

The Exegetical Terminology of Akkadian Commentaries

By
Uri Gabbay

CULTURE & HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

The Exegetical Terminology of Akkadian Commentaries

Culture and History of the Ancient Near East

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To Carmel, Yotam, and Naomi



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Introduction

1 Akkadian Commentaries

Akkadian commentaries and explanatory texts are known from over nine hundred cuneiform tablets, stemming from various cities in Babylonia and Assyria from the eighth century up to the first century BCE.[1] The earliest known commentaries derive from a period in which the long editorial process that yielded the broad canon of Sumero-Akkadian literature—including liturgical, ritual, divinatory, medical, and lexical texts—reached its peak. Once the canon was closed, there was much less freedom for scribes to create new texts or rework older ones and the scholarly focus shifted to the study and interpretation of the existing texts, leading to the creation of new genres of exegetical texts that are based on the fixed canonical corpus.

While the commentary as a distinct genre is a new creation of the first millennium BCE, it is important to emphasize that interpretation was already a significant feature of Sumerian and Akkadian literature in its earliest stages during the third millennium BCE. The lexical interpretation of individual words and phrases is manifest in the very first bilingual lexical lists, dating to the beginning of the second millennium BCE in Babylonia (and much earlier in Ebla), as well as in the Akkadian translations of Sumerian texts known from the same period onward. Phenomenal interpretation forms the basis of omen literature, also attested from the beginning of the second millennium BCE onward, which seeks to interpret the meaning and significance of phenomena observed in the sky, on earth, or during ritual. These two forms of interpretation, lexical and phenomenal, serve as the principal topics of commentaries.[2]

From a formal perspective, there are two main types of commentaries: those organized by theme and those that proceed line by line through a particular text. The thematic commentary, usually termed *mukallimtu*, deals with a theme or subject treated in a certain group of texts (not necessarily according to the original order of those texts), although it includes other materials as well. The continuous type, usually termed *ṣâtu*, is closely related to a specific

1 Frahm (2011, 6) lists 861 commentaries, and according to the *Cuneiform Commentaries Project* (CCP) the corpus includes 880 commentaries, to which I add cultic commentaries and other explanatory texts.

2 See Frahm 2011, 12–23.

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text, interpreting lemmata according to the order in which they appear in the text.[3]

Akkadian commentaries are very difficult texts. They are written laconically, in brief syntactical units, usually as a series of lexical equations and correspondences and short explanations, and not as an interpretive essay. Our understanding of these texts has been greatly advanced in the last few years by the publication of Eckart Frahm's book *Babylonian and Assyrian Text Commentaries*.[4]

2 The Study of Akkadian Commentaries: Base Text, Motivation, Terminology

One of the chief problems in understanding Akkadian commentaries is that the text on which they comment is not always easily identified. If that text cannot be identified, it is very difficult to follow the commentary. Therefore, the first step one should take when studying commentaries is to attempt to identify the base text, i.e., the text that is the subject of the commentary.[5] This is not an easy task, as often the text has not appeared in a modern edition or, worse, is unpublished or completely lost. If the base text cannot be identified, the modern scholar is at a loss when trying to determine what the commentary refers to, and sometimes even when attempting to distinguish between the lemma cited from the base text and the corresponding commentary.

The second step to be taken when studying ancient Mesopotamian commentaries, in my view, is to try to understand the motivation behind each comment. Each comment answers a certain question or difficulty in the text, whether simple (e.g., What does a certain word or phenomenon mean?), or more complex (e.g., Why is a certain treatment used for a specific sickness?). Therefore we should ask: What textual difficulty prompted a given interpretation? In my opinion, this subject has not been properly addressed yet in the study of Mesopotamian commentaries.[6] As a result attention is directed, not

3 I use here terminology from the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which distinguishes between thematic and continuous *pesharim*; see Lim 2002, 14–15. For the typology of commentaries, see Frahm 2011, 28–37, 41–58.

4 Frahm 2011. Prior to this volume the only systematic monograph dedicated to commentaries was R. Labat's *Commentaries assyro-babyloniens sur les présages* (Labat 1933). For the history of research on Akkadian commentaries, see Frahm 2011, 4–6.

5 See Frahm 2011, 111–261.

6 But see Frahm 2011, 79–85.

unjustifiably, to the techniques and assumptions on which Mesopotamian commentators relied while dealing with the difficulty in the text,[7] while the difficulty itself has not been properly defined. Focusing on exegetical techniques at the expense of the problems they were meant to solve is an obstacle to a better understanding of the general nature of commentaries and of the Mesopotamian hermeneutical system itself. An exclusive focus on exegetical techniques also fosters the misconception that the commentaries are free-wheeling compilations of interpretations that extract multiple meanings from a single text, which I think is not the case.

Nehama Leibowitz, a prominent Bible scholar and educator who expounded the hermeneutics of the French medieval Bible commentator Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki, known as Rashi, used to begin her discussions on his commentaries with the phrase "What's troubling Rashi?" (*mah qasheh le-Rashi*).[8] Her approach is equally applicable to ancient Mesopotamian commentaries. Indeed, it is crucial that the scholars who investigate these commentaries should likewise ask, What difficulty in the base text prompted this interpretation? In other words, one should seek the motivation for the interpretations within the base text itself.

Lastly, the third step in understanding ancient Mesopotamian commentaries is the identification of exegetical terminology. Different types of commentaries, namely textual commentaries, *mukallimtu* commentaries on omens, and cultic commentaries, as well as scholarly reports to kings relating to omen texts and their interpretation, all share a fairly fixed set of terms with similar hermeneutical roles.[9] An understanding of the meaning of a term and the way it is used in the hermeneutical process helps the reader, whether ancient or modern, to anticipate what type of interpretation will follow. Once the commented text is identified, the commentary can be distinguished from the base text; and when the meaning and hermeneutical function of the terms used in the commentary are identified and understood, the skeleton of the commentary can be reconstructed, and its flesh and blood—namely the exegetical discussions it records—can be restored.

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7 See Bottéro 1977; Pearce 1998; Maul 1999b; Frahm 2011, 59–79; Selz 2013, 64–65.

8 See Unterman 2009, 370: "Nehama's most famous question was '*Ma kasheh le-Rashi*?—What's troubling Rashi?' She asked it consistently from her early years, finding it much more useful than 'What does Rashi say?' . . . In Nehama's hand it became a real tool, an overture for a nuanced examination of the verse. Her opening salvo at the beginning of every course was: 'We're not going to study *what* Rashi said, but *why* he said it'."

9 For previous studies on technical terms, see Krecher 1980–1983, 190; also Frahm 2011, 41–58 (on terms for the commentaries themselves).

This book is dedicated to this last step, the identification of exegetical terminology, although it takes into consideration the first two steps as well when seeking to define the exegetical terms and their hermeneutical use. The three steps described above—identifying the base text, discerning the motivation for the commentary, and understanding the exegetical terminology—will be discussed below.

2.1 *The Base Text: Commentaries and Canonization*

Almost all of the texts that have attracted commentaries belong to the canonical corpus of first-millennium BCE Mesopotamian literature.[10] I use the term "canonical" to refer to texts that meet four criteria: (1) they belong to a relatively closed group of texts that circulated in various localities and in different periods during the first millennium BCE; (2) their manuscripts are standardized and display a minimum number of variants; (3) they have been grouped into corpora, often as segments of an individual composition or (especially in Nineveh) as a series of compositions arranged in a standard sequence; and (4) they are attributed to a figure of great authority, often a divinity. Although the notion of canonization is not universally accepted in studies of Mesopotamian literature,[11] I prefer to treat texts that meet these four criteria as members of a canon, even if there are limits and exceptions—as is the case with any canonical corpus. The assumption that a Mesopotamian canon existed also leads to a further criterion for the definition of a canon, namely, an interpretive and study tradition, expressed in the form of commentaries on a text or group of texts. At the same time, accepting Mesopotamian literature as a canon sheds light on certain hermeneutical concerns that are found in commentaries, especially the desire to harmonize different texts with each other.

The base texts that commentaries interpret belong, with a few exceptions, to the canonical corpus of Mesopotamian literature and, significantly, mostly to that part of the canonical corpus that was attributed to divine authority. The Catalogue of Texts and Authors, known from Nineveh, arranges the Babylonian literature according to authorship.[12] While most of the compositions in the catalogue are attributed to sages, kings, and scholars, the text begins with the compositions and series attributed to the god of wisdom, Ea:[13]

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10 Some of this section is based on my previous discussion in Gabbay 2012, 274–278.

11 For studies on the canonization of cuneiform literature in the first millennium BCE and the attendant problems, see Rochberg-Halton 1984; Lieberman 1990; Frahm 2011, 317–332; Gabbay 2014b, 193–227.

12 Lambert 1962.

13 Lambert 1962, 64, I:1–4.

[*a-ši-pu-t*]u_4 : ^{lú}GALA-*ú-tu*$_4$: U_4 AN ^{d}EN.LÍL / [*alam-dí*]*m-mu-ú* : SAG ITI NU.TIL.LA : SA.GIG.GA / [KA.TA.D]U_{11}.GA : lugal-e u_4 me-lám-bi nir-ĝál: an-gin$_7$ dím-[ma]
[*an-nu-tu*$_4$] *šá pi-i* ^{d}*é*-[*a*]

[*āšipūt*]*u* (= the corpus of the *āšipu* priest), *kalûtu* (= the corpus of the *kalû* priest), Enūma-Anu-Enlil (= astrological omen series), [Alam-di]mmû (= physiognomic omen series), saĝ-iti-nutila (= "one that did not complete the months"; possibly the omen series about abnormal births),[14] Sagig (= diagnostic series), [Katadu]ga (= series of omens dealing with human utterances), Lugal-e u_4 me-lám-bi nir-ĝál, An-gin$_7$ dím-ma (= both mythic hymns to the god Ninurta).
[These are] according to (*ša pī*; literally: from the mouth of) Ea.

The bulk of the Mesopotamian commentaries address precisely the divinatory corpora attributed to the god Ea in these lines.[15] In addition, the mythic hymn Lugale, which is listed in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors as a composition by the god Ea, is one of the only literary compositions known to possess a commentary (excluding compositions concerned with the theology of the god Marduk and incantations; see below).[16] In addition, although the corpus of *āšipūtu* was not systematically explicated, there are quite a few commentaries on the compositions it includes.[17] Other compositions in the catalogue are designated as "according to (literally: from the mouth of)" certain scholars,[18]

14 This phrase is elsewhere associated with *kūbu*, "(demonized) fetus"; see Stol 2000, 29. Here the phrase possibly refers to the series of teratological omens (usually known as Šumma Izbu) by a Sumerian name, as is the case in some of the other entries in these lines. See De Zorzi 2014, 2.

15 One large divinatory corpus that does not seem to be mentioned in the list of compositions attributed to the god Ea but was nevertheless the subject of numerous commentaries is the series of terrestrial omens (Šumma Ālu). This series, however, may have been closely associated with the *āšipūtu* corpus, attributed to Ea in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors, since these omens often appear on the same tablets on which Namburbi-rituals (performed by the *āšipu*) are written. Similarly, medical texts that are not mentioned in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors are known from many commentaries, but these too may have been closely associated with *āšipūtu*.

16 See Finkel 1986, 190–191; Frahm 2011, 117–119.

17 For commentaries on the *āšipūtu* corpus, see Frahm 2011, 121–128.

18 See Lambert 1962, 66, V:2, 5, VI:6, 8, 12–14, VII:2, 4, 7.

and apparently did not receive commentaries.[19] For example, the epic of Gilgameš is attributed to the scholar Sîn-lēqe-unnīni,[20] but although it has received much attention from modern scholars, no ancient commentary on the epic is known. Commentaries, especially in the later periods, are occasionally attributed to scholars using the same designation: "according to (literally: from the mouth of) a scholar."[21] Although this label distinguishes the commentaries from the divine writings they interpret by assigning them to a human author, it nevertheless demonstrates the authoritative standing the commentaries possessed, similar to that of canonical literature from other genres, such as the epic of Gilgameš. In sum, although exceptions occur, the vast majority of texts that received commentaries were canonical and endowed with divine authority.

One large corpus that includes many commentaries but is not mentioned in the list of compositions attributed to the god Ea is the series of extispicy omens (*bārûtu*).[22] This series was considered divinely inspired as well, but it was attributed not to the wisdom god Ea but to the gods in charge of extispicy, Šamaš and Adad. According to a mythological passage introducing the qualifications of the Babylonian diviners, the gods Šamaš and Adad revealed the secrets of divination (including extispicy) to the legendary king Enmeduranki, who in turn revealed them to the citizens of the cities Nippur, Sippar, and Babylon. Scholars then transmitted this divine knowledge to their sons.[23]

Lastly, a word is due on the very few Akkadian literary texts (not *āšipūtu*) that are known to have been commented on but are not attributed to divine authority (or not mentioned at all) in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors.[24] It is noteworthy that the few known literary texts that have full commentaries are theological texts centered on the god Marduk and his city, Babylon.[25] These are the Babylonian creation epic Enūma eliš, the theological wisdom texts Ludlul-bēl-nēmeqi and the Babylonian Theodicy, and probably a prayer to

19 An exception is the Babylonian Theodicy, for which a commentary is known; it is attributed in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors (and in the acrostic of the composition itself) to the scholar Saĝil-kīnam-ubbib. See Lambert 1960, 62–91; Lambert 1962, 66, V:1–2; Oshima 2014, 121–125. For this composition, see below.

20 See Lambert 1962, 66, VI:10.

21 See Chapter 1, 2.1.1.

22 Cf. Lambert 1962, 69.

23 See Lambert 1998, 141–158.

24 Excluding the Sumero-Akkadian mythic hymn Lugale, discussed above in the context of divine authorship.

25 See Horowitz 2009, 39–53.

Marduk.[26] Another related text is the Code of Hammurabi, of which one fragmentary commentary is known,[27] also associated with the city of Babylon and its famous king. It is no coincidence that commentaries on these Babylon/Marduk-centered compositions were found either in Babylon or the cities close to it (Borsippa and Sippar) or in Nineveh (which reflects a Babylonian tradition) but not elsewhere, especially not in south Babylonia.[28]

The attribution of the texts that are commented on to divine authors is significant for several reasons, the most important of which are the following: (1) It emphasizes the perceived distinction between the closed canonical corpus and the newly written commentaries, and consequently shifts the textual authority from the divine author to the human scholastic interpreter. (2) It results in a perception of the entire commented corpus as a single harmonic composition inspired by the god(s), which encourages, on the one hand, the interpretation of its details, all considered deliberate components of the divine message, and on the other hand, the search for ties and analogies between the different texts in this corpus. The process of standardizing and canonizing a text involves seeing it as a coherent and logical unit, even if it is in fact not so—if, for example, it suffers from editorial glitches or was compiled from different sources. But the process of canonization is not limited to enshrining individual texts. One of the results of defining a group of texts as an authoritative "canon" is the assumption that the canonical texts should agree with each other and form a coherent corpus—all the more so in the case of texts whose authority is divine, such as the Mesopotamian omen series. As a result of the process of canonization, the coherency of an individual text is presumed to be no less important than—and sometimes even preferable to—its literal meaning, and therefore even if a nonliteral explanation of a phenomenon in the text will increase its coherency, it is adopted. Similarly, contradictory texts can be harmonized by stipulating that one offers a general statement while the other applies to a specific situation—a situation that was probably not anticipated by the (author of the) text—thereby ensuring cross-textual consistency within the canon.

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26 See Frahm 2011, 111–121 and CCP 1.5. The relatively high number of commentaries on the composition Marduk's Address to the Demons (Frahm 2011, 124–126), which belongs to the *āšipūtu* repertoire, may be a consequence of the Marduk theology as well; see now Geller 2016, 16 with n. 31.

27 See Lambert 1989b, 96–97.

28 See Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

2.2 *Hermeneutical Technique versus Hermeneutical Motivation*

In modern scholarship on Mesopotamian commentaries, it is often assumed that a major goal of the commentaries is to expand or broaden the meaning of a text. The commentaries, according to the standard view, compile multiple interpretations or extrapolate new meanings through various speculations, especially lexical.[29] Indeed, one of the main ways in which Akkadian commentaries change the literal meaning of the base text is by seeking a meaning for a lemma that is not the first meaning one would associate with this lemma. This new meaning is often anchored in the Mesopotamian lexical tradition. At times the new meaning is arrived at through a chain of equations, whereby the lexical equivalent of a lemma in the base text is equated with another lemma whose meaning can be transferred to the first lemma. This lexical logic can be summarized in the following formula: "If A = B, and B = C, then A = C," although many variations of this are found.[30] The combination of the vast lexical tradition of ancient Mesopotamia and the polysemic nature of cuneiform signs themselves, indeed facilitates the extrapolation of new meanings from a given lemma.

But in my opinion it is a mistake to assume that the invention of new meanings is itself the chief motive of the commentaries. Extrapolation of meaning is hardly ever their immediate concern. It is true that commentaries make extensive use of the polysemic cuneiform writing system and the tradition of Sumero-Akkadian bilingualism. However, this does not mean that the commented texts themselves were viewed as polysemic.[31] The commentators perceived texts to have a single logical and consistent meaning, but in order to recover that meaning they sometimes relied on the polysemic nature of cuneiform signs, often as part of an attempt to balance the literal meaning of a text with its broader context. Thus, for example, when the multiple meanings of a cuneiform sign are invoked in commentaries on omens, this is not done in order to extract an additional meaning from the omen, but rather to find a reading of the sign that produces a coherent text, for example by clarifying the obscure relationship between the omen's protasis and apodosis—an authentic and pressing concern for any reader of omen texts, ancient or modern.[32] In the case of the commentary on the names of Marduk in Enūma eliš,[33] the commentator had before him a name and its explanation in the base

29 See, e.g., Lambert 1954–1956, 311; George 1991, 155.

30 Compare Frahm 2011, 64–66.

31 See Gabbay, forthcoming 2. See also Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

32 Frahm 2011, 80–81.

33 Bottéro 1977; Frahm 2011, 114–116; Lambert 2013, 139–142; Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 295.

text, but the relationship between them was not always immediately clear, and so he used the polysemy of the signs as a tool for discovering this connection. For ancient scholars studying a corpus of canonical texts, the preservation of textual coherence, logic, and consistency in exegesis was highly valued, even if this required an interpretation that deviated from the literal sense and relied on the exploitation of the polysemic nature of the cuneiform writing tradition or on other hermeneutical techniques.

Therefore recognition of the base text, as discussed above, is crucial for understanding commentaries. The commentaries do not simply speculate on and expand the meaning of a text; rather, they respond to a problem in the base text, whether a minor problem confined to the interpretation of a single lemma, or a more extensive problem regarding a larger passage or its context. The commentaries solve these problems in various ways, ranging from the straightforward to the fanciful. Unless one has correctly identified the problem addressed by the commentator, it is easy to miss the point of a commentary and to mistake an authentic effort to solve this problem for a "wild" speculation and an attempt to expand its meaning, especially if the solution comes at the price of changing the literal meaning of the text.

2.3 *Exegetical Terminology*

Once the reader of a commentary has identified the base text and the problem in that text that the commentary seeks to resolve, the next step is to determine how the commentary proposes to solve the problem. In other words, what line of reasoning or exegetical strategy does the commentary apply to the text? The answer to this question is sometimes contained in the exegetical terminology employed in a particular comment. In general, each step of the exegetical operation performed by the commentary may be expressed in stereotypical language associated with a particular hermeneutic procedure. In other words, there is a core repertoire of exegetical techniques expressed through standard formulas. Once the exegetical terminology present in a particular comment has been identified and correctly interpreted, it is usually a relatively straightforward matter to reconstruct the exegetical process.

Thus, it is evident how important it is to correctly understand the terminology used in Akkadian commentaries. Nevertheless, a systematic study of these terms has never been attempted, and moreover, much of the terminology, even the most basic terms, is understood incorrectly in current Assyriological research, leading to erroneous understandings of the commentaries.

In the scholarly research of another large corpus of ancient hermeneutical material, namely early rabbinic literature (Midrash, Mishnah, and Talmud),

much attention was paid to exegetical terminology,[34] following the understanding that this terminology serves as a key for comprehending the content it introduces, and in addition provides a reflection of the exegetical process that led to these commentaries, as well as the attitude towards the Scripture that is being commented on. Thus Wilhelm Bacher, in his monumental *Die Exegetische Terminologie der Jüdischen Traditionsliteratur* (1899), reflects on the significance of the earliest rabbinic exegetical terminology:[35]

> As to the content of the terminology presented here, the following should be emphasized. Its expressions mark the object of the interpretation: the text of the Holy Scripture and its components; they identify the text according to its content-related and form-related characteristics, from which the rules for the interpretation arise; they ultimately refer to the action of the commentator and his exegetical method. Particularly striking is the dramatic nature of this terminology. It betrays everywhere its origin from the lively discussion and school, from the dialogues between teachers and students, between text commentators inquiring together. But also the object of the interpretation, the biblical text, appears in this terminology not as a dead object; it rather stands alive before the commentator, it is constantly personified, as is especially evident from the collection of attestations given in pp. 90ff. [= attestations of Scripture as the subject of active verbs; U.G.].

In my opinion, Bacher's words could also be applied to Akkadian exegetical terminology.[36] Granted, the terminology of the Akkadian commentaries is

34 E.g., Bacher 1899; Gertner 1962; note also Yadin 2004, where the terminology referring to Scripture is used to portray the attitude towards Scripture in certain Midrashim. See also Elledge 2003 on exegetical terminology in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

35 Bacher 1899, vii: "Was den Inhalt der hier dargestellten Terminologie betrifft, sei Folgendes hervorgehoben. Ihre Ausdrücke benennen den Gegenstand der Auslegung: den Text der heiligen Schrift und seine Bestandtheile; sie kennzeichen den Text nach seinen inhaltlichen und formalen Eigenschaften, aus denen sich die Regeln für die Auslegung ergeben; sie beziehen sich endlich auf die Thätigkeit des Auslegers und sein exegetisches Verfahren. Besonders hervorstechend ist der dramatische Charakter dieser Terminologie. Sie verräth überall ihren Ursprung aus der lebendigen Discussion und Lehrhauses, aus dem Dialoge zwischen Lehrer und Schüler, zwischen gemeinsam forschenden Schriftauslegern. Aber auch der Gegenstand der Auslegung, der Bibeltext, erscheint in dieser Terminologie nicht als Todtes Object; er tritt vielmehr dem Ausleger lebendig gegenüber, er wird fortwährend personificirt, wie das besonders aus der S. 90ff. gegebenen Zusammenstellung ersichtlich wird."

36 See especially Chapter 1 and Chapter 5.

not as rich as the terminology of the later rabbinic exegetical texts, but the importance of studying it is just as great, and perhaps even greater, since these commentaries are still so poorly understood that a better grasp of their terminology will surely help in their decipherment and understanding.

As will be emphasized in this book, ancient Mesopotamian commentaries are not expository essays.[37] They are reflections, in my view, of the study of the texts they comment on. Textual study was not solitary, but rather took place during a lesson (*malsûtu*) conducted by a scholar-teacher (*ummânu*). It included the reading of the text by the (advanced) student (or young scholar) and his exposition of selected passages, elicited by questions from the scholar-teacher who thereby communicated his teachings (*maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*). The commentaries are not transcripts of these lessons but an attempt to distill their results in a laconic text. Therefore, much of the language that surely characterized the actual encounter between scholars or between teacher and students was omitted from the texts we call commentaries. However, some terms rooted in the context of the lesson and its rhetoric were retained when these discussions were set down in writing, and these terms encode the hermeneutical process that was rhetorically enacted during the oral lesson.

3 Structure and Content of the Book

Although this book is inspired by W. Bacher's treatment of Hebrew exegetical terminology in early rabbinic literature over a century ago,[38] it does not apply the same methodology. Unlike Bacher's contribution, the present study is not a catalogue or glossary of the terms used in the commentaries. Rather, this book groups together terms according to how they are used in the commentaries. Each chapter is dedicated to the exposition, through representative examples, of a set of terms related in theme or function. The first chapter (1) deals with terms that attest to the *Sitz im Leben* of commentaries, namely the environment in which they were compiled and studied. The following chapter (2) deals with terms relating to the most basic hermeneutical techniques used in commentaries, (lexical) equation and description. The next chapter (3) deals with terminology used in explaining the base text, either by contextualizing it or by reasoning to a conclusion. Following this is a chapter (4) dealing with terms that exhibit an awareness of the exegetical process, such as terms that refer to the base text in a way that implies exegesis, or terms

37 See especially Chapter 1.

38 Bacher 1899.

that refer to the process of exegesis itself. The last chapter (5) differs from the others, as it is devoted to terms that employ the verb *qabû*, "to say," whose use in the Mesopotamian commentaries is widespread and multifarious. The book includes two appendixes: the first deals with interpretive terminology related to the process of divination, rather than textual exegesis; the second is a comparative discussion, drawing links between the terminology used in Akkadian commentaries and that used in early Hebrew exegesis, especially in halakhic Midrash and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The corpus used in this book is limited, since many of the commentaries are still unpublished. I mainly relied on published, and mostly edited commentaries, although unpublished and unedited materials are also cited and considered. New materials will probably add more terms, and will probably also require revision of some of the explanations proposed in these chapters.[39] The corpus consists of different types of texts that can all be grouped together due to their explanatory nature and, most importantly for this book, their use of similar terminology. These include *ṣâtu* commentaries, *mukallimtu* commentaries, extispicy expository texts, cultic commentaries, and to some extent also scholarly letters to the Assyrian king.

The citations of the texts in this book are given in transliteration and are not normalized, since commentaries often refer to logograms and the orthography of a phrase is frequently the basis of an interpretation. Variants are indicated in parentheses; thus $u_{(2)}$ indicates that one tablet uses the sign *u* while another uses *ú*. When the division between two lines on a tablet is significant, it is indicated by a slash (/). A colon (:) indicates a *Glossenkeil*, and a colon followed by a period (:.) indicates a triple-*Winkelhaken Glossenkeil*.

39 During the final stages of the preparation of this book, the *Cuneiform Commentaries Project* (CCP) started making editions of commentaries available online (ccp.yale.edu). I tried to update some of the citations from commentaries in the book accordingly, but a comprehensive collation was not possible; in any case, by the time this book is published more editions will surely have been posted online.

CHAPTER 1

The Reality Behind Commentaries: Terms for Study, Discourse, Sources, and Compilation

1 Introduction: The *Sitz im Leben* of the Study Process

Unlike modern scholarly commentaries, Mesopotamian commentaries are not treatises that serve to exhibit an interpreter's opinion on various texts and matters. They are a by-product of the joint study of texts by scholars who used their transmitted traditional knowledge to interpret them. Mesopotamian commentaries were probably always regarded as, and at times actually were, records of teachings and interpretations conveyed by a master scholar (*ummânu*) to young scholars, or of deliberations on texts among a group of scholars, and not as the work of a lone scholar interpreting texts.

That scholars assembled for the purpose of discussing texts and other scholarly matters is evident from various sources.[1] Thus, Assurbanipal, in a colophon appended to different types of texts, notes: "I copied, checked and collated this tablet in the assembly of the scholars (*tapḫurti ummânī*)."[2] Similarly, in another inscription (L_4) he claims: "I watch the signs of heaven and earth and deliberate (on them) in the assembly of scholars (*puḫur ummânī*)."[3] The assembly of scholars (*puḫur mārī ummâni*) is also summoned by Nabonidus to confirm that excavations are uncovering the exact spot of the shrine of Sippar.[4] That this collective was also active in the process of education is evident from the second line of *Examenstext* A where the scribe tests the student "in the assembly of scholars (Akkadian: *puḫur ummânī*), the court of the tablet-house."[5]

The commentaries themeselves likewise reflect the study and teaching of the text, including its clarification and interpretation, in the context of the

1 In addition to the references given below, the assembly of scholars (*pu-ḫur šá um-ma-ni*) is also mentioned in an incantation to appease an angry god. See KAR 71:4 // LKA 104:14; cf. Ebeling 1931, 30; Klan 2007, 39.

2 Hunger 1968, no. 318, Asb. Type b:6-7: *tup-pu šu-a-tu ina tap-ḫur-ti um-ma-a-ni áš-ṭur as-niq* IGI.KÁR-*ma*. The meaning given in *CAD* T, 180b, is less likely.

3 See now Livingstone, 2007, 100:14: [GIZ]KIM.MEŠ AN-*e u* KI-*tì am-ra-ku šu-ta-du-na-ku ina* UKKIN *um-ma-a-ni*.

4 Schaudig 2001, 386, 1:36.

5 Sjöberg 1975, 140:2: u[kkin ^{lú}u]m-me-a-ke$_4$-e-ne kisal é-dub-b[a-a-ka] // *ina pu-ḫur um-ma-ni* KISAL É *tup-pi*.

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relationship between one (advanced) scholar and another (younger) scholar. Many of the terms related to commentaries, either as genre designations, scribal remarks, or hermeneutical terms, point to this study environment. The picture that arises from an examination of this language is that of the joint scholarly study of canonical (and divine) texts in the form of a lesson (*malsûtu*) during which the base text was read, probably by a young scholar (or a few young scholars) who offered interpretations in response to questions posed by a senior scholar (*maš'altu ša pī ummâni*), the latter adding his expositions and further teaching. These oral explanations were later combined with written sources by the young scholar, who was responsible for composing the commentary tablet itself.

The oral nature of the lesson (*malsûtu*) conducted by a scholar (*ummânu*) is nicely demonstrated in the following scribal remark, which appears twice on a small tablet containing extracts from a composition referred to as the Nippur Compendium in modern research, and which was probably called "Nippur which was built by itself" in antiquity:[6]

> MU.ME *šá ina* nibru^{ki} ní-bi-ta dù-a *i*(-)*na mál-su-tu*$_4$ *ka-mu-ti-šú-nu ana pi-i* UM.ME.A *ša-mu-ú áš-šú šá-me-e šá ka-mu-ti-šú-nu* ZI-*ni* (var. *šaṭ*$^{?}$-[*ru-ni*]$^{?}$) MU.ME *ina bi-re-e-tú* GU$_4$.UD.ME *a-mi-r*[*u*] *ana* TIL.LA GAR-*an*
>
> Lines from "Nippur which was built by itself" which were heard during the lesson (*malsûtu*) of their *external interpretations*(?)[7] according to the mouth of a scholar (*ana pī ummâni*). They were copied because of the hearing of their *external interpretations*(?). The lines in between are skipped. The reader may complete (them).

Not everything is clear in this remark. Perhaps the lines were copied ahead of time to be read aloud and heard (*šemû*) during the lesson, when ("external"?) expositions were presented by the master scholar.[8] In any case, this remark nicely illustrates the oral *Sitz im Leben* of the study of scholarly texts in Mesopotamia.

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6 See George 1992, 162; Frahm 2010a, 179.

7 The word is *kamûtu*, which would seem to be a plural form of the adjective *kamû*, "outer, external." In this context, it perhaps refers to the oral explanations presented by the scholar in the lesson. Until further evidence should appear, however, this explanation must remain speculative and therefore *kamûtu* is not discussed as an exegetical term in this study.

8 For other texts written for a lesson, see Frahm 2010a, 166–168, 177–179.

1.1 *The Scholarly Study Environment*

It is noteworthy that commentaries do not reflect a scribal study environment whose goal was to train young scribes for different activities. The scribal training curriculum contained extracts from basic texts that were used to cultivate scribal skills. The commentaries, however, address more advanced texts that were the exclusive province of scholars. They reflect an environment in which young scholars studied the texts that comprised their cultural repertoire, acquiring the traditional scholarly knowledge that was transmitted along with the texts on the authority of senior scholar-teachers (*ummânū*).[9] The compositions comprising this textual repertoire were studied individually, but also as part of a greater systematic and canonical body of knowledge, and therefore scholars also sought to find connections between the different parts of the corpus[10] and to reconcile differences and contradictions within them.

The study of the canonical corpus was not conducted solely for practical reasons. Thus, although divinatory texts were surely intended as practical handbooks for divination, they were also studied for the sake of the knowledge and intellectual tools they provided. This is explicitly stated in some extispicy texts that define certain ominous entries as follows:[11]

> (BE-*ma*) MU.MEŠ (var. UZU.MEŠ)[12] *šá ina ba-ru-ti* KÚR.MEŠ-*ma* GIZKIM(.MEŠ)-*šú-nu ana la-ma-di* KUR-*át*
>
> ("If":)[13] Entries/omens that are *contradicted*[14] in the *bārûtu*-corpus but their sign(s) is/are *sufficient* for study.

---

9 In this regard, it is interesting to compare the corpus of texts interpreted in commentaries to the corpus of texts known to have been used in scribal training during the Neo- and Late Babylonian periods (Gesche 2000). Although both corpora make wide use of canonical texts (for the school texts, see Gesche 2000, 61–187), there is very little overlap between them (for a list of the texts and compositions found on school tablets, see Gesche 2000, 806–20). Most significant is the fact that omens are entirely absent from the scribal training texts, although they were the subject of the overwhelming majority of commentaries. This difference encapsulates the different attitudes toward the two corpora.

10 See, e.g., Biggs 1968, 51–58; Geller 2014.

11 Koch 2005, no. 37:30, no. 55:1, no. 114:r.7′, no. 115:7′; see also Appendix 1, 4.1. Note also MSL 10, 68:18 (see Schuster-Brandis 2008, 22): [N]A_4 *ana la-ma-da*.

12 K.11711:7′ (CT 30, 28, collated from digital photograph): UZU^{I}.MEŠ.

13 See 4.5.1.1 below.

14 For *nakāru* in the (admittedly rare) sense of "contradict," see CAD N/I, 164–165.

The ominous entries to which this remark refers are not in agreement with other omens in the *bārûtu* corpus. Nevertheless, and perhaps precisely because of this inconcinnity, they deserve to be studied.

It should be emphasized, however, that the primary purpose of scholarly research was always to gain a better understanding of the base text, and not to broaden its meaning or to encourage speculation, although this may sometimes have been a secondary outcome of the study of the base text. Scholarly study aimed to make sense of difficult passages within the text—to determine their meaning and rationale, both lexically and phenomenally, as well as in their larger context—and sought also to harmonize the text with other texts, a natural goal given the cultural significance of the whole corpus of canonical texts. That the purpose of scholarly study was to make sense of the text is indicated in one explanatory extispicy text dealing with the calculation of the stipulated term, where the noun *iḫzu* signifies "study," and the noun *ṭēmu* refers to the sense of the text:[15]

> BE-*ma* . . . *ana* IGI-*ka* $UŠ_4$-*ši-na ana iḫ-zi-ka* . . .
>
> If . . . is before you[16]—in order for you to study (lit. "for your study") its sense—. . .

1.2 *Attitude toward the Sources of the Commentary*

The sources of the various interpretations given in commentaries are hardly ever mentioned. In rare cases there are references to oral or written sources for specific interpretations,[17] but in most cases the sources are unnamed and presumably belong to the categories of word-lists (*ṣâtu*) and oral (scholarly) lore (*šūt pî, maš'alti ummâni, maš'altu ša pī ummâni*) listed in the common subscripts to the commentaries.

While the commentaries were mostly composed for texts possessing divine authority, the commentaries themselves possessed scholarly (oral) authority.[18] But the oral lore transmitted by scholars, although authoritative, was not regarded in Mesopotamian tradition as the fruit of the scholars' own innovative ingenuity. The scholars, according to Mesopotamian tradition, had been in charge of Mesopotamian knowledge and its interpretation from the time this divine knowledge was revealed to the mythological sages (*apkallū*). They were

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15 Koch 2005, no. 106:r.11′.

16 For the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, see 3.2.1–8 below.

17 See 4.3 below.

18 See Introduction, 2.1; Gabbay 2012, 274–287.

responsible for its transmission, mostly orally, from generation to generation—a mode of transmission referred to with phrases such as *šūt pî*, "oral lore" (literally, "those of the mouth"), or *ša pī ummâni*, "according to a scholar."[19] This knowledge assisted scholars in revealing the true meaning (at least in their own eyes) of the divine texts, and hence the early commentaries that deal specifically with divination are termed "revealers" (*mukallimtu*).[20] This transmission was the exclusive preserve of scholars and was kept away from outsiders, as witnessed in the colophons of esoteric texts that warn that the content of the text must be revealed only to an initiate and not to anyone else.[21] These colophons use the verb *kullumu*, "reveal," the same verb from which the commentary designation *mukallimtu* derives.[22]

As will be seen below, often several interpretations are given to a word or phrase in the commentaries, and these may very well stem from different sources. The human sources are never named, however, and the entire body of interpretation was collectively regarded as part of the scholarly oral lore transmitted from the moment it was revealed in early history. Yet since the process of interpretation did in fact involve human beings, it is only natural that some diversity, and even controversy, should have arisen over time. That such diversity existed is clear from the letters written by scholars to the Assyrian king, where different interpretations of ominous events are given by different scholars, all of whom attribute their interpretations to the scholastic lore they have studied.[23] A single explicit reference to diversity or scholarly controversy

19 See S. Parpola, SAA 10, XVII–XVIII; Elman 1975; Frahm 2011, 87.

20 Frahm 2011, 42–47.

21 See Lenzi 2008a, 135–219. For examples of this warning in the colophons of cultic commentaries, see Livingstone 1986, 260.

22 I thank Prof. Wayne Horowitz who first pointed out this similarity to me; cf. also Frahm 2011, 42. Outside of these uses, the verb *kullumu* is rare in commentaries. Explanatory texts referring to the calculation of the stipulated term in extispicy address the diviner in the second person as the one who performs the calculation "as he/they revealed to you" (GIM/*ki-i ú-kal-li-mu-ka*); see Koch 2005, no. 93:11 and no. 130:1′, 6′. Note also *mu-kal-lim* in Koch 2005, no. 42:A r.31 (p. 347). The verb appears also in astronomical contexts where an eclipse is revealed. See SBTU 4, 162:16; Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:11, 12, 21; cf. also SAA 8, 21:10. In one case, an omen is said not to reveal the signs it refers to, and these signs are given in the commentary. See Koch-Westenholz 2000, 155, no. 20:24: *šá ana* SIG_5 *u* ḪUL DU_{11}.GA-*ma* GIZKIM-*šú-nu la ú-ka*[*l-la-mu*(?)], and Chapter 5, 1.4.4 with n. 80. Another verb referring to the revelation of knowledge is *petû*, which is used in a specific albeit enigmatic sense only in texts related to the calculation of the stipulated term in extispicy. See Koch 2005, no. 99:19, no. 101:r.5′, perhaps no. 95:r.6′; cf. Koch 2005, 60.

23 Cf. Frahm 2004, 49–50. Sometimes even scholarly rivalry and jealousy can be seen, e.g., in SAA 10, 72.

may be found in the first line of the dub-ḫa-la extispicy text dealing with the calculation of the stipulated term, where this lore is described as the "kept secret of *bārûtu*-divination, a secret set aside of heaven and earth, *contention* of the scholars (*tašninti ummânī*)."[24] Koch noted that *tašnintu* in the sense of "rivalry" or "fight" is difficult here and suggests that the noun "refers to the special results or interpretive insights reached by the competitive debates of scholars."[25] Thus, the transmission of secret scholarly and divinatory lore extends to the different opinions debated among the scholars who transmit this lore.

The exclusive custody of traditional lore granted to the scholars is what makes it "secret," or in Akkadian, a lore that is "kept" only by its scholastic transmitters (*naṣāru, niṣirtu*).[26] This is nicely seen in texts regarding the transmission of the knowledge of extispicy from father to son. This knowledge is considered a "kept secret" (*niṣirtu*) that "the father keeps for the son he loves" (AD *a-na* DUMU-*šú ša i-ram-mu i-na-aṣ-ṣa-ru*).[27]

It is likely that scholars transmitted the interpretations of texts along with the reasoning behind the interpretations. In other words, oral lore included not only the result of the interpretive process but also the means by which it was reached. This is suggested by a few attestations that refer to an interpretation or its source as a "measure," *nindanu*, perhaps implying "characteristic," or as "sealed and shut," *kakku sakku*. These terms probably imply that the text itself does not contain any clue as to how it should be interpreted, but its interpretation is nevertheless known from the transmission of scholarly lore.[28]

2 The *Sitz im Leben* of the Learning Environment: The Lesson

As will be shown below, many terms found in commentaries have to do with the lesson during which the text was studied. How did lessons take place in

24 Koch 2005, no. 90:1: *taš-nin-ti* (var. *-tu*$_4$) UM.ME.A; also CT 31, 30–33:38, see Koch 2005, 57 n. 112.

25 Koch 2005, 57–58. Note, however, the possibility raised by Lenzi 2006 that *tašnintu* here may mean "repetition, teaching," based on Hebrew etymology.

26 For various aspects of secrecy regarding Mesopotamian knowledge, see Lenzi 2008a, 1–219.

27 See Koch 2005, no. 91:1; no. 92:[1]. See also Koch 2005, no. 90:4: *ni-ṣir-ta a-bu-um a-na ma-a-ri e-zi-bu*. Note also the designation of extispicy as *niṣirtu*, "kept secret," and *pirištu*, "secret set aside," several times in Lambert 1998, 148–149. Cf. also Lambert 1998, 143; Koch 2005, 57–59. Note also Biggs 1968, 53:4: *ni-ṣir-tú* AN *u* KI *ú-ṣur*.

28 See Chapter 4, 1.3.1 and 1.3.2.

reality? The terminology gives us some hints. A text was prepared by the young scholar for a lesson (*malsûtu*) lead by the teacher-scholar (*ummânu*), where it was read (*šasû*). The commentaries reveal how some non-verbal features in the text were realized when read out. Thus, the *Glossenkeil* separating variant versions in the base text was probably rendered as *šanîš* when read aloud.[29] Another feature may be DIŠ, or *šumma*, at the beginning of omen entries, which may not have always been rendered when the entire entry was read out.[30] In contrast, it is possible that DIŠ before lexical entries in lexical texts, which is usually regarded as having no pronunciation, was in fact pronounced.[31] A Late Babylonian lexical commentary has *it-ti* or *it-tú* before sub-entries beginning with a cuneiform sign.[32] This may not be the preposition *itti*, "with, at," but rather *ittu*, "sign," perhaps related to Hebrew *'ôt*, which is used of both an oracular sign as well as a written character.[33] Like the Hebrew term, *ittu* here may mean "(cuneiform) sign" and seems to be used to introduce entries from the base text before commenting on them.

Some of the lemmas in the text were explained by the young scholar, sometimes in response to a question by the teacher-scholar. To do this, the young scribe re-cited the relevant lemma or phrase from the base text, followed by *ša iqbû*, "which it (= the text) said."[34] This citation was followed by the interpretation—probably the basic interpretation given by the student, with expansions made by the scholar. In the interpretation itself, various exegetical terms were used. If the commentary comprised simply a lexical equation, it is possible that when the word from the base text and its lexical correspondence were read aloud they were followed by a pronoun (usually *šū*).[35]

After the lesson, the young scholar compiled a tablet using the oral sources heard in class (*šūt pî, ša pī ummâni*) as well as existing commentary tablets (*ṣâtu*). Many of the commentary tablets known to us are a result of this activity.[36]

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29 See 4.5.2 below.

30 See already Parpola 1983, 289. See also 4.5.1.1 below.

31 Note also the use of DIŠ before the names of letters of the alphabet (in a Late Babylonian cuneiform archival text). See Jursa 2005, 399:3.

32 See MSL 14, 323–326.

33 See Appendix 1, para. 1.

34 This is the format that scholars used to cite texts in letters to the Assyrian king before commenting on them. See Chapter 5, 1.2.1.

35 See Chapter 2, para. 1.

36 The existence of duplicates indicates that some commentary tablets were simply copied from others. But this was probably not usually the case. Note that the standard phrase *kīma labīrīšu šaṭirma bari*, "copied and collated according to its original," and its congeners are hardly found in commentaries, and that duplicates of commentaries (with the

The above is relevant especially in regard to sequential commentaries, i.e., commentaries dealing with a single text and interpreting lemmas and phrases in it according to their sequence in the text. But thematic commentaries (often *mukallimtu*), although related to a certain text, are organized by subject. For example, the commentaries on chapters of the *bārûtu* series, instead of dealing with a text lemma by lemma, collect various sources pertaining to specific phenomena. Another such commentary is the "esoteric commentary" from Kutha that deals with one or a few themes and not with a particular text.[37] The colophon of the tablet from Kutha indicates that like other commentaries it arose in the study environment.[38] In general, thematic commentaries probably reflect the study environment, as their terminology suggests. The theme is often introduced with the term *šumma . . . ina pānika*, "if . . . is before you,"[39] which may reflect how the theme of the lesson was presented by the teacher to the student(s).

2.1 *"Genre" Designations Related to the* Sitz im Leben *of Study*

Here follow terms indicating the study environment that appear in the subscripts of Mesopotamian commentaries. It should be noted that these are not terms for literary genres per se, but terms related to the process of study and interpretation that are also used for defining the commentaries. Thus, some of these terms are also found elsewhere.

2.1.1 *šūt pî* and *ša pī ummâni*, "(scholarly) oral lore"

The term *šūt pî* often appears in subscripts of commentaries as a genre designation, but always in combination with other designations (especially *ṣâtu* and *maš'altu* [*ša pī*] *ummâni*, as well as *mukallimtu*).[40] This phrase, the plural of *ša pî*, literally "that (pl. those) of the mouth," was the common designation for oral (scholastic) lore in ancient Mesopotamia.[41] More broadly, the term

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exception of *ṣâtu* lexical correspondences or extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries) are also extremely rare; see 4.3.1.3 below; Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

37 See Biggs 1968; Böck 2000b.

38 Biggs 1968, 54:19: *šu-ut* KA *maš-a-a-al-tu*$_4$ ^{lú}*um-man-nu*. See 2.1.3 with n. 62 below; see also 3.2.1 below.

39 See 3.2.1 below.

40 See Frahm 2011, 42–58. See also 4.3.2, 4.3.2.1, 4.3.2.3 below.

41 Although *šūt pî* is attested almost exclusively in commentaries it does not refer primarily to interpretations, but to oral lore in general (of which commentaries constitute an important part). Thus, e.g., a syncretistic hymn to Ištar is designated as *šūt pî* in its subscript. See Lambert 2003/2004, 22:36 (but contra Lambert, this should not be translated "interpretations"); see also Frahm 2011, 44–45, and 4.3.2 below.

marks a distinction between two concurrent traditions, one fixed and one fluid. The fixed tradition comprises texts and wisdom whose form was established, usually in writing, and unchangeable. These materials often traced their origins to a divine authority and thus were at times designated *ša pī* DN, "that of the mouth of" a god.[42] The fluid tradition or *šūt pî*, on the other hand, is a body of scholarly lore, originally and essentially oral; although it too may be written down, its form is not fixed. This lore accompanied the fixed tradition and was transmitted orally among scholars from the time of the first mythological sages. Therefore the term *šūt pî* is synonymous with *ša pī ummâni*, "oral lore from a scholar."[43] It is this tradition that is recorded in writing in the commentaries. Thus, the commentaries were not seen as innovative works but were perceived as continuing the transmission of the oral lore that accompanied the canonical textual tradition of ancient Mesopotamia. Indeed, commentaries from different places and periods, even if they differ in their details, usually have enough in common to attest to a common scholarly tradition.

2.1.2 *malsûtu*, "reading, lesson"

Late commentaries from the Achaemenid period, usually of the *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni* type, are often also designated with another term (which can likewise occasionally appear alone or with the designation *ṣâtu u šūt pî*): *malsûtu*, "reading" or "lesson."[44] The noun *malsûtu* is derived from the verb *šasû*, "to read," which designates not only the simple act of reading but also the study of a text.[45] This designation is found mainly in colophons from Uruk, where *malsûtu* can occur before the designation of the base text, indicating that the commentary is (the result of) a reading of the text. Or, usually in commentaries dated to an earlier period, *malsûtu* can occur in the construct state before the name of the scribe who wrote down the commentary, demonstrating that the commentary is (based on) the scribe's reading of the text.[46] In the first case, the term *malsûtu* may also be accompanied by a number, indicating the number of the lesson. This number is occasionally different from (although close to) the serial number of the base text,[47] indicating that one tablet could

42 E.g., Lambert 1962, 64, 1:4; Lambert 1980, 78:16.

43 See *CAD* P, 466; Frahm 2011, 42–58, esp. 45. Note the juxtaposition of *šūt pî* with *ša pī ummâni* (i.e., "those of the mouth [= oral lore] from the mouth of a scholar") in some designations for commentaries (see Frahm 2011, 43, 45, 53–54). See also 4.3.2.3 below.

44 See Frahm 2011, 52–54.

45 Cf. e.g., SAA 10, 160:40–42; Hunger 1968, 175.

46 See Frahm 2010a, 167–168.

47 Cf. Farber 1987, 30, nn. 15 and 35.

be studied over more than one lesson (usually the first tablets), or vice versa, that a few tablets could be studied in one lesson. The sequencing of the written *malsûtu* tablets exhibits a certain development in the meaning of *malsûtu* from "lesson" to "text."

The word *malsûtu* is not a designation for a commentary, but rather for the context in which the interpretations were introduced. Therefore there are a few occurrences of *malsûtu* that are not connected to commentaries, mainly in texts that have the colophon "copied for a *malsûtu*," indicating that the text was copied before a lesson.[48]

The *malsûtu* commentary texts, on the other hand, are probably based on what was heard in the lesson, and thus were not copied in advance (and probably not during the lesson). Rather they are compilations of the interpretations heard in the lesson and entries copied from other *ṣâtu* commentaries.

The oral nature of the *malsûtu*, "lesson," is demonstrated in the scribal remark cited above:[49] MU.ME *šá . . . i*(-)*na mál-su-tu*$_4$ *ka-mu-ti-šú-nu ana pi-i* UM.ME.A *ša-mu-ú*, "Lines from . . . which were heard during the lesson of their *external interpretations*(?) according to the mouth of a scholar." Likewise, the subscript of an extract from Enūma-Anu-Enlil with commentary[50] exhibits Assyrian forms and the particle *mā*,[51] attesting to its oral nature, and states that it was written "for the lesson (*malsût*) of Kiṣir-[. . .]," probably the scribe who wrote the tablet.[52]

Related to the term *malsûtu* is also the use of the (negated) verb *šasû* in scribal remarks, for which see below.[53]

2.1.3 *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*, "questioning (= teaching) according to a scholar"

The ancient Mesopotamian environment of study, including the questioning of the student by the teacher, is well attested in texts, often humorous in nature, portraying the school atmosphere.[54] While these texts reflect the study of cuneiform in different stages of the scribal curriculum, the commentaries

48 See Frahm 2010a, 166–168, 178–179.

49 See George 1992, 162, and para. 1 above.

50 K.3145, Rochberg-Halton 1988, 225–227. For this tablet, perhaps originally from Assur, see Frahm 2011, 123 n. 620, 144–145.

51 See Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:12, 13, 20, 22.

52 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227:15′: ⌜*ana*?⌝ ⌜*mal*?-*su-ut*⌝ ^{m}*ki-ṣi*[*r*- . . .] (collated from photograph; the signs are very damaged at this part). See Frahm 2011, 144–145.

53 See 2.2.2 below.

54 Cf. Sjöberg 1975.

reflect a more advanced stage of study by scholars. But here too the interrogatory didactic method is maintained. This is implicit in the designation of the commentaries as *maš'altu*, literally "questioning,"[55] and other remarks relating to the oral transmission of the interpretations,[56] but there is also a unique commentary that directly testifies to the interrogatory method by introducing the problem commented upon in the form of a question by a scholar:[57] "If your master-scholar (*ummânka*) asks you (*iša'alka*) thus: . . ." The question asked by the teacher does not simply test the knowledge of the student, it is also a means to introduce an explanation to a textual problem.[58] This questioning of the student reflects the *Sitz im Leben* of the commentaries: they are the fruit of dialogues between students and scholars and not interpretive essays drafted by scholars working alone.

It is this cultural and pedagogical environment that we should bear in mind when examining the Akkadian phrase *maš'altu* (*ša pî*) *ummâni*, "teaching (literally: questioning) of (or: according to) a scholar."[59] This phrase is found in the genre label of commentaries from the Achaemenid and Hellenistic periods. The complete designation is *ṣâtu u šūt pî maš'alti ummâni*, "lexical correspondences and oral lore, the teaching of a scholar," in texts from Babylon and Borsippa (and probably the entirety of northern Babylonia),[60] or *ṣâtu šūt pî u maš'altu ša pī ummâni*, "lexical correspondences, oral lore, and the teaching according to a scholar," in texts from Uruk and Nippur (and probably all of south and central Babylonia).[61] The former phrase regards the oral lore as the teaching of the scholar,[62] and the latter regards it as additional oral lore that is specifically related to the scholarly oral tradition.

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55 See Pearce 1998, 332 n. 5; Frahm 2011, 53–56.

56 See 2.2 and 4.3.2 below.

57 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 136–137; see also Frahm 2011, 54.

58 The full question and answer are cited below; see 2.3.

59 Note SBTU 1, 94:28: UM.ME.A *maš-a-a-al-tu*$_4$, although the meaning of this is unclear (cf. H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 98).

60 See Frahm 2011, 53. For Kutha, see n. 62 below.

61 See Frahm 2011, 54–55. The questionable tablets listed by Frahm as possibly stemming from other locations are most probably from Uruk or Nippur as well; cf. Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

62 So also in a commentary from Kutha which contains the phrase *šūt pî maš'altu ummâni*, without mentioning the *ṣâtu* commentary, and without the conjunction *u*, "and," between the elements; see Biggs 1968, 54:19. Note also the designation *šūt pî ša pī ummâni*, "oral lore according to the mouth of a scholar," found especially in astrological commentaries, already in Nineveh, and *ṣâtu u šūt pî* (. . .) *ša pī ummâni* found in some Late Bayblonian commentaries; see Frahm 2011, 43–45, 53.

As noted, the noun *maš'altu* is derived from the verb *šâlu*, "to ask." Outside the corpus of commentaries, the noun *maš'altu* may refer to the inquiry for a divine oracle.[63] Most importantly, in other contemporary sources outside the corpus of commentaries, *maš'altu* occurs especially in reference to legal questioning or interrogation, usually of a criminal or suspect, at times even using torture.[64] The term therefore implies an inquiry and interrogation rather than the posing of a single question. Who then is interrogated in the *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni* commentaries? As noted earlier, in the traditional didactic atmosphere of Mesopotamian school texts, the scholar "interrogates" the student. But the *maš'altu* commentaries are not interrogations of the student. They are the result of this interrogation: the expounding and explanations given by a scholar. The term *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni* reflects a semantic shift from a process to the result of the process: from an original questioning (*šâlu*) directed at the student, to teachings and interpretations provided by the teacher (*maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*), perhaps as the result of the interrogation.[65]

2.2 *Scribal Remarks Related to the* Sitz im Leben *of Study and the Compilation of Commentaries*

There are a few scribal remarks in commentaries that hint at the reality behind the composition of the commentaries. These are usually negated phrases, indicating the absence of one of the normal components of the study and interpretation of the text.[66]

2.2.1 *ul ašme*, "I did not hear"

The remark "I did not hear," known from a few attestations,[67] refers to the lesson environment, where one listens to the explanations given by the teacher-scholar. However, it is unlikely that this phrase means that the scribe failed to hear the explanation due to lack of concentration or distraction by another sound. Rather, it is likely that when the scribe, after the lesson, copied his tablet, he also copied words that merited explanations but were not discussed

63 This may be the meaning of *tūrtu maš'altu*, which appears in some texts together with oaths, perhaps referring to inquiries that were not held properly. See CAD M/I, 354a, and especially in an oracular query (*tamītu*), see Buisson 2008 with n. 3.

64 Cf. Jursa 1996, 199 with n. 3 and references; CAD M/I, 354b.

65 It is possible, of course, that at some point the term *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni* became generalized, so that commentaries could be designated as such even if they were not directly connected to this precise method of teaching.

66 For other remarks, related to the sources from which the commentaries were composed, see para. 4 below.

67 Leichty 1973, 79:5, 17; SBTU 2, 54:52; SBTU 5, 272:r.6′ ([*ul*$^{?}$ *á*]*š*$^{?}$*-me-e-ma*).

("heard") in the lesson. The verb *šemû* in the context of study is also found in another scribal remark, discussed above:[68]

> MU.ME *šá . . . i*(-)*na mál-su-tu*$_4$ *ka-mu-ti-šú-nu ana pi-i* UM.ME.A *ša-mu-ú áš-šú šá-me-e šá ka-mu-ti-šú-nu* ZI-*ni*
>
> Lines from . . . which were heard during the lesson of their *external interpretations*(?) according to the mouth of a scholar. They were copied because of the hearing of their *external interpretations*(?).

2.2.2 *ul alsi*, "I did not read," *ul šasi*, "it was not read"

The remarks *ul al-se-eš*, "I did not read it," and MU.MEŠ MEŠ-*tì ina* ŠÀ-*bi ul al-s*[*i*], "I did not read many lines from it," occur in two Babylonian tablets from Nineveh.[69] These remarks should not be understood as "I could not read it," alluding to a badly written or broken text on the tablet from which the scribe copied; rather, they refer to the lemmas or phrases from the base text that the scribe did not read out (*šasû*) while studying the text in the lesson (*malsûtu*, derived from the same verb, *šasû*, "read").[70] In a Late Babylonian commentary from Uruk, the verb appears impersonally: "it was not read."[71] Perhaps the impersonal form here, as opposed to the first person used in other texts, implies that several (young) scholars participated in the lesson, and that a specific lemma was not addressed during the study of the text in that lesson—i.e., no one read it. A remark in one of the Babylonian texts from Nineveh mentioned above is especially revealing: *ina tup-pi ul šá-lim ul al-se-eš*, "It is not preserved in the tablet. I did not read it."[72] This may indicate that when the young scholar wrote down the commentary, based on the oral lesson and on written tablets (probably *ṣâtu* commentaries), he wrote down a lemma he thought worthy of commentary. However, this lemma was neither "read" in class, i.e., it received no explanation from an oral source, nor was it explained in the commentary tablet used as a source, i.e., it received no explanation from a written source.[73]

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68 George 1992, 162; see para. 1 above.

69 CT 41, 29, ii:4′ and CT 41, 33:r. 22; see Labat 1933, 50, 74.

70 For *šasû* and the nouns derived from the same root in the context of study (cf. *šitassû* in colophons), see the references in Hunger 1968, 175, and *CAD* Š/II, 166b; see Pearce 1993, 188. Note also *šasû* in the context of reading aloud as part of the process of study in SAA 10, 160:40, 47, r.14.

71 See SBTU 2, 54:41, 45: *ul šasi*.

72 CT 41, 29, ii:3′; see Labat 1933, no. 4.

73 In any case, I maintain that the remark "it is not preserved in the tablet" does not refer to damaged signs on the tablet, but to the absence of a lemma and its explanation in the

2.2.3 *ul īde*, "I did/do not know"

The remark "I do/did not know" (*ul i-de*) is found in a series of Babylonian commentaries from Nineveh,[74] where it indicates that the student of the text did not know how to explain a lemma or passage. Negated forms of the verb *idû* also appear as part of the exegetical discourse in the commentaries themselves.[75]

2.2.4 *ul* (*m*)*urruq*, "It is not clear(?)"

This term appears in four Babylonian commentaries from Nineveh, written either *ul ur-ru-uq* or *ul mur-ru-uq*.[76] The verb *murruqu* means "to clear (from claims),"[77] and the noun (*m*)*urqu* belongs to the semantic field of clearness and intelligence,[78] and therefore the meaning of *ul* (*m*)*urruq* is "not clear," "not comprehensible," similar perhaps to *ul īde*.[79] This fits the context of these occurrences, where each occurrence of *ul* (*m*)*urruq* seems to be attached to an interpretation that goes beyond the obvious lexical level but is not justified. This lack of justification may be why the interpretation is labeled as "not clear."[80]

2.2.5 *ul ēpuš*(?), "I did not do(?)"

Four commentaries contain the remark NU DÙ, which may stand for *ul ēpuš*, "I did not do."[81] The exact meaning of this phrase is uncertain, but it would seem to refer to a textual passage or lemma that was not read or discussed

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commentary tablet used as a source (although not excluding the possibility that an entire section of that tablet was broken off) (see 4.3.3.3).

74 CT 41, 25 (Labat 1933, no. 1; see Freedman 1998, 296, ad 17):r.6; CT 41, 33 (Labat 1933, no. 7):2, 3: r.3, r.10, r.11, r.14; CT 41, 34 (Labat 1933, no. 8):2, 4, 12, 14, 15, 21; cf. perhaps also Linssen 2004, 318, B:21.

75 See 3.1 below.

76 CT 41, 28 (Labat 1933, no. 3):9: *ul ur-ru-uq*; CT 41, 29 (Labat 1933, no. 4):17: *ul mur-ru-uq*; CT 41, 33 (Labat 1933, no. 7):r.5: *ul mur-ru-uq*; Ach Ištar 30 = AAT 91–92: r.7: *ul mur-ru-*[*uq*]; see Lambert 1960, 306.

77 *CAD* M/II, 222–223.

78 *CAD* M/II, 220a; Lambert 1960, 306; Oshima 2013, 35.

79 See Lambert 1960, 306.

80 In CT 41, 28:9 (Labat 1933, no. 3) the phrase ⌜*mìm*⌝*-ma ul ú-kal-lam* seems to be part of the commentary (and not a scribal notation about a text not being explained or "revealed," *kullumu*, since the present form would not be expected in that case). Cf., however, the use of the verb *kullumu* in Chapter 5, 1.4.4 with n. 80.

81 SBTU 1, 41:12, 13; Reiner 2005, no. 70:11; Verderame 2002, 38:12 (cf. DÙ in line 13); Böck 2000a, 255:26.

("done") in the lesson.[82] A Late Babylonian commentary inserts the term after *šanîš*,[83] indicating that the young scholar knew of a second interpretation that was not covered during the lesson.[84]

2.2.6 Other Remarks

There are a few scribal remarks that seem to be related to the *Sitz im Leben* of commentaries but appear only in one text and are not always well understood.[85]

2.2.6.1 pi-i iṣ-ṣi(*?*)

The sequence of signs *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* occurs at least twice in a Late Babylonian commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons.[86] The sequence seems unrelated to the context in which it appears, and the context itself seems to be incomplete. The two secure attestations are discussed here.

The first attestation is found at the end of the first interpretation of a line from Marduk's Address to the Demons:[87]

> [G]E UMUN-*ḫi šá šá-ru-*<*ru*>*-šú ú-na*[*m-ma-ru* KUR].KUR.MEŠ : KI ^{múl}KUN.MEŠ ITI.ŠE UD.20.KAM / *šá ni-ši* ŠUK.MEŠ-*ši-na ana* ^{d}UTU [GAR-*ma ma-aq*]-*qí-tú šá* UD.20.KAM *šá* ITI.ŠE *šá ni-ši* IGI.MEŠ-*ši-na* /

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82 Note the phrase *tuppu epēšu*, which is understood by CAD E, 224a, as "to read a tablet (aloud)," but this understanding of the phrase is not certain. Note also *uppuš*, appearing in colophons, CAD E, 232b, perhaps referring to copying a tablet (but this is uncertain too).

83 Böck 2000a, 255:26: *šá-niš* NU DÙ.

84 Cf. similarly Freedman 2006b, 151:12–13: *šanîš . . . ina tuppi ul šalim*; see 4.5.2 below.

85 In addition to the remarks below, note also the following: (1) BM 47529+:7 (Geller 2014, 61:3; collated): *ṭàb-ba-*^{r}$^{?}$$^{\urcorner}$ ^{r}NU$^{?\urcorner}$ SAR-*ár*. Geller (2014, 62 with n. 26) understands this as part of the commentary, but perhaps it is a scribal remark referring to something not written (although the reading of this passage is very uncertain). (2) Koch-Westenholz 2000, 19:24: *an-niš ia-a-ti an-nu-um-miš šá it-tal-ku*. This was previously understood as if it was part of the commentary (cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, 135: "'here' refers to me 'there' to him who went away"; so also CAD I/J, 329a). But since this line stands between two passages, it is more likely that it is related to the process whereby the text on the tablet was compiled; perhaps it indicates that the preceding passage came from the scribe's own tablet or even his lesson, while the following passage refers to someone or something that was taken away, i.e., "(up to) here—mine; there (= from here on)—that which (or: he who) went away."

86 BM 47529+:6-7(?), r.3, r.9. See Geller 2014, 61–62:3(?) (^{gada}*t*[*a-kil-ti . . . pi-i iṣ-ṣ*]*i*? so Geller; *šá me-lam-mu-šú pi-*^{r}*i*$^{?\urcorner}$ [*iṣ-ṣi*]? or is the beginning of the PI sign actually a *Glossenkeil*, and restore: : *me-l*[*am*]$^{??}$), 9, 10.

87 BM 47529+:r.1–3, see Geller 2014, 61:9; collated from photograph.

> *i-qa-a* ÉN ^{d}UTU UD.20.[KAM UD-*ka na*]*m-ri* GURUN *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* : *šá-niš ana* UGU *šá-ru-ru šá* ^{d}UTU DU_{11}
>
> "[I] am Asarluḫi whose rays ligh[t up the la]nds"—the region of Pisces, the month Addāru, twentieth day, (in) which the people [set] their offerings to Šamaš and they poured the libation of the twentieth day of the month Addāru of the people *before them*(?), (and) the incantation "Šamaš! The twenti[eth] day is [your bri]ght [day]," fruit *pi-i iṣ-ṣi*; secondly: it is said concerning the rays of the Sun.

The commentary first gives the zodiac sign that matches this line and then notes that the line refers to the twentieth day of the month Addāru, when people make offerings and libations to Šamaš and recite an incantation to him.[88] Then the sign for "fruit" occurs, perhaps as one of the offerings to be given to Šamaš,[89] but then the sentence does not continue; instead the sequence *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* appears, followed by a second interpretation of the rays of Marduk in the base text as the rays of the sun.

The second occurrence of *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* in the text also seems out of place:[90]

> GE UMUN-*ḫi bir-bir-ru-šú ub-*[*ba-tú* BÀD NA_4:] . . . *šá-niš ana* UGU *zi-mi šá* ^{d}UTU *šá* KUR-*ú šá* NA_4 *pi-i iṣ-ṣi*
>
> "I am Asarluḫi, (whose) brilliance de[stroys a stone wall]"—. . .; secondly: concerning the glow of the Sun that . . . (*pi-i iṣ-ṣi*) the mountain of stone.

In this passage too, a verb seems to be missing and the sequence *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* seems unrelated to the text.[91]

The sequence *pi-i iṣ-ṣi* may represent a scribal remark, perhaps relating to the "speech (literally: mouth)," *pû*, heard in the lesson, followed perhaps by a form of *īṣu*, "few, small," or less likely from *maṣû*, "suffice." Perhaps the phrase indicates that the teacher made a brief remark that the scribe did not have

88 For the incantation, see Lambert 1960, 341; for its popular use, see its citation in the fable in Lambert 1960, 221. For the twentieth day of the month as the day dedicated to Šamaš and its connection to his divine number 20, see Maul 1999a, 303–305; Zawadzki 2005.

89 A reference to Sîn, known as the "Fruit," is less likely here (although not excluded).

90 BM 47529+:r.4–9; see Geller 2014, 61–62:10.

91 Admittedly, it is possible, although much less likely, that this is a genitive construction and not a subordinate clause, i.e., "the glow of the sun of the mountain of stone"; cf. Geller 2014, 63.

enough time to write down in full, or perhaps it is an expression analogous to "etc."

2.2.6.2 annû namir(*?*), *"it is clear(?)"*

A small tablet from Assur contains extracts from Udug-ḫul;[92] the first entry is in bilingual form, and the rest are in Akkadian translation with commentary. After the first entry has been cited, the remark(?) *annû namir* appears:[93]

> nam-lú-u_{18}-lu ù ĝ saĝ ĝi$_6$-ga-ke$_4$
> *a-me-lu-tú ni-ši ṣal-mat qaq-qa-di an-nu-u na-mir šu-lu-šá*[!?]("ÍA")-*a*
>
> "Mankind, the people, the black headed"—this is *clear*, (it is) three times each(?).

The meaning of this passage is not certain. Perhaps it is a scribal remark. It may signify that three words for mankind were listed in the base text for the sake of clarity.[94]

2.2.6.3 ina pīya ḫariš(*?*), *"it is . . . in my mouth"*(*?*)

The same Assur tablet mentioned in the previous entry, a duplicate of which was found in Assur as well, contains the remark(?) *ina pīya ḫariš*, "it is *ḫariš* in my mouth":[95]

---

92 Tablets II:47, III:107–110, IV:1–4; see Geller 2007, 98, 105, 109.

93 LKA 82:1–2; see Frahm 2011, 126, cf. 127 n. 636.

94 As noted by Frahm 2011, 127 n. 636, *šu-lu-šá*[!?]("ÍA")-*a* may stand here for an exegetical technique mentioned in *Examenstext* A, Sjöberg 1975, 142:15 (cf. Chapter 4, 1.2). Since the term occurs in *Examenstext* A in the context of changing the word or sign order (cf. Chapter 4, 1.2), perhaps *šulūšā* in our passage (if the emendation is correct) refers only to ù ĝ saĝ ĝi$_6$-ga // *ni-ši ṣal-mat qaq-qa-di*, composed of three elements, of which the order of the second and third is reversed in the Akkadian translation. Recently, Geller (2016, 74, n. 47) suggested a different reading of this line: *an-nu-u šu-mer-šu* KI.A GAR.A, "as for this: its Sumerian is KI.A GAR.A," understanding KI.A GAR.RA as a variant of kalam-ma ĝál-la-ba // *ina ma-a-ti ba-šá-a* in the following line. According to the photograph and copy in Geller 2016, pl. 137, this reading is possible although not certain. If it is correct, though, I prefer seeing KI.A GAR.A not as a variant to the next line, but rather as a variant of the term ki-bé ĝar-ra = *pūḫtu*, "replacement," known from *Examenstext* A, Sjöberg 1975, 142:15 (cf. Chapter 4, 1.2 and 1.2.2), and referring to the change of lexical order noted above.

95 Transliteration according to LKA 82:3–6, with variants from Al-Rawi 2000, 48, JRL 1053:11–15. Note that Geller (2016, 112, n. 110) emends the text to *ḫa-si*[!]*-is*, but according to the photograph and copy in Geller 2016, pl. 137, the sign indeed seems to be SAG (and in any case its final part looks like PA and not GIŠ). Additionally, Geller (2016, 112, n. 110)

> *a-na* É *ina* (var. ⌜*i-na*!⌝) *e-re-bi-ia* / ᵈUTU *ina* IGI-*ia* ᵈ30 *ina ár-ki-ia* (var. EGIR!?-*ia*) *ma-a šum-ma ina* ᵈUTU.È *pa-ni-ia* GAR!?(“*šú*”)-*nu* (var. *šak*!?-*nu*) / *ma-a* ᵈUTU *ina* IGI-*ia* ᵈ30 *ina ár-ki-ia* / ᵈU.GUR *ina im-ni-ia* ᵈMAŠ *ina* GÙB-*ia ina* KA-*ia ḫa-riš* (var. *ḫa-*⌜*ri*!?⌝(“⌜IM⌝”)-*iš*?⌝)
>
> “When I enter the house—Šamaš is in my front, Sîn is in my back”—thus: if my front faces east. Thus: “Šamaš is in my front, Sîn is in my back, Nergal is on my right, Ninurta is on my left”—it is . . . in my mouth.

The text first cites the beginning of the line with a commentary indicating that the speaker in the base text is facing east. Then the commentary re-cites part of the first lemma with its continuation, and remarks: *ina pīya ḫariš*, “it is . . . in my mouth.” It is possible that the use of the first person (*pīya*) is somehow related to the use of the first person in the base text. If so, the phrase would be part of the commentary itself and not a scribal remark. However, it is more likely that it is a scribal remark and that the first-person suffix refers to the scribe himself. The question is how to interpret *ḫariš* here. The verb *ḫarāšu* means “to bind,” which is difficult in this context.[96] Better sense can be made if the verb is understood from the West Semitic root *ḫrš*, “to be silent,” i.e., “it was silent in my mouth,” perhaps a remark similar to *ul alsi*, “I did not read.”[97] One last option would be to derive the verb from *ḫarāṣu*, which has the meaning “clear,” i.e., “it is not clear in my mouth,”[98] although the reading *riṣ* is otherwise unknown for SAG.

---

understands the following line (*ina libbi puṭur lemnu*) as connected to this remark (“in my mouth [= interpretation] it is remembered to be within (the incantation) *puṭur lemnu* [= UḪ tablet 2].” But in my opinion the following remark is a rubric on the lines extracted for interpretation as in other commentaries (e.g., KAR 94:24′, 36′, 45, see Frahm 2011, 384–296).

96 *CAD* Ḫ, 96a; *AHw*, 324b.

97 See 2.2.2. This root *ḫrš* is attested once in Old Babylonian Mari; see *AHw*, 1559b. Note that Dossin 1968, 75–76, in his discussion of this attestation, points to the Standard Babylonian attestation of the verb *ḫarāšu* with *pû* as another candidate for “silent, mute.” Note, however, that Böck 2000a, 242:63 (with n. 739), reads the sign KA as KIR_4, “nose,” not “mouth,” in this context.

98 Cf. *namir*, “clear,” earlier in the same commentary; see 2.2.6.2 above.

2.3 *Terms Referring to Discourse in the Study Environment and the Teacher-Student Relation: Dialogue, Direct Speech* (mā)*, Interrogatives, and Conjunctive Adverbs*

Within the *Sitz im Leben* of the study environment, there are a few terms that reflect the discourse, or supposed discourse, of the learning process. These are closely related to the main relationship reflected in commentaries: not a silent interaction between a commentator and a text but a dialogue between scholars, or between a master and a young scholar. As seen above, the "questioning" that forms part of the lesson involves one (senior) scholar asking another (young) scholar about the text, and not a scholar asking the text a question. Thus, a few commentaries contain interrogatives, reflecting these questions, and some Neo-Assyrian commentaries contain the particle *mā*, denoting direct or reported speech.

An extispicy commentary from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh is exceptional in that it is constructed as an actual dialogue between a master-teacher and a young scholar, making use of the verb *šâlu*, "to ask," and the particle *mā*, as well as interrogatives:[99]

> BE-*ma um-ma-an-ka i-šá-'-al-ka ma-a* GIŠ.TUKUL 15 AN.TA IGI NU SIG_5 GIŠ.TUKUL 150 AN.TA IGI SIG_5 *ma-a ina* SAG EDEN 15 ŠU.SI GIŠ.TUKUL GAR-*ma* AN.TA IGI *ma-a am-mi-ni-e ana* SIG_5 *i-tur ma-a ina* SAG EDEN 150 ŠU.SI GIŠ.TUKUL GAR-*ma* AN.TA IGI *ma-a am-mi-ni-e ana* NU SIG_5 *i-tur ma-a* UZU.KIN *ina* ŠÀ UDU.NÍTA TI.LA *ki-i* GAR-*tu-ni* SAG ŠU.SI KI.TA IGI-*al ina an-ni-e šá* 15 SIG_5 *šá* 150 NU SIG_5
>
> If your master-scholar asks you:
> "— a 'weapon' of the right points up—unfavorable; a weapon of the left points up—favorable;
> "— (so) a 'weapon' placed on the top of the right plain of the 'finger' (that) points up,
> "— Why did it turn favorable?
> "— (and) a 'weapon' placed on the top of the left plain of the 'finger' (that) points up,
> "— Why did it turn unfavorable?"
> (Answer): "— When the oracular message is placed in the inner parts of the living sheep, the top of the finger points up. Therefore that of the right side is favorable (and) that of the left side is unfavorable!"

99 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26.

Most of the passage comprises a complicated question by the master-scholar, who asks the young scholar to harmonize two supposedly contradicting omens: a general omen noting that a "weapon" on the right side of the liver pointing up is favorable and a "weapon" on the left side pointing up is unfavorable, and a specific omen that states the opposite when these "weapons" appear on the right or left sides of the top of the plain of the "finger" of the liver. The answer explains how the specific omen can be harmonized with the general rule in the first omen: When the message was given by the god—i.e., when the liver was still in the living body of the standing sacrificial sheep (as opposed to the position of the liver when taken out of the dead sheep lying on its back)—the top of the "finger" was pointing in the opposite direction, and thus the directions are reversed.[100]

This technique of harmonizing two contradictory statements by limiting one of them to a specific case is expressed in the form of a dialogue between the master-teacher (*ummânu*), who uses the interrogative "why" (*amminê*) for his question, and the young scholar, who includes the conjunctive adverb "therefore" (*ina annî*) in his reply. The questions and answers of the two speakers are introduced with the Assyrian particle *mā*, denoting direct speech.

Although it is doubtful whether this specific case reflects a verbatim discussion between a master and a young scholar, I do think it reflects the study environment, where it was customary for the master-teacher to pose such questions. Indeed, this is what the commentaries actually represent, according to one of their native designations: *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*, "questioning of (or: according to) a scholar."

The speech of the scholars is also reflected in the frequent appearance of the Neo-Assyrian particle *mā*, used before each of the cases the master-scholar cites, before his questions, and before the answers of the young scholar. The next entry in the same extispicy commentary also uses the particle *mā*, as well as the interrogative *ammīni*, but without the "narrator's" indication of who is speaking (although it is obvious from the previous entry). Unfortunately, the entry is not well preserved, but nevertheless it is still worth citing:[101]

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100 This may not be as far-fetched as it seems. The "finger" may be connected to the somewhat loose part of the top of the *processus caudatus*, whose top curves downwards when the liver is positioned for extispicy, just as it does in a living sheep, while all the other parts of the liver point the other way.

101 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26 (see the photographs in pls. XXXIV–XXXV).

ma-a KI.GUB *u* SILIM ZAG IGI.MEŠ SIG_5 *ma-a am-mi-ni* / *ma-a* MUL.ŠU.PA *ina* MÚ-*šú* IGI MUL.ŠU.PA KUR$^{?}$-[*aḫ*] / MUL.ŠU.P[A . . . *ana* . . .] IGI-*šú* GAR-*nu* DU_{11}-*bi* / SILIM ^{d}IM ZI [. . . *ana*] ^{d}MAR.TU IGI-*šú* GAR-*nu*

"The 'presence' and the 'well-being' point to the right—favorable—
"— Why?"
"— Böotes is seen at its rising; Böotes ris[es](?),[102]
"— You say: Böotes is directed [to]wards [. . .].
"The 'well-being' is Adad, the rising(?) [. . .] is directed westwards."

This conversation is not entirely clear, but it is obvious that here too the dialogue concerns two cases that are to be harmonized: a pathological situation in the liver and an astronomical situation believed to correspond to it. Perhaps Böotes was thought to be the celestial correspondence of the "presence" on the liver;[103] Adad is indeed known to correspond to the "well-being."[104] The westward direction of Adad (= the wind?), and perhaps also of Böotes may correspond to the orientation of the features toward the right in the liver omen. In any case, this exegesis is presented as a question (*ammīni*) and an answer in direct discourse involving a reinterpretation of an astrological omen (*taqabbi*).[105]

In the examples above, a study session, whether or not it actually occurred, is presented in the form of a dialogue where a master questions a young scholar, whose reply contains an interpretation of the base text. There are also cases where an unidentified speaker questions someone else about a text, although there too one may infer that the unidentified questioner actually represents a master scholar, while the other figure represents a young scholar who articulates the interpretation of the base text. These anonymous exchanges contain more rhetorical features associated with dialogues: other uses of interrogatives, conjunctive adverbs, the particle *mā*, and the employment of second-person verbs. These will be expounded immediately below.

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102 This line may be part of the question: "Why (is it that when) Böotes is seen at its rising . . .?"; i.e., perhaps the extispicy omen is confronted here with an unfavorable(?) celestial situation. See immediately below.

103 Böotes is not preserved, however, in a list of such correspondences in SBTU 4, 159:1–3.

104 SBTU 4, 159:12.

105 See Chapter 5, para. 6.

2.3.1 Interrogatives

Similar to the interrogative *ammīni*, "why," in the dialogues presented above,[106] the interrogative *mīnu*, "what," is also used on rare occasions in extispicy commentaries from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh. Like *ammīni* it reflects the rhetorical process of study, although its exact function in the commentaries is not clear. Thus, one finds the question: *aš-šum a-nim* MU.MEŠ *ša la ti-du-ú-šú mi-nu-ú iq-qab-bi*, "concerning this, the omen entries which you do not know, what is said?"[107]

An unusual Late Babylonian expository text dealing with, among other matters, the gestation period of animals, also uses the interrogative *minû*, in questions introduced by the phrase "perhaps (i.e., if) you shall say thus" (*mindēma taqabbi umma*), which appears several times in the text.[108] Two of these questions contain the interrogative *minû*:[109] *mìn-de-e-ma ta-qab-bi um-ma mi-nu-ú i-da-tu*$_4$ *šá* S[A$^?$].MEŠ-^{r}*nu*$^?$-*tú*$^?$^{1} (copy very unclear), "Perhaps (= if) you shall say thus: 'What are the signs(?) of the . . .?'"; and[110] [*mìn-de-e-ma t*]*a-qab-bi um-ma mi-nu-ú* U$_8$, "Perhaps (= if) you shall say thus: 'what is (it concerning) an ewe [(. . .)]?'" Here the question is not posed by the master-teacher, but rather attributed to the student, or to an implied reader.

A Late Babylonian cultic commentary asks *ana muḫḫi mīni*, "on account of what?":[111]

> *a-na muḫ-ḫi mi-ni-i ki-i il-la-ka-' ina* ITI.ŠU *mu-ši ki-i i*[*k-ru*]*-ú* / *ana* UGU *ur-ru-ku šá mu-ši* MÍ.DUMU.MEŠ *é-saĝ-íl ana é-zi-da it-tal-ka-ni*
>
> On account of what is it that they (= the goddesses) go? In the month of Du'ūzu, when the nights have become short, the daughters of the Esaĝil go out to the Ezida for the lengthening of the nights.

Finally, in a hypothetical discussion with the king, where omens are specified as applying either to the king or to the land, the king is said to ask *ina minî lūmur*, "in what can I see (this)?"[112]

---

106 The interrogative *ammīni* is perhaps to be restored also in Koch 2005, no. 28:56, text E; see 2.3.2 below.

107 See Koch 2005, no. 109:141 (A iv 1–2); and similarly two lines further (A iv 4); see also no. 91:1 (A 7 // [B 9]).

108 SBTU 5, 254:10, 17–18, 32, 36, 61.

109 SBTU 5, 254:36.

110 SBTU 5, 254:61.

111 Livingstone 1986, 255 (BM 34035:4–5).

112 SAA 8, 283:3. See Appendix 1, 6.2.

2.3.2 Adverbial Conjunction (*ina annî*)

The term *ina annî*, "therefore," which appeared in the answer to a question in the scholarly dialogue mentioned above,[113] occurs in a similar context in another extispicy commentary from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh, regarding the gall bladder.[114] Unfortunately the passage is not well preserved, but it is likely that two seemingly contradictory omens are presented, perhaps with the question *ammīni*, "why?," and a reply formulated like the one in the passage cited above: *ina an-ni-e ana* SIG_5 [*i-tur*], "therefore it [turned] favorable."

3 Referring to the Reader of the Text in the Second Person

Another rhetorical feature found in commentaries, which has already appeared in some of the examples above, reflects the context of communal study and conversation: the use of the second person. In most cases where the second person is found, it is not part of the textual exegesis proper but an echo of the process of study and interpretation that comprises divination. Thus, *taqabbi*, "you say," *tuštabbal*, "you consider," and *ina qātika tukāl*, "you hold in your hand," refer to the process of omen interpretation and deliberation, not the study of the text of the omen itself.[115] Nevertheless, sometimes these terms are used in such a way that the line between divination and exegesis is blurred.

It should be noted that although the use of the second person in commentaries may have originated in the teacher's address to the student, its use to depict the teacher-student relationship could also be transferred to the relationship between text and scholar. In the commentaries it is sometimes the text (or its assumed author) that addresses the scholar (or diviner), a trope that resembles how the text is regularly depicted as "speaking" through third-person forms of the verb *qabû*.[116] It should be emphasized that the use of the second person to indicate what the text "says" is also found in other genres, such as divination and its interpretation as mentioned above, and in ritual texts that instruct the cultic performer of his duties.

113 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26. See 2.3 above.

114 Koch 2005, no. 28:56, text E.

115 For *taqabbi*, see Chapter 5, para. 6. For *tuštabbal*, cf. Chapter 4, 2.3.1.2 and Appendix 1, 7.1; see also K.3123 (ACh Supp. 2, XIX; see Frahm 2011, 57 n. 262), r. 19′ (written: ḪI.ḪI-*ma*). For *ina qātika tukāl*, see Appendix 1, 2.2.

116 See Chapter 5, para. 7.

3.1 *"(not) knowing"* (idû) *the Text*

The study of the Mesopotamian textual tradition, like any other process of study, had as its ultimate goal the preservation of knowledge, to be achieved through the formation of people who could carry and transmit this knowledge. The Akkadian root used for this capacity is *idû*, "to know," and indeed the scholars are referred to as *mūdû*, literally "he who knows."[117]

In the commentaries, negated second-person forms of the verb *idû*, "to know" (*. . . lā tīdû*), appear in conditional or subordinate clauses, where they inform the scholar of those passages that are indeed incomprehensible, unless some explanation is provided or some exegetical technique is used. Note the scribal remark *ul īde*.[118]

The verb *idû* is also found in *Examenstext* A, where a scribe asking a student about his mastery of various subjects repeats the question "do you know?" (ì-zu(-u$_{(3)}$) // *ti-de-e*) after naming each subject.[119] Note especially that before asking these questions, he uses the negated form of the verb in the second person, "you do not know" (nu-zu-a // *ul ti-de*), as in the occurrences below.[120]

3.1.1 *šumma . . . lā tīdû*, "if you do not know"

An extispicy omen that uses the rare word *kukittu* receives a short explanation:[121]

> BE SILIM 2-*ma ku-kit-ta-šú-nu* GAR-*a*[*n* . . .] / BE-*ma ku-kit-ti* NU *ti-du-u* x / [. . .] / DIŠ-*en* ZÉ 2-*ú* ME.NI [IGI . . .]
>
> "If there are two 'well-beings' and their *kukittu* is there [. . .]"—if you do not know "*kukittu*"—[. . .], one [points] to the gall bladder, the second to the palace gate.

---

117 See *CAD* M/II, 166.

118 See 2.2.3 above. In addition, note the negated verb *idû*, probably in the third person in Koch 2005, no. 91:1: *ki-a-am* NU ZU-*ú*. Cf. also Koch 2005, no. 32:23: [*an-nu*]-*ti a-ḫu-ti šá* [*ma*]-*am-ma la i-du-u*; Koch 2005, no. 113:3′, no. 114:15′, cf. no. 28:69 // Heeßel 2008, 139:7′–8′: [*an-nu*]-*ti* BAR.MEŠ *šá* LÚ.ḪAL *ma-am-man* NU ZU-[*u* . . .].

119 Sjöberg 1975, 140–144:12–28.

120 Sjöberg 1975, 140:5.

121 STT 2, 308 r. iii:46–48 (cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, 429 n. 997).

The text introduces the word *kukittu*, whose meaning is uncertain in modern scholarship as well,[122] using the clause "if you do not know,"[123] and then explains the situation this word describes.[124]

3.1.2 *aššu . . . lā tīdû*, "since you do not know"

While the previous example, *šumma . . . lā tīdû*, "if you do not know," suggests that the student of the text might have been expected to know what *kukittu* means,[125] the phrase *aššu . . . lā tīdû*, "since you do not know," assumes that the student does not know the meaning of the lemma. An astrological commentary from Assur deals with the word *pešgibira*:[126]

> DIŠ MUL *dil-bat* 9 ITI *ina* ^{d}UTU.È 9 <*ina*>$^{?}$ ^{d}UTU.ŠÚ.A KI.GUB-*sà* KÚR. KÚR KI.MIN GUR.[GUR] / ZI ÉRIN-*man-da* DIŠ peš-gi-bi-ra *aš-šú* peš-gi-bi-ra la *ti-du-ú* : ^{peš}[peš$_{10}$(KI.A)](?) / *kib-ra-a-ti er-bu-u kib-ra-a-ti ina li-šá-a-ni* ⌜*da*$^{?}$-*gíl*$^{?}$⌝ peš *šá-lá-*[*šú*$^{?}$] / gi *iš-tén* EN x-*a-te ina ṣa-a-ti da-*[*gíl*]
>
> "If Venus turns back, variant: changes, its position for nine months in the east, nine in the west—attack of the Umman-manda *towards*(?)[127] peš-gi-bi-ra"—since you do not know "peš-gi-bi-ra"—(the reading) peš [(of the signs) KI.A (i.e., peš$_{10}$)](?) = regions, "four = regions" is seen(?) in the vocabulary; peš = thre[e]; gi = one . . . is se[en] in the word-lists.

122 Cf. *CAD* K, 498a: "(mng. uncert.)."

123 There is no clear reason for the writing *ti-du-u*, since a subjunctive is not expected. Perhaps it is influenced by other constructions with *idû* that are introduced by a conjunction and consequently in the subjunctive; see 3.1.2, 3.1.3 below.

124 Note that another extispicy commentary treats the same word lexically and not phenomenally: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 87:6′: ⌜*ku-kit-tu*$_4$⌝ NU *mit-gur-tu*$_4$ *ina* EME *q*[*a*^{i}-*bi*]. This is in line with other commentaries that deal with the same word; see *CAD* K, 498a.

125 Indeed, it is explained lexically in other commentaries; see n. 124 above.

126 VAT 10218; see Reiner and Pingree 1998, 50–51:106 (43′–46′) (cf. parallels in CT 34, 14, BM 98821:6–7, K.11018 and K.13894, and CT 51, 174, mentioned in Reiner and Pingree 1998, 54 n. 20, where it is also stated that the unpublished parallels have *la ti-du-ú* without *aššu*; however, I could not find this in any of the manuscripts mentioned by Reiner and available either in hand copy or digital photos). See also Frahm 2011, 77–78. In previous treatments the word has been read gir-gi-bi-ra (related to the toponym Girgilu, associated with Nippur?), but I think it is better to read the first sign GIR as peš, in agreement with the Sumerian ternary system of counting (see immediately below).

127 It is not clear whether the sign DIŠ here is part of the apodosis, i.e., *ana* peš-gi-bi-ra, or introduces a lexical entry; see Reiner and Pingree 1998, 50–51 and 54 n. 34. See also the discussion immediately below.

The meaning of the noun peš-gi-bi-ra is assumed to be unknown by the student of the text. Assuming that DIŠ before peš-gi-bi-ra it is to be read *ana*, i.e., that peš-gi-bi-ra belongs to the apodosis, then the commentary seems to explain why this word means an attack against the "four regions," as discussed by Frahm.[128] First peš is explained as a homonym of $peš_{10}$, *kibrātu*, "regions,"[129] which is associated with "four" in a *lišānu* vocabulary.[130] In addition, peš-gi is indeed a writing for the number four according to the ternary system, which uses the bases gi for "one" and peš for "three."[131] Unfortunately I cannot restore and understand the last part of the commentary, which relies on a lexical correspondence of EN(?) with an Akkadian word.

3.1.3 *ša lā tīdû*, "that you do not know"

The term *ša lā tīdû* occurs in difficult contexts in calculations and orientations of extispicy presented as a scholarly dialogue.[132]

3.2 *Having the Text "before you"*

Another term using the second person, *šumma . . . ana pānika*, "if . . . before you," is not an exegetical term per se but is nevertheless related to the process of study. This term, like *ina qātika tukāl*, "you hold (it) in your hand," relates to the evidence the diviner or interpreter has to take into consideration, some of it kept in mind (in the Akkadian idiom, "in hand," *ina qāti*), and some lying before him (*ana pāni*). The term *šumma . . . ana pānika* is mostly found in extispicy commentaries, especially those from the Neo-Assyrian period, but occasionally appears in other commentaries, usually of a thematic nature. The term normally introduces a citation of a source, or a theme, that is the subject of, connected to, or supports the discussion and argumentation in the commentary. It may occur in various collocations, enumerated below.[133]

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128 Frahm 2011, 77–78.

129 Differently Frahm (2011, 78 n. 377), who sees a phonetic resemblance between GIR-gi-bi-ra and *kibrātu*.

130 See Malku 1:187 (Hrůša 2010, 42); cf. Frahm 2011, 78 n. 378.

131 See Balke 2011, 720–723 (with previous literature in notes; note that -bi is often added to some of the numbers in this system).

132 See Koch 2005, no. 90:7: *ša la* ⌜*ti*⌝-[*du-ú*](?); Koch 2005, no. 109:141: *aš-šum a-nim* MU.MEŠ *ša la ti-du-ú-šú mi-nu-ú iq-qab-bi . . . a-nim-mi ša la ti-du-šu mi-nu* MU-*šu*. For the full passage, see Chapter 5, 3.3.3.

133 Besides the examples below, the following attestations of *šumma . . . ana pānika* occur in broken or unclear context: Koch 2005, no. 93:C r.18, and no. 99:18; perhaps also TCL 6, 5:r.26, see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.26 (emend the end of the line to <*ana*> IGI-*ka*?).

3.2.1 *šumma . . . ana pānika*, "if . . . is/are before you"

The phrase *ana pānika* regularly appears in the titles of *mukallimtu* commentaries to extispicy texts, where it refers to the omens that follow and that need to be taken into consideration, e.g.:[134]

> BE-*ma šu*-[*ma-a-ti*] *ši-bi* ($u_{(3)}$) *mu-kal-lim-ti šá* NA *ana* IGI-*ka*
>
> If omen-entries, (textual) witnesses and the "revealer" (*mukallimtu*) of the "presence" are before you—. . .

The phrase *ana pānika*, "before you," refers to the texts to be read by the student (and which follow this phrase in the commentary). Koch-Westenholz does not construe the clause as conditional but leaves *šumma*, "if," out of her translation,[135] perhaps to indicate that *šumma* here marks the beginning of a commentary passage and is not syntactically connected to what follows.[136] Although *šumma* in omen series may indeed have been understood as marking the beginning of an omen and not necessarily as a conditional particle,[137] here it belongs to the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika* and is indeed to be translated "if"; the omens cited in the commentary act as the apodosis following this conditional clause.

Similarly, the phrase is found in the astronomical compendium MUL.APIN:[138]

> *šum-ma* (vars. BE, BE-*ma*) UD.DA.ZAL.LÁ-*e* u_4-*mi* ITI *u* MU.AN.MA *ana* IGI-*ka*
>
> If the correction for the day, month, and year is before you—. . .

A similar use of the phrase is found in a Late Babylonian text that seeks to connect celestial bodies with omens related to the human body. The text first introduces the subject of the exegesis, namely three omen series dealing with

134 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:1, also no. 20:1, A iv 12′–13′, no. 42: G 1, no. 42:r.4; Koch 2005, no. 25:1; DT 84:1 (CCP 3.4.1.A.1). Note the textual corruption in the Seleucid Uruk tablet TCL 6, 25:22 (Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:22), where *šību* is rendered ŠÀ-*bu-ú*.

135 See, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, 132.

136 See 4.5.1.1 below.

137 See 4.5.1.1 below.

138 Hunger and Pingree 1989, 94, II, ii:13. Cf. Koch 2005, 64 with n. 123.

the body (Izbu, Sagig, and Alamdimmû) and their celestial correspondences.[139] Then the celestial nature of Izbu is specifically elaborated:[140]

> BE-*ma iz-bu ana* IGI-*ka*
>
> If Izbu is before you—…

Here *šumma*, "if," is not part of the title Šumma Izbu, but rather the beginning of the phrase *šumma … ana pānika*; as is often the case, Izbu alone serves to designate the series.[141] This explanation of the clause is supported by the introduction of the next passage in this commentary, a few lines later:[142]

> BE-*ma* ŠÈR *šá ṣa-a-tu*$_4$ *ana* IGI-*ka*
>
> If the *collection* of *ṣâtu*-lists is before you—…

In both cases, the phrase *šumma … ana pānika* is addressed to the student and refers to the subjects he is about to study. Indeed, the act of study is explicitly mentioned in connection with the phrase *šumma … ana pānika* in an explanatory extispicy text dealing with the calculation of the stipulated term:[143]

> BE-*ma* KI.MEŠ *šá* IGI BÀ *u* NIGIN-*tì* BÀ *ana* IGI-*ka* UŠ$_4$-*ši-na ana iḫ-zi-ka* …
>
> If the areas of the front of the liver and the circumference of the liver are before you—in order for you to study (lit. "for your study") its sense—…

The phrase *šumma … ana pānika* also appears in a specifically exegetical context. In an extispicy commentary from Nineveh, the phrase seems to introduce a word from the base text before commenting on it:[144]

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139 Biggs 1968, 53:1–2.

140 Biggs 1968, 53:5.

141 Line 1 of the text begins with *šumma Izbu* as well (BE-*ma iz-bu* SA.GIG ALAM.DÍM-*mu-ú*). Here, *šumma* either belongs with Izbu, i.e., the title of the composition in full is "If a malformation" (so Biggs 1968, 54, and Böck 2000b, 615), or it is an indication of the beginning of an entry. It is difficult to understand it here as opening a conditional clause.

