

E. MYTHOLOGICAL POETRY

III.17 EPIC OF CREATION

The Epic of Creation celebrates the exaltation of the Babylonian god Marduk to supreme deity of the Mesopotamian pantheon after he had saved the gods from attack by Tiamat, the ocean. The poem ascribes to Marduk reorganization of the universe, with Babylon at the center of it, and inspiration for the creation of humankind in order to sustain the gods. It offers an explanation of various names it assigns to Marduk. This poem should not be considered “the” Mesopotamian creation story; rather, it is the individual work of a poet who viewed Babylon as the center of the universe, and Marduk, god of Babylon, as head of the pantheon. This message was not lost on contemporary readers, for, in some Assyrian versions of the poem, Assur was substituted for Marduk.¹ Therefore this poem can be read as a document of Babylonian nationalism. It may be a product of Babylonian nationalistic revival at the time of Nebuchadnezzar I (see III.12), though there is no firm evidence for its date of composition. To judge from its language and content, the poem dates to the latter part of the second millennium B.C.²

Some modern scholars have used this text as a Babylonian explanation for the necessity of absolute rule. According to them, it portrays an evolution of political authority from an assembly of equals working out policy to an absolute monarch proclaiming policy. In their view, the text can be read as a metaphor for the evolution of Mesopotamian political institutions from a reconstructed local assembly of elders to absolute kingship claiming divine sanction on a regional or international scale. The catalyst for this change is portrayed as an outside threat calling for a resolute war leader. The leader demanded, as his terms for leadership, absolute obedience, even when the threat of war was removed.³

1. W. G. Lambert, “The Assyrian Recension of *Enūma Eliš*,” CRRAI 39 (1992), 77–79.

2. W. G. Lambert, “Studies in Marduk,” BSOAS 47 (1984), 4–6 (time of Nebuchadnezzar I); W. Sommerfeld, *Der Aufstieg Marduks*, AOAT 213 (1982), 174–181 (Kassite period); T. Abusch, in K. van der Toorn, ed., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden, 1995), 1017–1019; see also p. 376 note 3.

3. T. Jacobsen, “Primitive Democracy in Ancient Mesopotamia,” JNES 2 (1943), 159–172; similar ideas were developed independently by I. M. Diakonoff, *Obščestvennyj i gosudarstvennyj stroj drevnego Dvureč'ja: Šumer* (Moscow, 1956), 120 note 1. Information on assemblies found in other literary contexts, such as omens, does not support such a hypothesis, although it can suggest the possibility of opposition between assembly and king; see Oppenheim, OrNS 5 (1936), 224–228.

As the poet portrays this, the gods willingly surrender their power in return for perpetual safety and maintenance. For the latter purpose humankind is created. The rebellious human spirit, as seen in Atrahasis (II.36), has no place in this poem, where the highest good for man is to discover and understand his place in the divinely ordered universe.

The poem is a work of great complexity and abounds with conceptual and philological problems. There are still many obscure passages and words. A predilection for certain types of words and constructions, together with the over-arching scheme of the poem, suggests the work of a single author. Though naturally there are variants in the manuscript tradition, there is no reason to suppose that the fundamental content of the work has been altered by successive generations, as has sometimes been suggested, just as there is no reason to elevate this composition to a greater authority than it deserves. It was esteemed highly in the first half of the first millennium B.C., as witnessed by the numerous copies that have turned up in both Assyria and Babylonia, by the preparation of an ancient commentary to the names of Marduk (Tablet VII), and by the ritual use of the composition in the Babylonian New Year's festival as stated in late sources.¹ It was quoted or referred to in other texts about Marduk; see General Introduction, D.3.

The least accessible part of the text for the modern reader will be the passage dealing with the names of Marduk, as it exemplifies techniques of Mesopotamian explanatory philology. The names are explained or translated, where their etymology seemed transparent, and then expounded in other ways through assigning further significance to elements within the name. For some names an ancient commentary is preserved; this is excerpted below in the notes to each name. There is no proof that the commentary reflects the original author's intent in every instance, but it stands as an example of how a learned Mesopotamian reader approached this document.

The poem begins and ends with concepts of naming. The poet evidently considers naming both an act of creation and an explanation of something already brought into being. For the poet, the name, properly understood, discloses the significance of the created thing. Semantic and phonological analysis of names could lead to understanding of the things named. Names, for this

1. A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*² (Chicago, 1951), 16–17; W. G. Lambert, TUAT III/4, 568–569; an older, considerably overstated view, is S. Pallis, *The Babylonian Akitu Festival*, Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab., *Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser* XII/1 (1926), 297. For general discussion of this ritual, see B. Pongratz-Leisten, *Ina šulmi irub. Die Kulttopographische und ideologische Programmatik der akitu-Prozession in Babylonien und Assyrien im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (Mainz, 1994); M. E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East* (Bethesda, 1993), 400–453.

poet, are a text to be read by the informed, and bear the same intimate and revealing relationship to what they signify as this text does to the events it narrates. In a remarkable passage at the end, the poet presents his text as the capstone of creation in that it was bearer of creation's significance to human-kind.

The poetry of the Epic of Creation shows command of a wide range of traditional poetic techniques and profound learning. A contrast between speech and action is drawn in the first four tablets, in that speech, characteristic of the old order of the gods, can run to considerable length and repetition. A hint of circularity is provided by the concentrically arranged rehearsals of the narrative; by the climax of Tablet III, speech occurs within speech within speech within speech. This device is favored in traditional tale-telling as a narrative frame and as a demonstration of virtuosity, but it is seldom developed to such an extent in Akkadian literature (though compare the Anzu poem, III.23, on which the Epic of Creation may have been modeled). By contrast, the speech and action characteristic of the new order of the gods under Marduk are narrated rapidly, with a minimum of repetition. The last part of the poem is one continuing speech, explaining and celebrating Marduk's fifty names.

Tablet I

(Before anything was, mother ocean [Tiamat] and fresh water(?) [Apsu] mingled to produce the first of a series of pairs of gods. The descendants, with their boisterous behavior, stir Tiamat and Apsu. Although Tiamat bears it in good part, Apsu wishes to kill the offspring. The father is urged on by his counsellor. Apsu's intentions are foiled by Ea, who kills him and restrains his counsellor. He founds his home in Apsu, the watery domain represented by the slain primeval father, and dwells there with his wife.)

When on high no name was given to heaven, (1)
 Nor below was the netherworld* called by name,
 Primeval Apsu was their progenitor,
 And matrix-Tiamat¹ was she who bore them all,
 They were mingling their waters together, (5)
 No canebrake was intertwined nor thicket matted close.^{2*}
 When no gods at all had been brought forth,
 Nor called by names, none destinies ordained,
 Then were the gods formed within the(se two).
 Lahmu and Lahamu³ were brought forth,
 were called by name. (10)
 When they had waxed great, had grown up tall,
 Anshar and Kishar⁴ were formed, greater than they,
 They grew lengthy of days, added years to years.
 Anu their firstborn was like his forebears,
 Anshar made Anu, his offspring, (his) equal.⁵ (15)

1. Tiamat is the name of the ocean; Apsu is generally taken to refer to fresh water. The word rendered here "matrix" (after Jacobsen) is *mummu*, meaning "wisdom" or "skill," according to W. G. Lambert, JSS 14 (1969), 250; hence "creator" or "craftsman" (CAD M/2, 197). *Mummu* can mean also "noise"; see Michalowski, *Studies Moran*, 386.

2. That is, nothing divided or covered the waters.

3. For Lahmu and Lahamu, see W. G. Lambert, "The Pair Lahmu-Lahamu in Cosmology," OrNS 54 (1985), 189–202.

4. Anshar and Kishar are the totality of heaven and earth, understood as a circle or horizon. Anshar was later used by Assyrian scholars as a way of referring to Assur, thus giving him primacy over Marduk; see p. 817 note 1.

5. Or: "Anu, his offspring, was equal to Anshar."

Then Anu begot his own equal, Nudimmud,¹
 Nudimmud was he who dominated(?) his forebears:
 Profound in wisdom, acute of sense, he was massively strong,
 Much mightier than his grandfather Anshar,
 No rival had he among the gods his brethren. (20)
 The divine brethren banded together,
 Confusing Tiamat as they moved about in their stir,
 Roiling the vitals of Tiamat,
 By their uproar distressing the interior of the Heavenly Abode.²
 Apsu could not reduce their clamor, (25)
 But Tiamat was silent before them.
 Their actions were noisome to her,
 Their behavior was offensive, (but) she was indulgent.
 Thereupon Apsu, begetter of the great gods,
 Summoned Mummu³ his vizier, saying to him, (30)
 "Mummu, vizier who contents me,
 "Come, let us go to Tiamat."
 They went, took their places facing Tiamat,
 They took counsel concerning the gods their offspring.
 Apsu made ready to speak, (35)
 Saying to her, Tiamat, in a loud voice,
 "Their behavior is noisome to me!
 "By day I have no rest, at night I do not sleep!
 "I wish to put an end to their behavior, to do away with it!
 "Let silence reign that we may sleep." (40)
 When Tiamat heard this,
 She grew angry and cried out to her spouse,
 She cried out bitterly, outraged that she stood alone,
 (For) he had urged evil upon her,⁴
 "What? Shall we put an end to what we created? (45)

"Their behavior may be most noisome,
 but we should bear it in good part."
 It was Mummu who answered, counselling Apsu,
 Like a dissenting vizier's was the counsel of his Mummu,
 "Put an end here and now, father, to their troublesome ways!
 "By day you should have rest, at night you should sleep." (50)
 Apsu was delighted with him, he beamed,
 On account of the evils
 he plotted against the gods his children.
 He embraced Mummu, around his neck,
 He sat on his knees so he could kiss him.¹
 Whatever they plotted between them, (55)
 Was repeated to the gods their offspring.
 The gods heard it as they stirred about,
 They were stunned, they sat down in silence.
 Surpassing in wisdom, ingenious, resourceful,
 Ea was aware of all, discerned their stratagem. (60)
 He fashioned it, he established it, a master plan,
 He made it artful, his superb magic spell.
 He recited it and brought (him) to rest in the waters,²
 He put him in deep slumber, he was fast asleep,
 He made Apsu sleep, he was drenched with slumber, (65)
 Mummu the advisor was drowsy with languor.
 He untied his sash, he stripped off his tiara,
 He took away his aura, he himself put it on.
 He tied up Apsu, he killed him,
 Mummu he bound, he locked him securely. (70)
 He founded his dwelling upon Apsu,
 He secured Mummu, held (him) firm by a leadrope.
 After Ea had captured and vanquished his foes,
 Had won the victory over his opponents,
 In his chamber, in profound quiet, he rested. (75)
 He called it "Apsu," They Recognize Sanctuaries.³

1. Another name for Ea, god of wisdom.

2. Andurrunna, a cosmic locality; see also p. 776 note 2.

3. The same word, *mummu*, translated above as "matrix," here the personal name of Apsu's advisor; see p. 439 note 1.

4. Or: "She suppressed the evil thought."

1. As interpreted here, Apsu bends down to kiss Mummu in his joy; Bottéro, "Création," 33, suggests that Mummu is sitting on Apsu's knees; so also Lambert, *TUAT* III/4, 571.

2. Variant: "on the waters," perhaps meaning that the spell was laid on the waters themselves.

3. An Akkadian hermeneutic explanation of the Sumerian name (Durand, *N.A.B.U.* 1994/100); compare Tablet V line 129.

He established therein his chamber,
Ea and Damkina his wife dwelt there in splendor.

