

2 The Great Prayer to Nabû

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2.1 Manuscripts and Editions

The so-called *Great Prayer to Nabû* is preserved in the large manuscript K.2361+K.3193+K.14033+K.18434+Sm.389+Sm.601 (MS A) and on two small fragments, K.15248 and K.21022 (MSS B₁ and B₂). All fragments come from the Nineveh palace libraries,¹ but no colophon is extant. Both manuscripts are written in Neo-Assyrian script and show horizontal rulings every two lines, thus marking the poetic couplets. MS A is a two-column tablet; the original format of MS B cannot be reconstructed.

The first edition of the text dates back to 1889, when Brünnow published copies of K.2361+K.3193+Sm.389.² Brünnow transliterated the

¹ It is difficult to establish a more precise provenance. Manuscript A has low K numbers, and therefore comes probably from the South West Palace (cf. Reade 2000, 422, George 2003, 386). The findspot of manuscript B, though, is unknown.

² Brünnow 1889, 236-42.

text, but did not offer a translation. The first attempt at translating the *Nabû Prayer* was made by von Soden, who included this text in his *Sumerische und Akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* edited with Falkenstein.³ In 1954, von Soden collated the tablets in the British Museum and identified additional fragments belonging to MS A: K.14033, Sm.601 and K.11373. The latter, however, is not part of the prayer, and has been identified as belonging to a divinatory text.⁴ Based on his collations, von Soden was able to restore some additional lines; he also discovered the fragment K.15248, which represents the only duplicate known so far (MS B). Recently, T. Mitto identified K.21022, a poorly preserved fragment which could potentially belong to the same manuscript as K.15248, even though the two fragments do not join directly. Finally, K.18434 was identified by E. Jiménez as part of the main manuscript (A).

In 1971, von Soden published a second comprehensive edition of the prayer,⁵ with a transliteration, translation and philological commentary. Von Soden provided new copies of neither the published fragments, nor of the unpublished fragments. Seux offered a translation with philological notes in his anthology.⁶ Foster translated the text as well, basing his readings and interpretations mostly on von Soden's previous edition.⁷ An online edition of this text has been prepared by the author within the *eBL* project and is available on the *eBL* platform.⁸ It includes an updated translation by B. Foster, but no philological commentary.

2.2 Layout and Poetic Structure

Both manuscripts share the same layout characterised by a ruling after every second line, which led scholars in the past to designate the *Great Hymns and Prayers* as 'hymns in paragraphs'.⁹ This formal feature reflects the poetic structure of the texts that were subdivided into couplets and quatrains. The division into couplets agrees with the typical structure of Akkadian and Sumerian hymns and prayers:

³ Falkenstein, von Soden 1953.

⁴ This fragment seems to show parallels with the divinatory series *Šumma ālu*. Transliteration and photo of K.11373 is available on the *eBL* platform: <https://www.ebl.lmu.de/fragmentarium/K.11373>.

⁵ Von Soden 1971, 44-71.

⁶ Seux 1976, 181-5.

⁷ Von Soden 2005, 621-6.

⁸ Rozzi 2022b.

⁹ See Lambert 1959-60, 48.

a succession of quatrains consisting of two couplets that are distinguished only through the delayed introduction of the deity's name:¹⁰ In the first couplet, the deity is usually referred to by epithet (most commonly *bēlu* 'lord') or not named at all, whereas his or her proper name is introduced in the first line of the second couplet. This *variatio* is normally the only difference between the first and the second couplet. Despite the numerous *lacunae*, the extant text demonstrates that this type of alternation is consistently used throughout the first 56 lines of the *Nabû Prayer*, and then occasionally in the rest of the text.¹¹ The subdivision into couplets runs through the whole text, but is interrupted in ll. 175-80, where the ruling is placed after three lines rather than two. However, while ll. 175-7, though spread across three lines, maintain the structure of the couplet, ll. 178-80 form a tercet.

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

2.2.1 Prosody

Since many lines are only partially preserved, a comprehensive metrical analysis of the text is difficult. Based on the complete lines, the usage of the so-called *clausula accadica* is apparent.¹² We can observe this specific pattern, a *trochaeus* at the end of the line, in almost all complete or restorable poetic lines, as well as in the lines where at least the final word is extant (a total of 98 lines). The sole exceptions are the parallel ll. 25 and 27, which end in a long, closed syllable (*nekelmûk*).

The final trochee is also often found at the end of the first hemistich, immediately preceding the *caesura*. If we take into account all

¹⁰ As noted above (chapter 1, § 1.2.3), this feature is also known as 'lyrical repetition'. Cf. chapter 5, § 5.2.4.1.2 *sub* "Delayed Introduction".

¹¹ Von Soden 1971, 47.

¹² For several studies on the Akkadian metre, see above chapter 1, § 1.2.3.

lines that allow us to examine their first hemistich (103 lines),¹³ we count 86 lines that end in a trochee before the metrical break. The exceptions are:

ll. 38, 40: <i>lipšaḥā</i>	l. 93, 101: <i>Nabû</i>	l. 121: <i>zakâ</i>
ll. 41, 43: <i>palkû</i>	l. 97: <i>imkû</i>	l. 210: <i>šuṣê</i>
l. 77: <i>šūṣû</i>	l. 104: <i>tattadi</i>	l. 211: <i>erbê</i>
l. 79: <i>amû</i>	l. 115: <i>šurdû</i>	ll. 221/223: <i>tanittaka</i>

Nevertheless, von Soden does not treat words with final ultraheavy vowels as exceptions to the *clausula accadica*, but instead suggests that they maintain the same accentuation of standard trochaic endings (e.g. *Nabû*).¹⁴ Huehnergard and Knudsen,¹⁵ on the other hand, analyse final ultraheavy vowels as containing two syllables, namely a long vowel which bears the *ictus* and a short unaccented vowel immediately following. Contract vowels are hence counted as ‘virtual trochees’.¹⁶ According to this reconstruction, a word such *Nabû* should be scanned as *nabûũ*, and accented on the long, penultimate syllable.

Jiménez follows this second interpretation, and furthermore hypothesises that this accentuation might be due to a pseudo-archaising system of recitation.¹⁷

Overall, the poetic lines in the *Nabû Prayer* are structured according to the most common metrical pattern of Akkadian epic and hymnic texts: Four metrical units in each line are divided by a *caesura*, so that a single verse is characterised by a 2+2 structure.¹⁸ Single words, genitive chains (simple: e.g. l. 176 *šuršurrû ḫinzurri*, or composed, e.g. l. 49 *ina gipiš edê*), and pairs of words (e.g. standard formulas such as ‘heaven and earth’, ‘above and below’, ‘night and day’, ‘father and mother’) are taken as one metrical unit.¹⁹ Genitive chains and word pairs, however, seem to have a variable metrical length and probably should be considered *anceps*.²⁰ Some particles

¹³ The following lines are too damaged and have been excluded here: 95-6, 104-13; 130-71, 123-4, 127-8.

¹⁴ Von Soden states that the Babylonian metrical system was rhythmic; he takes into account not only words ending with ultraheavy vowels at the end of the last foot, but also those within the poetic line (von Soden 1981, 104-5).

¹⁵ Knudsen 1980, 14; Huehnergard 2011, 395. Cf. Helle 2014, 58.

¹⁶ Huehnergard 2011, 395.

¹⁷ Jiménez 2017a, 227.

¹⁸ Lambert 1960, 66; Hecker 1974, 113; West 1997, 176.

¹⁹ Lambert 2013, 23-5; cf. also West 1997, 175-87.

²⁰ Lambert 2013, 25.

and prepositions do not count as one metrical unit (e.g. *ša, ana, ina, adi, kīma*).

To provide some examples: a poetic line like *ibli ina qê šibqī || ana parā'i lēmu* (l. 51) will be analysed as composed of two metrical units in the first hemistich (verb + preposition with genitive chain) and two metrical units in the second (preposition with infinitive + adjective), therefore resulting in a standard 2+2 structure. A hemistich like *balāša u utnēnšu* (l. 216) will be taken as composed of two metrical units, formed by two nouns connected by a particle. As mentioned above, the indication of the *caesura* in the layout, i.e. the interposed space or the vertical ruling in the middle of a line, is consistent only in the first column of the main manuscript. Where the manuscript lacks such a graphic indication, it is still possible to count the words according to the general rules, by scanning for four-unit lines. Taking into account only the lines that are complete or sufficiently preserved to allow an analysis (82 lines),²¹ we count 66 lines of the 2+2 type. Two parallel lines seem to have a 3+1 structure:

³⁷[*bēlu*] *rēštû nūḥ || ana surri*

[...]

³⁹[*Na*] *bû rēštû nūḥ || ana surri*

In this couplet the vertical spacing representing the break was clearly inserted before *ana surri*, implying a single metrical unit in the second hemistich. It is not impossible, however, that the scribe placed the *caesura* in the wrong position. An incorrect division of the poetic line and a mechanical use of the vertical ruling between the hemistichs is a common phenomenon. It is attested both in epics and, in particular, in the *Great Hymns and Prayers*.²² One could therefore move the *caesura* forward (after *rēštû*) and analyse the line as a standard 2+2. The subdivision in hemistichs in the present prayer not only follows formal criteria, but also takes into account the semantic structure of the line. It is, however, difficult to see why a subdivision “Supreme lord, be appeased || in an instant” would be preferable over “Supreme lord, || be appeased in an instant”.

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

²¹ Restored lines have been excluded, unless the restorations were highly probable. Damaged lines have been considered only if preserved in such a way as to leave no doubt about the number of metrical units per hemistich.

²² Lambert 2013, 20 notices the occurrence of *caesurae* at the wrong place in *Enūma eliš* (I 19 and I 36), and the inconsistent division of couplets in the *Šamaš Hymn* (Lambert 1960, 123). Reiner 1985, 69 mentions the *Šamaš Hymn* on the same subject, and Oshima 2011, 220 observes similar incongruities in *Marduk*2.

⁵³ *aḥuz qāssu || lā immês²³ aradka*
[...]

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

We can recognise a 2+2 structure in the first line and a 3+2 in the second. In total, there are eight lines of the 3+2 type (ll. 55, 57-8, 175, 184, 189, 207, 214).²⁴ Ll. 183, 185 and 186 have a 3+3 structure.

2.3 Language and Spelling Conventions

Like the other Akkadian hymns and prayers under study, the *Nabû Prayer* presents some typical features of the so-called ‘hymno-epic dialect’ (see chapter 1, § 1.2.4). As noted above, von Soden and, in his footsteps, Groneberg,²⁵ identified the main phonological, morphological and lexical characteristics of this literary idiom as follows:

- Apocope and elision of vowels in enclitic personal pronouns
- Use of specific determinative (e.g. *šāt*, *šūt*), interrogative (*man-nu*, *mīnû*) and indefinite pronouns (*ayyu*, *ayyum-ma*, *mamman* and *mimma*)
- Special forms of the noun in the *status constructus* (e.g. *status constructus* in *-u*)
- Use of the locative and terminative cases (*-um* and *-iš*; occasionally their combined form *-uš*).
- Shortened forms of the prepositions *ina*, *ana* and *eli*.
- Use of the prefix (*ta-*) to mark the singular feminine in the verb conjugation.
- Use of the ŠD-stem.
- Use of a high-register vocabulary (including *hapax legomena*)

Goodnick Westenholz²⁶ adds the inverted word order to these characteristics, and Krebernik²⁷ mentions the usage of uncontracted vowels. Only some of these features occur in the present prayer:

²³ The spelling actually suggests a form *immessu* with overhanging vowel; see von Soden 1971, 63.

²⁴ However, it is highly possible that there are other hypermetrical lines, for example, ll. 25/27 or 36, but a metric analysis is challenging because the beginnings of these lines are fragmented.

²⁵ Von Soden 1931, 163-227 and 1933, 90-183; Groneberg 1978, 15; Hess 2010, 102-22. Cf. also Lambert 2013, 33-4, who investigated the usage of this literary style in the *Enūma eliš* and Jiménez 2017a, 76-9, who provided a study of the use of the hymno-epic dialect in the “Akkadian Disputations Poems”.

²⁶ Goodnick Westenholz 1997a, 26.

²⁷ Krebernik 2003-04, 11.

Locative and terminative:

ll. 84 and 192 *qibūtukka*; l. 90 *ištarāniš*; l. 124 *dāriš*; l. 178 *pisnuqiš* and *lallāriš*; l. 179 *daddariš*.

In ll. 118/120 and in l. 178 the word *aḥrâtaš* occurs. As noted by Lambert discussing this form in *Enūma eliš* (2013, 40-1), this form is probably the result of a scribal error, due to the misreading of the sign UR as *taš* instead of *tiš₂*. In fact, the form *aḥrâtaš* is only attested in first millennium manuscripts, and it can be assumed that the original form was *aḥrâtiš*. In the Old Babylonian period the form *aḥrêtiš* is indeed attested (see Lambert 2023, 40).

Apocope of personal pronouns:

ll. 21/23 [*šagi*]mmuk (*si vera lectio*) and *lā padûk*; ll. 25/27 *amā* ruk (*si vera lectio*), *nekelmûk*; l. 49 *elīš*; l. 50 *nesīš*; l. 54 *šertuš* and *šūlīš*; ll. 100/102 *baluk*; ll. 117/119 *nalbābuk*; ll. 118/120 *rašubbatuk*; l. 173 *illurtaš* (*si vera lectio*).

Use of the interrogative pronoun *mīnû*:

l. 79 *mīnâ*; l. 97 *a[na mīnâ i]mkû* (*si vera lectio*).

Rare words and *hapax legomena*:

ll. 21/23 *šagimmu* ‘roar’; ll. 38/40 *tīrānu* ‘mercy’; ll. 41/43 *mukallu* ‘priest’ (mng. uncertain) and *ešeštu* ‘knowledge(?)’ (hapax); ll. 45/47 *šalbābu* ‘furious’; l. 78 *taltaltu* ‘pollen(?)’ (hapax, mng. uncertain); ll. 91/93 *tele’û* ‘capable’; ll. 92/94 *temēšu* ‘forgiving’; ll. 104 and 149 *dušmû* ‘servant’; l. 140 *kingallu* ‘leader of the assembly’; l. 44 *zunzunu* ‘locust(?)’; l. 149 *abdu* ‘servant’; l. 173 *qunabru* ‘fetter’; l. 176 *šuršurru* ‘fruit(?)’, *ḥinzurru* ‘apple-tree(?)’; l. 177 *mešheru* ‘young man(?)’ (hapax), *šēditu* ‘maiden(?)’ (hapax); l. 178 *lallāriš* ‘like syrup’ (hapax), *pisnuqiš* ‘pitiable’; l. 180 *tadmīqu* ‘high-quality date’; l. 181 *antu* ‘ear of barley’ (uncertain); l. 184 *šēzuzu* and *tayyāru* ‘raging’ and ‘merciful’; l. 185 *aḥammu* ‘especially’; ll. 207/209 *nakruṭu*, as infinitive from *karāṭu* N ‘to have mercy’;²⁸ l. 210 *šingu* ‘village’; l. 217 *atnu* ‘prayer’.

***Status constructus* ending in -u:**

l. 176 *šēru rēšūtīya*.

²⁸ See Mayer 2017a, 14; cf. also Hrůša 2010, 116 and 257.

Inverted word order, i.e. the placement of verbal forms in the penultimate position or in first position, e.g.:

- l. 115 *idāt lumni šurdû ušabraršu² pūt[a²]*; l. 128 [...] ... *bitré unamgarū karš[i]*; l. 175 *ana kal māti ummāti ušahlâ manīt[u]*; l. 187/189 (Nabû) *tasanniq aradka nappaša šu[pte²]*.

In addition to these characteristics, the manuscripts of the *Nabu Prayer* display a remarkable inconsistency in the spelling of the case endings.²⁹

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

- ll. 45/47 *šal-ba-ba* (epithet; MS A); l. 82 *šà-sur-ra* (uncertain; MS A); l. 181 *ŠE-am* (subject in an intransitive clause; it should be considered a pseudo-logogram; MS A).

The nominative singular in *-i* occurs more frequently (all attestations are found in MS A):

- ll. 17/19 *na-ad-ri* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 21/23 *gir-ri* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 29/31 *ri-i-bi* (predicate nominal clause); ll. 37/39 *reš-ti-i* (epithet); l. 50 *kib-ri* (subject nominal clause); l. 129 *ṭa-ṭpul²-ti¹* (*si vera lectio*).

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

- ll. 30/32 *šá qin-nu* (uncertain; MS A); ll. 42/44 *šu-ka-a-mu* (*āšiš šukāmi*, epithet; MS A); l. 52 *ru-šum-du*, *ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu* (MS A); ll. 54/56 *ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu* (MS A); l. 57 *ina nap-la-qu* (MS A); l. 58 [*in*] *a pi-i le-'u-ú* (MS A); l. 115 *i-da-at lum-nu* (MSS A and B₁); l. 147 *a-na ka-ša-du* (MS A); l. 146 *a-na im-mu u mu-šu* (MS A); l. 176 *šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru* (uncertain; MS A); ll. 213/215 [*ana kal*] *da-ad-mu* (MS A).

The accusative singular may end in *-u* (all MS A):

- ll. 30 *qin-nu* (uncertain, context broken); l. 18 *ta-na-aš-šar ḫi-iš-bu*; l. 164 *lum-n[u]* (uncertain); l. 80 *a-šu-uš-tu4 ni-is-sa-t[u4]*; l. 185 *ma-ru áš-ru*; l. 186 *ma-ru la áš-ru*; ll. 187/189 *nap-pa-šu*; in l. 205 *na]k-ru-uṭ* could also be interpreted as *naq-ru-tú*, for *naqruta*, see the commentary on this line.

²⁹ Cf. von Soden 1971, 46.

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

l. 20 *ta-na-aš-šar ħi-iš-bi* (MS A); l. 125 *ĥu-up-šú* (MS A); l. 182 *bil-ti* ¹*ú*-[*tar*?] (uncertain; MS A).

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

ll. 42-4 *a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu* (MS A); l. 174 *a-na da-na-na i-ri-a-ti* (MS A).

The mimation of case endings is normally not written explicitly in this text, with the exception of very few frozen or consciously archaising forms:

ll. 91/93 *ti-le-é-a-um* (MS A, for *tele'û*); l. 181 *ŠE-am* (MS A, pseudo-logogram for *û*).

Note also *an-nam* in ll. 79 and 85-6, in which *NAM* might stand for /*nv*/. The context here, however, is unclear.

Apart from these writings, we find attestations of the sign *TUM* in word-final position, employed in nominative and genitive singular feminine nouns, but apparently never in accusative. The majority of the attestations show the use of *TUM* in the nominative (all the following attestations are found in MS A):

ll. 25/27 [*u*]r-pa-tu₄; l. 80 a-šu-uš-tu₄; l. 179 a-la-mit-tu₄.

There are three passages for the genitive:

ll. 41/43 muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tu₄; l. 175 a-na kal ma-^rtu₄¹.

Lastly, the sign *LUM* in word-final position seems to be used, but only in *be-lu₄* (*passim*).

With regard to the verbal forms, it should be noted that second-weak verbs in some cases show overhanging vowels (all attestations are in MS A):

ll. 26/28 *tu-ka-ni* for *tukān*; l. 88 *i-šá-bi* for *išâb*; l. 207 [*re*]-^re¹-mì for *rēm*.

In one case, a verb *ultimaefirmae* seems to present an unexpected final vowel:

l. 109 *ir-ra-qu* for *irraqi* (uncertain).

The morphological and stylistic features, together with the lexical peculiarities, are typical of late manuscripts. The date of composition of this text is uncertain, although scholars have suggested the first millennium, or the Cassite period.³⁰ However, as with the *Šamaš Hymn* or *Marduk1*, it is possible that the present text is a reworking of an earlier version.

2.4 Structure and Content

The fragmentary state of the manuscript prevents a comprehensive interpretation of the prayer. It is nevertheless still possible to identify several thematic sections, which agree with the standard structure of Akkadian prayers:³¹ the first eight lines are missing, but it is reasonable to suppose that the text opened with the conventional invocation, the hymnic opening in which the god was recognised and invoked with standard epithets and names (“Hymnic Introduction”,³² ll. 1-44). This first section also included the praises of the deity, which probably started from l. 9: in this part various divine aspects and prerogatives are listed. From l. 37, typical motifs of prayer appear: this portion of the text forms the second section, which is devoted to the lament (“Penitential Section”, ll. 45-173). In fact, along with praises and occasional epithets, there are also lines including pleas for divine assistance (ll. 37, 39, 53, 55-6) and descriptions of the sufferer’s condition (ll. 48-52). The lines that follow are too poorly preserved to allow a content analysis. However, we observe the return of a penitential tone from l. 91, where a special focus on the sufferer’s sins (ll. 91-4) and on Nabû’s mercy (ll. 99-102) is apparent. This was probably succeeded by the description of the misfortunes and sorrows that had befallen the sufferer, interspersed with new praises of Nabû (ll. 117-21; 174-7). In the lines following l. 140, other deities and demons are mentioned (e.g. ll. 143 and 145), and more symptoms of the penitent’s disease are

30 Cf. Lambert 1959-60, 48; von Soden 1971, 47. On the manuscript tradition and the datation of the *Great Hymns and Prayers*, see chapter 1, § 1.2.2.

31 More specifically, incantation prayers. For the basic structure of Mesopotamian prayers, I follow von Soden 1957-71, 161, who identifies four sections: 1) “Der Lobpreis des Gottes” 2) “Die Klage” 3) “Die Bitte” 4) “Das Dankversprechen”. Mayer, in his work on Akkadian *šulla* prayers, includes yet another element, “Das Tun des Beters”, namely the description of the supplicant’s behaviour (Mayer 1976, 36-7). Cf. Oshima 2011, 14-19, who also provides a structure for Akkadian Prayers, basing his classification on von Soden’s study. Cf. also Frechette *apud* Lenzi 2011, 27-9. The structure of Mesopotamian prayers partially overlaps with that of hymns. Metcalf (2015, 25), for example, divides Mesopotamian Hymns into three basic sections: *Invocatio*, *Preces*, *Salutatio*. The same terms are used by Pohl (2022) in her recent treatment of Old Babylonian hymns. Cf. also Zgoll 2003a, 30-1, who also employs a three-part structure in her analysis of *Šuillas*. For the differences between Akkadian hymns and prayers, see chapter 1, § 1.1.1.

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

listed. In ll. 178-86 lamentations give way to a short wisdom section (“Wisdom Section”, ll. 174-86). With l. 187 a new section opens, characterised by pleas for the god’s help expressed through a series of precatives in the second hemistich (“Plea”, ll. 187-209). This final part of the text contains yet another section, namely the salutation to the deity (“Final Salutation”, from l. 211): the author glorifies Nabû, stressing his pre-eminence among the other gods and proclaiming the importance of his worship among people (ll. 211-25).

The prayer can therefore be divided into five sections:

1. “Hymnic Introduction” (ll. 1-44): possible invocation, and praises of the god, description of his powers and characteristics.
2. “Penitential Section” (ll. 45-173): description of suffering and requests for aid. Hymnic break (ll. 117-77).
3. “Wisdom Section” (ll. 178-86).
4. “Plea”: requests for pity and salvation (ll. 187-210).
5. “Final Salutation” (ll. 211-25).

2.4.1 Analysis of the Individual Sections: Topoi and Use of Verbal and Nominal Forms

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

The hymnic introduction (ll. 1-44) shows a clear paratactic structure and consists of numerous nominal phrases that are grammatically and semantically complete within each line. As is always the case in hymnic compositions, participles and nominal phrases prevail in the lines where invocations and praises are to be found. The usage of these forms aims to highlight the eternal nature of deities, whose attributes are unchangeable.³³

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

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

Only one precative form is attested: ll. 38/40 *lipšaḫā*.

³³ Metcalf 2015, 63; Metzler 2002, 728.

The present tense verbs in these lines are atemporal.³⁴

The features and powers of Nabû are described in the opening section – particularly his ruthlessness in punishing those who have sinned, as well as his mercy towards those who have been forgiven. These two opposite aspects alternate with one another until l. 45, when the “Penitential Section” begins. In this way, the poet creates an antithetical structure, very similar to the one occurring in the first forty lines of *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi* and in *Marduk1*, both of which also show an alternation of opposite behaviours, namely, the contrast between the cruelty of the god and the punishments resulting from his anger on one hand, and the beneficial consequences of his benevolence on the other.³⁵ The syntactic dichotomy that can be observed in the first lines of the *Nabû Prayer* is used to express the two antithetical aspects of the god (ll. 17-22):

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

¹⁸[*tukammar(?) he]galla tanaššar hišba*

¹⁹[*Nabû ušumgall]u(?) uzzaka nīrka nadru*

²⁰[*tukammar(?) he]galla tanaššar hišba*

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

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

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

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

As can be seen from these lines, the poet employs the ‘lyrical repetition’ (or *a-a*’ structure), in which several couplets are repeated in an almost identical way: the ‘delayed’ name of the god – inserted only in the second couplet – is the only variation.