142 Biggs 1968, 54:14.

143 Koch 2005, no. 106:r.11′.

144 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:84. For the apodosis, see now George 2013, 235, no. 33:40. The interpretation of this passage follows Frahm 2011, 81–82, and the discussion of the

> BE 3-*šú* NA GIM *zi-qit* GÍR.TAB DAM LÚ *ina kub-bu-bu suḫ-se-e-šú* IZI *ana* É LÚ ŠUB-*di* / *šum-ma suḫ-su ana* IGI-*ka suḫ-su qé-nu* / *qé-na-at-ma ina qé-ni-šá* IZI *ana* É LÚ ŠUB-*di*
>
> Third "if"—"The 'presence' is like the sting of a scorpion—a man's wife will set fire to the man's house by the burning of her[!] (text: his) crotch (*suḫsu*)"[145]—If "crotch" (*suḫsu*) is before you—*suḫsu* ("crotch") = jealousy; she is jealous, she will set fire to the man's house in her jealousy.[146]

Here, *šumma . . . ana pānika* serves as a hermeneutical term, introducing an element from the text (the rare word *suḫsu*) to its student, before reinterpreting it and re-reading the base text in a way that explains the enigmatic phrase. Functionally, this hermeneutical use is quite similar to the re-citation of an element from a text using the term *ša iqbû*, before offering a commentary on it.[147]

3.2.2 *šumma* [omen] *ana pānika*, "if [citation of an omen] is before you" Similar to the cases above, the term *šumma . . . ana pānika* may bracket a citation of the protasis of an omen. Since the omen begins with *šumma* as well, in such a case *šumma* may appear twice in succession (usually in two different witings), first as part of the term *šumma . . . ana pānika*, and then as the opening word of the omen. An illustrated commentary on lung omens provides an example:[148]

> BE *šum-ma* ŠU.SI MUR MURUB$_4$ *e-ni-ta ana* IGI-*k*[*a*] / *ib-bala-kàt-ma* NÍG.PI-*šá ina* 2,30 GAR-*a*[*n*] / *an-ni-tu*$_4$ GIŠ.ḪUR-*šá* (drawing) / *šum-ma ina ṣa-a-ti* MU-*šú ana* IGI-*ka* / BAL *e-nu-ú* BAL *na-bal-ku-tú*
>
> If "If the 'middle finger of the lung'[149] is inverted" is before you—it is turned and its "handle"[150] lies to the left; this is its drawing: (drawing on

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noun *suḫsu* in George 2013, 121. A similar use of the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika* is probably found in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:54.

145 See George 2013, 121.

146 For Akkadian *qīnu*, "jealousy," see Frahm 2009, 35–39; Frahm 2011, 82.

147 See Chapter 5, para. 1.

148 CT 31, 40 (see *CAD* E, 174b; Frahm 2011, 184), r.iii:9–13; see probably also CT 41, 40, r.iii:14, iv:23, and perhaps also CT 31, 14, K.2090, ii:2′. For the second part of the commentary, see 3.2.8 below.

149 For this part of the lungs, see Koch 2005, 81: "accessory/intermediate/azygos lobe."

150 See Koch 2005, 80: "part of the Middle Finger of the Lung."

the tablet); if its entry in the *ṣâtu* vocabularies is before you: BAL = invert, BAL = turn.

The commentary introduces the omen "if the middle of the lung is inverted," using the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, resulting in two consecutive occurrences of "if" (*šumma*). The commentary then explains the situation described in this omen.

In other cases, *šumma* is omitted from the beginning of the omens cited within the phrase *šumma . . . . ana pānika*, as seen in the examples below.[151]

3.2.3 *šumma* [omen] *ša ana dumqi/aḫiti iqbû ana pānika*, "if [citation of an omen], which it said (un)favorably, is before you"

As noted above,[152] in most cases where an omen is introduced with the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, the *šumma* of the omen is omitted.[153] This is seen, for example, in cases where the citation of the omen (within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*) is directly followed by the regular term for introducing citations in commentaries, *ša iqbû*, in an expanded form.[154] In the following extispicy commentary, the first and third uses of *šumma . . . ana pānika* bracket an entire omen, but the second one brackets a citation of an apodosis alone (therefore the *šumma* preceding it belongs to the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, and not to the cited omen):[155]

BE *ina sip-pí* NA UGU-[*nu* NA NA MAN-*ma* GAR] / *ina* GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ DINGIR.MEŠ ⌜*re-ṣu-ti*⌝ [EN UDU.NÍTA DU-*ku*] / *ina* UD SUD *la* DINGIR-*šú* UGU LÚ [ŠUB-*ut*] / *šum-ma ina sip-pí* NA UGU-*nu* NA NA MAN-*ma* [. . .] / *ina* GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ DINGIR.MEŠ *re-ṣu-ti* EN UDU.NÍTA DU-[*ku*] *šá ana* SIG_5 *iq-bu-ú ana* IGI-*ka ši-bu-šú*
BE NA SAG.ÚS GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina* SAG NA *e-ṣir*
BE 3-*šú* NA SAG.ÚS GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina* SAG-*šú ina* 15 *e-ṣir*
šum-ma NU DINGIR-*šú* UGU LÚ ŠUB-*ut šá ana a-ḫi-ti* DU_{11}-*ú ana* IGI-*ka* NA *a-ḫu-u šá sip-pí* 15 NA MAŠ.GAN-*šú* TAG_4-*ma ina sip-pí* 150 NA UGU-*nu* NA *ina* 150 GAR

151 See 3.2.3, 3.2.4.

152 See 3.2.2.

153 Note that *šumma* is omitted anyway in other cases as well; see 4.5.1.1 below.

154 See Chapter 5, 1.4.1.

155 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:69–73 (for a discussion of this passage, see also Gabbay 2015b, 357–361). Another, hardly preserved occurrence of the same term is Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 79:8.

BE MAN-*ú* MU.NI NA SAG.ÚS GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina* 150 GAR LÚ.ZABAR.DAB *ina* SÍSKUR LUGAL DIŠ-*en* ÚŠ / *šum-ma* NA SAG. ÚS GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina* 150 GAR LUGAL KUR-*su* ŠUB-*ta* TUŠ-*ib* / *šá ana* SIG_5 *iq-bu-u ana* IGI-*ka ši-bu-šú*

BE NA SAG.ÚS GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina sip-pí* 150 NA *e-ṣir*

"If in the 'door-jamb' of the 'presence',[156] above [the 'presence', there is a second 'presence']—in battle: the gods [will come] to the help of [the owner of the (sacrificial) ram];[157] in the long term: a god who is not his will [fall] upon the man."—**If** "In the 'door-jamb' of the 'presence', above the 'presence', [there is] a second 'presence'—in battle: the gods will come to the help of the owner of the (sacrificial) ram," which it said favorably, **is before you**, its (textual) witness (is as follows):

"If there is a regular 'presence' and a second one is drawn at the top of the 'presence'."[158]

Third "If":[159] "There is a regular 'presence' and a second one is drawn at its top to the right."

If "a god who is not his own will fall upon the man," which it said unfavorably, **is before you**:

The anomalous 'presence' of the right 'door-jamb' of the 'presence' has left its place and is placed in the left 'door-jamb' of the 'presence' above the presence to the left.

Its second "if":[160] "There is a regular 'presence' and a second one is placed to the left—the *zabardabbû*-official during the king's offering *will kill someone*(?)."

156 The "door-jamb" (*sippu*) usually refers to the features to the right and to the left of the "palace gate" (*bāb ekalli*), the fissure dividing the *lobus sinister* from the *lobus quadrates*; see Jeyes 1978, 213–215; Koch-Westenholz 2000, 46. Here, however, it seems to refer to a feature connected to the "presence." See also *CAD* S, 302–303.

157 My restorations in this omen are based on its re-citation directly below; differently Koch-Westenholz 2000, 140–141.

158 For this situation as a favorable omen, see n. 162 below.

159 Contra Koch-Westenholz 2000, 141 n. 403, this is the correct order. This is indeed the third omen; the previous one (the "witness") is the second, while the first is the original omen (with the favorable apodosis); the "second If" later in the text is the second omen supporting the unfavorable prediction.

160 Since the previous statement was a description and not a citation of an omen, this citation is considered the second omen with an unfavorable outcome (the first one is the original omen with the unfavorable apodosis).

(But) **if** "There is a regular 'presence' and a second one is placed to the left—the king will (re-)settle his abandoned land," which it said favorably,[161] **is before you**, its (textual) witness (is as follows):
"If there is a regular 'presence' and a second one is drawn in the left 'door-jamb' of the 'presence'."

First, an omen about the existence of an extra "presence" above a regular "presence" is introduced, with two apodoses, one favorable and one unfavorable. The association of two opposing apodoses with one reality poses a hermeneutical problem, and the rest of the commentary attempts to solve this contradiction. The commentary deals first with the favorable apodosis. It re-cites the omen, but only with its favorable apodosis, using the term *ša ana dumqi iqbû*, "which it said favorably," bracketed by the phrase *šumma . . . ana panīka*, "if . . . is before you," leading to a citation of two omens. First, the situation is explained by a citation of a favorable omen that describes a similar phenomenon (although the apodosis is not cited, it is indeed known to be favorable).[162] Next, a similar omen is cited that specifies that the circumstances given in the original omen are present on the top right side. Although the apodosis of the omen is not given (nor is it known from other sources), it is likely that this would have been a favorable prediction. The commentary now proceeds to deal with the unfavorable apodosis in the original omen, presenting it in the same way as the favorable apodosis was presented, namely, within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, but the omen is followed, as expected, by *ša ana aḫīti iqbû*, "which it said unfavorably." This apodosis is now specified twice, first by locating the situation in the omen in the top left part, which must have been regarded as an unfavorable situation, and then by citing an omen describing a similar situation at the top left part with what appears to be an unfavorable apodosis (as expected). However, even though the contradiction between the favorable and unfavorable predictions has now been resolved by specifying that they apply to two different situations, the discussion does not end here. The commentary now cites an omen, again framed by the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, that describes a situation similar to that in the previous unfavorable omen, namely that an extra presence lies to the left; unlike the previous omen, however, this one has a favorable apodosis. The omen is followed by the phrase *ša ana dumqi iqbû*, "which it said favorably," emphasizing that it contradicts

161 Cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 16:11 (and no. 20:52), with a favorable apodosis about the king resettling his abandoned land.

162 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 16:17, and 20:28: "—the *abandoned* protective gods will return to the ruler" (ᵈALAD.MEŠ ŠUB.MEŠ *ana* NUN GUR.MEŠ-*ni*).

the previous unfavorable omen. An extra omen, with a similar protasis, is now cited. Although the apodosis is not cited, it is likely that the omen was considered favorable,[163] in agreement with the previous omen.

3.2.4 *šumma* [omen] *uṣurtašunu ana pānika*, "if [citation of an omen], their design, is before you"

Another situation where the *šumma* of the omen may actually serve as the *šumma* of the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, occurs when the details of the omen are referred to with the noun *uṣurtu* and then demonstrated. For example:[164]

> BE-*ma* NA 3-*ma* NA 15 *u* 150 BAL.MEŠ-*ma* SAG.UŠ IGI.MEŠ NUN ILLAT.MEŠ-*šú* BAL.MEŠ-*šú-ma ú-šam-qa-ta-šú* GIŠ.ḪUR-*šú-nu ana* IGI-*ka* NA SAG.UŠ GAR-*ma* DIŠ *ina* SAG 15-*šú* MAN-*ú* (*ina*) $MURUB_4$ 15-*šú iš-šak-ka-nu-ma* NA IGI.MEŠ SAG 15 NA 15 $MURUB_4$ 15 N[A 150]
>
> **If** "there are three 'presences' and the right and left 'presences' are turned and point at the regular one—the ruler, his auxiliary troops will rebel against him and bring out his defeat," their design, **is before you**[165]—
> There is a regular 'presence', and one is placed at its right top and the second at its right middle and they point to the 'presence'. The right top of the presence is the right one, the right middle of the presence [is the left one].

The commentary addresses an omen that appears in a series of omens dealing with three "presences." In this case the left and right "presences" point toward the middle, "real" one. This omen is unfavorable. The commentary presents the omen within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, but with an emphasis on the physical details or scheme of this case (*uṣurtašunu*). The underlying hermeneutical problem with this omen, not explicitly mentioned here, may have been that if only the right "presence" is turned toward the middle, it is an

163 Koch-Westenholz (2000, 142 n. 407) refers to the unfavorable omen, no. 16:13 (cited also in no. 20:59), but although this omen is formulated very similarly to our omen, it presents a different case, involving the left "door-jamb" (*sippu*) not of the "presence," but rather of the "palace gate." A favorable omen that may specify a case similar to ours appears in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:56.

164 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:69.

165 I.e., "**If** the design of 'if there are three presences . . .' **is before you**."

unfavorable omen, while if only the left one is turned, it is favorable.[166] Thus, if both occur they should neutralize each other, leaving only the straight, "real" and favorable "presence." Therefore, the commentary rearranges the phenomena so that the two extra "presences" are both on the right side, but in two different locations, namely the upper and middle right, explaining the upper right "presence" as the right "presence" in the original omen, and the middle right "presence" as the left "presence" in the original omen.[167]

3.2.5 *šumma ittašunu ana pānika*, "if their sign is before you"

Like *uṣurtu*, the noun *ittu* may also appear within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*. In an extispicy commentary from Nineveh, the phrase *šumma ittašunu ana pānika* follows an omen that begins with *šumma*, as well as a short explanation of that omen:[168]

BE-*ma* NA *kab-su* SILIM-tu_4 *u* NU SILIM-tu_4 TAG-*at* / *na-bal-ku-tu*$_4$ *šá* NA *u* KAL BE-*ma* GIZKIM-*šú-nu ana* IGI-*ka*
BE UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*át* NA *ka-bi-ìs šib-sat* DINGIR *ana* LÚ GUR-*ma i-ik-mu-ni*
BE UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* NU SILIM-*át* NA *ka-b*[*i*]-*ìs* RIG? ŠE? DINGIR *ana* LÚ *šá* x LÚ? [. . .] DU
BE UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*át* [. . .] / BAL-*e* KA.MU? ZI-*bi* [. . .] / [. . .] BE-*ma* ZI.GA x [. . .]
[BE UR_5. Ú]Š-*ka* NU SILIM ˹KAL˺ BAL [. . .] NU DU-*ak*
[BE NA] *kab-su* KAL BAL-˹*ma*˺ *ú-šal-lam-šú*

"If the 'presence' is(?) effaced,[169] the favorable and unfavorable (extispicy) is affected"—(It is) the turn of the 'presence' and the 'strength'—If their physical sign is before you:
"If your extispicy is favorable and the 'presence' is effaced—the wrath of god will turn against the man and seize him."

166 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 8:16–17.

167 Thus, there is no need for Koch-Westnholz's restoration according to an "Orientation Liver" (Koch-Westenholz 2000, 161 with n. 462), which also does not have enough space on the tablet (see the copy of K.4107 in Koch-Westenholz 2000, pl. v).

168 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:10–15. Another occurrence is Koch 2005, no. 28:51, and probably also no. 31:7′.

169 The form *kab-su* (rather than expected *kabis*) would seem to reflect a plural; perhaps emend: "If the presence <and the strength> are effaced"?

"If your extispicy is unfavorable and the 'presence' is effaced—the . . . of god towards the man; . . . ."
"If your extispicy is favorable [and the 'strength' is effaced/turned] (?)—. . ."
"[If] your [extis]picy is unfavorable and the 'strength' is turned—[. . .] will not go."
"If the 'presence' is(?)[170] effaced and the 'strength' is turned and *replaces* it."

Although there are some difficulties in the interpretation of this commentary entry, it is clear that it begins by explaining that the effacement of the "presence" or the "strength" turns the regular predictions upside down, and thus a favorable prediction becomes unfavorable and vice versa. The next lines indeed cite omens that seem to demonstrate this. These omens are introduced with the phrase *šumma ittašunu ina pānika*, literally "If their sign is before you." Koch-Westenholz ignores *šumma* and translates: "you have their defining characteristics before you."[171] Nevertheless, it is likely that *šumma . . . ana pānika* functions here much like the first example of this phrase given above,[172] where it appears in the titles of *mukallimtu* commentaries. In this case it is the protasis of an elliptical conditional sentence that may be paraphrased thus: If the physical signs in the omens are considered ("before you"), they will be explicitly demonstrated by citations of omens.

3.2.6 *šumma kīma aḫīti/damqi ittašunu ana pānika*, "if their sign is before you as in the (un)favorable (case)"

The following example combines two elements that also appear singly with the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*: *ittašunu* and *ša ana dumqi/aḫītu iqbû* (the latter in variation in this case).[173] An extispicy commentary from Nineveh reads:[174]

BE 7-*ú* GÍR 2-*ma* MAN-*ú nu-kúr* ÉRIN-*ni šu-bat-sà* KÚR-*ár* / *šá iq-bu-ú* DIŠ *ina* 15 DIŠ *ina* 150 GAR.MEŠ BE-*ma šá* 15 *ana* 15 *šá* 150 *ana* 150 *iḫ-ḫe-el-ṣu-ma* ŠUB-*tú* SIG_5(-*iq*) BE-*ma* GIM SIG_5 GIZKIM-*šú-nu ana* IGI-*ka*
BE GÍR 2-*ma* GÍR 15 *ana* 15 GÍR 150 *ana* 150 ŠUB-*tú* DU_8-*ár bi-ra-a-ti a-rad* EN.NUN.MEŠ *téš-mu-ú u* SILIM-*mu ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*

170 See n. 169 above.
171 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 153.
172 See 3.2.1.
173 See 3.2.5 and 3.2.3.
174 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:73–74. For another example, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 45:35: BE GIM! *a-ḫi-tu*$_4$ GIZKIM-*šú-nu* [*ana* IGI-*ka*]; collated from a digital photograph.

> Seventh "If": "There are two 'paths' and the second is changed—my army will change its position"(; that) which it said—they (= the "paths") lie one to the right and one to the left; if the right one slipped towards the right, and the left one towards the left, and they descend—it is favorable. If their physical sign is before you as in (= like) the favorable case: "If there are two 'paths' and the right 'path' descends towards the right and the left 'path' descends towards the left—dismantling of fortifications, dismissing of watchmen, the land will be prosperous and at peace."

This commentary presents an omen that is not entirely specified both in its protasis and in its apodosis. The omen is the seventh entry cited by the commentary from a series of omens that deal either with double "paths," effaced "paths," or a combination of the two, in which the first is indecisive (*nipḫu*),[175] while the others are either unfavorable omens or ambiguous. The commentary explains that the seventh omen actually refers to a specific situation of two "paths" that is understood to have a favorable prediction. In support of this explanation a favorable omen describing this situation is cited, and the commentary states that this favorable omen is actually equivalent to the first unspecified omen when the latter is interpreted favorably. The newly cited omen is introduced with the phrase *šumma kīma damqi ittašunu ana pānika*.

3.2.7 (*šumma* [omen] *ša iqbû . . . u ittašunu iddinu ana pānika*, "if [citation of an omen], which it said . . . and gave their sign, is before you")

There is one case where *šumma . . . ana pānika* brackets the phrases *ša iqbû*[176] and *ittašunu*.[177] The latter two elements also appear together in the phrase *ša iqbû . . . u ittašunu iddinu*.[178] It is somewhat unexpected that *iddinu* should retain the subjunctive marker in this case, given that it stands so far apart from *ša iqbû*; perhaps it is no coincidence that the only occurrence of this construction of the term is in a late tablet from Seleucid Uruk, which exhibits other peculiarities as well:[179]

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175 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:68.

176 See 3.2.3 above.

177 See 3.2.5 above.

178 See Chapter 5, 1.4.4.

179 TCL 6, 5:r.28–32; see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.28–31. For this tablet, see 3.2.8 below and nn. 133–134 above. For the continuation of the commentary, see 3.2.8 below.

> BE-*ma* UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*át* Á GABA.UŠ-tu_4 GAR-*at* / *ta-paq-qid-si šá iq-bu-ú* UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*tì* TAG-*át* / *ina* TAG-tu_4 *ú-šal-la-mu u* GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu ana* IGI-*ka šá-la-mu la-pa-tu*$_4$ *ina* EME *qa-bi-ma* TAG-*tim-ma ana* EME *ú-tir-ma* SILIM-*at iq-bi* . . .
>
> **If** "(if) your extispicy is favorable (and) a *pitruštu* sign occurs, you check it," which it said—your favorable extispicy is (now) unfavorable; in an unfavorable (extispicy) it makes it favorable—and (which) it gave their signs, **is before you:** "to be favorable" = "to be unfavorable" is said in the vocabulary, and (in) an unfavorable (extispicy) one turned it back(?) to the vocabulary and it said it is favorable . . .

In this commentary, lexical support is sought for the notion that the *pitruštu* sign renders a favorable extispicy unfavorable, as well as vice versa (which is not explicit in the base text). The omen under discussion is introduced with the term *ša iqbû . . . u ittašunu iddinu*, with a short explanatory description inserted between the two parts of this phrase, and the omen together with its explanation is nested within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, "if . . . is before you." Evidence from two different lexical lists, namely unilingual vocabularies (*lišānu*) and bilingual sign or word-lists (*ṣâtu*) (not cited here), is presented in support of this "joker" omen.[180]

3.2.8 *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*, "if its entry in the word lists is before you"

The phrase *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*, "if its entry in the word lists is before you," occurs a few times in commentaries before an exegetical comment in the form of lexical equations.

In the Late Babylonian extispicy commentary cited immediately above, the evidence from the *ṣâtu* vocabularies is introduced with the phrase *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*:[181]

> BE-*ma* UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*át* Á GABA.UŠ-tu_4 GAR-*at* / *ta-paq-qid-si šá iq-bu-ú* UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* SILIM-*tì* TAG-*át* / *ina* TAG-tu_4 *ú-šal-la-mu . . . šum-*<*ma*> *ina ṣa-a-tu*$_4$ MU.NI *ana* IGI-*ka* GI *šá-la-mu* GI *la-pa-tu*$_4$

180 See also 3.2.8. For similar arguments that also use two sources to arrive lexically at the same exegesis that "favorable" means "unfavorable," cf. in the same tablet TCL 6, 5: r.39–41 (Koch 2005, no. 33:r.39–41), and in an extispicy commentary from Nineveh, Koch 2005, no. 53:36.

181 TCL 6, 5:r.28–32; see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.28–32.

> If "your extispicy is favorable (and) a *pitruštu* sign occurs, you check it" which it said—your favorable extispicy is (now) unfavorable; in an unfavorable (extispicy) it makes it favorable . . .; if its entry in the word lists is before you: GI = "to be favorable," GI = "to be unfavorable."

It is likely that the text is corrupt here, as it is elsewhere,[182] and therefore the third occurrence of the sign TAG should not be understood as "unfavorable" but should be emended to *šum-<ma>* as part of the phrase *šumma . . . šumšu ana pānika*.[183]

The phrase also occurs in an illustrated commentary on lung omens:[184]

> BE *šum-ma* ŠU.SI MUR MURUB$_4$ *e-ni-ta ana* IGI-*k*[*a*] / *ib-bala-kàt-ma* NÍG.PI-*šá ina* 2,30 GAR-*a*[*n*] / *an-ni-tu*$_4$ GIŠ.ḪUR-*šá* (drawing) / *šum-ma ina ṣa-a-ti* MU-*šú ana* IGI-*ka* / BAL *e-nu-ú* BAL *na-bal-ku-tú*
>
> If "If the 'middle finger of the lung' is inverted" is before you—it is turned and its "handle" lies to the left; this is its drawing: (drawing on the tablet); if its entry in the *ṣâtu* vocabularies is before you: BAL = invert, BAL = turn.

The commentary explains the adjective *enīta*, "inverted," used adverbally in the base text, as "turned," and then specifies in which direction the "middle finger of the lung" is turned; the phenomenon is also represented in a drawing. To support this interpretation, the commentary notes that BAL can signify both "invert" and "turn," introducing these lexical equations with the phrase *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*.

Another occurrence of this phrase appears in an unpublished extispicy commentary fragment from Nineveh, but in broken context:[185]

> [ ] x ⌜GIŠ.TUKUL⌝ ⌜15⌝ x x [ ] / [. . . *šumma ina*] ⌜*ṣa-a-ti*⌝ MU-*šú ana* IGI-*ka* ⌜SUR⌝ [. . .] / (*vacat*) SUR *aṭ-mu* [(?)]

182 See n. 179 above.

183 So already *CAD* Ṣ, 119a.

184 CT 31, 40 (see *CAD* E, 174b; see Frahm 2011, 184), r.iii:9–13. For this entry, see also 3.2.2 above.

185 K.11531:1′–3′. I understand the equation SUR *aṭ-mu* in the commentary as related to SUR *ṭamû* (*CAD* Ṭ, 44–45).

4 The *Sitz im Leben* of Compiling Commentaries: Oral and Written Sources for the Compilation of the Commentary

As already stressed, tablets containing Babylonian and Assyrian commentaries are not the product of a master scholar writing up his thoughts about a text, but are rather mostly compilations of oral and written sources made by young scholars studying a text. We have already seen that many of the oral sources are the product of a lesson (*malsûtu*) where the text was read and explained as the master scholar posed questions (*maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*) to the student or junior scholar. This dialogue was the setting for the transmission of the oral lore accompanying the written text. Both oral and written sources are sometimes mentioned in the commentaries themselves, as will be demonstrated below.

4.1 *Rubrics*: ṣâtu, šūt pî, maš'altu (ša pī) ummâni, malsûtu

The sources of the commentaries (except in the case of *mukallimtu* commentaries and *ṣâtu* commentaries alone) are generally indicated in their rubrics: they are compilations of *ṣâtu* vocabularies, i.e., word correspondences from either lexical texts or *ṣâtu* commentaries themselves, and *šūt pî*, oral lore. The simple designation *ṣâtu u šūt pî*, "*ṣâtu*-lists and oral lore," is documented already in the Neo-Assyrian period.[186] This oral lore is scholarly in nature, and it is explicitly attributed to a scholar already in the Neo-Assyrian period in some Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentaries: *šūt pî ša pī ummâni*, "oral lore according to (lit.: from the mouth of) a scholar."[187] In the Late Babylonian period a combination of the designations *ṣâtu u šūt pî* and *šūt pî ša pī ummâni* appears, in which the latter is expanded to include the environment in which this scholarly lore was transmitted.[188] The most natural mode of transmission of scholarly oral lore was through scholarly gatherings, especially lessons (*malsûtu*) conducted by a chief scholar (*ummânu*) through questioning. As noted above, in Late Babylonian commentaries from north Babylonia (Babylon and Borsippa), the source of this oral lore is explicitly indicated to be the

186 See Frahm 2011, 51–52. Note that the *ṣâtu* lists themselves, like any written lore, were also accompanied by an oral tradition. Therefore, one finds in a Late Babylonian "esoteric commentary" from Kutha the following reference to the source of a commentary, Biggs 1968, 54:14–18 (Böck 2000b, 615): *šu-ut* KA *šá ṣa-a-tú e-du-tú*, "oral lore of . . . *ṣâtu*-lists"; see the discussion of this passage in 4.3.2.1 with n. 240 below.

187 See Frahm 2011, 43–45. In Late Babylonian Uruk this designation occurs together with *ṣâtu* as well; see Frahm 2011, 53.

188 See 2.1 above.

"questioning of the scholar" (*ṣâtu u šūt pî maš'altu ummâni*).[189] In south and central Babylonia (Uruk and Nippur), this scholarly questioning is listed as a third source next to *ṣâtu* and *šūt pî*, namely *maš'altu ša pī ummâni*; but the presence of *ša pî* in the last phrase implies that the source of the oral lore itself is in fact this scholarly questioning (*ṣâtu šūt pî u maš'altu ša pī ummâni*).[190]

Often, at times in the very same commentary, the rubric also clearly indicates that this compilation is a record of the process of study of the young scholar who copied the tablet, considered his "lesson" (*maslûtu*).[191] On the one hand this "lesson" could have been the actual lesson led by the senior scholar, during which the oral sources were collected, but on the other hand it could also represent the actual process of compiling oral and written sources for the understanding of the text in the form of a written commentary. This explains why the numbering of commentary tablets does not necessarily correspond to the numbering of the tablets of the base text, since the sequence in which the text was studied could differ from its scriptural sequence, and the pace of study also varied.

4.2 mā *Indicating a Source of Interpretation in Assyrian Commentaries*

In the Neo-Assyrian dialect, the particle *mā* is a typical indicator of direct speech,[192] and it can also be used to indicate the discourse of study, introducing the question posed by the master scholar or the answer given by the young scholar, as seen in two examples given above (explicitly in one commentary entry and implicitly in the following one).[193] In these references, *mā* signals that the oral study process was the source of the commentary. Unsurprisingly, although the tablet on which these two examples are preserved is from Nineveh (which usually reflects the Babylonian tradition), the section of the tablet in which both of these entries are preserved is said to be a copy from a collection originating in Assyria.[194]

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189 See 2.1.3 above; Frahm 2011, 53–54. In Kutha, in north Babylonia as well, one finds the same designation without *ṣâtu* (indeed in a thematic commentary and not on a specific text where the lemmata are the basis for the commentary): *šūt pî maš'altu ummâni*. See Biggs 1968; Böck 2000b; Frahm 2011, 56.

190 See 2.1.3 above; Frahm 2011, 54–55. It should be noted that although commentaries are often designated with the noun *maš'altu* in the Late Babylonian period, this noun, and even the combination *maš'altu ša pī ummâni*, is (rarely) attested within commentaries already from the Neo-Assyrian period; see Frahm 2011, 56.

191 See 2.1.2 above.

192 Cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2000, 133, and note Parpola 1983, 153, for the possible use of *mā* to introduce the speech of a translator.

193 See 2.3 above (Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26).

194 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:32: *šá ki-iṣ-ri gaba-ri* BAL.TIL^{ki}; see Frahm 2011, 269.

In other cases, *mā* is used to refer to the source of a commentary.[195] In one instance, it explicitly designates an "alternative scholarly oral lore" (*ša pī ummâni šanê mā*).[196] Elsewhere *mā* does not necessarily refer to an oral source, but may be a general indication that the commentary is attributed to a certain source. Thus, the direct speech indicated by the particle *mā* may be understood as the "speech" of the source for the interpretation. Unsurprisingly, in these cases, the most widespread use of this particle is in commentaries from Assur,[197] although some commentaries from Nineveh, obviously relying here on a specific Assyrian tradition, employ this particle as well.[198] Normally, the particle in commentaries simply introduces an explanation, supposedly reflecting the direct speech of its source, as in the following commentary on Maqlû from Assur:[199]

> URU *zab-ban* URU *zab-ban šá* URU.MU *zab-ban* 2 ABUL.MEŠ-[*šú*] / {NU} *ma-a zab-ban ana mu*ʾ-ʳ*bi-ra*ʾ-*a-ti* ŠUB-*di* 2 ABUL.MEŠ-*šú* / *ma-a* ʳ*a*ʾ-*na ḫul-pa-qim-ma ma-ši-il* / *ma-a šá ina* ŠÀ-*bi* UD ZI GAR ŠÚ-*šu*ʾ *iq-bu-u* / *ma-a šá* 15 *zab-ban-ma šá* 150 *kar-kar*ki!?("KU")
>
> "My city Zabban, my city Zabban! My city Zabban—two are its gates"—
> – thus: Zabban *lies towards* . . .;
> "two are its gates"—thus: it resembles a *ḫuluppaqqu*-vessel;
> – thus: that it said in . . .; thus: that of the right—Zabban, that of the left—Karkar(?).

195 Cf., besides the extispicy commentaries discussed above (see 2.3), the references in nn. 197–198 below, as well as Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:12(?), 22, r.3′; Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, III:28b–c, 29a. For citations in letters to the Assyrian king, see SAA 10, 23:13–18 and SAA 10, 74:19–r.3 (perhaps also SAA 8, 220:r.5). Cf. also Frahm 2011, 110 n. 571; KAR 82:4, 5 (Al-Rawi 2000, 48:12, 13), 11, 12; Al-Rawi 2000, 48:2.

196 Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:6 (10–15); Geller 2014, 65:8.

197 KAR 94:18′, 20′, 21′, 23′, 26′, 38′, 42′, 47′, 48′, 52′, 54′, 56′ (Frahm 2011, 385–386). Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:12 (8), Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:6 (10–15), 9 (19); see Geller 2014, 65:8, 10, 13.

198 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:12(?), 22, r.3′ (perhaps related to the archival context of the tablets from Assur mentioned in n. 197; see Frahm 2011, 269–270); Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, III:28b–c, 29a. It is possible that at least once, the Babylonian equivalent *umma* is used in a Late Babylonian astronomical commentary; see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.14. Perhaps it also appears in SBTU 1, 83:r.17; see Böck 2000a, 256:53 (but this is uncertain and less likely); see Chapter 4, 2.2.

199 KAR 94:19–23; Frahm 2011, 385; Schwemer 2010, 323. I would like to thank Avigail Wagschal for discussing this difficult passage with me, and for providing me with references.

Much of the commentary is not understood, but it is clear that some of it attempts to connect the text of the incantation with the ritual in which it was performed. First the line from the incantation is cited.[200] Each of the following explanations of this line is introduced with *mā*. After the first *mā*, the location of Zabban is perhaps explained.[201] Next, the element "two are its gates" is recited from the base text, with an explanation, again introduced by *mā*, that the two gates of the city resemble the *ḫuluppaqqu* vessel known to be widely used in the Maqlû ritual.[202] Following this, another explanation, unfortunately not understood yet, is introduced, again with *mā*.[203] The final *mā* seems to introduce an explanation of the orientation of the gates of the city Zabban, one facing the area of Zabban, and the other perhaps facing the city of Karkar.[204]

4.3 *Scribal Remarks on Written and Oral Sources of the Commentaries*

Occasionally the scribe inserts notes on the sources of his commentary.[205] These include remarks on written sources and oral sources, often referring to the interpretation with a personal pronoun (*šū*).[206]

4.3.1 References to Written Sources

4.3.1.1 *Reference to a* mukallimtu *Commentary as the Source for an Interpretation*

The noun *mukallimtu*, usually limited to rubrics[207] and the first line of *mukallimtu* extispicy commentaries,[208] is on one occasion used to denote the source

200 For this incantation, the third incantation of Maqlû, see Schwemer 2010, 322 (with previous literature).

201 See Schwemer 2010, 323; contra Frahm 2011, 386, 390.

202 See Schwemer 2010 (and Maul apud Schwemer 2010), 323.

203 The interpretation by Schwemer 2010, 323 with n. 47, and Frahm 2011, 386–387, 392, is unlikely (as regarded by Schwemer and Frahm as well). For another, more likely interpretation, but still with difficulties, namely that this refers to the directions of the gates, see Frahm 2011, 386–387, 391. Another possible, but also very uncertain interpretation, is perhaps to emend the text to *šá ina* ŠÀ-*bi šá*$^{!?}$ *zi-sur*$^{!?}$-*ri*$^{!?}$ *iq-bu-ú*. Note that a *zisurrû* ("magic circle") is drawn around(?) the *ḫuluppaqqu* vessel at this point in the ritual; see Schwemer 2010, 325 (cf. Schwemer 2011, 108).

204 See Frahm 2011, 392; for another possibility, see Schwemer 2010, 323 with n. 48.

205 I do not refer here to the citation of sources in support of a commentary (for which see 4.4 below), but to the attribution of an entire interpretation to an oral or written source.

206 See CT 41, 25 (Labat 1933, no. 1; Freedman 1998, 298, ad 23):r.10: *ša pi-i šu-u*; Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:8 (17) (Geller 2014, 65:9): *šá mu-kal-lim-te šu-u*; see 4.3.1.1 below.

207 See Frahm 2011, 42–47.

208 See 3.2.1. See also in subscripts: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 89: vi 23; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:A iv 15; Koch 2005, no. 114:r.6′: *an-nu-ú mu-kal-lim-tu*$_4$; see also Frahm 2011, 46.

of a specific explanation. A commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons from Assur deals with Marduk "dwelling" in his awe:[209]

> ˹KI˺.MIN (= *ana-ku* ^{d}*asar-lú-ḫi*) DINGIR *el-lu a-šib me-lam-me a-na-ku* / [M]E : AN-*e* : LAM : *er-ṣe-tú* : *a-šib* AN-*e* KI-*tì ki qa-bu-u* / *šá mu-kal-lim-te šu-u*
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi), the pure god, who dwells in splendor (*melammu*) am I"—[M]E = heaven; LAM = earth; it is as if (lit. like) "who dwells in heaven (and) earth" is said. It is from a *mukallimtu* commentary.

The hermenutical technique used in this commentary is discussed elsewhere.[210] The scribe, however, added a remark about the source of this commentary (or at least the lexical equations used in it), namely a *mukallimtu* commentary.[211]

4.3.1.2 *A "second tablet"* (tuppu šanû) *as a Source for an Alternative Interpretation*

A good scholar, whether a diviner or (ancient) philologist, will use as many sources as possible to guarantee an accurate presentation or interpretation, whether of a phenomenon or of a text. In Akkadian terminology, an additional source is referred to as a *tuppu šanû*, "second tablet."[212] In a divinatory context a diviner is required to give the correct prediction according to various sources, as formulated in the Babylonian Diviner's Manual: *tup-pi* 2-*ma ina* ŠU-*ka tu-kal*, "you hold a second tablet in your hand."[213] In a "philological" context, when two different texts are found for one composition, the second can be introduced as deriving from a "second tablet,"[214] in the phrase *šanîš ša pī tuppi šanî*, "alternatively, in a second/different tablet." This phrase occurs in three tablets from Nineveh in a magical-medical context, where it indicates variant ingredients used in a treatment,[215] and in a Neo-Babylonian tablet from Ur,

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209 *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A.163:r.15′–16′ (Lambert 1954–56, 315, and Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:8; Geller 2014, 65:9).

210 See Chapter 5, 4.2.

211 Note also in a letter from an Assyrian scholar to the king, SAA 10, 23:r.13–15: *ki-i an-ni-i ina mu-kal-lim-t*[*i*^{i} *šà*$^{?}$-*ṭi*]*r* / *ma-a* . . . "it is thus [writt]en in a *mukallimtu*-commentary."

212 My preference for rendering the noun as *tuppu* rather than *ṭuppu* follows Streck 2009.

213 Oppenheim 1974, 200:48 (Oppenheim's translation on p. 205 with n. 32 is not certain). Note letters from scholars to the Assyrian king regarding celestial divination, where a few references to reading or copying a "second tablet" occur; see SAA 10, 63:r.14 and 101:r.4–5.

214 For the use of *šanîš* in this and other contexts, see 4.5.2.

215 Schuster-Brandis 2008, 376, A II: 26, cf. 330, VI:34 (with parallels).

where it introduces an alternative ritual accompanying the recitation of an incantation, surely alluding to a second source.[216]

Likewise, a reference to an additional interpretation or a citation of an additional omen in *mukallimtu* extispicy commentaries is sometimes said to derive from a "second tablet," using similar but not always identical formulations, as will be discussed below.

4.3.1.2.1 *ša libbi tuppi šanîmma*, "it is from a second tablet"

This phrase occurs in a commentary on Enūma eliš (VII:109–110) from Nineveh:[217]

> [diĝir-é-sískur *šá-qiš ina* É *ik-ri-bi li-šib-ma* D]INGIR.MEŠ *maḫ-ʳri-šúʾ ʳliʾ-še-ri-bu kàt-ra-šú-un qí-šá-a-tú šá ina* ITI.BÁRA TA UD.6.KÁM EN UD.12.KÁM SUM-*na* MU ^{d}*za-ba*$_4$-*ba*$_4$ *ki* DU$_{11}$-*u* / [. . .-*m*]*a*? ^{d}EN *šá ina a-ʳkiʾ-ti* UD.8.KÁM *uš-šá-bu kàt-ru-u ṭa-'-tu šá* ŠÀ *tup-pi šá-nim-ma*
>
> "[Diĝir-Esiskur—may he sit highly in the House of Prayer]; may the gods bring their presents before him"—(these are) the gifts which are given in the month of Nisannu from the sixth day till the twelfth day—it is as if (literally: like) it is said concerning Zababa; [. . .] Bēl who sits in the Akītu (House) (in) the eighth day; "present" = contribution—(this) is from a second tablet.

The commentary first presents a ritual explanation of the gifts given to Bēl in the base text as the gifts given to Zababa during the Akītu festival in Nisannu.[218] Then it cites another cultic explanation that states that this line refers to Bēl in the Akītu House on the eighth day (of Nisannu) and offers a lexical explanation of the word for "present" used in the base text. This is said to be from a second tablet. Indeed, a duplicate of this commentary from Assur does not preserve this second explanation.[219]

Note also that in a Babylonian report to the Assyrian king, the remark *šá lìb-bi tup-pi* [*šanî*(*mma*)(?)], "[(it is)] from a [second] tablet," occurs following

216 Gurney 1960, 224, 21. See also Worthington 2012, 24–25.

217 K.4657+ (CT 13, 32+; Lambert 2013, pl. 35):r. 6′–7′; Lambert 2013, 134:109–110; Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 312–313.

218 For this passage, see Chapter 5, 4.4.

219 VAT 10616(+)11616 (Lambert 2013, pl. 36), see Lambert 2013, 134 (note on text v); Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 312–313.

the citation of an omen that is separated by dividing lines from two previously cited omens and the following omens.[220]

4.3.1.2.2 *ša tuppi šanî*, "according to a second tablet"

This phrase occurs once in a Late Babylonian extispicy commentary, introducing an additional source for an explanation:[221]

> BE UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* IGI-tu_4 *ki ta-paq-qid-si* GI *šá-la-mu* / GI *la-pa-*tu_4 SI *šá-la-mu* SI *la-pa-*tu_4 SI *šá-lam* SILIM-*át* / <*ina*> *ṣa-a-tú* MU.NI *qa-bi šá* DUB MIN-*i šá-la-mu la-pa-*tu_4 *ina* EME *qa-bi*
>
> "If your first extispicy, when you check it"[222]—GI = favorable, GI = unfavorable, SI = favorable, SI = unfavorable, SI = favorable, it is favorable—its entry is said <in> the *ṣâtu* vocabularies. According to a second tablet: favorable = unfavorable is said in the *lišānu* vocabulary.

An almost identical commentary occurs in the same tablet,[223] but it does not use the term *ša tuppi šanî* to characterize the textual support from the *lišānu* vocabulary. Instead, it reports the evidence from the *lišānu* vocabulary first, and the evidence from the *ṣâtu* vocabularies second, and instead of asserting that the latter comes from a *ṣâtu* vocabulary, it uses the phrase *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika* to refer to another piece of evidence in front of the student of the text. This additional evidence is analogous to the "second tablet" that serves as an extra source for the commentary.[224]

4.3.1.2.3 *ša pī tuppi šanî*, "according to a second tablet"

This phrase refers to citations of omens in *mukallimtu* commentaries, and not to the citation of a commentary per se. Thus, e.g., in an extispicy commentary from Nineveh:[225]

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220 SAA 8, 327:7.

221 TCL 6, 5:r.39–41; see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.39–41 (// no. 53:36, restored; restoration not certain).

222 This refers to a *pitruštu* in the first extispicy, which requires checking in a second extispicy, and turns a favorable extispicy into unfavorable, and vice versa.

223 See 3.2.8 above.

224 See 3.2.8 above.

225 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:62.

> BE 3 NA 3 GÍR BAL-*e* LUGAL KI DINGIR GÍD.DA.MEŠ NA 3-*ma* ŠEŠ *ana* ŠEŠ LÚGUD.DA-*ma šá* 15 x BE GÍR 3-*ma* SAL.LA BE.MEŠ *šá-šú-nu šá* KA DUB 2-*i*[226]
>
> "If there are three 'presences' and three 'paths'—the reign of the king will be prolonged with god (= with divine approval)"; "If there are three 'presences' and one is shorter than the other and the right one is . . ."; "If there are three 'paths' and they . . . the 'narrow'"; these are according to a second tablet.

The phrase in this case simply refers to the source of these omens. A similar case occurs in the same commentary from which the previous example was cited,[227] as well as in another extispicy commentary.[228] Note also a variant apodosis cited in an Assyrian report to the Assyrian king, introduced with: [*šá* KA *tup-p*]*i*[!] *šá-ni-e*, "[according to] a second [tabl]et" (although one of the other variations of this phrase may be restored here).[229]

4.3.1.2.4 *šaniš ina tuppi šanîmma*, "secondly: in a second (or: another) tablet"

An extispicy commentary from Nineveh contains in three consecutive lines the notation *šá-niš ina* DUB MAN-*ma*, "secondly, in a second tablet," each time preceding the citation of an alternative omen.[230]

4.3.1.3 *Commentaries Copied in Whole from Older Tablets with the Same Exact Text*

Some of the commentaries, especially *mukallimtu* commentaries on extispicy and astrology as well as mostly tabular *ṣâtu* commentaries (especially the Izbu Principal Commentary),[231] are known from various tablets, mostly from Nineveh (but including Babylonian tablets as well), that all contain a fairly fixed text. In such cases one can speak of a commentary manuscript, as opposed to a commentary composed or compiled on one occasion from different sources.

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226 Cf. also *šá-šú-nu* at the end of the next line (Koch-Westenholz 2000, 160, no. 20:63).

227 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:93: *šá* KA DUB-*pi* TAB-*i*.

228 Koch 2005, no. 26:92 (cf. no. 27: iii 6′): MU.DIDLI *šá* KA DUB TAB-*i*, "entries according to a second tablet." Note also Koch 2005, no. 25:100: *an-nu-ti* MU.MEŠ *šá* KA 2-*ti* IM.GÍD.[DA], "these entries are according to two 'long-tablets'." Cf. perhaps also in an unpublished extispicy commentary, K.11531:6′: GIM NUMUN-*šú* (or: MU[!]-*šú*[?]) *ša pi-i* [. . .].

229 SAA 8, 107:5.

230 Koch 2005, no. 25:23, 24, 25.

231 See Leichty 1970, 211–229; Frahm 2011, 203–205.

The transmission of these commentaries is similar to that of other literary and scholarly texts, where one is copied from the other in full.[232]

In other cases, mostly from the Late Babylonian period, commentaries are not transmitted by copying an older commentary tablet word for word. A good example are the tablets containing commentaries to the first tablet of the diagnostic series Sagig. While they all exhibit a common scholastic tradition, they are not identical copies, even though most were found in the same library context in square U 18 in Uruk.[233] Indeed, the scribal notation *kīma labīrišu šaṭir*, "copied according to its older (original)" (and similar), so common in other genres,[234] is rare in commentary tablets.[235]

Nevertheless, as pointed out by Frahm, this does not exclude the possibility that some of the tablets containing commentaries are actually copies of older commentary tablets (although contra Frahm in my opinion these are a minority).[236] As noted above, there are some rare cases where the phrase "copied according to its older (original)" appears. In addition, there are some commentaries that seem to be exact duplicates of other tablets and may reflect a written textual transmission of the commentaries.[237]

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232 Note, however, that some commentaries show more flexibility, as in the case of, e.g., the section that is inserted in some tablets of a *manzāzu* commentary but not in others; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, 132.

233 See George 1991, 138–141, 146–163, as well as SBTU 5, 256; Frahm 2011, 221–224.

234 See references in Hunger 1968, 165–166.

235 E.g., SBTU 1, no. 90:r.10′ (it is perhaps significant that the subscript contains *ṣâtu u šūt pî malsût ištar Enūma Anu Enlil*, but does not mention *maš'altu ša pī ummâni*). Note the occurrence of the scribal note: LIBIR.RA-*šú* TA *muḫ-ḫi* ^{im}*gì-ṭa* (var. -*ṭù*) SUMUN *gaba-ri bar-sip*^{ki} SAR-*ma* IGI.TAB, "its older (tablet) was copied and collated from a 'long-tablet', a copy from Borsippa," in the colophons of CT 41, 30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5; see Hunger 1968, no. 410) and CT 41, 32 (Labat 1933, no. 6; see Hunger 1968, no. 411), perhaps also in the colophon of Funck 2, *AfO* 21, pl. X (see Freedman 2006a, 75; emending the beginning of line 22), and restore perhaps also in BM 41586 (see Freedman 2006a, 149:r.5′). I am not sure what this remark indicates; it seems to state that the original used for the writing of the commentary is a copy from another tablet, but perhaps the original was simply used as a source. Lastly, note that the existence of the remark *ḫīpi* in commentaries (see 4.3.3.1 above) does not necessarily indicate a one-to-one copy from an older original, but can rather refer to a break in one of the written sources used for the compilation of the commentary.

236 See Frahm 2011, 44. For this issue, see now also Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

237 E.g., Freedman 2006b, 149–166 // SBTU 5, no. 259; *AfO* 14, pl. VI (see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227–228) // SBTU 4, no. 162.

4.3.2 References to Oral Sources

Remarks pointing to written sources, whether *mukallimtu* commentaries or a "second tablet," are occasionally paralleled by references to oral sources. Although it is true that *šūt pî* does not always refer to oral literature but, as noted by Frahm, may refer also to knowledge not recorded in the canonical texts of the first millennium,[238] the remarks citing *šūt pî* as a source for a commentary seem to indicate an oral scholarly lore or tradition, or at least a non-"scriptural" source.

4.3.2.1 šūt pî (šū), *"(it is) oral lore"*

Two Babylonian commentaries from Nineveh attribute explanations to oral lore, using the phrases *šūt pî*, "oral lore," and *šūt pî šū*, "it (= the interpretation) is oral lore," after an explanation.[239] A Late Babylonian exegetical text from Kutha notes that a given commentary follows the "oral lore of . . . *ṣâtu* vocabularies."[240]

4.3.2.2 ša pî šanî/šalši/*etc., "according to a second/third/etc.* (*source of*) *oral lore"*

The singular form *ša pî* occurs with an ordinal number, *ša pî šanî*, "second (source of) oral lore,"[241] and also further *ša pî šalši*/[*rebî*]/*ḫamši/šeššī*, "third/[fourth]/fifth/sixth (source of) oral lore," in two Late Babylonian astronomical commentaries, introducing alternative interpretations.[242]

4.3.2.3 ša pī ummâni, *"according to a scholar"*

This phrase appears in the rubrics of commentaries from Uruk and Nippur in the phrase *maš'altu ša pī ummâni*, " 'questioning' according to a scholar," and in other rubrics, as discussed above.[243] Besides this the phrase occurs once in a commentary from Assur within the phrase *ša pī ummâni šanê* (see below).[244]

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238 Frahm 2011, 44–45. See also 2.1.1 with n. 41 above.

239 CT 41, 29:r.1 (Labat 1933, no. 4): *šu-ut pi-i*; CT 41, 25:r.9 (Labat 1933, no. 1; Freedman 1998, 298, ad 23): *šu-ut pi-i šu-u*; see discussion in Frahm 2011, 44 with nn. 169, 171 (cf. *ša mukallimte šū*, cited above). Note also the same remark in Finkel 2000, 182:22, mentioned in Frahm 2011, 44 n. 171.

240 Biggs 1968, 54:18: . . . : *šu-ut* KA *šá ṣa-a-tú e-du-tú*. The meaning of *edûtu* is not clear; see Chapter 2, 1.8.4.

241 LBAT 1535:8′, 14′, and 1536, i′:2′, ii′:4′ (cf. Frahm 2011, 164); also Reiner 2005, no. 71:4′, 10′, 11′, r. 2, 3, 6–9, 11, 13, 15–16, 18: *ša pî šanî*.

242 LBAT 1536, i′:8′, ii′:5′, 7′, 8′; Reiner 2005, 286, no. 71:r. 11.

243 See 2.1.3.

244 See 4.3.2.4.

In addition it occurs in a tablet that may contain a commentary on the series *abnu šikinšu*:[245] NA_4 GAR-*šú šá* KA ^{lú}UM.ME.A [. . .] / *a-na la-bi-ru* [. . .].

Explicit references to *ša pī ummâni* as a source for noncanonical scholarly (oral) lore (but not necessarily lore associated with commentaries) are found in two letters to the Assyrian king. In the first, Ištar-šumu-ereš cites omens, some designated as belonging to the series (*iškaru*), others as "external" (*aḫû*), or "according to a scholar" (literally "of scholarly lore," *ša pī ummâni*):[246]

> *šu-mu an-ni-u la-a ša* ÉŠ.GÀR-*ma šu-u* / *ša pi-i um-ma-ni šu-u*
>
> This omen-entry is not from the "(canonical) corpus"; it is according to a scholar.

Similarly, in a report to the Assyrian king, after citing an omen labeled "this is from the series,"[247] Nabû-mušēṣi cites an extra omen that he attributes to an oral scholarly authority dating back a few centuries:[248]

> *an-ni-u ša pi-i um-m*[*a-ni*] / *ki-i* ^{md}PA-*ku-dur*-PAP KUR NIM.MA[^{ki}] *iḫ-pu-u-ni*
>
> This is according to a scholar, when Nabuchadnezzar (I) destroyed Elam.

A scholarly source may also be attributed to the scholars' semi-mythological antecedents, the "sages" (*apkallū*). Thus the content of medical texts is credited to these sages:[249] *šá* KA ABGAL.MEŠ-*e la-bi-ru-ti šá la-am* $A.MÁ.URU_5$ . . ., "oral lore of the ancient sages from before the flood . . ."[250]

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245 Horowitz 1992, 120:6′–7′; see Frahm 2011, 258.

246 SAA 10, 8:r.1–2. Cf. Elman 1975, 23–26.

247 SAA 8, 158:8: *an-ni-u ša iš-*[*ka-ri*].

248 SAA 8, 158:r.4–5.

249 AMT 105, iv:22; see Lambert 2005, XVI.

250 Note that the following part of the colophon records how this oral lore may have been found, transmitted, or revealed in Šuruppak by the Nippurean sage Enlil-muballiṭ, during the second year of Enlil-bani of Isin. Unfortunately the crucial verb is not well preserved; see Lambert 2005, XIX, n. 8; Lambert (1957, 8 with n. 30) read ⌜*ip*$^{?}$⌝-*pu-šu*$^{?}$, which is paleographically possible but, as he noted, poses a grammatical problem regarding the tense of the verb. Lenzi (2008b, 150 with n. 53) reads the verb as [*ez*]-*bu*, "bequeathed," but the first sign does not seem to be *iz, bu* is possible but doubtful, and the following sign, not in Lenzi's transliteration, probably belongs to the same verb. The perception seems to be that this ancient scholarly knowledge, almost lost after the flood, was revealed again in

Indeed, both sages (*apkallū*) and scholars (*ummânū*) are designated as the source (*ša pî*) of various compositions in the "Catalogue of Texts and Authors."[251]

4.3.2.4 ša pī ummâni šanî, *"according to a second scholarly oral lore"* (*or: "according to a second scholar"*)

A commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons from Assur refers to the scholarly nature of an alternative piece of oral lore:[252]

> KI.MIN (= *anāku* ^{d}*asar-lú-ḫi*) *šá ina ṭè-me-šú ib-ba-nu-u a-na-ku* / ÍL ˹*šá*˺ ˹*ina*˺ ˹ITI.ŠU˺ UD.13.KAM *ina* IGI EN GAR-*nu* / *šá-niš ma-a ina* UGU *ú-lu-lu* AN.ŠÁR *qa-bi* / *šá* KA *um-ma-ni* MIN-*e ma-a* ^{d}*né-bi-ru* : ^{d}MES *šá ana ra-ma-ni-šú* DÙ-*u* / ^{d}*ní-bi*$_7$(KU)-*rú* RA : *šá-a* : RA *i-na* : KU (umuš) : *ṭè-e-mu* : DÙ (rú) : *ba-nu-u* / NÍ : *ra-ma-nu* : ^{d}*né-bi-ru* : ^{d}*ní-bi*$_7$*-rú*
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi) who was created by his own reason, am I"—the basket(?)[253] that is placed before the Lord in the month Du'ūzu on the thirteenth day; secondly, thus: within (the month of) Ulūlu he is called Anšar. A second (source of) oral lore by a scholar, thus: Nēberu = Marduk who is created by himself, (as seen in the writing) ní-bi$_7$(KU)-rú: ra = who, ra = by, bi$_7$ (= KU = umuš) = reason, rú = create, ní = self; Nēberu = Ní-bi$_7$-rú.

After two interpretations, a third one is introduced, according to the authority of an alternative piece of scholarly oral lore.[254] It explains that the description of Marduk as being created by his own reason can be discerned in the name Nēberu, Marduk's star, when spelled Ní-bi$_7$-rú.

4.3.2.5 (ana pī ummâni, *"according to the mouth of a scholar"*)

This phrase is not found in commentaries,[255] but a scribal remark that provides a glimpse of the *Sitz im Leben* of study notes that the lines that the scribe

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the city of the only survivor of the flood, Utanapištim of Šuruppak. The same perception is found in the introduction to the Standard Babylonian Gilgameš epic (Tablet I, line 8), where Gilgameš, who met Utanapištim, "brought back an instruction (*ṭēmu*) from before the flood" (see George 2003, 445, 538–539:8).

251 See Lambert 1962, 59–77.

252 *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A 163:r.9′–14′, see Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:6 (10–15); Geller 2014, 65:8. For the correct interpretation of this passage, see Lambert 2013, 165 n. 13.

253 See Geller 2014, 65 n. 30.

254 Note that the same commentary also indicated another interpretation as deriving from a *mukallimtu* commentary (see 4.3.1.1 above); see Lambert 1954–56, 320.

255 Note its occurrence in a battle ritual, CBS 1516 (PBS 1/2, 106):r.30 (see Ebeling 1949, 179; cf. Elat 1982, 5–6 with photograph on pp. 7–8): *a-na* KA UM.ME.A *šá-ṭir* ˹*gaba*˺*-ru-u la-bi-ru*

copied "were heard from the mouth of a scholar" (*šá . . . ana pi-i* UM.ME.A *ša-mu-ú*).[256] One commentary contains the remark *ana* KA [(traces)], but other restorations are possible.[257]

4.3.2.6 (nindanu ša bārûti*(?)*, *"(secret, professional) knowledge of the lore of extispicy"(?)*)

This phrase appears once in an extispicy commentary,[258] and is discussed in Chapter 4.[259]

4.3.2.7 (kakku sakku, *"sealed and shut"*)

This phrase may imply a reference to scholarly knowledge, as discussed in Chapter 4.[260]

4.3.3 Scribal Remarks Relating to Defects and Problems in Written and Oral Sources

A number of scribal remarks attribute a lacuna in a commentary to various disturbances. Several such remarks alluding mainly to problems with the oral sources of the lesson (*ul ašme, ul alsi, ul alsīš, ul šasi, ul ēpuš?, ul īde, ul* (*m*)*urruq*) were treated above.[261] Most of those remarks refer exclusively to the oral setting of the lesson, where the text was read aloud and explained.[262] Remarks concerning problems with a textual source will be discussed below.

4.3.3.1 ḫepi/ḫīpu (eššu/labīru), *"(new/old) break"*

The stative or noun *ḫepi*/*ḫīpu* is the regular way to refer to a break in the tablet from which a copy is made. It is possible that the adjectives "new" and "old" were used to distinguish between a "new break" occurring in the source tablet directly consulted by the scribe, and an "old break" that had occurred at an earlier stage in the transmission of the text and was thus already indicated by

ul a-mur. Note also a similar phrase using *ina* instead of *ana* in a tablet from Assur containing a notation that the source for some of the extispicy omens in it is not written lore, but scholarly oral lore (KAR 434:r.ⁱ4 [= Heeßel 2012, no. 84:r.4′]: UZU.MEŠ *ša i+na tup-pi la-a šaṭ-ru-ma ina pi-i* UM.M[E.A . . .].

256 George 1992, 162; see para. 1 above.

257 MSL 14, 326:r.27′.

258 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 135, no. 19:18.

259 See Chapter 4, 1.3.2.

260 See Chapter 4, 1.3.1.

261 See 2.2.

262 Note that *ul ēpuš* and *ul* (*m*)*urruq* may refer also to the textual source; see 2.2.4, 2.2.5 above.

the presence of *ḫepi*/*ḫīpu* in the tablet consulted by the scribe.[263] The presence of this notation in commentaries reflects an interaction between a scribe and a written source.[264] The notation can indicate either that the entire commentary tablet was copied from an earlier one (which included "(new) breaks" or notations of "(old) breaks"), or that an earlier tablet (including "(new) breaks" or notations of "(old) breaks") was used as a source by a scribe compiling a commentary tablet from other sources as well.

4.3.3.2 ul āmur, *"I did not see"*

This remark, found probably twice in an explanatory text on trees, likely alludes to a written source.[265] Note that the same text probably also contains the remark "I did not hear" ([*ul á*]*š*$^{?}$*-me-e-ma*),[266] alluding to the oral sources of the text.

4.3.3.3 ina tuppi ul šalim, *"it is not preserved in the tablet"*

This phrase, known from a few commentaries,[267] does not seem to refer to a break in the text from which the tablet was copied, since the regular *ḫepi*/

263 See Worthington 2012, 25–27.

264 Attestations in commentaries: *ḫi-pí*: SBTU 1, 84:34; SBTU 5, 263:3′–12′; SBTU 5, 272:24, r.21′; Reiner 2005, no. 71:r.14; Finkel 2006, 140:19; Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284–285:37, r.28, 30; Verderame 2002, 37:r.4; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:1, 15, 35; Koch 2005, no. 25:18; SBTU 1, 83:r.15, 17, 19, 20 (see Böck 2000a, 256:51, 53, 55, 56); CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):31; BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 62):30, 31, 32. *ḫi-pí la-bi-ru*: Reiner and Pingree 1998, 149:10; *ḫi-pí eš-šú*: SBTU 1, 38:20 (= Heeßel 2000, 234:20); SBTU 1, 83:r.19 (Böck 2000a, 256:55); SBTU 5, 263:8′; SBTU 5, 264:5′, 6′, r.4, 6, 11, 14; Civil 1974, 336:2, 3; George 1991, 152:49 (b 29, 30); Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:16, 19, 20; Leichty 1970, 230:254–256, 254a–c; CT 41, 25 (Labat 1933, no. 1) (see Freedman 1998, 257 ad 46, 259 ad 50, 296 ad 17, 298 ad 21): 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 20, r.5, 8; CT 41, 26–27 (Labat 1933, no. 2; Freedman 2006a, 170 ad 46′):r.11; CT 41, 29 (Labat 1933, no. 4):r.9; CT 41, 30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5):33, 34, 35; CT 41, 32 (Labat 1933, no. 6):r.3–5; MSL 14, 504:14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

265 SBTU 5, 272:r.31′: [*u*]*l*^{i} *a-mur*, r.32′: *ul a-mur*; cf. also 4.3.3.4 below. Note also in a battle ritual, CBS 1516 (PBS 1/2, 106):r.30 (see Ebeling 1949, 179; cf. Elat 1982, 5–6 with photograph on pp. 7–8): *a-na* KA UM.ME.A *šá-ṭir* ˹*gaba*˺*-ru-u la-bi-ru ul a-mur*. Cf. also Gabbay 2014b, 233–234.

266 SBTU 5, 272:r.6′. See 2.2.1 above.

267 CT 41, 20 (Labat 1933, no. 4):3: *ina tup-pi ul šá-lim ul al-se-eš*; SBTU 1, 50:30 [*ina* I]M NU GI; SBTU 1, 83: r.4 (Böck 2000a, 255:40): *ina* IM NU SILIM, and r.10 (Böck 2000a, 255:46): *ina* DUB NU SILIM; SBTU 3, 99:32: *ina* IM NU$^{!}$ SIL[IM$^{!}$]; Freedman 2006b, 151:13: *ina tup-pi ul šá-lim*; MSL 14, 504:19–20: *pa-šá-lu*$_4$: *ina* DUB *ul šá-lim* […] / […*k*]*i-na-a-tu*$_4$: DUB *ul šá-lim*. Cf. also the similar remark: (*amatu*) *ina tuppi ul āmur*, 4.3.3.4 below.

ḫīpu (*eššu*) remark is used for this (see above),[268] and indeed both notations may occur in the same tablet, indicating that they refer to two different phenomena.[269] In my opinion, the term seems to refer directly to the source, noting that an explanation of a given lemma is not included there. Either the scribe is aware that an interpretation exists even though it is not found in the tablet he is using as a source, or he is aware that the interpretation on the tablet in front of him is not the entire interpretation, and therefore notes that this interpretation is not fully preserved in the tablet. It should be noted that in both cases, one cannot exclude the possibility that the lack of explanation may be due to a large break affecting an entire section in the tablet. Supporting this interpretation of *ina tuppi ul šalim* is a Babylonian scholarly letter to the Assyrian king that contains the following passage:[270]

> *tup-pi šá* LUGAL *ip-pu-šú* / [*ma*]-*ṭu ù ul šá-lim* / [*a*]-*du-ú tup-pi* / [*l*]*a-bi-ru šá am-mu-ra-pi* LUGAL / [*e*ʾ]-*pu-šú ma-al-ṭa-ru* / [*šá p*]*a-ni am-mu-ra-pi* LUGAL *ki-i áš-pu-ru* / *ul-tu* TIN.TIR^{ki} *at-ta-šá-a*
>
> The tablet that the king is using is [lack]ing, and is not full. Now, when I have sent an old tablet that King Hammurapi used (and)(?) an inscription from before King Hammurapi, I carried it from Babylon.

The letter does not seem to refer to a broken tablet used by the king, but rather to a tablet that is deficient in content (although it cannot be excluded that this deficiency derives from a break of an an entire section of the tablet) and does not preserve as much material as the better ancient tablets brought by the scholar.

An interesting remark is found in a Babylonian commentary from Nineveh: "It is not preserved in the tablet. I did not read it."[271] This may indicate that when the scribe wrote down the commentary, he included a lemma that he thought was worthy of commentary (alternatively, he might have copied the lemma before the lesson, either on this tablet or on a draft tablet, with the intent of adding a commentary later). However, this lemma was neither "read"

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268 See 4.3.3.1.

269 See CT 41, 29, ii:3′ (Labat 1933, 50, 54): *ina tup-pi ul šá-lim*, but r. ii:9: *ḫi-pí eš-šú*; SBTU 1, 83:r.4, 10 (Böck 2000a, 255:40, 46): *ina* IM/DUB NU SILIM, but r.15, 17, 19, 20 (Böck 2000a, 256:51, 53, 55, 56): *ḫi-pi* (*eš-šú*); MSL 14, 504:14, 15, 16, 17, 18: *ḫi-pí eš-šú*, but 19, 20: (*ina*) DUB *ul šá-lim*.

270 SAA 10, 155:5–13.

271 CT 41, 29, ii:3′; see Labat 1933, 50.

in the lesson, i.e., it received no explanation from an oral source, nor was it explained in the commentary tablet the scribe consulted (probably a *ṣâtu* commentary), i.e., it was not explained by the written source.[272]

4.3.3.4 (amatu) ina tuppi ul āmur(*?*), *"I did not see* (*the lemma*) *on the tablet"*(*?*)

This remark occurs once in a Late Babylonian commentary:[273] [KA-*šú* :](?) ⌜KA⌝ [:] ⌜*qí*⌝-*bi-tú* : KA : *a-mat ina* IM NU IGI : GIŠ$^{?}$ x. The commentary probably treats a series of omens from the seventh tablet of the diagnostic series beginning with *šumma* (*marṣu*) KA-*šú*.[274] After presenting lexical evidence for the reading of KA as *qibītu*, the commentary notes that the second correspondence of KA is not seen in the tablet (cf. *ul āmur* above).[275] The commentary may refer to the missing entry as *amatu*, or, more likely, *amatu* is part of the commentary, another (known) correspondence of KA, and the following remark only indicates that *amatu* was not seen in the tablet. If the latter is the case, then it is possible that the text should be emended to read <*šá*>-*lim*; in such a case, the remark following *amatu* would be the regular phrase *ina tuppi ul šalim*, discussed above.[276]

4.4 *Sources Cited in Support of a Commentary*

A matter related to the sources of a commentary, although it is closer to the subject of hermeneutics than textual compilation, is the citation of external sources (i.e., texts other than the base text) in support of a commentary.[277] Many of these sources are cited using the verb *qabû*, e.g., *ina ṣâti šumšu qabi, ša ina . . . iqbû*, etc., discussed in Chapter 5.[278] Often, especially in texts from Babylon, the citation alone is given without any introduction.[279]

4.4.1 References: Looking up other Sources

In a few commentaries where a text is cited in support of an explanation, the process by which it can be looked up is also mentioned.

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272 For a somewhat similar case in Freedman 2006b, 151:12–13 (*šanîš ina tuppi ul šalim*), see 4.5.2 below.

273 SBTU 1, 32:r.4. I thank E. Jiménez for confirming that the sign in the line is indeed IGI according to a photograph.

274 See Labat 1951, 64–66:59′–85′.

275 See 4.3.3.2.

276 See 4.3.3.3.

277 See Frahm 2011, 86–110.

278 See Chapter 5, para. 2.

279 E.g., many citations in MSL 14, 323–326 (see Frahm 2011, 245–246).

4.4.1.1 dagālu, *"to look"*

The verb *dagālu* is used twice to indicate a reference to an external lexical source (*ṣâtu, lišānu*?) cited in support of a commentary. It functions like the verb *qabû*, but whereas the verb *qabû* refers to what is "said" in the text, *dagālu* refers to what is seen in it by its student.

An astronomical commentary interprets ITI.NE, usually a writing for the month of Abu, as "that month":[280]

> ITI.NE ITI *šu-a-ti* NE *šu-a-ti ina ṣa-a-ti da-gíl*
>
> "The month 'NE'"—that month; NE = that, it is seen in the word lists.

The commentary notes that in this instance the sequence ITI.NE should be understood as "that month" and not as the month Abu, justifying the interpretation by noting that the lexical equation can be looked up in the *ṣâtu* word lists.

Similarly to the previous example, a reference to *ṣâtu*, and perhaps also to *lišānu*, occurs in another astronomical commentary, from Assur:[281]

> DIŠ MUL *dil-bat* 9 ITI *ina* ^{d}UTU.È 9 <*ina*>$^{?}$ ^{d}UTU.ŠÚ.A KI.GUB-*sà* KÚR. KÚR KI.MIN GUR.[GUR] / ZI ÉRIN *man-da* DIŠ peš-gi-bi-ra *aš-šú* peš-gi-bi-ra la *ti-du-ú* : ^{peš}[peš$_{10}$(KI.A)](?) / *kib-ra-a-ti er-bu-u kib-ra-a-ti ina li-šá-a-ni* ⌜*da*$^{?}$*-gíl*$^{?}$⌝ peš *šá-lá-*[*šú*$^{?}$] / gi *iš-tén* EN x-*a-te ina ṣa-a-ti da-*[*gíl*]
>
> "If Venus turns back, variant: changes, its position for nine months in the east, nine in the west—attack of the Umman-manda *towards*(?) peš-gi-bi-ra"—since you do not know "peš-gi-bi-ra"—(the reading) peš [(of the signs) KI.A (i.e., peš$_{10}$)](?) = regions, "four = regions" is seen(?) in the vocabulary; peš = thre[e]; gi = one . . . is se[en] in the word-lists.

A full discussion of this passage is given above.[282] Here too, as in the previous example, the text notes that the lexical equations that justify the commentary can be looked up in the *ṣâtu* lists (and perhaps in the *lišānu* synonym lists).

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280 Reiner and Pingree 2005, 114, K.2876, ii:9′–10 (see Frahm 2011, 154).

281 VAT 10218, see Reiner and Pingree 1998, 50–51:106 (43′–46′) (cf. parallels CT 34, 14, BM 98821:6–7, K.11018 and K.13894 and CT 51, 174, mentioned in p. 54, n. 20). See also Frahm 2011, 77–78.

282 See 3.1.2.

A related term, *ina muḫḫi šumišu iddaggil*, refers elliptically to an external reference where lexical equations may be found. This is discussed elsewhere.[283]

4.4.1.2 itti, *"with"*

In one case the source of a citation in support of a commentary is indicated by the term *itti*, "with," similar to the use of *itti* with *ša iqbû*.[284] In a Sagig commentary, the condition of a skull is commented on:[285]

> *ši-bit* SAG.DU-*šú nu-u'-ḫu-rat* : SAG.GIŠ.RA / *nu-ú-ú-ru* : SAG : *kak-ku*[286] : GIŠ *kak-ku* / RA : *ma-ḫa-ṣu šá-niš* RA : *na-a-ra* : RA : *ma-ḫa-ṣu* / *šal-šiš* GAZ : *na-a-ra* : GAZ : *ḫé-pu-u* / *né-'i-ir* SAG.DU *ma-ḫi-iṣ* UGU-*ḫi* : KI *ši-gu-ú* / *al-si-ka*
>
> "the suture of her head('s skull) is struck"—SAG.GIŠ.RA = to strike; SAG = head(?),[287] GIŠ = weapon, RA = to hit; secondly: RA = to strike, RA = to hit; thirdly: GAZ = to strike, GAZ = to break; "he who strikes the head, who hits the skull" (is said) with "I have called out to you a *šigû*-prayer."

The commentary cites the base text with the stative *nu"urat* (from *nêru* D), and presents three lexical correspondences indicating that it means "struck." In addition, it cites a literary text where the verb *nêru* appears together with *maḫāṣu*, "hit," confirming the interpretation of *nu"urat* as "struck." This citation is said to occur "with" or "at" (*itti*) the collection of *šigû* prayers, perhaps indicating that it comes from a prayer or incantation performed with the *šigû* prayers.[288]

4.4.1.3 (bu"û, *"to search"*)

The verb *bu"û* is rarely used, and not in commentaries per se. It is found in two texts that mention "searching" various elements for the calculation of the stipulated term in extispicy,[289] and perhaps also in an "esoteric commentary" from Kutha.[290]

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283 See chapter 2, 1.2.1.

284 See chapter 5, 2.5.

285 SBTU 1, 40:2–7; see Genty 2010, 29.

286 Probably a mistake for *qaq-qa-du*; cf. H. Hunger, SBTU 1, 49.

287 See n. 286 above.

288 Cf. Chapter 5, 2.5.

289 Koch 2005, no. 91:1: DI.BI.RI *bu-'-ú-ma*; Koch 2005, no. 97:4.

290 Biggs 1968, 54:16: *ub-te-e*; see Biggs 1968, 56, and Böck 2000b, 615–616. Note also *ub-ta-'-i* in SAA 8, 237:r.4′–5′ = Freedman 2006a, 104, no. 3:r.4 (cf. the same form also in SAA 10, 15:12).

4.4.1.4 (nekelmû, *"to watch, compare(?)"*)

In one instance the verb *nekelmû* may be used as an exegetical term, although this is very uncertain. A Late Babylonian commentary on plants used for medical treatment cites two different proverbs consecutively as part of its discussion of the *daddaru* plant:[291]

> . . . ^{giš}*da-ad-da-ri* / [. . . *in*]*a* ÍD *tab*$^{!}$("UB")-*ba-ši-i mu-*{:}*-ú-ka da-ad-da-ri te-ek-kel-mu-ú* / [. . . *ina l*]*i-ib-ba-ti-šú dad-da-ri ú-še-ṣi ina* ÉŠ$^{!}$.GÀR ^{m}si-dù *qa-bi*[292]
>
> . . . = *daddaru* plant [. . .]; "You come into existence in the river—your waters stink (lit.: are the *daddaru* plant)"; you watched(?) [. . . "In] his anger he brought out stink (lit.: a *daddaru* plant)"; it is said in the series Sidu.

As noted by Finkel,[293] while the source of the second citation is unknown, the first citation is the Akkadian version of a bilingual proverb.[294] Finkel treats the verb *tekkelmû* appearing after the first citation as part of the citation (". . .; you (who?) glare"),[295] noting that this does not correspond to the original text, which reads *ap-pu-na-ma* here.[296] But such a variant is unlikely and makes little sense. Assuming that the reading is correct, one option is to construe *tekkelmû* as the beginning of the second citation, or even as a second citation, followed by a third one. Another option is to treat *tekkelmû* as an exegetical term.[297] The verb *nekelmû* is sometimes used in omens to refer to two features facing each other.[298] It is perhaps possible that the two citations from the series Sidu were considered as two "features" facing each other too, but here the active second person refers to the scholar "watching," i.e., comparing or juxtaposing these two citations. Admittedly, this is very uncertain, and a verbal form ending with *-û* is unexpected here.

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291 Finkel 2005, no. 69:4–6; cf. Finkel 1986, 253; Frahm 2011, 103.

292 Note the corrections to the original transliteration proposed by Frahm 2011, 103 n. 532.

293 Finkel 2005, 282 (also Finkel 1986, 253).

294 Lambert 1960, 244, r.iv:19–20.

295 Finkel 2005, 281.

296 Finkel 2005, 282. For the original text, see Lambert 1960, 244, r.iv:21.

297 Note Frahm 2011, 103 n. 533.

298 See *CAD* N/II, 153–154 (attested only in the stative).

4.5 *The Enumeration and Presentation of Assembled Sources*

A characteristic feature of Akkadian commentaries is enumeration. Enumeration can refer to three different phenomena: (1) the presentation of different textual sources formulating an identical or similar phenomenon (especially in extispicy *mukallimtu*); (2) the presentation of variant readings of the base text; and (3) the presentation of variant interpretations. These phenomena will be discussed below.

4.5.1 The Presentation of Different Textual Sources Formulating an Identical or Similar Phenomenon

4.5.1.1 *Numbered Sequence*

Extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries often cite different omens (at times only the protasis, and sometimes with a short commentary) that are believed to apply to the same phenomenon in the exta of the sacrificial sheep. Koch-Westenholz describes this pattern thus:[299]

> The commentary consists mainly of listing together similar protases, and sometimes whole omina, in numbered sequence. The listed protases were judged to describe the same phenomena couched in different terms. The omina are culled from all parts of the series, including *multābiltu*, and probably from other sources as well. These other sources could be non-canonical tablets, pre-canonical tablets, or even oral tradition. Often omens from the same section of a tablet in the extispicy series are excerpted and listed as variants in the commentary.

As noted by Koch-Westenholz, the most usual way of presenting variants is by citing the first omen, and then listing the second, third, etc., versions, inserting the number *šanû, šalšu*, etc., immediately after the opening *šumma*, "If," of the omen.[300] For example:[301]

> BE NA GU-*am sa-di-id* MU DINGIR NUN DIB-*at*
> BE MAN-*ú ina* ŠÀ SAG NA GU *sa-di-id tuš-šu* UGU LÚ ŠUB-*ut*
> BE *šal-šú* NA *ši-ši-tu*$_{(2/4)}$ *a-rim* LUGAL GIG *dan-na* GIG-*uṣ*

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299 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 31–32.

300 A variant seems to be *šanû šumma* . . . (or *šanû* alone before an omen beginning with *šumma*), see Koch 2005, no. 59:5, 10: 2-*ú* BE . . . (but note that this is not a commentary per se).

301 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:130–132.

"If the 'presence' *is streaked* with filaments—oath by god will seize the ruler."
"If 2) in the midst of the top of the 'presence' it *is streaked* with filaments—malicious speech will fall upon the man"
"If 3) the 'presence' is covered by a membrane—the king will be ill with a severe illness."

This commentary assembles three omens whose protases deal with various features blurring the "presence," treating them as multiple descriptions of the same situation. The numbers *šanû* and *šalšu* after the opening *šumma*[302] in the second and third omens are rendered in the translation in the format chosen by Koch-Westenholz.[303] But why do these ordinal numbers appear after *šumma* ("If—second—etc.") and not before it ("Second: If etc.")? Furthermore, why do these numbers appear as ordinals and not as adverbs (e.g., **šumma šanîš . . .*, "If, secondly, etc.")? The use of ordinals may indicate, in my view, that *šumma* was not considered an integral part of the omen. Indeed, there are other indications that *šumma* was not regarded as part of omens, as evidenced by (rare) citations of omens without *šumma* in commentaries.[304] The suggestion that omens regularly began without *šumma* has already been raised in the scholarly literature, but J. Fincke has demonstrated that *šumma* did indeed begin omens.[305] I suggest, therefore, that although *šumma* introduced omen entries, it was not understood, at least at some point in time, as a conditional conjunction but as a noun indicating an omen entry. As a noun without a syntactical connection to the following clause, it would function similarly to ÉN before incantations and prayers, where it indicates the beginning of an entry belonging to a certain genre.[306] Indeed, *šumma/šummu* is treated as a noun elsewhere.[307] Coming back to our case, the ordinal numeral, then, simply acts

302 Rarely, the numeral may appear alone, without *šumma*, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:51: *šal-šú*.
303 For this instance, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:130–132.
304 See, e.g., George 1991, 148:15b.
305 See Fincke 2006, 134–138, with previous literature.
306 This does not mean that the protasis itself was not considered a conditional clause, but rather that the protasis did not require an introductory particle (cf. GAG §160), similar to the Neo-Babylonian laws, which present each entry without *šumma*; cf. Roth 1997, 144–149.
307 See references in CAD Š/III, 280b; cf. Fincke 2006, 139 n. 63.

as an adjective designating the noun *šumma*.[308] Therefore, I think it is more likely that the passage above should be rendered:

> "If: The 'presence' *is streaked* with filaments—oath by god will seize the ruler."
> Second "If": "In the midst of the top of the 'presence' it *is streaked* with filaments—malicious speech will fall upon the man"
> Third "If": "The 'presence' is covered by a membrane—the king will be ill with a severe illness."

At times the numeral does not occur alone but with *šumšu*. The most common of these formulations is *šumma šanû šumšu*, " 'If'—its second entry: etc." (or: "second 'If'—its entry: etc.").[309] The designation *šanû šumšu* is already known from Old Babylonian texts, but there it is used to introduce a second apodosis.[310] Additionally, *šumma šalšu šumšu* is also well attested,[311] and there are also some occurrences of *šumma rebû šumšu*,[312] and probably one of *šumma ḫamšu šumšu*.[313]

4.5.1.2 *Presentation of a Second Textual Witness*: šībušu

Sometimes when extispicy commentaries cite multiple omens that are believed to describe the same phenomenon, the second omen is introduced with *šībušu*, "its witness."[314] This is especially the case when only two omens are cited. When three or more omens are cited, the second omen may be

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308 Although ordinal numbers usually precede the noun, they do occasionally follow it. See *GAG* §139l; Streck 1995, 61.

309 See, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:18, no. 85:iv 2′; Koch 2005, no. 25:31; DT 84:4 (CCP 3.4.1.A.1).

310 See *CAD* Š/I, 394a. For a detailed discussion of its meaning and use in Old Babylonian extispicy omens, see Winitzer 2011, 77–94.

311 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:35, 37, 40, no. 51:9′, no. 88: iv 6: BE *šal-šú* MU.NI; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:52: BE *šal-šú* MU-*šú*; Koch 2005, no. 28:46, text A: BE *šal-šú* MU-*šú* (variants: BE *šal-šú*); DT 84:6 (*CCP* 3.4.1.A.1).

312 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:41: [BE] 4-*ú* MU.NI; Koch 2005, no. 28:47, text A: BE 4-*ú* MU-*šú* (variants: BE 4-*ú*); DT 84:7 (CCP 3.4.1.A.1).

313 Koch 2005, no. 28:48, text A: [BE 5-*šú* MU-*šú*] (variants: BE 5-*šú*).

314 Or *šībūšu*, "its witnesses." Although a singular is expected, the *u* could indicate a plural. But perhaps this is an indication that the noun had a triptotic declination in the construct state before suffixes (perhaps reinterpreted as deriving from the root *šb'*? cf. *GAG* §65h).

designated by *šībušu* (replacing the more usual *šumma šanû*), while the third omen is designated as *šumma šalšu*.[315]

The term can also be used to designate an alternative formulation of an omen that occurs in a list of numbered omens. For example, the first omen in the list may be followed by a second omen designated as *šumma šanû*, a third omen designated as *šībušu*, and a fourth omen designated as *šumma šalšu.* In this case, *šībušu* marks an alternative version of the second omen, not an independent alternative to the first omen in the list.[316]

The word *šību* can mean either "old" or "witness." When *šībušu* appears before a specific omen, Koch-Westenholz translates the word as "its old version,"[317] but when it occurs in the titular opening line of *mukallimtu* commentaries, she translates it as "variations" or "variants."[318] Since *šībušu* is applied to texts contemporary to the first cited omen as well as to older texts, I prefer to translate it as "(textual) witness," i.e., a witness to an ominous phenomenon described in other texts.[319]

The term *šībušu* appears in a few contexts. It can appear in the title line of extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries, known especially from Nineveh, e.g.: *šumma šumāti šībī u mukallimti* (*ša . . .*) *ana pānika*, "If entries, textual witnesses, and the *mukallimtu* commentary are before you."[320]

As noted above, within the commentaries themselves *šībušu* may occur alone between two citations of omens. Usually it appears between the first and second omens, in most cases at the end of the line of the first omen where it introduces the omen cited in the next line; it may also separate two omens in

315 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:50–51, no. 19:69–70 (see 3.2.3 above), no. 19:83–84.

316 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:84–87 (note that the first omen includes a variant apodosis introduced with *šanîš*).

317 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:50.

318 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:1, no. 20:1.

319 It should be noted that this does not fully correspond to the modern philological concept of textual witnesses.

320 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:1 // no. 20:1, "151–152" // no. 42: G 1 // no. 42:r.4; also Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 89: vi 23. Cf. in a subscript, Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:"154": DUB.4.KAM.MA *ši-i-bu u mu-kal-lim-tu*$_4$. Note that *šībū* was misunderstood in a Seleucid commentary, TCL 6, 6, r.iii:9, where instead of *ši-bu-u*, ŠÀ-*bu-u* (*libbū*, "as in") appears; see Frahm 2011, 47 n. 190.

one line.[321] Or, it may occur with *šumma* (written BE *ši-bu-šú*) at the beginning of the line before the second cited omen.[322]

4.5.2 The Various Uses of *šanîš* and Other Terms: Variants, Sources and Polysemy

A very common term in commentaries is *šanîš*, "secondly" (or "alternatively"), usually used of variant interpretations, but also of variants in the base text.[323]

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321 See, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:33, 35, 42, 53, 80, 82, 83, 86, 88, 92, 94, 98, 105, 106, 108, 110, 112, 120, 121; no. 20:85, 121, 123D, L[?] (note text A instead: BE *ši-bu-šú* in next line), 125D (note text A instead: BE *ši-bu-šú* in next line); no. 20, A iv:13′; no. 33, ii:8′; no. 42:2, 3; no. 42: I 2, 3; no. 48:4′, 5′, 6′. Note Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:69, 72: *šá a-na* SIG_5 *iq-bu-u ana* IGI-*ka ši-bu-šú*, where the phrase is not *ana pānika šībušu*, but rather the previous phrase ends with *ana pānika*, followed by the regular *šībušu* at the end of the line (see 3.2.3 above).

322 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:91, 96, 120; no. 20:124A (note omitted in text D and perhaps L, but with *ši-bu-šú* in previous line), 126A (note omitted in text D, but with *ši-bu-šú* in previous line); no. 25:24, 26, 29, 34, 36, 39; no. 47:2′.

323 For a discussion of *šanîš*, see also Gabbay, forthcoming 2. The following list contains most of the attestations of *šanîš* in published commentaries (mostly referring to a second interpretation, although references to a variant in a citation of a text, especially in extispicy omens, are also included here): KAR 94 (Frahm 2011, 385–386) (// Ass. 13955 ii, r. 5′–9′, see Frahm 2011, 388):1′; SBTU 1, 33:4′, 40:4, 47:6, 51:14, 16, 52:9, 72:11, 21, r.15, 81:5′, 84:14, 90:1, 14, r.3; SBTU 2, 36:24, 38:3, 18, 19, 20, 42:10, r.6?, 54:3, 7, 16, 19, 20, 22, 27, 28; SBTU 3, 99:7, 16, 22, 24, 38, 43, <45>; SBTU 4, 133:8, 143:3, 30, 145:6, r.12, r.13, 146:11, 162:5, 13, 21; SBTU 5, 260:3, 262:6, 263:r.4′, 264:r.10(?), 272:r.7′, r.8′; Al-Rawi and George 1991/92, 64:6, [15], 21; Heeßel 2000, 247:2 (= Leichty 1973, 83:2); Leichty 1973, 83:18, r.16′; Finkel 2006, 140:10, 21, 34; Freedman 2006b, 150ff.:10, 12, 14, [20](?), r.5, r.10; Civil 1974, 332–333:11, 15, 16, 18, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36, 42, 337:23; Finkel 2005, no. 69:14, 17; Reiner 2005, no. 71:3′, 6′, 9′, r.1, r.4, r.5, r.6, r.8, r.9, r.10. r.18; BRM 4, 32:5, 7, 8, 15, 17, 22 (Geller 2010, 168ff.); Koch-Westenholz 1999, 155ff.:38, 63; CLBT, pl. I (AB 249, cf. Linssen 2004, 318, B:18, 22); George 1991, 146:3 (a 9), 4 (a 11, 12, b 21, 23), 6 (a 14, b12′), 148:8 (b 16′), 9 (a 18, b 21′), 16 (a 20?, 21), 22 (b 9, c r.1′), 26 (a 29 // SBTU 5, 256:3′), 150:30 (a 30, b 15), 31 (b 11), 32 (a 36 // SBTU 5, 256:10′), 36 (a 41), [46 (b 26?)], 152:48 (a 45, b 28), 49 (c 11′), "title" (a 47); Lambert 1954–56, 313, B 6 (4), 314, C:5 (13), 315:4 (6); Lambert 1959/60, 118:6 (10–15) (Geller 2014, 64–65:7, 8, 11, 16, 21); Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284–285:13, 23, 27, 29, r.17, r.26; Verderame 2002, 9:ob, 38–39:11, 14, 19, 21, ii:2, ii:19, ii:21, ii:25, 106–107:3, 22, 23; Biggs 1968, 54:15; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:43, no. 20:5, 84, no. 25:8, no. 42:63, 70 (// 250, no. 42: G 14), 72, 144, no. 45:7, 8, no. 53:r.14, no. 80:27, no. 85:iv 7′, no. 89d:4; Koch 2005, no. 25:13, 22, no. 28:33 (// Heeßel 2008, 137:9′), 56, F ii 5′ (see p. 266), no. 29:4, no. 33:r.45, no. 58:50, no. 59:2, 4, no. 65:2, no. 99:19 (variant interpretation); Böck 2000a, 248:3 (=254:3), 7 (= 254:5), 254–256:3, 5, 16, 26, 28, 39, 47, 50, 62; Leichty 1970, 233:8, 9, 19, 22; Linssen 2004, 318, B:18, 22, CT 41, 30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5):5, 10, 20, 23, 25; CT 41, 32 (Labat 1933, no. 6):11, 15; CT 41, 39 (Labat 1933, no. 13):11; CT 41, 39 (Labat 1933, no. 13)+BM 43343

In Mesopotamian literature textual variants are often indicated by a *Glossenkeil*.[324] Only rarely are they indicated by the term *šanîš*.[325] This is also the normal case in omens, which frequently use a *Glossenkeil* or the signs KI.MIN (as well as MIN) to introduce a variant. Nevertheless, sometimes variants are explicitly indicated by *šanîš*,[326] or rarely *šanê*.[327] In addition, when omens are cited in divinatory reports to the Assyrian king, a *Glossenkeil* or KI.MIN[328] may occur, but also *šanîš* is attested.[329]

In commentaries, too, variants may be indicated by the use of *šanîš* (which is primarily used for alternative interpretations).[330] For example, an omen in

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(photo):18; CT 41, 43 (Labat 1933, no. 17):1, 8, r.5, r.11; CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):7; Freedman 2006b, 150:10, 151:14, 152:r.5′, 153:r.10; Livingstone 1986, 56:39; SAA 3, 39:23; Lambert 2013, 60:1 (BM 69595:2, pl. 36); Freedman 2006a, 73–74:7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, r.7; Lambert 1960, 82–84:200, 215, 219, 223–224, 224, 88:288; Cavigneaux 1981, 141:4 (with dupl., cf. George 1992, 83, n. 9); CT 51, 136:6, 12; MSL 14, 267:4′ (= SBTU 1, 140), 268, B:5′, 288:6, 11, 14, 323–326:10, 12, 15, 17, 26, 34, 37, 331:7, 495:14, 506:9, 11–12; Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, III:29a; LBAT 1536, ii:11′; Scheil 1916, 137–138:6′, 15′ (CCP 4.1.13.A); BM 47529+:r.3, r.9 (Geller 2014, 61–62:9, 10); BM 41586:8 (Freedman 2006a, 149:8; see CCP 3.5.31); DT 87:1 (CCP 4.1.10); BM 41252:5′ (CCP 7.2.u46); BM 37212:6′ (CCP 7.2.u19); 83-1-18, 722:r.4 (CCP 7.2.u6); 83-1-18, 725:5′ (CCP 7.2.u7); DT 87:1 (CCP 4.1.10); BM 39440:r.3′ (CCP 4.3.u4); BM 47668+BM 48447:2a (CCP 7.2.u56); BM 48344+BM 48536:3′ (CCP 3.5.6); 81-4-28, 800:5′ (CCP 7.2.u46); BM 42598:6′ (CCP 4.3.u3); BM 67179:10, r.7′ (CCP 4.2.U); BM 55491+:2, 4?, 5 (Jiménez 2016; CCP 4.1.3.B). See also SAA 10, 347:r.15′, 351:22.

324 See Krecher 1966, 436.

325 Thus, e.g., in a ritual text which begins with a conditional sentence, where the term *šanîš* indicates two variant details in the protasis; see Abusch and Schwemer 2011, 138, 144, no. 7.6.7:2, 4 (reference courtesy of A. Wagschal). In the Lamaštu series, Farber 2014, 82, 154–155, I:104 (cf. note on p. 210), as well as in a medical text, BAM 5, 430, iii′: 34′ // 431, iii′: [38], where different amounts of certain ingredients are recorded for treatment, *šanîš* appears between them. Note also in a literary text, where *šanîš* is translated by Lambert as "variant" (Lambert 1960, 102–103:80, and cf. his note on p. 314, connecting the line to omen literature). See also Worthington 2012, 24–25.

326 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 56:95, no. 64:53.

327 Labat 1951, 32:10 (cf. n. 354 below).

328 *Glossenkeil*: SAA 8, 89:r.3, 93:3, 4, 7, 100:2, 101:r.8, 103:9, 13, 214:4, 273:r.5, 300:17, r.4, 307:4, 308:2, 3, 311:r.3, r.6, 315:r.3, 323:r.7, 336:16, 343:3, 389:r.4, 390:4, r.4, 391:2, 392:3, 393:5, 438:3, 536:2, 543:7, 555:4, 6. KI.MIN: SAA 8, 1:4, 8:5, 11:3, 41:2, 53:10, 56:5, 68:9, 69:5, 70:3, 72:r.1, 104:12, 147:r.4, 168:r.2, 169:4, 181:r.4, 212:r.6′, 485:3, 495:2, [7], 502:r.1, 564:6.

329 SAA 8, 82:6, 502:r.6 (note KI.MIN in the same text, line r.1); SAA 10, 104:12′, 351:18. Cf. the remark in *CAD* Š/I, 397a.

330 See below. Rarely, *šanîš šumšu* (cf. *šanû šumšu*, 4.5.1.1 above) is used for indicating variant texts. See Koch 2005, no. 29:9: *šá-niš* MU.NI (alternative apodosis), and perhaps also SBTU 1, 54:7′: *šá-niš* MU-*šú*. Note perhaps also *šanû/šalšu šumšu* in this sense in Koch

the first tablet of the diagnostic series (Sagig) contains two alternative apodoses, separated from each other by a *Glossenkeil*:[331]

> DIŠ ŠAḪ GI_6 IGI GIG BI $BA.UG_7$: PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ(*uštapaššaq*)-*ma* TI
>
> If he (= the exorcist on his way to the patient) sees a black pig—that patient will die; (variant):[332] he will reach a crisis and then recover.

A commentary to this line uses the term *šanîš* instead of the *Glossenkeil* in the base text, and also explains the two variants by distinguishing two possible situations:[333]

> DIŠ ˹ŠAḪ˺ ˹GI_6˺ IGI GIG BI UG_7 *šá-niš uš-ta-pa-šaq-ma* TIN[334] . . . [*ki-i* LÚ.GI]G MÍ.KALA.GA IGI TIN *ki-i* MÍ.K[ALA.G]A NU IGI $BA.UG_7$
>
> "If he sees a black pig—that patient will die, alternatively: he will reach a crisis and then recover"—[if the patien]t experienced distress—he will recover, if he did not experience dis[tres]s—he will die.

But the most widespread use of *šanîš* in commentaries is in the enumeration of multiple interpretations.[335] Usually in commentaries the first interpretation is not marked as such, while *šanîš*, "secondly," introduces the second interpretation. If other interpretations exist they are usually introduced by *šalšiš*,

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2005, no. 107:187 (but this may refer to an alternative interpretation). Note also MIN, perhaps in this use, in Reiner and Pingree 2005, 175:3′ (MIN in Beaulieu 1995, 1:4 probably indicates a shortened re-citation), as well as KI.MIN in this sense perhaps in CT 41, 26–27 (Labat 1933, no. 2); Freedman 2006a, 151, ad 16:r.2, r.12(?), but this is uncertain.

331 George 1991, 142–143:6 (see variants on the bottom of p. 142; not given here). Other cases of *šanîš* in commentaries, indicating a variant in the cited text, occur especially in extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries; see, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 85:iv 7′; Koch 2005, no. 33:r.45, no. 58:50, no. 65:2.

