her with [*ai*]d and forgiveness

The qualities of the goddess are celebrated not only through praises, but also through physical acts of devotion: besides a verbal aspect, Mesopotamian prayers often contain descriptions of physical actions, i.e., ritual gestures and offerings, which were also part of the praying. The present text shows elements that illustrate similar expressions of worship practices:³⁶¹

l. 216 *šukennāši*, “bow down (pl) to her!”; l. 217 [...*a*]*ppakina libnāši*, “[... pro]strate yourselves to her!”; l. 229 [...*sar*]*āqakin muḥrāni*, “accept (pl.) your (f. pl.) libations from me!”; l. 230 [...*k*]*adrē zībīkin*, “[...gif]ts, your (f. pl.) food offerings”, l. 231 [...*šuk*]*ennā*, “bow down (pl)”; l. 235 [*kuru*]*nniš kinnā rēšiš killā*, “Lay (pl.) her [*kuru*]*nmu*-beer (as an offering), provide (pl.) for her!”

³⁶⁰ This definition is taken from Metcalf 2015, 37. For a discussion of this subject, see Metcalf 2015, 37–40 (in relation to Sumerian sources); 57–58 and 75–76 (for Akkadian sources).

³⁶¹ Cf. Chapter 2, §2.4.1 for similar elements in the Nabû Prayer.

3.5 EDITION

3.5.1 Text

Content

The so-called “Great Literary Prayer to Ištar” is known from two manuscripts: K 225 + 9962 (ms. A) and BM 35939 (ms B). Ms A is a two-column tablet, coming from Ashurbanipal’s library in Nineveh and written in Neo-Assyrian script. This manuscript is arranged in sections of 10 lines, marked by horizontal rulings. A rubric appears at the end of the last section, immediately below the division line.

Ms. B is a Late-Babylonian source, probably coming from Babylon. It is written in Late Babylonian script and partially preserves the last three lines of the prayer to Ištar on the reverse. Ms. B is marked by two division lines at the end of the prayer, and concludes with a colophon; the fragment is too small to establish its original format. On the obverse, it contains an unidentified Akkadian literary text (see Appendix).

The fragmentary state of the manuscripts does not allow for a reconstruction of the complete text. The composition is 237-lines long and shows the typical formal features of the “Akkadian Great Hymns and Prayers”. The text deals with a sufferer who laments his condition and addresses the goddess Ištar in prayer.

Manuscripts

A	K 225 + 9962	<i>AfO</i> 19, pls. 8-9	Two-column tablet, Neo-Assyrian script, 7 th cent.	Nineveh, ‘Ashurbanipal’s Library’, probably South-West Palace (Sm collection; Reade 2000: 422, George 2003: 386)
B	BM 35939	—	Late Babylonian script, 4 th cent.	Babylon (?), Spartali collection (Sp.–III. 475).

Previous Edition

Lambert, W. G. 1959–60. Three literary prayers of the Babylonians, *AfO* 19, 47–66 (50–55) (transliteration, translation and copy of K 225+ 9962).

Transliteration

(lines 1–5 lost)

6 A obv. i 1'	[		]	x
7 A obv. i 2'	[		]	x- ^r tú ¹
8 A obv. i 3'	[		]	^r šá-gi ¹ -muk
9 A obv. i 4'	[		]	-ki ² ^r na-an ¹ -duq
10 A obv. i 5'	[		]	x ù ^r mé ¹ -eṭ-l[u]-ti
<hr/>				
11 A obv. i 6'	[	šušqâ šušpula(?)	]	^r šá ¹ -da-da ù né-' u-u
12 A obv. i 7'	[		]	šá- ^r di ¹ -id qu-u-ki
13 A obv. i 8'	[	kīma qē(?) tu]-ḥaṣ-ši-ši		KUR.MEŠ bi-ru-ti
14 A obv. i 9'	[		]	ku- ^r bu ¹ -uk-ku-uk
15 A obv. i 10'	[		]	a-na ši- ^r kin ¹ še-pi-ki
16 A obv. i 11'	[	petê idīki(?) šu]-bé-' e-i		IM I
17 A obv. i 12'	[	pīt purīdīki(?)	]	pa-ni IM II
18 A obv. i 13'	[	IM III IM IV(?)	]	IM i-da-a-ti
19 A obv. i 14'	[	šār(?) er ² -bét ² -t]		um me-ḥu-u ra-bu-tum
20 A obv. i 15'	[		]	x KUR ^r ṣer ¹ -ret-su-un
<hr/>				
21 A obv. i 16'	[		]	x na k[a] ² x ta-ba-' a
22 A obv. i 17'	[		]	x x [x (x)] x a-nun-ki
23 A obv. i 18'	[		]	x-da-ti
24 A obv. i 19'	[		]	-^r ri ¹ ² -ši-in
25 A obv. i 20'	[		]	^r ma ¹ -la-ki
26 A obv. i 21'	[		]	^r d ⁺ en-líl
27 A obv. i 22'	[		]	-d]u-uš
28 A obv. i 23'	[		]	x-us
29 A obv. i 24'	[		]	x
30 A obv. i 25'	[		]	x x
<hr/>				
31 A obv. i 26'	[		]	-ku-ú-šú
32 A obv. i 27'	[		]	re-miš
33 A obv. i 28'	[		]	^r áš ¹ ² -ki
34 A obv. i 29'	[		]	-^r uš ¹ -šu
35 A obv. i 30'	[		]	-áš-ši
36 A obv. i 31'	[		]	x-tap- ^r pu ¹
37 A obv. i 32'	[		]	x u ₄ -um-šú
38 A obv. i 33'	[		]	x ba-aš-mu- ^r ma ¹
39 A obv. i 34'	[		]	šá-ma-me
40 A obv. i 35'	[		]	x [z]u- ^r un ¹ -na
<hr/>				
41 A obv. i 36'	[		]	uš ²]- ^r nam ¹ -mar
42 A obv. i 37'	[		]	di- ^r pa ¹ -[ru ²]
43 A obv. i 38'	[		]	x x [x x]
44 A obv. i 39'	[		]	x
45 A obv. i 40'	[		]	-di
46 A obv. i 41'	[		]	x-ma
47 A obv. i 42'	[		]	x a-na-ku
48 A obv. i 43'	[		]	is]-ḥu-up la-a-ni

49	A obv. i 44'	[x x x mungu(?) iṣ²-ba²-a]t' i-di-ia
50	A obv. i 45'	[] x ik-la-an-ni
<hr/>		
51	A obv. i 46'	[] pu-ú-ᵀtī¹
52	A obv. i 47'	[] x ᵀkur¹² x
53	A obv. i 48'	[]
54	A obv. i 49'	[] pa šur ru x [x x]
55	A obv. i 50'	[] ᵀù¹ bu [x x x]
56	A obv. i 51'	[] pa² i-red-du [x x x]
57	A obv. i 52'	[] x ba x x [x x x]

(lines 58–59 missing. Manuscript A breaks off, end of obv. i; first lines of obv. ii lost)

60	A obv. ii 1'	[] x x x []
<hr/>		
61	A obv. ii 2'	[] x ta a [x] x x [x x x]
62	A obv. ii 3'	[] šá ma šá a ti il lu [x x]
63	A obv. ii 4'	[x x x x x] ᵀap¹-pi-ia ṣé-na-ti ú-ᵀba¹-[]
64	A obv. ii 5'	[] x ᵀat¹-me-e pi-ia it-ta-aṣ-b[at]
65	A obv. ii 6'	[] uz-na-a-a a-mi-ru la-ma-a-ni
66	A obv. ii 7'	[šap²-ti²]-ki ti-iṣ-ba-ri ᵀur-di e-² e-li
67	A obv. ii 8'	ᵀe¹-gi aḥ-ᵀi i-ṣeṭ ú-gal-li[l]
68	A obv. ii 9'	ka-li-ši-in ḥi-ᵀa-tu-ú-a ù gíl-la-tu-ú-[a]
69	A obv. ii 10'	em-te-eš ul i-di ši-par-ra-ki e-te-e[q]
70	A obv. ii 11'	[ap]-ᵀru¹-uṣ sam ^{am} -na-ki me-e-ki ul aṣ-ṣu[r]
<hr/>		
71	A obv. ii 12'	[ka²-l]a² an-nu-ú-a ina qaq-qa-ri ú-kab-ba-a[s]
72	A obv. ii 13'	m[im²-m]u²-ú mi-ki-tú ma-la-a gíl-la-tu-ú-ᵀa¹
73	A obv. ii 14'	ᵀiṣ-tar ina¹ pu-uš-qí šu-zu-ba i-le-² i-ᵀi¹
74	A obv. ii 15'	a-nu-na k[u]l-ᵀlu¹-mat e-ᵀe-ra i-d[i]
75	A obv. ii 16'	a-a-ú ina ᵀDIGIR¹.MEŠ ᵀim¹-ṣa-a ma-la-k[i]
76	A obv. ii 17'	la am-ra ki-ma ka-a-ti ᵀma-ḥír te¹-es-li-t[i]
77	A obv. ii 18'	um-mad pa-liḥ-šá ina te-[es-p]i-[ti]
78	A obv. ii 19'	a-na ṣe-e-di na-ṣi-ᵀri¹ šá-a-šú [piq-di]-šu-[ma]
79	A obv. ii 20'	ul uḥ-ḥur-ši bul-lu-ᵀu []
80	A obv. ii 21'	ru-ub-bu ana sul-lu-mi ᵀqé-ru¹-[ub x x x]
<hr/>		
81	A obv. ii 22'	ul-tu ab-duk-ki tam-ši-i []
82	A obv. ii 23'	ᵀul¹ ir-ši a-bi ²e-e-mi [umma emēta(?)]
83	A obv. ii 24'	ka-tim-šú-ma te-šu-ú []
84	A obv. ii 25'	gal-lu-ú la a-di-ru r[a²-bi²-iṣ² ittīšu(?)]
85	A obv. ii 26'	ṣa-bit-su ḥur-ba-šú i-x []
86	A obv. ii 27'	ma-nu-šú a-na mi-ni man-gu [iṣbassu(?)]
87	A obv. ii 28'	muq-qa kin-ṣa-a-šú ᵀkit¹-mu-s[a² birKāšu(?)]
88	A obv. ii 29'	se-²a-ma ki-šá-da-šú x x []
89	A obv. ii 30'	ul kun-na iṣ-da-ᵀa¹-š[ú] []
90	A obv. ii 31'	ki-ma i-ᵀga¹-ri šá i-qu-up-ᵀpu¹ [i' abbat(?)]
<hr/>		
91	A obv. ii 32'	ta-nu-ᵀni-šú-ma¹ ta-pat-t[e nappaša(?)]
92	A obv. ii 33'	nap-šat-su x x x x x []
93	A obv. ii 34'	i-di-šú ᵀlit¹² x [x]-t]a-ᵀaṣ¹-x []

94	A obv. ii 35'	<i>su-um-meš</i> ʿid ² -da ² nam-mu ¹ -ma x []
95	A obv. ii 36'	[x] x-din-šú x x-[t]a-šú []
96	A obv. ii 37'	pu [x] x a-a x x uk i []
97	A obv. ii 38'	<i>si-qiš ka-siš</i> x x ina []
98	A obv. ii 39'	<i>e-zi-iš e-x</i> [x x] x-ʿki ¹ []
99	A obv. ii 40'	<i>a-a im-mes-ma</i> x []
100	A obv. ii 41'	<i>li-zi-ʿqa¹-šú ma-ʿni-ta¹-k[i</i>]
<hr/>		
101	A obv. ii 42'	ʿšum-ma ¹ ki-šad-su x x šá ku x x m[a ²]
102	A obv. ii 43'	<i>ša gab-ra-a ik-šu-d[u i]š-ʿta¹-riš ú-taq-[qí]</i>
103	A obv. ii 44'	<i>ul-liš qàd-mi-šu s[u-pu]-ʿú¹ šá-kin-ma</i>
104	A obv. ii 45'	<i>ina² ʿx li² il²¹ t[ú²] ʿta-²š²-i²-i[m²-ma² ta²-]-pa-as-sa-as</i>
105	A obv. ii 46'	x [x x] x bu ra ti b[u x x] x x [x x x]
106	A obv. ii 47'	[x x x] x x ʿqa ¹ la ti x []
107	A obv. ii 48'	ʿe ¹ -zib x x x x x ʿba ¹ ² x []
108	A obv. ii 49'	<i>an-na-a-ʿti ina lib-bi¹ x []</i>
109	A obv. ii 50'	<i>a-na la a-ḫi-ʿiz¹ ri[d²-di²</i>]
110	A obv. ii 51'	<i>u ú-si šá la sa-[an-qu</i>]
<hr/>		
111	A obv. ii 52'	<i>ul i-de</i> GAŠAN x []
112	A obv. ii 53'	<i>ki-i ik d[u²</i>]
113	A obv. ii 54'	<i>ᵀiš-ta[r</i>]
114	A obv. ii 55'	<i>ina</i> IGI ^{II} -i[a]
115	A obv. ii 56'	<i>ul</i> x []
116	A obv. ii 57'	<i>ù-</i> []
117	A obv. ii 58'	<i>i-x</i> []
118	A obv. ii 59'	<i>i[š-</i>]

(manuscript breaks off, lines 119–131 lost)

132	A rev. iii 1'	x []
133	A rev. iii 2'	la []
134	A rev. iii 3'	<i>up-p[i</i>]
135	A rev. iii 4'	<i>ba-la-a[n²-gu²</i>]
136	A rev. iii 5'	<i>na-ṭa-tiš</i> x []
137	A rev. iii 6'	<i>pi-rit-tum</i> x []
138	A rev. iii 7'	<i>lib-la kab-ta-[at²-ka²</i>]
139	A rev. iii 8'	<i>lib-bu-uk rab-b[u</i>]
140	A rev. iii 9'	<i>a-nu-uk-ki a-</i> []
<hr/>		
141	A rev. iii 10'	<i>qí-bu-uk-ki i-na</i> []
142	A rev. iii 11'	<i>šá-lum-mat-ki šá t[a²</i>]
143	A rev. iii 12'	<i>i-tar-rak na-piš-t[a-šu</i>]
144	A rev. iii 13'	<i>e-li-lu-šú šur-ru-pu</i> x []
145	A rev. iii 14'	<i>bu-ul-lul ina di-ma-ti i-ʿbak¹-k[i šarpiš²]</i>
146	A rev. iii 15'	<i>lâl-la-ru-šú kim-ta-šu i-ḫá[š-šá²-aš²]</i>
147	A rev. iii 16'	<i>ana nu-bé-e-šú mar-šu-ti ip-ḫu-ra sa-la[t-su]</i>
148	A rev. iii 17'	<i>ur-ra ú-tak-ka-ak mu-šá i-na-aḫ-ḫi-[is]</i>
149	A rev. iii 18'	<i>ina še-ri-šú it-ku-šú re-e-mu ʿun-ni¹-[ni]</i>
150	A rev. iii 19'	<i>šur-ru-up šu-us-suk a-ri-ʿim ka¹-la-a-[šú]</i>

151 A rev. iii 20'	<i>ina la ʔa-a-bi</i> IM AN <i>ma-ḥu-tiš tab-</i> [<i>la</i> ²]
152 A rev. iii 21'	<i>l[i]l-¹la¹</i> GÌR-šú <i>i-ra-^uú-bá qa-t</i> [<i>a-a-šú</i>]
153 A rev. iii 22'	<i>it-taḥ-ba-áš i-ra-tuš li-šá-an-šú it-g</i> [<i>u²-rat²</i>]
154 A rev. iii 23'	<i>i-siq ik-ri it-ta-at-ba-ka i-da-</i> [<i>a-šú</i>]
155 A rev. iii 24'	<i>am-lat ka-bat-ta-šú du-us-su eṭ-r</i> [<i>e-et</i>]
156 A rev. iii 25'	<i>tab-ka uz-na-a-šú ul ^ua-di-ma</i> x [x]
157 A rev. iii 26'	<i>ṭe-em-šú ul ḥa-sis ma-ši ra-ma</i> [<i>n-šú</i>]
158 A rev. iii 27'	<i>ana mi-na-a im-ku-ú tu-am-mé-šú an-n</i> [<i>a-šú</i>]
159 A rev. iii 28'	<i>ina kar-ri u ma-li-i šu-um-ki i-tab-nak-</i> [<i>ki</i> ²]
160 A rev. iii 29'	<i>aḥ-zi qat-su a-a iš-šá-al</i> ì[R ² -ki ²]
<hr/>	
161 A rev. iii 30'	<i>kib-su-uš du-un-ni-ni iš-du-uš k</i> [<i>in-ni</i>]
162 A rev. iii 31'	<i>si-qi en-šu lip-ta-aṭ-ṭi-ra mi-</i> [<i>na²-ti²-šú²</i>]
163 A rev. iii 32'	<i>pa-iš ka-ra-ši pi-di-šú a-¹a¹</i> [innadi(?)]
164 A rev. iii 33'	<i>la ú-qa-at-ti en-su-ú sír-</i> [<i>qi-šú</i>]
165 A rev. iii 34'	<i>ta-qà-a-ti</i> DUMU LÚ.HAL <i>a-a ¹i¹-</i> [<i>ku²-ul²</i>]
166 A rev. iii 35'	<i>a-na šat-ti né-^eli-šú</i> []
167 A rev. iii 36'	<i>a-a ú-zab-bil na-piš-ta-šú i</i> [<i>r¹-tuš-šú</i>]
168 A rev. iii 37'	<i>a-a i-ba-a¹ ša la ka-a-ti ¹ú¹-</i> [<i>ru-uḥ-šú</i>]
169 A rev. iii 38'	<i>i-par-ra-as-ma ar-ka-tuš i-na</i> [<i>m-mi²-ra² idātīšu(?)</i>]
170 A rev. iii 39'	<i>i-mu-ma tur-tur-re-eš i-pa-</i> [x x x]
<hr/>	
171 A rev. iii 40'	<i>iš-ti-is-su tap-pu-u ru-ù-ⁱi uš-</i> [<i>ši²-ru²-šú²</i>]
172 A rev. iii 41'	<i>id-din-šu-ma uz-za-za</i> [x x x x]
173 A rev. iii 42'	<i>id-din-šu-ma i-da-mu i-šá-a</i> [<i>b x x x</i>]
174 A rev. iii 43'	<i>pi-qa-ma šap-ti taq-bi-i ma-a</i> [<i>g-ra-ti</i>]
175 A rev. iii 44'	<i>taš-ši-tú az-za-kir la¹(ma) ši-na-a-ti a</i> [<i>q²-bi²</i>]
176 A rev. iii 45'	<i>ši-i-ri iš-ta-ḥi-iṭ lu-^ut</i> [<i>u² iṣbatanni(?)</i>]
177 A rev. iii 46'	<i>i-ni tal-li ki-ma lip-p</i> [<i>u²</i>]
178 A rev. iii 47'	<i>iš-tu ib-na-ma il-</i> [<i>a-</i>]
179 A rev. iii 48'	<i>i-na ʔa-a-bi ma-a-a-</i> [<i>i²</i>]
180 A rev. iii 49'	[] x x [] x x [] x x []
<hr/>	
181 A rev. iii 50'	[] <i>la il-</i> [<i>a-</i> ku []
182 A rev. iii 51'	[<i>tēmī(?) ut²</i>]- <i>tak-kàr ḥi-pi líb-bi</i> x []
183 A rev. iii 52'	[] ¹ ud ¹ ra ki <i>iṣ-ṣu-riš</i> x []
184 A rev. iii 53'	[x <i>ni²-ki²-i</i>] ² <i>t² ar-ši-ma na-dúr a-</i> []
185 A rev. iii 54'	[<i>šērta(?) n</i>] ² <i>a²-šá-ku-ma ni-ir še-la-a-ti</i> [<i>šaddāku(?)</i>]
186 A rev. iii 55'	[] <i>x-it-ma ^diš-tar ¹u¹</i> x []
187 A rev. iii 56'	[] uš šá šá <i>le-ⁱi-š</i> []
188 A rev. iii 57'	[] <i>lem-niš uš-ta-a</i> [<i>t²</i>]
189 A rev. iii 58'	[] <i>ib-ba-šá i-du-</i> [<i>ú</i>]

(end of column iii; manuscript breaks off, lines 190–195 lost)

196 A rev. iv 1'	[] x x []
197 A rev. iv 2'	[] <i>-š</i>]u ² ¹ li-is-saḥ-ḥur ¹
198 A rev. iv 3'	[] <i>-x-di lu-um-mid</i>
199 A rev. iv 4'	[] MEŠ <i>su-us-su-li rig-muš-ki</i>
200 A rev. iv 5'	[<i>dalāt(?) AN²</i>]- ¹ e ¹ pe-te-e <i>šu-pal-ki-ma</i>

201 A rev. iv 6'	[kīma(?) ^d UTU ²]- ^r šī ¹ šu-uḫ-li-i ši-ti-iš
202 A rev. iv 7'	[x x x x]-ia ina na-lu-uš ra-ma-ni-ia
203 A rev. iv 8'	[x x x] x i-dal-lu šá-a-la ur-tas-sa
204 A rev. iv 9'	[x x x ina kib-ra]-a-ti LIMMU lis-su-pa-'i-i
205 A rev. iv 10'	[x x x x] šá-se-e šu-e-ti ^d a-nun-na
206 A rev. iv 11'	[liqē(?) un ² -n]i ² -ni pu-uš-ši-ḫi ki-ši-ia
207 A rev. iv 12'	[muḫrī(?) kàt ² -r]e-e-a ka-a-ši lud-lul-ki
208 A rev. iv 13'	[x x x x] ki-ma AD a-li-di-ia
209 A rev. iv 14'	[kīma ummi a-lit]-ti-ia ri-ši-i re-e-ma
210 A rev. iv 15'	[mīta(?) bu ² -ul ² -l]u ² pu-uš-šu-ḫa i-le-'i
<hr/>	
211 A rev. iv 16'	[zikir ma-ra]t ^d 30 ana da-la-li ṭa-a-bu
212 A rev. iv 17'	[šabta(?) umaššir(?) k]a-sa-a ú- ^r ram ¹ -mi
213 A rev. iv 18'	[ša(?) bīt ši-bit-tu]m ú-kal-lam nu-ú-ra
214 A rev. iv 19'	[x x x x] x qé-ru-ub e-nen-šá
215 A rev. iv 20'	[kāšat(?) še ² -e]r ² -ta-šá a-ru-uḫ nap-šur-šá
216 A rev. iv 21'	[x x x x-š]i ² DIĜIR.MEŠ šu-ki-na-ši
217 A rev. iv 22'	[a]p-pa-ki-na líb-na-ši
218 A rev. iv 23'	[iš-tu ši-it] ^r d ¹ UTU-ši ana šá-la-mu ^d UTU-ši
219 A rev. iv 24'	[x x x]-ma-ši kit-ra-ba-ši ^r ša ¹ -a-ši
220 A rev. iv 25'	[epšū(?) su]k ² -ki ud-du- ^r ú pa ¹ -rak-ki
<hr/>	
221 A rev. iv 26'	[x x x] x ^r šu-mu ¹ šá-du-ši-in zak-ru
222 A rev. iv 27'	[e-diš ši-rat
223 A rev. iv 28'	[e-diš gaš-rat
224 A rev. iv 29'	[ur-šá-nu-tú
225 A rev. iv 30'	[a-šá-re-du-tú
226 A rev. iv 40'	[k]a-a-šá a-za-ra
227 A rev. iv 41'	[rašīt na-a]k-ru-uṭ ni-ši-ši-in dul-la
228 A rev. iv 42'	[ri-šá-a la-mas-sa
229 A rev. iv 43'	[sa-r]a- ^r qa-ki ¹ muḫ-ra-ni
230 A rev. iv 44'	[k]àd-re-e zi-bi-ki-in
<hr/>	
231 A rev. iv 45'	[x ² x ² šu ² -k]e ² -na šuq-qa-a ḫu-us-sa-ši
232 A rev. iv 46'	[iddišši(?) ^d]en-líl šu-zu-ba e-ṭe-ru
233 A rev. iv 47'	[ka ² -a ²]-šá u nap-šu-ra i-šim-ši ^d šá-la-aš
234 A rev. iv 48'	[ellā(?) qa]-ta-šá mu-us-sa-a i-da-a-šá
235 A rev. iv 49'	[ku ² -ru ² -u]n-niš ki-na re-ši-iš kil-la
B rev. 1'	[r]e- ši-iš ^r kil-la ¹
236 A rev. iv 50'	[suppû(?) su-u]l-lu-u šu-te-mu-qu ku-um-ma ^d iš-tar
B rev. 2'	[šu-te-m]u-qu ku-um-ma ^d iš-tar
237 A rev. iv 51'	[a-ḫu-lap-ki
B rev. 3'	[a-ḫ]u-lap-ki

ms. A ends with a rubric:

A rev. iv 52' [] ša ^diš-tar

ms. B ends with a colophon:

B rev. 4' [] x šu' ak ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[É]
B rev. 5' [] DIŠ MU.BI.ᵀIM¹

Bound Transcription

(lines 1–5 lost)

6	...	
7	...	...
8	...	...
9	...	šagīmuk
10	...	... nandūq
10	...	... u meṭl[ū]ti

11	[šušqâ šušpula(?)]	šadāda u nē`a
12	...	šadid qūki
13	[kīma qē(?) tu]ḥaššišī	mātāti birūti
14	...	kubukkuk
15	...	ana šikin šēpīki
16	[petē idīki(?) šu]be`é(?)	Sūti
17	[pīt purīdīki(?)]	pān Iltāni
18	[Šadū Amurru(?)]	šār idāti
19	[šārū erbett]i(?)	meḥū rabūtu
20	...	... šerressun

21	...	... taba`ī
22	...	... anūnki

(lines 23–24 too fragmentary for transcription)

25	...	malāki
25	...	Enlil

(lines 26–31 too fragmentary for transcription)

32 rēmiš
----	-----	-----------

(lines 33–36 too fragmentary for transcription)

37	...	... ūmšu
38	...	... bašmūma
39	...	... šamāmī
40	...	... zunna

41	...	uš]nammar(?)
42	...	]dipā[ru]

(lines 43–46 too fragmentary for transcription)

47	...	... anāku
48	...	is]ḥup lānī
49	...	mangu(?) iṣba]t(?) idīja
50	...	]iklanni

51	...]pūtī(?)
----	-----	----------

(lines 52–55 too fragmentary for transcription)

56	...] ... ireddu [...]
----	-----	----------------------

(lines 57–62 lost or too fragmentary for transcription)

63[...] *appīja šenāti* ... [...]
64[...] ... *atmē pīja ittašb[at]*
65[...] *uznāja amīra lamāni*
66[šaptī] *ki tišbarī turdī e'ēla*
67 *ēgi aḥti ešēṭ ugalli[l]*
68 *kalīšin ḥiātūa u gillātū[a]*
69 *emtēš ul īdi šiparraki ēte[q]*
70 [ap] *ruš samnaki mēki ul aššu[r]*

71 [kal] *a(?) annīja ina qaqqari ukabba[s]*
72 *m[imm]ē(?) mikīti mala gillatīja*
73 *Ištar ina pušqi šūzuba ile' i*
74 *anūna k[u]llumat eṭera īd[e]*
75 *ajjū ina ilī imša malāki*
76 *lā amra kīma kāti māḥir teslīt[a]*
77 *ummad pāliḥša ina t[esp]ī[tī]*
78 *ana šēdi nāširi šātu [piqdī]šū[ma]*
79 *ul uḥḥurši bulluṭu [...]*
80 *rubbu ana sullumi qer[ub ...]*

81 *ultu abdukki tamšī [...]*
82 *ul irši aba ema [umma(?) emēta(?)]*
83 *katimšūma tēšū [...]*
84 *gallū lā ādiru r[abiš ittīšu]*
85 *šabissu ḥurbāšu ... [...]*
86 *manūššu ana mīni mangu [iṣbassu(?)]*
87 *muqqā kinsāšu kitmus[ā birkāšu(?)]*
88 *se' āma kišādāšu ... [...]*
89 *ul kunnā iṣdāš[u ...]*
90 *kīma igāru ša iquppu [imaqqut(?)]*

91 *tānunīšūma tapatt[ī nappaša(?)]*
92 *napšassu ... [...]*
93 *idīšu ... [...] ... [...]*
94 *summeš idammuma(?) ... [...]*

(lines 95–96 too fragmentary for transcription)

97 *šīqiš kasīš ... [...]*
98 *ezziš ... [...] ... [...]*
99 *aj immēšma ... [...]*
100 *lizīqaššu mānitak[i ...]*

101 *šumma kišadsu ... [...] ... [...]*
102 *ša gabrā ikšud[u i]štariš utaq[qi]*
103 *ullīš qadmīšu s[up]ū šakinma*
104 *ina(?) ... tašī[mma(?) ta]passas(?)*

(lines 105–107 too fragmentary for transcription)

108 *annāti ina libbi [...]*
109 *ana lā āḥiz ri[ddi(?) ...]*
110 *u ūsu ša lā sa[nqu(?) ...]*
111 *ul īde bēltī [...]*

(lines 112–137 lost or fragmentary for transcription)

134 *upp[u* ...]
135 *bala[ngu* ...]

(line 136 too fragmentary for transcription)

137 *pirittu...[* ...]
138 *libla kabta[tkā(?)* ...]
139 *libbuk rabb[u* ...]
140 *anukki...[* ...]

141 *qībukki...[* ...]
142 *šalummatki ša...[* ...]
143 *itarrak napišt[āšu* ...]
144 *elilūšu šurruḫū...[* ...]
145 *bullul ina dimāti ibakk[i šarpiš(?)*
146 *lallarīšu kimtašu iha[ššaš(?)*
147 *ana nubēšu marsūti iphura salā[ssu]*
148 *urra ūtakkak mūša inahḫ[is]*
149 *ina šerīšu itkušū rēmu unnī[ni]*
150 *šurruḫ šussuk arim kalā[šu]*

151 *ina lā ṭābi šār ili mahḫūtiš tab[la(?)*
152 *l[i]llā šepāšu ira 'ubā qāt[āšu]*
153 *ittahbaš iratuš lišānšu itg[urat(?)*
154 *isīq ikri ittatbakā idā[šu]*
155 *amlat kabattāšu dūssu eṭr[et]*
156 *tabkā uznāšu ul u' addīma ... [...]*
157 *tēmšu ul ḫasis maši ramā[nšu]*
158 *ana minā imkū temeššī(?) ann[ašu(?)*
159 *ina karri u malī šumki ibtanak[ki(?)*
160 *aḫzī qāssu aj iššāl ara[dki(?)*

161 *kibsuš dunninī išdūš k[innī]*
162 *sīq enšu liptaṭtirā mi[nātīšu(?)*
163 *pāiš karāši pidišu aj [innadi(?)*
164 *lā uqatti ensū sir[qīšu]*
165 *taqqāti Barū aj ī[kul(?)*
166 *ana šatti ne'ellišu [* ...]
167 *aj uzabbil napištāšu ir[tuššu(?)*
168 *aj ibā' ša lā kāti u[ruḫšu]*
169 *iparrasma arkatuš ina[mmirā(?) idātīšu(?)*
170 *īmūma turturreš ... [* ...]

171 *ištīssu tappū ru 'u uš[širūšu(?)*
172 *iddinšumma uzzaza [* ...]
173 *iddinšumma idammu išā[b* ...]
174 *pīqāma šaptī taqbi ma[grātim]*
175 *taššīta azzakir lā(?) šināti a[qbi(?)*
176 *šīrī ištahīṭ lu 't[u (?) iṣbatanni(?)*
177 *īnī talli kīma lipp[u* ...]
178 *ištu ibnāma ... [* ...]
179 *ina ṭābi mayyāl[i(?)* ...]

(line 180 too fragmentary for transcription)

181 [...] lā ill[a]kū [...]
 182 [tēmī(?) ut]takkar(?) hīpi libbi... [...]
 183 [...] ... iṣṣūriš ... [...]
 184 [... niki]tta(?) aršīma nadur ... [...]
 185 [šerta(?) n]ašākūma(?) nīr šelāti [šaddāku(?)]
 186 [...] ... Ištar ul... [...]
 187 [...] ... lē'īš [...]
 188 [...] lemniš ... [...]
 189 [...]ibbaša id[ū(?)...]

(manuscript A breaks off, lines 190–196 lost or too fragmentary for transcription)

197 [...] ... lissahhur
 198 [...] ... lummid
 199 [...] .M]EŠ sussulli rigmuški
 200 [dalāt šam]ē(?) pitē šupalkīma

201 [kīma(?) Šam]ši šuḥlī šītiš
 202 [...] ... ina naluš ramānīja
 203 [...] ... idallu šāla urtassa
 204 [... ina kibr]āti erbetti ...
 205 [...] šasē šu'ēti Anunna
 206 [liqē unn]īnī(?) puššihī kīšīja
 207 [muḥrī(?) kadr]ēa kāši ludlulki
 208 [...] kīma abu ālidīja
 209 [kīma ummi ālit]tīja rišī rēma
 210 [mīta(?) bul]luḥ(?) puššuḥa ile' i

211 [zikir māra]t Sīn ana dalāli ṭābu
 212 [sabta umaššir k]asā urammi
 213 [ana ša bīt šibitti]m ukallam nūra
 214 [...] ... qerub enēnša
 215 [kāšat(?) šē]rtaša(?) aruḥ napšurša
 216 [...]-ši ilī šukennāši
 217 [...] a]ppakīna libnāši
 218 [ištu šīt Šam]ši ana šalāmu Šamši
 219 [...]-ši kitrabāši šāši
 220 [epšū(?) su]kkī(?) uddū parakkī

221 [...] šumu šadūššin zakru
 222 [...] ēdiš šīrat
 223 [...] ēdiš gašrat
 224 [...] uršānūtu
 225 [...] ašarēdūtu
 226 [...] k]āša azāra
 227 [rašīt na]kruḥ nīšīšin dullā
 228 [...] rišā lamassa
 229 [... sar]āqakin muḥrāni
 230 [...] k]adrē zībīkin

231 [... šuk]ennā(?) šuqqā ḥussāši
 232 [iqīssi(?)] Enlil šūzuba eṭēra
 233 [kā]ša(?) u napšura išīmši Šalaš
 234 [ellā(?) qā]tāša mussā idāša
 235 [kuru]nniš kinnā rēšīš killā
 236 [suppū(?) su]llū šutēmuqu kūmma Ištar
 237 [...] aḥulapki

ms. A ends with a rubric:

[...] *ša Ištar*

ms. B ends with a colophon:

[... ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[É]

[... MU.BI.†IM†

Translation

(lines 1–7 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

8[...] in your r[o]ar.
9[...] your... is clad,
10[...] ... and excel[le]nce.

11[*To exalt, to bring down,*] to pull and to turn back,
12[...] your thread is stretched.
13[*Like a string you ha*]ve cut the distant mountains.
14[...] your strength,
15[...] at the setting of your foot.
16[*The spreading of your wings is the ru*]sh of the South wind,
17[*The opening of your legs is*] the face of the North wind,
18[*the East wind, the West wind*], the side wind,
19[*the fo*]ur [winds], the great storms,
20[...] ... their lead-rope.

21[...] ... you walk ...
22[...] ... *your fear* ...

(lines 23–24 too fragmentary for translation)

25[...] *as you.*
25[...] *E*]nil

(lines 26–31 too fragmentary for translation)

32[...] ... *mercifully*

(lines 33–36 too fragmentary for translation)

37[...] ... *his storm*
38[...] ... *have been built*
39[...] ... the heavens,
40[...] ... the rain.

41[...] *it en*]lightens
42[...] *the tor*[ch]

(lines 43–46 too fragmentary for translation)

47[...] ...*am I,*
48[...] covered my body,
49[*paralysis seiz*]ed my arms.
50[...] ... held me back.

51[] *my forehead*

(lines 52–55 too fragmentary for translation)

⁵⁶[...] ... *he goes* [...]

(lines 57–62 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

⁶³[...] my *blocked* nose [...],

⁶⁴[...] ... the utterance, my mouth has been sei[zed],

⁶⁵[...] my ears are *obstructed* (lit. encircled) with a stoppage.

⁶⁶Move your [*lips*], chase away the binder-demon!

⁶⁷I have been negligent, I have sinned, I have done wrong, I have commit[ted sacrilege].

⁶⁸All my sins and [my] crimes!

⁶⁹I have unknowingly disregarded, I have ignor[ed] your *instructions* (lit. instruction),

⁷⁰[I br]oke an oath in your name, I have not obey[ed] your rites.

⁷¹She can trample [*al*] my sins to the ground,

⁷²A[*n*]y *neglect*, all my misdeeds.

⁷³Išta[r] can rescue from distress,

⁷⁴She sh[ow]s terror, (but) she kno[ws] how to save.

⁷⁵Who, among the gods, is as powerful as yo[u]?

⁷⁶There has never been seen someone who accepts praye[r] like you.

⁷⁷She *sustains* who reveres her with plea,

⁷⁸[*Assign*] him to the guardian *šēdu*-spirit!

⁷⁹Healing is not delayed for her [...]

⁸⁰Anger is *clo[se]* to reconciling [...]

⁸¹After you forgot about your slave [...]

⁸²He has no father, (no) *father-in-law*, [(no) *mother*, (no) *mother-in-law*]

⁸³Confusion overcomes him ... [...]

⁸⁴A fearless demon *li[es in wait for him]*

⁸⁵Chill seizes him, ... [...]

⁸⁶In his bed, why [*has*] paralysis [*seized him*]?

⁸⁷His shins are sluggish, [*his knees*] *are be[nt]*,

⁸⁸His neck is bowed down ... [...]

⁸⁹[His] foundations are unstable [...]

⁹⁰Like a tottering wall [*he will fall down*].

⁹¹*You have punished him*, but (now) you ope[n a window]

⁹²His life...[...]

⁹³His arms...[...]

⁹⁴Like a dove *he continually moans* [...]

(lines 95–96 too fragmentary for translation)

⁹⁷Tightly, constrainedly ... [...]

⁹⁸Furiously ... [...] ... [...]

⁹⁹May he not be destroyed ... [...]

¹⁰⁰May yo[ur] breeze blow on him, [...]

¹⁰¹... his neck ... [...]

¹⁰²He who overwhelm[ed] the enemy was attent[ive] to the goddess,

¹⁰³Afterwards (his) pr[aye]r was set before his god.

¹⁰⁴*In(?) ... you dec[ree and ann]ul.*

(lines 105–107 too fragmentary for translation)

- ¹⁰⁸The sins *from* the he[a]rt ... [...]
¹⁰⁹To *the one who does not unde[r]stand the proper behaviour* ...]
¹¹⁰And the path that is not *pru[dent]* ...]
-

- ¹¹¹He did not know, O Lady, ... [...]

(lines 112–136 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

- ¹³⁴The *uppu-dru[m]* ...]
¹³⁵The *balan[gu-instrument]* ...]