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

³⁴ For the use of present tense as ‘extratemporalis’ see GAG § 78 d, β.

³⁵ Oshima 2011, 48. For the dual character of deities in *Ludlul* and in the *Great Hymns and Prayers*, see chapter 1, § 1.2.5.

is shown – and almost ‘reminded of’ – his ability to save the sufferer.³⁶

The second section (“Penitential Section”, ll. 45-173) includes the enumeration of the miseries afflicting the supplicant and his pleas for mercy. Despite this part of the prayer being severely damaged, it seems that the description of suffering accords with the standard motifs and phrases used in the Mesopotamian penitential prayers and in some wisdom compositions (e.g. *Theodicy*, *Ludlul*).³⁷ The specific nature of the illness is not openly mentioned, and the miseries described in this section seem to indicate a general condition of physical decay and mental distress. The sufferer is said to be afflicted by several feelings of discomfort: depletion and misery (ll. 46/48 *imṭû tănēḥu*), sorrow, wailing and bewilderment (l. 80 *ašuštu nissatu [u kûru (?)]*), and his terrible condition is expressed through the use of similes: he is depicted as being cast into deep water (ll. 49-50), a motif also to be found in the Sumerian tradition,³⁸ and stuck in the marshes (ll. 51-2, 54/56),³⁹ an expression often taken as a reference to death and the underworld.⁴⁰ Metaphors borrowed from the animal kingdom are also typical of Mesopotamian prayers, like the one in l. 57, by which the moaning of the supplicant is likened to that of a bull being slaughtered (for the similes and metaphors attested in the *Great Hymns and Prayers* cf. also chapter 5).⁴¹

36 Mayer 1976, 44-5. Mayer in his division of the Akkadian *šuilā* prayers calls this action the ‘Vergegenwärtigung’; cf. Oshima 2011, 15. Cf. Hallo 1968, 77. Cf. also the remarks by Lenzi 2010, 309, regarding the invocation in *diġiršadabba* prayers: he defines the hymnic introduction as “a protocol analogous to the ones that people used when addressing human authorities”, in the sense that the petitioner, while invoking the deity, makes use of specific models, which resemble those used in certain human relationships.

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

38 See for example the bilingual *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 9, ll. 17-18: a-gin₇ ki al-ġen-na-gu₁₀ nu-un-zu | ⁶¹⁴má-gin₇ kar ab-ús ġen-na-gu₁₀ nu-un-zu; Akkadian lines: *kīma mē ašar allāku ul ide | kīma eleppi ina kar innemmidu ul ide*, “Like water I do not know where I am going | like a boat I do not know at which quay I put in” (for the latest edition see Jaques 2015, 55. The translation used here is that of Lambert 1974, 291. Cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65 and 191 fn. 152).

39 See for example the *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 11, l. 100: *kīma ārid appari ina rušumdi nadāku*, “Like one who goes down in the marshes, I have fallen in the mud” (for the latest edition see Jaques 2015, 77. Here I use the translation provided by Lambert 1974, 279. Cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65 and 190 fn. 149).

40 Van der Toorn 1985, 65.

41 See for example the *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 11, l. 12: *adammum kīma summat mūši u urra*, “I moan like a dove night and day” (see the latest edition by Jaques 2015, 67. The translation here is by Lambert 1974, 275. Cf. also Van der Toorn 1985, 65 and 190 fn. 142 for more attestations of this motif also in Sumerian literature).

Further in this section, several damaged lines continue to describe physical suffering of the penitent: ll. 114-15 mention lice and an unknown disease called *šurdû*.

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

Imperative verbs:

l. 53/55 *aḥuz*; ll. 54/56 *šutbi šērtuš* and *šūliš*; l. 97 *mēš*; l. 98 *ukkiš*.

Precative verbs:

l. 76 *lubbabil*; l. 77 *lūšer*; l. 78 *luttaggiš*; ll. 117/118 [*ludl*]ul; l. 123 *lukin*; l. 124 *luma*'*irū* and *lupīra* (uncertain).

Typical elements of Akkadian penitential prayers are direct questions to the gods, by which the penitent complains about his suffering and asks for the reasons of his punishment.⁴²

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

Knowledge of these standard formulas allows restorations to be made, such as l. 97: *a[na minâ i]mkû mēš ara[nšû]*, "I[n what respect has he been negligent? Disregard his guilt!]", and l. 116: *adi mati kala šatti ginâ lumnu(?) šumšu(?)*, "How long, a whole year, does any evil last?".

The "Wisdom Section" (ll. 174-85) stands out from the rest of the prayer for its philosophical content, difficult vocabulary and poetic structure. In this section *hapax legomena* (e.g. l. 178 *lallāriš*) and rare words (e.g. l. 176 *šuršurrû*; l. 178 *pisnuqiš*; l. 180 *tadmīqāsa*; l. 181 *an(n)ātū(šu)*; l. 184 *šēzuzu* and *tayy[ār]*; l. 185 *aḥammu*) appear. Parallels to other Mesopotamian texts are also frequently found (see section below, 2.3).

In addition, the broad use of *parallelismus membrorum* in these lines resembles the structure of the hymnic introduction, and a lyrical tone, similar to the one characterising the opening section, is observed. The similarity in the stylistic features is also emphasised by

⁴² Mayer 1976, 107.

the use of verbs. In fact, the wisdom section and the hymnic introduction both display an extensive occurrence of atemporal forms. In this respect, statives are most frequently to be noted in the wisdom section:

l. 174 *bašim*; l. 179 *mā[r]*; l. 180 *damiq* and *nuḥā[š]* (uncertain);
l. 184 *eklet*; *namrat*; *tayy[ār]*.

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

l. 175 *ušaḥlā*; l. 178 *udaššap*; l. 185 *ika[rrab]*; l. 181 *ikušša*; l. 186 *irrar*.

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

Mesopotamian hymns and prayers usually end with petitions and, finally, with a salutation to the deity.⁴³ The last two sections of the *Nabû Prayer* accord with this standard feature: in the fourth section petitions for health and prosperity unfold (the “Plea” ll. 187-210), while the fifth section consists of the “Final Salutation” to the goddess (ll. 211-25).

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

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

Beside precatives, we find the occurrence of imperative forms emphasising the petition:

l. 187 *šu[pte]*; l. 188 *idi* and *suḥḥira*; ll. 205/207 [*r*]ēm (uncertain) and *rišīšu*

The fifth and last section (the “Final Salutation”) runs from l. 211 to the end of the text. It is characterised by a hymnic tone: in this part the pre-eminent role of Nabû among the other divinities is stressed;

⁴³ Metcalf 2015, 22, 71-2; Mayer 1976, 307.

moreover, the petitioner expresses the wish that the whole pantheon of deities, together with the peoples, will glorify the god (on this concept, i.e. the ‘public aspect’ of praise, see *infra*). Precative forms are used:

l. 211 *limmir*; ll. 212/214 *lištammar*; ll. 213/215 *lištěpâ*; l. 217 *likûn*;
l. 218 *liḫuzû*; l. 219 *liqbû*.

This section has been defined by von Soden as “Dankversprechen”, implying that its scope is mainly to thank the invoked deity.⁴⁴ Indeed, while in the Akkadian language there is no exact word for ‘to thank’, one can nevertheless interpret this section as an expression of gratitude. The devotee formulates his thanksgiving not only by praising the deity, but also by performing specific symbolic gestures and by providing ritual offerings.⁴⁵ In this respect, we notice the following couplet in the *Nabû Prayer*:

²¹⁶[*liq*]e *damāša balāša u utnēnšu*

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

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

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

Praise has a ‘public’ aspect,⁴⁶ that is to say, it involves not only the individual, but also the whole of humanity, as well the divine world. This feature occurs in the closing section of the prayer: in ll. 213/215 the desire for all the inhabited lands to praise Nabû is formulated ([*ana kal*] *dadmī lištēpâ narbīka*, “To all the inhabited regions of the world, may he proclaim your greatness”), and the poet further implores the Igigi gods and the Laḫmu gods to advocate for the penitent:

²¹⁸[*Igigi*]i *gimrassunu liḫuzû abūssu*

²¹⁹[*La*]ḫmū *išrassunu(?) liqbû dumuqšu*,

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

²¹⁹May the [Laḫmu-g]ods, their totality, put in a good word for him.

44 Von Soden 1957-71, 161, § 4. See also Mayer 1976, 356-7, who further analyses this aspect, maintaining that the praises occurring in the closing section have the function of actualising the glorification of the god. The petitioner promises or wishes to extol the deity in the future, because he is certain that, having diligently fulfilled his religious duty by following the proper worship practice, he will eventually receive the divine help he needs. Thus, he can already praise the deity with confident anticipation of his deliverance. Cf. Westermann 1965, 78.

45 Mayer 1976, 308.

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

The very last lines of the prayer (ll. 220-5) comprise a doxology: the greatness of Nabû is praised one last time, both among the gods and the people:

^{220/222}[*bēlu/Nabû in*]a ilī šurbû narbûka

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

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

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

Hence the conclusion of the *Nabû Prayer* illustrates the new condition of the penitent, who has overcome suffering and isolation, and can glorify the deity who restored him to wholeness by proclaiming his power to the gods and to humanity.⁴⁷

The vocabulary that appears in the fifth section exemplifies the standard vocabulary used in Akkadian prayers.⁴⁸ Verbs belonging to the semantic field of ‘praising’ and frequently found in penitential prayers are employed here as well. In almost all of the attestations, their objects are nouns in the accusative case, with a suffixed pronoun:

- *šamāru* with acc. + suffix: ll. 212/214 *lištammar ilūtka*; also in l. 225 [... *lišta*]mmar.
- *apû* with acc. + suffix (here Š-stem): ll. 213/215 *lištěpâ narbîka*.
- *qabû* with acc. + suffix: l. 219 *liqbû dumuqšu*.
- *rabû* with acc. + suffix (Š-stem): ll. 220/222 *šurbû narbûka*.
- *šarāḫu* with acc. + suffix: ll. 221/223 [*t*]anittaka ušarriḫā.

In addition, l. 212 shows a very common construction recurring in Akkadian prayers that consists in connecting a precative and an imperative in order to form a consecutive sentence:

²¹²[*aḫu*]z qāssu lištammar ilūtka

²¹²[Tak]e his hand, so that he may extol your divinity.⁴⁹

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

⁴⁷ Mayer 1976, 309.

⁴⁸ Mayer 1976, 319-27

⁴⁹ Cf. Mayer 1976, 312, and fn. 16.

On the other hand, however, not only does the supplicant need divine help to restore his health, but the deity also needs a living and healthy devotee, who can worship him through praise and offerings.⁵⁰

The bijective relationship between divinities and human beings is clearly expressed, for example, in *Marduk*1, ll. 67-9:

⁶⁷*ša ʕiʕiʕ imû mînu nêmelšu*

⁶⁸*balʕum-ma ardu bêlâšu ipallaḥ*

⁶⁹*epru mîtu ana ili mînâ uššab*

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

⁶⁸Only a living servant can revere his master!

⁶⁹Dead dust, what is its use to the god?⁵¹

2.5 The “Wisdom Section”: Content and Intertextual Perspectives

In addition to stereotypical motifs, the *Nabû Prayer* also contains some original passages that deal with philosophical themes. Lines 178-86 of the wisdom section seem to develop the idea that there is an appointed time for everything, thus implying that it is wise to wait patiently for a negative beginning to end positively.

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

¹⁷⁸*aḥrâtaš pisnuqiš lallâriš udašš[ap]*

¹⁷⁹*alamittu uḥenša daddariš m[ār]*

¹⁸⁰*arka tadmîqša damiq per’u nuḥ[āš(?)]*

¹⁸¹*û ina ligimîšu immarḥā an(n)ât[û(šu)]*

¹⁸²*ikušša ina rabêšû-ma bilta u[târ(?)]*

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

51 Translation by the Author. Cf. Oshima 2011, 147-8; 162-3, and more recently Fahil, Jiménez 2019, 168 and 170. Cf. also Mayer 1976, 313-14.

- ¹⁷⁸What has seemed pitiable, he will swe[eten] like syrup,
¹⁷⁹The fresh date on the date palm is bitter like stinkwort,
¹⁸⁰(but) later its fine date is good, the sprout is lu[xuriant].
¹⁸¹The grain in its budding phase: [(its)] ea[rs] may rot,
¹⁸²It lingers in its ripening, (but then) br[ings (abundant)] yield.

The dates still on the date palm are bitter, but they sweeten after their ripening, and the grain, which can sometimes be affected by diseases and rot in its spikes, requires a long time to fully mature for a successful harvest. The motif of a positive development coming from apparently negative circumstances finds a parallel in the *Theodicy*, ll. 260-3, where the same argument is presented by stating that the first-born is physically inferior to the second one:

- ²⁶⁰*littu bûršu rēštû šapil-ma*
²⁶¹*ligimûša arkû maši šittînšu*
²⁶²*lillû mârû pânâ i'allad*
²⁶³*le'û qardu ša šanî nibîssu*
²⁶⁰In the case of a cow, the first calf is lowly,
²⁶¹The later offspring is twice as big.
²⁶²A first child is born a weakling,
²⁶³But the second is called a heroic warrior.⁵²

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

- ¹⁸⁴*ašar eklet namrat šēzuzu tayy[ār]*
¹⁸⁴where it was darkness, there will be light, the ferocious one (will be) merciful.

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

- ²*ēziz mūši muppaššir urri*
²Furious in the night, pacified by day.⁵³

In the same way we can read in *Marduk2*, l. 81:

⁵² Cited from Lambert 1960, 86-7. Cf. Heinrich 2022.

⁵³ Translation by Foster *apud* Häntinen 2022; cf. Oshima 2014, 79.

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

⁸¹In the morning there is your forgiveness, the furious one relen[ts].⁵⁴

The god puts the man to the test (l. 187: *tasanniḳ aradka*), but rewards his patience, like a father would do to help his obedient son (ll. 184-5). Divine help, like mercy, arrives at daylight (l. 176 *šēru rēšūtiya*).⁵⁵ It is possible to find the same idea expressed in *Marduk2*, ll. 18 and 20:

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

[...]

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

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

[...]

²⁰Marduk, by sunrise your help came.⁵⁶

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

A comparative approach between Mesopotamian and biblical texts has been used since the first Akkadian texts were found and translated in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The many similarities between Mesopotamian hymns and prayers and the biblical psalms even led some scholars to suggest a direct dependence of the latter on the Mesopotamian texts.⁵⁷ It is not my intention here to argue that the Mesopotamian sources had a direct influence on the biblical ones, as a direct contact between the two corpora seems difficult to postulate. However, the similar motifs, the formal structure and stock-phrases shared by the Akkadian compositions and the biblical texts constitute interesting parallels between the two literary traditions, in that both were informed by similar ideas and beliefs about the problem of unjust suffering and divine justice.

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

⁵⁴ Translation by the Author and restoration from K.9917+K.17647, see below in the philological commentary, ll. 10/12.

⁵⁵ The association between sunlight and joy is also a recurring theme in the Kiutu prayers, see Baragli 2022a, 117.

⁵⁶ Oshima 2011, 223, 240-1.

⁵⁷ Zernecke 2011a, 61-2 and 2014.

Those who sow with tears
 will reap with songs of joy.
 Those who go out weeping,
 carrying seed to sow,
 will return with songs of joy,
 carrying sheaves with them.
 (Ps 126:5-6)

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

The end of a matter is better than its beginning,
 and patience is better than pride.
 (Eccles. 7:8-9)⁵⁸

The motif that strictly connects divine help with the morning's light also occurs in the Old Testament. Light is a synonym for closeness to deity and salvation, while darkness is related to abandonment and death.⁵⁹ Examples of this association between morning and divine help are numerous, for example: Ps 5:3-4; 90:14; 143:8; 43:3; 46:6.

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

59 Janowski 2013, 67. Cf. Janowski 1989.

2.6 Edition

2.6.1 Text

Content

This prayer is addressed to the scribal god Nabû, and attested in two fragmentary manuscripts (A and B). Manuscript A is a four column tablet written in Neo-Assyrian script; in both manuscripts, the text falls into couplets marked by horizontal rulings, as frequently occurs in Babylonian poetry, especially in manuscripts of the *Great Hymns and Prayers*.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the tablet retains the graphic indication of the metrical *caesura* in the first column, either represented by a blank space left between the hemistichs or by a vertical line drawn in the middle of verses (see ll. 57-8). Manuscript B is a small fragment and preserves very few lines of the prayer (ll. 115-17); it is not possible to define its format.

This 236 line long composition makes use of the so-called ‘hymno-epic dialect’, a high-register literary language characterised by uncommon grammatical traits, rare words borrowed from lexical lists and *hapax legomena*. Numerous rhetorical features enrich this prayer, which depicts a supplicant describing his pitiable state and asking the god for forgiveness and aid. The text also contains a wisdom section (ll. 178-86), in which philosophical reflections on suffering and the human condition are found.

Manuscripts

A	K.2361+K.3193+K.14033+K.18434 +Sm.389+Sm.601(+)	ZA 4, 252-5; ZA 4, 256-8; <i>eBL</i> (Rozzi 2022b)	pls 1-2	Two-column tablet, Neo-Assyrian script, 7th cent.	Nineveh, ‘Ashurbanipal’s Library’, probably South-West Palace (Sm collection; Reade 2000, 422, George 2003, 386)
B ₁	K.15248	<i>eBL</i> (Rozzi 2022b)	pl. 3	Neo-Assyrian script, 7th cent.	Nineveh, ‘Ashurbanipal’s Library’
B ₂	K.21022	<i>eBL</i> (Rozzi 2022b)	pl. 3	Neo-Assyrian script, 7th cent.	Nineveh, ‘Ashurbanipal’s Library’

⁶⁰ Fadhil-Jiménez 2019, 162.

Previous Editions

Brünnow, R.E. (1889). *ZA*, 4, 252-8 (transliteration of K.2361+K.3193+Sm.389).
 von Soden, W. (1971). *ZA*, 61, 50-60 (transliteration and translation of A without K.18434).

Online edition: Rozzi, G. (2022b). “Great Prayer to Nabû”. With Contributions by A.C. Heinrich, A. Häntinen, E. Jiménez and T.D.N. Mitto. Translated by B.R. Foster. *electronic Babylonian Library*. <https://doi.org/10.5282/eb1/1/3/5>.

Transliteration

(8 lines missing)

9	A obv. i 1'	[<i>bēlu</i> x x x x x]	<i>sa-bi</i> -[' <i>u</i> x x]
10	A obv. i 2' A	[x x x x x x x]	<i>nāp-šur-k</i> [<i>a</i> x x]
<hr/>			
11	A obv. i 3'	[<i>Nabû</i> x x x x x]	<i>sa-bi</i> -[' <i>u</i> ' [x x]
12	A obv. i 4' A	[x x x x x x x]	[<i>n</i>] <i>ap-šur-ka</i> [x x]
<hr/>			
13	A obv. i 5'	[<i>bēlu</i> x x (x) <i>šu-ud-lu</i>]- <i>pa</i>	<i>ki-ma</i> [x x x]
14	A obv. i 6' A	[x x x x x x x x (x)]- <i>ú</i>	<i>sa-ḫir</i> [<i>šēr</i> ²- <i>tī</i> '?]
<hr/>			
15	A obv. i 7'	[<i>Nabû</i> x x (x) <i>šu-u</i>] <i>d-lu-pa</i>	<i>ki-ma</i> [x x x]
16	A obv. i 8' A	[x x x x x x x x (x)]- <i>x-ú</i>	<i>sa-ḫir</i> [<i>šēr</i> ²- <i>tī</i> '?]
<hr/>			
17	A obv. i 9'	[<i>bēlu ušumgallu</i> (?) <i>uz-za</i>]- <i>ka</i>	<i>nir-ka na-ad-ri</i>
18	A obv. i 10' A	[<i>tukammar</i> (?) <i>ḫé-g</i>] <i>ál-la</i>	<i>ta-na-aš-šar ḫi-iš-bu</i>
<hr/>			

19	A obv. i 11'	[Nabû ú ² -šum ² -gal ² -l]u uz-za-ka	nir-ka na-ad-ri
20	A obv. i 12'	[tukammar(?) ḥ]é-gál-la	ta-na-aš-šar ḥi-iš-bi
	A		
21	A obv. i 13'	[Adad(?) šá-gi]m-mu-uk	la pa-du-uk gir-ri
22	A obv. i 14'	[x x x x x (x) DING]IR.DINGIR	ta-bar-ri an-šár
	A		
23	A obv. i 15'	[Nabû Adad(?) šá-gi]m-mu- ¹ uk ¹	la pa-du-uk gir-ri
24	A obv. i 16'	[x x x x x (x) D]INGIR.DINGIR	ta-bar-ri an-šár
	A		
25	A obv. i 17'	[šibbu(?) a-ma]-ru-uk	¹ ur ¹ -pa-tu ₄ né- ¹ kel ¹ -mu-uk
26	A obv. i 18'	[tušteššer(?)] ¹ i ¹ -šá-ri	[t]u-ka-ni iš-di-šú
	A		
27	A obv. i 19'	[Nabû šibbu(?) amāruk	ur ¹ - ¹ pa-tu ₄ né- ¹ kel-mu-uk
28	A obv. i 20'	[tušteššer(?) išara	tu-k]a-ni iš-di-šú
	A		
29	A obv. i 21'	[bēlu(?) x x x (x)	e-de-e]d-ka ri-i-bi
30	A obv. i 22'	[x x x x x (x)	ša qin-n]u tam-ḥu
	A		
31	A obv. i 23'	[Nabû x x x (x)]	e-de-ed-ka ¹ ri ¹ -i-bi
32	A obv. i 24'	[x x x x x (x)]	šá qin-nu tam- ¹ ḥu ¹
	A		
33	A obv. i 25'	[bēlu(?) x x x x	ḥ]u-ḥu-um šá-ma-mi
34	A obv. i 26'	[x x x x kīma pāṭ(?) qinni(?)	k]a-mir i[š-di-ḥ]u
	A		
35	A obv. i 27'	[Nabû x x] x x	¹ ḥu ¹ -ḥu-um šá-ma-mi
36	A obv. i 28'	[x x x x k]i- ¹ ma ¹ paṭ qin-ni	¹ ka ¹ -mir iš-di-ḥu
	A		

37	A obv. i 29'	[bēlu r]eš-ti-i nu-uḫ	a-na sur-ri
38	A obv. i 30' A	[bu ² -n]u-ka lip-šá- ¹ ḫa ¹	¹ ri ¹ -ši ti-ra-a-ni
39	A obv. i 31'	[^d A]G reš-ti-i nu-uḫ	a-na sur-ri
40	A obv. i 32' A	[bu ² -nu]-ka lip-šá-ḫa	ri-ši ti-ra-a-ni
41	A obv. i 33'	b[e-l]u ₄ pal-ku-ú	¹ muk ¹ -kal-li e-še-eš-tu ₄
42	A obv. i 34' A	rap- ¹ šá ¹ uz-ni	¹ a ¹ -ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu
43	A obv. i 35'	^d AG ¹ pal ¹ -ku-ú	muk-kal-li e-še-eš-tu ₄
44	A obv. i 36' A	rap-šá uz-ni	a-ši-ši šu-ka-a-mu
45	A obv. i 37'	be-lu ₄ šal-ba-ba ta-as-sa- ¹ bu ¹ -us	UGU ìR-ka
46	A obv. i 38' A	še-riš it-tab-šu-ú	¹ im ¹ -ṭu-ú ta-né-ḫu
47	A obv. i 39'	^d AG šal-ba-ba ta-as-sa-bu-us	UGU ¹ ìR ¹ -k[a]
48	A obv. i 40' A	še-riš it-tab-šu-ú	im-ṭu-ú t[a-né-ḫu]
49	A obv. i 41'	ina gi-piš e-de-e na-di-ma	a-gu-ú e-liš it-ta[k-kip]
50	A obv. i 42' A	kib-ri ru-uq-šú	né-si-iš na-ba-[u]
51	A obv. i 43'	ib-li ina qé-e šib-qí	a-na pa-ra-a ² -a le-e-m[u]
52	A obv. i 44' A	¹ it ¹ -ta-til ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu	ka-li ina ru-šum-du
53	A obv. i 45'	¹ a ¹ -ḫu-uz ŠU ¹¹ -su	la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]
54	A obv. i 46' A	¹ šu ¹ -ut-bi šèr-tuš	šu-liš ina na-ri-iṭ-ṭu

