Intertextuality in Babylonian Narrative Poetry:

Anzû, *Enūma Elish*, and *Erra and Ishum*

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Abstract

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This thesis interprets literary allusions in three major Babylonian narrative poems: *Anzû, Enūma Eliš,* and *Erra and Išum*. The use of the term 'intertextuality' recognises that these readings do not necessarily attempt to reconstruct what the authors were thinking, but are based empirically on what can be found in the text, and that multiple interpretations are possible. The methodology used has been drawn from scholarship on Latin and Greek literature.

The aim is not only to identify relationships to other poems but also to consider what these mean, closely analysing the similarities and differences in order to draw out each allusion's full significance. A wide variety of allusive techniques have been found, showing great depth, complexity, and sophistication. Chapter One finds that *Anzû* alludes to *Lugal-e, Labbu, Atraḫasīs, The Return of Lugalbanda,* and *balaĝ*-laments. Chapter Two explores allusions in *Enūma Eliš* to *Anzû,* which depict Marduk as the new Ninurta. Chapter Three analyses allusions in *Enūma Eliš* to *Atraḫasīs,* which contribute to Marduk's superseding of Enlil. Chapter Four studies allusions in *Enūma Eliš* to *Lugal-e,* finding that Marduk's restoration of order after the battle owes as much to Ninurta's precedent as does the battle itself. Chapter Five examines allusions in *Erra and Išum* to *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* which present Išum as a new Ninurta, and Erra as a chaotic Anzû figure. Chapter Six considers allusions in *Erra* to *Enūma Eliš, Atraḫasīs,* and *Gilgameš,* which work together to show the cosmic order unravelling. In many of these examples, the relationship is a competitive one, where *Anzû, Enūma Eliš,* and *Erra* each conspicuously out-do the protagonists of the poems which came before them. Chapter Seven finds that the underlying structure of *Erra and Išum* parallels that of *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur,* and argues it is deliberate, which raises intriguing questions about the continuity of Sumerian city laments after the Old Babylonian period. Thus it is demonstrated that allusion is a vital part of Akkadian poetics, and that close-reading Akkadian texts unlocks deeper meaning within them.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations follow the conventions of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary with the following exceptions:

AB – Assyriologische Bibliothek

Atr – Atraḫasīs

Anzû – Standard Babylonian *Anzû*

CRRAI – Compte Rendu, Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale

EAE – Enūma Anu Enlil

Ee – Enūma Eliš

Erra – Erra and Išum

Gilg – Standard Babylonian *Gilgameš*

LE – Eridu Lament

LN – Nippur Lament

LU – Ur Lament

Lugalbanda – The Return of Lugalbanda (*Lugalbanda II*)

LSU – The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur

LW – Uruk Lament

SANE – Sources from the Ancient Near East

Contents

Introduction……...1
Methodology: Intertextuality and Allusion…….....3
Previous approaches…….……..8
Specific methodological concerns……...11
The Babylonian literary background……...17
Reflections on religious history……22
The origins of Apsû and Ti'āmtu……...24
Storm gods versus the sea……26
Apsû and Ti'āmtu – Oceanus and Tethys…….29
The Primary Sources……..30
Core Akkadian texts……...30
Anzû……30
Enūma Eliš…….……..33
Erra and Išum……..39
Sumerian texts……43
Lugal-e…….43
The Return of Lugalbanda……...46
The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur……47
Other Akkadian texts…….……48
Atraḫasīs…….……48
Gilgameš……..52
Labbu……54
Variants and translations……..55
Chapter One – Allusions in *Anzû*…..……56
Anzû against the background of *Lugal-e* and *An-gin*$_7$……...57
New names, new identities……...67
Labbu……70
Atraḫasīs……..75
The Return of Lugalbanda……...77
Lamentations……..83
Reverse intertextuality…….……..87
Chapter Two – *Enūma Eliš* and *Anzû*……90
Marduk as the new Ninurta ……93
The dutiful son……..97
Blood on the wind……100
The tablet of destinies……..103
Structural imitations and adaptations…….……..117
The names……118

Structural adaptations, *hysteron-proteron,* and repetition……121
Character adaptation: Šar-ur and Kakka……128
The battle: poisonous monsters, 'poisonous' arrows……132
Magic: from Anzû to Ti'āmtu to Marduk……136
Chapter Three – *Enūma Eliš* and *Atraḫasīs*……140
Noise and the deluge……143
The personification of Apsû……149
Overthrowing the bad kings……155
The role of Ea……157
The stripping of the crown……158
The second sleep disturbance……161
Enlil the fowler……164
Creations……168
Freedom from toil……173
The creation of Babylon……175
Chapter Four – *Enūma Eliš* and *Lugal-e*……177
Weapons……180
Opponents……185
Establishing order……190
New creation……190
Controlling the water……193
50 destinies, 50 names……198
Chapter Five – *Erra*: Allusions to *Anzû* and *Lugal-e*……208
Anzû: Išum as Ninurta……209
Erra as Anzû……217
Stripped of power……220
Lugal-e……222
Išum the door……227
Chapter Six – Overturning the old order: *Erra* and *Enūma Eliš, Atraḫasīs, Gilgameš*……232
Enūma Eliš……233
Turning Marduk's own poem against him……234
Atraḫasīs and the deluge……241
Disturbed sleep: *Atrahasīs* and *Enūma Eliš*……246
A time before the flood – *Gilgameš*……255
Marduk's defeat and Erra's victory……259
Chapter Seven – *Erra* and *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*……262
LSU and *Erra* in detail……271
The net of Enlil……283
Conclusion – A self-conscious tradition……287
Findings of individual chapters……287
The range of allusive techniques……293

Character comparison……293
Reversals……..……295
Multiple reference……...296
Structural allusions……297
Hysteron-proteron……299
Reverse intertextuality……299
Allusions to allusions……300
Implications for literary history……301
References……...……...304

Introduction

Babylonian literature is highly complex and sophisticated. Babylonian narrative poems are brimming with puns and word play, graphic puns, games that depend on the arrangement of the text on the tablet, metrical tricks, flourishes of alliteration and sound, and allusions to other poems. If we can notice and appreciate the full significance of any of these aspects, we gain a much deeper understanding and enjoyment of the poem in all its richness and nuance.

A poem understood in isolation can yield only so much. Scholars of the ancient world usually think it reasonable and necessary to try to understand a poem in its context – that is, interpreting references to places, obscure names, religious practices, and so on. When we come across something that has a parallel in the world outside the poem, we naturally use what we know of that world to understand the poem. So, for example, the simile in *Erra and Išum* IV.43 when Marduk compares Babylon to a cylinder seal hung on 'the neck of the sky' (*ina ti-ik-ki* ^{d}*a-nim*). This is a lofty and abstract image which is beautiful in its own right. However, if we translate ^{d}*a-nim* as the god 'Anu' rather than 'sky', and we know that giant cylinder seals made out of precious materials really were dedicated to gods and hung around the necks of their statues,[1] the image starts to make more sense and we can appreciate what lies behind the comparison: Marduk sees his city as a precious, sacred object, worthy to be a gift to a god. Much more is gained from unpacking what the simile really means.

Similarly when we come across an allusion to another poem in a text, it does not help us very much just to point out that the same line, concept, or character occurs elsewhere in a similar context. We ought to stop and consider what the allusion means. Interpreting an

[1] E.g. the seal dedicated to Marduk, VA Bab 646, RIMB 2: 104 ff.

allusion requires us to compare the text before us with the text to which it is alluding (the 'source text'), noticing the similarities and differences between them, as it is these which are key to understanding what the point of the comparison is (see Lyne, 1987: 102-3; Pucci, 1987: 237). Some scholars prefer the term 'reference' to 'allusion' because it encapsulates this sense more precisely: the text sends us back to consult its models and then we are to consider how the new text differs from them (Thomas, 1986: 172). The first line of *Erra* is very similar to the first line of Standard Babylonian *Anzû:* the similarity shows that Išum is addressed as the hero of the piece, comparable to Ninurta, while the difference is the first of many indications throughout the poem that Išum's warrior aspect is different and superior to that of Ninurta.

This approach of close-reading ancient texts is well-established in the field of Classics, in which I have a background. The aim of this study is to read Mesopotamian literary texts in a similar way: to interpret allusions and see how much more the poems can yield, to investigate the frequency and depth of allusion present in *Anzû, Enūma Eliš,* and *Erra and Išum.* I propose that reading Babylonian texts with this approach will help to do justice to them as the complex, multi-faceted, and dynamic works of literature that they are.

I have chosen these three poems because connections between them are already well-established but under-explored. As heroic narratives about warrior gods, they form a coherent group which stand in a historical relationship, each one alluding to the poems that precede it. Lambert (1986) first acknowledged that *Enūma Eliš* borrows elements from *Anzû* to depict Marduk as the new Ninurta, the implications of which were highlighted by Machinist: 'The similarities with and modifications of the *Anzû* text...allow us to appreciate more precisely what *Enūma Eliš* is about' (2005: 44). Machinist's article is of particular relevance to this thesis, because he frames these borrowings as deliberate artistry, and extends the picture to include *Erra and Išum.* Allusions to *Anzû* in *Erra* identify Išum with

Ninurta, the hero, and Erra with Anzû, the threat to the cosmic order. *Erra* alludes to *Enūma Eliš* at the very moments where Erra destroys the cosmic order that Marduk created in the latter poem, and emphasises Erra supplanting Marduk as ruler of Babylon (Machinist, 2005: 47-8). Frahm has also noted this aspect of *Erra* as a 'counter-text' to *Enūma Eliš,* reversing its themes and thereby undermining its authority (Frahm, 2010, 2011: 347-9). *Erra* thus builds on and subverts the allusive patterns in *Enūma Eliš,* and the three poems form a set which reflect on each other.

This study aims to examine in detail what these borrowings mean, but also to look outside these three poems to explore intertextuality with other texts. Thus chapter one begins with *Anzû* itself, finding allusions to *Lugal-e, Labbu, Atraḫasīs, The Return of Lugalbanda,* and *balaĝ*-laments. The next three chapters focus on *Enūma Eliš:* chapter two examines the numerous allusions to *Anzû,* chapter three explores allusions to *Atraḫasīs,* and chapter four looks at allusions to *Lugal-e.* The final three chapters concentrate on *Erra and Išum:* chapter five explores *Lugal-e* and *Anzû,* chapter six groups *Enūma Eliš, Atraḫasīs,* and *Gilgameš,* and chapter seven argues for a deliberate connection with *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur,* as well as with *balaĝ*-laments. *Anzû, Enūma Eliš,* and *Erra and Išum* are thus addressed in chronological order, since each one builds on the last.

Methodology: Intertextuality and Allusion

The term 'intertextuality' refers to a system where texts relate to each other. It encompasses all types of text within it, and all the different ways that they can relate, whether by deliberate allusion, quotation, copy-and-paste incorporation, use of stock phrases which are shared by other texts, echoing of a concept, or even just a casual similarity which

reminds the reader of something they came across elsewhere. The names at the end of *Enūma Eliš* can be said to be intertextual with various god lists, for example, whatever their exact relationship – whether they are based on one specific list, or have vague similarities with others which are related to it – the similarities spark comparisons. Intertextuality is really a property of language itself, in that in any language, culture, or literary system, there are bound to be phrases, topics, figures of speech that recur, and which are the building blocks we use to create new utterances, sentences, and images. This, at least, is closer to what the term originally meant when it was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966, as a philosophical statement about the nature of language (see Kristeva, 1980). It has since come to be used in many different ways, often as a synonym for 'allusion', so much so that Kristeva herself stopped using it and replaced it with the term 'intersubjectivity' instead. The most common use of the word 'intertextual' today is simply for connections 'between texts', and that, in a basic sense, will be how I will use it.

If intertextuality is the larger system, allusion is more specific. When we say that a line of poem X alludes to poem Y we are pointing to one specific intertextual connection. By saying this, however, we also implicitly make the poem a bearer of intention. We imply that the poem *means* to say this, that its author is deliberately nudging us towards this comparison. This is where the methodological arguments begin. Since the 1960s there has been much anxiety over this 'problem' – how can we know what the author really intended? In a lecture given in 1968, Barthes famously declared that the author was dead – i.e. that s/he had no relevance to our interpretation of a text and it was a pointless enterprise to try to reconstruct what s/he really thought (published in Barthes, 1977). This was thought to be true even if the author was still alive and could just be asked, for the authors themselves were not

in control of their literary language. Rather, 'the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture' (Barthes, 1977:146).

Writing authors and their intentions completely out of an analysis of cuneiform literature might then seem to be a useful approach. It is perfectly possible to trace connections between poems, compare them and analyse the significance that emerges, without speaking at all of what the poem or author is 'trying' to do. However, this is not the approach I take. More recently, literary critics have claimed back intention as a useful concept. Umberto Eco speaks of *intentio operis,* 'the intention of the work', which is essentially to draw sensible conclusions about what the text is doing from the text itself, without invoking any biographical information about its author (Eco, 1992: 66). It is this biographical criticism which provoked postmodernist theorists to deny the author to begin with, as the approach was taken to extremes in the early twentieth century.[2] It was argued, for example, that the Earl of Oxford was more likely to have written *Hamlet* than Shakespeare, because he had been captured by pirates whereas Shakespeare had not (Shapiro, 2010: 303; chapter 3). Supposedly direct experience made the Earl of Oxford more able to write about Hamlet's experience than Shakespeare, who merely had indirect knowledge and imagination to work from. One extreme position easily provokes another, but as always the truth is somewhere in between, and the pendulum has now swung back the other way. Just one year after the appearance of *The Death of the Author* Michael Foucault delivered a lecture exploring the function of the author (published in Foucault, 1977). Among scholars of English literature today it is now common to read, for example, the politics of Wordsworth's *Prelude* in the light of him seeing his friends beheaded during the French revolution, or the poetry of Sylvia

[2] And in Classics much later: cf. Conte, 'I am trying to purge any excess of intentionalism from the concept of *imitatio*' (1986: 28)

Plath and Ted Hughes in the light of their turbulent relationship. In Classics, Heath has argued that asking questions about intentions is not to ask about unknowable psychological states, but rather to enquire into the text as the product of purposive behaviour (2002: 63-4). What matters is not to go to extremes: to be aware of the limits of what we can know, and be reasonable in our assumptions.

As Assyriologists we are in no danger of falling into the traps of the extremes of the intentional fallacy (term coined by Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1946), because we know nothing about our authors' lives, in most cases not even their names. However, certain assumptions have been made about them based on what we find in the texts, and this seems to me to be entirely legitimate. It is obvious that the 'point' of *Enūma Eliš* (or at least one of them) was to elevate Marduk and so justify Babylon's rise to power. The evidence is so much in the text that it would be difficult to draw any other conclusion (of course, one can point out other 'purposes' of the poem and disagree about relative emphases, but this would not invalidate the claim). From this, it is often extrapolated that *Enūma Eliš* (henceforth *Ee*) was written by a priest (or priests) of Marduk for the explicit purpose of exalting their god above all others. There seems to me to be nothing wrong with this, given that whoever wrote *Ee* and Babylonian poems in general must have been highly educated to the level that only a priest is likely to have been. This is more akin to Eco's *intentio operis* than speculating about what was happening in the author's mind, and it is not likely to lead us to absurd conclusions.

However, we can go further. Allusions can in fact help us to understand more about the text's original purpose. For example, correspondences between *Anzû* and *Labbu* show that the competitive relationship between these poems is in fact a result of the competitive relationship between the gods who are their protagonists. As part of the theology that sees Ninurta/Ningirsu as superseding all other warrior gods, he takes over their stories. This is in

line with what is known about religious developments in the Old Babylonian period when *Anzû* was composed, and so this interpretation fits with the contemporary context of the poem. It is also the same phenomenon we see later in *Ee* which puts Marduk in competition with Ninurta, at a time when Marduk took over from Ninurta in the world outside the poem. In this light, a literary allusion can be seen as another piece of evidence which can be used to reconstruct the ancient Mesopotamian world view. The study of ancient texts is exactly this, an attempt to work out what they *mean.* We cannot do this without trying to reconstruct their original purpose, which comes back to the intentions of whoever wrote them.