(line 136 too damaged for translation)

- ¹³⁷Fear ... [...]
¹³⁸May [*your mi*]nd be set *towards him* [...]
¹³⁹In your soft heart [...]
¹⁴⁰At your consent ... [...]
-

- ¹⁴¹At your command ... [...]
¹⁴²Your awesome radiance that ... [...]
¹⁴³[His th]roat throbs [...]
¹⁴⁴His joyous songs are grievous ... [...]
¹⁴⁵Stained with tears, he weeps [bitterly].
¹⁴⁶His family *gathe[rs]* his mourners,
¹⁴⁷His kin assembled for a grievous wailing on him.
¹⁴⁸By day he *scratches himself*, at night he sobs,
¹⁴⁹Pity and pra[yer] have moved away from him.
¹⁵⁰He is burnt, thrown down, completely overwhelmed.
-

- ¹⁵¹By an evil wind of a god he is *dri[ven]* to madness,
¹⁵²His feet are [*we*]ak, [his] ha[nds] shake,
¹⁵³He is shattered in his chest, his tongue is *twi[sted]*.
¹⁵⁴He had difficulty breathing, [his] ar[ms] became limp,
¹⁵⁵His insides are trembling, his manliness is tak[en away],
¹⁵⁶His reason is powerless, he does not *recognise* ... [...]
¹⁵⁷He does not understand his mind, he forgets him[self],
¹⁵⁸In what respect has he been negligent? *You can disregard* [his] *gui[lt]*.
¹⁵⁹In the mourning cloth and with dishevelled hair, he *wee[ps continuously]* (*invoking*) your name.
¹⁶⁰Take his hand, may [*your*] *sla[ve]* not be *destroyed*!
-

- ¹⁶¹Strengthen his path, make his foundations st[able]!
¹⁶²The weak one is constricted, may [his] lim[bs] be loosened.
¹⁶³Save him from the mouth of annihilation, may he not be [*thrown away*]
¹⁶⁴The dream interpreter must not use up his offer[ings],
¹⁶⁵The diviner must not [*consume*] the libations.
¹⁶⁶Therefore *turn favourably towards him!* [...]
¹⁶⁷May his life not fade [*in his brea*]st,
¹⁶⁸May he not walk on [his] *pa[th]* without you!
¹⁶⁹That he will find the cause of his trouble, [*his omens*] *will become cl[ear]*.
¹⁷⁰*They* have turned into ... [...]

¹⁷¹Companions and friends *le[ft him]* alone.
¹⁷²He let himself become furious... [...]
¹⁷³He let himself have convulsions, *sha[ke ...]*
¹⁷⁴“Once my lips have spoken blas[phemous words],
¹⁷⁵I pronounced insults, I *utte[red] improper words*.
¹⁷⁶My flesh twitched, *debi[lity seized me]*.
¹⁷⁷My *eyes* (lit. eye) rolled up like a *wrap[ping ...]*”
¹⁷⁸After he made ... [...]
¹⁷⁹In a sweet restin[g place ...]

(line 180 too fragmentary for translation)

¹⁸¹[...] *do not g[o ...]*
¹⁸²[*my mind is ch*]anged, anxiety... [...]
¹⁸³[...] ... like a bird ... [...]
¹⁸⁴[...] I became [*af*]aid, [*my*]... became obscured [...]
¹⁸⁵[*b*]ear [*a punishment*], [*I pull*] a yoke of *negligences*,
¹⁸⁶[...] ... Istar does not... [...]
¹⁸⁷[...] mightily [...]
¹⁸⁸[...] badly ... [...]
¹⁸⁹[...] her [*he*]art ... [...]

(lines 186–195 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

¹⁹⁷[...] ... may he turn around,
¹⁹⁸[...] ... may I set,
¹⁹⁹[...] the basket-*[carriers]* at your cry,
²⁰⁰Open wide the [*doors of heave*]ns!

²⁰¹[*Like the su*]n, shed light from the east!
²⁰²[...] ... in *my lying down*,
²⁰³[...] ... he *roams about*, ...
²⁰⁴[*In the*] four [world re]gions ...
²⁰⁵[...] *calling* the Lady of the Anunna-gods,
²⁰⁶[*accept*] my [*pra*]yer, release my bonds!
²⁰⁷[*Receive*] my [*prese*]nts, so that I may praise you!
²⁰⁸[...] like the father who begot me,
²⁰⁹[like the mother who gave bi]rth to me, have pity on me!
²¹⁰[(*She can*) *rev*]ive [*the dead*], she can soothe.

²¹¹[The *word* of the daught]er of Sîn is sweet to praise!
²¹²[She frees the captive], she releases the ma[n in bonds],
²¹³[To the one who is in pris]on she shows light,
²¹⁴[...] ... close is her mercy,
²¹⁵[*slow is her punish*]ment, swift her compassion,
²¹⁶[...] ... gods, bow down to her!
²¹⁷[...] pro]strate yourselves to her!
²¹⁸[From the rising of the] sun to the setting of the sun,
²¹⁹[...] ... keep blessing her,
²²⁰[*chap*]els [*are built*], shrines are established.

221[...] the name is praised in their mountains,
 222[...] she alone is supreme,
 223[...] she alone is powerful,
 224[...] heroism,
 225[...] pre-eminence,
 226[...] help and aid,
 227 Extol [*her, who shows* mer]cy to *their* people,
 228[...] acquire a protective spirit,
 229[...] accept your (pl.) [liba]tion from me!
 230[...] gif]ts, your (pl.) food offerings,

231[... *prostr]ate yourselves, praise and heed her!*
 232 Enlil [*granted her*] (the power) to save and rescue,
 233 Šalaš endowed her with [*char]ity* and forgiveness,
 234 Her [ha]nds [are *holy*], her arms are pure,
 235 Lay her [*kuru]nmu-beer* (as an offering), provide for her,
 236 [*Supplication, pet]ition, prayer are yours, o Ištar!*
 237[...] your word of deliverance.

ms. A ends with a rubric:

[...] of Ištar.

ms. B ends with a colophon:

[...] ... (copied) in its totali[ty]
 [...] number of lines: ...

3.5.2 Commentary

8. ¹šá-gi¹-muk: *šagīmu* is a rare noun also attested in its variant form *šagimmu* (see *AHw* II 1127; *CAD* Š/I 73, “roar, cry”). Derived from the verb *šagāmu*, “to roar” (*AHw* III 1125–1126; *CAD* Š/I 63–65), it is mostly used in literary texts: it occurs, for example, in the Marduk Prayer 1, l. line 87: ^dIŠKUR šá-gi-m[u],³⁶² and in the Nabû Prayer, ll. 21–23, [^dIŠKUR šá-gim]-mu-uk (if correctly restored). Cf. Chapter 2, the commentary of the Nabû Prayer on ll. 21–23.

The form *šagīmuk* contains the locative suffix *-um*, and displays the apocope of the final vowel in the pronominal suffix *-ki*. Both elements are typical traits of the hymno-epic dialect. See the Introduction of the Ištar Prayer, §3.3.

9. ¹na-an¹-duq: This form is a third person masculine singular stative from *edēqu* N-stem, “to be clothed, to be clad” (*AHw* I, *CAD* E 29). The verb *edēqu* in the N-stem is found in literary texts, especially in hymnic passages, where it is used in the description of deities, and often refers to divine garments or weapons (see *CAD* E 29 mng. a3’ and b for this usage). In addition, *edēqu* has the same meaning as the verb *labāšu* (*AHw* I 523–524; *CAD* L 17–22), which is commonly employed in divine epithets (see *CAD* L mng. 4b), see for example the Old-Babylonian Hymn to Ishtar, ll. 5–7: *ša-at me-li-ši-im ru-à-ma-am la-ab-ša-at*, “The one of joy, clad in seductiveness”.³⁶³ In a Middle-Assyrian proverb the two verbs occur in a parallel couplet, used as synonyms: *na-an-duq er-šú šu-bat bal-ti/ nu`u-ú ú-lap da-me la-biš*, “The wise man is girded with a loin cloth. The fool is clad with a scarlet cloth”.³⁶⁴

Hence, even though the damaged state of the line does not allow a clear reconstruction of the context, one can hypothesise that in the present line *nandūq* describes a part of the body of Ištar, or perhaps another attribute of the goddess.

10. ¹mé¹-eṭ-[u]-ti: The primary meaning of *meṭlūtu* is “manhood” (*AHw* II 650, *CAD* M/2 45). This word derives from *eṭlu*, “man”, and is the antonym of *mešherūtu*, “childhood” (*AHw* II 648, *CAD* M/2 36–37). It is to be distinguished from *mētellūtu*, “power, rulership” (*AHw* II 649, *CAD* M/2 43), derived from *etellu*, “ruler”;³⁶⁵ *meṭlūtu*, *mešherūtu* and *mētellūtu* all

³⁶² See Oshima 2011, 162–163.

³⁶³ Own translation. For the edition of the text, see Thureau-Dangin 1925, 169–177 and Groneberg 1997, 3–54.

³⁶⁴ Lambert 1960, 228 and 232.

³⁶⁵ In a bilingual composition, however, *meṭlūtu* is improperly used as a variant of *mētellūtu*, corresponding to the Sumerian *nam.ner*, “supremacy”, that in fact represents the Sumerian rendering of *mētellūtu*, see SBH 38,

belong to the literary language, and are built on the MAPRAS-pattern with the suffix *-ūtu* used to form *abstracta*.³⁶⁶

The masculine aspect of Ištar is attested already in 2500 BC, and symbolizes the warlike nature and the virile strength of the goddess. In iconographic sources, Ištar is occasionally represented with a beard to express this masculine trait.³⁶⁷

Cf. the Ağušaya Hymn A (rev. iv, ll. 5–6): *id-di-iš-ši eṭ-lu-ta-am / na-ar-bi-a-am da-na-na-am*, “(Ea) has given to (Ištar) manliness, greatness, might”.³⁶⁸

11. Restoration based on the “Exaltation of Ištar”, ivb, l. 24: *mar-ti ana e-ma ṭa-bu-ki šu-uš-qu-ú šu-uš-pu-la šá-da-da u né-e-’u-ú*, “My daughter, to wherever it pleases you to exalt, to bring down, to pull and to turn back”.³⁶⁹

13. [*kīma qē(?) tu*]-*ḥaṣ-ši-ši*: The restoration is based on similar passages: the image involving a god or king cutting the mountains is a well-attested motif in literary texts. This topos usually employs the substantive *qū*, “thread, cord”, with verbs meaning “to cut” or “to split”, for example *salātum* (*AHw* II 1014; *CAD* S 94–95, see mng. 3b), see, e.g., the Tukulti Ninurta Inscription (RIMA 1, 276, l. 31): *hur-šá-ni be-ru-ti šá KUR.KUR na-i-ri ki-ma qe-e lu-se-lit*, “I cut through the distant mountains of the lands of Nairi like a string”; see *CAD* S 95, mng. 2’ b for further attestations of this topos. Cf. also the verb *nakāsum* for a similar usage (*AHw* II 720–721; *CAD* N/1 171–180, see 174 mng. 1c).

16–19. The restoration of ll. 16-17 is based on ll. 28–29 of a syncretistic hymn to Ištar:

²⁸*kūr* *pe-te-e i-di-ki <šu>-bé-’e-i* ^{im}*u*₁₈.*lu* ^d*MÜŠ-UNUG*^{ki}

²⁹*pi-it pu-ri-di-ki pa-an* ^{im}*si.sá* ^d*MÜŠ-a.ga.de*^{ki}

²⁸The spreading of your wings is the rush of the south wind – Ištar of Uruk,

²⁹The opening of your legs is the face of the north wind - Ištar of Akkad³⁷⁰

In the Akkadian texts, the four winds are always listed in the same order, and this allows to reconstruct l. 18 of the present prayer. The fixed sequence can be observed in standard

rev. ll. 8–9, *šir.re nam.nir.ra mu.un.na.an.du*₁₂.*du*₁₂.*a/za-ma-ri mi-iṭ-lu-ti i-za-am-mu-ru*, “They sing a song in praise of excellence” (the translation follows *CAD* M/2 45, lex. sec.). This occurrence has been considered by von Soden (1951, 155) as a Late Babylonian scribal mistake. Borger, however, maintains that *meṭlūtu* could be a shortened form of *mētellūtu* (Borger 1957–1958, 416). Since this alleged byform of *mētellūtu* is very uncertain, I understand the noun in the present text as *meṭlūtu*.

³⁶⁶ Von Soden 1951, 154–156.

³⁶⁷ On the gender duplicity of Ištar, see Groneberg 1986, 25–46.

³⁶⁸ Groneberg 1997, 77. The translation used here is by Metcalf 2015, 69.

³⁶⁹ Own translation, see Hruška 1969, 489 and 493.

³⁷⁰ Lambert 2003, 22.

formulas employed in incantations and prayers, for example: IM.1 IM.2 IM.3 ʿIM.4 *li¹-zi-qu-nim¹*, “May south wind, north wind, east wind (and) west wind blow towards m[e]”.³⁷¹ The lexical sources provide further occurrences of the fixed order of the four winds,³⁷² see the Practical Vocabulary of Assur 19’–22’,³⁷³ Erimḥuš II 66–69 and 82–85 (MSL 17, 30–31), Igituḥ 311–314 Long Version³⁷⁴ and Igituḥ Short Version 99–102 (Landsberger and Gurney 1957–58, 82), Kagal D 1’–4’ (MSL 13 244–250)³⁷⁵ and Malku 197–202.³⁷⁶

The same sequence appears also in literary texts, see for example Gilgameš V, l. 138: *im¹šūtu(u₁₈-lu) im¹iltānu(si.sá) im¹šadû(kur.ra) im¹amurru(mar.dú) im¹ziq-qa*, “South Wind, North Wind, East Wind, West Wind, Blast”³⁷⁷ and *Enūma Eliš* IV, l. 43 *šūtu(im-u₁₈-lu) iltānu(im-si-sá) šadu(im-kur-ra) amurru(im-mar-dú)*.³⁷⁸

[*šār(?) er²-bét²-t*]um: restoration based on Igituḥ 99–104 (Short Version, see Landsberger and Gurney 1957–58, 82, cf. *CAD* M/2 4 lex. sec.) = Igituḥ Long Version 312–316.³⁷⁹

⁹⁹im_{u₁₉}-lu = *šu-u-tu*

¹⁰⁰im_{si-sá} = *il-ta-nu*

¹⁰¹im_{kur-ra} = *šá-du-ú*

¹⁰²im_{mar-tu} = *a-mur-ru*

¹⁰³im_{me-er-me-er} = *me-hu-u*

¹⁰⁴im-límmu₂-ba = *šá-a-ru er-bet-te*

⁹⁹im_{u₁₉}-lu = South Wind

¹⁰⁰im_{si-sá} = North Wind

¹⁰¹im_{kur-ra} = East Wind

¹⁰²im_{mar-tu} = West Wind

¹⁰³im_{me-er-me-er} = Storm

¹⁰⁴im-límmu₂-ba = Four Winds

IM *i-da-a-ti*: In his edition of the text, Lambert reads: im limmu *ta-a-ti* (Lambert 1959–60, 50), leaving the line untranslated; however, the sign before DA/TA has five horizontals and looks like I. My restoration is based on Malku III 202, which belongs to a large set of lines containing different kinds of winds, storms and other weather phenomena (Malku III, 180–

³⁷¹ Abusch & Schwemer 2016, 196 and 204, l. 133. Cf. Mayer 1976, 229 for a similar formula in *Šuilla*-prayers.

³⁷² Cf. Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 48.

³⁷³ Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 47; cf. also Landsberger & Gurney 1957–1958, 334, ll. 841–844. Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 50.

³⁷⁴ See Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 192–193; cf. *CAD* M/2 4 lex. sec.

³⁷⁵ Cf. Hurowitz 1998, 197.

³⁷⁶ Hrůša 2010, 88–89, 237 and 374.

³⁷⁷ George 2003, 608.

³⁷⁸ Lambert 2013, 88–89.

³⁷⁹ Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 193.

203).³⁸⁰ The following passage (Malku III 197–202) appears similar to ll. 16–18 of our Prayer to Ištar:

- ¹⁹⁷[pirig]-g[al] = [š]u-ú-ti
¹⁹⁸[pirig-bàn]-da = [i]l-ta-nu
¹⁹⁹[pirig-š]u-du₇ = ša-du-u
²⁰⁰[p]irig-nu-šu-du₇ = a-m[u]r-ru
²⁰¹im-ti-la = šá-a-ri š[e]-li
²⁰²im-ti-la = MIN i-da-a-t[i]
¹⁹⁷South (Sum.) = South Wind
¹⁹⁸North (Sum.) = North Wind
¹⁹⁹East (Sum.) = East Wind
²⁰⁰West (Sum.) = West Wind
²⁰¹Side Wind (Sum.) = Side Wind
²⁰²Side Wind (Sum.) = Side Wind³⁸¹

20. ¹šer¹-ret-su-un: The line is too broken to allow restorations. The word *šerretu* (*AHw* III 1092; *CAD* Š 134–136) often appears in divine epithets and stock-phrases within hymns and prayers, used in a figurative sense to describe the influence and rulership of deities over mankind and the whole universe, see for example in the *Agušaya Hymn* (A, col. ii), ll. 10–11: *iš₈-tár ri-tu-uš-ša šé-re-et / ni-ši ú-ki-a-al*, “Ištar holds the lead rope of the people in her hand”.³⁸² Cf. *CAD* Š 136, mng. 4b and 4c for further occurrences of this use of *šerretu*. It is therefore possible that *šerretu* was used in a similar sense in the present line, that is to describe Ištar’s sphere of influence.

41-42. [uš²]-¹nam¹-mar: The tablet is damaged, preventing a clear understanding of the context; nevertheless one can hypothesise that a form of the verb *namārum/nawārum* occurs at the end of l. 41; the occurrence of *dipāru*, “torch” (*AHw* I 172; *CAD* D 156–157) in the second half of the succeeding line (l. 42) might support this reconstruction. Therefore, I tentatively restore a third person singular Š-stem from *namārum/nawārum*, perhaps related to an attribute of the goddess, cf. for example a *šuilla*-prayer to Ištar (Ištar 11³⁸³), l. 5: *ga-šír-tum ša šá-ru-ru-šá uš-nam-ma-ru ik-li-ti*, “Terrible one, whose splendour illuminates the darkness”.³⁸⁴

³⁸⁰ Hrůša 2010, 236.

³⁸¹ Hrůša 2010, 88–89, 237 and 374.

³⁸² Groneberg 1997, 75.

³⁸³ I follow here the numeration given by Mayer 1976, 390.

³⁸⁴ Ebeling 1953, 128–129.

In addition, the word *dipāru* is often attested in divine epithets in the Akkadian hymns and prayers, even in association with Ištar, see for example the *šulla*-prayer Ištar 1, l. 2: *di-pár AN-e u KI-ti šá-ru-ur kib-ra-a-t[i]*, “Torch of heavens and earth, splendour of the regions”.³⁸⁵

49. [*mungu(?) iṣ²-ba²-a*]t² *i-di-ia*: Tentative restoration based on the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no. 11, l. 10 *mun-ga iṣ-ša-bat i-di-MU*,³⁸⁶ and also on *Ludlul* II, l. 78: *man-gu iṣ-bat i-di-ia*, “Paralysis has seized my arms”.³⁸⁷ The reference to paralysis or to an illness of a similar sort would match the preceding and following lines (l. 48 and 50), in which the verbs *saḫāpu* (l. 48 [*iṣ*]-*ḫu-up*), “to cover, to overtake” (*AHw* II 1004; *CAD* S 31, see especially mng. 1e, as referred to evil forces) and *kullu* (l. 50 *ik-la-an-ni*), “to hold” (*AHw* I 503–504; *CAD* K 508–518), imply a sense of constriction and physical limitation.

The topos of paralysis is well attested in the corpus of Akkadian prayers and in the “righteous sufferer”-compositions, and is one of the typical symptoms of suffering described by the supplicant.³⁸⁸ Furthermore, Akkadian prayers also contain other expressions used to depict physical or mental imprisonment, which involve fetters and manacles, cf. the Nabû Prayer, l. 173 *puṭur qunnabrašu ḫipi illu[rtaš]*, “Loose his fetters, break his ma[nacle]!” in Chapter 2.³⁸⁹ Cf. also below within the present text ll. 212–213, in which the goddess is praised for her ability to release the captive.

63. *ap¹-pi-ia šé-na-ti*: Lambert reads *ZE-na-ti* and interprets the word as *zenâti* from the adjective *zenû*, “angry” (*AHw* III 1519; *CAD* Z 85–86); furthermore, he understands *ap¹-pi-ia* as “my face”, thus translating the line as “... my angry face.. [...]” (Lambert 1959–50, 51).

I suggest to take *ap¹-pi-ia* as “my nose”, and to read the sign *ZI* as *šé*: I analyse the form as *šé-na-ti*, namely as the rare verbal adjective *šēnu*, “laden, loaded” (*AHw* III 1090; *CAD* Š 128), derived from *šēnu*, “to load” (*AHw* III 1091; *CAD* Š 131–132) and only attested in lexical sources, cf. *Hh* IX 134 (MSL 7 42): [*gima-sá*]-*ab sá^{sa}*-[*a*] = *še-e-nu*, “filled basket” (Cf. *CAD* Š 134). This reading would fit the context, since in the following lines other parts of the upper body are mentioned. It appears that in this portion of the text (ll. 63–65), all the senses of the sufferer have being damaged: his nose is filled with mucus (l. 63), his mouth is

³⁸⁵ Zgoll 2003a, 192 and 198.

³⁸⁶ For the latest edition, see Jaques 2015, 67 and 51. The translation used here is that of Lambert 1974, 275.

³⁸⁷ Oshima 2014, 90–91 and 406. The translation here follows Lambert 1960, 43.

³⁸⁸ Van der Toorn 1985, 59 and 66.

³⁸⁹ Cf. Oshima 2014, 258.

paralysed (l. 64) and his ears are clogged with a stoppage (l. 65). Similar symptoms are described in a passage of *Ludlul* (III, ll. 82–95), wherein Šubši-mešrâ-Šakkan recounts his initial pitiable condition finally healed by Marduk, see in particular ll. 84–87:

⁸⁴*uznā* (GEŠTU.MIN)-a-a šá uṭ-ṭa-am-mi-ma us-sak-ki-ka ḥa-šik-kiš

⁸⁵*it-bal a-mi-ra-šin ip-te-te neš-ma-a-a*

⁸⁶*ap-pa šá ina ri-di um-mi ú-nap-pi-qu ni-[. . .*

⁸⁷*ú-pa-áš-ši-iḥ mi-ḥi-iš-ta-šu-ma a-nap-pu-uš [za-mar]*

⁸⁴My ears which were clogged and blocked like a deaf man's—

⁸⁵He removed their wax and opened my hearing.

⁸⁶My nose, whose [breathing] was choked by the onset of fever—

⁸⁷He soothed its affliction and now I breathe [freely].³⁹⁰

66. [šap[?]-ti[?]]-ki: The restoration suits the context and fits in the space available in the break. For the usage of *šabāru* with *šaptu* see *CAD* § 3, mng. 1a.

67-68: The theme of sin, expressed through the confessions of guilt, is commonly found in penitential prayers, especially in the *šigû*-prayers, *diġiršadabbas* and *lipšur*-litanies. Such confessions can show different variations: they can be included in general protestations of ignorance, which imply the presumed innocence of the supplicant and hence accord with the “righteous sufferer”-theme, or consist in detailed lists of wrongdoings.³⁹¹ The belief which underlies confession in prayers is that one has to acknowledge his own sin in order to be reconciled with the deity and saved from his suffering.³⁹² The enumerations of crimes and the repetitions were used to reinforce the efficacy of prayer.³⁹³ Within the present context, the supplicant openly confesses his misconduct (ll. 67–70), making use of the standard vocabulary of penitential prayers, that is a specific set of verbal and nominal forms which typically occurs in the confession of the penitent. The verbs *egû* (“to neglect”), *ḥaṭû* (“to commit an offence”), *šêṭu* (“to disregard”) and *gullulu* (“to commit a crime”) that are found in l. 67 tend to occur in the exact same sequence in numerous penitential prayers, and the terms

³⁹⁰ Oshima 2014, 98–99, 419–420. The translation used here is taken from Lambert 1960, 53.

³⁹¹ Mayer 1976, 110–116; Van der Toorn 1985, 97; Jaques 2015, 101.

³⁹² Van der Toorn 1985, 97.

³⁹³ This feature has been defined by Bottéro as “Loi de réduplication” (see Bottéro 1987–1990, 207a §12, 213a §24, 216b §30). For the conative function of figures of speech in incantations, see Veldhuis 1999, 35–48 and Schwemer 2014, 263–288; cf. Jaques 2015, 130.

hiṭtu (“sin”) and *gillatu* (“crime”) in the following line (l. 68) represent a well-attested fixed pair.³⁹⁴

A long *diġiršadabba*-prayer (no. 11) contains a couplet (ll. 122–123) that resembles ll. 67–68 in the present text:

¹²²[e]-gi a-na DIĠIR.MU aḥ-ṭi ana ^dXV.MU ú-[gal]-lil

¹²³[DÙ a]n-nu-ú-a DÙ ḥi-ṭa-tu-ú-a DÙ gíl-la-tu-ú-a¹

¹²²[I ha]ve been neglectful towards my god, I have sinned against my goddess, I have committed sacrilege,

¹²³[All] my [si]ns, all my misdeeds, all my crimes!³⁹⁵

70. *sam^{am}-na-ki*: The phonetic gloss *am* should help to read the preceding sign *sam* instead of *ú*, so as to facilitate the understanding of the rare word *samnu*, “oath”, attested in Malku as a synonym of *nīšu* and *māmītu* (Malku IV 74–75³⁹⁶), cf. *AHw* II 1019; *CAD* S 128.

71. The restoration in the first half of the line is based on tablet collation and on textual parallels. The preserved trace after the break shows a partially damaged horizontal and a vertical wedge, and can be reconciled with the sign LA: the noun *kala* fits in the available space. Moreover, *kala* is employed in similar contexts, see for example the following passage of an Akkadian *šigū*-prayer to Marduk, ll. 22–24:

²²[] ka-la ḥi-ṭa-t[u-u-a]

²³[ka-la gíl-la-t]u-u-a k[a-l]a ma-ma-tu-u-[a]

²²[] all [my s]ins,

²³[all] my [crimes], a[l]l m[y] mamītu-curses.³⁹⁷

Cf. also the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no. 11, l. 123, see above the note on ll. 68–69.

ina qaḡ-qa-ri ú-kab-ba-a[s]: Lambert takes *ukabbas* in our line as a first person singular verb referred to the supplicant, providing the following translation: “[...] I trample my sins to the ground” (Lambert 1959-60, 51). Indeed the verb *kabāsum* (*AHw* I 415–416; *CAD* K 5–11) in D-stem is often used with nouns meaning “sin” or “sacrilege”, e.g. *anzillu*, *hiṭtu* or *arnu*, in the sense of “to commit a crime”, literally “to tread upon a sin” (see *CAD* K 5 sub *kabāsu* mng. 5a/b). This common meaning of *kabāsum* appears, for example, in a

³⁹⁴ Mayer 1976, 111–116, esp. 111 fn. 89.

³⁹⁵ Lambert 1974, 280–281; Jaques 2015, 80 and 90, cf. also 103 for the commentary on these lines.

³⁹⁶ Hrůša 2010, 96–97 and 383.

³⁹⁷ For the edition of this prayer see Mayer 1976, 466–468; I follow von Soden’s restoration for l. 23 (see Mayer 1976, 467). Cf. the latest edition of the text by Oshima 2011, 296–302.

diġiršadabba-prayer (n.11, sec. B), l. 7: *an-nu-ú-a ħi-ṭa-tu-u-a gíl-lat-ú-a* [šá ki-ma ħa-mi] *tab-ku-ú-ma* UGU- ʾšī¹ -na ú-kab-bi-is, “I have trodden on my iniquities, sins and transgressions, [which] were heaped up [like leaves]”,³⁹⁸ or in a *eršahūga*-prayer (4R² n. 10), ll. 35.35:

AMA.AN.INANNA ám-gig-ga nu-un-zu-ta gí[r] ʾús¹-sa-a-ni
an-zil ^diš-ta-ri-ia ina la i-de-e ú-ʾkab¹-bi-is,

³⁴(Sum.) (My) goddess, if he unknowingly treads upon a taboo,

³⁵I unknowingly stepped upon the taboo of my goddess.³⁹⁹

However, when associated with terms indicating guilt, *kabāsum* can also mean “to forgive” (both in G and in D-stem), see for example an inscription belonging to the Assurbanipal’s Annals (Prism E₂, col. v, ll. 9-10: *re-e-mu ar-ši-šu-ma/ ú-kab-bi-sa ħi-ṭi-is-su*, “I showed him mercy, I pardoned his sin”.⁴⁰⁰ Cf. *CAD* K 9–10 sub *kabāsum*, mng. 4d and 5e.⁴⁰¹

In the present context, the second meaning, namely “to forgive”, seems more likely, since our line belongs to a strophe wherein the theme of Ištar’s mercifulness is emphasised: the lines immediately following (ll. 72–80), in fact, deal with the goddess’s ability to help and forgive sins. Therefore, I take *ukabbas* as a third-person singular verb referred to Ištar and used here in the sense of “to forgive”.

72. *m[im[?]-m]u[?]-ú mi-ki-tú*: The first half of the line is fragmentary, but the preserved traces before the lacuna can be reconciled with the initial part of MIM; a small part of an oblique wedge is visible immediately after the break, and could be read as MU.

The word *mikītu* (*AHw* II 651; *CAD* M/2 63) is a *hapax*. It displays a nominal pattern of the PARIST type and seems to be a substantivised feminine form of the verbal adjective *mekû*, “idle”, “negligent” (*AHw* II 643; *CAD* M/2 9⁴⁰²) derived from the verb *mekû* “to be negligent” (*AHw* II 643; *CAD* M/2 8–9). According to the context, *mikītu* could be translated as “negligence” or “transgression”.

For similar occurrences of *mimmû* in the genitive, see *CAD* M/2 82 sub *mimmû*, usage 2a.

³⁹⁸ Jaques 2015, 83, 92 and 131.

³⁹⁹ Maul 1988, 238.

⁴⁰⁰ Borger 1996, 180, cf. Novotny & Jeffers 2018, 49.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. also Kouwenberg 1997, 129.

⁴⁰² For a recent treatment of verbal adjectives in Akkadian, see Mayer 2019. According to this study, verbal adjectives derived from intransitive verbs can be connoted by a semantic nuance of “habitus” or tendency (Mayer 2019, 300–302): the very rare adjective *mekû* could then be understood as “someone who is used/ has the tendency to be negligent”.

73–74. *a-nu-na k[u]l-lu¹-mat*: The learned word *anūnum* is attested exclusively in literary texts and lexical sources and, according to the dictionaries, can be translated as “fear” (*AHW* I 55; *CAD* A/2 150). It also has a feminine form, *anantum/anuntum* (*AHW* I 50; *CAD* A/2 111), which instead means “battle”, “strife”, and is considered by von Soden as an example of the special vocabulary of the hymnic-epic dialect.⁴⁰³ Both nouns seem to derive from a Semitic root **ʾnn*, “to fight”; *anūnum* was borrowed into Sumerian as a-nun-na.⁴⁰⁴

The dualism of deities, who can be both relentless and forgiving, is a common topos in Mesopotamian penitential prayers and “righteous sufferer”-compositions. The gods incorporated both negative and positive aspects of nature, and were ultimately held responsible for human suffering or salvation.⁴⁰⁵ The opening hymn of *Ludlul* clearly exemplifies the duplicity of Marduk’s character, who, just as Ištar in the present text, can switch between rage and mercy.⁴⁰⁶ The philosophical concept implied in this literary motif is that piety is worthwhile, since the enraged deities will eventually relent and show benevolence as reward for a god-fearing behaviour.⁴⁰⁷

For further passages, in which this topos is employed in relation to Ištar, see the so-called Hymn to the Queen of Nippur col. iii, ll.19–22:

¹⁹[*m*]a-am-ma-an ul i-le-’i-i []

²⁰a-ga-ga ta-a-ra na-ak-ru-[*ta*]

²¹ma-am-ma-an ul i-le-’i []

²²e-né-na re-e-ma ru-um-ma []

¹⁹No one [but s]he is able [...]

²⁰To become angry (and then) relent, to show kindness [...]

²¹No one but she is able [...]

²²To punish (but then) show compassion, to take a mild view [...]⁴⁰⁸

75–76. This couplet displays the standard hyperbolic praises, a traditional feature of the opening section of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and prayers. In fact, in the first portion of hymns and prayers—namely the “Hymnic introduction”, cf. the introduction of the Ištar

⁴⁰³ Cf. Von Soden 1933, 169.

⁴⁰⁴ Selz 2000, 45, note 83; cf. Gelb 1987, 32; Roberts 1972, 36.

⁴⁰⁵ Sitzler 1995, 89; cf. Oshima 2014, 38.

⁴⁰⁶ For the alternation between divine wrath and forgiveness in *Ludlul* and in several penitential prayers to Marduk, including Marduk 1, see Chapter 1, §1.2.5.

⁴⁰⁷ This thought agrees with the so-called “Positive Wisdom”, namely the traditional religious view which does not deal with seemingly undeserved suffering, nor brings divine justice into question. Positive wisdom opposes to what has been called by scholars the “Negative Wisdom”, see Cohen 2013, 14–15, cf. Chapter 1, §1.2.5 and Chapter 2, §2.5 some wisdom themes in the Great Hymns and Prayers and some examples of negative wisdom.

⁴⁰⁸ Lambert 1982. 196–197.

Prayer, §3.4—the invoked deities are typically extolled for their divine powers: hyperbolic praises are used to stress their uniqueness and prominence within the pantheon.⁴⁰⁹

For a similar phraseology, cf. for example the *šuilla*-prayer to Ištar (no.1), l. 15: *eš-’e-e-ma ina* DIGIR.MEŠ *su-pu-u šar-ku-ki(:) as-ḥur-ma ina* ^d15.MEŠ *ka-ši-ma šá ba-a-li*, “I searched among the gods: to you are prayers offered. I sought among the goddesses: only you are to be supplicated.”⁴¹⁰

81. *ul-tu ab-duk-ki tam-ši-i*: This is a standard formulation found in the Akkadian penitential prayers, used to describe the typical topos of the disturbed communication between the penitent and the god. Divine disapproval leads to the god’s abandonment, and ultimately allows evil to strike the forsaken person. This motif is defined by Mayer as the “*Entfremdung*”, and can be formulated via numerous expressions, by which the god is said, for example, to be angered, to have abandoned the sufferer and to have turned away from him.⁴¹¹

From a linguistic and stylistic point of view, this thought can be formulated either through standard stock-phrases which make use of precative verbs (see, e.g., in Chapter 2, ll. 204–206 of the Great Prayer to Nabû, [*bēlu(?)*]^dNĀ] *bu-nu-ka ZALÁG.MEŠ lit-tar-ri-šu e-li-šú*, “[*O Lord/O Nabû*] may your radiant face be tu]rned towards him”), or through relative sentences with *ša*,⁴¹² see for example the *diġiršadabba* n.11, l. 47: *tir-ra ki-šad-ka šá taš-bu-su UGU-ia*, “Avert the anger you have had for me”,⁴¹³ or, like in our case, in secondary sentences introduced by temporal conjunctions. For a similar passage, see for example the *šuilla*-prayer to Sîn no.3, ll. 56–57: *e-nu-ma* DIGIR-MU *ze-nu-ú it-ti-ia/* ^dU.DAR-MU *né-sa-at UGU-ia*, “Since my god has been angry with me / (and) my goddess has been distant from me”.⁴¹⁴

The substantive *abdu* is a learned word for “servant” (*AHW* I 6; *CAD* A/1 52) and is attested in the lexical sources. It is entered in Antagal 228–230 (MSL 17, 159) within a bilingual group of words which also mean “slave” or “servant”:

²²⁸SAG = *re-e-šú*

²²⁹SAG^{e-ru} SAL = *ab-du*

²³⁰1a-bar = *ar-du*

⁴⁰⁹ Metcalf 2015, 40–49, 76–77.

⁴¹⁰ Zgoll 2003a, 194 and 198; the translation used here is that of Sperling 1981, 11.

⁴¹¹ Mayer 1976, 93–94.

⁴¹² Mayer 1976, 94–98.

⁴¹³ Jaques 2015, 72 and 88. The translation is taken from Lambert 1974, 48.

⁴¹⁴ Mayer 1976, 498 and 501.

The same equation between *abdu* and *ardu* is found in Malku I 175;⁴¹⁵ beyond the lexical lists, *abdu* is also attested in the Great Nabû Prayer, l. 150 (cf. Chapter 2).

The form *ab-du-uk-ki* that appears in the present text is what has been defined by Mayer a pseudo adverbial locative (“Pseudo-Lokativadverbialis”): it displays the adverbial locative ending *-um* + the personal suffix *-ki*, but is used as an accusative.⁴¹⁶

82. ¹ul¹ *ir-ši a-bi ʿe-e-mi* [*umma(?) emēta(?)*]: Tentative restoration. I take *ʿe-e-mi* for *emu*, “father-in-law” (*AHW* I 302; *CAD* E 154-156; cf. also Mayer 2016, 205), because it pairs with “father” (*a-bi*) immediately preceding. The spelling with aleph is, however, elsewhere unattested, and can be a scribal mistake.⁴¹⁷ This line appears to present the traditional topos of the sufferer’s social isolation, cf. below l. 171. In fact, in the Mesopotamian penitential prayers and “righteous sufferer”-compositions, the supplicant typically complains about his lack of friends and family, who have either died or have turned away from him.⁴¹⁸ For further occurrences of this motif, see e.g., *Ludlul* I, l. 192: *a-na la UZU.MEŠ-šú iš-ku-na-an-ni*, “My family treat me as an alien”,⁴¹⁹ and Theodicy ll. 9-11:

a-ḫu-ra-[k]u-ma za-ru-ú š[i]m-tum ub-til
a-ga-rin-nu a-lit-ti i-ta-ar KUR.NU.GI
a-bi u ba-an-ti i-zi-bu-in-ni-ma ba-al ta-ru-u-a
 When I was a child, fate struck (my) father,
 The Land of No Return *has killed* the mother who bore me.
 My father and my mother left me without a guardian.⁴²⁰

Cf. also the *šulla*-prayer to Ištar (Ištar 2), l. 78: *sap-ḫat il-la-ti ta-bi-ni pur-ru-ur*, “My kin is dispersed, my shelter scattered.”⁴²¹

84. *r[a²-bi²-iṣ² ittīšu(?)]*: Restoration follows *CAD* R 12, mng. 3b.