55	A obv. i 47'	^a AG a-ḫu-uz šU ^{II} -su	la im-me-es-su ìR-k[a]
56	A obv. i 48'	'šU ^I -ut-bi šèr-tuš	šU-liš ina na-ri-i[ṭ-ṭu]
	A		
<hr/>			
57	A obv. i 49'	[k]i-ma le-e šá ina nap-la-qu pal-qu i-'ram-mu ^I -um ši-i[g-miš]	
58	A obv. i 50'	[in]a 'pi-i ^I 'le ^I -u-ú da-ab-ru na-di-ma ú-gan-na-a[n ^I x x x]	
	A		
<hr/>			
(end of A obv. i; first 16 lines of obv. ii missing)			
75	A obv. ii 1'	ki 'tu ^I x x [x x x x x x] x [x x x]	
76	A obv. ii 2'	na-si-ka-ku lu-ub-ba-bil 'lu ^I -u[p ^I -pa ^I -ṭir ^I]	
	A		
<hr/>			
77	A obv. ii 3'	ki-i na-ak-mi šU-šU-ú lu-šèr 'a ^I -[ḫi ^I -ta ^I]	
78	A obv. ii 4'	ki-i tal-tal-ti lut-tag-giš i-na k[a-ma-a-ti]	
	A		
<hr/>			
79	A obv. ii 5'	an-nam mi-na-a a-mu-ú i-zi-za [elīya(?)]	
80	A obv. ii 6'	id-da-a a-šU-uš-tu ₄ ni-is-sa-t[u ₄ u kūru(?)]	
	A		
<hr/>			
81	A obv. ii 7'	be-lu ₄ at-ta-ma tam-bi [šumī(?)]	
82	A obv. ii 8'	qí-bi-tuk-ka šà-sur-ra 'ú ^I -[x x x]	
	A		
<hr/>			
83	A obv. ii 9'	^d AG at-ta-ma tam-bi [šumī(?)]	
84	A obv. ii 10'	qí-bi-tuk-ka šà-sur-ra [x x x x]	
	A		
<hr/>			
85	A obv. ii 11'	i-na an-nam a-bi 'i ^I -[na ^I anna(?)] ummi(?)]	
86	A obv. ii 12'	an-nam AD.MEŠ-šú a[n ^I -nam ^I ummātīšu(?)]	
	A		
<hr/>			
87	A obv. ii 13'	'ul ^I i-'na ^I (-)x [x x x x x x x]	
88	A obv. ii 14'	i-šá-bi i-'ta ^I -x [x x x x x x x]	
	A		
<hr/>			

89	A obv. ii 15'	<i>i-la a-bi-'i' ka-a-ti mar-ši iš-^rtam-mar¹</i>
90	A obv. ii 16'	<i>gi-na-a mas-^rda¹-ri iš-ta-ra-niš i-^rqal¹</i>
	A	<hr/>
91	A obv. ii 17'	<i>ti-le-é-'a¹-um 'be-lu₄¹ in-ni-ti pa-^rtar[?]</i>
92	A obv. ii 18'	<i>ti-mé-e-šú 'gíl¹-la-t[i lā] 'ṭa¹-ab-tú 'ti[?]-gi[?]</i>
	A	<hr/>
93	A obv. ii 19'	<i>ti-^rle-é-a¹-u[m Nabû in-n]i-ti pa-ṭ[ar[?]</i>
94	A obv. ii 20'	<i>ti-m[é-e-šú gillatī lā ṭa-a]b-tú 'ti[?]-[gi[?]</i>
	A	<hr/>
95	A obv. ii 21'	<i>i-na x [x x x x x x x k]u pa-x-[x]</i>
96	A obv. ii 22'	<i>i-na [x x x x x x(-)r]i-bi ma-^rna-a-ma[?] [x (x)]</i>
	A	<hr/>
97	A obv. ii 23'	<i>'a¹-n[a mīnâ i]m-ku-ú me-e-šú a-^rra¹-[an-šú]</i>
98	A obv. ii 24'	<i>[mimma(?) mala(?)] 'i¹-še-ṭu₄ uk-kiš ḫi-^rip[?] š[ā[?]-šú[?]</i>
	A	<hr/>
99	A obv. ii 25'	<i>[ela k]a-a-ti be-lu₄ ul ib-ba-áš-'ši [rēmu(?)]</i>
100	A obv. ii 26'	<i>[ina b]a-lu-^ruk¹ 'in¹-ni-ti gíl-la-^rti¹ [ul(?) ippaṭṭar(?)]</i>
	A	<hr/>
101	A obv. ii 27'	<i>[ela k]a-a-ti ^dAG ul ib-ba-^ráš¹-[ši rēmu(?)]</i>
102	A obv. ii 28'	<i>[ina ba-l]u-uk in-ni-ti gíl-la-t[i ul(?) ippaṭṭar(?)]</i>
	A	<hr/>
103	A obv. ii 29'	<i>[tu[?]-še[?]]-ṣa[?]-ma ìR-ka ta-as-sa-^rkip¹ [x x x (x)]</i>
104	A obv. ii 30'	<i>[ina r]it[?]-ti-ka ta-at-ta-di 'du¹-u[š[?]-ma[?]-ka[?]</i>
	A	<hr/>
105	A obv. ii 31'	<i>[a[?]-šam[?]]-^ršá¹-niš ḫal-lu-la-a-a DINGIR lem-ni 'ta¹-x [x x x x]</i>
106	A obv. ii 32'	<i>[x x-tu]l[?] la-^rga¹-mi du-tuš ta-bar-^ri¹ x [x x]</i>
	A	<hr/>

107	A obv. ii 33'	[x x x]- ^f liš ²¹ uš-ḥa-ri-ir i-laq- ^f qé ¹ x [x x x]
108	A obv. ii 34' A	[x x x] ^f i ¹ -ta-šar ig- ^f da-mar ¹ [x x x x]
<hr/>		
109	A obv. ii 35'	[x x] x-šú ir-ra-qu kab- ^f ta ² -ta ²¹ [x x x]
110	A obv. ii 36' A	[tēnšu(?) it ² -t]a-kir-šú iḥ-ši- ^f iḥ ²¹ [x x x x]
<hr/>		
111	A obv. ii 37'	[x x x] x ig-ga-mir x x [x x]
112	A obv. ii 38' A	[x x] x ^f ip ¹ -pa-ṭir x x [x x x x]
<hr/>		
<i>(lower edge)</i>		
113	A rev. iii 1	ši-in-šú i[p ² -x x x] x x pa-ri- ^f im ¹ a-a- ^f ba ²¹ (x)
114	A rev. iii 2 A	mut-qu p[u-u]l-ḥu-šú ik-ta- ^f bit ¹ ^f UGU-nu-šú ¹
<hr/>		
115	A rev. iii 3 B1	i-da-at l[um-n]u šúr-du-ú ú-šab-ra-ár- ^f šú ²¹ ^f pu ¹ -t[u ²] i-da-at lum-nu šú[r-du-ú x x x x x]
116	A rev. iii 4 B2 A, B ₁	^f a ¹ -di ma-t[i k]a ² -la šat-ti gi-na-a lu- ^f mun ²¹ ^f šum-šú ²¹ a-di ma-ti k[a-la x x x x x x x x]
<hr/>		
117	A rev. iii 5 B ₁ 3'	[lud]- ^f lul ¹ be-l[u ₄] na-al-ba-bu-uk e- ^f ze-zu ¹ lud-lul ^f be-lu ₄ ¹ n[a-al-ba-bu-uk x x x]
118	A rev. iii 6 B ₁ 3' A	[li ² -te ² -l]i ² r[a-šú]b-ba-tuk a-na AN-e aḥ- ^f ra ¹ -t[aš] [li ²]- ^f te ²¹ -[li ² x x x x x x x x x]
<hr/>		
119	A rev. iii 7 B ₂ 1'	[ludlul ⁴ A]G na-al-ba-bu-uk ^f e ¹ -ze-z[u] [x x x x x x x x e]- ^f ze ¹ -z[u]
120	A rev. iii 8 B ₂ 2' A, B ₂	[līṭeli(?) ra-š]ub-ba-tuk ^f a-na ¹ AN-e aḥ- ^f ra ¹ -[taš] [x x x x x x x x] ^f aḥ- ^f ra ¹ -ta[š]
<hr/>		
121	A rev. iii 9 B ₂ 3'	[bīt(?) ki ² -im ² -t]i-ia e-pir za-ka-a e-pir is-qu-q[u] [x x x x x x x x x] ^f e ¹ -pir is-qu- ^f qu ¹
122	A rev. iii 10	[(x) A.Š.Ā.G]A ab-bé-e-a ki-šub-bu-šá bi-lat kàs-p[u]

	B ₂ 4' A, B ₂	[(x) x x x x x x x x x x bi]- ¹ lat ¹ kàs-[pi]
123	A rev. iii 11 B ₂ 5'	[x x x] ku-nu-uk-ka sa-an-tak ki-na-a-ti ša mu šú 'lu-kin ¹ 'i ² -x (x) [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x] 'lu-kin ¹ 'i ² -[x]
124	A rev. iii 12 B ₂ 6' A, B ₂	[x x x] lu-ma-a ² -i-ru lu-pi-ra da-a-a-n[u ²] [x x x x x x x x x x da]- ¹ a ¹ -a-[nu]
125	A rev. iii 13	[x x] x-ni ħu-up-šú za-ma-ni ú-šam-q[at ²]
126	A rev. iii 14 A	[x x] x-ni ul i-né-e ² -i i-na-as-sa-ħu 'šah ² -šah ¹ -[(hi)]
127	A rev. iii 15	[x x]- ¹ ram ² -ma ² 1 ki-i la lib-bi DINGIR im-nu- ¹ ú ¹
128	A rev. iii 16 A	[x x x x-s]u bit-re-e ú-nam-ga-ru kar-š[i ²]
129	A rev. iii 17	[x x x i]š ² -pik-ke-e-a šá-ru-ti ta- ¹ pul ² -ti ¹
130	A rev. iii 18 A	[x x x x x-p]il ² im ħu uz °šá° šá-x x x
131	A rev. iii 19	[x x x x x](-) ¹ a ¹ -šá šu-bat nu-uħ- ¹ ši ¹
132	A rev. iii 20 A	[x x x x x x] x ħu ši-in- ¹ du ¹
133	A rev. iii 21	[x x x x x] x 'K1 ¹ .2.KAM ¹ šu-bat la-l[e ² -e ²]
134	A rev. iii 22 A	[x x x x x x x x x (x)]- ¹ ú ¹ x [x]
<i>(manuscript A breaks off, 4 lines of rev. iii are missing)</i>		
138	A rev. iii 26	x [x x x x x x x x x x x (x x)]
139	A rev. iii 27	li-x [x x x x x x x x x (x x)]
140	A rev. iii 28 A	kin-gal-lu t[i ² -x x x x x x x x x]

141	A rev. iii 29	<i>uṣ-ṣi-iṣ-ma</i> AN.ZA.[GÀR x x x x x (x x)] <i>ul x [...]</i>
142	A rev. iii 30	^d <i>am-na ina bi-r</i> [i x x x x x (x x)]
	A	<hr/>
143	A rev. iii 31	<i>za-qí-qu ina šat</i> ^r <i>mu</i> ¹ -š[i x x x x x (x)]
144	A rev. iii 32	<i>zu-un-zu-na</i> [x x x x x x (x x)]
	A	<hr/>
145	A rev. iii 33	^d <i>nin-gùn-nu a-x</i> (-)[x x x x x (x x)]
146	A rev. iii 34	^r <i>a</i> ¹ - <i>na im-mu u mu-š</i> [ú x x x x x x (x x)]
	A	<hr/>
147	A rev. iii 35	<i>a-na ka-ša-du me-x</i> [x x x x x x (x x)]
148	A rev. iii 36	<i>i-na bu-ul</i> ^d ŠA[KAN x x x x x x (x x)]
	A	<hr/>
149	A rev. iii 37	<i>du-uš-mu-ú-šú</i> ^r <i>i</i> ¹ -[x x x x x x (x x)]
150	A rev. iii 38	<i>ab-du-ú-šú ip-pa</i> [l x x x x x x (x x)]
	A	<hr/>
151	A rev. iii 39	<i>iḫ-ti-dam-m</i> [<i>a marṣatuš</i> (?) <i>ibakkīka</i> (?)]
152	A rev. iii 40	<i>na-an-gul lib</i> - ^r <i>ba</i> ¹ -[šú- <i>ma iḫtammatka</i> (?)]
	A	<hr/>
153	A rev. iii 41	<i>uṣ-ṣar-ri-ip ka</i> -[<i>bat</i> ² - <i>ta</i> ² -šú ² x x x x x (x)]
154	A rev. iii 42	<i>di-ma-šú ik-ta</i> -[<i>li</i> ² x x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>
155	A rev. iii 43	<i>ma-ṣi be-lí</i> x [x x x x x x x (x)]
156	A rev. iii 44	<i>a-ḫu-lap</i> (KID) <i>ti-me</i> [š x x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>
157	A rev. iii 45	<i>tu-šá-ma za-ma-nu</i> - ^r <i>ú</i> ¹ [x x x x x x (x)]
158	A rev. iii 46	<i>ù mu-de-e al-k</i> [<i>a-ka-ti</i> x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>

159	A rev. iii 47	<i>a-bar-šá É.Z</i> [I.DA x x x x x x (x)]
160	A rev. iii 48	<i>rag-ga la</i> ^r i ¹ -[šá-ra ² x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>
161	A rev. iii 49	<i>el im</i> -[(x)] x [x x x x x x (x)]
162	A rev. iii 50	<i>mìn-su</i> x [(x)] x (x) [x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>
163	A rev. iii 51	<i>šá rag-gi u</i> x [x x x x x x (x)]
164	A rev. iii 52	[š]u ² -ut lum-n[u x x x x x x (x)]
	A	<hr/>
165	A rev. iii 53	[x x] x [x x x x x x (x)]
		(In von Soden's edition, the lower part of column iii is represented by the fragment K.11373, that, however, is a manuscript of a divinatory text and duplicates K.6226. The end of column iii is thus broken, and has approximately 7 lines missing.)
173	A rev. iv 1	<i>pu-ṭur qu-un-nab-ra-šu ḫi-pi il-lu-u[r-taš²]</i>
174	A rev. iv 2	<i>a-na da-na-na i-ri-a-ti ba-šim du-^rú¹-r[u]</i>
	A	<hr/>
175	A rev. iv 3	<i>a-na kal ma-tu₄ um-ma-^rtu₄¹ ú-šaḫ^{-la}lá-a ma-ni-t[u₄]</i>
176	A rev. iv 4a	<i>še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru</i>
177	A rev. iv 4b-5	<i>meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú²] mar-tú ma-r[i]</i>
	A	<hr/>
178	A rev. iv 6	<i>aḫ-ra-taš pi-is-nu-qiš lál-la-riš ú-da-ás-š[ap]</i>
179	A rev. iv 7	<i>a-la-mit-tu₄ ú-ḫe-en-šá da-da-riš ma-a[ar]</i>
180	A rev. iv 8	<i>ar-ka ta-ad-mì-iq-šá da-mì-iq pe-er-^u nu-ḫ[ás²]</i>
	A	<hr/>
181	A rev. iv 9	ŠE-am i-na li-gi-mì-šú i-ma-ar-ḫa an-na-t[u(-šú)]
182	A rev. iv 10	<i>i-kuš-šu i-na ra-bé-šú-ma bil-ti</i> ^r ú ¹ -[tar ²]
	A	<hr/>
183	A rev. iv 11	[m]u-ú-šu šá lib-bi ú-ru-la-ti-šú ik-kib DINGIR.MEŠ ka-la-ma ana UN.MEŠ x [x]
184	A rev. iv 12	<i>a-šar ek-let nam-rat še-zu-zu ta-a-^ra¹-[ar]</i>
	A	<hr/>

185	A rev. iv 13	<i>ma-ru áš-ru sa-an-qa a-ḥa-mu za-ra-šú i-ka[r-rab]</i>
186	A rev. iv 14	<i>ma-ru la áš-ru la DIM₄ a-di e-né-šú ir-ra-ár b[a²-ni²-šú²]</i>
	A	_____
187	A rev. iv 15	<i>ta-sa-niq ìr-ka nap-pa-šu šu-u[p²-te²]</i>
188	A rev. iv 16	<i>i-di let-ka suḥ-ḥi-ra ki-š[ad-ka]</i>
	A	_____
189	A rev. iv 17	^d AG <i>ta-sa-niq ìr-ka nap-pa-šu šu-[up²-te²]</i>
190	A rev. iv 18	<i>i-di let-ka suḥ-ḥi-ra ki-š[ad-ka]</i>
	A	_____
191	A rev. iv 19	<i>ul-li e-né-es-su ^rla-mas¹-su l[i-ir-ši]</i>
192	A rev. iv 20	<i>^rq¹-bi-tuk-ka SIG₃.MEŠ x [x] x x [x]</i>
		<i>(manuscript A breaks off, 7 lines of rev. iv are missing)</i>
	A	_____
200	A rev. iv 28	<i>[x x x x l]i-pu-uš ga-nu-un-^ršú¹</i>
201	A rev. iv 29	<i>[x x x x l]i-pu-uš si-ma-ak-šú</i>
	A	_____
202	A rev. iv 30	<i>[x x x x šu²-u]s²-si líp-pa-ṭir zu-mur-šú</i>
203	A rev. iv 31	<i>[x x x x l]m-mir ni-ṭil-šin</i>
	A	_____
204	A rev. iv 32	<i>[būnūka namrūtu li]t-tar-ri-šu e-li-šú</i>
205	A rev. iv 33	<i>[rēm(?) aradka na]k-ru-uṭ ri-ši-šú ti-ra-nu</i>
	A	_____
206	A rev. iv 34	<i>[Nabū] ^rbu-nu-ka¹ ZĀLAG.MEŠ lit-tar-ri-šu e-li-šú</i>
207	A rev. iv 35	<i>[re]-^re¹-mì ìr-ka nak-ru-uṭ ri-ši-šú ti-ra-nu</i>
	A	_____
208	A rev. iv 36	<i>[ḥal²-qa²]-a-tu₄ A.ŠA.MEŠ li-tu-ra a-nu-^rmíš¹</i>
209	A rev. iv 37	<i>[x x x]-a-ti GIŠ.ŠUB.BA.MEŠ li-ku-na a-na šá-a-šu</i>
	A	_____

210	A rev. iv 38	[ina(?) š]i-in-gi ù šu-še-e liš-te-šer at-man-šu
211	A rev. iv 39	[ina kibrāt e]r-bé-e lim-mir nu-par-šu
	A	<hr/>
212	A rev. iv 40	[a-ḫu-u]z šu-su liš-tam-mar DINGIR-ut-ka
213	A rev. iv 41	[ana kal] 'da ¹ -ad-mu liš-te-pá-a nar-bi-ka
	A	<hr/>
214	A rev. iv 42	[Nabû] 'a ¹ -ḫu-uz šu-su liš-tam-mar DINGIR-ut-ka
215	A rev. iv 43	[ana kal d]a-ad-mu liš-te-pá-a nar-bi-ka
	A	<hr/>
216	A rev. iv 44	[li-q]é da-ma-šu ba-la-šu ù ut-nen-šú
217	A rev. iv 45	[kīma(?) q ¹]-šá-a-ti at-nu-uš li-kun tés-lit-su
	A	<hr/>
218	A rev. iv 46	[^a i-g]i-gu gim-rat-su-nu li-ḫu-zu a-bu-us-su
219	A rev. iv 47	[^a la]ḫ-mu iṣ-rat-su-nu liq-bu-ú SIG ₅ -šú
	A	<hr/>
220	A rev. iv 48	[bēlu i-n]a [?] DINGIR.MEŠ šur-bu-ú nar-bu-ka
221	A rev. iv 49	[nišū [?] t]a-nit-ta-ka ú-šar-ri-ḫa ana ša-a-ti
	A	<hr/>
222	A rev. iv 50	[Nabû ina DINGIR.M]EŠ šur-bu-ú nar-bu-ka
223	A rev. iv 51	[nišū [?] ta-ni]t-ta-ka ú-šar-ri-ḫa ana ša-a-ti
	A	<hr/>
224	A rev. iv 52	[x x x x x (x)] x x 'lil ¹ -lip-ka
225	A rev. iv 53	[x x x x x x x x (x) liš [?] -ta]m-'mar ¹

(manuscript A breaks off; no colophon preserved)

Bound Transcription*(8 lines missing)*

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

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

¹³[*bēlu* ... *šudlu*]pa *kīma* [...]
¹⁴[...] ... *saḥir* [šerta(?)]

¹⁵[*Nabû* ... *šu*]dlupa *kīma* [...]
¹⁶[...] ... *saḥir* šerta(?)

¹⁷[*bēlu ušumgallu*(?) *uzza*]ka *nīrka nadru*
¹⁸[*tukammar*(?) *ḥe*]galla *tanaššar ḥiṣba*

¹⁹[*Nabû ušumgallu*(?) *uzzaka* *nīrka nadru*
²⁰[*tukammar*(?) *ḥe*]galla *tanaššar ḥiṣba*

²¹[*Adad*(?) *šagi*]mmuk *lā padûk girru*
²²[...] *il*]ī *tabarri Anšar*

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

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

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

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

³¹[Nabû ...] *edēdka rību*
³²[...] *ša qinna tamḥu*

³³[bēlu(?) ...] *ḥ]uḥum(?) šamāmī*
³⁴[... kīma pāt(?) qinni(?)] *k]āmīr iš[diḥ]i*

³⁵[Nabû ...] ... *ḥuḥum(?) šamāmī*
³⁶[... k]īma pāt(?) qinni(?)] *kāmīr išdiḥi*

³⁷[bēlu r]ēštū nūḥ *ana surri*
³⁸[būnū]ka(?) lipšaḥā *riši tīrānī*

³⁹[Na]bū rēštū nūḥ *ana surri*
⁴⁰[būnū]ka(?) lipšaḥā *riši tīrānī*

⁴¹b[ēl]u palkû *mukkalli ešešti*
⁴²rapša uznī *āšiš šukāmi*

⁴³Nabû palkû *mukkalli ešešti*
⁴⁴rapša uznī *āšiš šukāmi*

⁴⁵bēlu šalbābu tassabbus *eli ardīka*
⁴⁶šēriš ittabšû *imṭû t[ānē]ḥu*

⁴⁷Nabû šalbābu tassabbus *eli ardīk[a]*
⁴⁸šēriš ittabšû *imṭû t[ānē]ḥu*

⁴⁹ina gipiš edē nadī-ma *agû eliš itta[kkip]*
⁵⁰kibru rūqšu *nesiš nābal[u]*

⁵¹ibli ina qē šibqī *ana parā'i lēmu*
⁵²ittatīl ina nāriṭṭi *kali ina rušumti*

⁹¹*tele'û bēlu* *ennētī paṭāra(?)*
⁹²*temēšu gillatī* *lā] ṭābta tīgi(?)*

⁹³*tele'û [Nabû* *enn]ētī pa[ṭāra(?)*
⁹⁴*tem[ēšu gillatī* *lā ṭā]bta tīgi(?)*

⁹⁵*ina [...] ... [...]*
⁹⁶*ina [...] ... [... manāma(?) [...]*

⁹⁷*a[na mīnâ i]mkû* *mēš ara[nšu]*
⁹⁸*[mimma(?) mala(?)] išēṭu* *ukkiš ḥīp(?) li[bbīšu(?)]*

⁹⁹*[ela k]âti bēlu* *ul ibbašši [rēmu(?)]*
¹⁰⁰*[ina b]aluk ennētī* *gillatī [ul(?) ippaṭṭar(?)]*

¹⁰¹*[ela k]âti Nabû* *ul ibbaš[ši rēmu(?)]*
¹⁰²*[ina bal]uk ennētī* *gillatī [ul(?) ippaṭṭar(?)]*

¹⁰³*[tušē]šâm-ma aradka* *tassakip [...]*
¹⁰⁴*[ina r]ittika(?)* *tattadi du[šmâka]*

¹⁰⁵*[ašam]šāniš ḥallulāya* *ila lemna ... [...]*
¹⁰⁶*[...] ... lagā'a(?) dūtus* *tabarri [...]*

¹⁰⁷*[...] ... ušḥarrir* *ileqqe [...]*
¹⁰⁸*[...] ... itašar* *igdamar [...]*

¹⁰⁹*[...] ... irraqi(?)* *kabtata(?) [...]*
¹¹⁰*[ṭēnšu(?) itt]akiršu* *iḥših [...]*

¹¹¹*[...] ... iggamir ... [...]*

¹¹²*[...] ... ippaṭṭir ... [...]*

113 <i>šinšu(?) ... [...]</i>	<i>pārim ayyābi(?)</i>
114 <i>mutqu p[u]lhūšu</i>	<i>iktabit elēnuššu</i>
115 <i>idāt lumni šurdû</i>	<i>ušabraršu(?) pût[aʔ]</i>
116 <i>adi mati kala šatti</i>	<i>ginâ lumnu(?) šumšu(?)</i>
117 <i>ludlu bēla</i>	<i>nalbābuk ezēzu</i>
118 <i>[lī]te[l]i(?) r[ašu]bbatuk</i>	<i>ana šamē aḥrât[aš]</i>
119 <i>[ludlu Na]bû</i>	<i>nalbābuk ezēz[u]</i>
120 <i>[lī]te[l]i(?) raš]ubbatuk</i>	<i>ana šamē aḥrâta[š]</i>
121 <i>[bīt(?) kimt]īya(?) epir zakâ</i>	<i>epir isqūqa</i>
122 <i>[(... eqe]l(?) abbēya</i>	<i>kišubbûša bilat kasp[i]</i>
123 <i>[...] kunukka santak kināti</i>	<i>ša ... lukīn ...</i>
124 <i>[...] lumaʔir</i>	<i>lūpira dayyân[a]</i>
125 <i>[...] ... ḥupša</i>	<i>zāmânī ušamq[at(?)]</i>
126 <i>[...] ... ul ineʔi</i>	<i>inassaḥ(?) šaḥšaḥ[h]ī</i>
127 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... kī lā libbi ili imnû</i>
128 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... bitrē unamgarû karš[ī]</i>
129 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>i]špikkīya šarûti ṭapultu(?)</i>
130 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... ša ...</i>
131 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... šubat nuḥši</i>
132 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... šindu</i>
133 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... šanû šubat lā[lé(?)]</i>
134 <i>[...] ...</i>	<i>] ... [...]</i>

(ll. 135-9 lost or too fragmentary for transcription)

¹⁴⁰kingallu ... [...]