332 George 1991, 143 renders the *Glossenkeil* in his translation as "(or)," but this could be taken to mean that the primary meaning of the *Glossenkeil* here is to indicate two possible predictions of a certain case. While this could have been a secondary understanding, the *Glossenkeil* is primarily a philological siglum indicating that both apodoses are attested in the textual tradition of this omen.

333 George 1991, 146:6b.

334 Note also the parallel text George 1991, 146:6a: DIŠ ŠAḪ G[I_6 IGI] *šá ana dum-qí u lum-nu* E-*ú* . . . $BA.UG_7$: *šá-niš* [PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ-*m*]*a* TIN-*uṭ*.

335 Note the rare use of KI.MIN for a variant explanation in SAA 8, 107:r.3 and 110:9.

"thirdly," and *rebîš*, "fourthly."[336] On rare occasions, *šanîš* itself is used to introduce a third (or fourth, or fifth) interpretation.[337]

Usually the text is cited, then interpreted, and followed by a second interpretation (and third and fourth interpretations, if they exist). For example, in a commentary on the phrase "her genitalia are loosened" in a tablet containing incantations and rituals for a woman giving birth:[338]

> *uš-šu-rat ḫur-da-at-su* : *ḫur-da-tú* : *ú-ru-u* / *šá sin-niš-ti lìb-bu-u qa-at-ka šu-ta-am-ṣa-am-ma lu-pu-ut ḫur-da-at-na* / *šá-niš ḫur-da-ti* : *qim-ma-ti* : *šal-šiš ḫur-da-ti* : *ḫur-ri da-du* / *da-du* : *ma-ra*
>
> "Her *ḫurdatu* (= genitalia) are loosened"—*ḫurdatu* (genitalia) = the pubic area of the woman, as in: "Let your hand be put out and stroke our *ḫurdatu* (= genitalia)" (Gilgamesh VI:69); secondly: *ḫurdatu* = (pubic) hair(?); thirdly: *ḫurdatu* (genitalia) = *ḫurri dādi* ("hole of lovemaking"), lovemaking = son.

The rare noun *ḫurdatu* is given three explanations. The first and third are similar, insofar as both explain the word *ḫurdatu* as the female genitalia, which is indeed its meaning. But while the first explanation brings contextual support for this meaning, citing a passage from the Gilgameš epic (Tablet VI:69) that uses the same noun, the third explanation presents "etymological" support, cutting up the word into two parts (*notariqon*) which together sum up to the meaning of the noun. In addition, the third explanation adds that the word "lovemaking" contains within it a lexical reference to the result of lovemaking, the newborn son, which is the goal of the entire ritual and incantation. The second explanation is not entirely certain. The noun *qimmatu* usually refers to the top part of something: the top of a person, i.e., his hair, but also the top of

336 *šalšiš*: KAR 94 (Frahm 2011, 384–386) (// Ass. 13955 ii, r. 5′–9′, see Frahm 2011, 388):2′; SBTU 1, 40:5; SBTU 1, 49:14; Civil 1974, 332:42; Freedman 2006b, 150:10; Finkel 2005, no. 69:7; BRM 4, 32:17 (Geller 2010, 169); George 1991, 146:4 (a 13, b 22), p. 150:30 (b 15); Lambert 1954–56, 315:4 (7) (Geller 2014, 64:7); *AfO* 14, pl. IV (Verderame 2002, 38–39), i:2, 12, 21, ii:6; Verderame 2002, 107:20, 24; Freedman 2006b, 150:10; Livingstone 1986, 56:39; Lambert 2013, 134:98; MSL 14, 288:7; BM 67179:11 (CCP 4.2.U). *rebîš*: BRM 4, 32:17 (Geller 2010, 169). *ḫamšiš*(?): *AfO* 14, pl. IV, i:4 (Verderame 2002, 38, i:4): 5^{i}("4")-*šiš*. See also attestations in *CAD* Š/I, 263, *CAD* R, 221.

337 See MSL 14, 506:11–12; Freedman 2006a, 73–74:11–15, r.7.

338 Civil 1974, 332:40–43 (a variant occurs in UET 6/3, 897:r.7′–8′). For the base text, see KAR 196 = BAM 248, ii:30 (see Veldhuis 1989, 244).

a tree, a building, or perhaps even the moon.[339] Here I tentatively understand *qimmatu* as referring to pubic hair (not attested elsewhere), although this is very uncertain. In any case, the second and third explanations are introduced with the regular terms: *šanîš*, "secondly," and *šalšiš*, "thirdly." These various explanations do not necessarily contradict each other.

Rarely a second interpretation is embedded within the general interpretation. For example:[340]

> DIŠ *ina* ITI.BÁRA ^{d}UDU.IDIM IGI-*ir* : sàg-me-gar : *šá-niš* GU_4.UD *ina* ITI.BÁRA IGI.MEŠ-*ma*
>
> "If a planet is seen in Nisannu"—Jupiter, alternatively Mercury, are seen in Nisannu.

In this commentary the name of the planet mentioned in the base text is specified. However, two possible names were known to the commentator, namely Jupiter and Mercury, and they were combined, using the term *šanîš*, within the rephrasing of the base text.

Elsewhere *šanîš* may occur when one interpretation in a series of several interpretations is paired with an alternative interpretation. The following example from a commentary on the first tablet of Sagig, referring to the observations of the healer on his way to the patient, illustrates this use of *šanîš*:[341]

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339 See *CAD* Q, 252–254.

340 SBTU 1, 90:1; cf. H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 94:1.

341 George 1991, 146:4a. Cf. the close parallel in George 1991, 146:4b: DIŠ SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA IGI GIG UG_7 : SAG.ÚS *šá-niš* LÚ *š*[*á ina ḫur-sà-a*]*n i-tu-ra* / [A : *me-e*] : GUR : *ta-a-*ʳ*ra*ʾ ʳ*šal*ʾ*-šiš* MUNUS.$PEŠ_4$: A : *ma-ru* :^{ki}-^{ir}GU[R_4 : *ka-ra-ṣ*]*a* / [*šá-niš*] ʳAʾ : *ma-ri* : GUR : *na-šu-u*. A similar case is probably reflected in Civil 1974, 332:33–66, as well as Finkel 2006, 141:33–34: KUR *su-un-qam* IGI-*ma* / EGIR EN Á.KAL DU-*ku* : *su-un-qam* : *su-un-qu šá-niš* sun_7(DAN)-*qu* : *dan-na-tú* : *šá-niš su-un-qa*. The chain of interpretation is not entirely clear to me, but the second *šanîš* seems to mark an alternative understanding within the second interpretation of the base text. Finally, a similar case may also be found in *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A 163:r.9′–14′ (Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:6 [10–15]; Geller 2014, 65:8), treated in 4.3.2.4 above, where after a broken first interpretation, a second interpretation is introduced with *šanîš*, followed by a third one introduced with *ša pî ummâni šanê*, "second oral lore from a scholar." The use of *šanîš* and *šanê* here may indicate that *šanîš* marks an alternative interpretation of an element within the first source of interpretation.

> DIŠ SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA IGI : *šá ina ḫur-sà-an i-tu-ru* : A : *me-e* : GUR : *ta-a-ri šá-ni*[*š* MUNUS.$PEŠ_4$] / A *ma-ri* : GUR_4 : *ka-ra-ṣi* : *šá-niš* A : *ma-ri* : GUR : *na-*[*šu-ú*] / *šal-šiš ḫa-ban-na-nu* : A : *me-e* : GUR : *m*[*a-l*]*u-ú*
>
> "If he sees a burned brick (*agurru*)"—he who returned from the river ordeal: A = water, GUR = return; secondl[y: a pregnant woman]: A = son, GUR_4 = to nip off; alternatively: A = son, GUR = ca[rry]; thirdly: a water vessel: A = water, GUR = full.

This commentary presents three interpretations of the sight of a "burned brick" (*agurru*); each uses the technique of *notariqon*, interpreting *agurru* by assigning individual meanings to the elements A and $GUR_{(4)}$. The second interpretation (introduced with *šanîš*), which claims that the word for "burned brick" refers to a pregnant women, gives two explanations that support this interpretation, the second introduced with *šanîš*, here translated "alternatively."

What does *šanîš*, "secondly," signify in these examples? Does it designate a second possible interpretation of a polysemic text, perhaps a hidden meaning that can be recovered through creative exegesis? Or does it identify an interpretation from an alternative source, either a documented source or a new explanation proposed by the commentator? The answer, in my opinion, is probably the latter. An examination of the term *šanîš* outside the corpus of commentaries may be instructive. As seen above, *šanîš* is not only used to indicate a second interpretation but also to introduce a variant source. Thus, e.g., in the medical text mentioned above,[342] where *šanîš* appears between alternative ingredients listed in a remedy, its main function is not to indicate that two different treatments are possible, although that may indeed be the case; rather, *šanîš* marks the compilation of information from two sources containing variants of the same prescription. In this context *šanîš* may be treated as an abbreviation of a more detailed formulation, *šanîš ša pī tuppi šanî*, "alternatively, in a second/different tablet," which clearly refers to an alternative source. The longer formulation occurs in three tablets from Nineveh, in a magical-medical context where variant ingredients of a remedy are listed,[343] and in a Neo-Babylonian tablet from Ur, where it introduces an alternative ritual accompanying the recitation of an incantation, surely alluding to a second source.[344]

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342 See 4.3.1.2.

343 Schuster-Brandis 2008, 376, A II: 26 (with parallels).

344 Gurney 1960, 224, 21. In this context, note also that to ensure a correct prediction, diviners are instructed to look up omens in a "second tablet" (*tuppi šanîmma*); see Oppenheim 1974, 200:48 (contra translation in 205 with n. 32).

Coming back to the commentaries, is it possible to demonstrate that when *šanîš* introduces an alternative interpretation, the commentary is simply recording an interpretation from an alternative source, and not asserting that the text has a second valid interpretation?

As noted earlier,[345] a commentary on extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian period introduces an alternative interpretation with the phrase "secondly, in a second tablet" (*šanîš ina tuppi šanîmma*),[346] using the same terminology as in the ritual texts mentioned above that are citing alternative traditions from written sources. In addition, there are other expressions that do not include *šanîš* but attribute material in a commentary to a written or oral source.[347] The variety of phrases that can be used to introduce alternative interpretations from outside sources indicate that this was a frequent practice in commentaries; *šanîš* was simply the shortest way to cite an alternative source of interpretation.

The term *šanîš* occurs in two other contexts where an extra source is mentioned. In a Late Babylonian Ālu commentary, an explanation of an omen is given; a second explanation, introduced by *šanîš*, is said to be missing in the written source for the commentary:[348]

> *šu* TÉŠ.BI KAR-*šú* : TÉŠ.BI : *bal-tu*$_4$: *bal-tu*$_4$: *bu-nu* : KAR *e-zeb šá-niš šu* TÉŠ.BI KAR-*šú* / *šá* E-*ú ina tup-pi ul šá-lim*
>
> "He[349]—his dignity (TÉŠ.BI) will leave him"—TÉŠ.BI = dignity; dignity = appearance; secondly: "he—his dignity will leave him," which it said—it is not preserved in the tablet.

345 See 4.3.1.2.4.

346 Koch 2005, no. 25:23, 24, 25.

347 See 4.3 above.

348 Freedman 2006b, 151:12–13.

349 The sign *šu* does not appear in the manuscripts of the base text (see score in Freedman 2006a, 23:19, collated from digital photos). This implies that either a different version of the base text was used by the commentator in his citation of this text (perhaps *-ma* at the end of the verb *uš-te-eṣ-bi-šú-ma*, which precedes TÉŠ.BI in the base text, was misunderstood as *šu* at some point in the transmission of the text; or perhaps *-ma* was omitted from the manuscript on which the commentary is based, and the final *-šú* had a variant *-šu*, misinterpreted as an independent pronoun), or that the commentator added a pronoun to clarify this citation, which does not contain an explicit reference to the one whose dignity is deprived.

After the text presents one explanation of an omen prediction,[350] it introduces an alternative explanation with *šanîš*, "secondly," and re-cites the prediction using the term *ša iqbû*, but the explanation itself is omitted because "it is not preserved in the tablet." As discussed above,[351] the phrase *ina tuppi ul šalim* does not seem to refer to broken signs in a tablet from which a commentary was copied, but to a passage missing from a source tablet. Perhaps the scribe learned the alternative explanation during a lesson but did not write it down; at any rate, this explanation was not to be found in the tablet he consulted when writing the commentary. A similar case may be found in a Late Babylonian commentary, where the phrase *šá-niš* NU DÙ occurs.[352]

As seen above, *šanîš* could be used to indicate either a second (source of) interpretation or a textual or phenomenal variant. A few commentaries distinguish between the use of *šanîš* in citations of omens and its use in citations of alternative interpretations. Thus, in the astrological *mukallimtu* commentary *Sîn ina tāmartišu*, Tablet I, textual variants seem to be indicated by KI.MIN, while variant interpretations are preceded by *šanîš*.[353] Similarly, in another astrological commentary that presents various calculations in order to account for a number in the base text, when the same numbers are used in two different calculations, the distinction is made by *ša šanî*, but when a different method of calculation is used (using different numbers), it is differentiated from the first two alternatives by *šanîš*.[354]

A different distinction is found in an astronomical commentary from Seleucid Babylon that cites various lines from the astronomical series Enūma-Anu-Enlil.[355] In this commentary, when two texts presenting variant descriptions of the same phenomenon are cited, the term *šanîš* is used to distinguish between them.[356] The different interpretations given to the texts, however, are explicitly ascribed to different sources: *ša pî šanî*, "second oral source,"[357]

350 For the base text, see Freedman 2006a, 10:19.

351 See 4.3.3.3.

352 SBTU 1, 83:26 (Böck 2000a, 255:26). For NU DÙ, see 2.2.5.

353 Koch-Westenholz 1999, 155–157:38, 63.

354 Al-Rawi and George 1991/92, 64:4, 13, [20] (*ša šanî*), 6, [15], 21 (*šanîš*) (see table on p. 65); see Ossendrijver 2014. Cf. also Reiner 2005, no. 70:3(?). The term *šanê* also occurs in CT 51, 136:14 (cf. Frahm 2011, 105), while otherwise the text uses *šaniš* (lines 6 and 12), but *šanê* here is itself a citation from the identical indication of two variant apodoses in the base text; see Labat 1951, 32:10.

355 Reiner 2005, no. 71.

356 Reiner 2005, no. 71:3′, 6′, 9′, r.1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 18.

357 Reiner 2005, no. 71:4′, 10′, 11′, r.2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18.

as well as *ša pî šalši*, "third oral source."[358] Clearly the plurality of interpretations is not the product of theoretical speculation or the invocation of multiple levels of interpretation; rather, it is the result of compiling different sources, specifically oral sources. In my view, this astronomical commentary provides an explicit articulation of a phenomenon that can also be indicated briefly by *šanîš* alone.

Yet another indication that multiple interpretations represent multiple sources is the use of the particle *mā* before an interpretation in some commentaries dating to the Neo-Assyrian period.[359] This particle indicates that the interpretation that follows represents the "direct speech" of a source. The phrase *šanîš mā*, which appears in two commentaries, thus signals a transition from the "direct speech" of one source to that of an alternative source.[360]

Finally, it is worth including here an example that does not contain *šanîš* but is nevertheless a clear example of the use of multiple sources to construct a commentary. There are a few cases where a phenomenon in an omen is substantiated by two sources of lexical evidence: Sumerian-Akkadian word and sign lists (*ṣâtu*) and monolingual Akkadian lists (*lišānu*). The commentaries seem to treat these lexical sources as two different ways of arriving at the same explanation, rather than grouping them together as two pieces of evidence supporting the same interpretation.[361] In fact, in one commentary, the alternative lexical text is identified with an alternative written source:[362]

> BE UR_5.ÚŠ-*ka* IGI-tu_4 *ki ta-paq-qid-si* GI *šá-la-mu* / GI *la-pa-tu*$_4$ SI *šá-la-mu* SI *la-pa-tu*$_4$ SI *šá-lam* SILIM-*át* / <*ina*> *ṣa-a-tú* MU.NI *qa-bi šá* DUB MIN-*i šá-la-mu la-pa-tu*$_4$ *ina* EME *qa-bi*
>
> "If your first extispicy, when you check it (its prediction turns to the opposite)"—GI = favorable, GI = unfavorable; SI = favorable, SI = unfavorable; SI = favorable, (i.e., the extispicy) is favorable; its entry is said in the *ṣâtu* lists. According to an alternative tablet: favorable = unfavorable; it is said in the *lišānu* list.

358 Reiner 2005, no. 71:r.11 (see p. 287).

359 See 2.3 above.

360 Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, III 29a (r.27); Lambert 1959/60, 118:6 (10–11) (Geller 2014, 65:8). See 4.2 above.

361 See, e.g., TCL 6, 5:r.28–32 (Koch 2005, 309, no. 33:r.28–32).

362 TCL 6, 5:r.39–41 (Koch 2005, 310, no. 33:r.39–41); probably paralleled by Koch 2005, 365, no. 53:36. The passage is also cited and discussed in 4.3.1.2.2 above.

The commentary discusses *pitruštu* signs that convert a prediction from favorable to unfavorable and vice versa. In order to show that the equation of favorable and unfavorable is attested lexically, the commentary first cites evidence from the bilingual *ṣâtu* lists. Then the commentary introduces another source, a second tablet,[363] that provides similar evidence from a monolingual *lišānu* vocabulary. This passage clearly illustrates the derivation of variant interpretations from variant sources;[364] more often, however, the citation of an alternative source is simply indicated by *šanîš*.

To sum up, the citation of multiple interpretations in Akkadian commentaries is not evidence that canonical texts were perceived as polysemic. Rather, the listing of a plurality of interpretations reflects the variety of sources that were brought to bear on a given text. On the other hand, the gathering of multiple interpretations in a commentary may have promoted the idea that the base text was indeed polysemic, since the commentary itself does not declare that one of the interpretations is superior to the others. Nevertheless, a careful study of scribal terminology shows that this perception was not the original motive for the compilation and study of commentaries.

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363 See 4.3.1.2.

364 Another reference to alternative lexical lists as separate sources used to support an interpretation may occur with *šanîš*: see Koch 2005, 268, no. 29:4 (K.2196+Sm.693:9′–10′, collated from digital photograph): . . . *li-m*[*aʾ*-] / [ ] x *ina* EME *qa-bi šá-niš li*-[ ] (note that this may be an equation of a word beginning with *li-* in two sources).

CHAPTER 2

"What?": Interpretation Through Definition (Equation and Description)

The terminology treated in this chapter and the next includes the majority of the functional hermeneutical terms that appear in Akkadian commentaries. These terms encode exegetical operations and are key to understanding the fundamental principles of Mesopotamian textual hermeneutics. A useful distinction can be drawn between two main types of techniques, corresponding to two styles of interpretation: interpretation through definition, and interpretation through contextualization. Interpretation through definition tends to answer the question "What?" by focusing on the meaning of individual words and phrases. These words and phrases can be defined either by equating poorly understood words or signs with other words or signs, or by describing the phenomena to which the words and phrases refer. Interpretation through contextualization, on the other hand, usually addresses problems in larger syntactic units, such as the protasis of an omen. Contextual interpretations answer the questions "How?" and "Why?" by taking the context of words or phenomena into account, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 3.

The definitional hermeneutical procedures discussed in the present chapter—equation and description—can be correlated with two main streams of Mesopotamian intellectual tradition: the lexical tradition and the divinatory tradition.[1] The principal concerns of both traditions are mirrored in two of the fundamental hermeneutical concerns of commentaries. Like the lexical tradition, commentaries deal with the meaning of the words and signs that make up texts by a process of equation. And like the divinatory tradition, which is founded on the accurate description of observable phenomena in the natural world and in human society so that these signs can be coordinated with their outcomes, the commentaries frequently rely on the description of objects and events in order to clarify the meaning of the words and phrases that refer to them.

1 See Frahm 2011, 12–23.

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1 Equation

Because lexical texts exercised a major influence on the evolution and nature of commentaries, equation, especially lexical equation, is a characteristic feature of Mesopotamian exegesis. Usually such equations are not structured by technical terminology but are simply indicated by a *Glossenkeil* separating the two equated words. Nevertheless, there are a few terms that can be used when making equations. In addition, it is possible that the *Glossenkeil* itself corresponds to a verbal formula that was pronounced during lessons to indicate the relationship between the terms in a lexical equation. Perhaps this formula was as simple as adding a pronoun as a copula after the equated terms and could be conveyed more economically in writing by placing a *Glossenkeil* between the two terms.[2]

1.1 *Pronouns*

When lexical equations are expressed in commentaries, pronouns are sometimes used as copulas and usually correspond grammatically to the gender or number of the equated item(s) (i.e., *šū*, *šī*, *šunu*). Pronominal copulas are especially common in scholarly letters and reports dealing with interpretive matters and thus attest to the colloquial use of pronouns to express equation—probably a reflection of the oral study environment. The copular use of pronouns is also common in cultic commentaries.[3]

A sequence of pronouns occurs in a commentary from Assur on lines from the series Šurpu.[4] The commentary attempts to identify general natural phenomena and general and foreign gods with specific features and gods of Babylonia:[5]

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2 See Chapter 1, para. 2.

3 See below.

4 The lines from the base text that are commented on are Šurpu III 23, 165, 64, 73, 83 (see Borger 2000, 39, 43–45, 53); see Frahm 2011, 386.

5 KAR 94:46′–56′; see Frahm 2011, 386–387:46′–56′. Contra Frahm (2011, 395), I understand these lines to reflect a Babylonian, not an anti-Babylonian, tradition. For other occurrences of pronouns in commentaries (besides the occurrences noted in the example immediately below, and further below in scholarly letters and cultic commentaries), see the following references: *šū*: Al-Rawi and George 1991/92, 64:7; Reynolds 1999, 370:3 (Koch 2004, 107:r.3); Verderame 2002, 37:r.12(?); MSL 14, 327:28(?); MSL 14, 496:19(?); MSL 14, 504:3, 4(?); note also two possible occurrences where *šū* may occur between the two elements of an equation (i.e., "x: it is y"): Gehlken 2012, 203:r.6′ and BM 67179:r.19′ (see Geller and Stadhouders 2015 with n. 12 [CCP 4.2.U]); *šī*: Reiner and Pingree 1981, 40, III:5b; KAR 94:35′ (Frahm 2011, 385:35′); *šunu*: Reynolds 1999, 370:10; Freedman 2006b, 154:19(?).

ma-mit KI.TUŠ *a-na* IGI ^{d}UTU *a-šá-bu ú-*[6] / *ma-a šá a-na tar-ṣi* MUL.SAG.ME.GAR *uš-šá-bu* / *ma-a* ^{d}UTU MUL.SAG.ME.GAR *šu-u*
ma-mit ^{d}MÚŠ EN *um-ma-ni ú-* / ^{d}MÚŠ ^{d}*na-bi-um*
ma-mit ^{íd}*sa-la-ḫa u* ÍD.MEŠ *ú-* / *ma-a* ÍD.MEŠ *šá* KUR URI^{ki} *ši-*[*na*]
ma-mit suk-ku pa-an-pa-na ⌜*ú*⌝- / *ma-a* BÁRA.MEŠ *šá é-saĝ-íl šú-*[*nu*]
ma-mit ib-re-ti u né-me-di-šá [*ú*]- / *ma-a* BÁRA.MEŠ *šá* KÁ.DINGIR^{ki} [*šú-nu*]

"The curse of sitting on a seat before Šamaš—(Asarluḫi, the exorcist of the gods) will (undo)"—thus: that which sits facing Jupiter, thus: Šamaš is Jupiter.
"The curse of Tišpak, lord of the troops—(Asarluḫi, the exorcist of the gods) will (undo)"—Tišpak = Nabû.
"The curse of *sprinkler*[7] and rivers—(Asarluḫi, the exorcist of the gods) will (undo)"—thus: they [are] the rivers of the Land of Akkad (= Babylonia).
"The curse of the chapel and shrine—(Asarluḫi, the exorcist of the gods) will (undo)"—thus: they [are] the sanctuaries of Esaĝil.
"The cures of an (outdoor) cult niche and its base—(Asarluḫi, the exorcist of the gods) [will] (undo)"—thus: [they are] the sanctuaries of Babylon.

In all these lines, the non-specific and non-Babylonian elements are equated with specific Babylonian features. This is in line with the general tendency in the commentaries to use specification as a hermeneutical technique.[8] Interestingly, the pronouns occur in these lines only when *mā*, the marker of direct speech, precedes an equation; conversely, in the only line that does not contain a pronoun (^{d}MÚŠ ^{d}*na-bi-um*), *mā* is also absent. As noted above,[9] the correlation of *mā* (here an indicator of oral tradition)[10] and *šū* may reflect how equations were expressed orally, namely by the pronoun *šū*. Elsewhere in cuneiform texts, equated terms only occasionally appear with *šū*; usually they are simply written one after the other, often with a *Glossenkeil* in between.

The use of *šū* to link a word with its interpretation is also common in scholarly letters and reports to the Assyrian king, reflecting the oral tradition that

6 As noted by Frahm (2011, 394), this is an abbreviation of the phrase *upaššar mašmaš ilī Asarluḫi*, occurring in this and the following lines.
7 See Frahm 2011, 395.
8 See Gabbay 2015b.
9 See para. 1 above.
10 See Chapter 1, 2.3.

stands behind the commentaries.[11] Thus, e.g., the prominent Neo-Assyrian scholar Balasî uses the pronoun *šū* after equations or short descriptions when corresponding with the king. In an astrological report he uses *šū* a few times:[12]

> *mu-šú*MI *an-ni-i-ú* / MUL.UDU.IDIM.SAG.UŠ *a-na* ^{d}30 / *iq-ṭi-ri-ib* MUL.UDU.IDIM.SAG.UŠ / MUL : ^{d}UTU *šu-ú* / *ki an-ni-i-e* / *pi-še-er-šú* SIG$_7$ *šá* LUGAL *šu-u* / ^{d}UTU MUL *šar-ri šu-u*
>
> Tonight Saturn approached the Moon. Saturn is the star of the Sun. Thus is its interpretation: it is good for the king. The Sun is the star of the king.

Similarly, Balasî notes in a letter to the king:[13]

> MUL.SAG.ME.GAR ^{d}30 *šu-u*
>
> "Jupiter" is the Moon.

And in the same manner in another letter:[14]

> MUL.UDU.IDIM.GU$_4$.UD DUMU-LUGAL / *šu-ú*
>
> Mercury is the crown-prince.

As noted above, the copular use of pronouns is also very common in cultic commentaries, which interpret cultic acts and objects by associating them with mythical acts and divinities. For example:[15]

> [LÚ.GAL.MEŠ] *šá kis-ki-la-te i-maḫ-ḫa-ṣu* DINGIR.MEŠ AD.MEŠ-*šú* ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*šú šu-nu ki-i iš-mu-u* [. . .]

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11 Note the use of both a *Winkelhaken* and the pronoun *šū* in SAA 10, 207:r.12: *a-me-lu* : LUGAL : *šu-ú*.

12 SAA 8, 95:r.1–7.

13 SAA 10, 43:r.5.

14 SAA 10, 52:r.9–10. Cf. also SAA 10, 73:r.7–8: MUL.UDU.IDIM.[GU$_4$].UD DUMU-LUGAL / [*š*]*u*$^{!}$-*ú* (Nabû-aḫḫē-erība).

15 SAA 3, 37:6′. For attestations of *šū* in cultic commentaries, see Livingstone 1986, 61:9(?) (BM 34035); Livingstone 1986, 68:r.5 (SIG$_4$ *šu-u*); Livingstone 1986, 172:4 (BM 34035); SAA 3, 37:5′, 10′, 17′, 26′ (*šu-ma*); SAA 3, 38:13, 17, 41 (*šu-ú-*(*ma*)). For attestations of *šī*, see BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 61):10; SAA 3, 39:19, 23. For other attestations of *šunu*, see Livingstone 1986, 172:6 (BM 34035); SAA 3, 37:32′ (*šu-nu-ma*).

> [The magnates] who beat the clappers are the gods, his fathers (and) brothers, when they heard [. . .].

1.2 šumšu, *"its name"*

In ancient Mesopotamian perception, as in the perceptions of other societies and cultures, the name of a person, object, or phenomenon embodies its essence. Naming stands at the intersection of definition by equation and definition by description, since on the one hand the name is considered to be equal to, or at least closely associated with the thing it designates, while on the other hand the name can be considered as a concise description of the essence of the thing it designates.

The noun *šumu*, "name," occurs a few times in commentaries, where it refers to a short designation, definition, description,[16] or equation, always followed by a possessive suffix (*-šu* or *-šunu*), a use that is known from other explanatory and descriptive genres as well.[17]

For example, an Ālu commentary on snake omens probably refers to a "wandering"(?) (*ruppudu*) snake:[18]

> [x x] MUŠ *ru-up-pu-<du>* : *ra-pa-du* : *šá-né-e* [*ṭēmi*(?) (. . .)] / [*i-la*]-*as-su-um lu-bu-ši-šú ú-šar-ra-a*[*ṭ* . . .] / *ra-pa-du* MU-*šú*
>
> [. . .] " 'wandering'(?)-snake"—to wander = to go [mad(?) (. . .)] he [ru]ns and tears off his clothes [. . .]—"wander" is its name.

The designation of the snake—*ruppudu*, "wandering"(?)—is said to derive from the verb *rapādu*, "to wander, to roam." However, *rapādu* D occurs in the first millennium BCE in the context of sick persons,[19] and indeed the only (lex-

16 See 2.3.6.2 below.

17 See, e.g., references in *CAD* Š/III, 286–287. See also Schuster-Brandis 2008, 19–20. For occurrences of *šumšu* in commentaries, besides the examples given below, see SBTU 1, 36:21 (. . . *ka-ra*$^{?}$*-ra* MU.NE); SBTU 1, 49:20 (*lìb-bu-ú* GÍDIM *šá* DIŠ$^{!}$ GIDIM MU.NE); Biggs 1968, 54:22 (. . . A.MEŠ : *šá* ABZU MU.NE; see Gabbay 2006); CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):9 (U_4 *šá-qu* MU.NE.NE); Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:44 (DUL MU.NI); Koch 2005, no. 95:r.6′, 7′ (MU.NI); Reynolds 1999, 370:7 (var: *ina šumišu*), 10, 11; Reiner and Pingree 2005, 178:23′ (^{d}*né-bé-ru* MU.NI); cf. Reiner and Pingree 2005, 191, left edge. For other occurrences of *šumšu*, cf. also *ina ṣâti šumšu qabi*, see Chapter 5, 2.1; *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*, Chapter 1, 3.2.8.

18 Funck 2:8–10 (*AfO* 21, pls. 9–10; Freedman 2006a, 73:8–10); see Jiménez 2015c with n. 4 (CCP 3.5.25).

19 See *CAD* R, 149b.

ical) attestations of the noun *ruppudu* seem to refer to a disease.[20] Therefore, the commentary seems to understand the noun *ruppudu* this way, referring perhaps to a disease suffered by the snake or by one attacked by the snake. The commentary presents some symptoms of this disease (suffered by human beings)—running around and tearing one's clothes—and then notes that this situation is called (*šumšu*) "to roam" (*rapādu*) as well. This may in fact be the correct etymology of the noun *ruppudu* in this omen if it reflects the *quttulu* pattern often associated with sicknesses and disabilities.[21]

An astrological commentary (*Sîn ina tāmartišu*) contains another case where a phrase is explained using the term *šumšu*:[22]

> [DIŠ 30 TÙR U]D ḪÉ$^{!}$.NUN$^{!}$ NÍGIN$^{!}$[23] AN.MI ^{d}TIR.AN.NA UD ḪÉ.NUN[24] MU.NI TÙR BABBAR NÍGIN-*ma* ŠÈG SUR
>
> "[If the moon] is surrounded [by a halo] of a 'day of abundance'—eclipse"—a rainbow—"day of abundance" is its name; it is surrounded by a white halo and rain falls.

The commentary cites an omen in which the moon is surrounded by a halo of a "day of abundance" and explains this phrase as referring to a rainbow—in the Akkadian idiom, as a "name" for the rainbow; this explanation is attested elsewhere as well.[25] The commentary then paraphrases the original omen in light of its interpretation as a rainbow: the moon is "surrounded by a white halo and rain falls." The halo is said to be white on the basis of the first element of the phrase "day of abundance" (UD = day, but also BABBAR = white). The second element of the phrase, "abundance," is a common designation for rain.[26]

In another example, from a Neo-Assyrian cultic commentary, a phrase that is homophonic to the term *tamrīqātu* is defined as *šumšu*, "its name":[27]

---

20 *CAD* R, 412a.

21 See *GAG* §55n.

22 Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161:123 (collated from photograph of K.4024+, r.6′).

23 Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161, reads: [diš 30 *ina*] ud-1-kam tùr, "if the moon (is surrounded by) a pen on the 1st day," but the last sign is not TÙR, but rather NUN and NÍGIN (not LAGAR, the second component of TÙR), as seen in a photograph of the tablet, and as expected on the basis of the continuation of the commentary.

24 For this reading, confirmed by collation, see Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161 n. 89.

25 See Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161 n. 89; cf. *CAD* M/I, 230b.

26 See *CAD* N/II, 320–321.

27 SAA 3, 39:16, cf. SAA 3, 40:15. For *šumšu* in homophonic environments, see 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 below, and Chapter 3, 3.2, discussion of Reynolds 1999, 370:8–12, with n. 59.

tam-ri-qa-tú šá ina KA UN.MEŠ DU_{11}.GA-*ú e-ta-mar* ŠU^{II}-*a-a* MU-*šú*

The *tamrīqātu* (cultic element) that is said in the mouth(s) of the people[28]—"I have seen my hands (*ētamar qātīya*)"[29] is its name.

1.2.1 *ina* (*muḫḫi*) *šumišu iddaggil*, "it is seen (with)in its name"

A term that incorporates *šumšu* is *ina* (*muḫḫi*) *šumišu iddaggil*, "it is seen (with)in its name," which perhaps also occurs in a variant using a different verb or form. This term equates the meaning of a word with the meaning of the sum of the elements that comprise it (here referred to as the "name," *šumu*, of that word). The term occurs twice, in both cases explaining a name through an etymological *notariqon*.[30]

A Neo-Assyrian report cites favorable hemerological entries for the month Ayyāru, and then notes (perhaps by way of a second citation) that the favorable character of the month can be seen by an analysis of the signs with which it is written (ITI.GU_4.SI.SÁ):[31]

DIŠ ITI.GU_4.SI.SÁ *ia-e-ru ar-ḫu šu-te-šur ka-la-ma* / *ina* UGU *šu-mi-šu i-da-gi-il* : ITI : *ar-ḫu* / GU_4 : *nap-ḫa-ru* : GU_4 : *ka-la-ma* : SI.SÁ *e-še-ru*

ITI.GU_4.SI.SÁ = Ayyāru = the month of bringing everything into order; it is seen within its (= the month's) name: ITI = month, GU_4 = total, GU_4 = everything, SI.SÁ = to be in order.

A second example is found in an expository text on Ninurta and his manifestations, where the name Zababa is explained through an analysis of its elements:[32]

28 I assume that "that is said in the mouth(s) of the people" refers backwards to *tamrīqātu*, as in a typical *ša iqbû* construction (see Chapter 5, para. 1, although acting in a different role here). One cannot exclude the interpretation, advanced by A. Livingstone (SAA 3, 101), that the phrase refers forwards to *ētamar qātīya*, although I think it is less probable.

29 Or *ētamar qātāya*, "he learned from my example"; see A. Livingstone, SAA 3, 101, and *CAD* A/II, 22b, *CAD* T, 146a.

30 Cf. also *ina ṣâti dagil*. See Chapter 1, 4.4.1.1.

31 SAA 8, 232:r.8–10; cf. Frahm 2011, 284.

32 Lambert 1989a, 216:1–2.

> ^{d}za-ba$_4$-ba$_4$ EN KUR.KUR *ina šu-me-*^{r}*šú*^{1} x [...][33] / ZA *be-lu*$_4$ BA$_4$.BA$_4$ *ma-ta-*[*tu*$_4$]
>
> Zababa—lord of of the lands; it is [seen(?)] in his name: ZA = lord, BA$_4$. BA$_4$ = lands.

1.2.2 *ina* (*libbi*) *šumi . . . qabi*, "it is said (with)in the name"(?)

Similar to the phrase *ina* (*muḫḫi*) *šumišu iddaggil* discussed above,[34] but referring to how the name is pronounced or spoken (*qabû*) and not how it is seen (*dagālu*), is *ina libbi šumi . . . qabi*, "it is said within the name . . .," which is probably attested just once. It is possible that this phrase occurs once more in a broken context, if *qabû* is to be restored rather than *dagālu*.[35]

The phrase *ina libbi šumi . . . qabi* occurs in a Late Babylonian commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons:[36]

> GE UMUN-*ḫi šá* ^{giš}TUKUL-*šú a-bu-b*[*u ez-zu* : . . .] . . . [. . .] *ina lìb-bi* MU *šá* ^{d}AMAR.UTU *qa-bi*$^{i?}$("TI")[37]
>
> "I am Asarluḫi whose weapon is a [fierce] flood"—[. . .] . . . [. . .] it is said within the name of Marduk.

The commentary first cites a line from Marduk's Address to the Demons,[38] followed by an explanation, not presented here, that is not entirely understood.[39] This is followed by the phrase "it is said within the name of

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33 Lambert (1989a, 216–217) restores *q*[*a-bi*], and translates: "Zababa is said to be 'Lord of the Lands' by his name." But it is possible, in agreement with the previous example, that a form of *dagālu* should be restored (^{r}*i*^{1}-[*da-gil*]? *d*[*a-gil*]?).

34 See 1.2.1 above.

35 Lambert 1989a, 216:1–2. See 1.2.1 above with n. 33.

36 BM 47529+:r.11–13 (Geller 2014, 62:12); collated from photograph. See also Jiménez 2015a (CCP 2.2.1.B).

37 Geller 2014, 62, n. 24: "Emended from *-ti* by W.G.L."

38 For the base text, see Lambert 1959/1960, 115, B:16; Geller 2007, 155, excerpt 4:11.

39 The full commentary is as follows (collated from photograph): GE UMUN-*ḫi šá* ^{giš}TUKUL-*šú a-bu-b*[*u ez-zu* : ^{múl}ZU]BI *kak-ku šá* ŠU^{II} ^{d}AMAR.UTU *gam-lu* / *šag-gi-šu* : *qab*$^{?}$-[*lu* x x *ša*]*g-ga-šú* ^{r}MUŠ^{1} *im-tú* : *mu-bal-li-ṭu* / *bi-iṣ-ṣú* : *ni-i*[*t*$^{?}$*-ku*$^{?}$ . . .] *ina lìb-bi* MU *šá* ^{d}AMAR.UTU *qa-bi*$^{i?}$("TI"), " 'I am Asarluḫi whose weapon is a [fierce] flood'—"[crooked]-staff [star]" (=Auriga); the weapon in the hands of Marduk is a murderous crooked-staff = murderous battle; snake(?) and(?) poison; he who makes live; droplets = dr[ops(?) . . .]

Marduk," occurring after a break. It is not certain how this phrase is related to what preceded it, and perhaps it is not related but was considered an alternative interpretation (perhaps introduced by *šá-niš*). It is possible, in my view, that the phrase refers to the association of Marduk with the flood and weapons that appear, according to an ancient interpretation, in a variant form of his name. Lambert observed that Marduk was probably pronounced also Marutuk(u),[40] which is known to have been rendered as ^{d}mar-uru$_5$-^{giš}tukul, "a flood of weapons,"[41] omitting the final /*l*/.[42] As noted by Lambert,[43] this epithet of Marduk occurs in an Akkadian Šuila prayer to Marduk: *a-bu-ub* ^{giš}TUKUL *qa-bal la* [*ma-ḫ*]*ar šá t*[*i*$^{?}$-*bu*$^{?}$-*šu*] *ez-zu*, "(Marduk), the flood weapon, the battle without [rival], whose [*onslaught*] is furious."[44] This line links the name of Marduk as a "flood of weapon(s)" with the adjective *ezzu*, and they are also linked in the line that is commented on here: "I am Asarluḫi whose weapon is a [fierce] flood." Thus, according to the commentary, this description of Marduk is actually manifest in his name (*ina libbi šumi ša Marduk qabi*, if the emendation *qa-bi*$^{!}$ is correct).[45]

1.3 ištēn(-ma), *"(is/are) one"*

While lexical equations are usually indicated simply by juxtaposing the corresponding terms with or without a personal pronoun, in some rare cases the term *ištēn*(*-ma*), "(is/are) one," is added instead of a pronoun. The term is not used with simple lexical equations, but with equations of certain circumstances, references, or predictions whose similarity or identity is not apparent superficially.[46] It can also mark a harmonization accomplished by expository

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it is said within the name of Marduk." Note *šá-ga-áš-tú* = *qablu*, see references in *CAD* Š/I, 69b. The mention of the snake and its poison here is reminiscent of the description of the weapon of Marduk or Nabû as dripping poison; see Gabbay 2015a, no. 99:a+14 with note to line and its citation in the Birdcall text (cf. Lambert 2013, 235). For the connection between Marduk as a flood and a dragon or snake, see Oshima 2011, 172–173.

40 Lambert 2013, 161–164.

41 An-Anum II:193 (Litke 1998, 91): ^{d}mar-uru$_5$-^{giš}tukul = MIN (= ^{d}AMAR.UTU) *a-bu-bu* ^{giš}TUKUL.MEŠ.

42 See Lambert 2013, 164.

43 Lambert 2013, 165.

44 See Oshima 2011, 356–357:7.

45 E. Jiménez called my attention to a similar phrase found in other texts, namely (*ša*) *kīma šumišu*, "(who) as his name," that occurs a few times in reference to characteristics of a god that are mirrored in the etymology of his name; see Lambert 1967, 132.

46 Cf. the phrase *ana zikari u sinništi ištēn-ma*, "it is one (= i.e., the same diagnosis or prediction) for a male or a woman," occurring in omen literature (cf. H. Hunger, SBTU 1,

"etymology," such as homophony. For example, a commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman who experiences difficulty in giving birth addresses a passage in an incantation that refers to the use of dirt (saḫar) from a road as part of that woman's treatment:[47]

> saḫar sil-la : saḫar : *e-pe-ri* : sa-ḫar *u ṣa-ḫar iš-ten-ma*
>
> "dirt (saḫar) of the road"—saḫar = dirt; dirt (saḫar) and child (*ṣaḫar*) are one.

The commentary attempts to harmonize the ingredient used for treatment, namely dirt, saḫar, with the hoped-for result: the birth of the child (*ṣeḫru, ṣaḫru*). It does this by homophony, noting that the "dirt" of the treatment is directly related to the birth of the "child" resulting in this treatment, due to their homophony (saḫar, [*ṣeḫru* >] *ṣaḫar*), and thus the two may be considered one and the same (*ištēn-ma*).

In two other cases, the equation is between gods.[48] A cultic commentary states:[49]

> *ina* ITI.ŠU UD.18.KAM ^{d}U.GUR KI-*tì ur-rad* / ITI.GAN UD.28.KAM E_{11} ^{d}UTU *u* ^{d}U.GUR 1-*en*
>
> On the eighteenth day of the month Du'ūzu, Nergal goes down to the netherworld. On the twenty-eighth day of Kislīmu he comes up; Šamaš and Nergal are one.

The descent of Nergal to the netherworld during the summer and his ascent during the winter seem to be associated with the summer and winter solstices, and consequently associated with the sun(god), Šamaš; thus Nergal and Šamaš are said to be "one" (*ištēn*), at least in this aspect.

The second equation of gods with the term *ištēn* occurs in a Sagig commentary:[50]

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p. 39, and references in Heeßel 2000, 406). Cf. also SAA 8, 371:r.3: *šá* ^{d}30 *u* ^{d}GU_4.UD 1^{i}+*et*^{i} *a-mat-su*^{i}-*nu*^{i}. Cf. also Reynolds 1999, 370:5: *ti-amat u* ^{d}*qin-gi ana iš-tén* GUR-*ru* (var.: MEŠ)-*ma* (see Koch 2006, 132–133).

47 Civil 1974, 332:9. For the base text, cf. Cohen 1976, 138:46; see Veldhuis 1989, 242.

48 Cf. SAA 8, 371:r.3, cited in n. 46 above.

49 Livingstone 1986, 256 (BM 34035:52–53).

50 SBTU 1, 30, 11–13.

> SAG.KI-*šú šá* 15 GU_7-*šú* ŠU ^{d}UTU TIN / [SAG.KI-*šú šá* 1]50 (2,30) GU_7-*šú* ŠU ^{d}15 TIN : IGI 15 : ^{d}15 : IGI 150 (2,30): ^{d}UTU / [x ^{d}]UTU *u* ^{d}15 1-*ma*
>
> "his right temple hurts him—(it is the) Hand-of-Šamaš; he will live," "[his le]ft [temple] hurts him—Hand-of-Ištar"—*corresponding* to right (written: 15) = Ištar (written: ^{d}15), *corresponding* to left = Šamaš; [. . .][51] Šamaš and Ištar are one.

The term *ištēnma*, "are one," may refer here to the fact that both the Hand-of-Ištar and the Hand-of-Šamaš result in the recovery of the patient (TIN, "he will live," in the apodoses of both).[52] But it is difficult to comprehend why this should be stated when it is clear from the omens themselves that this is the case; furthermore, this remark does not seem to result from the previous discussion. Assuming, then, that the meaning of the *ištēnma* equation depends on the meaning of the term *pān* that precedes it, this would refer to a different correspondence between Šamaš and Ištar, as discussed below.[53]

1.4 pān(ī) (. . . šakin), *"corresponding"(?)*

The exegetical term *pān* was recognized by J. Wee.[54] Whether it is used with or without *šakin* it seems to have the same function, as indicated by parallel commentaries that contain this variation.[55] However, there are some problems with the interpretation, and perhaps even the existence of the term. First, since in most examples it occurs with animals, one cannot exclude that it simply refers literally to the faces of animals. Note especially the use of *pānī . . . šakin* with animals in omen texts.[56] Second, in another example, *pān* may have a spatial meaning, referring to things facing each other, and thus may not be an exegetical term at all. All the examples will be discussed below. If the term does exist, it seems to relate to a correspondence between two features, phenomena, or perceptions. The use of *pānu* in this sense may be compared to its use in mathematical texts, where it indicates a number's reciprocal, i.e., the number

51 Various restorations are possible here. H. Hunger, in his edition in SBTU 1, 30, proposes *šá*. Another possibility is *ana*.

52 So H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 39.

53 See 1.4 below.

54 See Wee 2012, 495.

55 See George 1991, 148:22, texts a (*pān . . . šakin*), b, and c (*pāni*); see below.

56 See references in *CAD* P, 94–95.

that "faces" its counterpart in order to achieve a whole.[57] In commentaries, this term (if it indeed exists) explicitly refers to the juxtaposition of two realities, one standing for the other in a harmonizing or even allegorical relationship.[58]

A Sagig commentary cites two similar omens, one dealing with the right temple of the patient and the other with the left temple:[59]

> SAG.KI-*šú šá* 15 GU_7-*šú* ŠU ^{d}UTU TIN / [SAG.KI-*šú šá* 1]50 (2,30) GU_7-*šú* ŠU ^{d}15 TIN : IGI 15 : ^{d}15 : IGI 150 (2,30): ^{d}UTU / [x ^{d}]UTU *u* ^{d}15 1-*ma*
>
> "his right temple hurts him—(it is the) Hand-of-Šamaš; he will live," "[his le]ft [temple] hurts him—Hand-of-Ištar"—*corresponding* to right (written: 15) = Ištar (written: ^{d}15), *corresponding* to left = Šamaš; [. . .][60] Šamaš and Ištar are one.

There are a few problems with the interpretation of this commentary. First, if *pān* here does serve as a hermeneutical term, it would seem to have a different syntax than it does in other exegetical contexts. Instead of the formula x *pān* y, our text has *pān* y = x.[61] Let us suppose that *pān* is an exegetical term referring to correspondence. I assume that the commentary is trying to make sense of the connection between the protasis and apodosis in each of the two omens. In the omens, the pain on the right side is associated with Šamaš, and the pain on the left with Ištar. But the commentary notes that Ištar corresponds (*pān*) to the right, which would seem to contradict the omen where she is associated with the left. The reason why the commentary insists on pairing her with the right side is the obvious numerical correspondence between Ištar, written with the number 15, and the right side, written with the number 15 as well. Šamaš is said to correspond (*pān*) to the left, but the numerical justification for this is unclear;[62] nevertheless, this statement contradicts the omen's association of

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57 Cf. also the use of *miḫru* in the interpretation of ominous events (*ittu miḫir itti*). See Appendix 1, 4.1.

58 Besides the examples below, a few other attestations of *pānu*, all in astronomical contexts, probably do not refer to the putative exegetical term *pān*. See BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 62):28–29: SA NÍG.GIG an-šár *áš-šú* MÚL.KAK.BAN IGI MÚL.ḪUN *ana* ^{ta}*tal-lu i-še-eṭ* / MÚL.KAK.BAN *ana tal-lu ik-tal-du*; BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 62):30: 27 UD.MEŠ IGI *šá* MÚL *ḫi-pi*; Reiner and Pingree 2005, 46:9: *pa-ni* AN-[*e* . . .].

59 SBTU 1, 30, 11–13. This entry was also treated in 1.3 above.

60 For restoration, see n. 51 above.

61 Cf. Wee 2012, 495–496.

62 One may speculate whether Šamaš, whose number is 20, was associated with the left (written: 150), in the following way: the number for "left," 150, is written 2,30. These two

him with the right. In order to resolve the contradiction between the numerical associations and the omens, the commentary asserts that the two gods are actually "one."[63] But the commentary can also be understood in a more concrete way, in which *pān* need not be construed as an exegetical term. If the left temple of the patient hurts, and this is caused by the "hand" of Ištar, one may visualize the patient as standing facing (*pān*) Ištar so that his left temple is on her right, and this results in a numerical correspondence between the goddess's right side and the goddess herself. Conversely, if the right temple of the patient hurts, this corresponds to the left side of Šamaš when he is envisioned as standing in front (*pān*) of the patient.

Perhaps the clearest example demonstrating that *pān* (*. . . šakin*) is an exegetical term is to be found in a Sagig commentary. An omen in the first tablet of Sagig notes:[64]

> DIŠ ANŠE SAL.ANŠE U_5-*ma* IGI GIG BI *mu-tu u šu-ú ik-tap-pi-lu na-qud* NU TE-*šú*
>
> If he (= the healer on his way to the patient) sees a donkey mounting a jenny—that patient, death and he are intertwined; he (= the patient) is dangerously sick; one should not approach him.

A commentary to this omen, preserved in three tablets in variant forms, explains why the mounting of the donkey and the jenny refers to the hazardous state of the patient:[65]

> Commentary a: *ik-tap-pi-lu* : [. . . ÈME *pa-an* GIG] / ANŠE *pa-an mu-tú šá-kin l*[*ìb-bu-ú*(?) . . .]
>
> Commentary b: ANŠE SAL.ANŠE U_5-*ma* IGI GIG BI [*mu-tú*] *u šu-ú ik-tap-pi-lu* : LA.GA : ANŠE : LA GA : *la nap-ṭu-*[*r*]*u* : [. . . *mu-tú*(?) *pa*]*-ni* ANŠE *šá-niš pa-ni* MUŠ

---

elements, 2 and 30, when multiplied are 60 (2 × 30 = 60) or 3,600 (2 × 60 × 30 = 3,600). Šamaš is written 20, but the king, who is also written 20, can also be written 200 (3,20), the same two elements as in the writing for "left," 3 and 20, resulting in 60 (or 3,600) when multiplied, but in reverse order (cf. Labat 1965b, 259–260; Nougayrol 1972, 96, no. 12).

63 This may relate to the identical prediction "he will live" in both; see above.

64 George 1991, 142:22.

65 George 1991, 148:22 (sigla following George).

Commentary c: [. . . *mu-tú*(?) *pa-ni* ANŠE *š*]*á-niš* ⌜*pa-ni*⌝ [MUŠ]

Commentary a: "They are intertwined"—[. . .; the jenny stands in correspondence to the patient], the donkey in correspondence to death, as [in(?) . . .].

Commentaries bc: "If he sees a donkey mounting a jenny—that patient, [death] and he are intertwined"—LA.GA = "donkey," LA GA = "unreleased"; [. . . death(?) corresp]onds to(?) the donkey; alternatively, corresponds to(?) a snake.

As noted by George,[66] "[t]he donkeys joined in copulation are a symbol for the fatal bond between the sick man and death." George understands the phrase *pān . . . šakin* in the text in an exegetical way, translating it as "serves for," similar to my translation "stands in correspondence to," but understands *pānī* in texts b and c as an actual "face."[67] It seems likely to me that *pānī* and *pān . . . šakin* should be understood as variations of the same term, and therefore *pānī* in texts b and c should also relate to the correspondence between death and the donkey. The remaining problem is why the snake is mentioned in text b. Assuming that the copy is correct and MUŠ is indeed the sign, perhaps death corresponds to a snake, even though no snake is mentioned in the base text, because snakes are often described as "intertwined" (*kitpulu*),[68] predicting death.[69]

A case similar to the previous one is found in another Sagig commentary:[70]

DIŠ GÙ GIG *taš-mi-ma* GIM GÙ AN[ŠE?] / [*ana*?] UD.1.KAM GAM *šá* E-*ú mu-ú-tu pa-ni* AN.IM.DUG[UD.MUŠEN] / *an-zu-u* : *an-šu-ú* : *i-me-*[*ru*?]

"If you hear the cry of the patient and it is like the cry of a do[nkey (ANŠE)](?)—he will die [within] one day," which it said—death corresponds to(?) the Anzû-[bird]; *anzû* = *anšû* = donk[ey].

66 George 1991, 157.

67 George 1991, 149.

68 See references in *CAD* K, 174b, and n. 69 below.

69 Cf. Freedman 2006a, 10–11:20: "If in the month of Nisannu, from the first day to the thirtieth day, snakes are intertwined (*ik-tap-pi-lu*) in a man's house—the owner of that house will die," and Freedman 2006a, 88–89, vi:18′ (see Heeßel 2007a, 36, no. 9, vi:16′): "[If snak]es in a street are intertwined (*ik-tap-pi-lu-ma*) and a man sees (them) and kills them—that man will die." See also the commentary in Freedman 2006b, 151:13–14, cited and discussed in Chapter 3, 6.1.

70 SBTU 1, 32:r.11–13; cf. Genty 2010, 30. For the base text, cf. Labat, 1951, 66, 68:86′–92′.

In this omen the correspondence between the Anzû-bird and death, a correspondence perhaps related to the deadly nature of the Anzû-bird, is extended through homophony to include the donkey (*anzû* > *anšû* > anše), whose sound predicts the death of the patient in the omen.[71] However, there are some problems with this interpretation. First of all, one cannot rule out the possibility that *pānī* here refers to the perception of the actual "face" of (personified) death. Second, an Akkadian word *anšû* for "donkey" does not exist.[72] Third, even though the last sign in the copy of the protasis cited in the commentary looks like the beginning of ANŠE, perhaps this is not correct and another animal should be restored—perhaps a type of bird,[73] which would correspond to the later mention of the Anzû-bird.

Another use of *pān* with reference to an animal occurs in a medical commentary:[74]

> MAŠKIM KA LÚ *uṣ-ṣab-b*[*it*] / MAŠKIM *pa-ni* ÙZ *šá-kin*
>
> "a *rābiṣu*-demon has seized the mouth of the man"—the *rābiṣu*-demon corresponds to the goat.

The commentary entry cited here follows an interpretation of a goat's hide, listed as an ingredient of a remedy for a sickness.[75] Although the remedy is not preserved in the base text,[76] a similar medical text prescribes various ingredients for a similar sickness, including a goat's hide.[77] The commentary, then, wishes to link between the ritual act of preparing the remedy and the cause of the sickness, the *rābiṣu* demon.[78] If the *rābiṣu*-demon had the face of a goat, then *pān . . . šakin* here could be taken literally, and the link between the ritual

71 Note also the connection between the Anzû-bird and equids remarked by George 1991, 157.

72 Note that Geller 2010, 148 and 196 n. 203, understands the words differently, as "*anzû*-bird = dream interpreter (for *ensû*) = priest" (reading the last word as *i-šip*-[*pu*]).

73 So Geller 2010, 148.

74 SBTU 1, 47:13–14 (see Frahm 2011, 398). For the base text, see SBTU 1, 46:r.27 (Frahm 2011, 397). Note that SBTU 1, 46 does not correspond entirely to what is interpreted in the commentary SBTU 1, 47, where sections not preserved in SBTU 1, 46 are explained; cf. Frahm 2011, 396, referring to SBTU 1, 46 as "what seems to be, at least for the most part, its base text."

75 SBTU 1, 47:13, see Frahm 2011, 398 and discussion in 402–403.

76 SBTU 1, 46.

77 See references and discussion in Frahm 2011, 402.

78 Cf. Frahm 2011, 403.

act and the demon causing the sickness would be clear. However, as indicated by Frahm, there is no other indication that the *rābiṣu*-demon had the face of a goat, and elsewhere he is actually linked to a lion.[79] Thus it seems more probable that *pān* here is an exegetical term. Because the disease described in the base text is connected to epilepsy, the correspondence between the *rābiṣu*-demon and the goat probably reflects a more general association of epilepsy with goats in the ancient world.[80]

1.5 lū, *"it is indeed"*

A commentary on a medical text uses the particle *lū*, "indeed," to refer to an equation that was mentioned earlier in the commentary:[81]

> A PÚ *šá* E-*ú* : *ina* ŠÀ *šá* MAŠKIM *mu-sa-*ʳ*a*ˀ-[*ti*] / ᵈ*šu-lak* : *lu-ú* ᵈ*šu-lak šá mu-sa-a-*[*ti*]
>
> "Water of a well" which it said, since the demon of the lavatory = Šulak, (who) is indeed Šulak of the lavatory (referred to earlier in the commentary).

The commentary cites an ingredient listed in the base text for the treatment of the patient,[82] and proceeds to explain why it is used, using the term *ša iqbû ina libbi ša*[83] to associate it with the demon of the lavatory, who caused the sickness. This demon is identified as Šulak, who was linked earlier in the commentary with impure toilet hygiene.[84] Thus the well water prescribed for the treatment is intended to counter the impure hygiene associated with the lavatory (and its demon).[85] The equation of the demon of the lavatory with Šulak is

79 See Frahm 2011, 403.

80 See Stol 1993, 149–150.

81 SBTU 1, 47:14–15. This is the only certain attestation of *lū* in this meaning. Possible other attestations are SBTU 2, 36:15 and CT 41, 39 (Labat 1933, no. 13)+BM 43343 (from photo):14 (see CCP 3.8.2.A), but the context is difficult in both occurrences. Other attestations of *lū* are in the context of options ("or"), see 1.7 and 2.5.1 below. In BM 47529+:4 (Geller 2014, 61:2), *lu-ú* UR.MAḪ probably does not mean "it is indeed a lion," or "or a lion," but is rather the lexical equation "*lû* = lion." See references in *CAD* L, 227b (Malku V:58; see Hrůša 2010, 112, 399:58 and references on p. 254) (perhaps a reinterpretation of the middle element in the name Asar**lu**ḫi).

82 See SBTU 1, 46:28 (Frahm 2011, 397).

83 See Chapter 5, 1.4.5; differently: Frahm 2011, 398, 400.

84 See SBTU 1, 47:2–5 (Frahm 2011, 398); see Chapter 5, 1.2.

85 See Frahm 2011, 403.

emphasized with the particle *lū*, "indeed," since the rationale for this equation was already discussed earlier in the commentary.[86]

1.6 (apālu, *"to correspond"*)

In a few extispicy explanatory texts the verb *apālu*, literally "to answer," is used to denote a correspondence between two features.[87] For example, in the following Late Babylonian entry:[88]

> BE-*ma* GABA.UŠ-tu_4 GABA.UŠ-tu_4 *i-tap-pal šá* IGI-tu_4 *u* EGIR-tu_4 <*ana*>[?] IGI-*ka*
>
> If "a *pitruštu*-sign corresponds to (another) *pitruštu*-sign, and that of the first (extispicy) and the later extispicy" *is before you*.

Or, in a tablet dealing with the calculation of the stipulated term:[89]

> GIZKIM UDU.NÍTA *né-re-bu šá* NAM.AZU *ina ṣa-a-ti u* NÍG.ŠID *i-tap-pal*
>
> A sign of the sheep corresponds to the "entrance" of extispicy in the *ṣâtu*-lists and calculations.

1.7 *Multi-option Equation*: lū . . . (u) lū, *"(whether/either . . .) or"*

Just as descriptions may contain different options, so may equations include more than one correspondence.[90] For example, in a commentary on the first tablet of Sagig, referring to an entry from the base text that deals with the observation of a "prowling" god by the healer on his way to the patient:[91]

> DIŠ DINGIR *saḫ-ḫi-ra* IGI : *lu-u*$_{(2)}$ ^{d}*be-let*-DINGIR.MEŠ / *lu-u*$_{(2)}$ *ur-gu-la-a lu-u* ^{d}*gaz-ba-ba* : *šá-niš un-na-niš-šú*

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86 See above with n. 84.

87 See references in *CAD* A/II, 164b.

88 Koch 2005, no. 33:r.26. Besides the two examples given below, the verb occurs also in Koch 2005, no. 33:r.35, r.37; Koch 2005, no. 34A:1, 200 34B:1′; Koch 2005, no. 93:48: 360.

89 Koch 2005, no. 95:r.4′.

90 See 2.5.1 below. Besides the example below, note other occurrences of *lū*, "or," naming alternative correspondences for stars: SBTU 3, 102:r.7–8; probably Verderame 2002, 92:2′; perhaps Verderame 2002, 150:9′.

91 George 1991, 150:30 (a 29–30) // SBTU 5, 256:4′.

> "If he sees a prowling god"—either/whether Bēlet-ilī, Leo, or Gazbaba; secondly: Unna-niššu.

The commentary identifies the "prowling god" mentioned in the base text. According to the second interpretation, it is the god Unna-niššu, but according to the first interpretation the phrase can be equated with any of three different gods.

1.8 ṣâtu, *"word correspondences"*

In line with the long tradition of lexical lists and translations in Mesopotamia, one of the most basic concerns of the commentaries is lexical. This is most evident in the lexically and philologically oriented *ṣâtu* commentaries. As Frahm pointed out, the term *ṣâtu* is not reserved for commentaries per se but is also a designation for other lexical lists and vocabularies.[92] This is apparent in the layout of these commentaries on tablets in their early stage in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods, which resembles that of lexical texts arranged in two columns. The left column contains a selection of words listed in the order in which they appear in the base text, and the right column provides simple lexical correspondences, usually to explain a rare word or to indicate the reading of a logographically written word or sequence.

The word *ṣâtu*, a plural form of the noun *ṣītu*, is derived from the verb (*w*)*aṣû*, "to go out," and is usually used to designate a period of time distant from the present, whether in the past or in the future.[93] How this meaning of *ṣâtu* might be related to its use to refer to a genre of commentaries is not clear, and several options have been proposed: **(1)** It may go back to the basic meaning of the verb (*w*)*aṣû*, "to go out," referring to "those that come out," i.e., extracts from the commented text with explanations.[94] **(2)** Alternatively, *ṣâtu* in the sense of "those that come out" could refer to the explanations deriving ("coming out") from the words commented on.[95] **(3)** Another possibility is to understand the word in light of one of the idiomatic meanings of the verb (*w*)*aṣû* in the Š-stem, "to bring out, to reveal," and to regard *ṣâtu* as "explanations."[96] **(4)** Perhaps *ṣâtu* is related to the use of the Št stem of the verb (*w*)*aṣû* to refer to equation and correspondence (although this meaning is not certain).[97]

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92 Frahm 2011, 48–49.

93 See *CAD* Ṣ, 116–119.

94 See Labat 1933, 15, and Frahm 2011, 49 with n. 199.

95 Cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, 35 n. 95.

96 See Lambert 1954–56, 320.

97 See Koch 2005, 34A:1, 200; 34:B:1′: KI *a-ḫa-meš uš-te-eṣ-ṣu-ú*.

(5) A less likely suggestion, based on the temporal sense of *ṣâtu*, is that it refers to ancient times, hinting at either the ancient forms of the words explained or the ancient origin of the commentaries themselves (indeed, this association may have existed in ancient Mesopotamia).[98] **(6)** Lastly, a Hebrew term used in rabbinic exegesis may point to a rare meaning of the verb (*w*)*aṣû*, namely, "to be similar," which would fit well in the context of lexical correspondences. The Hebrew verb *yaṣa'*, which is the etymological and semantic cognate to Akkadian (*w*)*aṣû*, has the rare meaning "to be similar" in rabbinic sources. Thus, both the Akkadian noun *ṣâtu* and the Hebrew verb would refer to similarities (lexical or contextual). Whether "to be similar" might be a rare basic meaning of the common Semitic root of the Akkadian and Hebrew terms, a parallel development in both languages, or the result of Akkadian influence on Hebrew is difficult to determine.[99]

1.8.1 *ṣâtu* as a designation in commentary subscripts

The use of the term *ṣâtu* to designate commentaries in subscripts of commentaries was discussed in detail by Frahm,[100] and will not be treated here.

1.8.2 *ina ṣâti šumšu qabi*, "its entry is said in the *ṣâtu*-lists"

This phrase is discussed in Chapter 5.[101]

1.8.3 *šumma ina ṣâti šumšu ana pānika*, "if its entry in the *ṣâtu*-lists is before you"

This phrase is discussed in Chapter 1.[102]

1.8.4 Other occurrences of *ṣâtu*

A Late Babylonian "esoteric commentary" from Kutha refers twice to *ṣâtu*-lists, once within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, and once in reference to the source of the commentary:[103]

> BE-*ma* KÉŠ *šá ṣa-a-tu*$_4$ *ana* IGI-*ka tu* : *ta* : *ti* / *ù* : *a* : *ia* : *e sá-niš* AN-*e u* KI-*tì* / KUR-*ú tam-tì u šá-a-ri ub-te-e* / ^{d}GIŠ.BAR : ^{d}60 : NE (= IZI) : *ul-la-nu* : ^{d}40 : *mu-ú* / IM^{tu}.ḪUR.SAG : ^{d}*en-líl* : *šá-a-ri* : *šu-ut* KA *šá ṣa-a-tú e-du-tú*

98 See Frahm 2011, 48 with nn. 193–194 and references.

99 See Appendix 2, para. 10.

100 Frahm 2011, 48–56.

101 See Chapter 5, 2.1.

102 See Chapter 1, 3.2.8; cf. also in 1.8.4 below.

103 Biggs 1968, 54:14–18 (Böck 2000b, 615).

> If the collection(?) of *ṣâtu*-lists is before you—*tu, ta, ti* = *ù, a, ia, e*; secondly: heaven and earth, mountain, sea, and wind *is searched*: Girra = Anu, NE (also: IZI: fire) = primeval, Ea = water, east wind = Enlil = wind; oral lore of . . . *ṣâtu*-lists.

The commentary in general is concerned with harmonizing signs in heaven and on earth. In this passage lexical texts are cited for this purpose. First the commentary notes that the use of the different vowels in the lexical list beginning with the sequence *tu-ta-ti* corresponds to the four basic vowels of language(?), attested also as the vowels comprising the different affixes of Sumerian.[104] The commentary notes that this sequence stands for the primal elements in the world: heaven and earth, mountain, sea(-water), and wind (or air). Then follows another correspondence relating to the primordial gods and their relation to the primal elements of the universe: heaven, fire, water, and wind, corresponding to the gods Anu, Enlil, and Ea, and primeval time. This explanation is said to be derived from oral lore on the *ṣâtu* lists. The designation of these lists as *edûtu* is not clear. A plural feminine adjective would have been expected, and a construct seems awkward here. Biggs proposed understanding this as "learned(?),"[105] and Böck suggests "learned(?)" or "isolated(?)."[106]

Besides the phrases noted above, *ṣâtu* occurs occasionally with the preposition *ina*[107] or the preposition *itti* (in the phrase *ša itti ṣâti . . . šutābulu*, "that which is to be interpreted with [the help of] the *ṣâtu*-lists"),[108] and in other contexts.[109]

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104 See Frahm 2011, 49 n. 198. Differently, Scurlock and Al-Rawi 2006, 371–372.

105 See Biggs 1968, 54, and comment on p. 56.

106 See Böck 2000b, 616 (with reference in n. 4 to Livingstone 1986, 74).

107 See the following two occurrences, both in texts concerning the calculation of the stipulated term in extispicy: Koch 2005, no. 91:1 (A 9–10 // B 10–11): NÍG.ŠID-*šú ina ṣa-a-tì i*(-)*na a-re-e i*(-)*na* NÍG.ŠID *i*(-)*na ak-ka-de-e ù šu-me-ri . . . bu-'-ú-ma*, "Search . . . its calculation in the *ṣâtu*-lists, in the mathematical tablets, in the calculations, in Akkadian and Sumerian." Koch 2005, no. 95:r.4′: GIZKIM UDU.NÍTA *né-re-bu šá* NAM.AZU *ina ṣa-a-ti u* NÍG.ŠID *i-tap-pal*, "A sign of the sheep corresponds to the 'entrance' of extispicy in the *ṣâtu*-lists and calculations."

108 For the correct interpretation of this phrase, with references to previous literature, see Jiménez 2014, 107.

109 See Koch 2005, no. 103:2: [ ] *u ṣa-a-ti šu*-x-[ ] (Koch 2005, 475, restores: *šu-t*[*e-'u*], but perhaps restore differently (perhaps *šu-t*[*a-bil*]? collated from photograph; or, as suggested to me by E. Jiménez: [*it-t*]*i ṣa-a-ti šu-t*[*a-bu-lu*]?). Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 79:8 (composite of texts A and B, both collated from photographs): [ ](-)*il-ti ṣa-a-ti* (. . .)$^{?}$ ⌜*ú*$^{?}$⌝-*lu* EME [. . .]. See also CAD Ṣ, 119; cf. SAA 8, 384:r.12; SAA 10, 177:r.2–3.

2 Description

One of the fundamental concerns of the commentary tradition is description, primarily as a way of interpreting a phenomenon, even when that phenomenon is not apprehended directly but only represented in a text. A correct description leads to a better understanding of a phenomenon, specifically a word or phrase. Just as the lexical mode, where one word is explained by another, is well anchored in the Mesopotamian tradition of creating lexical texts, so is the descriptive mode anchored in the Mesopotamian tradition of describing phenomena, most prominently in the protases of omens. But descriptions are found elsewhere as well, most notably in a genre closer to the commentaries than omen literature, a genre where we indeed find similar phrases to those appearing in the commentaries. This is the descriptive genre par excellence, devoted to recording aspects of the natural world, specifically the compositions *abnu šikinšu* and *šammu šikinšu*.[110]

In the commentaries, description may also involve an active hermeneutical process, since a descriptive explication of a blurry representation in the base text may limit or modify its meaning in a way that changes its original sense or intention. This process illustrates the very concrete habits of thought that inform commentaries: a blurry "literary" meaning of a text cannot be accepted as such. It must be defined so that it refers to something concrete.[111]

2.1 *Description Referring to the Essence of the Commented Word, Object, or Phenomenon*

A descriptive reference to the essence of the commented word, or better the phenomenon or object behind the word, may be structured in various ways. It can be introduced with the noun *uṣurtašu*, contextualized with *libbū*, or contained in a clause opening with *ša*. It may employ the pronoun *šū* or *šī* (primarily used for equations)[112] or the stative *šakin* (used in the sense of "to be" or "to have"), or, if it is necessary to indicate the absence of something, the particle *yânu*.

2.1.1 *libbū*, "as in"

The term *libbū*, "as in," is used in a few ways, all connected to contextualization, and is therefore treated separately in a different chapter.[113] It is noteworthy,

110 Cf. 2.4.1 below with n. 174.

111 See Gabbay 2015b.

112 See 1.1 above.

113 See Chapter 3, para. 1.

however, that one way contextualization may be achieved is through a description.[114] For example, in a commentary on the fifth tablet of Sagig:[115]

> ÚḪ-*su* MUR.MEŠ x [x x] / *lìb-bu-ú i-sa-'-ul u* ÚḪ-*su* x [x x]
>
> "The lungs [. . .] his phlegm"—as in (when) he coughs but his phlegm [. . .].

Although the commentary is broken, it is obvious that the phrase from the base text is explained through a description of the medical situation it represents as the commentator understands it. Thus, the contextualization indicated by the term *libbū* is accomplished here by a description.

2.1.2 *šakin*, "is, has, located"

Descriptions, especially in protases of omina, are often constructed with a stative form of the verb *šakānu*, namely *šakin*, with a meaning close to "to be," "to be located," "to have."[116] The same form is sometimes used in descriptions in commentaries, for example in a description of a plant used as a medication in a Late Babylonian medical commentary:[117]

> ^{ú}*nu-ṣa-bu* / ^{ú}*ku-uk-ka-ni-ti* 5 *la-a-ri šá-kin*
>
> "*nuṣābu*-plant"—a *kukkanītu*-plant (that) has five branches.

2.1.3 Personal pronouns: *šū, šī*

On rare occasions a description may be followed by an independent personal pronoun that corresponds to the commented lemma in gender and number, as in simple equations of the A = B type.[118] As in the case of the equations, when an independent pronoun appears with a description it indicates that the

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114 This is related to the phenomenal specifications and descriptions indicated by this term, discussed in Chapter 3, 1.2.

115 SBTU 1, 31:r.31–32; cf. Genty 2010, 24. For the base text, cf. perhaps Labat 1951, 48, E, 1:10. See also 2.1.4.3 below.

116 See references in *CAD* Š/1, 130–134.

117 Civil 1974, 337:17–18. Other attestations: Finkel 2005, no. 69:8; Böck 2000a, 244:85; cf. Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:6–7 (4–7) (Geller 2014, 65:12–13): *ša . . . šaknu*; for *pān . . . šakin*, see 1.4 above.

118 See para. 1 above, especially 1.1.

description is perceived as the very essence of the commented lemma (or of the object signified by it).

The personal pronoun may also appear in a description that is part of a larger hermeneutical process. For example, a Late Babylonian commentary on a medical text attempts to connect the use of an "egg of a crow" to treat a sickness to the cause of that sickness, a ghost:[119]

> NUNUZ *ḫa-aḫ-ḫu-ru š*[*á* E?]-*ú* / *ina* ŠÀ *šá* MUL.UGA.MUŠEN : ^{d}en-líl : ^{d}en-líl EN KI-*tì u* GIDIM *šu-ú*
>
> "egg of a crow" wh[ich it sa]id—because the "Raven-star" (= Corvus) = Enlil; Enlil is the lord of the netherworld and the ghost(s).

The commentary first introduces, using the term *ša iqbû*,[120] the ingredient from the base text, namely the crow's egg. Since the egg is used in the base text as a treatment for a sickness caused by ghosts, the commentary attempts to link it with the cause of the sickness, the ghost. It does this through the transitive logic often found in commentaries: "If A = B, and B = C, then A = C."[121] The commentary first notes that Corvus, the Raven-star, linked to the crow's egg in the base text,[122] represents or is associated with Enlil,[123] and Enlil, in turn, is the lord in charge of the underworld and the ghost(s) (using the pronoun *šū*). Thus the crow's egg can be linked with the ghost it is supposed to overcome.

2.1.4 *ša*, "that . . ."

The particle *ša*, "that," referring back to the commented lemma, or better the commented phenomenon or object, is frequently used to introduce a description. Sometimes it functions as a relative pronoun referring grammatically to this lemma. For example, in two consecutive lines in a Sagig commentary,

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119 SBTU 1, 49:27–29. Other attestations: *šī*: Civil 1974, 332:13; SBTU 2, 36:14; cf. SAA 3, 39:19, 22 (*šīma*); BM 74141:2′ (CCP 7.2.u71) (*šīma*); *šū*: Reynolds 1999, 370:12 (Koch 2004, 108:r.12); LKA 82:11; perhaps CT 41, 25 (Labat 1933, no. 1):23(?); CT 41, 39 (Labat 1933, no. 13):r.3(?); cf. Livingstone 1986, 255 (BM 34035:6, 8). Note also *šunu*: BM 47529+:4, 7 (Geller 2014, 61:4, 7).

120 See Chapter 5, para. 1.

121 See Introduction, 2.2.

122 The egg is said to be that of a "crow," *ḫahḫuru*, while the "raven" in the star name is *āribu*, but the correspondence between the two birds is well documented in lexical texts. See *CAD* Ḫ, 29–30, *CAD* A/II, 265.

123 For the association of Enlil with the raven, see, e.g., the Sumerian myth Enlil and Namzitara.

a noun in the base text is explained by the use of a relative pronoun and a verb or stative:[124]

> *ri-mu-tú* : *šá i-*ʳ*ram*ʔ*-mu-ú* / . . . ʳDABʔ*-tu*$_4$ *šá ka-mu-ú*
>
> "paralysis"—he who becomes paralyzed. . . . "prisoner(?)"—he who is captured.

Another example exhibits the use of the relative pronoun in a more complex hermeneutical process:[125]

> 3 ITI *šú-nu-ti uš-ta-pa-šaq-ma* : *ina* ITI *šá ana da-li-*[*liʾ ṭ*]*a-a-bi* / *šá i-bir-ru-ú u i-ṣa-am-mu-ú šú-ú šup-šu-qu*
>
> "He will be suffering for those three months"—in a month that is [g]ood(?) for prai[se](?);[126] he who will hunger and thirst, it is he who will suffer.

Although this commentary is not entirely clear to me, it is evident that *ša* refers to the subject of the verb in the base text, reemphasized in the commentary with the independent pronoun *šū*.

But usually *ša* is used in a general way to open a clause containing a description; it does not agree grammatically with a commented lemma as a pronoun would. Its role is to introduce a subordinate content clause[127] that contains the meaning (and syntactically the predicate) of the commented lemma (i.e., "x [means] that y [verb/adjective]"). For example, a commentary treats phenomena regarding the buttocks (*qinnatu*, written GU.DU) that are listed in three omens in the diagnostic series Sagig:[128]

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124 BM 66873:r.9′–19′ (CCP 4.1.18).

125 Freedman 2006b, 151:14–15 // SBTU 5, 259:1–2.

126 The restoration *ana da-li-*[*liʾ ṭ*]*a-a-bi* is very uncertain. There seems to be more room for restoration than in the copy in Freedman 2006b, 165 (collated from photograph). The first *-li* is preserved in SBTU 5, 259:1. If one does not restore the second *-li*, perhaps read *šá ana da-li* [*ṭ*]*a-a-bi*, "that is good for a bucket," but this is even less comprehensible.

127 Cf. Hackl 2007, 53–60.

128 SBTU 1, 36:8–10 (from copy on p. 136, see H. Hunger's commentary on p. 45; cf. also Genty 2010, 25). For the base text, see Labat 1951, 132:53, 59, 60. Other occurrences: SBTU 1, 36:14, 20; SBTU 1, 40:10, 11; SBTU 1, 41:4, 5; SBTU 1, 55:12′(?), 17′(?); SBTU 1, 72:20, r.9; SBTU 1, 84:24; SBTU 2, 36:4, 14(?), 19; SBTU 2, 42:r.5(?); Heeßel, AOAT 43, 247:8 (= Leichty 1973, 83:8); Heeßel 2000, 273:7 (see Gadotti and Sigrist 2011, no. 193); Freedman 2006b, 151–154:13, 19

GU.DU 15-*šú šu-uḫ-ḫu-ṭ*[*a-at*] / *šá maš-ku ina* UGU *iš-šá*$^{!}$-^{r}*aḫ*^{1}-*ṭu* : GU.DU.MEŠ-*šú šal-ma šá pi-ṭir ina* U[GU](?)[129] / *la ib-šu-ú* : GU.DU-*su* NU È-*a šá man-zal-tu*$_4$ *la ú-še-ṣ*[*u-ú*(?)]

"His right buttock is removed"—that the skin on (it) was stripped off. "His buttocks are intact"—that there is no *fissure* o[n (it)](?).[130] "His buttock does not let out"—that it does not let out a *flow of excrement*.[131]

(// SBTU 5, 259:6′), 23, r.7, r.8, r.9, r.10, r.11, r.15, r.21; Civil 1974, 332:19; George 1991, 148:16 (a 20)(?); Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:7 (6) (Geller 2014, 65:12); Lambert 1954–56, 315, F:4 (6) (Geller 2014, 64:7); Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.12; Verderame 2002, 107:6, 8; Böck 2000a, 238:15 (246:1), 239:16 (247:2), 240:25(?), 33(?), 242:61(?), 252:1, 256:55, 266:32, 270:78; Leichty 1970, 231:265j; Funck 2:6 (*AfO* 21, pls. 9–10; Freedman 2006a, 73:6); CT 41, 28 (Labat 1933, no. 3):r.7, r.8; CT 41, 29:30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5):4, 32; Lambert 1960, 52:30(?), 54:f; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:15; KAR 52:2 (Farber 1989, 91).

129 H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 44, reads: *pi-ṭir*-[*šú*], but the traces seem to favor *ina* U[GU], and the commentaries preceding and following this one employ only *ša* and not *ša . . .-šu* (see 2.1.4.1).

130 This interpretation deals with the supposedly unexpected omen about buttocks in a fine condition (*šalmā*), which seems out of place in a sequence about various problems in the buttocks. Therefore the commentary indicates that *šalmā* means they are intact in their outer appearance, since there is no fissure on the buttocks, but implies that they are internally diseased. This is supported by a similar interpretation earlier in the text, SBTU 1, 36:5–6 (using *ša . . .-šu*, see 2.1.4.1 below): DIŠ TUḪUL.MEŠ-*šú šal-m*[*a iballuṭ*(?)] / *šá* TUḪUL.MEŠ-*šú* GIG *u líp-tu ina* ŠÀ *la i-šu-ú*, " 'If his hips are inta[ct—he will live]'—that his hips are sick but there is no sickness-mark in (them)." The commentary (on Labat 1951, 130:29) deals with an omen that is found within other omens describing sicknesses and problems in the hips. Therefore, here too an omen describing the hips as *šalmā*, which can be understood as "well, healthy," is unexpected in this context. The commentary notes that they are not healthy, explicitly stating that there is a problem with the hips (they are sick, GIG), but there is no external sign to indicate this since their outer appearance is intact (*šalmā*).

131 As noted by H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 45, the last citation is corrupt. The base text has: DIŠ GU.DU.MEŠ MI.MEŠ-*ma* KI.GUB-*su* NU È-*a u* A NU (var. *la*) *ú-še-rid* (Labat 1951, 132:60; preserved in SBH 148, i:14′ and LKU 74:5′). It is possible that a haplography occurred when citing this base text (or in the manuscript of the base text itself), jumping from the DU of GU.DU.MEŠ to the DU of KI.GUB (= DU)-*su*. *CAD* M/I, 239a assigns the meaning "excrement" to *manzāzu* on the basis of this occurrence. It is likely that *manzāzu* in the base text is a variation of *manzaltu* (as is indeed explained in the commentary, as well as in another commentary: KI.GUB-*su* : *man-zal-ta-šú*, GCCI 2, 406:13, see *CAD* M/I, 230b, 239a). Thus *manzāzu* (along with KI.GUB) is a form influenced by the two meanings of *manzaltu* (the first < *mazzaztu*: "stand," and the second from *nazālu*, "drainage, flow").

The use of *ša* before an explanatory description is occasionally found in *mukallimtu* astrological commentaries, often cited in astrological reports to the Assyrian king, where it introduces a description of a celestial phenomenon in the base text. For example, in a commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil from Nineveh:[132]

> DIŠ ^{mul}*dil-bat ina* ITI.GUD KUR-*ma ad-riš* ŠÚ *šá* TA KUR-*šá* EN ŠÚ-*šá un-nu-ta-tu*$_4$
>
> "If Venus rises in the month of Ayyāru and sets dimly"—that she is faint from her rising to her setting.

2.1.4.1 ša . . .-šu/ša (*also*: ša ina . . . -šu)

Often, in a description in a commentary introduced by *ša*, the particle functions like a relative pronoun, and the comment that follows may include a word with the resumptive suffix *-šu/ša*, referring back to the antecedent of *ša*. This is a regular and natural formulation for a description, and it is used not only in commentaries but in other texts as well. Thus, for example, many of the entries in the composition Marduk's Address to the Demons are constructed with *ša . . .-šu*, describing Marduk.[133] Unsurprisingly, this construction appears often in Izbu and physiognomic commentaries that describe a feature of the body. For example, in the following commentary on a physiognomic omen:[134]

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132 Reiner and Pingree 1998, 132, II:16 (20). Other occurrences: Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, III:26a (cf. 42, note to 14a, *AfO* 14, pl. 16:5); Reiner and Pingree 1998, 56:8 (30), 86:1 (D ii 3′), 132, IV:11 (27–28)(?), 150:r.1 (r.7′), 244:21 (22); SAA 8, 110:9, 145:3, 188:4, 295:3, 6, 298:5, 320:4, 9, 346:[3], 395:8, 404:3, 405:4, 471:8, 488:r.3′, 494:9, 501:2′(?), 506:5.

133 E.g., Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:13 (Geller 2014, 65:14): KI.MIN (= *anāku Asarluḫi*) *šá šá-ru-ru-šú ú-nam-ma-ru ma-ta-a-ti*, "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi), whose radiance lights up the lands."

134 SBTU 1, 83:4–5 (Böck 2000a, 254:5). For the base text, see Böck 2000a, 248:7. Other occurrences: KAR 94:18′ (Frahm 2011, 385–386:18′); SBTU 1, 36:4, 6, 9, 18; SBTU 1, 40:9; SBTU 1, 51:2; SBTU 1, 55:10;(?), 13′; SBTU 1, 72:18–19; SBTU 1, 84:22, 23, 29, 31; SBTU 2, 36:5; SBTU 4, 145:9; Heeßel 2000, 247:2, 4 (= Leichty 1973, 83), 273:6, 8, 10? (Gadotti and Sigrist 2011, no. 193); Leichty 1973, 84:r.15′, r.17′; BRM 4, 32:23 (Geller 2010, 169); George 1991, 148:9 (b 18′); Böck 2000a, 239:16 (247:2): *šá* GÚ-*su u ab-bu-ut-t*[*a*$^{?}$-*šú*$^{?}$]; Böck 2000a, 242:62(?) (*šá* SAG.DU-*šú*, mistake for *šá* SAG.DU-*su*?), 244:85, 250:9, 12, 254–256:10, 11, 18, 42, 266–274:30–31, 37, 112–115, 118, 274–276:3–17; Leichty 1970, 211:38, 41, 232:11′, 233:8; CT 41, 29 (Labat 1933, no. 4), r.1, r.14; CT 41, 29 (Labat 1933, no. 5):30–31, 32; CT 41, 35 (Labat 1933, no. 9), i–ii:35; Funck

DIŠ SAG.DU *a-ri-bi* GAR UD.MEŠ-*šú* GÍD.DA.MEŠ / *šá-niš ina* LA-*šú* UG_7 : *šá* SAG.DU-*su ṣal-mu-ma* NUNDUM.MEŠ-*šú* BABBAR.MEŠ . . .

"If he has a head of a raven—his days will be long; alternatively (= variant apodosis): he will die in the prime of his life"—he whose head is black but his lips are white.

2.1.4.2 ša . . . yānu, *"that there is/has no . . ."*

A descriptive comment introduced by *ša* may be negated by placing *yānu*, "is not," at the end. Two examples of this are known in commentaries.[135] The first occurs in a commentary on the diagnostic series:[136]

SAG.KI-*su* [. . .] / *šá* UZU *ina muḫ-ḫi ia-a-nu*

"His forehead is [. . .]"—that there is no flesh on (it).

Another example occurs in a physiognomic commentary, as part of a more complex hermeneutical process:[137]

AN.DA.SU.US / *šá* SÍK *ina su-ḫat-ti-šú ia-a-nu* : AN : *šá-a* : DA : *šá-hat*[!]("ÁŠ") : SÙ : *ra-a-qa* : SA : *šar-tu*$_4$

"AN.DA.SU.US"—he who has no hair in his armpit: AN = (he) who, DA = side, SÙ = empty, SA = hair.

In this commentary, the explanation for the enigmatic AN.DA.SU.US is supported, or even arrived at, through an analysis of the lexical equations corresponding to its elements. The analysis yields a negative description (**not** having hair).

2:3, 13, 14 (*AfO* 21, pls. 9–10; Freedman 2006a, 73–74:3, 13, 14); Freedman 2006b, 154:r.17; MSL 16, 343:20′(*šá ina ra-m*[*a-ni-šú*(?)]); MSL 14, 288:3; MSL 14, 504:16; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 134, VI:7 (5); Scheil 1916, 137–138:8′, 11′ (CCP 4.1.13.A); BM 39440:r.2′ (CCP 4.3.u4); BM 67179:3–4 (see Frahm 2011, 239 n. 1119; CCP 4.2.U); BM 47529+:7 (Geller 2014, 61:3); perhaps BM 49042:4′ (CCP 3.5.1.B).

135 Note the use of *yānu* in divinatory contexts with *ittu*, "sign," in SAA 8, 500:r.1 and SAA 10, 112:26–27.

136 Heeßel 2000, 247:2–3 (= Leichty 1973, 83:2–3).

137 SBTU 1, 83:r.26–27 (Böck 2000a, 256:62–63; cf. also *CAD* S, 347a).

2.1.4.3 ša libbū, *"that (it is) as in"*

On one occasion the particle *ša* introduces a contextual description that begins with *libbū*.[138] An Izbu commentary explains an omen referring to a feature of the flesh, probably the flesh of the head, of a malformed animal:[139]

> UZU GIM GIŠ.KIB ZI-*iḫ* | *šá* ŠÀ-*bu-ú* SÍG <<:>> UDU *raq-ʳqa*!?¹
>
> "The flesh is removed like a plum"—that it is as in (when) the wool of a sheep is thin.

The commentary deals with a plum-shaped pit in the flesh of a malformed animal. But this would be difficult to see, since the flesh of an animal is covered with hair or fur. The commentary therefore specifies that this occurs (or is noticeable) when (*libbū*) the hair of the malformed sheep is thin.[140]

2.1.4.4 (ša kīma, *"that (it is) like"*)

The use of *kīma* to begin a comparative description[141] in a clause introduced by *ša*[142] probably occurs once, although the context is broken.[143]

2.1.5 *uṣurtu*, "drawing, schema"

In some commentaries to physiognomic and extispicy texts a drawing is used to illustrate a particular situation.[144] In these cases the drawing may be referred to by the noun *uṣurtu*, "drawing, schema," usually with a possessive suffix referring to the phenomenon portrayed in the omen.[145] The term *uṣurtu* may also refer to a verbal description, as discussed in Chapter 1.[146]

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138 See 2.1.1 and Chapter 3, para. 1. One other possible attestation, partly restored, is BM 66873:r.7′ (CCP 4.1.18).

139 Leichty 1970, 230:264a; De Zorzi 2014, 524, 527 with n. 227; cf. Frahm 2011, 80. For the reading of this line, as well as a full discussion of the passage, see Gabbay 2015b, 348–349.

140 Note that another commentary deals with a similar phenomenon by explaining "removed like a plum" as "placed like a plum," through a lexical correspondence of the two verbs found in a bilingual text, thereby changing the feature from a diminution of the flesh to a lump of flesh (which is not concealed by the hair of the animal). See Finkel 2006, 140:12–14; Gabbay 2006. For a full discussion, see Gabbay 2015b, 349 n. 15.

141 See 2.4 below.

142 For *ša ana. . . mašlu*, see 2.4.2.2.

143 See SBTU 2, 36:24–25: *šá-niš šá kima* / [. . .].

144 See Frahm 2011, 41, 84–85.

145 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:68 // no. 42: G 11; no. 42:151; no. 45:19–23 (see pl. XI, BM 99071); CT 41, 40, r.iii (see Chapter 1, 3.2.2).

146 See Chapter 1, 3.2.4 (Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:69; perhaps also no. 45:15).

2.1.6 *ittu*, "sign"

Similar to *uṣurtu, ittu*, "sign, omen," can be used to refer to a description. Often this description is in the form of an omen protasis. This occurs usually in the phrases *šumma ittašunu ana pānika* and *ša iqbûma ittašunu iddinu*, dealt with in Chapters 1 and 5.[147]

2.2 *Qualitative Description*

Although it does not fall under the heading of what one would usually classify as exegesis, it is worth mentioning a practice that occurs mostly in contexts of divinatory explanations. A short description, or better a label, designating a phenomenon as favorable or unfavorable does belong to the category of commentary. Marking an omen with a negative apodosis as "unfavorable" involves an act of interpretation, or at least a mediation between the interpreter and the reader, usually as part of a larger hermeneutical process.

2.2.1 *damqu/damiqtu*, "favorable"; *aḫû/aḫītu*, "unfavorable"

The regular way of summarizing an omen in *mukallimtu* commentaries is either to add a note on the favorable or unfavorable nature of the omen after the apodosis, or to replace the entire apodosis with such a note, often following a short explanation. For example, in the following extispicy commentary:[148]

> BE *ana* SILIM KARAŠ UR_5.ÚŠ DÙ-*ma* GÌR 15 *a-li-kàt šá iq-bu-ú* / *ina* GÌR 15 *ana* KUR KÚR DU-*ak* SIG_5 AN.TA-tu_4 DU-*i*[*k*] / GÌR 150 *mu-še-ri-bat ina* GÌR 150 KÚR KU_4-*ba* ⌜BAR-tu_4⌝ KI.TA-tu_4 DU-⌜*ik*⌝
>
> "If you perform an extispicy for the wellbeing of the military camp and the right 'foot' is the one going (out)" which it said—in the right "foot" you will go to the enemy's land; favorable; it (= the "foot") points up. "(. . .)

147 See Chapter 1, 3.2.5, and Chapter 5, 1.4.4.

148 Koch 2005, no. 28:49; see Glassner 2010, 97, 100:39′–41′. For other attestations of *damqu*, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:16, 23, no. 20:25, cf. 43, no. 25:6, 35, no. 42:11, 63 (text G), 67, 73, 153, 155, 156, 159, 160, 162, 165, no. 78:15; cf. SAA 10, 61:11–13; Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, note to 14a (*AfO* 14, pl. 16:5), 47, note to IV:7a, K.10566:r.12′ (and //), 56:1; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 82:9 (18); cf. also *dumqu*: Freedman 2006b, 153:r.13–14; SAA 10, 73:r.15–17, 100:17, r.1–4, 353:s.2. For attestations of *aḫītu*, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:9, 12, 16, 23, no. 42:141!, 144!, 152, 154, 157, 161, 163, 164, no. 45:35, no. 52:5′, no. 83:B ii 9′, no. 86:25; cf. Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42, note to 14a (*AfO* 14, pl. 16:5), 47, notes to IV:6a, 7a, K.10566:r.12′–13′ (and //); Reiner and Pingree 1998, 82:8 (15); cf. also *laptu* in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:43, and *lumnu*: Freedman 2006b, 153:r.13–14; SAA 10, 56:r.2–6, 79:r.19–20, 100:13, 112:6–7, 168:10–13; cf. Reiner and Pingree 1998, 56:1. Note also attestations of *damqu* and *aḫītu* with *qabû*, in Chapter 5, 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3, 4.1.3, 4.1.4.

> the left 'foot' is the one bringing in"—in the left path the enemy will enter; unfavorable; it points down.

The commentary cites a protasis of an omen regarding the right "foot" on the liver. After explaining it as a triumphal attack on the enemy, the commentary summarizes it as "favorable" and adds a short explanation of the physical feature on the liver. Next, the commentary cites a detail from the same omen, or a following omen, regarding the left "foot" on the liver. The commentary explains this as an attack of an enemy entering the city and summarizes it as "unfavorable," adding a short note on the orientation of the physical feature.

2.3 *Quantitative Description*

Quantitative description refers to the size or amount of the object commented on. The following terms, although not exegetical terms per se, are often used in descriptions and are therefore included here.

2.3.1 *ma'du/ ma'diš*, "many, much"

An adjective used to specify the size or amount of a commented lexeme (or better: of the object lying behind it) is *ma'du*. For example, in an Ālu commentary on a snake omen that refers to the moaning voice of a snake:[149]

> *i-dam-mu-um* : *šá ši-si-ti* <<:>> *ma-a-du*
>
> "it (= the snake) moans" = (said) of a cry, (but) heavy.

Another example occurs in an Ālu omen that deals with the consequences when "a man builds a well" (DIŠ NA PÚ *i-pé-eš*). A commentary on this omen in a Babylonian tablet from Nineveh interprets this as follows:[150]

> *ḫi-pí eš-šú* PÚ *i-pé-eš* | *šá* PÚ.MEŠ *ma-da-ti* DÙ[!?]("NI").MEŠ
>
> "new break builds a well"—that many wells are built(?).[151]

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149 Freedman 2006b, 154:r.16. For the base text, see Freedman 2006a, 45:84. For other occurrences of *ma'du* in commentaries, see immediately below, SBTU 2, 36:5, SBTU 3, 99:39–42 (Frahm 2011, 97), cf. probably Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 10:15, and perhaps CT 41, 20:17 (Labat 1933, no. 4:17).