Those who prefer not to speak of authorial intention do so because they fear the discussion will be reduced to arguing over what the author was thinking, which in the case of ancient Mesopotamia, is obviously irrecoverable. However, the notion is problematic anyway, since even if the author unconsciously wrote a line which evokes another poem, it cannot be denied that the similarity is there. It may even still fit very well with the overall programme that the author did intend. In fact, much of the process of writing is 'unconscious': no matter how much writers plan their work, when it comes to producing it, elements of the unconscious assist. Critics can discern intentions from lines which were not originally written with that intention specifically in mind, and yet, the writer can agree that such an interpretation is true to their overall aim. What is conscious and unconscious in an author's work blurs into indistinction, but it turns out that one does not have to know what the author was thinking after all to make insightful interpretations of their work.

I am arguing for deliberate, intended allusion in these poems. However, I choose the word 'intertextuality' for the title of this thesis because it acknowledges that multiple interpretations are possible. No two readers will interpret a poem in exactly the same way, but their readings are equally valid as long as they are based on what is there in the text.

From an intertextualist viewpoint, the reader is the one who constructs meaning by drawing these connections. Emphasising the reader's interpretation sidesteps arguments about what the author intended and open up the rich possibilities of literary polyphony. It is even possible for there to be contradictory readings of the same text, as in Virgil's *Aeneid* which exalts Augustus at the same time as undermining him through allusion (e.g. Lyne, 1987: 27-32). When we stay open to these possibilities when reading a text, a variety of voices emerge. However, at the same time, we need the idea of the author to be able to talk about allusion in a way that does justice to the complexity of these poems: 'Without some idea of the poet as aetiologist, as mobilizer of his own tradition, ever tendentious and ever manipulative, our accounts of literary tradition will always turn out too flat. If we are to dramatize the immediacy of the interests at stake in the dynamics of appropriation, we must be prepared to personalize them' (Hinds, 1998: 14; cf. Lyne, 1987: 3; cf. Heath, 2002: 92).

What these philosophical debates about intertextuality have done for us is to show that these arguments about whether or not the author intended something were really just about how strong the resemblance was (Fowler, 1997: 15). The term 'intertextuality' keeps the enquiry empirical and focused on the evidence in the text (as Lyne, 1994; Fowler, 2000: 112). The term 'allusion' can remain, then, a convenient way to talk about a specific intertextual connection, so long as we remember its limitations.

Previous approaches

My methodology is informed by approaches to Greek and Latin literature that have long been employed to rediscover and make sense of allusions. The study of allusions has been a core part of the discipline ever since its inception. However, there have also been

many theoretical discussions concerning the terms 'allusion' and 'intertextuality' and a variety of viewpoints are held, depending on how author-centred the approach is.

Intertextual approaches are most highly developed in Latin studies, which have led the way in adopting new critical techniques for the analysis of ancient poetry.[3] The readiness of scholars to embrace intertextuality in this field is due to the fact that we know that Roman literary culture valued allusion and imitation highly, not as slavish dependence on earlier texts but as a way of enhancing a new work and even aiming to improve on its model (Russell, 1979; Hutchinson, 2013: 30). Thus the sense is often one of progress and competition, rather than derivativeness and degeneration.[4] This culture has its roots in the Greek Hellenistic world and the aesthetic of the Alexandrian poets, who favoured a learned, even scholarly approach to literature (see e.g. Giangrande, 1967). Thus by exploring associations between texts, we are engaging in the same process as these ancient readers, albeit with our own, twenty-first century perspective.

Allusion is recognised as a vital part of classical and archaic Greek poetry (e.g. Garner, 1989). The study of intertextuality has been slower to take root in scholarship on early Greek literature but is growing (Fowler, 1997: 28 with references). A school of thought known as 'Neo-analysis' proposes that the Iliad and Odyssey meaningfully allude to other poems, which do not survive other than in summaries of their content or quotations (for overviews of neo-analysis see Clark, 1986; Willcock, 1997). The recent explosion in interest in the potential relationships between early Greek poetry and that of the ancient Near East (e.g.

[3] First with Pasquali (1951). See especially Conte (1986); Barchiesi (1984); Lyne (1987) and (1994); Farrell (1991); Fowler (1997) and (2000); Hinds (1998).
[4] Cf. Barchiesi (1993) for a different argument about dependence on tradition as meaningful engagement.

Burkert, 1992; Penglase, 1994; West, 1997) has led neo-analysts to look beyond Greece for potential sources of Homer, even suggesting allusion to *Gilgameš* (Currie, 2011).

The intertextual approach has thus been used for many types of literary cultures, from the 'bookish' Hellenistic scholars and their Roman successors, to the performance context of Greek tragedy and lyric, to the controversial world of Homer and orality. Even in contexts where we have no explicit statements that allusion was part of the shared aesthetic, meaningful allusion has been found. The same is true in Mesopotamia: although we have no Mesopotamian literary criticism to guide us as to how they interpreted their literature, it evidently contains references, quotations, and learned scribal games, all of which point towards a literary culture with some of the same features as those in the later Classical world. It is this which makes the application of this methodology particularly relevant to the cuneiform world. This has been noticed by Classicists too: it has been argued that *Gilgameš* uses strategies of allusion similar to those used by Homer (Currie, 2011).

The scribal education of Mesopotamia familiarised students with many different types of text. Particularly in the case of literary texts, where we have a sophisticated and learned approach to reading and writing, these other texts would be recalled, whether consciously or unconsciously, and inform the interpretation of the work. By reconstructing the relationships between texts, we can try to reconstruct the range of associations which the Mesopotamians would use to interpret their literature, and we can come closer to understanding it. Vanstiphout argued for this approach in 1986, giving several examples of high literary consciousness from Sumerian literature which refer to other texts and traditions (H. Vanstiphout, 1986a: 217-27). We can expect this common level of knowledge amongst scribes of the early first millennium also, since a survey of the libraries so far excavated reveals that they contain almost the same texts (Charpin, 2010: 214).

Overviews of types of intertextual relationships in Akkadian literature are given by Foster (2005: 22-6, 2007: 113-14). Important studies are by Reiner (1985), who explores the nuances and literary merits of Assyro-Babylonian poetry; Hallo (1990), who draws attention to the prevalence of intertextuality in Mesopotamian literature and offers some observations on the occurrence of proverbs in literary texts; Black (1998), who explores in great detail intertextuality in the Sumerian poem of *Lugalbanda;* Lambert (1986), who argues for an intertextual relationship between *Enūma Eliš* and *Anzû;* and Machinist (2005), who extends this to include *Erra.* Halton (2009) finds allusions to epics within oracles, and Cooley (2008) finds allusions to astronomical omens in *Erra.* Frahm shows that *Erra* is a subversive response to *Enūma Eliš* (2011). From a more theoretical perspective, Pongratz-Leisten analyses *Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi* as an intertextual composition (2010) using the terminology of the theorist Genette (1997), and Pearce reflects on the intertextuality inherent in the cuneiform writing system and culture (2006). Most recently in Sumerian studies, Feldt looks at intertextual references in the *Gudam* text (2004), an article by Alster analysing *Inanna's Descent* speaks of intertextual links with other literary works, rituals, and incantations, calling it 'an innovative and original literary conglomerate' rather than simply a myth (2011: 71), and Gabbay explores intertextual connections between proverbs and Emesal laments (2011). In Akkadian literature, articles by Katz (2011) and Seri (2012, 2014) explore some allusions in *Enūma Eliš.* These represent only the beginning of what is possible in our field.

Specific methodological concerns

How can we reasonably determine what counts as an allusion? Some critics stress the need to distinguish between 'accidental allusions' and intentional ones (e.g. Halton, 2009: 51),

but as already discussed, this is impossible and unnecessary. Hinds argues that we should embrace this fact and exploit the possibilities offered by it (1998: 34). In considering Greek tragedy, Taplin proposes that 'the only question we can ask…is this: is it *there* or is it not? 'Is it there?' If the point is to be accepted, it should (broadly speaking) meet three conditions: it should be prominent, coherent, and purposeful' (1978: 6). If the allusion stands out, if it coheres with the rest of the poem, and it contributes something interesting, then we are justified in interpreting it.[5] Some of the allusions I discuss may not seem prominent at first sight since many of them have gone undetected until now, but this is due to our unfamiliarity with cuneiform literature as compared with that of a native Mesopotamian. Prominence is difficult to define, since whatever criteria are proposed, a prominent allusion can usually be found which conforms to the opposite (see Silk, 1974: 66). In the end it comes down to probability: how *likely* is it that this is an allusion? Does it make *sense*? While a reader is entitled to make whatever connections they like, some connections will be more widely accepted than others. And yet, allusions cannot be proved or disproved (cf. Garner, 1989: 1): 'one of the reasons for the durability and continuing usefulness of [the term] 'allusion'…is precisely the teasing play which it defines between revelation and concealment (Hinds, 1998: 23).

The frequency of words and phrases in the cuneiform corpus can to some extent address the likelihood of an allusion to an exact quotation. Rare words and phrases are striking and prominent when they reoccur, and can be clear signposts to a famous usage of them. Conversely, we might think that the more common the phrase, the less likely it is to

[5] Cf. Fowler, 'We require a correspondence to stand out and to make sense, that is, if someone wants to convince the interpretative community of a particular intertextual relation, s/he must say how the correspondence between the source- and target-texts is special, and s/he must do something interesting with it, make it mean' (1997: 20).

evoke one particular text. However, while this kind of evidence might increase or decrease the likelihood of allusion, its absence cannot rule out the possibility. Firstly, allusions are often echoes of an idea and may use different words from the text they refer to, yet strongly and recognisably evoke it (Halton, 2009: 51-2). Secondly, even if the language used is formulaic or generic, this cannot discount an allusion. It is possible for one particular use of a formula to become well known, and thus alluded to. For example, the exclamation 'me miserum!' in the first poem of Ovid's *Amores* is considered to be an allusion to a specific use of the phrase in the first poem of Propertius' elegies (McKeown, 1989: 27). This is despite the fact that it was a common phrase in Roman speech: the pull exerted by the popularity of Propertius, the fact that Ovid writes in the same genre, the similarities of the contexts, and the prominent position of both instances in the first poems of their respective collections make it likely that this is such an allusion (Hinds, 1998: 30-34).

In fact, it can even be said that the prevalence of formulae, generic language, and topoi can, rather than make allusion impossible, actually *enable* it (Pucci, 1987; Hinds, 1998: 34). Each redeployment of a formula will have its own individual meaning due to its use in a different context (Pucci, 1987: 29), and yet will resonate with its uses elsewhere in the tradition. Thus Pucci argues that the repetitive nature of Homer's language makes allusion inevitable, as it results in 'an incessant play of sameness and difference' which is the very nature of allusion (1987: 29). Type scenes and literary topoi can, as well as alluding to famous individual instances, allude to the tradition as a whole, invoking the memory of their use in multiple contexts (Hinds, 1998: 34-47). This is an equally rich and valid way of engaging with a literary tradition. It would be fruitful to apply this kind of analysis to cuneiform literature in, for example, the stock description of the netherworld which reoccurs in *Ištar's Descent, Nergal and Ereškigal,* and *Gilgameš.* However, my focus in this thesis is on the ways that

poems refer specifically to other poems, and so this kind of approach will not be discussed at length.

Thus commonality or rarity of phrases is actually far less important as a determining criterion than may first appear. It can be a useful piece of evidence to weigh into the balance, but it only changes the nature of the interpretation rather than confirming or denying it.

What about similarities of plot? My analysis often compares the sequence of events in these poems as a meaningful way of articulating similarities and differences between warrior gods and their literary predecessors. However, it could be argued that any poems about warrior gods will inevitably have similar structures because they belong to the same genre, and because of the patterns inherent in certain types of stories. Vladimir Propp identified certain elements in common to the structures of all Russian folk tales, for example, suggesting that despite differences in detail, on the structural level they were strikingly similar (1968). Or it could be said that only seven basic plots exist (as those in e.g. Booker, 2004), and so any poem about a warrior's rise to power will inherently have similarities with that of others. The answer to this partly overlaps with the response to formulaic language: the reoccurrence of these structures inherently *enables* comparison. In fact, a strong expectation of how a plot will unfold makes it all the more noticeable when a poem deviates from the expected norm. The fact that *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* are famous instances of 'the warrior god's rise to power' means that they in turn become programmatic: when *Ee* makes specific, verbal allusions to these poems, it cannot help but spark comparisons with their structures as well. The reader will remember how Ninurta behaved in these previous poems more generally, and will notice whether Marduk follows suit or deviates from these actions. The author has no choice in this matter: anyone writing a poem about Ninurta cannot prevent the reader from thinking of how it compares with its famous predecessors, just as the portrayal

of Marduk in *Erra* cannot escape comparison with the portrayal of Marduk in *Ee* (cf. Fowler, 1997: 15-17). The poet can, however, use this inevitability to their advantage, and play with these expectations, and this is what I believe is happening when I speak of 'structural allusion'.

Structural allusions are not inevitably due to coincidence, but can be a very real part of how the author shapes the poem to make specific points. I believe these are worth interpreting when textual correspondences point towards this as well as there being casual similarities. For example, there are many structural similarities between *Ee* and *Anzû*, but there are also numerous and specific textual allusions in *Ee* to *Anzû* which signpost a direct and deep engagement with this earlier poem, and thus it is reasonable to include the structure as part of this programme. Indeed, it can be shown that the structure of *Ee* is in fact based on the structure of *Anzû*, which makes analysis of them all the more relevant. However this can be extended further: I propose that playing with the structure of earlier poems is in fact a fundamental and widely used strategy of Mesopotamian intertextuality, as it can be seen not only in *Ee* with *Anzû* but also *Ee* and *Lugal-e*, and *Erra* and the *Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur*.

Another phenomenon I discuss is that of 'reverse intertextuality'. I use this term when an allusion in one text engages with an earlier text in such a way that makes it impossible to read that earlier text in the same way again: text B projects itself back into text A to influence how we read it. Parallels for this can be seen in Classical texts, such as Lucan's description of the mutilated trunk of Pompey in *De Bello Civili I* (I.685-6) which alludes to the description of the mutilated trunk of Priam in Virgil's *Aeneid* (2.537-8). The effect of this is that on reading the *Aeneid*, the trunk of Priam seems already to be an allusion to Pompey, even though Virgil was writing before Lucan (Narducci, 1973; Hinds, 1998: 8). In some ways this is an inevitable

consequence of intertextuality (Fowler, 1997: 27). However, often the allusion in text B is markedly strong and competitive, and seems really to be pushing us towards a different reading of text A. To take a Mesopotamian example, Anzu in the Sumerian *The Return of Lugalbanda* is a benevolent helper of mankind, but in Akkadian *Anzû* he is an evil threat to the cosmic order. When we read *The Return of Lugalbanda* after reading *Anzû* we remember this shift and cannot see him innocently as we did before. Yet this is not just an inevitable result of a different portrayal, but rather specific allusions to *Lugalbanda* in *Anzû* encourage us to read the earlier poem in this way. To take another example: it no longer seems impressive for Tišpak to have the help of his magic seal if we read *Labbu* after reading *Anzû,* where it is not the hero who has magic assistance but the enemy, yet the hero is able to overcome it. The competitive element to this kind of dynamic is what persuades me of the likelihood of its intentionality, and is explored in more detail in the individual chapters in which it occurs.

Understanding allusions often helps to make more sense of these poems, as lines and concepts that once seemed obscure are illuminated by their literary context. The realization that a poem is alluding to earlier texts explains utterances that otherwise are nonsensical: 'the correct, that is, the complete interpretation of the poem is made possible for the reader only by the intertext'(Riffaterre, 1978: 149-50). For example, *Ee*'s allusion to *Lugal-e* makes sense of the 'blocking' of Mummu, which is otherwise perplexing (see pp. 197-8). However, as well as solving puzzles, intertextual readings can set up tensions and raise questions (Barchiesi, 2001: 146). They allow other perspectives to emerge, sometimes radically different from what seems to be the text's main message.[6]

[6] This is what is meant by Lyne's 'further voices' (1987).