*(Birth and childhood of the hero Marduk, who is born with full strength. He is given
the four winds by his grandfather.)*

In the cella of destinies, the abode of designs,
The most capable, the sage of the gods,
the Lord¹ was begotten, (80)

In the midst of Apsu Marduk was formed,
In the midst of holy Apsu was Marduk formed!
Ea his father begot him,
Damkina his mother was confined with him.
He suckled at the breasts of goddesses, (85)
The attendant who raised him endowed him well with glories.
His body was magnificent, fiery his glance,
He was a hero at birth,

he was a mighty one from the beginning!
When Anu his grandfather saw him,
He was happy, he beamed, his heart was filled with joy. (90)
He perfected him, so that his divinity was strange,
He was much greater, he surpassed them in every way.
His members were fashioned with cunning
beyond comprehension,

Impossible to conceive, too difficult to visualize:
Fourfold his vision, fourfold his hearing, (95)
When he moved his lips a fire broke out.

Formidable² his fourfold perception,
And his eyes, in like number, saw in every direction.
He was tallest of the gods, surpassing in form,
His limbs enormous, he was surpassing at birth. (100)
"The son Utu, the son Utu,³
"The son, the sun, the sunlight of the gods!"

1. Or: Bel.

2. "Formidable" is an attempt to render a pun in the original between *rabû* "great" and *erbu* "four."

3. A series of interlingual puns on son and sun, only one level of which can be rendered in English. The cuneiform signs used to write the name Marduk, AMAR.UD, are here construed as *māru* "son" and Utu "sun."

He wore (on his body) the auras of ten gods,
had (them) wrapped around his head(?) too,
Fifty glories¹ were heaped upon him. (105)
Anu formed and produced the four winds,
He put them in his hand, "Let my son play!"²
He fashioned dust, he made a storm bear it up,
He caused a wave and it roiled Tiamat,
Tiamat was roiled, churning day and night,
The gods, finding no rest, bore the brunt of each wind.* (110)

(Tiamat is stirred to action by the angry gods.)

They plotted evil in their hearts,
They said to Tiamat their mother,
"When he killed Apsu your husband,
"You did nothing to save him but sat by, silent. (115)
"Now he has made four terrible winds,
"They are roiling your vitals so we cannot sleep.
"You had no care for Apsu your husband,
"As for Mummu, who was captured, you remained aloof,
"Now,* you churn back and forth, confused.
"As for us, who cannot lie down to rest, (120)
you do not love us!
"Think of our burden, our eyes are pinched,*
"Lift this unrelenting yoke, let us sleep!
"Battle has begun, give them what they deserve,*
"[Ma]ke a [tempest], turn them into nothingness."
When Tiamat [heard] these words, they pleased her, (125)
"[As y]ou have counselled, we will make a tempest,³
"[We will] the gods within it,
"(For) they have been adopting [wicked ways]
against the gods [thei]r parents."

1. Marduk has fifty names in this text. In a Late period god-list, Marduk was assigned the number 50. Perhaps this was done so that Marduk could replace Enlil (also number 50) as head of the pantheon; see W. G. Lambert, BSOAS 47 (1984), 3 and below, p. 484 note 3.

2. Or: "My son, let them whirl."

3. Or: "monsters," but this would leave the reference in line 127 unclear.

[They clo]sed ranks and drew up at Tiamat's side,
 Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day, (130)
 [Ma]king warfare, rumbling, raging,
 Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.
 Mother Hubur,¹ who can form everything,
 Added countless invincible weapons,
 gave birth to monster serpents,
 Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?), (135)
 She filled their bodies with venom for blood.
 Fierce dragons she clad with glories,
 Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)
 "Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness!
 "Wherever their bodies make onslaught,
 they shall not turn back!" (140)
 She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,
 Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,
 Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,
 Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle.²
 Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them, (145)
 Eleven indeed on this wise she crea[ted].³
 From among the gods her offspring,
 who composed her assembly,

She raised up Qingu¹ from among them,
 it was he she made greatest!
 Leadership of the army, command of the assembly,
 Arming, contact, advance of the melee, (150)
 Supreme command in warfare,
 (All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.
 "I cast your spell.
 I make you the greatest in the assembly of the gods,
 "Kingship of all the gods I put in your power.
 "You are the greatest, my husband, you are illustrious, (155)
 "Your command shall always be greatest,
 over all the Anunna-gods."
 She gave him the tablet of destinies,²
 had him hold it to his chest, (saying)
 "As for you, your command shall not be changed,
 your utterance shall endure.
 "Now that Qingu is the highest and has taken [supremacy],
 "And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children, (160)
 "Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],
 "Your concentrated venom shall make the mighty one yield."³

1. Another epithet of Mummu-Tiamat, as a proper name suggesting a creative force (so Speiser, JAOS 68 [1948], 12), more commonly (as in IV.17 line 17) a name of the netherworld river, construed here as "Mother Noise" by Michalowski, *Studies Moran*, 385 (see General Introduction E.3); see also Conti, RA 82 (1988), 128.

2. For the appearance and names of the demons in this list, see W. G. Lambert, "The History of the muš-ḫuš in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Les Cahiers du CEPOA, Actes du Colloque de Cartigny* 1981 (Geneva, 1985), 87–94; A. Green, "A Note on the 'Scorpion-Man' and Pazuzu," *Iraq* 47 (1985), 75–82; "A Note on Assyrian 'Goat-Fish', 'Fish-man' and 'Fish-woman'," *Iraq* 48 (1986), 25–30; "Neo-Assyrian Apotropaic Figures," *Iraq* 45 (1983), 87–96; R. S. Ellis, "'Lion-Men' in Assyria," *Studies Finkelstein*, 67–78; F. Wiggermann, "Exit Talim! Studies in Babylonian Demonology I," *JEOL* 27 (1981/2), 90–105. For discussion of the list as a whole, see W. G. Lambert, CRRAI 32 (1985), 56–57; F. Wiggermann, *Babylonian Prophylactic Figurines: The Ritual Texts* (Amsterdam, 1986), 268–323.

3. This number was reached by adding the "monster serpents" of 134, the "fierce dragons" of 137, and the nine creatures of 141–143. As shown by W. G. Lambert, CRRAI 32 (1985), 56–57, this is an expansion of a traditional list of eight in order to incorporate the heroic deeds of Ninurta into Marduk's *res gestae*.

1. A male deity about whom little otherwise is known. Jacobsen, SANE 2/3, 16 has proposed to derive his name from the Sumerian word for "work," and hence, he infers, Qingu's blood used to create man gave him his working capacity.

2. The tablet of destinies, though not a clearly defined concept in Mesopotamian tradition (see W. G. Lambert, OrNS 39 [1970], 174–175), gave its possessor the power to give especially powerful commands. In the Anzu story (III.23), on which this episode is based, the tablet gave the power to control divine spheres of responsibility and thus universal authority. For discussion, see Lawson, *Fate*, 19–25.

3. Contrast Tablet I line 96. "Fire" and "might(y one)" are both references to warfare; Tiamat's magic is intended to make Qingu and his army invincible.

Tablet II

(Tiamat's preparations are known to Ea, who, in apparent despair, goes to Anshar, king of the gods. The relevant passages of Tablet I are repeated verbatim. Anshar is horror-stricken; he blames Ea for what has occurred. Since Ea started the trouble, he must find a solution to it. This accords well with Ea's plans for his son.)

- Tiamat assembled her creatures, (1)
 Drew up for battle against the gods her brood.
 Thereafter Tiamat, more than(?) Apsu,
 was become an evildoer.¹
 She informed Ea that she was ready for battle.
 When Ea heard this, (5)
 He was struck dumb with horror and sat stock still.
 After he had thought and his distress had calmed,
 He made straight his way to Anshar his grandfather.
 He came in before his grandfather, Anshar,
 All that Tiamat plotted he recounted to him, (10)
 "My father, Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us,
 "She has convened an assembly, furious with rage.
 "All the gods rallied around her,
 "Even those you created are going over to her side,
 "They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side. (15)
 "Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day,
 "Making warfare, rumbling, raging,
 "Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.
 "Mother Hubur, who can form everything,
 "Added countless invincible weapons,
 gave birth to monster serpents, (20)
 "Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?),
 "She filled their bodies with venom for blood.
 "Fierce dragons she clad with glories,
 "Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)
 'Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness! (25)
 'Wherever their bodies make onslaught,
 they shall not turn back!'

1. With Bottéro, "Création," 36. One could also understand "on account of Apsu" or "against Apsu" (in that case now the domain of Ea).

- "She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,
 "Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,
 "Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,
 "Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle. (30)
 "Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them,
 "Eleven indeed on this wise she created.
 "From among the gods her offspring,
 who composed her assembly,
 "She raised up Qingu from among them,
 it was he she made greatest!
 "Leadership of the army, command of the assembly, (35)
 "Arming, contact, advance of the melee,
 "Supreme command in warfare,
 "(All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.
 'I cast your spell. I make you the greatest
 in the assembly of the gods,
 'Kingship of all the gods I put in your power. (40)
 'You are the greatest, my husband, you are illustrious.
 'Your command shall always be greatest,
 over all the Anunna-gods.'
 "She gave him the tablet of destinies,
 had him hold it to his chest, (saying)
 'As for you, your command shall not be changed,
 your utterance shall endure.
 'Now that Qingu is the highest
 and has taken [supremacy], (45)
 'And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,
 'Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],
 'Your concentrated venom
 shall make the mighty one yield.'"

(Anshar flies into a passion at Ea, blaming him for what has transpired. Ea defends himself by pointing out the necessity of Apsu's murder. Anshar thereupon orders Ea to subdue Tiamat. Ea is unable to do so, so Anshar sends out Anu, who is likewise unable. This situation was no doubt anticipated by Ea, who is waiting to produce his favorite son from the wings. This provides the opportunity for Marduk to take his place and to make his great demand.)

[When Anshar heard] the speech, the affair was confused,
 He cried out "Woe!"; he bit his lip, (50)
 His spirits were angry, his mind was uneasy,
 His cries to Ea his offspring grew choked,
 "My son, you yourself were instigator of battle!
 "Do you bear the consequences of your own handiwork!
 "You went forth and killed Apsu, (55)
 "So Tiamat, whom you have enraged,
 where is one who can face her?"
 The sage counsellor, wise prince,
 Producer of wisdom, divine Nudimmud,
 Answered [his] father Anshar gently,
 With soothing words, calming speech, (60)
 "My father, inscrutable, ordainer of destinies,
 "Who has power to create and destroy,
 "O Anshar, inscrutable, ordainer of destinies,
 "Who has power to create and destroy,
 "I will declare my thoughts to you, relent for a moment, (65)
 "Recall in your heart that I made a good plan.
 "Before I undertook to kill Apsu,
 "Who had foreseen what is happening now?
 "Ere I was the one who moved quickly to snuff out his life,
 "I indeed, for it was I who destroyed him,
 [wh]at was occurring?" (70)
 When Anshar heard this, it pleased him,
 He calmed down, saying to Ea,
 "Your deeds are worthy of a god,
 "You can(?) [] a fierce, irresistible stroke,
 "Ea, your deeds are worthy of a god, (75)
 "You can(?) [] a fierce, irresistible stroke,
 "Go then to Tiamat, sub[du]e her onslaught,
 "May her anger [be pacified] by [your] magic spell."
 When he heard the command [of his father] A[nshar],
 He set off, making straight his way, (80)
 Ea went to seek out Tiamat's stratagem.
 He stopped, horror-stricken, then turned back.
 He came before Anshar the sovereign,
 He beseeched him with entreaties, saying,