150 CT 41, 25:4 (Labat 1933, no. 1:4; Freedman 1998, 257 ad 46).

151 Note that NI is indeed the sign on the tablet itself (collated from photograph of K.2895) and not only in the copy (cf. Freedman 1998, 257 ad 46). The plural marker of the verb may

It is likely that the commentary takes issue with the difficult form *i-pé-eš*, which it construes as the Old Babylonian present-tense form *ippeš*. The Old Babylonian form is an unexpected substitute for the Standard Babylonian form *ippuš*, but more importantly, a present-tense verb is not expected in the protasis of an omen, where usually perfect or preterite forms are used. Therefore, the commentary interprets the use of the present as signifying the durative action of building numerous wells.[152]

The adverb *ma'diš*, "very (much)," is also used. For example, an Izbu omen deals with an anomaly's ears being "cut up in many pieces" (GEŠTU.MEŠ-*šú šu-ul-lu-qa*).[153] A commentary explains the stative *šulluqā*:[154]

> *šu-ul-lu-qa* | *šá ma-'-diš sal-ta*
>
> "cut up in many pieces" = that they are split off very much.

2.3.1.1 ma'du *modifying a qualitative description of an omen*

Sometimes, the qualitative description of an omen as favorable or unfavorable[155] is accompanied by the designation *ma'du*, "much," relating to its quantity. This occurs in two successive entries in an extispicy commentary:[156]

> BE *ana* SILIM GIG UR_5.ÚŠ DÙ-*ma* UR_5.ÚŠ.MEŠ-*ka* 15 ZI.MEŠ-*a* / GIG BI ÚŠ SIG_5.MEŠ-*šá ma-'-du*
>
> BE MIN-*ma* UR_5.ÚŠ.MEŠ-*ka* 150 ZI.MEŠ-*a* GIG BI TIN-*uṭ* / BAR.MEŠ-*šá ma-'-du*

---

also be interpreted as representing the Gtn stem, i.e., "that he builds many wells over and over again."

152 Cf. also Freedman 1998, 257 ad 46.

153 Leichty 1970, 134:48′.

154 Leichty 1970, 230, Commentary V:365j. For other occurrences of *ma'diš* in commentaries, see SBTU 1, 72:15; SBTU 5, 259:9′–10′ (according to copy) // Freedman 2006b, 150–151:22–23; see Jiménez 2015b (CCP no. 3.5.22.A.b): *ina* KI.KAL DU_8-*šú* (so Jiménez 2015b; Freedman 2016b, 150 reads: *ina qé-reb* GABA-*šú*) / ⌜*aš*[?]-*šum*⌝ *šá ma-diš ina muḫ-ḫi-šú i-ku-šú*.

155 See 2.2.1 above.

156 Koch 2005, no. 26:88–89.

"If you perform an extispicy for the wellbeing of a patient, and your extispicies rise on the right side—that patient will die"—its favorable signs are (too)? many.

"If ditto (= you perform an extispicy for the wellbeing of a patient), and your extispicies rise on the left side—that patient will live"—its unfavorable signs are (too)? many.

2.3.2 *arku*, "long"
See below *s.v. magal*.[157]

2.3.3 *magal*, "very"
An Ālu commentary on snake omens describes a certain snake according to its size, using the adverb "very":[158]

MUŠ.^{d}MUŠ : *ni-ra-ḫu* : MUŠ *qát-nu šá ma-gal ár-ki*

"MUŠ.^{d}MUŠ" = *niraḫu*-snake—a thin snake that is very long.

2.3.4 *īṣu*, "small"
Only once does the adjective *īṣu*, "small," the opposite of *mādu*, seem to occur. A medical commentary explains the *qulqullânu* plant by comparing it to another plant,[159] but seems to add the adjective *īṣu*:[160]

^{ú}*qul-qul-la-nu ki-ma kìr-kìr-ra-nu u i-ṣi* [x]

"*qulqullânu*-plant"—it is like the *kirkirrânu*-plant but small(?) [(. . .)].

2.3.5 *qatnu*, "thin"
See above *s.v. magal*.[161]

157 See 2.3.3.

158 Freedman 2006b, 152:25 // SBTU 5, 259:12′. The reading and interpretation by Freedman 2006b, 152, is incorrect. For other occurrences, see BM 49042:4′ (CCP 3.5.1.B), SBTU 3, 99:39–42 (Frahm 2011, 97), and perhaps SBTU 1, 36:20.

159 See 2.4.

160 SBTU 1, 51:r.9; cf. the note by H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 62.

161 See 2.3.3.

2.3.6 *mala*, "as much as"

Another term referring to the quantity of the commented lemma is *mala*, relating to the size, literally "fullness," of the qualified word or phrase. For example, an Ālu omen deals with a snake who "constantly all the time" (*gi-na-a* DÙ.A.BI) blocks the course of a man.[162] A Late Babylonian commentary known from two tablets seeks an exact definition of "constantly all the time," and assigns a time span to this perpetual period:[163]

> [*gi-na*]-*a* DÙ.A.BI : u_4-*mu ma-la* ^{d}UTU *nap-ḫi*
>
> "[constant]ly all the time" = (at) day, as much as the shining Sun (i.e., during the period when the sun is visible).

Thus the commentary reduces the theoretically limitless period of "constantly all the time" in the omen to a clearly defined period: "constantly all the time" during the day.[164]

2.3.6.1 mala . . . maṣû, *"which amounts to"*

The juxtaposition of *mala* with the verb *maṣû*, quite frequent in nonexegetical contexts,[165] occurs in a Late Babylonian astrological commentary as part of a long commentary passage on different cloud formations (IM.DIRI) occurring with an eclipse, discussed elsewhere.[166] Only the relevant passage is cited here:[167]

> IM.DIRI *e-ri-tu*$_4$$^{!}$: IM.DIRI : *sa-an-da* / IM.DIRI *al-lu-da-nu* IM.DIRI *šá ma-la* ^{d}UTU *ma-ṣu-u*

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162 See Freedman 2006a, 36:12.

163 Freedman 2006b, 152:r.2 // SBTU 5, 259:r.2′. For other occurrences of *mala*, see SBTU 1, 51:14; SBTU 2, 36:21(?); George 1991, 146:6 (a 17; cf. 3b); cf. Verderame 2002, 38:10.

164 A similar hermeneutical approach (without *mala*) is found in SBTU 2, 36:4: *sa-ad-riš i-bak-ku* : *šá* u_4-*mu-us-s*[*u* . . .], " 'it continually cries'—that it [. . .] daily." See also Gabbay 2015b, 351.

165 See *CAD* M/I, 345–346.

166 See Chapter 5, 3.2.1.

167 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:11–12. The reading and interpretation of this passage follows a suggestion by E. Jiménez (private communication). Note that a supposedly second occurrence of this phrase, with the form *mala imaṣṣû*, occurs in the same commentary, Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.13–15. But this is probably a coincidence, and the use of the phrase is part of the commentary itself.

"naked(?) cloud"—red cloud, *alludānu* cloud (= a meteorological phenomenon), a cloud which amounts to the Sun.[168]

2.3.6.2 (mala . . . šumšunu nabû, *"as much as their entries are named"*)
Besides the occurrences above, there are two more terms constructed with *mala*: *mala . . . šumšunu nabû*, and *mala iqbû* (discussed elsewhere).[169] The term *mala . . . šumšunu nabû*, "as much as their entries are named," occurs in two consecutive entries of a Late Babylonian extispicy commentary. It relates to a general phenomenon, the details of which are enumerated in the various omens. The commentary deals with ambiguous "joker" signs (*pitruštu*):[170]

BE-*ma* GABA.UŠ-tu_4 *ma-la ina ba-ru-tu*$_4$ MU.NI.NI *na-bu-ú ina* TIL UR$_5$-*ka* IGI-*tú u* EGIR-*tú iš-šak-na-a-ma a-ḫa-*<<*meš*>>*-a-meš ip-pa-la-ma* SILIM-*át ta-qab-bi*

BE-*ma* GIŠ.ḪUR.MEŠ *ma-la ina ba-ru-tú* MU.NI.NI *na-bu-ú ina* KI.MEŠ 15 *u* 150 *šá* BÀ *ina* UR$_5$ *iš-šak-na-ma a-ḫa-a-meš ip-pal-la-ma* GABA.UŠ-tu_4 GABA.UŠ-tu_4 *i-tap-pal* SILIM-*át ta-qab-bi*

If *pitruštu*-signs, as much as their entries are named in the extispicy lore, occur at the end of your extispicy, both in the former (inspection) and in the last (inspection)—they balance each other; you say it is favorable.

If physical signs, as much as their entries are named in the extispicy lore, occur in (your) extispicy in both the right and the left areas of the liver—they balance each other; a *pitruštu*-sign balances a *pitruštu* sign; you say it is favorable.

2.4 *Comparative Description*

The most frequent mode of description used in commentaries is comparison. A feature worthy of interpretation is described by likening it to a more familiar or better understood feature. This form of description by analogy clearly

168 The exact meaning here is not clear to me. Perhaps it refers to the size of the cloud, or rather, as noted by Rochberg-Halton (1988, 288), it refers temporally to the entire day (cf. the rest of the commentary, as well as Freedman 2006b, 152:r.2 // SBTU 5, 259:r.2′, cited above, 2.3.6).

169 See Chapter 5, 1.3.1.

170 TCL 6, 5:r.33–38, see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.33–38.

alludes to the phenomenon behind the commented lemma and not to the lemma: what is described is the feature itself, the signified, and not its linguistic and textual signifier.

A comparison of features can be expressed using the preposition *kīma*, "like," or by using forms of the verb *mašālu*, "to resemble."

2.4.1 *kīma*, "like"

As noted, *kīma* is used to compare a phenomenon deserving of commentary to a known phenomenon.[171] A *kīma* description usually occurs without a verb,[172] and therefore actually forms a nominal sentence with a prepositional phrase serving as its predicate.[173] As Frahm noted with respect to a specific commentary, this use of *kīma* in a nominal sentence is reminiscent of the technique used to describe stones and plants in the series *abnu šikinšu* and *šammu šikinšu*.[174]

An Izbu commentary attempts to explain the meaning of "compacted" (*kupput*), said of a body part (probably the head) of a miscarried animal:[175]

> *ku-up-pu-ut* : *li-ip-tú nu-šur-ru-ú ki-ma* PÚ.MEŠ *ḫur-ru-šú*
>
> "compacted"—an affliction of diminution (lit.: an affliction, a diminution) (in the flesh); its (= the affliction's) holes (in the flesh) are like pits.

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171 For the use of *kīma* in the interpretation of omens by analogy, see Appendix 1, para. 7. For *kīma damqi*/*aḫīti*, combining comparative and qualitative descriptions (see 2.4.1 above) as part of a more complex hermeneutical process, see Chapter 1, 3.2.6.

172 For an exception, cf. with *bašû* in 2.4.1.1 below. Other exceptions occur as well.

173 See GAG §126i. There may be a few instances where *-ma* is added to indicate the nominal sentence (cf. GAG §126c), e.g., the construction with *šikinšu* mentioned in n. 174 below, as well as SBTU 1, 53:11, and perhaps Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:173. In SBTU 1, 47:6 (Frahm 2011, 398–399:6), *-ma* probably connects two descriptions and does not serve to indicate the predicate. Note also Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:70: GIM *an-nim-ma* GIŠ.ḪUR-*šú*, with variant: AN *a-nu*[*m*]. Freedman 2006b, 151:18 // SBTU 5, 259:5′, is not clear. See also *kīma qāti*(*šuma*) and *kīma . . . ibaššīma*, n. 176 and 2.4.1.1 below.

174 See Frahm 2011, 401. For these series, see Horowitz 1992, 112–122; Schuster-Brandis 2008, 17–47; Stadhouders 2011, 3–51. In fact, in one instance the phrasing with *šikinšu* seems to be used also in an extispicy commentary; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 47:13′: GAR-*šú* GIM *šá* 15-*ma*.

175 Finkel 2006, 141:31; Gabbay 2009.

Another commentary deals with the consequences of a healer seeing a "dappled pig" on his way to the patient. The commentary attempts to understand the exact meaning of this "dappled pig":[176]

> DIŠ ŠAḪ GÙN IGI *šá* E-*ú* / [šaḫ-z]é-da-s[ur-ra :] *bu-ri-ia-a-mu šá zu-mur-šú ki-ma ṭi-me uṣ-ṣu-ru*
>
> "If he sees a dappled (*burrumu*) pig" which it said—[šaḫ-z]é-da-s[ur-ra] = *buriyāmu*-animal (= a porcupine?), whose body is marked like yarn.

Using the term *ša iqbû*, the commentary cites the base text's reference to a dappled or multicolored pig, Akkadian *burrumu*. The commentary notes that this must refer to a pig whose body is "marked like yarn." This conclusion is reached by analyzing the Sumerian equivalent of the word *buriyāmu*, which perhaps refers to a porcupine but literally means "the dappled one"; it is a cognate of the verb *burrumu* in our text. The Sumerian term indicates that this creature was classified as a pig (šaḫ) or piglet (zé-da), as in our text. The element sur was understood as *ṭamû*, "to spin,"[177] from which the noun *ṭīmu*, "yarn, thread," is derived, leading to an alternative description of this "dappled pig": "its body is marked like yarn."

2.4.1.1 kīma . . . ibaššīma (or: bašīma), *"it is like"*

One medical commentary adds the verb *bašû*, "to be," before *-ma*, instead of constructing the comparison as a nominal sentence with a prepositional phrase as the predicate:[178]

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176 George 1991, 148:9 (b 17′–18′). Other occurrences of *kīma*: SBTU 1, 51:r.9; SBTU 1, 84:r.7′(?); SBTU 2, 36:24; SBTU 2, 38:18; SBTU 5, 264:3′(?), 4′(?), r.1(?); Finkel 2006, 141:31; Civil 1974, 336:9, 338:2(?); Gehlken 2008, 285:23′, 24′ (not *kīma i*[*q-bu-u*]), r.8; BRM 4, 32 (Geller 2010, 168–170):6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, 19, 29; Verderame 2002, 89:17′, 107:10; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 24:7, no. 25:9; CT 41, 25 (Labat 1933, no. 1):r.8; CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):6; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 82:3 (7–8), 100:12 (30), 246:29 (34)(?); BM 48736:6′ (CCP 3.5.u7); BM 67179:r.18′ (CCP 4.2.U). See also references in n. 173 above. The phrase *kīma qāti* occurs three times in a Late Babylonian grammatical commentary, once as *kīma qātišuma*, and twice with the following signs broken; see Leichty 1973, 79:2, 7. The meaning of this phrase is not clear at this point (cf. Leichty 1973, 80, note to line 2), and it is not necessarily a hermeneutical term. It is likely that *kī* occurs a few times in the same sense as *kīma*. Cf. Koch-Westenholz 1999, 159:92; perhaps Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:43; SBTU 1, 50:29; Lambert 2013, 60:36 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 300): DUG.A.GÚB.BA *ki-*⌜*i*⌝ x [. . .].

177 For sur = *ṭamû*, see *CAD* Ṭ, 45–46; cf. George 1991, 156.

178 SBTU 1, 31:38.

[. . .] / GIM *ḫi-in-qí* GÁL-*ma*

"[. . .]"—it is like a constriction.

2.4.2 *mašālu*, "to resemble"

In addition to the preposition *kīma*, the verb *mašālu* is also used to formulate comparative descriptions, usually in its predicate adjectival form *mašil*.[179]

2.4.2.1 ana . . . mašil, *"it resembles"*

The phrase *ana . . . mašil* is regularly used in simple descriptions of an object. For example, in a commentary on Maqlû (II 163) from Assur:[180]

[*k*]*i-ma ḫu-ḫa-ri ana sa-ḫa-pi-ia* / *ma-a ḫu-ḫa-ru* : *ana* ^{giš}*kak-kul-li ma-šil* / *šá* ME UD x ˹SUḪUŠ-*šú*˺ DAGAL KA-*šú qa-ta-an* / ZA[?] [x x (x x)] x-*ni-iš ana* É.SIG$_4$ x [x Š]UB[?]-*u*[?]

"To clamp down on me as a bird-snare"—thus: "bird-snare"—it resembles a *kakkulu*-vessel, whose . . . *base*(?) is wide and whose opening is narrow . . . towards the wall . . . are cast(?).

A description using the *ana . . . mašil* construction can also be combined with a lexical analysis. In such a case the commentary addresses both the reality behind the lemma and the lemma itself; in linguistic terms, it treats both the signified and the signifier. For example, a medical commentary explains the noun *ziqqatû*, perhaps an ingredient used for medical treatment:[181]

ziq-qa-tu-ú : *a-na sip-pi a-tu-ú ma-šil* : ZI[Q : *sip-pu*] / *a-tu-ú* : ^{d}*pap-sukkal*

"*ziqqatû* (= an ingredient)"—it resembles the threshold of a doorkeeper; *zi*[*q* = threshold], *atû* = Papsukkal.

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179 For the form *muššulu* in BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 61):11, see Chapter 4, 1.3.1.

180 KAR 94:25′–28′ (Frahm 2011, 385, 387:25′–28′, 393). The phrase *ana . . . mašil* is also used earlier in the same text, KAR 94:21′ (Frahm 2011, 385:21′). Other occurrences of *ana . . . mašil*: SBTU 1, 41:12, SBTU 1, 50:19, 26 (see below), BM 67179:r.19′ (CCP 4.2.U). Cf. perhaps also MSL 14, 270:r.10: *ana me-še-lu šá* LÚ-*tú ma-šal* (but cf. W. G. Lambert, MSL 14, 270 n. 10: "Unidentified quotation").

181 SBTU 1, 50:26 (note the use of the form *ana . . . undašil* in the same text, lines 27–28).

The commentary explains *ziqqatû* as resembling the threshold of a doorkeeper,[182] confirming this description through *notariqon*. The elements comprising *ziqqatû* are ZIG or ZIQ, known to correspond to *sippu*,[183] "threshold," and *atû*, "doorkeeper," represented in myth and cult by the guard-deity Papsukkal.[184]

2.4.2.2 ša . . . (-šu) ana . . . mašlu, *"which resembles"*

The construction discussed above appears also with *ša* (. . .*-šu*) and accordingly is followed by the *-u* subjunctive marker. For example, in an Ālu commentary, probably on the cry of a cat:[185]

[. . . *i*]*-za-am-mur* : *šá ik-kil-la-šú a-na za-ma-ri ma-áš-lu*

"[. . . s]ings"—that its cry resembles singing.

The commentary explains why the cat(?) is said to "sing" simply by noting that its cry resembles the sound of singing.

2.4.2.3 ana . . . undaššil (= umtaššil), "it resembled"

On one occasion the Dt of the verb *mašālu* (*undaššil* < **umtaššil*) is used in place of the G stative *mašil* to express a comparison:[186]

182 The meaning of *ziqqatû* is uncertain. For its use in medical treatments, see *AHw*, 1531b. It may be a fish, as evidenced by the lexical entry MSL 8/2, 103:41: NUN.BAR.ḪUŠ[^{ku6}], in which the Akkadian correspondence is not preserved, but which is preceded by NUN.BAR.ḪUŠ^{ku6} = *ziq-tu*$_4$ (cf. *AHw*, 1531a). Indeed, our commentary presents the correspondence NUN.BAR.ḪUŠ = *ziq-qa-tu-ú* just two lines before the explanation as the threshold of the doorkeeper (SBTU 1, 50:24). However, since the determinative KU$_6$ is missing, it is possible that in this instance NUN.BAR.ḪUŠ and *ziqqatû* refer to something else, perhaps related to *ziqqu*, as part of a building. See *AHw*, 1531b, and note especially *zi-iq-qu* = *si-ip-pu* in Malku 1:248 (Hrůša 2010, 48–49:248) (although the element NUN may nevertheless be an indication that this refers to a substance related to fish, NUN = agargara, "fish-spawn," or based on NUN for *nūnu*).

183 Cf. references in CAD S, 300b.

184 Cf. Wiggermann 2001, 490–500, esp. 493–495, for Papsukkal's connection to doors and to gods associated with doors.

185 SBTU 2, 36:6. Note that line 3 of the same text probably contains this phrase as well. Another occurrence is in Funck 2 (*AfO* 21, pl. 9–10):14 (Freedman 2006a, 74:14).

186 SBTU 1, 50:27–28. Note the use of *ana . . . mašil* in the same text, lines 19 and 26.

ina ŠU.SI-*šú kam-kam-mat* KÙ.BAB[BAR x x (x)] / *a-na* ĻAB-*rat šá* ^{d}30 *un-da-áš-šil* : *kam-kam-mat* : *u*[*n-qu*](?)

"a silv[er] ring [. . .] in his hand"—it resembled the *disc* of the moon; ring = si[gnet].

2.4.2.4 tamšīlu, *"resemblance"*

In addition to the verb *mašālu*, the noun *tamšīlu* is probably rarely used as well to express a comparison. An Ālu commentary dealing with birds explains the noun *qaquttu* (most probably a type of bird):[187]

qa-qu-ut-tu$_4$ / *tam-šil* [*pa*]-*ás-pa-ás*

"*qaqquttu*-bird"—(it is) the likeness of a duck.[188]

2.5 *Multi-Option Description*

While a single descriptive explanation usually suffices to clarify a word or phrase from the base text, it also happens that several descriptions may be associated with a word or phrase. In such a situation, the base text may be described as one thing *or* another. Furthermore, in more complex hermeneutical processes, a feature in the base text may be explained in two different ways in order to harmonize it with its content or overcome a textual problem.

2.5.1 (*lū* . . .) *lū*, "(either . . .) or . . ."

While a commented lemma is usually paired with a single description, some explanations may contain one or more alternative descriptions. Thus the commentary notes that the lemma could signify more than one thing.[189] For example, a commentary on the first tablet of Sagig deals with the observation of a KI.UD.BI/BA cultic structure by the healer on his way to the patient:[190]

DIŠ KI.UD.BI IGI NA[M.ÉRIM DAB-*s*]*u* / *lu-u* ⌜*šá*⌝ *ana* SISKUR *mi-ḫir lu-u šá ana* ^{d}U.GUR *lu-u šá ana ḫi-s*[*u-ú-ti* (?) GAR-*nu*] / *lìb-bu-ú ina*

187 SBTU 3, 99:20–21. For another occurrence, see MSL 16, 343:29′.

188 It is unlikely that this refers to a bird called *tamšīlu* (CAD T, 149b, para. 3).

189 Note also the similar use of *lū* in equations; see 1.7 above. Besides the examples given below, descriptions with a few options using the term *lū* are found also in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:15 (TCL 6, 6, ii:11–17); probably SBTU 1, 90:4 and George 1991, 148:16 (a 22–24); cf. Verderame 2002, 107:22–23; SAA 8, 36:r.7.

190 George 1991, 146:3 (a 6–7), and note on p. 154. For the base text, see George 1991, 142:3.

> KI.UD.BI-*šú* NIDBA.MEŠ DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ *uq*-[*tar-ra-bu* (?)] / *šá* KI ^{d}U.GUR *kaš-kaš* DINGIR *na-ram* ^{d}nin-men-na *šá ina* nam-é[rim-búr-ru-d]a E-*ú*
>
> "If he sees a KI.UD.BI—a cu[rse has seized hi]m"—whether (the KI.UD.BI) [was set] for the sacrificial offering, whether for Nergal, or for remem[brance(?)]; as in: "In his KI.UD.BI the meals of the great gods are pre[sented]" which is with "Nergal, most powerful of the gods, beloved of Ninmena," which it said in (the corpus) nam-é[rim-búr-ru-d]a.

The commentary first notes that the KI.UD.BI cultic structure can serve either for an offering, or for Nergal, or for another purpose. Then it presents a citation[191] that, together with its context, supports at least the first two options: the structure is intended for an offering and for Nergal.

A similar case of a description that contains alternatives linked with "or" is found further along in the same commentary, when dealing with the observation of the *gabagallu*-part of a vehicle[192] on the healer's way to the patient:[193]

> DIŠ ^{giš}*gaba-gál-la* : ⌜*pi-it-nu*⌝ ⌜^{giš}MAR.GÍD.DA$^{?}$⌝ / *šá* DIŠ-*en* ANŠE KÚNGA *u lu-u* DIŠ-*en* ANŠE x [(. . .) *ṣa-an-du*(?)][194]
>
> "If he sees the *gabagallu*-part (of a vehicle)"—the box of a *cart* to which a single mule or a single *donkey* [is hitched(?)].

The commentary describes the *gabagallu* as a box on a small cart to which a single equid, either a mule or a donkey(?),[195] can be hitched. Interestingly, a similar commentary on the same line does not explain which equid might be associated with this part but simply notes that a single animal is hitched to it (*šá* DIŠ-*en ú-ma-ma* ⌜*ṣa*⌝-[*an-du*]).[196]

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191 For the terminology used in this presentation, see Chapter 5, 2.5, n. 120.

192 See George 1991, 162.

193 George 1991, 152:49 (a 45–46). For the base text, see George 1991, 144:49.

194 Restored from the parallel in George 1991, 152:49 (b 29); see below.

195 Assuming that the next sign is not a designation of ANŠE, i.e., referring to a different equid.

196 George 1991, 152:49 (b 29).

2.5.2 *kī . . . kī*, "if . . . if . . ." (or: "when . . . when . . .")

A more complex type of multi-optional description occurs when the different options are introduced as specifications of a phenomenon in the text in order to reconcile an apparent problem in the logic of the omen.[197] The term *kī . . . kī . . .*, "when . . ., when . . .," is used when a scenario presented in the base text has to be refined by distinguishing two possible variations of that scenario. Each of the two variations is introduced with the conjunction *kī*, "if, when."[198] For example, an extispicy commentary deals with a feature regarding the "presence":[199]

> BE SUḪUŠ NA *kap-pu* SUḪUŠ-*su ana* UGU ZI IM *i-kap-pap-ma* SUḪUŠ NA *ik-pu-up-ma ina* ŠÀ-*šú* BÙR ŠUB NUN *ina zi-qit* GÍR.TAB ÚŠ *ki-i ina* ŠÀ GIŠ.ḪUR BÙR ŠUB-*di* SIG_5 *ul i-lap-pat-su* / *ki-i ina* ŠÀ $PEŠ_{10}$-*šú* BÙR ŠUB-*ú* : *i-zaq-qit-su-ma* ÚŠ
>
> "If the base of the 'presence' is curved—its base curves above the 'rise of the wind' (= the right edge of the *lobus sinister*) and the base of the 'presence' is curved and a hole lies in its center—the ruler will die by the sting of a scorpion"—if the hole lies in the center of the scheme—it is favorable and will not affect him; if the hole lies in the center of its edge—it (= the scorpion) will sting him and he will die.

The commentary cites an omen with an unfavorable prediction regarding both the curving of the "presence" and a hole in its center. But this must have caused a problem, perhaps because the two features, namely both the curving and the hole in the middle, were considered unfavorable and thus the combination of the two should have resulted in a favorable prediction. The commentary therefore notes that the unfavorable prediction applies only when the hole lies in the center of the edge of the "presence."

Two other attestations of the term *kī . . . kī . . .* occur in a commentary on the first tablet of the diagnostic series Sagig.[200] An omen in this tablet deals with the observation of a black pig by the healer on his way to the patient, present-

197 See Chapter 3, para. 4.

198 For *kī* in conditional sentences in the Neo-Babylonian and Late Babylonian periods, see Hackl 2007, 67–71. For other cases of specification that do not include specific terminology, see Gabbay 2015b.

199 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:6.

200 A third occurrence may occur in the same commentary, but this is partially based on restoration; see George 1991, 148:16 (a 22–24).

ing two apodoses: one unfavorable, predicting the death of the patient, and one favorable, predicting a medical crisis but then the recovery of the patient.[201] A Late Babylonian commentary refers to the favorable and unfavorable apodoses of the omen:[202]

> DIŠ ŠAḪ G[I_6 IGI] *šá ana dum-qí u lum-nu* E-*ú* : $^{šu-ul}$ŠAḪ : *le-e-bu* : BA.UG_7 : *šá-niš* [PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ-*m*]*a* TIN-*uṭ* / *ki-i* GIG *dan-na-at i-mu-ru* TIN-*uṭ ki-i dan-na-at la* [IGI] UG_7 . . .
>
> "If [he sees a bla]ck pig" which it said favorably and unfavorably—(the reading) *šul* of the sign ŠAḪ (= pig) = ague; "he will die; alternatively, [he will reach a crisis] and then recover"—if the patient has experienced distress—he will recover, if he has not [experienced] distress—he will die.

The commentary tries to reconcile the two contradictory apodoses in the original omen. First the commentary cites the protasis of the omen, using the term "which it said favorably and unfavorably" to acknowledge the contradictory apodoses. After noting that the observation of the pig alludes to the ague from which the patient is suffering, since both are written with the same sign,[203] the commentary states that the favorable prediction applies if the patient has experienced distress. In such a case the patient will recover, as the second apodosis states. But if the patient has not experienced distress he will die, as the first apodosis states.

A similar case is found in the next entry in the commentary, which deals with another omen containing two apodoses. In this omen, the observation of a red pig is said to predict that the patient will die within three months, or according to a variant, within three days.[204] As in the previous example the commentary on this line resolves this contradiction by describing two situations that account for the two different predictions:[205]

> [DIŠ ŠA]Ḫ ˹SA_5˺ [IGI GIG B]I *a-na* ITI ˹3˺.KAM : *ana* UD [3.KAM UG_7 *š*]*á* E-*ú* / [*ki*]-*i* ˹*na*˺-*a*[*q-du ana* 3 u_4-*mu*] ˹*ki-i*˺ *la na-aq-d*[*u ana*] ˹3˺ ITI UG_7

201 For the base text, see George 1991, 142–143:6.

202 George 1991, 146–147:6a (cf. 6b).

203 Cf. MSL 14, 507:23.

204 For the base text, see George 1991, 142:8.

205 George 1991, 148:8 (c 10, cf. b 16′–17′).

> "[If he sees] a red [pi]g—[th]at [patient will die] within three months; (variant:) within [three] days" which it said—if he is dangerously [sick] he will die [within three days]; if he is not dangerously sick, [within] three months.

Lastly, a commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil may contain another example of the resolution of a contradiction in a text by the use of *kī . . . kī . . .*, but the context is badly broken.[206]

> [. . . *dumqu*] / *u* ḪUL *šá* E-*ú ki* UN[?] [. . .]
>
> [. . .—favorable] and unfavorable which it said—if . . . [. . .]

206 SBTU 1, 90:3′–4′. See Chapter 5, para. 1.

CHAPTER 3

"How, Why?": Terms for Contextual Explanations

The previous chapter described the terms used in definitional interpretation, the branch of Mesopotamian hermeneutics that deals with the meaning of isolated words and phrases through lexical equations and description. But context plays an important role in Babylonian exegesis as well. Commentaries interpret lemmata not as isolated words or phrases but as elements embedded within a larger context. Usually this context is the clause or sentence in which the lemma appears, but sometimes it is broader and may on occasion extend to include the textual canon itself. Thus contextual interpretation, in the sense of explaining a word or phrase in its immediate or larger context, is a process regularly encountered in Akkadian commentaries.

Just as definitional interpretation may proceed by lexical equation or by description, there are several distinct methods related to contextual interpretation. The first is contextualization, a process of discovering or constructing a context that will allow the interpreter to make sense of a lemma that is difficult to understand in isolation or in its immediate context, or to harmonize contradictory texts. In such cases, the result of this process may be the identification of a context that is seemingly unrelated to the base text. Indeed, when contextualization is performed to resolve a contradiction or a textual difficulty, the solution may come at the price of changing the literal meaning of an isolated lemma.

One form that contextual interpretation often takes is specification.[1] In general terms, specification is the addition of details to clarify a situation in the base text, usually by redescribing or paraphrasing the original wording. Sometimes this strategy is used to deal with a problematic omen by positing that a scenario in the base text is ambiguous or insufficiently detailed, and then specifying two variations on that scenario. For example, a commentary may cite a protasis—"If A"—and then modify it by stipulating additional conditions: "If A and B" and "If A and C." These reformulations of the protasis are more specific than the original, and the commentary explains the reformulated protases in a way that resolves the problem in the base text.

A third method of contextualization is reasoning, or the process of identifying premises and drawing conclusions. For example, Babylonian commentaries may explain a text through cause-and-effect reasoning, clarifying a word or

1 See Gabbay 2015b.

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phrase in the base text by identifying the cause of the situation it describes. Other forms of reasoning may also be used to explain features of the base text, or to justify an explanation given in the commentary itself.[2]

The Akkadian hermeneutical terminology employed in all three methods of contextual interpretation is chiefly comprised of prepositions and conjunctions that indicate the logical relationships between various signifiers. It should be noted that all of the prepositions treated in this chapter also occur in constructions featuring the verb *qabû*.[3]

1 Comparative Contextualization: *libbū*, "as in"

Contextualization may be achieved by introducing a comparison or analogy. The term most closely associated with comparative contextualization and specification is *libbū*, "as in."[4] It is not usually connected syntactically to what follows it (i.e., when a sentence follows it is not subordinate, and the subjunctive marker is not used).

The role of the term *libbū* is to contextualize a lemma or phenomenon, often through analogy, thereby indicating its meaning in a specific context. This context may be linguistic (lexical or semantic), phenomenal or descriptive, or textual, if the content of another text is cited in order to contextualize the commented lemma or phrase.[5]

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2 Besides the use of *aššu* and *ina libbi* for reasoning, which will be discussed below (para. 6 and 8), it is possible that the preposition *ina muḫḫi* was also used on rare occasions, but unfortunately it is found only in broken contexts. See SBTU 2, 36:15, 16; SBTU 5, 272:7(?); MSL 14, 288:1(?); CT 41, 39+:r.15′ (Labat 1933, no. 13; CCP 3.8.2.A); BM 67179:14 (CCP 4.2.U). For the use of *ina muḫḫi* in divination, see Appendix 1, 5.3.

3 See Chapter 5, para. 3 for discussion of the various combinations.

4 Cf. Cavigneaux 1994, 143: "par analogie avec." The term may probably also occur as *libbū ša* (MSL 14, 268, A:10′ [= SBTU 1, 140], and SBTU 4, 143:24); for *libbū ša*, see Hackl 2007, 28, 88–89.

5 For attestations of *libbū* in broken, restored, or unclear contexts that could not be assigned with certainty to any of the categories below, see SBTU 1, 31:9, 38; SBTU 1, 41:17; SBTU 1, 49:9, 20; SBTU 1, 50:4; SBTU 1, 84:25, 39, r.8′; SBTU 3, 100:30; Leichty 1973, 83:22, r.8′; Leichty 1970, 233:23; Civil 1974, 338:9; George 1991, 148:22 (a 27); George 1991, 150:46 (b 25); George 1991, 148:16 (a 22–24) (restored; alternatively, perhaps restore [*lu-u*] as in the continuation of the text); George 1991, 152:49 (c 10′–11′); MSL 14, 268, A:10′. For *libbū* in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:22 (TCL 6, 6: BE-*ma šu-ma-at* ŠÀ-*bu-ú mu-kal-lim-e-t*[*i*] *šá . . . a-na* IGI-*ka*), a corruption of original *šībū*, see Chapter 1, 4.5.1.2 with n. 320. For the juxtaposition of *libbū* with *qabû*, see Chapter 5, para. 2. For other occurrences, see also Chapter 2, 2.1.1 and 2.1.4.3.

1.1 libbū *with Homophones*

In a few cases, the term *libbū* introduces a homophonic (or even homonymic) explanation of the commented lemma from the base text. For example, a Sagig commentary explicates the diagnosis "(it is) the hand of the oath of his god; he will live (ŠU MU DINGIR-*šú* AL.TI)" thus:[6]

> ⌜*ni*⌝-*iš* DINGIR-*šú lìb-bu-ú niš* ŠU^{II}
>
> "the oath (*nīš*) of his god"—as in hand-lifting (*nīš*) (= prayer).

While "the hand of god" is very common in the apodoses of medical texts,[7] the phrase "hand of the oath of his god" is rare. Using *libbū* to indicate the line of reasoning followed here, the commentary explains *nīš*, "oath," by reference to its homonym, "lifting"; linked with "hand" this yields the common phrase "hand raising," i.e., prayer. The positive prognosis for the patient given in the base text can now be justified: since the patient "lifted his hands," i.e., prayed, he will live. Thus, the analogy of the homonyms *nīšu* has implications for the wider context of the entry.

1.2 libbū *in Phenomenal Specifications or Descriptions*

At times, the term *libbū* introduces a redescription of the general phenomenon described in the base text, contextualizing and specifying this phenomenon. For example, a Sagig commentary on an apodosis that diagnoses a baby's sickness while in the arms of his mother as an act of witchcraft specifies this act:[8]

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6 SBTU 1, 36:25. The base text is Labat 1951, 134:39. Other occurrences of *libbū* before homophones: Civil 1974, 332:17–18 (*el-la-me-e . . . lìb-bu-u* é-lam$_4$-ma . . .); Civil 1974, 332:28–29 (*na-am-li-su lìb-bu-u nap-lu-su . . .*); Civil 1974, 332:15–17 (cf. George 1991, 155) (*ṭe-ra-at . . . lìb-bu-u* gú-da-ri *na-an-du-ra* : gú$^{!?}$("E")-lá :*e-ṭe-ri*); perhaps Civil 1974, 337:22–23 (MAŠ UD-*mu* : *mi-šil ta-am-mu* / ŠÀ-*ú mi-šil šá-ma*); perhaps SBTU 1, 31:3; perhaps SBTU 1, 41:3 (very uncertain); perhaps SBTU 3, 100:9–11 (very uncertain).

7 See Heeßel 2007b, 120–130.

8 SBTU 1, 41:9. The base text is most probably Labat 1951, 218:16, 18, 19: *šu*(*-u*)*l-ḫu kiš-pi ip-šú-šú*, "afflictions of witchcraft have affected him (= the baby in his mother's arms)." Babies are not commonly victims of witchcraft, but see, e.g., Farber 1989, 66, no. 15:222 (with note) (reference: A. Perdibon); cf. Schwemer 2007, 37. Other occurrences: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:20 (TCL 6, 6, iii:6–7); CT 41, 30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5):29 (collated from photo); Leichty 1970, 230:264a (see chapter 2, 2.1.4.3); SBTU 1, 31:r.31–32 (see Chapter 2, 2.1.1); Leichty 1970, 233:17; Reiner 2005, no. 71:16'; Verderame 2002, 38:14,19: *šá-niš lìb-bu-ú*; perhaps SBTU 4, 143:24; perhaps SBTU 4, 145:r.17; perhaps SBTU 5, 254:33.

[x x (x) *l*]*ìb-bu-ú* MÍ.UŠ$_{11}$.ZU *a-na mál-taq-tú* DÙ-*ús-su*

["…"]—as in (when) a witch affected him (= the baby) to get a *maštaqtu*-disease.[9]

The specification introduced by *libbū* may serve as part of a larger hermeneutical process. For example, in a Sagig commentary:[10]

ŠU DAM NA *lìb-bu-ú a-na* DAM NA (var. LÚ) TE-*ḫe*

"The Hand of a Married Woman"—as in (when) he approached a married woman (sexually).

Here it is not the diagnosis, "Hand of a Married Woman," that is specified. Rather, the cause of this affliction is specified: it is an act of adultery by the patient. This specification is found elsewhere in omen literature, both in commentaries[11] and outside this corpus,[12] but using the term *aššu* instead of *libbū*. The interchange of these terms shows that specification and reasoning can be closely related.[13]

1.3 libbū *with a Semantic Equation or a Specification in the Form of a Paraphrase*

Sometimes the semantic equation or specification introduced by *libbū* is a close paraphrase of the commented lemma or phrase from the base text. The grammatical construction of the original is retained but a lexeme is replaced. For example:[14]

ši-it-rid-ma : *ši-it-ru-du* : *da-n*[*a*]-*an* : *lìb-bu-ú i-ziz-ma*

"*steady yourself*!"—*to steady oneself* = to be strong, as in: "stand (still)!"

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9 For *maštaqtu* (not *maltaktu*, "testing," as in H. Hunger, SBTU 1, 41:9 and 50), especially in the phrase *ana maštaqti*, see CAD M/I, 393.

10 George 1991, 148:23 (b 9, c2′).

11 See BM 74141:5′ (CCP 7.2.u71).

12 See MU DAM LÚ, "because of a married woman" (cf. Labat 1951, 166:79), referring to adultery; see Heeßel 2007b, 126.

13 See para. 7 below.

14 SBTU 1, 72:r.13–14. For other occurrences of *libbū* followed by a paraphrase, see SBTU 1, 31:28–29; SBTU 1, 41:6; SBTU 1, 81:6′; probably George 1991, 146:3 (b 10′); perhaps SBTU 1, 31:r.32 (see Chapter 2, 2.1.1); BM 66873:r.11′ (CCP 4.1.18). Note also one occurrence combined with the verb *qabû* (*libbū … qabi*), see Chapter 5, 3.4.

The meaning of *šitrudu* is unknown, and the translation proposed here is no more than a guess. Nevertheless, it is clear that the interpretation introduced by *libbū* retains the imperative form and the *-ma* that follows.[15]

Just as an act of specification can serve as part of a larger reasoning process,[16] so may a paraphrase be one element in an exegetical argument. For example:[17]

> ˹ADDA˺ IGI GIG BI TI-*uṭ* : *šá-al-ma-ti lìb-bu-ú pu-ú-ḫu* IGI
>
> "(If) he sees a human corpse—that patient will live"—dead body, as in (when) he sees a substitute.

By specifying that this corpse is a substitute for the life of the patient, the commentary gives the reason for the patient's recovery in the base text. The commentary does this by introducing this specification with the term *libbū* and paraphrasing "he sees (lit.: saw) a human corpse" in the base text with the identically structured "he sees (lit.: saw) a substitute."

1.4 libbū *with Textual Citation*

Sometimes "as in" refers not to a description or a parallel case or phenomenon, but to another literary or lexical text. This kind of contextualization is generally lexical in nature, but it is often more complex than a mere equation, and the citation of the other text may be part of a larger hermeneutical process. In addition to contextualizing the lemma in the base text, the citation also serves to harmonize different texts with each other.[18] The term *libbū* may appear alone with the citation or as part of the longer phrase *libbū . . . ša ina . . . iqbû* and *libbū . . . ina . . . qabi*.[19]

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15 Note that contra H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 75, in his note to the line, as well as *CAD* Š/III, 134b, I do not understand the following lines as a continuation of the commentary or a citation, but rather as a new lemma (*la ta-na-ḫis*) and its interpretation.

16 See 1.2.

17 George 1991, 150:35 (c 8′).

18 See Gabbay, forthcoming 1.

19 See Chapter 5, para. 2. Besides the examples below, *libbū* before a citation occurs also in Finkel 2006, 140:7–11 (citing Ludlul IV:17); CT 41, 30–31 (Labat 1933, no. 5):15 (citing a hemerology, see KAR 212, i:11; cf. *CAD* E, 201a); SBTU 1, 36:6–7 (citing Lambert 1970, 40, ii:7; see Frahm 2011, 98); UET 6/3, 897:8′(?), r.6′ (citations of Schramm 2008, 36:39 and Udug-ḫul 13–15:32, Geller 2007, 167:32; identification: E. Jiménez); Böck 2000a, 256:53–55 (SBTU 1, 83:r.17–19); George 1991, 146:2a (cf. also b) (cf. I. Finkel apud George 1991, 153); probably SBTU 3, 99:35–36; perhaps George 1991, 148:19 (b [7]); perhaps BM 47529+:11 (Geller 2014, 61:4).

For example, a commentary on a compendium of incantations and rituals for a woman who is experiencing a difficult childbirth interprets a rare word for the woman's vulva that appears in the base text:[20]

> *uš-šu-rat ḫur-da-at-su* : *ḫur-da-tú* : *ú-ru-u* / *šá sin-niš-ti lìb-bu-u qa-at-ka šu-ta-am-ṣa-am-ma lu-pu-ut ḫur-da-at-na*
>
> "Her genitalia are loosened"—genitalia = the pubic area of the woman, as in "Let your hand be put out and stroke our genitalia."

The text explains the rare word *ḫurdatu* by equating it with the common word for genitalia, *ūru*. In support of this lexical equation, the commentary presents an example of the noun *ḫurdatu* in context, namely a citation from the epic of Gilgameš (Tablet VI:69).

The use of *libbū* to introduce a citation is part of a larger hermeneutical process in a Sagig commentary on an omen about a healer who sees a black pig on his way to the patient:[21]

> DIŠ ŠAH G[I_6 IGI] *šá ana dum-qí u lum-nu* E-*ú* : $^{šu-ul}$ŠAḪ : *le-e-bu* : BA.UG_7 : *šá-niš* [PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ-*m*]*a* TIN-*uṭ* / *ki-i* GIG *dan-na-at i-mu-ru* TIN-*uṭ ki-i dan-na-at la* [IGI] UG_7 [*lìb-b*]*u-u* DIŠ ŠAḪ *ana ùr-ši* É LÚ KU_4 *a-sir-tu*$_4$ *ana* É LÚ KU_4 : *a-*^{r}*sir*^{1}*-t*[u_4 : *e-se-r*]*u*$^{?}$ / NAM.ÉRIM *ma-la ina*$^{!}$ SA.GIG
>
> "If he [sees a bla]ck pig" which it said favorably and unfavorably—(the reading) *šul* (of the sign) ŠAḪ = fever, "—he will die; alternatively [he will reach a crisis] and then recover"—if the patient has experienced distress, he will recover, if he has not [experienced] distress, he will die, as [in] "if a pig enters into a bedroom—a concubine will enter into a man's house"—concubine (*asirtu*) = [to confine](?) (*esēr*]*u*$^{?}$), a curse just as in (the series) Sagig.

The commentary wishes to explain how the observation of the pig in the base text predicts sickness: the sign for "pig," ŠAḪ, is shown to contain the meaning "fever," demonstrating that the observation of the pig in the protasis

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20 Civil 1974, 332:40–42 (partially paralleled by UET 6/3, 987:r.7′). For the base text, see BAM 248 (= KAR 196), ii:30 (see Veldhuis 1989, 244:30).

21 George 1991, 146–147:6 (a 13–17). A very similar commentary (on which some of the restorations in the cited commentary are based, but probably using the full form *libbū . . . ša ina . . . iqbû* ([*libbū*] . . . *ša ina . . .* <*iqbû*>) is found in George 1991, 146–147:6 (b 12′–16′).

predicts, through lexical association, the sickness ("fever") in the apodosis. Next, the commentary cites the two apodoses of the omen, which indicate that the observation of the pig could predict either death or a medical crisis followed by a recovery, and harmonizes these apodoses by treating the crisis itself as an ominous condition: if there is a crisis, he will recover, but if not, he will die. The commentary now uses the term *libbū* to introduce an omen from the series Šumma-ālu that is said to deal with the same situation as in the base text. That omen states that the entrance of a pig into the bedroom predicts the entrance of a concubine, but the commentary cites the word for concubine (*esirtu*) and (probably) notes that this symbolizes (or even refers to?) the confinement (*esēru*) of the patient to his bed described in the base text. Indeed, the commentary explicitly states that like the base text, the passage from Šumma-ālu should be understood to refer to sickness and not to a concubine: NAM.ÉRIN *ma-la ina*$^{!}$ SA.GIG, "the curse (i.e., the malevolent prediction of the omen in Šumma-ālu, resulting according to the interpretation in the confining sickness) (is) just as in (the series) Sagig (i.e, the base text)." Thus, in this case, not only is the citation introduced by *libbū* used to interpret the base text, the base text is also used to interpret the citation.

2 Referential Contextualization: *ana*, "to, for"

The preposition *ana*, "to," is mostly used as a term for linguistic contextualization.[22] It appears rarely in non-linguistic contexts.

2.1 *Non-linguistic Use of* ana

Besides its linguistic use,[23] the preposition *ana*, "to, for," is used a few times in commentaries in ways that resemble its function in the interpretive process in divination—namely, for finding out what an ominous event portends,[24] as well as for specifying the person or entity affected by an omen.[25] The first use is found in an "esoteric commentary" from Kutha:[26]

22 For a contextualization that combines the preposition *ana* with the verb *qabû*, see Chapter 5, para. 3.

23 See 2.2 below.

24 See Appendix 1, 5.1.

25 See Appendix 1, 5.2.

26 Biggs 1968, 54:11. For another occurrence of *ana* with a similar use, see probably SBTU 1, 90:6. The following two references also seem to make use of *ana* as an exegetical term, but the context of both is unclear: SBTU 2, 38:4 and SBTU 4, 133:8. For astrological texts

MUL.ÙZ *a-na bu-lu*$_4$

Capricorn (portends) to cattle.

The second use, specifying the person affected by the omen, occurs as part of a broader hermeneutical procedure. A commentary resolves contradictory variants in an Ālu snake omen where both a favorable and an unfavorable apodosis occur by specifying the social class of the subject of the omen:[27]

DIŠ MUŠ *ina* É NA ^{giš}IG ^{giš}SAG.KUL NIGIN-*ma* / [*a-n*]*a* BAD-*e* NU SUM-*in* É BI DAGAL-*iš* KI.MIN ŠUB-*di* : *ana kab-tu dum-qí ana* MAŠ.EN.GAG *lum-nu*

"If a snake circles the door (or) latch in a man's house and does not allow it to open—that house will expand; alternatively: (that house) will be abandoned"—for a nobleman—favorable, for a commoner—unfavorable.

The contradictory apodoses are predicated of persons belonging to different social classes, using the preposition *ana*, "for": if a nobleman's house is affected, the omen is favorable; if the house belongs to a commoner, it is unfavorable.

2.2 ana, *"to," in Linguistic-lexical Context*

The preposition *ana*[28] is used relatively often in lexical contexts—usually but not exclusively in lexical commentaries[29]—to associate a verbal or nominal form with an etymological cognate, frequently a noun but most commonly

(from Enūma-Anu-Enlil) constructed with the name of a star followed by *ana* and then a prediction (often in the form of an apodosis of an omen), see Reiner and Pingree 1981, 25, 36–46.

27 Freedman 2006b, 153:r.12–13. For the base text, see Freedman 2006a, 42, 56:59; Heeßel 2007a, 45, no. 11:56. For social and other specifications in omens in general already in the Old Babylonian period, see Jeyes 1989, 45; Winitzer 2011.

28 See Lambert 1999, 223, 227–230; Frahm 2011, 67–68.

29 Interestingly, apart from the lexical commentaries, many uses of linguistic *ana* are found in the Theodicy commentary (see n. 30 below; is this an indication of the scholastic tradition or school of its compiler?).

the infinitive.[30] It should be noted that this term is also used in non-linguistic contexts.[31]

In a lexical commentary, the noun *sisqu* (< *sirqu*, "offering") is followed by two explanations that are both introduced by the preposition *ana*. The first is a noun, the second an infinitive:[32]

si-is-qu : *ana sa-as-qu-u* . . . / *šá-niš si-is^{š}-qu* : *ana sa-ra-qu*

"*sisqu*-offering"—to *sasqu*-flour . . .; secondly: *sisqu*—to *sarāqu* (= scatter).

The commentary offers two explanations of the noun *sisqu*, a Late Babylonian form of *sirqu*,[33] designating a type of offering. In the second explanation, it is (correctly) derived from the verb *sarāqu*, "to scatter."[34] The first interpretation disregards the possibility that the second consonant was originally /*r*/ and connects *sisqu* to the noun *sasqû*, which contains the same consonants and is semantically related as well.

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30 Note the occasional use of the infinitive with *kayyānu*; see Chapter 4, 1.4.4. The following is a list of the attested forms: ***ana*** + **infinitive:** Noun + *ana* + infinitive: Civil 1974, 332:34–35; Lambert 1960, 72 ad 41; Lambert 1960, 74 ad 57; Lambert 1960, 76 ad 76; Lambert 1960, 82 ad 208–209; Lambert 1960, 82 ad 212; Lambert 1960, 86 ad 271; MSL 14, 323:12; MSL 14, 323:20; MSL 14, 323:14–15; MSL 14, 274:r.6′; MSL 14, 274:17; CT 51, 136:2; DT 35:2 (BM 92705), see Lambert apud Freedman 1998, 27 ad 17(?); BM 76695:r.1, r.2 (CCP 4.2.AA). Adjective (substantivized) + *ana* + infinitive: Civil 1974, 338:8. Stative + *ana* + infinitive: BAM 401:12 (Bácskay 2014, 511). Verb + *ana* + infinitive: MSL 14, 324:24; CT 41, 43:r.10 (Labat 1933, no. 17); DT 87:r.7′ (CCP 4.1.10). x + *ana* + infinitive: MSL 14, 274:9–10; MSL 14, 275:r.22′; BM 39440:3′ (CCP 4.3.u4). ***ana*** + **noun:** Noun + *ana* + noun: Lambert 1960, 70, ad 23; MSL 14, 323:14–15; DT 87:r.6′ (CCP 4.1.10); probably BM 37212:7′ (CCP 7.2.u19). x + *ana* + noun: Lambert 1960, 72, ad 39. ***ana*** + **adjective:** Noun + *ana* + adjective: MSL 14, 269:r.3. ***ana*** + **x (broken):** Verb + *ana* + x: Lambert 1960, 86 ad 265. Stative + *ana* + x: Lambert 1960, 86 ad 255. Noun + *ana* + x: MSL 14, 273:4; MSL 14, 274:16(?). Broken: MSL 14, 288:5(?); MSL 14, 323:17; MSL 14, 324:28; MSL 14, 325:50 (?); MSL 14, 325:r.24′(?); MSL 14, 326:r.26′(?); MSL 14, 326:r.27′(?); MSL 14, 326:r.36′(?); perhaps Reiner 2005, no. 71:15′(?).

31 See 2.1.

32 MSL 14, 323:14–15. Cf. Frahm 2011, 68.

33 Cf. *GAG* §34c.

34 An awareness of the shift from *sirqu* to *sisqu* is seen through the writing of the form here as *si-is^{š}-qu*, i.e., *sišqu*, since the shift before /*k*/ (or in this case /*q*/) from /*r*/ to a sibilant is usually to /*š*/ and not to /*s*/; see *GAG* §34c.

Rarely the term *ana* occurs with two lexical equations of the commented lemma. In such cases it precedes the second of the two equations, for example:[35]

pa-šal-la : *ḫu-*[*r*]*a-ṣu* : *ana pa-šá-lu*

pašallu = gold, to *pašālu* ("to crawl").

The word *pašallu* from the Babylonian Theodicy (line 271) is first explained as "gold," an equation known elsewhere as well.[36] Then the commentary notes that this noun should be associated (*ana*) with the homonymic verb *pašālu*, "to crawl."[37] This association appears to be a Babylonian etymological speculation, but it may also have a contextual dimension, if the "crawling" here is understood figuratively with respect to the oppression and suppression dealt with in the corresponding passage from the Babylonian Theodicy.

The preposition *ana* may also occur when grammatical elements are equated, rather than entire words. For example, in a lexical commentary:[38]

AŠ ˹:˺ x x uš aš *a-na* še *šu-u*

"AŠ"— . . . uš, aš, to (the terminative infix) še, "he" (= third person, singular)

If my interpretation of the commentary is correct, it assigns the elements uš and aš to (*ana*) še, probably referring here to a form of the verbal terminative infix,[39] with the meaning "third singular" (*šū*).

A linguistic reference using *ana* may serve as one stage in a more complex hermeneutical process. For example, in a commentary on the series of incantations and rituals for a woman experiencing difficulty in childbirth:[40]

^{urudu}gag-u$_4$-tag-e /. . . URUDU : *e-ru-u* / *a-na a-re-e*

35 Lambert 1960, 86, ad 271. Another occurrence of the same type occurs probably just a bit further in the commentary; see Lambert 1960, 86 ad 265.

36 See Malku V:168 (Hrůša 2010, 118, 404:168).

37 Cf. Frahm 2011, 68.

38 MSL 14, 327:3. For another instance of *ana* referring to a grammatical equation, see probably MSL 14, 328:41: GÁ ù *šu-a-tu*$_4$ ù *a-na* GÁ *šu-u*.

39 Cf. NBGT 9:79–80: še = *šu-ú*, ši = *šu-a-tu*$_4$ (MSL 4, 173:79–80), and Aa V/3:119 ši-i ši = *šu-*˹*ú*˺ (MSL 14, 424:119).

40 Civil 1974, 332:32–35.

> "copper arrow"—. . .; URUDU (= the sign for copper) = *erû* (copper), to "to be pregnant" (*arû*).

The commentary attempts to relate an arrow used in the ritual for the woman giving birth to the purpose of the ritual. Therefore the commentary notes that the substance from which the arrow is made, copper (as indicated by the determinative URUDU), *erû* in Akkadian, should be associated with the verb *arû* (*erû*), "to be pregnant"; thus the arrow refers to the condition of the pregnant woman treated in the ritual.

3 Referential Contextualization: *ana muḫḫi*, "on account of, concerning"

Similar to *ana*, "to," the prepositional phrase *ana muḫḫi*, "on account of, concerning," is also used for contextualization, mostly in linguistic use.[41]

3.1 *Non-linguistic Use of* ana muḫḫi

Like the preposition *ana* alone,[42] the prepositional phrase *ana muḫḫi* is rarely used for non-linguistic contextualization. The occurrences of *ana muḫḫi* alone in this use are found mainly in a passage from a Late Babylonian commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons:[43]

> GE UMUN-*ḫi šá bir-bir-ru-šú ub-*[*ba-tú* BÀD NA_4 :] *ana* UGU ^{múl}ḪUN.GÁ 4 UŠ EGIR GIŠ-*šú* / *šá* $^{múl.lú}$ḪUN.G[Á . . .] x *šá* ^{d}30 ^{d}UTU *ana* UGU KUR-*du ul-tu* ^{d}UTU / *ina* ^{giš}*gú-ḫ*[*a-áš-ši*(?)] *ina* IGI ^{d}UTU GUB BÀD NA_4 : AGA ^{d}30 / *it-ti ni-*[. . . D]U-*na* : *a-di* ^{d}30 *ub-ba-tú* BÀD NA_4 / *ana* UGU AGA [. . .] x : ^{d}UTU *ana* KI NA_4 *šá* ^{d}30 ^{na4}A.SAG : SÀG / ^{lú}ḪUN.GÁ : x [. . . ^{mú}]^{l}KÚŠU Á.SÀG *šá-niš ana* UGU *zi-mi šá* ^{d}UTU *šá* KUR-*ú šá* NA_4 *pi-i iṣ-ṣi*
>
> "I am Asarluḫi, whose brilliance de[stroys a stone wall]"—concerning Aries, 5 *uš*-length-measurements behind its . . ., of Aries [. . .] . . . of the Moon (and)(?) the Sun, concerning the arrival—after the Sun in the

41 For contextualization using the juxtaposition of *ana muḫḫi* with the verb *qabû*, see Chapter 5, 3.2.

42 See para. 2 above.

43 BM 47529+:r.5–9 (collated from photograph), see Geller 2014, 61–62:10 (note that *ana muḫḫi* combined with *qabû* probably occurs in the previous line; see Chapter 5, 3.2).

> wi[re(?)] stands before Šamaš.[44] "a stone wall"—the crown of the Moon; with the . . . [. . .] . . .; until the Moon destroys the stone wall; concerning the crown [. . .] . . .; The Sun (moves)(?) to the region of the stone of the Moon—the *asakku*-stone (var. written a-sàg). Aries(?)—[. . .] Cancer = Asakku; secondly: concerning the glow of the Sun that . . . *pi-i iṣ-ṣi*[45] the mountain of stone.

I am unable to make sense of most of this commentary, but it does seem that all four occurrences of *ana muḫḫi* relate to the contextualization of the base text. This is especially seen in the last instance, where the brilliance destroying a stone wall in the base text is said to refer (*ana muḫḫi*) to the glow of the sun on the mountain of stone.

3.2 ana muḫḫi, *"on account of," in Linguistic and Lexical Contexts*

Apart from a few occurrences in a non-linguistic context,[46] the term *ana muḫḫi* is mostly used linguistically.[47] In the majority of these cases *ana muḫḫi* does not refer to a simple noun or infinitive, as is the case with *ana*,[48] but rather to a lexical equation. For example, in a commentary on the word *akkannu*, "wild donkey," mentioned in the Babylonian Theodicy (line 48):[49]

> *ak-k*[*an-nu* : . . . :] *ana* UGU GAN : *a-la-du*
>
> "*akk*[*annu* (= wild donkey)"—. . .], on account of (the equation): GAN (KAN) = to give birth.

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44 I cannot make sense of this sentence.

45 See Chapter 1, 2.2.6.1.

46 See 3.1 above.

47 See Lambert 1999, 227–231. Cf. Frahm 2011, 75.

48 See 2.2 above.

49 Lambert 1960, 72 ad 48 (cf. Oshima 2014, 449:48). For other occurrences of *ana muḫḫi* referring to a lexical equation (and not just a noun or infinitive, as in the case of *ana*), and lacking a larger hermeneutical concern besides the linguistic, see BM 42271:18 (cited in Lambert 1999, 227), and MSL 14, 274:22–23. In a Sagig commentary, probably from the beginning of the Late Babylonian period, the term *ana muḫḫi* may be used lexically before a paraphrase of the base text; see BM 66873:r.3′–4′ (CCP 4.1.18): [. . .]-x-*šú a-na* UGU *ra-bi-ti-šú* / [GAL(?) : . . .-*b*]*i*?*-i-šu* : GAL : *ra-bu-ú*, "'*his* [. . .]'—on account of his *greatness*; [GAL(?) = . . .] . . ., GAL = great." It seems that the personal pronoun, probably in the base text, is retained in the explanation following *ana muḫḫi*. However, since the first word of the following lexical equation that serves to justify the explanation ends with *-šu*, this may be part of a noun or adjective in the previous line as well.

The commentary notes that the wild donkey, *akkannu*, contains the syllable *kan* (GAN), which can mean "to give birth." As noted by Lambert,[50] this probably refers to the sexual behavior of this animal. But besides the "etymological" concern of the commentator to understand how the word is connected to the characteristic of the animal, this interpretation does not seem to be related to the larger context of the line in the Theodicy.

Usually, however, the lexical equation referred to by the term *ana muḫḫi* is part of a larger hermeneutical process.[51] For example, line 62 of the Babylonian Theodicy says: "For the crime that the lion committed, a pit (*ḫaštu*) is open for him."[52] A commentary on this line explains the word *ḫaštu* by a lexical correspondence, harmonizing it with the deeds of the lion:[53]

ḫa-áš-tú : KI-*tì* : *ana* UGU ḪAŠ : *šá-ga-šú*

"pit (*ḫaštu*)"—netherworld, on account of (the equation): ḪAŠ = to kill.

The commentary seeks to show that the fate of a killer, such as the lion, is to die and go to the netherworld's "pit." The justification for the association between the killer and the "pit" is introduced by the term *ana muḫḫi*: the noun *ḫaštu* contains the syllable *ḫaš*, which could lexically correspond to the verb "to kill."

A medical commentary places a reference to the *gizzatu* (*kissatu*) disease in a larger hermeneutical context, using not a lexical equation but rather an infinitive with a semantic contextualization:[54]

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50 Lambert 1999, 229.

51 Note Funck 2 (*AfO* 21, pl. X); see Freedman 2006a, 74:r.1: [*šá-n*]*iš*(?) *ḫa-de-e ana* UGU *ḫi-di-tu*$_4$ (or: *ḫa-ṭe-e ana* UGU *ḫi-ṭi-tu*$_4$, see Jiménez 2015c [CCP 3.5.25]). Since this may be a second interpretation, and since the equation seems to be obvious, a larger hermeneutical concern must have been involved here.

52 Lambert 1960, 74:62; Oshima 2014, 446:62.

53 Lambert 1960, 74 ad 62; cf. Lambert 1999, 230; Frahm 2011, 75 with n. 357. For another commentary of this type, see probably CT 41, 39+:r.16′ (cf. Labat 1933, no. 13; *CAD* N/I, 172a): ITI.DUL : *taš-ri-tu*$_4$: *a-na* UGU RU : *na-ka-su* (note also that this may be preceded by *ina muḫḫi* in the previous line; cf. the restoration by Jiménez 2015d [CCP 3.8.2.A]).

54 SBTU 1, 51:3. See Geller, forthcoming; for *gizzatu*, see Fincke 2011, 176–181. Note a verbal modification after the infinitive, also with a larger contextual concern, in Freedman 2006a, 74:r.14: *šu-ta-tu-su-nu* NU *ez-bu-ma la ez-bu*-[*ma*(?) . . .] / *ana* UGU-*ḫi e-ze-bu it-tap-ra-su*, " 'their facing each other is not (NU) left (?)'—not (*lā*) left, on account of 'to leave', (i.e.,) they have been separated."

gi-iz-za-tú : *ana* UGU *ga-za-az šá* SÍG ÙZ

gizzatu-disease = on account of the shearing (*gazāzu*) of the goat's wool.

The commentary explains *gizzatu* using the infinitive *gazāzu*. This much could have been expressed by *ana* and the infinitive alone, but here the use of the infinitive and the narrow linguistic interest is only part of the explanation. The term *ana muḫḫi* is used because the commentary also seeks to describe the nature of this disease: resembling or feeling like a goat sheared of its wool.[55] Alternatively it may be indicating the alleged cause of the disease.

A last example shows a complex use of *ana muḫḫi* in conjunction with the term *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi*,[56] which also occurs in this example. A mythological commentary on months and stars deals with two stars or constellations called Gizzānītu and Puššānītu:[57]

gi-iz-za-ni-tu$_4$ *u pu-uš-šá-ni-tu*$_4$ *šá it-ti lìb-bi* MÚL.MEŠ E-*ú* / *ana* UGU-*ḫi* $^{mul(2)}$ÙZ *u* ^{múl}ADDA *ina lìb-bi* ^{múl}MÁŠ DU$_{11}$-*bi ti-amat u* ^{d}*qin-gi* (var. *-gu*) / *šu-nu* (:) *gi-iz-za-ni-tú* : *ki-iz*(-)*za-ni-tú* MU-*šú ana* UGU-*ḫi* ^{múl}MÁŠ *ki-iz-zu* (var. *ki-iz*(-)*za-ni-tú*) / *pu-uš-šá-ni-tu*$_4$ *pu-ú*(-)*za-ni-tú* MU-*šú ana* UGU-*ḫi* ^{múl}KA *qa-bi* / ^{múl}KA : ^{múl}ADDA

(The constellations) Gizzānītu and Puššānītu that are said together among the stars—it is said (or: you say it) on account of the She-goat-star (= Lyra) and the Corpse-star within(?) the He-goat-star (= Capricorn?).[58] They are Tiāmat and Kingu. Gizzānitu = *kizzanītu* is its name, on account of (the equation): He-goat-star = he-goat (*kizzu*) (var. *kizzānītu*, goat-like female). Puššānītu = *pû-zanītu* is its name;[59] it is said on account of the Mouth (*pû*)-star; Mouth-star = Corpse-star.

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55 So Geller, forthcoming; differently, Fincke 2011, 177.

56 See Chapter 5, 3.2.

57 Reynolds 1999, 370:8–12 (composite text; collated from photographs of BM 55466+ and BM 35188+). Note that my interpretation slightly differs in some places from Reynolds's interpretation.

58 For the meaning of *ina libbi* here, see Reynolds 1999, 374–375; Koch 2006, 128 (reference: E. Jiménez).

59 Reynolds (1999, 371) understands here "angry goat" (*ki-iz za-ni-tú*) and "angry mouth" (*pu-ú za-ni-tú*). However, since both *kizzu* and *pû* are masculine, this would be awkward, even by the standards of *notariqon* interpretation. Therefore, I understand *šumšu*, "its name," here as a reference to the pronunciation of the word in the time the commentary

The commentary first introduces the two constellations *gizzānītu* and *puššānītu*, using a variation of the phrase *ša* (*itti*)*... iqbû*.[60] It then notes that this pair of constellations corresponds to the She-goat-star and Corpse-star, using the preposition *ana muḫḫi* (not linguistically) with the verb *qabû* (*qabi* or *taqabbi*). After identifying the pair with the mythological figures Tiāmat and Kingu, the commentary returns to the correspondences between the constellations and the stars. First the commentary explains *gizzānītu* as what is usually called ("its name")[61] *kizzānītu*,[62] connecting it linguistically via the term *ana muḫḫi* to *kizzu*, "goat"; hence the feminine noun *kizzānītu* refers to the She-goat-star. The second constellation, *puššānītu*, is explained as otherwise called ("its name") *pû*(-)*zanītu*.[63] This rendering begins with the element *pû*, "mouth," and is therefore said to refer to the Mouth-star, using here the term *ana muḫḫi... qabi*, and not *ana muḫḫi* alone as in the previous case (perhaps because this interpretation only refers to the first element of the word, and is therefore less "linguistic" than the first explanation). And the Mouth-star in turn is known to be equated with the Corpse-star. Hence, the correspondences of *gizzānītu* and *puššānītu* with the She-goat-star and the Corpse-star are achieved.

4 *kī... kī...*, "if..., if..."

The use of *kī... kī...* in the contextualization of different or conflicting elements in the base text according to specific realities is discussed in Chapter 2.[64]

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was written, with no clever *notariqon* (note that *šumšu* does not usually have such a hermeneutical function; see Chapter 2, 1.2, and see n. 61 below). Admittedly, the shift from /*š*/ to /*z*/ in the case of Puššānītu is curious and may point toward *zanītu*, as supposed by Reynolds, after all. In any case, if this is correct, it is perhaps better to understand the *notariqon* as a genitive construction, the second element being a substantivized adjective, "the goat of the angry one," "the mouth of the angry one."

60 See Chapter 5, 2.1.5.

61 See Chapter 2, 1.2 (especially SAA 3, 39:16 cited and discussed there, where *šumu* is related also to pronunciation), 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. See also n. 155 below.

62 But see n. 59 above.

63 See n. 59 above.

64 See Chapter 2, 2.5.2.

5 *lišānu ša*, "language of"

Of the terms dealt with in this chapter, only *lišānu ša* is not a preposition or conjunction. Nevertheless, it is closely related to contextualization, specifically linguistic contextualization.

Linguistic explanations are one of the most common modes of interpretation in Babylonian commentaries. Lexical correspondence and semantic analysis of lexical components (*notariqon*) are undoubtedly two of the hermeneutical techniques most commonly used in commentaries. Since these techniques usually yield simple lexical pairings,[65] they have little need for any specialized terminology. The terms that do appear in conjunction with these techniques are usually the prepositions *ana*, "to," *ana muḫḫi*, "on account of," and *aššu*, "concerning, because," as discussed in this chapter.[66]

On rare occasions the term *lišānu ša* is used in commentaries, where it refers to the linguistic contextualization of a commented lemma.[67] The three examples, one of them only partially preserved, do not allow a conclusive description of this term. It may refer to the semantics of the commented word, or to its "etymology," similar to *ana*.[68] For example:[69]

> *kib-šá* : *qu-um-ma-nu* : *ek-ke-tú* EME *šá e-ge-*[*gi*]
>
> *kibšu*-rash = fungus = itching (*ekketu*), language of "to scratch" (*egēgu*).

The commentary observes that the *kibšu* rash is a sort of fungus causing itching (*ekketu*) and notes that the word for "itching" (*ekketu*) is "the language of" the

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65 See Chapter 2, para. 1.

66 See para. 2, 3, and 6.

67 The term was first recognized (in SBTU 1, 51:4) by Geller, forthcoming. Besides the noun *lišānu* discussed here, the noun *amatu* was thought to appear once in a linguistic context in a Ludlul commentary from Nineveh (Lambert 1960, pl. 16, K.3291, r.11, see 52:30 and ad 30; Annus and Lenzi 2010, 25, III:96 and ad 96, and translation on p. 40: ⌜*ur*⌝*-ú-di šá in-ni-is-*⌜*ru*⌝ *ú-nap-pi-qu la-*⌜*gab*⌝*-biš* : *la-gab-biš šá a-mat pag-ri*, " 'My throat, which was constricted, blocked as with a lump'; 'as with a lump'—pertaining to [lit.: that of] a word of a corpse"). However, the reading *a-mat* was now corrected to *a-šaṭ*, "stiff, hard," by E. Jiménez apud Lenzi 2015 n. 4 (CCP 1.3).

68 Note that otherwise *lišānu* may refer to the lexical genre of vocabularies, often referred to in commentaries; see Chapter 5, 2.1, and see Frahm 2011, 89–90.

69 SBTU 1, 51:4 (see Geller, forthcoming). For various attestations of *kibšu*, interpreted in the commentary, see Fincke 2011, 173–175, and especially 190, ii:5′, 8′ (perhaps the base text for the commentary).

verb "to itch, scratch" (*egēgu*), which is probably indeed the correct etymology of the noun. The question that cannot be answered at this point is whether the relationship between the noun and the verb expressed by *lišānu ša* is semantic or etymological, i.e., does "language" here refer to a verb that points toward the meaning of the noun (which often also corresponds to it etymologically), or does it refer directly to the etymology of the noun, similar to the case with *ana*?

The term *lišānu ša* occurs also in a lexical commentary on the entry dun-dun:[70]

[. . .][71] / EME *šá pa-šá-lu*$_4$

"(DIŠ du-un-du-un DUN.DUN)" . . . [. . .], language of crawling.

The reference to crawling may be related to the fact that dun means "to dig" (i.e., a "low" action);[72] cf. also níĝ-dun, "prostration, submission," in an inscription of Gudea.[73] Depending on what is restored before the phrase *lišānu ša pašāli*, the noun *lišānu* may be understood either as a semantic indicator or as an "etymological" indicator (in the latter case, it is probable that a word related homophonically to *pašālu* should be restored).[74]

Finally, an entry in a physiognomic commentary may contain this term as well:[75]

ṣi-ba-ru : EME *šá ṣi-pa-ru*

ṣibāru-fleshy-excrescence—language of *ṣiparu*.

Since this commentary occurs in the context of an interpretation dealing with lips,[76] one cannot rule out the possibility here that *lišānu* literally means "tongue." Nevertheless, the parallels and the reference to a noun similar to the one commented on suggest that this entry indeed contains the hermeneutical

70 MSL 14, 507:29–30.

71 Perhaps *ri*[*g*$^{?}$*-mu* (. . .)], proposed in the edition of the text, is not the correct restoration here.

72 Cf. some lexical correspondences in *CAD* Ḫ, 175a. Note its correspondence to *tarāḫu*, which also has the meaning "to dig," earlier in the same commentary entry (MSL 14, 507:27).

73 Gudea, cyl. B, i:14; see Edzard 1997, 89.

74 Cf. Lambert 1960, 86 ad 265: *pa-šal-la* : *ḫu-*[*r*]*a-ṣu* : *ana pa-šá-lu*, discussed in 2.2 above.

75 Böck 2000a, 255:38 (SBTU 1, 83:r.2).

76 See the previous line (Böck 2000a, 255:37 = SBTU 1, 83:r.1); cf. Böck 2000a, 244:83.

term; here it may refer to a phonetic variant of *ṣibāru*, or to a noun similar to *ṣipru*, "crest, excrescence."[77]

6 Between Contextualization and Reasoning: *aššu*, "concerning, because"

The preposition/conjunction *aššu*, one of the terms most frequently used in commentaries, can mean both "concerning" and "because."[78] Accordingly it is used to show the dependency of a text on a larger context in either a referential or a causal relation, and is therefore used in hermeneutical roles ranging between contextualization and reasoning, indicating either the specific referent of the base text or its explanation. Indeed, sometimes it is difficult to ascertain whether it is used in commentaries as a simple contextualization ("concerning"), or whether this contextualization is causal in nature ("because"). One way of distinguishing between these two uses relates to the structure of the commentary entry: when *aššu* follows an interpretation, it usually serves to justify it and hence is used for reasoning, but this criterion does not apply to all cases. In any case, it should be noted that the hermeneutical use of *aššu* for contextualization is more frequent than its use for reasoning.

In the following sections, various uses of *aššu* will be discussed; examples referring to simple contextualization are presented first, followed by examples that refer to reasoning, if any are attested.[79]

6.1 aššu *in Phenomenal Contextualization, Specification, and Reasoning*

The term *aššu* may be used to contextualize the phenomenon referred to in the base text with respect to a specific reality. In most of these cases, the term *aššu* follows the base text directly; if *aššu* follows an explanation, the specification it introduces will usually not be connected to that explanation.

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77 Cf. *CAD* Ṣ, 204b, para. 1d.

78 *CAD* A/II, 467b.

79 For occurrences of *aššu* in broken, unclear, or poorly understood contexts that cannot be assigned to the categories below (6.1–6.7), see Leichty 1973, 79:14; Civil 1974, 338:7; SBTU 1, 83:r.11 (Böck 2000a, 255:47); CT 41, 33:12, 14 (Labat 1933, no. 7); SBTU 5, 263:9′; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 58:8 (40, 41), 132, III:6 (25), 246:36 (r.5′), 42 (r.13′), 248:48 (r.19′); Reiner and Pingree 2005, 90:7″; Verderame 2002, 88:5 // 89: 10′ (*ša aššu*), 106:2; BM 34035:28 (Livingstone 1986, 62); BM 41586:5, 9 (Freedman 2006a, 149; see CCP 3.5.31); BM 66873:r.10′ (CCP 4.1.18); BM 41623:r.9′ (CCP 3.7.2.K); BM 42598:4′ (CCP 4.3.u3). For the juxtaposition of *aššu* with the verb *qabû*, see Chapter 5, 3.3 and 4.4.

An Ālu commentary deals with an omen about the observation of two snakes coiled around each other:[80]

> *ik-tap-pi-lu* gú^{II}-ak-a : *kit-pu-lu* : *šá* GÚ *it-ti-qu* / *šá-niš* 2 MUŠ.MEŠ *aš-šum ṣa-al-tu*$_4$
>
> "they (= the snakes) are circled with each other"—gú^{II}-ak-a (lit. "to do two necks") = to be circled with each other; that they cross the neck; secondly: two snakes, concerning a fight.

The commentary offers two interpretations that specify what the verb "to be circled with each other" (*kitpulu*) might refer to here, interpretations that indeed correspond to two known uses of this verb. The commentary first cites a lexical correspondence that uses the verb *kitpulu*, as in the base text,[81] and describes the phenomenon in the base text (using *ša*, as is customary)[82] as referring to two snakes intertwined with each other, their necks crossing each other—a use of *kitpulu* that is indeed otherwise attested, both with snakes and with lizards.[83] Then the commentary offers an alternative interpretation, introduced with *aššu*, that specifies the verb *kitpulu* ("to be circled with each other") by indicating that this "circling" refers to the situation of two fighting snakes circling each other, a meaning of the verb that is indeed attested elsewhere.[84]

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80 Freedman 2006b, 151:13–14. For other uses of *aššu* to specify a reality, see SBTU 1, 83:r.12 (Böck 2000a, 256:48; cf. *CAD* Š/II, 342a): *ig-ru ul i-šet-su áš-šú šá a-na i-di-šú in-na-ag-ga-ru*, " 'Wages will not remain for him'—concerning that he is hired for work" (cf. the almost identical commentary in BM 41623:r.10' [CCP 3.7.2.K], but without the use of the term *aššu*); SBTU 3, 100:4–6, see Cavigneaux 1994, 143: KAŠ.AL.ŠE$_6$.GÁ : KAŠ *ba-šal aš-šum* KAŠ ŠE.BAR SUMUN / KAŠ.AL.ŠE$_6$.GÁ *áš-šú la-ba-a-ka* / še-e ŠE$_6$: *i-*$^{\lceil}$*zu*$^{?\rceil}$*-ú* : *ba-šá-lu*, "'KAŠ.AL.ŠE$_6$.GÁ = roasted beer'—concerning beer of old grain; 'KAŠ.AL.ŠE$_6$.GÁ'—concerning steeping: (the sign) ŠE$_6$ (pronounced) *še* = squeezed beer(?) = to roast"; SBTU 1, 31:27 (Genty 2010, 21–22); KAR 52:6 (Farber 1989, 91): *aššu . . . šū*; probably Reiner and Pingree 1998, 133, IV:17 (31); perhaps Freedman 2006b, 150–151:22–23 // SBTU 5, 259:9′–10′ (see Jiménez 2015b [CCP 3.5.22.A.b]) (note, however, that *aššu* is mostly restored and therefore uncertain).

81 See Ḫḫ II:288: gú (ì-)ak-a = *kit-pu-lu* (MSL 5, 72:288).

82 See Chapter 2, 2.1.4.

83 See *CAD* K, 174b. Cf. also the discussion of George 1991, 148:22, in Chapter 2, 1.4 with n. 69.

84 See Leichty and Kienast 2003, 266:63–65, in a sequence of Ālu omens dealing with fighting birds circling each other.

Another example of a phenomenal specification of a reality occurs in an astrological commentary written on a Babylonian tablet from Nineveh:[85]

né-ke-mé-e-tu$_4$ / *áš-šú a-la-ku u mé-ḫe-e-su šá* ^{d}GU$_4$.UD

"(planetary) losses"—concerning the going and retrograding of Mercury.

The commentary refers to the rare astronomical designation *nēkemētu*, and specifies it in the context of the movement of Mercury.[86]

The term *aššu* may also express a line of reasoning when used to describe a phenomenal feature in the base text, providing a justification of an interpretation offered in the commentary. A Late Babylonian Ālu commentary on cat omens explains the derivation of the word for a type of lynx through phenomenal reasoning:[87]

SA.A.RI.RI : *zi-ir-qa-tu$_4$ aš-šum bur-ru-mu*

"SA.A.RI.RI"—a *zirqatu*-lynx, because it is speckled.

The text concisely explains that this type of lynx is called *zirqatu* because it is speckled (*burrum*). Implicitly, the commentary connects the noun *zirqatu* to

85 CT 41, 45:14 (Labat 1933, no. 20); cf. *CAD* N/II, 154b.

86 Similar to this example, the term *aššu* can follow a short explanation in the form of a paraphrase, contextualizing both the base text and its paraphrase. This occurs in an astronomical commentary from Nineveh written in Babylonian script (CT 41, 45:13; see Labat 1933, no. 20): *ka-la mu-ši la ú-ta-ad-di* : *kal mu-ši ul iz-za-zi áš-šú* ^{d}GU$_4$.U[D], " 'The entire night it was not revealed'—the entire night it does not stand, concerning Mercury." For the use of *aššu* with a paraphrase of the base text, see 6.6 below. In one case, *aššu* introduces a paraphrase not of the base text, but of an interpretation, which may serve as a second (perhaps later) interpretation explaining the first (CT 41, 45:9; see Labat 1933, no. 20): *ṣar-ru-ti* / *šá bi-ir-ṣu šak-nu áš-šú* MUL.ME *né-bu-*⌜*ti*⌝ GAR-*n*[*u*], " 'flashing (stars)'—that there are luminosities, concerning that there are shining stars" (the restoration *šá i*[*qbû*], instead of GAR-*n*[*u*] in *CAD* N/II, 148a, is surely incorrect, since this is not the way this phrase is used; see Chapter 5, para. 1).

87 SBTU 4, 145: "r." 7. Other instances of phenomenal reasoning occur in SBTU 1, 30:14; Gehlken 2012, 203:r.11, r.15(?), 17(?), 20(?). Perhaps this is also the case in Böck 2000a, 255:39 (SBTU 1, 83:r.3): SAG.$^{gi-il}$GIL : *áš-šú dan-na šá-niš i-kab-bit*, where *dannu* may explain a phenomenon as "strong," but this is very uncertain.

the adjective *zarriqu*, which refers to having speckled eyes and is elsewhere equated with *burrumu*.[88]

6.2 aššu *in a Phenomenal Specification through Harmonization*

A more complex contextualization involves a specification of the base text through a reference to another text, thus harmonizing both texts. For example, in an Ālu commentary on snake omens:[89]

> DIŠ MUŠ NA IGI-*ma* GAZ-*šú* NA BI *a-di-ra-tu-šú* NU TE.MEŠ-*šú* / [*i-na*] ⌜u_4[!?]-*mi*[!?]⌝ ⌜*šá*[!?]⌝ *a-na da-a-ku ṭa-a-bu* IGI-*ma i-duk* : *aš-šum* UD 20.KAM *šá* ITI.GU$_4$
>
> "If a snake sees a man and he (= the man) kills it—that man, his misfortunes will not approach him"—it (= the snake) saw (the man) [on] *a day that* is good for killing, and he killed (it);[90] concerning the twentieth day of Ayyāru.

The second part of the commentary on this omen, which specifies that the sighting and killing of the snake occurred on the twentieth day of Ayyāru, corresponds to hemerologies that assign this day for the purpose of killing a snake.[91] Thus, the commentary contextualizes the phenomenon in the omen, using the term *aššu*, by harmonizing the phenomenon in the omen with the phenomenon in the hemerology.

An attempt to specify a reality with the term *aššu* occurs in the same commentary in reference to a different snake omen. In this case the term may introduce a citation:[92]

---

88 See Leichty 1970, 222:356; De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 609:3.

89 Freedman 2006b, 152:29–30 (collated from photograph) // SBTU 5, 259:16′–17′. For a full discussion of this entry, see Gabbay 2015b, 351–354.

90 The sign in the copy in SBTU 5, 259, looks like MA but I suggest emending it based on the syntax and context, and especially according to the parallel phrase a few lines earlier in the commentary, Freedman 2006b, 151:14–15 (collated from photograph) // SBTU 5, 259:1′–2′: 3 ITI *šú-nu-ti uš-ta-pa-šaq-ma* : *ina* ITI *šá ana da-li*[?]-[*li*[?] *ṭ*]*a-a-bi* / *šá i-bir-ru-ú u i-ṣa-am-mu-ú šú-ú šup-šu-qu*.

91 See Livingstone 2013, 20:20 (Ayyāru 20): (UD) 20 MUŠ *li-duk* (vars. GAZ / ḪÉ.EN.GAZ); cf. also 122:77: (Ayyāru UD 20) [MU]Š[!] *ta-*⌜GAZ⌝*-ak*.

92 Freedman 2006b, 153:r.12–13. See Jiménez 2015b (CCP 3.5.22.A.b).

> DIŠ MUŠ *ina* É NA ^{giš}IG ^{giš}SAG.KUL NIGIN-*ma* / [*a-n*]*a* BAD-*e* NU SUM-*in* É BI DAGAL-*iš* KI.MIN ŠUB-*di* : *ana kab-tu dum-qí ana* MAŠ.EN.GAG *lum-nu* / ⌜*aš*⌝-*šum šu-tuk-ku dan-nu-tu*$_4$ *šá* ^{d}*nin-ĝír-zi-da* : *šu-tuk-ku* : *sik-kát*$^{!}$
>
> "If a snake circles the door (or) latch in a man's house and does not allow it to open—that house will expand; alternatively: (that house) will be abandoned"—for a nobleman—favorable; for a commoner—unfavorable. It (= the protasis) concerns "the strong (ritual) reed huts of Ninĝišzida"; (ritual) reed huts = peg.

The commentary first resolves the contradiction posed by the two apodoses in the base text, one favorable and one unfavorable, by associating each one with a specific social class: the action of the snake is favorable when the man in the house is a nobleman, but unfavorable when he is a commoner. The commentary then returns to the protasis, specifying that it refers to "the strong ritual reed huts of Ninĝišzida,"[93] which is most likely a quotation from an incantation.[94] The circular shape of the huts, together with Ninĝišzida, a god associated with snakes,[95] is linked by the commentator to the circling of the door and latch in the base text. In addition, the commentary adds that "ritual reed huts" correspond (in lexical texts?) to "peg," a material used in the construction of the doors and latches that are mentioned in the base text.[96]

While in the previous examples the reality in the base text was specified, even modified, on the basis of another text, in the following example the term *aššu* is used to specify another text according to the base text. This occurs in a commentary on the first tablet of Sagig:[97]

> DIŠ *suk-ku-ku* IGI ŠU ^{d}U.GUR : KI MUL.KA.DUḪ.A *a-li*[*d u*]*q-q*[*u-u*]*q* / *šá-niš suk-ku-uk* : *iz-bi* GEŠTU.MIN-*a-šú ki-la-at-ta-an* BA.[RA B]ÙR$^{!}$.MEŠ *mi-qit-tu*$_4$ *dúr*$^{du\text{-}ur}$-*giš-lu-ú* GÁL-*ši* : *dúr-giš-lu-ú* : x [x x]-⌜*lam*$^{?}$⌝ ⌜EN.LÍL$^{ki?}$⌝ / *dúr-giš-lu-ú* : EN.LÍL^{ki}-*ú* : *áš-šú* ^{d}U.GUR

---

93 For this citation from an incantation known from two manuscripts, see *CAD* Š/III, 412a, where Ninĝišzida (not Ninĝirzida) occurs as expected. For Ninĝirzida here, see Freedman 2006b, 163.

94 If so, this is the only known occurrence of *aššu* introducing a quotation.

95 See Wiggerman 2000, 369–371.

96 For a different interpretation, see Jiménez 2015b n. 24 (CCP 3.5.22.A.b).

97 George 1991, 150:32 (a 35–38) and note on p. 160. Cf. Wee 2012, 336–337; De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 458–459; Bácskay, Esztári, and Simkó 2014, 6.

> "If he (= the healer on his way to the patient) sees a deaf man—it is the Hand-of-Nergal"—"(If a child) is born under the constellation Cygnus—he will be dumb; secondly: deaf"; "(If) both ears of a malformed fetus are lacking holes—downfall of Durgišlû will occur"—"Durgišlû": [Durgiš]-lam(?) = Nippur, Durgišlû (= Durgišlean) = Nippurean, concerning Nergal.

The commentary cites an omen concerning the observation of a deaf man that implies that the patient is suffering from a disease caused by Nergal. The commentary then harmonizes this statement with two other texts: the first is a horoscope that predicts deafness for a child born under the region of Cygnus, a star known to be associated with Nergal; the second is a citation from Šumma Izbu[98] that concerns a fetus born with an ear problem (connected to the deaf person in the base text) and predicts the downfall of Durgišlû. The commentary then attempts to show that Durgišlû is (or is associated with) Nergal. It probably does this by referring to a lexical equation of Durĝišlam and Nippur[99] with the gentilics formed from these toponyms, i.e., "he of Durgišlam" and "he of Nippur." The commentary then notes that this concerns (*aššu*) Nergal, understanding "the Durgišlean" as Nergal,[100] and consequently understanding *miqitti Durgišlû ibašši* as "there will be an epidemic by Nergal."[101]

6.3 aššu *in Contextualizations and Specifications of the Semantic Field of the Base Text*

A contextualization introduced by the term *aššu* can specify the semantic field of a lemma in the base text. For example, a simple semantic contextualization is found in the following entry from an Ālu commentary:[102]

---

98 Leichty 1970, 70, IV:38.

99 Erimḫuš V:21–23; see MSL 7, 67; George 1992, 146, no. 18:6', 442–443. See also in the Izbu Principal Commentary, Leichty 1970, 216:140: *dur-gi-iš-lu-u* / *ni-ip-pu-rum*.

100 Bácskay, Esztári, and Simkó (2014, 6) interpret dur-giš-lam as alluding to the Meslam temple of Nergal. Although this is likely, the commentary does not allude to this explicitly. The question is how Nergal should be associated with the interpretation of Durgišlam as Nippur (and not Kutha). Although Nergal is not the "Nippurean" (but rather the "Kuthean") it is possible that this epithet refers to him obliquely as the son of Enlil, god of Nippur.

101 Cf. CAD M/II, 101b, for *miqittu*, "epidemic."

102 CT 41, 30–31:r.9 (Labat 1933, no. 5). For other occurrences of *aššu* referring to a semantic field, besides the examples below, see Reiner and Pingree 1998, 132, III:11 (26): *iṣ-ru-ur áš-šú na-ma-ru*; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 133, VI:1 (r.1): *zi-im-ru áš-šú a-la-lu* : *áš-šú za-ma-ru* (the end of this entry may also be an example of a linguistic reference to the infinitive, see 6.4); perhaps CT 41, 45:11 (Labat 1933, no. 22); perhaps MSL 14, 504:15.

A *it-bu-uk* : *áš-šú ši-na-a-te*

"He pours water"—concerning urine.

Using *aššu*, the commentary specifies the "water" in the base text as the patient's urine, which is what the context requires.

Another semantic contextualization is found in a Late Babylonian lexical commentary:[103]

DIŠ ú-ru EN+KAK? *ta-né-ḫu šá a-gi-i aš-šum a-gi-i šá* ÍD

"The sign EN (written archaically here as EN+KAK) (pronounced) *uru* = calming (said) of a flood" concerning the flood of a river.

The commentary specifies what "flood" refers to, namely the flooding of a river. The reason for this is not clear. Perhaps the word is connected especially to the flooding of rivers and not to the flooding of the sea or the mythological flood. Another possibility is that since "calming (said) of a flood" is such a rare meaning of EN, perhaps attested only here,[104] the commentator felt obliged to add the reference to the river in order to make it clear that *agû* here is "flood" and not its homonym meaning "crown," "disc (of the moon)," or "circular shape" (although admittedly it is difficult to associate these meanings with "calming").[105]

Another semantic specification, almost resulting in a change of the textual referent,[106] occurs in a Late Babylonian Ālu commentary on cat omens:[107]

KI.NÁ : *ma-a-a-al-tú aš-šum mu-ṣe-e*

"KI.NÁ"—bed, concerning the blanket.

The commentary retains the bed of the base text in its semantic field, but specifies that it refers to only one item considered part of the bed: the blanket.[108]

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103 SBTU 2, 54:2.

104 Note that the interpretation suggested by Civil (1989, 55) is not certain.

105 *CAD* A/I, 153a.

106 See 6.7 below.

107 SBTU 4, 145:"r." 6′ (cf. Frahm 1998). Another occurrence where the referent is almost changed is KAR 52:6 (Farber 1989, 91), where weakness is explained as poorness.

108 Note the colocation of bed and blanket (*muṣû*) in other cases as well; see *CAD* M/II, 246a.

When used as an indicator of a semantic field *aššu* may at the same time introduce a reason, for example to justify a lexical interpretation given in the commentary. An astrological commentary from Nineveh written in Babylonian script offers a lexical equation followed by a semantic justification:[109]

ra-ḫu-ú | *ba-nu-ú áš-šú e-pe-ši*

"to beget"—to create, because of "to make."

The commentary explains "beget" with the verb "create" (literally: "build") by explaining that both verbs are semantically related to the verb "to make."[110]

6.4 aššu *as a Linguistic Indicator in Lexical Contextualizations*

Like the prepositions *ana* and *ana muḫḫi*,[111] *aššu* is occasionally used as a linguistic indicator.[112] In these cases *aššu* contextualizes a word from the base text by linking it to another word. Often the word introduced by *aššu* is an infinitive; but unlike *ana*, *aššu* is not always followed by the expected cognate infinitive. For example, a lexical commentary presents an infinitive with *aššu* in order to explain a noun:[113]

ši-mit-[*tú*] : *aš-šum šá-ma-ṭum*

"*šimittu*-object"—concerning *šamāṭu* ("to strip off").

---

109 CT 41, 45:6 (Labat 1933, no. 20). For another occurrence, see perhaps SBTU 2, 54:35–36.

110 Cf. Malku VIII:133 (Hrůša 2010, 146–147, 426:133 and discussion on p. 277). The commentary may have added the semantic reference "to make" in order to avoid confusion with *banû*, "to be beautiful" (suggestion: E. Jiménez).

111 See para. 2–3.

112 Besides the examples presented below, cf. also the following occurrences of *aššu* in a linguistic/lexical use: Leichty 1970, 231:365l (De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 640:12): [*ḫa*$^{?}$]-*as-ra* : *áš-šú ḫe-se-ru* (according to De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 640, this line relates to Tablet 11:51′ [De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 649; partially restored], but perhaps restore [*ka*]-*aṣ-ra* [so Labat 1933, no. 10:12] according to the next lines, Tablet 11:52′–54′ [De Zorzi 2014, vol. 2, 650], in which case the commentary would not be providing an obvious explanation of the text); Reiner and Pingree 1998, 133, VI:1 (r.1): *zi-im-ru áš-šú a-la-lu* : *áš-šú za-ma-ru* (see also 6.3); perhaps also Leichty 1973, 79:7: [. . .] / *áš-šú ra-qa-tu*$_4$.

113 MSL 14, 495:8.

The function and use of *aššu* here seems similar to that of *ana* discussed above.[114] Perhaps there is a difference, though. Since in the example given above the infinitive is probably not related to the noun, *aššu* may refer here to a linkage between a noun and infinitive that is consciously known not to be the "real" linguistic etymological link, but is nevertheless linked for other reasons of contextualization.[115]

A similar use of *aššu* is found in an astronomical commentary:[116]

> *ṣir-ḫi* | *áš-šú ṣa-ra-ru*
>
> "flare"—concerning "to flash."

The noun *ṣirḫu* is most probably not connected to *ṣarāru*, although they share phonetical similarities and are semantically close. This relationship is indicated by the term *aššu*.

Another example of a similar use of *aššu* with an infinitive, here following a lexical equation, is found in another lexical commentary:[117]

> DIŠ ma-aḫ MAḪ *túb-ku aš-šum ta-ba-ku*
>
> "The entry MAḪ (pronounced) *maḫ* = heap(?)"—concerning "to heap up."

In this case, the noun *tubku* is probably derived from *tabāku*, and therefore the difference from the use of *ana* is not apparent. Perhaps, however, *aššu* is used since *tubku* is such a rare word.[118]

In the following case, a lexical equation is followed by *aššu* and another noun that contextualizes and explains the lexical citation:[119]

> DIŠ e-gi ÉGI *ru-ba-a-tu*$_4$: *be-el-tú aš-šum ru-bu-ú-tu*$_4$
>
> "The sign ÉGI (pronounced) *egi* = queen"—lady, concerning "female ruler(?)" (or: rulership).