86. *ma-nu-šú*: I understand this form as *manuššu*, namely the substantive *manû* (*AHW* II 274 sub *munû*; *CAD* M/1 221) followed by the locative suffix *-um* and the personal pronoun *-šu*.

⁴¹⁵ Hrůša 2010, 42–43 and 313.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Mayer 1996, 428; cf. Groneberg 1987 II, 55.

⁴¹⁷ Perhaps this curious spelling might be explained as an Aramaic influence; in fact, Akkadian words with an initial glottal stop take an aleph in the alphabetic transliteration of their corresponding Aramaic forms (Hämeen Anttila 2000, 12; Kaufman 1974, 142).

⁴¹⁸ See Van der Toorn 1985, 60–61 and 64; cf. Lenzi 2015, 77–78. Cf. also above the introduction to the Ištar prayer, 3.4.

⁴¹⁹ Translation by Lambert 1960, 35. Cf. the latest edition of the text by Oshima 2014, 82–83 and 392.

⁴²⁰ Own translation. Cf. the edition by Lambert 1960, 70–71 and Oshima 2014, 150–151 and 440.

⁴²¹ See Zgoll 2003a, 46 for the text.

manû is a rare word for “bed” borrowed from Sumerian (Emesal) *mu.nú*, and entered in the lexical lists as a synonym of *eršu*, “bed” (*AHw* I 246, *CAD* E 315–318), see exp. Malku III 364–365 *mu-nu-ú /ma-nu-ú* = MIN (*er-šu*).⁴²²

The use of the locative case is common in poetic texts and a typical feature of the hymno-epic dialect.⁴²³ Moreover, the topos of the sufferer lying on a bed of sickness, or on his deathbed, is frequently attested in Mesopotamian literary texts,⁴²⁴ see, e.g., *Ludlul* II, 95: *a-ḥu-uz* ^{giš}NÁ *me-si-ru mu-še-e ta-ni-ḥ[u]*, “I take to a bed of bondage; going out is a pain”.⁴²⁵ Cf. CT 46 49, l. 15 [*mar²-š*]*a²-ku ina* ^{giš}NÁ *šá* ^ṛ*šī¹-ig-ge-e ú-qat-ta u₄-me*, “[I am si]ck on a bed of lamentations (and) I finish (my) days”.⁴²⁶ Cf. also Marduk 2, l. 98: *šá i-na* ^{giš}NÁ ^d*nam-tar na-du-ú ta-dak-ki-šú*, “The one who is cast onto the deathbed, you raise him up”.⁴²⁷ See also the prayer to Marduk 5 (BMS 12), l. 43: *šá ina* ^{giš}NÁ *NAM.TAR ŠUB-ú tu-šat-bi*, “The one who was lying on the deathbed, you let him rise”.⁴²⁸

For a Sumerian example, see *The Death of Gilgameš*, l. 68: ^{giš}*ná-nam-tar-ra-ka ba-ná ḥur nu-mu-e-[da-an-zi-zi]*, “On the bed of fate he lies, he [rises] not”.⁴²⁹

man-gu: the noun *mungu/mangu*, “paralysis” (see *AHw* II 602–603, which provides the translation “Hautkrankheit”; cf. *CAD* M/1 211) is derived from the verb *magāgu*, “to become stiff” (*AHw* II 574; *CAD* M/1 28) and is predominantly applied to feet and arms. It is often paired with another disease that involves stiffness, namely *lu’ utu* (*AHw* I 575; *CAD* L 256–257; cf. below the note on l. 176).⁴³⁰

[*išbassu*(?)]: I tentatively restore a preterite G-stem from *šabātum* with the pronominal suffix, because *mangu* often appears with this verb (see *CAD* M/1 211 for similar occurrences).

87.^ṛ*kit¹-mu-s[a² birkāšu*(?)]: *kitmusā* is restored on the basis of *CAD* K 119 sub *kamāsu* B, mng. 2 and 375 sub *kimšu* mng. b, 1c’; cf. also OIP 114, no. 66, l. 14: *kin-ši kit-ṛmu-sa¹*, “The

⁴²² Hrůša 2010, 192–193, 457.

⁴²³ See von Soden 1933, 90–102; Groneberg 1978, 19. Cf. Hess 2010, 109–110.

⁴²⁴ Cf. Lambert 2007, 153–154 and Jiménez 2017a, 268, fn. 678.

⁴²⁵ Translation follows Lambert 1960, 45; cf. the last edition by Oshima 2014, 90–91, 406 and the note in the commentary on p. 260.

⁴²⁶ Own translation. The text is unpublished, see Lambert & Millard 1965, Pl. XLVII; cf. Lambert 1960, 294; also quoted in *CAD* Š/2 411.

⁴²⁷ Oshima 2011, 231, 246–247.

⁴²⁸ Mayer 1993, 317.

⁴²⁹ Kramer 1944, 7 and 10.

⁴³⁰ See Scurllock & Andersen 2005, 249 for further information on the *mungu/mangu*-disease. Cf. also Stadhouders 2011, 15.

knees are bent”.⁴³¹ Cf. Lambert (1959-60, 51) who reconstructs 𒀭*kit*¹-*mu-r*[*u...*], translating: “[his...] are overcome”.

I tentatively restore *birkāšu* at the end of the line, because the first hemistich contains *kimšu*: the substantives *birku*, “knee” (*AHw* I 129; *CAD* B 255–256) and *kimšu*, “shin” (*AHw* I 478–479; *CAD* K 373–375) are often attested together, forming a fixed pair, see the occurrences in *CAD* K sub *kimšu* mng. b) 1, b' and *CAD* B sub *birku* mng. 1a.

89–90. The image of the god strengthening the foundations of the pious—i.e. supporting him—or instead making the impious unstable, is a well-known motif in Akkadian prayers, see for example in the Great Šamaš Hymn, l. 96: *e-ni qa-aq-qar-šu*, “... his foundations are undermined”,⁴³² or in the *šuilla*-prayer to Sîn no. 3, l. 49: *ša a-na ka-a-ša it-ka-lu-ka tu-ka-an iš-diš-šú*, “You strengthen the foundations of the one who confides in you”.⁴³³ Cf. also within the present text l. 161 *išdūš k[innī]*, “make his foundations stable!”.

The restoration *i' abbat* (l. 90), from *abātum* A, present N-stem (*AHw* I 5; *CAD* A/1 41–45) is based on a similar passage found in the series of *Utukku Lemnūtu*, tablet VIII (CT 16 27), ll. 4–5:

⁴a-lá ḫul é-gar₈ diri-ga-gin₇ lú-ra in-gu[1]-u₈-a ḫé-me-en

⁵MIN *ša ki-ma i-ga-ri i-qu-up-pu-ma* UGU L[Ú *in-n*]a-ba-tu at-tu

⁴Whether you be an alû-demon, which, like a tottering wall, collapses upon a man (Sum.),

⁵Whether you be an alû-demon, which, like a wall, buckles and collapses upon a man (Akk.).⁴³⁴

Furthermore, the image of the wall falling down, used as a metaphor for the annihilation of the sufferer, is also found in a passage in *Ludlul*, in which the verb *abātu* appears as well, see *Ludlul* II, 68: *la-a-ni zaq-ru i-bu-tu i-ga-ri-iš*, “They brought my lofty stature down as if it were a wall”.⁴³⁵

91. *ta-pat-t[e nappaša(?)]*: Restoration based on the Nabû Prayer, ll. 186/188 *tasanniq aradka nappaša šup[te]*, “You/O Nabû, you test your servant, let a window o[pen] for him to breathe!” (see above, Chapter 2). The topos of the god “opening a window” for the supplicant,

⁴³¹ Cf. Jursa 1998, 423 and Streck 2003, 55.

⁴³² Lambert 1960, 130–131.

⁴³³ Mayer 1976, 497 and 501.

⁴³⁴ Geller 2016, 288. Cf. also *CAD* A/1 41 lex. sec., where this passage is reconstructed with the form *i'abbatu*: [*i-a*]b-ba-tu. The restoration suggested by Geller [*in-n*]a-ba-tu, however, seems plausible (photo collation: K. 4661).

⁴³⁵ Lambert 1960, 42–43; Oshima 2014, 90–91 and 405. Incidentally, cf. also Psalm 62:3, “How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?” Translation taken from the English Standard Version, 2017.

i.e. releasing him from suffering, also appears in Marduk 2, l. 28': *a-na tap-pi-šá-a-te šá es-la nap-pa-šá tú-ram-me* "You loosen an opening for holes that are blocked".⁴³⁶

94. The damaged state of the line prevents a clear understanding of the whole context, yet it appears that the supplicant is being compared to a moaning dove. This is a well-attested simile in the Mesopotamian literature, and even finds parallels in the biblical sources.⁴³⁷

In his edition of this text, Lambert suggests to restore *id-mu-ma* (see Lambert 1959–60, 51), although, judging from the space on the tablet, the reconstruction *id-da-nam-mu-ma*, (Gtn-stem of *damāmu*) seems more likely. Cf. *AHW* I 155 and *CAD* D 60-61 for similar attestations.

Metaphors which involve animals are often used in Mesopotamian prayers, and birds are traditionally associated with feelings of fear and distress.⁴³⁸ Cf. *Ludlul* I 107, [*ki-m*]a *su-um-me a-dam-mu-ma gi-mir u₄-me-ia*, "I moan like a dove all my days",⁴³⁹ or the *diġiršadabba*-prayer n.11, l. 12: *a-dam-mu-um GIN₇ su-um-mat mu-ši u ur-ra*, "Like a dove, I am moaning day and night".⁴⁴⁰

99. *a-a im-mes-ma*: Reading follows *CAD* M/2 36, cf. the Nabû Prayer in Chapter 2, ll. 53/55: *a-ġu-uz šU^{II}-su la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]*, "Take his hand, may your servant not be destroyed!".

100. *li-zi-^rqa¹-šú ma-^rni-ta¹-k[i]*: In the Mesopotamian literature, the sweet wind can be interpreted in two different ways: it can represent an actual wind, meant to carry away evil agents, but it can also signify the pleasant breath of a god. To say that the "sweet wind" of a deity blows towards someone means that the god is protecting him and showing him benevolence.⁴⁴¹

The restoration of the present line fits the traces and is corroborated by parallels:⁴⁴² it contains a standard formula, typical of prayers, hymns and incantations, by which the good

⁴³⁶ Own translation. I follow the reading provided in *CAD* T 184, cf. KAR no. 321, VAT 10174, rev., l. 3; cf. also the last edition of this text by Oshima 2011, 234, 248–249, 266 and Pl. XIV, BM 61649+, col. iii, l. 28'.

⁴³⁷ Zernecke 2014, 36.

⁴³⁸ Jaques 2015, 197–198. Cf. van der Toorn 1985, 59.

⁴³⁹ Lambert 1960, 36; cf. Oshima 2014, 107–108 and 394 (this verse is preserved in ms. O of Oshima's edition).

⁴⁴⁰ Lambert 1974, 274–275; Jaques 2015, 72 and 87. For further attestations of this motif see Mayer 1976, 83 and Streck 1999, 64. Cf. Oshima 2014, 217–218.

⁴⁴¹ Jiménez 2018, 332–334.

⁴⁴² This restoration was made by Lambert after the ms. A of the prayer under study was cleaned, see Mayer 1992b, 39, with fn. 19. Cf. also Seux 1976, 196, fn. 28 and 29.

wind is invoked and asked to blow favourably towards the supplicant. Cf. above in the present commentary, note on l. 16–19.⁴⁴³

An example of such formula also appears in *Marduk 1*, l. 58: *li-zi-qa IM-ka-ma za-mar nap-šir-šu*, “Let your wind blow, quickly relent”.⁴⁴⁴

The earliest attestations of this phrase are found in Old-Babylonian sources. It occurs also in Sumerian, yet only in two first-millennium bilingual texts. For this reason, it can be ascribed to a purely Akkadian literary tradition.⁴⁴⁵

The substantive *mānitu* (*AHW* II 603; *CAD* M/1 212) is a learned word for “breeze” attested in *Malku III* 183–184:

¹⁸³*zi-qi-qu* = *ša-a-ru*

¹⁸⁴*ma-ni-tum* = MIN⁴⁴⁶

The same term also occurs in literary texts, see for example the Great Nabû Prayer (Chapter 2), l. 175 *a-na kal ma-^rtum¹ um-^rma-tum¹ ú-šaḥ^{-la}LAL-a ma-ni-tu[m]*, “Upon the whole land a gentle breeze brings solace”, or *Ludlul I*, l. 6: *ù ki-ma ma-nit še-re-e-ti za-aq-šú ta-a-bi*, “Yet whose breeze is as pleasant as a morning zephyr”.⁴⁴⁷

Cf. also the commentary to the *Theodicy*, l. 26 *^rma-ni-tu¹ : ^ršá-a-ri¹*, “‘Breeze’ means ‘wind’”.⁴⁴⁸ See *CAD* M/1 212 for further attestations.

103. *qàd-mi-šu: qudmu/qadmu* (*AHW* II 927; *CAD* Q 50) is a learned word which originally indicated a specific deity, but later came to signify simply “god”.⁴⁴⁹

In the god-list *An* = ^dA-nu-um (V 290–291) *qudmu/qadmu* appears as both the vizier (Sum. *sukkal*) and the adviser (*gu₄.balaĝ*) of *Ištarān* (cf. also *An* = ^dA-nu-um VI 208 and 226–227 where the same glosses appear⁴⁵⁰):

^{290d}(qu-ud-ma)_{KUD} = *sukkal* ^dKA.DI.KE₄

^{291d}(qa-ad-ma)_{KUD} = *gu₄.balaĝ* ^dKA.DI.KE₄⁴⁵¹

The word, however, is listed as a synonym for *ilu* in *CT 25 pl. 18 ii 9: qa-ad-mu = i-[lu]*.

⁴⁴³ Oppenheim 1956, 233–234; Mayer 1976, 228–229; Jiménez 2018, 331–334.

⁴⁴⁴ For more attestations of this motif in Akkadian hymns, prayers and incantations see Jiménez 2017a, 486–495, cf. Jiménez 2018, 332–334.

⁴⁴⁵ Jiménez 2018, 332.

⁴⁴⁶ Hrůša 2010, 88–89, 372.

⁴⁴⁷ Oshima 2014, 78–79 and 380; the translation is taken from Lambert 1960, 343.

⁴⁴⁸ Jiménez, 2017b, “Commentary on *Theodicy* (CCP 1.4),” *Cuneiform Commentaries Project* (E. Frahm, E. Jiménez, M. Frazer, and K. Wagensonner), 2013–2020; accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: [10079/7m0cg9h](https://doi.org/10.1007/7m0cg9h)

⁴⁴⁹ Lambert 1960, 309; Oshima 2014, 351–352. See also Krebernik 2006–2008, 190–191.

⁴⁵⁰ Litke 1998, 215–216.

⁴⁵¹ Litke 1998, 195–196, see 195 note on l. 290.

Other lexical sources confirm this equation, see Ea III 215–216 (MSL XIV 312) and Aa III/5 184–185 (MSL XIV 348, cf. *CAD* Q 50 sub *qadmu*, lex. sec.):

*qa-ad-mu*_{TAR} = ^dTAR

*qu-ud-mu*_{TAR} = ^dTAR

See also l. 39 of the *Theodicy*, in which—as in the present text—*qadmu* is used in the sense of “personal god”, and appears in *parallelismus* with *ištaru*, “(personal) goddess” (*AHw* I 399; *CAD* I/J 271–274):

³⁹[*sa-ba*]-*su qàd-mi ina su-up-pe-e i-s[ah[?]-hur[?]]*

⁴⁰*sa-lit-tu^d iš-tar i-ta-ri ina ba-a-lu*

³⁹Through prayer, the [furio]us god will re[turn],

⁴⁰Through supplication, the friendly goddess will come back.⁴⁵²

In addition, the Commentary of the *Babylonian Theodicy*, l. 13, explains this noun as following: *qàd-mu* ^r: DIĜIR x¹ [(x x)] *ana qu-ud-mu : maḥ-ri*, “‘Preeminent’ means ‘god’ [(...)], it stems from ‘before’, (i.e.) ‘in front of.’”⁴⁵³

Cf. also Malku III 72: *qu-^rud¹-[m]u = [ma]ḥ-ri*.⁴⁵⁴

The occurrence of the personal god and goddess as a fixed pair is common in penitential prayers. Another example of this pair is found in the Great Nabû Prayer, ll. 89–90 (see above, Chapter 2):

⁸⁹*i-la a-bi-i ka-a-ti mar-ši-iš^r ut¹ x*

⁹⁰*gi-na-a mas-da-ri iš-ta-ra-niš i-^rqal^r*

⁸⁹The god, my father, you, bitterly, ...

⁹⁰Always, without cease, he attends to the (personal) goddess.

104. The line is too damaged to make a confident reconstruction, although few traces are extant in the middle and at the end of the line. The tentative restoration ^r*ta[?]-ši[?]-i[?]-i[m[?]-ma[?] ta[?]]-pa-as-sa-as*, “You/she decree/s (and) annul/s”, preterite G-stem from *šâmu*, “to establish” (*AHw* III 1225; *CAD* Š/1 358–364), followed by the durative G-stem from *pasâsu*, “to cancel” (*AHw* II 838; *CAD* P 218–221), fits the traces and the context. The subject of the verse must be the addressed goddess. The sequence of preterite + durative is well attested in Neo-Babylonian literary texts; in this construction, the preterite has a gnomic value and must be

⁴⁵² Own translation. For the last edition of the text see Oshima 2014, 152–153 and 443. Cf. Lambert 1960, and 443.

⁴⁵³ For the transliteration and translation of this line see the *Theodicy* Commentary edited online by Jiménez 2017b, accessed on 26/03/2020 at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: 10079/7m0cg9h.

⁴⁵⁴ Hrůša 2010, 78–79, 231 and 264.

translated as a present.⁴⁵⁵ Both verbs could be third singular, or also second singular feminine forms displaying the hymno-epic *ta-* prefix. The first half of the line remains uncertain.

109-110. *la a-ḫi-iz¹ ri[d²-di²]*: For further attestations of the expression *āḫiz/lā āḫiz riddi* see *CAD A/1 177* sub *aḫāzu* mng. 4a and *CAD R 324* sub *rīdu* mng. 1.

la sa-[an-qu]: Tentative restoration. The adjective *sanqu* (*AHw II 1024*; *CAD S 147–148*), with its opposite *lā sanqu*, is also attested in the Nabû Prayer, cf. Chapter 2, “The Great Prayer to Nabû”, ll. 183–184.

111. *ul i-de* GAŠAN: Despite the line being too broken to allow a comprehensive understanding of the context, it seems to contain the standard protestation of ignorance: this is a common topos in penitential prayers, used to remark the miserable condition of human beings, incapable of distinguishing between good and evil, and therefore prone to commit unknown sins. This motif is presented in the typical opening formula of *diġiršadabbas: ilī ul īde*, “My God, I did not know!”.⁴⁵⁶ Cf. also the ritual indication in *Šurpu II*, l. 18': ÉN DIĠIR.MU *ul ZU* “The incantation: My god, I did not know (you will recite)”.⁴⁵⁷

134-135. This couplet belongs to an extremely damaged portion of the text. The beginning of the two lines, however, seems to mention two musical instruments: the *balaggu/balangu* (*AHw I 98*; *CAD B 38–39*) and the *uppu* (*AHw III 1424*; *CAD U 185*).

The *balaggu*, borrowed from Sum. *balaġ*, was a stringed instrument, probably a lyre,⁴⁵⁸ used in the performance of the *Balaġ* -prayers, liturgical compositions in Emesal Sumerian; during the second millennium BC, the care and custody of the *balaġ* were assigned to the chief-lamentation priest, namely the *gala-mah*,⁴⁵⁹ but there is evidence that during the first millennium this instrument was also played by the *kalû*-priests.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁵ For the “gnomische Präteritum” in Akkadian, see Mayer 1992a; see in particular 380–384 for further examples of the preterite-durative sequence.

⁴⁵⁶ Jaques 2015, 101, note to l. 114; van der Toorn 1985, 94–97.

⁴⁵⁷ Reiner 1970, 13; cf. Jaques 2015, 275.

⁴⁵⁸ Shehata 2017. Nevertheless, the difficult identification of this instrument has led to various interpretations among scholars. Uri Gabbay maintains that the *balaġ* was initially a stringed instrument, which however already during the second millennium came to be identified with the *lilissu*-drum: the *lilissu* had replaced the *balaġ* in the liturgical performances, and according to Gabbay, the change in the cultic practice brought about a change in the word meaning as well, as the word *balaġ* became progressively associated with the *lilissu* drum (see Gabbay 2014b, especially 133–137). Heimpel, instead, identified the *balaġ* with a harp (2015: 573). Cf. Shehata 2017, 73–74.

⁴⁵⁹ Shehata 2009, 162; 2014, 117.

⁴⁶⁰ Shehata, 2017, 69–70.

The word *uppu* (loanword from Sum. *ub₃*) designates a small kettledrum made from the hide of an animal. The *uppu*-drum is mostly attested in third millennium sources, only occasionally appearing in later literary and lexical texts. This could indicate that this instrument was not used anymore after the third millennium. Like the *balaĝ*, it was closely connected with the Emesal liturgical performances and with the *kalû*-priests.⁴⁶¹

146-147. I accept von Soden’s reading of the sign ZIG as *háš* at the end of l. 146, contrary to Lambert’s reading *šip* (Lambert 1959–60, 52). Von Soden reconstructs this line as follows: *lâl-la-ru-šú kim-ta-šu i-há[š-šá-šu]* “Seine Klagepriester rufen seine Familie [zusammen]” (von Soden 1971, 49).

Although von Soden’s interpretation accords with the case-endings, I suggest to take *kim-ta-šu* as the subject of the phrase—and not *lâl-la-ru-šú*—thus inverting the syntactic order proposed by von Soden: I restore therefore a third person singular form from *hašāšu* G-stem (*AHw* I 333 sub *hašāšu* II, cf. von Soden 1971, 49; cf. also *CAD* H 138 sub *hašāšu* B), namely *ihaššaš*. If my reconstruction is correct, *lâl-la-ru-šú* displays the nominative case-ending in *-u* instead of the expected *-i* of the plural oblique. This irregular spelling is not uncommon among first millennium texts, and also occurs within the present text (cf. the introduction of the *Ištar Prayer*, §3.3).⁴⁶²

To hire professional lamenters in occasion of a funeral was a common practice in Mesopotamia, as in the whole Ancient Near East. Wealthy families would summon mourning specialists to come to public funerary performances: together with the relatives, the mourners would wail on the deceased, intoning laments perhaps with an instrumental accompaniment.⁴⁶³

Other expressions of mourning were self-injuring acts as scratching one’s cheeks and breast (see below l. 149), and wearing ragged clothes (see below l. 159). Indeed, line 146 of the present text seems to describe the summon of the professional mourners by the family of the sufferer.

The literary motif of the funeral rite being carried out before the sufferer’s death appears in *Ludlul* as well (III, 114–115):

¹¹⁴*pe-ti KI.MAĜ er-šu-ú šu-ka-nu-ú-a*

¹¹⁵*a-di la mi-tu-ti-i-ma bi-ki-ti gam-rat*

⁴⁶¹ Gabbay 2014b, 140–142; Shehata 2014, Cf. Kilmer 1977 for a study on the word *uppu*.

⁴⁶² Cf. Schwemer 2017, 72 for other examples of masculine plural nominatives in *-ī* in the Maqlû manuscripts. Cf. also Streck 2014, 274–275.

⁴⁶³ Scurlock 1995, 1885–1886.

¹¹⁴My grave was waiting, and my funerary paraphernalia ready.

¹¹⁵Before I had died, lamentation for me was finished.

A hymn to Marduk from Ugarit (Ugaritica 5, n. 162), that shares many similarities with *Ludlul*, also contains a passage wherein the pious sufferer is said to be surrounded by family members who arrange his funeral prior to his death:

paḥ(PAK¹)-*rat* IM.RI.A *a+na qú-ud-du-di la-ma-dan-ni*

qé-ru-ub sa-la-ti a+na-at-ku-li-im-ma iz-za-az

ŠEŠ-*u-a ki-ma maḥ-ḥe-e [d]a-mi-šu-nu ra-am-ku*

NIN-*u-a šam-na ḥi*(GI¹)-*il- ʿša¹-ni ú¹-ra-ḥa-à-ni*

The family has assembled in order to prostrate (in grief) before time,

The kin is standing by in order *to mourn gloomily*,

My brothers, like ecstasies, are bathed in their own blood,

My sisters are pouring fine oil.⁴⁶⁴

Cf. also the disputation fable named by scholars “The palm and the vine”, l. 46': *ú-šat-taq lal-la-ri šá šur-ru-up nu-bu-ú-šú*, “(Then) I dispatch the mourner who had been wailing for him”.⁴⁶⁵

A ritual tablet from Nineveh might confirm these funerary practices, since it describes the arrangement of a funeral rite for a living person: in this ritual, the annual mourning ceremony for Dumuzi was reproduced and used to heal the patient, perhaps the son of a king.⁴⁶⁶

148. *ú-tak-ka-ak*: I take this form as derived from *ekēku* Dt present, “to scratch oneself”.⁴⁶⁷ The Dt-stem of *ekēku* is elsewhere unattested.

The present line belongs to the supplicant’s lament, which includes the description of various manifestations of grief (see in particular ll. 144–147 and 149–157). The action of scratching one’s facial parts and body is a typical gesture of mourning in the Ancient Near East (see above the note on ll. 146–147), and can be considered as a type of self-mutilation, like the practice of tearing one’s hair out.⁴⁶⁸ Self-injuring acts are traditionally attributed to

⁴⁶⁴ Own translation. First edition by Nougayrol 1968, 265–273. For the most recent editions see Cohen 2013, 165–175 and Arnaud 2007, 110–114; see also Oshima 2011, 205–215; cf. von Soden 1969.

⁴⁶⁵ See Jiménez 2017a, 254–255 for the text; cf. also the commentary on this line: Jiménez 2017a, 268–269.

⁴⁶⁶ Scurlock 1992. Cf. Jiménez 2017a, 269.

⁴⁶⁷ Also Foster (2005, 607) provides this reading, translating the line: “By day he lacerates (?) himself, at night he sobs”.

⁴⁶⁸ Scurlock 1995, 1886; Cohen 2005, 49. Incidentally, cf. the passage in Job 2:8, which also describes scratching as an expression of despair: “Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes”, translation taken from the New International Version, 2011.

women, although in the Gilgamesh Epic the hero is described as pulling out his hair in despair for the death of Enkidu (tablet VIII, ll. 63–64).⁴⁶⁹

151. *tab-[la²]*: I suggest to restore *tabla(m)*, namely a stative singular from *tabālum*, “to carry” (*AHw* III 1297; *CAD* T 11–20) with the ventive suffix *-a(m)*. For the occurrences of the verb *tabālum* with *šāru* see *CAD* T 14 sub *tabālum*, 1d and *CAD* Š/2 135 sub *šāru* mng. 1a3'. The motif of the wind which can be either good or evil is well attested in the Mesopotamian literature (cf. above, commentary on l. 100). In Mesopotamian incantations, evil winds are often identified with a demonic force, but in some cases they might be emanated by deities: the gods can send good winds to show people their mercy, or, on the opposite, evil ones to punish them.⁴⁷⁰ The belief behind the concept of the bad winds is that demons move through the air, being carried within the wind itself.⁴⁷¹

If a wind is the vehicle of a demonic being, it brings suffering and disease; cf. the passage in *Ludlul* II 50–57, in which a wind brings illness and demons from the netherworld.⁴⁷²

153. For another example of the form *iratuš*, namely *iratu* with the so-called pseudo-adverbial locative, see Mayer 1996, 430. The restoration *it-g[u-rat]* follows *CAD* L 210 sub *lišānu* 1a.

156–157. This couplet describes the state of mental confusion of the sufferer, a well-attested motif in Mesopotamian penitential prayers. Confusion and insanity, together with depression and anxiety, are fact typical symptoms of mental illness caused by divine abandonment (cf. the Great Prayer to Nabû in Chapter 2, note on l. 110 in the commentary).⁴⁷³

The writing *'-a-di* (l. 157) might be an irregular spelling for *u'addi*, “he recognises”, preterite D-stem of *idûm*, “to know” (*AHw* III 1454–1455; *CAD* I/J 20–34), cf. *GAG* §106 q.

158. *tu-am-mé-šú an-n[a-šú]*: Reconstruction based on the Great Nabû Prayer, l. 97 (see Chapter 2): *'a²-n[a minâ i]m-ku-ú me-e-šú a-ra-[an-šú]*, “I[n what respect has he been ne]gligent? Disregard [his] gui[lt]!”. The word *tu-am-mé-šú* seems to be a scribal mistake for a verbal form derived from *mêšu*, “to forgive” (*AHw* II 649; *CAD* M/2 41–43), although it is difficult to determine how this mistake could have occurred. I understand it as a G-stem

⁴⁶⁹ Scurlock 1995, 1886; Cohen 2005, 49. Cf. the edition of the Gilgamesh Epic by George 2003, 656–657.

⁴⁷⁰ Jiménez 2018, 323–330 and 334–336.

⁴⁷¹ Jiménez 2018, 323.

⁴⁷² Oshima 2014, 88–89 and 403–404; Jiménez 2018, 326–327; cf. Oshima 2014, 249.

⁴⁷³ Van der Toorn 1985, 65.

present, probably referred to the goddess, and therefore read it as *temeššī*. It might also be a N-stem present form, i.e. *tammeššī*, with an ingressive sense: “You can move to disregard”. The reconstruction, however, remains uncertain.

159. *i-tab-nak-[ki[?]]*: I explain this form as resulting from a sign metathesis, and understand it as *ibtanakki*, Gtn-stem from *bakû*, “to cry, to lament” (*AHW* I 97; *CAD* B 35–38). According to the dictionaries, the verb *bakû* is normally used independently or with a preposition, and could not take *šumki* as a direct object; however, it seems that *bakû* can occasionally bear the meaning of “to say in tears”. For similar passages, in which this verb seems to have a semantic nuance of “to say”, “to declare”, see for example the Babylonian Prayer to Anūna, l. 83: *iḥ-ti-dam-ma al-ka-ta-šu i-b[a-ak-ki-ki-im]*, “He has spoken forth, tearfully telling [you] his manner of life”,⁴⁷⁴ or Marduk 1, l. 129: *iḥ-ti-dam-ma mar-ša-tuš i-[ba]k-ki-ka*, “He muttered as he wailed his woe to you”.⁴⁷⁵ For more on the motif of the penitent recounting his sins while crying, see above the commentary on ll. 151–152 of “The Great Prayer to Nabû” in Chapter 2.

160. *aḥ-zi qat-su*: The motif of the god who takes the supplicant by the hand is well known in Akkadian hymns and prayers. It is a metaphorical expression that symbolises a gesture of help from the deity, who rescues the pious from distress. It can be formulated also with the verb *šabātum* (cf. *CAD* 31-32 sub *šabātum*, mng. 4’c).⁴⁷⁶

a-a iš-šá-al i[R[?]-ki[?]]: The heads of two horizontals are visible at the end of the line: I suggest to read the logogram *ìR*, “slave”, cf. the Great Nabû Prayer, ll. 53/55: *a-ḥu-uz šU^{II}-su la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]*, “Take his hand, may your servant not be destroyed!” (see above in Chapter 2).

The precise meaning of the verb *šálu* in the present context is doubtful, though it must refer to something negative (cf. Lambert 1959–60, 53). Foster understands this verb as indicating the possible slander or malicious gossiping against the sufferer, thus translating as follows: “Take his hand lest he be bruited as a curiosity(?)...”.⁴⁷⁷ However, whereas *šálu* generally means “to ask, to question” (*AHW* III 1151–1152; *CAD* Š/1 sub *šálu* A 274–282), it can also have the secondary meaning of “to bring someone to justice”, or “to put someone to test”, and, in certain cases, even “to destruct” or “to murder” (see Mayer 1994, 116; cf.

⁴⁷⁴ Lambert 1989, 326 and 330.

⁴⁷⁵ Own translation. Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 58 and Oshima 2011, 151, 164–165, 184–185.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. Oshima 2011, 186.

⁴⁷⁷ Foster 2005, 608.

Charpin in ARM 1/2, 70b). For some attestations of these semantic nuances, see for example ARM 26/2 no. 311, ll. 21–22: *ša a-wa-at be-lí uš-te-ni-šú-ú ù be-lí li-ša-al-šu-nu-ti*, “May my lord put to test those who reveal the word of my lord”, or also ARM 26/2 no. 401, ll. 31–32: 5 LÚ.MEŠ ÌR É.GAL *ša¹ a-na ḥat-nu-ra-bi ú-zu-un-šu-nu i-tu¹-ru¹ ṽi-ša-al¹*, “(He) has executed 5 servants of the palace who were on the side of Ḥatnurabi”, and further in l. 34: ù 3 LÚ.TUR.TUR *aḥ-ḥe-šu it-ti-šu i-ša-[a]l*, “(He) has murdered three of his young brothers who were with him”. See Mayer 1994, 116 for more occurrences of this meaning of *šálu*. Cf. also in Chapter 2, the Great Nabû Prayer, l. 186: *ta-sa-niq ÌR-ka nap-pa-šu šu-u[p-te]*, “You put your servant to test, let a window open for him to breathe!”

162. *si-qí en-šu*: I take *si-qí* as *sīq*, namely the third person singular stative from *sāqu*, “to become tight” (*AHw* II 1039; *CAD* S 169–170) with a overhanging vowel (cf. the Introduction of the Ištar Prayer, §3.3), and *en-šu* as *enšu*, “weak” (*AHw* I 219–220; *CAD* E 170–171), *contra* Lambert who reads *si-ke-en-šu* as a single word, leaving it untranslated (see Lambert 1959–1960, 53). Cf. also Groneberg (1987, 107) who translates the line as following: *si-ke-en-šu lip-ta-aṭ-ṭi-ra* (!), “Sein Eigentumsbeweis soll gelöst werden”. Von Soden, on the contrary, also reads *si-qí*, though understands it as an imperative from (*w*)*asāqu*, “to raise up”, (*AHw* 1474 translates “etwas ‘stärken’”, but compare *CAD* U/W 405).⁴⁷⁸

lip-ta-aṭ-ṭi-ra mi-[na²-ti²-šú²]: The reconstruction fits the traces and the context. The second half of the line contains the request to release the sufferer from his state of constriction: the word *minātu* often occurs in medical texts with *paṭāru*, see *CAD* M/2 88 sub *minītu* 2a for various occurrences. In the present line, *paṭāru* Dt-stem is used in the sense of “to be loosened, to be released” (see *CAD* P 301, mng. 14 II/2); for a similar phraseology see for example BAM 3 248, col. ii, l. 53: *meš-re-e-tu lip-te-ṭi-ra li-ir-mu-ú* SA.MEŠ, “Let the limbs become relaxed, let the sinews slacken” (cf. *CAD* P 301 sub *paṭāru* mng. 14 II/2 b).

163. *pa-iš ka-ra-ši*: The form *pāiš* displays the terminative-adverbial suffix *-iš*, typically used in the hymno-epic dialect.⁴⁷⁹ The idiomatic expression *pī karašē*, literally “the mouth of destruction”, is a metaphor for the open grave.⁴⁸⁰ Besides the present text, it appears in other prayers and wisdom compositions, for example in Marduk 1, l. 153: ṽi¹-na *pī-i ka-ra-še-e na-*

⁴⁷⁸ Von Soden 1977, 283.

⁴⁷⁹ See von Soden 1931, 220–227; Groneberg 1978–1979, 15–29. Groneberg 1987 I, 56–58; Mayer 1995. Cf. Lambert 1959–60, 49.

⁴⁸⁰ Oshima 2001, 15–18; cf. Oshima 2011, 186–187, 213, 304. See also Oshima 2014, 318.

[*di aradka*], “Your [servant] li[es] in the jaws of destruction”,⁴⁸¹ in a fragment of a bilingual prayer (4R² 22, 2, ll. 20’–21’): KA.KI.KAL×BAD.a.ta e.[d]a.šub/ *ina pi-i ka-ra-ši [na-di-m]a*, “He is c[ast] into the mouth of annihilation”,⁴⁸² and in a *šigû*-prayer, l. 3: [*ša ina pī(?) k]a-ra-še-e na-du-u ta-ša-bat šU.MIN-su*, “The one who is cast into the mouth of destruction, you hold his hand.”⁴⁸³ Cf. also in Chapter 2 the Great Prayer to Nabû, l. 58 for a similar phraseology: [*in]a pi-i le-’u-ú da-ab-ru na-di-ma*, “He is cast into the jaws of a powerful force”. See *CAD* K 214 for further attestations.

The same expression can also be found in *Šurpu* IV 43–44:

⁴³*ina ha-áš-ti šu-lu-[ú]*

⁴⁴*ina KA ka-ra-še-e e-te-ru*

⁴³to pull out from the pit

⁴⁴to rescue from the throes of a catastrophe.⁴⁸⁴

The interpretation that *karašû/karāšu* metaphorically indicates the grave is corroborated by the lexical sources. In fact, this word is entered in Malku II, l. 17 as a synonym of *eršetu*, “netherworld” (*AHw* I 245–246; *CAD* E 310 sub *eršetu* mng. 2) and *qubûru*, “grave” (*AHw* II 925; *CAD* Q 293).⁴⁸⁵

In addition, *karašû/karāšu* is equated with *qubûru* also in ll. 20–21 of Commentary B of *Šurpu*:

²⁰*ha-áš-ti = šu-ut-ta-tú*

²¹[*ka-ra-šu-u*] = *qu-bu-ri*

²⁰Hole = pitfall

²¹[Catastrophe] = grave⁴⁸⁶

Cf. also Ugaritica 5, 162, l. 40: *ul-tu pi-i mu-ti i-ki-ma-an-ni*, “He took me from the *mouth* of death”.⁴⁸⁷

a-^ra¹ [*iddi(?)*]: I tentatively restore *iddi* from *nadû* (*AHw* II 705–708; *CAD* N/168–100), since this verb is attested with *karašû*, see *CAD* K 214 for other occurrences.

164–165. *en-su-ú*: This rare noun is attested exclusively in the lexical lists. It is a loanword from the Sumerian word *ensi*, found in the Early Dynastic Lú E 76 (MSL 12, 18), in the OB

⁴⁸¹ The translation used here is taken from Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 171. Cf. Oshima 2011, 154, 166–167.

⁴⁸² Cf. Oshima 2001, 17.

⁴⁸³ Oshima 2011, 303–304.

⁴⁸⁴ Reiner 1970, 26.

⁴⁸⁵ See Hruša 2010, 52 and 330.

⁴⁸⁶ Reiner 1970, 50. Cf. Oshima 2001, 17.

⁴⁸⁷ Arnaud 2007, 111 and 114; Oshima 2011, 210–211 and 215; cf. Oshima 2001, 17; Cohen 2013, 168–169.