"[My father], Tiamat has carried her actions beyond me, (85)
 "I sought out her course, but [my] spell cannot counter it.
 "Her strength is enormous, she is utterly terrifying,
 "She is reinforced with a host, none can go out against her.
 "Her challenge was not reduced,
 it was so loud(?) against me,
 "I became afraid at her clamor, I turned back. (90)
 "My father, do not despair, send another to her,
 "A woman's force may be very great,
 but it cannot match a man's.
 "Do you scatter her ranks, thwart her intentions,
 "Before she lays her hands on all of us."
 Anshar was shouting, in a passion, (95)
 To Anu his son he said these words,
 "Stalwart son, valiant warrior,
 "Whose strength is enormous, whose onslaught is irresistible,
 "Hurry, take a stand before Tiamat,
 "Soothe her feelings, let her heart be eased. (100)
 "If she will not listen to what you say,
 "Say something by way of entreaty to her,
 so that she be pacified."
 When he heard what his father Anshar said,
 He set off, [made str]aight his way,
 Anu went to seek out Tiamat's stratagem. (105)
 He stopped, horror-stricken, then turned back.
 He came before [Ansha]r, [his father who begot him],
 He beseeched him with entreaties, s[aying],
 "My father, Tiamat has carried her actions beyond me,
 "I sought out her course, but my s[pell cannot counter it]. (110)
 "Her strength is enormous, she is utterly terrifying,
 "She is reinforced with a host,
 none can [go out against] her.
 "Her challenge was not reduced, it was so loud(?) against me,
 "I became afraid at her clamor, I turned back.
 "My father, do not despair, send another to her, (115)

"A woman's strength may be very great,
 but it cannot match a man's.
 "Do you scatter her ranks, thwart her intentions,
 "Before she lays her hands on all of us."
 Anshar fell silent, gazing at the ground,
 Nodding toward Ea, he shook his head. (120)
 The Igigi-gods and Anunna-gods were all assembled,
 With lips closed tight, they sat in silence.
 Would no god go out [at his] command?*
 Against Tiamat would none go as [he] ordered?
 Then Anshar, father of the great gods, (125)
 His heart was angry, he would not summon anyone!*"

(Ea summons Marduk privately and informs him that his hour is now come. He enjoins him to present himself respectfully before his great-grandfather as a volunteer in time of crisis. Ea does not explicitly advise Marduk what price to set on his services, as the poet makes that come from the heart of Marduk himself. Marduk is warmly received by the elder gods and his offer to be champion is willingly accepted. Now Marduk offers his terms: if he is to save all the gods, he is to become their supreme, unquestioned leader, always.)

The mighty firstborn, champion of his father,
 Hastener to battle, the warrior Marduk
 Did Ea summon to his secret place,
 Told him his secret words,¹ (130)
 "O Marduk, think, heed your father,
 "You are my son who can relieve his heart!
 "Draw nigh, approach Anshar,
 "Make ready to speak. He was angry(?),
 seeing you he will be calm."
 The Lord was delighted at his father's words, (135)
 He drew near and waited upon Anshar.
 When Anshar saw him, his heart was filled with joyful feelings,
 He kissed his lips, he banished his gloom.
 "My father, let not your lips be silent but speak,
 "Let me go, let me accomplish your heart's desire. (140)
 "[O Anshar], let not your lips be silent but speak,

1. Uncertain. While this could be a reference to magic words (CAD K, 36a; AHW, 420a ["wish"]), it could as well refer to Marduk's demand, lines 156–163.

"Let me go, let me accomplish your heart's desire!
 "What man is it who has sent forth his battle against you?
 "Why,* Tiamat, a woman,
 comes out against you to arms!
 "[My father], creator, rejoice and be glad, (145)
 "Soon you will trample the neck of Tiamat.
 "[Anshar], creator, rejoice and be glad,
 "Soon you will trample [the neck] of Tiamat!"
 "[Go], son, knower of all wisdom,
 "Bring Tiamat to rest with your sacral spell. (150)
 "Make straight, quickly, with the storm chariot,
 "Let it not veer from its [course], turn (it) back!"
 The Lord was delighted at his grandfather's words,
 His heart was overjoyed as he said to his grandfather,
 "Lord of the gods, of the destiny of the great gods, (155)
 "If indeed I am to champion you,
 "Subdue Tiamat and save your lives,
 "Convene the assembly, nominate me for supreme destiny!
 "Take your places in the Assembly Place of the Gods,¹
 all of you, in joyful mood.
 "When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you. (160)
 "Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,
 "Nor what I say be revoked or changed."

1. Ubshu-ukkenna, a cosmic locality, called "abode of counsel" in IV.42d line 28.

Tablet III

(Anshar convokes the gods for this purpose, commissioning his vizier, Kakka, to wait upon Lahmu and Lahamu to tell them the story of Tiamat's threat and Marduk's offer. Lahmu and Lahamu are terrified. They and the other gods convene, eat and drink liberally, and, in the festive mood of a reunion, they surrender their authority to Marduk.)

Anshar made ready to speak, (1)
 Saying to Kakka his vizier these words,
 "Kakka, vizier who contents me,
 "Let it be you that I send off toward Lahmu and Lahamu.
 "You know how [to find a way], you can make a fine speech. (5)
 "Send over to my presence the gods my ancestors,
 "Let them bring all the gods before me.
 "Let them converse, sit down at a feast,
 "On produce of the field let them feed, imbibe of the vine.
 "Let them ordain destiny for Marduk, their champion. (10)
 "Be off, Kakka, wait upon them,
 "All that I tell you, repeat to them:
 'It is Anshar your son who has ordered me to come,
 'He has bade me speak in full the command of his heart,
 'To wit:
 "Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us, (15)
 "She has convened an assembly, furious with rage.
 "All the gods rallied around her,
 "Even those you created are going over to her side.
 "They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side.
 "Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day, (20)
 "Making warfare, rumbling, raging,
 "Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.
 "Mother Hubur, who can form everything,
 "Added countless invincible weapons,
 gave birth to monster serpents,
 "Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?), (25)
 "She filled their bodies with venom for blood.
 "Fierce dragons she clad with glories,
 "Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)

'Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness!
 'Wherever their bodies make onslaught,
 they shall not turn back!' (30)
 "She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,
 "Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,
 "Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,
 "Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle.
 "Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them. (35)
 "Eleven indeed on this wise she created.
 "From among the gods her offspring,
 who composed her assembly,
 "She raised up Qingu from among them,
 it was he she made greatest!
 "Leadership of the army, command of the assembly,
 "Arming, contact, advance of the melee, (40)
 "Supreme command in warfare:
 "All she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.
 'I cast your spell, I make you the greatest
 in the assembly of the gods,
 'Kingship of all the gods I put in your power.
 'You are greatest, my husband, you are illustrious, (45)
 'Your command shall always be greatest,
 over all the Anunna-gods.'
 "She gave him the tablet of destinies,
 had him hold it to his chest, (saying)
 'As for you, your command will not be changed,
 your utterance will endure.
 'Now that Qingu is the highest and
 has taken over [supremacy],
 'And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children, (50)
 'Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],
 'Your concentrated venom
 shall make the mighty one yield.'
 "I sent Anu, he could not confront her,
 "Nudimmud was afraid and turned back.
 "Marduk came forward, the sage of the gods, your son, (55)
 "He has resolved to go against Tiamat.

"When he spoke, he said to me,
 'If indeed I am to champion you,
 'Subdue Tiamat and save your lives,
 'Convene the assembly,
 nominate me for supreme destiny! (60)
 'Take your places in the Assembly Place of the Gods,
 all of you, in joyful mood,
 'When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you.
 'Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,
 'Nor what I say be revoked or changed.'

"Come quickly to me,
 straightaway ordain him your destinies, (65)
 "Let him go and confront your powerful enemy."

Kakka went and made straight his way
 Toward Lahmu and Lahamu the gods his ancestors.
 He prostrated, kissed the ground before them.
 He stood up straight and said to them, (70)
 "It is Anshar your son who has ordered me to come,
 "He has bade me speak in full the command of his heart:

 'Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us,
 'She has convened an assembly, furious with rage.
 'All the gods rallied around her, (75)
 'Even those you created are going over to her side.
 'They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side.
 'Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day,
 'Making warfare, rumbling, raging,
 'Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities. (80)
 'Mother Hubur, who can form everything,
 'Added countless invincible weapons,
 gave birth to monster serpents,
 'Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?),
 'She filled their bodies with venom for blood.
 'Fierce dragons she clad with glories, (85)
 'Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)

 "Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness!
 "Wherever their bodies make onslaught
 they shall not turn back!"

 'She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,
 'Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men, (90)
 'Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,
 'Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle.
 'Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them.
 'Eleven indeed on this wise she created.
 'From among the gods her offspring
 who composed her assembly, (95)
 'She raised up Qingu from among them,
 it was he she made greatest!
 'Leadership of the army, command of the assembly,
 'Arming, contact, advance of the melee,
 'Supreme command in warfare:
 '(All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais. (100)

 "I cast your spell and make you the greatest
 in the assembly of the gods,
 "Kingship of all the gods I put in your power.
 "You shall be the greatest, you are my only spouse,
 "Your name shall always be greatest,
 over all the Anunna-gods."

 'She gave him the tablet of destinies,
 had him hold it to his chest, (saying) (105)
 "As for you, your command shall not be changed,
 your utterance shall endure."
 "Now that Qingu is the highest
 and has taken over [supremacy],
 "And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,
 "Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],
 "Your concentrated venom shall make
 the mighty one yield." (110)

 'I sent Anu, he could not confront her,
 'Nudimmud was afraid and turned back.
 'Marduk came forward, the sage of the gods, your son,
 'He has resolved to go against Tiamat.
 'When he spoke, he said to me, (115)
 "If indeed I am to champion you,
 "Subdue Tiamat and save your lives,

"Convene the assembly,
 nominate me for supreme destiny!
 "In the Assembly Place of the Gods take your places,
 all of you, in joyful mood.
 "When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you. (120)
 "Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,
 "Nor what I say be revoked or changed."
 'Come quickly to me,
 straightaway ordain him your destinies,
 'Let him go and confront your powerful enemy.'"
 When Lahmu and Lahamu heard, they cried aloud, (125)
 All of the Igigi-gods wailed bitterly,
 "What (is our) hostility,¹ that she has taken a[ct]ion (against) us?
 "We scarcely know what Tiamat might do!"
 They swarmed together and came.
 All the great gods, ordainers of [destinies], (130)
 Came before Anshar and were filled with [joy].
 One kissed the other in the assembly [],
 They conversed, sat down at a feast,
 On produce of the field they fed, imbibed of the vine,
 With sweet liquor they made their gullets run, (135)
 They felt good from drinking the beer.
 Most carefree, their spirits rose,
 To Marduk their champion they ordained destiny.

1. Or, "Why be opposed?" Lambert, TUAT III/4, 583: "What was wrong?"

Tablet IV

(Marduk takes the throne and is hailed by all the gods in a coronation ceremony. Proof is administered of his supremacy. He is hailed as king, is given the trappings of royalty, chooses his weapons, and sets forth on his quest.)