---

114 See 2.2.

115 Another possibility is that the commentary did not end here, but that ": *šá ši-in*-x [. . .]" following the infinitive in the same line is part of the same interpretive discourse.

116 CT 41, 45:12; see Labat 1933, no. 20:12.

117 SBTU 2, 54:50–53.

118 There is only one other attestation according to *CAD* T, 446b.

119 SBTU 2, 54:21.

The interpretation of the commentary is not entirely clear to me. It is possible that since *rubātu*, "queen," does not always mean the female ruler herself but may refer to the king's wife,[120] the commentary explains that this is the "lady" herself, using *aššu* to connect the word to *rubūtu*, "princess, female ruler,"[121] or *rubûtu*, "rulership," in order to make it clear that égi means "queen" in the sense of a ruling queen.

Another case involving etymology, but not an infinitive, is found in an astronomical commentary:[122]

su-ga-ga-tu$_4$ *áš-šú* su-gu$_7$

"*sugagātu* (= a malevolent prediction)" = concerning su-gu$_7$ ("famine").

The meaning of *sugagātu* is not known and it is doubtful whether it is derived from Sumerian su-gu$_7$, "famine" (although this cannot be entirely excluded). In any case, the commentary connects this noun to the Sumerian noun su-gu$_7$ using *aššu*. Whether this reflects the ancient understanding of the etymology of the word or a more elaborate association through homophony is unclear.

The term *aššu* can also be used in linguistic reasoning (as opposed to linguistic contextualization, as discussed above), to support a lexical interpretation offered by the commentary or, in lexical texts, to justify a lexical correspondence found in the base text itself.

In a few astronomical commentaries *aššu* is used after a straightforward lexical correspondence to justify an interpretation as a lexical paraphrase. For example, in an Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentary:[123]

ub-bal : *i-na-aš-šá-a aš-šum* | *ba-ba-lu na-šú-u*

"will bring"—will carry, because "to bring" = "to carry."

120 See *CAD* R, 392.

121 See *CAD* R, 401a.

122 Reiner and Pingree 1998, 56:3 (10); cf. *CAD* S, 343.

123 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:4–5. Similarly, later in the same commentary (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.21): *iš-ta-mar-ma* : *i-šá-as-si* : *aš-šum šit-mu-ru* : *ša-su-ú*. Another such case occurs in another Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentary; see SBTU 4, 162:r.7: *i-ra-sip* : *i-da-ku* : *aš-šum ra-sa-pu* : *da-a-ku*. See perhaps also SBTU 2, 39:5. For a possible similar case (where a logogram is explained), see BM 67179:1–2 (CCP 4.2.U), but the text may be corrupt.

In this example, a verb is paraphrased using a different root. The paraphrase is justified, using *aššu*, by equating the infinitives of the two verbs.

Similarly, in another Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentary, a verb is paraphrased using a different root, but here the justification relies on the equation of two nouns derived from the two verbs:[124]

> *is-sal-la-' i-*˹*mar*ˀ˺ (copy: "˹ḪAR˺")*-ra-aṣ* : *aš-šum* ˹*si*ˀ˺*-li-tu*$_4$: *mur-ṣ*[*u*]
>
> "he will become ill"—he will become sick, because "illness" = "sickness."[125]

A similar case involving two Akkadian nouns that serve as elements of a larger construction is found in a medical commentary:[126]

> MÚD *ka-mi-i* : MÚD LÚ *ga-ar-ba-nu áš-šú ka-mu-ú* : / LÚ *ga-ar-ba-nu šá-niš* MÚD *qa-du-ú*^{mušen}
>
> "Blood of a captive (*kamû*)"—blood of a leper, because "captive" = "leper"; alternatively: blood of an owl (*qadû*).[127]

It is also possible for *aššu* to introduce a Sumerian- (or logographic-) Akkadian lexical correspondence.[128] A medical commentary reads:[129]

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124 Verderame 2002, 39, ii:15 (cf. copy in *AfO* 14, pl. IV).

125 For the first equation, cf. Izbu Principal Commentary:27 (Leichty 1970, 212:27), Freedman 2006b, 150:7–8, and BM 67179:r.7′–9′ (CCP 4.2.U); for the equation after *aššu*, cf. Lambert 1960, 44 ad II:90. A similar line of reasoning, but using a lexical correspondence that is not identical to the lemma and its paraphrase, may be found earlier in the same commentary; see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:3, with note on p. 287 (CCP 3.1.16): *ik-kam-ma-ru* : *id-da-a-ku* : *aš-šum ka-ma-ri dáb*$^{?}$("GÌR")*-du-u*, " 'they will be piled'—they will be killed, because 'to pile' = '(corpses of) bloodshed(?)'." In this example, the verb from the base text is paraphrased using the root *dâku*, but the following justification, introduced by *aššu*, associates *kamāru* not with *dâku* but, if the emendation is correct, with the semantically close *dabdû*, which can refer to corpses in battle. For a similar case, cf. perhaps Verderame 2002, 39, ii:18.

126 BRM 4, 32:7–8 (see Geller 2010, 168).

127 Cf. Lambert 1954–56, 315, E^{1}:3: [*k*]*a-mu-u* : *gar-ba-nu*. For "blood of a captive," cf. *CAD* K, 128a; for "blood of an owl," cf. *CAD* Q, 51b.

128 For other occurrences of *aššu* followed by a lexical correspondence, see SBTU 2, 54:8; CT 41, 45:6 (Labat 1933, no. 22); neither occurrence is clear.

129 BRM 4, 32:5 (Geller 2010, 168).

A.RI.A NAM.LÚ.U_{18}.LU : ^{ú}*maš-ta-kal* : *áš-šú* ^{ú}A.RI.A : ^{ú}*maš-ta-kal šá-niš* A.RI.A : *ri-ḫu-tú*

"A.RI.A of mankind"—*maštakal*-plant, because A.RI.A-plant = *maštakal*-plant; alternatively: A.RI.A = semen.

In this commentary, a lexical justification is used to explain only part of the lemma: A.RI.A is equated with the *maštakal*-plant, but "mankind" is apparently not taken into consideration. The second interpretation may be an attempt to address this omission by reading A.RI.A as "semen," which yields the phrase "semen of mankind (i.e., of a human male)."

Another case of partial correspondence between a lemma and the term with which it is equated occurs in a lexical commentary:[130]

DIŠ su-uḫ SÙḪ *ra-qa-du aš-šum* GIŠ.ŠÚ.A.SÙḪ.SÙḪ : *lit-tú ri-iq-du*

"The entry SÙḪ (with the reading) *suḫ* = dance," because GIŠ.ŠÚ.A.SÙḪ.SÙḪ = dancing stool.

Here a longer lexeme is used to clarify the meaning of a shorter one. The meaning "to dance" of the sign SÙḪ is explained by using *aššu* to introduce another lexical correspondence that is connected to dancing and that contains the element SÙḪ within it. In this case the boundary between the two hermeneutical functions of *aššu*, namely reasoning and contextualization, is not so sharp: *aššu* can also be understood as pointing to a specific context in which SÙḪ is related to dance.[131]

A lexical commentary uses *aššu* to connect two nouns by equating each with a third noun:[132]

130 SBTU 2, 54:46. Strictly speaking, since the lexical equation in this case is part of the base text, *aššu* here is not used to justify an interpretation given by the commentary, but an interpretation that is part of the base text. A similar use of *aššu* may be found in Böck 2000a, 255:44–45 (SBTU 1, 83:r.9): [. . . *ti*]-*ik-ki ki-rád* : *ki-šá-du ki-ra-d*[*u* . . . / . . . *ti*]-*ik-ki áš-šú ki-rad šá* Ì.GIŠ, but this is very uncertain.

131 For a somewhat similar case, see SBTU 2, 54:34: DIŠ ri-im ZUM *ma-šá-du* : *ḫa-la-ṣu šá* SAG. DU : *aš-šum* ga-ZUM *mul-ṭu*, " 'the sign ZUM (pronounced) *rim* = to comb'—to squeeze, (said) of the head, because ga-ríg(ZUM) = comb." For another similar case, see perhaps Verderame 2002, 39, ii:15–16.

132 SBTU 2, 54:38–40.

> . . . *me-ku-u* : *pu-ra-du* / *aš-šum* SUḪUR^{ku6} : *pu-ra-du* : SUḪUR^{ku6} : *me-ku-u*
>
> . . . "*mekkû*"– carp, because SUḪUR^{ku6} = carp, SUḪUR^{ku6} = *mekkû*.

The meaning of *mek*(*k*)*û* is unclear, perhaps referring to a type of harness, but other options are possible as well.[133] In any case, it is indeed attested as corresponding to a compound containing SUḪUR.[134] Since *purādu*, "carp," is the regular Akkadian correspondence to SUḪUR, this justifies the correspondence of *mekkû* and *purādu*-carp. Thus, the very typical chain of thought and argument "A = B and B = C, therefore: A = C"[135] is presented here in the form "A = C, because B = A and B = C."

The following example involves a lexical justification using *notariqon*. A lexical commentary deals with various meanings of the sign MAḪ, including an (otherwise unknown) association with *ragāmu*, "to call out":[136]

> DIŠ ma-aḫ MAḪ . . . *rag-ga-am-ma-nu* : *ra-ga-mu* / *aš-šum* MA : *qa-bu-u* : AḪ *ma-du-tú*
>
> "The entry MAḪ (with the reading) *maḫ*"— . . . loud-speaker(?) (and) "to call out," because (the element) MA (from MAḪ) = to speak, (and the element) AḪ = much.

In this and in similar cases, the result of the *notariqon* is explicitly stated as a reason (*aššu*) for the meaning "to call out."[137]

A more complex case of lexical reasoning is found in a Late Babylonian commentary on Šumma Immeru, where some part of the sheep was probably described as resembling a concave-sided tetragon (*apsamikku*):[138]

> ÁB.ZÀ.MÍ : *ḫa-si-si* : *áš-šú* U / *ap-ta šá sa-am-mu-ú*

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133 Cf. CAD M/II, 8a, *AHw*, 642b.

134 Cf. references in CAD M/II, 8a.

135 See Introduction, 2.2.

136 SBTU 2, 54:50–53. Other similar occurrences of *aššu* before a *notariqon* that functions as the reason for a lexical equation: SBTU 2, 54:12–13: DIŠ sa-a-al SAL *uṣ-ṣu-u* : *uṣ-ṣu-u* : *ra-pa-šú* : *uš-šu-u* : *ra-ka*$^{!}$*-su* / *aš-šum* SA : *rik-si* : AL : *šu-ú*; MSL 14, 506:3–4: DIŠ ki-si-im KISIM$_5$ *ki-sim-mu* : *tar-ba-ṣu re-*$^{r\,\prime\,\prime}$-[*i*] / *aš-šum* KI : *šup-lu* : SI : *im*-[. . .].

137 It should be noted that similar reasoning usually occurs without the use of the term *aššu*.

138 SBTU 1, 72:r.10–11.

> "concave-sided tetragon (written literally: 'cow of the *sammû*-harp')" = ear, because U = the opening of the *sammû*-harp.

The commentary explains the word *apsamikku* as "ear," probably of the sheep. In order to justify this explanation, it refers to the equation of the sign U, a sign used in lexical texts for "ear,"[139] with the "opening of the *sammû*," perhaps the literal meaning of *apsamikku* (if ÁB was originally AB).[140]

Finally, on one occasion a lexical rationale is given for a non-lexical entry in the base text, in order to harmonize the protasis of an omen with its apodosis. A Sagig commentary treats an omen that assigns death to a patient if his healer saw a kiln-fired brick while traveling to visit him:[141]

> SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA IGI GIG BI UG_7 *aš-šum* ÙR : *šá-rap* : ÙR : *ṣa-ra-pa*
>
> "If he sees a kiln-fired brick (SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA)—that patient will die"—because ÙR = to burn, ÙR = to fire.

The element ÙR is isolated from the sequence of signs SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA, "kiln-fired brick." Because ÙR refers to burning as well as to the firing of the brick, the relationship between the protasis and apodosis can be explained: the firing of the brick portends the burning fever of the patient who is going to die.

6.5 aššu *in the Contextualization of a Phenomenon to a Specific Reality Based on a Lexical Equation*

While *aššu* often introduces a lexical equation that is used to contextualize or justify the interpretation of a lemma, there are cases where a lexical equation itself requires contextualization or justification. In such cases *aššu* appears after the lexical equation and introduces the contextualization or justification.

An example of *aššu* following a lexical equation occurs in a commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman having trouble giving birth. In one of the incantations in the base text the god Sîn is referred to by his epithet *ella*(*m*)*-mû*, "pure-of-rites."[142] The commentary attempts to explain this in a few ways, the second of which is cited here:[143]

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139 See CAD Ḫ, 126b, CAD U/W, 362a.

140 Cf. Lawergren and Gurney 1987, 39 (differently: Krispijn 1990, 3, 22 n. 22).

141 George 1991, 146:4 (c r.7′).

142 See BAM 248 = KAR 196, i:41; VS 17, 34:17; see also Veldhuis 1989, 243:41.

143 Civil 1974, 332:18–20 // UET 6/3, 897:4′–6′.

> *šá-niš* si é-gar$_8$-bi til-la : *el-lam-mu-u*$_{(2)}$ *šá nu-ú-ru la-ni-šu ú-qat-ta-a* : si : *nu-ú-rum* : é-gar$_8$: *la-a-nu* / -bi : *šu-u*$_{(2)}$: til : *qa-tu-u*$_{(2)}$ *áš-šú* ^{d}30 *šá* AN.TA. LÙ *gam-mar-ti i-šak-kan* (var. GAR-*nu*)
>
> . . . alternatively: si é-gar$_8$-bi til-la = *ellam-mû*, he who ends the light *of* his stature: si = light, é-gar$_8$ = stature, -bi = his (lit. "he"), til = to end; concerning Sîn who sets a complete eclipse.

The commentary equates *ella-mû* with si é-gar$_8$-bi til-la, "he who ends the light of his stature," but it is still necessary to explain how this phrase is related to Sîn. The term *aššu* serves to relate the phrase to Sîn, and the following relative clause explains that "he who ends the light of his stature" refers to the moon-god at the time of an eclipse.

A Late Babylonian medical commentary remarks on the *amānu*-salt used for medical treatment:[144]

> MUN *a-ma-nu* : Ù.MU.UN : *a-ma-nu* / [Ù.M]U.UN *da-mu áš-šú* MUN *sa-mat šá* KUR *ma-da-a-a*
>
> "*amānu*-salt"—Ù.MU.UN = *amānu*, [Ù.M]U.UN = blood, concerning the red salt of Media.

The commentary associates *amānu* with blood, since both can be written Ù.MU.UN, and then specifies (*aššu*) the *amānu*-salt as the red salt of Media, which has the color of blood.[145]

The lexical and phenomenal hermeneutical process found in the following example is more complex. A commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman having trouble giving birth discusses the use of an arrow in the treatment of that woman:[146]

> ^{urudu}kak-ud-tag-e / *mul-mul* : *mul-mul* : *šil-ta-ḫu* : mul-mul : *ze-ri* / ^{gi}mul-mul : *ze-ri šá-niš* gi : *sin-niš-ti* : urudu : *e-ru-u* / *a-na a-re-e* : du-u KAK :

144 BRM 4, 32:15–16 (Geller 2010, 169 and 200 n. 272).

145 Geller (2010, 172) understands *aššu* here as introducing a reason and translates *sa-mat* as the predicate ("because the salt of Media is red"), but since *sa-mat* is not at the end, I understand it as standing for the adjective *sāmtu* in Late Babylonian orthography.

146 Civil 1974, 332:33–37; cf. Jiménez 2015f (CCP 4.2.A.a). The beginning of the text is paralleled by UET 6/3, 897:11′–13′.

lil-li-du : za-al UD : *nu-úr* : tag-ga : *e-ze-bi šá-niš* du-u KAK : *lil-li-du* : si : *e-še-ri šá a-la-ku aš-šum* / ^{mul}kak-si-sá

"arrow" (written: ^{urudu}kak-ud-tag-ga) = arrow (written: *mul-mul*); *mul-mul* = dart, mul-mul = seed, (since) ^{gi}mul-mul = seed, alternatively: gi = woman; urudu = copper (*erû*), to "pregnancy" (*arû*), KAK (pronounced as) *du* = offspring, UD (pronounced as) *zal* = light, tag-ga = to leave; alternatively: kak (pronounced as) *du* = offspring, si = to be straight (said) of going, concerning the "arrow star" (written: ^{mul}kak-si-sá)

The commentary attempts to find the reason for the use of an arrow in the treatment of the woman giving birth. It does this through an analysis of the writing for "arrow," ^{urudu}kak-ud-tag-ga. First, the commentary notes that ^{urudu}kak-ud-tag-ga corresponds to *mul-mul*, another word for "arrow," and that the noun *mul-mul* also corresponds to "seed," referring to the child of the woman in labor. The correspondence of *mul-mul* to "seed" is found in the writing ^{gi}mul-mul, or according to another interpretation this writing is connected to the treatment of the woman, because the element gi is equated with "woman." The commentary now returns to the original writing ^{urudu}kak-ud-tag-ga in the base text and analyzes its elements: the sign KAK can refer to "offspring," the sign UD to "light," and the element tag-ga to the verb "to leave." The combination of these elements signifies offspring leaving the womb and entering the light, alluding to the desired result of the treatment: childbirth. The commentary now offers an alternative interpretation: KAK corresponds to "offspring," and the element si means "to go straight," alluding to the offspring who will come out "straight," i.e., directly and properly formed, out of the womb. Then the commentary explains the source of the element si, which is not in the base text: it refers (*aššu*) to the "arrow star," written ^{mul}kak-si-sá and obviously related to the "arrow" in the base text.

The following case seems to use *aššu* after a lexical equation to introduce a reason for an interpretation rather than a simple contextualization. A commentary from Nineveh written in Babylonian script explains the relationship between the names of the months in the Elamite calendar and in the Babylonian calendar: the Elamite month-names are shown to refer to events associated with the Babylonian months to which the Elamite months correspond. For example, in the following entry that deals with Addāru:[147]

147 Reiner 1973, 102:r.8–10. Restoration and interpretation follow Jiménez 2015e (CCP 3.9.1); see also Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 339. The term *aššu* occurs in the other entries of this commentary, known also from BM 47554; see Reiner 1973, 101–102:3, r.1, r.4, r.6–7,

ITI.ḪUL.DÚB.E ITI.ŠE.KIN.KU$_5$ ḪUL [*lem-nu* DÚB *na-pa-ṣu*(?)] / *áš-šú ina* ITI.ŠE.KIN.KU$_5$ ^{d}AMAR.UTU *lem-nu-t*[*i-šú*(?) . . .] / *ú-nap-pi-ṣu* LUGAL-*ta* [*il-qu-ú*(?)]

"Month Ḫuldube = Addāru"—ḪUL = [evil, DÚB = crush](?), because in the month of Addāru Marduk crushed [his](?) evil (enemies) [. . . (and) took(?)] the kingship.[148]

The commentary explains the name Ḫuldube as referring to Marduk's mythological combat in Addāru before his enthronement in the month of Nisannu. The elements ḪUL and DÚB are explained as meaning "evil" and "crush," and this interpretation is justified by a reference to Marduk's combat.

6.6 *Paraphrase through* aššu

Rarely, an interpretation introduced by the term *aššu* seems to be a paraphrase of the base text. For example, in the following astrological commentary:[149]

MUL.ME AN-*e i-nu-uš-šú áš-šú* MU[L.ME]Š AN-*e i*-[. . .]

"The stars of heaven shake"—concerning: the sta[rs] of heaven [. . .].

Since the verb *nâšu*, "to shake," is not regularly used for celestial phenomena, the commentary may have rephrased the sentence using a different and more common verb for this context. Unfortunately the commentary breaks off after the first sign of the verb that would correspond to *nâšu*.

Another case of paraphrase, although it could fall also into the category of regular semantic referencing,[150] occurs in a commentary on the explanatory plant list Uruana:[151]

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r.8–10. See also CCP 3.9.1 (Jiménez 2015e); Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 338–339, A:7, 9, 16, B:r.2, 5, 8, 10.

148 For the restoration, see Jiménez 2015e n. 3 (CCP 3.9.1).

149 SBTU 1, 84:5. Another attestation of a paraphrase introduced by *aššu* may occur in CT 41, 45:16 (Labat 1933, no. 22): *a-mit-tu$_4$ šá-a-ri* : *áš-šú a-mit-t*[*u$_4$* . . .] (see below for another paraphrase in the same text). For other cases of paraphrase where the term *aššu* appears but is not used to directly introduce a paraphrase of the base text, see n. 86 above.

150 See 6.3 above.

151 CT 41, 45:11 (Labat 1933, no. 22). For the base text (Uruana III:603–604), see *CAD* N/II, 251a; *CAD* R, 342a. For a similar occurrence using *aššu* as well as the semantic indicator *ša*, as in the base text, see MSL 14, 507:27–28.

[*ni-qi-q*]*u šá* ŠAḪ : *ni-i-ki ni-i-ki šá* ŠAḪ : *áš-šú ri-ḫu-tú šá* ŠAḪ

"[copulat]ion of a pig = fornication of a pig"—concerning the semen of a pig.

The commentary explains the ingredient whose name is "copulation of a pig," which contains no obvious reference to a plant or seed, by identifying it with the semen of a pig. The new name uses the same construction as in the base text (*ša šaḫî*),[152] and is more likely to refer to an ingredient.[153]

On two occasions, the term *aššu* is used to introduce an explanation or paraphrase that is achieved through homonyms. An entry in the i-nam-ĝiš-ḫur an-ki-a astro-mathematical exegetical composition explains the epithet "fruit" of the moon-god Sîn:[154]

DIŠ GURUN ^{d}30 MU (var. *aš-šu*) ^{d}*a-nù im-bu-ú* MU.N[I]

"Fruit (*inbu*)"—Sîn, because Anu called (*imbû* < *inbû*) his name.

Sîn's epithet "fruit," originally referring to the full moon in the sky, is paraphrased, and thus also explained, through homophony: the fruit, *inbu*, is related to his father, Anu, who named him, *inbû*.[155]

Another occurrence of homophony, but in a larger hermeneutical context, is found in a commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman having trouble giving birth:[156]

aš-šum (var. *áš-šú*) ÁB-*ia*$_{(5)}$ *la a-lit-ti* (:) *áš-šú* ^{d}30 EN *la-a-tu*$_4$ (var. [ÁB].ʳMEŠ¹) *el-le-e-ti* (var. KÙ.MEŠ) / zi ^{d}nin-dar-a sipa AB.LU lu ú-a ḫé-pà : *niš* ^{d}MIN SIPA *ú-tul-la-a-tú lu-ú ta-ma-at* : ^{d}nin-dar-a : ^{d}30

"Because of my cow that is not giving birth (*littiya lā ālitti*)"—because Sîn is the lord of the pure cows (*lâti ellēti*): "you are conjured by the oath of Nindara, shepherd of the herdsmen!"; Nindara = Sîn.

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152 Note that *ri-ḫu-tú šá* ŠAḪ without *aššu* occurs in the base text in the previous entry; see *CAD* R, 342a.

153 See *CAD* R, 342, and see, e.g., the explanation of the reference to the *maštakal* plant as "sperm" (of mankind) in BRM 4, 32:5 (Geller 2010, 168), discussed in 6.4 above.

154 Livingstone 1986, 28:2 = 30:1.

155 Or is *šumšu* here a term relating to homophones? See n. 61 above.

156 Civil 1974, 332:21–23 // UET 6/3, 897:7′.

The commentary cites a line from a passage describing how the god Sîn cries over his cow that has failed to give birth.[157] The commentary notices this close association of Sîn with "his" cow and remarks that Sîn is the lord of the cows, thus creating a homophonic paraphrase of the description of the cow in the base text (*littiya lā ālitti—lâti ellēti*).[158] In support of this explanation,[159] the commentary cites a line from an incantation[160] in which the god Nindara is said to be the shepherd of the herdsmen (or herdswomen?), i.e., he is associated with cattle and cows, and then notes that Nindara is the god Sîn, an equation known from elsewhere.[161]

6.7 aššu *in a Specification with a* (*Symbolic*) *Change of Textual Referent*

As seen above,[162] a specification introduced by *aššu* may actually change the referent that seems to have originally been intended in the base text. In most cases, this change is limited and the result is semantically or phenomenally related to the base text. But in other cases, this change is much more radical.

In an Ālu commentary on snake omens, a description of a snake frightening a man seems to be converted, using the term *aššu*, into a reference to the behavior of soldiers in an army:[163]

> [*u*]*p-ta-nar-rad* : *šá* LÚ.ÉRIN.MEŠ *ina bi-ri a-ḫa-meš ú-par-ra-du aš-šum ga-la-tu*$_4$ *šá* LÚ.ÉRIN.MEŠ / [x *u*]*p-ta-nar-rad* : *up-ta-na-al-làḫ*
>
> "it (= the snake) constantly causes fear"—that troops cause fear among themselves; (this snake omen) concerns the fright of troops; [(. . .)] "it constantly causes fear"—it constantly causes fright.

In this case, the fear caused by the snake is probably shifted to a different referent: the omen does not deal with fear of snakes but with fear among troops at war.[164] Here the term *aššu* is used to communicate an interpretation that is almost allegorical.

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157 For the base text, see Veldhuis 1989, 243:43.

158 Differently, Veldhuis 1989, 246. For the wordplay in the base text, see Veldhuis 1989, 257 n. 4.

159 This does not occur in the parallel UET 6/3, 897:7′.

160 See Geller 2007, 120, Tablet 5:59.

161 See Gabbay and Wilcke 2012.

162 See 6.3 above.

163 Freedman 2006b, 153:r.11–12.

164 For a different interpretation, see Jiménez 2015b (CCP 3.5.22.A.b): " 'Constantly causes fear' (ŠĀ 23 57) refers (to the snake) which frightens a whole army, on account of (the line) 'to be afraid, said of soldiers' (quotation from an unknown lexical list)."

Indeed, a change of referent that results in a quasi-allegorical interpretation is frequently encountered in cultic commentaries, where a cultic object is explained as a mythological being, and in commentaries on mythological and magical texts, where a mythological element is explained as a cultic one or as a reference to a human custom or behavior. In these cases the change of referent is occasionally achieved with the term *aššu*.[165]

The term *aššu* is found a few times in a commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons from Assur. Elsewhere in this commentary the term *aššu . . . iqtabi* occurs, and therefore it is likely that *aššu* alone is simply a shortened form of the term *aššu . . . iqtabi* (or vice versa).[166] The term *aššu* occurs twice in the following entry from this commentary:[167]

> [KI.MIN (= *a-na-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi)] *a-šar šil-la-te la i-qab-bu-u a-na-ku* / [M]U EN *šá ina á-ki-it ina qa-bal tam-tì áš-bu* / [*š*]*á-niš šá ina* É ÉR LÚ *ina qab-ri-šú la i-kar-ra-bu* / *šal-šiš* MU DUMU.MEŠ KÁ.DINGIR.RA^{ki} *šá ina* ^{mul}SAG.ME.GAR *la i-tam-m*[*u*]*-u*
>
> "[Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi)] (who) does not speak in a place of blasphemy, am I"—concerning Bēl who is seated in the midst of the Sea in the *akītu* (-House); secondly: that in the "house of mourning"[168] a man does not pray in his tomb; thirdly: concerning the residents of Babylon who do not swear by Jupiter.

The commentary addresses a line from Marduk's Address to the Demons that is clear in itself but whose context is opaque. Where and when does Marduk not speak in a place of blasphemy? The commentary proposes three explanations. The first notes, using the term *aššu*, that the line refers to Marduk sitting upon the Sea in the Akītu House, i.e., his seat that is named after the goddess

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165 Note the use of *aššu* in Lambert 2013, 94, comm. Y:5–7, and 134:9 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 304), where *aššu* refers to the contextualization of myth as ritual, but it is likely that *kī iqbû/qabû* should be restored at the ends of these lines, as the term *aššu . . . kī iqbû/qabû* occurs elsewhere in the commentary to Enūma eliš; see Chapter 5, 4.4.

166 This is especially seen in *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A 163:1–5 (Lambert 1954–56, 313, B 6; Lambert 1959/60, 115; Geller 2014, 65:11), where one interpretation of the base text is introduced with *aššu*, and another interpretation of the same text is introduced with *aššu . . . iqtabi*.

167 *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A 163, r.4′–8′; see Lambert 1954–56, 315, F:4; Lambert 1959/60, 118; Geller 2014, 64:7.

168 Is this a simple individual place of mourning, or is it a cultic place related to the temple of Babylon? Cf. *bīt sipittê*, "house of the lamenter(?)," in Babylon (George 1993, no. 991).

Tiāmat—a context that mirrors his mythological combat against Tiāmat when he occupies that seat during the Akītu festival. The rationale of this commentary vis-à-vis the base text is not entirely clear. Perhaps the Sea is the place of blasphemy here, but the commentary does not explain the significance of Marduk not speaking in that place. The second explanation, which is not introduced by *aššu*, contextualizes the "place of blasphemy" as a tomb and specifies the act of not speaking as not praying (to Marduk?). The third explanation uses the term *aššu* to contextualize the phrase in the base text with respect to the citizens of Babylon, Marduk's city, who do not swear (a specification of "speaking" in the base test) by the star Jupiter, associated with Marduk. The assumption behind the commentary seems to be that since swearing may lead to the uttering of false oaths, one cannot involve Marduk in this act.

A change of referent may also occur when *aššu* introduces an explanation of the reasoning behind the base text (as opposed to a simple contextualization, as discussed above). In this case the change of referent is often symbolic. A commentary on a medical-magical composition for the treatment of a woman giving birth provides the reasoning behind the base text's instruction to the healer to break a reed over the woman's navel:[169]

> *e-li* LI.DUR-*šú ḫe-pi-ma aš-šum* GI / *na-ki-is ab-bu-un-na-ti* : *ab-bu-un-na-tú ri-ik-si šá* LÚ *ši-i*
>
> "break (the reed) over her navel"—because reed is the cutter of the navel (= the umbilical cord); the navel is the knot of man.

The commentary explains the symbolism of the act: the healer is miming what the treatment aims to facilitate—birth, a process that is finalized by cutting the umbilical cord with a reed.[170] Here, the woman is having trouble giving birth and so the healer symbolically enacts the process of birth, thereby magically helping her. The following interpretation, which emphasizes the role of the navel, probably reiterates that the woman's navel stands for the baby's umbilical cord, which will be cut when the treatment succeeds.[171]

Similar cases of reasoning that result in a change in the referent of the text occur in cultic commentaries, where an object or entity participating in

169 Civil 1974, 332:12. For the base text, cf. Cohen 1976, 136–138:52–53; see Veldhuis 1989, 242.

170 For a reed as the regular tool for cutting the umbilical cord, see Stol 2010, 111, 142 with n. 184.

171 Cf. also Stol 2010, 142.

cult is explained as a mythological entity or happening. Often, the term *aššu* introduces the reason for this shift. For example, in the following commentary from the Neo-Assyrian period:[172]

> ˹dug˺GÚ.ZI *ša* DÙ-*uš ak-ka šu-u ka-si* AN.ŠÁR / MU ^{d}+EN DU-*ma* ^{d}*a-nu-um ik-mu-ú* [K]UŠ-[*šú*] / *iš-du-du* AD_6-*šú ana* ^{d}*a-nun-na-ki ip-qid / it-ti-ku-nu-ma ka-mi* ^{d}*a-n*[*u-um*] / KUŠ-*šú ki-i i-ku-ṣu* MUL.SIPA.ZI.AN.NA MÚD-*šú* / *ki-i ú-lab-bi-šu u* ^{d}*a-nu*(*-um*) *ina* UGU SAG.DU *nak-si i-*[*zi-zu*(?)]
>
> The cup (with) which he performs (the ritual)—it is a . . .;[173] it is the cup of Anšar, because Bēl went and captured Anu, pulled off [his] hide, and assigned his corpse to the Anunnaki, (saying): "Anu is (now) captured with you!" When he flayed his hide, when he dressed Orion with his blood, and Anu s[tood](?) on (his)(?) cut-off head.

The cup used in cult is said to represent a divine element and its use is explained through a reference to a mythological battle between gods.

7 Reasoning and its Result: *ina annî* and *aššu annî* "because of this, therefore"

Similar to *aššu*, the terms *ina annî* and *aššu annî* are used when discussing reasoning in commentaries. But while the term *aššu* refers to the reason for a commentary, the terms *ina annî* and *aššu annî* refer to the result of the reasoning process, the explanation itself.

The term *ina annî* appears in an extispicy commentary from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh constructed as an actual dialogue between a master-teacher and a young scholar:[174]

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172 SAA 3, 38:17–22. For other similar occurrences, see SAA 3, 39:r.7–8 and 40:1.

173 Livingstone (SAA 3, 96) understands DÙ-*uš-ak-ka*, "prepared for you," but this is unlikely (note DÙ-*uš* in line 23). Elsewhere, Livingstone understands this as *ak-ka šu-u*, "it is as follows" (Livingstone 1986, 116–117), but this is also unlikely because *šū* is usually used for an equation (see Chapter 2, 1.1). Therefore *ak-ka* should probably be a noun corresponding to *kāsu*, although its meaning is unclear.

174 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26. For a full citation and discussion of this passage, see also Chapter 1, 2.3.

> BE-*ma um-ma-an-ka i-šá-'-al-ka ma-a . . . am-mi-ni-e ana* SIG_5 *i-tur . . . am-mi-ni-e ana* NU SIG_5 *i-tur ma-a . . . ina an-ni-e šá* 15 SIG_5 *šá* 150 NU SIG_5
>
> If your master-scholar asks you: ". . . —Why did it turn favorable? . . . —Why did it turn unfavorable?" (Answer): ". . . Therefore that of the right side is favorable (and) that of the left side is unfavorable!"

The term *ina annî*, "therefore (literally: in this)," is used to sum up and restate the problem ("why," *amminê*) posed in this passage, after it was answered.

The same term, perhaps after the answer to the question "why" as well, occurs in a similar context in another extispicy commentary from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh, regarding the gall-bladder:[175]

> *ina an-ni-e ana* SIG_5 [*i-tur*]
>
> "therefore it [turned] favorable."

Similar to *ina annî*, the term *aššu annî*, "because of this, therefore," may appear a few times as well, introducing an answer to an (implicit) question "why." In an astrological-mythological explanatory text, Tiāmat and Kingu are identified with constellations:[176]

> *a-ḫa-meš un-nam-ma-ru-' áš-šú an-ni-i ki-i* ^{múl}ÙZ *šá* KI ^{múl}GÍR.TAB IGI-*ru*
>
> They (= Kingu and Tiāmat as constellations) are seen together. Because of this (she = Tiāmat) is like the She-goat constellation which is seen with the Scorpion constellation.

The phrase *aššu annî* also occurs in a cultic commentary, discussed elsewhere,[177] but perhaps it is part of a larger construction involving the verb *qabû*.[178]

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175 Koch 2005, no. 28:56, text E. See Chapter 1, 2.3.2.

176 Reynolds 1999, 370–371:6 (Koch 2004, 108:r.6). See also Koch 2004, 108:r.25–26.

177 KAR 142, i:10–13 (Pongratz-Leisten 1994, 221). See Chapter 5, 4.4.

178 See discussion in Chapter 5, 4.4.

8 Reasoning: *ina libbi* (*ša*), "because"

Similar to *aššu*, the term *ina libbi* (*ša*) too is used for reasoning, although it occurs less often than *aššu*.[179] Like *aššu*, it may appear after *ša iqbû*.[180]

When used in a lexical sense, *ina libbi* (*ša*) usually introduces a simple lexical Sumerian- (or logogramic-) Akkadian equation as a justification for a commentary (similar to *ana muḫḫi*). For example, a Sagig commentary explains why an observation of a chariot by the healer on his way to the patient leads to the diagnosis that the patient is suffering from the "Hand of Ištar":[181]

> [^{giš}GIGIR] IGI GIG BI ŠU ^{d}15 : *ina* ŠÀ *šá* MUL.GIGIR : *dili-bat*
>
> "(If he) (= the healer) sees [a chariot]—that patient (is suffering from) the 'Hand-of-Ištar' "—because the Chariot-star = Venus.

The commentary attempts to explain the association between the observation of the chariot in the protasis and the Hand-of-Ištar disease in the apodosis. The reason (*ina libbi ša*) that the one predicts the other is that the chariot can be connected to the chariot constellation (Auriga), and the latter is associated

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179 For the meaning "because" for *ina libbi ša*, see Hackl 2007, 62–63; for its use in commentaries, see De Zorzi and Jursa 2011. See also Ossendrijver 2010. In commentaries the complete phrase *ina libbi ša* is usually found, but there are probably a few cases without *ša*; see Böck 2000a, 256:59 (SBTU 1, 83:r.23); CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):10; perhaps Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 338, A:2. See also *ša iqbû ina libbi* (*ša*) in Chapter 5, 1.4.5. Note also *ina libbi kī* in BM 36595+BM 37055:27 (CCP 7.2.U103). Note that although the term *ina libbi ša* is etymologically connected to the term *libbū* (para. 1 above), they have different hermeneutical functions.

180 See Chapter 5, 1.4.6.

181 George 1991, 150:46 (c 9′; cf. a 43). Other occurrences of *ina libbi* (*ša*): SBTU 1, 51:13: NUMUN Ú.HI.A *ma-la iq-bu-ú* : GAZI.SAR : *ina* ŠÀ *šá* Ú [. . .]; SBTU 1, 52:3(?); SBTU 1, 141:6′: *ina* ŠÀ *šá* SUD : *sa*-[*la-ḫu*](?); Reynolds 1999, 370:1: *ina* ^{iti}*tap-pat-tu*$_4$ *šá ne-pe-šú an-nu-tú* DÙ-*uš ina* ŠÀ-*bi šá* [. . .]; Verderame 2002, 42:16′–17′ (see n. 183 below); Biggs 1968, 54:12–13 (see n. 183 below); Böck 2000a, 256:59 (SBTU 1, 83:r.23); CT 41, 42 (Labat 1933, no. 18):10; Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 338, A:2. Cf. Al-Rawi and George 1991/92, 64:7 (see Ossendrijver 2014, line 7 with note to line, and Ossendrijver 2010). Cf. also SAA 8, 69:6–7: *ina* ŠÀ *it-ti ša* MUL.SAG. ME.GAR / *šu-u*. Note that Reiner 1973, 101, Rm. 2, 127:r.3 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 339) (*ša ina* ŠÀ-*bi* lugal-e me-lám-bi nir-ĝ[ál . . .]) probably does not belong here (see Chapter 5, n. 106).

with Venus, Ištar's star.[182] Thus, the wagon is associated with Ištar and therefore predicts the disease caused by her.[183]

As in the case of *aššu*, the reasoning introduced by *ina libbi* (*ša*) may serve as a justification for an explanation of the base text. For example, in an Izbu commentary on an omen that predicts the death of a palace official (literally: "son of the palace"):[184]

> DUMU É.GAL : *šá re-eš ina lìb-bi šá ṣe-eḫ-ru-ma* / [. . .] x-*ú a-na a-bi la i-tu-ru*
>
> "Son of the palace" = courtier (*ša rēši*), because when he was young and [. . .][185] did not become a father.[186]

The commentary explains that "the son of the palace" is a courtier (or perhaps even a eunuch) and then justifies this explanation. The element "son" signifies that the person is young, and the phrase "son of the palace" indicates either that he did not return to his father but stayed in the palace, or that he did not become a father, i.e., he was castrated, and therefore was considered the "son of the palace."[187]

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182 Note that my interpretation differs from the one proposed by George (1991, 151, 161), who does not see *ina libbi ša* as an exegetical term but as a spatial preposition indicating that Venus is inside (*ina libbi*) the constellation Auriga. However, this syntax is somewhat awkward, given the use of *ša* and the position of Venus at the end of the clause. Similarly, the restoration in the parallel passage in "commentary a" is probably incorrect. This does not imply that the interpretation of the sign U within the alternative form of the sign GIGIR is necessarily incorrect (cf. George 1991, 161).

183 As is the case here, *ina libbi ša* in two other astronomical contexts should probably be understood as a hermeneutical term and not as a spatial preposition. See Biggs 1968, 54:12–13: *iz-bu šá* TA UGU UR.A *ú-šar-ru-ú* / *ina* ŠÀ *šá* UR.A *ina* IGI MÚL.^{d}A.EDIN, as well as Verderame 2002, 42:16′–17′: DIŠ 30 ÍD NÍGIN-*mi* TÙR / : *ina* ŠÀ MUL A x.

184 Leichty 1970, 233:6–7; see De Zorzi and Jursa 2011; Kraus 2015. The restoration is not certain. For the base text, see Leichty 1970, 153, Tablet 14:10.

185 Perhaps restore the term *libbū*? For a different restoration, see n. 186 below.

186 Translation follows Kraus 2015. For a different restoration and translation, see De Zorzi and Jursa 2011: "[he was sum]moned [to the palace] ([*a-na* É.GAL *šá-s*]*u*^{l}-*ú*) and did not return to (his) father."

187 See De Zorzi and Jursa 2011; Kraus 2015.

CHAPTER 4

Terms for the Nature of the Text and Hermeneutic Awareness

Even though commentators were aware of their own part in the commentaries they created, only rarely do commentaries display terminology that refers to the nature of the text they are commenting on, or to the actions performed by the commentator. The interpretive process itself was not of immediate interest to the commentators, whose main concern was to better understand the base text. But the use of various techniques in order to study and understand the text also implied a certain attitude towards it and even towards the techniques used for interpreting it. These attitudes were sometimes reflected in terminology. Certain terms point to an awareness of the nature and character of the text—including features such as its literal meaning, its sign order, and its syntax—and of the act of interpretation itself and the commentator himself. Such terms are the subject of this chapter.[1]

1 References to the Nature of the Text

1.1 *Reference to a Textual Phenomenon*

Commentaries sometimes point to a feature in the text they comment on. Usually the identification of this feature depends on a prior hermeneutic judgment, and is not just a preliminary observation about some aspect of the text. By using the following phrases, however, the commentator avoids any reference to the hermeneutic process that led him to identify a particular feature, and consequently presents himself as less actively manipulating the text.

1.1.1 Reference to the Nature of the Text with a Pronoun: . . . *šū/šī*, "it is . . ."

Statements about the nature of the base text may be formulated by using an independent pronoun in conjunction with a term that describes the nature of the text or a passage from it. Thus, for example, a commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman having problems giving birth identifies

1 For self conscious thinking in ancient Mesopotamian scholarship, see Machinist 1986.

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a section of the base text as an example of *pūḫtu*, "(syntactical) replacement, exchange":[2]

> *pu-uḫ-tu*$_4$ *ši-i*
>
> It (= the wording in the base text) is a "replacement" (= a phrase written in non-syntactical word order).

A pronoun is also used to refer to the base text when a commentary describes a passage as *kakku sakku*, "sealed and shut." Thus in a cultic commentary:[3]

> *mul-ṭu u mu-šá-lu šá ina* ŠU.MIN-*šú kak-ku sak-ku šu-ú muš-šu-lu šá* múlADDA
>
> The comb and *mirror* that are in her (= the goddess's) hands—it is *implicit* ("sealed and shut")—(it is) a *representation* of the Corpse star.

1.1.2 Reference to the Nature of the Text by "calling" it: *tanambi* (*tanabbi*), "you call"

On rare occasions explanatory texts "instruct" the scholar how to treat the text or the phenomenon that is commented on—in Akkadian terms, how to "call" it (*nabû*). The explanatory text i-nam-ĝiš-ḫur an-ki-a, in a discussion that deals with phases of the moon in connection to the sun, and in reference to both Enūma-Anu-Enlil Tablet 14 and the opening passages in Enūma eliš Tablet 5, notes:[4]

> x x x (x) x ^{d}30 *u* ^{d}UTU 3 A.RÁ 3 *ta-nam-bi* / [x x x (x x)] ⌜9⌝ A.RÁ 3 27 27 UD.27.KAM ^{d}30 *u* ^{d}UTU / [x x x x (x)] GUB.ME-*zu-ma* EŠ.BAR KUR EŠ.MEŠ / [x x x (x) *ṣa*]-*ad-du ana* KUR SUM.MEŠ-*nu*
>
> . . . you call Sîn and Šamaš (as) 3 × 3; [. . .] 9 × 3 = 27; 27 = day 27; Sîn and Šamaš [*both*] stand and make decisions for the land; [. . .] they give signs for the land.

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2 Civil 1974, 331:3. For a full discussion, see 1.2.2 below.

3 BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 61):11. For another reference, see BM 36595+BM 37055:r.5 (CCP 7.2.u103; cf. Livingstone 1986, 68:r.5): [ ]-x-*nu kak-ku sak-ku šu-u* : SIG$_4$ *šu-u-*⌜*ma*?⌝. See 1.3.1 below for a full discussion.

4 Livingstone 1986, 24:20–23 (collated from a digital photograph of K.2164+).

As noted by Livingstone, the text tries to find philological and mathematical support for the idea that Sîn and Šamaš give their decisions at the end of the month.[5] The commentary connects the twenty-seventh day of the month to Sîn and Šamaš by instructing the scholar to "call" these gods as 3 × 3 (*tanambi*),[6] and the total is probably multiplied again by 3 in order to arrive at 27.

The same text probably instructs the reader to "call" one number as another according to its reverse reading (*elîš-šapliš*, *šapliš-elîš*), as discussed below.[7] In addition, another line in the composition i-nam-ĝiš-ḫur an-ki-a probably refers to reading ("calling") coefficients (*igigubbê*) regularly (*ka-a-a-nam-ma* [ras.] *ta-nam-*[*bi*]).[8]

The instruction "you call" appears also in extispicy expository texts. For example:[9]

> . . . *ana* IZI.GAR-*ma ta-nam-bi*
>
> You call . . . (= various features in the liver) as an (indecisive)-*nipḫu*-feature.

1.2 *Terms Relating to the Order of Words or Signs*

There are a few terms that refer to word or sign order. In the bilingual *Examenstext* A, the scholar asks the student a series of questions about the knowledge he should have acquired in his studies, including the following:[10]

> ki-bé ĝar-ra níĝ-gil-gil-bi ka-kéš-ta [. . . 3-ta-àm] eme-uri^{ki}-ra si-sá-e-dè nu-[ĝar-ra] i-zu-u
>
> *pu-uḫ-ta e-gir-ta ka-ṣir-ta šu-me-ru* x [x x] *šu-lu-šá-a šá ak-ka-du-u a-na šu-te-šu-ru la na-ṭu-ú* MIN (= *ti-de-e*)
>
> Do you know the 'replacement', the '*twisted*', the 'compilation', Sumerian [. . .] three each,[11] that is not suitable for setting clearly in Akkadian?

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5 Livingstone 1986, 41–42.

6 For the justification of this numerical rendering of the gods, see Livingstone 1986, 41.

7 Livingstone 1986, 22:14–15; see 1.2.1 below.

8 Livingstone 1986, 20:r.8. See n. 53 below.

9 See Koch 2005, no. 3:44 (A i:56), no. 3:178: *ana la šal-ma-a-ti ta-né-eb-bi*, "you call . . . as unfavorable." Cf. also *CAD* N/I, 38b.

10 Sjöberg 1975, 142:15.

11 For the possible occurrence of this term, perhaps also in the context of word order, in LKA 82:1–2, see Frahm 2011, 127 n. 636; Chapter 1, 2.2.6.2 with n. 94.

As will be suggested below, the "replacement" mentioned in this question probably refers to a change in the order of words, and so perhaps the other terms in this question refer to similar phenomena.[12]

1.2.1 *elîš-šapliš šapliš-elîš* (AN.TA-KI.TA KI.TA-AN.TA), "top-bottom, bottom-top"

All known occurrences of the phrase *elîš-šapliš šapliš-elîš* refer to the order of the signs that make up numerals.[13] This term appears twice in a theological-mathematical commentary (i-nam-ĝiš-ḫur an-ki-a) that deals with phases of the moon in reference to Enūma-Anu-Enlil Tablet 14, as well as the opening passages in Enūma eliš Tablet 5. The commentary attempts to link different days of the month with the moon's visibility. In two consecutive entries, this is done by multiplying a date by 10 and then reading the signs of the product in reverse:[14]

> U[D.13.KAM] UD.12.KAM 12 130 AN.TA KI.TA KI.TA AN.[TA] / ˹*ta*˺-[*nam-b*]*i*(?) KA.INIM.MA NAM.KÙ.ZU *a*-˹*re*˺-*e šu*-˹*a*˺-[*tú*?]
> UD.˹22.KAM˺ UD.14.KAM 14 10 *tuš-ta-ṣa*!?("A")-*bu* 14 10 14[0 140?] / 22 AN.TA KI.TA KI.TA AN.TA 1 ŠU.BI.GÁL.L[A]
>
> "D[ay 13]"—Day 12; you *call* 12: "130," (as) "top-bottom, bottom-top." "Incantation"(?)—the wisdom of that calculation.
> "Day 22"—Day 14; you multiply(?) 14 (by) 10;[15] 14 (times) 10 (is) 14[0; 140(?)] is 22 (as) "top-bottom, bottom-top." 1—the same.

The commentary first explains the thirteenth day of the month as the twelfth. This is done by multiplying 13 (standing for the thirteenth day) by 10, which yields 130. The numeral 130, written 2,10, is comprised of two verticals (60+60 = 120), followed by a *Winkelhaken* (10). When the order of the three signs is reversed so that the *Winkelhaken* precedes the two verticals, they signify

12 For the phenomenon of reverse writing, see Beaulieu 1995, 1–14.

13 For a previous discussion of these references, see Beaulieu 1995, 4–6.

14 Livingstone 1986, 22, K.2164+:14–17 (collated from photograph), and discussion and notes in 39–41; cf. Pearce 1998, 337.

15 Translation follows Livingstone 1986, 23. I am not sure how to understand the verb. The context would favor a derivation from *eṣēpu* ("to multiply") or, less likely, *aṣābu* ("to add, enlarge"), but these verbs are not attested in the Š stem (cf. CAD A/II, 352a; CAD E, 345a), and the form ending with *u* would be difficult to explain. A derivation from *ṣubbû* does not fit the pattern of the verb either. If the text is not emended the form could perhaps be regarded as reflecting the verb *wapû* Št, but this leads to further problems.

12 (10+1+1), standing for the twelfth day. This calculation is described as reading, or "calling"[16] the original numeral the other way round; it does not actively change the original numeral (except for the multiplication by 10) but rather indicates that it is written in an irregular way.[17] Similarly, the next entry of the commentary explains the fourteenth day as the twenty-second day. Again the number of the day is multiplied by 10, this time resulting in 140, written by two verticals followed by two *Winkelhaken* (60+60+10+10). When the signs are reversed so that the *Winkelhaken* precede the verticals, the result is 22 (10+10+1+1).[18]

The phrase appears in another extract from the same composition:[19]

> . . . : AN.TA KI.TA SAR.E.DÈ EN 600 | 11 | ^{d}U.GUR ^{d}GÌR
>
> . . . *to write it* (= 11) (as) "top-bottom"—lord of 600 (Anunnaki gods) | 11 | Nergal, Šakkan.[20]

The number 11, standing here for the gods Nergal and Šakkan, is written with a *Winkelhaken* and a vertical wedge (10+1). When the signs are reversed, as prescribed here, they yield 600 (60×10), the number of the Anunnaki netherworld gods, whose lord is Nergal.

The most well-known occurrence of the phenomenon of switching the order of signs in a numeral is found not in a commentary but in a royal inscription of Esarhaddon, explaining how Esarhaddon rebuilt Babylon after his father

16 Cf. 1.1.2 above.

17 It is not clear to me what exactly the second part of the line refers to. Perhaps it refers to the noun *kainimmakku*, "utterance, plan," appearing in Enūma eliš 2:130 and 5:114 (a composition to which this commentary also refers, see above), noting that this "utterance" is actually "the wisdom of that calculation," i.e., the "top-bottom, bottom-top" calculation in this commentary that turned the thirteenth day to the twelfth day.

18 Here too, as in the previous entry, it is not clear what comes after this interpretation. Does "the same" refer back to the previous entry in order to indicate that like the calculation in the previous entry, this calculation too is the "utterance"? See n. 17 above.

19 Livingstone 1986, 32–33:4.

20 There are several problems in the interpretation of this line. First, the meaning of the signs preceding AN.TA KI.TA is not clear (PA$^{?}$ AD AN ⌜KI$^{?}$⌝ AN; from photograph). Second, the correct meaning and reading of SAR.E.DÈ is not clear. And third, it is not certain that EN stands for *bēl*. It may stand for *adi* in a numeral/mathematical sense (cf. *CAD* A/I, 121), or perhaps it is connected to the previous phrase (i.e., SAR.E.DÈ.EN), although this is less likely.

Sennacherib had destroyed it, a destruction that was theologically understood to reflect the raging Marduk's will:[21]

> 70 MU.AN.NA.MEŠ *mi-nu-ut/tu ni-du-ti-šu iš-ṭur-ma re-me*$_{(2)}$ (var. *réme*)-*nu-u*$_{(2)}$ ^{d}AMAR.UTU *sur-riš lib-ba-šu*$_{(2)}$ *i-nu-uḫ-ma e-liš a*(-)*na šap-liš uš-bal-kit-ma a-na* 11 MU.AN.NA.MEŠ *a-šab-šu*$_{(2)}$ *iq-bi*
>
> The merciful god Marduk wrote the number (of years) of its (= Babylon's) abandonment (as) seventy years, (but) his heart quickly calmed, and he turned "top" to "bottom," and he ordered its (re)occupation to be after eleven years.

Esarhaddon justified the destruction that his father Sennacherib brought upon Babylon as part of the angry Marduk's divine plan. Marduk wrote the numeral 70 (on the heavenly tablets?), a typological number appearing in divine decisions, to indicate the period of time for which Babylon should remain abandoned. But Esarhaddon rebuilt Babylon long before seventy years had passed and thus searched for a divine justification for an act that seemed to contravene the will of Marduk. This was achieved through exegesis, by reversing the order of the two cuneiform signs comprising the numeral 70, a vertical and a *Winkelhaken* (60+10), resulting in the numeral 11 (10+1); this figure represented the number of years that had elapsed between Sennacherib's destruction of Babylon and his son's decision to rebuild the city. Because humans cannot manipulate the divine order, the inscription did not attribute the new interpretation of the cuneiform numeral to Esarhaddon or his scholars, although they were obviously its originators. Instead, the reinterpretation had to be attributed to Marduk himself. Yet, from a theological point of view, the god could not alter his original order of seventy years of desolation. Although the reinterpretation of 70 as 11 in this instance was clearly the result of a strategic exegesis, it is also the case that in cuneiform tradition, although signs are usually written from left to right, one can also find the opposite. Therefore, there was nothing unorthodox in Marduk's decision to read the cuneiform numeral 70 as 11.

21 Esarhaddon Babylon Prism A and parallels; see Leichty 2011, no. 104, ii:2–9; no. 105, ii:16–22; no. 114, ii:12–18.

1.2.2 *pūḫtu*, "replacement, exchange"

The noun *pūḫtu*, literally "substitute, exchange, replacement," is listed among the techniques that a student should know in *Examenstext* A, where it corresponds to Sumerian ki-bé ĝar-ra, "put in its place."[22]

Besides the attestation in *Examenstext* A, the term *pūḫtu* appears once in a commentary. An incantation for a woman having trouble giving birth begins with the following bilingual line:[23]

> [gug nu-zu] ù gug! n[u-zu]
> [*lu-'-at-ma a-na ni*]-*qí*!-*i ul* [*na-ṭa-at*]
>
> Sumerian: [She does not know whether it is carnelian (gug)] and she does [not know] whether it is carnelian.
> Akkadian: [She is defiled and is] not [appropriate for off]ering.

The Sumerian version of this line was obviously corrupted in the course of its transmission, since the word gug is not expected twice. Indeed the Old Babylonian versions of this incantation, preserved in a monolingual Sumerian tablet (= A) and in a syllabically written Sumerian bilingual tablet (= B), indicate that it originally appeared only once:[24]

> A 9′ n[a4gug nu-zu] na4za-gìn nu-zu
> B 20 ù gu-ug nu-zu ù za-gi-i[n nu-zu]
> B 21 *ù sa-am-tum ú-ul i-de ù uq-nu-ú-um ú-u*[*l i-de*]
>
> She does not know whether it is carnelian; she does not know whether it is lapis-lazuli.

The original version of this line referred to the woman giving birth as a loaded boat that does not know whether the cargo it is carrying is carnelian (gug) or lapis-lazuli (za-gìn); in other words, the woman does not know whether the baby she is carrying is female or male.[25] During the transmission of this text,

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22 See 1.2 above.

23 KAR 196 = BAM 248, i:9–10; Veldhuis 1989, 241. For the restorations see the discussion and the commentary on this line below. For another possible attestation of the term, see Chapter 1, 2.2, n. 94.

24 Veldhuis 1989, 241 (A = YOS 11, 85; B = AUAM 73.3094 [Cohen 1976, 135–138]).

25 See Stol 2000, 62.

the word za-gìn, "lapis-lazuli," was corrupted to gug (ZA.GUL), "carnelian," as in the first part of the line.

This line, like the rest of the composition, received an Akkadian translation in the first-millennium BCE version of the incantation. This Akkadian translation, however, unlike the translation preserved in the Old Babylonian version cited above, is not literal. The Akkadian version states that the woman, probably after she has given birth, is not pure and therefore not yet worthy to present an offering. This translation does not correspond to the original Sumerian text and is exegetical in itself (perhaps provoked by the textual difficulty in the Sumerian line).[26]

The commentary to this line, preserved on a tablet from Nippur, investigates how the Akkadian translation relates to the (corrupted) Sumerian text:[27]

> gug nu zu ù gug nu zu : *lu-'-at-ma a-na ni-qí-i ul na-ṭa-at* : *pu-uḫ-tu*$_4$ *ši-i* : gug : *el-lu*$_4$ / nu : *la-'* : zu : *na-ṭu-u* : *a-ma-ra* : *a-na ni-qí-i ul na-ṭa-at* / *šá* E-*u* : siskur : *ni-qu-ú* siskur : *ṣu-le-e um-ma lu-'-at-ma a-na ṣu-le-e ul am-ra-at*
>
> "(Sum.): She does not know whether it is carnelian (gug) and she does not know whether it is carnelian // (Akk.): She is defiled and is not appropriate for offering"—It is a (word) replacement: gug = pure, nu = not, zu = to be appropriate = to see; "(she) is not appropriate for offering" which it said: siskur = offering, siskur = prayer; thus: "she is defiled and is not (or: should not be) seen in prayer."

The commentary cites the entire Sumerian line, with its Akkadian translation, and explains how the Sumerian version, which is made up of two identical clauses, corresponds to the Akkadian version: gug, while originally referring to carnelian, can also mean "pure" (*ellu*); nu is the negation prefix; and zu, literally "to know," can by extension also mean "appropriate" and "to see." In addition, although this is not explicitly mentioned in the commentary, gug can also signify "offering" (and the second nu is the negation again). So the sequence gug nu zu, which occurs twice in the line, contains the elements "pure," "not" (twice), "appropriate," and "offering," thus yielding the Akkadian version: "She is defiled (= not + pure) and is not appropriate for offering."[28] But the collocation of "not" and "pure" reflected in the Akkadian translation disregards Sumerian syntax, since "not" here must refer to the verb that follows it, zu, and

26 Cf. Cavigneaux 1987, 253.

27 Civil 1974, 331:2–6.

28 Admittedly the element zu is only rendered once here.

not to the preceding nominal form "pure." Therefore the commentary states that the Sumerian text contains a "replacement" or "exchange" (*pūhtu*), i.e., a deviation from regular word order.[29] Then part of the line, namely the second clause of the Akkadian version, is requoted, followed by the term *ša iqbû*, which introduces an additional commentary: the Sumerian word siskur can refer to both "offering" and "prayer." Therefore the word for offering here can also be interpreted as "prayer," and on the basis of the commentary's extension of the meaning of Sumerian zu to include "to see" (and not only "appropriate"), the Akkadian version can thus be rendered: "She is defiled and should not be seen in prayer."

It should be stressed that *pūhtu* does not designate an active hermeneutical manipulation of the text (even if this was indeed the action that was undertaken here). Rather, the term is a description of the text. In the phrase *pūhtu šī, šī* refers not to a hermeneutical technique but to the sequence of wording in the base text; i.e., it is written in the reverse order of what would usually give the regular sense. The text, according to the commentator, was written in an irregular order, but as noted above,[30] this is not an unknown custom in cuneiform tradition; using the long textual tradition of reverse writing in cuneiform, the commentator simply changed the order of the Sumerian elements so that he might recover the intention of the text's (divine) author.

1.3 *Reference to the Character of the Text*

1.3.1 *kakku sakku*, "sealed and shut" (= implicit?)

The occurrences of the term *kakku sakku* have been cited and discussed in a few places.[31] As noted by Lambert, the term *kakku sakku* is comprised of two synonyms, "sealed"[32] and "shut," used together "for emphasis, a well-known point of Akkadian literary style."[33]

The term *kakku sakku* followed by a pronoun appears in two cultic commentaries, where it describes an element in the base text as "sealed and shut"; nevertheless an interpretation is offered. Thus in an explanatory text, probably

29 For other understandings of the role of *pūḫtu* here, see Civil 1974, 333; Cavigneaux 1987, 252–253; Seminara 2002, 245; *CAD* P, 493–494; cf. Frahm 2011, 69.

30 See 1.2.1 above.

31 See Parpola 1983, 22; Lambert 1989a, 220–221; cf. references also in *CAD* K, 153b; *CAD* S, 78a.

32 For *kanku* > *kakku*, see Lambert 1989a, 220.

33 Lambert 1989a, 220.

dealing with the Moon-god Sîn as well as with monthly cult, especially in the month Simānu:[34]

> [ ] x SIG_4 *ina* KISAL? BÀN.DA *lu-uṭ-ṭu ina* KI.TA-*ši-n*[*a*]? / KIN ˹ITI˺ [x x] x x x [x] x : *ár-ḫa-a-tú* : *ár-ḫi* : ITI : SIG_4 / *li-bit-tú lu-uṭ-ṭu šá ina* x [x (x)]-x-*nu kak-ku sak-ku šu-u* : SIG_4 *šu-u-˹ma?˺*
>
> [. . .] . . . brick in the small court, a vessel(?) beneath them, *the work of the month* [. . .] . . . = half-bricks (*arḫātu*), *arḫu* = month, SIG_4 = brick; the vessel(?) that in [. . .] . . .—it is *implicit* (lit. "sealed and shut")—it is a brick.

The passage is very poorly understood. It probably deals with the writing for the month of Simānu (ITI.SIG_4). First the word *luṭṭu*, perhaps "vessel," but perhaps also something else,[35] possibly a word for a brick,[36] appears in a context that also mentions a brick. The commentary connects the elements ITI, "month," and SIG_4, "brick," by means of the noun *arḫu*, which can refer both to "half-brick" and to "month." Then the commentary returns to the passage containing the word *luṭṭu* and notes that it is "sealed and shut," but then provides an interpretation, namely that it is a brick. If *kakku sakku* were simply a term indicating that a word or text was obscure, it would be difficult to understand why the interpretation "brick" follows. It is possible, therefore, that the term *kakku sakku* means "implicit" here, i.e., the text does not give any details or hints toward the meaning of the passage. The statement that the lemma concerns a brick may reflect a general interpretive tradition not anchored in the text itself.

Another passage contains the same construction as in the previous example, namely *kakku sakku* followed by a pronoun and then an interpretation, and presumably the same explanation is valid here as well:[37]

> *mul-ṭu u mu-šá-lu šá ina* ŠU.MIN-*šú kak-ku sak-ku šu-ú muš-šu-lu šá* ^{múl}ADDA
>
> The comb and *mirror* that are in her (= the goddess's) hands—it is *implicit* (lit. "sealed and shut")—it is a *representation* of the Corpse star.

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34 BM 36595+BM 37055 (Livingstone 1986, 68, BM 37055 only):r.3–5. See Gabbay, Finkel and Jiménez 2015 (CCP 7.2.u103).

35 Livingstone (1986, 69–70) understands *luṭṭu* as a variant of *liṭṭu*, "shape."

36 Cf. Livingstone 1986, 30:2: *ár-ḫu liṭ-ṭu maš-l*[u_4].

37 BM 34035 (Livingstone 1986, 61):11.

The passage consists of three parts. First it presents a cultic or mythological element, namely the objects held by the goddess. Second, it notes: "it is sealed and shut." But this is followed by what seems to be an interpretation of the initial description of the objects held by the goddess. Thus, since an interpretation is given, "sealed and shut," does not seem to refer to the obscurity and incomprehension of that phrase. The interpretation given in the third part is not without problems. Since both *mušālu* (in the first part) and *muššulu* (in the third part) may mean "mirror,"[38] it would be tempting to connect the *mušālu* held by the goddess with *muššulu* before the mention of the Corpse star. However, it seems to me that this is a coincidence, since a "mirror" of a star makes little sense. I suggest, therefore, that the text itself does not contain a detail or clue that would allow us to associate the comb and mirror(?) with the Corpse star; i.e., this reference is implicit, as indicated by Akkadian *kakku sakku*, "sealed and shut." Nevertheless, there was a general ancient scholarly tradition that these elements represent the Corpse star.[39]

Outside the commentaries, the phrase *kakku sakku* occurs in the L_4 inscription of Assurbanipal, in the context of the king's scholarly achievements:[40]

> *ḫi-ṭa-a-ku* GÙ.SUM *ab-ni šá la-am a-bu-bi šá* (sup ras.)$^{?}$ *kak-ku sa-ak-ku bal-lu*
>
> I have examined stone inscriptions from before the flood, which are "sealed, shut, and mixed."

The phrase *kakku sakku ballu*, "sealed, shut, and mixed" is related to and probably an expansion of the term *kakku sakku*.[41] In his discussion of this line Livingstone notes that unlike other scholars who regard *kakku sakku* here as a name for a specific composition, he believes that it refers to "obtuse and to Ashurbanipal seemingly antediluvian inscriptions, perhaps in reality Early Dynastic or from the Jemdat Nasr Period, that only but grudgingly yielded their meaning."[42]

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38 Cf. references in *CAD* M/II, 256–257, 281b. Differently, Goodnick Westenholz 2010.

39 See below, n. 48, on the possibility that the term *kakku sakku* contains within it a reference to this ancient tradition.

40 Streck 1916, vol. 2, 252–271; Borger 1996, 187–188. See recently Livingstone 2007, 100:18.

41 Cf. Lambert 1989a, 220.

42 See Livingstone 2007, 101.

In addition, *kakku sakku* is mentioned in a library record of Babylonian tablets brought to Assyria:[43] 1 ⌜3⌝ *kak-ku sak-ku*, "one (polyptych-writing-board) of three (boards), (containing) 'sealed and shut'."[44] Since there are also a plant and a stone called *kakkusakku* or *kakkušakku*,[45] Parpola remarked that "it does seem that the term *kakku sakku* referred to a concrete object of a definite shape, perhaps a mythological weapon (*kakku*), which would also have given its name to the medicinal plant and stone just mentioned. If so, there probably also existed a text describing the *kakku sakku* and its mythological role in greater detail, which accordingly might be the text referred to in the present context."[46] However, Lambert doubted whether the *kakkusakku* plant and stone are connected to the term *kakku sakku*, and regarded *kakku sakku* as a term for expository texts such as mystical and cultic commentaries.[47]

I agree with Livingstone's rendering of the Assurbanipal passage. The phrase *kakku sakku ballu* there would refer to ancient, seemingly unintelligible texts that were nevertheless read by the wise Assurbanipal. The reference in the library record, however, poses a problem to which several solutions have been proposed. First, it could refer to a specific composition, as suggested by Parpola. Second, it may refer to a type of composition, namely expository commentaries, as Lambert thought. Third, in light of the use of *kakku sakku* in the Assurbanipal inscription, it could perhaps refer to the genre of texts written "before the flood," i.e., archaic or Early Dynastic texts found and curated by scholars, or copies of such texts, or lists of archaic or Early Dynastic signs and pseudo-signs made by scholars of the Neo-Assyrian period, like those excavated in Nimrud and elsewhere.[48] Lastly, if the term *kakku sakku* in the library record has the same meaning as in the commentaries themselves, i.e., signifying something implicit, it may refer to writing boards containing miscellaneous texts rather than a specific composition (i.e., extracts, ad hoc compositions, or the like), or perhaps to unclear compositions.

In sum, the term *kakku sakku* figuratively refers to a text (or phenomenon) that is "sealed and shut" either because it is obscure, or, when the term occurs

43 See Parpola 1983, 12, section 2.

44 This is preceded probably by [G]ALA-*tú*, and followed by 1 ⌜6⌝ *bul-ṭi*.

45 See *CAD* K, 601.

46 Parpola 1983, 22.

47 Lambert 1989a, 220–221.

48 E.g., CTN 4, 229; cf. other references mentioned in Maul 2012, 99 n. 63. If *kakku sakku* indeed refers to such texts, *kakku sakku* in the commentaries cited above would refer not only to an implicit text, but also to the ancient tradition behind the interpretation that follows, which cannot be elicited from the text itself through the usual hermeneutical tools.

in commentaries, because the base text does not contain a key to its interpretation and therefore cannot be cracked through the usual hermeneutical techniques found in commentaries. This does not mean, however, that it does not have a meaning, but that the only way to access its (general) meaning is through the scholarly tradition. Therefore, even though the text (or phenomenon) is "sealed and shut," it can be given a general interpretation in the commentary. Similarly, even though the ancient texts are "sealed and shut," Assurbanipal is able to read them.

1.3.2 *nindanu ša bārûti*, "(secret, professional) knowledge of the lore of extispicy"

The phrase appears once in an extispicy commentary:[49]

> BE MAN-*ú* MU.NI NU.UM.ME *ṭu-ú* DAG 15 / *nin-da-nu šá ba-ru-ti* NU.UM.ME *e-li-tu*$_4$ / AN-*tu*$_4$ ⌜*i-mit-tu*$_4$⌝ DU [. . .]
>
> Its second "If" entry: "The 'top part' (NU.UM.ME) is a 'dais', a right 'seat' "—(secret, professional) knowledge[50] of the lore of extispicy—NU.UM.ME = "top part"; "top part"(?) = right . . .

The structure of this entry is similar to the structure of the *kakku sakku* entries above: A text is cited, followed by a remark on its nature ("knowledge of the lore of extispicy" or "sealed and shut"), and finally the explanation itself is given.[51] The phrase *nindanu ša bārûti*, therefore, would seem to function like *kakku sakku*, referring to both the nature of the text and the source of its interpretation. The text itself cannot be interpreted by conventional methods, and the explanation given is drawn from the traditional lore of extispicy.

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49 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:18.

50 For this translation, see Fuchs 1994, 237:158, where it parallels *pirištu*. Another possible attestation of this noun, although very uncertain, is in the commentary BM 38681:r.4–11 (see Jiménez and Gabbay 2015 [CCP 7.2.u32]), where the enigmatic sequence of signs NÍG.AK-*ku* may indicate *ninda-ak-ku*, perhaps a by-form of *nindanu* (and *nindanakku*); see *CAD* N/I, 238b, and *AHw* 790b, 1580b. For a comparison with Hebrew *middah*, "measurement," as an exegetical term, see Appendix 2, para. 15.

51 But note that the first lexical correspondence is known elsewhere as well; see Nabnītu XXV:175 (MSL 16, 228:175): nu-um-ma = *e-li-tu*$_4$.

1.4 kayyān(u), *"regular, actual": Reference to the Literal Meaning of the Text*

The adjective/adverb *kayyān*(*u*), "regular, actual" is used as an exegetical term in commentaries dating to the late Achaemenid period.[52] The term usually appears with the first interpretation given to a word or phrase and indicates its literal meaning in the commented text. It occurs after the citation of the commented text, either alone or following a short explanation of the commented word or phrase, and seems to always appear in the masculine singular. The term is known to me from nine attestations on seven tablets, and all nine occurrences will be discussed in the following paragraphs.[53]

1.4.1 *kayyān*(*u*) Alone

Often, the term *kayyān*(*u*) occurs alone after the first citation of the base text, where it refers to the entire cited passage or to a lemma within it.

A commentary offers several interpretations of an omen from the first tablet of the diagnostic series Sagig that deals with the relationship between the medical condition of the patient and the observations made by the healer on his way to him:[54]

> DIŠ SIG_4.AL.ÙR.RA IGI GIG UG_7 : SAG.ÚS *šá-niš* LÚ *š*[*á ina ḫur-sà-a*]*n i-tu-ra* / [A : *me-e*] : GUR : *ta-a-*˹*ra*˺ ˹*šal*˺*-šiš* MUNUS.$PEŠ_4$ / A : *ma-ru* : $^{ki\text{-}ir}$GU[R_4 : *ka-ra-ṣ*]*a* / [*šá-niš*] ˹A˺ : *ma-ri* : GUR *na-šu-u*
>
> "If he (= the healer) sees a baked brick (*agurru*)—the patient will die"—regular/actual (*kayyān*(*u*)); secondly: (*agurru*, "baked brick," refers to) a

52 For previous discussions of this term, see Cavigneaux 1982, 237; George 1991, 155; Geller 2010, 201 n. 282; Frahm 2011, 38; Gabbay 2014a, 336–351; Gabbay, forthcoming 2. The following discussion is based on my previous discussions in the last two references, with some omissions, additions, and changes. For possible precursors to this term, see n. 98 below.

53 In a previous treatment of the term (Gabbay 2014a, 337 n. 6 and 344 n. 45), I included two other occurrences from the unpublished tablet BM 67179 that were based on a mistaken interpretation; see now Geller and Stadhouders 2015 (CCP 4.2.U). In addition to the examples of *kayyān*(*u*) presented below, there are two more instances where forms of the adverb *kayyān*(*u*) are perhaps used in a similar way. See Livingstone 1986, 20:r.8: *ka-a-a-nam-ma* (ras.) *ta-nam-*[*bi*], and SAA 10, 295:11–12: *mi-i-nu šu-u* / *ka-a-a-*[*ma-n*]*u* . . . (it is not certain that the interpretation given by Fincke 2003/2004, 121, although attractive, is correct).

54 SBTU 1, 27:r.21–23; George 1991, 146–147:4. For the base text, see George 1991, 142–143:4. A similar commentary, but without the term *kayyān*(*u*), and an entirely different commentary on this line occur in two other tablets; see George 1991, 146–147:4a, c.

> man who returned from the river ordeal: A = water, GUR = return; thirdly: (*agurru*, "baked brick," refers to) a pregnant woman: A = son, GUR_4 (pronounced) *kir* = to pinch off; alternatively: A = son, GUR = carry.

The second and third interpretations in the commentary seek the significance of the word for "baked brick," which alludes to the death of the patient. Each of the two interpretations proposes a *notariqon* of *agurru* that links the word to new life, whether birth in the third interpretation,[55] or the sparing of the life of a person who survived the river ordeal in the second interpretation. These interpretations probably indicate that the new lives were conceived as substitutes for the near-death of the patient,[56] and thus seek to connect the ominous observation in the protasis, explained in the commentary as a new life, to the prediction of the death of the patient in the apodosis.

But the first interpretation does not seek a nonliteral meaning in the word for "baked brick," *agurru*. It simply notes that the "baked brick" in the omen entry is none other than (*kayyān*(*u*)) a baked brick. This statement is significant, since the literal understanding of the word *agurru* as "baked brick" in the protasis has nothing to do with the death of the patient in the apodosis. Furthermore, it makes the literal meaning of the entire line difficult. As noted by Frahm,[57] "baked brick" may be the literal meaning of the word *agurru*, but given that baked bricks were regularly used in Mesopotamian architecture, the omen would effectively predict the death of every patient visited by a healer, who could scarcely avoid seeing an *agurru* on his way to the patient. Nevertheless, the commentary notes this is a possible interpretation of the text, even though it causes problems in understanding the rationale behind the text as a whole.

What does the term *kayyān*(*u*) here refer to: the meaning of the word, or the essence of the object represented by the word? Theoretically, it could refer to both, and in previous literature it was understood to refer to the "regular, normal" meaning of the word versus a "non-normal" meaning.[58] But in my opinion, when the semantics of *kayyān*(*u*) are taken into consideration,[59] the term must refer not to the "regular" meaning of a word such as *agurru*, but rather to the "actuality" of the item represented by the word, in this case a brick. To be

55 Note that the third interpretation includes two ways (both *notariqon*) of arriving at the meaning "pregnant woman"; see Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

56 See George 1991, 154–155.

57 See Frahm 2011, 38.

58 Cf. George 1991, 155.

59 See 1.4.5 below.

sure, the difference between understanding *kayyān(u)* as "regular" or "actual" is not significant, but the difference in the referent of *kayyān(u)* is indeed significant. This question will be dealt with further below.

Another occurrence of *kayyān(u)* alone is in a commentary on the nineteenth tablet of the astronomical omen series Enūma-Anu-Enlil, which deals with predictions concerning lunar eclipses occurring in different stages of the night. Among other scenarios, the tablet considers eclipses during the rising and setting of the moon.[60] The commentary on this tablet, from Achaemenid Babylon, cites an omen and proceeds to interpret it:[61]

> DIŠ 30 *ad-riš* KU_4 / *ina i-dir-tu*$_4$ [*ina* IM].DIRI KU_4-*ma ina* IM.DIRI ŠÚ-*ma* : *šá-niš* / *ka-a-a-nu*
>
> "If the Moon sets ('enters') darkly" —It enters [into a] cloud in darkness and it sets (while) in the cloud; secondly: actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*).

This omen was usually understood in antiquity to refer to a lunar eclipse that is still in process when the moon sets at the end of the night; similar omens concerning the dark rising of the moon deal with an eclipse already in effect when the moon rises in the evening.[62] The second interpretation in the commentary—*kayyān(u)*, "actual, regular"—refers to the conventional understanding of this omen, namely, that when the moon sets "darkly" it sets in the early morning while it is still eclipsed.

In similar omens the verbs used for the rising ("coming out") and setting ("entering") of the moon are the verbs usually used for the rising and setting of the sun. Such is the case with this omen, which uses the verb "to enter" to refer to moonset. But otherwise the setting of the moon uses a different verb.[63] The first interpretation addresses this deviation from standard usage outside this and similar omens, construing "to enter" rather literally as a reference to the moon entering a cloud. Then, describing how the moon sets at the end of the night while still in the cloud, the commentary uses the more common

60 See Rochberg-Halton 1988, 47–48, 158.

61 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:28–30.

62 See Rochberg-Halton 1988, 47–48, 158; Koch-Westenholz 1999, 155–156 with n. 48. This understanding is reflected in astronomical reports by scholars to the Neo-Assyrian king that quote omens relating to the dark rising of the moon in the context of lunar eclipses in the evening. See SAA 8, 336, 535.

63 The verb used for the setting of the moon and stars outside these omens is *rabû*; see CAD R, 50–52.

verb for the setting of the moon (*rabû*). Although it is this interpretation that understands the verb "to enter" literally, it is the second interpretation that is said to be *kayyān(u)*. Thus, *kayyān(u)* here must refer to the "regular," contextually appropriate way in which "to enter" is understood when the subject is the moon.

The term *kayyān(u)* appears alone twice in an Ālu commentary. The first occurrence directly follows the citation of an apodosis:[64]

> IZI *ina* É LÚ MÚ SAG.ÚS *šá-niš* MÚ x [(x x x)]
>
> "A fire will burn in the house of the man"—actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*); secondly: "burn" –. . . [. . .]

Here *kayyān(u)* indicates that the fire is to be understood as an actual fire; this notation was probably succeeded by a more expository explanation in the broken part.

The second occurrence of the term in the tablet also directly follows a citation:[65]

> ^{uzu}ÚR-*šú u lu*[66] UŠ-*šú* GU_7 SAG.ÚS / [*šá-niš*(?) . . .] x : ÚR : *su-ú-nu* : $^{bu\text{-}un\text{-}gu}$UŠ : *šèr-ru*
>
> "It hurts (lit. 'eats') his thigh *or* his penis"—actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*); [secondly(?): . . .], ÚR = lap; UŠ (pronounced) *bungu* = child.

First the commentary presents the opinion that the signs ^{uzu}ÚR and UŠ should be understood as "thigh" (*pēmu*) and "penis" (*ušaru*), the regular or actual (*kayyān(u)*) readings of these signs. The second explanation offers different interpretations of the signs, reading ÚR as "lap" (*sūnu*) and UŠ as the Sumerian word bungu (usually written UŠ.GA) meaning "child, baby" (*šerru*),[67] perhaps indicating that the pain described in the base text affects his child (and his wife sitting in his lap?) and not his own body as in the first, "actual/regular" (*kayyān(u)*) interpretation.

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64 SBTU 4, 145:r^{i}.6. The term *kayyān(u)* occurs also once more in this tablet; see 1.4.4 below. For this tablet, cf. Frahm 1998.

65 SBTU 4, 145:r^{i}.7–8.

66 Or emend: *ù*$^{!?}$

67 Cf. Diri IV:156: bu-un-gu UŠ.GA *šer-rum* (MSL 15, 156–157:156); cf. also *CAD* Š/II, 317b.

1.4.2 Re-citation + *kayyān(u)*

While *kayyān(u)* usually appears as the first interpretation in a commentary, it may also appear as the second interpretation, following a re-citation from the base text. A commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil 56 contains the following broken passage:[68]

> DIŠ M[UL? . . .] / *a-dir* [. . .] / *šá-niš meš-ḫa ka-a-a-nu* [. . .]
>
> If the st[ar(?) . . .] is obscured [. . .]; alternatively: "*mišḫu*-phenomenon"—actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*).

The first line and the beginning of the second line cited above probably refer to one of three omens that contain the form *a-dir* in Tablet 56 of Enūma-Anu-Enlil.[69] The end of the second line and the beginning of the third line would therefore be addressing one of the following omens that contain the noun *mišḫu*.[70] Thus, the end of the second line must have contained a "non-regular" interpretation of the noun *mišḫu*, and the second interpretation, preserved in the third line, indicates that it should be understood "regularly," *kayyān(u)* (i.e., as an actual "luminous phenomenon in the sky, usually produced by stars, a meteor?").[71]

1.4.3 Clarification + *kayyān(u)*

In one text, the term *kayyān(u)* follows an explication of a logographic writing in the base text. A medical commentary remarks on the name of a plant used in treatment:[72]

> Ú.ḪA : *šam-mu nu-ú-nu ka-a-a-an* / [. . .]
>
> "Anise (written with the signs Ú = 'plant', and ḪA = 'fish')" = "fish-plant"—actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*); [. . .]

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68 SBTU 1, 90:r.1′–3′. Note that in Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:28–30, cited above, *kayyān(u)* appears as the second interpretation, but does not follow a re-citation of the base text or of part of it.

69 Largement 1957, 248:63ab–64.

70 Largement 1957, 248:65ab, 67–68.

71 *CAD* M/II, 120a.

72 BRM 4, 32:26–27 (Geller 2010, 169).

The commentary attempts to give the reading of the logographically written name of a plant that is used medically according to the base text. The commentary states that the sequence of the signs Ú and ḪA should be read as *šammi-nūni*, "fish-plant."[73] This reading is a literal rendering of the elements of the writing Ú.ḪA, since Ú is the cuneiform sign that stands for "plant," and ḪA is the sign that stands for "fish." Following this clarification, the commentary notes: *kayyān*(*u*). Here, *kayyān*(*u*) cannot refer to the "regular" meaning of the sign sequence Ú.ḪA, since "fish-plant" is not its regular reading. Normally, this sequence of signs probably indicates the plant *urânu*, "anise," or less often *šimru*, "fennel."[74] But the literal rendering of the signs as *šammi-nūni* (or: *šammi-nūnī*), "fish-plant," is also (rarely) attested in other lexical and exegetical texts, and it probably designates anise, fennel, or a similar plant.[75] In any case, although the reading "fish-plant" is possible, it is not the "regular" reading, which is *urânu*. Therefore, *kayyān*(*u*) here does not refer to the "regular" reading of the commented word but rather the "actual," separate reading of each of its signs as "plant" and "fish," resulting in "fish-plant."[76] It is possible that in the unpreserved part of the next line, the more regular renderings of the signs as *urânu* and *šimru*, and perhaps other equations, were given as alternative interpretations.[77]

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73 My interpretation slightly differs from the one proposed by Geller 2010, 173: "slag is also *urānu*(-plant), literally 'fish-plant'." Geller understands anise (*urânu*-plant) as an explanation of the previous word, but in my opinion, "anise" (Ú.ḪA) begins a new entry and is not related to the previous word, which probably belonged to the commentary on the previous lemma. In addition, I do not understand the commentary as a remark on the literal meaning of the writing of *urânu* (cf. also Geller 2010, 201 n. 282), but rather as an alternative reading of the plant as *šammi-nūni*, "fish-plant," rather than *urânu*.

74 See *CAD* Š/III, 9a: "The reading of the log[ogram] Ú.ḪA . . . is unknown; it may be *šimru* or *urānu*." But in *CAD* U/W, 207–208, Ú.ḪA is already given as a writing for *urânu* (according to a syllabic parallel in one case, cited on p. 207b, para. c 3′).

75 See the writings Ú *ša-mi* ḪA.ḪI.MEŠ and Ú ḪA.ḪI.A (where the plural indicators probably indicate a reading KU_6 of the sign ḪA) in Uruana I:323–329 (according to *CAD* Š/III, 8b; *CAD* U/W, 207a); see also Langdon 1916, 30:r.3–4, where *urânu*, "anise," in an omen is explained: "anise (*urânu*) = *arantu* grass = *alamû*-plant = fish-plant (*šam-me* ḪA.ḪI.A)."

76 Note that it refers to the actual meaning of the signs and not to the actual meaning of the words represented by the signs; the term does not refer to an actual "plant of a fish," which does not exist.

77 Note that earlier in the same text (BRM 4, 32:5; cf. Geller 2010, 168; Maul 2009, 71) the sign sequence Ì KU_6 (= ḪA) is rendered (correctly) as *šamni nūni*, "fish-oil," without the designation *kayyān*(*u*). This is indeed the actual meaning of the signs, and it is also the regular and most obvious way of reading the signs, while the reading of the signs Ú.ḪA

1.4.4 Infinitive + *kayyān(u)*

In a few cases the term *kayyān(u)* follows the infinitive of a verbal form in the base text. An Ālu commentary dealing with birds explains an omen regarding the psychological consequences of observing mating birds:[78]

> DIŠ *rit-ku-bu* MUŠEN IGI / <<DIŠ>> *mi-qit ṭè-mi* GAR-*šu* : *ra-ka-ba* SAG. ÚS : *mi-qit ṭè-mi* / *šá* E-*u* : *ṭè-em-šú i-šá-an-*<*niš* : *šá*>*-niš* : ŠÈD$^{\text{še-ed-še-ed}}$ŠÈD / *rit-ku-ub* MUŠEN : $^{\text{še-en}}$ŠÈD : *še-e-tu*$_4$: MIN : *e-te-e-qu*
>
> "If he sees the mating ('mounting') of birds—desperation will come upon him."[79]—to mount—actual/regular (*kayyān(u)*); "desperation" which it said—he will go mad. <Secondly>: ŠÈD.ŠÈD (pronounced) *šedšed* = "mounting" of birds; ŠÈD (pronounced) *šen* = to leave,[80] ditto (= ŠÈD pronounced *šen*) = to pass.

In this text the mating of birds, using the Akkadian word *ritkubu*, is first explained by introducing the related infinitive *rakābu* and noting that it should be understood literally, as an actual mating. Then the phrase "desperation" is reintroduced from the apodosis, using the term *ša iqbû*, and an explanation is given. Then follows another, nonliteral, interpretation. The commentator searched for an explanation of why the sight of mating birds should cause desperation. Although the literal and regular sense of "mounting of birds" refers to mating, this does not have anything to do with the apodosis. Therefore, the commentator attempted to interpret the phrase differently by equating the phrase "mounting of birds" with a Sumerian equivalent, and then demonstrating that this Sumerian equivalent could also stand for the words for "leave, escape" and "pass."[81] This leads to the sophisticated understanding of the phrase "mounting of birds" as "escape, passing of birds." Thus, the "passing" or "escape" of the birds predicts the "passing" of the observer's mind—an interpretation that would maintain the inner logic of the omen.[82]

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as *šammi-nūni* in our example, although rendering the actual meaning of the signs, is not the regular or obvious way of reading them, and therefore the term *kayyān(u)* is added.

78 SBTU 3, 99:43–46. See Cavigneaux 1994, 142–143.

79 The text requires an emendation, since the line begins with an unexpected vertical wedge before the apodosis; cf. E. von Weiher, SBTU 3, p. 188. But it is likely that this is a mistake (therefore emend: <<DIŠ>>).

80 See n. 82 below.

81 The lexical equation uses the following logic: "A = B and B = C; therefore: A = C"; see Frahm 2011, 65–65; Introduction, 2.2.

82 In my previous discussion of this passage (Gabbay 2014, 337–338), I misunderstood the lexical equations at the end of the commentary, and hence misinterpreted the passage.

If so, why did the commentator take the trouble to include the obvious explanation that "mount" could also be understood in the regular sense of mounting or mating? Even though it is hard to find the logic connecting the protasis and apodosis when "mount" is understood literally, this regular interpretation (*kayyān*(*u*)) is still a possibility. Here, as in the other examples, *kayyān*(*u*) does not refer to the "regular" sense of the word "to mount," but rather to the "actual" action of "mounting."[83] Thus, the first explanation, using the infinitive "to mount" (or "mounting") followed by the adjective *kayyān*(*u*), may be paraphrased thus: "mounting is actually what it is: mounting."

Another case of *kayyān*(*u*) following the infinitive is contained in a commentary on a series of incantations and rituals for a woman experiencing difficulty in labor. The commentary cites a phrase in one of the incantations that features the image of a cow giving birth while piercing the ground with her horns:[84]

> *ina qar-ni-šú qaq-qar ṭe-ra-at* : *ṭa-ru-u* SAG.ÚS / *šá-niš ṭe-ra-at* : *ḫe-eṣ-né-et* : *ṭa-ru-u* : *ḫa-ṣa-nu lìb-bu-u* gú-da-ri / *na-an-du-ra* : gú[!?] (edition: "E")-lá : *e-ṭe-ri*
>
> "with her horn she pierces the earth"—to pierce—actual/regular (*kayyān*(*u*)); secondly: "she pierces" = she gives shelter; to pierce = to give shelter, as in gú-da-ri = to embrace each other, gú(?)-lá = to embrace.

The first interpretation notes that the image is indeed of the cow actually (*kayyān*(*u*)) piercing the earth. The second interpretation understands the verb to refer to the positive outcome of the delivery: the cow will soon be embracing her calf, and consequently the woman will likewise be embracing her baby.[85] The justification for this interpretation is that the verb *ṭarû*, "to pierce," can also mean "to give shelter, to protect, to receive in a friendly way." The commentary specifies that the protection occurs through (*libbū*, "as in") embracement, i.e., a close contact between two entities, as is the case with the

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The correct interpretation of the passage was proposed by Cavigneaux (1994, 142–143), and this interpretation is followed here. I thank A. Cavigneaux and E. Jiménez for alerting me to this explanation.

83 On this semantic distinction in the use of *kayyān*(*u*), see 1.4.5 below.

84 Civil 1974, 332:15–16; see George 1991, 155. For the base text, see BAM 248, i:38 (restored with the help of a duplicate from Nineveh and a similar text in line iii:56); Veldhuis 1989, 243:38 and 246; cf. Stol 2000, 69. For a different transliteration and interpretation, see *CAD* Ṭ, 104b.

85 This type of interpretation is common in this commentary; see Gabbay, forthcoming 1.

verb *ṭarû*, which refers to a very close contact, often (but not always) resulting in piercing.[86] In support of this, the commentary refers to the equation of *nanduru* and *eṭēru* with gú-da-ri and gú(?)-lá, the first three of which are approximate homophones of *ṭarû* (*nan**duru***, ***eṭēru***, gú-**da-ri**).[87]

The term *kayyān*(*u*) follows an infinitive also in the following passage from an Ālu commentary:[88]

> DIŠ UR.GI$_7$ *ina* É LÚ *ip-ru* : *pa-ru-ú ka-a-a-nu* ⌜ú?⌝ ⌜KAB?⌝ ⌜GAR?⌝
>
> "If a dog vomits in the house of a man"—to vomit—actual/regular (*kayyān*(*u*)); . . .

The commentary introduces the infinitive of the verb in the commented passage with the term *kayyān*(*u*), thereby noting that the base text deals with actual vomiting. Although one would expect the commentary to continue with an alternative interpretation introduced by *šanîš*, the signs are on the edge and in a broken area, and as copied by von Weiher do not support this reading.[89]

1.4.5 Semantics of *kayyān*(*u*)

The examples discussed above demonstrate that understanding the term *kayyān*(*u*) as "regular," which is the basic and most frequently attested meaning of this word, corresponds to the use of this term in commentaries in some instances, but not all. Rather, in the context of the commentaries the term sometimes seem to indicate "actual" or "true," in addition to "normal" or "regular." This semantic range of the word *kayyān*(*u*) is also attested outside commentaries, especially in the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian periods. A short semantic investigation of this word is required before proceeding with the discussion of the term's exegetical uses.

The *CAD* defines the adjective *kayyānu* as "normal, plain, permanent, constant, regular,"[90] and the adverb *kayyān*(*a*) as "always, constantly, regularly."[91] In the sixth century BCE, in the royal inscriptions of the Chaldean kings of Babylonia, we find a more varied use of the adjective in accordance with the

86 See *CAD* Ṭ, 104, especially para. c.

87 For the use of *libbū* with homophones, see Chapter 3, 1.1. For a different understanding of this passage, see George 1991, 155.

88 SBTU 4, 145:r'.10. The term *kayyān*(*u*) occurs twice more in this tablet; see 1.4.1 above.

89 E. von Weiher, SBTU 4, p. 62, reads: *ú-kab/p*$^{?}$*-pat*$^{?}$.

90 *CAD* K, 40b.

91 *CAD* K, 38–39.

diverse meanings of the verb from which it is derived: *kânu*, "to be firm, . . . to last, . . . to be loyal, honest, reliable, correct."[92] Thus we find the adjective as a first-person predicate, *kayyānāku*, with the meaning, "I am faithful, loyal."[93] The adjective *kayyānu* can also refer to the actuality of an object. In one of his inscriptions, the Babylonian king Nabonidus seeks the foundations of the actual and concrete (*kayyānu*) ancient cella of the Sun-god.[94]

The meanings "true, loyal" and "actual" are attested one century earlier for the adjective *kayyamānu*, a by-form of *kayyānu* with the same meanings.[95] Thus *kayyamānû* may refer to a loyal, trustworthy person,[96] and it may also refer to something as "actual." In the Neo-Assyrian Underworld Vision of an Assyrian Prince, the prince reports seeing the demon Šulak and proceeds to describe his appearance: "Šulak was an actual lion (*kayyamānūu*). He stood on his hind legs."[97] Here the adjective *kayyamānūu* means that Šulak was not simply a demon with some leonine features, but had the appearance of an actual lion.

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92 *CAD* K, 159a.

93 This form appears with an extra phrase indicating the consistency of this quality, in the passage: *anāku ana Marduk bēliya kayyānāku lā baṭlāku*, "I am faithful to my lord Marduk, I am not negligent" (Langdon 1912, 144, i:22–23; 150, A ii:4–5; cf. 210, i:17), and in the phrase: *ana Esaĝil u Ezida kakdâ kayyānāk*, "I am always faithful to the Esaĝil and Ezida temples" (Langdon 1912, 168, B, vii:4–5; 94, iii:3–4), contra the elliptic understanding by *CAD* K, 42a: "constantly . . . (dedicated)."

94 Schaudig 2001, 386 (with variant on p. 389), i:35, 38 (*papāḫi Šamaš kayyānu*). Note the correct interpretation by Schaudig 2001, 392 with n. 483: "die beständige Cella (> wirkliche / eigentliche)."

95 The adjective *kayyānu* is the regular form used in the second millennium BCE, while *kayyamānu* is rare in this period. In the first millennium BCE *kayyamānu* replaces *kayyān*(*u*) as the colloquial form and as the form used in technical literature, especially omens (although both *kayyāna* and *kayyamān* are used in an adverbial sense in the first millennium). In literature and royal inscriptions of the first millennium BCE, *kayyamānu* is only rarely attested, and *kayyān*(*u*) is used instead, with many occurrences especially in the inscriptions of the Chaldean dynasty (where the form *kayyamānu* is not attested at all). Note one literary text where both forms are attested as variants in two different tablets (cited in *CAD* K, 37a, lexical section)

96 *CAD* K, 38b.

97 SAA 3, 32:r.6, but contra Livingstone's translation ("constantly"); cf. correctly von Soden 1936, 22:46: "ein normaler Löwe," and *CAD* K, 38b: "a veritable lion." In *AHw*, 420a, W. von Soden proposes a different understanding of *kayyamānūu* here: "daurend bereit," but this seems less likely.

Returning to the term *kayyān(u)* in the commentaries:[98] the nuanced meanings of *kayyānu* and *kayyamānu* discussed above are found mostly from the seventh century BCE onward, which is also the time when the commentary tradition arose. The use of *kayyān(u)* in commentaries is dated to the fifth century BCE and later, and therefore is likely to have contained the semantic component of "true, actual," in addition to the more common meaning "regular."