Ultimately this study is an empirical one, based firmly on the texts. I argue for the interpretations that strike me as most likely, using evidence from both the texts themselves and the wider Mesopotamian cultural context. However, I acknowledge they are not the only ones possible. 'The intertext presents vistas and possibilities that would otherwise remain unglimpsed and inaccessible' (Farrell, 1997: 237).' Exploring intertextuality is only the start of interpretation.

The Babylonian literary background

The poems discussed here belong to a highly educated scribal milieu. They may have originated as oral traditions known to ordinary people,[7] but the texts that we have are clearly the product of an intellectual elite. Of the poems discussed in this thesis, only in the cases of *Erra* and *Gilgameš* is an author named. Kabti-ilānī-Marduk, son of Dābibi, names himself at the end of *Erra*, claiming that the poem was revealed to him in a dream (V.43-4).[8] Kabti-ilānī-Marduk clearly belonged to a scholarly milieu, since he alludes to the omen series *Enūma Anu Enlil* (Cooley, 2008), and plays with Sumerian etymologies, for example, the epithets of Išum in the prologue, which can hardly be accidental (Lambert, 1958: 400). This scholarly play can also be seen in *Ee* in the names of Marduk. An idea of the intended audience of *Erra* can be gleaned from V.49-56, where Erra lists the peoples he wishes to praise him. As well as gods, kings, and princes, these are ^{lu2}*nāru*(NAR), 'the cultic singer' (V.53), ^{lu2}*ṭupšarru*(DUB.SAR), 'the scribe' (V.55), and *ummânū*, 'the scholars' (V.56). The singer, the scholars, and the higher-

[7] Cf. e.g. Feldt (2011) for folktale patterns in *Lugal-e.*
[8] Assuming he is a real person. 'Marduk is respected among the gods' would be an odd choice of name for an invented author given Marduk's negative portrayal in the poem.

ranking scribes all would have been trained in a temple-related environment where familiarity with literary works was perpetuated.

The Standard Babylonian *Gilgameš* was ascribed to Sîn-lēqi-unninni, who may have drawn on older versions to produce the Standard Babylonian version, probably in the Kassite period (George, 2003: 28-33). Interestingly, it was not only the Old Babylonian version he drew on, but also Sumerian compositions, since tablet XII is a translation of the Sumerian composistion *Bilgames, Enkidu, and the Netherworld.* As we will see, this regard for Sumerian traditions as well as Akkadian is prominent in *Anzû, Ee,* and *Erra*. Even as long as a thousand years after Sumerian ceased to be a spoken language, its literature was copied and revered. Sîn-lēqi-unninni was claimed by a family of scholars in Late Babylonian Uruk as their mythical ancestor, which at least shows that he was considered part of this milieu in later times.[9]

Some of these literary texts were not only read by scholars but used by them in their ritual activities. Four manuscripts of *Erra* were found in the house of a family of exorcists at Assur (N 4, Pedersén, 1986: 56), one of which was written on an amulet-shaped tablet (KAR 169), and elswhere an extract from the poem was found written on an amulet (see Reiner, 1960). This implies the poem's utility to ritual specialists, and is confirmed by the poem itself which proclaims its function in averting evil at the end (V.57-8). In the same house, an extract of *Lugal-e* was found on a school tablet together with a list of stones and an incantation ritual (Pedersén, 1986: 56). Many of the scholarly texts commenting on cultic practices (e.g. those in Livingstone, 1986) allude to the myths which these poems relate,

[9] See George (2003: 28-31) for Sîn-lēqi-unninni and the likely context of the creation of SB *Gilgameš*.

which may explain their interest for cultic practioners (or vice-versa),[10] and it has been proposed that the importance of Ninurta in royal ideology may have meant the poems about him had some function in state ritual (see Annus, 2002: 51ff, 123). The Babylonian catalogue of texts and authors attributes *Lugal-e* to the authorship of the god Ea (Lambert, 1962a: 64: 3-4), which may indicate it was viewed with mystical importance.

The glorification of Marduk which is the foundation of *Ee* has led to the assumption that it was composed by the priests of Marduk specifically for this aim. It certainly came to be important in the cult, as the poem was recited during the *akītu* festival and commentary texts exist which relate certain episodes to cultic events (Frahm, 2011: 113-17; Lambert, 2013: 137-8). It is possible that *Anzû* and *Erra* were texts with special meaning at the temple of Nergal at Tarbiṣu: the tablet GM1 was found here, which groups both poems together, and a gift of Anzû-birds to the temple was commemorated with a text that alludes to *Erra* (Weissert, 1997: 193). Qurdi-Nergal, associated with the collection from Huzirina, was probably a priest of Zababa and Baba. *Anzû, Enūma Eliš, Erra and Išum, Lugal-e, An-gin₇,* and *Gilgameš* were all found in this collection. However, the Huzirina tablets show that it was not only temple personnel who would have known these compositions: the junior apprentice scribes who wrote them were the sons of provincial officials, including the scribe of the military official the *turtānu* (Robson, 2013: 49-50). They were not training to become priests, as the lack of omens in this corpus probably shows, but to join the administration – familiarity with the literary classics was thus considered important for these middle-ranking people as well (Robson, 2013: 50).

[10] Although it should be noted that the rituals also allude to mythological episodes not known from these poems and indeed can be quite different from them.

The nature of scribal culture and training in Mesopotamia means that students would have been familiar with many compositions (Black, 1998: 118). The process of learning to write involved copying out texts, often from memory. The commentaries used by scholars frequently quote other texts – including *Gilgameš, Enūma Eliš, Lugal-e,* and *Erra* – without giving references, implying that memory is the source (Frahm, 2011: 86, 102-7). Not much is known of scribal education after the Old Babylonian period, but various literary compositions have been found as first-millennium school texts, e.g. *An-gin*$_7$*, Gilgameš, Ludlul bēl nēmeqi, Enūma Eliš* and *The Babylonian Counsels of Wisdom* (Gesche, 2000). As for the poems which are the focus of this study, there are many school texts of *Ee* (at least 57 from Babylonian sites according to Lambert's manuscript list), more than a quarter of the total number of surviving manuscripts. One excerpt tablet of *Anzû* from Sippar-Amnanum from the second millennium is a school exercise (Cavigneaux, 2000). Three or four of our manuscripts of *Erra* are school tablets with extracts (B_2, C_1, D_1 and probably C_4) while a further two (M_1 and N_1) are extracts preserved alongside excerpts from other compositions – *Ee, Ludlul bēl nēmeqi, The Great Hymn to Šamaš*, *Maqlû*, and the lexical series *Erim-huš* and *Diri* (Hruška, 1974: 356). The manuscript of tablet II of *Erra and Išum* from Me-Turnat was written by a student, as evident from the mistakes and badly written signs (Al-Rawi & Black, 1989: 111).

Regarding the other poems alluded to, *Lugal-e* was a staple of OB scribal education and is listed in the Louvre curricular catalogue along with *The Return of Lugalbanda* and *The Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur* (Kramer, 1942). *Lugal-e* was the subject of a commentary (Frahm, 2011: 117-19) and its survival into the first millennium may be due to pedagogical use (Cooper, 1978: 9-10); bilingual school texts survive from the late period (e.g. Geller, 2010; Maul CTMMA II, no. 43). Five fragmentary extract tablets of *The Return of*

Lugalbanda have been found, which given their lower quality may well be school exercises (H. Vanstiphout, 2003: 135). Almost all of our manuscripts of *The Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur* are OB one-column exercise tablets (im-gid$_2$-da), and one of the sources from Ur contains lines 1-69 repeated three times (Michalowski, 1989: 18-19). The main witness to the text of OB *Atraḫasīs* is a set of tablets written by Ipiq-Aya, 'the junior scribe' (*ṭupšarru*(DUB.SAR) *ṣeḫru*(TUR)) at an advanced stage of his education, which implies its currency as a school text (see van Koppen, 2011: 160-1), and was quoted by an Assyrian scholar in a letter to the king a thousand years later (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 27-8). *Gilgameš* was common as a school text both in the Old Babylonian and the Late Babylonian periods, although in Late Babylonian times it would have been encountered at a later point in education, probably written as a kind of final examination to prove the pupil's mastery of the scribal art (George, 2003: 37-8).

Literature in particular is an effective way of teaching difficult grammar and vocabulary, as well as familiarising students with their cultural and religious traditions. All scribes trained to a high level would therefore have been familiar with the literary classics of their time. The first-millennium libraries that have been excavated so far contain more or less the same texts across a variety of locations, from the school collection at Huzirina on the fringes of the Neo-Assyrian empire to the temple library at Sippar in the heart of Babylonia, showing that those educated to a certain level would have known the same compositions (D Charpin, 2010: 214).[11] Since the number of literary texts which have this kind of status is relatively low, it is possible to have a detailed knowledge of all of them: a small set of well known compositions increases the likelihood of allusions being recognised.

[11] There are of course also differences between the content of these libraries: for an overview see Robson (2013).

Reflections on religious history

One striking aspect of the use of allusion in these poems is their competitive nature: in *Anzû* Ninurta implicitly takes over from Tišpak, and in *Ee* Marduk takes over from Ninurta, Enlil, and (in a different sense) Ea, while *Erra* promotes Išum as a far better example of heroism than either Ninurta or Marduk and shows Erra replacing Marduk as the one in control. All this is accomplished via allusion to the poems which glorify those earlier heroes. This reflects developments in religious history: as Ninurta came to be identified with more and more gods, so he took over their stories, a process which was repeated when Marduk came to be identified with Ninurta.[12] However, while we hear little of Tišpak after the Old Akkadian period aside from being one of Ninurta's names, Marduk does not simply replace Ninurta in this way, for the Ninurta texts *Anzû*, *Lugal-e*, and *An-gin*$_7$ continue to be copied long after the ascendancy of Marduk and *Ee.* One explanation for this may be sought in the understanding of Ninurta as one aspect of Marduk: Marduk has absorbed the characteristics of Ninurta and many other gods, so independent traditions about them can continue to exist but may now be interpreted as stories about Marduk in areas where Marduk's supremacy was believed. This would not have been the case everywhere or at all times, for example, in Assyria Aššur took the place of Marduk (e.g. in the Assyrian version of *Ee* where Aššur is the hero – see Lambert, 1997b) and Ninurta continued to be important in his own right without being reduced to an aspect of Aššur. However, ultimately it is difficult to tell what Babylonians really thought of these theological equations, as one god absorbing the name of another did not always result in any change in religious practices (Lambert, 1997a: 159). The

[12] See Lambert (2013: 248-77) for the rise of Marduk.

poems reflect only one particular view: for all that *Ee* virtually ignores Enlil, he continued to be worshipped in his numerous shrines in Babylon, included in *Tintir = Babylon,* a text roughly contemporary with *Ee* (George, 1992: 7).

It is possible that *Erra*'s consistent undermining of *Ee* may reflect a real loss of confidence in the power of Marduk (Hruška, 1973: 4-5; Frahm, 2011: 347), although there is no argument for this outside the text itself. *Erra* is considered to be a theological reflection on the reasons for Babylon's suffering during the turbulent events of the early first millennium: either a deserved punishment for cultic neglect (Cagni, 1969: 31-7) or a statement that human beings are undeservedly subjected to forces of chaos outside of their control (cf. Reiner, 1958: 45; Bottéro, 1985: 263-5). This is a complex matter, since Marduk's desertion of Babylon is not a straightforward abandonment or captivity as would usually explain the calamity befalling a city (e.g. the *Marduk Prophecy,* edition Borger, 1971; a bilingual Babylonian historical epic explaining an Elamite attack in these terms, edition RIMB 2 nos. 8-9). Erra tricks Marduk into leaving but Erra's destruction takes place after Marduk has returned and should, therefore, still be in a position to intervene. Why does he not? This is partly to do with the weakness that *Erra* ascribes to the old order of gods, explored in chapter six of this thesis, but it is also partly because Marduk consents: the neglect of his statue implies that there has been some disruption of his worship. At I.122 Erra declares that the people have disregarded Marduk's word, and at III.C.47 he suggests that the reason for Marduk's departure is that kings and princes are forgetting their cultic responsibilities. These may be exaggerations to justify his violent impulses, but they may have some basis in reality. There is a parallel with the situation described in Uruk at IV.52-62.

When inciting Erra to battle, the Sebettu give the justification that the Anunnaki cannot sleep (I.82). However, since the gods in the assembly in tablet II vocally oppose Erra's

actions, this appears to be an invented pretext. They carry on to say that flocks are being ravaged and farmland destroyed, with farmers and shepherds grieving (I.83-6). The passage is fragmentary, but rather implies that disorder is already rife, and that Erra must intervene in order to prevent *further* damage, perhaps even at these men's entreaty (Cagni, 1977: 31 n.22). Although this too may be an exaggeration to justify their desire for bloodshed, which clearly gets out of control, it would seem that something was already wrong even before Marduk left. As his statue was falling into disrepair, other problems were unfolding. It cannot be determined which was the primary cause, the cultic neglect or the internal problems; more likely the two are intertwined in a downward spiral into chaos.

The origin of Apsû and Ti'āmtu

One literary-historical matter it will be useful to explore is the origin and function of Apsû and Ti'āmtu in *Enūma Eliš,* since the allusions to *Atraḫasīs* are made through them. *Enūma Eliš* is fundamentally a story about the rise of Marduk. Why, then, does it begin with the story of Apsû and Ti'āmtu? Beginning the story at the beginning of time, as noted in the chapter on *Anzû,* gives it the authority of coming first, of the events it narrates having taken place before any of the other myths and thus being the most authentic. On a similar note, Katz argues that the detailed account of Marduk's creation establishes him so firmly as 'the' creator god that it undermines the claim of any other deity to that role (Katz, 2011: 131). However, unlike *Anzû*, which uses a few lines to set the scene in a primeval time and then sets the main plot in motion, *Enūma Eliš* has a whole extra episode which takes place before the birth of its main character. This has its own function as explaining the origins of Apsû as a cosmic region, but what is the purpose of this in relation to Marduk? Most obviously, it

explains the creation of the dwelling of Ea, Marduk's father, and thus provides a highly prestigious place for Marduk to be born. Establishing Ea's takeover of the kingship further legitimises Marduk's claim to it as his son (Sonik, 2008: 741), and Ea's exploits serve as a precursor to Marduk's, with structural and thematic parallels between them (Katz, 2011: 129-30). But that this is accomplished through the murder of Apsû stands out as being worthy of further attention.

Apsû and Tiʾāmtu are not there for the sake of traditional cosmogony, and this is not a normal account of the first creation (Lambert, 1965: 291; Vanstiphout, 1992: 53). Tiʾāmtu does not occur outside *EnūmaEliš* and the texts which are dependent on it (Vanstiphout, 1992: 53). Indeed, as Seri remarks, 'The fictitious and biased nature of *Enūma Eliš's* initial genealogy is apparent from the omission of the god Enlil and from the dubious occurrence of the first three pairs'[13] (2012: 10). Apsû and the Sea occur in a few third-millennium personal names, which appear to treat them like personal gods (Lambert, 2013: 217-18, 237), however there is not much evidence for the continuity of this tradition.[14] Tiʾāmtu is probably a foreign, West-Semitic import: the sea is not a traditional enemy in any other Mesopotamian text, whereas the battle of a storm god against the sea also appears in Ugaritic literature - *Baʿlu versus Yammu*, (edition Smith, 1994) and other Syrian traditions (Jacobsen, 1968: 107). Similarly, this is the first time that Apsû is attested in such a role. Earlier Sumerian traditions about primeval creative waters only mention one figure – Nammu, the primeval mother of all the gods. Nammu is mentioned only very occasionally in texts, perhaps a remnant of a

[13] She goes on to qualify that the pairs Laḫmu and Laḫamu, Anšar and Kišar appear in different orders and further apart in *An = Anum* (2012: 10), but does not mention Apsû and Tiʾāmtu.