They set out for him a princely dais, (1)
 He took his place before his fathers for sovereignty.
 "You are the most important among the great gods,
 "Your destiny is unrivalled, your command is supreme.
 "O Marduk, you are the most important (5)
 among the great gods,
 "Your destiny is unrivalled, your command is supreme!
 "Henceforth your command cannot be changed,
 "To raise high, to bring low, this shall be your power.
 "Your command shall be steadfast,
 your word shall not be misleading.
 "Not one of the gods shall go beyond the limits you set. (10)
 "Support is wanted for the gods' sanctuaries,
 "Wherever their shrines will be, your own shall be established.
 "O Marduk, you are our champion,
 "We bestow upon you kingship of all and everything.
 "Take your place in the assembly, your word shall be supreme. (15)
 "May your weapon never strike wide but dispatch your foes.
 "O Lord, spare his life who trusts in you,
 "But the god who has taken up evil, snuff out his life!"
 They set up among them a certain constellation,
 To Marduk their firstborn said they (these words), (20)
 "Your destiny, O Lord, shall be foremost of the gods',
 "Command destruction or creation, they shall take place.
 "At your word the constellation shall be destroyed,
 "Command again, the constellation shall be intact."
 He commanded and at his word
 the constellation was destroyed, (25)
 He commanded again and the constellation was created anew.
 When the gods his fathers saw what he had commanded,
 Joyfully they hailed, "Marduk is king!"
 They bestowed in full measure scepter, throne, and staff,

They gave him unopposable weaponry
that vanquishes enemies. (30)
“Go, cut off the life of Tiamat,
“Let the winds bear her blood away as glad tidings!”
The gods, his fathers, ordained the Lord’s destiny,
On the path to success and authority
did they set him marching.
He made the bow, appointed it his weapon, (35)
He mounted the arrow, set it on the string.
He took up the mace, held it in his right hand,
Bow and quiver he slung on his arm.
Thunderbolts he set before his face,
With raging fire he covered his body. (40)
Then he made a net to enclose Tiamat within,
He deployed the four winds that none of her might escape:
South Wind, North Wind, East Wind, West Wind,
Gift of his grandfather Anu;¹ he fastened the net at his side.
He made ill wind, whirlwind, cyclone, (45)
Four-ways wind, seven-ways wind, destructive wind,
irresistible wind:
He released the winds that he had made, the seven of them,
Mounting in readiness behind him to roil inside Tiamat.
Then the Lord raised the Deluge, his great weapon.
He mounted the terrible chariot,²
the unopposable Storm Demon, (50)
He hitched to it the four-steed team, he tied them at his side:³
“Slaughterer,” “Merciless,” “Overwhelmer,” “Soaring.”
Their lips are curled back, their teeth bear venom,
They know not fatigue, they are trained to trample down.
He stationed at his right gruesome battle and strife, (55)

At his left the fray that overthrows all formations.
He was garbed in a ghastly armored garment,¹
On his head he was covered with terrifying auras.
The Lord made straight and pursued his way,
Toward raging Tiamat he set his face. (60)
He was holding a spell ready upon his lips,
A plant, antidote to venom, he was grasping in his hand.
At that moment the gods were stirring, stirring about him,
The gods his fathers were stirring about him,
the gods stirring about him.

(Marduk approaches for battle while the gods hover fearfully near him. Qingu is terrified. Tiamat intimates that Marduk’s support is disloyal. Ignoring Qingu, he challenges her to single combat and indicts her for the contemplated murder of her own children. Stung to a fury, Tiamat herself advances for battle. Marduk kills her, destroys her forces, takes the tablet of destinies, and puts it on himself.)

The Lord drew near, to see the battle² of Tiamat, (65)
He was looking for the stratagem of Qingu her spouse.
As he³ looked, his tactic turned to confusion,
His reason was overthrown, his actions panicky,
And as for the gods his allies, who went at his side,
When they saw the valiant vanguard, their sight failed them. (70)
Tiamat cast her spell pointblank,
Falsehood, lies she held ready on her lips.*
“... lord, the gods rise against you,
“They assembled [where] they are,
(but) are they on your side?”⁴
The Lord [raised] the Deluge, his great weapon, (75)
To Tiamat, who acted conciliatory,⁵ sent he (this word),

1. The gift refers to the four winds (see Tablet I lines 105–106), not the net. The original has an elaborate poetic structure that cannot be reproduced clearly in translation. “At his side” could also mean “on his arm” (Landsberger, JCS 21 [1967], 150 note 62).

2. Literally: “the storm chariot ..., the terrible one.” A late bilingual fragment may preserve part of a hymn(?) to Marduk’s chariot; see W. G. Lambert, “The Chariot of Marduk,” *Studies Böhl*, 275–280.

3. Apparently the ends of the reins, normally held by an attendant, are here strapped to him, to keep both hands free for fighting. Balancing in a chariot with weapons in both hands and guiding a four-steed team by the belt is, of course, a heroic feat of the first order.

1. This line is a remarkable example of alliteration, a device esteemed by this poet: *naḥlapti aplūḫti pulḥāti ḥalipma*.

2. Wordplay on “middle” or “inside” and “battle.”

3. Presumably Qingu is meant.

4. Uncertain. Tiamat evidently tells Marduk that the gods he is championing are actually disloyal to him. For a discussion of the battle between Marduk and Tiamat, see Jacobsen, JAOS 88 (1968), 104–108; Jacobsen interprets these lines quite differently, *The Treasures of Darkness* (New Haven, 1976), 177.

5. Or: “who was furious” (so CAD K 109a etc.; I follow Bottéro, “Creation,” 46).

"Why outwardly do you assume a friendly attitude,¹
 "While your heart is plotting to open attack?
 "Children cried out, they oppress their parents,
 "But you, their own mother, spurned all natural feeling.² (80)
 "You named Qingu to be spouse for you,
 "Though he had no right to be, you set him up for chief god.
 "You attempted wicked deeds against Anshar,
 sovereign of the gods,
 "And you have perpetrated your evil against the gods my fathers.
 "Though main force is drawn up,
 though these your weapons are in array, (85)
 "Come within range, let us duel, you and I!"
 When Tiamat heard this,
 She was beside herself, she turned into a maniac.
 Tiamat shrieked loud, in a passion,
 Her frame shook all over, down to the ground. (90)
 She was reciting an incantation, casting her spell,
 While the gods of battle were whetting their blades.
 Tiamat and Marduk, sage of the gods, drew close for battle,
 They locked in single combat, joining for the fray.
 The Lord spread out his net, encircled her, (95)
 The ill wind he had held behind him he released in her face.
 Tiamat opened her mouth to swallow,
 He thrust in the ill wind so she could not close her lips.
 The raging winds bloated her belly,
 Her insides were stopped up, she gaped her mouth wide. (100)
 He shot off the arrow, it broke open her belly,
 It cut to her innards, it pierced the heart.
 He subdued her and snuffed out her life,
 He flung down her carcass, he took his stand upon it.
 After the vanguard had slain Tiamat, (105)
 He scattered her forces, he dispersed her host.
 As for the gods her allies, who had come to her aid,

1. Or: "Why are you aggressive and overbearing?" (Lambert, JSS 27 [1982], 283).

2. The precise significance of Marduk's remarks is not clear. While he may refer to Tiamat's natural goodwill toward her children (Tablet I lines 28, 46), it seems more likely that he refers to her insinuation that he had best beware the loyalty of those he championed. Line 79 may mean that children are normally trying to their parents, so her intended infanticide is unnatural. For "crying out" of children, compare II.20c, IV.54.

They trembled, terrified, they ran in all directions,
 They tried to make a way out(?) to save their¹ lives,
 There was no escaping the grasp that held (them)! (110)
 He drew them in and smashed their weapons.
 They were cast in the net and sat in a heap,
 They were heaped up in the corners, full of woe,
 They were bearing his punishment, to prison confined.
 As for the eleven creatures, the ones adorned with glories, (115)
 And the demonic horde(?),
 which went in attendance at her side,
 He put on leadropes, he bound their arms.
 He trampled them under, together with their belligerence.
 As for Qingu, who was trying to be great among them,
 He captured him and reckoned him among the doomed gods. (120)
 He took away from him the tablet of destinies,
 which he had no right to,
 He sealed it with a seal and affixed it to his chest.

(Splitting Tiamat's corpse in half, Marduk uses one piece to create the heavens. Her blood is borne off by the wind as evidence of her death. Marduk makes Esharra, an abode in heaven, as a counterpart to Apsu.)

Having captured his enemies and triumphed,
 Having shown the mighty(?)* foe subservient(?),²
 Having fully achieved Anshar's victory over his enemies, (125)
 Valiant Marduk having attained what Nudimmud desired,
 He made firm his hold over the captured gods,
 Then turned back to Tiamat whom he had captured.
 The Lord trampled upon the frame of Tiamat,
 With his merciless mace he crushed her skull. (130)
 He cut open the arteries of her blood,
 He let the North Wind bear (it) away as glad tidings.
 When his fathers saw, they rejoiced and were glad,
 They brought him gifts and presents.
 The Lord calmed down, he began inspecting her carcass, (135)

1. Text has "his life."

2. This may refer to a triumphal parade.

That he might divide(?) the monstrous lump
and fashion artful things.
He split her in two, like a fish for drying,
Half of her he set up and made as a cover, heaven.¹
He stretched out the hide* and assigned watchmen,
And ordered them not to let her waters escape. (140)
He crossed heaven, he inspected (its) firmament,²
He made a counterpart to Apsu, the dwelling of Nudimmud.
The Lord measured the construction of Apsu,
He founded the Great Sanctuary, the likeness of Esharra.³
(In) the Great Sanctuary, (in) Esharra,
which he built, (and in) heaven, (145)
He made Ea, Enlil, and Anu dwell in their holy places.

1. That is, he made the sky to hold back the waters.

2. For discussion of this line, see Moran, *Eretz Israel* 14 (1978), 35. Marduk models his new heaven after Apsu, the domain of Ea. "Firmament" is a free rendering of *ašrātu*, a difficult word; Lambert suggests it might mean something like "covering" (AfO 23 [1975], 43 and Tablet V line 121); more recently "Himmelsteile" (TUAT III/4, 583).

3. Esharra means "House of the Universe," the abode of Enlil. See Tablet IV line 145, V line 120, VI line 66 and Moran, *AnBi* 12 (1959), 264 note 2. For discussion of this passage and its cosmological implications, see W. G. Lambert in C. Blacker and M. Loewe, eds., *Ancient Cosmologies* (London, 1975), 55–58; Livingstone, *Explanatory Works*, 79–81; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 112–114.

Tablet V

(Marduk organizes the stars and planets and marks off years. He establishes his own planet, called Neberu, as a marker for all the others in their motion. He regulates the moon, sun, weather, and subterranean waters. He links the various parts of the cosmos.)

He made the position(s) for the great gods, (1)
He established (in) constellations the stars, their likenesses.¹
He marked the year, described (its) boundaries,²
He set up twelve months of three stars each.³
After he had patterned the days of the year, (5)
He fixed the position of Neberu
to mark the (stars') relationships.⁴
Lest any make an error or go astray,
He established the position(s) of Enlil and Ea in relation to it.⁵
He opened up gates on both (sides of her) ribs,*
He made strong bolts to left and right. (10)
In her liver he established the heights.
He made the moon appear, entrusted (to him) the night.
He assigned to him the crown jewel of nighttime
to mark the day (of the month),
Every month, without ceasing,
he exalted him with a crown.*
"At the beginning of the month, waxing over the land, (15)
"You shine with horns to mark six days,
"At the seventh day, the disk as [ha]lf.
"At the fifteenth day, you shall be in opposition,

1. These lines and the following, especially 24, parallel a passage from the astrological omen series *Enuma Anu Enlil*, where the same proceedings are assigned to Anu, Enlil, and Ea. See Weidner, *AfO* 17 (1954/6), 89; Landsberger and Kinnier Wilson, *JNES* 20 (1961), 172; Rochberg-Halton, *AfO Beiheft* 22 (1988), 270–271; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 114–117. For translations of similar texts, see below, III.18.

2. That is, laid out the ecliptic?

3. Babylonian astrolabes assign three stars to each month; here Marduk is portrayed as creating this pattern; see Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 115.

4. For Neberu, see J. Koch, "Der Mardukstern Nēberu," *WdO* 22 (1991) 48–72. Koch argues that the planet Mercury best fits the astronomical data, though Neberu, in another tradition, could also have referred to Jupiter or the central area in the sky where Jupiter was to be found. As pointed out to me by I. Zbikowska, Jupiter is more likely to serve as a marker than is Mercury, which is often difficult to see.