1.4.6 Syntax and Use of *kayyān(u)*

The few identified occurrences of the form *kayyān(u)* in commentaries make it difficult to discern whether the term is used as an adjective (probably as a predicate and not an attribute)[99] or as an adverb. It is apparently undeclined, but its few attestations do not allow a decisive conclusion.[100]

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98 As already noted by Frahm (2011, 38 n. 137), the term *kayyān(u)* in commentaries should be compared to the by-form *kayyamānu* in omens, especially extispicy, which refers to a regular state in contrast to an abnormal state or special ominous feature; see *CAD* K, 37, and references listed in Koch-Westenholz 2000, 507, and Koch 2005, 588. In older omen collections, from the second millennium BCE, the form *kayyānu* rather than *kayyamānu* occurs for the same phenomenon (with one or two exceptions); see *CAD* K, 37, 40–41. It should be noted that in many of these instances the translation "actual, real" should be preferred over "regular," e.g., Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:23: [BE 8]-*ú* NA SAG.UŠ GAR-*ma* MAN-*ú ina* SAG NA *i-šá-riš e-*[*ṣir*], "[Eigh]th ['If']: 'There is a real presence and a second one is dr[awn] straight at the top of (the first) presence'." (Koch-Westenholz 2000, 155, translates: "normal Presence," but this is actually the "real presence" on the liver, while the other one is a groove that is not the "real" one.) Like many other commentary features that are influenced by or borrowed from the omen literature (cf. Frahm 2011, 20–23), perhaps the use of this term in omens, referring to normal and abnormal (or actual/real and non-actual/real) features, found its way into commentaries, where it referred to actual/normal and non-actual/abnormal meanings or understandings. Note, however, that the origin of the term may lie in the lexical tradition. As recently discussed by Veldhuis (2014, 308–309), a lexical tablet from Haft Tepe (ancient Kabnak), dating to the middle of the second millennium BCE, contains the term *kayyamānu* (corresponding to ĝiš, in the context of wooden objects). Veldhuis (2014, 308–309) interprets this as "in its usual meaning," but in line with my interpretation of the term, and in light of the fact that writing the Akkadian translation would have required fewer signs, I suggest "actual (wood)."

99 The distinction between attribute and predicate would depend on whether the form appears as *kayyānu* or *kayyān*. Of the four attested syllabic spellings, three indicate the form *kayyānu* (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:28–30 [see 1.4.1 above], SBTU 1, 90:r.3′ [see 1.4.2 above]; SBTU 4, 145:r.ⁱ10 [see 1.4.4 above]), and one indicates *kayyān* (BRM 4, 32:26–27 [see 1.4.3 above]). But the final vowels in the orthography of this late period do not necessarily correspond to Standard Babylonian grammar. Therefore the answer is not obvious.

100 Note that in George 1991, 146–147:4 (see 1.4.1 above), it may be implied (according to the alternative interpretation) that the term *kayyān(u)* refers to the baked brick, *agurru*, a noun that is usually treated as feminine; see *AHw*, 17b.

In most cases the term *kayyān(u)* is listed as one of several explanations, usually the first.[101] As demonstrated above,[102] the term *kayyān(u)* can appear alone, relating to the entire phrase quoted from the commented text (or, implicitly, to a word within it); it can appear after a re-citation of a word from the base text; or it can follow a clarification of or variation on the commented form—usually the infinitive of the verbal form attested in the commented text, but there is also one case where the term follows a syllabic clarification of a logographically written noun. Finally, in one instance,[103] the form *kayyān(u)* is not followed directly by a second interpretation, but rather by a re-citation of the following lemma in the base text and its explanation, before proceeding to another interpretation of the phrase that was earlier designated as *kayyān(u)*.

1.4.7 The Akkadian Concept of "literal" and its Hermeneutic Function as Seen in the Term *kayyān(u)*

Hermeneutically, the term *kayyān(u)* is used to indicate the regular or actual, and usually the literal meaning of a word or phrase. It is used especially when a nonliteral meaning is given as an alternative interpretation (or, perhaps, when a nonliteral alternative could have been suggested).[104]

The term *kayyān(u)* can refer to two phenomena that seem at times to be contradictory. It can refer to the literal, "etymological," sense of a word (as in "fish-plant")[105] even though it is not normally understood in that way, indicating that in the present context it should nevertheless be interpreted thus. Or, it can refer to the regular and accepted understanding of an entire phrase, even though a literal, noncontextual understanding of one of its components may lead to a different interpretation (as in the "entering" of the moon).[106] Thus, the term *kayyān(u)* is associated with the "actual" and "regular" sense of a word in its context. Sometimes a literal understanding causes difficulties in the larger context, whereas an alternative, nonliteral interpretation may offer a coherent explanation of the text commented on. Still, in such cases, it is important for the commentator to state that the literal meaning of the word in its immediate

101 Exceptions are SBTU 1, 90:r.3 (see 1.4.2 above) and Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:28–30 (see 1.4.1 above).

102 See 1.4.1–1.4.4.

103 SBTU 3, 99:43–46 (see 1.4.4 above).

104 For the unpreserved or absent second interpretations in BRM 4, 32:26–27 and SBTU 4, 145:r.ˈ10, see 1.4.3 and 1.4.4 above.

105 BRM 4, 32:26–27. See 1.4.3 above.

106 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:28–30. See 1.4.1 above.

context is still the "actual," "regular," or even "true" possibility, even though it interferes with a coherent understanding of the text.

2 "Thus!": References to Active Hermeneutics

Usually, the Akkadian commentators do not portray themselves as actively expounding the text; rather, they show that the result of their interpretation is actually evident in the text itself.[107] Nevertheless, commentaries do occasionally betray the presence of the commentator, most notably by the use of present-future verbs in the second person.[108] These verbs relate actions that the student of the text must perform, similar to divinatory and ritual texts in which second-person present-future verbs instruct the diviner or priest what to do. In addition to second-person verbs, imperatives with a similar function are also (rarely) attested.

Below are some attestations of verbs used in the second-person present-future that indicate a hermeneutical action to be performed by the student of the text. In addition, the (rare) use of the particle *umma*, "thus," in commentaries, will also be examined, since it functions similarly to instructions given in the second person. Finally, a few terms referring to the act of interpretation itself will be mentioned.

2.1 *Second-Person Present-Future Verbs*

2.1.1 *taqabbi*, "you say"

This term is discussed in Chapter 5.[109]

2.1.2 *tanambi*, "you call"

This term is discussed above.[110]

2.1.3 *tuštabbal*, "you interpret"

This term is discussed below.[111]

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107 See 1.1 above.

108 Note also the use of the second person in a didactic context; see Chapter 1, para. 3.

109 See Chapter 5, para. 6.

110 See 1.1.2 above.

111 See 2.3.1.2 below.

2.1.4 **tušeppiš* (*ša . . . lā tušeppišu*)

The verb *epēšu* in the Š stem, perhaps referring to the process of divination or its interpretation,[112] is found once, negated, in a subordinate clause together with the phrase *ša iqbû*:[113]

> BE NU.UM.ME *ṭu-ú šá ina* ŠÀ-*šu ši-kin* U (var. [Š]U.SI) *a-tu-ú* / *šá iq-bu-u*$_{(2)}$ GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu la tu-še-ep-pi-šu šá ina* ŠÀ-*bi-šú ši-kin* ŠU.SI *tam-ma-ru* GIM DU$_{11}$-*ú*
>
> "If the top part is a 'dais' in which a form of a 'finger' is found" which it said, gave their sign (and which) you shall not perform—"in which you see a form of a 'finger'," is like it said.

The meaning of the commentary, including its rephrasing with the term *kī iqbû*,[114] as well as the meaning and significance of *lā tušeppišu* here, are not clear to me. Perhaps the situation described in the omen is impossible, and therefore it is noted that the diviner either should not or cannot encounter ("perform") such a phenomenon; hence the omen is paraphrased so that this is only what seems ("you see") to occur and not what is actually "found."

2.2 umma, *"thus": Active Interpretation through Paraphrase*

The particle *umma*, "thus," rarely found in commentaries, may introduce a reinterpretation of the text, usually in the form of a paraphrase. This construction implies a deliberate alteration of the base text by the commentator.

A commentary on a collection of incantations and rituals for a woman having trouble giving birth offers a paraphrase of the original Akkadian translation of the Sumerian base text, introduced with *umma*. The paraphrase is based on the interpretation that precedes it:[115]

> gug nu zu ù gug nu zu : *lu-'-at-ma a-na ni-qí-i ul na-ṭa-at* : *pu-uḫ-tu*$_4$ *ši-i* : gug : *el-lu*$_4$ / nu : *la-'* : zu : *na-ṭu-u* : *a-ma-ra* : *a-na ni-qí-i ul na-ṭa-at* / *šá* E-*u* : siskur : *ni-qu-ú* siskur : *ṣu-le-e um-ma lu-'-at-ma a-na ṣu-le-e ul am-ra-at*

---

112 See CAD E, 204–205, 229a for *epēšu* in this sense in the G stem. For the Š stem, see Koch 2005, no. 32:157, 175 (cf. Heeßel 2012, no. 70): *šá mim-ma* LUGAL EN-*ka ú-še-pé-šu*-[*ka*]; *a-na mu-še-pi-šu-ti* ZI-*ḫa*.

113 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:17.

114 For the equation of *atû* with *amāru*, see CAD A/II, 518b.

115 Civil 1974, 331:2–6.

> "(Sum.): She does not know whether it is carnelian (gug) and she does not know whether it is carnelian // (Akk.): She is defiled and is not appropriate for offering"—It is a (word) replacement: gug = pure, nu = not, zu = to be appropriate = to see; "(she) is not appropriate for offering" which it said—siskur = offering, siskur = prayer; thus: "she is defiled and is not (or: should not be) seen in prayer."

This commentary is dealt with elsewhere.[116] What is significant here is that in light of the lexical interpretations offered in the commentary, the commentator renders the original Akkadian translation "she is defiled and is not appropriate for offering" as "she is defiled and should not be seen in prayer." The particle *umma* introduces this new rendering, indicating that it is the result of the previous discussion and that it is how the text should now be understood.

Other attestations of *umma* in commentaries are mostly in broken contexts, but most seem to have introduced a paraphrase of the base text as well. The term *umma* probably occurs in a commentary from Ur on the same collection of incantations and rituals for a woman having trouble giving birth mentioned above:[117]

> ^{giš}MÁ : MUNUS.PEŠ$_4$: *um-ma* MUNUS.PEŠ$_4$ *li*$^?$/*tu*$^?$-RI-*di*$^?$
>
> "Boat"—the pregnant woman; thus: the pregnant woman . . .

The commentary probably paraphrases a line in the base text dealing with the boat as referring to the woman giving birth (in line with the general nature of this commentary).

An Ālu commentary makes use of the particle *umma*:[118]

> *ṣi-mi-it-tú šá* É.GAL *ip-par-ra-as* ÉR[IN : *ṣi-mit-tú* (. . .)](?) / ŠU$^{!?}$ (copy: KU).DUL$_{8/9}{}^{!?}$ ("UR") : *ṣi-mit-tú* : *um-ma ṣi-mit-tú šá* [. . .]
>
> "The yoke of the palace will be cut off"—ÉR[IN = yoke (. . .)](?), ŠU$^{!?}$. DUL$_{8/9}{}^{!?}$ = yoke; thus: "the yoke of the [. . .]."

116 See 1.2.2 above.

117 UET 6/3, 897:r.19′ (the reading *umma* here was suggested to me by E. Jiménez).

118 Funck 2, r.4–5 (*AfO* 21, pl. X; Freedman 2006a, 74; cf. CAD Ṣ, 198a for the correspondence ÉRIN = *ṣimittu*). See also the reservations by Jiménez 2015c with nn. 9–10 (CCP 3.5.25).

Due to the break, it is not certain what the commentary tried to demonstrate here,[119] but what follows *umma* is similar to the citation from the base text and therefore was probably a paraphrase, informed perhaps by the lexical equations preceding it.[120]

Another occurrence of *umma* is found in an astronomical commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil:[121]

> [DIŠ 30 *ina* IT]I.BÁRA *ina* IGI.LÁ-*šú a-dir ina* È-*šú ad-*ʳ*ri*ˀ È LUGAL.ME$^{!}$ SÁ.SÁ-*ma* / [SÁ.SÁ-*ma*(?) *i*]*š-šá-an-na-nu-ma* : *um-ma* LUGAL *ma-l*[*a* LUG]AL *i-ma-aṣ-ṣu* / [*šá-niš*(?) SÁ.SÁ *šá-n*]*a-nu* : *šá-na-nu ka-šá-du*
>
> "[If the moon in the mon]th Nisannu is dark at its appearance, *in its rising it rises darkly*(?)—kings will be rivaled (written: SÁ.SÁ-*ma*) (and . . .)"—[SÁ.SÁ-*ma*] = will be rivaled; thus: one king will be (strong) as much as (another) king; [secondly(?): SÁ.SÁ = to riv]al, to rival = to conquer.

If the text has been correctly restored, the commentary seems to present two explanations of what the apodosis "kings will be rivaled" means in the base text. The first explanation understands the verb *šanānu*, used for "rival," in its sense of being equal, and thus (*umma*) paraphrases the apodosis as "one king will be (strong) as much as another king," a clause that is indeed attested (with some variation) in the apodosis of an Izbu omen.[122] The second interpretation given in the commentary (if restored correctly) equates the verb "to rival" from the base text with "to conquer," implying that this "rivalry" refers to the conquering of (the land of) one king by another.

Lastly, an attestation of *umma* is found in a commentary on physiognomic omens, but unfortunately the text before the commentator was broken:[123]

> *mar-a-ḫa* : *ma-ar-'* : *um-ma ḫe-pí*
>
> "to spoil"(?) = . . .; thus: (broken).

---

119 It is likely that the different orthography for *ṣimittu* was not the point of the commentary.

120 Perhaps the paraphrase included a reference to a chariot, since *ṣimittu* is often used in reference to the yoke of a chariot.

121 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.13–15. For the improved reading of this passage, see Jiménez 2015g (CCP 3.1.16).

122 See Leichty 1970, 142, x1:142′; De Zorzi 2014, 664, x1:139′. See also similar phrases in other apodoses, cited in *CAD* M/I, 346a.

123 SBTU 1, 83:r.17′, see Böck 2000a, 256:53.

2.3 *Terms for the Act of Interpretation*

Besides the designations for commentaries that are usually found in the rubrics of the commentaries themselves,[124] there are a few terms occasionally found in commentaries and expository texts that reveal an awareness of the act of interpretation (not necessarily textual interpretation).[125]

2.3.1 *šutābulu*, "to interpret, deliberate"

One of the few terms employed to designate interpretation par excellence is *šutābulu*.[126] The verb (and its nominal form), probably the Št stem of *abālu* or *apālu*,[127] is used primarily and almost exclusively not of textual interpretation or commentaries but of the interpretation of omens, i.e., it refers to part of the process of divination. But in some cases the term seems to encompass textual interpretation as well. Below are attestations of the verb in commentaries and similar texts where the context suggests that the verb refers to textual exegesis.[128]

2.3.1.1 šutābulu (*infinitive*), *"to interpret"*

The infinitive *šutābulu* appears in *Examenstext* A in an exegetical, or at least pedagogical context:[129]

> KA-bal inim ḫi-ḫi an-ta eme-uri^{ki}-ra ki-ta e[me-gi$_7$-ra] an-ta eme-gi$_7$-ra ki-[ta eme-uri^{ki}-ta] ì-zu-u // KA.BAL.E.DA *šu-ta-bu-la e-liš ak-ka-da-*[*a*] *šap-liš šu-me-ru šap-liš ak-ka-da e-liš šu-me-ru* [*t*]*i-de-e*
>
> Do you know how to translate, to interpret(?), Akkadian above and Sumerian below, Akkadian below and Sumerian above?

The context here of translation and bilingualism suggests that the verb concerns linguistic correspondences, and perhaps interpretation.

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124 See Chapter 1, 2.1.

125 Note that there is no indication that *parāsu* in SAA 10, 60:r.1–2 means "to interpret," contra S. Parpola, SAA 10, p. 44 (cf. also Parpola 1983, 47). Even if the Akkadian verb was understood by Parpola as a cognate of Hebrew or Aramaic *prš*, the meaning "interpret" of this root is only a much later development.

126 For a discussion of this verb and its semantics, as well as some occurrences and references to previous literature, see Frahm 2011, 57.

127 See discussion in *CAD* A/I, 29a.

128 Excluded are references where the verb refers to correspondences between omens, e.g., Koch 2005, no. 3:153, no. 25:19; cf. *CAD* A/I, 28, para. 10e.

129 Sjöberg 1975, 140:14.

2.3.1.2 tuštabbal*, "you interpret"*

The second-person present-future form of the verb[130] appears in a few cases where the interpretation of an omen is reached through analogy: x *kīma* y *tuštabbal*, "you interpret x as y."[131] Elsewhere the verb appears once in negation, in what seems to be a non-divinatory context, although the tablet is broken and the passage unclear:[132]

> IM ME *la tuš-tab-bal*
>
> Do not interpret "IM ME."

Interestingly, as noted by Leichty, the prohibitive is used in the line. Since the meaning of the prohibitive is that of a negated imperative, it should be considered along with the imperative *šutābil* attested in other texts (see below).[133]

2.3.1.3 šutābil, *"interpret!"*

The imperative *šutābil* appears a few times in texts related to the calculation of the stipulated term in a description of the process of extispicy. For example:[134]

> *at-ta e-la-at* UZU.KIN-*ka ḫi-iṭ šu-ta-bil-ma* TÙN *ù* UZU.MUR.MEŠ *bu-'-* [x x x *at-ta*(?)] UZU.KIN.MEŠ-*ka ḫi-iṭ šu-ta-bil-ma* . . .
>
> You, watch and interpret/consider the upper part(?) of your extispicy; find(?) the "pouch" and the lungs [. . .; you(?)], watch and interpret/consider your extispicies.[135]

2.3.1.4 multabiltu, *"interpreter(?)"*

The feminine participle *multabiltu*, the name of the last chapter in the *bārûtu* series, was understood to be related to the act of interpretation expressed by the verb *šutābulu*.[136] Nevertheless, it is equally likely that the participle here

130 For such forms, see 2.1 above.

131 See Appendix 1, 7.1.

132 Leichty 1973, 80:24. Another use of the second person of *šutābulu* (written: ḪI.ḪI-*ma*) is found in K.3123:r.19′ (ACh Supp. 2, XIX; see Frahm 2011, 57 n. 262), but here the meaning is probably "to consider," and does not refer to an active interpretation.

133 See 2.3.1.3.

134 Koch 2005, no. 97:4–5.

135 See, similarly, Koch 2005, no. 104:2, and also Koch 2005, no. 91:1.

136 See Koch 2005, 5.

signifies not "interpretation" but "correspondence,"[137] since that is the nature of many of the entries in the tablets of this series.[138]

2.3.1.5 šutābultu, *"interpretation(?)"*

The noun *šutābultu* occurs a few times in the context of extispicy, but its meaning is somewhat obscure.[139] Its occurrence together with *piširtu* in one text,[140] probably referring to the interpretations of omens found in apodoses,[141] points toward a meaning that could indeed be related to "interpretation." However, this meaning is difficult in other contexts.[142]

2.3.2 *pišru*, "interpretation, solution," *pašir*, "interpreted"

These terms, both within and outside of divinatory contexts, are discussed in Appendix 1.[143]

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137 See nn. 128, 132 above.

138 Note Koch 2005, no. 57:10, in a text collecting corresponding protases: UZU.MEŠ *mul-ta-bil-ti*.

139 For occurrences, see *CAD* Š/III, 394–395.

140 Koch 2005, no. 32:157 (cf. Heeßel 2012, no. 70): *šu-ta-bu-ul-ta-šu$_{(2)}$-nu pi-šir-ta-šu$_{(2)}$-nu* GIM (var. *ki-ma*) *šá* ŠUB [GU.ZA].

141 See Appendix 1, 6.3.1.

142 See e.g., Koch 2005, no. 90:2.

143 See Appendix 1, 6.3, and especially 6.3.2 for non-divinatory contexts.

CHAPTER 5

The Verb *qabû*, "to say," in Akkadian Commentaries

This chapter deals with one of the verbs most frequently used in commentaries: *qabû*, "to say," which appears in various forms and constructions.[1] Specific phrases containing the verb *qabû* serve particular hermeneutical processes and may refer to the wording of the base text that is being commented on, to a text cited in support of an interpretation, to the context of the base text, to the interpretation of the base text, and finally also to the act of interpretation itself. The hermeneutical roles of the verb *qabû*, alone or in combination with other words, will be demonstrated below through examples. The chapter concludes by considering the implications of the use of *qabû* in commentaries for our understanding of how ancient Mesopotamians conceived of the authority of canonical texts.

1 *ša iqbû*, "which it said": Reference to the Wording of the Text in the Commentary

Although *ša iqbû* is one of the most frequently occurring terms in commentaries,[2] it has been previously misunderstood in modern scholarship.

1 This chapter is partially based on my previous shorter discussion of the verb *qabû*; see Gabbay 2014a, 351–359. For an earlier discussion of *qabû* in commentaries, see Frahm 2011, 108–110, as well as other references given throughout this chapter.

2 There are well over one hundred attestations of this phrase in the published corpus of commentaries. The following references include most of the attestations of the term *ša iqbû* in the published material: Al-Rawi and George 1991/1992, 64:1; Reiner 2005, no. 71:2′(?); Freedman 2006a, 151:12–13; Civil 1974, 331:2–6, 336:10–11, 12–13, 337:20–21; George 1991, 146:6b, 148:8c, 9b // c, 15b, 150:30b; SBTU 1, 47:1–5; SBTU 1, 32:11–13; SBTU 1, 49:2; SBTU 1, 49:5; SBTU 1, 50:3, 12–13, 13–14, 18–19, 21(?), 24–26; SBTU 1, 51:6–7, 10–11, 12; SBTU 1, 52:2; SBTU 1, 54:11′; SBTU 3, 99:43–46; SBTU 3, 100:11–14; Beaulieu 1995, 1–2; Livingstone 1986, 24:30 (cf. Al-Rawi and George 1991/1992, 65); SBTU 4, 162:13, 18, r.9(?); Koch 2005, no. 26:92 (cf. no. 27: iii:6′), no. 28:49, 62, no. 33:r.28–29, no. 41:75, no. 94:4(?), no. 115:58, 59, no. 99:18; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:25, no. 20:35, 42, 102–103, 141, no. 25:11, no. 42:72, 73, [172](?), no. 45:6, E20′, 34, no. 80:23, no. 83:15, iii:4′, 6′, 9′, no. 86:27, no. 88: [iv 11](?); Reiner and Pingree 1998, 248:49 (r. 21′); BM 36595+BM 37055:11 (CCP 7.2.u103)(?); K.13866:8 (Lambert 2013, 137, pl. 38)(?); K.19136:6′ (CCP 3.9.u4)(?). For references from Neo-Assyrian letters and for other Neo-Assyrian sources, see 1.2.1 below; for expansions of the phrase *ša iqbû*, see 1.4 below; for the phrase with the

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Typically it has been regarded as *introducing* an interpretation, often assumed to be a citation from another text. It has been suggested that the implied subject of the verb in this construction is the unidentified scholar(s) who gave the explanation that follows, and that the explanation itself is the verb's object. So, for example, A. George:[3]

> We have left the phrase impersonal in translation, since it often introduces quotations from the traditional corpus of anonymous literature; but the referent in 3rd m. sg. can on other occasions be a living man, the scholar who expounded the text under discussion to the writer of the commentary tablet.

The *CAD* translates *ša iqbû* with "as they said," and notes that this and similar phrases (discussed below) refer "to an explanation given (possibly by the teacher) about ominous phenomena and their interpretation."[4] E. Reiner, dealing with an occurrence of *ša iqbû*, states: "The comment is introduced by the phrase that normally introduces scholia: 'as they say' (or 'as it—scil. the commentary—says'), and finally the scholion or explanation itself."[5] Similarly, P.-A. Beaulieu, when addressing this phrase in another text, explains that "the phrase *ša iqbû* introduces the interpretive subsection of a commentary."[6] In the same manner, U. Koch-Westenholz treats *ša iqbû*, together with other constructions of the verb *qabû*, as an indication that an authoritative source has issued the interpretation:[7]

> Sometimes the commentaries refer to the authority of an enigmatic external source.. . . It is unclear whether these phrases refer to the word of a teacher, to the stream of tradition in general, or maybe even to another written source. They often seem simply to be used as quotation-marks, to introduce quotations from other scholarly literature—or some external source.

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preposition *libbū*, see 2.4 below; for variants of the phrase, see 1.3 below; for the combination of *ša iqbû* with the phrase *kī iqbû*, see 4.1.2 below.

3 George 1991, 139.

4 *CAD* Q, 29.

5 Reiner 1993; cf. (almost identically) Reiner 1995, 60.

6 Beaulieu 1995, 2 n. 2.

7 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 32.

Similarly, E. Frahm notes the following:[8] "It is true that *ša iqbû* seems to introduce quotations from written texts as well as explanations of a more general nature."

Commentaries indeed use particular phrases other than the term *ša iqbû* to refer to the external oral or written sources from which the interpretations they present were drawn, as was discussed in Chapter 1, but this is never done using the term *ša iqbû*.[9] A detailed examination of all occurrences of the phrase *ša iqbû* known to me demonstrates that the object of the verb *qabû* is never the explanation that follows it; rather, it is always the lemma or passage from the base text cited before the phrase, the lemma that is about to be commented on. Syntactically, the commentary on this cited lemma or passage serves as the predicate of a nominal sentence, i.e., "x (= citation of a lemma from the base text) which it (= the 'text') said (*ša iqbû*) (is/means) y (= commentary)."[10] The implied subject of the verb *qabû* is not the scholar or scholarly lore in general, but rather the base text itself as a whole, or even the larger body of "scripture."[11] Thus, the phrase *ša iqbû* does not identify the source of an interpretation; rather, it marks the end of the cited text before introducing a commentary on it. The phrase serves as a boundary between the base text and its interpretation in the ongoing back-and-forth between them that comprises the hermeneutical process. The origin of the phrase may lie in the oral study environment, where it would have signaled the end of a re-cited lemma for the purpose of interpretation.[12]

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8 Frahm 2011, 109.

9 See Chapter 1, para. 4; also Frahm 2011, 86–87.

10 Note that *ša iqbû* is never separated from the cited text preceding it by a *Glossenkeil* (the only possible exceptions are not well preserved: SBTU 1, 42:5′, and CT 41, 30:1, where a different word may be restored; note however *mala iqbû* [see n. 171 below]), although one does occasionally separate the phrase from the interpretation that follows. In addition, except in extispicy commentaries dated to the Neo-Assyrian period, the term *ša iqbû* usually follows the cited text immediately, in the same line; sometimes it appears at the end of the line, and much less frequently it begins a new line. Of course, since these texts are not literary, the relationship between textual lines and textual units has less significance, but it may still provide some insight into the writer's perception of the relation between the clauses. For the term *ša iqbû* in the extispicy commentaries of the Neo-Assyrian period, see below with n. 15.

11 For the scriptural and theological implications of this, see para. 7 below.

12 See Chapter 1, para. 2.

1.1 *First Citation of a Text*

The phrase *ša iqbû* can occur after the first citation of a commented text or after a re-citation, in whole or in part, of a text that was cited earlier. These two uses, which are found already in the Neo-Assyrian period and continue into the Late Babylonian period, are surveyed in this section and the one that follows.

1.1.1 Citation of a Full Omen in *mukallimtu* Commentaries on Extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian Period

The phrase *ša iqbû* is most often found in *mukallimtu* commentaries on extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian period (although reflecting mainly a Babylonian tradition), which collect and discuss omens pertaining to similar phenomena. Often the omen alone, or even just its protasis, is cited, but when an omen is commented on, it may be followed by the phrase *ša iqbû*, after which its interpretation is given.[13]

Unlike other commentaries, especially the standard commentaries of the Late Babylonian period, the extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period are thematic and not continuous in nature, i.e., they do not interpret a single text line by line, but rather deal with a theme addressed in a given chapter, citing texts that are related to this theme, usually with commentary. In these instances, therefore, the phrase "which it said" (*ša iqbû*) does not mark a citation from a base text that is the subject of a continuous textual commentary,[14] but rather the citation of one or more texts pertinent to the general theme of the commentary, some of which also require interpretation.[15]

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13 For examples, see references in n. 2 above (cf. also references to *qabû* in the indexes of Koch-Westenholz 2000, 524–525, and Koch 2005, 607).

14 See 1.1.2 below.

15 This difference in the use of *ša iqbû* may be seen in the graphic distribution of the lines of various entries in the commentaries. In continuous textual commentaries *ša iqbû* is usually not separated from the cited text to which it refers (see n. 10 above), but in the thematic *mukallimtu* extispicy commentaries *ša iqbû* more often begins a new line, where it is followed by remarks on the cited passage. Now, as noted above, while the term *ša iqbû* refers back to the cited text, it also introduces the following commentary, thus serving as a bridge between text and commentary. The placement of *ša iqbû* on a new line in extispicy commentaries may indicate that in this context, the term is more closely associated with the commentary that follows than it is in the textual commentaries; perhaps this practice is related to the fact that the commentary does not cite the text continuously. Therefore, in extispicy commentaries I translate the relative pronoun *ša* not only as "which" but as "that which," beginning a new clause. (Note, however, that a challenge to this interpretation is posed by the inclusion of a cited omen followed by *ša iqbû* within the phrase *šumma . . . ana pānika*, which would seem to indicate that this is only one clause after all; see Chapter 1, 3.2.3.)

In a commentary dealing with the phenomenon of two "paths" (*padānu*; a groove on the *lobus sinister*) in the liver of the sacrificial sheep, seven omens describing ambiguous double "path" markings are cited. The sixth and seventh phenomena are not just citations, but are followed by short explanations:[16]

> BE 6-*šú* GÍR 2-*ma a-ḫe-e* ŠUB.MEŠ ÉRIN-*ni* KASKAL-*šá* ŠUB-*ma* MAN-*tam-ma* DIB-*bat* / *šá iq-bu-ú* (var. DU_{11}-*ú*) DIŠ (*ina*) 15 DIŠ (*ina*) 150 GAR.MEŠ *šá-niš nu-kúr* GALGA MAN-*e* $UŠ_4$-*mi*
>
> BE 7-*ú* GÍR 2-*ma* MAN-*ú nu-kúr* ÉRIN-*ni šu-bat-sà* KÚR-*ár* / *šá iq-bu-ú* DIŠ *ina* 15 DIŠ *ina* 150 GAR.MEŠ BE-*ma šá* 15 *ana* 15 *šá* 150 *ana* 150 *iḫ-ḫe-el-ṣu-ma* ŠUB-*tú* SIG_5 BE-*ma* GIM SIG_5 GIZKIM-*šú-nu ana* IGI-*ka* . . .

> Sixth "If":[17] "There are two 'paths' and they lie separately—my army will abandon its campaign, but go on another"(; that) which it said—they (= the "paths") lie one to the right and one to the left; alternatively:[18] "change of mind, madness."
>
> Seventh "If": "There are two 'paths' and the second is changed—my army will change its position"(; that) which it said—they (= the "paths") lie one to the right and one to the left; if the right one slipped towards the right, and the left one towards the left, and they descend—it is favorable. If their physical sign like (in) the favorable situation is before you: . . .

The commentary cites two omens as the sixth and seventh possibilities related to double "paths," but since the formulation of the omens is unclear or curt, some explication is necessary. First, however, the commentary notes in each case that the entry is what the text from which the omens were quoted "said" (*ša iqbû*), indicating that the text has been cited and now requires some clarification. The general descriptions—"they lie separately" in the first citation and "the second (path) is changed" in the second citation—are explained as the position of the two paths, one lying to the right and the other to the left.[19]

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16 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:72–73. For the base texts, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 40:r.3; cf. no. 38:3, and no. 94:r.4–6.

17 See Chapter 1, 4.5.1.1.

18 I.e., a citation of an alternative apodosis for the original omen.

19 The commentary on the second citation also proceeds by citing an omen (not reproduced here) in support of the interpretation; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:74; for the phrase *šumma . . . ittašunu ana pānika* at the end of the second entry, see Chapter 1, 3.2.5.

The first entry (the sixth "if") continues with the citation of an alternative apodosis included in the original omen ("change of mind, madness"),[20] switching back from the commentary to the cited text.

1.1.2 Citation of a Full Passage in Late Babylonian Commentaries

In the Late Babylonian period (especially during the Achaemenid and Seleucid periods), the commentaries are mostly textual, interpreting selected lemmata and phrases in the order in which they occur in the base text. At times, an entry in a commentary begins with the citation of a full passage (and not just one lemma) from the base text that has not been previously cited. Thus, a Late Babylonian medical commentary cites an entire line, using the term *ša iqbû*, before proceeding to comment on it:[21]

> DIŠ NA BIR-*su* KÚ-*šú* ŠU$^{!}$ ^{d}*nergal šá* E-*ú*$^{!}$ / MUL.BIR : ^{d}*ṣal-ba-ta-a-nu*
>
> "If a person, his kidney hurts him—(it is) the Hand-of-Nergal" which it said—Kidney star = Mars.

The commentary cites an entry that notes that Nergal is in charge of kidney pain, marking it with the phrase *ša iqbû*, and then proceeds to explain that the Kidney star is Mars, a planet associated with Nergal,[22] thus harmonizing both parts of the cited passage.

1.1.3 Citation in a Sequential Interpretation of the Base Text in Late Babylonian Commentaries

The phrase *ša iqbû* does not exclusively occur before the start of a commentary passage; it can also mark the citation of a new lemma within a commentary entry. For example, the following omen, from the first tablet of the diagnostic series Sagig, relates to an observation made by the healer on his way to the patient:[23]

---

20 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 94:r.4.

21 Civil 1974, 337:20–21; see Frazer 2015 (CCP 4.2.B); cf. also Reiner 1993; Reiner 1995, 60.

22 For the association of Mars with Nergal, cf. Brown 2000, 56, 70. Other examples of *ša iqbû* introducing the citation of a complete passage are George 1991, 148:8c; SBTU 1, 32:11–13; Civil 1974, 336:6; cf. also George 1991, 148:9bc; Al-Rawi and George 1991/1992, 64:1, where a complete protasis is introduced; and SBTU 3, 100:11–14, where a complete symptom is introduced.

23 George 1991, 144–145:30.

> DIŠ DINGIR *saḫ-ḫi-ra* IGI ŠU (var. SÌG-*iṣ*) ^{d}MAŠ.TAB.BA
>
> "If he sees a 'prowling god'—(that patient is suffering from) the hand (var. stroke) of the Divine Twins."

A Late Babylonian commentary interprets this as follows:[24]

> DINGIR *sa-ḫi-ra* : ^{d}*gaz-ba-ba . . . šá-niš* ^{d}*la-ta-ra-*^{r}*ak*$^{\urcorner}$*-a šal-šiš* ^{d}*un-na-ni-ši* [^{d}MAR.TU : ^{d}]MAŠ.TAB.BA *šá* DU_{11}*-ú* : ^{mul}TAB *šá* IGI-*et* ^{mul}SIPA.ZI.AN.NA [GUB.MEŠ-*z*]*u* ^{d}*lú-làl u* ^{d}*la-ta-ra-ak-a*
>
> "Prowling god"—Gazbaba . . . ; secondly: Latarak; thirdly: Unna-niši = [Amurru]. "Divine Twins" which it said—the Twin-Stars that are [station]ed opposite Sipaziana (= Orion): Lulal and Latarak.

The commentary first cites the "prowling god" from the protasis and provides three different explanations of who this god is; the second one identifies him as Latarak. Then the commentary cites the phrase "Divine Twins" from the apodosis, marking the citation with the term *ša iqbû*, and interprets it as the Twin-stars, one of whom is the same Latarak mentioned in connection with the "prowling god." The protasis is thereby harmonized with the apodosis.

1.2 *Re-citation*

1.2.1 Re-citation in Neo-Assyrian Sources (Scholarly Reports to the Assyrian King and a Commentary)

The earliest examples of *ša iqbû* (or the variant form *ša qabû*; both also occur in an Assyrian subjunctive form: *ša iqbûni*, *ša qabûni*) used to re-cite part of a passage cited earlier stem from the Neo-Assyrian period.[25] They are found in reports by scholars to the Assyrian king about the interpretation of natural (usually astronomical) phenomena in light of citations of omen entries from the canonical corpus. For example, in a report written to the Assyrian king by the scholar Nabû-aḫḫē-erība about the appearance of the new moon, an omen is cited and interpreted:[26]

---

24 George 1991, 150–151:30b. For other occurrences of this use of *ša iqbû*, see, e.g., probably Civil 1974, 336:10–11, 12–13.

25 *ša iqbû*: SAA 8, 99:5–r.3, 502:1–6; *ša iqbûni*: SAA 8, 57:5–r.4 (see below), 64:r.7–8, 80:6–10; Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:16 (see below); *ša qabû*: SAA 8, 316:6–7 (it is not entirely certain that this is a re-citation); *ša qabûni*: SAA 8, 232:r.1–3.

26 SAA 8, no. 57:5–r.4.

> DIŠ 30 *ina* IGI.LAL-*šú* SI ZAG-*šú* AN-*ú* *qar-nu i-mit-ti-šú šá-mu-u* *ṭe-rat* KI.LAM *ke-e-nu ina* KUR GÁL-*ši na-áš-kun* ḪI.GAR$_{bar\text{-}ti}$ *ina* KUR MAR.TU^{ki} GÁL-*ši* / *qar-nu* ZAG-*šú* AN-*ú ṭe-rat ša iq-bu-u-ni ina šá-me-e i-ḫal-lu-up-ma la in-na-mir* DIR$_{di\text{-}ir}$ *ḫa-la-pu* | *ša qar-ni*
>
> "If the moon, at its appearance, its right horn pierces the sky—there will be stable prices in the land; there will be a revolt in the Westland."—"its right horn pierces the sky" which it said—it will slip into the sky and will not be seen; (the sign) DIR (pronounced) *dir* (means) "to slip" (said) of horns.

The scholar cites an omen from the astrological series Enūma-Anu-Enlil about the right edge ("horn") of the moon crescent at its first appearance, as it "pierces" the sky.[27] Since the meaning of this phrase is not obvious, the scholar proceeds to explain it. He re-cites part of the omen using the phrase *ša iqbûni* (here with the Assyrian subjunctive), and explains that piercing in this case means slipping in, referring to the vanishing of the right edge of the crescent. In support of his interpretation, he notes that the verb "to slip" is known to be equated with the sign DIR, which can stand for the slipping in of (celestial) "horns," and which is homonymous with the first part of the form *ṭerât* used in the omen.

The form *ša iqbûni* also appears once in a commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil from Nineveh, probably originally from Assur, written for the "lesson" (*malsûtu*) of a certain Kiṣir-[..], perhaps Kiṣir-Nabû or Kiṣir-Aššur, and including, like other Assur commentaries, some colloquial (including Assyrian) forms that probably reflect the way in which the text was read in the lesson.[28] The text deals with Tablet 20 of Enūma-Anu-Enlil, beginning with a citation of a passage dealing with eclipses in Nisannu.[29] After the passage is cited, the text contains re-citations from the passage with commentary. One of these re-citations is followed by the Assyrian form *ša iqbûni* before the commentary is given:[30]

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27 Cf. George 1991, 155.

28 See Frahm 2011, 144–145, 269–270. See Chapter 1, para. 2 and 2.3.

29 See Rochberg-Halton 1988, 225–226, text j (K.3145):1–11. For this text, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180–181:1–11, and 183–184:6–16.

30 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:15–16. The re-citation is from the passage cited earlier in the text; see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 225:7–8. Note that in the original citation of the passage, the text has the expected numeral 2/3 and not 1/3 (cf. Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:7 [where 1/3 indeed occurs as a variant], and especially 183:13), contra Rochberg-Halton 1988, 225:8

> DINGIR *šá ina* KAxMI-*šú* EN.NUN UD.ZAL.LE SAR-*ma* 2/3.TA.ÀM [EN.NU]N *uḫ-ḫu-rat-ma* / *ina* ŠÀ.ḪUL ŠÚ-*ú šá iq-bu-u-ni* EN.NUN UD.ZAL.L[E . . .] . . .
>
> "The god who in his eclipse began the last watch, and two-thirds of the [watch] was delayed, and who set while in 'anger' (= eclipse)" which it said—the last watch = [. . .] . . .

1.2.2 Re-citation in Late Babylonian Commentaries

In Late Babylonian commentaries too, part of a previously cited passage may be re-cited using the phrase *ša iqbû*. A Late Babylonian commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons reads:[31]

> GE UMUN-*ḫi mu-up-pir* ÍD.MEŠ *m*[*u-k*]*in na-piš-tú* KUR : ÍD.ME KI ^{múl}GÍR.TAB *tam-tì* / *na-piš-tú ma-a-tú šá* DU_{11}-*u* : ^{d}*be-let-da-ád-me*
>
> "I am Asarluḫi, who digs[32] canals, who establishes the life of the land"—"canals"—the region of Scorpio = the Sea; "life of the land" which it said—(the goddess) Bēlet-dadmē ("Lady of the people").[33]

Here the entire line from the base text is cited, followed by a commentary that refers only to its first part. Then the second part of the line is re-cited, using the term *ša iqbû*, followed by a commentary.

Another re-citation using the phrase *ša iqbû* is found in a Late Babylonian Ālu commentary that interprets an omen about the observation of mating birds:[34]

(collated from digital photograph). The re-citation, though, omits the verb *iz-ku-ú*, which appears in the original citation (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 225:8; cf. 183:13), but is indeed omitted in another recension of this text (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:7–8).

31 BM 47529+:11–12; see Geller 2014, 61:5; Jiménez 2015a (CCP 2.2.1.B). Besides this and the following examples, re-citations with the phrase *ša iqbû* in Late Babylonian commentaries are found, e.g., in Civil 1974, 331:2–6, 332:46–51 (see 1.4.6 below); George 1991, 148:15b; Beaulieu 1995, 1–2.

32 See Geller 2014, 61 n. 23.

33 For this goddess, see Geller 2014, 62 n. 27, with reference to Šurpu II:172 (cf. Borger 2000, 32).

34 SBTU 3, 99:43–46.

> DIŠ *rit-ku-bu* MUŠEN IGI / {DIŠ} *mi-qit ṭè-mi* GAR-*šú* : *ra-ka-ba* SAG.ÚS : *mi-qit ṭè-mi* / *šá* E-*u* : *ṭè-em*$_4$-*šú i-šá-an-*<*niš* : *šá*>-*niš*:[35] ŠÈD.$^{\text{še-ed-še-ed}}$ŠÈD[36] / *rit-ku-ub* MUŠEN : $^{\text{še-en}}$ŠÈD : *še-e-tu*$_4$: MIN : *e-te-e-qu*
>
> "If he sees the mating ('mounting') of birds—desperation will come upon him"—To mount—regular; "desperation" which it said—he will go mad. <Alternatively>: ŠÈD.ŠÈD (pronounced) *šedšed* = "mounting" of birds; ŠÈD (pronounced) *šen* = to leave,[37] ditto (= ŠÈD pronounced *šen*) = to pass.

After citing the entire omen the commentary interprets the mating ("mounting") in the protasis literally (using the term *kayyānu*).[38] Next, the commentary deals with the apodosis, re-citing the word for "desperation" followed by the term *ša iqbû*, and explaining the word as referring to madness. Then a second interpretation regarding the "mounting" of the protasis is introduced.[39]

1.2.3 Re-citation before an Alternative Interpretation in Late Babylonian Commentaries

In more complex hermeneutical procedures, the phrase *ša iqbû* may occur with a re-citation of a text followed by an alternative interpretation. For example, a Late Babylonian commentary from Uruk deals with a passage from the twentieth tablet of Enūma-Anu-Enlil:[40]

> DINGIR *šá ina* KAxMI-*šú* EN.NUN U$_4$.ZAL.LA SAR-*ma* 1/3.TA.ÀM EN.NUN *uḫ-ḫi-ru* : *ina* EN.NUN U$_4$.ZAL.LA AN.GI$_6$ GAR-*ma* KAxMI-*šú-ma* : 1/3.TA.ÀM : *šal-šú* ⌜*šá*?⌝ *bir-ṣu* LUL-*tu*$_4$ EN.NUN / *šá-niš* 1/3.TA.ÀM *šá iq-bu-ú* : *šal-šú šá* ⌜NIGIN-*rat*⌝ *a-na* ZÁLAG TAG$_4$ ⌜*at*?⌝-*ri-šú-ma*
>
> "The god who during his eclipse the morning watch (= the last watch of the night) began, and delayed one-third of the watch"—during the

35 My emendation assumes haplography in the text.

36 For this lexical equation, see MSL 17, 218:240 (Antagal F:240), and Borger 1991, 72–73 (= [36]–[37]):27, 78 (= [42]). For ŠÈD (and KÍD), see Borger 2003, 66–67 ad no. 107, and 268 ad no. 106.

37 See Chapter 4, 1.4.4 with n. 82.

38 See Chapter 4, 1.4.4.

39 For this part of the commentary, see Chapter 4, 1.4.4.

40 SBTU 4, 162:10–14. For the base text, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:7. Another example of a re-citation before a second interpretation is found in Freedman 2006b, 151:12–13.

> morning watch the eclipse occurred and it obscured it; "one-third"—a third of a false luminosity (within) the watch; secondly: "one-third" which it said—a third of the disc, its remainder is left to the light.

The commentary cites a passage that deals with the occurrence of an eclipse during the last watch of the night, resulting in a delay of one-third of the watch. The commentary first explains the general details of the situation, namely that the eclipse occurred during the last morning watch, and therefore the determination of the watch was not clear. Then the commentary re-cites the number "one-third" and explains it, first as a third of the luminosity, and second, as a third of the disc of the moon. This second interpretation is introduced by the term *šanîš*, "alternatively," followed by an additional re-citation of the number "one-third" from the full text cited earlier, this time with *ša iqbû*.

1.2.4 Re-citation of a Text Introduced in Support of an Interpretation of the Base Text in Late Babylonian Commentaries

A lemma from a text that was cited in support of an interpretation of the base text may be re-cited and commented on, using the regular term *ša iqbû*, "which it said." For example, a passage from a commentary on a medical text that deals with symptoms of paralysis reads:[41]

> DIŠ NA IGI.MEŠ-*šú* GÚ-*su u* NUNDUN-*su šim-mat* TUK.MEŠ-*a ù ki-ma* IZI *i-ḫa-am-ma-ṭa-šu* NA BI MAŠKIM *mu-sa-a-ti* DIB-*su*
>
> If a man, his face, his neck, and his lip(s) have enduring paralysis and they burn him like fire—that man, the demon of the lavatory has seized him.

A Late Babylonian commentary identifies the demon of the lavatory mentioned in the base text, and shows how this demon caused the sickness:[42]

> MAŠKIM *mu-sa-a-ti* : ^{d}šu-lak / *a-na* É *mu-sa-a-tú* NU KU_4-*ub* : ^{d}šu-lak SÌG-*su* / ^{d}šu-lak *šá* E-*ú* : ŠU : *qa-tu*$_4$: la : *la-a* : KÙ : *el-lu* / *ana* É *mu-sa-a-tú* KU_4-*ub* $ŠU^{II}$-*šú* NU KÙ *ana* UGU *qa-bi*

41 SBTU 1, 46:6–8; see Frahm 2011, 397–398.

42 SBTU 1, 47:2–5; see Frahm 2011, 398–399. Another case of re-citation of part of a text that was cited in support of a commentary on the base text is found in George 1991, 146–147:6b; perhaps also SBTU 1, 50:24–26.

> "Demon of the lavatory"—Šulak, (as in): "He should not enter the lavatory (on a certain day)—Šulak will seize him." "Šulak" which it said (in the quotation)—ŠU = hand, *lā* = not, KÙ = clean; He enters the lavatory, (so) his hands are not clean—(it) is said about (him) (= about the sick person).

The commentary first explains that the demon of the lavatory in the text is the demon called Šulak. In support, a passage known from several hemerologies is cited,[43] stating that on certain days one should not enter the lavatory, since the demon Šulak will seize him. The commentary then reintroduces the name Šulak from the cited text, using the term *ša iqbû*, and analyzes its elements as pertaining to unclean hands, implying that the sickness demonically caused by Šulak is medically caused by the patient's failure to wash his hands after using the lavatory.

1.3 *Variants of* ša iqbû

There are two very rare variations on the term *ša iqbû*. The first retains the verb *qabû* but replaces the relative pronoun *ša* with *mala*, while the second retains the relative pronoun but changes the verb to *nadû*.[44] I can detect no distinction between the use of these terms and of the regular term *ša iqbû*. One possibility is that the form using *mala* refers to a lemma that occurs a few times in the base text.[45]

1.3.1 *mala iqbû*, "as much as it said"

The phrase *mala iqbû*, "as much as it said," appears a few times. A Late Babylonian medical commentary deals with medical materials:[46]

> NUMUN Ú.ḪI.A *ma-la iq-bu-ú* : GAZI.SAR : *ina* ŠÀ *šá* Ú […] / *šá-niš* NUMUN Ú.ḪI.A *ma-la ina* KA.KÉŠ *ana mur-ṣi-šú* […]

---

43 See references in *CAD* M/II, 234–235; Livingstone 2013, 170:76, 185–186:10–11, 187:27.

44 For a possible variant *ša iškunu* (or: *šaknu*), see n. 222 below. For a possible variant *ša išṭuru*, see 3.1.6 with n. 156 below. Another possible variant is *ša iqabbû*, appearing twice in CLBT, pl. 1 (Linssen 2004, 318, col. B:20, 22), but the context of these attestations is unclear.

45 See 1.3.1 below and Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:9–14 cited in 3.2.1 below.

46 SBTU 1, 51:13–14. Note that otherwise in this commentary the term *ša iqbû* is used (lines 6, 10, 12). Here *mala* may be used for phrases in the base text that appear more than once (suggestion: E. Jiménez). For other occurrences of *mala iqbû*, see 3.2.1 below.

> "Seed of plants" as much (= as many times?) as it said—the *kasû* plant,[47] because a plant [. . .]; secondly, "seed of plants"—as many as[48] in the "knot" for his illness [. . .].

1.3.2 *ša iddû*, "which it set down (in writing?)"

This term, which seems to be a variant of *ša iqbû*, perhaps related to the use of *nadû* in the sense "to put down in writing,"[49] was first recognized by A. Cavigneaux[50] and is known from only one attestation in a Late Babylonian Izbu commentary:[51]

> LUGAL IM.GI *šá ṭè-e-me* UR.GI$_7$ *šak-nu* LUGAL *šá ṭè-en-šú šá-nu-u ina* KUR GÁL-*ši*:LUGAL IM.[G]I *šá id-du-u*:LUGAL:*šar-ri*:IM:*ra-ma-n*[*i*] / *u* GI *šá-nu-u*
>
> "There will be a usurper king who has the mind of a dog, a king whose mind is changed (= mad), in the land"—"usurper king" which it set down: LUGAL = king, IM = self, and GI = change . . .

The commentary explains that the writing for "usurper king," LUGAL IM.GI, can refer to the madness ("change of mind") attributed to this king because the elements LUGAL, IM, and GI can be rendered as "king," "self," and "change," i.e., a "king who changes himself," a reference to going mad. The commentary does this by re-citing LUGAL IM.GI from the base text using the term *ša iddû*, which appears to be functionally equivalent to *ša iqbû* in similar contexts.

1.4 *Expansion of the Term* ša iqbû

The term *ša iqbû* can be expanded to include a reference to the context of the cited text, thereby beginning the hermeneutical process of commenting on

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47 Cf. *CAD* K, 248a: "(a native spice plant, specifically, its pungent seeds)."

48 This second occurrence of *mala* is probably not an exegetical term, although it may refer back to the same phrase as the one referred to by *mala iqbû*.

49 See *CAD* N/I, 87.

50 Cavigneaux 1996, 149.

51 SBTU 4, 143:38–49; see Frahm 2011, 75; De Zorzi 2014, 248. Frahm (2011, 75 and 254–255, n. 1207) hesitantly suspects Leichty 1973, 79:6, to be another occurrence of *ša iddû*, but this seems not to be the case: all the elements in the phrase *šá a-na ru-qu* ŠUB-*ú* correspond to the elements níĝ-til-ri-iš that they interpret: *šá* = níĝ, *ana* = iš, *rūqu* (*rêqu*) = TIL (bad), *nadû* = ri.

the text.[52] Nevertheless, it is not considered part of the commentary proper, and like all uses of *ša iqbû*, it both refers back to the cited text and anticipates the commentary on it.

1.4.1 Expansion Relating to the Nature of the Base Text (1): *ša ana dumqi (u lumni)/aḫīti iqbû*, "which it said favorably (and unfavorably)/unfavorably"

Expansions of the subordinate clause *ša iqbû* that use the preposition *ana* are common especially in extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries, mostly from the Neo-Assyrian period.[53] They sum up the character of the cited omen before the following interpretation.[54] The omen may be characterized as favorable (*dumqu*),[55] unfavorable (*aḫītu*),[56] or both favorable and unfavorable (*dumqu u lumnu*),[57] i.e., ambivalent (often when two apodoses occur). By calling attention to the character of the omen, the expanded *ša iqbû* phrase implies that there is something unexpected about it, and therefore an explanation is required. Therefore, in such cases, the commentaries focus on the favorable or unfavorable character of the omen.

For example, the following favorable omen refers to the "presence" (*manzāzu*; a groove on the *lobus sinister*):[58]

> BE SAG NA *zu-qúr-ma ina* UGU-*šú* GIŠ.TUKUL GAR-*in ina* GIŠ.TUKUL DINGIR.MEŠ *re-ṣu-ut* EN UDU.NÍTA DU.MEŠ

52 In addition to the occurrences below, the expanded phrase *ša itti libbi . . . iqbû* may occur in Reynolds 1999, 370:8, but the significance of the phrase in that context is not entirely clear; it seems to refer to the inclusion (*itti*) of items (= constellations) in a textual enumeration (of stars). See Chapter 3 3.2.

53 This should be compared to the use of the verb *qabû* with the preposition *ana* in non-subordinate clauses; see 3.1 below.

54 The interpretation can actually take the form of an additional citation of a different omen, demonstrating the situation in the omen under discussion.

55 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:69, 72, 74, 80; no. 20:61; no. 25:15 (see below), 42; no. 42:10; no. 54:r.7′ = no. 55:3; K.11531:r.3 (unpublished).

56 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:71; no. 42:9; no. 83:17′; also with *kī iqbû*, see n. 215 below (cf. also 4.1.4 below).

57 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:16; no. 20:139; and the example below; also in combination with *ittašunu iddinu*, see the examples in 1.4.4 and n. 80 below.

58 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 4:27.

> If the top of the "presence" is protuberant and a "weapon" is placed on its top—in weapon (= battle) the gods will come to the aid of the owner of the ram (for extispicy).

A Late Babylonian extispicy *mukallimtu* commentary cites the protasis of this omen and explains:[59]

> AŠ SAG NA *zuq-qúr-ma ina* UGU-*šú* GIŠ.TUKUL GAR-*i*[*n*] / *šá a-na* SIG_5 DU_{11}.GA-*ú* : *šá ṣu-lul-ti* / *šá* SAG NA *zuq-qú-ra-tú ina* UGU-*šú* GIŠ.TUKUL GAR-*nu-ma* / *lu-ú* KI.TA *lú-ú* 150 IGI.MEŠ . . .
>
> "If the top of the 'presence' is protuberant and a 'weapon' is placed on its top"(; that) which it said favorably—that the covering of the top of the "presence" is protuberant (and) "weapons" are placed in its top and they face either downwards or to the left . . .

The protasis of the omen is first cited as a favorable omen (*ša ana dumqi iqbû*), which is evident from the apodosis in the original omen, which is not cited in the commentary. Then the commentary explains why the omen is favorable even though a "weapon," usually considered an unfavorable sign, is located on top of the "presence," considered a favorable zone: this is because the "weapon" faces left or downwards, i.e., in directions which are unfavorable, and as usual in omen literature, the combination of two "negatives" (the unfavorable "weapon" and these unfavorable directions) results in a "positive": a favorable omen.

One of the rare occurrences of this construction outside the corpus of extispicy commentaries is found in a Late Babylonian commentary on the first tablet of the diagnostic series Sagig. An omen in the base text deals with the observation of a black pig by the healer on his way to the patient:[60]

> DIŠ ŠAḪ GI_6 IGI (GIG BI) (BA).UG_7 : PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ (var. *uš-ta-pa-šaq-ma*) TI(-*uṭ*)
>
> If he sees a black pig—that patient will die; (alternatively): he will reach a crisis and then recover.

59 TCL 6, 6, ii:11′–14′; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:15.

60 George 1991, 142–143:6.

A Late Babylonian commentary discusses the favorable (recovery after crisis) and unfavorable (death) apodoses of the omen:[61]

> DIŠ ŠAḪ G[I_6 IGI] *šá ana dum-qí u lum-nu* E-*ú* : $^{šu\text{-}ul}$ŠAḪ : *le-e-bu* : BA.UG_7 : *šá-niš* [PAP.ḪAL.MEŠ-*m*]*a* TIN-*uṭ* / *ki-i* GIG *dan-na-at i-mu-ru* TIN-*uṭ ki-i dan-na-at la* [IGI] UG_7 . . .
>
> "If [he sees a bla]ck pig" which it said favorably and unfavorably—(the reading) *šul* (of the sign) ŠAḪ = fever; "he will die; alternatively, [he will reach a crisis] and then recover"—if the patient has experienced distress—he will recover, if he has not [experienced] distress—he will die . . .

The phrase *ša ana dumqi u lumni* occurs after a citation of the protasis and calls attention to the favorable and unfavorable outcomes that may result. First the commentary sets the case in a medical context by explaining that the sign for "pig" can also refer to "fever"; next, citing the two apodoses, it explains how the two contradictory predictions, death and recovery, are correlated with the distress that the patient experienced while suffering from this fever.

1.4.2 Expansion Relating to the Nature of the Base Text (2): *ša iqbû aḫītu/damqu*, "which it said: unfavorable/favorable"

In *mukallimtu* extispicy commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period, a construction similar to the previous one occurs, but with the designation "(un)favorable" standing after the subordinate phrase *ša iqbû*.[62] As with other phrases where *ša iqbû* is followed by another element,[63] this is not, strictly speaking, a single term. This construction occurs usually as part of a complex hermeneutical process wherein several omens are cited in order to demonstrate a phenomenon, and the commentary finds it necessary to state whether this phenomenon is favorable or unfavorable for the purpose of harmonization. Therefore the commentary sums up the character of the omens cited in connection with the first omen as "favorable" or "unfavorable." Alternatively, but still within the framework of a complex hermeneutical process, the

---

61 George 1991, 146–147:6a.

62 For *ša iqbû aḫītu*, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:27; no. 42:77; no. 45, E:13′, 34; no. 83, B ii:7′, 34, 37. For *kī iqbû*, see the example below, and n. 215 below. For *ša iqbû damqu*, see n. 215. See also Chapter 2, 2.2.1.

63 See 1.4.5–7 below.

expanded phrase may be used similarly to the previous construction with *ana*,[64] i.e., when the nature of the apodosis is unclear or unexpected from its literal formulation and requires interpretation. Unlike the construction with *ana*, however, where the reference to the character of the omen is enclosed within the phrase *ša . . . iqbû* and cannot be regarded as part of the interpretation itself, when *aḫītu* or *damqu* occurs after the term *ša iqbû* it can be seen as the first step in the commentary. Nevertheless, hermeneutically these two constructions play very similar roles. The following example demonstrates the use of *ša iqbû aḫītu*/*damqu* before the interpretation of the apodosis:[65]

> BE MAN-*ú ina* SAG NA GU *šá-kin* [U]R.SAG *dan-nu ina* BAL(-*e*) LUGAL E_{11}-*a* / [*š*]*á* DU_{11}-*ú* BAR-tu_4 / LUGAL IM.GI GIM MIN-*u*
>
> Second "If":[66] "A filament is placed on the top of the 'presence'—a mighty warrior will rise during the king's reign"(; that) which it said: unfavorable—"a usurper king" is like it said.

The commentary cites an omen concerning filaments at the top of the "presence" (*manzāzu*; a groove on the *lobus sinister*), following another omen on the same subject. This condition sounds unfavorable, but the outcome—"a mighty warrior will rise during the king's reign"—seems favorable, assuming that the warrior acts on behalf of the king. Therefore, after citing the omen using the term *ša iqbû*, the commentary adds that this apodosis is actually unfavorable: a "usurper king" was intended in the omen, and thus the omen in fact indicates that "a mighty warrior will arise during the reign of a usurper king," which is unfavorable if the warrior is to be regarded as a representative of the king.[67]

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64 See 1.4.1 above.

65 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:137.

66 See Chapter 1, 4.5.1.1.

67 For the term *kī iqbû*, see para. 4 below. Another option would be to understand the interpretation as referring to the identity of the "mighty warrior" as a usurper king, which would also make good sense as an unfavorable omen. This is possible, but the use of the term *kī iqbû* often refers to a slight change in the wording of a text that will change its literal meaning (see para. 4 below), and therefore I prefer seeing "usurper king" as replacing or contextualizing the neutral "king."

1.4.3 Expansion Relating to the Nature of the Base Text (3): *dumqu u lumnu ša* (. . .) *iqbû*, "favorable and unfavorable which it said (. . .)"

Whereas the phrase *ša ana dumqi* (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti iqbû*[68] refers to the character of the cited text within the relative clause *ša . . . iqbû*, and the phrase *ša iqbû aḫītu/damqu*[69] notes the character of the cited text after the relative clause *ša iqbû*, the phrase *dumqu u lumnu ša* (. . .) *iqbû* indicates the character of the cited text prior to the relative clause *ša iqbû*. This phrase occurs twice in commentaries on Enūma-Anu-Enlil.

The first occurrence of the phrase is in a Late Babylonian astrological commentary, in a complex construction that exceptionally expands the term *ša iqbû* by including within it a reference to the context of the omen that uses the preposition *ina*:[70]

> *taš-nin-tu*$_4$ *ina* KUR GÁL-*ši ina* KI ÁB.AB.SÍN *u* GENNA BE.MEŠ / *taš-nin-tu*$_4$ SIG$_5$ *u lum-nu šá ina* AN.MI *iq-bu-ú* KI$^{!}$ ITI-*šú ana*$^{!}$ KI$^{!}$ *šá ana* KUR *mi-ḫir-ti ḫe-pí*
>
> "There will be conflict in the land"—in the region of Virgo and Saturn . . . ; "conflict"—favorable and unfavorable which it said in (reference to)$^{?}$ the eclipse—the region of its month (corresponds to)$^{?}$ the region that is *counterpart* to the land broken.

I am not sure why "conflict" is designated as both "favorable and unfavorable," since "conflict" would seem to be an exclusively unfavorable prediction. Perhaps the original omen contained an alternative favorable apodosis, or perhaps the word *tašnintu*, usually in the meaning "conflict," was understood here neutrally as "competition," not necessarily in a negative sense.[71]

A second occurrence of this phrase occurs in an astrological commentary as well, but in a broken context:[72]

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68 See 1.4.1.

69 See 1.4.2.

70 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:29–30 (collated from photographs). The reading and interpretation of the last part of this entry follows suggestions by E. Jiménez (personal communication).

71 See *CAD* T, 294, for positive uses of *tašnintu*, although only in early Neo-Assyrian inscriptions and not in omens.

72 SBTU 1, 90:r.3′–4′.

[. . . *dumqu*] *u* ḪUL *šá* E-*u ki* UN[?] [. . .]

[. . .—favorable] and unfavorable which it said—. . .[73]

1.4.4 Expansion Relating to Phenomena in the Protasis of the Base Text: *ša* (*ana . . .*) *iqbû*(*ma*) *ittašunu iddinu*, "which it said (. . .) and gave their sign"

This construction is attested only in *mukallimtu* commentaries on extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian period.[74] The second part of the clause is usually written GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu*,[75] but there is probably one attestation in which the first element is written syllabically.[76] Its relation to the first part of the clause is evinced by the particle *-ma* that usually precedes it. The particle connects the two parts of the clause and indicates that the phonetic complement *-nu* in SUM-*nu* represents the subjunctive marker *-u* connecting the verb to *ša*; it probably also indicates that the verb is a third-person singular form like *qabû*. U. Koch-Westenholz cautiously suggested that perhaps the element NU should be understood as the negation *lā* and that the suffix would simply be *-šu*.[77] However, the phrase GIZKIM-*šú-nu la ú-ka*[*l-la-mu*(?)][78] would seem to rule out this possibility. The relationship between *ittašunu iddinu* and the subordinate construction *ša iqbû* indicates that the additional phrase refers to the ominous elements within the cited entry, specifically within its protasis. Outside

73 It is not clear what this entry is commenting on. The previous entry on the tablet (SBTU 1, 90:r.3′) probably referred to one of the omens in Largement 1957, 248:65–68 (see Chapter 4, 1.4.2), but the entry just three lines below (SBTU 1, 90:r.7′) may refer to a passage much further along in the base text (see Largement 1957, 254:109–111; cf. H. Hunger, SBTU 1, p. 94). Since the commentary seems to deal with a textual contradiction ("favorable and unfavorable"), it is likely that *kī* refers to a condition in which the text is either favorable or unfavorable, followed by an opposite condition introduced by *kī* as well; see Chapter II, 2.5.2.

74 For attestations, see the example below and n. 80, as well as Koch 2005, no. 25:9, 11; no. 70:16, 17, 21; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:115 (see para. 6). For the juxtaposition of *ša iqbûma ittašunu iddinu* with *kī iqbû*, see below with n. 216. Note the interesting construction in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:17: *šá iq-bu-u*$_{(2)}$ GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu la tu-še-ep-pi-šu*, where the last phrase is also still part of the subordinate clause; see Chapter 4, 2.1.4.

75 The first part of this clause, *ittašunu*, is found without the term *ša iqbû* in the phrase *ittašunu ana pānika*; see Chapter 1, 3.2.5. GIZKIM-*šú-nu* is also attested in the phrase *ittašunu ana lamādi kašdat* (Koch 2005, no. 37:30; no. 55:1; no. 115:7). Note also BM 38681:5′: GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*at* (CCP 7.2.u32).

76 Koch 2005, no. 93:9: *šá* (one manuscript omits *šá*) DU$_{11}$.GA-*ma it-ta-a-šú-nu* [SUM-*nu*(?)]

77 Cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, 33 n. 89.

78 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:24; see n. 80 below.

our context, the noun *ittu* refers to actual, physical elements in ominous situations that may be described in the protases of omen entries.[79] In our phrase it seems to refer to the fact that a supposedly unclear omen is in fact unambiguous, i.e., the protasis of the omen does contain the signs that indicate when it is valid, but they can only be identified with the help of a commentary or through comparison with other omens, which indeed follow this phrase.[80] The plural suffix *-šunu* is difficult to comprehend and may be a frozen form that originally referred to various elements within the protasis, or perhaps even in the apodosis.[81]

A *mukallimtu* commentary on extispicy collects omens regarding two "paths," among them an omen with two apodoses, one favorable and one unfavorable:[82]

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79 For the meaning of *ittu*, see Maul 1994, 6–7. Koch-Westenholz (2000, 33 n. 89) prefers to translate *ittu* here not as "sign" but as "characteristic." Outside the context of omen literature, the phrase *ittu nadānu* is rare; see CAD N/I, 52b (in an astronomical context).

80 It seems that when the signs are not detailed in the omen, the phrase *ša . . . iqbûma ittašunu lā uka*[*llamu*(?)], "which it said but did not exh[ibit(?)] their sign," occurs; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:24. The restoration of the verb *kullumu* proposed in Koch-Westenholz 2000, 155, seems correct, but one cannot entirely exclude other options, including perhaps a form of the verb *kullu*; cf. SAA 10, 33:r.1–2: *a-na it-ti-ma nu-ka-al*, "we take it as a sign" (see Appendix 1, 3.1). This phrase seems to state the opposite of the phrase *ša iqbûma ittašunu iddinu*, namely, that the omen is indeed lacking a detailed description. As noted, the phrase occurs only once, in a *mukallimtu* commentary on extispicy that cites an omen in the context of double "presences" and deals with it (Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:24; the omen itself appears in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 16:9; cf. no. 90:3): [BE N]A 2 *a-na* GIŠ.TUKUL IZI.GAR *ina* SIZKUR NUN DINGIR DINGIR GÙ-*si ina* UD(-*me*) SUD ⌜NUN⌝ ⌜d⌝[ALAD] / [*ù* d]⌜LAMMA!⌝ TUK-*ši šá ana* SIG_5 *u* ḪUL DU_{11}. GA-*ma* GIZKIM-*šú-nu la ú-ka*[*l-la-mu*(?)], " '[If] there are two '[pres]ences'—for weapon (= battle): an indecisive omen (*nipḫu*); in the offering of the ruler (one) god will invoke (another) god; in future days—the ruler will acquire a [protective god and go]ddess'(; that) which it said favorably and unfavorably but did not ex[hibit(?)] their sign . . ." Since the details ("signs") of the phenomenon of two "presences" are not given in this omen, the commentary cites other, more detailed omens dealing with this phenomenon, all of which contain either favorable or unfavorable predictions (in accordance with the first omen "which it said favorably and unfavorably"; see 1.4.1 above), depending on the details regarding the direction or placement of these two "presences." See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:25–32.

81 There is only one attestation of GIZKIM with the suffix *-šú* rather than *-šú-nu*, but this may be a mistake (although it probably appears in two manuscripts); see Koch 2005, no. 28:51.

82 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:67–68. For the base text, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 27:34.

> BE GÍR 2-*ma na-aḫ-su tam-ṭa-a-tu*$_4$ *ki-bi-is* GÌR LÚ KI DINGIR *šu-šur* / *šá ana* SIG$_5$ *u*$_{(3)}$ ḪUL (one manuscript omits *u*$_{(3)}$ HUL) *iq-bu-ú*(-*ma*) GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu* BE (var. *šum*)-*ma ina* 15 GAR.MEŠ SIG$_5$ (var. *da-mi-iq*) / BE GÍR 15 *u* 150 GAR *ni-ip-ḫu* (var. IZI.GAR) *an-ni-tu*$_{(2/4)}$ GIŠ. ḪUR-*šú*
>
> "If there are two 'paths' and they are recessed—deprivation; man's ways will be in harmony with god"(; that) which it said favorably and unfavorably and gave their physical sign—If they (= the two "paths") are present on the right—it is favorable. If the path is present (both) on the right and (on) the left—it is an indecisive omen (*nipḫu*). This is its formation: . . .

The commentary cites the omen using the phrase *ša iqbû*, here constructed with *ana* in reference to the omen's favorable and unfavorable conditions,[83] as well as the phrase (*ša* . . .) *ittašunu iddinu*, indicating that the physical signs of the omen are contained within it, and proceeds to demonstrate this by expounding the details of these signs. First of all it specifies the state that would lead to the favorable omen, namely when the two "paths" are on the right side. What remains to be determined is what happens when the "paths" are both on the left and on the right, and the commentary notes that such a situation is a *nipḫu*, i.e., an indecisive omen that reverses the prediction. The commentary proceeds by introducing eight omens (seven omens plus an extra one that explains the seventh) that refer to at least one of the two conditions mentioned in the omen from the base text, namely a double "path" and a recession.[84] The apodoses to these omens are usually either explicitly indecisive (*nipḫu*), neutral, or unfavorable; i.e., they correspond to the combination of both apodoses in the base text or only to the first unfavorable one.

1.4.5 Expansion Relating to the Meaning, Reason, or Context of the Base Text (1): *ša iqbû ina libbi* (*ša*), "which it said, since . . ."

The combination of *ina libbi* (*ša*), "because, since," with the phrase *ša iqbû*, attested only in Late Babylonian commentaries, is not, strictly speaking, a single term. The phrase *ina libbi ša* is a discrete term that occurs independently of the term *ša iqbû*.[85] Note especially that occasionally the phrase is

83 See 1.4.1 above.

84 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42:69–74.

85 See Chapter 3, para. 8. See also *ina*(?) . . . *iqtabi ina libbi ša*, 2.6 below.

distributed across two lines or occurs with a *Glossenkeil* between its two parts.[86] Nevertheless, since the collocation of the two parts occurs quite often, it is treated here as one term.[87] The term *ša iqbû ina libbi* (*ša*) can introduce a reference to the specific context in which the cited text should be understood, or it may refer to the reasoning behind the cited text, which is then expounded in the commentary, as is the case when the term *ina libbi ša* is used independently.[88] For example, a commentary on a medical text seeks to ascertain why the hair of various animals is used for the treatment of the Hand-of-Ištar disease:[89]

> *ana* ŠU ^{d}+INANNA / ZI$^{!}$-*ḫi u* BÚR-*ra*[90] SÍG UR.MAḪ UR.BAR.RA KA_5.A *u* $UR.GI_7$ / [*šá*] E-*ú ina* ŠÀ *šá lab*$^{la\text{-}ab}$-*ba-ti* : ^{d}15 / [*š*]*u-pu-tu*$_4$ *lab-bat* ^{d}í-gì-gì *mu-kan-ni-šat* DINGIR *šab-su-tu*$_4$
>
> "In order to remove and undo the Hand-of-Ištar—the hair of a lion, a wolf, a fox, and a dog (are to be used)" which it said, since "lioness" = Ištar, (as in): "Exalted one, lioness of the Igigi-gods, who subdues the angry gods."

The commentary first cites the base text, which relates to the treatment of the Hand-of-Ištar using the hair of a lion and other animals. This is done by using the term *ša iqbû* and then adding the phrase *ina libbi ša* in order to contex-

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86 Separation into two lines: SBTU 1, 49:27–28: Civil 1974, 336:6–7. Separation by a *Glossenkeil*: SBTU 1, 47:14–15 (cf. Frahm 2011, 398).

87 So already Frahm 2011, 109 n. 566.

88 See Chapter 3, para. 8.

89 SBTU 1, 50:32–35 (cf. Frahm 2011, 98). For other instances of *ša iqbû ina libbi ša*, see n. 86 above, as well as SBTU 3, 99:26, and George 1991, 148:18b. In two Late Babylonian commentaries, the phrase appears as *ša iqbû ina libbi* (omitting *ša*; cf. Hackl 2007, 22): SBTU 1, 50:31, and Civil 1974, 336:6–8. The latter comments on BAM 78:1–3 (or a similar text): DIŠ NA *ṭú-lim-šú* KÚ-*šú aš-rat* ^{d}AMAR.UTU KIN.KIN-*ma* TI-*uṭ šá* E-*u* / *ina* ŠÀ ŠÀ.GIG : ^{d}SAG.ME.GAR : ŠÀ.GIG *ṭu-li-mu*, " 'If a man, his spleen hurts him—he shall seek the place of Marduk and he will recover' which it said, since ŠÀ.GIG = Jupiter, ŠÀ.GIG = spleen." The commentary notes that the connection between protasis and apodosis is lexically evident because (= *ina libbi*) ŠÀ.GIG can stand both for the spleen and for Jupiter, known to be associated with Marduk; cf. Brown 2000, 64–66. Cf. Reiner 1993; Reiner 1995, 60; and *CAD* Ṭ, 124b, where this section is treated, but the misinterpretation of the term led to an erroneous understanding and translation of the passage.

90 In his edition in SBTU 1, 50, H. Hunger reads: AŠ.ŠE.ḪI *u* BÚR.RA, but according to the copy the first two signs are probably actually ZI, missing the two verticals; cf. BAM 471, iii:15′: *ana* ŠU GIDIM.MA ZI-*ḫi ù* BÚR-*ri*. See Frahm 2011, 98 n. 496.

tualize the citation by noting the association of Ištar with a lioness in a Šuila prayer,[91] thereby harmonizing both parts of the cited base text.

1.4.6 Expansion Relating to the Meaning, Reason, or Context of the Base Text (2): *ša iqbû aššu*, "which it said, because/concerning . . ."

The phrase *ša iqbû* is followed twice by the preposition *aššu*, "because, concerning." Formally speaking it is possible that *aššu*, a term used frequently in commentaries,[92] begins an interpretation after the citation, but the context and the lack of a *Glossenkeil* after *ša iqbû* make it likely that the combination of *ša iqbû* and *aššu* constitutes a single term.

A tablet containing incantations and rituals for a woman in labor prescribes a list of materials to be used for rubbing her body, among them "dirt from the fallen top of a wall (SAḪAR *sa-mit* BÀD ŠUB-*t*[*i*])."[93] The commentary addresses this ingredient:[94]

> SAḪAR BÀD ŠUB-*tú* / BÀD (= KÉŠxBAD) : *du-ú-ru* : KÉŠ : *ri-ik-si* : BAD : *pe-tu-u* / ŠUB-*tú šá* E-*u áš-šú* SI.A : *qa-a-pa šá* É.GAR$_8$: SI : *e-še-ri šá a-lak* / A : *ṣa-ḫar*
>
> "Dirt from a fallen wall (BÀD)"—BÀD (= a combination of the signs KÉŠ and BAD) = "wall"; KÉŠ = tie, BAD = open; "fallen" which it said, because SI.A = collapse of a wall, SI = come forward (said) of motion, A = baby.

The commentary first quotes the phrase "dirt from a fallen (top of a) wall" and explains how the significance of this ingredient is evident in the sign for "wall," BÀD, which contains elements that could also be interpreted as "opening a tie," i.e., dilating the narrowed birth canal that is causing the hardship in labor. Then the commentary re-cites the word "fallen," using the term *ša iqbû*, but adds *aššu*, "because," introducing another lexical entry that is close in meaning to the "fallen wall," namely SI.A, which can mean "collapse of a wall," showing that the components of this entry can mean the release of the baby from the birth canal.

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91 See Zgoll 2003, 43:31.

92 See Chapter 3, para. 6.

93 KAR 196 (= BAM 248), iii:7.

94 Civil 1974, 332:46–51. Another instance of *ša iqbû aššu* is found in Freedman 2006b, 154:18–19.

1.4.7 Expansion Relating to the Context of the Base Text (3): *ša iqbû libbū*, "which it said, as in . . ."

The phrase *ša iqbû libbū*, "which it said, as in . . . ," combines the phrase *ša iqbû* with the regular term used for contextualization, *libbū*, "as in."[95] It occurs in one commentary, unfortunately in a broken context:[96]

> [. . .] *šá* E-*ú* / *lìb-bu-*ʳ*ú*ˀ [. . .] AN ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*šú*
>
> [. . .] which it said, as in "[. . .] . . . his brothers."

The commentary is too broken, but since the contextualization indicated by *libbū* is often (although not exclusively) in the form of a citation,[97] it is possible that what follows is a citation from a literary text.

2 (*libbū*) *ina . . . qabi*, "(as) it is said in . . ."/ *libbū . . . ša ina/itti . . . iqbû*, "as . . . which it said in/with . . .": Introduction of Another Text in Support of a Commentary on the Base Text

At times it is not the base text that is cited in the commentary, but rather another text that is introduced in support of the interpretation or contextualization of the commented text. In such cases, the verb *qabû* is often used as well, sometimes as a passive stative form in a non-subordinate clause, and sometimes as an active preterite in a subordinate clause.

2.1 ina ṣâti/lišāni/arê (šumšu) qabi, *"it(s entry) is said in the word-lists/vocabulary/calculation-text": Citation of a Lexical Equation in Support of an Interpretation in* mukallimtu *Commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian Period*

In astrological and extispicy *mukallimtu* commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period, lexical correspondences are cited in support of a commentary or as an aid to understanding the base text. The end of the citation is usually marked by one of the following phrases: *ina ṣâti šumšu qabi*, "its entry is said in the

95 See Chapter 3, para. 1. Although etymologically connected to the phrase *ša iqbû ina libbi* (*ša*) (1.4.5 above), the two phrases serve different functions.

96 SBTU 1, 50:3–4.

97 See Chapter 3, 1.4.

(bilingual) *ṣâtu* word-lists,"[98] or less often *ina ṣâti qabi*, "it is said in the (bilingual) *ṣâtu* word-lists,"[99] as well as *ina lišāni qabi*, "it is said in a (monolingual) vocabulary,"[100] and once also *ina arê qabi*, "it is said in a calculation-text."[101]

A *mukallimtu* commentary on extispicy quotes omens regarding a hole on the top of the "increment" (*ṣibtu*; *processus papillaris*). The second omen cited also contains a short commentary:[102]

> BE MAN-*ú ina bu-de-e* MÁŠ BÙR ŠUB-*di* ŠEŠ LÚ ÚŠ *šá* MIN *ina šá-šal-li* MÁŠ BÙR ŠUB-*di* GIM MIN BAR *bu-ú-du šá-šal-li ina ṣa-a-ti* MU.NI *qa-bi šá-šal-lu* UGU-*nu* UGU-*ḫu*
>
> Second "If":[103] "A hole lies in the shoulder of the 'increment'—the man's brother will die"(; that) which it said—"a hole lies in the back of the 'increment' " is like it said. BAR = shoulder (and) back—its entry is said in the *ṣâtu* word-lists; back = above = top.

After the omen is cited, using the term *ša iqbû*, it is explained by replacing "shoulder" with "back," using the term *kī iqbû*.[104] The commentary justifies this rewording by referring to word lists that equate the logogram BAR with both "shoulder" and "back." Then, in order to harmonize this entry with the previous

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98 Examples: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:25, 48 (and perhaps also B v:11′); Koch-Westenholz 1999, 158:82; Koch 2005, no. 33:r.41; Verderame 2002, 44:16′. Frahm (2011, 91 n. 455) refers to K.50:r.24: [*kī*] *pī ṣâti šumšu qabi* (for this tablet, cf. Frahm 2011, 160–161), but according to a digital photograph it is more likely, in my view, that this is not the case, and that the text should be read: [U]D*?* *ina ṣa-a-ti* MU-*šú qa-bi*. Note that *ṣâtu* is a general term for bilingual word lists and does not necessarily refer to a commentary; see Frahm 2011, 48–50, 89 with n. 443.

99 Examples: Koch-Westenholz 1999, 156:60, and see n. 107 below for Late Babylonian references. A variant that does not use the verb *qabû* is found in Reiner and Pingree 2005, 114, K.2876, ii:10′: *ina ṣa-a-ti da-gil* (see Frahm 2011, 154). Note the exegetical use of *dagālu*, discussed in Chapter 1, 4.4.1.1 and Chapter 2, 1.2.1.

100 Examples: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 87:6′; Koch 2005, no. 29:4; no. 33:r.31, 41; cf. also Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 86:29, no. 81:5 (see 4.1.1 below). For the difference between the usually bilingual *ṣâtu* lexical texts and monolingual *lišānu* lexical texts, see Frahm 2011, 89–90.

101 Koch-Westenholz 1999, 156:49: *ina a-re-e qa-bi*.

102 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:25.

103 See Chapter 1, 4.5.1.1.

104 See 4.1.2 below.

one, which deals with a hole above the "increment,"[105] "back" is also explained as meaning "above" and "top."

2.2 ina . . . qabi, *"it is said in . . .": Citation of a Text in Support of an Interpretation in Late Babylonian Commentaries*

The phrase *ina . . . qabi*, emerging from the earlier phrase *ina ṣâti qabi* and the like, is used in Late Babylonian commentaries after a citation, in reference to lexical correspondences as well as to other compositions.[106] Nevertheless, the traditional reference *ina ṣâti qabi* still appears also in Late Babylonian commentaries.[107] For example, a commentary on the lexical text Aa cites a bilingual line from the corpus of Emesal prayers (*kalûtu*):[108]

> DIŠ me-er-me-ri EN-crossed-by-EN . . . *šá-niš* me-er-me-ri : *me-ḫu-u* / me-er-me-ri zi-gu-ú i-bí-bi saḫar-ra bí-in-dul // *me-ḫu-u it-ba-am-ma e-per pa-ni-šú ik-tùm ina*ˡ LÚˡ.ŠÚ-*tú qa-bi*
>
> "(The reading) *mermeri* (of the sign) EN-crossed-by-EN"—. . .; secondly: *mermeri* = storm (*meḫû*): "A storm (Sumerian: me-er-me-ri // Akkadian: *meḫû*) rised, its face was covered with dust" is said in the *kalûtu*-corpus.

105 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:24.

106 A Babylonian commentary from Nineveh cites an unidentified passage from Lugale; see Reiner 1973, 101 (Rm. 2, 127):r.3 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 339): *ša ina* ŠÀ-*bi* lugal-e u_4 me-lám-bi nir-ĝá[l . . .]. It is quite possible that the verb *qabû* should be restored at the end, which would indicate a citation formula using the term *ša ina libbi . . . iqbû/qabû*. However, since this is the only case and it is based on a restoration, it is not discussed here. It is unlikely, in my opinion, that *ša ina libbi . . . iqbû* in KAR 94:22′ (see Frahm 2011, 385, 391–392) refers to a citation (although I cannot offer a satisfactory alternative explanation for this passage). It should be noted that a text can also be cited in support of a commentary without this or any other phrase introducing it; see Frahm 2011, 107. For the phrase *ina* (*libbi*) *šumi. . . qabi*(?), see Chapter 2, 1.2.2. Note also *ina libbi iqtabi* in BM 36595+BM 37055:6 (CCP 7.2.u103).

107 See SBTU 2, no. 38:10–11, 14; SBTU 1, 38:17, see Heeßel 2000, 234.

108 SBTU 2, no. 54:8–10. See Frahm 2011, 100–101, for this passage and the identification of the cited text. For other attestations of *ina . . . qabi* in Late Babylonian texts, see Finkel 2005, 69:4–6; Finkel 2006, 140:12–14 (cf. Gabbay 2009), 23–24; perhaps SBTU 1, 30:18; perhaps SBTU 1, 14 (cf. SBTU 1, 140:3′ = MSL 14, 267); perhaps SBTU 5, 264:r.14′.

2.3 libbū . . . ina . . . qabi, *"as in . . . ; it is said in . . ."*: *Contextualization in the Form of a Citation of a Text in Support of an Interpretation in Late Babylonian Commentaries* (*1*)

In Late Babylonian commentaries a citation is sometimes introduced with *libbū*, "as in, like, according to," followed by the regular phrase *ina . . . qabi*. Otherwise, when not combined with the verb *qabû*, the use of *libbū* indicates a contextualization of the cited base text, sometimes by introducing a citation.[109] When it occurs with *ina . . . qabi* or *ša ina . . . iqbû* (see below), the citation itself serves as the contextualization of the cited base text; often the relationship between the base text and the new citation is purely circumstantial or situational and not lexical. Thus a Late Babylonian Izbu commentary cites a passage from the wisdom composition Ludlul[110] in order to demonstrate the meaning of a phrase in the apodosis of an omen:[111]

> *ši-pir ṭuḫ-du* DU : *ši-pi-ir ṭu-uḫ-du il-lak* : *šal-ṭiš* / *lìb-bu-u šá-ad-di-ḫu* <*a*>*-ḫa-a-a ku-ta-at-tu-mu i-ta-ḫa-az* / *šá e-ti-li-iš at-tal-la-ku ḫa-la-liš al-ma-du ina lud-lul* EN <<É/LÍL>> *né-me-qa qa-bi*
>
> "He will walk in the 'action of abundance' (written logographically)"—He will walk in the "action of abundance" (written syllabically)[112]—triumphantly, as in: "My far-reaching arms were kept continually covered, holding each other; I, who walked in a princely fashion, learned to slink by unnoticed"; it is said in *Ludlul-bēl-nēmeqi*.

109 See Chapter 3, para. 1.

110 Ludlul I:76–77; see Lambert 1960, 34; George and Al-Rawi 1998:193, 200; Annus and Lenzi 2010, 17; Oshima 2014, 389; cf. Finkel 2006, 143.

111 Finkel 2006, 140:16–19 (see Frahm 2011, 102). The phrase *libbū . . . ina . . . qabi* appears also in Leichty 1970, 232, Comm. O:2–4. See also BM 55491+:6–7: *lìb-bu-ú . . .* [*. . . ina*? *. . .*] / *šá* GI.NU.TAG.GA-*u qa-bi*, "as in '. . .'; it is said [in the (?) . . .] of (the series) *Ginutaqqû*; see Jiménez 2016 (CCP 4.1.3.B).

112 This is the understanding of the text according to the commentary. The text itself is to be read: *ši-pir* GABA DU.DU, "He will constantly walk in the 'manner of the breast' "; see Finkel 2006, 143, and Frahm 2011, 102.

2.4 libbū . . . ša ina . . . iqbû, *"as in . . . , which it said in . . ."*: *Contextualization in the Form of a Citation of a Text in Support of an Interpretation in Late Babylonian Commentaries* (2)

Similar to the previous phrase, but more common, is the use of *libbū* before the citation, followed by a relative clause beginning with *ša*.[113] At least one syllabic writing indicates that unlike in the previous phrases, the verb here should be read as *iqbû* and not *qabû* (*qabi* + subjunctive).[114] Since there is no apparent functional difference between this term and *libbū . . . ina . . . qabi* alone, it is likely that the change to the preterite form was influenced by the subjunctive found in the term *ša iqbû* discussed above.[115] For example, a Late Babylonian Izbu commentary deals with a physical feature described as "crushed" and cites a proverb from the wisdom series Sidu in which the same verb occurs:[116]

> *qé-e-el* : *ḫe-pu-ú* : KUD.DU : *qé-e-el* : KUD.DU : *ḫe-pu-u lìb-bu-ú ṣu-uḫ-ḫu-tú kur-ban-né-e su-un-šú ma-li šá i-qer-ru-ba-am-ma i-ni ši-qa-an-ni a-qi-il-šú šá ina* ÉŠ.GÀR ^{m}si-dù E-*ú*
>
> "crushed"—broken; KUD.DU = crushed, KUD.DU = broken, as in: "The 'dripping-eyed', his lap is full of clods, (saying): 'whoever comes close (mocking me by saying) 'Eye, give me a drink!'—I will crush him!'," which it said in the series Sidu.

2.5 libbū . . . ša itti . . . iqbû, *"as in . . . , which it said with . . ."*: *Contextualization in the Form of a Citation of a Text in Support of an Interpretation in Late Babylonian Commentaries* (3)

A variant of the previous formula uses *itti* instead of *ina* before the name of the composition or corpus in which the citation occurs,[117] perhaps referring to citations of incantations appended (*itti*) to rituals (and vice versa), or to texts whose serialization, standardization, and canonization are less strict than the

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113 For attestations, see below and n. 114; George 1991, 146:3a, 6b (emended); BRM 4, 32:14–15 (Geller 2010, 169:14–15; interpretation contra Geller 2010, 172 and 199 n. 245); probably SBTU 1, 81:4′; SBTU 1, 140:3′ (MSL 14, 267:3′); SBTU 3, 99:5; probably SBTU 3, 100:20–21.

114 Finkel 2005, 280–281, no. 69:9–10. Another syllabic attestation may be SBTU 5, 263:6′: [*libbū*?] . . . *šá ina* ITI.SIG$_4$ *iq-bu-u*.

115 See para. 1 above.

116 Finkel 2006, 141:28–30; Gabbay 2009.

117 In the three known attestations (see examples below and n. 120), the preposition is written with the logogram KI. It is also possible, although less likely, that it was read *ašar*; see Frahm 2011, 97 n. 492. It is even less likely that the sign stands for *kī* here.

compositions referred to with *ina*. A Late Babylonian Ālu commentary uses this construction in reference to a combination of ritual instructions with an incantation:[118]

> *ir-ḫu-uḫ-ma* : *is-si-ma* : $GÙ_{gu\text{-}ú}$ NAM.TAG.GA R[A].RA : *ra-ḫa-ḫa* / GÙ NAM.TAG.GA RA.RA : *mu-uš-ta-aṣ-nu* : *šá ši-si-it-su ma-gal ra-ba-a-ta lìb-bu-u* ÉN *mu-uš-ta-aṣ-nu ṣi-i-ri šu-pu-u ra-šub-bu* : *šá* KI nam-búr-bi. ME *ana* ^{d}IM E-*ú*
>
> "shouted(?)" = cried; GÙ NAM.TAG.GA RA.RA = to shout(?), GÙ NAM. TAG.GA RA.RA = roaring, (which means) he whose cry is very loud, as in: "Incantation: Roaring, exalted, manifest, terrifying," which it said with the Namburbi rituals to (or: concerning) Adad.[119]

In this commentary the verb *raḫāḫu* from the base text is explained as shouting on the basis of a lexical equation of both *raḫāḫu* and *muštaṣnu* with GÙ NAM.TAG.GA RA.RA (lit.: "crying out a cry of sin"). The word *muštaṣnu* itself requires commentary and is explained as a loud cry, supported by a phrase from an incantation to (the roaring storm-god) Adad that is appended(?) to a Namburbi ritual.[120]

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118 SBTU 3, 99:39–42 (Frahm 2011, 97).

119 A reference to the god to whom the cited composition is dedicated is rare, and is probably emphasized here because the subject that is dealt with, namely roaring, is an important trait of Adad. Another example occurs in the same text, SBTU 3, 99:5: *šá ina* ^{lú}UŠ. KU-*ú-tu ana* ^{d}*pap*-[*sukkal*] E-*u*, "which it said in the *kalûtu*-corpus to Papsukkal," where the commentary deals with this god and the citation is from a composition dealing with Ninšubur/Papsukkal (even though he is probably not mentioned in this specific citation); cf. Gabbay 2006; Frahm 2011, 99–100.

120 The incantation is not known; cf. similar epithets cited in CAD M/II, 228a. A similar but more complex construction occurs in a Late Babylonian Sagig commentary; see George 1991, 146:3a: DIŠ KI.UD.BI IGI NA[M.ÉRIM DAB-*s*]*u* / *lu-u* ⌜*šá*⌝ *ana* SISKUR *mi-ḫir lu-u šá ana* ^{d}U.GUR *lu-u šá ana ḫi-s*[*u-ú-ti* (?) GAR-*nu*] / *lìb-bu-ú ina* KI.UD.BI-*šú* NIDBA. MEŠ DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ *uq*-[*tar-ra-bu* (?)] / *šá* KI ^{d}U.GUR *kaš-kaš* DINGIR *na-ram* ^{d}nin-men-na *šá ina* nam-é[rim-búr-ru-d]a E-*ú*, " 'If he sees a KI.UD.BI—a cu[rse has seized hi]m'—whether (the KI.UD.BI) [was set] for the sacrificial offering, whether for Nergal, or for . . . ; as in: 'In his KI.UD.BI the meals of the great gods are pre[sented]' which is with 'Nergal, most powerful of the gods, beloved of Ninmena', which it said in (the corpus) nam-é[rim-búr-ru-d]a." For the cited line, see Mayer 1976, 479:4. Finally, *itti* appears alone, without the verb *qabû*, in one commentary, SBTU 1, 40:6–7; see Chapter 1, 4.4.1.2.

Another occurrence of *libbū … ša itti … iqbû* occurs in a Late Babylonian commentary on the diagnostic series Sagig:[121]

> ÚŠ ^{giš}TUKUL : *mu-ut kak-ku šá-niš* ^{giš}TUKUL SÌG-*iṣ* : […] / *lìb-bu-ú* SAL ^{giš}TUKUL SÌG-*at šá* KI *bul-ṭu* D[U_{11}.GA-*ú*]
>
> "death by a weapon (written logographically)"—death by a weapon (written syllabically); secondly: struck by a weapon; […] as in "a woman struck by a weapon" which it sa[id] with the medical texts.

Leichty, in his edition of this passage, understood the sign KI as standing for the conjunction *kī* and read the sign DU_{11} as KA; he restored ˹*ka*˺-[*aš-da-at*], translating it as "(the woman) who when she recuperates."[122] It is very likely, however, that this interpretation is wrong and that the text simply introduces a citation from a medical text[123] that contains the phrase "struck by a weapon" in a medical context (perhaps referring to urinary bleeding or menstruation).[124]

2.6 ina(?) … iqtabi ina libbi ša, *"it said (this) in … , since"*

The phrase *ina*(?) … *iqtabi ina libbi ša*, combining a reference to a citation of a text (using the form *iqtabi* rather than *qabi*) with a rationale for this citation (*ina libbi ša*, usually following *ša iqbû*),[125] is probably found in an explanatory text from Uruk that compares the theology of Anu with that of Enlil by citing various passages from the *kalûtu* and *āšipūtu* corpora:[126]

> […]-an-ni : *iš-tu* É.MIN ^{d}KUR.GAL *ma-ri* ^{d}*a-nu-um* […*ina kalûti*? *i*]*q-ta-bi ina lìb-bi* <<:>> *šá* ^{d}KUR.GAL : ^{d}*en-líl* : ^{d}KUR.GAL : ^{d}mar-tu
>
> "Great-Mountain (^{d}KUR.GAL), son of Anu, while [going out(?)][127] from the … House";[128] it said (this) [in the *kalûtu*-corpus(?)], since ^{d}KUR.GAL = Enlil, ^{d}KUR.GAL = Martu (= Amurru).

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121 Leichty 1973, 83:18–19.