[14] Lambert mentions the incipit of a Sumerian incantation en$_2$ a-ab-ba ama dingir-re-e-ne, 'Sea, mother of the gods' (STT 254, 41) and a hymn to the Tigris which mentions a female cosmic sea (*SpTU* II 5: 7-8) (Lambert, 2013: 237). However both of these texts are from the first millennium and so may have been influenced by *Enūma Eliš*.

very ancient tradition whose protagonists were no longer 'active' in Sumerian mythology (Leick, 1994: 14). She is named as ama palil u_3-tu diĝir $šar_2$-$šar_2$-ra-ke_4-ne, 'foremost mother who gave birth to all the gods,' in *Enki and Ninmaḫ* line 17. In the OB god list TCL 15 no. 10 she is an ancestor of Anu and is called 'Amatuanki', 'Mother who gave birth to heaven and earth' (Lambert RLA VI 1981: 220). The name is repeated in the god list An: Anum (line 28), where she is also designated as mother of Enki (line 27), 'from which her watery character should be deduced' (Lambert, RLA VI: 220). As Lambert notes, 'she was not split, however, and no battle with her is known' (1965: 295). Thus although Nammu is, like Tiʾāmtu, a primeval watery figure who gives birth to the gods, unlike Tiʾāmtu, there does not seem to have been any conflict with her, and she has no watery spouse as a counterpart . One watery mother is replaced by a pair (Lambert, 1975b: 55).[15] Neither Apsû nor Tiʾāmtu, then, are part of the traditional creation mythology of Mesopotamia. Where have they come from?

Storm gods versus the sea

Jacobsen was the first to suggest that the story of a battle versus the sea comes from West Semitic traditions, that this kind of mythologem would be more relevant to the lives of peoples close to the sea than those far away in Mesopotamia (Jacobsen, 1968: 107). He cites the Ugaritic traditions of Baʿlu and Yammu, which are also similar to Marduk's battle in *Ee* in that this victory was how the storm god won kingship over the other gods. Since then, a Mari letter has been discovered which mentions a conflict between the storm god Addu of Halab (Aleppo) and Têmtum, the sea, which accounts for how Addu obtained his kingship (Durand, 1993: 45). This Syrian Addu may be the link between the Baʿlu cycle and *Ee*: one of

[15] See also Lambert (2013: 236-47) on the background of Tiʾāmtu, including a possible connection with rivers.

Baʿlu's standard epithets is *hd,* or Haddu, equivalent to Akkadian Addu (Smith, 1994: 110). Furthermore, an Ugaritic god list equates both ^{d}*adad* with *bʿl ṣpn* and ^{d}*tâmtum* with *ym,* 'sea', RS 20.24, lines 4-10 and 29 (edition Nougayrol, Laroche, Virolleaud, & Schaeffer, 1968: 44-48). The Mari letter suggests that this West-Semitic story about a battle of the storm against the sea existed in the Mesopotamian cultural sphere (Smith, 1994: 111).

Addu of Halab was a particularly important storm god with an especially wide reach. He was the head of the pantheon of that city, and was worshipped elsewhere as well. In the second half of the second millennium his cult is found everywhere where the storm god was an important deity, from Mari to Hattusa (Schwemer, 2007: 163-5). Durand suggests that Addu's story may have come from an Amorite tradition which spread from the West into Mesopotamia as the Amorites assimilated into this area (1993: 50). Given that there were close relations between the ruling houses of Halab and Babylon, it is possible that the theology of Addu influenced that of Marduk (Schwemer, 2008: 27). Motifs of battles connected with the sea in some way already existed for Ninurta (his victory over the *kusarikku* in the midst of the sea) and Tišpak against the *labbu* which came from the sea, so the motif would have fitted in easily (Schwemer, 2008: 27). On the *labbu,* it is worth mentioning that the word *labʾum* itself is Amorite in origin, and used as a more poetic word for lion than the more common *nēšu* (Durand, 1993: 50; CAD L: 25), which may have something to show about the origin of this monster too. Most telling of all, however, is VII.119-22 of *Enūma Eliš,* where Marduk is given the name Addu, spelt ^{d}*ad-du* rather than being written with the logogram ^{d}IM. Marduk is definitely associated with the storm god Addu here at least, which may account for his victory over the sea.

The motif of the victory of the king of the gods over the sea, of which Marduk and Ti'āmtu are one example,[16] probably originated on the Eastern Mediterranean coast, but spread too early for us to be able to traces its spread in any detail (Schwemer, 2008: 27). The search for a source for Marduk in Syrian Addu is further complicated by the fact that the Sumerian Iškur is sometimes portrayed as a young warrior going into battle on behalf of his father (in these cases, Enlil) (Schwemer, 2007: 131), and that some texts show associations between Adad and Ninurta as both young warriors who wield storms and lightning (Schwemer, 2007: 127). Given the early nature of these assimilations, we may not be dealing with adaptation from or allusion to any one text: common cultural background may be more likely.

What we can now see is that this kind of West Semitic story about a battle against the sea has been amalgamated with the very old Sumerian tradition of a primeval water, and this results in the birth of Apsû and Ti'āmtu as independent characters in Babylonian literature. Katz proposes another explanation about why Ti'āmtu, a foreign monster, should be chosen as Marduk's principal enemy rather than a more traditional Babylonian foe: as a body of water, she represents the mythological creative property of primordial water, the essential material of creation (2011: 129-30). When Marduk creates the universe out of her dead body, he can do something no warrior god has done before, and thus stake his claim to be the most powerful deity of all (Katz, 2011: 130). Lambert suggests that the idea of Marduk fighting the sea may derive from Ninurta mythology, since Ninurta held back the savage waters in both *Lugal-e* and Gudea *Cyl. A*, and is also known to have defeated sea creatures (2013: 236-7).

[16] Similar stories existed for Hurrian Teššub, and there are loose parallels with monsters who live in the sea in the Hittite myth of Iluyanka (Durand, 1993: 56), Kumarbi's opponent Hedammu, the stone monster Ullikummi, and the forces of chaos defeated by Yahwe (Schwemer, 2008: 25).

Given the other aspects of Ninurta absorbed by Marduk in *Enūma Eliš,* this may well have been an important factor.

Apsû and Ti'āmtu – Oceanus and Tethys

It has been argued that the figures of Oceanus and Tethys in the *Iliad* are there only because they have been imported from Mesopotamian myth (and specifically *Enūma Eliš*) rather than being part of traditional Greek religious thought (Burkert, 1992: 92). The story Hera tells about them in the so-called 'Deception of Zeus' episode has been called a 'trivialization' of the story in *Ee*: Ocecanus and Tethys have been quarrelling and are no longer sleeping together, as Apsû and Ti'āmtu who originally mingled their waters, symbolic of sexual intercourse (Lambert, RLA IV: 220), have had a far more serious quarrel which will in fact result in Apsû's death (West, 1997: 383). In particular the figure of Tethys is suspect, since no cult of hers is known, and her name may be etymologically derived from that of Ti'āmtu (Burkert, 1992: 92-3).[17] In other words, Oceanus and Tethys only exist for the sake of the story being told. Interestingly, the situation may be the same in the poem from which they may derive – Apsû may have been invented specifically to play a part in *Enūma Eliš,* to form a natural pairing with the sea enemy Ti'āmtu.

This could be no more than a curious coincidence. However it is interesting to entertain other possibilities. Did the poet of the *Iliad* somehow know that Apsû was personified specifically for this role in *Enūma Eliš*? Did his imitation of *Enūma Eliš* go as far to

[17] Note that Burkert has been criticised by Kelly (2008), who argues that Oceanus and Tethys do make sense in the context of Greek mythology. Kelly provides a useful and plausible way of understanding these figures, but this does not, in my view, prove that they do not derive from the Near East. For example, Kelly points out that Tethys also occurs in Hesiod's *Theogony* (2008: 22), but this poem is generally agreed to be influenced by Near Eastern traditions (see e.g. West, 1997: 276 ff.).

to imitate the personification of Oceanus? These would be bold and controversial suggestions; the question of Near Eastern influence on early Greek literature is by no means straightforward even in more simple cases. Nonetheless, I throw out these questions, as they are tantalising to consider.

The Primary Sources

Core Akkadian Texts

Anzû

Anzû is the earliest of the three poems that form the core of this study. It existed in an Old Babylonian version and was later worked into a Standard Babylonian version. Standard Babylonian *Anzû* consists of three tablets holding at least 549 lines. The end of tablet III is fragmentary, and preserved by only one witness, GM1 (Saggs, 1986), which would have had space for a few more lines at the end before the colophon. Around 33 lines of tablet I and 63 lines of tablet III are incomplete and cannot be fully restored, meaning SB *Anzû* is in a better state of preservation than many other poems, around four-fifths complete. This is not the case for OB *Anzû*, however, which only has 157 lines preserved of an unknown total. These correspond to I.82-209 and II.1-147 of the SB version, with four lines that seem to belong with tablet III just before line 9 of the SB text but do not match it (Annus, 2001: 31-9). As a result, it is primarily SB *Anzû* which is used here, although OB *Anzû* is consulted when relevant. The most recent critical edition of both OB and SB versions is that of Annus (2001), on which the text presented here is based, and the most recent translation is by Foster (2005: 555-78).

The two tablets preserving the OB version are written in Middle- or Neo-Babylonian script. Vogelzang suggests they are the work of a later scribe copying an earlier version (1988: 111, 114-15).[18] Interestingly, they come from Susa, showing just how far knowledge of the poem travelled. Lambert mentions an unpublished OB tablet of *Anzû* in the Yale Babylonian collection, but unfortunately does not gives its tablet number (2013: 442 n.11). A fragment from Sippar-Ammanum Di 2258 (van Lerberghe, 1991: 74) is the oldest tablet known to us: Vogelzang places it as Middle-Babylonian (1988: 32), although it only contains damaged excerpts and equally well may date from the late Old Babylonian period (Cavigneaux, 2000: 19). Two Middle Assyrian exemplars are also known. The most substantial of these witnesses is a two-column tablet found in Assur, containing 157 lines from tablet II (Assur 21506w, LKA 1-4), and the other is a fragment from Nineveh (BM 121087, CT 46, 37).

The poem continued to be copied into the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian period. There are two manuscripts from Kuyunjik in Neo-Babylonian script (Sm 1807 + Sm 2195 = CT 46, 40 and Lambert, 1980: 81; K 3008 + K 18740 + K 19368 = CT 46, 38 and Lambert, 1980: 82), and one Neo-Babylonian tablet of unknown provenance but with a colophon saying it was written in Borsippa (YBC 9842 = Hallo & Moran, 1979). The Neo-Assyrian manuscripts are from Nineveh (three or possibly four), Tarbiṣu (one), Sultantepe (three), and one fragment of unknown provenance which may come from Tell Tayinat (A 11000 = Lauinger, 2008).

Most of the manuscripts are from the Neo-Assyrian period, a fact reflected by the find spots of our extant tablets, but this should probably be regarded as an accident of survival. References to *Anzû* in *Ee* strongly indicate that *Anzû* was widely known in Babylonia - the modified quotation of the feathers on the wind motif (see chapter two p. 100 ff.) is the most

[18] The tablets have also been checked by Foster who came to the same conclusion (Machinist, 2005: 33).

obvious example - and are integral to the understanding of *Ee* as a poem elevating Marduk above Ninurta. Thus we should expect that these references were intended to be recognised, as they are central to the ideology of *Ee*, a quintessentially Babylonian poem.

The tablets from Sultantepe STT 23 and 25 have been treated by editors of *Anzû* as belonging to a different poem, although they appear to tell a version of the Anzû story. This is not a matter of manuscript variants, rather they have entirely different text from the manuscripts of tablet III from Nineveh and Tarbiṣu, and no colophons survive attributing them to *bīn šar dadmē* (as for example ms. p, YBC 9842, Hallo & Moran, 1979: 90).[19] Saggs suggests these tablets might represent a hymn to Ninurta appended to the end of the narrative, 'glorifying the god by re-telling his deeds in another form' (1986: 29). The variations between the manuscripts of the other tablets of Standard Babylonian *Anzû* are largely orthographic or grammatical, and so insignificant. We can therefore safely say that excluding STT 23 and 25 they represent the same poem, which was textually fixed, the odd grammatical slip or orthographic difference aside.

The Standard Babylonian poem tells the story of how Ninurta earned his position as esteemed warrior god of Mesopotamia. The protagonist of the Old Babylonian version is Ningirsu, who was identified with Ninurta. Anzû, a demon with eagle and lion features, grows jealous of the chief god Enlil, and flies off with the tablet of destinies, a magical object which gives Enlil his power. The whole divine order is thrown into chaos and the gods are now helpless; they seek a champion to fight Anzû and retrieve the tablet and their authority. Ninurta rises to the challenge, and is rewarded with a high position in the pantheon.

[19] It may be significant that the Sultantepe manuscripts of tablet II, which *are* treated as part of SB *Anzû* (STT 21, 22, and 19), often share variants with the Middle Assyrian manuscript E from Assur.

Anzû was one of the foundational texts of Mesopotamian mythology: the battle of Ninurta against Anzû was referred to in texts as diverse as Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions (Annus, 2002: 94-101), rituals and their commentaries (Annus, 2001: xvi), and medical treatises (Annus, 2002: 138-44). A Sumerian poem, *Lugal-e,* also told of a heroic battle of Ninurta, this time against a demon called Asag with an army of stones; this text also continued to hold a special status a thousand years after it was written in the Old Babylonian period, and is alluded to by many of the same texts as *Anzû*. *Anzû* did not replace *Lugal-e,* but gives an alternative event as Ninurta's 'greatest' exploit. Although *Anzû*'s relationship to *Enūma Eliš* and *Erra* is by now well known, *Anzû* itself has not yet been investigated for any allusions it may contain, other than the parallel with *balaĝ*s mentioned by Annus (2001: xii).

Enūma Eliš

Enūma Eliš (henceforth *Ee*) is spread across seven tablets and has 1094 lines. The poem is very well preserved, as only 68 lines are incomplete without plausible restorations, the majority from tablet V. The text of *Ee* presented here is a composite based on the edition of Kämmerer and Metzler (2012), and follows their manuscript designations. The latest edition is by Lambert (2013), which appeared late in the writing of this thesis. As it draws on many more manuscripts, it has been consulted for the manuscript count and variants. Lambert (2013) is now the most up-to-date translation.

There are 181 known manuscripts of *Ee* (Lambert, 2013: 3-4). Of these, the earliest are Middle Assyrian: seven tablets from Assur which may date to the first half of the ninth century (according to paleographic analysis by Köcher, apud Lambert 2013: 4). In total 79 tablets and fragments are Neo-Assyrian, of which 46 are from Nineveh, 18 from Assur, 13

from Sultantepe, and two from Nimrud. All those from Nineveh can be attributed to Ashurbanipal's library.

We have 95 pieces in Late Babylonian script, but only seven were found in excavations: three from Kish, two from Uruk, one from Sippar and one from Tell Haddad. The rest are unprovenanced, although Lambert speculated about the origins of some of them, proposing one to be from Borsippa (tablet IV ms. a (in his designation) = Budge, 1888: 86; CT 13, 14-15), one as possibly from Babylon (Tablet I ms. b = King, 1902: vol. II: I-VI+; Lambert, 2013: plate 5), and one possibly from Sippar (tablet VI ms. a = King, 1902: vol. II: XXXV-XXXVII). All are Late Babylonian, the earliest being Neo-Babylonian and the latest perhaps even Parthian.