5. "It" refers to Neberu. Variant substitutes Anu for Ea.

at the midpoint of each [month].¹
 "When the sun f[ac]es you from the horizon of heaven,
 "Wane at the same pace and form in reverse. (20)
 "At the day of di[sappeara]nce, approach the sun's course,
 "On the [] of the thirtieth day, you shall be in conjunction
 with the sun a second time.
 "I d[efined?] the celestial signs, proceed on their path,
 "[] approach each other and render (oracular) judgment.
 "The sun shall [] ..., killing, oppression (25)
 "[] me."
 W[hen he []
 The val[iant] []
 The sun []
 In [] (30)
 "Let []
 []
 "Let there arise no []
 "Let there be []
 "In [] (35)
 "Da[ily] []."
 After [he had []
 [He made the night []
 He made the day []
 The year [was equal] (in days and nights).² (40)
 At New Year []
 (Another) year []
 "Let []
 "The doorbolt of sunrise []."
 After he had as[igned] [], (45)
 [And fixed] the watches of night and day,
 [] the foam of Tiamat,
 Marduk created []
 He compacted (the foam) into c[louds]
 and made (them) billow.
 To raise the wind, to cause rainfall, (50)

To make mists steam, to pile up her spittle (as snow?),
 He assigned to himself, put under his control.
 He set down her head and piled di[rt]¹ upon it,
 He opened underground springs, a flood was let flow(?).^{*}
 From her eyes he undammed the Euphr[ates] and Tigris, (55)
 He stopped up her nostrils, he left ...
 He heaped up high-peaked mo[unt]ains from(?) her dugs.
 He drilled through her waterholes to carry off the catchwater.
 He coiled up her tail and tied it as(?) "The Great Bond."²
 [] Apsu beneath, at his feet. (60)
 He set her crotch as the brace of heaven,
 Spreading [half of] her as a cover, he established the earth.
 [After] he had completed his task inside Tiamat,
 [He spre]ad his net, let all (within) escape,
 He formed(?) the ... [] of heaven and netherworld, (65)
 [Tightening] their organization and ...

(Marduk distributes trophies, parades his defeated enemies,
 and is celebrated as a returning hero.)

After he had designed his prerogatives
 and devised his responsibilities,
 He put on leadropes,^{3*} entrusted (those) to Ea.
 [The tablet] of destinies, which he took from Qingu
 and brought away,
 As the foremost gift he took away, he presented (it) to Anu. (70)
 The [] of battle, which he had fastened on
 and set on his head,⁴
 [] he led before his fathers.
 [And as for] the eleven creatures that Tiamat created ...
 He smashed their [wea]pons, he tied them to his feet.

1. For discussion, see Vanstiphout, JCS 33 (1981), 196–198; Livingstone, *Explanatory Works*, 39–40; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 117.

2. For restoration and suggested meaning, see Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 117.

1. Compare Tablet VII line 71; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 118.

2. That is, the link that holds heaven and the world below together; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 120.

3. See p. 177 note 2.

4. Compare perhaps Tablet I line 103 and IV lines 38ff.

He made images [of them] and set them up
 at the [Gate of] Apsu.¹ (75)
 "Lest ever after they be forgotten, let this be the sign."
 When [the gods] saw, they rejoiced and were glad,
 Lahmu, Lahamu, and all his fathers.
 Anshar [embra]ced him,
 proclaimed (his) salutation (to be) "king."
 [A]nu, Enlil, and Ea gave him gifts, (80)
 [] Damkina his mother made cries of joy over him,
 She(?) made his face glow with (cries of) "Good ...!"²
 To Usmu,³ who brought (Damkina's) gift at the glad tidings,
 [He en]trusted the ministry of Apsu
 and care of the sanctuaries.
 All the Igigi-gods together prostrated before him, (85)
 [And] the Anunna-gods, all there are,
 were doing him homage,
 The whole of them joined together to pay him reverence,
 [Before him] they stood, they prostrated, "This is the king!"

*(Marduk cleans himself and dons his insignia.
 The gods swear allegiance to him; he undertakes to maintain them.)*

[After] his fathers had celebrated him in due measure,
 [] covered with the dust of battle. (90)
 [] ...
 With cedar [oil] and [] he anoi[n]ted his body,
 He clothed himself in [his] princely [gar]ment,
 The kingly aura, the awe-inspiring tiara,
 He picked up the mace, he held it in his right hand, (95)
 [] he held in his left hand.
 []
 [] he made firm at his feet.
 He set over []
 The staff of success and authority [he hung] at his side. (100)

1. Gate of Marduk's temple in Babylon (George, *Topographical Texts*, 301). This passage may be an aetiology for some reliefs or statuary there known to the poet.

2. This is evidently a congratulatory exclamation, with a play on Damkina and *dumqu* ("good").

3. Advisor or messenger god to Ea, a Janus-like figure with a double head; see R. M. Boehmer and W. G. Lambert, "Isimu," RLA 5, 178-181.

After he [had put on] the aura of [his kingship],
 His netted sack, the Apsu [] awesomeness.
 He was seated like []
 In [his] throne room []
 In his cella [] (105)
 The gods, all there are, []
 Lahmu and Lahamu []
 Made ready to speak and [said to] the Igigi-gods,
 "Formerly [Mar]duk was 'our beloved son',
 "Now he is your king, pay heed to his command." (110)
 Next all of them spoke and said,
 "Lugal-dimmerankia' is his name, trust in him!"
 When they had given kingship over to Marduk,
 They said to him expressions of goodwill and obedience,
 "Henceforth you shall be provider for our sanctuaries, (115)
 "Whatever you shall command, we will do."

(Marduk creates Babylon as the terrestrial counterpart to Esharra, abode of the gods in heaven. The gods are to repose there during their earthly sojourns.)

Marduk made ready to speak and said
 (These) words to the gods his fathers,
 "Above Apsu, the azure dwelling,
 "As a counterpart to Esharra, which I built for you, (120)
 "Below the firmament, whose grounding I made firm,
 "A house I shall build, let it be the abode of my pleasure.¹
 "Within it I shall establish its holy place,
 "I shall appoint my (holy) chambers,
 I shall establish my kingship.
 "When you go up from Apsu to assembly, (125)
 "Let your stopping places be here, before your assembly.^{2*}
 "When you come down from heaven to [assembly],

1. For discussion of this passage, see Livingstone, *Explanatory Works*, 80-81; W. G. Lambert, "Himmel," RLA 4, 411-412; George, *Topographical Texts*, 296; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 120-122. Babylon and the temple of Marduk, Esagila, are at the center of the universe, above Apsu (water below the earth) and below heaven (water held back by the firmament).

2. That is, when the gods or their cult images travel to Babylon, they can find accommodation in specific chambers of Marduk's temple.

"Let your stopping places be there to receive all of you.
 "I shall call [its] name [Babylon],

Houses of the Great Gods,¹
 "We shall all hold fe[stival]s with[in] it." (130)

When the gods his fathers heard what he commanded,
 They ... []

"Over all things that your hands have created,
 "Who has [authority, save for you]? (135)
 "Over the earth that you have created,
 "Who has [authority, save for] you?*

"Babylon, to which you have given name,
 "Make our [stopping place] there forever.
 "Let them² bring us our daily portions,

"[] our []. (140)
 "Whosoever shall [] our task that we [],
 "In his place [] his toil []."

[Marduk] rejoiced []
 The gods [] ... them.

... [] them li[ght]. (145)
 He opened [] ... []

(two fragmentary lines)

The gods prostrated before him, saying,
 To Lugaldimmeran[ki]a, their lord, they [said], (150)

"Formerly [we called you] 'The Lord, [our beloved] son',
 "Now 'Our King' ... [shall be your name],

"He whose [sacral] sp[ell] saved [our lives],
 "[au]ra, ma[ce], and ne[t],

"[Ea? ev]ery [sk]ill. (155)
 "Let him make the plans, we ... []."

1. Hermeneutic etymology of the name Babylon (George, *Topographical Texts*, 253–255).

2. Who "they" refers to is disputed. It may refer to the defeated gods (Landsberger and Kinnier Wilson, JNES 20 [1961], 178–179); it may be impersonal, or it may refer proleptically to the Babylonians.

Tablet VI

(The rebellious gods are offered a general pardon if they will produce their leader. They produce Qingu, claiming that he started the war. He is sacrificed, and his blood is used to make a human being; compare Atrahasis [II.36] Tablet I lines 224ff.)

When [Mar]duk heard the speech of the gods, (1)
 He was resolving to make artful things:

He would tell his idea¹ to Ea,
 What he thought of in his heart he proposes,

"I shall compact blood, I shall cause bones to be, (5)
 "I shall make stand a human being, let 'Man' be its name.

"I shall create humankind,
 "They shall bear the gods' burden that those may rest.²

"I shall artfully double the ways of the gods:
 "Let them be honored as one but divided in twain."³ (10)

Ea answered him, saying these words,
 He told him a plan to let the gods rest,⁴

"Let one, their brother, be given to me,
 "Let him be destroyed so that people can be fashioned.

"Let the great gods convene in assembly, (15)
 "Let the guilty one be given up that they may abide."

Marduk convened the great gods in assembly,
 He spoke to them magnanimously as he gave the command,

The gods heeded his utterance,
 As the king spoke to the Anunna-gods (these) words, (20)

"Let your first reply be the truth!
 "Do you speak with me truthful words!

"Who was it that made war,
 "Suborned Tiamat and drew up for battle?

"Let him be given over to me, the one who made war, (25)

1. Literally: "his utterance," but to judge from the context, the utterance is so far purely internal.

2. From the necessity of providing for themselves; see Atrahasis (II.36 Tablet I lines 240–243).

3. A reference to two main divisions of the Mesopotamian pantheon, Anunna-gods and Igigi-gods, or to the supernal and infernal deities (compare Tablet VI lines 39ff.).

4. The text assigns Marduk primacy in the creation of humans by giving him the "idea," since Mesopotamian tradition, established centuries before this text was written, agreed that Ea/Enki had been the actual creator, along with the Mother Goddess.

"I shall make him bear his punishment, you shall be released."
 The Igigi, the great gods answered him,
 To Lugaldimmerankia, counsellor of all the gods, their lord,
 "It was Qingu who made war,
 "Suborned Tiamat and drew up for battle." (30)
 They bound and held him before Ea,
 They imposed the punishment on him and shed his blood.
 From his blood he made humankind,
 He imposed the burden of the gods and exempted the gods.
 After Ea the wise had made humankind, (35)
 They imposed the burden of the gods on them!
 That deed is beyond comprehension,
 By the artifices of Marduk did Nudimmud create!

*(Marduk divides the gods of heaven and netherworld.
 The gods build Esagila, Marduk's temple in Babylon.)*

Marduk the king divided the gods,
 The Anunna-gods, all of them, above and below, (40)
 He assigned to Anu for duty at his command.
 He set three hundred in heaven for (their) duty,
 A like number he designated for the ways of the netherworld:
 He made six hundred dwell in heaven and netherworld.
 After he had given all the commands, (45)
 And had divided the shares of the Anunna-gods
 of heaven and netherworld,
 The Anunna-gods made ready to speak,
 To Marduk their lord they said,
 "Now, Lord, you who have liberated us,
 "What courtesy may we do you? (50)
 "We will make a shrine, whose name will be a byword,
 "Your chamber that shall be our stopping place,
 we shall find rest therein.
 "We shall lay out the shrine, let us set up its emplacement,
 "When we come¹ (to visit you), we shall find rest therein."
 When Marduk heard this, (55)
 His features glowed brightly, like the day,

1. Or: "When we achieve (the task)."

"Then make Babylon the task that you requested,
 "Let its brickwork be formed, build high the shrine."
 The Anunna-gods set to with hoes,
 One (full) year they made its bricks. (60)
 When the second year came,
 They raised the head of Esagila,¹ the counterpart to Apsu,
 They built the upper ziggurat of Apsu,²
 For Anu-Enlil-Ea³ they founded his ... and dwelling.
 He took his seat in sublimity before them, (65)
 Its pinnacles were facing toward the base of Esharra.⁴
 After they had done the work of Esagila,
 All the Anunna-gods devised their own shrines.