¹⁴¹uššiṣ-ma Anza[gar(?) ...] ul ... [...]

¹⁴²Amna ina bīr[i ...]

¹⁴³Zāqīqu ina šāt mūš[i ...]

¹⁴⁴zunzunu [...]

¹⁴⁵Ningunnu [...]

¹⁴⁶ana immi u mūši [...]

¹⁴⁷ana kašādi ... [...]

¹⁴⁸ina būl Šak[kan ...]

¹⁴⁹dušmūšu ... [...]

¹⁵⁰abdūšu ippa[l ...]

¹⁵¹iḥtidam-m[a marṣatuš ibakkīka (?)]

¹⁵²nangul libba[šū-ma iḥtammaṭka (?)]

¹⁵³uššarrip ka[battašu(?) ...]

¹⁵⁴dimmašu iktali(?) ...]

¹⁵⁵maši bēlī ... [...]

¹⁵⁶aḥulap temē[š ...]

¹⁵⁷tušāma zāmānū [...]

¹⁵⁸u mūdī alk[akāti ...]

¹⁵⁹abarša Ez[ida ...]

¹⁶⁰ragga lā i[šara ...]

¹⁶¹el ... [...]

¹⁶²minsu ... [...] ... [...]

163 *ša raggi u [...]*
 164 *[š]ūt(?) lumn[a(?) ...]*

(manuscript A breaks off, approximately 7 lines missing)

173 *puṭur qunnabrašu ḫipi illu[rtaš(?)]*
 174 *ana danān iriyāti bašim dūr[u]*

175 *ana kal māti ummāti ušaḫlā manīt[u]*
 176 *šēru rēšūtiya šuršurrū ḫinzūri*
 177 *mešheru šid[ītu(?)] | mārtu mār[u]*

178 *aḫrātaš pisnuqiš lallāriš udašš[ap]*
 179 *alamittu uḫešša daddariš mā[r]*
 180 *arka tadmīqša damiq per'u nuḫ[āš(?)]*

181 *ū ina ligimišu immarḫā an(n)āt[ū(šu)]*
 182 *ikušša ina rabēšū-ma bilta u[tār(?)]*

183 *[m]ūšu ša libbi urullātīšu ikkib ilī kalāma ana niši ... [...]*
 184 *ašar eklet namrat šēzuzu tayy[ār]*

185 *māru ašru sanqu aḫammu zārāšu ika[rrab]*
 186 *māru lā ašru lā sanqu adi enēšu irrar b[ānišu(?)]*

187 *tasanniq aradka nappaša šup[te]*
 188 *idi lētkā suḫḫira kiš[ādka]*

189 *Nabû tasanniq aradka nappaša šu[pte]*
 190 *idi lētkā suḫḫira kiš[ādka]*

191 *ulli ennessu lamassa li[rši]*
 192 *qibītukka damqātu ... [...] ... [...]*

(ll. 193-9 missing)

200 [...]]īpuš ganūnšu
 201 [...]]īpuš simakšu

202 [... šu]ssi(?) lippaṭir zumuršu
 203 [...]li]mmir niṭilšu

204 [būnūka namrūtu lit]tarrišā elišu
 205 [rēm(?) aradka na]kruṭa rišišu tīrāna

206 [Nabû] būnūka namrūtu littarrišū elišu
 207 [r]ēm(?) aradka nakruṭa rišišu tīrāna

208 [ḥalq]ātu(?) eqlētu litūrā annummiš
 209 [...] ... isqētu likūnā ana šāšu

210 [ina(?) š]ingi u šuṣē lištēšer atmanšu
 211 [ina kibrāt er]bē limmir nupāršu

212 [aḥu]z qāssu lištammar ilūtka
 213 [ana kal] dadmī lištēpā narbīka

214 [Nabû] aḥuz qāssu lištammar ilūtka
 215 [ana kal d]admī lištēpā narbīka

216 [liq]e damāša balāša u utnēnšu
 217 [kīma(?) qī]šāti(?) atnūš likūn teslīssu

218 [Iq]īgū gimrassunu liḥuzū abbūssu
 219 [La]ḥmū iṣrassunu(?) liqbū dumuqšu

220 [bēlu in]a ilī šurbū narbūka
 221 [nišū(?) t]anittaka ušarriḥā ana šāti

²²²[Nabû ina il]ī

šurbû narbûka

²²³[nišû(?) tani]ttaka

ušarriḫā ana šāti

²²⁴[...

] ... lilipka(?)

²²⁵[...

lišta]mmar

(manuscript A breaks off; no colophon preserved)

Translation

(8 lines missing)

⁹[O Lord ...] who toss[es ...]
¹⁰[...] yo[ur] forgiveness [...]

¹¹[O Nabû ...] who tosses [...]
¹²[...] your forgiveness [...]

¹³[O Lord, who ... the distres]sed like a [...]
¹⁴[...] ... *bounded [by punishment],*

¹⁵[O Nabû, who ... the di]stressed like a [...]
¹⁶[...] ... *bounded by punishment.*

¹⁷[O Lord], your [ang]er is a [*lion-dragon*], your yoke is furious,
¹⁸[You *provide* ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.

¹⁹[O Nabû], your anger is a [*lion-drago*]n, your yoke is furious,
²⁰[You *provide* ab]undance, you release the bountiful produce.

²¹[O Lord, your *ro*]ar [is *Adad*], your ruthlessness is fire,
²²[...] the g]ods, you behold Anšar.

²³[O Nabû, your *ro*]ar [is *Adad*], your ruthlessness is fire,
²⁴[...] the g]ods, you behold Anšar.

²⁵[O Lord], your [gla]re is [a *serpent*], your frown a [dar]k cloud,
²⁶[You *make*] the just [*prosper*], [yo]u strengthen his foundations.

²⁷[O Nabû, your glare is a *serpent*], your frown a [dark clo]ud,
²⁸[You *make*] the just *prosper*, you str]engthen his foundations.

²⁹[O Lord, ...], your [char]ging is an earthquake,
³⁰[...], *who holds the family.*

³¹[O Nabû, ...], your charging is an earthquake,
³²[...], *who holds the family.*

³³[O Lord, ...] ... of the heavens,
³⁴[... *as the family circle*, who sup]plies the profit

³⁵[O Nabû, ...] ..., ... of the heavens,
³⁶[...] *as the family circle*, who supplies the profit.

³⁷O supreme L[ord], be appeased in an instant!
³⁸May your [fac]e relent, have mercy.

³⁹O supreme [Na]bû, be appeased in an instant!
⁴⁰May your [face] relent, have mercy.

⁴¹O wise L[or]d, *mukkallu*-priest of *knowledge*,
⁴²Of vast intelligence, who masters the scribal art.

⁴³O wise Nabû, *mukkallu*-priest of *knowledge*,
⁴⁴Of vast intelligence, who masters the scribal art.

⁴⁵O raging Lord, you have become angry with your servant,
⁴⁶Depletion and distress have come upon him.

⁴⁷O raging Nabû, you have become angry with yo[ur] servant,
⁴⁸Depletion and distress have come upon him.

⁴⁹He is cast out into huge waves, so that the flood cras[hed] over him again
and again,
⁵⁰Far away from him is the shore, distant is the dry la[nd].

⁵¹He perishes in a web of deceptions, impossible to be cut.
⁵²He lies in the marsh, he is stuck in the mire.

⁵³Take his hand, may yo[ur] servant not be destroyed,
⁵⁴Take away his punishment, raise him from the mar[sh]!

⁵⁵O Nabû, take his hand, may yo[ur] servant not be destroyed,
⁵⁶[Ta]ke away his punishment, raise him from the ma[rsh]!

⁵⁷[L]ike a bull that is slaughtered with a butchering knife, he roars lo[udly],
⁵⁸He is cast [in]to the jaws of a powerful force, and it *clo[ses tight around him]*

(*end of A obv. i; ll. 59-75 lost or too fragmentary for translation*)

⁷⁶I am fallen, let me be carried, *let me be re[leased ...]*.

⁷⁷Just as *pus* is removed, should I go ou[tside]?
⁷⁸Like *the pollen of a date palm*, should I float around in the op[en country]?

⁷⁹Yes, why has the one-handed man stepped [*on me*]?
⁸⁰He cast sorrow, wailing [*and daze*] on me.

⁸¹O Lord, it is you, who called [*my name*],
⁸²At your command, the womb ... [...].

⁸³O Nabû, it is you, who you called [*my name*],
⁸⁴At your command, the womb [...].

⁸⁵*From my father's 'yes'* *fr[om my mother's 'yes']*,
⁸⁶*The 'yes!' of his forefathers*, *the ['yes' of his foremothers]*,

⁸⁷Not ... [...]
⁸⁸He will sway, he will ... [...]

⁸⁹O god, my father, the sick man extolled you over and over,
⁹⁰Always, without cease, he attends to the (personal) goddess.

⁹¹O Lord, the one who is capable of *und[oing]* my sin!
⁹²O forgiving one, *you can pardon* my [wick]ed crime!

⁹³O [Nabû], the one who is capable of *und[oing]* my [si]n!
⁹⁴O forg[iving one], *you can par[don]* my wi]cked [crime]!

⁹⁵With ... [...] ... [...]
⁹⁶With [...] ... [...] somebody [...]

⁹⁷[In what respect has he been ne]gligent? Disregard [his] gui[lt]!
⁹⁸[*Whatever crime*] he has committed, drive away [*his*] *hea[rt]break!*

⁹⁹[Apart from y]ou, O Lord, there is no [mercy],
¹⁰⁰[With]out you, my sin (and) my punishment [will not be removed].

¹⁰¹[Apart from y]ou, O Nabû, there i[s] no [mercy],
¹⁰²[With]out you, my sin (and) [my] punishment [will not be removed].

¹⁰³[You c]ast your servant out, you pushed (him) away
¹⁰⁴[*With*] your [*hand*] you throw down [your] sla[ve]!

¹⁰⁵[Like a wh]irlwind, the *Hallulāyu*-demon, the evil god you ... [...]
¹⁰⁶[...] ... dirt, *his virility*: you observe ... [...]

¹⁰⁷[...] ... he was silent, he takes [...]
¹⁰⁸[...] *he mustered*, *he finished* [...]

¹⁰⁹His ... [...] *hid itself* the insides [...]
¹¹⁰[*His mind has become es*]tranged from him, he wanted [...]

111[...] ... was brought to an end ... [...]

112[...] ... was loosened ... [...]

113His *tooth* [...] ...

who slices the enemy,

114The headlice, h[is terro]r,

has become burdensome for him,

115The sign of the [šurđû-dis]ease

has flickered on (his) face,

116How long, a whole year,

does any evil last?

117[Let me pr]aise the Lo[r]d:

your anger is fu[ry],

118Your [aweso]meness [...]

to heaven fore[ver].

119[Let me praise Na]bû:

your anger is fu[ry],

120Your aweso[meness ...]

to heaven fore[ver].

121[*The house of*] my [*famil*]y is well provided with clear beer, well provided with fine fl[our],

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

123[...] *the sealed document ... the associates, continuously ... may I establish ...*

124[...] *may I send, may I provide for the judge.*

125[...] ... the *rabble*,

he overt[hrows] the enemies,

126[...] ... he will not turn away,

they will extirpate [my] slanderer.

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

128[...] ... magnificent, *they denounce the cal[umnies].*

129[...] ... *of my wealthy storehouse ...insult.*

130[...] ... *of ...*

131[...] ... a dwelling of abundanc[e],

132[...] ... the binding,

¹³³[...] ... second, a dwelling of *de[light ...]*.

(ll. 134-9 lost or too fragmentary for translation)

¹⁴⁰O Leader of the assembly ... [...]

¹⁴¹He asked *Anza[gar ...] | did not ... [...]*

¹⁴²Amna, through divinat[ion ...]

¹⁴⁵The Zaqiqu-spirit during the *ni[ght ...]*

¹⁴⁶The *locust [...]*

¹⁴⁵Ningunnu [...]

¹⁴⁶To daylight and night [...]

¹⁴⁷To arrive at ... [...]

¹⁴⁸From the herd of Šak[kan ...]

¹⁴⁹His servant ... [...]

¹⁵⁰His slave answe[rs ...]

¹⁵¹He *mu[tters painfully and wails his woes to you]*,

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

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

¹⁵⁴He dr[ie]d his tears ... [...]

¹⁵⁵It is enough, my Lord, [...]

¹⁵⁶Have Mercy, o Forg[iver]! ...]

¹⁵⁷*As if it were the enemy [...]*

¹⁵⁸And he who knows the *wa[ys] ...]*

¹⁵⁹Certainly Ez[ida ...]

¹⁶⁰The wicked, the *un[just] ...]*

¹⁶¹On ... [...]

¹⁶²Why ... [...]

¹⁶³Of the wicked and ... [...]

¹⁶⁴Thos who [...] evil [...]

(manuscript A breaks off, approximately 7 lines missing)

¹⁷³Loose his fetters, break [his] ma[nacle]!

¹⁷⁴Against the hardship of cold wind, a w[all] is built,

¹⁷⁵Upon the whole land a gentle bree[ze] brings solace,

¹⁷⁶My morning aid, the fruits of the apple-tree,

¹⁷⁷youth (and) maid[en] | daughter (and) so[n]

¹⁷⁸With time, what (seemed) pitiable, he will swee[eten] like syrup,

¹⁷⁹The early fruit of the date-palm is bit[ter] like stinkwort,

¹⁸⁰(But) later its fine date is good, the sprout is lux[uriant].

¹⁸¹The grain in its budding phase: [(its)] ea[rs] may rot,

¹⁸²It lingers in its ripening, (but then) b[rings (abundant)] yield.

¹⁸³The discharge of his foreskin is an abomination to all the gods and [com-
mon] to the people,

¹⁸⁴Where it was dark, it will be bright, the raging one will be me[rciful],

¹⁸⁵The obedient, disciplined son: his father giv[es] (him) a special
blessing,

¹⁸⁶The disobedient, undisciplined son: his b[egetter] curses (him) until he
changes his ways.

¹⁸⁷You test your servant: let a window o[pen] for him to breathe!

¹⁸⁸Incline your face, turn yo[ur head] towards me!

¹⁸⁹O Nabû, you test you servant: let a window o[pen] for him to breathe!
¹⁹⁰Incline your head, turn yo[ur head] towards me!

¹⁹¹Remove his punishment! May he ac[quire] health,
¹⁹²At your command, good ... [...] ... [...].

(ll. 193-9 missing)

²⁰⁰[...]let him build his storeroom,
²⁰¹[...]let him build his sanctuary,

²⁰²[...]let his body be released,
²⁰³[...]le[t the sight of his (eyes) be clear.

²⁰⁴[May your radiant face be tu]rned towards him,
²⁰⁵[Have mercy on your servant, have com]passion, have pity on him!

²⁰⁶[O Nabû], may your radiant face be turned towards him,
²⁰⁷[Have mer]cy on you servant, have compassion, have pity on him!

²⁰⁸May (his) [uncultiv]ated fields be restored h[ere],
²⁰⁹May the [...] fortunes be firmly established for him.

²¹⁰[In the vil]lages and in the marshes, may his sanctuary be in order,
²¹¹[In] the four wo[rld regions], may his heart become bright.

²¹²[Tak]e his hand, so that he may he extol your divinity,
²¹³[To all] the inhabited regions of the world, may he proclaim your greatness.

²¹⁴[O Nabû, tak]e his hand, so that he may extol your divinity,
²¹⁵To all the inhabited regions of the world, may he proclaim your greatness.

²¹⁶[Acc]ept the prostrating, the bowing and his prayer,
²¹⁷[like *donati*ions, (take) his petition, may his prayer become true.

2.6.2 Commentary

9/11 *sa-bi-ù*: the verb *sabā'u* 'to toss, to bound' (AHw II 999; CAD S 2) is frequently associated with the tossing of the sea and with waves being agitated by storms or gods. The verb here seems to be a G-stem participle, probably to be taken as a divine attribute.⁶² A poetic image connecting the god with massive waves can be supplied in this line, because it would match ll. 49-50, where the sufferer is said to be cast into the water and hit by waves. It is possible therefore that *sābi'u* describes here the god churning and tossing like a threatening mass of water.

10/12 *nap-šur-ka*: an alternation between the two aspects of the god - his rage and his compassion - runs throughout the opening hymnic section (ll. 9-37). For this reason, we can hypothesise that *napšurka* was used to create an opposition between the god's anger - perhaps associated with the destructive power of floodwater in ll. 9/11 - and his mercy. Moreover, in *Marduk*2, ll. 80-1/82-3, we read:

⁸¹*be-lu₄ ug-gu-uk-ka k[i]-i ga-pa-áš a-bu-[bi]*

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

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

⁸²In the morning there is your forgiveness, the furious one relen[ts].⁶³

A similar antithetic parallelism can be expected in the *Nabû Prayer*.⁶⁴

14/16 The *caesura* prevents the reading *ú-sa-ḥir* suggested in the latest edition by von Soden.⁶⁵ The *ú* sign does not seem to belong to the following word, as it is immediately followed by the metrical break.

⁶² Von Soden 1971, 62.

⁶³ Translation by the Author and restoration from K.9917+K.17647, identified by Oshima as belonging to manuscript C of this text (see Oshima 2011, 88). He restores this line (2011, 229 and 245): *[ur-r]a nap-šur-ka še-z[u-z]u [m]u-ú-š[im]*, and translates (246): "A day is your forgiveness, angry by night (i.e. a night is your anger)". However, the signs in the second half of the line suggested by Oshima do not fit the traces (photo collation, but cf. also the copy of the tablet recently published in George, Taniguchi 2019, 92, no. 104). Therefore, I offer the following restoration: *[ur-r]a nap-šur-ka še-z[u-z]u uš-pa-áš-ši[h]*. Cf. also *Ludlul* I, l. 2: *e-ziz mu-ši mu-¹up¹-pa-šir ur-r[i]*, "raging at night, relenting at day", cf. George, Al-Rawi 1998, 92 and Oshima 2014, 78-9, 281.

⁶⁴ For the classification of the various types of parallelism, see Bühlmann, Scherer 1994, 37-42; Wagner 2007, 15-16; Streck 2007, 170-5. Specifically for the definition of the antithetic parallelism, see Bühlmann, Scherer 1994, 40; Watson 1999, 170; Wagner 2007, 15-16; Berlin 1979, 13 and 1999, 154; Streck 2007, 171. I will discuss further the different types of parallelisms used in the *Nabû Prayer* and in the other *Great Hymns and Prayers* in chapter 5, § 5.2.4.1, where I provide examples of this literary device as it occurs in the compositions under study.

⁶⁵ See von Soden 1971, 50.

The traces after *sa-ḥir* could be reconciled with *šer-ti*. I suggest to take *sa-ḥir* as a stative, and read *saḥir šērta*, as referred to the sufferer, in the sense of being ‘surrounded’, ‘bound’ by the punishment.

17/19 [ú²-šum²-gal²-l]u uz-za-ka: restored on the basis of *Marduk2*, l. 45: ú-šum-gal-li uz-za-ka ta-kám-mi še-e-ni, “The *ušumgallu*-dragon is your rage, you overcome the malevolent”.⁶⁶ The mythical dragon *ušumgallu*⁶⁷ is often used in reference to Marduk’s anger, but is also an epithet of both Marduk and Nabû.⁶⁸ It occurs most often in Akkadian hymnic texts addressed to deities, but is also attested as an epithet of kings.⁶⁹

18/20 These lines could represent another example of the *parallelismus membrorum* found so often in this prayer. A second person singular present tense verb (*tanaššar*), and its object (*ḥišbu*) are preserved after the break that occurs at the beginning of both lines, and right after the vertical line representing the *caesura*. The substantive *ḥegallu* (‘abundance’), having a meaning very similar to that of *ḥišbu*, is preserved in the second hemistich. For this reason, a verb corresponding in meaning and form to *tanaššar* can be expected in the first hemistich as well. The result is a parallelism of the synonymous type.⁷⁰ *tu-da-áš-šá* would fit the given space. Indeed, a similar use of *dešû* is attested in other Akkadian prayers, see for example a *šulla* prayer to *Marduk* (*Marduk5*), rev. 10: *mu-deš-šu-ú* ḥÉ.GÁL “The one who supplies abundance”.⁷¹ See CAD D 130 for other attestations. However, other verbs meaning ‘you give, you provide, you bestow’ and so forth are also possible, and another possible restoration could be, for instance, *tukammar*, from *kamāru* ‘to heap up’, also attested in similar contexts (cf. CAD K 114 mng. 4a, sub *kummuru*).

21/23 Restoration based on *Marduk1*, l. 87: ^dīšKUR šá-gi-m[u].⁷² The substantive *šagīmu/šagimmu* (*AHw* II 1127; *CAD* Š/I 73, ‘roar, cry’) is mentioned in von Soden’s study on the hymno-epic dialect⁷³ as an example of the high-register vocabulary that characterises this literary

66 Oshima 2011, 226, 242-3.

67 Landsberger 1934a, 55.

68 Tallqvist 1938, 34.

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

70 Cf. Bühlmann, Scherer 1994, 38-40; Watson 1999, 170; Wagner 2007, 16; Berlin 1979, 13-14 and 1999, 154-5; Streck 2007, 171. Cf. chapter 5, § 5.2.4.1.1.

71 Oshima 2011, 356-7. For a complete edition of this text see Mayer 1993, 313-37.

72 See Oshima 2011, 149, 162-3.

73 Von Soden 1933, 90-183.

style.⁷⁴ The same noun is also found in the *Prayer to Ištar*, l. 18: *šá-gi]-muk*⁷⁵ (cf. the edition of this text in chapter 3).

The noun *girru* (fire) in the second half of the line is employed as a metaphor for the god's mercilessness. For this reason another natural phenomenon describing another aspect of the god can be expected in the first half of the line. In this way, the two nouns would form a chiasmic structure within the line: the wind would parallel the fire, and the god's roar his ruthlessness. The line seems to display the structure AB||BA: **iškur šá-gim-mu-uk || la pa-du-uk gir-ri*. This would be a 'synthetic' parallelism, in which the image expressed in the first part is amplified or completed in the second. In this case, we would have an amplification, describing two different aspects of the raging god - his roar and his ruthlessness.⁷⁶

The restoration can be further corroborated by the common usage of the verb *šaġāmu* as referred to Adad (for attestations see *CAD Š/I* 63-4).

23/25 For the restoration [*šibbu(?) a-ma]-ru-uk*, see *Marduk1*, ll. 5/7: *šá a-ma-ru-uk šib-bu ga-pa-áš a-bu-šin*.⁷⁷ Some scholars have read *a-ma-ru-uk* as a G-stem infinitive form of *amāru* 'to see', followed by the pronominal suffix for the second person singular,⁷⁸ whereas others⁷⁹ consider it to be a borrowing from Sumerian a-m-a-r-u, a-m-á-r-u, a-m-á-r-u_{10'}, which corresponds to the Akkadian *abūbu* 'devastating flood' (*CAD A/I* 80), 'Sintflut, Wasserflut' (*AHw I* 8). The original Sumerian word passed into Akkadian directly as the rare noun *emaruk(ku)*, taken by von Soden (*AHw I* 211) to refer to the mythological deluge-serpent ("Sintflutdrache"), but translated by Oshima and other scholars as an equivalent of *šibbu* and *abūbu*, therefore alluding more generally to a destructive rush of water (though the meaning 'flood-dragon' is not excluded).⁸⁰ Thus, Oshima bases his reading on the Sumerian antecedent, offering the following translation for ll. 5/7 of the *Marduk1*: "He who is the *deluge*, a *šibbu* dragon, a massive flood".⁸¹ Given the learned and high-registered nature of the

⁷⁴ Von Soden 1933, 168.

⁷⁵ Lambert 1959-60, 50.

⁷⁶ Bühlmann, Scherer 1994, 41; Streck 2007, 171.

⁷⁷ Oshima 2011, 142, 158-9.

⁷⁸ Lambert 1959-60, 55, translates it as "Your stare"; Mayer 1995, 172, offers: "Du, dessen Blicken eine šibbu-Schlange ist". *CAD A/1*, 93 sub *abušim*: "You, whose glance is a serpent, a massive..." See also Fadhil, Jiménez 2019, 13 and 15: "[Wh]ose stare is a dragon, a flood overwhelming".