122 Leichty 1973, 85.

123 BAM 235:4: [S]AL ^{giš}TUKUL *maḫ-ṣa-at*.

124 See Leichty 1973, 85; cf. CAD M/I, 74b.

125 See 1.4.5 above.

126 SBTU 3, 63:7′–8′; (cf. also line 12′: *ina* ^{lú}GALA-*ú-tu i*[*q-ta-bi*]).

127 Cf. perhaps Cohen 1988, 279:141.

128 This is preceded by another citation from the Emesal corpus regarding Amurru (SBTU 3, 73:3′–6′); see Cohen 1988, 299:32–33, 301:82–83.

The commentary deals with a passage from the corpus of Emesal prayers that portrays the god Great-Mountain (^{d}KUR.GAL) as the son of Anu. Although kur-gal is a regular epithet of Enlil in the corpus of Emesal prayers, its appearance in the Akkadian translation with a divine determinative must refer here to Amurru, who is indeed regarded as the son of Anu in another passage from an Emesal prayer.[129] The commentary notes that this is what is said in the Emesal corpus (*kalûtu*), but adds that since (*ina libbi ša*) Kurgal is a name of both Enlil and Amurru, the passage could also be understood to deal with Enlil, the son of Anu.[130]

3 *ana . . . qabi*, "it is said concerning . . ." and Other Prepositional Constructions: Specification, Contextualization, or Reference to the Intention of the Base Text

The previous sections have described the use of the verb *qabû* to mark a citation of a text, whether in the phrase *ša iqbû*[131] or in the phrase *ina . . . qabi* (and similar).[132] In these constructions, the verb *qabû* is an element of discourse referring simply to the wording of the text[133] and is not, strictly speaking, part of the commentary itself. In other constructions, however, the verb *qabû* can serve a hermeneutical function, usually of contextualization, appearing usually in the stative (*qabi*) but also in active forms. For example, it can be used in a commentary in conjunction with various prepositions (almost all of which can also be used alone in commentaries) to specify or contextualize the base text.[134] As with all the other phrases containing the verb *qabû* catalogued here,

129 See Cohen 1988, 434:f+118: ur-saĝ gal ^{d}mar-tu dumu an-na.

130 See Frahm 2002, 90 n. 76.

131 See para. 1 above.

132 See para. 2 above.

133 But see the expansion of the term *ša iqbû* with *ana* discussed in 1.4.1 above.

134 See Chapter 3. In addition to the references below, the phrase *ina libbi . . . iqbi*, "it is said on account of . . . ," occurs once in a Late Babylonian commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil, SBTU 4, 161:7: ^{áb}LÚ.ḪUN.GÁ : *ina* ŠÀ LUGAL a-ga-dè^{ki} *iq-bi*. In my view, however, this should probably not be considered an independent exegetical term; rather, it seems to be a different formulation of a phrase from the base text: *ana/ina* ŠÀ a-ga-dè^{ki} (*ù* LUGAL a-ga-dè^{ki}) EŠ.BAR SUM-*in* (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:5, 183:10, 185:4). Note also SAA 10, 90:r.8′–11′, cited in para. 7 below. Another unique instance occurs in a commentary from Assur on Marduk's Address to the Demons, where the verb *qabû* seems to occur after a clause beginning with *ša*, with the same referential meaning as in the other cases where the reference is indicated by a preposition; see *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A.163:5–6; Lambert 1954–56, 313,

the base text is the subject of the verb; thus these hermeneutical phrases refer back to the base text and not to what follows (as some scholars erroneously claimed). Unlike the *qabû* constructions discussed above,[135] which are stereotyped phrases with very little variation, there is much variation among the *qabû* constructions that occur within the commentaries proper.

3.1 ana . . . qabi, *"it is said concerning . . ." and Similar Constructions*

The phrase *ana . . . qabi* occurs both in the Neo-Assyrian period and in Late Babylonian commentaries. Like other forms of *qabû* constructed with the preposition *ana*, it should be compared to the phrase *ša ana . . . iqbû*, which also contains a reference to the nature and context of the cited text.[136]

3.1.1 *ana . . . qabi* in Sources from the Neo-Assyrian Period

The phrase *ana . . . qabi* occurs in an Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentary from Nineveh, and in three letters and reports to the Assyrian king.[137] Thus, in a letter to the Assyrian king, the scholar Balasî replies to the king's concern about a stroke of lightning. The scholar assures the king that this lightning has had no affect on the king and cites a relevant omen, explaining that it does not refer to the king but to the owner of the field that was damaged by lightning:[138]

> *šum-ma* LUGAL *be-lí i-qab-bi ma-a a-ke-e qa-bi* A.ŠÀ ŠÀ-*bi* URU *lu-u qa-an-ni* ^{d}IM *ir-ḫi-iṣ lu ṭi-bi-iḫ ma-ga-ar-ri iš-ku-un lu-u i-šá-ti mì-im-ma ú-qa-al-li a-me-lu šu-u* 3 MU.AN.NA.MEŠ *ina ku-ú-ri u ni-is-sa-te it-ta-na-al-la-ak* / *a-na šá* A.ŠÀ *i-ru-šu-u-ni* / *qa-bi*
>
> If the king, my lord, says, thus: "How is it said?" (answer:) "(If) Adad devastates a field inside or outside a city, or if he sets a '. . . of chariot', or if fire

B:7; cf. Lambert 1959/60, 115; Geller 2014, 65:12: KI.MIN (= *ana-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi) *a-pir a-ge-e šá me-lam-*ʳ*mu*ˀ*-šú ra-šub-ba-tú za-*ʳ*n*ˀ*-na* / *šá ina* É *me-sír* LÚ.MAŠ.MAŠ TÚG.ÁB.SAG SA_5 GAR-*nu iq-t*[*a-bi*], " 'Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi) wearing a crown whose radiance is laden with awe'—that in the House-of-confinement the *āšipu* has a red . . .-garment, it sa[id]." See also *ina libbi iqtabi* in BM 36595+BM 37055:6 (CCP 7.2.u103). For *ina libbi šumi . . . qabi*, see Chapter 2, 1.2.2.

135 See para. 1–2 above.

136 See 1.4.1 above. For *ana* used in commentaries without the verb *qabû*, see Chapter 3, para. 2.

137 Besides the example below, the phrase *ana . . . qabi* occurs in SAA 8, 52:5–6, 114:2–3, and ACh. Supp. 2, 64, K.2281, ii:3.

138 SAA 10, 42:20–r.10.

burns anything—that man will walk about in depression and misery for three years"—it is said concerning the one who cultivated his field.

3.1.2 *ana . . . qabi* in Late Babylonian Commentaries

The phrase *ana . . . qabi* is rarely found in Late Babylonian commentaries. An Ālu commentary, known from two tablets, interprets a phrase from an apodosis of an omen:[139]

ek-let nam-rat : *a-na muš-ke-ni qa-bi*

"dark will become bright"—it is said concerning a commoner.

The commentary treats an omen from Šumma-Ālu 22, concerning a man seeing a snake and fearing it.[140] The omen contains two apodoses, the first favorable and the second unfavorable. The favorable omen predicts that "dark will become bright,"[141] and the commentary notes that this apodosis regards a commoner (*muškēnu*);[142] the second apodosis was probably understood to refer to someone else, and therefore did not have to be reconciled with the first.

3.1.3 *ana . . . iqabbi* in Sources from the Neo-Assyrian Period

The pairing of an active form of *qabû* in the present tense with *ana* occurs in sources dated to the Neo-Assyrian period.[143] For example, the first line of the anti-witchcraft series Maqlû is interpreted in a commentary from Assur:[144]

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139 Freedman 2006b, 151:17 (Freedman 2006a, 12–13, ad lines 34–35, 36) // SBTU 5, 259:4′. Another occurrence of *ana . . . qabi* in a Late Babylonian commentary is MSL 14, 495:13.

140 For the omen, see Freedman 2006a, 25:35. Note that line 34 has the same apodosis, but since it seems to be the only apodosis in that omen no commentary is needed.

141 Such an apodosis occurs also in other omens; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 62:62, 83.

142 This understanding makes better sense than E. von Weiher's MUŠ *ke-ni* in his edition of SBTU 5, 259, since the specification of predictions according to social rank occurs elsewhere in omen literature.

143 The passive phrase *ana . . . iqqabbi*, using the N stem of *qabû*, occurs once, in a *mukallimtu* commentary on extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian period, Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:19: BE *šal-šú* MU.NI *ana* LÚ NA.ME *ul iq-qab-bi*. However, the exact intention of this phrase here is not entirely clear (note also the previous entry in the commentary).

144 KAR 94:1′–3′ // Ass. 13955:r.4′–6′; see Frahm 2011, 384, 386, 388. The phrase *ana . . . iqabbi* occurs also in Lambert 1959/60, 313, B:12 (Geller 2014, 65:13), SAA 10, 72:18–21, and a few times in an Enūma-Anu-Enlil commentary from Nineveh; see Reiner and Pingree 1981, 42–44, III:22a (r.11), 25[?] (r.18), 26 (r.19), 29b (r.24), 29a (r.26b–27), 36 (r.35).

[*al*]-˹*si-ku-nu-ši*˺ ˹DINGIR.MEŠ˺ ˹*mu-ši-tú*˺ ˹:˺ DINGIR.MEŠ *mu-ši-tú* ˹MUL?˺ DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ *šá-niš ana* ^{mul}MUL ^{mul}GU$_4$.AN.NA ^{mul}SIPA.ZI.AN.NA *i-qab-bi šal-šiš ana* MUL.MEŠ *ka-a-a-ma-nu-ti i-qab-bi*

"I invoke you, gods of the night!"—"gods of the night" = *the stars of* the great gods; secondly: it says (it) regarding the Pleiades, Taurus, and Orion; thirdly: it says (it) regarding the regular stars.

3.1.4 *ana . . . iqtabi* in a Late Babylonian Commentary

The active form of *qabû* in the perfect is paired with *ana* in a Late Babylonian commentary, preserved on two tablets, dealing with a line from an incantation for a woman giving birth:[145]

šá ŠÀ $^{(na4)}$*iš-qil-la-tu*$_4$ (var. *-lat*) *li-kal-lim nu-ú-rum* / *ana* MUNUS.PEŠ$_4$ *iq-ta-bi* : NA$_4$.PEŠ$_4$: *ṣi-il-la-tu*$_4$ (var. *ṣil-lat* : *šá-niš um-mi šal-šiš* MUNUS.PEŠ$_4$) : NA$_4$: *a-ṣu-u šá ze-rum* / A : *ma-ra* : ŠÀ : ŠÀ-*bi*

"May he show the light to the one within the shell"—it said (it) in reference to the pregnant woman; NA$_4$.PEŠ$_4$ (= ŠÀxA) = shell (var. adds: secondly: mother, thirdly: pregnant woman): NA$_4$ = coming out, (said) of seed, A = son, ŠÀ = womb (lit.: heart).

The commentary notes that "shell" in the incantation refers to ("it said (it) in reference to") the pregnant woman, and thus "the one in the shell" refers to the baby in the womb of the pregnant woman. Then the commentary explains that the word "shell" (here with the form *ṣillatu*)[146] can be written with the signs NA$_4$.PEŠ$_4$, in which the element PEŠ$_4$ (= ŠÀxA) can also stand for "pregnant." These signs can also be analyzed as a son (A) coming out (NA$_4$) of the womb (ŠÀ).

3.1.5 *ana . . . iqṭibi* in a Neo-Assyrian Commentary

An Assyrian form of *ana . . . iqtabi* (although theoretically also of [unattested] *ana . . . iqbi*) occurs in a commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil Tablet 20 from Nineveh, probably originally from Assur, exhibiting colloquial and Assyrian forms:[147]

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145 Civil 1974, 332:38–40 // UET 6/3, 897:r.3′–5′ (cf. Frahm 2011, 241).

146 Cf. Stol 2000, 52.

147 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226, text j (K.3145):12–13 (perhaps also 20); collated from a digital photograph. For this tablet, see 1.2 above.

ina ŠÀ.ḪUL-*šú ú-la ina* AN.MI *ir-bi ma-a* AN.M[I . . .] ⌜*ú*ʔ-*kal*ʔ-*lam*ʔ⌝ *šu-u* / *a-na ši-kin* AN.MI *ša* EN.NUN AN.Ú[SANʔ] x x-*u*ʔ ⌜*iq*⌝-*ṭi-bi*

"in his anger (= eclipse)" or(?) "he sets in an eclipse"[148]—thus: it is(?) an eclipse [. . .] he reveals(?); it said (it) in reference to the occurrence of an eclipse that [*begins* (in)](?) the evening watch.

3.1.6 *ana dumqi* (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti qabi* (var.: *šaṭir*), "it is said/written favorably (and unfavorably)/unfavorably"

A special but rather rare case of the phrase *ana . . . qabi* is its combination with *aḫītu*, *dumqu*, or *dumqu u lumnu*, just as in the subordinate construction where the same nouns are included within the phrase *ša iqbû*.[149] Thus, in a commentary on a lung omen:[150]

BE *ina bi-rit* U.SAG MUR *u* MU SAG MUR UZU GIM ^{giš}GAG GUB-*iz* / *šá* BAR-tu_4 MIN GIM ^{giš}GAG *ana* UGU *ap-pi-šu ib*[151]*-bal-kit-ma* GUB-*az-ma ana a-ḫi-ti qa-bi* / ZI-*tú* GAR-*an-ma* ^{d}+*en-líl* KU-*mi* UN.MEŠ *u* GÁxSAL UN.MEŠ / *ina* ^{giš}GAG *il-lal-ma šá* DU_{11}-*ú ti-bu-ut* KÚR / *a-la-lu šá-qa-lu*

"If between the 'cap' of the lung and the 'honor' of the lung a piece of flesh is present like a peg"—*which it said unfavorable*—[152] like a peg it is

148 This interpretation of the signs is uncertain. Perhaps some confusion occurred regarding the sign ŠÚ, which could be understood as the verb *rabû*, or as a possessive suffix; note that if the citation were of a subjunctive form (i.e., ŠÚ-*ú*, cf. Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:8, 225:8, and syllabically *ir-bu-ú* in 183:13, and with the possessive suffix and followed by the syllabic writing in 183:9), then the simple negation *lā* would be expected in place of *ú-la*, "or," but this is more difficult in the context.

149 See 1.4.1 above.

150 CT 31, pls. 38–39, K.1999, i:15–17 (= DA 38); collated from a digital photograph. Another example is found in the same text, CT 31, 38, ii:11 (= DA 38): *ana* SIG_5-*ti qa-bi*. Note also in an extispicy commentary from the Neo-Assyrian period, DA 45, K.3837:14: *ana* BAR-*ti* DU_{11}-*ú* (for *ana aḫīti qabû*? or perhaps *iqbû*?); cf. perhaps also line 17 of the same text: *ana* [. . .]-*ma* GÌR^{II} BAR-*ti iq-bu-u*.

151 The sign is indeed IB, as correctly copied by A. Boissier in DA 38, and not UR as in CT 31, 39 (collated from a digital photograph).

152 The correct interpretation of the sequence of signs *šá* BAR-tu_4 MIN is uncertain. Here I treated it as the equivalent of *ša aḫīta iqbû*, a variant of the more regular phrase *ša ana aḫīti iqbû* (see 1.4.1 above), but with *aḫītu* in the accusative rather than in the genitive following *ana*. (This reading of *šá* BAR-tu_4 MIN recalls the phrase *ša iqbû aḫītu* [see 1.4.2 above], with the last two elements reversed, unless the text should be emended to *šá* <*ana*> BAR-tu_4 MIN, although BAR-*ti* would have been expected.) Another possibility is

> turned on its edge and is present—it is said unfavorably. "An attack will be set and Enlil will hang the . . . of the people and the . . . of the people on a peg"(;[153] that) which it said—the attack of an enemy; to hang = to weigh.

The commentary cites a lung omen concerning a formation of tissue in the shape of a peg. Such formations are usually considered favorable,[154] but here the apodosis (cited one line below) indicates that it is unfavorable. The commentary explains this reversal by positing that the peg is upside down, thereby making the entire omen unambiguously unfavorable. The commentary explicitly states this using the phrase *ana aḫīti qabi*, "it is said unfavorably." Then the commentary cites the apodosis with *ša iqbû* and explains the "attack" as the negative attack of the enemy, while adding a gloss for the word "hang."

A Late Babylonian commentary on Iqqur-īpuš contains this phrase twice, once with the verb *qabû* and once with *šaṭāru*:[155]

> UŠ : *šá-la-lu*: *a-na du-un-qu u lum-nu qa-ba-a* :. *ana pa-an u a*[*r*ʔ*-ki*ʔ *ša*ʔ] / *iš-ṭu-ru* KI.TA-*e-tu*$_4$ *šá* ^{múl}*zi-ba-ni-tu*$_4$: ^{múl}*zi-ba-n*[*i-tu*$_4$ MUL?] / *šá ki-na-a-tu*$_4$: *mu-šaq-qil-tu*$_4$: *zi-ba-ni-tu*$_4$ *it-ti a*[*l*ʔ-] / *a-na dum-qí šá-ṭi-ir*
>
> UŠ = to plunder; *They are* said favorably and unfavorably. "Before and af[ter?" which?] it wrote[156]—the bottom of Libra; Libr[a—the star(?)] of justice: scales; Libra with [. . .]—it is written favorably.

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that MIN does not stand here for the verb *qabû* but is rather the ditto sign, referring to the repetition of the anatomical situation in the cited protasis, i.e., it refers to the flesh on the lungs (cf. CAD N/I, 16b). In such a case *šá* BAR-*tu*$_4$ would perhaps simply refer to the omen as favorable or unfavorable, although the construction with *ša* is not regular and the genitive form BAR-*ti* would have been expected.

153 CAD S, 249, treats KU-*mi* as UMUŠ-*mi* (*ṭēmi*), and emends GÁxSAL to GÁxGAR, i.e., GALGA (*milku*), thus: "Enlil will hang the reason of the people and the spirit of the people on a peg." The reading of the first element as *ṭēmu* may be supported by Koch 2005, no. 15:10′–12′ and pl. viii: ˹^{d}+*en*˺-*líl ṭe-em ni-ši ú-ša-an-na* / [*ṭe-e*]*m ni-ši i-na si-ik-ka-ti* / ˹*i-lal*˺-*ma*, but the restoration of the noun *ṭēmu* here, although possible, is not certain either. Another possibility, also uncertain, is that perhaps *ku-mi* stands for *kummu*, "private room," and GÁxSAL stands for AMA$_5$ = *maštaku*, "living quarters," although the sense of this is also unclear to me.

154 See Multabiltu 1:7 and Koch 2005, no. 2:7.

155 CT 41, 39:5–8; see Labat 1933, 98. Collated from photograph; see Jiménez 2015d (CCP 3.8.2.A).

156 This may be a variant of the phrase *ša iqbû*, but the restoration is not certain.

The first part of the interpretation probably refers to the phrase DINGIR-*šú ana* (SAL).SIG$_5$(-*tì*) UŠ.MEŠ-*šú*, "His god will . . . him favorably."[157] The signs UŠ.MEŠ were understood as a form of *šalālu* (although such a reading is otherwise unknown, and this is probably not the original meaning of the base text). This would make the apodosis in the base text both favorable (*ana damiqti*) and unfavorable (*šalālu*), as the commentary explicitly notes. Next, the commentary seems to cite another passage from the base text, which I am unable to identify.[158] The commentary interprets this as an allusion to the constellation Libra and notes that it is "written favorably."

3.2 ana/(ina) muḫḫi . . . qabi, *"it is said about . . ."*

This phrase is known from a few Late Babylonian commentaries.[159] Like other terms involving the verb *qabû*, this phrase too was not usually regarded as a technical term and thus was not understood correctly. Rochberg-Halton thought that it referred forward to the following passage,[160] while Geller took the verb *qabû* as referring to the source of the commentary.[161] But these interpretations are incorrect, and the phrase serves as an exegetical term indicating the referent of the cited text(s).

A commentary passage on Enūma-Anu-Enlil deals with omens from the beginning of the sixteenth tablet of this series that are concerned with lunar eclipses occurring in hazy weather:[162]

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157 See Labat 1965a, 58, §1:9 (Tašrītu); cf. also line 7: ^{d}*iš$_8$-tár ina la-li-šú* UŠ.MEŠ-*šú* (Ulūlu) (perhaps cited in support of the interpretation earlier in our commentary, line 2); cf. Labat 1965a, 58–59 n. 8. The original meaning of UŠ.MEŠ here is probably "follow" (*redû*); see Jiménez 2015d (CCP 3.8.2.A, line 2, translation).

158 Cf. perhaps Labat 1965a, 58, §1:10: *ana* IGI-*šú* GIN-*ak*. That a new passage is cited is probably indicated by the three-*Winkelhaken Glossenkeil*; cf. Finkel 2005, 279–280.

159 Besides the examples presented below, the term *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* occurs also in TCL 6, 17:r.22; see Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161 n. 88. A variant form may be *ana muḫḫi . . . ša iqabbû*, occurring in CLBT pl. 1 (Linssen 2004, 318, vol. B:24), but the context is very unclear. For *ana muḫḫi* used in commentaries alone, see Chapter 3, para. 3.

160 See Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285: "with reference to . . . it says: . . ."

161 Geller 2014, 63: "they say, refers to . . ."

162 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:1–2 (collated). For the base texts, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 84–85. The phrase *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* occurs in the same commentary also in lines 15 and 23–24, as well as with the phrase *mala iqbû* (see 3.2.1 below). The phrase occurs also in Reynolds 1999, 370:8–9 and 11.

> [DIŠ] AN.MI GAR-*ma* UD ŠÚ-*up* DIŠ AN.MI GAR-*ma* ^{d}IM KA-*šú* ŠUB-*di* DIŠ AN.MI GAR-*ma* ŠÈG SUR-*nun* AN.MI GAR-*ma* NIM.GÍR *ib*-GÍR *ana* UGU AMA.MEŠ *qa-bi*
>
> "If an eclipse occurs and the day is dark," "If an eclipse occurs and Adad casts his voice (= it thunders)," "If an eclipse occurs and it rains," "If an eclipse occurs and lightning flashes"[163]—it is said about summer.[164]

The commentary begins with a citation of four protases from the beginning of Enūma-Anu-Enlil 16 and then adds a short commentary, noting that all the cited omens concern situations that occur in summer.

The term is also found in a Late Babylonian commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons:[165]

> [G]E UMUN-*ḫi šá šá-ru-<ru>-šú ú-na*[*m-ma-ru* KUR].KUR.MEŠ :...: *šá-niš ana* UGU *šá-ru-ru šá* ^{d}UTU DU_{11} (0)[166]
>
> "[I] am Asarluḫi whose rays ligh[t up the la]nds"—...; secondly: it is said concerning the rays of the Sun.

3.2.1 *ana muḫḫi... qabi* Paired with *ša/mala iqbû*: Reference to the Wording and Intention of the Base Text

The phrase *ana muḫḫi... qabi* may follow either *ša iqbû* or *mala iqbû*,[167] accordingly containing references both to the wording of the base text and to its intention or meaning as understood by the commentator.

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163 For the form *ib*-GÍR, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 287; GÍR here, when read in reverse phonetic order, yields the expected *riq*; for the phenomenon of retrophony, see Beaulieu 1995, 6–7 with n. 13.

164 Rochberg-Halton (1988, 284–285) reads DAGAL.MEŠ and leaves this phrase unexplained. For AMA.MEŠ = *ummātu*, "summer," see *CAD* U/W, 132. Similarly, in line 14, where Rochberg-Halton reads GALGA.MEŠ, the sign is AMA (GÁxAN) and not GÁxGAR (= GALGA) (collated from a photograph). See below.

165 BM 47529+:1–3; see Geller 2014, 61:9.

166 Geller (2014, 61:9) transliterates DU_{11}-⌜*ú*⌝, but a photograph of the tablet, although it does not show the entire edge, seems to indicate that there is nothing after DU_{11}. If the sign Ú is indeed on the edge, the form *qabû*, rather than *qabi*, would probably be in agreement with the plural form of the rays (*šarūrū*), i.e., "*they* (= the rays?) are said concerning the rays of the Sun."

167 See para. 1 above.

The phrase *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* probably occurs in a Babylonian report to the Assyrian king, where it is paired with the phrase *ša iqbû*:[168]

> DIŠ *ina* ITI.APIN ^{d}IM GÙ-*šú* SUB-*di-ma* UD-*mu* [ŠÚ-*up* AN ŠUR] ^{d}TIR. AN.NA GIL NIM.G[ÍR *ib-riq* IDIM SIG-*ú* ŠUB-*ut*] / . . . ^{lú}*kab-tu e-du-ú šá iq-bu-ú u*[*l* . . .] *a-na* UGU-*ḫi mam-ma šá-nam-ma* ⌜*qa*$^{?}$-*bi*$^{?}$⌝
>
> "If in the month of Araḫšamna Adad casts his voice (= it thunders), the day [is dark, it rains], a rainbow stretches, (and) lightn[ing flashes—a famous dignitary will fall]" . . . "a famous dignitary" which it said, is no[t said about the king (?)], it is *said* about someone else.

The scholar first cites the omen that corresponds to the actual weather that occurred in that month, using the term *ša iqbû*, but then concludes that it does not concern the king, using the term *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi*.[169]

The phrase *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* is paired twice with the phrase *mala iqbû*, a variant of *ša iqbû*,[170] in a Late Babylonian commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil:[171]

> DIŠ AN.MI GAR-*ma ina* IM.DIRI BABBAR GI_6 SA_5 SIG_7 *u* GÙN *u du-'-um* DU-*ma u* ZÁLAG-*ir* : *ma-la iq-bu-u ana* UGU ^{d}UDU.IDIM.MEŠ / IM.DIRI *qa-bi* IM.DIRI *e-ri-tu*$_4^{!}$: IM.DIRI : *sa-an-da* / IM.DIRI *al-lu-da-nu* IM.DIRI *šá ma-la* ^{d}UTU *ma-ṣu-u* : *šá-niš* IM.DIRI *šá kal-la u*$_4$*-mu u mu-ši* DU-*zu* : IM.DIRI *ma-la iq-bu-ú ana* UGU AMA$^{!}$.MEŠ *qa-bi*

168 SAA 8, 502:1–6; see collation on p. 381. Note also the elliptic occurrence *ana muḫḫi qabi* in SBTU 1, 47:5 (discussed in 1.2.4 above).

169 In the same manner, later in the report, after citing other astronomical omens that correspond to the celestial state at the time of writing, the scholar explicitly says (lines r.7–8): "All the signs that came are related to the land of Akkad and its nobles; any evil in them will not approach the king, my lord."

170 See 1.3.1 above.

171 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 284:9–14. The reading and interpretation of this passage follows a suggestion by E. Jiménez (private communication). It is significant that the first *mala iqbû* passage does not occur directly after the citation, as is usually the case with *ša iqbû* (see n. 10 above), but begins after a *Glossenkeil* (confirmed by collation from a photograph), and perhaps indicates that the pairing of the two terms can be understood as a single phrase referring to the formulation of the omen and its meaning. The combination of *mala iqbû* with *ana muḫḫi qabi* may occur also in lines r.2–3 of the same text; see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.2–3: [*ma-la*] *iq-bu-ú ana* UGU ^{d}UDU.IDIM.MEŠ *u* IM.DIRI *qa-bi*. Rochberg-Halton (1988, 285) transliterates IGI but the sign UGU is clear on a photograph of the tablet (IGI must be a typographical error, as U and I are adjacent on the keyboard).

> "If an eclipse occurs and it stands in a white, black, red, yellow, or variegated, or dark cloud, and clears"; (this omen) as much as it said, is said about planets (and) a cloud;[172] "naked(?) cloud"—red cloud, *alludānu* cloud (= a meteorological phenomenon), a cloud which amounts to the Sun. Alternatively: a cloud that stands all day and night; the "cloud," as much as it said, is said about summer.[173]

The commentary begins with a citation of a protasis about an eclipse that occurs within a cloud of a certain color. The commentary first notes that all (*mala*) the details that are mentioned in this protasis concern planets and clouds, perhaps indicating that the color seen in the eclipse is due to the aura of planets.[174] The commentary then goes on to explain the lemma "naked(?) cloud" that perhaps occurred in the base text. It notes that this can refer to other phenomena that are related to color, such as darkening and redness, or a cloud in the size(?) of the sun,[175] all perhaps referring to an eclipse occurring at the end of the night, toward dawn.[176] Then the commentary presents an alternative explanation, that the cloud is present the entire day and night, and probably adds that summer is the assumed context for all (*mala*) the details concerning the clouds in the base text.[177]

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172 See almost identically later in the same commentary, Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.2–3: [*ma-la*] *iq-bu-ú ana* UGU$^{!}$ ^{d}UDU.IDIM.MEŠ *u* IM.DIRI *qa-bi* (collated; cf. also n. 171 above).

173 For the reading AMA, see n. 164 above.

174 For the connection of planets to lunar eclipses, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 62–63.

175 See Chapter 2, 2.3.6.1 and n. 176 below.

176 Note that *sāmtu*, "redness," can refer to the redness of the sky at dawn; see *CAD* S, 124–125. The explanation that the cloud amounts to the sun may be along the same lines, limiting the eclipse to this period.

177 A variant of the phrase *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* is *ina muḫḫi . . . qabi*, known from a Late Babylonian commentary on Enūma-Anu-Enlil preserved on two tablets; see SBTU 4, 162:1–3 // *AfO* 14, pl. VI (Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227:1–2; for the base text, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 180:1): DIŠ *ina* ITI.BÁRA UD.14.KAM AN.MI GA[R-*m*]*a* DINGIR *ina* KAxMI-*šú* Á IM.U$_{18}$.LU AN.TA KAxMI-*ma* Á IM.SI.SÁ KI.TA *iz-ku* : *ina* (so SBTU 4, 162:2; note that E. von Weiher's copy of SBTU 4, 162 seems to have *ina* on top of an erased *ana*; *AfO* 14, pl. VI has *ana*) UGU *re-eš ši-kin qa-bi* : *taš-ri-tu*$_4$ / *e-la-nu* : KI.TA *šap-la-nu*, " 'If on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisannu an eclipse occurs and the god in his eclipse becomes dark in the south side above, and clears in the north side below'—it is said about the starting of the occurrence (of the eclipse); beginning = top; KI.TA = below." An interesting usage of *ina muḫḫi* without *qabû* that functions similarly to *ina muḫḫi . . . qabi* occurs in SAA 10, 33:6–10: *ša* LUGAL *be-li iš-pur-an-ni ma-a ú-la*$^{?}$ *ina bi-rit pu-ri-di a-me-li e-ti-iq ina* UGU *ša šap-la* ^{giš}GIGIR-*e tu-ṣu-u-ni ina* UGU-*ḫi šu-*^{r}*u*^{1}, "As to what the king, my lord, sent to me, thus: '*Does* (the omen) "(If a mongoose) passes between the legs of a

3.2.2 *ina muḫḫima qabi*, "it is . . . who is said about (it/him)"

Similar to *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi*, the phrase *ina muḫḫima qabi* is used twice in one text. The first two entries of the commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons from Assur read:[178]

> *ana-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi *šá pu-luḫ-tú ez-ze-tú ḫi-it-lu-pu šu-ʳtuʾ-ru nam-ri-ir* / MU EN *šá* TA ^{iti}BÁRA EN ^{iti}KIN Ú.MEŠ *ik-tan-šu-ma* / ^{d}*en-líl-ú-ta* DÙ-*šú* ^{d}*en-líl* ^{d}*mar-duk ina* ʳ*muḫ*ʾ-*ḫi-ma qa-b*[*i*]
>
> KI.MIN (= *ana-ku* ^{d}*asar-lú-ḫi*) ^{d}*en-líl* DINGIR.MEŠ *a-ši-ir kib-ra-te ina* ʳ*muḫ*ʾ-*ḫi-ma qa-b*[*i*]
>
> "I am Asarluḫi who is clad in fierce awe, superlative in splendor"—concerning the Lord (to) who(m) from the month of Nisannu until the month of Ulūlu *the plants bend down*, and he practices *ellilūtu* (= the divine rule); *Enlil—it is Marduk who is said about* (*him*).
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi), Enlil of the gods, who looks after the world regions"—it is he (= Marduk) who is said about (him) (= Enlil).

The commentary first cites a line from Marduk's Address to the Demons and interprets it, in a way unintelligible to me, as referring to Marduk exercising divine

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man" apply to (lit.: about) one who came out under the chariot?'—it does apply (lit.: it is about)"; see Appendix 1, 5.3.

178 Geller 2014, 64:1–2 (cf. Lambert 1959/60, 115, A:1′–3′; *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A.195:1′–3′). For *ina muḫḫi*, cf. also Appendix 1, 5.3, and Chapter 3, n. 2; cf. also the variant in n. 177 above. In addition to these occurrences the phrase *ina muḫḫi . . . qabi* occurs once more in the same commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons. However, in this case it is more likely that it is not an exegetical term: see *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A.163, "rev." 9′–11′; Lambert 1954–56, 315, F:6 (10–11); Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:6 (10–11); Geller 2014, 65:8: KI.MIN (= *ana-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi) *šá ina ṭè-me-šú ib-ba-nu-u a-na-ku* / ÍL ʳ*šá*ʾ ʳ*ina*ʾ ʳ^{iti}ŠUʾ UD.13.KAM *ina* IGI EN GAR-*nu* / *šá-niš ma-a ina* UGU *ú-lu-lu an-šár qa-bi* . . ., " 'Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi) who was created by his own decree, am I'—the *basket* that in the thirteenth day of the month Du'ūzu is placed in front of the Lord; secondly, thus: *within the* month Ulūlu he (= Marduk) *is called* (lit. "said") Anšar." The intention of the commentary is probably to connect Marduk to Anšar, a god indeed known to have created himself, as in the line that is commented on; see Frahm 1997, 282 (with further references, as well as a reference to our commentary; cf. also Lambert 1997, 78–80). The translation of the commentary offered here regards *ina muḫḫi* as a preposition referring to the month, while the implicit subject of *qabi* is Marduk, who is called by the name Anšar (for a similar use of *qabû* meaning "called," see Koch 2005, no. 109:134–139). However, it cannot be excluded that we are dealing here with an exegetical phrase, perhaps "it is said because (in) Ulūlu (Marduk is) Anšar."

rule, or in Akkadian terminology Enlil-ship (*ellilūtu*). The commentary notes that this mention of Enlil refers to Marduk, using the phrase *ina muḫḫima qabi*, "it is said about (him)." The second line that is cited from Marduk's Address to the Demons already contains the name Enlil, and the commentary notes that this refers to Marduk as well, using the same phrase.

3.3 aššu . . . qabi/iqtabi, *"it (is) said concerning . . ."*

The use of *aššu* with the verb *qabû* is so far attested mostly in sources from Assur. It should be compared to the more hermeneutically complex phrase *aššu . . . kī qabû*.[179]

3.3.1 *aššu . . . qabi*

The phrase *aššu . . . qabi* occurs two or three times. It appears in a commentary from Assur dealing with the second line of the first Maqlû incantation:[180]

> KI-*ku-nu al-si mu-ši-tú kal-la-tú ku-tùm-tú* / *kal-la-tú ku-tùm-tú* ^{d}*gu-la šá mám-ma la ú-ṣab-bu-ši* MU ^{d}UTU.ŠÚ.A *qa-bi*
>
> "With you I invoke the night, the veiled bride"—"the veiled bride" = Gula, whom no one can watch. It is said concerning sunset.

The commentary first explains that the "veiled bride" in the incantation is Gula, referring to her manifestation as a star (here probably the "Goat star"),[181] who should not be visible in the sky at the time the incantation is performed. Then the commentary explains that the line concerns sunset, i.e., that the invocation of the night and Gula occurs at sunset.[182]

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179 See 4.4 below. For *aššu* alone in commentaries, see Chapter 3, para. 6.

180 KAR 94:4′–6′ (// Ass. 13955 ii, r. 7′–9′; see Frahm 2011, 384–385, 388). The other occurrence of this phrase is in Reiner and Pingree 1981, 40, III:11c (29). Another possible occurrence is Verderame 2002, 39, ii:19–20.

181 See Frahm 2011, 388 n. 1842.

182 This may simply imply that the Gula star cannot be seen (i.e., it is "veiled") at sunset. However, this may refer to the entire line and not specifically to the Gula star. As suggested to me by Avigail Wagschal (personal communication), it is possible that the intention of the first part of the commentary is to note that the "Goat star" (= the Gula star) is not seen at all during the season in which Maqlû was performed, namely the month of Abu, and indeed according to MUL.APIN I, ii:44 and iii:19 (see Hunger and Pingree 1989, 42, 49), it is implied that the "Goat star" is not seen in the sky after the fifth of Abu. If so, the second part of the commentary does not refer to the Gula star but to the entire line,

3.3.2 *aššu . . . iqtabi*

Similar to *aššu . . . qabi*, but using the active voice with the perfect form, the term *aššu . . . iqtabi* is found four or five times in a commentary from Assur on Marduk's Address to the Demons. This term, like *aššu* alone, is used to contextualize the base text or to explain its reasoning.[183] Two of these occurrences are cited here.

An entry in the commentary deals with a line describing Marduk as illuminator of the lands:[184]

> KI.MIN (= *a-na-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi) *šá šá-ru-ru-šu ú-nam-ma-ru* KUR.KUR.MEŠ / MU *ṣu-lum šá lib-bi* ^{d}UTU ^{d}MES *iq-ta-bi*
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi) whose rays light the lands"—it said (it) concerning the black spot that is in the Sun (who is) Marduk.

An enigmatic line in the base text portrays Marduk as lighting up the lands with his aura or rays, a definition that would fit the sun god Šamaš much better. The commentary notes that this can still be said about Marduk since the black spots seen in the sun were considered to be Marduk. This interpretation reflects a wider first-millennium BCE conception that Marduk was present within the sun.[185] In addition, as noted by Frahm and Geller, the use of the sign MES to write Marduk's name here is probably also connected to the black spot (*ṣulmu*) in the sun, since *ṣulmu* is elsewhere equated with MES.[186]

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perhaps explaining that an invocation of the night implies that night has not actually begun yet; i.e., the cultic recitation of the line occurred at sunset.

183 See Chapter 3, para. 6.

184 Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:13; Geller 2014, 65:14. See Frahm 2011, 82–83. Besides this and the next example presented below, the other occurrences of this phrase in this text are Lambert 1954–56, 313, B:6 and 314, C:11 (Geller 2014, 65:11, 18). (In the last entry I understand *eṣṣurtu* as a form of *uṣurtu*, "drawing, design, plan," which also has the forms *uṣṣurtu* and *eṣurtu*; see *CAD* U/W, 290b. Differently Geller 2014, 67 with n. 34. Note that [MU] . . . *i*[*q-ta-bi*] may also occur further along in this last entry, but the context is broken.) Geller 2014, 67, renders *iqtabi* differently: "who is said," "which/what is called."

185 See SAA 3, 39:r.5: *šá* ŠÀ ^{d}U[TU ^{d}AM]AR.UTU, "the inside of the S[un is Ma]rduk"; cf. STC 2, pl. 67ff.:11–12. The passages are cited and discussed by Beaulieu 1999, 93–94. See Frahm 2011, 82–83. Frahm (2011, 82) also connects this commentary to *ṣalmu*, but in my opinion that is not the case here (the evidence presented by Frahm [2011, 82 with n. 411] is not related to the commentary, but concerns the association of Saturn, known also as the "black star," with the sun in Mesopotamian scholarly tradition).

186 See *CAD* Ṣ, 240–241. See Frahm 2011, 82–83; Geller 2014, 67 n. 32.

Another entry from this commentary treats a line describing Marduk as judging cases "in the river":[187]

> ⌜KI.MIN⌝ (= *ana-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi) *šá ina* ÍD *ub-ba-bu ke-e-nu u rag-gu* : MU *ḫur-sa-an iq-ta-bi*
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi) who purges the (case of the) honest and the wicked in the river"—it said (it) concerning the river ordeal.

3.3.3 *aššu annî/annûti . . .* (*minû*) *i*(*q*)*qabbi/iqabbû*, "concerning this/these . . . (what do/does) it/they say/is said?"

These phrases only appear in a passage from an extispicy explanatory text, and so they cannot be considered to belong to the technical hermeneutical lexicon. Nevertheless, since the phrases resemble other phrases discussed in this chapter, the passage is cited here:[188]

> *aš-šum* TA ^{giš}TUKUL BÙR *ù* DU_8 ŠEŠ ŠÈ ŠEŠ ḪA.LA *mi-*[*nu-ú*(?)] / *i-qab-bu-ú aš-šum an-nu-ti šu-*[*mu*? x] TA ^{giš}TUKUL BÙR *ù* DU_8 ŠEŠ ŠÈ ŠEŠ ḪA.LA *mi-*[*nu-ú*(?)] / *i-qab-bi aš-šum* TA ^{giš}TUKUL *ia-um* BE N[A? KAR(?)] *i-qab-bu-ú* TA ḪA.LA ZAG *ma-la i-ba-aš-*[*šu-ú*] / *ina* IGI TÙN EGIR TÙN *u* MUR ^{giš}TUKUL *pár-ku* GAR-*ma* GÙB [IGI] / TA ^{giš}TUKUL *ia-um* . . . BE NA KAR *i-qab-bi aš-šum a-nim* MU.MEŠ / *ša la ti-du-ú-šu mi-nu-ú iq-qab-bi* / 3 DU_8.MEŠ-*ru šá a-šar* 1 DU_8 DU_8 ŠUB / *a-nim-mi ša la ti-du-šu mi-nu* MU-*šu* / *aš-šum* TA ^{giš}TUKUL ZAG TA ḪA.LA *ma-la i-ba-aš-šu-ú* / *u* DU_8 GÙB KÚR GAZ-*ni* TA ^{giš}TUKUL GÙB *ù* DU_8 ZAG KÚR GAZ / *iq-qa-bu-ú aš-šum ba-ru-te* / *ša ina* GÁN.DIŠ-*i pe-tu-ú* TA *ba-ru-ti* / *i-na-ad-di-nu i-qab-bu-ú* . . .
>
> Wh[at](?) do they say concerning "from a 'weapon', a 'hole' and a 'split', one to the other, a 'division' "? Wh[at](?) does it say concerning these ent[ries(?) . . .]: "from a 'weapon', a 'hole' and a 'split', one to the other, a 'division' "?

187 *AfO* 19, pl. 26, A.163:14 (Lambert 1954–56, 314, C:7); Geller 2014, 65:17.

188 Koch 2005, no. 109–110:140–142 (cf. also line 143, not presented here, where similar phrases appear, but in a broken context); note that the broken spaces at the end of the lines are smaller than indicated in Koch's transliteration; collated from a digital photograph of K.70+. For *aššu annî*, see also Chapter 3, para. 7. For this passage, see also Chapter 1, 2.3.1. For another possible occurrence of the phrase, see Koch 2004, 108:r.25–26 (cf. Koch 2006, 124–125).

They say "If the 'pre[sence' is obliterated](?)" concerning "from a 'weapon' " (that is) mine.

"From a right division, as much as there is, in the 'front of the pouch', the 'back of the pouch' and the lungs, lies a crosswise 'weapon' and [points] left"—"from a 'weapon" (that is) mine . . ."

"If the 'presence' is obliterated"—what is said concerning this, the entries that you do not know?

Three 'splits' where there is one 'split', a 'split' lies—this is what you do not know; what is its entry?

Concerning "from a right 'weapon'," "from a division, as much as there is," and "a left 'split' "—"an enemy will defeat me," (and concerning) "from a left 'weapon'," and "a right 'split' "—"I will defeat the enemy" are said. It is said concerning the *bārûtu*-lore that was revealed in . . .

3.4 libbū . . . qabi(*?*), *"it is said as in . . ."*

The stative *qabi* may occur with *libbū* in one instance.[189] A Sagig commentary explains the difficult word *ṣubbutu*:[190]

ṣu-ub-bu-tu$_4$ *lìb-bu-ú šeb-ri* DU$_{11}$.GA

"*ṣubbutu*-condition"—it is said as in (the case of) a break (of a bone).

The interpretation of this passage is uncertain,[191] especially since the meaning of *ṣubbutu* is not clear.[192] It is assumed that DU$_{11}$.GA here stands for *qabi*, but it should be emphasized that *qabi* is usually written syllabically, so perhaps another form is intended here (*iqtabi*?).

189 The term *libbū* also appears alone (see Chapter 3, para. 1) and with the phrases *ša ina . . . iqbû* or *ina . . . qabi* (see 2.3–5 above).

190 Leichty 1973, 83:6; see Heeßel 2000, 247.

191 It is likely that the second word in this case is *šebru*, "break," and not *šipru*, "work," as previously understood by Leichty (1973, 83) and Heeßel (2000, 247).

192 The word is perhaps connected to *ṣubbutu*, "lame"(?), in OB Lu Fragment I:13 and OB Lu A:384, where it is equated with lú-dùg-dab/dub (MSL 12, 169, 201; see *CAD* Ṣ, 227b, and *CAD* T, 445–446). Note also the stative of *ṣabātu* D, used for medical conditions; see *CAD* Ṣ, 37a.

4 *kī iqbû/qabû*, "like it (is) said": Reference to the (Re-)interpretation of the Wording of the Base Text

Like the term *ša iqbû*, the term *kī iqbû/qabû* was not understood correctly in previous scholarly literature. It was assumed to refer to a citation and was not distinguished from the term *ša iqbû*. It is usually translated as "as he/it/(they) said,"[193] or "as it is said."[194] Like the term *ša iqbû*, it was taken as an allusion to some kind of oral lore that contained the adjacent explanation.[195]

A significant advance in the understanding of this term was recently made by E. Frahm, who noted that it always appears after the commentary and also mentioned that this commentary may have the form of a paraphrase:[196]

> [W]e are obviously not dealing with a quotation from a written text, but with an interpretation followed by a paraphrase of the line commented on. The explanation is introduced by *ša iqbû*, while *kīma iqbû* concludes it. This seems to be the function of the two expressions in general. . . . If we regard commentarial quotations and explanations as some kind of direct speech, attributed either to texts or to anonymous scholars, we can indeed claim that *ša iqbû* and *kīma iqbû* function as cuneiform quotation marks, with the former opening and the latter closing the quotation.

Before proceeding with my interpretation of this term, a few words on its reading are necessary. The reading of this term was not correctly understood in previous literature. Since in most cases it appears with the logogram GIM, it was assumed in those cases that the first element is *kīma*.[197] However, syllabic writings of the term, stemming from different periods, localities, and genres, indicate that the first element is to be read *kī*.[198] The reading of the second

193 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 32; Frahm 2011, 109; Lambert 2013, 137.

194 E.g., Livingstone 1986, 29; Lambert 1989a, 217; Lambert 2013, 137.

195 See Koch-Westenholz 2000, 32 (cited in para. 1 above); Frahm 2011, 109–110; Lambert 2013, 137. Note Scurlock 1992, 59 n. 50, who proposes to associate the phrase with popular lore (referring to SAA 3, 38:r.6–8; see 4.2 below): "The 'as it is said' may refer to popular interpretations of these cultic acts (as opposed to scribal lore on the subject)."

196 Frahm 2011, 109–110.

197 See *CAD* Q, 30; Koch-Westenholz 2000, 32; Frahm 2011, 108–109.

198 See, e.g., *ki-i iq-bu-ú* in a Babylonian tablet from Nineveh, K.6151:3 (CCP 7.2.u83). See especially the Enūma eliš commentary CT 13, 32+, where the syllabic forms *ki*(*-i*) DU_{11}.(GA) (*-ú*) (lines 5, r.5′, 6′) occur alongside GIM DU_{11}-*ú* (line r.13′) in the same text, and are also duplicated by GIM in VAT 10616(+)11616 (Lambert 2013, 570, pl. 36); see Lambert 2013, 60

element as *iqbû* is certain only in some extispicy commentaries where syllabic spellings indicate this reading,[199] while other texts have syllabic indications for the stative *qabû*.[200] In other instances the reading is not clear (although likely to be *qabû*). It is possible that the special hermeneutical context of this phrase, which stands between a reference to the wording of the base text (which normally uses the preterite)[201] and its meaning or contextualization (which often uses the stative)[202] is the cause of the variation in the form of *qabû* in this phrase.

As observed by Frahm (cited above), the term *kī iqbû* always appears after an interpretation. It refers to the commentator's perception of the intended meaning of the base text, which usually changes the original wording only slightly.[203] The term should be understood as a subordinate sentence consisting of the element *kī* with the meaning "like" and standing after the object of the verb *qabû* when used in the preterite, or after the subject of *qabû* when used in the stative.[204] Its meaning is thus "like it said . . ." or "as if it said . . .," referring to the wording of the text as it has been rephrased by the commentator, i.e., "as if (the base text) said x (= a paraphrase of the base text)."

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ad 36, and 134 ad 77, 108, 109–110 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 310, 312, 314). Although Borger (2003, 399 ad no. 686) is reluctant to assign the reading *kī* to GIM in the absence of secure evidence, I think it is likely, in light of the syllabic writings of the term *kī qabû*, that GIM *iqbû* in the extispicy commentaries should be read *kī iqbû* (I do not see any reason to read the sign GIM differently when it occurs with *iqbû* and *qabû*, as in, e.g., CAD Q, 30). For another instance of GIM = *kī*, see Koch 2005, no. 93:11: GIM *ú-kal-li-mu-ka*; and Koch 2005, no. 130:1′, 6′: *ki-i ú-kal-li-mu-ka*. See also *ki-i* in SAA 4, 225:4′ and 276:12 (Babylonian tablets), where GIM usually occurs (e.g. SAA 4, 18:15); see I. Starr, SAA 4, 255, note to line 12. The only postulated syllabic writing of the phrase as *kīma iqbû* (Gehlken 2008, 285:24′) should probably be restored differently; since *kīma* occurs also in the previous line within a description (see Chapter 2, n. 176), it probably functions the same way in this line as well—perhaps *ki-ma r*[*i-gim* . . .], or *ki-ma i*[*k-kil*], or similar.

199 Cf. some examples below.

200 Cf. some examples in 4.2 below.

201 See para. 1 above.

202 See para. 3 above.

203 An interesting case is DA, 45–46:5 (K.3837:20), where the rephrasing may be based on the homophony of a logogram: BAR.MEŠ-*ma* BIR.MEŠ GIM *iq-bu-u* (cf. CAD S, 164a).

204 For the various meanings of *kī* and its etymological complexity as both a preposition and a subordinating conjunction, see Hackl 2007, 22–27.

4.1 kī iqbû *in* mukallimtu *Commentaries on Extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian Period*

The texts in which the term *kī iqbû* appears most frequently, and the only texts in which it is certain that the preterite form is used (rather than the stative), are extispicy commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period.[205]

4.1.1 *kī iqbû* (Alone)

The phrase *kī iqbû* is usually paired with *ša iqbû* in extispicy commentaries (see below), but it sometimes occurs alone. For instance, an extispicy commentary cites an omen and explains its rare terminology by rephrasing it:[206]

> BE MAN-*ú* KI BAD_4 15 IGI-*et* SAG GÍR [... DINGI]R.MEŠ Á ÉRIN.MU DU.MEŠ LAL.MEŠ-*ua* (var. *u-a*) LAL.MEŠ-*šú-nu* LAL.MEŠ [KI] (var. *qaq-qar*)[207] *dan-na-at* 15 KI PAP.ḪAL 15 GIM *iq-bu-ú* (var. D[U_{11}]) *pu-uš-qu dan-na-tu*$_4$ *ina* [EME *qa-bi* (?)]
>
> Second "If":[208] "The area of the right 'distress' is opposite the top of the 'path' [...—the go]ds will come to the aid of my army, my captives will capture their captors."—"The area of the right 'distress' "—"the area of the right 'strait' " is as if (lit.: like) it said; strait = distress, [it is said] in [the vocabulary(?)].

The commentary notes that the "the area of the right 'distress'," as it is formulated in the original omen, using an unusual word for a feature of the liver, should be understood (using the term *kī iqbû*) as "the area of the right 'strait'." The commentary paraphrases the omen by replacing the word "distress" with the word "strait," a more familiar name for a part of the liver.[209] In support of this interpretation, the commentary cites a lexical equation of the words for "strait" and "distress" (outside the context of extispicy) from a monolingual vocabulary.[210]

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205 The only exception is an astronomical commentary from Nineveh written in Babylonian script, K.6151:3 (CCP 7.2.u83): *ki-i iq-bu-ú*.

206 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 81:5. Other attestations of *kī iqbû* alone are Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:49; DA 45–46:5 (K.3837:19–20); perhaps Koch 2005, no. 31:4′, 346, no. 41:74, and K.11531:7 (unpublished). For combinations of *kī iqbû* with other phrases, see 4.1.3–4 below.

207 So according to a digital photograph of K.6655.

208 See Chapter 1, 4.5.1.1.

209 Koch-Westenholz 2000, 62.

210 See 2.1 above. For *pušqu* = *dannatu*, see the references in *CAD* P, 543.

4.1.2 *ša iqbû . . . kī iqbû*: Reference to the Wording and Rewording of the Base Text

In most cases in extispicy commentaries the term *kī iqbû* occurs after *ša iqbû*, where *ša iqbû* refers to the wording of the base text, and *kī iqbû* to an interpretive paraphrase of the base text. At times the rewording is followed by a short explanation or justification. For example, a commentary on a liver omen from the Neo-Assyrian period deals with the effacement of two grooves on the liver:[211]

> BE NA *ka-bi-ìs* GÍR KAR-*im šá iq-bu-u*$_{(2)}$ / BE NA GÍR *kab-su* GIM *iq-bu-u*$_{(2)}$ / KAR *e-ke-mu* KAR *e-ṭè-ru ḫa-la-qu*
>
> "If the 'presence' is effaced and the 'path' is hindered"(; that) which it said—"If the 'presence' and the 'path' are effaced" is as if (lit.: like) it said; KAR = to hinder, KAR = to take out, to disappear.

First the protasis of an omen is cited, followed by the term *ša iqbû*. The explanation that follows contains a rephrasing of the omen (using the term *kī iqbû*) in which the verb "to be effaced" is taken to refer to both grooves on the liver. Then the omen provides lexical support for this new understanding.

In other instances the explanation precedes the rewording, and sometimes it can be regarded as part of the rewording. Thus, a commentary from the Neo-Assyrian period deals with the apodosis of a liver omen about the same two grooves on the liver mentioned in the previous example:[212]

> BE UR$_5$.ÚŠ DÙ-*ma* NA GIM GÍR GÍR GIM NA *e-ṣir ù* MÁŠ *na-pár-qú-da-at* / [AN *u*] KI-*tu*$_4$ *it-tak-ki-ru šá iq-bu-ú* ŠÈG.MEŠ *u* ILLU.MEŠ ˹DU˺.MEŠ-*ma* / [AN *u*] KI-*tu*$_4$ *it-ti a-ḫa-meš i-nak-ki-ru* GIM *iq-bu-ú*
>
> "[If] you perform an extispicy and the 'presence' is drawn like the 'path' and the 'path' is drawn like the 'presence', and the 'increment' is convex—

211 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:9. Note that in a different commentary, the same rewording is given without the terms *ša iqbû* and *kī iqbû* and without the following lexical support; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:3. For other examples of a lexical explanation following the rewording with *kī iqbû*, cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:25, and probably no. 83:38–45, esp. lines B v:5′, 9′, 11′. For a different, more general, justification for a rephrasing, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:21.

212 Koch 2005, no. 29:7. Other attestations where the explanation precedes the rephrasing are probably Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 78:12; no. 85, iv:11′–12′; Koch 2005, no. 29:5, 6; no. 41:73, 74.

> [heaven and] earth will be mutually hostile"(; that) which it said—rains and floods will come and (by that) "[heaven and] earth will be hostile with one another" is as if (lit.: like) it said.

Using the term *ša iqbû*, the commentary cites an omen with the enigmatic apodosis "heaven and earth will be mutually hostile." The commentary then explains that heaven and earth represent the waters of these two abodes, namely rain and floodwaters, and then rephrases the apodosis to indicate a reciprocal relationship by using the G stem of *nakāru* with *itti aḫāmeš*, instead of the rare Gt form of this verb, which has a similar meaning. The term *kī iqbû* appears at the end of the paraphrase.

4.1.3 *ša iqbû* (Expanded) . . . *kī iqbû*

In extispicy commentaries, the term *kī iqbû* may also appear with an expanded form of *ša iqbû*,[213] which usually performs a hermeneutical function before the paraphrase. These expanded forms are *ša ana aḫīti iqbû . . . kī iqbû*,[214] *ša iqbû aḫītu*/*damqu . . . kī iqbû*,[215] and *ša iqbû*(*ma*) *ittašunu iddinu . . . kī iqbû*.[216]

4.1.4 *ša iqbû . . . kī iqbû aḫītu*

Related to the pairing of *kī iqbû* with an expanded form of *ša iqbû*, there is also one instance in an extispicy *mukallimtu* commentary from the Neo-Assyrian period where the designation *aḫītu*, "unfavorable," follows *kī iqbû*:[217]

> BE MÁŠ *kup-pu-ta-at* SUR-*an* AN-*e* / *šá* MIN SUR-*an* NA_4 NA_4 SUR-*nun* GIM MIN BAR-tu_4
>
> "If the 'increment' is compact—rain from (lit.: of) the sky"(; that) which it said, "rain of stones (= hail)"—it will rain stones (= hail)—is as if (lit.: like) it said. Unfavorable.

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213 See 1.4 above.

214 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:17' (collated from a digital photograph of K.182+). See 1.4.1 above.

215 With *aḫītu*: Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:137 (see 1.4.2 above); no. 88, ii:7′–11′; no. 85, iv:5′–8′. With *damqu*: probably Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:38–45 (cf. line B v:5′). See 1.4.2 above.

216 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:17. See 1.4.4 above.

217 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:36. For the base text, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 72:20.

The commentary lists this omen together with other unfavorable omens describing the "increment," and therefore an unfavorable prediction would have been expected. However, the coming of rain in the omen is favorable, and therefore the commentary rephrases the apodosis by replacing rain with hail, using the term *kī iqbû*, and adding that hail, unlike rain, is unfavorable.

4.2 kī qabû *in Commentaries on Various Texts from the Neo-Assyrian Period*

In Neo-Assyrian texts outside the corpus of extispicy commentaries, the term appears with the stative *qabû* and not the preterite *iqbû*. A commentary on Marduk's Address to the Demons from Assur deals with Marduk "dwelling" in his awe:[218]

> ⌜KI⌝.MIN (= *ana-ku* ^{d}asar-lú-ḫi) DINGIR *el-lu a-šib me-lam-me a-na-ku* / [ME :] AN-*e* : LAM : *er-ṣé-tú* : *a-šib* AN-*e* KI-*tì ki qa-bu-u* / *šá mu-kal-lim-te šu-u*
>
> "Ditto (= I am Asarluḫi), the pure god, who dwells in splendor (*melammu*)"—[ME =] heaven; LAM = earth; it is as if (lit.: like) "who dwells in heaven (and) earth" is said. It is from a *mukallimtu* commentary.

The phrase "who dwells in splendor" in the base text, which uses the unexpected verb "dwell" (usually a god is "clad" in splendor), is rephrased as "who dwells in heaven and earth" by treating the elements ME and LAM of *melammu* as idiographic representations of "heaven" and "earth."

Another interesting example occurs in a cultic commentary from Assur:[219]

> [x x]-*ú-su* ŠE.SA.A *ša ina* UGU ^{d}*dumu-zi* ŠUB.ŠUB *ina* NA_4.MEŠ *ki i-qa-mu-*⌜*šú*⌝ / [*qa*]-*la-a-te ša* GAR-*nu* E_{11} *ana* AN.TA.MEŠ[220] *ki-i qa-bu-*[*ú*]

218 *AfO* 19, pl. XXVI, A.163:r.15′–16′ (Lambert 1954–56, 315, and Lambert 1959/60, 118, F:8; Geller 2014, 65:9). The term *kī qabû* may also occur in a letter to the Neo-Assyrian king; see SAA 10, 112:r.23.

219 LKA 72, r.6′–7′; see Livingstone 1986, 120:19, and SAA 3, 38:r.6–7. Another example occurs in the following line, but the interpretation there is more difficult; see LKA 72:r.8′; Livingstone 1986, 120:19 = SAA 3, 38:r.8. Cf. Scurlock 1992, 59 and 63 n. 83.

220 Cf. LKA 73:r.4; see Livingstone 1986, 128:r.4 = SAA 3, 40:r.4: [ ] ⌜*e*⌝-*la-a a-na* AN.TA.MEŠ.

> [. . .] . . . (and)? the roasted barley (*qalâte*)[221] which they throw on account of Dumuzi, when they grind it on stones—"the roasted barley (*qalâte*)" which is set[222]—"he (= Dumuzi) goes up to the above (*elâte*)" is as if (lit.: like) it is said.[223]

The commentary attempts to harmonize a ritual act connected to Dumuzi with his mythological rising from the netherworld. The "roasted barley" (*qalâte*) in the ritual is interpreted, based on its phonic similarity with *elâte*,[224] as Dumuzi coming up from the netherworld.

4.3 kī DU11.GA-ú *in Commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian Periods*

In some cases, since the form of the verb *qabû* is written logographically, it is uncertain whether the verb should be read *qabû* or *iqbû* (but it is more likely to be read *qabû*). Such an ambiguous writing appears in the explanatory text i-nam-ĝiš-ḫur an-ki-a, preserved in a tablet from the Neo-Assyrian period, which discusses the noun *bubbulu* (the day of the disappearance of the moon):[225]

> *bu-úm*(UD)*-bu-li* BU *na-sa-ḫu* / UD *ú-mu* BU.LÌ *šu-ta-as-su-ḫu* / *ta-as-su-uḫ-tu*$_4$ *ta-lit-tu*$_4$ / *u*$_4$*-mu i-lit-ti* ^{d}30 *ki-i* DU$_{11}$.GA-*ú*
>
> "Day of disappearance (*bumbulu*)"—BU = to remove, UD (= úm) = day, BU.LÌ = to be removed; removal = birth; it is as if (lit.: like) it (is) said "the day of the birth of the Moon."

The commentary notes that the noun *bubbulu*, which refers to the day of the disappearance of the moon, can be interpreted through *notariqon* as if it actually says (*kī qabû/iqbû*, "like it (is) said") "the day of the birth of the Moon."

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221 Contra Livingstone (1986, 120) and his reading in SAA 3, 38, the logogram should be read as *qalītu*, or better *qalâte*, rather than *lābtu*, as indicated by the interpretation.

222 Is this a paraphrase of the verb "to throw" in the original description, or is it a variant of *ša iqbû*?

223 Or: " 'he goes up'; it is like it (i.e., *qalâte*) is said in reference to 'above' (*elâte*)." If this is the interpretation, then *ana . . . kī qabû* should be understood as a term related to *ana . . . qabi* (see 3.1 above).

224 This was perhaps even pronounced *qalâte* or similarly in the Neo-Assyrian dialect, since other instances of the interchange of *q* and *'* are known; cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2000, 17.

225 Livingstone 1986, 28:28–31; cf. perhaps also Lambert 2013, 106:21–22 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 304); K.13866:8 (Lambert 2013, 137, pl. 38); K.19136:6′ (CCP 3.9.u4).

Another example is found in a Late Babylonian commentary on epithets of the god Zababa:[226]

> [*d*]*a-a-a-iš* NA_4.MEŠ ^{d}*za-ba*$_4$-[*ba*$_4$] / [N]$A_4^{?}$ ^{mul}ADDA *ki-i* DU_{11}.GA-[*ú*] / [^{mul}A]DDA *pa-gar* Á.SÀG NA_4 *a-sak*-[*ku*]
>
> "Crusher of stones, Zababa"—"[ston]e(?)"[227]—"Corpse star" (is) as if (lit.: like) it (is) said; [Corpse st]ar—the corpse of the Asakku demon; stone (is) Asakku.

The commentary notes that the noun "stone" in the epithet of Zababa is equivalent to the "Corpse star," explaining that the Corpse star represents the corpse of the Asakku demon who was defeated by Ninurta/Zababa, and who was realized as stone.[228]

4.4 aššu . . . kī qabû, *"it is like it (is) said concerning . . .": Reference to the Context of the Base Text According to an Interpretation*

The term *kī qabû* (written at least once syllabically, but in other cases *iqbû* cannot be ruled out), paired with *aššu*, appears in a few texts dating to the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian periods. It is different from the term *kī iqbû*/*qabû* alone, since it does not refer directly to the rewording of the text but to its context, as in other cases of *aššu . . . qabi/iqtabi*;[229] here it emphasizes the hermeneutical awareness that the interpreted text is to be understood "as if it were being said about something else (or: in a different context)." Thus, a commentary on Enūma eliš from the Neo-Assyrian period attempts to connect a line from the myth (Enūma eliš VII:110) with a ritual act:[230]

> DINGIR.MEŠ *maḫ-ri-šú li-še-ri-bu kàd-ra-šú-un qí-šá-a-tú šá ina* ITI.BÁRA TA UD.6.KÁM EN UD.12.KÁM SUM-*na* MU ^{d}*za-ba*$_4$-*ba*$_4$ *ki* DU_{11}-*u*

226 Lambert 1989a, 216:3–5. The term occurs also in lines 8 and 14 of the same text.

227 It is not improbable that *aššu*, "concerning," should actually be restored here, and not "stone"; see 4.4 below.

228 See Lambert 1989a, 218.

229 See 3.3 above.

230 CT 13, 32+:r.6′ (and parallels); see Lambert 2013, 134 ad 109–110 (cf. Frahm 2011, 113). For this tablet, see Frahm 2011, 113–114; Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 312–313. Other occurrences of this term on this tablet are in lines r.5′, r.13′ and probably 5, as well as in the parallels to this tablet; see Lambert 2013, 60 ad 36, and 134 ad 77, 108, 109–110 (Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 299–314).

> "The gods will bring in their gifts before him"—The presents which are given in the month of Nisannu from the sixth day until the twelfth day; it is as if (lit.: like) it is said concerning Zababa.

The line from Enūma eliš that originally referred to presents given to Marduk is said in the commentary to refer to Zababa of Kiš, who participated in the Babylonian New Year's ritual. Unlike the cases of *kī qabû* alone cited above, *aššu . . . kī qabû* does not refer to the rephrasing of the original text, but to an interpretation of the referent of the text, which differs from its simple wording according to the context in which it appears.

This term occurs also in a Late Babylonian commentary. A medical text describes a patient suffering from paralysis of the face. One symptom of this disorder is that "he does not stop rubbing (*muš-šu-da*) his face with syrup and butter."[231] A commentary deals with this unusual symptom of rubbing the face:[232]

> *muš-šu-da* : *muš-šu-'u* / *áš-šú* MAŠ.MAŠ-*ú-tu ki-i qa-bu-ú*
>
> "rub"—smear, it is as if (lit.: like) it is said concerning the lore of the *āšipu*-priest.

The commentary equates the verb "rub" in the base text with "smear."[233] This is not merely a lexical interpretation. In my opinion this substitution has a deeper exegetical purpose. While the base text seems to be referring to the patient's attempt to relieve his suffering by rubbing his face with syrup and butter, his action is still considered to be a symptom of his condition; this is clear from the fact that it is followed in the base text by a description of the treatment. The commentary, however, presents this action itself as a treatment for his condition. It does so by introducing the verb *muššu'u*, "smear," which is used of treatments in the lore of the *āšipu*.[234] Therefore, what is said in the text concerning the act of the patient is to be regarded as if it had been said (*kī qabû*) about his treatment (by the *āšipu*-priest).[235]

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231 SBTU 1, 46:18–19: *ina* LÀL *u* Ì.NUN.NA IGI.MEŠ-*šú muš-šu-da la i-kal-li*; see Frahm 2011, 397, 399.

232 SBTU 1, 47:10–11; see Frahm 2011, 398.

233 A similar interpretation is found in another commentary, SBTU 1, 29:10′: *ú-maš-šad* : *ú-maš-*[*šá-'* . . .].

234 Finkel 1991; Böck 2007.

235 Note that my interpretation of the commentary differs from the one proposed by Frahm (2011, 402).

Lastly, an expanded form of *aššu . . . kī qabû* may occur in a cultic explanatory text:[236]

> *šá* ^{d}EN *pa-nu-šú* ^{d}*en-líl* / *kut-tal-la-šú* ^{d}U+GUR / MU *an-ni-e* ^{d}*né-er-e-tag-mil* / *ki-i qa-bu-u*
>
> The face of Bēl is Enlil, his back (of the head) is Nergal; it is as if it is said about this: Nēr-ē-tagmil.

The general meaning of this passage is clear: the association between Ner(i)gal and Nēr-ē-tagmil as the back side of Marduk[237] is explained by the homophonic resemblance of the two names. However, the specifics of this explanation are not entirely clear. I translated the phrase in question as a variation of the more common term *aššu . . . kī qabû*. But it is also possible that *aššu annî* here refers to an act of reasoning,[238] i.e., "because of this, it is as if Nēr-ē-tagmil is said." Another possibility is that the sign MU here does not stand for *aššu*, but for *šumu*, "name" (although the following *annê* would not be in the correct case), which would yield the translation "this name: it is as if Nēr-ē-tagmil is said."

5 The Verb *qabû* Alone (E/ DU_{11}.GA; Uncertain Reading): Rephrasing the Base Text

There may be some cases where the use of the verb *qabû* alone, without *kī*, refers to a rephrasing of the text. Unfortunately, in these cases the verb *qabû* is written logographically and so it is uncertain which form of the verb was intended. The logographic writing of *qabû* may simply be an abbreviation of the phrase *kī iqbû*/*qabû*, but it is also possible that it represents an independent term with a more radical hermeneutical intention. The rephrasing in these cases seems to go one step beyond what is signified by the phrase *kī iqbû*/*qabû*; i.e., it is not simply "like" (*kī*) what the original formulation meant, but rather contains the actual meaning of what was said. For example, a Late Babylonian Izbu commentary deals with a difficult apodosis:[239]

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236 KAR 142, i:10–13 (Pongratz-Leisten 1994, 221; beginning perhaps duplicated by U. 30495:14, copy: Lambert 1997, 79).

237 A mythological composition regards Nēr-ē-tagmil as the one "going behind" Marduk (*a-lik* EGIR-*šú*); see Lambert 2013, 322:9, 12. For Nēr-ē-tagmil, see Lambert 2013, 430 with n. 16.

238 See Chapter 3, para. 7, as well as 3.3.3 above.

239 Finkel 2006, 140:20–21 (cf. Frahm 2011, 206 with n. 975).

> IM.ŠÈG *ana* KUR *re-še-e-ti* LÁ-*a* : KUR *re-še-e-tú* $^{ḫe\text{-}pí}$ / *šá-niš ina re-eš šat-ti šá-a-ri u zu-un-nu i-ma-aṭ-ṭu* E
>
> "(Wind and) rain will reduce *the first fruits for the land*"—"*the first fruits* (*rēšēti*) *for the land*"—broken; alternatively: "In the New Year (*rēš šatti*), wind and rain will diminish" *it said*.

The meaning of the original omen is uncertain.[240] The commentary rephrases this apodosis, making IM.ŠÈG (understood here as *šāru u zunnu*)[241] the second syntactic unit of the sentence; the first syntactic unit results from reading *rēšēti* as the almost homonymous *rēš-šatti*, "New Year," which also includes the syllable *šat*, corresponding to KUR in the original omen.[242] After this rephrasing the sign E occurs, which stands for the verb *qabû*. Finkel understands this as the stative *qabi*,[243] and while this may be possible, it is extremely rare for the stative to be written with the sign E in commentaries. Therefore it is more likely in my opinion that it stands for an active form, such as *iqtabi*,[244] *iqbi*,[245] or perhaps even *taqabbi*.[246]

Three further examples of rephrasing using the verb *qabû* alone, again written only logographically, occur consecutively in a Late Babylonian extispicy commentary:[247]

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240 The translation given here follows Frahm 2011, 206. But perhaps *rēšētu* here refers to mountain peaks; see CAD R, 272.

241 In the original omen, the signs IM.ŠÈG probably refer only to *zunnu*, "rain"; cf. also Finkel 2006, 143.

242 Cf. Finkel 2006, 143. Alternatively, KUR (with the reading *maṭ*) could be connected to this syllable in the final verb (*imaṭṭû*).

243 Finkel 2006, 143. It should be noted that the sign E seems to be damaged. E. Jiménez (personal communiation) suggests reading *i-ma-aṭ-ṭu-ú*!. The tablet requires collation.

244 For *iqtabi* alone, cf. Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 45:34–35; Biggs 1968, 43:3–4; perhaps also George 1991, 150:30b. But I do not entirely understand the role of the verb in these contexts. (In the case of Biggs 1968, 53:3–4 [*a-na e-la-nu ki-i ik-šu-du alam-dím-mu-ú iq-ta-bi*], if the suggestion by Böck [2000b, 615 n. 3] that *alamdimmû* is reflected in *lānu* in *elânu* is correct [although Böck herself reads *ana qabê*(E) *la-nu* here], this would be the type of rephrasing based on homophony known also to occur with *kī qabû*; see, e.g., SAA 3, 38:r.6–7, discussed in 4.2 above.) Cf. also *iq-ṭi-bi* (standing for *iqtabi*, but in Neo-Assyrian, perhaps for *iqbi*) in SAA 8, 99:r.3.

245 For *iqbi*, see Koch 2005, no. 33:r.30–31 (I do not understand the role of *iqbi* in this passage; perhaps it refers back to the base text); also SBTU 4, 157:18 (Koch 2005, no. 99:18), and Rochberg-Halton 1988, 285:r.8 (both unclear to me).

246 See para. 6 below.

247 TCL 6, 6, ii:20′b–r.iii:1′; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 25:17–19.

BE NA *u* SILIM BAL.MEŠ-*ma pa-ni šá* SILIM {GAR} *ana* UGU ZÉ GAR-*nu-ma* : SILIM BAL-*ut* DU_{11}.GA
BE GÍR *ana* IGI ZÉ BAL.MEŠ *pa-ni* GÍR 150 ZÉ *ana* UGU ZÉ GAR-*nu-ma* GÍR 150 ZÉ BAL.MEŠ DU_{11}.GA
BE NA *u* ŠUB AŠ.TE BAL.MEŠ *ḫe-pí eš-šú ana* UGU ŠU.SI GAR.MEŠ-*ma* ⌜ŠUB⌝ AŠ.TE BAL DU_{11}.GA

"If the 'presence' and the 'well-being' are turned and the front of the 'well-being' is placed on the gall-bladder"—"the 'presence' is turned" *it said*.
"If the 'path' is turned towards the front of the gall-bladder (and) the front of the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder' is placed on the gall-bladder"—"the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder' is turned" *it said*.
"If the 'presence' and the 'throne base' are turned—new break—are placed on the 'finger' "—"the 'throne [base]' is turned" *it said*.

Here, too, the interpretation is a reformulation of the original protasis, and although in other cases *kī iqbû* would perhaps have been expected,[248] here the verb DU_{11}.GA occurs alone.

6 *taqabbi*, "you say": Rephrasing and Interpretation of One Omen in Light of Another by the Diviner-scholar

The form *taqabbi* occasionally occurs in omen texts and interpretations in connection with the predictions to be made by the diviner.[249] At times a prediction

248 Cf., e.g., the very similar use of *kī iqbû* in Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:9, cited in 4.1.2 above.

249 See, e.g., Koch 2005, no. 33:r.25, 35, 38, and SBTU 4, 162:7, 15, where *taqabbi* refers to the prediction to be made; cf. especially also SBTU 4, 162:8′–9, r.17′ (// *AfO* 14, pl. VI:r.7′; see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227): *pi-šèr ana* ŠÀ *ta-qab-bi* (cf. also LBAT 1611:19′, 21′), referring to the prediction; see Appendix 1, 6.3.1. The form *taqabbi* is found in the rhetorical context of a dialogue in the Diviner's Manual, Oppenheim 1974, 200:51; cf. also SBTU 5, 254:10, 17–18, 32, 36, 61 (see Frahm 2011, 236). For *taqabbi*, cf. also Reiner and Pingree 2005, 180, K.3636:13′ (Frahm 2011, 154). For other attestations of *taqabbi*, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:11; Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:28, 115, no. 20:[1], 3, 4, no. 78:13, no. 83, B ii 9′(?); Koch 2005, no. 25:10, 12, no. 28:15, 17, no. 32:176, no. 70:16, no. 93:47, C r.16; Reiner and Pingree 1998, 231:[11] (22′)(?). Note other attestations referring to the diviner-commentator in the second person, e.g., *tuštabbal* (Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:25; no. 83:21; also in an unpublished commentary, see Frahm 2011, 193; see also attestations cited in *CAD* A/I, 27b); see Chapter 4, 2.3.1 and Appendix 1, 7.1.

itself requires a hermeneutical process. A Neo-Assyrian extispicy commentary deals with the concavity of the "dying vat" (*naṣraptu*; *impressio abomasalis*):[250]

> BE NÍG.TAB 15 *u* 150 *ana* KI.TA-*nu* TÉŠ.BI *kap-ṣa-at-ma u* GÍR *ina* ŠÀ-*šá* NU GAR-*in* NUN KUR-*su* BAL-*su ana* KI.TA-*nu i-kap-pí-iṣ-ma* ⌜NA⌝ K[UR?-*ud*?] *ta-qab-bi*
>
> "If the 'dying-vat' on the right and the left is equally concave downwards, and the 'path' is not present in its midst—the ruler, his land will rebel against him"—you say it is concave downwards and r[eaches(?)] the "presence"(?).

The commentary explains the omen, rephrasing part of it with very similar words, and perhaps adding a clarification that corresponds to the previously cited omen[251] (although the restoration here is not certain). This rephrasing is not presented as the intended meaning of the text, but as an action explicitly said to be performed by the diviner-commentator (although probably more for the sake of divination than for the sake of textual hermeneutics).

Often, when the verb *taqabbi* is used, the hermeneutical process involves using one omen to explain another. This could be regarded as a sort of rephrasing, where the formulation of one omen acts as a paraphrase of another. However, this hermeneutical process seems more complex than a mere rephrasing, since it enables the mutual interpretation of both omens, each newly illuminated by the other. Such a complex procedure could not be viewed as rooted in the text itself and expressed in a third-person form; rather, it necessitated the involvement of the diviner-commentator, and therefore the hermeneutical procedure is indicated with a second-person form, *taqabbi*, addressed to this diviner-scholar.

A *mukallimtu* commentary on extispicy from the Neo-Assyrian period deals with a difficult omen by comparing it to a different omen:[252]

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250 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 78:13. For the base text, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 57:3. For an anatomical discussion, see Koch-Westenholz 2000, 53–56.

251 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 78:12.

252 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:115. Other occurrences of a similar use of *taqabbi* are Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:2–4 (but *taqabbi* should probably not be restored in line 2), and Koch 2005, no. 25:9–10, 11–12 (also no. 70:16). See also Frahm 2011, 171–172, citing two lines from a commentary known from a few manuscripts, mostly unpublished, on the first chapter of *bārûtu*. Note also Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:26, where the verb *taqabbi* in this use appears in the context of a scholarly dialogue; see Chapter 1, 2.3.

> BE NA GIM GÍR 150 ZÉ *u* GÍR 150 GIM NA GAR-*in* / *šá iq-bu-u-ma* GIZKIM-*šú-nu* SUM-*nu* BE-*ma* NA 2-*ma it-lu-pu-ma u* BAL.MEŠ GÍR 150 ZÉ GIM NA GAR *ta-qab-bi* BE-*ma* NA GIM GÍR 150 ZÉ GAR-*ma* / *u* BAL-*ut* NA GIM GÍR 150 ZÉ $u_{(3)}$ GÍR 150 ZÉ GIM NA GAR DU_{11}-*bi*
>
> "If the 'presence' is placed like the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder', and the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder' (is placed) like the 'presence' " (; that) which it said and gave their sign—"If there are two 'presences' and they are entangled and turned"—(in such a case) you say "the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder' is placed like the 'presence'." "If the 'presence' is placed like the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder'," "and is turned"—(in such a case) you say "the 'presence' is placed like the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder', and the 'path to the left of the gall-bladder' (is placed) like the 'presence'."

The commentary first cites an omen about the two grooves on the liver, the "presence" and the "path to the left of the gall bladder," each placed on the liver like the other.[253] This ominous situation is said to correspond to an omen about "two presences" that are entangled and turned.[254] Thus the diviner may treat ("you say") the "path to the left of the gall bladder" as a second "presence." However, the original omen also treats the "presence" as a "path to the left of the gall-bladder," which does not accord with the omen about two "presences"; in addition, the second omen also mentions the entanglement and turning of the "presences," which does not occur in the first omen (and seems also to be impossible, at least in the case of entanglement, given that the grooves on the liver mentioned in the first omen are so far apart). Therefore, the commentary seems to understand that the "turning" is actually the switching or replacement of the two grooves mentioned in the first omen—the "presence" is to be understood as the "path to the left of the gall-bladder," and vice versa—and thus the diviner can treat ("you say"), through exegesis, the wording of the first omen as applying to the second omen, and vice versa.

This complex hermeneutical process, unlike what is indicated by *kī iqbû*, does not claim that the text itself said (or intended) something different from what is actually formulated in it. Instead, the interpretation of the text, or even its reformulation as a different omen, is transformed into an action to be taken

253 For the phrase *ša iqbûma ittašunu iddinu* that introduces this omen, see 1.4.4 above.

254 This is not necessarily an actual canonical omen, but could be an oral lore or simply an ad hoc description.

by the diviner, who identifies the phenomenon described in the text with a different phenomenon.

7 "Mesopotamian Scripture as Logos"?[255]

To conclude this chapter, I would like to examine the cultural implications of considering the text to be an active speaker. In those instances where the verb *qabû* appears in an active form, especially the preterite, who is the speaker? Is it the text itself, or perhaps its composer? It is not easy to answer this question. One may rightfully argue that there are no special cultural implications attached to this use of *qabû*, and that it is just a figure of speech used to refer to the wording of the text, analogous to the use in modern languages and cultures of phrases like "the text says that . . ." This use of *qabû* may thus be derived from the actual context in which the texts were read and studied. They were spoken aloud in that context (although the verb *šasû* would be a more appropriate term for reading a text out loud), which included several scholars studying together. The verb could therefore refer concretely to the person reading the text from a tablet (or reciting it from memory), while secondarily implying that the text itself is speaking. Still, I would like to suggest that there are wider cultural implications to be drawn from this usage.

In a letter to the Neo-Assyrian king, for example, the speaker of an omen is the "corpus" or "series" (*iškāru*):[256]

> ÉŠ!.ᵍGÀR!ᵑ ᵍ*šu*!ᵑ-*ú-tú ina* ŠÀ AN.MI *an-ni-e šá* ITI.BÁRA *iq-ṭi-bi*
>
> The "series" itself said in connection to this eclipse of Nisannu: . . . (followed by a citation of an omen).

The "series" can be a specific series, Enūma-Anu-Enlil in this instance. But it is also possible that the "series" here reflects a more abstract idea of a canonical corpus of texts, or in other words "(a) scripture."[257]

Similarly, the Neo-Assyrian explanatory work Marduk's Ordeal refers to the content of Enūma eliš in the following words:[258]

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255 Adapted from Yadin 2004 ("Scripture as Logos").

256 SAA 10, 90:r.8′–11′ (see collation on p. 418).

257 Cf. the opposition between *iškāru* on the one hand, and *aḫû* and *ša pī ummâni* on the other in SAA 10, 8:r.1–2, 8, 15. Cf. Elman 1975, 19–32; Rochberg-Halton 1984, 127–144.

258 SAA 3, 34:54 // 35:[44].

šu-ú ina ŠÀ *e-nu-ma e-liš iq-*ʳ*ṭi-bi*ˀ *ki-i* AN-*e* KI.TIM *la ib-ba-nu-ni* AN.ŠÁR *it-*[*tab-ši*] *ki-i* URU *u* É *ib-šu-u-ni šu-ú it-tab-ši*

That—within[259] Enūma eliš it said: When heaven and earth were not created, Anšar came into [being], (only) when city and house were created, he (= Marduk) came into being.

The text uses a perfect active form of the verb *qabû* (reflecting the regular use of the perfect morphological form to indicate the past in Neo-Assyrian), but the subject is not the composition Enūma eliš itself. Rather, someone or something else spoke in Enūma eliš. Who is this speaker? Here, too, it is possible that this is "scripture" itself.

What kind of being might this actively speaking "scripture" have been in Mesopotamian thought? According to my understanding, the concept of Mesopotamian "scripture" is rooted in the idea that certain kinds of texts constituted divine utterances.

The concept that the divine "word" is a manifestation of the mysterious divine power itself is already present in Sumerian literature, especially in Emesal Balaĝ and Eršema prayers that refer to the actions of the unintelligible divine "word" (e-ne-èĝ) and their awesome consequences. Thus, for example, a Balaĝ composition begins with the following passage:[260]

u_4-dam ki àm-ús š[à-bi nu-pà-da]
šá ki-ma u_4*-mu šur-šu-du qé-reb-šá la a-te-e*
e-ne-èĝ-ĝá-ni u_4-dam ki àm-ús š[à-bi nu-pà-da] . . .
e-ne-èĝ an-šè an al-dúb-ba-an (var. -a)-ni
a-ma-tu$_4$ *šá e-liš* AN-*e ú-rab-bu*
e-ne-èĝ ki-šè ki al-sìg-ga (var: -a)-ni
šá šap-liš er-ṣe-tì ú-nar-<*ra*>*-ṭu*

Like day(break) it touches earth, its heart (= meaning) is unfathomable!
His Word, like day(break) touches earth, its heart is unfathomable! . . .
His Word which makes heavens thunder above,
His Word which makes earth shake below!

259 The phrase *ina libbi* here is not an idiom meaning "because" or the like, but a regular formula for citing texts (not necessarily as part of a hermeneutical process) in the Neo-Assyrian period, usually with the stative *qabi*; cf., e.g., SAA 10, 277:9–10 and probably 353:r.12–15.

260 See Cohen 1988, 122:1–12.

Literally, the "word" here refers to the divine command or message given before the god's awesome appearance. But the manifestation of this "word" is itself likened to a theophany.[261]

The divine utterance is found also in divinatory contexts. Divination was considered the quest for a divine utterance, in the form of a message (*têrtu*) or a "word" (*amatu*),[262] that would reveal the way in which the god would manifest himself, and was actually a divine manifestation in its own right.[263] Already in the Old Babylonian period, this divine utterance was conceived of as written as well as oral. The liver of the sacrificial sheep, which was the subject of divination, was perceived as a divine written message: a tablet. Thus, "tablet" in Mesopotamian religious literature designates the liver examined during extispicy.[264] Indeed, at times the message delivered by the god is actually written as a cuneiform sign on the liver—or, in the case of physiognomic omens, on the body.[265]

In a composition relating to the divine transmission of divinatory knowledge, the gods Šamaš and Adad bring the mythical king Enmeduranki into their presence, teach him divination, and give him the "tablet of the god, the 'pouch', secret of heaven and earth."[266] Enmeduranki, in turn, does the same for the citizens of Nippur, Sippar, and Babylon, and from that moment on every diviner is obligated to train his beloved son in divination, including interpretation and other divinatory sciences: "(the arts of provoked divination) that are to be interpreted with (the help of) lexical correspondences, the series Enūma-Anu-Enlil, and calculation texts."[267] The diviner binds his son by the oath of the tablet and stylus.[268] Here it is evident, from the mention of both the textual

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261 See Gabbay 2014b, 21–23. I would like to thank Prof. Konrad Volk, who first suggested that I connect such Emesal passages with the concept of "logos."

262 For the "word" in (Old Babylonian) extispicy omens, see Jeyes 1989, 17–19. Cf. also a letter to the Assyrian king, in which an omen entry is referred to as a "word," SAA 10, 84:r.1–5: *an-nu-rig ina* [IGI *e-ra-bi*] *a-da-gal a-bat-*[*su la-mur*] *šum-ma ina* ŠÀ-*šú e-t*[*ar-ba*] *pi-šìr-šú a-na* LUGAL E[N-*ía*] *a-šap-pa-ra*, "Presently I am watching for [the occultation, so that I may look up its] 'word' (= textual omen); if it en[ters] in it (= in the moon), I shall send its interpretation to the king [my lo]rd."

263 See Winitzer 2010, 177–197.

264 See already in the Old Babylonian period YOS 11, 23:16; see also below in the Enmeduranki composition.

265 See Frahm 2010b, 93–141.

266 Lambert 1998, 148:8: *tup-pi* DINGIR.MEŠ *ta-kal-ta pi-riš-tì* AN-*e u* KI-*tì* [*i*]*d-di-nu-šu*.

267 Lambert 1998, 149:18: *šá* KI *ṣa-a-ti* UD AN ^{d}en-líl *u* A.RÁ-*a šu-ta-bu-lu*. For the interpretation of this passage, see Jiménez 2014, 106–107.

268 Lambert 1998, 149:20: *ina tup-pi u* GI-*tup-pi*.

material (Enūma-Anu-Enlil, *ṣâtu*, *arû*) and the oath over the tablet and stylus, that the knowledge transmitted by the diviner to his beloved son is textual, and that it continues the chain of divine textual transmission that began with Šamaš and Adad handing the "tablet of the gods" to Enmeduranki.

Finally, a true divine scriptualization of omen literature, as well as other knowledge and religious texts, is seen in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors, known from Nineveh, which ascribes the large omen series (Enūma-Anu-Enlil, Alamdimmû, perhaps Izbu, Sagig, Kataduga) to the god Ea—and quite literally and specifically to his speech, or his mouth (*ša pī Ea*).[269]

Thus, in the Mesopotamian worldview, certain texts were considered to be divine utterances.[270] The divine word, as seen in the Emesal literature, is incomprehensible, and so is the divine message that is delivered through a sign in the natural world in the context of divination (cf. "the liver of the gods, the 'pouch', *secret* of heaven and earth," mentioned above in the Enmeduranki myth). Hermeneutics and interpretation must be applied to the divine word in order to make it comprehensible. Thus, it comes as no surprise that most of the texts commented upon (certainly in the earlier Neo-Assyrian period but also in the Late Babylonian period) are omen texts,[271] the texts most strongly considered to be divine utterances in Mesopotamian thought. Therefore, when commentaries cite these texts, they represent the base text as speaking actively.

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269 Lambert 1962, 65, I:1–4. See Introduction, 2.1.

270 It is worth mentioning that the commentaries themselves are also a "word"—not a divine word but rather a human, scholarly word, based on "those of the mouth" (*šūt pî*), especially the mouth of a scholar (*ša pī ummâni*) (see Chapter 1, 2.1.1). Thus *qabû* is also found in commentaries when referring to the interpretation of the text (*taqabbi*; see para. 6 above), where it is related to the authority of the interpreter and not to that of the (divine) text.

271 See Frahm 2011, 128–218; Gabbay 2012, 275–276.

Conclusion

1 Mesopotamian Commentaries as Evidence of a Scholastic Community

As emphasized throughout this book and especially in Chapter 1, the terminology used in commentaries reflects the *Sitz im Leben* of their study and compilation. With a few exceptions, such as the regional differences in the designations for commentaries—*ṣâtu u šūt pî maš'alti ummâni* in north Babylonia versus *ṣâtu šūt pî u maš'altu ša pī ummâni* in south and central Babylonia, as well as other variations that may indicate the existence of different schools[1]—commentaries stemming from different localities and different periods share a common terminology. This attests to an oral and textual social jargon specific to a scholastic community.

Scholasticism, originally a term for an intellectual and educational tradition specific to medieval Christian Europe, has come to refer to similar phenomena in other communities in modern research. Cabezón lists eight characteristics commonly found in scholastic communities: (1) self-identification with a long and unbroken tradition; (2) a concern with language and its exegesis; (3) proliferativity, or a tendency toward textual and analytical inclusivity, opting for broader canons and detailed analysis; (4) a perception that the tradition is complete and compact; (5) the belief that the universe is basically intelligible; (6) systematicity, or insuring a logical flow to the scholastic "narrative" that is both consistent and complete; (7) rationalism, namely a commitment to reason and noncontradiction; and (8) self-reflexivity—an engagement with the act of exegesis and hermeneutics itself.[2]

One may question whether these are the only characteristics that may be used to define a scholastic community. But in any case, each of these characteristics can be traced in the ancient Mesopotamian intellectual tradition, and they are often evidenced in the terminology the Akkadian commentaries use. (1) The ancient Mesopotamian commentators see themselves as continuing a scholarly oral tradition (*šūt pî, ša pī ummâni*) that accompanied the textual (mostly divine) canon.[3] (2) Akkadian commentaries are very much concerned with languages. (3) The commentaries cite texts possessing different levels of canonical authority in support of their arguments, and tend to analyze texts

1 See Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

2 Cabezón 1998, 4–6.

3 See Chapter 1, 1.2 and 2.1.1.

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that would otherwise not seem to require scholarly treatment. (4) The commentaries (and also scholarly reports) treat their traditional canonical texts as complete, and when commentaries extrapolate new ideas and knowledge from those texts they are always exegetically rooted in the base text itself. (5) With their emphasis on interpreting ominous natural phenomena, the commentaries actively try to make sense of the universe, on the assumption that this is indeed possible. (6) The commentaries, especially *mukallimtu* commentaries, seek complete and consistent treatments of given subjects (and this is also a characteristic of much of ancient Mesopotamian knowledge not related to the genre of commentaries). In addition, the commentary tradition in itself is consistent, often providing similar explanations for similar entries shared by different base texts, and thus the tradition forms a systematic scholarly network of texts and explanations. (7) The commentaries strive to eliminate contradictions within the texts they comment on, as well as contradictions between the texts and reality.[4] (8) The commentaries reflect on both the nature of the texts they annotate and the process of interpretation itself.[5]

Thus, the evidence from Mesopotamian commentaries seems to justify the identification of the community that produced them as scholastic.[6] An additional characteristic of scholastic communities, besides those defined by Cabezón, is the use of a common terminology or jargon restricted to this community. The terms and idioms examined in this book were part of the heritage exclusive to members of the Mesopotamian scholastic community. Akkadian exegetical terminology was used by Mesopotamian scholars to formulate complex modes of thought and hermeneutical processes. The distribution of an established and unified set of terms across time, space, and genre indicates that this jargon was not an individual or local development but part of a systematic tradition shared by a scholarly community.

2 The Limitations of Exegetical Terminology

Since exegetical terminology is a defining feature of Mesopotamian commentaries, and since it often helps us understand hermeneutical arguments, it is

4 See Gabbay 2015b.

5 See Chapter 4.

6 Of course, evidence for a Mesopotamian scholastic community can also be offered from texts other than commentaries. Note, e.g., the emphasis given to the social class of scribes and scholars from an examination of the corpus of lexical lists throughout Veldhuis's (2014) book on the cuneiform lexical tradition. See also Machinist 1986.

easy to fall into the trap of identifying it with the hermeneutical process itself. But one must remember that exegetical terminology is only a tool for expressing a hermeneutical process, which can exist also without the terms.

This hermeneutical process is an authentic attempt to make sense of the base text. The expository nature of commentaries often suggests that their purpose is to deliberately extend or transcend the literal sense of a text, to speculate on phenomena surely not anticipated by the text, to extrapolate new meanings from the text, or to find its hidden sense. Although such invention is indeed part of the exegetical process, it is, to put it bluntly, a mistake to assume that speculation is the essence of the commentary tradition.[7] To the contrary, commentaries are first and foremost concerned with making sense of a lemma, a passage, a phenomenon, a text, or a corpus. In order to achieve this goal, textual problems must be dealt with, variants need to be reconciled, contradictions have to be resolved, problems in the verisimilitude of the text need to be addressed, the relevance of a lemma or phrase in its context must be explained, and so forth.[8] To be sure, this process often leads to expository explanations, but they are the result of an authentic attempt to make sense of the text as it stands. Therefore, as noted in the introduction to this book, the motivation of the commentator should always be kept in mind so that we are not led astray by what we may perceive to be the fanciful extravagances of the commentary itself.[9]

In order to make sense of a text, commentaries rely on a few simple and intuitive principles, almost all of which are expressed through a set of terms that are used in their (oral and written) textual formulation. Some of these principles provided the titles for chapters in this book. Thus, description and contextualization (including specification),[10] for example, which served as rubrics for sets of terms in the present study,[11] are relatively well-defined basic principles of explanation, and both are accompanied by a set of terms used to articulate them.

On the other hand, there are other basic hermeneutic principles that cross the topical boundaries drawn in this study. One of the primary ways of making sense of something unknown is to compare it to something known—in other words, to construct an analogy. This principle underlies several of the hermeneutical techniques categorized in this book, for example lexical equations,

7 See Introduction, 2.2; Gabbay 2015b, 345–346.

8 See Gabbay 2015b.

9 See Introduction, 2.2.

10 For specification, see Gabbay 2015b.

11 See Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

where a rare or problematic lemma is equated with a better known word; or, in more complex hermeneutical processes, the equation of a lemma that is difficult to understand in its context with a lemma that makes better sense there. The terms that express lexical analogies were dealt with in the first part of Chapter 2. Description, too, can be carried out by analogy. Instead of cataloguing the features of an unknown or problematic phenomenon, one can liken it to a phenomenon that possesses similar features and is better understood, or less difficult in the context. The terms related to phenomenal analogy were dealt with in the second part of Chapter 2. A much more complex method of exegesis by analogy is the harmonization of texts, i.e., drawing an analogy between two different texts, or even reaching a new understanding of one text by analogy with another. This is often found in extispicy commentaries, as well as in cases where an analogy is drawn between one text and another, resulting in the reinterpretation of one or both of the texts. The terminology used to articulate such analogies is usually the regular terminology for contextualization, discussed in Chapter 3.[12] Finally, analogy is a basic feature of interpretation and of making sense of the world in the process of understanding ominous phenomena. As may be seen in Appendix 1, many of the terms employed in the process of interpreting omens, and especially the process of matching an omen to a textual entry, are based on analogy.[13]

Turning back to the role of terminology, it should be emphasized again that the exegetical terms dealt with in this study are just formulas that provide a rhetorical shorthand for the actual hermeneutics or modes of thought that lie behind them. In fact, most interpretations found in commentaries, especially equations, do not make use of exegetical terminology. The same hermeneutical processes that are regularly expressed in a specific set of terms are also found without them—indeed, the very same interpretation may be phrased both with and without scholarly jargon.