*(The gods come to the new temple for a celebration.
 After a feast they take their places to ordain destinies.)*

The three hundred Igigi-gods of heaven
 and the six hundred of Apsu all convened.⁵
 The Lord, on the Exalted Dais,
 which they built as his dwelling, (70)
 Seated the gods his fathers for a banquet,
 "This is Babylon, your place of dwelling.
 "Take your pleasure there, seat yourselves in its delights!"*
 The great gods sat down,
 They set out cups, they sat down at the feast. (75)
 After they had taken their enjoyment inside it,
 And in awe-inspiring Esagila had conducted the offering,
 All the orders and designs had been made permanent,
 All the gods had divided the stations of heaven and netherworld,

1. Wordplay on the name of Marduk's temple ("House whose Head Is High").

2. Esagila is therefore a counterpart or replica of the abode of Ea (Apsu) and the abode of Enlil (Esharra). For discussion of this passage, see George, *Topographical Texts*, 296, 299 ('upper ziggurat' the one visible to humanity in Babylon).

3. The three divine names together may here be taken as a syncretism for Marduk; compare Tablet VII lines 136, 140, and below, p. 475 note 2. For discussion of this passage, see Moran, *AnBi* 12 (1959), 262.

4. The significance of this line is obscure; variant: "He was looking at." See Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 124.

5. This is an unresolved contradiction with lines 39–44 above, so was presumably drawn from a different source; for discussion, see George, *Topographical Texts*, 368.

The fifty great gods took their thrones, (80)
 The seven gods of destinies were confirmed forever
 for rendering judgment.

(Marduk's bow becomes a constellation.)

The Lord took the bow, his weapon, and set it before them,
 The gods his fathers looked upon the net he had made.
 They saw how artfully the bow was fashioned,
 His fathers were praising what he had brought to pass. (85)
 Anu raised (it), speaking to the assembly of the gods,
 He kissed the bow, "This be my daughter!"
 He named the bow, these are its names:
 'Longwood' shall be the first,
 'May It Be on Target' shall be the second."
 The third name, 'Bow Star', he made visible in heaven, (90)
 He established its position
 with respect to the gods his brethren.¹

(Marduk is made supreme god. Anshar gives him a second name, Asalluhi.

Anshar explains Marduk's role among gods and men with respect to this second name.)

After Anu had ordained the destinies of the bow,
 He set out the royal throne
 that stood highest among the gods,
 Anu had him sit there, in the assembly of the gods.
 Then the great gods convened, (95)
 They made Marduk's destiny highest, they prostrated themselves.
 They laid upon themselves a curse (if they broke the oath),
 With water and oil they swore, they touched their throats.²
 They granted him exercise of kingship over the gods,
 They established him forever
 for lordship of heaven and netherworld. (100)
 Anshar gave him an additional name, Asalluhi,
 "When he speaks, we will all do obeisance,
 "At his command the gods shall pay heed.

1. Aetiology for an unidentified star; mentioned as a "god of the night" in II.27a.

2. A symbolic slashing gesture meaning that they may die if they break the oath.

"His word shall be supreme above and below,
 "The son, our champion, shall be the highest. (105)
 "His lordship shall be supreme, he shall have no rival,
 "He shall be the shepherd of the people of this land,
 his creatures.
 "They shall tell of his ways, without forgetting, in the future.
 "He shall establish for his fathers great food offerings,
 "He shall provide for them,
 he shall take care of their sanctuaries. (110)
 "He shall cause incense burners to be savored,
 he shall make their chambers rejoice.
 "He shall do the same on earth as
 what he brought to pass in heaven,
 "He shall appoint the people of this land to serve him.
 "Let the subject peoples be mindful
 that their gods should be invoked,
 "At his command let them heed their goddess(es). (115)
 "Let their gods, their goddesses be brought food offerings,
 "Let (these) not be forgotten, let them sustain their gods.
 "Let their holy places be apparent(?),*
 let them build their sanctuaries.¹
 "Let the people of this land be divided as to gods,
 "(But) by whatever name we call him, let him be our god.² (120)

(Beginning of the explanation of Marduk's fifty names. Names 1–9 are those borne by Marduk prior to this point in the narrative. Each of them is correlated with crucial points in the narrative as follows: (1) his birth, (2–3) his creation of the human race to provide for the gods, (4) his terrible anger but his willingness to spare the rebellious gods, (5) his proclamation by the gods as supreme among them, (6) his organization of the cosmos, (7) his saving the gods from danger, (8) his sparing the gods who fought on the side of Tiamat, but his killing of Tiamat and Qingu, and (9) his enabling the gods to proceed with the rest of what is narrated.)

"Let us pronounce his fifty names,
 "That his ways shall be (thereby) manifest, his deeds likewise(?):*

1. As interpreted here, the holy places show forth their own qualities of holiness so that humankind builds shrines there, but the meaning of the line is doubtful.

2. That is, Marduk is to be the one god of all the gods, no matter how many gods humankind may serve.

(1) MARDUK!
 "Who, from his birth, was named by his forefather Anu,
 "Establisher of pasture and watering place,
 who enriches (their) stables,
 "Who by his Deluge weapon subdued the stealthy ones, (125)
 "Who saved the gods his forefathers from danger.
 "He is indeed the Son, the Sun,¹
 the most radiant of the gods,
 "They shall walk in his brilliant light forever.
 "On the people whom he made,
 creatures with the breath of life,
 "He imposed the gods' burden, that those be released. (130)
 "Creation, destruction, absolution, punishment:
 "Each shall be at his command, these shall gaze upon him.
 "(2) MARUKKA shall he be,
 the god who created them (humankind),
 "Who granted (thereby) the Anunna-gods contentment,
 who let the Igigi-gods rest.
 "(3) MARUTUKKU shall be the trust of his land,
 city, and people, (135)
 "The people shall heed him forever.
 "(4) MERSHAKUSHU, angry but deliberative,
 furious but relenting,²
 "Deep is his heart, all encompassing his feelings.
 "(5) LUGALDIMMERANKIA is his name
 that we all pronounced,
 "Whose commands we exalted above those
 of the gods his fathers. (140)
 "He shall be Lord of All the Gods
 of Heaven and Netherworld,³
 The king at whose revelations
 the gods above and below stand in dread.
 "(6) NARI-LUGALDIMMERANKIA

is the name we invoked, instructor of all the gods,¹
 "Who founded for us dwellings out of danger
 in heaven and netherworld,
 "And who divided the stations
 for the Igigi- and Anunna-gods. (145)
 "At his name the gods shall tremble and quake in (their) dwellings.
 "(7) ASALLUHI is that name of his which Anu,²
 his father, pronounced.
 "He is the light of the gods, the mighty leader,
 "Who, according to his name,
 is protective spirit of god and land,
 "And who in mighty single combat
 saved our dwellings from harm.³ (150)
 "Asalluhi they named secondly (8) NAMTILA,
 god who maintains life,⁴
 "Who, according to his nature, repaired the shattered gods,
 "The lord who revived the moribund gods by his sacral spell,⁵
 "Let us praise the destroyer of the wayward foes!
 "Asalluhi, whose name was called thirdly (9) NAMRU, (155)
 "The pure god⁶ who purifies our ways."
 Anshar, Lahmu, and Lahamu named three each of his names,
 They said to the gods their sons,
 "We have named three each of his names,
 "Do you, as we have, invoke his names." (160)
 Joyfully the gods heeded their command,
 As they took counsel in the Assembly Place of the Gods,
 "The valiant son, our champion,
 "Our provider, we will exalt his name!"
 They sat down in their assembly to name (his) destinies, (165)
 In all their rites they invoked of him a name.

1. See above, Tablet I lines 101f. and p. 442 note 3. For the name Marduk, see Sommerfeld, AOAT 213 (1982), 7-12.

2. The text construes MER = "angry," SHAKUSHU = "be appeased, calm." This contrast is developed more fully in the hymn to Marduk that opens the Poem of the Righteous Sufferer; see III.14 Tablet I lines 1-36; III.12a lines 1-3.

3. See Tablet V line 112, translation of Sumerian name.

1. Interpretation of Sumerian name.

2. One expects Anshar on the basis of Tablet VI lines 101 and 159. The substitution may have been intentional if the poet was trying to include the triad Anu-Enlil-Ea (see Tablet VII lines 136, 140; Tablet VI line 64).

3. Etymologizing elements in the name.

4. Interpretation of Sumerian name. It is unclear whether or not DINGIR should be construed as part of the proper name; variant has Namtilaku.

5. That is, saved the gods whom Tiamat would have killed (see p. 477 note 4).

6. Interpretation of NAMRU as Akkadian *namru* "shining," hence "pure" (see General Introduction, E.4).

Tablet VII

(This section deals with Marduk's three Asaru-names [10–12], his five Tutu-names [13–17], his six Shazu-names [18–23], his four Enbilulu-names [24–27], his two Sirsir-names [28–29]. Some of these reflect Marduk's role as a vegetation deity.)

- “(10) ASARI, bestower of cultivation, who established surveys, (1)
 “Creator of grain and fibrous plants,
 who causes vegetation to sprout,¹
 “(11) ASARALIM, who is honored in the house of counsel,
 whose counsel excels,
 “Whom the gods heed, without fear,²
 “(12) ASARALIMNUNNA, the honored one,
 light of the father who begot [him], (5)
 “Who implements the decrees of Anu, Enlil, Ea,
 (who is) Ninshiku.
 “He is their provider who assigns their portions,
 “Whose tiara increases abundance for the land.³
 “(13) TUTU is [he] who effected their restoration,
 “He shall purify their shrines that they may be at rest, (10)
 “He shall devise the spell that the gods may be calm.
 “Should they rise in anger, they shall turn [back].
 “He shall be supreme in the assembly of the gods his [fathers],
 “No one among the gods shall [make himself equal] to him.⁴
 “Tutu is (14) ZIUKKENNA, life of [his] masses, (15)
 “Who established the holy heavens for the gods,
 “Who took control of where they went, assigned their stations,

1. Commentary: RI = “bestower,” RU = “bestow,” SAR = “cultivation,” A = “border,” RA = “establish,” RU = “creation,” SAR = “grain” and “herbs,” SAR read MA as “cause to sprout,” and SAR = “vegetation.”

2. Or: “and feel fear before him” (Lambert, TUAT III/4, 557, with different text). Commentary: SA = “house,” SA = “counsel,” ALIM = “honored,” SA = “excelling,” SA = “counsel,” DINGIR = “god,” SA = “heed,” SA = “fear,” SA = “learn” (i.e., “has not learned to fear”).

3. Or: “Who increases abundance of the field for the land.” Commentary to this name broken.

4. Commentary: TU = “effect,” TU = “restore,” DA (implied phonetic complement to TU) = “he,” TU = “purify,” DU (rhyming sound) = “shrine,” DA = “he,” [DA] = “should,” DU₆DU(?) = “relieve,” TU = “devise,” TU = “spell,” DINGIR = “god,” TI (like TU) = “be at rest,” TU = “be angry,” DA = “should,” TU = “rise,” TU+DU = “turn back,” DA = “should,” DA = “lofty,” relative “supreme,” TA = “in, from among,” TU = “assembly,” DINGIR = “[god, father].”