Nippur Lú 242 (MSL 12, 41) and in the OB Proto Lú 499, in which *ensi* appears within the group list of the diviners (MSL 12, 50, ll. 499–501): *ensi*, SAL *ensi*, *mur-ra-aš*.⁴⁸⁸ The meaning of “diviner” is confirmed by the occurrence of the Akkadian form *ensû* in Diri Oxford II 394–395, which explains the lemma as a synonym of *šā’ilu* (“diviner”, see *AHw* III 134; *CAD* Š/1 110–111): EN.ME.LI = *en-su-ú*, *ša-i-lum* (MSL 15, 45), cf. Also Diri IV 61: *en-si* EN.ME.LI = *en-su-ú*, *ša-i-lu[m]* (MSL 15, 152). Cf. *CAD* Š/1 110, lex. sec. Cf. also the restored passage in Lú Excerpt I 182 (MSL 12, 102): [*ensi*] = *ša-’i-i-li*.

ta-qà-a-ti: I understand this word as the plural of *tanqītu/taqqītu* (*AHw* III 1324; *CAD* T 175), a nominal form derived from *naqû*, “to pour”, attested in Malku III 222–223 in the thematic group list of ritual offers and sacrifices. Indeed in Malku *tanqītu/taqqītu* is equated to *niqû*, “offering”, and to the Sumerian *zì.mad.gá*, corresponding to the Akkadian *mašhatu*, a type of flour used for libations (cf. *AHw* II 620; *CAD* M/1 330–331), see Malku III 221–223:

zi-i-bu = *ni-qu-u*

ta-an-qí-ta = MIN

ta-an-q[í]-ta = Zì.MA[D.GÁ]

Food offering = sacrifice

Offering = *ditto*

Offering = *mašhatu*-flour⁴⁸⁹

See also *CAD* T 175 sub *tanqītu*, lex. sec. Compare von Soden’s interpretation of *ta-qà-a-ti*, which he reads as *ultu(TA.) ka-a-ti*, translating “von dir aus”.⁴⁹⁰

a-a ¹*i*’-[*ku*²-*ul*²]: I tentatively restore the preterite from *akālum* at the end of the verse, because it would fit the grammar and the space available on the tablet, furthermore allowing to create a parallel with *la ú-qa-at-ti* in the previous line (l. 164). The reconstructed verb must have a similar meaning to that of *qatû*, namely “to finish” or “to consume” (see *AHw* II 911–912; *CAD* Q 177–183). For attestations of the verb *akālum* in this sense, see *CAD* A/1 253 mng. 2d and 5a.

The theme of the ritual experts who consume the libations offered by the supplicant, yet do not receive any favourable response from the deity, is attested in Ugaritica 5, 162, ll. 6’–7’:

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. Oppenheim 1956, 221.

⁴⁸⁹ Hrůša 2010, 91 and 375.

⁴⁹⁰ Von Soden 1977, 283.

mu-uš-ša-ak-ku ša-ilu ^{lú}HAL *pu-ḫa-di ig-dam-ru*, “The interpreter used up the incense (for smoke omens), the diviner—the lambs”.⁴⁹¹

Cf. also the Etana Epos, col. ii, ll. 135–136:

¹³⁵*ig-dam-ra mas-sak-ki-ia* MÍ.EN.ME.LI.ME[Š]

¹³⁶*as-li-ia ina tu-ub-bu-hi* DIĜIR.MEŠ *ig-dam-r[u]*

¹³⁵The dream-interpreters used up all my incense (used for smoke omens),

¹³⁶upon sacrifice, the gods used up all my sacrificial lambs.⁴⁹²

The lack of a satisfactory oracle can be explained as a consequence of witchcraft: the sufferer has been bewitched by an enemy, and the divination experts cannot provide a diagnosis for his condition, nor define the future course of his illness.⁴⁹³ This motif is often developed in prayers and wisdom texts,⁴⁹⁴ see for example *Ludlul* II, ll. 6–9:

⁶lúHAL *ina bi-ri ár-kàt ul ip-ru-us*

⁷*ina ma-áš-šak-ka šá-`i-li ul ú-šá-pi di-i-ni*

⁸*za-qí-qu a-bal-ma ul ú-pat-ti uz-ni*

⁹lúMAŠ.MAŠ *ina ki-kiṭ-ṭe-e ki-mil-ti ul ip-ṭur*

⁶The diviner, through divination, has not investigated (my) situation,

⁷The dream interpreter, through libanomancy, has not elucidated my case.

⁸I sought the favour of the *zaqīqu*-spirit, but he did not enlighten me;

⁹And the incantation priest with his ritual did not appease the divine wrath against me.⁴⁹⁵

166. *né-`e-li-šú*: In the previous edition of this prayer, Lambert interpreted this form as derived from *na`ālu*, “to rest” (*AHw* II 125; *CAD* N/1 204–206), suggesting a secondary meaning of this verb, namely “to flow”, and taking it as a reference to tears and crying (see Lambert 1959–60, 53).

Nevertheless, it is more likely that the verb used in the present text does not derive from *na`ālu*, but instead from *ne`ellû*, a quadrilateral verb translated in the dictionaries as “to run around”, “to roam” (*AHw* II 774; *CAD* N/1149; cf. von Soden 1951, 156–158). *ne`ellû* is mostly attested in literary texts and lexical lists, and often refers to demons roaming in the steppe. It occurs also in the *Babylonian Theodicy* l. 141, wherein it clearly means “to roam”:

⁴⁹¹ Translation taken from Cohen 2013, 167. Cf. Nougayrol 1968, 267 and 269; Arnaud 2007, 111–112; Oshima 2011, 208–209; Cohen 2013, 166–167 and 169.

⁴⁹² Translation taken from Cohen 2013, 169. See also Haul 2000, 188–189. Cf. Oshima 2011, 212.

⁴⁹³ Cf. Schwemer 2010, 497.

⁴⁹⁴ See van der Toorn 1985, 60–61 and 64–65.

⁴⁹⁵ Lambert 1960, 38–39; cf. Oshima 2014, 86–87 and 397.

bi-ri-iš lu-ut-te-e`-lu-me su-le-e lu-ša-ᵀa¹-[a-ad], “Hungriily I will go around, I will ro[am] the streets”.⁴⁹⁶

The lexical sources, however, indicate also another possible meaning for this verb: in Malku, the Ntn infinitive of *ne`ellû* is found among the group list of verbs which signify “to have mercy”, and equated to *saḫāru* (*AHw* III 1004–1008; *CAD* S 37–54), see Malku V 70–75:

⁷⁰*re-e-mu* = *nap-šû-ru*

⁷¹*tî-ra-nu* = *ta-a-ru*

⁷²*šâ-gur-ru-ú* = *ta-a-ru*

⁷³*kiš-šû*⁴⁹⁷ = *ta-a-ru*

⁷⁴*tî-ra-nu* = *mu-us-saḫ-ru*

⁷⁵*i-te`e-lu-ú* = *sa-ḫa-ru*

⁷⁰Pity = forgiveness

⁷¹Mercy = to relent

⁷²Compassion = to relent

⁷³Aid = to relent

⁷⁴Mercy (or merciful) = benevolently turned to

⁷⁵To turn favourably = to turn, to seek⁴⁹⁸

It is therefore possible that *ne`ellû* might also bear the meaning of “to help”, “to rescue”, besides its more common meaning of “to roam”, which would not suit our line. In the present context, the imperative *ne`ellî* probably refers to the goddess, who is asked to save the sufferer.

Moreover, the verb *saḫāru*, equated in Malku to *ne`ellû*, can mean “to turn around”, or “to go around”, but also, in the N-stem, “to turn again in favour to someone” (see *AHw* II 1007–1008 sub *saḫāru* N 2; *CAD* S 52–53, mng. 16a and b); it is often listed in lexical sources among group of words related to mercy, see for example Erimḫuš V 12–14 (MSL 17, 81):

¹²*gur* = *na-às-hu-ru*

¹³*ša₃-ab-gur* = *tî-ra-nu*

⁴⁹⁶ Oshima 2014, 156–157 and 450. Cf. Lambert 1960, 78.

⁴⁹⁷ This entry probably does not derive from *kašāšu*, “to master” (*AHw* I 462 sub *kašāšu* II; *CAD* K 286 sub *kašāšu* A), but instead from *kāšu*, “to help” (*AHw* I 463a and 470b; *CAD* K 295b), *contra* Ḫrūša 2010, 115 who translates it as “*Machtausübung*”. It is to be distinguished from the homonymous *kiššu* “strength” (*AHw* I 492; *CAD* K 461b, cf. also the lex. sec.), and here signifies “help” or “aid”: *kiššu* seems to be a nominal form of the PIRS pattern, with a compensatory gemination in place of the long vowel (*kiššu* for **kīšu*). For other examples of compensatory gemination, see GAG §20 d. Cf. also note on l. 226 and 233.

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. Ḫrūša 2010, 114–115 and 400.

¹⁴ša₃-ab-la₂-su₃ = *e-pe-qu*

¹²gur = benevolent attention

¹³ša₃-ab-gur = mercy

¹⁴ša₃-ab-la₂-su₃ = to be merciful

For further examples, cf. *CAD* S 38 sub *saḫāru*, lex. sec. and *CAD* N/2 sub *nashuru*, lex. sec.

Cf. also the Commentary to the *Theodicy*, l. 17: *na-ak-ru¹-[tu : xx x (x x)] : MIN : na-as-hu-ri*, “ ‘Mer[cy]’ (= *Theodicy* 43) means ...], *ditto* means ‘favour’”.⁴⁹⁹

Therefore, one can suggest that the verb *ne`ellû* has the same lexical nuances, and can be interpreted as both “to turn around” and “to have mercy”. Cf. Foster’s translation of the present line: “So run to his aid [...]”.⁵⁰⁰

167. *i[r!-tuš-šû]*: I follow Jiménez for this restoration, which is based on a similar passage in the fable *Palm and Vine*, l. 43’ (ms c): *šá ina GABA-šú ú-¹zab¹-bil nap-šat-su*, “He whose life has faded from his breast”⁵⁰¹. As noticed by Jiménez, this use of the verb *zubbulu* (*AHW* 1500–1501; *CAD* Z 4) is found in *Lugale* as well (l. 101).⁵⁰² Within the present text, the form *irtuššu*, if correctly restored, presents the locative suffix *-um* followed by the pronominal suffix. The lines 167–168 share the same syntactic structure in the first hemistich, thus providing a parallelism:

¹⁶⁷*aj uzabbil napištāšu irtuššu*

¹⁶⁸*aj ibā’ ša lā kâti u[ruḫšu]*

On use of *zubbulum* with *irtu*, compare also Mayer 2017, 246.

169. *i-na[m-mi[?]-ra[?] idātīšu(?)]*: Restoration based on *Ludlul* V 47: *i-na ká-u₆-de-babbar-ra ed-da-tu-u-a im-me-ra*, “At the Gate of Splendid Wonderments my omens became clear”.⁵⁰³

For this usage of *namāru* with *ittu* see *CAD* N/1 213 sub *namārum* mng. 1f.

170. The line is too damaged to allow a reconstruction. I take *i-mu-ma* as the preterite plural from the verb *ewû/emû*, “to become, to turn into something” (*AHW* I 266–267; *CAD* E 413), followed by the conjunction *-ma*; the form *tur-tur-reš* shows the adverbial suffix *-iš*, often attested with *ewû/emû* (see *CAD* E 413–5, sub *ewû/emû*, mng. 1b and 3b). The word *turturru*,

⁴⁹⁹ Jiménez 2017b, accessed July 16, 2020, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: [10079/7m0cg9h](https://doi.org/10.1007/7m0cg9h).

⁵⁰⁰ Foster 2005, 608.

⁵⁰¹ Jiménez 2017a, 252–253 and 267.

⁵⁰² Jiménez 2017a, 267.

⁵⁰³ Own translation. I follow the tablet numbering suggested by Oshima in his last edition (Oshima 2014); for the quoted passage, cf. Oshima 2014, 109–110 and 432. Cf. also Lambert 1960, 60–61.

attested in different variants (see *AHw* II 1340 sub *ta(t)turrû*; *CAD* T 499), seems to indicate a kind of metal beads. The meaning of the line is obscure. Cf. Groneberg (1987, 57), who translates the phrase: “sie (?) wurden wie Scheibchen (?)”.

171. *uš-[šī[?]-ru[?]-šú[?]]*: I tentatively restore *ušširūšu*, from *wuššurum*, “To abandon, to leave alone”, cf. *CAD* U/W 253 sub *wuššurum* mng. 5 a). The present line contains the well-known motif of the social isolation of the sufferer, commonly attested in wisdom texts and penitential prayers.⁵⁰⁴ After having been forsaken by the god, the supplicant might experience social adversities, which can include the hostile behaviour from family members, friends or companions, and even the disrespect from his slaves.

For other occurrences of this topos, see *Ludlul* I, ll. 81–104, in particular ll. 85–86:

⁸⁵*a-na lem-ni u gal-le-e i-tu-ra ib-ri*

⁸⁶*na-al-bu-bu tap-pe-e ú-nam-gar-an-ni*

⁸⁵My companion has become a wretch and a devil,

⁸⁶In his savagery, my comrade denounces me.⁵⁰⁵

Cf. also the prayer to Marduk IV R 59/2, l. 21': *[i]b-ri u tap-pi-e it-ta-nam-da-ru-in-ni*, “Friends and comrades are continually annoyed with me”.⁵⁰⁶

172–173. In this couplet, hendiadys is employed. This figure of speech can be found in Akkadian hymns and prayers, and can also involve finite verbs, as in the present lines: in both lines the verb *id-din-šu-ma*, “he allowed himself” is joined by the particle *-ma* with *uz-za-za* in l. 172, “he becomes angry”, with *i-da-mu* in l. 173, “he has convulsions” and with *i-šá-a[b]* in l. 173, “he shakes”.⁵⁰⁷ Cf. the Nabû Prayer in Chapter 2, l. 88 *i-šá-bi*.

For several occurrences of *nadānum* in hendiadys see *CAD* N/1 50 sub *nadānum* mng. I 2'.

For the translation of this couplet, I partially follow Foster 2005, 608, who translates ll. 172–173 as follows: “He let himself become enraged [...] / He let himself go berserk [...].” Cf. Lambert (1959–1960, 53): “He let him become savage [...] / he let him become hysterical [...].” Cf. also the translation by Groneberg: “Er veranlaßte ihn, zornig zu werden

⁵⁰⁴ Van der Toorn 1985, 60–61 and 64; cf. Lenzi 2013, 77–78.

⁵⁰⁵ Translation taken by Lambert 1960, 35. Cf. also the latest edition by Oshima 2014, 82–83 and 391.

⁵⁰⁶ Translation taken by van der Toorn 1985, 144. Cf. also the latest edition by Oshima 2011, 288–289.

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. Groneberg 1987 I, 47. For a recent study on nominal and verbal hendiadys see Wasserman 2003, 5–28. Wasserman suggests that verbal hendiadys is used in poetry to convey special nuances in the action described (Wasserman 2003, 26 and 28).

/ er veranlaßte ihn, sich zusammen zu krampfen”.⁵⁰⁸ Contrary to Groneberg’s interpretation, however, a reflexive meaning of the pronominal suffix –šu can probably be assumed for this line (see *GAG* §43 for the reflexive usage of the pronominal suffixes), hence Foster’s translation appears more suitable.

174–175. The supplicant confessing to have said blasphemous things is a current topos in Mesopotamian prayers (cf. above, ll. 67–70). Cf. the *diġiršadabba*-prayer n. 11, ll. 125–126:

¹²⁵[*la na*]-*tu-ta e-pu-uš la šá-lim-tu aq-bi*

¹²⁶[*la qi-bi-t*]a ú-šá-an-ni la šá-lim-tu ina pi-ia

¹²⁵I did wrong, I spoke improper things,

¹²⁶I repeated [what should not be utter]ed, improper things were on my lips.⁵⁰⁹

A similar passage is also found in the so-called Lipšur-litanies, l. 54: *la na-tu-tú DÙ-uš la [ša-lim]-tu ina KA-ia šá-k[ín] la qa-bi-ta ú-šá-an-ni*, “I did unfitting things, my mouth was full of improper words, I repeated confidential information”.⁵¹⁰

I accept Lambert’s restoration of *ma-a[g-ra-ti]*, “blasphemy” (from *magrītu* *AHw* II 577; *CAD* M/1 46–47), at the end of l. 174, cf. *CAD* M/1 47.

pi-qa-ma: For the meaning of *pīqa(m)* (*AHw* II 864b; *CAD* P 384–385a) see Mayer 2017a, 27, who translates this adverb as “einmal”, following *AHw* which offers: “einmal (wohl)” (*AHw* II 864b), *contra CAD* which instead has “perhaps” (*CAD* P 384).

taq-bi-i: This is to be understood as *taqbi*, the third person singular preterite from *qabû*, here referring to *šaptī*, “my lips”. The form is written with a *plene* spelling, perhaps a scribal mistake. The usage of the *ta*-prefix to mark the feminine third person verbs occurs in the Old Akkadian and Assyrian dialects (see *GAG* §75A); it is also a typical trait of the “hymno-epic” dialect (see the introduction of the present text, §3.3).

taš-ši-tú: The substantive *taššītum* is found in the lexical list An (K 52, CT 18, pl. 6), rev, l. 45’ within the group of words which mean “insult”, or generally “hostile talk” (rev. ll. 40–47); it is equated, together with other synonyms, to *lā qabītu*, “unspeakable” (*AHw* II 886 sub *qabītu*; *CAD* Q 3 sub *qabītu*):

⁴³*nu-ul-la-tum = la qa-^rbi^l-[tum]*

⁴⁴*ma-ag-ri-tum = MIN*

⁴⁵*taš-ši-tum = MIN*

⁵⁰⁸ Groneberg 1987 I, 47.

⁵⁰⁹ Jaques 2015, 80, 90–91 and 102. Cf. Lambert 1974, 280–281 and 304.

⁵¹⁰ Reiner 1956, 52.

^{43'}malicious talk = unspeaka[ble things]

^{44'}malice = *ditto*

^{45'}insult = *ditto*

taššītum is probably related to *tuššu*, “slander” (*AHw* III 1374; *CAD* T 496–497).⁵¹¹

la' (ma) *ši-na-a-ti a[q²-bi²]*: The sign before *ši* looks like MA, though it is likely a mistake for LA (cf. *CAD* Š 40); the head of a horizontal wedge is still visible before the break at the end of the line, and it could be the beginning of the sign AK. I tentatively restore *aqbi*, “I said”, because *lā šināti* is commonly attested with *verba dicendi*, and especially with *qabû*, cf. *CAD* Š/2 40.

176. *lu-'u-t[ú² išbatanni(?)]*: The line is broken, but the visible traces in the second half of the line can be reconciled with the sign UD. I therefore suggest to restore the noun *lu'tu*, “debility” (*AHw* I 565, which however interprets it as derived from *lu''û*, “to dirty”,⁵¹² offering “Schmutz” as translation; *CAD* L 256–257 sub *lu'tu* A); *lu'tu* is often used in descriptions of illness in prayers and “righteous sufferer”-compositions, and usually paired with *mangu*, “stiffness” (*AHw* II 602–603; *CAD* M/1 211); *mangu* and *lu'tu* appear together in numerous incantation texts as witchcraft-induced symptoms, indicating a general state of decay of the body.⁵¹³

I tentatively restore *išbatanni* at the end of the line, because the verb *šabātum* is commonly found with *lu'tu*, although other verbs are also possible (for example *malû* D-stem, “to fill”), cf. *CAD* L 257 for similar attestations.

177. *i-ni tal-li*: I follow Foster (2005, 608) for the interpretation of this line, and understand the form *talli* as a third person singular feminine present with the *ta*-prefix (see *supra* l. 174 *taq-bi-i*), derived from *elû* G-stem, “to go up” (*AHw* I 206–210; *CAD* E 114–125); it refers to *inī*, literally “My eye”. The upward movement of the eyes is a typical symptom of seizure as it is described by the *āšipu* in the medical texts: the eyes of a person stricken with seizure are said either to be fluttering or to be “open wide towards the sky” (*ana* IGI AN-*e na-pal-ka-a*⁵¹⁴), namely to be rolled back into the head, leaving only the white part of the eyes visible.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ Lambert 1960, 313.

⁵¹² On the possible connection between *lu'tu* and *lu''û* see Feder 2016, 104.

⁵¹³ Schwemer 2007, 106. Cf. also Feder 2016, 104–105 and de Zorzi 2019, 168.

⁵¹⁴ For the text see DPS X A obv. 4–6 (= *TDP* 80: 4–6) in Scurlock 2005, 305.

⁵¹⁵ Scurlock 2005, 304–305.

The second half of the line is broken, but the sign LIB is visible, followed by what could be a partially preserved BU. I tentatively restore the word *lippu*, “wrapping”, “wad” (*AHw* I 554; *CAD* L 200).

182: [tēmī ut²]-tak-kār: I tentatively restore *uttakkar*, “is changed”, Dt-stem present from *nakārum*, “to become hostile”, “to become estranged” (*AHw* II 718–720; *CAD* N/1 151–179).

The line is too damaged to allow a reconstruction, but the verb might refer to *ṭēmu*, “reason” (*CAD* Ṭ 85–97); for expressions of *ṭēmu* with *nakārum* in the sense of “to become deranged”, see *CAD* N1 163 mng. 2a and b).

184. [x ni²-ki²-i]t²-ti: The first half of the line is broken, but one can see an oblique and a vertical wedge, which can be reconciled with the end of the sign ID. I suggest to restore *nikitti*, because the substantive *nikittu*, “fear” (cf. *AHw* II 792 sub *niqittu*; *CAD* N/2 223), often appears with the verb *rašû*, see *CAD* N2 223 sub *nikittu* mng. 1a.

I take *na-dûr* as *nadur*, third person singular stative from *adārum* N-stem, “to become nervous” (*AHw* II 11 sub *adārum* N, mng. B; *CAD* A I 105 sub *adārum* A, mng. 7a). Despite the line being broken, it seems that it belongs to a strophe which contains the laments of the supplicant. In the present couplet, the sufferer speaks in the first person, describing his feelings of restlessness and fear, and confessing his guilt. Anxiety is a typical manifestation of the mental distress which afflicts the supplicant in Akkadian penitential prayers and wisdom texts.⁵¹⁶

185. [šērtā(?) n]a²-šá-ku-ma ni-ir še-la-a-ti [šaddāku(?)]: The first half of the line was restored on the basis of similar occurrences of *našû* with *šērtu*, in the sense of “to bear a punishment” (see *AHw* II 763, mng. II, f, γ; *CAD* N/2 108). This idiomatic use is attested in several literary texts, see for example *Marduk* 1, l. 141: [ḫ]u-¹um¹-mu-um na-ši ¹šēr-ta¹ e-pe-ri k[a]-ši-[šû], “[Cu]rtailed, bearing the punishment, dust [co]vering him”.⁵¹⁷

The expression *ni-ir še-la-a-ti* is doubtful: according to the dictionaries, *še-la-a-ti* in the present line has been interpreted as the plural form of *šēltu*, “blade” (*AHw* III 1210; *CAD* Š/2 273), see the translation in *CAD* Š/2 274: “You pull a yoke of *šēlāti*”, cf. also *AHw* III 1210. Nevertheless, I suggest to take *še-la-a-ti* as *šilāti*, plural form of *šilûtu*, a learned term for “negligence” (*AHw* III 1237 sub *šilûtu* II; *CAD* Š/2 453), derived from *šelû*, “to be negligent”

⁵¹⁶ Van der Toorn 1985, 61 and 65.

⁵¹⁷ See the manuscript IM 124504 recently published by Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 168; cf. also Oshima 2011, 152, 166–167.

(*AHw* III 1205; *CAD* Š/2 274–275). The vowel shift from /i/ > /e/ accords with the general spelling inconsistency in the representation of the phonemes /i/ and /e/ in Neo-Assyrian, a trait which might reflect a dialect variation.⁵¹⁸

The reading *šilāti* fits our context, allowing for a *parallelismus* between the first and second hemistich. For a similar formulation, cf. also the Old Testament, Lam. 1: 14, “The yoke of my transgressions is bound; by His hand they are knit together”.⁵¹⁹

I tentatively restore *šaddāku*, from *šadādu*, “to pull” (*AHw* III 1121–1122; *CAD* Š/1 20–32), because this verb is often found with *nīru*, see *CAD* Š/1 23 sub *šadādu* mng. 2c. The stative *šaddāku* would correspond to [n]a²-šá-ku-ma in the first hemistich.

199. I follow the translation of Lambert (1959–1960, 53) for this line, cf. also *CAD* S sub *sussullu* 418, mng. 7'a.

rig-muš-ki: This form displays the adverbial locative suffix in *-um* followed by the poetic suffix *-uš* and the pronominal suffix *-ki*. For an explanation on the development and formation of the suffix in *-uš*, see Mayer 1996, 434. Cf. Lambert 1959–1960, 49.

200–201. [dalāt(?) AN²]-r¹e¹: The manuscript is partially broken in this section, and the signs in the first half of the line are lost, yet a broken vertical is still visible. The traces can be reconciled with the end of the sign E.

The restoration is based on similar formulations, see for example a ritual prayer to Šamaš, l. 9: ^dUTU *te-ep-te-a-am sí-ik-ku-ri da-la-at ša-me-e*, “O Šamaš you have opened the locks of the gates of heaven”,⁵²⁰ or an *eršemma*-prayer to Ištar (34.2), l. 21: *iš-tar pe-ta-at ši-gar AN-e el-lu-ti*, “O Ištar, opener of the holy bolt of heaven”.⁵²¹ For further occurrences of this image involving the god who opens the doors of heaven, see *CAD* N/1 270 sub *napalkûm*, 2 and *CAD* D 55 sub *daltu*, mng. 1h. According to the Mesopotamian belief, the heaven had an interior space, to which the divine beings—especially the Sun-god and the astral deities—had access through an entrance and an exit door. Cuneiform texts therefore often mention the doors of the heaven (*daltu*), and all the elements related to it, e.g. the bolt (*sikkūrum*), the lock (*šigarum*), and the gate (*bābu*).⁵²²

⁵¹⁸ Luukko 2004, 40–42 and 87; cf. Hobson 2012, 81.

⁵¹⁹ Translation taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995.

⁵²⁰ Starr 1983, 30 and 37.

⁵²¹ Cohen 1981, 132 and 134.

⁵²² Horowitz 1998, 266–267. For more detailed information on the geography of heaven in Mesopotamian thought, and on the deities crossing the doors of heaven, see Heimpel 1986, 127–151.

[*kīma*(?) ^dUTU²]-^ršⁱ?¹: Restoration based on the prayer to Marduk 5 (preserved on the ritual tablet BMS 12), l. 35: *at-ta-ma* GIM ^dUTU *ek-let-si-na tuš-nam-mar*, “You enlighten their darkness like the sun”.⁵²³ For further attestations of this comparison see *CAD* Š/1 336 sub *šamšu* mng. 1b.

The imperative verbs in l. 200 form an hendiadys, cf. above ll. 172–173 and also l. 69, *emtēš ul īdi*, “I unknowingly disregarded”.⁵²⁴

If ll. 200–201 are correctly reconstructed, they form a parallel couplet, in which Ištar is compared to the sun for her ability to bring light.

202. *na-lu-uš*: This word might be an infinitive form derived from *nālu*, “to lie down” (*AHw* II 725; *CAD* N/1 204–206), followed by the poetic suffix *-uš*, which here would be used in a locative sense. The suffix *-uš* also occurs in l. 199 within the text under study (see above).

The pleonastic use of the preposition *ina* with the locative-adverbial suffix is commonly attested in Old-Babylonian literary texts, see for example in the Nabû Prayer, ll. 100/102 [*ina b*]a-lu-uk, “without you” (see Chapter 2).⁵²⁵ The expression *ina na-lu-uš ra-ma-ni-ia* could therefore be translated as “In my lying down”. For the topos of the sufferer lying in a bed of sickness, see above the note on l. 86; see perhaps also l. 179 in the present text: *i-na ṭa-a-bi ma-a-a-l[i?]*, “In a sweet restin[g place ...]”, cf. Foster 2005, 609, fn. 1.

203. *i-dal-lu šá-a-la ur-tas-sa*: The form *i-dal-lu* is probably to be taken as a third-person singular G-stem present from *dālu*, “to roam around” (*AHw* I 155; *CAD* D 58–59), followed by the ventive form in *-u*.⁵²⁶ Foster understands the word *šá-a-la* as an infinitive form from *šālu*, “to ask” (*AHw* III 1151–1152; *CAD* Š/1 sub *šālu* A 274–282), but it could also derive from the homonymous *šālu*, “to smear” (*CAD* Š/1 282 *šālu* B), or from the learned verb *šālu*, “to rejoice” (*CAD* Š/1 283 **šālu* C, cf. Mayer 2017b, 213); the form *ur-tas-sa* is problematic: it seems to be a third-person singular present Dt-stem from the difficult verb *russû*, which, according to the dictionaries, means “to sully” or “to soak” (*AHw* II 996; *CAD* R 425, cf. Mayer 2003, 241). There is, however, another possible meaning of this verb, namely that of “to bind”, mostly attested in incantations texts and confirmed by lexical sources.⁵²⁷ Foster (2005, 609) translates the present line as following: “[...] walking around,

⁵²³ Mayer 1993, 317 and 325; cf. Oshima 2011, 356–357.

⁵²⁴ Cf. Groneberg 1987 I, 47.

⁵²⁵ Mayer 1996, 434. GAG §66, c.

⁵²⁶ See Schwemer 2017, 77 for other examples of ventives in *-u*. Cf. also the Nabû Prayer l. 181: *i-kuš-šu* (Chapter 2).

⁵²⁷ Schwemer 2007, 9–10; see also Abusch & Schwemer 2011, 385. Cf. Lambert 1960, 228.

he has cut short the bruit of curiosity”. Lambert’s translation instead has: “[...] walks about... has bound.” (Lambert 1959–1960, 54). The sense of this line remains obscure.

204. This line is partially damaged and prevents a clear understanding. It belongs to the closing section of the prayer, wherein the final praise of the deity unfolds (see above in the introduction of the Ištar prayer, §3.4; cf. Mayer 1976, 307–361 “*Der Gebetsschluß*”). The mention of the “four world regions” in the present line accords with the standard motifs of the closing section of Akkadian prayers, in which expressions indicating totality are often found: the *Gebetsschluß* typically includes a wish not only for the supplicant himself, but also for all the gods and the people, to extol the invoked deity in the whole world and for all time. See for example a *šuilla*-prayer to Gula (KAR n. 73, obv. l. 24): *a-na* ^d*gu-la lik-ru-bu DÙ-liš* UB.MEŠ, “May the entire world extol Gula”.⁵²⁸

The form *lis-su-pa-’i-i* is likely a scribal mistake; one could hypothesise that it is an aberrant spelling of the precativ of *wapû* Š-stem, “to make manifest”, or “to make glorious”, which is often used in prayers, mostly in the finale praises, see Mayer 1976, 324 and 330. Cf. also the occurrences in *CAD* A/2 202 sub *wapû*, mng. 4.

205. *šu-e-ti: šu’ētu* is a learned word for “Lady”, only attested in lexical sources and literary texts. It is listed in Malku I 9 and expl. Malku I 17 as a synonym of *bēltu*. The same equation is attested in the Commentary of the *Babylonian Theodicy*, l. 34’: *šu-’e-e-tu₄ = be-el-’tu₄*], “‘*šu’ētu*’ means ‘lad[y.]’”.⁵²⁹ Cf. *Theodicy*, l. 278: *šar-ra-tum pa-ti-iq-ta-ši-na šu-e-tú^dma-mi*, “the queen, the one who shapes them (people), the mistress Mami”.⁵³⁰

206-207. [*liqē(?) un²-n*]*i²-ni*: The restoration fits the traces and is corroborated by parallels, cf. for example the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no. 11, l. 112: *li-qí un-ni-ni-ia pu-ṭ[ur il-ti]*, “Accept my prayers, release my bond”. The imperative of *leqû*, “to take” (*AHw* II 544–546; *CAD* L 131–147) often occurs with *unnīnu*, “prayer” (*AHw* III 1421; *CAD* U/W 162–164), forming a typical stock-phrase of Akkadian *šuilla*-prayers.⁵³¹

[*muhrī(?) kàd²-r*]*e-e-a*: If the restoration is correct, the present line displays another standard formula of Akkadian prayers,⁵³² also found in *Marduk* 2, l. 159: *mu-ḥir kàd-ra-šú le-*

⁵²⁸ Cf. Mayer 1976, 329.

⁵²⁹ For the Commentary of *Theodicy*, see Jiménez 2017b, accessed June 16, 2020, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: [10079/7m0cg9h](https://doi.org/10.1007/7m0cg9h).

⁵³⁰ Oshima 2014, 165–166, 462.

⁵³¹ Mayer 1976, 217. Cf. *CAD* U 162 sub *unnīnu* mng. b’ for further attestations of *unnīnu* with *leqû*.

⁵³² Mayer 1976, 217–218. Cf. *CAD* K, 32 sub *kadrû* mng. a), 1’, for further attestations of *kadrû* with *maḥāru*.

qí pi-de-e-šu, “Receive his present, take his ransom”.⁵³³ Furthermore, the substantive *kadrû* occurs within our text in l. 230.

The petition for the acceptance of offerings and prayers is a traditional motif in Akkadian prayers, and appears among other general requests for aid and forgiveness.⁵³⁴ Prayers served as verbal-offerings, and could be used in place of material offerings, such as sacrifices or libations.⁵³⁵ This function of prayers appears clearly from various texts, see for example Marduk 2, ll. 24’–25’:

²⁴*na-šá niq-ka ki-ma ta-[’a²-ti²] x un-nin-ni ù šu-ken-ni*

²⁵*ki-ma qí-šá-a-ti ik-ri-b[u-ú la-ba]n ap-pu,*

²⁴They bring your offering like g[ifts] ... prayer and prostration,

²⁵Like donations, (they bring) *bless*[ings and the gest]ure of devotion”.⁵³⁶

See also the Nabû Prayer in Chapter 2, ll. 216–217:

²¹⁶*[li-q]é da-ma-šu ba-la-šu ù ut-nen-šú*

²¹⁷*[kīma(?) qí²]-šá-a-ti at-nu-uš li-kun taš-lit-su*

²¹⁶[Ta]ke the prostrating, the bowing down and his prayer,

²¹⁷[like donati]ons (take) his petition, may his prayer become true.

208-209: This couplet employs a well-known simile, commonly found in Akkadian penitential prayers, by which the invoked deity is equated to a merciful father and mother, and asked to show benevolence towards the supplicant.⁵³⁷ An example of a similar formulation is attested in the standard concluding phrase of *eršahunga*-prayers:

Sum.:

šà-zu šà-ama-tu-ud-da-gim ki-bi-šè ḥa-am-gi₄-gi₄

ama-tu-ud-da a-a-tu-ud-da-gim ki-bi-šè ḥa-am-gi₄-gi₄

Akk.:

libbaka kīma libbi ummi ālittim ana ašrīšu litūra

kīma ummi ālitti abi ālidi ana ašrīšu litūra

May your heart, like the heart of a natural mother, return to its place for me,

Like (the heart of) a natural mother, like (the heart of a) natural father, may

⁵³³ Oshima 2011, 154, 166–167.

⁵³⁴ Mayer 1976, 210.

⁵³⁵ Oshima 2011, 30–31.

⁵³⁶ Cf. Oshima 2011, 237, 250–251.

⁵³⁷ Cf. Mayer 1976, 366.

it return to its place for me!⁵³⁸

The ending of a *šulla*-prayer to Marduk (BMS 11), ll. 38–39, also resembles this formulation, yet slightly modifying the classical phrase by mentioning the father before the mother, as in our Ištar prayer:

³⁸*lib-ba-ka ki-ma a-bi*

³⁹*a-li-di ù AMA a-lit-ti-ia a-na áš-ri-šú li-tu-ra*

³⁸May your [h]eart, like (the heart of) my natural father,

³⁹of my natural mother, return to its place for me.⁵³⁹

The equation between the god and a benevolent parental figure is also found within the same *šulla* in l. 2: *nap-šur-šu a-bu re-mé-nu-ú*, “Whose forgiveness is that of a merciful father”.⁵⁴⁰

The same motif appears in Marduk 1, l. 10/12 [*ta-b*]i *na-as-hur-ka ki-i a-bi re-e-muk*, “Your attention is [sweet], like a father’s your mercy”.⁵⁴¹

The first half of l. 208 is lost, but one can assume that it contained a request for mercy or general aid, to parallel the second half of the succeeding line (l. 209: *rišî rēma*).

210. [*mīta*(?) *bu²-ul²-l*]u²: Tentative restoration. I suggest to reconstruct the form *bulluṭ* for *bulluṭa*, with a loss of the final vowel.⁵⁴² For similar passages, see Marduk 1, ll. 182/184: EN^d*Marduk-ma LÚ.ÚŠ bul-luṭ i-le-’i li-iz-zak-ru*, “Let them say to one another: ‘The Lord/Marduk is able to raise the dead’”,⁵⁴³ and the Hymn to the Queen of Nippur col. iii, ll. 29–30:

²⁹*ma-am-ma-an ul i-le-’i*

³⁰*bu-ul-luṭ mi-ti šu-x [x] ke-še-ra*

²⁹No one [but she] is able

³⁰To bring the dead back to life, to ... the pit (?)⁵⁴⁴

For further occurrences of *mītu* with *bulluṭu* see *CAD* M/2 141 sub *mītu* mng. 2’, a’.

212-213. These lines were restored on the basis of *Šurpu* II, ll. 29–30:

⁵³⁸ Maul 1988, 10. Cf. also Hallo 1968, 80–81. This formula is an expanded version of the traditional closing of the Neo-Sumerian literary genre of “Letter-prayers”. The typical ending of letter-prayers is the following: *ša diġir-mu ki-bi ḥa-ma-gi₄-gi₄*, “May the heart of my god be restored!”, see Hallo 1968 81, 84 and 87.

⁵³⁹ Mayer 2004, 198-199, 204 and 206.

⁵⁴⁰ Own translation; I follow Mayer 2004, 205 for the interpretation of this line. Cf. Oshima 2011, 348.

⁵⁴¹ The translation used here is that of Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 169. Cf. Oshima 2011, 159.

⁵⁴² Cf. Schwemer 2017, 79 for the attestations of the dropping of final vowels in verbal forms in the Maqlû manuscripts. Cf. also Streck 2004.

⁵⁴³ Translation taken from Lambert 1959–1960, 60; cf. Oshima 2011, 156 and 168–169.

⁵⁴⁴ Lambert 1982, 196–197.