For example, a common feature of Akkadian commentaries is paraphrase. A paraphrase of a passage in the base text is usually given after an interpretation has been introduced. The hermeneutical advantage of paraphrase is that it incorporates the results of exegesis within the original wording, formula, or structure of the base text, thus maintaining the authority of the base text. There are a variety of terms that are used to introduce a paraphrase: *libbū, aššu, ana muḫḫi, umma, kī iqbû*, and *taqabbi*.[14] But it is important to emphasize that

12 See e.g., Chapter 3, 1.4 and Chapter 5, para. 2. For some examples of analogies between texts, see Gabbay 2015b and Gabbay, forthcoming 1.

13 See Appendix 1, para. 4.

14 See Chapter 3, 1.3, 3.2 with n. 49, 6.4, 6.6, Chapter 4, 2.2, Chapter 5, 4.1, and para. 6.

the act of paraphrasing in itself does not require these terms. See, for example, the following entry from the astrological *mukallimtu* commentary *Sîn ina tāmartišu*:[15]

> [DIŠ 30 TÙR *m*]*ar-ra-tu*$_4$ NIGIN LAL ŠE *u* ŠE.GIŠ.Ì *mar-ra-tu*$_4$ ^{d}TIR.AN.NA TÙR ^{d}TIR.AN.NA NIGIN-[*ma*$^{?}$]
>
> "[If the moon] is surrounded by a halo of a *marratu*—diminution of barley and sesame"—*marratu* = rainbow: (it) is surrounded by the halo of a rainbow.

The paraphrase of the protasis could have been marked with a term such as *kī iqbû* or *libbū*, but here it occurs alone, and in fact its status as a paraphrase is clear enough without any marker. Indeed, one can find instances where the same paraphrase occurs in two different commentaries but only one of them introduces it with exegetical terminology. Thus, one finds the following in an extispicy commentary:[16]

> BE NA *ka-bi-iṣ* GÍR KAR NA (*u*) GÍR *kab-su*
>
> "If the 'presence' is effaced, the 'path' is hindered"—the "presence" and the "path" are effaced.

The commentary paraphrases the original omen, using only one of the two verbs present in the original text. The exact same paraphrase of this omen is given in a different commentary where the citation of the original omen is followed by the phrase *ša iqbû*, "which it said," and the paraphrase is followed by *kī iqbû*, "as if (lit.: like) it said."[17] In the latter case, the commentary provides lexical support for this understanding after the paraphrase.

There are also cases where an interpretation that does not recycle the language of the base text occurs in two different commentaries, once with

15 Koch-Westenholz 1999, 161:122 (collated from photograph of K.4024+). Note also a paraphrase in the following entry, cited in Chapter 2, 1.2. For another case of paraphrase not introduced by terminology, see, e.g., LKA 82:12.

16 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:3.

17 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 20:9. This commentary is cited and discussed in Chapter 5, 4.1.2.

technical terminology and once without. Thus, a physiognomic commentary, probably from Babylon, explains an omen apodosis:[18]

[. . . *ig*]-ʳ*ri*ˀ *ul i-šet-su*: *ana i-di-šú in-nam-gar*

"Wages will not remain for him"—he is hired for work.

The commentary explains the "wages" in the base text using a specific case and a different vocabulary. A commentary from Uruk on the same apodosis contains the same explanation, but subordinates it with *aššu ša* (and consequently the verb is in the subjunctive, *innaggaru*), i.e., "concerning that he is hired for work."[19] But the commentary is clear without the use of *aššu ša*; the content of the explanation itself leads the reader to recognize it as an interpretation of the cited text. Thus, although the phrase "concerning that" makes the relationship between the base text and the commentary explicit, it is not necessary in this case. As will be discussed below, it is perhaps significant that the commentary with the term *aššu* stems from Uruk, and that the one lacking this term is probably from Babylon.

3 Textualization and the Presence or Absence of Exegetical Terminology in Akkadian Commentaries

The examples considered in the previous section raise the question: What function does exegetical terminology fulfill if its use in commentaries is optional, at least in some situtations? To begin to formulate an answer to this question, it is necessary to consider it within the larger context of questions related to the textualization of the (originally) mostly oral commentary tradition.

As noted in Chapter 1, the commentaries, and the exegetical terms they contain, are a reflection of the oral study environment in which canonical Mesopotamian literature was discussed by senior and junior scholars.[20] Nevertheless, the commentaries are not direct protocols of those discussions, but compilations drawn from oral lessons as well as from written sources.[21] Thus we may ask: Does the terminology used in commentaries reproduce the

18 BM 41623:r.10′ (CCP 3.7.2.K).

19 SBTU 1, 83:r.12 (Böck 2000a, 256:48; cf. *CAD* Š/II, 342a): *ig-ru ul i-šet-su áš-šú šá a-na i-di-šú in-na-ag-ga-ru*; see Chapter 3, n. 80.

20 See Chapter 1, especially para. 1 and para. 2.

21 See Chapter 1, para. 4.

language used by scribal circles in their original oral study of the texts? Or did the terminology of the written commentaries develop out of the process of compilation itself, as a kind of shorthand that, although rooted in scholarly discourse, actually epitomizes longer oral discussions in which the terminology known from the commentaries may not have been systematically employed? Coming back to the examples of parallel interpretations presented above,[22] does the use of a term such as *aššu* or *kī iqbû* in one interpretation but not in the other indicate that one commentary accurately rendered an actual oral discourse while the other did not? Or does it indicate, rather, that oral discussions were not conducted exclusively in scholarly jargon but were more free to use other verbal (and non-verbal) indications to make a point, and that standardized hermeneutic terminology chiefly developed in the context of written commentaries (even if originating in the oral discussions)?

I am unable to provide good answers to these questions. Before dealing with these questions, though, another factor that should be considered is the distribution of terminology over time, place, and genre. Two main groups will be considered here: Babylonian and Assyrian commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period from Nineveh and from Assur, and commentaries from the Late Babylonian period from Uruk and Nippur, and from Babylon and Borsippa. The patterns that emerge from this examination suggest that the proliferation of exegetical jargon in certain groups of tablets constitutes an attempt to simulate or preserve the language of the oral study environment, usually outside of Babylon(ia), where the oral commentary tradition was centered.

Before turning to the commentaries proper, it should be emphasized that some of their terminology, especially the term *ša iqbû*, or its Assyrian form *ša iqbûni*, occurs in letters by scholars to the Assyrian king that cite divinatory texts.[23] These letters, although not a direct transcription of scholarly colloquial speech, are nevertheless a good indication that at least some elements of the technical jargon in the commentaries were used in actual scholarly discourse.

The use of *ša iqbû* in the Neo-Assyrian letters conforms well with the wide use of this and other scholarly terms in *mukallimtu* commentaries on divination, especially extispicy, from the same period.[24] The Neo-Assyrian *mukallimtu* commentaries are attested on duplicate tablets, indicating that the written texts, including their terminology, had been standardized. Although these commentaries are known especially from tablets written in Neo-Assyrian script, there are a small number of such tablets written in Babylonian script,

22 See para. 2 above.

23 See Chapter 5, 1.2.1.

24 See Chapter 5, 1.1.1.

and it is likely in my view that the *mukallimtu* tradition derives from Babylonia, specifically Babylon.[25] Thus, we have here an originally Babylonian tradition preserved in tablets that have undergone a high level of textual standardization and contain a high percentage of scholarly terminology.

On the other hand, *ṣâtu* commentaries from Nineveh, especially those written in Babylonian script, do not exhibit a high level of textual standardization,[26] and often seem to be ad hoc compilations. Although these commentaries exhibit some terminology directly related to lessons conducted in the oral study environment,[27] they do not contain much terminology indicative of hermeneutical processes, such as *ana, ša iqbû*, etc. As opposed to the *mukallimtu* commentaries, where a high degree of standardization can be correlated with a high percentage of terminology, these *ṣâtu* commentaries, many of which are Babylonian in origin, exhibit a low level of textual standardization matched by a low percentage of terminology.

The evidence of the *ṣâtu* commentaries and the *mukallimtu* commentaries points to a counterintuitive conclusion. I maintain that the hermeneutical jargon of the commentaries ultimately derives from the oral study environment. Yet (originally Babylonian) *mukallimtu* commentaries, which went through some degree of textual standardization in the Neo-Assyrian period (and probably already in the early Neo-Babylonian period), seem to contain more exegetical terminology than the Babylonian *ṣâtu* texts that stem directly from the

25 See Frahm 2011, 277. Note the complicated transmission history that is indicated by the only preserved colophon of an extispicy commentary from Nineveh written in Babylonian script, which states that it is based on a "large tablet" from Assyria. See Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 42, text I (K.1315+), and see also Frahm 2011, 177–178. The complexity of the transmission of extispicy commentaries is also seen in the insertion, in at least two tablets, of commentary passages that use Assyrian dialect forms and are separated from the rest of the Standard Babylonian commentary by dividing lines and rubrics; see Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:24–32. In addition to the commentaries on divination, I assume that the Enūma eliš commentaries known from duplicate tablets from Nineveh and Assur, and relatively rich with terminology, also reflect a Babylonian tradition, although only later Babylonian tablets are known. For these commentaries, see Frahm 2011, 113–114; Lambert 2013, 135–136; Frahm and Jiménez 2015, 293–303. Note, though, that Frahm and Jiménez (2015, 303) do not think the commentary originated in Babylon, since it mentions gods from other cities (Ištar of Nineveh, Zababa of Kiš, Mār-bīti of Ešnuna), but at least in the case of the first two, these deities are known to have participated in festivals in Babylon; see, e.g., the participation of Zababa and the Lady of Nineveh in a festival in Babylon during the month of Kislīmu; George 2000, 280–289. Note also the participation of Mār-bīti (of Borsippa, not Ešnuna) in a festival in Babylon during Šabāṭu; George 2000, 289–299.

26 An exception is the Izbu Principal Commentary; see Frahm 2011, 203–206.

27 See Chapter 1, 2.2.

oral lessons conducted in schools. This suggests that exegetical terminology was being added to the Babylonian commentary traditions as they were standardized in written texts.

This proposition would seem to be supported also by commentaries on non-divinatory texts, specifically magical texts, known especially from Assur.[28] On the one hand, in my opinion, these commentaries ultimately witness a general Babylonian tradition. On the other hand, the presence of duplicate tablets indicates that the text of the commentaries had gone through a process of standardization. Moreover, the commentaries exhibit a large amount of exegetical terminology, some of which is clearly Assyrian (e.g., *mā*), reflecting the Assyrian study environment (of the originally Babylonian tradition).[29] Once again there is a correlation between the standardization of commentary tablets and a high proportion of technical jargon.

In sum, when lessons conducted in the original Babylonian oral study environment were transformed into ad hoc, non-standardized texts, they preserved little of the exegetical terminology used in oral study. Instead, the terms, or the hermeneutical processes they reflect, were transmitted for the most part alongside the texts in the oral tradition; the texts were a complement to the oral tradition and not a substitute for it. But when the written Babylonian tradition was standardized, an effort was made to ensure that the text was comprehensible without the oral tradition that had previously accompanied it. The terminology of the scholarly classroom discourse was incorporated into the standardized commentaries, resulting in texts that simulated the original study environment. In the case of the Assyrian commentaries, when an oral lesson was transformed into an ad hoc text, the terminology of the classroom was likewise incorporated into the text: Assyrian scholars, far removed from the core of the oral tradition in Babylonia, possessed a weaker oral commentary tradition, and hence what was previously transmitted orally had to be recorded textually. When these ad hoc texts were standardized in Assyrian scholarly circles, the terminology of the oral study environment was retained.

The situation in the Late Babylonian period is somewhat different: textual standardization was not achieved, but nevertheless commentaries are closely associated with processes of textualization. Texts from late Achaemenid and early Hellenistic Uruk and Nippur are rich in exegetical terminology. Although these texts often reflect common traditions, they hardly ever duplicate each

28 See Frahm 2011, 268–271.

29 See Chapter 1, 4.2.

other,[30] and their colophons rarely state that a tablet is a direct copy from an older original. Indeed, many of the Uruk colophons note that the commentary is based on a "lesson" (*malsûtu*).[31] Thus the level of textual standardization in the commentaries from Uruk and Nippur is low. On the other hand, the written commentaries are not simply ad hoc protocols of an oral lesson. As noted in Chapter 1, a variety of sources, both oral and written, were used in the compilation of these commentaries.[32] Moreover, these commentaries contain signs of careful editorial arrangement. For example, multiple explanations, probably going back to different sources,[33] are enumerated with the terms *šanîš*, "secondly," *šalšiš*, "thirdly," etc.; if multiple explanations were being presented orally, they would more likely be introduced by *šanîš*, "alternatively," and not listed in a fixed and numbered sequence.[34] In this context, another indication of editorial care is the level of organization the commentaries sometimes display when dealing with consecutive lemmata: in one example, the first lemma is followed by the term *kayyān*(*u*), "regular, actual," and then the second lemma appears, also followed by an explanation; then the commentary returns to the phrase that was earlier designated as *kayyān*(*u*) and adds an alternative interpretation.[35] This arrangement clearly points to an editorial procedure that treats passages from the base text as larger units instead of simply addressing individual lemmata. Thus, the Late Babylonian commentaries from Uruk and Nippur are not simply written records of an oral discourse; they were conceived as written compilations, even if they are not part of a standardized tradition. This compilation process attempted to include the oral sources and traditions that accompanied the written sources, and the resulting commentaries—like the standardized *mukallimtu* commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods—emulated the original oral study environment and its terminology in order to ensure that the material remained comprehensible.

Late Babylonian commentaries from Babylon and Borsippa, usually dating to later stages in the Hellenistic period, are not as rich in exegetical terminology as the Nippur and Uruk commentaries. On the other hand, the colophons of commentaries from Babylon and Borsippa seem to contain a slightly larger

30 For some exceptions, see Chapter 1, 4.3.1.3; there is also evidence that some of the tablets were copied from older tablets; see Gabbay and Jiménez, forthcoming.

31 Note, however, that this term has gone through a process of textualization itself, and does not refer directly to the actual oral lesson; see Chapter 1, 2.1.2.

32 See Chapter 1, para. 4.

33 See Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

34 See Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

35 See Chapter 4, 1.4.6.

number of indications that the commentary is a copy from an earlier source, thus indicating a higher tendency towards textual standardization. In these commentaries, however, the relatively higher level of textual standardization goes hand in hand with a lower percentage of scholarly terminology relative to the Uruk and Nippur commentaries. Nor do the standardized commentaries from Babylon and Borsippa display a high level of editing. For example, some of these commentaries introduce successive explanations with *šanîš*, "alternatively," without enumeration.[36] The casual editing and lack of jargon in these texts indicates, in my opinion, that they were transmitted alongside a healthy oral tradition, and hence there was no attempt to simulate the oral discourse of the study environment in the commentaries. Since I maintain that the core of the commentary tradition was located in Babylon, it makes sense that the oral tradition remained strong there and in nearby Borsippa; the oral tradition in Uruk and Nippur, however, was not native to these cities, and although it persisted, there was a tendency to record it in writing. Its written form simulated to some extent the oral tradition, as in the case of the Assyrian commentaries produced in the Neo-Assyrian period.

In conclusion, the use of technical terminology in written accounts of hermeneutical processes is related on the one hand to the notions of textualization, standardization, and editing, and on the other hand to the existence of an oral tradition. Another factor is the geographical origin of the commentaries and their proximity to Babylon, where the core of the tradition was maintained. In any case, the boundaries between all these conditions are not rigid, and the use or disuse of hermeneutical terminology in commentaries cannot be predicted according to strict rules.

36 See above and Chapter 1, 4.5.2 with n. 337.

APPENDIX 1

Terms for Interpretation Found in Divinatory Sources

Divinatory texts feature a set of hermeneutical terms that are used in the interpretation of observed phenomena. Most of these terms are specific to divinatory texts, but some also appear in commentaries on written texts. In divinatory contexts, these terms are related to the interpretation of an observed phenomenon and not to the interpretation of a text (or of a textual description of a phenomenon). The overlap between the terminology of divinatory texts and the terminology of the commentaries demonstrates the relation between divinatory phenomenal interpretation and textual interpretation.[1]

1 Divination Conducted in Response to a Royal Question or Request

Acts of provoked divination such as extispicy, in which the diviner deliberately performs an action in order to produce a sign to be interpreted, are carried out at the request of an individual, usually the king. Thus, the phrase *išâlka šarru*, "the king will ask you" is found in the context of calculating the stipulated term of an extispicy prediction.[2] Similarly, the divinatory process is considered to be the "request" of the king rather than a question, also in the context of calculating the stipulated term:[3]

BE-*ma* LUGAL EN-*ka a-na* [UD]/ITI UD.DU$_{11}$.GA *šá-ka-na*(*m*) *ir-reš-ka*

If the king, your lord, requests from you to determine a term for a [day]/month.

The initiation of the divinatory action, an action that is interpretive in nature, with a question or request by a high authority, the king, is reminiscent of the initiation of the process of textual interpretation with a question by the teacher-scholar.[4]

1 It should be noted that although textual and phenomenal interpretation are treated as two separate disciplines, it is possible to regard textual commentaries as a type of phenomenal interpretation where the phenomena are the texts and the lemmata comprising them.

2 Koch 2005, no. 104:r.7′.

3 Koch 2005, no. 95:r.10′, 12′.

4 See Chapter 1, 2.1.3, 2.3.

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2 Observation

The precise observation of an ominous phenomenon is the first step in the process of its interpretation. In the art of extispicy it is the verb *barû*, "to observe, check, see," that is used to describe the inspection of the exta. Careful observation of a feature of the exta leads to the correct identification of a sign that can be paired with a textual omen entry and interpreted. Other verbs of sight are also used for making observations during the course of divination, such as *amāru*, *dagālu*, and *ḫâṭu*.

2.1 amāru, *"to see"*

A verb used quite frequently in divination is *amāru*, "to see, look," referring not to a simple chance observation but to a deliberate inspection or a search. Thus, in extispicy texts referring to the calculation of the stipulated term, where elements in the exta must be located in order to calculate the term during which the prediction is valid, the search for those elements is often expressed with the verb *amāru*.[5] A similar use is attested for the verb *ḫâṭu*, "to examine," in reference to the inspection of a detail in the exta prior to interpreting it.[6]

The verb *amāru* is also used of celestial observations. In an astrological report to the Assyrian king, it refers to observing, or even anticipating, a celestial event.[7] In a complex eclipse omen involving a certain day and time, as well as the blowing of the north wind,[8] the eclipse is said to be watched (*tammarma*), while the north wind is to be considered along with it (*ina qātika tukāl*).[9]

The same verb can also refer to "looking up" a phenomenon in a text in order to interpret it.[10]

2.2 ina qātika tukāl, *"you hold in your hand": Complex Multi-Element Observation*

When an ominous phenomenon contains more than one element, such as an eclipse that begins in one part of the sky and ends in another, all of the elements need to be considered together to guarantee a correct prediction. The Akkadian idiom for keeping

5 Koch 2005, no. 91:1, no. 93:1, probably also no. 93:12, 38, no. 94:21, no. 95:r.11′, no. 100:4′.

6 See Koch 2005, no. 91:1, no. 95:r.10′, no. 97:4, 5.

7 E.g., various uses in SAA 8, 293:r.1–9.

8 Cited in SAA 8, 300:r.5–10 and 336:r.1–8; cf. Rochberg-Halton 1988, 190:1–6.

9 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 190:4, SAA 8, 300:r.7, 306:r.3. Cf. also Rochberg-Halton 1988, 226:21.

10 See 6.2 below.

track of a particular aspect of a phenomenon observed during divination is "holding it in the hand" in order not to lose sight of it. For example:[11]

> DIŠ *ina* ITI.ŠE UD.14.KAM AN.MI GAR-*ma ina* IM.U_{18}.LU SAR-*ma ina* IM.SI.SÁ *iz-ku* / *ina* EN.NUN AN.ÚSAN SAR-*ma ina* EN.NUN U_4.ZAL.LE *iz-ku* IM.U_{18}.LU *ina* ŠU-*ka tu-kal* KAxMI-*šú* IGI-*ma ana* LUGAL KI.ŠÁR.RA EŠ.BAR SUM-*in* . . .
>
> If an eclipse occurs on the fourteenth of Addāru, and it begins in the south and clears in the north, it begins in the evening watch and it clears in the morning watch—hold the "south" in your hand, and watch its eclipse—the judgment (= prediction) is given for the king of the universe . . .

The same phrase can also be used to describe the consultation of written sources when more than one text needs to be taken into consideration. Thus, the Diviner's Manual states:[12] *tup-pi* 2-*ma ina* ŠU-*ka tu-kal*, "you hold a second tablet in your hand."

3 Verification and Acceptance of a Phenomenon as Ominous

3.1 kullu, *"to hold": Holding, Considering, and Defining a Phenomenon as Ominous*

Nature is a sequence of ever-occurring phenomena, but not every natural phenomenon was considered ominous. Part of the process of interpretation was identifying those phenomena that qualified as omens and determining whether they augured a benevolent or malevolent result. The verb regularly used for making these determinations in astrological reports is *kullu*, "to hold."

Thus, e.g., Ištar-šum-ereš writes to the Assyrian king to explain that although a written omen deals only with a mongoose passing between a man's legs, a mongoose passing between the wheels of a chariot is also considered ominous: "we regard (lit.: hold) it as a sign" (*a-na it-ti-ma nu-ka-al*).[13]

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11 Rochberg-Halton 1988, 248, XII:1–4. For other occurrences, cf. also Rochberg-Halton 1988, 190:4, 211, top: 6, 225:r.4′, 250, b:5, SBTU 4, 162:8, SAA 8, 336:r.3.

12 Oppenheim 1974, 200:48 (contra Oppenheim's translation on p. 205 with n. 32). See also Chapter 1, 4.3.1.2.

13 SAA 10, 33:r.1–2.

A similar phrase is also used to denote whether an ominous event is considered favorable or unfavorable. Thus, also in a letter by Ištar-šum-ereš, an ominous phenomenon concerning Mars "is considered (lit.: they hold, *ú-kal-lu-ni*) unfavorable."[14]

Somewhat differently, the verb *kullu* is found together with *pišru* in a letter, where it refers to the continuing validity of the interpretation of an ominous event (literally: "its interpretation still holds," *pi-šìr-šú uk-ta-ta-la-ma*) despite interference from other phenomena.[15]

4 The Process of Interpretation: Matching, Specification, Comparison, and Analogy

4.1 ittu, *"sign": The "text" of the Natural Phenomenon*

The sign worthy of interpretation is the natural phenomenon observed, usually an astronomical event. The noun that regularly refers to this phenomenon (but not necessarily its implications) is *ittu*.[16] Therefore, astrological reports to the Assyrian king often mention the "sign," sometimes followed by an evaluation indicating what the sign may predict.[17] This is of course part of the interpretation process, since the prediction can be given and confirmed by matching the "sign" with a description found in the protasis of a written omen and noting the corresponding prediction in its apodosis. Therefore, the exact observation and description of a phenomenon is actually the crucial part of the interpretation process.

Indeed, other attestations of *ittu* in astrological reports already involve the process of interpretation. The task of the diviner is to match the actual observation with a recorded observation—the description in the protasis of an omen entry. But just as all the facts of a legal case can never be placed in a precise one-to-one correspondence with the stipulations of a written law, there are features associated with the observed phenomenon that have no parallel in any protasis, and thus the matching of sign and omen requires some interpretation and justification. The correspondence between the observed sign and the sign described in writing is formulated in the phrase *ittu*

14 SAA 10, 8:r.10. Cf. also SAA 8, 98:6: IM.DUGUD SIG_5 *šu-u a-na* ḪUL *la uk-ta-la*, "this is a favorable fog, it is not considered unfavorable." Note also the evaluation of a month as favorable, usually provoked by the question: (ITI *an-ni-u*) *mì-i-nu tu-ka*(*-l*)*-la*, "what do you consider (this month)?" and followed by the answer: ITI *an-ni-u*$_{(2)}$ ITI ŠE *nu-ka*(*-a*)*-la*, "we consider this month a favorable month." See SAA 10, 23:10–11, 72:r.8–10; cf. SAA 10, 152:2′ and SAA 8, 3:4.

15 SAA 10, 363:r.12.

16 See Maul 1994, 5–10.

17 See, e.g., SAA 8, 98:r.7, 220:r.3, 283:1–7, 495:r.2.

meḫir itti, "a sign corresponding to a sign," attested in a few reports.[18] In some cases an observed "sign" (*ittu*) is said to correspond with another sign.[19]

In extispicy texts and commentaries, "sign" likewise refers to the characteristics of the phenomenon and not to what it predicts. Thus, lists of difficult "signs"—protases without apodoses—may be assembled for didactic reasons, as the rubric of one such list states:[20]

> UZU^{I}.MEŠ (var.: BE-*ma* MU.MEŠ)[21] *šá ina ba-ru-ti* KÚR.MEŠ-*ma* GIZKIM-*šú-nu ana la-ma-di* KUR-*át*
>
> Anatomical features (var. omen entries) that are *contradicted* in the *bārûtu*-corpus but their sign(s) is/are *sufficient* for study.

The use of "sign" to refer to characteristics named in the protasis of an omen is also found in two phrases that occur in commentaries: *ša iqbû ittašunu iddinu* and *šumma ittašunu ana pānika*.[22]

The relation between phenomenon and text is also mentioned in extispicy, but on a more complex hermeneutical level. When calculating the stipulated term of the prediction of a sign, textual and mathematical support is sought in vocabularies. A connection between two entirely different disciplines, represented by the phenomenal extispicy and the textual lexical compositions, is explicitly stated in a dub ḫa-la tablet:[23]

> GIZKIM UDU.NÍTA *né-re-bu šá* NAM.AZU *ina ṣa-a-ti u* NÍG.ŠID *i-tap-pal*
>
> The sign of the sheep, the entrance of extispicy, corresponds in the *ṣâtu*-lists and calculations.[24]

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18 See SAA 8, 40:6′, 63:4–5, 370:r.1. That the phrase was regarded as a technical term is indicated by the glosses accompanying it in SAA 8, 63:4.

19 Cf. SAA 8, 69:3–r.3 (the sun and Jupiter), and SAA 8, 248:r.6.

20 Koch 2005, nos. 37:30, 55:1, 114:r.7′, 115:7. See also the discussion of this passage in Chapter 1, 1.1.

21 The reading UZU^{I} is according to the collation of K.11711 from a photograph (Koch 2005, 549, no. 115:7). The variant BE-*ma* MU.MEŠ appears in CT 30, 43 (perhaps also in other texts, but not preserved). The introduction with *šumma* (BE-*ma*) may be an indication that *ana* IGI-*ka* should be restored at the end of the line in this case; see also Chapter 1, 1.1.

22 See Chapter 5, 1.4.4, and Chapter 1, 3.2.5.

23 Koch 2005, no. 95:r.3′.

24 Or "the sign of the sheep corresponds to the entrance of extispicy in the *ṣâtu*-lists and calculations."

Lastly, a fully textual use of *ittu* is found in a lexical commentary, where the word *it-ti* or *it-tú* precedes each sub-entry that begins with a sign.[25]

5 Specifying and Referencing the Ominous Event Using Prepositions

5.1 ana, *"(portends) to"*

The most important goal in the interpretation of an ominous event is to find out what it portends. In astrological reports this is often indicated by the preposition *ana*, "to." For example, in the following report dealing with the eclipse of the moon:[26]

> [AN.MI EN.N]UN AN.ÚSAN *a-na* ÚŠ.ME
>
> [An eclipse in] the evening [wat]ch (portends) to deaths.

Or, in a different report, regarding an earthquake:[27]

> [DIŠ?] *ri-i-bu ana na-bal-kat-ti*
>
> An earthquake (portends) to revolution.

5.2 ana, *"(specified) for"*

In addition to the regular use of *ana* before a direct reference to a predicted event, the preposition can also indicate specific details of that event, namely the person or entity who will be affected. This is the regular method of specification in the divination literature itself.[28] An example is found in the following astrological report, which indicates the favorability or unfavorability of an omen in relation to (Akkadian: *ana*, "for") the specific person or land affected by it:[29]

---

25 MSL 14, 323–326; see Frahm 2011, 245. It is less likely that the preposition *itti* is intended here. See also Chapter 1, para. 2. For the semantic identity of a graphic "sign" and an ominous "sign," cf. Hebrew *'ôt*, also relating to both; see Appendix 2. Note also GIZKIM = *ittu* in scribal context (nam-dub-sar // *tupšarrūtu*) in Sjöberg 1975, 140:5 (*Examenstext* A).

26 SAA 8, 300:r.13.

27 SAA 8, 495:r.1. For other occurrences of *ana* in this use, see SAA 8, 4:9; SAA 8, 80:6–10; SAA 8, 220:r.3; SAA 8, 316:3; SAA 8, 535:r.11, r.13(?). See also Chapter 3, para. 2.

28 See Chapter 3, 2.1 with n. 27.

29 SAA 8, 283:1–7. For another example of *ana* used in this way, see SAA 8, 336:r.12: *ana* LUGAL DI-*mu*.

GIZKIM *šá a-na* LUGAL *lem-né-ti a-na* KUR *dam-qat*$^{!}$ / GIZKIM *šá a-na* KUR *dam-qa-ti a-na* LUGAL *lem-n*[*é-et*] / *i-na mi-ni-i lu-mur* LUGAL *i-qab-bi-ma* / DIŠ MUL.LUGAL *ana* IGI 30 TE-*ma* GUB UD.MEŠ NUN TIL.MEŠ / *a-mat te-še-e*$^{!}$ *ina* KUR DU_8-*ár ana* KUR SIG_5 / DIŠ MUL.LUGAL *ana* UGU 30 [x-*m*]*a* GUB LUGAL UD.MEŠ *ma-'-du-tú* TIN-*uṭ* / [KUR NU.SI.SÁ . . . *ana* KUR] ḪUL

A sign that is unfavorable for the king is favorable for the land; a sign that is favorable for the land is unfavora[ble] for the king.

The king will say: "in what can I see (this)?"

(Answer): "If Regulus (Akkadian: "King star") approaches before the moon and stands (there)—the days of the ruler will come to an end; a confusing word will be solved in the land." For the land—favorable.

"If Regulus [. . .] to the top of the moon and stands (there)—the king will live for many days; [the land will not prosper . . ." For the land]—unfavorable.

5.3 ina muḫḫi, *"concerning"*

The process of interpreting an ominous phenomenon involves finding out who this phenomenon refers to, i.e., who will be affected by this phenomenon. Therefore, scholarly letters and reports often name the person or place that the observation concerns using the phrase "on, about," *ina muḫḫi*.[30]

For example, in a letter to the Assyrian king, Bēl-ušēzib mentions ominous phenomena and their implications, indicating the referent of these implications twice:[31]

lum-nu-um šu-ú ina UGU KUR *man-na-a-a* / *šu-ú . . . mim-ma ina* ŠÀ-*bi* / GIZKIM.MEŠ *a-ga-a ina* UGU LUGAL *be-lí-iá u* KUR-*šú ia-a-nu*

It (= an ominous phenomenon concerning the moon) is a bad (omen); it concerns the land of the Manneans . . . There is nothing within these signs that concerns the king, my lord, and his land.

A vivid example of the hermeneutics involved in this process can be seen in the following letter to the Assyrian king:[32]

30 Cf. the similar term *ana muḫḫi . . . qabi* that is used for specification in commentaries; see Chapter 5, 3.2. Cf. also Chapter 3, n. 2.

31 SAA 10, 112:6–7, 26–27. For similar occurrences of *ina muḫḫi*, see SAA 10, 111:r.7; SAA 10, 351:8–9.

32 SAA 10, 33:6–r.4.

ša LUGAL *be-li iš-pur-an-ni ma-a ú-la*ʾ *ina bi-rit pu-ri-di a-me-li e-ti-iq ina* UGU *ša šap-la* ^{giš}GIGIR-*e tu-ṣu-u-ni ina* UGU-*ḫi šu-*ʿ*u*ʾ LUGAL *be-li i-qab-*[*bi*] *ma-a pu-ri-di* ʿ*a*ʾ-[*me-li*] *pu-ri-di ki-ma* ʿ*bi*ʾ-*ri*[*t pu-ri-di*] / *ša* LÚ *ú-ṣ*[*a* ^{d}NIN.KILIM] / *šu-u bi-r*[*it* x x x (x)] / *is-s*[*u-r*]*i* x [x x x] […] *a-na it-ti-ma* / *nu-ka-al šu-u* ^{d}[NIN.KILIM] / TA* GÙB *a-na* ZAG ʿ*e*ʾ-[*te-ti-iq*] / *šap-la* GIŠ.GIGIR *it-*[*tu-ṣi*] / *ša pu-ri-di* ʿ*a*ʾ-[*me-li*] / *ša* LUGAL *be-li i*[*q-bu-u-ni*] / *an-ni-u pi-*[*šir-šu*] / DIŠ ^{d}NIN.KILIM *ina b*[*i-rit*] / PAP.ḪAL LÚ *e-*[*ti-iq*] / *lu-u* ŠU DINGIR *lu-u* ʿŠUʾ ʿLUGALʾ KUR-*su*

> As to what the king, my lord, sent to me, thus: "*Does* (the omen) '(If a mongoose) passes between the legs of a man' apply to (lit.: about, *ina muḫḫi*) one who came out under the chariot?"—it does apply (lit.: it is about, *ina muḫḫi šū*)." The king, my lord, say[s]: " 'The legs of a m[an]'—'legs' (applies only) when it emerges between a man's [legs]. That [mongoose passed] between [*the wheels of the chariot*(?)], perhaps […]?" … (Nevertheless), we consider it an omen. The [mongoose] pa[ssed] from left to right and em[erged] from underneath the chariot. As for "the legs of a m[an]" about which the king, my lord, s[poke], this is [its] int[erpretation]: "If a mongoose pa[sses] bet[ween] the legs of a man—the hand of the god or the hand of the king will seize him."

In this letter, the reality under consideration is that of a mongoose passing under a chariot from left to right. The king inquires whether a textual omen regarding a mongoose passing under a man's legs may be applied (lit. "about," *ina muḫḫi*) to this event, or whether the omen should be taken strictly literally. The scholar assures him that the event is ominous, and that the omen dealing with the mongoose and a man's legs can be extrapolated to include the case of a mongoose and a chariot as well.

6 Matching the Phenomenon with a Text

Since the diviner's authority in the first millennium BCE was rooted in the textual tradition of omens, a valid interpretation of a phenomenon had to be linked to an authoritative text.

6.1 amatu, *"word"*

A few scholarly letters to the Assyrian king refer to the textual formulation of a natural phenomenon (and consequently also to its ominous prediction) as a "word" (*amatu*, Neo-Assyrian: *abutu*). A clear case in which the "word" relates directly to a text is found in a letter to the Assyrian king by Akkullanu, who refers to the message of a cited omen as a "word":[33]

33 SAA 10, 84:9–15.

> ^{d}SAG.ME.GAR *ina* EGIR 30 *i-ti-ti-zi an-ni-u pi-šìr-š*[*ú*] / DIŠ MUL.SAG.ME.GAR *ina* [EGIR ^{d}30] GUB-*iz* MÍ.KÚR *ina* KUR [GÁL-*ši*] / LUGAL *be-lí* ⌜*a*⌝-[*bu-tú*] *in-nu-*⌜*u*⌝ [*ši-i*]
>
> Jupiter stood behind the moon; this is its interpretation: "If Jupiter stands [behind the Moon]—there will be hostility in the land." Oh king, my lord, [this is] a w[ord] concerning us!

The word *amatu* often appears with the third-person possessive suffix (*abassu*), indicating the close correspondence between the phenomenon and the text.[34] Conversely, when a phenomenon is not considered to hold any ominous significance, and indeed cannot be matched with an omen, the chief scribe Issar-šumu-ereš assures the king that the phenomenon "has no word about it (at all)" (*a-bat-su* (*a-na ga-mur-ti*) *la-áš-šú*).[35]

In one case the use of *amatu* is part of a hermeneutical process that is similar to the exegesis found in commentaries. In an astrological report to the Assyrian king, Nabû-šumu-iškun cites omens concerning the moon in reference to a celestial phenomenon involving Mercury. In order to justify the citation of these supposedly unrelated omens, he notes:[36] *šá* ^{d}30 *u* ^{d}GU$_4$.UD 1^{l}+*et*^{l} *a-mat-su*^{l}-*nu*^{l}, "the word of the moon and Mercury is one," i.e., the cited omens about the moon may be interpreted as referring to Mercury. The use of *ištēn*, "one," here is reminiscent of its use in textual commentaries.[37]

6.2 amāru, *"look up"*

As noted above, the verb *amāru*, "to see," is used of the observation of a sign,[38] but on rare occasions it is used to refer to the process of "looking up" the phenomenon (and its interpretation) in a text.[39]

In an astrological report to the Assyrian king, Nergal-eṭir attempts to show that just because an omen is unfavorable for the land, it is not necessarily unfavorable for the king too. On the contrary, the same phenomenon can actually have a favorable prediction for the king. Nergal-eṭir then rhetorically asks where this is attested, using the verb *amāru* (*i-na mi-ni-i lu-mur*, "in what can I see (this)?"). The answer consists of two

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34 Cf. the examples immediately below and SAA 10, 84:r.2 (suffix restored). In the same manner, the king (probably) inquires about a potential lunar eclipse in SAA 10, 26:r.1′–2′: *ma-a šum-ma i*^{l}-⌜*šá*^{l}⌝-[*kan*] / *mi-i-nu a-bat-su*, "if it should occ[ur], what is the word about it?" The answer to this question is admittedly not the citation of the omen itself, but it is a conclusion based on textual authority.

35 SAA 10, 8:r.12, 22, 27.

36 SAA 8, 371:r.3.

37 See Chapter 1, 1.3.

38 See 2.1 above.

39 Note the restoration in SAA 10, 84:r.2: *a-bat*-[*su la-mur*], where the reference is probably to looking up an omen related to a phenomenon.

citations of omens, one favorable for the land but unfavorable for the king, and one unfavorable for the land but favorable for the king. The passage is cited above.[40]

The verb *amāru* is also used of looking up a phenomenon in a text during extispicy. Thus, e.g., in the process of calculating the stipulated term of an ominous prediction:[41] [*ina ṣa-a-ti*(?)] *ù* NÍG.ŠID-*mi lu-mur*.[42]

6.3 pišru*: Prediction Based on the Correspondence Between a Phenomenon and a Written Omen*

The hermeneutical term used most widely in the correspondence of scholars with the Assyrian king is *pišru*. Originally, *pišru* simply referred to an interpretation of a phenomenon that did not require textual justification.[43] In the first millennium BCE, however, the grounding of the diviner's authority in a textual tradition gave *pišru* a specific technical meaning attested in letters and reports to the Assyrian king. It now signified matching a phenomenon with the protasis of a textual omen and using its apodosis to explain the meaning of the phenomenon or make a prediction.

6.3.1 *pišru* in Divinatory Texts Excluding Reports and Letters to the Assyrian King

First, the basic meaning of *pišru* outside of letters and reports, namely a simple interpretation of an omen, will be examined. The noun *pišru* means "solution" or "interpretation."[44] This "interpretation" is often equivalent to the prediction formulated in the apodosis of an omen. Therefore, on a textual level, *pišru* may refer to the content of the apodosis of an omen. For example, the noun *piširtu*, in all likelihood similar in meaning to *pišru*,[45] occurs in a rubric after the enumeration of protases of various extispicy omens, without their apodoses:[46]

> *šu-ta-bu-ul-ta-šu*$_{(2)}$*-nu pi-šir-ta-šu*$_{(2)}$*-nu* GIM (var. *ki-ma*) *šá* ŠUB [GU.ZA]
>
> Their interpretation and their prediction (i.e., the interpretations and predictions of protases listing marks on the lungs) is like that of the "[throne]-base."

40 See 5.2 above. SAA 8, 283:1–7.

41 Koch 2005, no. 95:r.3′ (cf. no. 95:r.5′), and no. 100:7′; for restoration, cf. Koch 2005, no. 95:r.4′.

42 Note that in entirely textual matters, the verb *dagālu* can be used for "looking up" something in a text; see Chapter 1, 4.4.1.1.

43 See 6.3.1 below.

44 See the discussion and list of previous studies in Gabbay 2012, 298–304.

45 Note the plural *pišrāti* in SAA 10, 56:13, r.2 (could *piširtu* be a back formation?).

46 Koch 2005, no. 32:157 (cf. Heeßel 2012, no. 70).

Since the omens are not cited with apodoses, this rubric notes that the process of interpreting the omens and their actual interpretation (*piširtu*), which usually appears as a textual apodosis, are to be derived from an analogy with omens pertaining to the "throne-base."

Sometimes the formulation of a potential phenomenon in the protasis of an omen is considered cryptic because it describes an unclear or impossible situation. In such cases, the act of clarifying the situation by placing it in a more apparent context is considered the interpretation of the phenomenon, its *pišru*. For example, an astronomical text presents a potential combination of complex phenomena occurring with a moon eclipse:[47]

> *ki-i* MÚL.E$_4$.RU$_6$ *a-na ziq-pi* GUB-*zu-ma* ^{d}30 AN.MI [*ú-ša*]*r-ru-*^{r}*ú*$^{\neg}$ MÚL.E$_4$.RU$_6$ MÚL.KI.DIDLI MÚL ^{d}PA *u* ^{d}LUGAL *a-di-i* ^{d}UTU MÚL.KI.DIDLI KUR-*ád pi-šèr-šá* AN.MI *ul ú-šar-ra-a*
>
> When Coma Berenices culminates, and a moon eclipse [should be]gin, (and) Coma Berenices, Virgo, Saggitarius, and Regulus (are present in the sky?) until the sun reaches Virgo—its interpretation (*piširša*): the eclipse will not begin.

The phenomenon relates to a lunar eclipse that was calculated to occur according to the culmination of a star,[48] but the sun then reaches Virgo. The meaning (*pišru*) of this is that an eclipse cannot occur, since the sun is not in the right position; this in turn implies that when the situation appears in the protasis of an omen it should not be regarded as a prediction of a lunar eclipse. Thus, the term *pišru* here does not relate to the prediction of the eclipse, but rather to the meaning of the complex, even impossible, phenomenon treated in the description. Once the phenomenon is clear, the prediction can be given accordingly.

The use of *pišru* to indicate a reinterpretation of a protasis is found in an astrological commentary from Uruk, where the phrase *pišir ana libbi taqabbi* follows the new interpretation.[49]

6.3.2 (*ul*) *pašir*(*?*), "(not) interpreted"

The predicative adjective of the verb *pašāru* occurs in a context that is probably similar to those in which the noun *pišru* is found. It appears in negated form (written: NU BÚR) with entries of *Iqqur īpuš* omens that, unlike other lines in the same sequence,

47 SBTU 3, 102:12–14; also lines 8, 11, 17, r.5, r.9 of the same text, and 103:5, 8, 11, 14, 17.

48 For this practice, see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227 (ad Rev. line 6′).

49 SBTU 4, 103, 162:r.17 (and probably also line 8; cf. copy on p. 186) // *AfO* 14, pl. VI:r.7′ (see Rochberg-Halton 1988, 227:7′). Cf. also LBAT 1611:19′, 21′: *pišri ina libbi*.

do not present an astronomical explanation.[50] Here the act of "interpretation," *pašāru*, refers to matching an omen with an astronomical phenomenon, the latter helping to explain the former; this is similar to the matching of a natural phenomenon with a textual omen indicated by the noun *pišru*, especially in astrological reports.[51]

Interestingly, the same phrase appears also in a textual context. A Seleucid tablet containing excerpts from the Balaĝ abzu pe-el-lá-àm has rubrics with the remark MU.MEŠ NU BÚR.MEŠ.[52] The remark would seem to refer to the lack of an Akkadian translation of the Sumerian text. However, the tablet does contain such translations. Perhaps the remark refers to the absence of translations in the original tablet from which the excerpt was made, or to something else.[53]

One more attestation of BÚR in connection with what seems to be a translation or textual interpretation is found in an Assurbanipal colophon to tablets of the Uruana plant list in Nineveh, where Assurbanipal portrays himself as the editor and reorganizer of the composition. The entries in this list are described thus: Ú.ḪI.A *šá ina ṣa-a-ti u* EME BÚR.MEŠ, "plants that are interpreted(?) in *ṣâtu*-lists and *lišānu* vocabularies."[54]

6.3.3 *pišru* in Reports and Letters to the Assyrian King

The most widespread use of the noun *pišru* is found in Assyrian and Babylonian letters and reports on ominous phenomena, almost always celestial, addressed to the Assyrian king. The most frequent use of the noun in these reports and letters is to introduce a citation of an omen. Thus the *pišru*, "interpretation," is the link between a celestial phenomenon, believed to be ominous, and an authoritative textual omen that describes that phenomenon in its protasis. The main hermeneutical process is the establishment of this correspondence, since a phenomenon will hardly ever completely match a text. Once the phenomenon has been linked to the protasis of an omen, its apodosis yields a prediction. The citation of the omen is introduced with the words "this is its interpretation (*piširšu*)."[55] Other texts refer to the writing (*šaṭāru*),

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50 Reiner and Pingree 1998, 149:7, 150:19, 154.

51 See 6.3.3 below.

52 CTMMA 2+SBH 35; Maul 2005, 20–21, no. 2:19, [r.11]; Gabbay 2015a, no. 1 (text D r.18).

53 See Maul 2005, 25; Gabbay 2015a, 34.

54 Hunger 1968, no. 320:2 (Asb. type f).

55 Forms: *annû*/*anniu piširšu*: SAA 10, 8:23, r.6, 33:r.7, SAA 8, 8:2, r.4 (Ištar-šuma-ereš), SAA 10, 84:10–11, 88:r.4, 94:10–11, SAA 8, 104:[6] (Akkullanu), SAA 8, 97:r.2?, SAA 8, 167:r.7 (after omens), SAA 8, 175:2, 7, 178:2 (Šumaya), SAA 8, 488:3, SAA 8, 502:17, SAA 8, 555:r.2′. *kī annî piširšu*: SAA 10, 13:15, SAA 10, 55:3′–4′, SAA 10, 104:8′–9′, r.5′, r.9′, 105:[4′–5′(?)] (Akkullanu?), SAA 10, 105:16′–17′, SAA 10, 362:10′, r.2, SAA 8, 95:r.5–6, 96:r.3(?), 97:r.2(?) (Balasî), SAA 8, 186:r.4: *ki-i a*[*n-ni-i*] *pi-šá-ar-šú*; cf. *akî annî piširšu*: SAA 10, 364:r.11. Note *piširšu* alone: SAA 8, 325:3.

excerpting (*nasāḫu*), sending (*šapāru*), and reading (*amāru*) of the textual omens that serve as this *pišru*.[56]

There is one letter that refers a few times to the noun *pišru* in a purely textual sense, as the apodosis of a textual omen: "the prediction(s) (*pišru*, *pišrāte*) to (textual omen) entries (*šume*, *ša šumē*)."[57] It has the same meaning in reference to monthly omens, and also in the statement "if '(the king) will be slighted (among his noblemen)' is its prediction (referring to an apodosis mentioned earlier in the letter)—it is the earthquake."[58] Note also a noncanonical omen where, after a phenomenon is described in a textual "protasis," the apodosis is introduced with the regular phrase "this is its interpretation" (*an-ni-ú pi-šìr-šú*).[59]

7 Interpretation Based on Analogical Phenomena

7.1 kīma . . . tuštabbal, *"you interpret like . . ."*

Interpretation is the next step after the examination and observation of a phenomenon. In the context of omens, one of the verbs most frequently used to describe interpretation is *šutābulu*.[60] Only one specific use of the verb in commentaries and related texts will be mentioned here.[61] As with other exegetical terms that were used for divination, *šutābulu* found its way into purely textual exegetical contexts. Thus, in *Examenstext* A it appears with what is likely to be a term for translation as one of the scholarly methods the student has to master: KA-bal inim ḫi-ḫi // KA.BAL.E.DA *šu-ta-bu-la*.[62] More specifically, the phrase *la tuš-ta-bal*, "do not interpret!," appears in a Late Babylonian commentary on grammatical terms.[63]

As a hermeneutical term, *šutābulu* is used in divination to draw analogies with other known phenomena. This is done by pairing it with the preposition *kīma*. Two examples appear in commentaries on liver omens: KAR-tu_4 GIM GIŠ.TUKUL-*ma*

56 See SAA 10, 67:14–15, 100:8, 101:r.12, 148:12–14, 172: r.2–4, 202:12, 347:r.3′–5′, 362:r.11–12, 363:r.6–7, SAA 8, 101:5, 102:r.9, 386:r.1–2. Note also SAA 10, 363:r.11–17, and probably SAA 10, 203:r.4–8.

57 SAA 10, 56:6–8, 13–r.2.

58 SAA 10, 56:r.2–6, with Pongratz-Leisten 1999, 37.

59 SAA 10, 8:r.3–8.

60 See Koch 2005, no. 97:4, 5, no. 102:[2]: *ḫi-iṭ šu-ta-bil-ma*.

61 The form is traditionally derived from *abālu*, although *apālu* may also be possible; see the discussion in CAD A/I, 29a. For this verb in exegetical contexts, see Frahm 2011, 57. For more on this verb, see also Chapter 4, 2.3.1.

62 Sjöberg 1975, 140:14.

63 Leichty 1973, 80: 24. See also Chapter 4, 2.3.1.2.

tuš-tab-bal, "you interpret a 'hidden part' as a 'weapon,"[64] and *pil-ša* GIM *ši-li-im-ma tuš-tab-bal*, "you interpret a perforation as a 'hole'."[65]

The noun *šutābultu* is also used of interpretation by analogy: *šu-ta-bu-ul-ta-šu*$_{(2)}$*-nu pi-šir-ta-šu*$_{(2)}$*-nu* GIM (var. *ki-ma*) *šá* ŠUB [GU.ZA], "Their interpretation and their prediction is like that of the 'throne base'."[66]

7.2 kīma . . . taḫarraṣ/ tuštaḫarraṣ, *"you consider like . . ."*

Like the verb *šutābulu*, the verb *ḫarāṣu* may be used to describe interpretation by analogy.[67] Thus, two astrological commentaries contain the phrase: . . . GIM AN.MI *ta-ḫar-ra-aṣ*, "you consider . . . as an eclipse."[68] And similarly also in the Š stem: GIM *maḫ-ru-ti-ma tuš-ta-ḫar-ra-aṣ*, "you consider . . . as the previous (entry)."[69]

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64 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 19:25.

65 Koch-Westenholz 2000, no. 83:21.

66 Koch 2005, no. 32:157 (cf. Heeßel 2012, no. 70).

67 In addition to the examples below, note also Koch 2005, no. 32:114 (cf. Heeßel 2012, no. 70): *an-nu-tu*$_4$ UZU.MEŠ *ana ra-ma-ni-šú-nu-ma* KI IGI.TÙN *ul uš-taḫ-ra-ṣu*. Koch (2005, 287) reads KI as *ašar* and translates: "and do not affect(?) an area of the Front of the Pouch." Pongratz-Leisten (1999, 325) reads KI as *itti*, "with" (and renders the following signs differently, cf. Koch 2005, 286 n. 408 and Heeßel 2012, 239). Similarly, Heeßel 2012, 234:56: "und werden mit denen der 'Vorderseite der Tasche' nicht verrechnet." I think that the *itti* of Pongratz-Leisten and Heeßel is a better rendering than Koch's *ašru*, but due to the parallels, one may also consider reading here: *ki* IGI.TÙN, similar to the otherwise attested *kīma* (i.e., *kī*).

68 Verderame 2012, 44:15′, 105:6′.

69 ACh 2. Suppl. 16:27, 30, 34, 39; see Koch 2005, 286 n. 408.

APPENDIX 2

Comparisons with Early Hebrew Exegetical Terminology

This appendix lists and discusses parallels between the Akkadian terms dealt with in this book and early Hebrew exegetical terminology.[1] The Hebrew terms are taken from two corpora that are regarded as vastly different from the standpoint of Hebrew exegesis, but may be grouped together in the broader context of the Near Eastern scholastic tradition. These corpora are the sectarian Pesharim literature plus the Damascus Document discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls (fragments of the latter were also found in the Cairo Genizah), dating approximately to the first century CE or a bit earlier,[2] and the rabbinic tannaitic halakhic Midrash, dating to the first centuries CE.[3]

Akkadian and early Hebrew exegesis have much in common, both in the hermeneutical questions and problems they raise, as well as in the techniques they use when attempting to solve these problems.[4] In addition, these exegetical phenomena are indicated with similar terminology. While one may argue that phenomenal similarity in itself is not sufficient to establish cultural contact, the use of similar terminology to describe the phenomena may point, in my opinion, toward contact rather than coincidence.

It is perhaps not self-evident why I choose to compare Akkadian commentaries to sectarian and rabbinic Hebrew sources that stem from Palestine, and not to Hebrew and Aramaic rabbinic sources from Babylonia, specifically the Babylonian Talmud. Indeed, as shown by Geller, medical, scientific, and magical material in the Babylonian Talmud is much closer to ancient Mesopotamian material than comparable materials in the Palestinian Talmud, indicating the persistence of the Mesopotamian

1 Some of the details and discussions in this chapter are based on my previous treatments in Gabbay 2012; Gabbay 2014a; Gabbay, forthcoming 2. It should be emphasized that my preference to compare the Akkadian terms to Hebrew ones does not imply that parallels should not be sought with exegetical terminology in other languages (specifically Greek).

2 For general surveys of the Pesharim and the Damascus Document, see Berrin 2000; Baumgarten 2000.

3 For a general survey, see Kahana 2006.

4 For previous literature on the connections between Akkadian and early Hebrew (and Aramaic) exegesis, see Tigay 1983; Lieberman 1987; Cavigneaux 1987; Frahm 2011, 373–380; Finkel 2014; Frahm 2014, 328–332; Gabbay 2012; Gabbay 2014a; Geller, forthcoming. Cf. also Abusch 1987.

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tradition in the space of Babylonia, even over such a long period of time.[5] But in the case of commentaries, I prefer to compare Hebrew materials that lie closer in time to the Mesopotamian materials. In terms of exegetical practice, the earlier Palestinian material is closer to the ancient Mesopotamian material, while the hermeneutics of the Babylonian Talmud are a development of exegetical strategies found already in the Palestinian Midrash.

There were a variety of channels for the transmission of ancient Mesopotamian beliefs, practices, and scholarship to the early Jewish tradition. While the practices themselves, such as magic and medicine, were transmitted within Babylonia over a long period of time and did not necessarily travel to Palestine, the exegetical framework occasionally used to comment on these practices was probably transmitted early on, and was carried by scholars to Palestine in a relatively early period.

In my opinion, the correspondence between Akkadian and Hebrew exegetical terms attests to socio-linguistic contact between Judean and Babylonian scholars. In almost every case where one finds a probable connection between Akkadian and Hebrew exegetical terms, the Hebrew term is not a loanword but a translation or semantic borrowing, using a Hebrew word that is semantically equivalent to the Akkadian original. Various linguistic and socio-linguistic theories explain different forms of language contact that result in loanwords, semantic borrowings, or code-switching.[6] I do not dare to characterize scholarly contact between Judeans and Babylonians in Mesopotamia on the basis of a few *calque* translations, but I would tentatively describe the type of contact reflected in the commentaries as a self-conscious bilingual cultural encounter between Jewish and ancient Mesopotamian scholars. This stands in contrast to recent studies that see the similarities between Jewish and Akkadian texts not as a reflection of direct contact, but as part of a larger process of cultural diffusion, mediated especially through Aramaic, that resulted in a common body of knowledge.[7] While I certainly agree with this conclusion in the case of other genres, such as astrological texts, in the case of commentaries I suggest that the evidence for contact between Jewish and Mesopotamian exegetical texts may reflect a different type of contact. Although I cannot entirely discount the same type of general cultural influence with respect to commentaries and their exegetical terminology, it seems to me that the evidence is too particular and sophisticated, extending to form and not just content, and goes beyond the level of general knowledge. In my opinion, the commentaries suggest direct scholarly contact, probably oral, between Jewish and ancient Mesopotamian scholars. Surely, later Hellenistic influence and internal developments had a much

5 See Geller 2000; Geller 2006.

6 See, in general, Weinreich 1963; Matras 2009; Hickey 2013.

7 See Popovic 2014; Ben-Dov 2014.

stronger impact on Hebrew exegesis. Nevertheless, the comparative evidence does point toward the Babylonian origins of at least some of the early Hebrew exegesis, and perhaps even toward common modes of thought and interpretation in the two traditions.

The natural question that arises is how, when, and where such contact between Akkadian and Hebrew exegesis could have occurred, and unfortunately there is no definite answer. There are a few hypothetical scenarios for this transmission of knowledge (and it is likely that the transmission occurred in multiple scenarios). It could have taken place in Mesopotamia already during the Neo-Babylonian period or the early Achaemenid period, during the first generations of the exile before the return to Zion; in this scenario, the new exegetical practices circulated orally or in writing among Jewish scholars for several centuries before they first appeared in the extant halakhic Midrash. However, recent study of this period suggests that this scenario is unlikely, since the Babylonian elite of this period appears to have been a closed society.[8] Nevertheless, in my view this option should still be considered, since other textual corpora do demonstrate contact in this period,[9] and since sporadic scholarly contact may still have occurred in this period, especially since social segregation in the realm of economy and marriage did not necessarily extend to scholarly matters. A second possibility is that this transfer of knowledge took place in Mesopotamia later, during the late Achaemenid period and the Seleucid and Arsacid periods,[10] closer to the time when the terms surface at Qumran and in halakhic Midrash; in this scenario, the terminology would have been carried from Babylonia to Palestine, whether in texts or by traveling scholars, in the last centuries BCE. A third possibility, related to the previous one, also assumes contact at a relatively late date, but posits that these terms circulated for a long time in Babylonian Jewish schools before they were brought to Palestine in the first centuries BCE by scholars who migrated from Babylonia, such as Hillel.[11] Yet, all these proposals, even if they are historically possible, are entirely hypothetical. There is no evidence to suggest how this transmission of knowledge occurred. The Babylonian practice of writing commentaries and omens on parchment, known from colophons dating to the last centuries BCE,[12] may have played some role in the transmission of the Babylonian exegetical tradition to Judean

8 See Jursa 2013, 152.

9 E.g., the Babylonian influences on the book of Ezekiel; see Winitzer 2014.

10 For various opinions on how long cuneiform texts (or at least ancient Babylonian tradition) continued to circulate in Mesopotamia, see Geller 1997; Westenholz 2007.

11 See Cavigneaux 1987, 251 with n. 39; Maul 1999b, 15.

12 DT 84 (Finkel 2005, 283); Leichty 1970, 201:13; Freedman 2006a, 75: r. 20, and 149: r. 5'; Reiner 2005, no. 38:5'.

scholars, especially if the commentaries were written in an alphabetic script (although there is no evidence for this).[13] Nevertheless, this transmission need not have been mediated by written texts and could have occurred orally, leaving no historical traces.[14]

Here follow a number of parallels that can be drawn between Akkadian and Hebrew exegetical terms. Some are less convincing than others, and some may be regarded as typological parallels rather than actual influences or *calques*. The terms are listed in the order in which they are presented in the body of this book.

1 *ittu*, "(cuneiform) sign" // *'ôt*, "(alphabetic) letter"

The noun *ittu*, "sign," is used in one lexical commentary when introducing the lexical entry from the base text.[15] In this case *ittu* does not relate to a natural phenomenon as it does when referring to ominous signs, but rather to the lexical entry, i.e., to the cuneiform sign, similar to the use of the noun *'ôt* in Hebrew (as well as "sign" in English). In Biblical Hebrew, the noun refers to a sign and to a mark.[16] Later, it can refer to "letter" as well.[17]

13 See Westenholz 2007, 278–280 (with previous literature), especially the citation from a communication by J. Oelsner at 279 n. 19 (even though Westenholz takes a minimalist approach, he follows Oelsner in maintaining that these parchments were written in an alphabetic script). See now also Oelsner 2014, 159, 163. Admittedly, it would be difficult to write Akkadian commentaries in alphabetic script. Perhaps they were written in a combination of cuneiform and an alphabet.

14 In a lecture given in Jerusalem in spring 2015, Dr. Yigal Bloch called attention to the dictation remark *mpy*, "from the mouth," in a Late Babylonian tablet that includes two columns containing a cuneiform transliteration of the names of the West Semitic alphabet, followed by a column of Akkadian words, mostly professions (Geller 1997–2000, 144–146; Geller 2001). While Geller considers this remark to be Aramaic, Y. Bloch correctly noted that the Aramaic form would have been **mpwm*, while the form *mpy* may indicate a Hebrew form here. This tablet and the remark attest to a direct Akkadian and West Semitic (perhaps Hebrew) contact in a scholarly, or at least curricular context.

15 See Chapter 1, para. 2.

16 See *HALOT*, vol. 1, *s.v. 'ôt*, 26.

17 See Bacher 1899, 2: "Die Bedeutung 'Zeichen' specialisirte sich zur Bed. 'Schriftzeichen', Buchstabe."

2 *ša pî*, "(scholarly) oral lore (lit.: of the mouth) // (*tôrâ šᵉ*)-*bᵉʿal peh*, "(scholarly) oral lore (lit. [Scripture that is] upon the mouth)"

The terms *ša pî*, *ša pī ummâni*, and *šūt pî*, all refer to scholarly oral lore.[18] They are reminiscent of the phrase *tôrâ šᵉ-bᵉʿal peh*, referring to the oral scholarly lore that accompanies the (textual) written Scripture.[19]

3 *malsûtu*, "reading" // *miqrā'*, "scripture"

The term *malsûtu* refers to the study of the base text, but as noted earlier it also comes close to referring to the text itself in the context of its study and interpretation.[20] In this respect it can be compared to Hebrew *miqrā'*. The word *miqrā'* appears in biblical literature in two different senses, which agree with the two main derivations of the basic meaning of the root *qr'*: "to call someone, to summon," and "to call out a word or text, to read."[21] The regular meaning of the biblical noun *miqrā'* is "meeting," especially in the phrase *miqrā' qōdeš*, the place to which one person summons another to meet on special occasions.[22] But in Nehemiah 8:8, the word *miqrā'* appears in an entirely different sense, in relation to the reading of the Law and its expounding. This meaning of the word *miqrā'* also appears in rabbinic Hebrew and evolved into a term for the biblical text itself.[23] The new sense of the (verbal) noun *miqrā'* as "reading (or studying) of a text" (and later the text itself, "Scripture"), which is first attested after the Babylonian exile, may have been influenced by Akkadian *malsûtu*, the "reading" of the base text for the purpose of its study, which in itself began undergoing a process of textualization (as seen by its occurrence with the serialization of tablets).

18 See Chapter 1, 2.1.1 and 4.3.2.

19 See Bacher 1899, 197. Cf. Elman 1975.

20 See Chapter 1, 2.1.2.

21 *HALOT*, vol. 3, *s.v. qr'*, 1128–1131.

22 Kutsch 1953; *HALOT*, vol. 2, *s.v. mqr'*, 629a.

23 Bacher 1899, 117–121.

4 *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*, "teachings (lit. questioning) (according to the mouth) of a scholar" // *midrāš* (*ḥăkāmîm*), "teachings (lit. inquiry) (of scholars)"

The term *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni* is used as a label for Late Babylonian commentaries, referring to the study environment out of which the commentaries emerged.[24] The Hebrew term *midrāš* may be semantically related to the Akkadian term *maš'altu*. The root *drš* in Biblical Hebrew means "to inquire." It is therefore generally assumed that the word *midrāš*, attested a few times in the Bible itself but known mainly from later sources, refers to an inquiry into or investigation of Scripture.[25] However, Gruber and Mandel have independently argued that the meaning of the verb *drš* and the noun *midrāš* in late biblical and early rabbinic sources is not an interpretive inquiry directed to the text, but rather the teaching and expounding of the scriptural law.[26] Although the noun *midrāš* may also refer to explanations, the focus of this word is not the relationship between the scholar and the text, but rather the relationship between the scholar and his audience. According to this interpretation, the root *drš* underwent a semantic shift, from inquiry (usually of a divine oracle) to teaching (of the divine law). The meaning of the term *midrāš* in early rabbinic sources, the teaching and explanation of the Scriptures by a scholar, corresponds to the meaning of the Akkadian word *maš'altu*.[27] As discussed above, the noun *maš'altu*, derived from the verb *šâlu*, "to ask, to inquire," does not represent textual inquiry, but signifies the teachings of the scholar, *maš'altu* (*ša pī*) *ummâni*, similar to the new interpretation of the word *midrāš* by Mandel and Gruber. Furthermore, the construction *midrāš ḥăkāmîm*, "teaching of the scholars," which appears once in the halakhic Midrash Sifra,[28] is parallel to the designation of commentaries as *maš'alti ummâni*, "teaching of a scholar" (in Babylon and Borsippa). In both cases there is a necessary semantic shift from a question put to a higher authority to the teachings of this higher authority. This parallel shift may witness a process of cultural contact or influence.[29]

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24 See Chapter 1, 2.1.3.

25 See Bacher 1899, 103–105, and recently Hirshman 2006, 109–10 (with previous literature).

26 Gruber 2007; Mandel 2006; Mandel 2009.

27 See Frahm 2011, 376.

28 Sifra *Behuqotai*, 2, 1.

29 Note that Mandel (2006, 14–23) has already observed that this shift may have occurred under Mesopotamian influence, although he related this to the custom of oracular inquiry.

5 *šemû*, "to hear" (*ul ašme*, "I did not hear") // *šmʿ*, "to hear" (*lō' šāmaʿnû*, "we did not hear")

The verb *šemû*, usually negated, is used within scribal remarks in commentaries where it reflects the reality of the oral (and aural) lesson that is the basis for the commentary.[30] This is paralleled by the use in midrashic literature of the verb *šmʿ*, "to hear," as part of the hermeneutic process; it too is often negated (e.g., *lō' šāmaʿnû*, "we did not hear") and points to an originally oral study environment.[31]

6 *šasû*, "to read (out)" // *qr'*, "to read"

Not only does the noun *malsûtu* find a parallel in Hebrew *miqrā'*, but the verb from which it derives, *šasû*, "to read," attested in scribal remarks in Akkadian commentaries,[32] is also paralleled in early Midrash, where as part of the hermeneutic process the text is "read," *qr'*, reflecting the original *Sitz im Leben* of the Midrash in the context of teaching and discussion.[33]

7 *idû*, "to know" (*ul tīde*, *. . . lā tīdû*, "[. . .] you do not know") // *ydʿ*, "to know" (*tēdaʿ*, "you know")

Akkadian commentaries occasionally use the verb *idû* in the second person (*tīde*), directed at the (hypothetical) student, although it is always negated.[34] Early rabbinic sources often use the form *tēdaʿ*, "you know," likewise directed at the hypothetical student of the text.[35]

30 See Chapter 1, 2.2.1.

31 See Bacher 1899, 189–190, as well as Bacher's note in his introduction (p. vii) about the origin of some of the terminology in the context of teaching and discussion. See also Yadin 2004, 36–46, 61–68.

32 See Chapter 1, 2.2.2.

33 See Bacher 1899, 174–177.

34 See Chapter 1, 3.1.

35 Bacher 1899, 68–69 (note also references to negated forms, although in the first person).

8 *šanîš*, "secondly, alternatively" // *dābār aḥēr*, "an alternative speech"

Akkadian commentaries often offer several interpretations of one lemma or phrase from the base text. As argued above, this does not imply that a text may be understood in several ways, but rather indicates that various interpretations, usually stemming from different sources, were suggested and consequently documented in the commentary text.[36] The alternative interpretations are introduced by *šanîš*, but when a third interpretation occurs it is usually enumerated as *šalšiš* (and so on for a fourth and fifth interpretation).[37] Rabbinic sources may also include alternative interpretations that are introduced by the phrase *dābār aḥēr*, literally "an alternative speech," but are not attributed to a specific scholar. This phrase is sometimes understood as a reference to the use of a different hermeneutic technique to extract another meaning from a biblical verse. However, this is not the case in early halakhic Midrash. As demonstrated by Goldberg, *dābār aḥēr* in these early sources usually introduces an interpretation that can be found in a different source, where it is attributed to a scholar or school. Specifically, when the phrase *dābār aḥēr* occurs in a Midrash attributed to the school of Rabbi Akiva, it marks an interpretation elsewhere attributed to the opposing school of Rabbi Ishmael, and vice versa.[38] At first glance the Akkadian and Hebrew terms seem unrelated, since Hebrew *dābār aḥēr* refers to an "alternative" interpretation, and Akkadian *šanîš* literally refers to a "second" interpretation (while *šalšiš* is used for a third). However, it is likely that *šanîš* usually (and originally) introduced an alternative or rival interpretation, not the second of two valid interpretations.[39] In some (admittedly rare) cases *šanîš* is used to introduce each of several variant interpretations, even when the series includes four or (perhaps) five interpretations. In such cases *šanîš* clearly marks "alternative" interpretations.[40] Supporting the hypothesis

36 See Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

37 See Chapter 1, 4.5.2.

38 Goldberg 1982. Nevertheless, as noted by Goldberg (1982, 100 with n. 7, 106), this does not exclude a few occurrences of *dābār aḥēr* that refer to alternative interpretations attributed to the same school.

39 Thus *AHw*, 1164a, which understands *šanîš* in commentaries and variants as "otherwise, or" (as opposed to a different *šanîš*, in other contexts, which is understood as "secondly"). Referring to the verb "to do again, to do for a second time," *CAD* Š/I, 386–387, translates *šanîš* both as "a second time" (definition 1) and as "differently, otherwise, or" (definition 2), but classifies the occurrences referring to variants and alternative interpretations under "differently, otherwise." Note that Akkadian *šanû* (from which *šanîš* is derived) can mean not only "second" but also "different"; *AHw*, 1164b and 1165b, raises the possibility that *šanû* I ("second") and II ("other") are identical.

40 See Chapter 1, n. 337.

that *šanîš* could be connected to *dābār aḥēr* is the fact that Akkadian *šanû*, "second," is indeed translated by a form of *aḥēr*, "other," in Aramaic. An inscription from Seleucid Uruk identifies the dignitary who was in charge of restoring parts of the Rēš Temple in Uruk: "Anu-uballiṭ, whose second name (*ša šumšu šanû*) is Kephalon."[41] A series of bricks from the Irigal temple in the same city bears an Aramaic inscription naming the same person, using Aramaic *'ḥrn* for Akkadian *šanû*: *'n'blṭ z*[*y š*]*mh 'ḥrn qplwn*.[42] In fact, a phrase similar to *ša šumšu šanû*, namely *šanîš šumšu*,[43] is used to indicate textual variation in a similar way to *šanîš*. Thus, it would not be surprising if *dābār aḥēr* corresponds to Akkadian *šanîš* (and other forms using the adjective *šanû*) not only functionally but lexically as well.

9 *šū, šī, šunu* "it (lit. he, she) is/ they are" // *hû', hî', hēm*(*mâ*)*, zeh, zô, ēllû,* "it is, they are"

The use of pronouns (*šū, šī, šunu*) for equations is frequent in commentaries, and as seen in various sources a pronoun may stand in the background of an equation even when the pronoun is not indicated in the written commentary.[44] This is reminiscent of the use of demonstrative pronouns (*zeh, zô, ēllû*) in rabbinic exegesis for equations,[45] and the use of pronouns (*hû', hî', hēm*(*mâ*)) in exegetical texts known from Qumran (especially Pesharim and the Damascus Document).[46]

10 *ṣâtu,* "lists of corresponding words" // *yṣa,* "to come out, to be similar"

The plural noun *ṣâtu* is one of the most common designations for commentaries, especially those that are based on lexical equations. There are several options for how to understand the use of a noun that is derived from the verb (*w*)*aṣû*, "to go out," to refer to a commentary that is based on lexical equations.[47] As noted, one of these options considers the rare Hebrew use of the verb *yṣ'* in the meaning of "being similar," as seen

41 See Falkenstein 1941, 6; Doty 1988, 97.

42 See Bowman 1939, 231–233; Falkenstein 1941, 31.

43 See Chapter 1, n. 330.

44 See Chapter 2, 1.1 and 2.1.3.

45 See Bacher 1899, 49–50; cf. also Fraenkel 1991, 214–215. Another way of indicating equation in Hebrew exegesis is by *ên* x *ellā'* y, "x is nothing other than y"; see Bacher 1899, 4–5.

46 See Elledge 2002, 374–375; Elledge 2003, 200–205.

47 See Chapter 2, 1.8.

particularly in the rabbinic method *kayôṣē' bô bᵉmāqôm aḥēr*, "similarly, in another place," which often focuses on the lexical level.[48]

There is a slight possibility that there may be a reference to a type of Hebrew commentary called *mṣ't* (*môṣā'ôt*) in the sectarian Damascus Document.[49] This word is usually regarded as a participle deriving from the verb *mṣ'*, "to find," but a derivation from *yṣ'* is also possible.[50] If *mṣ't* is to be understood as a noun from *yṣ'*, it would be a perfect semantic parallel to Akkadian *ṣâtu*, as both terms are plural forms of a noun from the root *yṣ'* (// (*w*)*aṣû*) that can also serve as a time designation.[51]

11 *ana . . . mašil*, "it resembles (lit.: it is resembled to) . . ." (and similar) // *māšāl lᵉ*, "resemblance to . . ."

The use of the verb *mašālu*, usually in the stative, together with the preposition *ana*, "to," is found in comparative descriptive interpretations.[52] This is similar to the use of the noun *māšāl* with the preposition *lᵉ*, "to," in allegories (usually in the form of a story or fable) in early (and later) rabbinic exegesis.[53]

12 *lišanu ša*, "language of" // *lāšôn*, "language (of)"

The term *lišānu ša*, "language of," referring to the semantic field of a commented lemma,[54] is paralleled by the similar use of the term *lāšôn* in tannaitic Midrash.[55]

13 *pūḫtu* (*šī*), "(it is) a replacement" // *zeh miqrā' mᵉsôrās*, "this is a transposed Scripture"

The term *pūḫtu*, "replacement," mentioned in *Examenstext* A, occurs also once in a commentary with the pronoun *šī*, referring to a change in syntactical order.[56] Even though the commentary refers to a "replacement" in what is a nonliteral interpretation,

48 See Bacher 1899, 75–76; Kahana 2006, 14 with nn. 51–52 and references. See Chapter 2, 1.8.

49 Damascus Document VI:19; see Baumgarten and Schwartz 1995, 24–25.

50 See Schiffman 1975, 35–36 with n. 87 (reference: P. Mandel).

51 Cf. the Hebrew plural construct *môṣā'ê* used for time designations; see Jastrow 1903, 746b. For *ṣâtu* as a time designation, see *CAD* Ṣ, 116–119.

52 See Chapter 2, 2.4.2.

53 See Bacher 1899, 121–122; Fraenkel 1991, 323–393.

54 See Chapter 3, para. 5.

55 See Bacher 1899, 97.

56 See Chapter 4, 1.2.2.

it does not refer to this "replacement" as an action performed by the commentator; rather, "replacement" indicates that the text is written in non-standard order.[57] A similar case is found with the Hebrew term *zeh miqrā' mᵉsôrās*, "this is a transposed Scripture," attested in halakhic Midrash with respect to the order of events within biblical passages.[58] Fraenkel discusses the use of the verb *srs* and distinguishes two different terms. The first is *zeh miqrā' mᵉsôrās*, "this is a transposed Scripture," and the second is *sārēs hamiqrā' wᵉdāršēhû*, "transpose the Scripture and expound it." The first term is a description of the Scripture, indicating that the formulation in the text stands in opposition to the logical sequence of events. The second term refers to an active hermeneutical process on the part of the commentator, who takes liberties in changing the order of words or verses in Scripture.[59] Fraenkel notes that it is possible that the second, more active and more radical phrase is a development from the first, but he admits that there is no evidence for this since both are attested contemporaneously, and therefore it is difficult to determine the historical relationship between these terms.[60] In any case, it is evident that the first phrase, *zeh miqrā' mᵉsôrās*, is very close to the term *pūḫtu šī* in Akkadian, which also describes a disarrangement in the text but does not mark an attempt to reorder the text (even if this is the effect of the interpretation).

14 *kakku sakku*, "sealed and shut, (implicit)" // *sātûm*, "shut, implicit"

The term *kakku sakku*, "sealed and shut," seems to refer not only to the obscurity of the commented text, but also to its meaning being implicit; the text is not detailed, and does not contain the hermeneutical key to its interpretation.[61]

As noted by Paul, the term *kakku sakku* is reflected in the phrase *sᵉtumîm waḥătumîm*, "shut and sealed," in the biblical book of Daniel.[62] But in rabbinic sources *sātûm* does not only refer to something obscure, it is also used to designate something as "implicit," in opposition to something that is "explicit" (*mᵉpôrāš*).[63] This may match the meaning of *kakku sakku* in Akkadian sources.

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57 See Chapter 4, 1.2.2.

58 See Bacher 1899, 136–137 (note also the variant *mᵉsôreset hî' happārāšâ* mentioned by Bacher); Fraenkel 1991, 153–156.

59 Fraenkel 1991, 153–156. See also Paz 2014, 250–279, esp. 269–274 (with discussion of Greek parallels).

60 Fraenkel 1991, 156.

61 See Chapter 4, 1.3.3.

62 Paul 2004 (Daniel 12:9; cf. Daniel 12:4).

63 See Bacher 1899, 137–138. See also Paz 2014, 38–67, esp. 43 (with a discussion of Greek parallels).

15 *nindanu*, "a measuring unit, knowledge" // *middâ*, "measurement, textual nature or characteristic"

The term *nindanu ša bārûti*, "measurement of the *bārûtu* lore," occurs once in an extispicy commentary, and seems to refer to the character of the commented text.[64] For the semantic relation between the meaning of *nindanu* as a measurement and as a type of knowledge, compare Hebrew *middâ*, "measurement," and especially *middâ battôrâ*, "a measurement in Scripture," an exegetical term often understood to refer to hermeneutical techniques, but actually originally referring to the character or nature of Scripture itself.[65]

16 *kayyān(u)*, "regular, actual, real" // *mammāš*, "actual," *wadday*, "real, actual"

The term *kayyān(u)*, "regular, real, actual," a predicative adjective or an adverb, probably always appearing undeclined in the masculine singular, usually occurs as the first of several interpretations of a word or phrase.[66] The term may occur immediately after the citation of the commented text, or it may follow a clarification of or variation on the commented form; when the latter element appears, it is usually the infinitive of a verbal form in the commented text.[67] The term *kayyān(u)* in commentaries refers to the literal meaning of the text by indicating the difference between the "actual, real," object lying behind the word, and something that is not this object, when the text is read or interpreted differently.

The term *kayyān(u)* may be compared to the Hebrew terms *wadday* and *mammāš*, which occur in tannaitic halakhic Midrash.[68] The word *mammāš* literally means "concrete, actual," and refers to the concrete essence of the object signified by the word in the text.[69] The term *mammāš* is paralleled by the term *wadday*, and the two terms may be used interchangeably in identical or similar texts appearing in different sources.[70] The term *wadday*, an adverb or an undeclined predicative adjective,[71] is used to dis-

64 See Chapter 4, 1.3.2.

65 See Bacher 1899, 100–102; Yadin 2004, 120–121.

66 See Chapter 4, 1.4. The following discussion is mostly based on Gabbay 2014a, 336–351; Gabbay, forthcoming 2.

67 See Chapter 4, 1.4.4.

68 Bacher 1899, 48–49, 105; Rosen-Zvi, forthcoming.

69 For a full discussion, see Rosen-Zvi, forthcoming.

70 For a full discussion, see Rosen-Zvi, forthcoming.

71 For the syntax of *wadday*, see Kaddari 1978.

tinguish between a literal understanding of the commented text and another explanation. When *wadday* is used in reference to the literal meaning of a word, it can be translated as "actual," but semantically *wadday* has another component: "real, true," as seen in nonexegetical occurrences of the adjective *wadday*, where it can refer to a "true" or "loyal" person.[72] In early Midrash, *wadday* does not refer to the "true" interpretation versus the "non-true," more elaborative interpretation, but to the "real" or "actual" object signified by the word, in contrast to alternative meanings attributed to the signifier through exegesis. When *mammāš* or *wadday* is used in the interpretation of a verb, the form of the verb may be simplified or altered. The verbal form to which *mammāš* or *wadday* refers can also occur in the commentary as a verbal noun or gerund. To sum up, both *mammāš* and *wadday* signify the literal meaning of a term through their relationship to the semantic notion of "actual" and "real," and they usually serve to distinguish a literal interpretation from a nonliteral interpretation. Their syntactic role is usually adverbial or adjectival (predicative); they are not declined according to gender and number. Either term may refer to the commented phrase or word itself or, in the case of a verbal form, to a paraphrased verb or verbal noun.[73]

The use of the terms *mammāš* and *wadday* shares many parallels with the use of *kayyān*(*u*) in Akkadian. The basic hermeneutical use of *kayyān*(*u*) is to mark a literal interpretation in contrast to another, non-standard interpretation, and this is also the basic function of the terms *wadday* and *mammāš*. Semantically, the meaning "actual, real," that is shared by both Hebrew terms parallels the Akkadian term, which means "regular, actual, real." Especially illuminating is the meaning of the term *wadday*, which in other contexts may signify "true, loyal," like Akkadian *kayyānu*.[74] In commentaries, both the Hebrew and Akkadian terms can refer to the concreteness of a signified object, and not necessarily to a "literal" interpretation of the signifier. The terms can also be used to distinguish between two readings of the signifier itself. As noted above, *kayyān*(*u*) appears after a citation as an adverb or undeclined predicative adjective, at times following the infinitive of the verbal form in the commented text (which in Akkadian can act nominally as a gerund as well), and at other times alone. Likewise, *mammāš* and *wadday* may appear after a quotation as adverbs or as undeclined predicative adjectives, sometimes with a simplified or generalized verbal form (occasionally the verbal noun acting as a gerund), and sometimes alone, following the commented word or an entire phrase.

72 Cf. Bronsnick 2008/9, 22 with n. 8.

73 For a full treatment, see Rosen-Zvi, forthcoming.

74 See Chapter 4, 1.4.5.

17 *ša iqbû*, "which it said," and *kī iqbû/qabû*, "like it (is) said" // *'ăšer 'āmar*, "which it said," and *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar*, "for this is what it said"

The terms *ša iqbû* and *kī iqbû* are used respectively for citing the base text before commenting on it, and for indicating the relationship between an interpretation and the base text.[75] These two terms are paralleled in form and use by the Hebrew phrases *'ăšer 'āmar*, "which he/it said"[76] (occurring before an interpretation), and *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar*, "for this is that which he/it said" (occurring after an interpretation, and before a re-citation of the base text that has just been interpreted), in the Pesharim literature and the Damascus Document.[77] Both the Akkadian and the Hebrew terms use the regular verb for "speak"—*qabû* and *'āmar* respectively—in the active third-person singular masculine form and in the past "tense" (Hebrew perfect, Akkadian preterite). In both cases, the phrases are subordinate clauses: in Hebrew the relative pronoun *'ăšer* is used in both phrases, while Akkadian uses the relative pronoun *ša* in the first case and only *kī*, the etymological cognate of Hebrew *kî*, in the second, since in Akkadian such clauses do not require the addition of the relative pronoun *ša*. However, the meaning of *kī/kî* in both phrases is different: the Hebrew *kî* has a causal-explanatory function, while the Akkadian *kī* has a comparative function.

There is another similarity between the paired Akkadian and Hebrew phrases: they appear in the same context and position within the commentary. The phrases in the first pair—*ša iqbû* and *'ăšer 'āmar*—appear with a quotation or a re-quotation; the Akkadian phrase follows the quotation and the Hebrew phrase precedes it, in accordance with the syntax of each language. In both the Hebrew and Akkadian exegetical literature, an interpretation follows the phrase. The phrases in the second pair—*kī iqbû* and *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar*—allude to the base text as well. Both the Akkadian and Hebrew phrases appear after the commentary and establish a relationship between the quoted text and the commentary. But there is also a difference: the Akkadian phrase *kī iqbû* refers to the new meaning, usually a paraphrase, which is "like" what the base text "says." The quotation from the base text is not repeated and the object of the verb *qabû*, "to say," is the new reading of the original text in light of the interpretation. In Hebrew, *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar* follows the interpretation but refers to the re-citation of the base text: "because this (i.e., the interpretation or intention of the base text) is what it (i.e., the base text) said: . . ."

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75 See Chapter 5, para. 1 and 4. The following discussion is mostly based on Gabbay 2012, 305–308; Gabbay 2014a, 351–364.

76 Frahm (2011, 375) already noted the similarity of *ša iqbû* and *'ăšer 'āmar*.

77 For these phrases, cf., e.g., Burrows 1952; Bernstein 1994, 30–70 (with previous literature); Elledge 2002, 368–369; Elledge 2003, 168–177.

Thus, although there is a difference in the use of *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar* and *kī iqbû*, I maintain that the basic similarity of the terms may indicate an actual transmission of the terms from Akkadian to Hebrew, rather than a simple case of parallelism. The difference between *kī iqbû* and Hebrew *kî hû' 'ăšer 'āmar* is perhaps due to a reinterpretation of Akkadian *kī* in line with the more conventional causal-explanatory meaning of *kî* in Hebrew.

18 *ina . . . qabi*, "it is said in . . ." // *ne'ĕmar, 'amûr*, "it is said"

Akkadian commentaries frequently cite other texts in support of a comment on the base text. Often this citation is followed by the term *ina . . . qabi*, "it is said in . . ."[78] The reference to a cited text as "said," using a passive form (in Akkadian, the stative), is paralleled in early rabbinic exegesis by the use of the Hebrew passive forms (*šᵉ*)*ne'ĕmar* and *'amûr* when citing texts as part of the hermeneutic procedure.[79]

19 *ana* (*muḫḫi*)*/aššu iqabbi/qabi* (and similar), "it says/it is said about, concerning" // *'al . . . hû' 'ômēr*/*ne'ĕmar*, "it says/it is said about . . ."

The Akkadian terms referring to the context of the base text may contain an active or passive form of the verb *qabû*, along with a preposition such as *aššu*, *ana muḫḫi*, or *ana*.[80] These constructions can be compared to halakhic Midrash passages containing similar Hebrew phrases that combine the verb *'āmar*, either in an active (*'ômēr*) or passive form (*ne'ĕmar*), with the preposition *'al*.[81]

20 *taqabbi*, "you say" // *'attâ 'ômēr*, "you say"

Although usually the verb *qabû* refers to the base text itself, in a few cases where the second-person present-future form *taqabbi* occurs, it is the commentator who is the subject.[82] This use of the second person can be compared to the Hebrew form

78 See Chapter 5, 2.2.
79 See Bacher 1899, 6.
80 See Chapter 5, para. 3.
81 Bacher 1899, 5–6.
82 See Chapter 5, para. 6.

'attâ 'ômēr, addressed to the interpreter of the text in halakhic Midrash, although in the framework of a more complex hermeneutical process.[83]

21 *ana*, "(portends) to, (specified) for," *ina muḫḫi*, "concerning (lit.: on)" // *'al*, "on, about, concerns"

In the interpretation of omens, the connection between an observed phenomenon and its interpretation, or between an entry in an omen text and a phenomenon, is expressed through the prepositions *ana*, literally "to," and *ina muḫḫi*, literally "on."[84] This is reminiscent of the use of the preposition *'al*, "on," to make a connection between a biblical verse and a historical person or event in the Pesharim literature.[85]

22 *pišru*, "solution, interpretation" // *pēšer*, "solution, interpretation"

The noun *pišru* usually refers to interpretation outside the corpus of commentaries, especially in letters and reports by scholars to the Assyrian king regarding ominous natural phenomena.[86] This noun parallels the use of *pēšer* in Late Biblical Hebrew and at Qumran.[87]

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83 Bacher 1899, 6.

84 See Appendix 1, para. 5.

85 See Elledge 2002, 372–374; Elledge 2003, 191–208 (note the variant *l* appearing in one manuscript mentioned on p. 193).

86 See Appendix 1, 6.3.

87 For Qumran, see Elledge 2002, 372–374; Elledge 2003, 191–199. See Gabbay 2012, 298–305, with references to previous literature.

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Abbreviations (especially of publications of cuneiform texts) in this book are according to the lists of abbreviations in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter 1928–) and *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (*CAD*) (Glückstadt and Chicago: J. J. Augustin and Oriental Institute, Chicago, 1956–2010). Other abbreviations: CCP = *Cuneiform Commentaries Project* (ccp.yale.edu); *HALOT* = Koehler, L. et al., *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (5 vols.), Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000.

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Glossary of Exegetical Terms and Related Words

aḫû/aḫītu, "unfavorable" **112–113**
ša aḫīta iqbû see *s.v. qabû*
ša ana dumqi (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti iqbû* see *s.v. qabû*
ša iqbû aḫītu/damqu see *s.v. qabû*
šumma kīma aḫīti/damqi ittašunu ana pānika see *s.v. šumma . . . ana pānika*
šumma . . . ša ana dumqi/aḫīti iqbû ana pānika see *s.v. šumma . . . ana pānika*
amāru, "to see, look up" **276, 283–284**
(*amatu*) *ina tuppi ul āmur*(?) see *s.v. tuppu*
ina minî lūmur see *s.v. mīnu*
ul āmur, "I did not see" **64**
amatu, "word" **282–283**
(*amatu*) *ina tuppi ul āmur*(?) see *s.v. tuppu*
ammīni, "why" 32, 34
ana, "to, for" **133–137**, 142, 271, 280–281, **304**
ana dumqi (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti qabi* (var.: *šaṭir*) see *s.v. qabû, šaṭāru*
ana . . . mašil see *s.v. mašālu*
ana (*muḫḫi*)*/aššu iqabbi/qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
ana pānika see *s.v. šumma . . . ana pānika*
ana . . . qabi see *s.v. qabû*
ana . . . undaššil see *s.v. mašālu*
ša ana dumqi (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti iqbû* see *s.v. qabû*
ana muḫḫi, "on account of, concerning" **137–141**, 142, 151, 167, 267
ana (*muḫḫi*)*/aššu iqabbi/qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
ana muḫḫi mīni, "on account of what?" 34
annû, "this"
annû namir(?), "it is clear(?)" **29**
aššu annî, "because of this, therefore" **165–166**
aššu annî/annûti . . . (*minû*) *i*(*q*)*qabbi/iqabbû* see *s.v. qabû*
ina annî, "because of this, therefore" 32, **35**, **165**
AN.TA-KI.TA KI.TA-AN.TA see *s.v. elîš-šapliš šapliš-elîš*
apālu, "to correspond" **100**
arku, "long" **115**
arû, "calculation text"
ina ṣâti/lišāni/arê (*šumšu*) *qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
aššu, "concerning, because" 142, **144–165**, 267, 268, 270
ana (*muḫḫi*)*/aššu iqabbi/qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
aššu annî see *s.v. annû*
aššu annî/annûti . . . (*minû*) *i*(*q*)*qabbi/iqabbû* see *s.v. qabû*
aššu . . . kī qabû see *s.v. qabû*
aššu . . . lā tīdû see *s.v. idû*
aššu . . . qabi/iqtabi see *s.v. qabû*
ša iqbû aššu see *s.v. qabû*

bašû, "to be"
kīma . . . ibaššīma (or: *bašīma*) see *s.v. kīma*
bu"û, "to search" **68**

dagālu, "to look" **67–68**, 276
ina (*muḫḫi*) *šumišu iddaggil*, "it is seen (with)in its name" **90–91**
ina ṣâti dagil, "it is seen in the *ṣâtu*-lists" **67**, 90
damqu/damiqtu, "favorable" **112–113**
ša iqbû aḫītu/damqu see *s.v. qabû*
šumma kīma aḫīti/damqi ittašunu ana pānika see *s.v. šumma . . . ana pānika*
dumqu, "good, favorable omen"
ana dumqi (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti qabi* (var.: *šaṭir*) see *s.v. qabû, šaṭāru*
dumqu u lumnu ša (. . .) *iqbû* see *s.v. qabû*
ša ana dumqi (*u lumni*)*/aḫīti iqbû* see *s.v. qabû*
šumma . . . ša ana dumqi/aḫīti iqbû ana pānika see *s.v. šumma . . . ana pānika*

edûtu (uncertain) 60, 103
elîš-šapliš šapliš-elîš (AN.TA-KI.TA KI.TA-AN.TA), "top-bottom, bottom-top" **172–174**
epēšu, "to do, perform"

tušeppiš (*ša . . . lā tušeppišu*), "you perform (which . . . you should not perform)" **195**
ul ēpuš(?) (NU DÙ), "I did not do(?)" **26–27**

ḫamšu, "fifth"
šumma ḫamšu šumšu see *s.v. šumma . . . šumšu*
ḫarāṣu, "to consider, to clarify"
kīma . . . taḫarraṣ/ tuštaḫarraṣ see *s.v. kīma*
ḫarāšu (uncertain)
see *ina pīya ḫariš*(?)
ḫâṭu, "to examine" 276
ḫepi/ḫīpu (*eššu/labīru*), "(new/old) break" **63–64**

idû, "to know" **36–38, 295**
aššu . . . lā tīdû, "since you do not know" **37–38**
mūdû **36**
ša lā tidû, "that you do not know" **38**
šumma . . . lā tīdû, "if you do not know" **36–37**
ul īde, "I did/do not know" **26**
ul tīde **36, 295**
iḫzu "study" 16
ina annî see *s.v. annû*
ina(?) *. . . iqtabi ina libbi ša* see *s.v. qabû*
ina libbi (*ša*), "because" 99, 128, 140, **167–168**, 261
ina(?) *. . . iqtabi ina libbi ša* see *s.v. qabû*
ša iqbu ina libbi (*ša*) see *s.v. qabû*
ina (*libbi*) *šumi . . . qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
ina minî lūmur see *s.v. mīnu*
ina muḫḫi, "concerning (lit.: on)" 240, 241, **281–282, 304**
ina muḫḫima qabi see *s.v. qabû*
ina (*muḫḫi*) *šumišu iddaggil* see *s.v. dagālu*
ina pīya ḫariš(?), "it is . . . in my mouth"(?) **29–30**
ina . . . qabi (*ša ina . . . iqbû*) see *s.v. qabû*
ina ṣâti/lišāni/arê (*šumšu*) *qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
ina ṣâti šumšu qabi see *s.v. qabû*
(*libbū . . .*) *ina . . . qabi* see *s.v. qabû*
libbū . . . ina . . . qabi see *s.v. qabû*
libbū . . . qabi(?) see *s.v. qabû*
libbū . . . ša ina . . . iqbû see *s.v. qabû*
ša ina . . . iqbû see *s.v. qabû*
ina qātika tukāl see *s.v. kullu*
ina ṣâti dagil see *s.v. dagālu*
ina šumišu see *s.v. šumšu*
ina tuppi ul āmur(?) see *s.v. tuppu*
ina tuppi ul šalim see *s.v. tuppu*
īṣu, "small" **115**
ištēn(*-ma*), "(is/are) one" **92–94**
itti, "with" **68**, 103
libbū . . . ša itti . . . iqbû see *s.v. qabû*
ša itti libbi . . . iqbû see *s.v. qabû*
ša itti ṣâti . . . šutābulu see *s.v. šutābulu*
ittu, "sign, cuneiform sign(?)" **112, 278–280, 292**
ittašunu nadnat, "their sign is given" 219
ša (*ana . . .*) *iqbû*(*ma*) *ittašunu iddinu* see *s.v. qabû*
ša . . . iqbûma ittašunu lā uka[*llamu*(?)] see *s.v. qabû*
šumma ittašunu ana pānika see *s.v. šumma ittašunu ana pānika*
šumma kīma aḫīti/damqi ittašunu ana pānika see *s.v. šumma ittašunu ana pānika*
šumma . . . ša iqbû . . . u ittašunu iddinu ana pānika see *s.v. šumma ittašunu ana pānika*

kakku sakku, "sealed and shut, (implicit)" **63**, 170, **177–181, 299**
kakku sakku ballu, "sealed, shut, and mixed" **179–180**
kamûtu, "external (interpretations?)" 14
kayyamānu, "regular" 191–192
see also *kayyān*(*u*)
kayyān(*u*), "regular, actual, real" **182–194,** 273, **300**
kī, "like"
aššu . . . kī qabû see *s.v. qabû*
kī iqbû/qabû see *s.v. qabû*
see also *kīma*
kī . . . kī, "if . . . if . . ." (or: "when . . . when . . .") **124–126, 141**
KI.A GAR.A (uncertain) 29
cf. *pūḫtu* (ki-bé-ĝar-ra)

ki-bé ĝar-ra see *s.v. pūḫtu* (ki-bé-ĝar-ra)
kīma, "like" **118–120**
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