- “He shall not be forgotten by teeming humankind,
 [let them hold fast to] his [deeds].¹
 “Tutu they called thirdly (15) ZIKU, who maintains purity,
 “God of the fair breeze,²
 lord who hears and accedes (to prayers), (20)
 “Producer of riches and wealth, who establishes abundance,
 “Who turned all our want to plenty,
 “Whose fair breeze we caught whiff of in our great danger,
 “Let them ever speak of his exaltation, let them sing his praises!³
 “Tutu let teeming humankind magnify fourthly
 as (16) AGAKU, (25)
 “Lord of the sacral spell, reviver of the moribund,
 “Who had mercy on the vanquished gods,
 “Who removed the yoke imposed on the gods, his enemies,
 “Who, to free them, created humankind,
 “The merciful, whose power is to revive, (30)
 “Word of him shall endure, not to be forgotten,
 “In the mouth of the people of this land,
 whom his hands have created.⁴
 “Tutu, fifthly, is (17) TUKU,
 his sacral spell shall ever be on their lips,
 “Who with his sacral spell uprooted all the evil ones.
 “(18) SHAZU, who knows the heart⁵ of the gods,
 who was examining the inside, (35)
 “Lest he allow evildoers to escape from him,

1. “Life of his masses” = translation of Sumerian name; “establish” = play on Sumerian ukkenna (“in the assembly”) and Akkadian *ukinmu* “which he establishes.” Commentary: ZI = “[go = way?],” ZI = “[hold?],” ZU (=ZI+U) “[determine],” NA = “sta[tion],” TA = “must not,” TU/ZI = (forget?), TA = “by, from among,” UKKIN = “tee[ming humankind],” TU = “deeds,” DU = “hold.”

2. Literally: “Propitious wind,” “(holy) spirit.”

3. Commentary: DU = “create, name,” ZI = “maintain,” KU = “pure, purity,” DINGIR = “god,” TU = “wind,” DU (rhymes with TU) = “fair,” DINGIR = “lord,” ZI = “listen, agree, produce,” KU = “riches, abundance,” ZI = “establish.” Commentary breaks off here.

4. “Sacral spell” (translation of Sumerian) means primarily an incantation to revive the ill, a special concern of Marduk's, but here refers as well to the protective spell used against Tiamat, as in Tablet V line 61. The “revival” includes saving the gods from Tiamat, sparing the rebellious gods who were doomed to death, and the creation of humankind. How the other explanations were construed in the commentary is unknown.

5. Translation of Sumerian name. The following clause may be read either as a general statement or as a reference to Tablet IV lines 65f., 110ff.

“Who established the assembly of the gods,
 who contented them,
 “Who subdued the unsubmissive,
 their (the gods’) broad [pro]tection,
 “Who administers justice, uproots twisted testimony,
 “In whose place falsehood and truth are distinguished.¹ (40)
 “Shazu they shall praise secondly as (19) ZISI,
 who silenced(?) those who rose (against him),
 “Who banished paralyzing fear from the body
 of the gods his fathers,²
 “Shazu is, thirdly, (20) SUHRIM,
 who uprooted all enemies with the weapon,
 “Who thwarted their plots, turned them into nothingness,
 “Who snuffed out all wicked ones,
 as many as came against him.³ (45)
 “The gods shall ever be joyful in the assembly!
 “Shazu is, fourthly, (21) SUHGURIM,
 who ensured obedience for the gods his fathers,
 “Who uprooted the enemy, destroyed their offspring,
 “Who thwarted their maneuvers, excepting none of them.
 “His name shall be invoked and spoken in the land!⁴ (50)
 “Shazu later generations shall tradite fifthly as (22) ZAHURIM,
 “Who destroyed all adversaries, all the disobedient,
 “Who brought all the fugitive gods into their sanctuaries.
 “This his name shall be the truth!⁵
 “To Shazu, moreover, they shall render all honor sixthly as
 (23) ZAHGURIM, (55)

1. Commentary preserved for lines 37–40, construing [ZI] (like ZU) = “[establish],” [SA] = “assem]bly” (semantic extension from ‘within’ to ‘corporate body’ easily made in Akkadian); DINGIR = “god,” [SA] = “[goo]d,” SA = “heart,” Z[I] = “sub]due, one who assents,” ZU = “[pro]tect, broad, falsehood,” ZI = “true, di[sti]nguish, [pl]ace.”

2. Commentary lost. The first element ZI = “rise up, banish,” SI = “silence, paralyzing fear,” SI (like SU) for “body” (so Böhl, AfO 11 [1936/7], 204); “silences the attacker” (translation uncertain, AHw, 1177b) is evidently a translation of ZI.SI; a wordplay may underlie it.

3. Translation uncertain. Commentary not preserved. SUH = “uproot, thwart, turn back, extinguish(?),” RIM = “all” (etc.).

4. Presumed explanations similar to preceding. Note the progression of each name’s sphere of recognition: “place” (18), “body of the gods” (19), “assembly” (20), and “land” (21), the first name as locus for action, the others loci for praise.

5. Presumed explanations similar to the preceding.

“He it is who destroyed all foes in battle.¹
 “(24) ENBILULU, lord who made them flourish, is he,
 “The mighty one who named them, who instituted offerings,
 “Who established grazing and watering places for the land,
 “Who opened channels, apportioned abundant waters.² (60)
 “Enbilulu they shall [invoke] secondly as (25) EPADUN,
 lord of open country and flood(?),*
 “Irrigator of heaven and earth, former of furrows,
 who formed the sacred(?) plowland in the steppe,
 “Who regulated dike and ditch,
 who delimited the plowed land.³
 “Enbilulu they shall praise thirdly
 as (26) ENBILULU-GUGAL,
 irrigator of the watercourses of the gods,
 “Lord of abundance, plenty, high yields, (65)
 “Producer of wealth, enricher of all the inhabited world,
 “Bestower of grain,* who causes barley to appear.
 “Enbilulu is (27) HEGAL,
 who heaps up abundance⁴ for the ...* peoples,
 “Who rains prosperity over the wide earth,
 who makes vegetation flourish.
 “(28) SIRSIR,
 who heaped up the mountain(s) above Tiamat, (70)
 “Who ravaged the corpse of Tiamat with [his] weapon,
 “Ruler of the land, their faithful shepherd,
 “To whom have been granted* the cultivated field,
 the subsistence field, the furrow,⁵
 “Who crossed vast Tiamat back and forth in his wrath,
 “Passing back and forth, as a bridge,
 at the place of single combat.⁶ (75)

1. Presumed explanations similar to the preceding.

2. Commentary lost. The first epithet is intended as a translation of the Sumerian name.

3. Commentary lost.

4. Epithet = translation of Sumerian name; other explanations not preserved.

5. Or: “Whose hair is the cultivated field, whose tiara is the plowed land.”

6. This passage may contain mythological material about a little-known deity, Sirsir, that is here worked into the Marduk story by association and syncretism. Sirsir, made into a name of Marduk, evidently figured in a tradition in which he slew the ocean in single combat. For discussion, see Landsberger, WO 1 (1950), 362–366.

"Sirsir they named secondly (29) MALAH, let it remain so,
 "Tiamat is his vessel and he the boatman.¹

(The remaining names are treated singly or in groups, beginning with the defeat of Tiamat and ascending to proclamation of Marduk as lord of the universe. Whereas his earlier names referred to his innate nature, his later ones commemorate his roles, accomplishments, and their outcome. Names 30–50 ascend in scope from earth to heaven.)

"(30) GIL, who stores up grain in massive mounds,
 "Who brings forth barley and flocks,
 grantor of the land's seed.²
 "(31) GILIMMA, who established the bond of the gods,
 creator of enduring things, (80)
 "The bridle(?)* that curbed them,
 provider of good things,³
 "(32) AGILIMMA, the lofty one, remover of the diadem,
 who controls the sn[ow],
 "Creator of the earth above the waters,
 establisher of the heights.⁴
 "(33) ZULUM, who assigned fields,
 measured off tracts(?) for the gods,
 "Grantor of portions and food offerings,
 tender of sanctuaries.⁵ (85)
 "(34) MUMMU, creator of heaven and netherworld,
 who guides those astray(?),
 "Divine purifier of heaven and netherworld,⁶ is, secondly,
 (35) ZULUMMU,

"To whom no other among the gods was equal in strength.¹
 "(35) GISHNUMUNAB, creator of all people,²
 who made the world regions,
 "Destroyer of the gods of Tiamat,
 who made humankind from parts of them.³ (90)
 "(36) LUGALABDUBUR,
 the king who thwarted the maneuvers of Tiamat,
 uprooted [her] weapons,
 "Whose support was firm in front and rear.⁴
 "(37) PAGALGUENNA, foremost of all lords,
 whose strength was supreme,
 "Who was greatest of the gods his brethren, lord of them all.⁵
 "(38) LUGALDURMAH, king of the juncture of the gods,
 lord of the great bond, (95)
 "Who was greatest in the abode of kingship,
 most exalted among the gods.⁶
 "(39) ARANUNNA, counsellor of Ea,
 fairest(?) of the gods [his] fathers,
 "Whose noble ways no god whatever could equal.⁷
 "(40) DUMUDUKU, whose pure dwelling is
 renewed in holy hill,
 "Son of holy hill, without whom the lord of holy hill
 makes no decision.⁸ (100)
 "(41) LUGALSHUANNA, king whose strength

1. Malah = Akkado-Sumerian word for "boatman."
 2. Commentary lost.
 3. The sign GIL(IM) is two crossed reeds, here explained as a (celestial) linkage and restraint. "Good things" and "enduring things" could also mean "excellence" and "truth."
 4. Commentary: IL = "lofty," MA = "remove," GIL = "diadem" (could "diadem" refer to the royal pretensions of the enemy?); GIL = "guide," (hence "provide"), "snow," MA = "create," IM = "cloud(?)," read in the commentary erroneously or with a different text as "ea[rth]," DINGIR = "hi[gh?]," MU = "waters" (bilingual pun), GI = "end[ure]." Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 129 suggests that removing the diadem refers to the melting of snow on the mountain peaks.
 5. Commentary: ZU = "[know]" (transitively as "designate"), UL = "[fields]," ZU = "[measure off]," UL = "[forms]" (here: "tracts"); further explanations not preserved.
 6. Explanations broken in commentary; "creator" = translation of Sumerian.

1. Commentary lost.
 2. Commentary lost. NUMUN means "seed" or "semen," see Böhl, AfO 11 (1936/7), 206.
 3. That is, "from something of them" = "their substance" or the like.
 4. Commentary: [LUGAL = "king"], B[IR?] = "thwart"], DU = "ac[tions]" = "maneuvers," AB = "Tiamat" (by extension from AB.BA "ocean"), BU = "root out," DU = "weapon," LU = "[who]," (commentary breaks off; [DUBUR = "foundation"])).
 5. Preserved explanations are [DINGIR] = "god," [PA] = "brethren(?)," [GAL] = "great, hero," [GU] = "totality."
 6. "King" and "lord" = translations of Sumerian. Commentary: LUGAL = "king, lord," DUR = "bond," DINGIR = "god," LU = "who," DUR = "in, dwelling," LUGAL = "king(ship)," MAH = "great(est)," DUR = "among," DINGIR = "god," MAH = "most," "exalted."
 7. Commentary: A.RA = "counsel(lor)," NUN = "Ea," RU = "creator," DINGIR = "god," A = "father," RA = "who," A.RA = "way," N[UN] = "[pr]ince," NU = "no," RU = "[equal]," (breaks off).
 8. "Holy Hill," throne dais in Marduk's temple in Babylon (George, *Topographical Texts*, 287–291). Commentary lost. Dumu-Duku means "Son of Holy Hill" and Lugal-Duku "King of Holy Hill" (the latter refers to Ea).

was outstanding among the gods,
 "Lord, strength of Anu, who became supreme
 at(?) the nomination(?) of Anshar.¹
 "(42) IRUGGA, who ravaged all of them amidst Tiamat,
 "Who gathered all wisdom to himself,
 profound in perception.²
 "(43) IRQINGU, ravager of Qingu, ... of battle,³ (105)
 "Who took charge of all commands, established lordship.⁴
 "(44) KINMA, leader of all the gods, grantor of counsel,
 "At whose name the gods quake for fear like a whirlwind.⁵
 "(45) ESIZKUR shall dwell aloft in the house of prayer,⁶
 "The gods shall bring in their presents before him, (110)
 "Until he receives (all?) their due.
 "None besides him can create artful things,
 "The four people of this land are his creatures,^{7*}
 "No god but he knows how long they will live.
 "(46) GIBIL, who maintained the ... of the weapon, (115)
 "Who because of the battle with Tiamat
 can create artful things,
 "Profound of wisdom, ingenious in perception,
 "Whose heart is so deep that none of the gods
 can comprehend it.⁸
 "(47) ADDU shall be his name, the whole sky he shall cover,
 "His beneficent roar shall thunder over the earth, (120)

1. Commentary lost; perhaps LUGAL = "king," LU = "who," AN = "among," (etc.), ŠU = "strength(?)."

2. IR = "ravage," GU = "all," [IR] = "amidst(?)," [GU] = "all," [GI = "wisdom"], [UR = "gather," [GI = "perception, profound"]].