²⁹ *šab-ta la ú-maš-ši-ru ka-sa-a la ú-ram-mu-u*

³⁰ *šá É ši-bit-tum la ú-kal-lam nu-ú-ra*

²⁹ Who did not free the captive, did not release the man in bonds

³⁰ Who did not let the prisoner see the light (of day)⁵⁴⁵

In Mesopotamian prayers, as well as in wisdom compositions, the supplicant is often depicted as a prisoner in his own house, or held by fetters (see above in this commentary, note on l. 49; cf. the Great Prayer to Nabû, l. 173). The prison metaphor is used to represent a state of extreme distress, and it occurs, for example, in *Ludlul*, l. 96: *a-na ki-suk-ki-ia i-tu-ra bi-i-tu*, “My house has become my prison”,⁵⁴⁶ in the *diġiršadabba*-prayer no. 9, ll. 15'–16': *bi-ti ana É dim-ma-tim i-tur-ma i-li ana-ku ka-ma-ak-šu ina libbi-šú tu-še-ši-b[a-an-ni]*, “My house has become a house of weeping, my God, I am its prisoner, you made [me] dwell in it”.⁵⁴⁷ Compare also in *Marduk 2*, l. 99: *šá ina bit ši-bit-ti na-du-u tu-kal-lam nu-úr*, “Who was cast into prison, you show him the light”, and in the Great Šamaš Hymn, l. 74: *ab-ka šá ina É ši-b[it-ti na-du-u t]u-šal-lam*, “You look after the prisoner who [was cas]t into jail”.⁵⁴⁸ Another example is provided by a prayer to Marduk (*Marduk 5*, on BMS 12), l. 44: *[šá x]-x-u É ši-bi[t-ti (other ms: u) ek-le-ti [us]-[su¹-ru tu-kal-lam ZALÁG*, “He, whom ... of the prison and of the *house of darkness* holds back, you show (him) the light”.⁵⁴⁹ Since the expression *bīt ekleti* can have the meaning of “underworld” (see *AHw* I 195, *ekletu* 3b and *CAD* I/J 61b, usage c2'), one could hypothesise that the symbolic prison enclosing the sufferer is a metaphor for his imminent death.⁵⁵⁰

215. *[kāšat(?) še²-e]r²-ta-šá*: After the break, there are traces of three vertical wedges which can be reconciled with the sign IR/ER. The restoration *šērtāša* fits both traces and context. If *šērtāša* is correctly reconstructed, one can hypothesise that an antithetic parallelism between the two hemistichs occurred: a verb with a meaning opposite to that of *aruḥ*, “is quick”, is expected at the beginning of the verse. I suggest to restore the form *kāšat*, third person singular stative from *kāšu* A, “to be late, to tarry” (*AHw* I 463 sub *kāšu* III; *CAD* K 294–295 sub *kāšu* A). Other verbs with a similar meaning might be possible as well (e.g., *namarkū*, “to be late, to delay”, *AHw* II 725, *CAD* N/1 208–209). Nevertheless, *kāšu* is a learned verb, found both in lexical lists and literary texts, and also attested in the Nabû Prayer (see Chapter

⁵⁴⁵ Reiner 1970, 13.

⁵⁴⁶ Oshima 2014, 90–91 and 408; the translation used here is that of Lambert 1960, 45.

⁵⁴⁷ For the latest edition of the text see Jaques 2015, 53–60.

⁵⁴⁸ Lambert 1960, 130–131; for the reconstruction of the line see *CAD* A/1 53 and Oshima 2014, 260.

⁵⁴⁹ Own translation. I follow the reading of Mayer 1993, 317, 325 and 333; cf. Oshima 2011, 356–357. For further discussion on the motif of imprisonment in Akkadian prayers, see Oshima 2014, 260–261.

⁵⁵⁰ For this interpretation see Mayer 1993, 333.

2, “The Great Prayer to Nabû”, l. 181). It represents a suitable option in the present context, as it accords with the high-register language of the Great Hymns and Prayers.

For a similar phraseology, cf. *Marduk* 1, ll. 30/32 *ša ar-ḫiš nap-su-ru ba-šu-[ú it]-ti-šu*, “Whose character is to relent quickly”.⁵⁵¹

220. [*epšū(?) su*]*k²-ki ud-du-¹ú pa¹-rak-ki*: The head of a vertical is partially visible after the break. I suggest to read the sign *SUG*, and tentatively restore *sukkī*, since *sukku* is often paired with *parakku* in lexical and literary sources (cf. *AHw* II 1055; *CAD* S 361–362, lex. sec.). The noun *sukku* is equated with *parakku* and *nēmedu* in *Malku* I 274–275,⁵⁵² and in the Commentary of *Šurpu* to tablet III (Commentary B, 14);⁵⁵³ *sukku* also appears in a group list in *Erimḫuš* IV 25–28 (*MSL* 17, 58) with *parakku* and other terms semantically close to it (*su-uk-ku, pa-an-pa-nu, du-ú, pa-rak-ku*).⁵⁵⁴

I tentatively reconstruct *epšū* at the beginning of the line because it fits the context and the space available on the tablet, but other verbs meaning “to build”, “to create” are possible. The verse seems to display a synthetic parallelism between the two hemistichs.

221. *ša-du-ši-in*: I understand this word as *šadūššin*, “In their mountains”, namely *šadū*, “mountains” (*AHw* III 1124–1125; *CAD* Š/1 49–59), followed by the poetic suffix *-uš* and the apocopated pronominal suffix *-šin*. The first portion of the line is missing, though it seems possible that the break might contain a word meaning “lands” or “regions”, to which *šadūššin* could refer. Cf. further in the text l. 227 *ni-ši-ši-in*, “their people”, probably also referring to the land.

226. [*k*]*a-a-ša a-za-ra*: Both words occur in *Malku* as synonyms in the same entry, see *Malku* V 87: *a-za-ru = ka-[a-š]u*.⁵⁵⁵ The learned verb *kiāšum/kāšu* means “to help, to save” (*AHw* 463a und 470b; *CAD* K 295b; cf. Mayer 2016, 226), and is attested, beyond lexical sources, only in literary texts, for example in *Ludlul* I, ll. 10/12: *ú-kaš-šú mi-i-ta*, “They (his hands) save the dead man”⁵⁵⁶ and *Ludlul* I 97: *ša la ka-šim-ma*, “The one who does not help”.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵¹ The translation used here is taken from Lambert 1959–1960, 56. Cf. Oshima 145, 158–159.

⁵⁵² Hrůša 2010, 50–51 and 324.

⁵⁵³ Reiner 1970, 50.

⁵⁵⁴ Cf. Hrůša 2010, 211.

⁵⁵⁵ Hrůša 2010, 114–115, 255 and 401.

⁵⁵⁶ Oshima 2014, 78–79 and 381; cf. Lambert 1960, 343.

⁵⁵⁷ Oshima 2014, 84–85 and 392; see Streck & Wassermann 2008, 352 for other occurrences of *kāšu*. The authors furthermore suggest that this verb might be a secondary form of *ḫiāšum*, “to hurry”. The transitive aspect

231. [š^u-k]e²-na: The line is partially broken, but there are visible traces of four horizontals and a vertical wedge after the break. I suggest to read the sign KI, and tentatively restore the plural imperative *šukennā*, already found within the present text in l. 216. Compare, however, von Soden’s reconstruction: [d^{In-n}]in-na *š^uq-qa-a*, “erhöht die [Inn]inna!”.⁵⁵⁸

232-233. This couplet contains the so-called *elatio*, namely the elevation of the invoked deity, whose role of power is legitimated by higher gods.⁵⁵⁹ The elevation is a conventional motif of Mesopotamian hymns, and it narrates how the chief gods have bestowed the addressed deity with divine attributes.⁵⁶⁰ I tentatively restore *iddišši* in l. 232 because it fits the space available in the break, and the verb *nadānu* is commonly found in similar contexts (see *CAD* N/1 48 sub *nadānu* 1e). Nevertheless, other verbs meaning “to give” or “to bestow” are also possible (for example *šutlumu*, cf. the Hymn to Mama A col. ii, ll. 10’–12’: *a-nu-um še-rum ú-ša-at-li-im-ši / ša-du-i er-še-ti-im na-ga-ab na-ra-ti*, “Fierce Anu bestowed upon (Mama) / the mountains of the land, the source of the rivers”⁵⁶¹). Cf. also the long section of *elatio* in Marduk 2 (ll. 36–41), for example l. 36: *ú-šar-bi-ka^d a-num a-ši-bu šá-[m]a-mi*, “Anum, the one who dwells in the Hea[ve]ns, made you greatest”.

The restoration [*ka²-a²*]-šá l. 132 of the present text fits the context, since this noun bears a similar meaning to that of *napšura* immediately following. The word *kāšu*, moreover, is already found within our prayer in l. 226.

^dšá-la-aš: The goddess Šalaš is the parhedra of Dagan. The first attestations of Šalaš are found in four pre-Sargonic Eblaite administrative texts: in three of them the goddess is paired with Wad’an, a god venerated in the city of Gar(r)amu, which was under the control of Ebla. One text, however, lists the offerings of precious metals to the “Lord of Tuttul”, namely Dagan, and to his spouse Šalaš (written defectively as ^dš^a-a-š^a). The goddess appears in Old-Babylonian sources from Mari, where she is also paired with Dagan, and is further attested in some Old-Babylonian theophoric names.⁵⁶² Šalaš is mentioned in the *š^uilla*-prayer Kaksisa 1, l. 9 (ms. B): [^dD]a-gan u ^dš^a-la-áš ú-šar-bu-u MU-ka, “Dagan and Šalaš make your name great”.⁵⁶³

of *kāšu*, however, contrasts with the intransitivity of *hiāšum*, thus rendering the hypothesis doubtful (see Streck & Wassermann 2008, 352, fn. 6).

⁵⁵⁸ Von Soden 1977, 283.

⁵⁵⁹ For the definition of this term, I follow Metcalf 2015, 37.

⁵⁶⁰ Metcalf 2015, 37–41, 57–58 and 63–73.

⁵⁶¹ Krebernik 2003–2004, 15, cf. Metcalf 2015, 71.

⁵⁶² Schwemer 2006–2008, 566–567 sub *Šala* §4; cf. Schwemer 2001, 402–408; cf. *Archi* 1995, 633–637.

⁵⁶³ Mayer 1990, 466–469. Cf. Schwemer 2001, 405.

The identification of Dagan with the god Enlil led to the connection between Šalaš and Enlil’s spouse, Ninlil. This association is clear from the God-lists: in An = Anum I 193–194 (CT 24: 6, 22–23; 22: 120),⁵⁶⁴ Dagan is equated with Enlil and Šalaš with Ninlil.⁵⁶⁵

If these reconstructions are correct, lines 232–233 of our Ištar Prayer are characterised by the use of synonymous parallelism, and furthermore display a chiasmic structure, in which the name of the gods, the verbal forms related to them and the qualities mentioned (l. 232 *šu-zu-ba, e-ṭe-ru* and l. 233[*ka[?]-a[?]]-šá u nap-šu-ra*) are placed in a reversed order.

235. I follow the reading in *CAD* K 517 sub *kullu* mng. f 2', b' and interpret *ki-na* as *kinnā*, plural imperative from *kānu* (*AHw* 438–440 und 1566; *CAD* K 159–171), corresponding to *killā* (see *kullu* *AHw* I 502–503; *CAD* K 505–518) in the second half of the line, *contra* Lambert (1959–60, 54), who reads [... *u*]n-niš-ki-na as a single word, and translates the line: “[...] to your [...] hold attentively”.

[*ku[?]-ru[?]-u*]n-niš: The broken sign at the beginning of the line ends with four wedges: two short verticals on top of two longer verticals. Hence, the traces can be reconciled with the ending of the sign UN, as already offered by Lambert in his edition. I suggest therefore to restore *kurunnu* (“beer”, *AHw* I 513, *CAD* K 579–581), followed by the apocopated pronominal suffix –š(i).

236. [*suppû*(?) *su-u*]l-lu-u *šu-te-mu-qu*: The beginning of the line is broken, but, judging from the spacing between the visible signs, the break might contain five or six signs. The restoration is based on lexical sources, see Aa V/III 43–45 (MSL 14 422) and Izi Q[?], 5–7⁵⁶⁶ in which the three nouns appear in immediate succession: [*su*]-*up-pu-ú* [*su*]-*ul-lu-ú* [*šu*]-*te-mu-qu*. The substantives *suppû* and *sullû* often occur together, seemingly as a fixed pair, in lexical lists and commentaries, as well as in literary texts. For example, *suppû* and *sullû* are found—one right after the other—in Aa VIII/1 30–31 and 45–46 (MSL 14, 490), equated to the Sumerian *siskur*, “Prayer” (cf. *CAD* S 365, lex. sec. for further occurrences of *suppû* with *sullû* in the lexical sources).⁵⁶⁷ In addition, they appear in wisdom compositions, see the *Counsels of Wisdom* l. 139: *su-up-pu-u su-ul-lu-u u la-ban ap-pi*, “Prayer, supplication and prostration”,⁵⁶⁸ and are attested within the corpus of the Great Hymns and Prayers, see the

⁵⁶⁴ Litke 1998, 62.

⁵⁶⁵ Archi 1995, 634; Schwemer 2001, 401.

⁵⁶⁶ New edition in Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 96.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 96. This pair is also found in *Diri* II, 7–8 (MSL 15, 122–123) and *Erimḫuš* II 170 and 173 (MSL 17, 36).

⁵⁶⁸ Lambert 1960, 104–105.

Great Šamaš Hymn, l. 130 *ta-šem-me* ^dUTU *su-up-pa-a su-la-a ù ka-ra-bi*, “You listen, Šamaš, to prayer, supplication and benediction”.⁵⁶⁹ See *CAD* S 365 and 394 for further attestations of the two nouns together.

⁵⁶⁹ Lambert 1960, 134–135.

CHAPTER 4: THE GREAT HYMNS AND PRAYERS AND THE LEXICAL LISTS

4.1 THE MESOPOTAMIAN LEXICAL LISTS AND THEIR SCHOOL CONTEXT

The scholarly approach to the Mesopotamian lexical lists has undergone many changes since von Soden's first comprehensive study on the lexical tradition in his well-known essay *Leistung und Grenze sumerischer und babylonischer Wissenschaft*.⁵⁷⁰ Von Soden depicts the lexical lists as a primitive attempt to classify the world. His interpretation, has influenced numerous studies, and the term *Listenwissenschaft*, first used by von Soden to define the Sumero-Akkadian practice of expressing knowledge through lists, has entered the vocabulary of modern Assyriology.⁵⁷¹

Many scholars considered the Mesopotamian lexica as a reflection of reality, an almost pre-scientific catalogue of the world.⁵⁷² However, recent studies have proved how the pejorative assumption inherent in the concept of *Listenwissenschaft* should be dismissed, in favour of a different perception of the Mesopotamian lexical tradition that stresses the value of lists as a form of scholarship.⁵⁷³

The lexical lists represented more than simple dictionaries or naïve folk-taxonomies, and should be understood as instruments to order, classify and transmit lore.⁵⁷⁴ The list-format is the standard structure of cuneiform scholarly inquiry, underlying all the different branches of Mesopotamian knowledge, from language and literature, to divination and legal practice.⁵⁷⁵

Lexical and literary texts derive from the same social and intellectual context, namely the scribal school, and this can explain the numerous interdependencies between the lexical and the literary genre. In the standard Old Babylonian curriculum, the study of lexical lists preceded that of Sumerian language and literature: in the first phase students would acquire familiarity with difficult signs and rare words belonging to the vocabulary of literary Sumerian, which was the subject of study in the advanced phase of education. Only highly

⁵⁷⁰ Von Soden 1936.

⁵⁷¹ Veldhuis 2014, 19–23; Van de Mieroop 2015, 64–45. Crisostomo 2019a, 47–48. Cf. also Van de Mieroop 2018, esp. 24–26.

⁵⁷² See for example Larsen 1987 and Cancik–Kirschbaum 2010, cf. Crisostomo 2019a, 48.

⁵⁷³ Hilgert 2009; Van de Mieroop 2015, 220–224, Crisostomo 2019a, 46–50.

⁵⁷⁴ Crisostomo 2019a, 49. Cf. Oppenheim 1978. Cf. also Crisostomo 2018 for the hermeneutical process inherent lexical lists, especially the translations.

⁵⁷⁵ Van de Mieroop 2015 and 2018, 25.

educated scribes, who belonged to the social elite, would be imparted advanced linguistic and literary knowledge in Sumerian.⁵⁷⁶

The process of text elaboration was probably based on both copying and memorization, yet also permitting a certain degree of innovation.⁵⁷⁷ The fluid nature of lists, which could be changed and manipulated, allowed borrowings from different sources, also literary ones; similarly, literary compositions could be informed by lexical texts and include words taken from lists.⁵⁷⁸

An investigation of the intertextual relationships between the lexicon and literature can shed a light on the central role played by lists in the scribal education, and in particular in the composition of literary texts.⁵⁷⁹ Furthermore, a closer look at the interaction between the two corpora can also enhance the comprehension of the literary compositions themselves: on the one hand, it can provide helpful parallels and allow restorations of broken passages, on the other, it can improve our understanding of language and poetry. In fact, lists are closely related to the rhetorical device of enumeration that represents one of the most common stylistic features of Ancient Near Eastern poetry, also often found within the corpus of the Great Hymns and Prayers. This group of texts seems to display numerous connections with the lexical lists, as not only is this corpus characterised by the usage of special and learned words explained in the lists, but also because it often employs enumerations of sets of lemmata that appear to be drawn from lexical sources.

4.2 LEXICON AND LITERATURE: PREVIOUS STUDIES

The interdependency between lists and literature has been the subject of investigation of numerous studies, the majority of which focused on texts written in Sumerian.

Miguel Civil first identified the element linking lexical and literary texts, namely the enumeration.⁵⁸⁰ This poetical device consists of a list of words that may follow a specific thematic order or be arranged in an apparent chaotic catalogue (the so-called chaotic

⁵⁷⁶ Michalowski 2012. Cf. Crisostomo 2016, 123.

⁵⁷⁷ Crisostomo 2016, 122–123. On memorisation within the scribal curriculum, see Delnero 2012. For the aspect of the flexibility of the lexical tradition, especially during the Old Babylonian period, see Veldhuis 2014, 223–225. Cf. Crisostomo 2016, 138; Cf. Civil 2011, 229.

⁵⁷⁸ Veldhuis 1997, 126–129; Crisostomo 2016; Cavigneau 1985, 4.

⁵⁷⁹ In the present study, I use the terms “intertextual” and “intertextuality” in a broader sense, following Wisnom 2019, 1–4, who considers as intertextuality any type of connection between texts, and instead calls “allusion” a specific dependence of one text to another. For the interpretation of intertextuality as a “study of sources” see Jiménez 2017a, 82. Jiménez further defines the notions of “general intertextuality” as the shared use of common *topoi* or formulas, and “specific intertextuality”, which describes instead the usage of specific borrowings (Jiménez 2017a, 81).

⁵⁸⁰ Civil 1987.

enumeration).⁵⁸¹ Whereas lists in lexical texts served pedagogical purposes, lists in literature are embedded in the text, and their scope is to convey a sense of completeness.⁵⁸²

As noted by Rubio, several Early Dynastic compositions seem to sit halfway between lexical lists and poetry.⁵⁸³ The *zá-mì* hymns, for example, include two or three-lines long litanies formed by lists of cities and divine names followed by the hymnic formula *zá-mì*, “be praised”.⁵⁸⁴

In his study on the relationship between the lexicon and Sumerian literature, Civil has brought attention to the occurrence of sets of lexical terms within various Sumerian literary compositions. He shows, for example, that in “Home of the Fish” or in “Feeding Dumuzi’s sheep” the lexical lemmata are encased in fixed formulas and followed by a short explanatory comment; the formulas, together with their comments, are in turn included in a broader frame, which forms the narrative context. Civil hypothesised that the comments on the lexical terms could derive from Early Dynastic lexical texts.⁵⁸⁵

A similar case of overlapping between literature and lexicography has been investigated by Veldhuis, who examined the Sumerian text labelled by modern scholars as “Nanše and the birds”.⁵⁸⁶ This composition is constituted for the most part of a catalogue of bird names and their description, representing another example of the “enumeration literature” previously defined by Civil. Veldhuis convincingly showed that the majority of bird names found in the text (79%) was also itemized in the Early Dynastic birds list, although the terms found in the literary composition are not listed in the same order in which they appear in the lexical sources.⁵⁸⁷

One example of exact correspondence between lemmata listed in a lexical text and those enumerated in a literary text is provided by the Old Babylonian Sumerian hymn to Inana known as *In-nin šà-gur-ra*₄. As Michalowski has demonstrated, the learned lexical series *Erim-ḫuš* = *anantu* (MSL 17)⁵⁸⁸ contains direct quotations from *In-nin šà-gur-ra*₄: line 157 of the hymn is quoted in *Erimḫuš* I 280-283, and line 159 appears in *Erim-ḫuš* II 1-5.

⁵⁸¹ For a study on the chaotic enumeration, see Spitzer 1945. Cf. Wasserman (forthcoming, 16–17) for possible examples of chaotic enumerations in Akkadian literature.

⁵⁸² Wasserman forthcoming, 9. Merismus is another possible rhetorical strategy used to express totality in Akkadian literature, see Wasserman 2003.

⁵⁸³ Rubio 2003, 203–206.

⁵⁸⁴ Rubio 2003, 205; cf. Krecher 1992.

⁵⁸⁵ Civil 1987, esp. 37.

⁵⁸⁶ Veldhuis 2004.

⁵⁸⁷ Moreover, according to Veldhuis’s study, most of the birds names used in the Sumerian proverbs match those appearing in *Ur₅-ra* (see Veldhuis 2004, 95–98).

⁵⁸⁸ See also the recent edition of some manuscripts with an introduction to the series in Hruša & Weiershäuser 2020, 8–11 and 103–136.

Furthermore, the two texts share a similar vocabulary, often employing the same rare words, a trait that also suggests a strong interdependency between the genres.⁵⁸⁹

Analysing the lexical similarities between three curricular lists and various Sumerian compositions, Crisostomo illustrated other cases of intertextual relationship. His study indicates that two hymns belonging to the so-called Enĥeduanna corpus share a high number of lemmata with Izi, and that the Sumerian Proverbs collection employs some extremely rare sign values, only ever attested in the sign list Ea.⁵⁹⁰ In addition, Crisostomo also noted that the word list Lu-azlag and two Sumerian dialogues (“A Father and his Perverse Son”, also known as Eduba B, and the “Dialogue between two scribes”) contain the same set of insults, listed precisely in the same sequence. More entries of Lu-azlag appear in other Eduba texts and dialogues, a fact that implies a strong correlation between the lexical and literary corpora.⁵⁹¹

Löhnert as well has drawn attention to a sequence of words enumerated in a balaĝ-prayer: she noticed that the text contains a set of lexical terms for doors, which appears identical in a later literary composition and in the Proto-Kagal list.⁵⁹²

Learned lemmata used in a literary text can depend on multiple lexical texts from various periods. The list of plant names found in a passage of Enki and Ninĥursaĝa (ll. 190-221⁵⁹³) seems to rely on various lexical sources: the a-tu-tu plant, for example, is only elsewhere attested in the Uruanna list of plants (see *CAD* A/2 522 sub *atutu*), and the amĥaru plant is a medical plant only attested, besides in Enki and Ninĥursaĝa, in Ura-ĥubullu XVII (MSL 10, 84, 50; 117, 16; 120, 16).⁵⁹⁴

The phenomenon of interrelation of the lexicon and literary compositions has also been detected in Akkadian sources. In his edition of *Malku* = *šarru*, Ivan Hrůša provided examples of possible connections between the synonym list and numerous Akkadian literary texts of different genres, further stressing the relevance of the list *Malku* in the process of writing and composing works of literature.⁵⁹⁵

Among the examples offered by Hrůša, there are two that illustrate that *Malku* was well-known to the authors of commentaries. Indeed both the commentaries on *Ludlul* and on the

⁵⁸⁹ Michalowski 1998.

⁵⁹⁰ Crisostomo 2016, 133–135; for the connections between literary texts and the list Izi, see also Crisostomo 2019a, 195. For other correlations between lists and Sumerian proverbs, see Krebernik 2004 and Crisostomo 2019b. Cf. also the observation by Tinney in Veldhuis 2014, 209.

⁵⁹¹ Crisostomo 2016, 136; cf. Veldhuis 2014, 164; see also Böck 1999, 55.

⁵⁹² Löhnert 2009, 214–215.

⁵⁹³ The order of the lines follows the online Oxford Electronic Corpus of Sumerian Literature, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/> (ETCSL 1.1.1).

⁵⁹⁴ Katz 2008, 330–331; Johnson (2015, 3–4) observes that this section of Enki and Ninĥursaĝa is a good example of the process of entextualisation, namely the modification of a discourse and the creation of a text decontextualised from its prior setting (for the notion of entextualisation, cf. Silverstein & Urban 1996, esp. 21).

⁵⁹⁵ Hrůša 2010, esp. 16–18.

Babylonian Theodicy contain words explained through the same equations provided by Malku, e.g., in the commentary on the Theodicy, the word *sattukku*, “Regular offering”, is equated, like in Malku, to: *gi-nu-ú šá* DIĜIR, namely “present (*ginû*) of the gods”.⁵⁹⁶

Other texts that seem to use Malku as a source are some Neo-Assyrian inscriptions of Sargon II, which display rare words and expressions elsewhere only attested in the synonym list (e.g., *mu'āru*, “man”, following Malku I 167: *mu'āru = eṭlu*).⁵⁹⁷

The fifth tablet of the Gilgameš epic includes an extensive enumeration of wind names (ll. 137–141), which depends on a list in Malku III 180–206.⁵⁹⁸ In addition, the Gilgameš epic contains further borrowings from the lexical sources: the portion of the text involving the mourning of Enkidu (tablet V, ll. 16–17), for example, includes a catalogue of wild animals which closely resembles a passage of Ura-ḫubullu VII (see Weiserhäuser & Hruša 2018).⁵⁹⁹

Gilgameš V, ll. 16–17:

¹⁶*lib-ki-ku asu bu-šu nim-ru mìn-di-n[u lu-l]i-mu du-ma-mu*

¹⁷*[nēšu r]i-mu a-a-lu tu-ra-ḫu bu-lum u [nam-ma]š-šu-ú šá* EDIN

¹⁶May the bear mourn you, the hyena, panther, cheetah, stag and jackal,

¹⁷the lion, wild bull, deer, ibex, the herds and animals of the wild!⁶⁰⁰

Ḫh XIV:

⁴⁸*am = ri-i-mu*

⁶³*ur = ne₂-e-šu₂*

⁷⁵*ur-šub₅ = min₃-di-nu*

⁷⁶*ur-šub₅-kud-da = du-ma-mu*

¹⁴⁶*lu-lim = lu-li-mu*

¹⁴⁷*si-mul = a-a-lu*

¹⁴⁸*duraḫ = tu-ra-ḫu*⁶⁰¹

In his study on poetical enumerations in Akkadian, Nathan Wasserman observed that borrowings from lexical lists are present in incantations as well (e.g., the list of mountain names in the Lipšur litanies which is dependent on Ura-ḫubullu XXII).⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁶Hruša 2010, 17; cf. Jiménez 2017b, <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917> DOI: [10079/7m0cg9h](https://doi.org/10.1017/7m0cg9h) (accessed August 20, 2020). Moreover, the Theodicy Commentary provides many further evidences of the strong correlation with the synonym list: l. 16 of the commentary, for example, quotes directly from Malku IV 196–198: *ta-ḫa-na-ṽtú¹ [: ta-li-mat : a-zi]-ṽba-tú¹ : ú-sat*, “‘Help’ (*taḫanātu*) = ‘succor,’ ‘support’ mean ‘assistance’” (see Jiménez 2017b, <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. DOI: [10079/7m0cg9h](https://doi.org/10.1017/7m0cg9h) (accessed August 23, 2020).

⁵⁹⁷Hruša 2010, 17.

⁵⁹⁸Hruša 2010, 16–18.

⁵⁹⁹Cf. Wasserman forthcoming, 7.

⁶⁰⁰George 2003, 651–652.

⁶⁰¹Weiershäuser & Hruša 2018, 145–146 and 149.

As can be seen from the previous examples, it is possible to identify two main types of interdependency between lexical and literary texts, one that involves the device of enumeration, which we shall call “Type a”, and another that results from the use of the same rare lemmata in both corpora, “Type b”. In the first case (Type a), the intertextual connections can be determined by:

1. An identical enumeration: the lexical and the literary text contain the same list of lemmata, enumerated in the exact same sequence (as is the case of Lu-azlag and the Eduba texts and dialogues, or the list of the winds found in the Gilgameš epic and in Malku).
2. A similar enumeration: the lexical and the literary text contain a list of lemmata which occasionally overlap; that is, the same terms might occur in both corpora, but they might appear in a different order (as for example in “Nanše and the birds”).
3. An enumeration lacking the hypotext:⁶⁰³ the literary text contains an enumeration of lemmata which closely resembles a list of lexical items, although there appears to be no corresponding lexical counterpart. In other words, such enumerations seem to draw from lexical sources, yet lack an actual lexical parallel (as with the “Home of the fish” or “Feeding Dumuzi’s sheep”).⁶⁰⁴

The second type of interdependence (Type b) concerns the shared use of a special vocabulary, i.e. rare terms attested exclusively in the lexical lists and in the literary compositions (such as the plant names in Enki and Ninḫursaĝa, the shared vocabulary between the Enḫeduanna texts and the Izi list, or the rare words found in the above mentioned inscription of Sargon, also attested in Malku).

Similar cases of intertextuality can be detected within the corpus of the Great Hymns and Prayers. In the following paragraph, some examples of contact between these texts and the lexical lists will be provided.

⁶⁰² Wasserman forthcoming, 6. For Hh XXII Weiershäuser & Hruša 2018.

⁶⁰³ I use here the definition coined by Genette 1997, 5, related to the notion of hypertextuality: “By hypertextuality I mean any relationship uniting a text B (which I call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not a commentary.[...] To view things differently, let us posit the general notion of a text in the second degree [...]: i.e., a text derived from another pre-existent text.” Cf. also Jiménez for the concept of hypotext within a discourse involving intertextuality as applied to the Akkadian literature (Jiménez 2017a, 80).

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Cale Johnson 2019, 17: “As always, Civil wisely avoids making any general statements about the generative properties of the process of enumeration, and at least in part, this is due to the fact that we do not have explicit textual precursors that demonstrate this type of derivational process. Stated somewhat differently, for the most part, we do not have the thematically driven lexical lists that would have served as direct written sources for the type of enumerations that Civil hypothesized.”

4.3 THE GREAT HYMNS AND PRAYERS AND THE LEXICON: INTERTEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

The Great Hymns and Prayers are extremely learned compositions: they are structured into poetic couplets, written in a literary style and enriched with rare words, often elsewhere unattested. While the precise *Sitz im Leben* of these texts is unknown, it is clear that they belonged to a scholarly context. Their importance within the stream of literary tradition is confirmed by the abundance of sources, many of which are school tablets,⁶⁰⁵ a fact that proves that these texts had a wide circulation and were used in the scribal education.⁶⁰⁶

The extensive use of this group of texts in the scribal schools can explain the numerous intertextual connections between this corpus and the lexicon. In some manuscripts, passages of the Great Hymns and Prayers are preserved together with lexical lists, as for example BM 36296+38070, which contains on the obverse the first seven lines of the Šamaš Hymn, immediately followed by a portion of Ura-ḫubullu XV (MSL 9, 10; Weiserhäuser & Hruša 2018, 112-116).⁶⁰⁷

The Great Hymns and Prayers present the types of intertextual relationship with the lexical corpus that have been described in the previous paragraph. They often contain enumerations, which in some cases correspond precisely to lists of terms in the lexical sources, and also special, high-register words, attested and explained in the lists.

4.3.1 Identical or similar enumerations

An identical enumeration is found for example in The Great Hymn to Šamaš, as it contains a set of synonyms for “cold” that resembles a passage in Antagal I, col. i 8’-11’ (MSL 17, 231),⁶⁰⁸ cf. also Erimḫuš VI 6–9:⁶⁰⁹

Šamaš Hymn:

¹⁸¹[*mu-šab-šu*]-*u ku-šu ḫal-pa-a šu-ri-pa šal-gi*

¹⁸¹[who cause]s cold, frost, ice and snow.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁵ For a list of the manuscripts see Chapter 1, §1.2.2

⁶⁰⁶ Their exact date of composition is unknown, though there are indications that at least one of these texts (Marduk I) had been copied since the Old Babylonian period, and continued to be transmitted until the third century B.C., see Oshima 2011, 138 and Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 155 and fn. 4. Cf. the remark of Lambert 1960, 122 on the Great Hymn to Šamaš, also attested on numerous school tablets.

⁶⁰⁷ See George & Taniguchi 2019, 8. There are numerous cases of these texts being copied on school tablets, together with extracts from lexical lists, cf. George & Taniguchi 2019, 4–8 and cf. also Chapter 1, §1.2.2.

⁶⁰⁸ For the restoration of this passage, see Landsberger 1934b, 248; cf. also Landsberger 1949, 156–157 on the ‘stereotypical’ sequence *ḫalpū šurīpu šalgu*.

⁶⁰⁹ Hruša and Weiserhäuser 2020, 123.

⁶¹⁰ Lambert 1960, 136–137.

Antagal I:

^{8'}en-te-[na(?)]_IZI+A = [ku-uš-šu]

^{9'}ud-šú-uš-ru = [ħal-pu-ú]

^{10'a-}ma^{1-gi}amagi(MÜŠ₃×A+DI) = [šú¹-ri-¹pu¹]

^{11'}A^{še-eg} AN = šal-gu

Within the same hymn, the couplet immediately following includes a list of terms related to the door and its parts, the majority of which occur in a section of Ura-ħubullu V:

Šamaš Hymn:

¹⁸²[pētú(?) k]á[?]-gal sik-kur AN-e muš-pal-ku-u da-lat da-ád-me⁶¹¹

¹⁸³[] x up-pi sik-ka-ta nam-za-qí áš-kut-ta

¹⁸²[Who opens the ga]te, the bolt of the heavens, who opens wide the doors of the earth,

¹⁸³[]...thong, lock-pin, latch, and door handle.⁶¹²

Hh V:

²⁷⁰^{ġeš}sa ġ-kul = si-ik-ku-ru

²⁷⁸^{ġeš}aš kud_x = áš-kut-tu

²⁸⁶^{ġeš}mud = up-[pu] (also 290: ^{ġeš}e₁₁ = u[p-pu])

²⁸⁸^{ġeš}ní ġ-gag-ti = na[m-za-qu] (see also 291: ^{ġeš}e₁₁ = [na]m-za-qu)⁶¹³

Two further examples involving lists of terms that show similarities with lexical sources are found in the Great Prayer to Nabû (see Chapter 2 for the edition). In l. 105 two names of demons, namely the *ħallulāju*-demon and *ilu lemnu*, are encased in the poetic composition. These demons occur together also in Erimħuš I 213–215 (MSL 17, 19). The copyist of the Nabû prayer, however, committed a mistake, borrowing from the list not only the name of the *ħallulāju*-demon, but also the adverb preceding it, i.e. *šanīš*, “again”, “secondly” (cf. the commentary on l. 105 of this prayer in Chapter 2):

Nabû:

¹⁰⁵[x x š]á-niš ħal-lu-la-a-a DIĠIR lem-ni ta-x [x x]

⁶¹¹ Own restoration based on copy collation: the copy of the new fragment K 20637 has been published in George & Taniguchi 2019, 100. According to the copy, the sign KÁ is partially visible before GAL, therefore I restore ká-gal, akk. *abullu*, “entrance gate”. Since the previous lines (176–181) all begin with a participle, one can hypothesise that a participle derived from a verb meaning “to open” is to be reconstructed in the first half of the verse; this verb could implicitly refer also to the second element of the enumeration chain, namely *sikkur šamê*.

⁶¹² Lambert 1960, 136–137.

⁶¹³ Weiershäuser & Hrůša 2018, 86–87. The word *sikkatu* is itemized independently in Hh VI 120, nevertheless it is listed very often in status constructus in Hh V, e.g., 287 ^{ġeš}gag mud = sik-kât up-pi, ^{ġeš}gag ní ġ-gag-ti = [sik¹-kât ki min] for *sikkat namzāqi*.

¹⁰⁵[...] *the Again-Hallulāju-demon*, the evil god you ... [...]

Erimḫuš I:

²¹³maškim₂ gi₆ lu₂-har-ra-an = *ḫal-lu-la-a-a*,

²¹⁴maškim₂ gi₄ a-ri-a = *šá-niš* MIN

²¹⁵diġir ki-šu tag-ga nu-tuku = DIĠIR *lem-nu*

Lines 176 and 178 in the same text display a vocabulary that seems to rely on a set of four entries found in Malku (Malku II 128–131; cf. the commentary on these lines in Chapter 2): the rare terms *šuršurru* and *ḫinzūru* appear together in l. 176 of the prayer, forming a genitive chain. The two words also occur in Malku, in immediate succession (Malku II 128–129):

Nabû Prayer:

¹⁷⁶*še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú²]/ mar-tú ma-r[i]*

¹⁷⁶My morning aid, the fruits of the apple-tree, youth (and) maid[en]/ daughter (and) so[n].

Malku II:

¹²⁸*šur-šur-ru* = *n[u-úr²-mu²-ú²]*

¹²⁹*ḫi-in-zu-ru* = *ḫaš-ḫu-ru*

¹²⁸*šuršurru*-fruit = Pomegranate

¹²⁹Apple-tree = Apple, Apple-tree⁶¹⁴

Moreover, the occurrence of the terms *alamittu* and *mar* in l. 178 recalls Malku II 130–131:

Nabû:

¹⁷⁸*a-la-mit-tum ú-ḫe-en-šá da-da-riš ma-a-[ar]*

¹⁷⁸The early fruit of the date-palm is bit[ter] like stinkwort.

Malku:

¹³⁰*mar-ra-tú* = *gi-šim-ma-ri*

¹³¹*a-la-mit-tum* = MIN

130 “The bitter one” = Datepalm

131 *alamittu*-palm = *ditto*⁶¹⁵

⁶¹⁴ Hrůša 2010, 60–61 and 341.

⁶¹⁵ Hrůša 2010, 60–61 and 341.

In the Ištar Prayer (see the edition in Chapter 3) the four winds are listed in the standard order (ll. 16–18).⁶¹⁶ The mention of the “side winds” which occurs after the four winds points to a similar set in Malku III 197–202 (cf. the commentary on these lines in Chapter 3):

Ištar Prayer:

- ¹⁶[*ni*²]-*pi-iḥ* IM I
¹⁷[] *pa-ni* IM II
¹⁸[IM III IM IV(?)] IM *i-da-a-ti*
¹⁶[the blo]wing of the South wind,
¹⁷[] before the North wind,
¹⁸[the East wind, the West wind], the side wind.