The date of composition of *Ee* is undetermined, but is certainly later than *Anzû* and earlier than *Erra.* Lambert's suggestion of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I in the late twelfth century is still the most convincing proposition (1964, 2013: 439-44). The poem clearly connects the rise of Marduk to the glory of Babylon, and so must have been composed at a time of national pride.[20] The reign of Nebuchadnezzar I fits these circumstances well, since this was a time of nationalistic revival coinciding with the return of Marduk's statue from Elam. Although Dalley argues that there are four reigns when a statue of Marduk was stolen and returned, and that the frequency of the theft (and indeed, the number of statues, since there was more than one) undermines it as a criterion for a specific date of composition (1997), if *Ee* does not date specifically to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, it probably dates somewhere near it. An Old Babylonian date, as suggested by Dalley (1997: 171), and implied by von Soden on linguistic grounds (1933: 122-30), is too early; in the prologue to Hammurapi's Laws, Anu and Enlil promote Marduk to rule over all the people but not over

[20] See now Lambert (2013: 439-65) on the composition of *Ee*.

all the gods (Lambert, 1964: 5-6), and there are no OB personal names which call Marduk king of the gods, although these are attested for many other deities (Lambert, 1984: 2). *An = Anum* may date to before Nebuchadnezzar's reign, but is probably Kassite, and so does not attest to the exaltation of Marduk in all his 50 names before the Kassite period (Lambert, 1984: 4). Lambert's argument against the Kassite-period date favoured by Sommerfeld (1982: 174-181) is that Marduk was a second-ranking god in this period according to evidence from boundary stones (1984: 3 ff.). The astronomical terminology used in *Ee* fits well with that used in *Enūma Anu Enlil*, which developed in the Kassite period, suggesting that it could have been composed around this time (Cooley, 2013: 159). However, linguistic forms cannot be used to date poetry precisely since it often incorporates archaizing features, but at least the terminology shows that the poem could not have been composed before the Kassite period. Kämmerer and Metzler do not take a stand on this debate, but do point out that there is no reason why *Ee* could not have been composed by the priests of Marduk during the Kassite period with purely theological and not political motives, thus anticipating the later political triumph of Marduk which the poem would be used to justify (2012: 20-21). A late Kassite date is possible given the cultural respect the Kassite rulers gave to native Babylonian traditions. Either way, the Standard Babylonian version of *Anzû* was almost certainly complete and in circulation by the time of *Ee*'s composition, and *Ee* in turn is earlier than *Erra.*

Enūma Eliš is often dubbed 'The Babylonian Creation Epic,' since it relates the creation of the world, of mankind, and the city of Babylon. However, most of the narrative is concerned with Marduk's battle against Ti'āmtu, a monster whose name literally means 'sea'

but who can take the shape of some kind of animal.[21] It is this conflict which results in Marduk being awarded kingship of all the gods, and establishes him not only as supreme warrior god, but supreme creator god and head of the whole pantheon. Since Marduk is the god of Babylon, the poem justifying his supremacy justifies the rise of his city as a major power, and is central to Babylonian identity.

Enūma Eliš is a text which draws on an extraordinary breadth of sources. Lambert notes its highly composite nature, calling it 'a sectarian and aberrant combination of mythological threads woven into an unparalleled compositum' and remarks that 'the various traditions it draws upon are often perverted to such an extent that conclusions based on this text alone are suspect. It can only be used safely in the whole context of Mesopotamian mythology' (1965: 291). This alerts us to the necessity of analysing the intertextuality of *Ee* for understanding the poem's true nature as well as being wary of taking it as a representative of any standard Mesopotamian creation myth, for the way in which it has altered these preceding traditions will be significant and tailored to the text's ideology.

Lambert points out that *Ee* combines several mythological threads into one narrative. He views Ti'āmtu[22] and Qingu as two separate enemies which have been combined into a single battle, and Ti'āmtu herself as originally two different monsters, since she appears at times as the sea, at others as a 'monstrous quadruped' (1965: 294, 1986: 56-7). The account of Marduk's battle and creation preserved in Berossus also seems to combine two types of enemy, although it does so in a different way from *Ee*, presenting her both as a woman and a body of water with monsters swimming inside her (Lambert, 1965: 294-5). This may suggest

[21] Probably a she-goat – see Reynolds (2000).
[22] I read *ti*-GEME$_2$ as *ti-amtu, -amta, -amti* following Borger (2008: 272-3), since there are writings of the word *ti*-GEME$_2$-*am-ma* (e.g. II.157 in mss. O and P+), where the logogram must be read as *amta* to make grammatical sense.

that rather than Berossus' version showing that there were wildly differing variant texts of *Enūma Eliš,* there existed different versions of the story of Marduk's battle itself. By the Seleucid period the sources of these stories had been recombined in different ways, and *Ee* is but one of these possible recombinations, although it became the most authoritative. For example, a fragment of Berossus' version also includes Marduk building a wall around Babylon after restraining the sea (Burstein, 1978: 17), which is more reminiscent of Ninurta's wall-building in *Lugal-e* (351-4) than *Ee.* On the other hand, the differences between Berossos' version and that presented in *Ee* may be most simply explained by corruption in transmission, since the *Babyloniaca* only survives in quotations in the works of later authors.

That the bulk of the blame goes to Qingu rather than Ti'āmtu is, in Lambert's view, an inconsistency which points to another combining of two traditions, that of the 'Bound Gods' whose ringleader was executed and the rest later freed, and the freeing of the gods from their heavy labour as related in *Atraḫasīs*: the freeing of imprisoned gods has been combined with the freeing from labour (Lambert, 2010: 26). Lambert later suggested that Qingu was based on Enmešarra: a late text he dubbed 'Enmešarra's Defeat' (Lambert, 2013: 290-98) has Marduk executing Enmešarra's seven sons and pronouncing that Enmešarra will not be allowed to live either. Other parallels between the two figures include that both are said to have seven sons (Qingu in KAR 307 rev. 18) and both occur in the list of defeated Enlils O 175 (Lambert, 2013: 285). It is unfortunate that not more of 'Enmešarra's Defeat' survives, nor any other narrative text about this elusive figure, and so nothing more can be said about this possible borrowing at present. Lambert believes that *Ee* draws on 'Enmešarra's Defeat' for the judicial scene in tablet VI (2013: 484); however, the one surviving manuscript of this text is extremely late (Seleucid or Parthian), and may be influenced by *Ee* rather than the other way round.

Lambert observes 'direct and conscious borrowing' from *Anzû* (1986: 56) but also motifs drawn from Sumerian Ninurta mythology such as the bow's name 'long wood' which is the name of Ninurta's spear in *Lugal-e* and *An-gin₇* (1986: 59). Resemblances to *Atraḫasīs* have been noted by Labat (1935: 29) and Jacobsen (1976: 167) with regard to Apsû being unable to sleep, Horowitz with the tripartite division of domains between Anu, Enlil and Ea (1998: 113, 128-9), and Machinist (2005: 44) and Seri (2006: 515) with the creation of man. Most recently, Seri has collected references in *Ee* to a range of texts, including *Marduk's Address to the Demons*[23] as well as to those already acknowledged (2014).

Marduk's names have probably been drawn from a god list, although we cannot be sure which one.[24] Sommerfeld observed that the list of Marduk's names is similar to those in the god list *An = Anum* (1982: 175), while Lambert suggested they are closer to that of a triple-column god list[25] (1964: 4, 1984: 3-4). Seri has examined the relationship between this latter god list and *Ee* to find that Marduk's names 37-50 in *Ee* occur in exactly the same order in the god list and repeat the list's explanations verbatim. She therefore suggests it is highly likely that this list was the source of the list in *Ee,* since certain plot events of *Ee* also occur in it: Ti'āmtu's defeat, Marduk's creation of skilful things as a direct result of it, and the slaughter of Qingu (2006: 516). However, the known tablets of the god list are Neo-Assyrian, and the only argument that it precedes *Ee* is that the explanations of the names are slightly shorter in the list than in *Ee.* The assumption must be that god lists aim to be as comprehensive as possible, and so would not omit information if it were available. However, it is not vital information which is being left out, since the elaborations in *Ee* are learned puns on the

[23] Now known to be part of *Utukkū Lemnūtu* (Mark Geller, 2007: 155).
[24] For a discussion of Marduk's names in god lists see Lambert, 2013: 147-60.
[25] CT 25 46-47 (K 7658 + 8222) + STC 1 165-66 (K 8519 and K.13337) + K 6538 (published by Lambert, 2013: plate 38). The list has recently been edited by Lambert (2013: 142-4).

names themselves, and so can be seen as added extras rather than fundamental. It is quite possible, then, that the list is dependent on *Ee* rather than the other way round, or that both draw on a common source, as Lambert has most recently suggested (2013: 159).

Certain features of lexical texts are present in *Ee*, such as the translation of Sumerian names into Akkadian explanations (Seri, 2006: 516). The list of ancestors at the beginning also seems to follow the genealogical tradition of god lists generally (Lambert, 1975b: 51-55), although it does not seem to be intertextual with a specific list, but the cosmogony itself is a feature associated with incantations rather than mythological narratives, and this type of cosmogony is attested nowhere else (H. Vanstiphout, 1992: 53). Aspects of the creation of Babylon may have been drawn from the topographical text *Tintir = Babylon*, such as the 900 Igigi gathered at *Ee* VI.69 (*Tintir* V.85; Horowitz, 1998: 124). Alternatively the two texts may draw on the same tradition for this detail (George, 1992: 6). Combined with the fact that Marduk's creation of the universe parallels events in the omen series *Enūma Anu Enlil* (Horowitz, 1998: 145-7; Seri, 2006: 515) it is evident that *Ee* is drawing on many types of text, not only the narrative poems under consideration here.

Erra and Išum

Erra and Išum (henceforth *Erra*) is written on five tablets, totalling around 800 lines. Of these, around 265 are incomplete and cannot be fully restored, mostly from tablets II and III. Only about 1/3 of the lines from tablet II are extant. Tablet III is broken into three sections and it was not possible to reliably establish consecutive line numbering between them when the most recent critical edition was published (Cagni, 1969). However, George has recently been able to determine from a photograph of an unpublished manuscript of Tablet III that it

would have had at least 224 lines, 100 more than previously thought (2013: 66). Overall the poem is about two-thirds complete. The text given here is from the edition of Cagni (1969, 1970), supplemented by the subsequent publications (Al-Rawi & Black 1989; Lambert 1980). Cagni's English translation was published in 1977. The most recent English translation which takes into account material since Cagni is by Foster (2005: 880-911).

Erra is the latest poem out of all those considered here. The earliest manuscripts are Neo-Assyrian, but the poem itself is older and originally Babylonian: KAR 168 (from Assur) and IB 212 (of unknown provenance) both state in their colophons that they have been written and checked according to originals from Babylon (Hunger, 1968: 84: 252; 121: 413). STT 16 similarly claims to go back to an older original (Hunger, 1968: 114: 366).

The poem was popular and widely known: Neo-Assyrian examples have been found in Assur (14), Nineveh (13), and Sultantepe (three)[26], with Neo/Late Babylonian manuscripts coming from Babylon (certainly one, possibly two or three),[27] Ur (one),[28] and more recently Sippar (two fragments, Lambert, 1980a, with six others of unknown provenance), Tarbiṣu (one, Saggs, 1986), and Me-Turnat (one), although the latter was found in Neo-Assyrian occupation levels (Al-Rawi and Black, 1989). Three more are of unknown origin, although ms L_3 may be from Nineveh. The total is 46 tablets and fragments, making it the third most popular literary composition in the first-millennium after *Ee* and *Gilgameš.*

The date of the poem is uncertain. All the manuscripts are from the first millennium, and it appears to be inspired by real events: the internal upheaval of Babylonia is described and lamented to such an extent that naturally commentators have sought an analogous

[26] Or perhaps two if STT 17 and 18 join, as first suggested by Gurney (1957: 1). Cagni treats them as two separate manuscripts, but Hruška raises again the possibility they are one (1974: 355 n.5).
[27] IB 212 is of unknown provenance but may be from Babylon (Gössmann, 1955: 86). The Late Babylonian fragment BM 36197 is 'presumably' from Babylon (Lambert, 1980a: 78).
[28] A distribution list of manuscripts available at the time of Cagni's edition is given by Hruška (1974).

historical situation. Most scholars now date these events, and the poem's subsequent composition, to within the range 1100-700 BC. Disturbances were so frequent during this period that there are a number of potential scenarios, with little to privilege one over another. Lambert favours the eleventh century, stressing the repeated mentions of the Aramean tribe the Suteans in the poem, and a known Sutean invasion c. 1100-1050 BC, during the reign of Adad-apla-iddin (1958: 397-8). This king was himself an Aramean usurper, which could well have led to internal tensions and uprising (1958: 398). The damage was not repaired until two centuries later, by Nabû-apla-iddin, who presents himself as avenger and restorer (e.g. King, *BBSt*, no. xxxvi col. ii. 26-iii.10). Thus Lambert suggests the poem was composed under his reign, probably at his instigation, in the first half of the ninth century BC (1958: 400).

Von Soden has focused on the unrest in Uruk as a possible clue to the poem's background. He proposes that it refers to the same unrest which the Nabonidus stele (VAB 4.274-6) ascribes to the reign of Erība-Marduk in the late eighth century, which was pacified by his son Marduk-apla-iddin II who succeeded him in 722 BC (1971: 255). Von Soden further links the poem to epidemics of plague that broke out in 765 and 759 BC (since Erra is specifically a god of plague), and an eclipse which occurred in 763 BC but is not mentioned by *Erra,* so had probably not yet occurred. He therefore suggests the poem was composed between 765 and 763 BC (1971: 266).[29] Gössmann dated the poem to the reign of Sennacherib, citing his famous destruction of Babylon in 689 BC as a likely inspiration (1955: 89), and most recently Franke has placed it during the time of Esarhaddon, suggesting it was composed at his instigation as part of his attempts to make amends for his father's actions (2014).

[29] cf. Beaulieu (2001), who accepts this date and pits the version of events in *Erra* against that in the Nabonidus stele, arguing that the poem presents a more plausible scenario than the later propaganda.

However, as Cagni observed, it would still be difficult to explain why the poem wishes for the Assyrians to destroy each other (IV.131) if it had an Assyrian background (1969: 38).

Lambert's dating was favoured by Cagni in his edition of *Erra* (1969: 43), but when the English translation was published in 1977 he acknowledged the interest of von Soden's theory, remarking, however, that the details of the disruption of cult in Uruk are 'imprecise and generic,' and therefore 'the question … arises as to whether a certain elasticity and historical imprecision were not in fact meant to be part of the historical perspective' (1977: 21). This is an important point: since there was frequent turmoil in Babylonia from the eleventh century to the Neo-Assyrian period, *Erra* can validly be read as a reflection on the prolonged troubles of the region rather than a specific event. If the poem was alluded to in a description of Sennacherib's campaign against Babylon (Weissert: 1997: 196), this would show that the poem did eventually become abstracted from the specific circumstances of its composition, and would provide a *terminus ante quem.*

The plot concerns the decision of Erra (identified with Nergal III.C.31; V.39) to wreak destruction across Babylonia. He tricks Marduk into surrendering his seat of power and letting him guard the order of the universe in his absence, hoping that some provocation will give him the opportunity to attack. However, Marduk returns and no such opportunity has arisen. Erra thus carries out his onslaught regardless.[30] This manifests as both enemy invasion and civil war throughout the region, which causes utter devastation. The gods are powerless to stop Erra, but Išum, traditionally his vizier but here behaving more like an equal, begs him to relent, describing the catastrophic effects of his actions. Erra is eventually persuaded, turning back the forces of destruction onto Babylonia's enemies, and decreeing

[30] Tablet II, where this part of the narrative falls, is unfortunately broken, and so we can only guess at the exact sequence of events.

her restoration. The poem laments the terrible effects of war, and can be read as a passionate condemnation of violence (Foster, 2007: 67; George, 2013).

Erra is particularly fruitful ground for the study of intertextuality. It is the product of a late creative phase in Akkadian poetry, which strives for innovation and has a more expressive and dramatic quality than more traditional compositions (Foster, 2007: 104-6). Such innovation does not break with tradition altogether but develops and challenges it. This is often dependent on allusions which signpost the differences between the new text and the old.

Despite acknowledgement of *Erra*'s innovation, specific studies relating to its intertextuality remain few: Machinist (2005), Cooley (2008), and Frahm (2011) have written about it from this perspective. Krebernik considers *Erra* in his study of divine anger, briefly comparing it to *Anzû* and the 'deluge myth', and in Biblical studies, Bodi (1991) has compared *Erra* to the book of Ezekiel.