3. Variant: "like an enemy"; Bottéro, "en plein combat." The passage remains uncertain.

4. Commentary lost; IR = "ravage."

5. Or perhaps "quake (as in a) whirlwind." Commentary lost.

6. "House of Prayer" = translation of Sumerian name. Commentary partially preserved, e.g., IL = "high," RA = "in," E = "house," SIZKUR = "prayer," RA = "dwell," DINGIR = "god," (rest fragmentary).

7. That is, the people of the four points of the compass? For different renderings of this line, see Dalley, BiOr (1995), 86.

8. Commentary: GI = "[be permanent]" (factitively "establish"), ... [LU = "who"], RA = "[in]," IR = "[battle]," MA = "[T]iamat]" (from *mi*, Akkadian word for water?), RU = "[create, do something artful]," GI = "[p]rofound, w[isdom]," RU = "[do]," GI = "[p]erception," IR = "[heart, remote]," RA = "[whose, not]," [IR? = "comprehend"] (breaks off). For line 115, Bottéro, 59 suggests "l'issue de la guerre."

"As he rumbles, he shall reduce the burden of the clouds,
 below, for the people, he shall grant sustenance.¹
 "(48) ASHARU, who, according to his name,
 mustered the gods of destinies,
 "He has taken all peoples in his charge.²
 "(49) NEBERU shall hold the passage of heaven and earth,
 "So they shall not cross above and below
 without heeding him, (125)
 "Neburu is his star that he made visible in the skies.
 "It shall hold the point of turning around,
 they shall look upon him,
 "Saying,
 'He who crossed back and forth,
 without resting, in the midst of Tiamat,
 'Neburu ("Crossing") shall be his name,
 who holds the position in its midst.'
 "He shall maintain the motions of the stars of heaven, (130)
 "He shall herd all the gods like sheep.
 "He shall keep Tiamat subdued,
 he shall keep her life cut short,
 "In the future of humankind, with the passing of time,
 "She shall always be far off, she shall be distant forever."³
 Because he created the firmament
 and fashioned the netherworld, (135)

1. Commentary mostly lost.

2. Commentary mostly lost. "Muster" in the Akkadian is a word homophonous with the name.

3. Or: "May he be without hindrance, may he endure until distant days" (Lambert, TUAT III/4, 601, using different text). The text etymologizes *neberu* as *nēberu* "crossing, passage." Commentary: DINGIR = "star," RA = "which, in," DINGIR = "heaven," E = "visible, splendid," RA = "shall, hold," KUN.SAG.GA = "front-back," DINGIR = "front," RU = "back," RU = "look upon," MA = "saying, son," RA = "which, in," IR = "inside," MA = "ocean" (see above, p. 482 note 8), BU = "cross," RA = "not," BI = "resting, his name" (from Sumerian *mu-bi* "its name"), RA = "shall," NEBERU = Neburu; RA = "hold," IR = "within," RA = "which," DINGIR = "star, heaven," RA = "go, be permanent," IR = "like," RI = "sheep, shepherd" (from Akkadian *rē'û*, shepherd?), DINGIR = "god," IR = "heart," SA = "heart, all (of them)," IR = "subdue," MA = "ocean, ..." SI = "li[fe]," RIM = "be sh[ort]" (life).

Father Enlil has pronounced
 his name (50) 'Lord of the World'.¹
 The Igigi-gods pronounced all the names.
 When Ea heard (them), he was joyful of heart.
 He said, "He whose name his fathers have glorified,
 "His name, like mine, shall be 'Ea'.² (140)
 "He shall provide the procedures for all my offices,
 "He shall take charge of all my commands."
 The great gods called his fifty names
 "The Fifty," they made his position supreme.³

(Composition and purpose of this text, its approval by Marduk.)

They must be grasped: the "first one"⁴ should reveal (them),* (145)
 The wise and knowledgeable should ponder (them) together,
 The master should repeat, and make the pupil understand.
 The "shepherd," the "herdsman" should pay attention,⁵
 He must not neglect the Enlil of the gods, Marduk,
 So his land may prosper and he himself be safe. (150)
 His word is truth, what he says is not changed,
 Not one god can annul his utterance.
 If he frowns, he will not relent,
 If he is angry, no god can face his rage.
 His heart is deep, his feelings all encompassing, (155)
 He before whom crime and sin must appear for judgment.
 The revelation (of the names) that the "first one"
 discoursed before him (Marduk),
 He wrote down and preserved for the future to hear,
 The [wo]rd of Marduk who created the Igigi-gods,

1. The commentary glosses "places" as "heaven"; RU = "create, fashion." For "lord of the world" (that is, "lands"), the commentary has MA = "name," A = "father." "Lord of the Lands" = "Enlil," meaning that Enlil has given Marduk his own name (as Ea does in the succeeding lines). The commentary continues through line 139 as if 137–139 were part of the explanation of "Lord of the World," or at least could be used for such an explanation.

2. Marduk is now made god of wisdom and magic.

3. Marduk is here assigned the number fifty. In Mesopotamian scribal practice, the number 50 was used to write the name of Enlil, so herewith Marduk has replaced Enlil as supreme deity; see p. 443 note 1.

4. See General Introduction, D.1.

5. Kings and other rulers; see p. 18.

[His/Its] let them [], his name let them invoke. (160)
 Let them sound abroad* the song of Marduk,
 How he defeated Tiamat and took kingship.

Text: W. G. Lambert and S. Parker, *Enuma Eliš, The Babylonian Epic of Creation* (Oxford, 1966). I have used this standard text where possible and have indicated only a few variants. Tablet II is based on al-Rawi and George, *Iraq 52* (1990), 150, 152. Additional fragments have been listed by Borger, HKL 2, 151–152; see also Vanstiphout, N.A.B.U. 1987/70 and W. G. Lambert, N.A.B.U. 1987/100. An additional manuscript of Tablet VI was published by Al-Rawi and Black, JCS 46 (1994), 136–139.

Edition: R. Labat, *Le Poème babylonien de la création* (Paris, 1935). Tablet II is edited by al-Rawi and George, *Iraq 52* (1990), 149–157; Tablet V by Landsberger and Kinnier Wilson, JNES 20 (1961), 154–179. I have benefited from detailed comments by Moran on an earlier version of this translation.

Translation: A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*² (Chicago, 1951); Speiser and Grayson, ANET³, 60–72, 501–503; Labat, *Religions*, 36–70; Dalley, *Myths*, 228–277. I am particularly indebted to the treatment by J. Bottéro, *Mythologie*, 602–679. The translation has been extensively revised in accordance with Lambert's 1994 German translation, TUAT III/4, from which I have drawn many new readings and interpretations of key passages. In some cases a different text is implied; these are given in notes pending publication of the sources.

Literature: In general, see Borger, HKL 1, 259–260; HKL 2, 151–152; J. Bottéro, *Annuaire 1975/6*, 70–126; D. O. Edzard, "Schöpfung," WdM, 121–124; T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness* (New Haven, 1976), Chapter 6; "The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat," JAOS 88 (1968), 104–108; A. Kragerud, "The Concept of Creation in Enuma Elish," in *Ex Orbe Religionum, Studia Geo. Widengren, Pars Prior* (Leiden, 1972), 39–49; R. Labat, "Les origines et la formation de la Terre, dans le poème babylonien de la création," AnBi 12 (1959), 205–215; W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *The Journal of Theological Studies* NS 16 (1965), 287–300; Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, 108–129. For the names of Marduk, the following two studies have been used, but will prove a challenge to the non-specialist reader: F. M. Th. de L. Böhl, "Die fünfzig Namen des Marduk," AfO 11 (1936/7), 191–217; J. Bottéro, "Les Noms de Marduk," *Studies Finkelstein*, 5–28.

*Notes to Text: (I 1–8) The proposal of West, *Iraq 59* (1997), 187, against all manuscripts, is unconvincing. (I 2) Hutter, RA 79 (1985), 187–188. (I 6) Held, AOAT 25 (1968), 233–237; for the syntax of this and the first ten lines, Wilcke, ZA 67 (1977), 163–170; Moran, N.A.B.U. 1988/21; Buccellati, *Studies Moran*, 125–128. (I 110) Translation uncertain; see Streck, OrNS 64 (1995), 50 and note 68. (I 119, 121, 123) Lambert, TUAT III/4, 572. (II 126) al-Rawi and George, *Iraq 52* (1990), 157. (II 144) George (unpublished fragment). (IV 72) Borger, RA 72 (1980), 95–96. (IV 125) With AHw, 976a; see CAD M/2, 304. (IV 139) Reading *mašku*. CAD M/1, 342a suggests *parku* "dividing line." (V 9) See Heimpel, JCS 38 (1986), 134. (V 14) Lambert, TUAT III/4, 588. (V 54) Emending: *a-<gu>-ú*. The text of the second half of the line is obscure; see AHw, 1207b. (V 68) George, *Topographical Texts*, 257. (V 126) George, *Topographical Texts*, 256. (V 136) After Bottéro, *Mythologie*, 637. (VI 73) Reading *wšb* with WLM, Lambert, TUAT III/4, 594. Some read *šebū* "have a sufficiency of"; compare CAD N/1, 124a; Bottéro, *Mythologie*, 641. (VI 118) Unclear, for suggestions see CAD M/1, 419b and CAD A/2, 204b; AHw, 634b. (VI 122) CAD

A/1, 298a (“likewise”), Bottéro, *Mythologie*, 644. (VII 61) Translation uncertain; see CAD A/2, 518. (VII 67) So AHW, 1294b, but the parallel in Tablet VII 79 suggests that *šû* “sheep” could be meant here. (VII 68) Word of uncertain meaning, see AHW, 987b. (VII 73) Translation uncertain; compare Lambert, TUAT III/4, 599; CAD M/2, 24e; AHW, 1192a and Bottéro, *Mythologie*, 649. (VII 81) CAD L, 113a; others suggest “trap,” “ring,” “yoke,” or the like. (VII 113f.) Differently Jacobsen, OIP 98 (1990), 103; Dalley, BiOr 52 (1995), 86; von Soden, GAG, 24**.

(VII 145–162) Wilcke, ZA 67 (1977), 171–174. (VII 161) Collation by Lambert, CAD M/1, 367b, *[l]i-šas-s[u-m]a*; von Soden, OLZ 91 (1996), 286: *ši-sis-s[u-ma]* “ist sein Ruf.”