⁷⁹ Oshima 2011, 171.

⁸⁰ Oshima 2003, 110; 2011, 171-3.

⁸¹ Oshima 2011, 159.

Great Hymns and Prayers, it is not unlikely that in ll. 5/7 of *Marduk1* both meanings, and indeed both interpretations of *a-ma-ru-uk* – be it G-stem infinitive of *amāru* with pronominal suffix or the Sumerian loan-word meaning ‘Flood’ or ‘Flood-dragon’ – are present as an intentional double entendre.⁸²

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

Furthermore, the usage of *amāruk* would allow a ‘multi-layered’ reading, as in *Marduk1*. Indeed, taking *a-ma-ru-uk* as ‘your stare’ is possible, because *amāruk* belongs to the same semantic field as *nekelmûk*, and would have the same syntactic function within the line. On the other hand, the allusion to the deluge or to the deluge-dragon suits the context as well, as ‘the storm cloud’ (*urpatu*) occurs in the next half of the line. The pair storm/flood is a common literary association in Mesopotamian literature, used to represent a devastating force in the description of, for instance, divine power, battles or catastrophes.⁸³

26/28 As in ll. 18/20, a verbal form in the second-person singular seems likely, because it would parallel the same form in the second hemistich. I tentatively restore *tušteššer*, on the basis of l. 49 of *Marduk2*: *tu-uš-te-eš-šer i-šá-ra tu-šam-ṭa ra-ag-ga*, “You make the righteous man prosper, you diminish the malicious”.⁸⁴ Cf. also the commentary on *Marduk2*, l. 44, which also shows the *-i* ending for the accusative *išara*: [...] ‘*ma¹-lu-ú: tu-uš-te-šir i-šá-ri* [x x (x)], “[...] means ‘to fill’. ‘You make the righteous prosper’ [...]”.⁸⁵

⁸² Moreover, Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 197 fn. 57, quotes these lines of *Marduk1* to observe the refined wordplay between the Sumerian etymology of Marduk’s name and his personification as the flood. Lambert (*apud* Foster 2005, 682) had already suggested this explanation in relation to Marduk’s prayer *BMS 12*, l. 7: “Deluge-weapon [hopeless] to combat, [whose onslaught] is furious”. Here Lambert indicates a possible pun based on the exegesis of the name of Marduk, that was probably interpreted as the sum of the Sumerian word for deluge, *a-ma-ru*, and the word for ‘weapon’, *tuku* l: the name would then be etymologised as (A)mar(u)tuku(l).

⁸³ Cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 197-8.

⁸⁴ Oshima 2011, 226, 242-3.

⁸⁵ Jiménez 2017, <https://ccp.yale.edu/P461258>.

[t]u-ka-ni iš-di-šú: the redundant vowel at the end of the verb could be the result of an ‘enriched’ *sandhi* spelling (CV-V structure).⁸⁶ However, it can also be an ‘overhanging vowel’, as suggested by von Soden in the previous edition of this text.⁸⁷ For a similar formulation cf. also l. 171 of the *Ištar Prayer*: kib-su-uš du-un-ni-ni iš-du-uš k[in-ni], “Strengthen his path, make his foundations st[able]!”, *Marduk*2, l. 77: *issahhur-ma ša ušḫalšû ukān išd[išu]*, “He turns towards the one, who ..., he makes his foundations stable” (E. Jiménez forthcoming, personal communication), a literary hymn to Marduk, l. 14: *šá ki-i-ni pa-li-ḫi-ka tu-ka-an iš-di-[šu]*, “(But) for the righteous, who reveres you, you strengthen his position”,⁸⁸ and an acrostic hymn to Nabû, K.8204, l. 7’: *ša2 en-ši u dun-na-mi-i tu-kan iš-di-šá*, “You strengthen the position of the weak and of the fool”.⁸⁹ Cf. *CAD* I 237 sub *išdu*, 2.⁹⁰

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

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

¹⁹*id-du-ud-ma ri-ma-šu* (var.: -MU) *ú-gan-na* (var.: -ni)⁹¹

This line presents certain difficulties, and has been interpreted differently by various scholars. The verb *ú-KAN-na* is mostly analysed as *kannû* D ‘to care for, to look after’.⁹² Oshima,⁹³ however, reads *ú-gan-na*, taking this form as a third-person masculine singular from *gun-nû*. The G-stem infinitive *genû* is attested in *Malku* IV 84, bearing the meaning of *nakāpu* ‘to butt’, and in *Malku* IV 86 the D-stem infinitive

⁸⁶ Worthington 2012, 176.

⁸⁷ Von Soden 1971, 62.

⁸⁸ Mitto 2020, 256; cf. Jakob 2018, no. 13.

⁸⁹ Strong 1895, 137.

⁹⁰ Jiménez forthcoming.

⁹¹ Oshima 2014, 78 and 382.

⁹² Foster 2005, 395; George, Al-Rawi 1998, 195 and note to ll. 19-20; von Soden 1990, 115; Annus et al. 2010, 16.

⁹³ Oshima 2014, 179-80.

gunnû is explained with *nukkupu*.⁹⁴ Piccin and Worthington,⁹⁵ too, follow this identification of the verb and translate *ú-gan-na* as ‘he butts’. Different interpretations have been offered to explain *ri-ma-šu/MU*. George and Al-Rawi,⁹⁶ for example, suggest reading it as *ra’mu* ‘beloved’, a verbal adjective from *rāmu* ‘to love’. They translate the line as follows: “he hurries to treat his *darling* tenderly”.⁹⁷ Piccin and Worthington, on the other hand, take *ri-ma-MU* as *ri-ma-NĪŠ*, postulating a syllabic value *niš_x* for MU, derived from the equation *mu = nišu* ‘oath’. The final word, resulting from this ‘Rebus-Schreibung’, is then the expression *rimāniš* ‘like a bull’ (*AHw* II 985; *CAD* R 355),⁹⁸ a literary combination formed by the noun *rīmu* plus the adverbial suffix *-āniš* (see *GAG* § 67 c). The variant *ri-ma-šu* in the other manuscript is then a scribal mistake.⁹⁹

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

A different understanding of the verb is suggested by Oshima. He maintains the semantic distinction between the meaning of *edēdu* in the D- and G-stem, translating *id-du-ud* as “he becomes pointed”. He adds, however, the additional (and otherwise unattested) semantic nuance of “becoming angry”. Thus Oshima translates the line: “When he becomes pointed (i.e. becomes angry?) he butts his (var.: my) wild bull”.¹⁰⁰ Piccin and Worthington are ambivalent about the D-stem/G-stem distinction, giving in their article two different translations of *id-du-ud-ma*: “He *hastens* to butt like a wild bull” (p. 115) and “He *looks sharp* and butts like a bull” (p. 122).

⁹⁴ Hrůša 2010, 96-7, 243.

⁹⁵ Piccin, Worthington 2015, 115.

⁹⁶ George, Al-Rawi 1998, 195.

⁹⁷ This reading has been accepted by Foster 2005, 395 (“He is impetuous to cherish the one he loves(?)”) and Annus, Lenzi 2010, 16 (“He hastens to treat his beloved(?) kindly”). Von Soden 1990, 115, instead, takes this noun as *rēmu* ‘womb’ or ‘pity, compassion’, and translated: “Er eilt hin und pflegt ihren Mutterleib”. A summary of other previous interpretations is offered in Oshima 2022, 47-9. In the same article, Oshima provides his own reading of *ri-ma-MU*, i.e. *ri-ma-šum* for *rimāšu(m)*, where *-šu(m)* is understood as a terminative suffix. Oshima translates the form with “at a wild bull”.

⁹⁸ Cf. also Mayer 1995, 170.

⁹⁹ Already Foster 1981, 189, tentatively suggested this reading, though without providing an explanation.

¹⁰⁰ Oshima 2014, 78.

Thus far, neither translation of *id-du-ud-ma* is satisfactory. It seems to me that *edēdu* in this context cannot simply mean ‘to be or become pointy’ or ‘to hasten’, but should instead express a nuance of greater violence – something equal to the aggressive movement described by *ú-gan-na* in the next half of the line. Moreover, most previous interpretations do not explain the action warrants comparison with an earthquake. Foster’s translation of *id-du-ud-ma* as “He charges forward (?)”¹⁰¹ is an exception, though previously dismissed for lack of evidence.¹⁰² The meaning of *edēdu* G-stem ‘to charge’, however, can now be corroborated by means of lexical lists. In Proto-*Izi* II 146 (MSL 13, 45) the Sumerian verb *du₇-du₇* is glossed by the Gtn infinitive form of *edēdu*: *du₇-du₇^{a-ta-du-du}*. Since *du₇* is equated, among other verbs, with *nakāpu* ‘to butt’,¹⁰³ one can assume that *edēdu* in Proto-*Izi* II 146 should have a similar meaning. Thus, *Ludlul* I, l. 19 can be translated: ‘He charges forwards and butts like a bull’.

This interpretation also suits ll. 29/31 of the *Nabû Prayer*, in which an analogous use of *edēdu* as *verbum movendi*, and with the meaning ‘to charge’, can be suggested: in this way, *e-de-ed-ka* can be translated as ‘your charging’. The metaphor probably depicts the god as a wild animal, likely a goring bull,¹⁰⁴ whose violent charge shakes the earth, thus producing the same effect as a powerful earthquake.

33/35 [... *h*]u-*h*u-um *šá-ma-mi*: the first hemistich is lost, but a few signs are preserved after the break. The new fragment K.18434 confirms von Soden’s reading *h*u-*h*u-um.¹⁰⁵ *h*u-*h*u-um seems to be an unknown word, but one would expect a noun in construct chain with *šamāmī*, perhaps an epithet of the god. This word is elsewhere unattested and its meaning remains obscure; compare, however, the term *gišhummu* ‘bench’, in *Malku* II 191, equated with *kippatu* ‘circle’.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Foster 1981, 189.

¹⁰² Moran 1983, 260.

¹⁰³ See CAD/1 156-7 sub *nakāpu* A, lex. sec. The reduplication of the Sumerian verbal base expresses the iterative aspect corresponding to the Gtn-stem in Akkadian.

¹⁰⁴ The bull was often used in similes and metaphors to represent an overpowering force. As Goodnick Westenholz points out, the wild bull used to symbolise “kinetic energy and power out of control” (Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 191). We can find this image for example in SB *Gilgameš* I, l. 30: *ri-i-mu mut-tak-pu* “butting wild bull” (George 2003, 538-9) or Tablet I, 212: *ù ki-ti¹ rīmi(AM) ug-da-áš-šá-ru eli* (UGU) *eṭlūti* (GURUŠ.MEŠ), “and lords it over the menfolk like a wild bull” (550-1, cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1996, 192). The same association was used in reference to a king: *ri-mu-um ka-ad-ru-um mu-na-ak-ki-ip za-i-ri*, “goring bull, who attacks the enemies” CH col. iii, 8 (cf. Oshima 2014, 179).

¹⁰⁵ See von Soden 1971, 50.

¹⁰⁶ Hrůša 2010, 66-7, 219 and 347.

34/36 The visible traces before PAD can be reconciled with *ki-ma*. In his online edition, Lenzi (2021) reads SUR instead of PAD, providing the reading *sur-qin-ni*; the sign, however, seems more reconcilable with PAD. I tentatively read *pāṭ qinni*, in the sense of ‘the family circle’, although one would expect a spelling *pa-aṭ*. Nevertheless, one has to consider the possibility of a scribal mistake, as the scribe could have easily confused PAD and SUR. In that case, the reading offered by Lenzi would be possible. The reading remains uncertain. With respect to the second hemistich, von Soden reads NAG after *qin-ni*, providing the reconstruction *nag-mir iš-di-ḫu*.¹⁰⁷ The sign after NI, however, looks like KA, whence the reading *kāmir* ‘provider’. The usual pair *be-lu* and ^dAG occurs in the couplet immediately following (ll. 37/39), therefore a different short appellative or epithet can be expected in the first half of ll. 34/36. An example of a tentative restoration could be *attā* because it would fit the available space in the break, expressing emphasis.

41/43 *muk-kal-li*: this substantive is attested in *Maliku* IV 8-9, as a synonym of *apkallu* ‘expert’ (l. 8), *pašišu* ‘anointed’ (l. 8a) and *āšipu* ‘exorcist’ (l. 9):¹⁰⁸

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

Cf. also a ‘Practical *Lú*-List’ in MSL 12, 233, col. i 18: *LÚ mu-^lkal^l-lu*. It is generally translated as ‘a priest or exorcist’ (see CAD M/II 187; AHw II 670 offers: ‘Ein Priester oder Gelehrter’). It comes from the Sumerian *nun-gal*, equated in *Lú* III 6¹¹ to the word *apkallu* (MSL 12, 121). See also the group in *Erimḫuš* V 7-9: *NUN^{ab-gal}ME = ap-kal-lum*, ^{i-ši-ib}ME = *a-ši-pu*, ^{ME^{MIN}}-gal = *i-ši-gal-lu₄* (MSL 17, 67). The same noun is also attested in a ritual text,¹⁰⁹ which, however, does not offer any further information about the specific role of the *mukkallu*-priest. *e-še-eš-tu₄*: this word is a *hapax*, and its exact meaning is obscure. It creates a wordplay with *a-ši-ši* in the succeeding lines (ll. 42/44), and could be a feminine nominal form derived from *ašāšu/ešēšu* (AHw I 79; CAD A/II 424-5) ‘to catch’. It seems to be a PIRIST noun, possibly to be understood with a passive nuance, namely ‘what is caught’. It is possible that this word yields a meaning corresponding to that of *iḫzu* ‘knowledge’, derived from *aḫāzu* ‘to take’, but also ‘to understand, to learn’ (AHw I 19; CAD A/I 177).

¹⁰⁷ “Fülle auf den Gewinn!”, cf. von Soden 1971, 50-1

¹⁰⁸ Hrůša 2010, 92-3, 239, 379.

¹⁰⁹ Falkenstein 1959, 40, l. 5’.

42/44 *rap-šá uz-ni*: this epithet is an example of the so-called *damqam-īnim* construction, i.e. a nominal construct chain formed by two components: an adjective or a substantive displaying the ending *-a(m)*, and a noun, that can be either declined in the genitive or be in *status absolutus*. Our case represents the most common type of *D-ī.*, namely the compound that has an adjective as its first element.¹¹⁰ This construction only occurs in literary texts, personal names or lexical lists, and is often attested in first-millennium Akkadian hymns in standard expressions, like: *našâ rēši* ‘with the head held high’, *rapša irti* ‘strong’.¹¹¹

a-ši-ši: I take *a-ši-ši* as a participle of *ašāšu* IV ‘to catch’ (*AHW* I 79; *CAD/A* II 424-5), in the broader sense of ‘to gather’, ‘to collect’.¹¹² For this meaning of *ašāšu*, which is closer to the Sumerian *ur₄* ‘to gather’, ‘to collect’, see the Commentary to *Theodicy* on l. 200: ‘*ka*’- [*áš-šá*]-*a-tú*: *ḥa-am-ma-a-tú*: *ur₄*: *a-šá-šú*: *ur₄*: *ḥa-ma-mu* “‘You embrace’ means ‘you encompass’, (since) *ur₄* means ‘to catch’ (and) *ur₄* means ‘to encompass’”.¹¹³

šu-ka-a-mu: ‘scribal skill’ (*AHW* III 1202; *CAD* Š/III 213), cf. a *šulla* prayer to Nabû (*Nabû Prayer* 4), l. 6: *er-šu pal-ku-ú ha-mi-im šu-ki-am-mu*, “wise, of wide knowledge, who masters the scribal art”¹¹⁴ Another manuscript of the same prayer presents the variant *šu-ki-a-am*. Considering the two spellings *šu-ki-am-mu* and *šu-ki-a-am*, one could hypothesise a contraction of the diphthong and a development of *šukiāmu* into *šukāmu*.¹¹⁵ The origin of this noun is unclear, but probably Semitic.¹¹⁶ Cf. also *Theodicy*, l. 205, [... *tu*]p-pa-ni ma-li *šu-ka-mi*, “... tablets, filled with scribal skill”.¹¹⁷ See *CAD* Š/III 213 for more attestations of this noun.

45/47 *šal-ba-ba*: there are two meanings attested for this word (*AHW* II 1147; *CAD* Š/I 241). The first one is ‘fierce’, entered in AnŠ 44 as

¹¹⁰ Detailed studies on this topic have been offered various scholars, see for instance von Soden 1960, 163-71; Reiner 1966, 125-7; 1970, 274-303; 1984, 177-82; see also Waserman 2003, 45-60, with further bibliography.

¹¹¹ Groneberg 1987, 1: 89.

¹¹² Cf. Lambert 1960, 303.

¹¹³ For the transliteration and translation of this line see the *Theodicy* Commentary edited online by Jiménez 2017b, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>. Cf. also Lambert 1960, 82; Oshima 2014, 454. For specific remarks on this line see Lambert 1960, 302.

¹¹⁴ Mayer 1990, 461.

¹¹⁵ Mayer 1990, 465. Cf. Beaulieu, Mayer 1997, 178.

¹¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion, see von Soden 1960, 166.

¹¹⁷ Translation by the Author. Cf. Oshima 2014, 160-1, 360.

a synonym of *qarrādu* ‘warrior’: *šal-ba-bu* = MIN(*qar-ra-du*).¹¹⁸ The second meaning is ‘wise’, attested in the Commentary to *Theodicy*, l. 11’: *šal-ba-ba* = *né-me-qa*.¹¹⁹ See also Sm.463, rev. i 20’ (CT 19, pl. 11): [n a m - k ù] - z u = *šal-ba-bu* ‘wise = *šalbābu*’ (Lanu B 20 according to CAD Š/1 241 *šalbābu* lex. sec.; restoration *ibid.*) The first meaning suits our line better, as *tassabus* ‘you have become angry’, follows in the second hemistich. However, it is quite possible that the scribe intentionally aimed to maintain ambiguity, especially when considering the preceding couplet in which the god is praised for his wisdom. This adjective is also found in *Marduk*1, ll. 192/4: *be-lu₄ šal-ba-bu li-nu-uḥ riš-tuk*, “May the furious Lord rest in your celebration”.¹²⁰

49/50 The same conventional image of the sufferer being cast into the flood can be found in *Marduk*2, l. 75: *šu-la-aš-šum-ma iš-tu ŠA-bi e-de-ra-bu-t[e] ZALÁG-[k]a li-mur*, “Raise him from the midst of a mass[ive] flood, so that he can see [you]r light”.¹²¹ See, too, the restored passage in *Marduk*1, ll. 42/44 *qab-lu-uš ta-^rma-tú¹ né-su-[ú na-ba-lu]*, “in the midst of the seas, far away are [the dry lands]”.¹²²

In addition, another parallel is found in a penitential prayer to *Marduk*, l. 11: *ru-qa-an-ni [kib-ri] na-ba-lu né-sa-an-ni*, “[The beach] is far from me, the dry land is remote from me”.¹²³

This example confirms von Soden’s hypothesis that interprets the pronominal suffixes in *ru-uq-šu* and *né-si-iš* (l. 50 of the *Nabû Prayer*) as accusatives of relation.¹²⁴

e-liš can be interpreted as *elīšu* ‘over him’. Von Soden suggests that the final vowel could have been dropped due to the following *i*-vowel in *ittā[kkip]*.¹²⁵

51 Contrary to what was suggested by von Soden, I read *a-na pa-ra-a’-a le-e-mu*, and not *a-na pa-ra-a’ a-le-e-mu*. I take *le-e-mu* as *lēmu*, which occurs in the lexical lists as *le-e-mu* and *le-em-ma*: *Erimḥuš* IV 95 (146): n u - š e = *le-e-mu* ‘to disagree = he is unwilling’ (MSL 17, 61); *Malku* V 154: *le-em-ma* = *la ma-ga-ru* ‘he is unwilling =

¹¹⁸ Hruša, Weiershäuser 2020, 214. Cf. also see *LTBA* II, 2, obv. i 44.

¹¹⁹ See Jiménez 2017b at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>; cf. Lambert 1960, 82 and Oshima 2014, 455.

¹²⁰ Oshima 2011, 168-9; cf. note for these lines, 189.

¹²¹ Translation by the Author. Cf. Oshima 2011, 244-5 and 75.

¹²² Oshima 2011, 160-1.

¹²³ Van der Toorn 1985, 141 and 143; von Soden 1987, 71. Cf. Jaques 2015, 257.

¹²⁴ Von Soden 1961, 156-62; 1971, 63.

¹²⁵ Von Soden 1971, 63. Cf. Groneberg 1987, 1: 127.

not to approve'.¹²⁶ The word *lēmu* has led to different interpretations: *CAD* lists it under *lemû* (*lēmu*, *lemmu*) (*CAD* L 125-6), and analyses it as an adjectival form possibly derived from a defective verb *lemû*, exclusively attested in the stative (cf. *AHW* II 543 'Ungehorsamer').¹²⁷ According to Veenhof, however, *lēmu* is to be connected with the verb *mu'ā'u* 'to want', and is the compound of a finite form of this verb and the negative particle *lā*.¹²⁸ Veenhof suggests that the resulting word be treated as a 'pseudo-stative'. He explains the form *lemma* (see *CAD* L 126a) as *lēm* + vowel, namely a spelling variant of *lemmu*. A passage in the *Gilgameš* Epic (SB IX, ll. 173-4) can clarify the grammatical category of *le-e-mu* in the *Nabû Prayer*:

¹⁷³ *sāmtu*^(na4 GUG) *na-šá-at i-ni-ib-šá*

¹⁷⁴ *is-ḥu-un-na-tu₄ ul-lu-la-at ana da-ga-la ḥi-pat*

¹⁷³ A cornelian (tree) was in fruit,

¹⁷⁴ Hung with bunches of grapes, lovely to behold.¹²⁹

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

52 The literary motif of the supplicant stuck in the swamp can be found also, for example, in the *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 9, l. 27'-28': GIM *a-ri-id ap-pa-ri ina ru-šum-d[e]-'e' na-da-ku*, "like one who goes down in the marshes, I have fallen in the mud",¹³⁰ in an Akkadian prayer to *Marduk*: *ki-i GUD.MEŠ na-da-ku ina ru-šu-un-tam-m[a]*, "like oxen, I was cast into mud",¹³¹ and in a *eršaḥuġa* prayer: *i-na me-e ru-šum-di na-di qa-as-su ṣa-bat*, "he was cast into the mud, take his hand!".¹³² The morass mentioned in these examples is to be interpreted as a metaphor for the underworld, which is often described as a mire in

¹²⁶ Hrůša 2010, 118-19, 404.

¹²⁷ See the remarks in *CAD* L 126. Cf. Hrůša 2010, 257-8.

¹²⁸ Veenhof 1986, 241.

¹²⁹ George 2003, 672-3. My thanks to I. Hrůša who kindly pointed out these lines to me.

¹³⁰ Lambert 1974, 278-9, l. 100; cf. also Jacques 2015, 77, 100. Cf. Oshima 2011, 280, note to l. 15'.

¹³¹ Oshima 2011, 278-9, l. 15'

¹³² See Maul 1988, 240 and 243, l. 38 (rev.); cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 190 fn. 149.

the ancient near Eastern literary tradition.¹³³ Incidentally, we note that ll. 51-2 form a synthetic parallelism that pairs the metaphorical web (*qé-e šib-qi* ‘a web of deception’) and the marsh, both trapping the sufferer.

54/56 [š]u-ut-bi šēr-tuš šu-liš ina na-ri-i[ṭ-ṭu]: *Marduk*1, l. 154 has a similar passage: šu-ut-bi-ma šer-tuk-ka ina na-ri-ṭi eṭ-ra-ás-sú, “Remove your punishment, and from the morass, save him”.¹³⁴

58 [in]a pi-i le-’u-ú da-ab-ru na-di-ma: von Soden¹³⁵ hypothesises that *le-’u-ú da-ab-ru* might be some sort of demon, but the expression remains obscure. Similar expressions are found in *Marduk*1, ll. 13/15: *ti-de ina pi-i šēr-ti pa-na ba-ba-la*, “You know (how) to forgive in the mouth of punishment”, and l. 153: *ina pi-i ka-ra-še-e na-di ir-ka*, “Your slave is cast in the mouth of annihilation”¹³⁶ and in the *Prayer to Ištar*, l. 173: *pa-iš ka-ra-ši pi-di-šú*, “Save him from the mouth of annihilation”.¹³⁷ While *ina pī šerti* is generally understood in a prepositional sense, and thus translated ‘in the face of sin/guilt’, the expression *ina pī karašē* has been taken as a metaphor for the open grave.¹³⁸ Due to the breaking, it is unclear whether the formulation in our line should be interpreted in a similar sense, that is to say metaphorically, or in a concrete sense – i.e. indicating the mouth of a demon or the like.

I have tentatively restored *ugann[an]* at the end of the line, from *kanānu/ganānu* ‘to encircle’ (*AHW* I 280; *CAD* G 40).