Sumerian Texts

Lugal-e

All three poems in this study allude to *Lugal-e,* the major Sumerian poem narrating a victory of Ninurta's. It consists of 16 tablets and 728 lines. 30 lines are too fragmentary for translation, and a further 66 are incomplete in some way, meaning that the poem is in a comparatively good state of preservation.The critical edition is by van Dijk (1983), and the text presented here follows his line numbering, which is consecutive without splitting into individual tablets. The most recent edition of the Akkadian text is by Seminara (2001). The

most recent translation was done by the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature project (published in print as Black, Cunningham, Robson, & Zoloymi, 2004: 163-86).

Lugal-e was a hugely popular poem. There are 135 OB tablets and fragments extant, the majority from Ninurta's cult city of Nippur, but also from Uruk, Ur, Sippar, and others of unknown provenance.[31] The poem continued to be popular after the OB period, with a further 80 manuscripts known from later periods. A Middle Assyrian version is known from 8 tablets from Assur and Nineveh. It differs from the OB version in that it inverts the order of tablets 13 and 14, places the passage about ^{na4}algameš (lines 524-30) between 568 and 569, and omits 571 and 574-6 (van Dijk, 1983 vol II: 8). These are minor differences; van Dijk suggests that the omission of those four lines might be due to the scribe wanting to make everything fit on the tablet after having moved lines from a previous tablet onto it (1983 vol II: 8). In any case, the Neo-Assyrian version follows the OB version rather than this MA one (van Dijk, 1983 vol. II: 8). There are no Middle Babylonian manuscripts extant, and the Neo-Babylonian version is closer to the OB version than to the MA one. The Neo-Assyrian tablets form the greatest proportion of the post-OB manuscripts, comprising 33 tablets and fragments from Nineveh (30 from the Kuyunjik collection), and one each from Assur, Nimrud, and Sultantepe. There are 25 Neo-Babylonian manuscripts known from Babylon, Uruk, Sippar, and Nineveh. The poem even survived into the Seleucid period, with two manuscripts known from Uruk, and another fragment of unknown provenance. It is difficult to determine exactly how many individual copies this represents, but it is clear that *Lugal-e*

[31] The manuscript count is from van Dijk (1983 vol II: 1-23) plus tablets and fragments published later, including: Al-Rawi & George, 1995 (four substantial tablets); Borger, 1986 (three fragments); Geller, 1985; von Weiher, 1988: no. 60 (one Seleucid tablet); Maul in (in Spar & Lambert, 2005: 201-2, one Seleucid fragment), and Geller, 2010 (one NB fragment from Babylon). Those published by Geller (1985) join to existing manuscripts and so have not been counted in the totals above.

had a wide distribution and a long transmission history, and would certainly have been known at the times when *Anzû*, *Ee,* and *Erra* were composed.

From the Middle Assyrian period onwards, the Sumerian text was almost always accompanied by an interlinear Akkadian 'translation'. This is the case for all but three manuscripts, which are short extracts on tablets from the Kuyunjik collection, and whose text is only in Sumerian. As Seminara has shown, the Akkadian version was not always a literal translation but often more an interpretation which was an aid to understanding the text, since words are often translated according to their homophones (e.g. 2004: 245; 2001: *passim*). According to Geller, however we should see the grammatical discrepancies as an attempt to render the translation in idiomatic Akkadian (2010: 98). The Akkadian text never circulated alone, as far as we know, and so we can expect later Mesopotamians who knew *Lugal-e* to have known both versions.

The mention of Eninnu in line 478 may point to a date of composition during the reign of Gudea (van Dijk, 1983: 2), although Cooper has argued that the mention of Anzu among Ninurta's conquered enemies speaks for a slightly later date (1978: 10).[32] The earliest reliably datable manuscripts are OB.

Lugal-e relates Ninurta's great and victorious battle against the Asag-demon and his army of stones. After he has killed Asag, he invents irrigation and passes judgement over the rebellious stones. The poem thus presents him in both his warrior and agricultural aspects.

[32] For discussion of the dating see Seminara (2001: 28-30).

The Return of Lugalbanda

This Sumerian poem (also called *Lugalbanda II,* henceforth referred to as simply *Lugalbanda)* was popular in the Old Babylonian period when *Anzû* was first written. The poem is 417 lines long and only 5 of these are not fully complete. Two manuscripts present the whole text on a single tablet, and eleven other manuscripts spread the text across two or three tablets, which may represent tablets 1 and 2 of a three-tablet edition (H. Vanstiphout, 2003: 134-5). The text presented here is based on the most recent edition by Vanstiphout (2003). The commentary by Wilcke (1969) has also been consulted, as has the recent literary study and translation by Black (1998). The most recent translation is that of Black et. al. (2004: 22-31).

Of the 55 manuscripts of that have come down to us, 52 are Old Babylonian, with 48 of these coming from Nippur (the cult city of Ninurta), two from Kish, one from Ur, and one of unknown provenance but possibly also from Kish (H. Vanstiphout, 2003: 135). Three more are Neo-Assyrian from Kuyunjik and are bilingual, showing that the poem continued to be copied all the way into the first millennium, and may well have been known by later readers of SB *Anzû*.

It has been proposed that *Lugalbanda* was originally composed in the Ur III period, since Ur III rulers such as Ur-Namma and Shulgi connect themselves with Lugalbanda and his dynasty (Falkenstein, 1952: 73-7). One tablet from Nippur (6N-T 638) which contains a text similar to *Lugalbanda I,* has been paleographically dated to the Ur III period (for the differences between this text and the OB version see S. Cohen, 1973: 10-14). However the earliest manuscripts of *The Return of Lugalbanda* are Old Babylonian.

The poem tells how Lugalbanda gained the favour of Anzu and thus was able to return to Uruk and help end the war against Aratta. It seems to form a natural sequel to *Lugalbanda in the Wilderness,* and so they are sometimes considered two halves of the same composition (H. Vanstiphout, 2003: 98-9). Since they are always found separately on the tablets, however, I have only considered *Lugalbanda II* in this study, the part which deals with Anzu.

The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur

The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur (henceforth *LSU*) is a city lament of 519 lines. Of these lines, 27 are missing altogether, and another 57 are incomplete in some way. Most of the manuscripts are one-column excerpt tablets, however the two Ur witnesses UET 6/2, 132 and UET 6/2, 133 have the text across five tablets, with one *kirugu* on each tablet (Dahl, 2011: 76). The text quoted from here is based on the edition of Michalowski (1989). The most recent translation is Black et. al. on the ETCSL website (not in print edition).

There are 47 known manuscripts. The majority (31) are from Nippur, 13 are from Ur, one is from Larsa (Ebabbar temple), and two are of unknown provenance (Michalowski, 1989: 28-34). All are Old Babylonian, and the lack of manuscripts from later times means it is generally assumed that *LSU* did not survive the OB period. In chapter seven, I propose that *Erra* alludes to *LSU:* since this gap in the evidence is of major significance to the argument and is not just a matter of manuscript findspots, I address it there.

The poem is probably related to the collapse of the Ur III dynasty (Michalowski, 1989: 3). It describes and laments catastrophe sweeping over the land of Sumer, culminating in the destruction of the capital city of Ur. The patron god of Ur, Nanna, begs Enlil to reverse his

decision, and eventually is successful. The poem ends with the gods deciding to restore Sumer, returning to their temples, and decreeing the destruction of the invading enemies.

Other Akkadian texts

Atraḫasīs

Atraḫasīs (henceforth *Atr*), the famous story of the flood, is written on three tablets. The total line count difficult to establish, as the text is broken in many places with large gaps. Tablet I probably had 414 lines, tablet II perhaps 231, and tablet III around 330,which would suggest a total of 975 lines (following the line counts of Foster, 2005: 229-53). 97 lines are incomplete in some way without reliable restorations, not counting the gaps. The critical edition of the OB poem is by Lambert and Millard (1969), however new manusripts have since been identified. Shehata's *Annotierte Bibliographie zum altbabylonischen* Atramḫasīs-*Mythos* (2001), which reconstructs the text from the various sources and discusses different readings, has been used throughout. The most up-to-date translation is that of Foster (2005: 229-53).

Atr is first attested in the Old Babylonian period, from which eight or nine different manuscripts are known. The main recension consists of three tablets written out by Ipiq-Aya,[33] identified in the colophons (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 32, mss. A-C). We have another tablet belonging to the same recension (D), and three or four other fragmentary manuscripts: E, F + BM 22714b (Lambert, 1991), G, and HE 529 (Groneberg, 1991), which might be a fragment of Ipiq-Aya's ms. B (van Koppen, 2010: 145). The colophons of Ipiq-Aya's tablets are dated to the reign of Ammi-ṣaduqa, so tablets I and II can be dated to 1635 and 1634 BC

[33] For the reading of the name see Wilcke, 1999: 68 n. 9.

respectively. All these OB manuscripts are unprovenanced, but are assumed to have come from Sippar based on what is known about the other tablets grouped with them in the museum collections (see Leichty, Finkelstein, & Walker, 1988: xviii-xix). For example, most tablets from Ammi-ṣaduqa's reign in the British Museum are from Sippar (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 35). Another Old Babylonian tablet from the Schøyen collection (George, 2009: no. 2) diverges slightly from this Sippar recension, as it contains extra lines not found there. For example, Ea argues that it was not his fault that the fish had escaped, blaming a fight between two creatures for breaking the bolt of the sea, and claiming to have punished them for it (ii.1-14). Although this episode is absent from the Sippar manuscripts, a version of it occurs in the Standard Babylonian version (x rev. ii 14-43).

In later periods many more copies are extant of a Standard Babylonian version. We have 14 Neo-Assyrian tablet pieces from Ashurbanipal's library (Lambert & Millard mss. J-R and V-W). Another two fragments from Ashurbanipal's library were published later, K 17853 and K 17752 (Lambert, 1980a: 74-5), making a total of 16 tablet pieces from Nineveh in the Neo-Assyrian period.[34]

There are four Late Babylonian tablets from Sippar dating to the late sixth century BC (George & Al-Rawi, 1996), two Late Babylonian fragments from Babylon, Lambert and Millard's manuscripts x and y (1969: 116-20), one Late Babylonian fragment MM 818 which may come from Babylon (Böck & Rowe, 2000), and one Neo-Babylonian or Achaemenid fragment MMA 86.11.378A (Spar & Lambert, 2005: 195-201). The text of the tablets from Sippar is mostly in agreement with the corresponding parts of those found in Ashurbanipal's library listed above. The fragments from Babylon, although small, also match up. George and Al-Rawi therefore suggest that they are all part of the same Standard Babylonian recension

[34] Mss. K and M join, as do probably O and P (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 41).

current in the first millennium (George & Al-Rawi, 1996: 148). MM 818 omits two lines of this SB recension, adds one line which is a common refrain in the OB version, and contains some variants. Böck and Rowe therefore consider it to be closer to the OB text, but the differences are small and not very significant. The text of the fragment MM 86.11.378A does not overlap with any other Late Babylonian tablet but is close to the Assyrian version (Spar & Lambert, 2005: 196).

There are also the Assyrian tablets from Nineveh, ST[35] and U, that are written with Assyrian grammatical forms and orthography and show slight differences of wording (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 37-8). The Assyrian version would probably not have had any influence on the Babylonian version of *Anzû*, *Ee* or *Erra,* three very Babylonian poems. However, the differences between this 'Assyrian version' and the Standard Babylonian version address some issues of textual fixity and variation that are of general interest to the concept of intertextuality.

There is little difference in plot: the same events occur in the same order, more or less. The differences in the Assyrian version are: 1) the idea to slaughter the rebel leader is proposed earlier, before Nusku goes to the rebels (ms. S col. ii line 7, Lambert & Millard, 1969: 55); 2) it is Anu rather than Enlil who instructs Nusku to go to the rebels and ask who is the instigator of battle (ms. S,col. ii, lines 8 and 12, Lambert & Millard 1969: 55); and 3) Mami is called Bēlet-ilī (ms. S line 6, Lambert & Millard, 1969: 55) and the episode of her re-naming may not be present. However it may simply not be extant, since we do not have the whole text, and this is also the case for the SB version. Point 1 is a condensation of the plot which

[35] To S have since been added four fragments: K 10097 (1969: xi-xii); K 10604 which joins S to T (Lambert, 1969b); K 1697 + 18479 + 18572 (Lambert, 1980a); K 21851 (Lambert, 1991). There is also one other Late Assyrian fragment which cannot be placed, K 13347, and may belong to the same story as the MB fragment from Ugarit since both are written in the first person (Lambert, 1991).

does not have much effect on the meaning of the story and so is not very significant, and the lack of text prevents us from speculating about point 3.

Point 2 is the most interesting, for it gives slightly more of a role to Anu than the OB version, something which is paralleled in the SB version. The SB also has Anu instruct Enlil to instruct Nusku to go to the rebels, and it also has the rebel leader declare something about Anu, unfortunately broken: ^{d}*a-nu-um-ma lu-ga-*[*ar-ri*$^{?}$ *. . .*] 'Let me [declare war against] Anu himself [. . .] !' (I.53').[36] However this does not significantly change the meaning of the story either, since Anu is a neutral figure: the demands for action still come from Enlil, and it is still Enlil who is the target of the rebellion.

The differences between the Assyrian version and the Old Babylonian version do not therefore show any drastic evolution or re-interpretation of the story. The existence of one poem in different dialectal forms does not mean that it occurred in completely different versions or that this represents a textual instability. The differences in the story mentioned above are very slight, as are the differences in wording, and so they would be recognised as essentially the same poem. The similarities are far more numerous and significant. In other words, an Assyrian reader of *Ee* who knew the 'Assyrian version' of *Atr* would have no difficulty recognising and understanding the allusions to it, even though the author of *Ee* would have been alluding to a Babylonian one.

Since *Anzû* was first composed in the OB period, it has been compared with the OB text of *Atr*. It is difficult to know, however, exactly what the text of *Atr* would have been like at the time *Ee* was written. Only three Middle Babylonian fragments exist: one is from Ugarit, and one is a small fragment from Nippur, neither of which match up to the OB or SB text.

[36] George and Al-Rawi suggest that the adverb *anumma* meaning 'now then' at OB I.61 has been misunderstood and interpreted as the name of Anu (1996: 185).

The third (K 13347, Lambert 1991) is from a part of the poem which is not well preserved in the OB version and so cannot be exactly placed. Although these fragments seem to tell the same story, they may not have been considered to have been part of *Atr* proper. The version from Ugarit is related in the first person, so was probably rather different. The question of what text was current in the Middle Babylonian period is important for deciding which text we use for analysing allusions in *Ee.* Fortunately, the text of the LB tablets at Sippar is fairly close to that of the OB tablets, close enough that it is often used to restore lines in the OB version. This suggests that the text itself may not have changed much over time, only the formatting of the tablets.[37] For the purposes of analysing allusion in *Ee* it makes sense to use the older text which existed before the time of the composition of *Ee* rather than the later one which was written after it. It cannot be guaranteed that all of this text made it into the SB version, of course, but the similarities so far seem encouraging. References to *Atr* therefore follow the OB text and line numbering of Lambert & Millard's edition (1969).

Gilgameš

Gilgameš (henceforth *Gilg*) was extraordinarily popular: in the Late Bronze Age it is found as far afield as Syria, Palestine, and Anatolia, and gave rise to versions in Hittite and Hurrian (George, 2003: 39). Ashurbanipal's library held multiple copies, showing its continued importance in the first millennium (George, 2003: 39). The text is written on 12 tablets holding nearly 3,000 lines, of which almost 2,400 survive; taking into account other lines which are damaged, the poem is around two-thirds complete (George, 2003: 419-20). The critical edition and most recent translation is that of George (2003).

[37] Differently Lambert (Spar & Lambert, 2005: 196).

A total of 73 manuscripts survive of the Standard Babylonian text. There are 34 or 35 from Kuyunjik (the attribution of KK is uncertain), four from Aššur, two from Nimrud, and two from Sultantepe. The Babylonian manuscripts yield seven from Uruk, two found in excavations at Babylon, and a further 21 Late Babylonian fragments probably from Babylon or Borsippa, the sites which were the source of finds by Rassam and by locals at the time of acquisition (George, 2003: 379-81).