Malku III:

- ¹⁹⁷[pirig]-g[a]l = [š]*u-ú-ti*
¹⁹⁸[pirig-bàn]-da = [i]*l-ta-nu*
¹⁹⁹[pirig-š]u-du₇ = *ša-du-u*
²⁰⁰[p]irig-nu-šu-du₇ = *a-m[u]r-ru*
²⁰¹im-ti-la = *šá-a-ri š[e]-li*
²⁰²im-ti-la = MIN *i-da-a-t[i]*⁶¹⁷

The prayer to Marduk labelled by scholars as “Marduk1” also seems to display an intertextual connection with Malku: ll. 21/23–22/24 employ a group of synonyms for “intelligence” that resembles a similar set itemized in the synonym list (Malku IV 119–120).⁶¹⁸

Marduk1:

- ^{21/23}*be-lum*^dAMAR UTU *at-ta-ma [mu-du]-ú ta-šim-ti*
^{22/24}*šá mil-ka ru-up-pu-šá [ši-t]u-lu ir-šu*
^{21/23}Lord, you are the [*one who know*]s intelligence,
^{22/24}The one who gained profound advice and [con]sultation.⁶¹⁹

Malku IV:

- ¹¹⁹*ta-šim-tum = mil-ku*
¹²⁰*ši-tul-tum = MIN*
 intelligence = advice

⁶¹⁶ The Practical Vocabulary of Assur, 19'–22' (see Hrůša & Weiershäuser 2020, 47; Landsberger & Gurney 1958, 334; cf. Lambert 1959–60, 50) also uses numbers for the ideograms of the winds.

⁶¹⁷ Hrůša 2010, 88–89, 237 and 374.

⁶¹⁸ Cf. Oshima 2011, 174 and CAD T 288 sub *tašimtu* A, lex. sec.

⁶¹⁹ I follow here Oshima 2011, 144, 158–159.

consultation = *ditto*⁶²⁰

Cf. also the word group in Antagal A 200-203 (MSL 17, 188): *ṭè-e-mu, mil-ku, ši-tul-tum, ta-šim-tum*.

In the so-called Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, the goddess Ištar is invoked under numerous names, many of which are rare and mostly attested in lexical lists.⁶²¹ One couplet in particular (col. iii, 57–58) mentions two names of the goddess that also occur together in a list (CT 25, pl. 30, col. i, 22–23):

Queen of Nippur:

^{57d}*mi-nu-ú-an-ni ek-de-tú pu-luḥ-tu*

^{58d}*mi-nu-ú-ul-la e-li-ia-tú šá-lum-mat bu-ri*

⁵⁷Minû-anni, fierce with terror,

⁵⁸Minû-ulla, the lofty, the splendour of the Bull-Calf.⁶²²

CT 25, pl. 30:

^{22d}*mi-nu-ú-an-n[a]*

^{23d}*mi-nu-ú-ul-[la]*

The examples provided so far have concerned the use of lists as poetic tools that can be inserted and manipulated within the literary compositions. In some cases “identical enumerations” have been identified (as in the Šamaš Hymn, l. 181); other examples have illustrated enumerations in the literary texts, which only partially overlap those attested in the lexical lists (Šamaš ll. 182–183). Occasionally, lexical sets can even be “split” within the literary composition, thus losing their enumerative character (e.g., Marduk1).

4.3.2 Enumeration lacking the hypotext

In addition, the Great Hymns and Prayers also largely employ what we have defined as an “Enumeration lacking the hypotext”. For example, the Gula Hymn presents a couplet (ll. 40–41) containing an enumeration of lexical terms related to the semantic field of agriculture, which does not find any precise lexical parallel:

Gula Hymn:

⁴⁰*be-let qup-pi* NUMUN ^{ĝeš}APIN *har-bu* ^{ĝeš}TUKUL *u re-di-i*

⁶²⁰ Hruša 2010, 100–101, 244 and 386.

⁶²¹ Lambert 1982, esp. his commentary to col. ii, ll. 18–19 and ll. 22–23 (208) and to col. iii, ll. 67–68 (213).

⁶²² Lambert 1982, 198–199.

⁴¹ *mut-tab-bi-lat áš-lu am-mat* GI.MEŠ *gi-níg-da-nak-ku*

⁴⁰ Mistress of basket, seed grain, plow, plowfield, share and *field hand*,

⁴¹ Who stretches out the measuring-cord, cubits and measuring rod.⁶²³

Marduk2, l. 37" presents an enumeration of terms connected to navigation, for which no exact lexical parallel is found:

Marduk2:

³⁷ "[*t*]ur-ri kib-ri ka-a-ri né-be-ri qa-tuk-ka paq-du

³⁷ My rope, bank harbour, embankment and ferry are entrusted to you.⁶²⁴

4.3.3 Lexical interdependence

The dependence of the Great Hymns and Prayers to the lexical corpus is also corroborated by the occurrence of special, extremely learned words that are elsewhere found only in the lexical lists. This corresponds to what we have previously labelled as the "Type b"-interdependence, namely the lexical interdependence.

The following terms are attested only within the lexical lists and the Great Hymns and Prayers:

mušallû, "liar": Šamaš Hymn l. 143⁶²⁵ and Malku VIII 35⁶²⁶ (cf. *AHw* II 678; *CAD* M/2 241⁶²⁷); *qunnabru*, "fetters": Nabû Prayer, l. 173, (cf. the edition and the commentary on this line in Chapter 2), Marduk1 l. 61, l. 155⁶²⁸ and Malku I 95 (cf. *AHw* II 928; *CAD* Q 306); *hinzûru*, "apple-tree": Nabû Prayer l. 176, Malku II 129⁶²⁹ and exp. Malku III, 210⁶³⁰ (cf. *AHw* I 333-334; *CAD* H 139-140); *abdu* "slave": Nabû Prayer l. 104 and 150, Ištar Prayer l. 81 (cf. the edition of the prayer and the commentary on this line in Chapter 3), Malku I 175⁶³¹ and Antagal 229 (MSL 17, 159; cf. *AHw* I 6; *CAD* A/1 52); *abūšîn*, "flood": Marduk1 ll. 5/7⁶³² and Malku II 257⁶³³ (cf. *CAD* A/1, 93a); *sissîru*, "granary": Prayer to Anūna l. 29, l. 111 and Malku I 273⁶³⁴ (cf. *AHw* III 1038; *CAD* S 328 sub *sissîru* B); *gāgamu*, mng. uncertain, probably refers to a type of building: Prayer to Anūna l. 93 and Malku I 267⁶³⁵ (cf. *AHw* I 273; *CAD* G 1); *karpašu*, "superb": Gula Hymn l. 171⁶³⁶ and Expl. Malku 154⁶³⁷ (cf. *AHw* I 449 ; *CAD* K 219).

⁶²³ The translation used here is that of Foster 2005, 585. Cf. Lambert 1967, 118-119.

⁶²⁴ Oshima 2011, 238, 250-251.

⁶²⁵ Lambert 1960, 134-135.

⁶²⁶ Hrůša 2010, 140-141 and 423.

⁶²⁷ *CAD* considers the word as derived from *sullû*, "to pray", "to implore", but the meaning "enemy" suits the line better, because this couplet of the hymn (ll. 143-144) deals with evildoers facing the Sun-god.

⁶²⁸ Oshima 2011, 147, 160-161; 154, 166-167.

⁶²⁹ Hrůša 2010, 60-61 and 341.

⁶³⁰ Hrůša 2010, 182-183 and 452.

⁶³¹ Hrůša 2010, 42-43 and 313.

⁶³² Oshima 2011, 142, 158-159, 171-172; cf. Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 167, 169 and 173.

⁶³³ Hrůša 2010, 18, 70-71, 223-224, 352.

⁶³⁴ Hrůša 2010, 50-51 and 324.

⁶³⁵ Hrůša 2010, 48-49 and 323.

⁶³⁶ Lambert 1967, 126-127 and 132.

⁶³⁷ Hrůša 2010, 158-159 and 435.

In analysing the relations between the lexicon and the literary corpus, it can be difficult to ascertain that an interdependence is in fact to be taken as such. Especially when dealing with enumerations lacking the lexical hypotexts, one has to consider the possibility that either the lexical source was lost in transmission or that there had been no lexical source at all, and the lexical-like listing inserted in the literary text should be understood as an original poetic expression.

However problematic it might be to recognise and classify intertextual connections, the examples presented above have shown that there is indeed a certain degree of correlation between the Great Hymns and Prayers and the lexical sources: a high level of interdependency is found especially between the literary compositions and the synonym list *Malku* = *šarru*. This confirms that *Malku* had a practical use in the composition and study of the Akkadian literary texts, and was not a mere scholarly collection of learned lemmata.⁶³⁸

Although in most cases it is impossible to ascertain whether it was the literary text using the lexicon as a source of inspiration or *vice versa*, there are instances where the “direction” of the process is clear. The erroneous *šanīš Ḥallulāju* in the Nabû Prayer (see above), for example, indicates that the author of the composition very likely relied on the lexical list and used it to create the text.

The difficult word *abūšīn* (see above, Marduk1), on the contrary, probably reflects the opposite situation: Lambert explained it as a scribal mistake perhaps originated from an original *abūruk* (derived from *abāru*, “to be strong”), written *a-bu-RUK* and misinterpreted by the scribes copying the prayer, who understood the form as *a-bu-šIN*. This would have led to the various corrupted forms attested in the manuscripts of Marduk1 (i.e., BM 45476: *a-bu-ši-in* (l. 5) and *a-bu-si-in* (l. 7), BM 76492: *a-bu-šIN*) and then eventually to the peculiar entry in *Malku* II 257 *a-bu-ši-in/šin*.⁶³⁹ Cf. also An VIII 79, which has the slightly varied equation: *a-bu-ši-im* = *a-bu-bu* (*CAD* A/1 93). Hence, in this case, the direction of the intertextual connection probably shifted from the literary composition to the lexical texts, in which lexicographers itemized and explained the nonexistent term *abūšīn/im*.

Lexical and literary texts were integral parts of the scribal education, and were both used in the production of texts. Indeed scribes would use lexical lists to compose works of literature: they could, for example, creatively manipulate lists, shaping them into poetical enumerations, or select and re-use refined terms provided by the lexical sources. Similarly,

⁶³⁸ Hrůša 2010, 18; cf. Edzard 2007, 24, who understands the synonym list *Malku* as a purely theoretical product of intellectual lucubrations.

⁶³⁹ Hrůša 2010, 18; Lambert 2011 and 2013, 473; cf. Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 173.

scribes could extract single words or entire phrases from literary compositions and incorporate them into lexical texts, in order to collect and explain rare lemmata.⁶⁴⁰ Lists pervade so deeply the Mesopotamian scholarship and culture that lexical and literary texts can intertwine.

This should remind modern scholars that it could be difficult to set and distinguish genres in Mesopotamia.⁶⁴¹ Cuneiform texts often defy the western labels and categorisations, presenting problems related to authorship, purpose and context. As convincingly argued by Michalowski, Mesopotamian literature appears to be defined by a strong interweave of intertextual and intratextual references and connections, rather than by strict *taxa*.⁶⁴² The lexical and the literary, seemingly belonging to completely different literary categories, are heavily dependent on each other. Their comparison proves to be essential for the understanding and interpretation of cuneiform literary texts, shedding light on poetic techniques as well as on the process of text production and composition in scholarly contexts.

⁶⁴⁰ Cf. Crisostomo 2016, 137.

⁶⁴¹ Vanstiphout 1986; Reiner 1992, 293; cf. Rubio 2003, 200–201. Cf. Chapter 1, §.1.1.1

⁶⁴² Michalowski 1999, 87–89; cf. Rubio 2003. 201.

CHAPTER 5: RHETORICAL DEVICES AND POETIC LANGUAGE OF THE GREAT HYMNS AND PRAYERS

5.1 RHETORIC IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

The classical canons of rhetoric⁶⁴³ cannot be easily applied to the Mesopotamian context, and the word rhetoric itself might appear as a misnomer when referred to cuneiform texts. The difficulty in investigating rhetorical features in Sumerian and Akkadian literature is due to multiple factors, such as the complex analysis of the metre,⁶⁴⁴ the nature of the writing system, the problematic reconstruction of the phonology,⁶⁴⁵ the fragmentary nature of many texts, the general anonymity of the author—and the uncertainty in determining the author’s original purpose—and ultimately the often unknown social context in which the text was used and performed, as well as the unknown audience.⁶⁴⁶

There is no absolute definition of rhetoric, and trying to enclose cuneiform literature within the schemes of western cultures can lead to the misinterpretation of textual sources. Discussing rhetoric in a comparative approach, Schiappa remarks:

[...] “Rhetoric” is the name of a category that is used in some but not all cultures and some but not all time periods of human history, and used in a highly variable manner when it is used. But there is no timeless essence of rhetoric, and no God’s-Eye View of what rhetoric “really is”. Furthermore, from a historiographical standpoint, we do a disservice to the differences produced in various cultures and times by attempting to reduce them to a unified (typically Greek) set of categories and terms, which is both bad history and bad manners.⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴³ The earliest attestation of the term *rhētorikē* is found in Plato’s *Gorgias*, but the first complete treatment of rhetoric has been provided by Aristotle, who considers it as an actual art, which allows to reinforce a discourse through persuasive strategies. He defines three forms of rhetoric: *ēthos*, i.e. the speaker’s ability to appear credible, *logos*, i.e. the logical strength of the argument, and *pathos*, i.e. the emotional effect on the audience. The first treatise in latin on the subject of rhetoric is Cicero’s *De inventione*, in which the author describes the five canons of rhetoric, namely *inventio* (invention), *dispositio* (arrangement), *elocutio* (style), *memoria* (memory) and *actio* (delivery); the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, was probably written approximately in the same period (1st century BCE), and it includes a comprehensive treatment of the rhetorical devices (*Figures*). See Mac Donald 2017 for a comprehensive study of the history and development of rhetoric.

⁶⁴⁴ On the importance of metre in the interpretation of poetry, see Buccellati 1990, 108.

⁶⁴⁵ See Michalowski 1996, 144–145 on the complexities in recognising Sumerian rhetorical elements caused by the uncertainties in the phonological reconstruction of the language. It remains unclear, e.g., if, how and when the determinatives were pronounced.

⁶⁴⁶ On the difficulties in conducting a rhetorical analysis of Mesopotamian literary texts (especially Sumerian), and on the different approaches taken by modern scholars, see Black 1998, 20–49. Incidentally, similar problems are encountered by Assyriologists when trying to define genres in the Mesopotamian literature, cf. the introduction, Chapter 1, 1.1.1, cf. also Chapter 4, §4.3.3.

⁶⁴⁷ Schiappa 2017, 35.

Whereas cuneiform sources do not include any theoretical treatise of rhetoric comparable to those by Aristotle or Cicero, there are, however, many indications of a conscious use of rhetorical strategies to enhance the aesthetics and the power of persuasion of the discourse.⁶⁴⁸

Indeed the lack of a term or systematised theory does not necessarily indicate the absence of a concept.⁶⁴⁹ Some Sumerian sources suggest that rhetorical skills were considered as valuable among Mesopotamians; for instance, a Sumerian hymn to the King of Ur Šulgi contains a passage, in which the king himself declares to have taught eloquence to his generals.⁶⁵⁰ Numerous Mesopotamian texts of various genres display rhetorical features: letters,⁶⁵¹ incantation texts,⁶⁵² royal inscriptions,⁶⁵³ wisdom compositions (e.g., dialogues or disputation poems, proverbs⁶⁵⁴) and epic all provide examples of rhetoric and poetic language.⁶⁵⁵ Also purely scholarly texts, as, for instance, commentaries, can exhibit certain traits that might be deemed as rhetorical.⁶⁵⁶ In addition, religious poetry, i.e. hymns and prayers,⁶⁵⁷ also lends itself to a rhetorical analysis, since it employs techniques that aim to persuade and facilitate the communication with a divine agency: the devotee expresses their faith via specific formulations and stock phrases that reflect the dynamics of power between human beings and deities, either showing trust in the divine aid or lamenting their miserable conditions (“negative rhetoric”).⁶⁵⁸ Nevertheless, there are relatively few Assyriological

⁶⁴⁸ Incidentally, this idea was rejected by Landsberger in his famous essay “Die Eigenbegrifflichkeit der babylonischen Welt” (1926). The author in fact succinctly declared that “Alle Rhetorik ist dem Akkader fremd. Niemals erhebt sich der Geist des Dichters aus der realen eine höhere Welt durch gehobene Sprache. Nur durch gesteigerte Kraft lebenswahrer Darstellung, durch einfaches Anreihen von Bildern von nicht zu übertreffender Plastik wirkt der Dichter.”

⁶⁴⁹ The idea that, for example, there was no concept of freedom in the Ancient Near East because there appears to be no precise word for it has been proposed by Finley (1985) and challenged by von Dassow (2011). See also Bahrani 2014 on the concept of aesthetics in Mesopotamia and van de Mieroop (2018, 20–21), who argues that a notion of philosophy comparable to that of the Greeks was present in the Mesopotamian culture, although no exact Sumerian or Akkadian term is found.

⁶⁵⁰ For this and other examples, see Sallaberger 2007 and Mittermayer 2020, 28–29, who further suggests that eloquence could have been taught in scribal schools through the Sumerian disputation poems.

⁶⁵¹ See, for example, Sallaberger 1999, esp. 149–154 for rhetorical aspects in Old-Babylonian letters. See below also fn. 663.

⁶⁵² For poetical features in magic texts, see Michalowski 1981, Cooper 1996, Veldhuis 1999 and Schwemer 2014.

⁶⁵³ For rhetorical figures in several Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, see e.g., Ponchia 2000.

⁶⁵⁴ See, for example, Vanstiphout 1990 and 1992 for rhetoric in Sumerian debates.

⁶⁵⁵ Hallo 2004, esp. 28–34. Sallaberger 1999, 149–154 and 2007, 70. For some remarks on the rhetorical and poetical discourses and how they intertwine, poetics being a type of rhetoric, see Walker 2017, 85–96.

⁶⁵⁶ See the study by Wee 2019 on the rhetorical strategies adopted by scholars in the Sa.gig commentary.

⁶⁵⁷ For a stylistic and rhetorical analysis of hymns and prayers see, for example, Mayer 1976; cf. also Zgoll 2003b, Lenzi et. al. 2011 and Frechette 2012.

⁶⁵⁸ For the contrast between positive and negative rhetorical expressions, see the study on the persuasive character of language in prayers in Lenzi 2019b, esp. 33, fn. 77; see also Mayer 1976 and see the introduction to the Great Prayer to Nabû and to the Literary Prayer to Ištar (Chapter 2, § 2.4.1. and Chapter 3, §3.4.1.). Cf. also Abusch 2018, 58 discussing the persuasiveness of prayers: “As a speech, the prayer may contain various rhetorical devices, but it should convey a clear message—one without blatant gaps, inconsistencies,

studies that deal with rhetorical aspects of cuneiform literature. Contrary to Biblical studies, that have a long tradition of literary and poetical criticism,⁶⁵⁹ modern scholarship in Assyriology mostly focuses on the study of the languages and the reconstruction of the texts. With regard to rhetoric, previous Assyriological research has been conducted on the use of specific rhetorical devices, or on the occurrence of rhetorical features within an individual text or corpus.⁶⁶⁰

For instance, several rhetorical devices appearing in both Sumerian and Biblical literature have been investigated by Berlin, who devoted particular attention to parallelism.⁶⁶¹ Further writings on parallelism and its different types (e.g., synonymous, antithetic, synthetic) has recently been offered by Streck;⁶⁶² Vogelzang focused on the device of repetition, analysing passages taken from Akkadian hymns and epic poems.⁶⁶³ A linguistic and semantic study on metaphor and imagery in Akkadian was provided by Goodnick Westenholz,⁶⁶⁴ and more recently by Wasserman, with particular regard to the Old-Babylonian corpus of literary texts.⁶⁶⁵ Sumerian literary texts also display similes and metaphors, as shown by Heimpel in his exhaustive study on this subject.⁶⁶⁶ Klein and Sefati observed puns in Sumerian literature,⁶⁶⁷ while Kilmer investigated the same phenomenon in Akkadian poetry.⁶⁶⁸

Among the significant contributions which took into examination individual texts or group of texts, one can mention, for example, the analysis of the Sumerian composition labelled as “The Exaltation of Inanna” offered by Hallo and van Dijk, who divided the poem into rhetorical sections (“exordium”, “argument” and “peroration”),⁶⁶⁹ or the study by Hess on the rhetorical techniques used in the Amarna letters.⁶⁷⁰

contradictions, etc. No less than a legal speech, a prayer is an address that tries to convince and to make a persuasive case.”

⁶⁵⁹ See for example the works on biblical poetry by Watson (1986 and 1994) or Schökel 1988; also the scholarship on Ugaritic has taken an interest in rhetorical and poetical features, see for example Pardee 1988, Segert 1983, Watson 1999 and more recently Lam 2019. For further bibliography on both Biblical and Ugaritic contributions on these subjects, cf. also Hallo 2004.

⁶⁶⁰ The below-mentioned works do not represent a complete list of Assyriological studies on the matters of poetic language and rhetoric, but are meant to provide a general idea of previous writings on this subject. Further bibliography can be found in Hallo 2004, Wasserman 2003, Foster 2005 and Lenzi 2019a.

⁶⁶¹ Berlin 1978.

⁶⁶² Streck 2007.

⁶⁶³ Vogelzang 1996.

⁶⁶⁴ Goodnick Westenholz, 1996.

⁶⁶⁵ Wasserman 1999.

⁶⁶⁶ Heimpel 1968, but cf. also the concise survey provided by Black 1998, 9–19, who addressed the same issue within his work on Sumerian poetry.

⁶⁶⁷ Klein & Sefati 2000.

⁶⁶⁸ Kilmer 2000.

⁶⁶⁹ Hallo & van Dijk 1968.

⁶⁷⁰ Hess 1993 and 2003; cf. also Gewirtz 1973.

Following the medieval conception of rhetoric as part of the *trivium* of the seven liberal arts (grammar, rhetoric and logic), Falkowitz stressed on the didactic essence of rhetoric within the Sumerian culture: he understood as “rhetoric” all the texts belonging to the Old-Babylonian scribal curriculum, as they were meant to teach the scribes how to write well: first by learning the signs and the grammar, and later by studying more complex texts including proverbs, letters and poetry. For this reason, Falkowitz coined the term “Sumerian rhetorical collection” to define the entire collection of Sumerian proverbs that were part of the scribal curriculum.⁶⁷¹

Numerous literary devices, especially alliterations, assonances and puns, have been identified by Noegel in the poem of Erra,⁶⁷² Mayer investigated the rhetoric and poetic language within the corpus of the Akkadian *šuilla*-prayers,⁶⁷³ and Streck offered a comprehensive study on figurative language in Akkadian Epic compositions.⁶⁷⁴

Wasserman’s work stands out among the studies on Mesopotamian poetic language, being a thorough rhetorical analysis of Old-Babylonian literary texts; the author made a selection of rhetorical devices occurring in the corpus of Old-Babylonian literary compositions, i.e., hendiadys, merismus, rhyming couplets, simile, *tamyīz* and *damqam-īnim*.⁶⁷⁵

For the purpose of the present study, an approach similar to Wasserman’s will be employed: a selected group of rhetorical devices found within the corpus of the “Great Hymns and Prayers” will be explained and illustrated through a selection of examples borrowed from the texts.

5.2 RHETORICAL DEVICES IN THE GREAT HYMNS AND PRAYERS

The literary compositions under study are written in a poetic language that uses a multitude of figures of speech. The following survey does not intend to be exhaustive, but is an overview of the most recurrent and prominent rhetorical figures that appear in the Great Hymns and Prayers.

The present classification is partially indebted to the model proposed by Plett in his study on literary rhetoric, hence rhetorical figures are divided according to their linguistic level, that is, to the effect they produce on the phonological, syntactical, semantic and morphological

⁶⁷¹ Falkowitz 1982, esp. 21–30; cf. Hallo 2004, 27.

⁶⁷² Noegel 2011.

⁶⁷³ Mayer 1976. Cf. also Frechette 2012.

⁶⁷⁴ Streck 1999.

⁶⁷⁵ Wasserman 2003.

level of language. Therefore, I will discuss a number of phonological, syntactic, semantic and morphological figures that can be detected within the poems under consideration:⁶⁷⁶

1. Phonological figures: alliteration, assonance, consonance, homoioteleuton and rhyme.
2. Syntactic figures: parallelism, repetition.
3. Semantic figures: metaphor, simile, hendiadys, merismus, pun, climax and enumeration.
4. Morphological figures: *figura etymologica*, polyptoton.⁶⁷⁷

5.2.1 Phonological figures in the Akkadian sources

Although the phonological reconstruction of ancient languages poses difficulties, and several nuances are destined to be lost to the modern reader,⁶⁷⁸ rhetorical figures that involve a deviation from the normative language in terms of sound are well-attested in the Akkadian sources. Alliteration and homoioteleuton (i.e. the repetition of the same consonant at the beginning or at the end of nearby words, respectively⁶⁷⁹), consonance and assonance (the former being the repetition of the same consonant in proximate words, the latter, of the same vowel), can often be found in purely literary texts as well as in incantations and omens.⁶⁸⁰ Rhyme, intended as the repetition of words or word endings at the end of lines, occurs less often. Indeed, the identification of rhymes in Akkadian poetry can prove problematic, due to the difficulties in reconstructing the Akkadian metre and the impossibility of ascertaining the exact pronunciation. In Semitic poetic texts, one could argue that rhymes are virtually a mere form of repetition.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁶ Plett classified rhetorical figures by analysing both their linguistic level and their linguistic operation, namely the deviation from the norm of the standard language (which could be either of a reinforcing or violating kind). For the sake of clarity, I take into account only the linguistic planes. See Plett 2010, 65–67. Cf. Plett 1975 and 1985.

⁶⁷⁷ For names of the figures, see, e.g., Lanham 1991, Sloane 2001 and Lausberg 1998; cf. also Watson 1986 and 1999, for a comprehensive classification of rhetorical devices in the biblical poetry, with comparison to Ugaritic and Akkadian literature.

⁶⁷⁸ Mesopotamian poetry was often sung: the actual pronunciation—and the possible varieties in pronunciation between different genres—the musicality and expressivity of the performances are inevitably difficult, if not impossible, for us to reconstruct, cf. Michalowski 1996, 144.

⁶⁷⁹ I consider here homoioteleuton and rhyme as two different devices. For a definition of homoioteleuton, see Lanham 1991, 83–85. For the sake of simplicity, I do not distinguish between cases of homoioteleuton and homioptoton, cf. the discussion on the difference and the possible overlapping of these two devices in Lanham 1991, 82–85.

⁶⁸⁰ Hecker 1974, 139–140; von Soden 1981, 53 and 78; Hurowitz 2000. For some examples of alliteration and consonance in Sumerian literary sources, see Klein & Sefati 2000, 41–54.

⁶⁸¹ Wasserman 2003, 157–159, who points out the close connection between rhyme and meter in Akkadian. Cf. also Helle 2014, 66. Cf. also Watson 1986, 230: “It is generally agreed that rhyme does not play an important part in ancient Semitic poetry”. In her study on Akkadian poetry, Vogelzang (1996) defines rhymes as a “sound repetition”, see 172. According to Civil (1993, 1233–1234), rhyme is not recurrent in Sumerian literature either: “Alliteration and assonantal rhyme are known, but sparingly used”. Cf. Klein & Sefati 2000, 24, fn. 4 and 25, fn.

Phonological figures are used for both aesthetic and practical reasons, as they not only contribute to the pleasantness of a text, by playing a crucial role with prosody in creating euphony and rhythm, but also serve the purpose of highlighting meaningful aspects of a composition.⁶⁸² Within incantations and prayers phonological figures help strengthening the effectiveness of the performance;⁶⁸³ furthermore, they convey an emotional and persuasive tone to the text, thus rendering it more appealing to the addressee.⁶⁸⁴ In hymns, rhyming couplets can occur at the end, marking the conclusion of the composition and suggesting a reaction from the audience.⁶⁸⁵

5.2.1.1 *Phonological figures in the Great Hymns and Prayers*

The following list includes various examples of phonological figures of speech found in the corpus under study. Two compositions in particular have proved to be especially rich in phonological figures, namely the Hymn to Šamaš and the Gula Hymn, being characterised by a remarkably high number of rhymes and homoioteleuta. Nevertheless, phonological devices appear throughout all the texts: consonance is the most common phonetic figure found within this corpus, while alliteration appears less often. The vast majority of the rhyming couplets that can be observed in the Great Hymns and Prayers are grammatical rhymes, that is, rhymes that result from the exact repetition of the same morphemes.⁶⁸⁶

In addition, rhyming couplets are used in the final section of the Great Prayer to Nabû, thus leading the audience to the end of the composition: ll. 210–223 contain a combination of

6. Compare, however, Wilcke 1974, 217–218, who provides several examples of rhymes, assonances and alliteration in Sumerian poetry, observing that phonological figures do occur quite often in Sumerian literary texts, although he considers Sumerian rhyme almost as a “Zeilengrenze überschreitende Form von Alliteration und Assonanz” (Wilcke 1974, 217).

⁶⁸² See for instance Hurowitz (2000, 68–70) for some cases of alliterations producing intratextual allusions within narrative passages. See also Vogelzang 1996, 168–170.

⁶⁸³ The power of phonetic effect can be seen especially in the so-called abracadabra incantations, see Veldhuis 1999, 46–48; Schwemer 2014, 266.

⁶⁸⁴ Schwemer 2014, 281; cf. also Vogelzang 1996, 169.

⁶⁸⁵ This practice is more attested in Sumerian compositions, but occurs more sporadically in Akkadian hymns. See Black 1992, 71–75 and Wasserman 2003, 172.

⁶⁸⁶ Grammatical rhyme is the most common rhyme attested within the corpus under analysis. Besides those here provided (see below), other examples of grammatical rhyme can be seen in: Šamaš Hymn, ll. 91–93; ll. 116–117, ll. 173–175; Nabû Prayer, ll. 200–203; Gula Hymn, ll. 142–143; 146–147. Although this type of rhyme might be considered weak according to our modern taste, it was widely used in Akkadian literary texts, together with the tautological rhyme, i.e., the exact repetition of the same word (see in the example below, the Šamaš Hymn, ll. 27–30). The pervasive occurrence of these and other kinds of repetition in the cuneiform literary sources (for instance, the repetition of entire couplets at the beginning of hymns and prayers in both Sumerian and Akkadian, see below §5.2.2.1.2.1, “Delayed introduction”) suggests that such types of identical repetition must have been deemed as pleasant by the Mesopotamians, cf. the remarks by Veldhuis 1999, 44–45 with regard to the usage of repetition in magical texts. Cf. Wasserman 2004, 162–167 for more examples of grammatical rhymes in Akkadian. Cf. the definition of grammatical rhyme in Brogan 1993a, 480.

“lyrical repetitions” (212–215 and 220–223) and rhyming couplets (ll. 210–211, with pattern AA, and 216–219, with pattern ABBA), see the complete text in Chapter 2.

5.2.1.1.1 Alliteration

- 1) Šamaš Hymn, l. 39 (alliteration of the velar phoneme /k/, emphasized by /q/):

³⁹[^dŠamaš] *ki-ma qé-e ka-sa-ta ki-ma im-ba-ri [ká]t-ma-ta*

³⁹[^dŠamaš], you draw in like the cord (of a net), you shroud like a fog⁶⁸⁷

- 2) Šamaš Hymn, l. 180 (alliteration of the nasal phoneme /m/):

¹⁸⁰ [*m*] *u-kar-ru-ú u₄-me mu-ur-ri-ku mūšâti* (GI₆.MEŠ)

¹⁸⁰[Wh]o yet shortens the days and lengthens the nights⁶⁸⁸

- 3) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, l. 37 (alliteration of the sibilant phoneme /š/)

^{37d} *šar-rat-nippuri^{ki} šá-qat u šar-rat*

³⁷the Queen of Nippur, she is lofty and she is queen⁶⁸⁹

- 4) Marduk Hymn 2, l. 12' (alliteration of the dental phonemes /t/ and /t'/)

^{12'} *tu-ut-ter-ra-áš-šú ta-a-bi šá it-ru-ru tē-en-šú*

^{12'}You made healthy again the one, whose mind has trembled.⁶⁹⁰

5.2.1.1.2 Consonance

- 1) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, 42 (repetition of the velar phoneme /k/):

⁴² *a-a ip-par-ku maḥ-ra-ki li-kun zi-ik-ruk-ki*

⁴²May it be recited without cease in your presence, be established at your command.⁶⁹¹

- 2) Šamaš Hymn, l. 128 (the first hemistich contains a repetition of the nasal phoneme /m/, and of the velar phonemes /k/ and /q/ and dental /d/ and /t/ in the second; note also the assonance of /a/ and /u/):

¹²⁸ *ma-na-ma ma-am-ma pu-uq-qu-du qa-tuk-ka*

¹²⁸Every single person is entrusted to your hands.⁶⁹²

- 3) Šamaš Hymn, l. 145 (repetition of the labial phoneme /m/):

⁶⁸⁷ Lambert 1960, 128–129; cf. Hurowitz 2000, 67.

⁶⁸⁸ Lambert 1960, 136–137.

⁶⁸⁹ Lambert 1982, 202–203.

⁶⁹⁰ Own translation. Cf. the last edition by Oshima 2011, 232, 246–247.

⁶⁹¹ Lambert 1982, 204–205.

⁶⁹² Lambert 1960, 134–135.

¹⁴⁵*mi-i-tum mur-tap-pi-du e-ṭim-mu ḫal-qu*

¹⁴⁵The roving dead, the vagrant soul⁶⁹³

4) Gula Hymn, l. 77 (repetition of the liquid phoneme //l/):

⁷⁷*i-lit-ti elletu* (KU₃-TI₃) *ša^dnin-<lil>*

⁷⁷Pure offspring of Ninlil⁶⁹⁴

5.2.1.1.3 Assonance

1) Gula Hymn, l. 171 (repetition of the /a/ vowel sound):

¹⁷¹*a-pir a-ga-a šá qar-ni kar-pa-ša-a-ti*

¹⁷¹His head is covered with a turban of superb horns⁶⁹⁵

2) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 43-44 (repetition of the /i/ vowel sound in the first line and of the /a/ in the second):

⁴³*a¹-na šid-di šá la i-de ne-su-ti u bi-ri la ma-n[u-ti]*

⁴⁴*[^d]UTU dal-pa-ta šá ur-ra tal-li-ka u mu-ša^d ta-saḫ-r[a]*⁶⁹⁶

3) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, obv. ii, l. 59 (repetition of the /a/ and the /u/ vowel sound):

⁵⁹*am-ma-a-áš ša-am-nam ip-ru-šú i-pu-šu ik-[ki-ba-am]*

⁵⁹His parents have withheld the oil, they have committed an ab[omination].⁶⁹⁷

5.2.1.1.4 Homoioteleuton

1) Nabû Prayer, l. 77 (repetition of the adverbial ending -iš):

⁷⁷*aḫ-ra-tiš pi-is-nu-qiš lâl-la-riš ú-da-áš-š[ap]*

⁷⁷With time, what (seemed) pitiable, he swee[tens] like syrup⁶⁹⁸

2) Gula Hymn, l. 65 (repetition of the stative ending -āku):

⁶⁵*ma-ra-ku kal-la-ku ḫi-ra-ku u ab-rak-ka-ku*

⁶⁵I am daughter, I am bride, I am spouse, I am house-keeper⁶⁹⁹

3) Šamaš Hymn, l. 33 (repetition of the plural ending -āti):

⁶⁹³ Lambert 1960, 134–135.

⁶⁹⁴ Lambert 1967, 120–121.

⁶⁹⁵ Lambert 1967, 126–127.

⁶⁹⁶ Lambert 1960, 128–129; cf. Vogelzang 1996, 179.

⁶⁹⁷ Lambert 1989, 326 and 330.

⁶⁹⁸ For this text, see the edition in Chapter 2, to which I will refer throughout the present study when discussing this prayer, if not differently stated.

⁶⁹⁹ Lambert 1967, 120–121.

³³*re-’u-u šap-la-a-ti na-qí-du e-la-a-ti*

³³Shepherd of that beneath, keeper of that above.⁷⁰⁰

5.2.1.1.5 Rhyme

- 1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 27–30 (tautological rhyme, pattern ABAB):

²⁷*te-te-né-ti-iq gi-na-a šá-ma-mi*

²⁸[š]u-um-dul-ta er-še-tu ta-ba-’a u₄-me-šam

²⁹*mīli* (ΓE₄.LA₆¹) *tāmti* (A.AB.BA) *ḥur-sa-a-ni er-še-ta ša-ma-mi*

³⁰*ki-i gán* [x¹ si *gi-na-a ta-ba-’a u₄-me-šam*

²⁷Regularly and without cease you traverse the heavens,

²⁸Every day you pass over the broad earth,

²⁹The flood of the sea, the mountains, the earth, the heavens,

³⁰Like a...you pass over them daily without cease.⁷⁰¹

- 2) Gula Hymn, ll. 115–116 (grammatical rhyme, pattern AA):

¹¹⁵*rag-gu a-a-bi ú’-šem-mi ti-iṭ-ṭiš*

¹¹⁶*šur-ši kul-lat la ma-gi-ru i-qam-mi a-pí-iš*

¹¹⁵The wicked and enemies he turns into clay,

¹¹⁶He burns up like reeds the roots of all disobedient.⁷⁰²

- 3) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. ii, ll. 13–14 (grammatical rhyme and homoioteleuton between the hemistichs; pattern AA)

¹³*um-mad re-š[á-a]-šú i-du še-pi-šú*

¹⁴*āl*(URU)-*šu su-uḥ-ḥur-šu pit-lu-ḥa-šu ni-šá-a-šu*

¹³Resting his head beside his feet.

¹⁴His city shunned him, his people stood aloof from him⁷⁰³

- 4) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, ll. 155–158 (pattern ABAB)

¹⁵⁵[*du-mi-i*]q-ta-am šī-ta-am a-na ni-ši a-pi₂-a-tim

¹⁶⁰x ri ur *wardum* (İR) uḥ₂-x x *ša-tam šu-mi-iš-ki*

¹⁶¹[] x-at é-tùr-kalam-ma ša-qú-ut i-la-a-tim

¹⁶²[] tin-tir šu-ur-ba-at e-nu-uk-ki

¹⁵⁵[Pleasa]nt sleep to the numerous peoples,

¹⁵⁶[...]... slave... at your name.

⁷⁰⁰ Lambert 1960, 128–129.

⁷⁰¹ Lambert 1960, 126–127.

⁷⁰² Lambert 1967, 122–123.

⁷⁰³ Lambert 1982, 194–195.