77 *na-ak-mi*: the precise meaning of this noun is uncertain; von Soden considers *nakmu*, and its variant *nakimtu*, as a verbal adjective from the root **nmk*, translating it as ‘aufgehäuft’ (*AHW* II 722 *nakmu* I; *CAD* N/I 189). With regard to the attestation of this term in our *Nabû Prayer*, von Soden proposes to take *nakmu* as some sort of disease (‘etwas Krankhaftes am Leibe’, *AHW* II 723 *nakmu* I, 2), and translates “das Ausgesammelte”.¹³⁹ Farber, instead, considers *nakmu* and *nakimtu* as two variants meaning ‘pus’ or ‘abscess’, emphasising the frequent use of both nouns in connection with the verb *wašû* in

¹³³ Watson 1999, 187. Cf. Van der Toorn 1985, 65.

¹³⁴ Oshima 2011, 166-7, 187; cf. Fadhil, Jiménez 2019, 12 and 15.

¹³⁵ Von Soden 1971, 64.

¹³⁶ Oshima 2011, 166 e 186;

¹³⁷ Lambert 1959-60, 53. Cf. chapter 3.

¹³⁸ For a more detailed study on this expression see Oshima 2001, 14-19.

¹³⁹ Von Soden 1971, 46, 77.

the Š-stem ‘to release’. He translates *nakmu* as ‘Angespeichertes’.¹⁴⁰ Cf. also *Malku* VIII 38: *na¹-ak-ma ‘i-ni’ = šu-uḫ-ḫ[u-tú] “Person mit ein-nem bestimmten Augendefekt = ausgepresst (= mit hervortretenden Augen?)*.¹⁴¹ I follow this second interpretation.

a-[ḫi-ta]: the restoration fits the traces and provides a parallelism with *ina ka[mâti]* ‘in the open country’, in the next line.

78 *tal-tal-ti*: this *hapax* has been interpreted by von Soden as a loanword from the Targumic Aramaic *ṭṭwl* ‘migration, exile’, derived from the root *ṭṭl* ‘to move, to shake’. Hence, von Soden suggests an Akkadian *hapax talaltu*, taking it as a foreign word meaning ‘homeless’ (cf. *AHW* III 1379, ‘Heimatlose’; *CAD* T 45, ‘fugitive woman’).¹⁴² The etymology is, however, uncertain, and von Soden’s interpretation can now be dismissed by a parallel passage, in which the same simile occurs. The fragment K.4953 (*eBL* transliteration), ll. 14-15 reads: x [(x)] *tal¹-tal-gin₇ bar-bar-ra-t[a ...-dag-dag] || [x (x) ki-m]a tal¹-tal-ti ina ka-ma-[a-ti it-ta-nam-gi-iš⁷] (...)*. The Sumerian term [(x)]-tal-tal implies that the Akkadian word meant here is a feminine form of *taltallu*, var. *taltallû*, namely the ‘(male) inflorescence of the date palm’ (*AHW* III 1312; *CAD* T 104). This simile likely refers to the pollen being dispersed (*nagāšu* Gtn) and carried by the wind.¹⁴³ Such a *hapax* seems not improbable in our text, and could confirm the reading of similarly learned and rare words, such as *šid[itu]* in l. 176b.

The motif of the supplicant wandering around is well attested in literary texts. Often used to describe the suffering of the supplicant, this topos implies the abandonment from the gods, and a feeling of loneliness and despair.¹⁴⁴ See for example *Ludlul* I, ll. 49-50: *iš-šak-na-nim-ma i-da-at pi-rit-ti uš-te-ši é-ya ka-ma-a-ti ar-pu-‘ud’*, “Fearful omens beset me, I am got out of my house and wander outside”.¹⁴⁵

79 *a-mu-ú i-zi-za*: for the meaning of *amû* ‘einhändig’, see *AHW* I 45b;¹⁴⁶ we note here the stereotypical motif of the supplicant complaining about being surpassed by weak or disabled individuals, also

¹⁴⁰ Farber 1977, 83-5.

¹⁴¹ Hrůša 2010, 141, 273 and 423.

¹⁴² Cf. also Abraham, Sokoloff 2011, 55; Cohen, Klein 2014, 117-19.

¹⁴³ I am grateful to Enrique Jiménez who pointed out this parallel to me and suggested this interpretation.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Barré 2001 for the usage of this topos in literary texts and even in letters to express despair. Cf. Rozzi 2019, 187.

¹⁴⁵ The latest edition of *Ludlul* is by Oshima 2014; the translation used here is that of Lambert 1960, 33.

¹⁴⁶ Von Soden 1971, 65.

attested for example in the *Theodicy*, l. 76: *il-an-nu ku-uš-šu-du pa-na-an-ni lil-li*, “A cripple surpasses me, a lunatic outstrips me”,¹⁴⁷ and in a *šulla* prayer to Ištar (no. 2), ll. 59-61: *a-di ma-ti dGAŠAN-MU lil-lu a-ku-ú i-ba-a'-an-ni*, “How long, my mistress, will imbeciles and weaklings surpass me?”.¹⁴⁸

80 *ni-is-sa-t[u₄ u kūru(?)]*: these two nouns are frequently found in penitential prayers.

They belong to the standard repertoire of expressions used in prayers to describe the difficult condition of the supplicant and form a fixed pair.¹⁴⁹ See for example a restored line in *Marduk*1, l. 124: [] x x *ni-is-sa-ta ù k[u-ri]*, “[...] ... wailing and daze”,¹⁵⁰ a *šulla* prayer to Nabû (no. 4), l. 12 (obv.): *ina ku-ú-ru u ni-[is-sa-ti x x x l]a-a-ni*, “With wailing and da[ze] ... my [figure]”,¹⁵¹ a prayer to Šamaš (no. 18), l. 19, obv.: *i-na ku-ú-ri u ni-is-sa-ti ra-ma-ni ú-tan-niš*, “I have become weak for depression and wailing”,¹⁵² and also the *Theodicy*, l. 30: *ku-ú-ru u ni-is-sa-tu₄ ú-qát-ti-ru zi-mu-[ú-a]*, “Depression and grief have blackened [my] appearance”.¹⁵³ *kūru* and *nissatu* often occur in parallelism with *qūlu* ‘silence, stupor’ (see CAD Q 304).¹⁵⁴

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

šà-sur-ra: this word indicates the womb or the midwife but can be also a personification of the mother goddess. It is translated more generally as ‘mother’; see *Malku* I 122-4: *ba-an-tu, a-ga-ri-in-nu, šá-'as'-su-ru = um-mu*¹⁵⁵ and *Antagal* B 85-8, where *šassurru* appears as an equivalent of the Sumerian *a b-sín* (‘furrow’) and is listed in a group with *ummu*, *bāntu* and *agarinnu* (MSL 17, 192). This noun is also found in *Marduk*1, l. 103 *i-na bi-na-at šá-sur-[r]i?*, “Among the creations of the womb/mother goddess”,¹⁵⁶ cf. in *Theodicy*, l. 130 *[u]p-te-eḫ-hir šà-s[ur ...]* (note that the other MS employs the divine determinative

147 Cf. Lambert 1960, 76-7; Oshima 2014, 154-5 and 448. I base the translation on l. 28 of the *Theodicy* Commentary, see Jiménez 2017b.

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

149 Mayer 1976, 83.

150 Oshima 2011, 164.

151 Mayer 1976, 477.

152 Schollmeyer 1912, 97-8.

153 Oshima 2014, 150-1.

154 Cf. also Oshima 2014, 351.

155 Hrůša 2010, 310-11, 204.

156 Cf. Oshima 2011, 164 and 182-3.

before the word: [up-ta]ḫ-ḫir ʿšà-[sur ...]), “The midwife is convened [at the bed of the woman in labor]” and l. 150 [ib-bat-ta]q-ma šá-sur-ra [...], “The midwife cut [the umbilical cord ...]”.¹⁵⁷

The end of the line is broken and makes it difficult to ascertain whether the word *šassūru* in the present context signifies ‘womb’ or ‘midwife’. The lack of a divine determinative might suggest that a personification of the mother goddess can be excluded, although, as can be seen in the above-mentioned passage in *Theodicy* (l. 130), the usage of the determinative sign seems quite flexible. In any case, the overall meaning of the line is clear: the god is the one who determines the birth of the child, who can be brought out of the womb only at the divine’s command. For other attestations of *šassūru* in similar contexts, see *CAD Š/II* 146, meaning b.¹⁵⁸

The visible sign before the break looks like Ú, and not GA, as read by von Soden.¹⁵⁹ Several verbs meaning ‘to create’, ‘to fashion’ or to ‘draw forth’, ‘take out’ could be possible. Cf. the translation by Foster, *apud* Rozzi 2022b: “At your command the midwife [drew me out?]”.

85-6 I follow here the interpretation offered by Foster (*apud* Rozzi 2022b), which takes *an-nam* at the beginning of l. 85 as *anna* ‘yes’ (*AHw* I 52; *CAD A/2* 125), and understands the line as a reference to the recognition of the child on the part of the father.¹⁶⁰ Cf. also the note on this line in Foster 2005, 623. The following line (86) seems to further develop this concept, extending it to the forefathers (*abbūšu*). This parallel couplet might express what follows the birth of the child, mentioned in the lines immediately preceding. The traces before the break in l. 85 are too poorly preserved to allow a reconstruction.

89-90 *i-la a-bi-i*: it is understood here as *ila abī* ‘God, my father’. If the interpretation is correct, *ila abī* designates the personal god, commonly defined as ‘father’ or as ‘god of the father’ in Mesopotamian prayers and letter-prayers.¹⁶¹ Cf. for instance an Old Babylonian letter-prayer, which opens as follows: ¹*a-na DINGIR a-bi-ya* ²*qī-bi-ma*,

¹⁵⁷ I follow here Heinrich 2022; cf. Oshima 2014, 156-7 and 456; Lambert 1960, 76-7.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. also Ps. 22:9: “Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast”, and Ps. 139:13: “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb”, translation taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, 2011.

¹⁵⁹ Von Soden 1971, 52.

¹⁶⁰ “From my father’s ‘It’s my child!’ [...] | “The ‘It’s my child!’ of his ancestors”, see Foster *apud* Rozzi 2022b.

¹⁶¹ See Streck 2003, 425; cf. Steinert 2012, 127. For the concept of personal gods as parental figures, see Bosworth 2015.

“Speak to the god, my father”.¹⁶² The personal god in this verse parallels with *ištārāniš* in the following line (l. 90). The plene writing in *a-bi-i* is, however, problematic and the reading remains uncertain.¹⁶³ The traces at the end of the line are compatible with *ištamar*, taken here as Gtn preterite of *šamārum* ‘to praise’, which parallels the present *iqâl* at the end of l. 90. In Akkadian literary texts, it is not uncommon to find a preterite followed by a present. In such contexts, the verbal form in the present usually expresses a durative action in the past, and may convey the idea of repetition.¹⁶⁴ In this case, indeed, the present *iqâl* is used to express the repetition of an action that took place in the past, cf. Foster’s translation of l. 90 (*apud* Rozzi 2022b): “He unceasingly heeded (his) goddess”.

91/93 *ti-le-é-a-um*: archaising writing for *tele’û* ‘capable’ (*AHw* III 1344; *CAD* T 327-8). The aleph sign is expressed through the sign A. Cf. also *rē’û* ‘shepherd’, occasionally spelled as *re-é-a-um* (*ASyll*.⁴, 12*, 174c; cf. *AHw* II 976; *CAD* R 300).¹⁶⁵ The same spelling with A is attested in a Late Babylonian Manuscript of *Marduk’s* Address to the Demons (*KAL* 9, 35 A 8),¹⁶⁶ see *eSAD* s.v. “tele’û”.¹⁶⁷

pa-ṭar: the traces after PA are barely visible, but there is space for one, perhaps two signs. I suggest to read TAR, and to restore the infinitive form *paṭāra*, cf. a similar line in *Marduk1*: *ti-di ina pi-i šèr-ti pa-na ba-ba-la | pa-ṭa-ra en-net-ta ina šap-šá-qi*, “[You know] how, in punishment, to extend forgiveness, [To absol]ve sin when in sorrow”.¹⁶⁸ The state of preservation is, however, so poor, that the restoration remains uncertain. Cf. von Soden’s restoration in his edition *pa-sat* (1971, 52-3, “meine Sünde ist ge[tilgt]”). However, this reconstruction does not appear to be appropriate for this particular section of the prayer. Here, the sufferer’s lament is conveyed through supplication and cries for forgiveness, that is to say, his sin has not been forgiven yet.

¹⁶² Stol 1981, 88-9, no. 141.

¹⁶³ On cases of plene spelling in Akkadian hymns, see Pohl 2022, 26-30, where cases of plene writings in Old Babylonian hymns are discussed, and interpreted as possible indications of musical performance. In the *Nabû Prayer* under study, however, there are no other attestations of similar spellings (case of overhanging vowels cannot be taken into account, since they are most probably late orthographic conventions and not linguistic features), and *a-bi-i* could thus be an isolated erroneous writing.

¹⁶⁴ See Streck 1995, in particular 46-7.

¹⁶⁵ See von Soden 1971, 65.

¹⁶⁶ Jakob 2018, 75.

¹⁶⁷ Streck et al. <https://altorient.gko.uni-leipzig.de/etymd.html>.

¹⁶⁸ Oshima 2011, 148, 162-3.

92/94 The final visible sign appears to be TI, but the subsequent sign is uncertain. The reading proposed by von Soden in his edition, *an-nat* seems unlikely because the traces prior to the break are not consistent with KUR. They could be reconciled with GI.

97 Tentative restoration based on the *Ištar Prayer*, l. 168 *ana mi-na im-ku-ú tu-am-mé-šú an-n[a²-šú²]*, “In what respect has he been negligent? You can disregard his sin”.¹⁶⁹

98 I owe the reconstruction of this line to E. Jiménez (private communication). [*mimma(?) mala(?)*] *i-še-tu₄*: in his edition, von Soden read [...]-i *še-tum*, but a verbal form in the subjunctive seems more likely, as it would parallel *im]kú* in the preceding line. *hi-¹ip² libbi*: there are some visible traces after *HI* that can be reconciled with IP (*pace* von soden, who read *uk-kiš hi-[ti-su]*). On the illness of *hīp libbi*, interpreted by scholars as ‘heartbreak’ or depression, see Van Buylaere 2020, 204-7 with previous literature.

100/102 [*ina b*]a-lu-uk: I follow von Soden¹⁷⁰ in this restoration. The preposition *ina* would be pleonastic, as *baluk* is another example of the locative-adverbial ending followed by the shortened form of the pronominal suffix. However, such a pleonastic usage of the prepositions *ina* or *ana* with the locative case is often attested in Old Babylonian sources.¹⁷¹

103 [*tu-še*]-ša-am-ma: I owe this restoration to T. Mitto (private communication). The space at the beginning of the line suggests that three signs can be restored in the break; the last one, still partially visible, ends with four vertical wedges, and can be ZA. Compare the different interpretation provided by Mayer, who reads a broken UN, and reconstructs [*tēnu*]n,¹⁷² preterite from *enēnu* (verbal root i/u), which is entered in *AHw* as *enēnu* II ‘bestrafen’ and III ‘sündigen’ (*AHw* I 217b and III 1553b), and in *CAD* E 194 as *enēnu* B ‘to punish’. Mayer, however, provides a different translation of this verb, namely ‘to rage’, ‘to let one feel one’s wrath’, taking *enēnu* as a synonym of other, more common intransitive verbs for ‘to be furious’ as *kamālu*, *aqāgu* and *šalbāsu*.¹⁷³ *enēnu* often occurs in prayers and literary texts, see for example a *šuilla* prayer to *Marduk* (*Marduk*5), l. 41:

¹⁶⁹ Translation, reading and restoration by the Author. Cf. Lambert 1959-60, 52.

¹⁷⁰ Von Soden 1971, 57-8.

¹⁷¹ Mayer 1996, 434; *GAG* § 66, c.

¹⁷² Mayer 1993, 233 fn. 11.

¹⁷³ Mayer 1993, 232-3 and 2016, 205-6.

šá i-nu-nu-šú DINGIR-šú, “He, whose god has let him feel his wrath”, or *Ludlul* I, l. 41: *ištu ūm(i) bēlī i-ni-na-an-ni*, “On the day when my lord let me feel his wrath”. The substantive *ennettu* is likely to be derived from this verb (see below the note on l. 103).

The sign before the break in the second hemistich shows two clear horizontal wedges, but the state of preservation of the tablet in this spot is too poor to allow a clear identification of the sign. Possible candidates for restoration are NAP, KIP or GU. I restore *tassakip* on the basis of *Marduk*1, ll. 41/43: *bēlu/Marduk uggukka tassakip aradka*.¹⁷⁴

104 [i-na² r]it²-ti-ka ta-at-ta-di du-u[š²-ma²-ka²]: the first part of the line is partially broken, but the partly visible sign at the beginning can be *rid/t*. I suggest restoring *dušmāka* at the end of the line, because it would parallel *aradka* in the immediately preceding line. The resulting couplet (ll. 103-4) then forms a synthetic parallelism, amplifying the previous image, and depicting the angry god who does not forgive the penitent, but keeps rejecting him.

The learned noun *dušmū* also appears in l. 149. It is attested - together with its feminine form *dušmētu* - in *Malku* I 177-8 as a synonym of the more common *ardu*.¹⁷⁵

105 a²-šam²]-šá¹-niš ḫal-lu-la-a-a: there is space for one or at most two signs before šá. I restore the rare adverbial form *ašamšāniš* (*AHw* I 78; *CAD* A/2 411),¹⁷⁶ meaning ‘like a storm’, based on the first entry of the *Tašritu* Hemerology, where the Hallulāja demon is attested together with the word *ašamsūtu* (*AHw* I 78; *CAD* A/2 411-13), a dust storm: U₄ 1.KÁM^{im} a-šam-šu-ta ina EDIN la ú-ma-ḫar ḫa-lu-li-ia i-ḫar-šu, “On the 1st (of *Tašritu*), he should not face a dust devil in the desert, lest Ḫallulāja marry him”.¹⁷⁷

The ḫallulāja demon and *ilu lemnu* occur together also in *Erimḫuš* I 213-16 (*MSL* 17, 19):

²¹³máškim₂ ḡi₆ lu₂ ḫar-ra-an = ḫal-lu-la-a-a

²¹⁴máškim₂ ḡi₄ a-ri-a = šá-niš MIN

²¹⁵diḡir ki-šu-tag-ga nu-tuku = DINGIR *lem-nu*

²¹⁶diḡir [zà]-ḡar-ra = DINGIR šá šu-ut-ti

¹⁷⁴ Oshima 2011, 146, 160-1, in which, however, this line is reconstructed differently. I owe this reconstruction to Enrique Jiménez (personal communication), who showed me his forthcoming edition of *Marduk*1.

¹⁷⁵ Hrůša 2010, 313-14; cf. Lambert 1968, 130 and Caplice 1974, 349.

¹⁷⁶ I owe this restoration to Aino Häntinen, who pointed out the line in the hemerology to me.

¹⁷⁷ Jiménez 2018a, 323, with previous references.

As can be seen from the lexical excerpt cited above, it would be naturally tempting to seek a correspondence in the adverb *šanīš* attested in *Erimḫuš* I 214,¹⁷⁸ and speculate that the scribe of the *Nabû Prayer* could have misinterpreted the lexical source, taking *šá-niš* not as a gloss, but as part of the name of the *ḫallulāyu*-demon mentioned in the list. However, the fragmentary nature of our verse prevents a definitive solution and calls for caution. An integration with *ašamšāniš* or a similar adverb seems more plausible. In any case, the sequence of the two demons, attested one after the other in *Erimḫuš* as well, could suggest a relationship between the two sources.

While the term *ḫal-lu-la-a-a* can generally indicate the name of an insect,¹⁷⁹ the parallel with the lexical text – which clearly lists four demonic beings – proves that in our context *ḫal-lu-la-a-a* denotes the *ḫallulāyu*-demon, a female demon that enters houses and frightens young brides.¹⁸⁰ The spelling A-A found in *ḫal-lu-la-a-a* can be used in Akkadian to express the diphthong *ay/ayy-* or *āy/āyy-* with any following vowel.¹⁸¹ In this case, this spelling could express the form *ḫallulāyu*, *ḫallulāya* or *ḫallulāyy*.

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

106 The interpretation of the line follows a suggestion by Enrique Jiménez (personal communication). If read correctly, the form *la-ga-mi* is derived from *lagā'u* ‘dirt’ (*AHw* II 527; *CAD* L 37). For the shift of /' to /m/, probably to be interpreted as a hypercorrection, see Jiménez 2017, 279 with previous literature. However, it is difficult to determine whether the final vowel in *la-ga-mi* is to be taken as an indication of a first-person singular suffix (‘my dirt’) or represents instead another example of erratic case ending. Considering that the preceding and succeeding verses include only third person singular forms, a first person form seems unlikely here, and *la-ga-mi* could be understood perhaps as *lagā'a*, that is, accusative without suffix. Nevertheless, the poor state of preservation of the line prevents from

178 The use of *šá-niš* for the adverb *šanīš* ‘again’, ‘similarly’, is attested four times within the preserved manuscripts of *Erimḫuš*, and always introduces the sign MIN, indicating the exact repetition of the Akkadian entry occurring in the preceding line. For the use of *šanīš* in lexical lists, see Hrůša, Weiershäuser 2020, 9-10.

179 The term has been translated differently: Landsberger 1934a, 135, takes it as the mole cricket, Ebeling 1937, 69, thinks instead of an ant-lion, and finally Farber 1987, 102-3, suggests translating it as “Scolopender” (cf. also Weiershäuser, Hrůša 2018, 166).

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

181 Mayer 2003, 303; *GAG* § 22b.

a clear understanding, and the form remains uncertain. The term *du-tuš*, if correctly read, is derived from *dūtu* ‘manliness’, and seems to display what has been defined by Mayer a pseudo-adverbial locative (“Pseudo-Lokativadverbialis”), followed by the apocopated pronominal suffix. Indeed, considering the verb immediately following (*tabarri*), *dūtuš* might serve as an accusative.¹⁸² Despite being severely damaged, the verse seems to display the theme of the loss of sexual potency, a common symptom of suffering in the Akkadian prayers. This motif can be found within the corpus under consideration as well, see e.g. the *Ištar Prayer* edited in the present study (l. 165). A similar passage occurs also in *Ludlul*, e.g. I, l. 47: *[i]n-né-ṭir ba-al-ti du-ú-tú ú-tam-mi[l]*, “My vigor was taken away, my manliness lost self-confidence”.¹⁸³

109 The verbal form *ir-ra-qu* might be an irregular form from *raqû*, present N-stem; *kab-^rta-ta¹* is a poetical variant for the more common *kabattu*.¹⁸⁴ On these poetic forms displaying anaptyctic vowels, see Jiménez 2017, 77-8 and cf. George 2003, 431-2.

110 This line belongs to a severely broken set of verses (ll. 104-15) that probably deal with the distress of the supplicant, whose miseries are listed and described in this portion of the prayer (the “Penitential Section”, ll. 44-173, see the Introduction to the *Nabû Prayer*, § 2.2.1). Therefore, I tentatively restore here *[ṭēnšū(?) it²-t]a-kir-šú*, because this kind of suffering, i.e. mental confusion and unrest, is a recurring theme in Akkadian prayers;¹⁸⁵ see for example the *eršahuûa* prayer 4R² 19 no. 3 (Maul 1988, 353-7), rev. ll. 15-16:

¹⁵*dimma nu-mu-un-dab ní-ĝu₁₀ nu-mu-uš-tuku-ĝen*

¹⁶*ṭè-e-mì ul šab-ta-ku ra-ma-ni ul ḥa-sa-ku*

I didn’t keep my reason, I forgot myself.¹⁸⁶

For several attestations of *ṭēmu* with *nakāru*, see CAD N/I 163. A similar motif can also be found in other *Great Hymns and Prayers*, as in the *Ištar Literary Prayer*, l. 167: *ṭè-em-šú ul ḥa-sis ma-ši ra-ma[n-šú]*, “He has lost his mind and forgets himself”,¹⁸⁷ and in *Marduk*2, l. 12: *tu-ut-ter-ra-áš-šú ṭa-a-bi šá it-ru-ru ṭè-en-šú*, “You made healthy again

¹⁸² On the so-called Pseudo-lokative, see Mayer 1996.

¹⁸³ Häntinen 2022; cf. Oshima 2014, 80-1, 385.

¹⁸⁴ Von Soden 1971, 65.

¹⁸⁵ Van der Toorn 1985, 65-6.