Gilgameš is a story with a long history, beginning with the Sumerian tales of Bilgames, developing into an Old Babylonian epic, and finally a Standard Babylonian version that replaced the others. This SB version was compiled by Sîn-lēqi-unninni, who, among other alterations, framed the poem with a new prologue and closing lines that echoed it, and as an epilogue added an Akkadian translation of the Sumerian *Bilgames, Enkidu, and the Netherworld* (George, 2003: 32). It is the Standard Babylonian version that is used here, since this would have been the one current at the time *Erra* was written. The earliest manuscripts are from the early first millennium, but the SB version was probably compiled earlier, in the second half of the second millennium when many other texts were similarly standardised (see George, 2003: 30). Three Assyrian manuscripts (x, y, z) seem to preserve two different Middle Babylonian editions which diverge from the SB version and remained current in Assyria alongside it, but their relationship to Sîn-lēqi-unninni's version cannot be determined (George, 2003: 29-30). However, they are overwhelmingly outnumbered by manuscripts of the SB edition.

Gilgameš tells the story of the eponymous legendary king of Uruk who goes on a quest for immortality, grief-stricken by the death of his friend. Its relevance to *Erra* is primarily in the first tablet, which describes the creation of Enkidu in the wilderness, his civilization by the sacred prostitute Šamḫat, and his transition to city life in Uruk.

Labbu

This text (CT 13 33-4), which relates the battle of Tišpak against the *labbu*-monster, exists in only one copy from Ashurbanipal's library. Only 35 lines are preserved. The most recent edition is by Lambert (2013: 364-5), but the edition of Lewis has also been used (1996: 30-32). The poem has also been translated by Foster (2005: 581-2).

Since the poem tells the story of the ascent of the city god of Ešnunna, it was most likely composed in the Old Babylonian period before Hammurapi's conquest of the city in 1755 BC, i.e. before it came under external domination (Wiggermann, 1989: 123). Thus the story may well have existed at the time when Old Babylonian *Anzû* was composed.

This raises the question of how widely known it would have been after the Old Babylonian period. Wiggermann points to 'the curious omission of phrases introducing direct speech on the obverse' which leads him to suggest that 'the failure to adapt it to the symmetrical taste of the first millennium perhaps indicates a lack of interest in the text on the part of later editors' (1989: 123). However, as he himself notes, one such phrase does appear on the reverse of the tablet, and use of the formula introducing speech is not at all compulsory in later texts – *Erra*, for example, jumps around without them in an unconventional way. On these same points Foster remarks that the text 'seems to the modern reader abbreviated or incomplete' (2005: 581). It is quite likely that it is a shortened version of a longer story; one might compare the abrupt ending of *Ištar's Descent* in comparison with the longer *Inana's Descent*, of which there are far more copies. Ashurbanipal is known to have sought out obscure texts for his collection, but the fact that he was able to find this text at all indicates that it had been continued to be copied after the Old Babylonian period, assuming this dating is correct, even though the transmission history is now obscure to us. *Ee* interacts with *Anzû* in a similar way to how *Anzû* interacts with *Labbu*: it is possible then, that a first-

millennium audience would be able to recognise the interaction of *Anzû* with *Labbu*, although the true extent of familiarity with this poem cannot be known.

Labbu has a similar plot to *Anzû* and *Ee:* a monster arises who is a threat to the cosmic order, and a god is called upon to defeat it – a founding myth justifying the power of that god (Tišpak) and his city (Ešnunna).

Variants and translations

The variants in these texts are few and generally not very significant. I note them when they affect the meaning of the text. I have ignored orthographic and spelling variants including the substitution of logograms, dialectal differences, and obvious scribal errors. Unexpected grammatical variants are noted, but those which do not affect the meaning are not, such as ventives, oblique cases written as traditional nominative forms that cannot be interpreted as nominatives, or feminine pronouns written as masculine ones that cannot be interpreted as masculine. For an overview of spelling and variants in *Ee* see Lambert (2013: 9-17).

All translations, unless otherwise specified, are my own.

Chapter One

Allusions in *Anzû*

Anzû alludes to a surprising variety of earlier poems. Some specific allusions can be found to *Lugal-e,* as the most important Sumerian composition about the deeds of Ninurta, and much can also be gained from comparing *Anzû* with the poem naturally paired with *Lugal-e* in later periods, *An-gin*$_7$. Comparison with these two brings out the ways in which *Anzû* makes Ninurta's victory against Anzû his definitive deed: many of the same techniques are used, but Ninurta starts from a lower position, and so attains more power through the slaying of Anzû. The foregrounding of Enlil emphasises how much power has been lost, which adds to Ninurta's credit when he wins it back; there is more emphasis on the familial relations in *Anzû,* defining Ninurta by his relationship to his father Enlil. Furthermore, Ninurta uses strategy (on the advice of Ea) to defeat his opponent rather than only relying on strength, marking him out as a different, more complex hero.

Additional differences come to light through the allusions to other poems. Ninurta's battle is probably also modelled on that of the god Tišpak in *Labbu,* however, while Tišpak carries a magic object into battle to help him win, in *Anzû* it is Ninurta's enemy who has been given this magical advantage, making him more difficult to defeat and thus elevating Ninurta's achievement. In *Anzû* Ninurta's mother Mami (possibly here called Mamītu) is re-named Bēlet-ilī, re-casting an episode which occurred in *Atraḫasīs* to show that her crowning glory is not the creation of mankind, but rather her role in spurring on her son to go against Anzû and restore the divine order. Finally, particular images allude to the Sumerian

Lugalbanda, a poem featuring Anzu as a benevolent creature. *Anzû* subverts this portrayal, not only through the very different way it depicts him, but also through specific allusions which result in a kind of dramatic irony. Furthermore, it engenders 'reverse intertextuality' next time we come to read *Lugalbanda,* for our view of Anzu will never be the same again.

Anzû against the background of Lugal-e and An-gin$_7$

The account of Ninurta's battle against Anzû, the demon with lion and eagle features, is most extensively told in the Akkadian poem of the same name. Standard Babylonian *Anzû* presents this as the most definitive of all Ninurta's battles. It alludes to other monsters he fought, but shows this to be the one that won him his high position in the pantheon. The earliest extant poems about Ninurta's victories, *Lugal-e* and *An-gin$_7$,* reveal the mythological background of this kind of tale, and the traditions that were attached to the god. These poems show us aspects of Ninurta's character and history, which inform the reading of Akkadian *Anzû.* Beginning the comparison of *Anzû* with Sumerian literature will help us understand it in the literary context from which it sprung and identify more specific resemblances.

This analysis will necessarily be based primarily on the Standard Babylonian version of *Anzû* rather than the Old Babylonian version, because only a small portion of the OB version is extant (about 150 lines). The biggest difference is the change in protagonist from Ningirsu to Ninurta, two warrior gods who were syncretised early on and often considered identical. The implications of this change will be discussed further below. The section preserved in the OB version corresponds to I.82-II.147 of SB *Anzû,* from the point where Anzû has snatched supremacy up until Ea's instructions, and is identical in terms of plot.

Comparing this part of the OB version with the SB version, the changes are mostly on the stylistic level: repetition has been introduced in order to create patterns of expectation and suspense, and the procedures of the assembly have become more elaborate (M. Vogelzang, 1988: 220, 187). One interesting difference is that in the OB version Anu and Ea act as leaders of the assembly, whereas in the SB version the assembled gods act together (Vogelzang, 1988: 191). This de-emphasis of the individual gods Anu and Ea increases the visibility and importance of Ninurta (cf. Worthington, 2011: 419-20 on the SB tendency towards homogenisation in order to foreground certain details). Another is the absence of rewards from the OB version in Bēlet-ilī's instructions to Ninurta: Hallo and Moran suggest that rewards were therefore originally not part of Ninurta's motivation to fight Anzû (1979: 67). The essential details, however, remain the same, and since we cannot know how much the OB version differed in other respects, the enquiry should be based on the SB text.

Anzu is mentioned among Ninurta's trophies in *An-gin*$_7$ 39 (edition Cooper, 1978) and *Lugal-e* 133 (edition van Dijk, 1983). The image of Anzu appears as a standard in the temple of Ningirsu at Lagaš (Gudea Cyl. A 351, 751), perhaps implying that Ningirsu's victory over him had already been established, at least in myth.[38] Unfortunately the only surviving tale which might have narrated the event – *Ninurta and the turtle* (edition Alster, 2006) – is largely broken. From this text we learn that after his defeat Anzu lets go of the divine power and the tablet of destinies returns to the Abzu. Anzu is not killed, but goes with Ninurta to visit Enki, who decrees that Ninurta's foot shall forever be on Anzu's neck. No account survives, however, of the battle itself or the events leading up to it. Furthermore, *Ninurta and the turtle* is a satirical composition: Anzu tells a confused Ninurta how Ninurta defeated him, and then Anzu takes Ninurta to the Abzu, rather than the other way round. Ninurta is not content

[38] Although cf. Wiggermann (1992: 161).

with the honours given him and becomes angry[39] – what exactly he is intending to do is not clear, but Enki sends a turtle to defeat him, and Ninurta is humiliated. Ninurta's behaviour here is quite different from the other poems: it may be making fun of Ninurta's aggressive stance in *An-gin*$_7$, since it takes this attitude to extreme levels only to undercut it by having him ambushed by a turtle.

We must turn to *An-gin*$_7$ and *Lugal-e* for the closest parallels to the slaying of Anzu. *An-gin*$_7$, often dubbed 'The return of Ninurta to Nippur', is a largely hymnic composition which tells how Ninurta came to Enlil's shrine in Nippur and demanded a place in it. *Lugal-e* relates Ninurta's battle against the monster Asag. Both may date from the Ur III period, are designated as 'šir-gid$_2$-da', meaning 'long song', and probably had some kind of cultic function, which may explain why they continue to be copied all the way into the first millennium (Annus, 2002: 123). Although their events do not follow exactly sequentially, these two form a natural pair: *Lugal-e* is about one great deed which confirms Ninurta's high status, while *An-gin*$_7$ celebrates Ninurta's victories in the mountains, and is about the establishment of a shrine for him in Enlil's temple Ekur – a prominent position and great honour. The popularity of both these texts makes them natural candidates for influencing Akkadian *Anzû* in some way, as it is likely they would have been known to whomever composed it. However, influence is not easy to pin down: the correspondences are often not specific enough to determine more than shared elements, or that they are drawing on a common tradition.[40] It will be more fruitful, then, to compare the texts for the sake of

[39] It is probably this that leads some to suggest that Ninurta may not have wanted to return the tablet of destinies at the end of SB *Anzû* (e.g. M. Vogelzang, 1988: 67; Foster, 2005: 556), but there is not enough textual evidence to support this conjecture (as Annus, 2001: xiii). In any case, we should be wary of using a satirical composition to reconstruct a serious poem.
[40] As Machinist (2005: 57) who understands OB *Anzû* as 'one of a series of variants'.

bringing out what is unique to each, to see how the Akkadian poet worked with and altered the existing traditions (as we know them) to bring out his own concerns.

Anzû combines both main aspects of *An-gin₇* and *Lugal-e* – the establishment of the shrine and the deed which proves his worth – into a new narrative, reframing the victory over Anzû as the main event which gave Ninurta his reputation.[41] There are significant differences in the treatment of these two aspects, however: in *An-gin₇* Ninurta aggressively demands honours from Enlil, whereas in *Lugal-e* Enlil bestows them of his own accord.[42] In *Lugal-e,* Šar-ur tells Ninurta that the people whose lands are being ravaged by the Asag are begging him to intervene (48-54), whereas *Anzû* shows the gods calling upon him for help as a last resort after three other gods have refused. This motif of gods seeking a new champion in a crisis situation is specific to Akkadian literature,[43] being used also in *Labbu* and *Enūma Eliš*, most likely because these texts are all related to each other. Giving Ninurta less power to begin with, of course, emphasises how much he has gained at the end: the defeat of *Anzû* is presented as a turning point in his history.

Both *An-gin₇* and *Lugal-e* begin with hymnic prologues praising Ninurta.[44] *Anzû* also opens in this way. The prologue of *An-gin₇* in particular has similarities with that of *Anzû* in that it concentrates on his family relations, stating that he is the son of Enlil (lines 1 and 3) and Nintu (line 2). The first four lines of *Anzû* also twice call Ninurta son of Enlil (2 and 4) and Mami (1 and 3). However, this hymnic prologue has more in common structurally with other Akkadian hymns, in particular the parallelism between lines 1 and 3, and between 2

[41] In *Lugal-e* Ninurta is not the typical young god but already has a high position, with wife, throne, and processional barque (Vogelzang: 1988: 160).
[42] The passage in SB *Anzû* where Ea tells Mami what Ninurta will receive in return for his help is unfortunately broken.
[43] Or one could equally well read it the other way round, as van Dijk does, and say that Ninurta's active intervention is unique to *Lugal-e* (1983: 3).
[44] Machinist notes the hymnic prologue of *Lugal-e* (2005: 53) but not of *An-gin₇.*

and 4.[45] It is possible that the focus on the god's mother and father was an influence, but it is also a common feature of hymns to name the addressee's parents. Nonetheless, beginning *Anzû* with a hymnic prologue signals the nature of the composition about to unfold: like *An-gin₇* and *Lugal-e* it is a poem whose ultimate purpose is to praise the god Ninurta, through relating his deeds. Fittingly, it alludes twice to episodes that are related in *Lugal-e*: Ninurta's invention of irrigation in line 6: *mu-ša₂-aš₂-qu-u₂ tar-ba-ṣi ir-mu u₂-ru su-qi₂ u āli*(URU), 'who waters the stall, garden, roof, street and city' (cf. *Lugal-e* 334-67), and his binding of the stone monsters in line 10: *ša₂ ina ek-du-ti-šu₂ ik-mu-u ik-su-u ša₂-ad ab-ni,* 'who in his fierceness bound and fettered the mountain of stone' (cf. *Lugal-e* 34-9) (Hallo & Moran, 1979: 74; Foster 2005: 562 n. 2). Given the popularity and importance of *Lugal-e* it is likely that these are allusions to this specific text rather than to the traditional deeds of Ninurta.

Some aspects of *An-gin₇* and *Lugal-e* are helpful in understanding *Anzû* as part of its background mythology, information which helps us interpret the later poem even if it does not specifically allude to it. Like Anzû, Asag is born in the mountains (*Anzû* I.25-7; *Lugal-e* 27-9; Hallo & Moran 1979: 70). Anzu is also a mountain-dweller in the Sumerian poem *Lugalbanda and the Anzu bird* (henceforth *Lugalbanda*). The mountains are prominent as the site of Ninurta's victories in Sumerian mythology: *Lugal-e* 128-34 enumerates a list of Ninurta's previous conquests and ends: kur-ra ḫe₂-mu-e-ni-ug₅, 'you killed them in the mountains'. The *An-gin₇* prologue describes Ninurta as: ḫur-saĝ-ta e₃-a, 'who came forth from the mountains' at line 3: ib₂ du₁₁-ga-ni kur ad₆ X [...] 'his fierce utterance [*made*] the mountain a corpse' at line 24: kur saĝ um-ma-ab-gi₄-a-aš, 'because you overturned the mountains' at 94, and finally at 159, he declares himself: kala-ga kur gaba nu-gi₄-me-en, 'I am the strong one, unopposed in the mountains'. Remembering these titles of his when we

[45] e.g. cf. Foster, 2005: II.1; II.5; III.30; III.31.

come to read *Anzû* makes it evident why he is able to vanquish Anzû when other gods refuse – he has a history of victories in this terrain and is naturally the one most suitable for the task. This has echoes in *Anzû*, where the mountains are described as Anzû's home territory in tablet I: *an-zu-u$_2$ ip-pa-riš-ma šadû*(KUR)*-us-su ig-guš*, 'Anzû flew away and went towards his mountain' (I.83 = I.110 = I.152), yet in tablet II we find only Ninurta as the subject of *šadûssu igguš* (II.29, II.147). Finally in tablet III the only reference to 'his mountain' is *dan-nu-um-ma ut-ta-'a-ar an-za-a šad-du-su*, 'The strong one (Ninurta) out-roared Anzû in his mountain!' (III.26), a progression of conquest of the territory.