¹⁵⁷[...] of Eturkamma, lofty one of the goddess,

¹⁵⁸[...] Tintir, greatest of the Anunnaki.⁷⁰⁴

5.2.2 Syntactic figures in the Akkadian sources

Rhetorical figures that produce an effect on the standard syntactic order of sentences are termed ‘syntactic figures’. One of the most important syntactic devices in Mesopotamian literature is parallelism, namely the use of parallel constructions in couplets, strophes, or individual verses. Parallelism can involve various linguistic levels, such as the grammatical, lexical or phonological; it consists of the repetition of a thought, which is amplified, enriched or contrasted through parallel formulations. It is also a typical figure of Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry,⁷⁰⁵ and its value lies in its both poetic and noetic character: parallelism allows to build “multidimensional” concepts, i.e. concepts that are expressed and developed from different perspectives, through combining multiple elements that expand or contrast each other.⁷⁰⁶

Previous studies, mostly conducted in the biblical field, have identified different sub-types of parallelism: the main criterion for distinguishing sub-types takes into account semantics (e.g., synonymous, antithetic, synthetic parallelism), though grammatical aspects can also be considered (e.g., gender match parallelism, verbal parallelism, etc.), and the number of verses across which the parallelism stretches.⁷⁰⁷

Parallel lines (or half-lines) can be arranged into chiasm, namely “any structure in which the elements are repeated in reverse, so giving the pattern ABBA”;⁷⁰⁸ chiasmic parallelism⁷⁰⁹ can be used to break the monotony of parallel lines, to signal structural changes within the text or to give emphasis to certain elements, e.g., intensifying negations and prohibitions (e.g., in the Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. ii, l. 17 see below in §5.2.2.1.1.4), creating suspense, etc.⁷¹⁰

Repetition is a typical device of the Sumero-Akkadian poetry as well: contrary to parallelism, which includes the reformulation of the same message with some degree of

⁷⁰⁴ Lambert 1989, 328 and 332.

⁷⁰⁵ See Wagner 2007; cf. Watson 1986, 114–159 for Hebrew poetry. For Ugaritic sources, see Segert 1983.

⁷⁰⁶ On the cognitive and noetic aspect of parallelism, see Wagner 2007, 8–13 and 17–18, cf. Landsberger (1926): “Für den Akkader [...], wie für die übrigen Semiten, ist der Parallelismus gleichsam die Stereometrie des Gedankenausdrucks, der stets aufs schärfste geschnitten und auf höchste Prägnanz bedacht ist.”

⁷⁰⁷ For the Mesopotamian sources, see Berlin 1979; cf. Berlin 1992; see also Foster 2005, 14–16 and Streck 2007.

⁷⁰⁸ For the definition of chiasm see Preminger & Brogan, 1993, 183–184.

⁷⁰⁹ Although some consider chiasm as a variant of parallelism, see e.g., Watson 1986, 170–181. For a definition of “chiasmic parallelism”, see Berlin 1992. See Smith 1980 for a study on chiasm in Sumerian and Akkadian sources; see also Streck 2007, 171. Cf. Hecker 1974, 142 for an example of parallelism with a “chiasmatische Wortstellung” in Gilgameš.

⁷¹⁰ For the possible functions of chiasm, see Watson 1986, 205–206, who distinguished between “structural” and “expressive” functions.

variation, repetition involves the exact (or minimally changed) iteration of individual words or clauses.⁷¹¹ A special type of repetition, mostly found in Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and prayers, is the delayed introduction of the addressed god, i.e., the repetition of two couplets which are identical, except for the introduction of the divine name in the third line.⁷¹²

Repetition can serve to produce intratextual allusions, through linking different parts of the discourse; it can also have a “dramatic” function, adding force and intensity to the composition.⁷¹³

5.2.2.1 *Syntactic figures in the Great Hymns and Prayers*

5.2.2.1.1 Parallelism

Great Hymns and prayers display parallelism within couplets or individual lines, i.e. between the two halves of a verse. Parallelism in tercets other quatrain is also attested, although it occurs more rarely (e.g., see below in Šamaš Hymn, ll. 97–100).

The present analysis partially follows Streck’s survey on the occurrence of parallelism in Old-Babylonian hymns. The following examples are meant to illustrate several synonymous, synthetic and antithetic parallelisms found in the corpus under consideration. Here, for a brief clarification: given two clauses, the synonymous type implies the repetition of the same message, first introduced in the initial clause, and then delivered in different terms in the succeeding one; the antithetic type opposes contrasting concepts, producing an antithesis between the two members of the parallel structure; the synthetic parallelism is more difficult to detect, and occasionally can be confused with the first type, as it consists in the expansion or amplification in the second clause of the same thought that has been already expressed in the first.⁷¹⁴ Chiastic parallelism is also very prominent in the Great Hymns and Prayers, and has been considered in this analysis. In addition, some examples of the so-called “interrogative parallelism”, namely the pairing of an indicative clause with and interrogative one, are included in the list here provided.⁷¹⁵

⁷¹¹ I consider parallelism and repetition as different devices, following Foster 2005, 15–16 and more recently Streck 2007, 172. For the use of repetition in Akkadian literature, see also Hecker 1974, 56–65; 154–160; Vogelzang 1996; Foster, 2005, 15–16. Cf. Lenzi 2019a.

⁷¹² Vogelzang (1996, 65–66) calls this technique “lyrical repetition”. See also Groneberg 1986, 183 and Metcalf 2015, 22–24 and 59–60; Mayer 1976, 40–41. Cf. the Chapter 2, §2.2.

⁷¹³ Vogelzang 1996, 173–174; cf. Watson 1986, 278–279. See also Foster 2005, 15.16; Lenzi 2019a,

⁷¹⁴ For the definition of synonymous, synthetic and antithetic parallelism, see Bühlmann & Scherer 1994, 38–41 and Berlin 1979, 13–14 and 1992. See Berlin 1979, 14: “The parallel clauses may both be independent, or one may be dependent on the other. The relationship is usually sequential or descriptive; the succeeding clauses extend the thought or action of the first, or illustrate further some aspect of it”.

⁷¹⁵ For the definition of the interrogative parallelism, which is not listed among the examples provided by Streck, see Berlin 1979, 13–14 and 1992. Berlin considers two parallel interrogative clauses as a synonymous

5.2.2.1.1.1 *Synonymous parallelism*

1) Nabû Hymn, l. 52:

⁵²*it-ta-til ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu ka-li ina ru-šum-du*

⁵²He lies in the marsh, he is held in the mire.

2) Marduk 1, l. 155:

¹⁵⁵*ḥi-pi qu-un-nab-ra-šu il-lu-ur-ta-šú puṭur maksīšu*

¹⁵⁵Break his shackles and fetters, release his bonds!⁷¹⁶

3) Gula Hymn, ll. 60-61:

⁶⁰*a-mat ul in-en-ni*

⁶¹*ṣi-it pi-ia ul uš-ta-pe-el-lu*

⁶⁰My word is not altered,

⁶¹The utterance of my mouth is not changed.⁷¹⁷

4) Nabû Prayer, ll. 49–50:

⁴⁹*ina gi-piš e-de-e na-di-ma a-gu-ú e-liš it-ta[k-kip]*

⁵⁰*kib-ri ru-uq-šú né-si-iš na-ba-l[u]*

⁴⁹He is cast out into huge waves, so that the flood cras[hed] over him again and again,

⁵⁰Far away from him is the shore, distant is the dry la[nd].

5.2.2.1.1.2 *Antithetic parallelism*

1) Nabû Prayer, ll. 184–185:

¹⁸⁴*ma-ru áš-ru sa-an-qa a-ḥa-mu za-ra-šú i-ka[r-rab]*

¹⁸⁵*ma-ru la áš-ru la sanqu (DIM₄) a-di e-né-šú ir-ra-ár b[a-ni-šú²]*

¹⁸⁴The obedient, disciplined son, his father giv[es] (him) a special blessing,

¹⁸⁵The disobedient, undisciplined son, his b[eggetter] curses (him) until he changes.

2) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 97–100:

⁹⁷*da-a-a-ṛna ṛ ṣal-pa me-se-ra tu-kal-lam*

⁹⁸*ma-ḥir ṭa-’a-ti la muš-te-še-ru tu-šá-az-bal ar-na*

⁹⁹*la ma-ḥir ṭa-’a-ti ṣa-bi-tú a-bu-ti en-še*

¹⁰⁰*ṭa-a-bi eli Šamaš (UGU^dUTU) balaṭa ut-tar*

You give the unscrupulous judge experience of fetters,

parallelism, see for example ll. 174-175 of the Šamaš Hymn: “Which are the mountains not clothed with your beams?/ Which are the regions not warmed by the brightness of your light?” (Lambert 1960, 136-137).

⁷¹⁶ Oshima 2011, 154, 166–167; cf. Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 168 and 171. The translation here follows Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 171.

⁷¹⁷ Lambert 1967, 118–119.

Him who accepts a present and yet lets justice miscarry, you make bear his punishment,
 As for him who declines a present, but nevertheless takes the part of the weak,
 It is pleasing to Šamaš, he will prolong his life.⁷¹⁸

3) Marduk 2, l. 49:

⁴⁹*tuš-te-eš-šer i-šá-ra tu-šam-ṭa rag-ga*

⁴⁹You make the righteous man prosper, you diminish the malicious.⁷¹⁹

5.2.2.1.1.3 *Synthetic parallelism*

1) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, ll. 10–11:

¹⁰[š]u-un-bu-uṭ nu-ur-šú ka-tim gi-mir da-ád-me

¹¹ba-ši nam-ri-ir-ra-šu ina qé-reb ḫur-sa-a-nu

¹⁰Its light is resplendent, covering all habitations,

¹¹Its brilliance penetrates the mountain.⁷²⁰

2) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, ll. 23–24:

i-ḫa-aṭ eš-re-te-šin ku-um-ma-šin i-bar-ri

a-na AN.MEŠ šu-ut ma-ḫa-zi ú-ad-da is-qu

She supervises their shrines, inspecting their living quarters

She assigns portions to the gods of the cult centres.⁷²¹

5.2.2.1.1.4 *Chiastic parallelism*

1) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. ii, l. 8:

⁸[i-ra-m]u-um-šu u₄-mi-iš lib-ba-ta-šu i-ma-al-la-ma

⁸[She] roared at him like a storm, was filled with anger at him.⁷²²

2) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. ii, l. 17:

¹⁷la iš-te-`a-a aš-^rra-šá¹ pa-ni-iš la iz-zi-zu

¹⁷Since he did not seek her shrine nor render her service⁷²³

3) Ištar Prayer, l. 69:

⁶⁹*em-te-eš ul i-de ši-par-ra-ki e-te-e[q]*

⁷⁰I have unknowingly disregarded, I have ignor[ed] your instructions (lit. instruction).⁷²⁴

⁷¹⁸ Lambert 1960, 132–133.

⁷¹⁹ Oshima 2011, 226, 242–243.

⁷²⁰ Lambert 1982, 200–201.

⁷²¹ Lambert 1982, 202–203.

⁷²² Lambert 1982, 194–195

⁷²³ Lambert 1982, 194–195.

5.2.2.1.1.5 Interrogative parallelism

1) Marduk 1, ll. 5–6:

⁵*ša a-ma-ru-uk ši-ib-bi ga-pu-uš a-bu-ši-in*

⁶*ša-áš-mu šá^d girra (GIŠ.BAR) a-li ma-ḥi-ir-ka*

⁵Whose stare is a dragon, a flood overwhelming,

⁶An onslaught of fire – where is your rival?⁷²⁵

2) Ištar Prayer, l. 75–76:

⁷⁵*a-a-ú ina ʾDIĜIRʾ.MEŠ ʾim¹-ša-a ma-la-k[i]*

⁷⁶*la am-ra ki-ma ka-a-ti ʾma-ḥír te¹-es-li-t[i]*

⁷⁵Who, among the gods, is as powerful as yo[u]?

⁷⁶There has never been seen someone who accepts praye[r] like you.⁷²⁶

5.2.2.1.2 Repetition

The delayed introduction of the divine name is commonly attested within the Great Hymns and Prayers. In addition, these texts exhibit further forms of repetition, like the refrain, envelope figure, keyword and ring-composition: the refrain consists of the multiple repetition of the same phrase at the end of a strophe, while keywords are single words (occasionally synonyms) repeated many times within a composition. The envelope figure, on the other hand, implies the repetition of the same phrase or word no more than twice within a text: this figure frames a group of lines, separating them from the rest of the text. All these devices are used for emphasis or allusion.⁷²⁷

The Šamaš Hymn in particular shows a combination of all these techniques, making extensive use of repeated words and phrases (see below). Furthermore, this long hymn is structured into a circular pattern: the cyclical course of the Sun is represented in the text through the structural device of the ring composition. The first section of the hymn, which describes the rising of the Sun-god and his daily journey through the heavens, the earth and

⁷²⁴ For this text, see the edition in Chapter 3, to which I will refer throughout the present study when discussing this prayer, if not differently stated.

⁷²⁵ Oshima 2011, 142, 158–159; cf. Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 167 and 169. The translation here follows Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 169. Compare also the translation offered by Mayer 1995, 172: “Du, dessen Blicken eine Šibbu-Schlange ist”.

⁷²⁶ For the edition of this text, see Chapter 2. Further examples of delayed introduction are found in Marduk 1 (Oshima 2011, 138–190), Marduk 2 (Oshima 2011, 216–274), Šamaš Hymn (Lambert 1960, 121–138).

⁷²⁷ For a definition and some examples of these devices in the Hebrew, Ugaritic and Akkadian poetry, see Watson 1986, 283–299. Cf. also Vogelzang 1996, 174–177. Cf. also Berlin 1979, 24–26, Groneberg 1996, 70–71.

the underworld, is mirrored in the conclusive section of the poem, in which the god is depicted as coming back to his bedchamber.⁷²⁸

5.2.2.1.2.1 *Delayed introduction*⁷²⁹

1) Nabû Prayer, ll. 41–44:

⁴¹*b[e-lu]m pal-ku-ú muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tum*

⁴²*rap-šá`uz-ni a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu*

^{43d}*NÀ`pal`-ku-ú muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tum*

⁴⁴*rap-šá`uz-ni a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu*

⁴⁵O wise L[or]d, *mukkallu*-priest of knowledge,

⁴⁶Of vast intelligence, who masters the scribal art.

⁴⁷O wise Nabû, *mukkallu*-priest of knowledge,

⁴⁸Of vast intelligence, who masters the scribal art!⁷³⁰

5.2.2.1.2.2 *Refrain*

1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 100, 106, 119:

ta-a-bi eli (UGU) Šamaš (dUTU) balāta (TI.LA) ut-tar

It is pleasing to Šamaš, he will prolong his life!⁷³¹

2) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, ll. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35:

ma-am-ma-an ul i-le-`i-i

No one (but she) is able.⁷³²

5.2.2.1.2.3 *Envelope figure*

1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 149 and 153:

¹⁴⁹*šá [ad-na-]a-ti Šamaš (dUTU) uznī(GEŠTU^{ll})-ši-na tuš-pat-ti*

¹⁵⁰*[maš]-ru-ka ez-zu šam-ru nūr(ZALÁG)-ka at-ta ta-nam-din-ši-na*

¹⁵¹*[tuš-te-š]èr te-ret-ši-na ina n[i-qí]-i áš-ba-[ta]*

¹⁵²*a-na šār erbetti (IM.LIMMU.BA) ar-kàt-si-na ta-par-ra-as*

⁷²⁸ With regard to the ring-structure of the Šamaš Hymn, and related observations on its poetical implications, see Reiner 1985, 68–84; cf. also Castellino 1976.

⁷²⁹ I borrow this term from Watson 1986, 336–337, who however uses it in a slightly different sense, describing it as follows: “[...] instead of stating the subject of a verb as soon as grammatically possible, the verb (or verbs) is (are) set out first, no definite identity being provided till the second or even third line of verse”, Watson 1986, 336. Compare the German term offered by Wilcke in his study on Sumerian literature, in which this phenomenon is defined as “Ornamentale Wiederholung” (Wilcke 1974, 214–217).

⁷³⁰ For the possible meaning of the *hapax legomenon ešeštum*, “knowledge”, see the commentary on this line in Chapter 2

⁷³¹ Lambert 1960, 132–133; cf. Vogelzang 1996, 174.

⁷³² Lambert 1982, 196–198.

¹⁵³*kal si-ḫi-ip da-ád-me u[z]-ni-ši-na tuš-pat-ti*

¹⁴⁹You grant revelations, Šamaš, to the families of men,

¹⁵⁰Your harsh face and fierce light you give to them.

¹⁵¹You manage their omens and preside over their sacrifices,

¹⁵²To all four points of the compass you probe their state.

¹⁵³So far as human habitations stretch, you grant revelations to them all.⁷³³

5.2.2.1.2.4 Key words

- 1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 123, 125, 134, 136, 140, 142, 144, 146, 147, 158, 160, 164, 173 contain different forms of *maḫārum*, “to receive, confront”, and its prepositional form *ina maḫrīka* “before you”. The dominant concept in this portion of the hymn is that all people indiscriminately are subject to the judgement of Šamaš.⁷³⁴
- 2) Gula Hymn, ll. 79, 81, 83, 86 contain different forms of *balātu*, “to heal”, “to get better”, and one derived substantive (*bultu*, “health”).⁷³⁵ Moreover, the hymn contains the epiphoric repetition, i.e. occurring at the end of the verse, of the independent personal pronoun: *anāku-ma*, “Am I”, ll. 43, 67, 91, 148, 169, 187. This can be considered as another example of key word.⁷³⁶

5.2.3 Semantic figures in the Akkadian sources

Sumero-Akkadian poetry makes extensive use of figurative language, expressed through the semantic devices of simile and metaphor. The Akkadian simile is characterised by the presence of specific markers, such as the comparative particles *kī* or *kīma*, “like”, “as”, or the adverbial suffixes *-iš* and *-āni* or also *-āniš*. It can display a more or less complex structure: for instance, besides the standard construction which relies on one tenor, one vehicle and a linking component called *tertium comparationis*, similes can involve multiple tenors or vehicles (this type is defined by Wasserman as “Multi-componential simile”), or two *tertium comparationis* (“Multi-verb” simile). Similes can be expressed through complete sentences—Buccellati describes this type of simile as the ‘true comparative clause’, rarely found in Akkadian texts⁷³⁷—or display what Wasserman describes as a more “cohesive syntactic structure”, in which no explicit *tertium comparationis* is used, and the simile-marker functions as the only connecting element between the tenor and the vehicle (“Non-explicit”

⁷³³ Lambert 1960, 134–135.

⁷³⁴ Cf. Vogelzang 1996, 174–175.

⁷³⁵ Lambert 1960, 132–138; cf. Vogelzang 1996, 177.

⁷³⁶ Lambert, 1967. Cf. Vogelzang 1996, 176–177.

⁷³⁷ The example provided by Buccellati, after Schott (1926, 3), is the following: “The cat was miaowing just like a child would be crying” (Buccellati 1976, 60–61), cf. Wasserman 2003, 148.

simile, see, e.g., in Marduk 1, ll. 10/12 *ki-i a-bi re-e-muk*, “Your mercy is like that of a father”⁷³⁸). “Negative similes”, i.e. similes formulated with a negative particle, are also attested in Akkadian.⁷³⁹

Metaphors can be distinguished from similes as they do not have a simile particle, nor a linking *tertium comparationis*; they can be nominal or verbal: metaphors concerning nouns can be structured into a nominal phrase, thus consisting in the mere juxtaposition of two substantives, that act as the vehicle and the tenor of the comparison (e.g., Nabû Prayer, l. 21: *la pa-du-uk gir-ri*, “Your ruthlessness is fire”). This form of comparison is widely attested in Akkadian poetry.⁷⁴⁰ Metaphors involving substantives can also be expressed through what Streck calls “indirekte Identifikation”, namely a construction in which the tenor is identified with the vehicle through apposition (e.g., in the Šamaš Hymn, l. 18 *me-reš še-em na-piš-ti ma-ti* “the grain field, life of the land”, cf. below §5.2.3.1.1.2.3).⁷⁴¹ Furthermore, metaphorical predications can be expressed through genitive constructions (i.e., in the Šamaš Hymn, l. 17 *šer-ret šá-ma-mi*, “the udders of heaven”, see below §5.2.3.1.1.2.2).⁷⁴²

On the other hand, verbal metaphors involve verbs used in a metaphorical sense, that change the meaning of the nouns to which they refer, see, for example, the metaphorical meaning of the verb *zanānu*, “to rain”, in a Marduk’s epithet: *mušaznin nuḥši*, “the one who lets abundance rain down”.⁷⁴³ Hence, in verbal metaphors the comparison is implicitly suggested through the use of a verb in the figurative sense.⁷⁴⁴ The Mesopotamian imagery is mostly based on the animal kingdom and nature. The semantic fields of similes and metaphors can be related, to humans, animals, nature, weather phenomena, physical objects, divine beings and abstract concepts.⁷⁴⁵

Similes and metaphors are not exclusive to literary texts, and also appear in letters, idiomatic expressions (often as “dead metaphors”⁷⁴⁶) and magic texts.

⁷³⁸ Oshima 2011, 142, 158–159; cf. also Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 167 and 169.

⁷³⁹ For “Non-explicit” similes see Wasserman 2003, 148–149; for “negative” similes, see Wasserman 2003, 149.

⁷⁴⁰ Mayer 1995, 172; Streck 1999, 38 and 97–117.

⁷⁴¹ Streck 1999, 39.

⁷⁴² Streck 1999, 39; he includes further sub-types of nominal metaphors, for instance the implicit metaphorical relationship resulting from parallel or chiasmic structures, or also the combination of metaphors and similes in a single comparative structure, which he calls “Das komplexe Bild” (Streck 1999, 41–42); see Streck 38–42 for the complete list). For various examples of nominal metaphors, see Streck 1999, 97–117.

⁷⁴³ Cf. Oshima 2011, 441. The verb *zanānu* (*AHW* III 1509–1510; *CAD* Z 41–43) is often used in figurative expressions, as observed by Vogelzang 1996, 185: “Any object, both concrete and abstract, can rain down”, cf. Streck 1999, 122.

⁷⁴⁴ Streck 1999, 40; for various examples of verbal metaphors, see Streck 1999, 117–123.

⁷⁴⁵ I take Wasserman 2003, 135–146 as a starting point for the list of semantic fields of similes and metaphors. Cf. also Streck 1999, 43–45.

⁷⁴⁶ Black 1998, 56–57.

Merismus and hendiadys have also been included in this survey: they are akin, but the former is employed to indicate totality through the use of antipodal word-pairs, while the latter consists of the combination of two separate words, joined by a conjunction and understood as an individual unit.⁷⁴⁷ As illustrated by Wasserman in his exhaustive study on this subject, hendiadys in the Akkadian texts serves to express a relationship of inalienability between its constituents; verbal hendiadys, moreover, is used to add certain nuances to the verbs, as it conveys aspectuality. Recent studies have shown that merismus occurs in Akkadian in both literary and non-literary sources; hendiadys—more specifically, verbal hendiadys—on the contrary, appears to be characteristic of literature, especially of the hymnic genre.⁷⁴⁸

Puns are found in Sumerian literature, e.g., hymns, laments and proverbs, and in Akkadian literary and magic texts as well: they can result from a lexical ambiguity caused by two words, identical or similar in sound, though different in meaning (homonymy and paronomasia, respectively), a single word which might have multiple meanings (*double-entendre*), or two or more signs that can have multiple values, and thus allow various readings (polygraphy).⁷⁴⁹ In word plays, sound might be interwoven with meaning:⁷⁵⁰ since it can be difficult to perceive phonetic effects in ancient poetry (cf. above §5.2.1), certain puns in Sumero-Akkadian sources could be missed by modern readers, or misinterpreted due to subjective interpretation.⁷⁵¹

To my knowledge, very few Assyriological studies mention the figure of the climax. This figure, known in the Classical Studies as *Gradatio* and termed “Sorites” in the Biblical scholarship, consists in a series of words or clauses arranged in a progressively increasing

⁷⁴⁷ For an explanation of merismus and hendiadys in general, see Lanham 1991, 59–60 and 82. For the occurrence of merismus and hendiadys in Akkadian, see Wasserman 2003: the author classifies the merismatic pairs on the basis of their semantic class, e.g., Time, Space, Social Groups and Nourishments (Wasserman 2003, 63). For merismus and hendiadys in Hebrew poetry, with comparisons to Akkadian and Ugaritic, see Watson 1986, 21–28; cf. also Watkins 1995, 45 for a general description of merismus in ancient poetry.

⁷⁴⁸ Wasserman 2003, 27–28 and 97.

⁷⁴⁹ Cf. Klein & Sefati 2000, 23–26.

⁷⁵⁰ Certain puns can produce phonetic effects, for example alliteration or consonance; however, wordplay involves primarily individual words and their meaning, hence I have classified this device as belonging to the semantic figures. Cf. the Noegel 2011, esp. 163, who also treats separately alliteration and punning. Cf. also Plett 2010, 175 discussing the “ambiguity” of wordplay: “The identity of a word–repetition can be disturbed not only by morphological deviations. The reason is that any word has phonological, graphemic and semantic aspects. If one or more of these aspects change and the others remain constant, then the morphological equivalence contains a wordplay.”

⁷⁵¹ Cf. Hurowitz 2000, 66.

order of importance, which results in a final climactic tension. It has been concisely treated by Wilcke in his study on Sumerian literature, in which one example of climax is offered.⁷⁵²

The last semantic figure that will be mentioned in the present discussion is poetic enumeration, a sequence of terms inserted in the poetic text. Indeed lists, ubiquitous in the cuneiform sources, were appreciated for their poetic quality, and also employed in poetry as creative tools.⁷⁵³ Enumerations in Mesopotamian texts are closely related to lexical lists, and occasionally depend on them (see Chapter 4). Poetic enumerations in Akkadian literature are used to convey an idea of totality: the listed terms belong to the same semantic class, and their enumeration produces a sense of completeness, in a similar manner as merismus, which however involves the contrast between polar extremities (see above in this paragraph).⁷⁵⁴

5.2.3.1 *Semantic figures in the Great Hymns and Prayers*

5.2.3.1.1 Similes and Metaphors

The compositions under analysis employ the simile-marker preposition *kīma/kī* in the construction of similes, and occasionally display the subordinate clause introduced by *kīma ša*. In addition, they make great use of the adverbial suffix *-iš*, characteristic of the hymno-epic dialect, used as a simile-marker in comparative clauses. Furthermore, one text contains what appears to be an elsewhere unattested comparative adverbial suffix in *-šan* (see below, in the Prayer to Ištar Anūna).⁷⁵⁵

The metaphor expressed through a nominal phrase, thus simply involving two juxtaposed words, occurs often as well; verbal metaphors are also found (see examples below).

⁷⁵² Wilcke 1974, 218. Cf. also Watson 1985, 212-213 for the sorite in Biblical poetry, with one example in Akkadian literature drawn from the poem of Erra. For a definition of the climax, see Lanham 1991, 36 or Lausberg 1990, 84.

⁷⁵³ Cf. Van De Mieroop 2015, 73: “The list format invites an element of play”; Cf. also Sadovski 2012, 153–154, commenting on von Soden’s false assumption of the alleged superiority of Indo-European poetry, considered as more complex in respect to the Mesopotamian one, which used lists: in fact, as shown by Sadovski, lists are widely employed in Indo-Iranian ritual poetry as well. More generally, on the poetic nature of lists, their inner structures and multiple facets, see Mainberger 2003. The author analyses what she calls the “enumerative games” (“enumerative Spiele”, Mainberger 2003, 7), and explores enumeration in its various functions and uses, not only in literary texts, but also in other genres and fields.

⁷⁵⁴ For the subtypes and functions of enumeration in Akkadian see Wasserman, *forthcoming*, 9-11. Incidentally, Umberto Eco interprets lists as an expression of infinity, since they appear open to possible modifications, being therefore unfinished, and that is, “infinite” in their own structure: “L’artista che tenta anche solo un elenco parziale di tutte le stelle dell’universo vuole in qualche modo far pensare a questo infinito oggettivo. L’infinito dell’estetica è un sentimento che consegue alla finita e perfetta compiutezza della cosa che si ammira, mentre l’altra forma di rappresentazione di cui parliamo (*sc.* la lista) suggerisce quasi *fisicamente* l’infinito, perché di fatto essa non finisce, non si conclude in forma” (Eco 2019, 17). Cf. also Rubio 2003, 203, who mentions the usage of open enumeration in different ancient literary texts (e.g., in Homer), and its literary implications in Sumerian texts.

⁷⁵⁵ See Mayer 1995 for a list of occurrences of the adverbial terminative *-iš* used in the comparative sense.

The imagery in these poems overall accords with the standard topoi employed in the description of suffering in the Akkadian penitential prayers and wisdom texts: they often include similes and metaphors taken from the animal kingdom (e.g., the supplicant is likened to a moaning dove, or to a bull being slaughtered, cf. below §5.2.3.1.1.1), or rely on stereotypical images, such as the sufferer who is compared to a prisoner,⁷⁵⁶ or said to be stuck in the morass.⁷⁵⁷ Furthermore, some of the figurative images appearing in the texts under study share common traits with the biblical prayers, especially the Psalms (e.g., what Zernecke calls “the motif of the cessation of praise in death”⁷⁵⁸).

For the purpose of this study, the following examples of similes and metaphors have been sorted according to their semantic fields, and further distinguished by their comparative marker.

5.2.3.1.1.1 *Similes*

5.2.3.1.1.1.1 *Animals*

- with *kīma/kī/kīma ša*

1) Nabû Prayer, l. 57:

⁵⁷[*k*]i-ma le-e šá ina nap-la-qu pal-qu i-ram-mu-um ši-i[*g-miš*]

⁵⁷[L]ike a bull who is slaughtered with a butchering knife, he bellows lo[udly].⁷⁵⁹

- with suffix

2) Ištar Prayer, l. 94:

⁹⁴*su-um-meš* x x ¹*id'-mu*-ma x []

⁹⁴Like a dove ... [h]e [mo]aned and [...]

3) Ištar Prayer, l. 183 (broken context): *iš-šu-riš*, “like a bird”.

5.2.3.1.1.1.2 *Human beings*

- with *kīma/kī/kīma ša*

1) Nabû Prayer, l. 78:

⁷⁸*ki-i ṭal-ṭal-ti lut-tag-giš i-na k[a-ma-ti]*

⁷⁸Like a homeless woman, should I wander in the op[en country?]

⁷⁵⁶ See, e.g., Ištar Prayer, l. 213: [*ša(?) bīt ši-bit-tu*]m ú-kal-lam nu-ú-ra, “[To the one who is in pris]on she shows light”.

⁷⁵⁷ See, e.g., Nabû Prayer, l. 52: *it-ta-til ina na-ri-iṭ-tu ka-li ina ru-šum-du*, “He lies in the marsh, he is held in the mire.” On the standard imagery of prayers and “righteous-sufferer” compositions, see Van der Toorn 1985, 65. Cf. Chapter 2, §2.4.1. and Chapter 3, §3.4.1

⁷⁵⁸ Zernecke 2014, 35. This motif is found in Marduk 1, ll. 66–69, cf. Oshima 2011, 147 and 162–163; cf. also Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 168 and 170.

⁷⁵⁹ This phrase is an example of the so-called “complete-sentence” simile (see above §5.2.3 and fn. 768).

2) Marduk 1, l. 133:

¹³³*ki-i la-la-ri qu-bé-e ú-šá-aš-rap*

¹³³Like a mourner, he utters bitter cries⁷⁶⁰

3) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 99:

⁹⁹*i¹-ni-iš-šu di-im-tum i¹-qar¹-ru-ra ki-i da-mi-mi*

⁹⁹Tears flow from his eyes like a mourner.⁷⁶¹

- with suffix

4) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 100 (the suffix *-šan* is elsewhere unattested⁷⁶²):

¹⁰⁰*du-ma-mi-iš ut-ta-ḫa-¹áš¹ la wa-li-ta-ša-an*

¹⁰⁰He sobs in mourning like a barren woman.⁷⁶³

5) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 106:

¹⁰⁶*mi-im-ma ú-ul a-mu-ra-ma²-an² ḫa-bi-li-iš*

¹⁰⁶I have not experienced anything as a criminal.⁷⁶⁴

5.2.3.1.1.1.3 Nature

- with *kīma/kī/kīma ša*

1) Šamaš Hymn, l. 121:

¹²¹*ki-ma A.MEŠ naq-bi da-ri-i NUMUN-[šú] da-[ri]*

¹²¹And like the water of a never failing spring [his] descendants will nev[er fail].⁷⁶⁵

2) Marduk 2, l. 80:

⁸⁰*be-lum ug-gu-uk-ka k[i]-i ga-pa-áš a-bu-b[i]*

⁸⁰Lord, your anger is [l]ike a massive delu[ge].⁷⁶⁶

- with suffix

1) Nabû Hymn, ll. 177–178:

¹⁷⁷*aḫ-ra-tiš pi-is-nu-qiš la-la-riš ú-da-áš-š[ap]*

¹⁷⁸*a-la-mit-tum ú-ḫe-en-šá da-da-riš ma-a-[ar]*

¹⁷⁷With time, what (seemed) pitiable, he swee[tens] like syrup,

¹⁷⁸The early fruit of the date-palm is bit[ter] like stinkwort

⁷⁶⁰ Oshima 2011, 152, 164–165; the translation here follows Lambert 1959–60, 58.

⁷⁶¹ Lambert 1989, 328 and 331.

⁷⁶² Lambert 1989, 335. Cf. Mayer 1995, 185.

⁷⁶³ Lambert 1989, 328 and 331.

⁷⁶⁴ Lambert 1989, 328 and 331. This line is an example of the so-called “negative” simile (Wasserman 2003, 149), i.e., a simile which contains a negative particle (see above, §5.2.3).

⁷⁶⁵ Lambert 1960, 132–133.

⁷⁶⁶ Oshima 2011, 229, 244–245. This is a case of “copulative” simile (Wasserman 2003, 148), i.e. a non-explicit simile in which there is no *tertium comparationis* and the simile–marker serves the function of a copula (see above, §5.2.3).

5.2.3.1.1.1.4 Inanimate objects and abstracta

- with *kīma/kī/kīma ša*

1) Gula Hymn, ll. 133–134:

¹³³*a-pir šamê* (AN-e) *ki-ma a-ge-[e]*

¹³⁴*še-e-nu eršetim* (KI.TIM) *ki-ma [še]-^le¹-n[i]*

¹³³He wears the heavens on his head like a turban,

¹³ He is shod with the underworld as with sandals.⁷⁶⁷

2) Ištar Prayer, l. 90:

⁹⁰*ki-ma i-^lga¹-ri šá i-qu-up-^lpu¹ [i`abbat(?)]*

⁹⁰Like a tottering wall [he will fall down].⁷⁶⁸

5.2.3.1.1.1.5 Divine beings

- with *kīma/kī/kīma ša*

1) Marduk 2, l. 44:

⁴⁴*[k]i-i^d Girru* (GIŠ.^lBAR¹) *ez-ze-za-ⁱ-^li¹-ri ta-šar-^{rap}*

⁴⁴Like the furious fire-god you burn up the foe.⁷⁶⁹

5.2.3.1.1.2 Metaphors

5.2.3.1.1.2.1 Animals

- Nominal

1) Marduk 1, ll. 5/7:

^{5/7}*šá a-ma-ru-uk ši-ib-bu*, “You, whose stare is a dragon.”⁷⁷⁰

2) Marduk 2, l. 45:

⁴⁵*ú-šum-gal-li uz-za-ka*, “Your rage is a *ušumgallu*-snake.”⁷⁷¹

3) Gula Hymn, l. 29:

¹⁹*ri-i-mu šá-qu-ú re-e-š[ú]*, “The wild bull with lofty head”, i.e. Ninurta.⁷⁷²

5.2.3.1.1.2.2 Nature

- Nominal

1) Marduk 2, l. 38”:

⁷⁶⁷ Lambert 1967, 124–125. These two similes can be defined as “similes of *instrumentalis*”, i.e. “similes whose tenor serves as an *instrumentalis*”, see Wasserman 2003, 149.

⁷⁶⁸ If my restoration is correct, this is another example of “complete-sentence” simile (see above, fn. 737).

⁷⁶⁹ Oshima 2011, 226, 242–243.

⁷⁷⁰ Oshima 2011, 142, 158 and 159; cf. also Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 167 and 169; Mayer 1995, 172.

⁷⁷¹ Oshima 2011, 226, 242–243.

⁷⁷² Lambert 1967, 116–117. This metaphor construction is in apposition to the name of the god, which appears further in l. 34; apposition is classified by Streck among the subtype “Indirekte Identifikation” (Streck 1999, 40).

pa-a-ka nag-bi e-du-ú qa-ta-a-ka

Your [m]outh is a spring, your hands are a huge wave.⁷⁷³

- 2) Šamaš Hymn, l. 17 (also Marduk 2, l. 9⁷⁷⁴):

šer-ret šá-ma-mi, “the udders of Heaven”, i.e. the clouds.⁷⁷⁵

- Verbal

- 3) Gula, l. 165 (*nalāšu*, “to dew”, “to rain”, *AHw* II 724; *CAD* N/1 199):

¹⁶⁵*i-na šá-da-hi-ia ku-uz-bu i-na-al-lu-uš*

¹⁶⁵When I go in procession, sexuality rains down⁷⁷⁶

5.2.3.1.1.2.3 Inanimate objects and abstracta

- Nominal

- 1) Marduk 1, l. 69:

ep-ru mi-i-tum, “dead dust”, i.e., a dead man.⁷⁷⁷

- 2) Šamaš Hymn, l. 18:

ziq šat ur-ri (for *zīq šāt urri*), “the torch of the morning”,⁷⁷⁸ i.e., the daylight.

- 3) Šamaš Hymn, l. 95:

šá ka-šir an-zil-li qar-na-šú, “the horns of a scheming villain”, i.e. the power.⁷⁷⁹

- Verbal

- 1) Marduk 1, l. 126 (*rehú*, “to pour”, *AHw* II 969; *CAD* R 252–254, see 253 mng. 3a):

¹²⁶*eli* (UGU)-*šu ir-te-eḫ-ḫu-^rú¹ [i]m-tu-ú ta-né-ḫú*

¹²⁶They have poured upon him depletion and distress⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷³ Own translation. Cf. Oshima 2011, 238, 250–251.

⁷⁷⁴ Oshima 2011, 222, 240–241.

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. Lambert 1960, 127, who translates: “the vault of the Heavens”. This Akkadian expression is a translation from the Sumerian *ubur.an.na*, “teat of heaven”, cf. Hurowitz 1998, 262–263; cf. also Streck 1999, 110. Following Streck, this metaphorical construction can be termed as “Genitivverbindug” (Streck 1999, 40).

⁷⁷⁶ Lambert 1967, 126–127.

⁷⁷⁷ Oshima 2011, 148, 162–163. Cf. also Fadhil & Jiménez 2019, 168 and 170.