¹⁸⁶ Maul 1988, 353-4.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Lambert 1959-60, 52.

the one, whose mind has trembled”.¹⁸⁸ The expression that employs the words *ṭēmu* and *nakāru* to describe mental derangement occurs very often in medical texts.¹⁸⁹

113 *ši-in-šú*: this word is taken as a *hapax* by von Soden (1971, 66), who suggests it may be a verbal noun deriving from *sanāšu*, “to insert, to infix”. Another possible reading could be *šinnu* ‘tooth’. Even though this word is fitting for the context, since the line under consideration occurs in a set of verses describing body parts, the expected form would be *šinnašu/šinnišu*. The reading remains therefore tentative. For the restoration at the end of the line, cf. a similar attestation in a hymn to Nabû, quoted in *CAD P 161*: *pa-ri-im na-piš-tú rag-gu*, “who cuts the throat of the wicked”.¹⁹⁰

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

116 *a-di ma-ti*: this is a conventional expression, often to be found in Akkadian penitential prayers. After the symptoms of suffering have been described, similar formulations are used in rhetorical questions addressed to the deity, who is considered responsible for the penitent’s pitiable condition.¹⁹¹

The restoration offered by von Soden *lu-ʿuq-qu*¹⁹² does not seem to fit the traces particularly well. I follow the suggestion by Foster (personal communication) and read *lu-ʿmun*¹⁹³ ‘šum-šú’, in the sense of ‘any evil’, although the expected form would be *lumnu*. The line is in any case so poorly preserved that the interpretation must remain hypothetical. Compare the similar verse in *Ludlul II*, l. 1, in which the time length of one entire year is mentioned as well: *šat-tam-ma a-na ba-laṭ a-dan-na i-te-eq*, “One whole year to the next, the predictable time passed by”.¹⁹³

118/120 The first visible traces after the break at the beginning of the line seem compatible with an oblique wedge followed by the heads

¹⁸⁸ Translation by the Author. Cf. the last edition by Oshima 2011, 232, 246-7.

¹⁸⁹ Arbøll 2019. Cf. Stol 2009.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. the updated transliteration of this hymn available on the *eBL* platform, with further references: <https://www.ebl.lmu.de/fragmentarium/BM.42768>.

¹⁹¹ Mayer 1976, 106-7. See also the Introduction to the *Nabû Prayer*, § 2.4.1.

¹⁹² Von Soden 1971, 66.

¹⁹³ See Häntinen 2022, <https://doi.org/10.5282/ebl/1/2/2>; cf. Oshima 2014, 86-7 and 396; Lambert 1960, 38-9. I am thankful to B. Foster who pointed this verse to me.

of two vertical wedges, and could then be interpreted as a damaged LI. I offer therefore the tentative restoration *līteḷi*, cf. CAD E, 117 sub *elû*, *mng*. 1b for some examples of *elû* with *ana*.

121-2 [bīt(?) *ki²-im²-t*]-*i-ia*: I follow Foster (2005, 626) in reconstructing *kimtīya*. For reasons of space, however, I also restore É at the beginning of the line. The restoration *bīt kimtīya* ‘my family house’, is made on the basis of CAD K 377, usage g.

[(x) A.ŠÀ.G]A *ab-bé-e-a*: the restoration *eqel abbēya* is tentative. The noun *kišubbû* ‘fallow’, ‘uncultivated land’ (see AHW II 493; CAD K 463-4) is commonly attested together with *eqḷu* ‘field’, which here would parallel *bītu* in the previous line.

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

123 *sa-an-tak*: it stands for the adverb *santak* ‘constantly’ (AHW III 1023-24; CAD S 148-9), and *ki-na-a-ti* can be understood as a substantive for ‘truth’, derived from *kittu*. However, von Soden takes *ki-na-a-ti* as an adverbial form from *kittu* ‘certainly’ (AHW I 494-5, usage c); cf. CAD K 383-4 under *kinātu* usage c).¹⁹⁴ In addition, von Soden suggests two possible readings for šá mu šú, namely *ša mūši* ‘of the night’, or *šamūšu* ‘second string’ (AHW II 1160; CAD Š II 364). Both interpretations are doubtful. Furthermore, at the end of the line, von Soden reads *lu qi-i-t[ú]* as *lū qītu* ‘may be the end’. After collation, however, it appears that the damaged sign after I is not UD. Unfortunately, I could not find a satisfying interpretation, and the overall meaning of the line remains difficult to clarify.

124 I follow von Soden in considering *lu-ma-a²-i-ru* as derived from (w)âru, D-stem ‘to send’ (AHW III 1472; CAD A/2 320, *mng*. 2). The succeeding word seems to be another precative, interpreted here as *lūpira* from *epēru* ‘to provide’. The traces at the end of the line are compatible with the reading *da-a-a-n[u²]*, which I have taken as object of *lūpira*, hence *dayyāna*. While relying on the translation provided by Foster as cited *apud* Rozzi in 2022b, the meaning of the verse remains uncertain due to the fragmentary state of the context.

125 I suggest reading *ḥu-UB-š_{u2}* as *ḥupšu* ‘rabble’ (AHW I 357; CAD H 241-2), because of the following *za-ma-ni* ‘my enemy’, *contra* von Soden 1971, 67. The term *ḥupšu* appears in the synonym list

¹⁹⁴ Von Soden 1971, 66.

Rm.354+K.15293, where it is equated to *nišū* ‘people’.¹⁹⁵ George and Al-Rawi point out that the term *ḥupšū*, while it can refer to a group of soldiers in a military context, can also have a broader definition as ‘a labour gang engaged in public works’, as used in a verse of the Neo-Babylonian version of Atramhasis to describe the mutinous gods.¹⁹⁶ In any case, it seems clear that in our text *ḥupšū* yields a negative meaning comparable to that of *zāmânû*. In fact, although the line is fragmented and difficult to reconstruct, it is highly probable that there is a parallelism between the two hemistichs. Hence, a verb with a meaning akin to that of *ušamqat* could occur in the first half of the line. The beginning of the line is broken, but the visible traces after the break look like ‘PA’ NI. A form derived from *sapānu* ‘to level’, ‘to devastate’ (AHw III 1025-6; CAD S 158-60) could be a possible candidate for restoration. Cf. CAD S 158 for uses of this verb in similar contexts. For a similar verse see a literary hymn to Marduk (K.8612+), l. 8: *ta-kaš-šad lem-nu-ti a-a-bi tu-šam-[qat]*, “You seize the wicked and overthrow the foe”.¹⁹⁷

126-9 This set of verses is heavily damaged and does not allow for a complete understanding of the text. It appears that there is the theme of slander, another recurring literary motif in penitential prayers and wisdom texts, where the sufferer laments being slandered or becoming the object of ridicule and scandal, see for example *Ludlul I*, ll. 57-8: *na-an-za-zu tas-li-tu uš-ta-^rna-ad¹-da-nu UGU-MU | paḥ-ru-ma ra-man-šu-nu ú-šaḥ-ḥa-^rzu¹ nu-ul-la-a-ti*, “Courtiers relentlessly relayed vile tattle about me, | They convened and urged themselves on with villainous talk”.¹⁹⁸ The restoration ‘*šaḥ-šaḥ¹-[hi]*’ fits traces and context.¹⁹⁹ Compare, furthermore, the following passage in the lexical commentary Murgud from Uruk (SpTU3, 116), in which the lemma *šaḥšaḥḥu* occurs:

¹⁹⁵ See Hrůša 2010, 290-1, who translates the word: “Angehöriger einer niederen Klasse, oft Soldaten”; Incidentally, this list had been erroneously joined to expl. *Malku II* by A. Kilmer, see Hrůša 2010, 288.

¹⁹⁶ George, Al Rawi 1996, 185.

¹⁹⁷ Mitto 2020, 256.

¹⁹⁸ Häntinen 2022; cf. Oshima 2014 80-1 and 404; Lambert 1960, 32-3. For further remarks on this theme as it is found in prayers and in *Ludlul*, see Lenzi 2013, 78 and Noegel 2016, 633-4 with fn. 139, where more examples are provided. That a bad reputation was considered a serious consequence of divine anger or an evil eye cast by an enemy can also be inferred from incantation texts, where the evil tongue was a characteristic feature of the evil workings of witchcraft. On this see Abusch, Schwemer 2011, 6-7; cf. Noegel 2016, 633.

¹⁹⁹ T. Mitto kindly suggested this restoration to me.

^{riv 32}[lú] 'inim¹ du₁₁-du₁₁ = šah-šah-ḥu = da-ab-bi-bi

^{riv 33}[lú] inim-inim du₁₁-^rdu₁₁¹ = a-ma-nu-u₂ = MIN

^{riv 34}lú eme lul = mu-nam-gi-ru = a-kil kar-ši

one who speaks constantly = calumniator = slanderer

one who speaks a lot all the time = talkative person = slanderer

one who has a false tongue = calumniator = slanderer²⁰⁰

This lexical passage also includes the equation = *mu-nam-gi-ru* = *a-kil kar-ši*, upon which is based the restoration in l. 128, *ú-nam-ga-ru kar-ši*]: the sign *ši* fits the traces at the end of the line, and *karšu* 'calumny' (AHw I 450; CAD K 222-3) would be a possible object for *unamgarū*. A similar equation is also found in a commentary to *Ludlul*, BM 41286, which explains the difficult form *unaggaranni* (*Ludlul* I, l. 86), through the equation *nugguru* = *a-k[al kar-ši]*.²⁰¹ It is worth noticing that the structure found in our text, *unamgarū kar-ši*], if correctly read, constitutes a *pleonasmus*, i.e. a redundant repetition.²⁰² The rest of the verse is damaged and difficult to understand, but considering the word [... *i]špikkīya* in the following line (l. 129), *bit-re-e* here could be an adjective referring to something comparable, perhaps wealth or a vast estate. Regarding this, see Foster's interpretation in the online edition of the text (Foster *apud* Rozzi 2022b): [... *i]š²-pik-ke-e-a* is a tentative restoration and other words are also possible, for example *kisikkū* 'funerary offering' (AHw I 486; CAD K 421). The reading *ṭa-^rpul²-ti¹* (as *ṭapultu* 'slander') at the end of the line fits the context better than *ṭa-ab-ti*, as offered by von Soden in his edition,²⁰³ since it provides a parallelism with *šahšahhī* and *unamgarū kar-ši*] in the preceding lines.

141-50 *uš-ši-iš-ma* AN.ZA.[GAR²]: this section of the hymn is severely damaged, though the context seems to hint at some divinatory practice (see l. 142, in which *bīru* 'divination' is found). The last visible signs of the line are AN and ZA, indicating perhaps the name of a god – e.g. as von Soden suggests, of *Zaqīqu*, who is mentioned further in l. 143.²⁰⁴ However, there is no divine determinative preceding *Zaqīqu* in l. 143, hence a different reconstruction can be suggested for l. 141. In this regard, I tentatively restore *Anza[gar ...]*, following

²⁰⁰ Cf. von Weiher 1988; see the online edition in <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dclt/>; cf. <https://cdli.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/artifacts/348714>.

²⁰¹ Frahm 2011, 106; cf. Oshima 2014, 2016.

²⁰² Lanham 1991, 116, 191.

²⁰³ Van Soden 1971, 67.

²⁰⁴ See von Soden 1971, 68.

Lenzi's online edition of this text.²⁰⁵ The minor deity Anzagar is attested in lexical lists and rituals as a dream god, although seems to be occasionally connected with ghosts and the Underworld as well, thus showing a 'demonic nature'.²⁰⁶

The conventional topos of the supplicant looking for the reasons for his suffering through divination and rituals – invoking several different deities and yet failing to receive an answer – seems to unfold in this part of the text (ll. 140-50).²⁰⁷ A similar passage occurs in *Ludlul* I, ll. 49-54 or II, ll. 6-9,²⁰⁸ and in other Akkadian prayers, see for example the *šulla* prayer to Marduk no. 5, ll. 57-8: *lem-na ḥa-ṭa-a/Á.MEŠ-ú-a [ter-r]e-tu-ú-a dal-ḥa-a-ma ul i-šá-a EŠ.BAR kit-ti*, "My signs are bad (and) faulty, the omina are so confused, that they have no firm verdict".²⁰⁹

142 *za-qi-qu*: the term *zaqīqu/ziqīqu* has various nuances.²¹⁰ It derives from the verb *zāqu* 'to blow', and is found in lexical lists equated to words for wind (see *CAD Z 58*, lex. sec.).

Thus, it can denote a wind or a breeze. It can also refer to a category of wind demons or ghosts, who are said to dwell in the underworld, and it is also the name of the Mesopotamian Dream God. Moreover, *zaqīqu/ziqīqu* is often found in passages that describe a communication between deities and men.²¹¹ In this regard, Butler, following Couprie,²¹² suggests that the term under discussion might also indicate a ritual expert involved in the incubation of dreams. She notes the occurrence of *zaqīqu* in *Ludlul* II, l. 8 *za-qi-qu a-bal-ma ul ú-pat-ti uz-ni*, "I prayed to the *Zaqīqu*, but he did not instruct me!". She interprets the word as parallel to *šā'ilu* 'dream-interpreter', in the line immediately preceding (*Ludlul* II, l. 7).²¹³

Within the present context, however, *zaqīqu* is probably to be taken as the god of dreams, as it seems to parallel *Amna* in the previous line.²¹⁴

²⁰⁵ Lenzi 2021 at <http://akkpm.org/P394371.html>.

²⁰⁶ On the various attestations of the deity Anzagar, see Butler 1998, 83-5.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Mayer 1976, 104-6; Van der Toorn 1985, 60-1; 64-5.

²⁰⁸ Häntinen 2022; Oshima 2014, 80-1; 86-7.

²⁰⁹ Mayer 1993, 313-37.

²¹⁰ Butler 1998, 79-81. Cf. Jacobsen 1989, 267-76.

²¹¹ See Oppenheim 1956, 234 and Oshima 2014, 229. See also *CAD Z 60*.

²¹² Couprie 1960, 86

²¹³ Butler 1998, 81. Cf. Oshima 2014, 86-7, 396.

²¹⁴ Butler 1998, 82.

143 *zu-un-zu-na*: the noun *zunzunu* is only attested in lexical lists, and indicates a type of locust, see *AHw* III 1538; *CAD* Z 163; cf. *Hg* A II 269: BURU₅ tur-tur = *zir-zir-rù* = *zu-un-zu-'nu'* (*MSL* 8/2, 45, 269). Even though this section of the prayer is too fragmentary to allow a clear understanding of the context, *zunzunu* seems to occur within a list of divine names (see ll. 142-5). Considering the mention of the *ḫallulāyu*-demon in l. 107, *zunzunu* might indicate here some sort of demon. The reading *zunzunna[tu]* 'shoe', offered by von Soden, appears less convincing within our context.²¹⁵

144 ⁴NIN.GÜN.NU: this is one of the names of Inanna/Ištar. It is also attested in several god lists, where also the variant ⁴NIN.IGI.GÜN can be found.²¹⁶

151-2 Lines restored on the basis of *Marduk1*, ll. 129-30: *iḫ-ti-dam-ma mar-ša-tuš i-[ba]k-ki-ka | kab-ta-as-su na-an-gul-lat-ma iḫ-[ta]m-maṭ-ka*, "He muttered as he wailed his woe to you, with his insides *throbbing*, he burns for you".²¹⁷ For a similar passage see also another composition belonging to the *Great Hymns and Prayers*, namely the *Anūna Prayer*, l. 83: *iḫ-ti-dam-ma al-ka-ta-šu i-b[a-ak-ki-ki-im]*, "He has spoken forth, tearfully telling [you] his way of life".²¹⁸

iḫ-ti-dam-ma: I follow Lambert's reading and take this form as derived from *ḫi'ādu* 'to speak', 'to utter' (*AHw* I 342; *CAD* Ḫ 128a), *contra* von Soden and Oshima who read *iḫ-ti-ṭam-ma*, from *ḫiāṭu* 'to watch', 'to inspect' (*AHw* I 342; *CAD* Ḫ 159-62). While verbs meaning 'to see' (e.g. *amāru*) do indeed occasionally occur with the substantive *maruštu* 'trouble', 'hardship' (cf. *AHw* II 618; *CAD* M/1 317-19) in the sense of 'experiencing trouble',²¹⁹ the topos of the supplicant confessing his sins and painfully describing his suffering is nevertheless a typical feature of Akkadian prayers,²²⁰ see for example *Marduk1*, l. 133-4:

²¹⁵ See von Soden 1971, 57 and 68.

²¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion see Cavigneaux, Krebernik 1998.

²¹⁷ Translation by the Author. Cf. Lambert 1959-60, 58 and Oshima 2011, 151, 164-5, 184-5.

²¹⁸ Lambert 1989, 326 and 330.

²¹⁹ Cf. Oshima 2011, 184.

²²⁰ The description of the symptoms belongs to the "Penitential Section", an element which is identified as "die Klage" by Mayer 1976, 35-7 and 67-118, following the structure of Akkadian prayers given by von Soden 1957-71, 161, § 4. See the Introduction of this prayer, § 2.4.1. For the confession of sins as a recurring topos, used in order to appease an angry god, see Oshima 2011, 16-17, Lenzi et. al. 2011, 42-5.

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

¹³⁴*du-lup-šú i-qab-bi ina te-ni-ni*

¹³³Like a professional mourner he utters bitter cries,

¹³⁴He speaks his lack of sleep in his prayer.²²¹

This motif is also found in several wisdom texts, as in the Babylonian dialogue *Man and his God*, ll. 10-11:

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

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

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

¹¹The man explains the suffering he is enduring.²²²

The verb *ḫi'ādu* is attested in lexical sources, together with its derivative *ḫittu* (a kind of utterance, perhaps 'riddle',²²³ CAD Ḫ 208, under *ḫittu C*, lex. sec.), see *Izi V*, 30'-32' (MSL 13, 150):

³⁰*i-bi-lu = ḫi-it-tu*

³¹*i-bi-lu = te-el-tu*

³²*i-bi-lu du₁₁-ga = ḫi-a-du*

³⁰*i-bi-lu = utterance*

³¹*i-bi-lu = saying*

³²*i-bi-lu du₁₁-ga = to speak*

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

nangullat: the stative *nangul* is derived from the verb *naḡālu* (see *AHw* II 709; *CAD* N/I 107) whose exact meaning remains doubtful, and which is attested mostly in the stative. Meissner interprets it as meaning 'to glow', 'to scintillate', 'to be bright', basing his translation on a variant gloss *nen-gu-la = nin-bu-ṭa* (see also *CAD* N/I 107, which leaves *naḡālu* untranslated).²²⁴ The verb is attested in the stative G-stem as referring to stars, hair of animals and, in one uncertain case,²²⁵ to human skin (see *CAD* N/I 107 for the attestations). The meaning 'to be bright' or 'to scintillate' can indeed easily be attributed to celestial bodies, and perhaps to the shimmering quality of hair or skin in a certain light. Furthermore, *na-gi-il* 'gleaming', is used once in the divination series *Šumma ālu* to describe the canopy

²²¹ Oshima 2011, 152, 164-5.

²²² Lambert 1987, 190.

²²³ Alster 1996, 7.

²²⁴ Meissner 1932, 47-8.

²²⁵ The attestation seems to occur in the Babylonian Love Lyrics (Lambert 1975, 105): *maš-ku naḡ-lat ki-ma di-q[a-ri]*, which *CAD* leaves untranslated. Lambert, however, read *naq-lat* and translates the line: "Her skin was burnt, like a pot".

of a house, as opposite to *eṭû* ‘dark’.²²⁶ The translation suggested by Meissner, however, does not fit all the occurrences. In fact, the stative N-stem of *nagālu* also occurs as referred to *libbu* ‘heart’ and *ka-battu* ‘liver’ (as in the text under consideration). *nagālu* seems also to be used in association with grieving and mourning, as in the *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 11, l. 14: *na-an-gu-la-ku-ma a-bak-ki šar-piš*, translated by Jaques in her edition as “Je suis enfiévré et pleure amèrement” (cf. CAD N/1 107, usage b, 2'-3'),²²⁷ or in an Old Babylonian love poem, rev. l. 10: *na-an-gu-la at-ku-la ku-a-ši-im sa-ap-da*, which Lambert translates as: “Women are in anguish, mourning and lamentation for you”, yet leaving the form *nangulā* unexplained.²²⁸ Moreover, in the literary text “the Fable of the Fox”, the verbal adjective *ug-gulu*, derived from *nagālu*, describes a reed: *[am]-mi-'ni' a-na ki-rim a-pi ug-gu-li ta-za-ar-ru nab-li*. Lambert translates this passage: “Why do you spread flame to the glowing reed...?”²²⁹

Contrary to previous translations, which evoke a supposed sense of ‘burning’ or ‘glowing’, I suggest a second possible meaning of *nagālu* N-stem, namely that of ‘to tremble’, ‘to shake’, or ‘to throb’, which might be applied to the human heart – or to the insides –, to someone sobbing in grief, or to a reed shaking in the wind. This meaning would parallel that of another Akkadian verb, (*w*)*amālu*, translated in the dictionaries as ‘to be nervous’, ‘to be agitated’ – if applied to *kabattu* –, but ‘to scintillate’ if denoting celestial bodies (see AHW III 1459; CAD U/W 401). The attestations of (*w*)*amālu* in the lexical lists, nevertheless, clarify the primary meaning of this verb: AnŠ 269-73 enters (*w*)*amālu* in D-stem among various synonyms for *ra'ību*, a kind of trembling, derived from the verb *ra'ābu* ‘to tremble’ (AHW II 444, ‘Zittern-Krankheit’; CAD R 81: “Probably a disease characterised by trembling”). Hence, the equation *ummulu* = *ra'ību* in AnŠ 270 (LT-BA II, 2 rev. I 56 and LTBA II, 3 rev. 6')²³⁰ associates (*w*)*amālu* with a flickering movement, which may metaphorically describe an emotional state of agitation, as well as the glint of stars. It is therefore possible to hypothesise a similar double meaning also for *nagālu*, which would mean both ‘to twitch’ or ‘to tremble’, and ‘to scintillate’.²³¹

²²⁶ For this attestation see Freedman 1998, 110-11, l. 14.

²²⁷ Jaques 2015, 67 and 87.

²²⁸ Lambert 1966, 55-6.

²²⁹ Lambert 1960, 195 rev. l. 15. Lambert explains this form as a case of dropping of the *n*, which occurs also in other verbs I-n. See Lambert 1960, 335.

²³⁰ Hrůša, Weiershäuser 2020, 225 and 245.

²³¹ Incidentally, the same double nuance is found in Latin in the verb *micāre* ‘to quiver, dart, flicker’, see OLD s.v. *micō*, 1108, mng. 1, usage b: “(of the heart, pulse) to throb, palpitate”, and mng. 2: “(of a heavenly body, fire, etc.) to emit light suddenly or spasmodically, flash, gleam”; and in the Greek noun, LSJ s.v. *παλμός*, 1294: “a quivering

153 *uš-šar-ri-ip ka-[bat²-ta²-šú²]*: for other attestations of *šarāpu* with *kabattu* see *CAD* Š 102, mng. 2.

154 *di-ma-šú ik-ta-[li²]*: on the use of the verb *kalû* for ‘to stop crying’, see Gabbay 2004, 181.

156 For the restoration *ti-me[š]*, understood here as vocative of the adjective *temēšu* ‘forgiving’, also occurring at ll. 92/94, I am grateful to E. Jiménez (personal communication).

157 *tu-šá-ma za-ma-nu-ú¹*: the adverb *tušāma* is the lengthened form of *tuša*, the function of which was to express *irrealis*. *tuša* appears moreover to convey a nuance of subjectivity, and it is indeed in two instances attested together with adverbial forms as *ina tašimātiya* ‘(as if) in my judgement’, or *ana inišu* ‘to his eyes’.²³² It is difficult to ascertain its etymology, but it could be related to the noun *tuššu* ‘hostile talk’.²³³ For similar passages in literary texts, cf. for example *Ludlul* I, l. 83: *tu-šá-ma nak-ra-ti na-an-dur-ti ma-a-ti*, “As if it were enemies, my land is furious”²³⁴ or in the narrative *Sargon the Conquering Hero*, *tu-ša ge-ri-ma qí-iš-tum ig-re-e-šu*, “As if it was an enemy, the forest had become hostile towards him”.²³⁵

164 Cf. l. 124 of the *Šamaš Hymn*: *šu-ut lum-nu i-pu-šú NUMUN-šú-nu u[l da²-ri²]*, “The seed of evildoers sha[ll not abide]”.²³⁶

173 For a very similar phraseology see *Marduk*1, l. 61: *ru-um-me il-lu-ur-ta-šú pu-ṭur ma-ak-[si-šú]*, “Release his manacles, loosen his bonds”,²³⁷ and l. 155 *ḫi-pi qu-un-nab-ra-šú il-lu-ur-ta-šú pu-ṭur ma-ak-si-šú*, “Break his fetters, his bonds, loosen his manacles”.²³⁸ The representation of the sufferer as constricted or imprisoned is a well-known image in the Mesopotamian prayers, see for example the *diġiršadabba* prayer no. 9, ll. 15'-16': *bi-ti ana é dim-ma-ti i-tur-ma i-li ana-ku ka-ma-ak-šu ina libbi-šú tu-še-ši-b[a-an-ni]*, “My house has become a house of weeping, my God, I am its prisoner, you made [me]

motion”, cf. usage 2: (of natural phenomena) “vibration, rapid movement”, and usage 3: “internal vibration of bodies”.

²³² Krebernik, Streck 2001, 67.

²³³ Krebernik, Streck 2001, 68.

²³⁴ After Krebernik, Streck 2001, 72; cf. Häntinen 2022; Oshima 2014, 82-3.

²³⁵ After Krebernik, Streck 2001, 71; cf. Goodnick Westenholz 1997a, 70, l. 59.

²³⁶ Lambert 1960, 134; cf. Rozzi 2021a; translation by Foster *apud* Rozzi 2021a.

²³⁷ Oshima 2011, 147, 160-1.

²³⁸ Translation by the Author. See Oshima 2011, 154, 166-7.

dwell in it”,²³⁹ and *Ludlul* II, l. 96: *a-na ki-suk-ki-ia i-tu-ra bi-tu*, “Home turned into my jailhouse”.²⁴⁰

175 *’ú¹-šah^{-la}l^a-a*: CAD M/I interprets this verbal form as a present Š-stem from *alālu/ḫalālu* ‘to suspend’, ‘to hang’. The expected form, however, would be *ušah^lal*; the final *a*-vowel might be explained as a ventive suffix, but the use of the sign LA before LAL would still pose a problem. It is more likely that the verb derives from *ḫelû* ‘to be bright’, as reads l. 87 in *Marduk*2 (Enrique Jiménez, private communication):²⁴¹ *ašar anqullu išḫupu tušah^la ūma*, “In the place shrouded in haze, you clear the day”. On the normalisation of the last word as *manītu*, instead of the *mānītu*, as defined in the dictionaries, see Mayer 1992b, 39-40. The verb in our line can thus be interpreted as *ušah^llā*, and the sign LA before LAL is to be taken as a gloss. This line parallels the preceding one, describing the god through a metaphor: Nabû is first compared to a wall which protects against the cold of winter (l. 174), and then to a gentle breeze which alleviates the heat of summer.²⁴²

176-7 *še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú[?]] | mar-tú ma-r[i]*: it is difficult to ascertain the meaning of this line, as it lacks verbal forms and, moreover, shows rare words borrowed from lexical lists. *šur-šú-ru ḫi-in-zur-ru*: the word *šuršurru* is attested exclusively in *Malku* II 128B, as a variant of *šuršašmu/šuršašnu*, and equated with *nurmû* ‘pomegranate’ (*AHw* II 804-5; *CAD* N/II 345-7, mng. 2);²⁴³ the word *ḫinzūru* – derived from the Hurrian *ḫinzuri* ‘apple’ – is also entered in *Malku* II 129²⁴⁴ and esp. *Malku* III 210 as a synonym of *ḫašḫūru* ‘apple-tree/apple’ (see *AHw* I 333-4; *CAD* Ḫ 139-40; cf. *GLH* 106).²⁴⁵ It is worth noticing that the two words *šuršurru* and *ḫinzūru* occur in immediate succession in *Malku*, as well as in our text. Furthermore, the noun *marratu* ‘the bitter one’ (following *AHw* II 612 “Das Bittere”, a name of a date-palm) is found in the following line of *Malku* (*Malku* II 130),²⁴⁶ and *alamittu* ‘a palm-tree’ (see *AHw* I 35;

²³⁹ Jaques 2015, 53-60.

²⁴⁰ See Häntinen 2022; cf. Oshima 2014, 90-1, 408 and Lambert 1960, 44-5.

²⁴¹ I am thankful to E. Jiménez who showed me his forthcoming edition of the text.

²⁴² Incidentally, cf. Isa. 25:4: “You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat”, translation taken by the New International Version 2011.

²⁴³ Hrůša 2010, 60-1, 341.

²⁴⁴ Hrůša 2010, 60-1, 341.

²⁴⁵ Hrůša 2010, 182-3, 452.

²⁴⁶ Hrůša 2010, 60-1, 341

CAD A/I 333) follows in the next line (*Malku* II 131).²⁴⁷ L. 179 of the *Nabû Prayer* reads: *a-la-mit-tu₄ ú-ḫe-en-ša da-da-riš ma-a-[ar]*. Hence, the vocabulary in ll. 176-7 and 179 of the *Nabû Prayer* seems to be informed by *Malku* II 128-31, and could indicate a conscious use of the lexical list by the author of the prayer, or viceversa, could suggest that the prayer was used as a source of inspiration for this lexical passage.²⁴⁸

meš-ḫe-ri ši-d[i-tú?]: I take *meš-ḫe-ri* as the elsewhere unattested word *mešḫeru*, probably a nominal form derived from the root *šḫr* ‘small’. It could be a literary noun indicating a boy or a young man (cf. the well attested *mešḫeriš* ‘in childhood’ and *mešḫerūtu* ‘childhood’, see *AHW* II 648; *CAD* M/II 36).

The restoration *ši-d[i-tú?]* fits the traces and the space at the end of the line. I interpret it as the feminine form of *šedū/šēdu* ‘offshoot’, as in *AnŠ* 198: *še-e-du = še-im*²⁴⁹ and in *Hh* III 195: ^{ḫi}še-e-du-a = *šu-ú* (*šedū*). The term *šidītu* would parallel *mešḫeru*, representing its feminine counterpart, possibly indicating a girl or a young woman.

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

L. 176 of the *Nabû Prayer* lists words and word-pairs referring to the god and his work.²⁵⁰ The initial expression *še-e-ru re-šu-ti-ia* ‘my morning aid’, is probably to be taken as a metaphor for Nabû, whose compassion is compared to daylight (cf. l. 184, see also the Introduction of the *Nabû Prayer*, § 2.3). Moreover, the mention of fruits and fruit-producing trees evokes images connected with fertility: the ‘apple’, or the pomegranate – Akkadian *ḫinzūru* (in our text), or its synonym *ḫašḫūru* – is often used in figurative language in Akkadian poetry as a symbol of sexual potency.²⁵¹ The common term for ‘fruit’ in Akkadian, *inbu*, can indeed be interpreted as ‘offspring’, ‘child’ (see *AHW* I 381, mng. 6; *CAD* I 144-7, mng. 2). In this line, the metaphorical expressions are further clarified through the chiasmic combination of word-pairs: *mešḫeru šid[ītu(?)] | mārtu māru* “the boy and the girl, the daughter and the son”. The resulting synonymous parallelism amplifies the same thought, namely that of fertility and progeny: the god is the one who can ensure descendants for the pious worshipper.

²⁴⁷ Hrůša 2010, 60-1, 341

²⁴⁸ A comparable ‘vertical’ quotation from *Malku* can be found in the commentary on the *Babylonian Theodicy*, see BM 66882+, l. 16, cf. Jiménez 2018b, 126 with fn. 11.

²⁴⁹ Hrůša, Weiershäuser 2020, 221. Cf. *LTBA* II, 2, obv. iii 198.

²⁵⁰ The line can of course be understood also as a nominal phrase, so Foster *apud* Rozzi 2022b: “The dawning of my rescue was a (luscious) pomegranate, an apple”.

²⁵¹ Lambert 1987, 27-31. The translation ‘apple’ for *ḫašḫuru* and its Sumerian antecedent *ḫašḫur* is uncertain. For a detailed discussion see Lambert 1987, 30-1.

178 Cf. the verse ʿár¹-ka-ti b[u-un]-na-ka ú-dáš-šap [lal-la-riš (?)], “In the future I will sweeten your f[a]ce [like honey]”, occurring in a wisdom monologue recently published in Jiménez 2022, 82-3, l. 49’.

180 *nu-ḥ[ášʷ]*: there is room for one or maybe two signs at the end of the line. The sign before the break shows traces of two horizontals and a Winkelhaken, and looks like ZIG. I suggest to read *nuḥāš* as a stative from the rare adjective *nuḥāšu* ‘prosperous’ (AHw II 800; CAD N/II 313), which appears in personal names and derives from *naḥāšu* ‘to prosper’ (AHw II 713; CAD N/I 133-4). The phonetic value *ḥáš* for ZIG is rare, though it is not uncommon to find rarely used sign values within the corpus of *Great Hymns and Prayers*, see for example the *Ištar Prayer*, l. 156: *lâl-la-ru-šú kim-ta-šu i-ḥáš-[šá-šú]*, “his mourners gathe[r] his family”, in which the form *i-ḥáš-[šá-šú]* also displays the sign ZIG with the value *ḥáš*,²⁵² or within our *Nabû Prayer*, l. 116 *šúr-du-ú*, which shows the rare value *šúr* for DÙL, otherwise only attested in Old Akkadian.²⁵³

181 Considering the space on the tablet, at most one sign is missing at the end of the line, broken at the end of the second hemistich. The signs AN NA T[U are clearly visible but challenging to reconcile with a satisfactory reading. The only word that could be suitable for the current context is *antu*, meaning ‘ear of barley’ (CAD A/1 146 A). However, it is difficult to explain the form that occurs in our text, perhaps a plural, although the plural form we would expect is *anātu(m)*, and it remains unattested elsewhere. I tentatively restore *an-na-t[u(-šú)]*, ‘[(its) ear[s]’. Concerning the first hemistich, if *ŠE-am* is really a nominative, the present line seems to display a case of *casus pendens* (GAG § 183a), as can be observed in ll. 185-6 in the same text (see *infra*).

182 *i-kuš-šu*: I interpret this verb as a present G-stem derived from *kāšu* ‘to delay’ (AHw I 463; CAD K 394-5 under *kāšu* A). The final *u*-vowel should possibly be considered a ventive in *-u*. The use of the ventive form in *-u* instead of in *-a(m)* is a consequence of the confusion between *u* and *a* progressively spreading in first-millennium Akkadian.²⁵⁴

ʿú¹-[tarʷ]: I suggest this restoration following Foster’s translation,²⁵⁵ *contra* von Soden, who restores instead ʿú¹-[ma-aṭ-ṭa], which is unlikely, especially since there is space for one sign, two at most, at the end of the line. The meaning of this verse is that there is a right

²⁵² See von Soden 1971, 49. Cf. chapter 2.

²⁵³ Cf. von Soden 1971, 66, and *AkkSyll.*⁴, 34, no. 179

²⁵⁴ See Schwemer 2017, 77 for other examples of ventives in *-u*.

²⁵⁵ Foster 2005, 624.

time for everything, and grain too needs time to mature to provide a good harvest. For more on this wisdom thought, see the Introduction to the *Nabû Prayer*, § 2.3 and chapter 1, § 1.2.5.

183 The tablet shows traces of a vertical wedge before the break. The space in the break suggests that two signs are missing at the end of the line. Due to context, one might hypothesise the line to mean that something abhorrent to the gods – such as a bodily discharge – is indeed common among men. The physical imperfection of human beings would be then compared with and opposed to the perfection of deities. This line seems to suggest the same idea found in the *Theodicy* (ll. 276-80)²⁵⁶ and in other Mesopotamian literary and religious compositions, namely that men are impure and sinful by nature.²⁵⁷ For similar wisdom themes in the *Great Hymns and Prayers*, cf. also chapter 1, § 1.2.5.

Nevertheless, another interpretation could be that the discharge of the male genitals, abhorred by the gods, is, on the contrary, positive for men, because it represents semen. In this sense, *mu-ú-su* could metaphorically mean ‘semen’. For this understanding, see the translation by Foster *apud* Rozzi 2022b: “If the putrid flux of the manly gland is abhorrent to all the gods, it is the [good seed sown] for the people”. However, the exact phrase *mūšu ša libbi urullātišu*, whose technical aspect seems to contrast with the poetic context, is found in lexical sources, where it seemingly indicates an infection: In the commentary *mur-gud = imrû = ballu* (see HgD to Ura = *hubullu* XV, 36' (75) in Weiershäuser-Hrůša 2018, 214; cf. MSL 9, 77-89, MS B₈)²⁵⁸ and in *Uruanna* III 171; MSL 10, 70, 32 (but cf. also *Uruanna* III 161 in Weiershäuser, Hrůša 2020, 37-3: ^{na4}*mu-šu* NĪTA = ^{na4}*mu-šu šá šá giš*). Moreover, it occurs in a ritual against depression, see Abusch, Schwemer 2011, 153, l. 28 and 158, cf. also CAD U 270-1 sub *urullātu*. The lexical parallels might corroborate the idea that the formulation *mūšu ša libbi urullātišu* in our text refers to an illness and is not a metaphor for the human semen, although the damaged state of the line, and the difficult philosophical meaning of this portion of the text, do not allow for a conclusive answer. Compare chapter 4, § 4.3.1 for the intertextuality between the *Nabû Prayer* and the lexical lists. On the word *mūšu* as ‘bilharzia’ or ^{na4}*mūšu* as ‘calculus’, see Kinnier Wilson 1968, 245-6 and Herrero 1975, 49-50; cf. also Steinert 2013 fn. 11.

²⁵⁶ See Lambert 1960, 88-9. Cf. Oshima 2014, 164-5 and 462.

²⁵⁷ For this interpretation see also Foster 2005, 625.

²⁵⁸ Transliteration available on the *eBL* platform: <https://www.ebl.lmu.de/fragmentarium/K.13602>.

184 *ek-let nam-rat*: this is a recurring apodosis in omens. It is explained in a commentary to *Šumma ālu* 22-3 (BM 129092, l. 17) as a reference to a ‘humble man’ (*a-na muš-ke-ni qa-bi*), who supposedly rises in society.²⁵⁹ It appears that the author of the *Nabû Prayer* knew this idiomatic phrase and used it for arguing that a negative beginning has a positive outcome. The author reinforces this idea in the second half of the line: *še-zu-zu ta-a-[a-ar]*, “the raging one will be merciful”. The concept of the angry god who eventually relents is often found in the apodoses of omens, cf. for example the following Old Babylonian omen:

DIŠ LÚ *it-ti ra-ma-ni-šu-ma qú-lum i[m]-qú-us-sú*
e-ze-ez i-lim ta-ia-ar-tam i-šu
 If silence falls upon a man without any reason,
 the wrath of deity will change into mercy.²⁶⁰

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

185-6 *CAD A/1* 169 considers *za-ra-šú* as the subject of the sentence and *ma-ru* the object, thus translating l. 184: “The father gives a special blessing to a humble, obedient son”, an interpretation followed by Seux (1976, 184). On the contrary, von Soden takes *ma-ru* as nominative case and *za-ra-šú* as accusative, therefore inverting the subject and the object. He translates: “Der demütige, disziplinierte Sohn segnet besonders noch seinen Erzeuger; der nicht demütige, disziplinlose Sohn verflucht [...] [seinen Vater]”.²⁶¹ Von Soden’s translation better agrees with the grammar, though it seems less convincing. I take *ma-ru* in both lines as a nominative absolute (*casus pendens*, cf. *GAG* § 183a) and understand ll. 185-6 as follows: “(As for) the humble, obedient son: his father giv[es] (him) a special blessing | (As for) the disobedient, undisciplined son: his b[egetter] curses (him) until he changes”. *a-di e-né-šú*: probably derived from *enú* ‘to change’, see von Soden 1971, 70.

a-ḫa-mu: it stands for *aḫammu*, a variant of the adverb *aḫamma* (*AHW* I 18; *CAD A/1* 168-9), see *Malku* III 90, which equates *aḫamma* to what appears to be a derivative from the adverb (*w*)*arku* ‘afterwards’ (*AHW* III 1470): *a-ḫa-am-mu* = *ár-k[a]*.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ See the “Commentary on *Ālu* 22-3 (*CCP* 3.5.22.A.a)” edited online by Jiménez 2015, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P461301>.

²⁶⁰ Köcher, Oppenheim 1957-58, 64, ll. 29-30. Cf. also Rahmouni, Lev 2016, 239.

²⁶¹ Von Soden 1971, 59.

²⁶² Hrůša 2010, 80-1, 233, 365.

191 *e-né-es-su*: von Soden²⁶³ takes this noun as derived from the feminine form of *ēnû* ‘substitute’ (AHw I 221; CAD E 180). The word would denote here someone to suffer in place of the supplicant. This interpretation is followed by Foster²⁶⁴ and Seux.²⁶⁵ However, I read this word as *ennētu* (var. *ennettu*, *e/innintu*, see AHw I 219; CAD E 169-70). This substantive derives from the verb *enēnu* ‘to rage’, ‘to let one feel one’s rage’ (l. 103 within this text), cf. Mayer 2016, 205-6, who translates *ennētu* with “gegen jem. gerichtete(r) Zorn/Zornesäußerung”. The broader meaning provided by CAD, namely ‘divine punishment’, also seems possible (see CAD E 169b and 170a); *ennettu/ennētu* is a nominal form of the PARRĀST pattern (cf. Mayer 2016, 206 and GAG § 55 o N.). For a similar formulation see, for example, the kiutu prayer *Biṭ rimki* IV, l. 30 (Baragli 2022a, 494): *šul-a-lum-bi ḫé-du-du nam-ta-g-ga-bi ḫé-zi-zi | en-ne-es-su lip-pa-ti-ir a-ra-an-šu li-in-na-siḫ*, “May his punishment be loosened, may his sin be eradicated”.

205/207 The restoration is based on *Marduk*1, l. 206 *ri-ši-šú re-[e]-mu nak-ru-ṭu a-na ir-ka*, “Have mercy on him, (have) pity on your servant!”.²⁶⁶ The form *nakruṭu* is to be analysed as an infinitive N-stem from *karātu* ‘to have mercy’ (AHw I 448; CAD N/I 195-6 sub *nakruṭu*. Cf. also Mayer 2017a, 139).²⁶⁷ *nakruṭu* is listed in *Malku* and equated, together with *tirānu*, with *rēmu* ‘compassion’, see *Malku* V 80: *nak-ru-ṭu = re-^re¹-mu*.²⁶⁸ Cf. also the word group in *Erimḫuš*, ll. 12-14: *na-ás-ḫu-ru, ti-ra-nu, e-pe-qu* (MSL 17, 81).²⁶⁹ *nak-ru-ṭu* is also attested in the Commentary to *Theodicy*, l. 17: *na-ak-^rru¹-[ṭu: x x x (x x)]: x x x (x x)*: MIN: *na-as-ḫu-ri*, “‘Mer[cy] means [...], ditto means ‘favour’”.²⁷⁰

The form *[re]-^re¹-mì* in the *Nabû Prayer* is probably a spelling for *rēm* with an overhanging vowel. The writing *nak-ru-uṭ* seems to be a

263 Von Soden 1971, 70.

264 Foster 2005, 625.

265 Seux 1976, 184.

266 Oshima 2011, 157, 170-1.

267 The conjugated forms of the verb *karātu* are rarely attested, and occasionally written as **qrt*. Indeed the two variant radicals **qrt* and **krṭ* tend to oscillate, sometimes alternating within the same manuscript. On this see Jiménez, Adalı 2015, 178-9 who postulate a root **qrṭ*, on the basis of an attestation of this verb in a line of the “Prostration Hemerology”, which has *ig-GĀR-rit*. The writing GĀR is used more often to express the value *qar* than *kār*.

268 Hrůša 2010, 114-15, 401.

269 Hrůša 2010, 255.

270 Jiménez 2017b, at <https://ccp.yale.edu/P404917>.

defective spelling for the accusative singular *nakruṭa*, with the dropping of the final short vowel.²⁷¹

208-9 The couplet belongs to the final section of the prayer, devoted to petitions (see the Introduction to the *Nabû Prayer*, § 2.4.1). Within this line, a request is made that supplicant's financial losses be recovered. I tentatively restore [*hal^l-qa[?]]-a-tu₄*, from *halqu*. For the use of this adjective in similar contexts see *AHw* I 312, usage 4; *CAD* H 50, usage 3).

217 [*kīma(?) qī[?]]-šá-a-ti*: restoration based on *Marduk*2, l. 25^u: *ki-ma qí-šá-a-ti ik-ri-b[u-ú la-ba]n ap-pu*, "Like donations, pray[ers and the gestu]re of respect".²⁷²

at-nu-uš: the substantive *atnu* is a learned word for 'prayer', only attested in lexical lists: *Malku* V 66²⁷³ and *An* VIII 76 share the same equation: *at-nu* = *ik-ri-bu*, cf. also *An* IX 90: [*at*]-*nu* = *šu-ke-nu*. See *CAD* A/2 499 lex. sec.

219 The expression *iš/s-rat-su-nu* is uncertain. The meaning 'their plan' (from *išratu* 'plan, design' *AHw* I 389; *CAD* I 206) yields little sense within the present context.

In l. 1 of tablet VII of *Enūma eliš*, *iš/sratu* occurs in *parallelismus* with *mēreštu* 'cultivation' (*AHw* II 645; *CAD* M/2, 24-5): *asar-re šá-rik mé-reš-ti šá is-ra-ta ú-kin-nu*, "Asarre, the giver of arable land who established plough-land".²⁷⁴ Moreover, on the fragment K.13866, l. 6', identified as a commentary to *Enūma eliš*, *iš/sratu* is explained as a synonym of *tamirtu* 'arable land' (*AHw* III 1341; *CAD* T 119-22): *is-ra-tu₄* = *ta-mir-tú* (this equation is also mentioned in *AHw* I 389).²⁷⁵ The same word is found in the *E-sagil* commentary:

⁹[é-sa₄-ki].i^l1 bītu na-bu-ú nap-ḫar is-ra-a-t[i]

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

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

¹⁰[sa] = call *ki-il* = all *ša* = meadows?²⁷⁶

271 If, however, one follows the reconstruction offered by Jiménez, Adalı 2015, 178-9 (see fn. 275 above) and consider a root *qrt instead of *krṭ for this verb, the present form could be read as *naq-ru-tú*, thus presenting no drop of final vowel, but a -u ending for the accusative case (cf. Jiménez, Adalı 2015, 178).

272 Translation by the Author. Cf. Oshima 2011, 238, 250-1.

273 Hrůša 2010, 114-15, 255, 400.

274 Lambert 2013, 124-5.

275 Lambert 2013, 482 (pl. 38).

276 See George 1992, 80-1 and 387. According to George, the equation with the Sumerian *ša* is otherwise unattested.

iš/sratu also appears in the Fable of Nissaba and the Wheat in broken context, l. 7: *iš-ra-tu₄ u* [...].²⁷⁷

The meaning ‘cultivated land’, however, does not fit our context. The reading remains therefore uncertain, though the *parallellismus* with *gimrassunu* in the previous line suggests understanding *išrassunu* ‘their plan’, as ‘their totality’ *vel sim.*

224 ¹*lil*¹-*lip-ka*: von Soden restored here ¹*qu*¹-*lup-ka*.²⁷⁸ The substantive *qulpu* is listed in *Hh* XXIV 144 as a type of barley: [šē DÌM.BAR²] = *qul-pu*.²⁷⁹ According to Deller, however,²⁸⁰ the word in the lexical sources should be read as *zir-pu*, and the lemma *qulpu* as ‘a type of barley’ (so *CAD* I/J 151; Q 301, š/1 248; cf. also *AHw* I 219, 927 and 1148) should be in fact deleted. I follow E. Jiménez (personal communication) and restore *lillipka*, precativum from *elēpu* ‘may he increase [...] for you’.

The restoration *l[u]d-lul-ka* offered by Oshima cannot be not reconciled with the extant traces, as the preserved sign before LUL cannot be DUG.²⁸¹

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

225 The final lines of the prayer probably correspond to the typical closing section of Akkadian prayers, defined by von Soden “Das Dankversprechen” and by Mayer “Gebetsschluss”.²⁸² Final petitions are normally found in this part, followed by praises of the deities. This ending reflects the public character of praise within Mesopotamian prayers (see above, § 2.3.1): the supplicant extols the addressed god before all the other deities, and before all of humanity as well, thus showing his gratitude, in anticipation of future salvation.²⁸³

I accept the restoration offered by von Soden, who further suggests that a first person precativum could also be a possible reconstruction. A third-person form is nevertheless more likely, if one considers the third person singular suffixes occurring in the preceding lines (ll. 216-17), which all refer to the penitent. The verb *šamāru* Gtn is

²⁷⁷ Lambert 1960, 169. Cf. the note on this word in the latest study on the fable: Jiménez 2017a, 67.

²⁷⁸ Von Soden 1971, 71.

²⁷⁹ Weiershauser, Hrůša 2018, 205-6.

²⁸⁰ Deller, Mayer, Oelsner 1989, 274.

²⁸¹ Oshima 2011, 19.

²⁸² Soden 1957-71, 161; Mayer 1976, 307. For the structure of this prayer see the introduction, § 2.1.1.

²⁸³ Mayer 1976, 309.

often found in the “Final Salutation”, together with other verbs meaning ‘to praise’, ‘to commend’, for example *karābu* Gtn, *dalālu*, *nādu* Dtn.²⁸⁴ The verbal forms are often followed by the object of praise, namely a noun in the accusative case. The nouns that commonly appear in this final section are *ilūtu* ‘divinity’, *dalīlu* ‘praise’, *narbû* ‘greatness’, *qurdu* ‘strength’.²⁸⁵

284 Mayer 1976, 319.

285 Mayer 1976, 320.