⁷⁷⁸ Own interpretation, cf. Lambert 126–127. The whole line reads as follows: *mu-šah-miṭ ZIG/ZIK KUR ur-ri me-reš še-em na-piš-ti ma-ti*. Lambert (1960, 126) understands ZIG/ZIK KUR as *ziqnāt*, plural construct of *ziqnu*, “beard” (*AHw* III 1531–1532; *CAD* Z 125–127), thus translating the verse: “Who sets aglow the beard of light, the corn field, the life of the land”. This translation yields little sense. Furthermore, such a plural form of *ziqnu* does not seem to be attested in other texts. Seux (1976, 53, fn. 15) provides a different interpretation, reading ZIG/ZIK as *zīq* from *zīqu*, “breeze”, (*AHw* III 1532, *CAD* Z 133) and KUR as *šāt*, offering: “Qui réchauffes la brise (?) de l’aube, le champ de grain, vie du pays”. Similarly Foster, 2003, 628: “Hastener of the morning breeze (for?) the grain field, life of the land”. I partially follow Seux, although I suggest to read *zīq* from *zīqu* B (*AHw* III, 1532; *CAD* Z 133–134), namely a by-form of *ziqtu*, “torch”, and to translate: “Who sets aglow the torch of the morning, (and) the grain field, life of the land”.

⁷⁷⁹ Lambert 1960, 130–131. The whole verse reads: *šá ka-šir an-zil-li qar-na-šú tu-bal-la*, “You destroy the horns of the scheming villain”, cf. Psalm 75:10, “All the horns of the wicked I will cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up” (translation taken from the English Standard Version, 2017).

⁷⁸⁰ Oshima 2011, 151, 165–165.

- 2) Gula Hymn, l. 150 (*sakāpu*, “to thrust”, *AHw* II 1011, sub *sakāpu* I; *CAD* S 70–74 sub *sakāpu* A; *nadû*, “to throw”, *AHw* II 705–709 sub *nadû* III; *CAD* N/1 68–100)

¹⁵⁰*sà-kip šal-tum na-du-ú tu-qu-un-tú*

¹⁵⁰Who sets strife in motion, lets loose warfare.⁷⁸¹

- 3) Queen of Nippur, col. ii, l. 21 (*bakû*, “to pour”, *AHw* 1295–1296; *CAD* T 1–10)

²¹*i-tab-bak hur-ba-šá elī(UGU)-šu*

²¹(the demon Kilili) pours silence over him⁷⁸²

5.2.3.1.1.2.4 *Divine beings*

- Nominal

- 1) Nabû Prayer, l. 21:

[*Adad(?) šá-gi*] *m-mu-uk*, “Your roar is Adad”, i.e., “Your roar is like a storm”.

5.2.3.1.2 *Hendiadys*

- 1) Great Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 166 (*riddum/tūbum*):

¹⁶⁶[] x *bi/ga ri-id-di ù tú-ú-bi*

¹⁶⁶[]... my favourable guidance (lit. my guidance and my favors).⁷⁸³

- 2) Ištar Prayer, ll. 172-173 (*nadānum/uzzuzum*; *nadānum/šābum*)

¹⁷²*id-din-šu-ma uz-za-za* [x x x x]

¹⁷³*id-din-šu-ma i-da-mu i-šá-a*[b x x x]

¹⁷²He let himself become furious... [...]

¹⁷³He let himself have convulsions, sha[ke ...]⁷⁸⁴

- 3) Šamaš Hymn, l. 126 (*hamāṭum/pašārum*)

¹²⁶[*tu-š*] *aḥ-maṭ ši-it pi-i-šú-nu ta-pa-áš-šar at-ta*

¹²⁶In a moment you discern what they say.⁷⁸⁵

5.2.3.1.3 *Merismus*

- 1) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. ii, l. 3: *eṭlu(m)/ardatu(m)*

³[*eṭlu*] *u ardatu* (KI.SIKIL) *i-su-ru i[m-mel-lu]*

³[Young man] and young woman danced and [made merry]⁷⁸⁶

⁷⁸¹ Lambert 1967, 126–127.

⁷⁸² Lambert 1982, 194–195.

⁷⁸³ Lambert 1989, 328 and 331; cf. Wasserman 2003, 12.

⁷⁸⁴ Cf. Groneberg 1987 I I 47.

⁷⁸⁵ Lambert 1960, 134–135. Merismatic pairs usually have a fixed order, in which the male component always precedes the female one. Cf. Wasserman 2003, 92–93.

- 2) Nabû Prayer, l. 176 (two merismi structured into a chiasmus: *mešheru/šīdītu; māru(m)/mārtu(m)*)

¹⁷⁶*še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ħi-in-zur-ru meš-ħe-ri ši-d[i-tú?]/ mar-tú ma-r[i]*

¹⁷⁶My morning aid, the fruits of the apple-tree, youth (and) maid[en]/ daughter (and) so[n]⁷⁸⁷

- 3) Ištar Prayer, l. 171: *tappû(m)-rū`u(m)*

¹⁷¹*iš-ti-is-su tap-pu-u ru-ù-`i-i uš-[šī?-ru?-šú?]*

¹⁷¹Companions and friends le[ft him] alone.

- 4) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 66: *immū-mūšū*

⁶⁶*it-ta-lak im-mi ù mu-ši₆a- [...]*

⁶⁶He has run around days and nights.⁷⁸⁸

- 5) Ištar Prayer, l. 218: *šit šamši-šalām šamši*

²¹⁸*[iš-tu ši-it] r^dUTU-ši ana šá-la-mu dUTU-ši*

²¹⁸[From the rising of the] sun to the setting of the sun.

5.2.3.1.4 Climax

- 1) Marduk 2, l. 62

⁶²*áš-ru-um-ma pa-li-iħ kit-mu-su ilu (DIĜIR) i-red-di*

⁶²Humble, frightful, prostrated, he follows (his) god⁷⁸⁹

- 2) Ištar Prayer, l. 150

¹⁵⁰*šur-ru-up šu-us-suk a-ri-^rim ka¹-la-a-[šú]*

¹⁵⁰He is burnt, thrown down, completely overwhelmed.

5.2.3.1.5 Pun

- 1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 53–56

⁵³*[ana(?)] ma-kal-ti ba-ru-ti a-na ri-kis erēnu (G^{is}EREN)*

⁵⁴*[ana(?)] mu-ši-mi šá-i-li pa-še-ru šunāti (MÁŠ.GE₆.MEŠ)*

⁵⁵*[x x] x šá rik-sa-a-ti kit-mu-sa ma-ħar-ka*

⁵⁶*[i-na ma]ħ-ri-ka kit-mu-su rag-gu ù ki-na*

⁷⁸⁶ Lambert 1987, 194–195.

⁷⁸⁷ For the meaning of the *hapax legomena mešheru* and *šīdītu*, see the commentary on this line in Chapter 2.

⁷⁸⁸ Lambert 1989, 326 and 330; cf. Wasserman 2003, 67.

⁷⁸⁹ Cf. Streck 2003, 56: “Demütig, ehrfürchtig, tief(?) gebeugt folgt er seinen Gott”. Cf. Oshima 2011, 227,242–243.

53[By] the seer-bowls (and) by the cedar knots,

⁵⁴[by] the *roasting plate* of the diviners you are the one who interprets the dreams.

⁵⁵[*Those who are bound*] by contracts are knelt before you,

⁵⁶In front of you the wicked and the just kneel down.⁷⁹⁰

These couplets display the device of polysemy: *riksu* can signify “band” but also “contract”.⁷⁹¹

2) Gula Hymn, ll. 114–115

¹¹⁴ *re-mé-nu su-pe-e i-šem-mi*

¹¹⁴ *rag-gu a-a-bi ú¹(i)-šem-mi⁷⁹² ti-iṭ-tiš*

¹¹⁴ Merciful, he hears prayer,

¹¹⁵ The wicked and enemies he turns into clay.⁷⁹³

This is a *paronomasia*: the verbal forms *išemme*, “he hears”, and *ušemmi*, “he turns” are similar in sound, but different in meaning.

3) Nabû Prayer, l. 25

²⁵ [*bēlu šibbu(?) a-ma*]-*ru-uk* [*u*]*r-pa-tum né-ke-l-mu-uk*

²⁵ [O Lord], your [gla]re is [a serpent], your frown is a [dar]k cloud

If my restoration is correct, this is a *double-entendre*: *a-ma-ruk* can be understood as derived from *amāru*, “to see” (*AHw* I 40–42; *CAD* A/2 4.27) followed by the suffix *-k(a)*, which would parallel *nekelmû* + *-k(a)*, “your frowning” (*AHw* II 775; *CAD* N/2 152–153) in the second hemistich, or as the Sumerian loan-word *Emarukku/Amarukku*, “deluge”, see *AHw* I 211.

5.2.3.1.6 Enumeration

1) Nabû Prayer, l. 216

²¹⁶ [*le-q*]é *da-ma-šu ba-la-šu ù ut-nen-šú*

⁷⁹⁰With regard to line 54, I take the form *mu-ši-mi* (other ms. *mu-šim-ma*, see Lambert 1960, 128) as *mušemmi*, following Mayer 2017, 11, namely an elsewhere unattested noun to be derived from *šawûm* D-stem, “to roast” (*AHw* III 1206; *CAD* Š/1 350), which might indicate a plate used for roasting in liturgical context. Such word would parallel [*ana*] *mākalti bārûti* in the previous line. For a possible reconstruction of line 55, see Böhl 1942, 676, who restores *rākisu* (from *rakāsu*, *AHw* II 945–947; *CAD* R 98–105) at the beginning of the verse, translating “wie den ritus vervullen”. I follow here the interpretation provided by Foster (2005), 630, who understands *rik-sa-a-ti* as related to legal bonds, and translates: “[The parties to] contracts”. However, the verse remains difficult to reconstruct, due to the multiple meanings of *riksu*.

fits the traces (copy collation, see Lambert 1960, pl. 35) and accords with similar passages within the same text, see e.g., ll. 124–125 (Lambert 1960, 134).

⁷⁹¹ *AHw* II 984–985; *CAD* R 347–355.

⁷⁹² The main manuscript has a scribal mistake and shows the form *i-šem-mi* also in line 115, cf. Lambert 1967, 122.

⁷⁹³ Lambert 1967, 121–122.

²¹⁶[Ta]ke the prostrating, the bowing and his prayer

2) Šamaš Hymn ll. 131-132

¹³¹*ta-šem-me* ^dUTU *su-up-pa-a su-la-a ù ka-ra-bi*

¹³²*šu-kin-na kit-mu-su lit-ḥu-šu ù la-ban ap-pi*

¹³¹You observe, Šamaš, prayer, supplication, and benediction,

¹³²obeisance, kneeling, ritual murmurs, and prostration.⁷⁹⁴

5.2.4 Morphological figures in the Akkadian sources

This short section contains some examples of three morphological figures—i.e, figures that operate on the morphological level of language—commonly found in Akkadian poetry, namely the *figura etymologica*, the polyptoton and the anadiplosis.⁷⁹⁵

The *figura etymologica* can be termed as “the coupling of a (usually intransitive) verb and a noun derived from the same root (*to sing a song, ein Leben leben*)”.⁷⁹⁶ The polyptoton, on the other hand, can concern nouns or verbs: the nominal polyptoton consists in the repetition of a word, varied in case, number or gender; in the verbal polyptoton, instead, the alteration mainly involves the conjugations, the tenses, and the plural or singular form of the verbs.⁷⁹⁷ Both these figures are used for intensification and emphasis, but also serve the aesthetic purpose of variation.⁷⁹⁸

The device of anadiplosis, also known as “terrace pattern” in the Biblical studies,⁷⁹⁹ is the repetition of the same morpheme of a verse at the beginning of the following line. It has the function of creating tension, slowing down the pace of the verses and thus capturing the audience’s attention.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁴ Lambert 1960, 135.

⁷⁹⁵ These rhetorical devices are often found also in Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry, see e.g. McCreesh 1991, 76 for the usage of polyptoton in Genesis and in the book of Proverbs; see Watson 1986, 239 for the occurrence of the *figura etymologica* in the biblical poetry, with some examples from Ugaritic and Akkadian; and cf. also Watson 1986, 208-13, 356-59 and 273 for several attestations of anadiplosis in Hebrew and Ugaritic sources.

⁷⁹⁶ Citation from Plett 2010, 174. Cf. Lanham 1991, 117 and Lausberg 1998, 288.

⁷⁹⁷ Plett 2010, 173–174. Cf. also Brogan 1993b, 967–68.

⁷⁹⁸ Cf. Lausberg 1998, 288, with regard to polyptoton: “[...] the contrast between the equivalence of the word and the difference in its syntactic function has an enlivening effect”; cf. also Plett 2010, 175. See Dardano 2019 for a study on the *figura etymologica* and the polyptoton, in addition to other rhetorical devices, in Hittite prayers.

⁷⁹⁹ Watson 1986, 208.

⁸⁰⁰ For a definition of anadiplosis, see also Lanham 1991, 10; cf. also Lausberg 1990, 82–83 sub *reduplicatio*. Compare Watson 1986, 209-210 for other possible functions of the device of anadiplosis in Hebrew, Ugaritic and Akkadian.

5.2.4.1 Morphological figures in the Great Hymns and Prayers

5.2.4.1.1 *Figura etymologica*

- 1) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, col. iv, l. 16 (*šīāmu/šīmtu(m)*):

¹⁶*maḥ-riš it-ti^d en-líl i-šam ši-im-ta*

¹⁶She decrees destinies in front of Enlil's sign.⁸⁰¹

- 2) Šamaš Hymn, l. 101 (*diānu/dīnu(m)*):

¹⁰¹*da-a-na muš-ta-lum šá di-in me-šá-ri i-di-nu*

¹⁰¹A circumspect judge who pronounces just verdicts.⁸⁰²

- 3) Prayer to Ištar Anūna, l. 84 (*anāḫu/inḫu(m)*):

⁸⁴*in-ḫu i-na-ḫu ú-ša-an-n[a]*

⁸⁴He repeats the toils he has wearied himself with⁸⁰³

5.2.4.1.2 *Polyptoton*

- 1) Šamaš Hymn, ll. 23-24 (*tapaqqid/paqdāka*):

²³*nišī (UN.MEŠ) mātāti (KUR.KUR) kul-lat-si-na ta-paq-qid*

²⁴*šá^d e-a šar (LUGAL) mal-ku uš-tab-nu-ú ka-liš paq-da-ka*

²³You care for all the peoples of the lands,

²⁴And everything that Ea, king of the counsellors, had created, is entrusted to you⁸⁰⁴

- 2) Gula Hymn, l. 117 (*ašarēd ašarēdi*⁸⁰⁵):

^{117d}*nin-urta a-šá-red a-šá-re-du DUMU^d en-líl gaš-ru*

¹¹⁷Ninurta, foremost of the foremost, mighty son of Enlil.⁸⁰⁶

- 3) Hymn to the Queen of Nippur, ll. 47–49 (*nigūti/nigūta*):

⁴⁷*ina bīt (È) araḫ i-sin-ni ta-ši-la-a-ti ni-gu-ú-t[i]*

⁴⁸*ši-mé-e-ma be-el-tu ka-bat-tuk li-iḫ-d[i]*

⁴⁹*li-li-iš lib-bu-uk li-te-riš ni-g[u-ta]*

In the house of the monthly festival, (wherein is) joy and mirth,

Harken, mistress, that your reins rejoice,

⁸⁰¹ Lambert 1982, 202–203.

⁸⁰² Lambert 1960, 132–133.

⁸⁰³ Lambert 1992, 326 and 330.

⁸⁰⁴ Lambert 1960, 126–127.

⁸⁰⁵ Cf. Schäfer 1974, 148–155, who calls this kind of formulation the “paronomastische Intensitätsgenitiv”.

⁸⁰⁶ Lambert 1967, 122–123.

Let your heart be glad and ask for mirth⁸⁰⁷

5.2.4.1.3 *Anadiplosis*

1) Marduk 2, ll. 68-69:

⁶⁸*ki-i i-din-nu be-lu₄ iš-ta-a'-a-lu i-re-em uš-pa-áš-šaḥ*

⁶⁹*uš-pa-áš-šaḥ* ^dAMAR.UTU *re-me-nú ú-tar a-na dum-qí*

⁶⁸After the lord has *reflected (and) rendered judgment*, he has mercy and relents,

⁶⁹He relents, Marduk the merciful one, he turns (*the punishment?*) into grace.⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰⁷ Lambert 1982, 204–205.

⁸⁰⁸ Own translation, cf. Oshima 2011, 228, 244-245. Another example of anadiplosis can be found in the ll. 54-55 of the Šamaš Hymn above mentioned, see example no. 1 in §5.2.3.1.5: ... *kitmusā maḥarka/ ina mahrika kitmusū*.

5.3 SUMMARY

The above survey is a preliminary study on the rhetorical techniques which can be found within the corpus under consideration:⁸⁰⁹ as one can notice from the provided examples, there is some degree of overlap between the figures, as multiple poetic devices can occur at the same time: for instance, in the Šamaš Hymn, l. 39 exhibits both alliteration and homoioteleuton, see above §5.2.1.1; or, in the Gula Hymn, the rhyming couplet formed by ll. 115-116 also constitutes a synthetic parallelism, see §5.2.1.1.5. Moreover, devices might be interpreted and labelled in different ways: rhyme, for example, might be considered as a form of repetition, or the various sub types of parallelism might appear as loosely distinct.⁸¹⁰

As difficult as it is to make a definite distinction between rhetorical figures, and to select those devices, which may be of particular significance in the outline of a general rhetorical analysis, it seems clear that the Great Hymns and Prayers are highly sophisticated poetic compositions.

Following the criteria given by Groneberg in her study on the definition of literary and lyrical texts in Akkadian, it can be observed that the corpus under study contains all the features indicative of “poeticity”.⁸¹¹ Indeed, they are characterised by a visual arrangement, being divided into distichs or strophes by horizontal rulings; they use a specific literary dialect (the “hymno epic dialect”), which includes a special vocabulary; they follow a metrical pattern, which interweaves with other sound effects, such as phonetic devices or puns.⁸¹² Furthermore, they are enriched with imagery, evoked by similes and metaphors.

Each of these parts contributes to the final result, that is a combination of sound and rhythm, of intra- and intertextual connections, of implicit allusions or vivid symbolic images: in one word, poetry.

⁸⁰⁹ Several poetic devices have not been included in the present analysis. For instance, cases of ellipsis have been omitted, because they appear seldom in these compositions (for an occurrence of ellipsis, see e.g., Nabû Prayer, l. 217, in which the verb *leqû*, “to take”, is implied. For the edition of the text and the commentary on this line, see Chapter 2). Another device that has not been mentioned in this section is the *enjambement*, which is rarely attested in Akkadian, and also scarcely used within the Great Hymns and Prayers (e.g., Šamaš Hymn, l. 43–44, cf. Groneberg 1987 I, 184–185). In addition, the hyperbole has not been included here, hyperbolic expressions being typical of hymnic passages, and therefore not deemed as particularly significant for the purpose of this analysis. For hyperbole in hymns, see the introduction of the Nabû Prayer and the Ištar Prayer in Chapter 2 and 3.

⁸¹⁰ Cf. Watson 1986, 131 on the difficulty in the classification of parallelisms.

⁸¹¹ Groneberg 1996.

⁸¹² For these particular aspects, i.e. the format of tablets, the language and the metrical system, cf. Chapter 1, §1.2.3 and §1.2.4.

CONCLUSIONS

The Akkadian literary corpus under study is labelled as the “Great Hymns and Prayers”. It includes eight poetical compositions addressed to the gods Nabû, Marduk, Šamaš, Gula and Ištar. These texts share formal and linguistic features, and, occasionally, similar themes and formulations. Concretely, they are 200 lines or more long, and are divided into couplets or poetical strophes marked by horizontal rulings; moreover, they make use of a special literary idiom (the so-called “hymno-epic dialect”). In addition, these texts contain several passages that show “philosophical” reflections which resemble wisdom literature.

Chapter 1 provides readers with a general overview of the Great Hymns and Prayers. First, the difficulties in defining the literary genres of Mesopotamian literature, for instance the fragmentary state of preservation of the texts and the lack of native poetic classifications, are acknowledged. After a brief summary of the evolution of Sumerian and Akkadian hymns and prayers, I describe the standard structure and form of the two genres. Then I present the actual corpus of the Akkadian Great Hymns and Prayers, taking into account different aspects of the compositions, such as the layout of the tablets, the prosodic structure, language, spelling conventions and content. The majority of the texts exhibit the standard metrical pattern of Akkadian literature (i.e., the *vierheber* verse) and display numerous hymno-epic features, including shortened pronominal suffixes, ŠD-stem verbal forms and a special vocabulary. With only few exceptions, almost all the tablets preserving the Great Hymns and Prayers are first millennium copies, characterised by the typical traits of late manuscripts, e.g., irregular case endings, or apocope of final vowels; verbs can present overhanging vowels.

With respect to the content, I briefly describe several passages in the Great Hymns and Prayers which concern problems of human suffering and divine justice. Indeed these compositions employ various wisdom motifs which also occur in the poems of *Ludlul* and the *Babylonian Theodicy*, and in some penitential prayers. The formulations and literary tropes appearing, for instance, in the Hymn to Marduk (Marduk 2) and in the Marduk 1, Nabû and Ištar Prayers, express the supplicant’s feelings of despair, the loss of divine protection, their misfortunes and petitions; they reflect the standard language of the *diġiršadabba* and *eršaḫunga* penitential prayers.

Chapters 2 and 3 contain new critical editions of the Nabû and Ištar prayers. Both texts are provided with an introduction, in which I present the stylistic and structural traits of the texts with a detailed prosodic analysis, a list of the hymno-epic traits and a description of the spelling conventions. Chapter 2 offers some observations with regard to the wisdom features of the Nabû prayer, as well. The editions include transliterations, transcriptions and

translations of the two prayers; furthermore, the remarkable or problematic philological issues are discussed in the commentaries. I have collated the texts from the original tablets and offer new readings and restorations, not least thanks to some recently discovered additional fragments. In addition, several lines in both prayers could be partially or completely reconstructed through comparison with textual parallels.

Lexical lists have proved to be particularly helpful in the understanding and reconstruction of the Great Hymns and Prayers, as scribes used them in the process of composition. Chapter 4 reveals how entries from the lexical sources were occasionally encased in these texts, often in the form of poetic enumerations. The opposite process was also possible, and these learned texts were a source of inspiration for scholars composing scholarly commentaries and lexical texts.

The linguistic and stylistic complexity of this corpus is due not only to their hymno-epic features, including the special vocabulary partially borrowed from the lexical lists, but also to the extensive use of rhetorical devices. The poetic figures and imagery employed in these texts are often inspired by the natural world. In this respect, Chapter 5 offers a poetical analysis of the corpus, illustrating the numerous phonetic, semantic, syntactic and morphological figures, which enrich the texts under study.

The *Sitz im Leben* of the Great Hymns and Prayers remains difficult to define, since they do not bear any clear indication as to their use within a cultic or liturgical setting. Due to their sophisticated style and language, together with their length and the themes they show, scholars have suggested that their scope might have been purely literary. Although the original purpose of these texts remains speculative, they were certainly employed in scribal schools. After all, most of the Great Hymns and Prayers are preserved on multiple manuscripts, many of them being school-exercise copies. As they were transmitted until the last period of the cuneiform culture, they were probably well-known texts, studied and copied as “classics” of the Mesopotamian literature.

In conclusion, it is clear that these compositions were produced through a careful balance of lexical sources, wisdom themes, poetic forms and religious beliefs, thus showing the inextricable web of connections running through the various realms of Mesopotamian written tradition. In these texts, scribal scholarship is interwoven with poetry and creativity, and traditional schemes are moulded and reshaped into new forms. The Great Hymns and Prayers, so recondite and skilfully composed, were passed down over countless generations of scribes, preserved in the scribal curriculum and regarded as valuable knowledge.

APPENDIX: BM 35939

The Late Babylonian fragment BM 35939 preserves the last lines of the Ištar Prayer on the reverse (see Chapter 3), while the obverse contains a yet unidentified Akkadian text, which seems to be a hymn or prayer. It is possible to reconstruct a few words and phrases, which suggest that the text might include some hymnic standard motifs. Judging from the preserved epithet in l. 3', *maššû šīri*, a male deity could be addressed. Immediately following the Ištar Prayer, the fragment presents a colophon on the reverse, which says that the tablet was copied in its totality (ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.ŠÈ, cf. Hunger 168, 181 for further attestations of this phrase). The use of this expression suggests that the texts preserved on this manuscript were part of a series.

(Previous lines missing)

B obv.	1'	[			] <i>ú-za-mi-¹ru²</i>
B obv.	2'	[			] <i>a-a-ú ma-l[a²-ka²]</i>
B obv.	3'	[			] <i>maš-šú-ú ši-¹ri²</i>
B obv.	4'	[			] <i>su² tuk-la a [x]</i>
B obv.	5'	[			] <i>u lu su-lum</i>
B obv.	6'	[			] <i>ina balīka(?) la na-bu-ú maš-še-[e²]</i>
B obv.	7'	[			] <i>¹x¹-sa-at a-mat-[ka²]</i>
B obv.	8'	[			] <i>mi i ¹šu² ¹x [x]</i>
B obv.	9'	[			] <i>x x ^dIDIM ^{d1}[x]</i>
B obv.	10'	[			] <i>^d30 a [x x]</i>
B obv.	11'	[			] <i>^dUTU ^{d2}[x x]</i>
B obv.	12'	[			] <i>x x x [x x x]</i>

(Manuscript B breaks off)

B rev.	4'	[			] <i>¹šur¹-ba-ak ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[É]</i>
B rev.	5'	[			] <i>DIŠ MU.BI.¹IM¹</i>

Translation

B obv.	1'	[	...		] <i>they sing</i>
B obv.	2'	[	...		] <i>who is eq[ual to you?]</i>
B obv.	3'	[	...		] <i>glori[ous] leader.</i>
B obv.	4'	[	...		] <i>... aid ...</i>
B obv.	5'	[	...		] <i>and may there be reconciliation.</i>
B obv.	6'	[	<i>without you</i>,		] <i>ruler[s] are not appointed!</i>
B obv.	7'	[	...		] <i>... [your] word is...,</i>
B obv.	8'	[	...		] <i>... [ ... ]</i>

B obv. 9' [...] ... Ea, [*Enlil*]
 B obv. 10' [...] *Šîn* ... [...]
 B obv. 11' [...] *Šamaš* ... [...]

(line 12 too fragmentary for translation; ms. B breaks off)

B rev. 4' ["... you are ex]alted", (copied) in it[s] totality.
 B rev. 5' [... number of lines: ...

Commentary

1'. *ú-za-mi-r* ¹*u*¹: The end of this line is partially broken, but the beginning of the sign RU can still be distinguished. It is possible therefore to reconstruct the verb *uzammirū*, plural form of the preterite D-Stem from *zamāru*, “to sing” (*AHw* 1508; *CAD Z* 36–38). The context is too damaged to allow an understanding, but one can hypothesise that the object of the verb might be the praises of the addressed deity. Cf. also the succeeding line, with a standard hyperbolic formulation.

2'. *a-a-ú ma-*[...]: This line, although severely damaged, could contain a rhetorical question, through which a hyperbolic praise to the addressed deity is expressed. Unfortunately, the break prevents restorations, although one would expect a form such as *ma-ħir-ka/ki*, “equal to you” (cf. *AHw* II 577–580; *CAD M/1* 63 sub *maħārūm*, mng. 3b) or *ma-la-ka/ki*, “like you”. For similar formulations see for example the Išar Prayer, l. 75: *a-a-ú ina* ¹*DIĜIR*¹.*MEŠ* ¹*im*¹-*ša-a ma-la-k[i]*, “Who among the gods is as powerful as you?” (see Chapter 3), or a Šuilla-prayer to Ištar, l. 11: *šum-ma i-na* ^d*Í-gì-gì a-a-ú ma-ħir-ki*, “Who is your rival among the gods of Heaven?”.⁸¹³ For hyperbolic formulations in Mesopotamian hymns, see Metcalf 2015, 42–49 with regard to Sumerian sources, and 76–77 for some examples in Akkadian texts.

3'. *maš-šu-ú ši-*¹*ri*²: This is divine epithet. The restoration is based on similar attestations, see Tallqvist 1938, 130, cf. *CAD M/1* 327 sub *massū*, “leader”, mng. a), cf. *AHw* 619. The end of the line is broken, but it seems that there is not enough space for more signs after RI.

⁸¹³ Cf. Zgoll 2003a, 193, the translation used here is that of Sperling 1981, 11.

4'. *tuk-la*: The context is too fragmentary to allow an understanding of the line. If the reconstruction of the noun *tukla*, from *tuklu*, “help” (*AHw* III 1367; *CAD* T 468) is correct, the sign A after LA must belong to the succeeding word.

5'. *u lu su-lum*: I understand this as *lū sullumu*, i.e. the precative particle *lū* followed by the D-stem infinitive form of *salāmu*, “to become reconciled” (*AHw* II 1013–1014 ; *CAD* S 89–92), with the dropping of the final vowel (a typical Late Babylonian trait).⁸¹⁴

6'. [... *ina balīka(?)*] *la na-bu-ú maš-še-[e²]*: Restoration based on similar formulations, see for example the *eršahunga*-prayer to Ištar (no. 43), l. 14'–15':

^{14'} ama-^{d+} Innin-mu za-da-nu-me-a m[u] n[a]m^l-mu-da-pàd-da

^{15^d} iš-ta-ri ina ba-li-ka šu-mi^l ul^l na-bi^l

My goddess, without you my name cannot be mentioned!⁸¹⁵

Cf. also *CAD* N/1 38-39 sub *nabû* A, “to call”, “to appoint”, mng. 7a. Cf. also *AHw* II 700 sub *nabû*, N mng. 2). Cf. also the Nabû Prayer, ll. 99-102 (Chapter 2).

Phrases using the conjunction *balum* or the preposition *balu* with suffixes are commonly found in Akkadian hymns and defined as “negative predications”.⁸¹⁶ This type of formulation is a standard topos, also attested in Old Babylonian Sumerian hymns as follows: DN-da nu-me-a, “without DN, (such-and-such does not happen)”. It stresses the indispensability of the invoked deity, without whom no human activity nor natural process is possible.⁸¹⁷

7'. I tentatively restore *amatka*, “Your word”, since the space on the tablet does not seem to be big enough to contain more than one sign after A and KUR. The traces at the end of the line are, however, barely visible, and the reading remains uncertain. A form with a dropping of the final vowel such as *amat* could also be possible, see for example ms. A of the Gula Hymn, l. 60 *a-mat* for *amatī* (Lambert 1967, 118; cf. Chapter 1). The initial break of the line prevents a reconstruction, but it is likely that the visible signs ZA and AT form the ending of a third feminine singular stative referred to *amatu*. The traces before ZA could be reconciled with MA or BA, but the tablet is too damaged to allow an interpretation.

⁸¹⁴ Cf. Schwemer 2017, 79 and Jiménez 2017, 277 for other examples of dropping of final vowels in verbal forms. Cf. also in the Ištar Prayer, l. 210 [*mīta(?) bu?-ul?-l]u?*], see the text and the note in the commentary on this line in Chapter 3.

⁸¹⁵ Maul 1988, 228, but cf. *CAD* B 70, *lex. sec.* which translates differently.

⁸¹⁶ This definition comes from Metcalf 2015, 154. Cf. also West 1997b, 268–269.

⁸¹⁷ Cf. Metcalf 2015, 154–170.

9'–11'. The list of divine names suggests that this portion of the text probably included the standard motif of the *elatio*, that is, the elevation of the addressed god by one or more deities. In the *elatio* the chief deities are said to grant legitimation to one god, bestowing upon him divine qualities and prerogatives. This is a typical element found in both Sumerian and Akkadian hymns.⁸¹⁸

For a similar passage, see the Ištar Prayer, ll. 232-233 and the note in the commentary on this couplet (Chapter 3).

(Reverse side, ll. 1'-3' correspond to ll. 235-237 of the Ištar Prayer, for which see the edition in Chapter 3)

4'. [] ʾšur¹-ba-ak ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[È]: The reconstructed word ʾšur¹-ba-ak is problematic. It could be an irregular spelling for a stative derived from *rabû* Š-stem (*AHW* 938–940; *CAD* R 37-50), i.e. *šurbû*, “to exalt”, with a loss of the final vowel. Forms of the singular stative in *-āka* (for the masculine) or *-āki* (for the feminine) are attested in Neo-Assyrian sources (see a hymn to Gula edited by Ebeling 1954, 347 rev. l. 19: *šur-ba-ki* and *d[u-un-nu-na]-ki*; cf. *GAG* § 75c and Groneberg 1987 I, 133–134). A first singular stative form in *-āk* for *-āku* is attested in literary texts of the Neo-Babylonian period (Jiménez 2017a, 225, cf. Chapter §1.2.4). The form could then perhaps be translated as “you are exalted”, or “I am exalted”, but it is not possible to determine whether it refers to the goddess Ištar or to some other deity.

ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[È]: This expression normally follows the tablet number and the name of the composition.⁸¹⁹ It can occur at the end of series, closing the last tablet, but is also found at the end of text catalogues, after the total number of the series tablets.⁸²⁰ Therefore, the form *šurbāk* immediately preceding this phrase could be part of the title of a series of compositions, to which the Ištar prayer used to belong.

⁸¹⁸ The term *elatio* as applied to Mesopotamian hymns was coined by Metcalf (Metcalf 2015, 37–40, 89–90, 174–5).

⁸¹⁹ Taylor 2005, 27.

⁸²⁰ For example, The expression ZAG.TIL.LA.BI.Š[È] appears at the end of the eighth tablet of the Gilgameš Epic (George 2003, 737, cf. Hunger 1968, 91 no. 294), and at the end of the incantation series *Maqlû* (Abusch 2015, 272, 366, 391); it is also found at the end of the series *Sakikkû* and *Alamdimmû* in the catalogue of the physician Esagil-kīn-apli (see Schmittdchen 2018, 152).

5'. [] DIŠ MU.BI.ṚIM¹: The phrase MU.BI.IM refers to the total number of lines of the tablet, which is not possible to reconstruct due to the fragmentary state of the line. The sign DIŠ, following an unknown numeric sign, may stand for 1 or 60.

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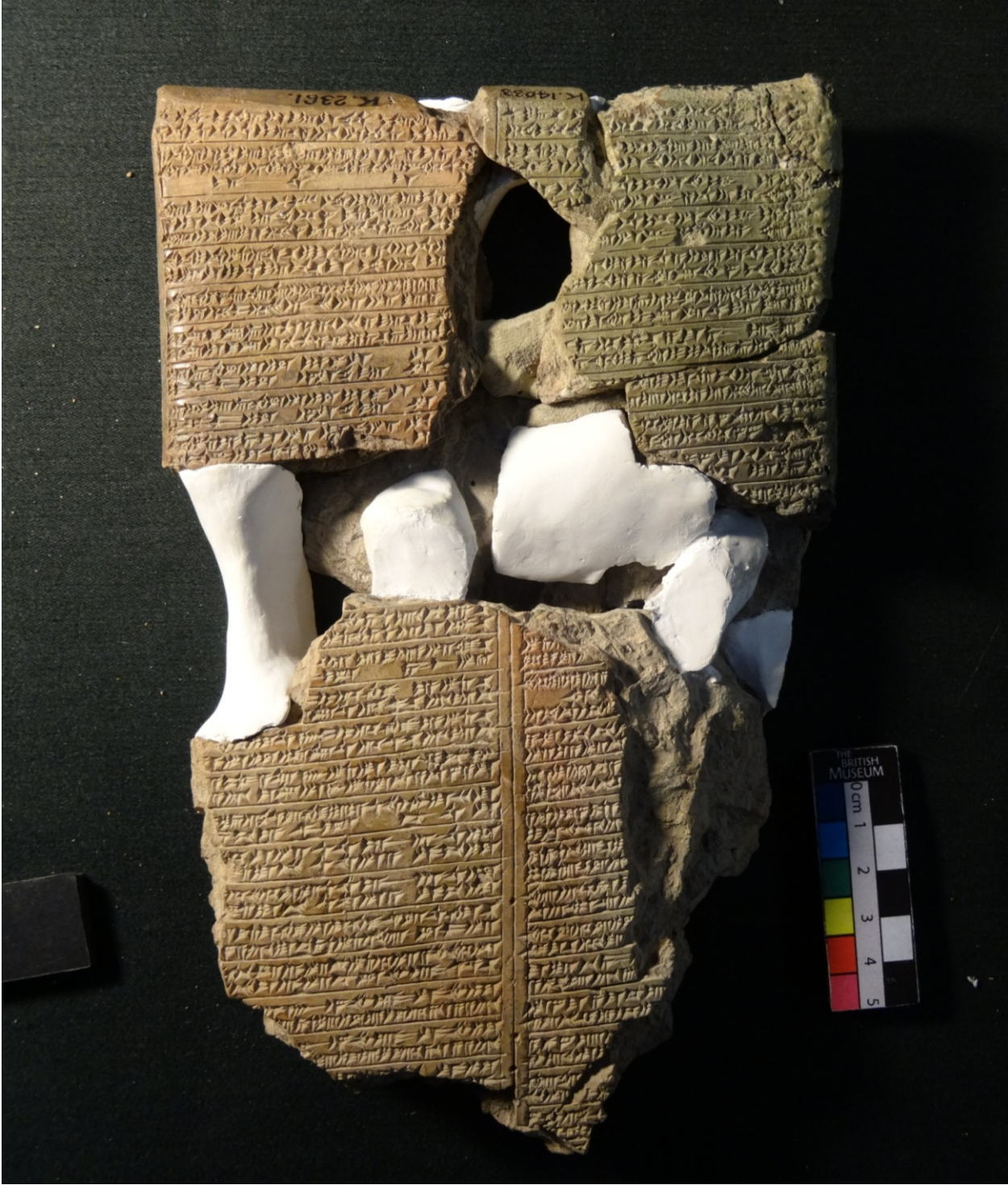
Plate 1 (Ms. A obv.= K 2361+)

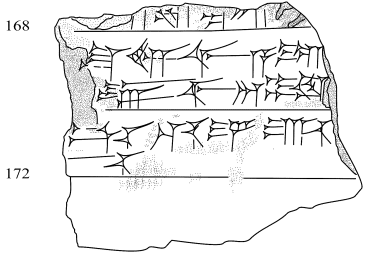


Plate 1 (Ms. A obv. = K 2361+ ,with recent join K 18434)



Plate 2 (Ms. A rev. = K 2361)

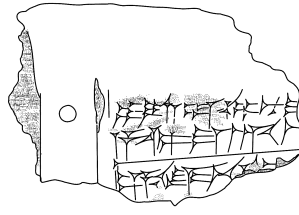




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3:2

Plate 3



K 15248 3:2