A similar technique is used in *Lugal-e. B*oth Ninurta and Asag are described with similar imagery from the realms of the human, divine, animal, physical, object, disease, meteorological, and plant (Feldt, 2011: 135-41).[46] We may take storm imagery as an example.[47] Ninurta is described as a storm five times (u$_4$: 1, 77, 235, 374; tu$_{15}$ ulu$_3$: 8; in addition to having a storm as a weapon), and Asag twice (u$_4$: 174 and 267). While such imagery is itself cliché in Sumerian literature, the specific way it is employed may not be. Asag is a threat because he is a rival to Ninurta's power. The monster is trying to lay its hands on the powers received by Ninurta in the Abzu and Ninurta's kingship is under threat (53-4). The rebel lands are worshipping the stone monster instead of Ninurta, as is made clear when he crushes them and the people cry out to each other: en ^{d}nin-urta-ra a$_2$ nu-mu-e-zi, 'You did not lift your hands in prayer to lord Ninurta' (262). And Šar-ur tells Ninurta: za-gin$_7$ kalam-ma di-bi [ši-in-ga]-ku$_5$-de$_3$, 'it actually decides the land's lawsuits just as you do!' (42). Asag is dangerous, therefore, because he is becoming too much like Ninurta. The fact that he is also described with the storm imagery which is so prominently associated with

[46] Another effect of this is to blur and explore the lines between hero and monster, chaos and stability (Feldt, 2011: 145).
[47] See Feldt (2011) for examples from other realms, which support the same point.

Ninurta in this poem may be a deliberate reflection of the way the monster is taking over the god's attributes, right down to his epithets. Indeed, Šar-ur tries to dissuade Ninurta from fighting it, saying: a$_2$-še a$_2$-sag$_3$-ge nu-si$_3$-ge, 'you will not equal the Asag!' (149). The situation in *Anzû* is different: the monster is not a threat to Ninurta's power, but an opportunity for him to gain it. Anzû is a threat to the supremacy of Ninurta's father Enlil and the traditional pantheon.

It is striking that Ninurta's weapon Šar-ur has been personified into a speaking character in both *Lugal-e* and *Anzû*.[48] Cultic objects, including weapons and emblems of gods, were often deified in Mesopotamia. They were brought to life in the same way as divine statues with the *mīs pî* ritual, and given offerings (Selz, 1997: 179), which explains how a weapon could be thought of as an independent being which is able to speak.[49] Šar-ur plays the same role in both poems, leaving in the midst of the battle to tell another god what is happening when victory seems unlikely (Ea in *Anzû,* Enlil in *Lugal-e*), then bearing a message of encouragement back to Ninurta. Based on the reoccurrence of this motif van Dijk argues that the battle between Ninurta and Anzû is based on that between Ninurta and Asag (1983: 3). The motif of asking a god for advice in battle could simply be a traditional story-telling technique.[50] However, the only other place it appears in Mesopotamian poetry is in *Lugalbanda,* where Lugalbanda hurries back to Uruk to ask Inana for advice in defeating Aratta. *Lugalbanda* is related to these compositions both in subject matter and via allusions, so the reoccurrence may not be pure coincidence. Either way, the presentation of a weapon as a speaking character is unparalleled apart from the Sebettu in *Erra and Išum* (Machinist, 2005:

[48] cf. Machinist (2005: 53), who notes the motif's extension into *Erra* as well.
[49] cf. Paffrath (1913: 61-66), on the secondary interpretation of Šar-ur and Šar-gaz as deities.
[50] For an analysis of *Lugal-e* according to the folktale structures of Vladimir Propp see Feldt (2011: 144-5), which does include this step. Propp's category is 'donor or consultation,' but what we have here is much more specific, and so is likely to be more than just coincidence.

53) and, through word play, Kakka in *Ee,* which are the result of their relationship to *Anzû*. It seems fairly certain that Šar-ur is a direct incorporation from *Lugal-e,* which the poet of *Anzû* has brought into his own telling of Ninurta's greatest battle, presenting the battle against Anzû as the god's ultimate triumph instead of that over Asag or any of the other traditional enemies.[51] This shows a much closer connection between *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* than with *An-gin*$_7$, where the parallels are less precise.

After the introductory hymn in *Lugal-e,* the emergence of the threat of Asag is immediately announced to Ninurta (24-69). *Anzû* also has a similar step, where immediately after the hymn of praise, the birth of Anzû is announced to Enlil (I.25-42, unfortunately much is broken). Given the similarities between the two compositions, this can be read as an ominous intertext. At first the appearance of Anzû seems like good news since there is nothing evil about him yet – he is the one who makes the waters flow, and Enlil appoints him to guard his shrine. However, to a reader who knows the parallel situation in *Lugal-e,* this may be rather unsettling. Like Asag, Anzû is born in the mountains, and he soon becomes a dangerous threat. If we are expecting the composition to unfold along similar lines, we may suspect that giving Anzû a position of responsibility may not be such a good idea. In terms of storytelling patterns, one would expect that the threat would emerge early on in this kind of story. However, the fact that the threat emerges immediately after the hymn of praise to Ninurta in both poems makes this more specific, and thus more likely to be a deliberate

[51] Šar-ur was originally a weapon of Ningirsu (Enḫeduanna Temple Hymn 20; Gudea *Cyl. A* IX.24; XV.23-4; *Cyl. B* VII.19-23) and became associated with Ninurta through their syncretism. The association of Šar-ur with other gods is mostly due to those gods being associated with Ninurta: Zababa, a god often identified with Ninurta (a Late Babylonian text, Cavigneaux, 1981: 79.B1/19), Marduk, who took over Ninurta's attributes (V R 46: 32), and Aššur, which is assimilating the mythology of Marduk, since they appear in a battle against Ti'āmtu (an inscription of Sennacherib, RINAP 3 160: 27) (Krebernik, RLA XII 1/2: 85-6). An exception is found in the fragmentary 'Inana and Gudam' (edition Römer, 1991) line 18, where he belongs to a person called 'Gudam', but Zababa is mentioned in the next line so there may be some connection.

imitation. The links between *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* may not be immediately obvious at this early stage in the poem, especially since the strongest link is the reappearance of Šar-ur, and so it may be that this kind of allusion may be picked up only on a second reading. This would signal that this poem is supposed to be read many times, and is a sign of literary sophistication.

When Šar-ur reports the battle to Enlil in *Lugal-e,* Enlil responds by sending Ninurta a storm weapon as assistance, and offering him a shrine in Ekur and universal acclaim as rewards. All three compositions under discussion therefore offer alternative events as the clinching factor in Ninurta's ascendancy to this place. However, the role of Enlil differs. In *Lugal-e* he appears only at the point when Šar-ur speaks to him, and at 187-90 when he expresses anxiety and fear because his son is not there to support him. The composition is very much about Ninurta from the start, and Enlil only appears when needed. He may be the one to grant Ninurta his shrine and a decisive weapon, but his power, or lack of it, stays in the background. In *Anzû* his power is foregrounded from the beginning, and the fact that it is lost, with Ninurta being the one to recover it, dramatises the crisis in a more immediate way, and highlights Ninurta's role as restorer of order. For while *Anzû* is primarily about Ninurta's victory, it must be remembered that he does not only win power for himself, but he also wins it back for Enlil. This is hinted at early on in the prologue, which emphasises Ninurta's familial relationships.[52] Ea's exhortation is first of all: *a-na a-bi* ⌜*a*⌝*-li-di-ka li-tu-ru par*$_2$*-ṣi*, 'let the divine powers return to the father who engendered you' (II.119 = II.141). This aspect of Ninurta is present in Sumerian narrative poetry, but not so prominently. In the *An-gin*$_7$ prologue he is called ur-saĝ ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$, 'warrior of Enlil' (8). That he supports his

[52] 'The reference to both parents in a single line [line 1] is extraordinary, a departure from normal practice that is a kind of foregrounding and arrests attention' (Hallo & Moran, 1979: 71).

father's rule is mentioned in the last line of the introductory hymn of *Lugal-e*, where he is called: dumu a-a-ni-ir su$_3$-u$_4$-bi-še$_3$ kir$_4$ šu ĝal$_2$, 'son who has forced homage to his father until distant days' (16), and is implicit from lines 187-90 when his absence causes Enlil anxiety, but it is not emphasised in the plot. Likewise, *An-gin*$_7$ ends by calling him nir-ĝal$_2$ a-a ugu-na, 'pride of the father who engendered him' (209), but the poem does not show him upholding Enlil. In the Sumerian poems, his role as protector of Enlil is implicit, but in *Anzû* it is emphasised by having him perform a specific task on his father's behalf. Hallo and Moran stress the personal tone of Bēlet-ilī's exhortations to Ninurta which present the mission as an opportunity to avenge his parents: she gave Anu and Enlil their roles,[53] so Anzû's theft of the *parṣū* has undone her work, as well as being an injustice against Ninurta's father (1979: 67-8). That *Anzû* is more concerned with Ninurta as the good son becomes clearer still in comparison with *Enūma Eliš*, for unlike in the latter poem which expresses Marduk's theological takeover of Enlil's position, Ninurta does not usurp Enlil's role, but restores it to him and is praised for doing so (III.120-1).

Another change in emphasis between *Lugal-e* and *Anzû* can be seen in the differing responses of Enlil and Ea. Enlil grants a weapon, but Ea gives strategic advice. It is not pure strength which enables Ninurta to win his victory, but the use of strategic thinking and word play. This taps into the theme of the power of language which ends up defeating Anzû when his magic words are turned against him.

[53] See note 70 below.

New names, new identities

Near the end of SB *Anzû,* Ninurta is rewarded with new names in honour of his victory. Eighteen different names and titles are preserved,[54] identifying him with a list of older deities, all of whom he has now absorbed and superseded. This conclusion was imitated by *Enūma Eliš*, where the names and titles of other gods (as well as other titles of Marduk himself) are bestowed upon Marduk as a declaration of his new identity as a supreme warrior deity (see Bottéro, 1977; Seri, 2006), culminating with Enlil himself handing over his title (VII.136). Many of the gods here assimilated with Ninurta are specifically warrior deities: Ningirsu (III.128), Zababa (III.142), 'warrior' Tišpak (*qarrādu*(UR.SAG), III.149), and Papsukkal 'the vanguard' (*a-lik maḫ-ri,* III.156).[55] Ningirsu was, in fact, the protagonist of Old Babylonian *Anzû,* assimilated with Ninurta to such an extent that the two gods were now considered virtually identical. Ninurta and Ningirsu may have been originally separate deities in Pre-Sargonic times,[56] but the assimilation took place at a very early stage so that by the time of composition of *Lugal-e,* for example, they were considered the same god: manuscript H of *Lugal-e* has Ningirsu as its protagonist, even though the tablet comes from Nippur, city of Ninurta (van Dijk, 1983: 4).

The fact that Ningirsu is the protagonist of Old Babylonian *Anzû,* even though it is Ninurta who conquers Anzu in the Sumerian texts, illustrates this syncretism. Anzu is a

[54] Three more are broken, and the tablet becomes very fragmentary at the end, making it impossible to say exactly how many there were.
[55] Zababa and Pabilsag are listed among 'the seven Ninurtas' in KAR 142. Pisag-Unug is listed next to Ninurta in Seleucid rituals for the temple of Anu at Uruk, and is included among the hypostases of Nergal in the lamentation a-ga1-ga1 buru$_{14}$ su-su, which leads Beaulieu to suggest he had the characteristics of a warrior deity (Beaulieu, 1993: 19).
[56] Falkenstein cites a title of Baba, Ningirsu's wife, as 'daughter of Eridu', perhaps connecting Ningirsu with Enki rather than Enlil initially (1966: 90-91).

symbol of Ningirsu in Gudea Cyl. A 351 and 751,[57] so there are Sumerian traditions connecting both gods to Anzu, although the conquest of Anzu is not explicitly mentioned, whereas there are many references to this in conjunction with Ninurta. Only two manuscripts of OB *Anzû* are published, so it is also possible that Ninurta was the protagonist in others which have not survived. The fact that SB *Anzû* gives the name of Ningirsu to Ninurta (III.128) may imply that a rivalry existed between them, even if long ago. The kind of rivalry envisaged would be similar to that between Ninurta and Marduk, where Marduk absorbs Ninurta's identity as his cult city, Babylon, becomes politically dominant over that of Ninurta's city Nippur. As Ningirsu's city of Lagaš became less important, so do references to Ningirsu decline (Black, 1988: 20). In line 5 of the SB poem Ninurta is described as *tu-kul-ti* E_2.NINNU, 'the one Eninnu relies upon'; Eninnu is, of course, the name of Ningirsu's temple in Girsu, his home city (Machinist, 2005: 36 n.16). Lambert suggests that Ningirsu might only have meant 'the form of Ninurta worshipped at Girsu' while still perhaps a separate deity in origin (1975b: 193). However the picture of this early rivalry (or not) is far from clear. The god lists of Abu Salabīḫ name Ningirsu although the site is close to Nippur and we might therefore expect Ninurta (OIP 99, text 83) and Ninurta does not appear at all (Cooper, 1978: 11 n.3). Two other texts name Ningirsu in conjunction with Nippur: ^{d}nin-ĝir$_2$-su nibru^{ki}-ta nir-ĝal$_2$, 'Ningirsu from Nippur is magnificent' (Reform text of URU-KA-gina, RIME E1.9.9.1 xii.36) and ^{d}nin-ĝir$_2$-su en nibru^{ki}-ta u$_4$ sud-še$_3$ maḫ, 'Ningirsu, the lord from Nippur, is exalted forever' (brick inscription of Lugal-Anda, RIME E1.9.8.2 ii' 6') (Cooper, 1978: 11 n.3). For our purposes, it is enough to note that the two gods merged well before the composition of OB *Anzû*, and that Ninurta had become more important than Ningirsu by the

[57] Although cf. Wiggermann's argument that Anzu is actually a symbol of Enlil (1992: 161).

time of SB *Anzû.* The attributes and actions of the god are the same in both poems - all that has changed is the name.

Ninurta's assimilation of Ningirsu in SB *Anzû*, then, is well accounted for. Slightly more unusually, however, Ninurta is named 'Tišpak' at III.149 and 'Lugalbanda' at III.147. Tišpak is a warrior god of Ešnunna, presumably absorbed by Ninurta because of his similar function. Ninurta and Tišpak are equated in god lists, for example *An = Anum* (CT 24, 41: 64) and K 4349+81-7-27, 54 (CT 25, 8: 15) (Lambert, 1986: 55). The syncretism may have taken place after Hammurapi's conquest of Ešnunna in 1755 BC, when the city was absorbed into his Babylonian empire. The equation with Lugalbanda is less straightforward. He is listed with Ninurta among the spouses of Gula,[58] but this hymn contains allusions to *Anzû,* and so this assimilation is probably due to the assimilation in *Anzû* rather than the other way round.

The other divine identities bestowed on Ninurta, then, also represent the other poems assimilated by *Anzû.* That is, the mention of Tišpak and Lugalbanda signals that *Anzû* interacts with the poems featuring them, *Labbu* and *Lugalbanda,* since they now form part of Ninurta's identity.[59] The assimilation is not passive, but *Anzû* inscribes these connections within itself as part of building Ninurta's new identity: not only the names of these other gods have been incorporated into the poem, but their own heroic narratives are alluded to and thus given to Ninurta.

[58] In 'The Gula hymn of Bullutṣa-rabi' edited by Lambert, (1967).
[59] This is potentially true of the others too, though *Labbu* and *Lugalbanda* are the only comparable heroic narratives to survive.

Labbu

Tišpak is the protagonist of a short text frequently dubbed the 'Labbu-myth'. The plot follows a similar trajectory to *Enūma Eliš* and *Anzû*:[60] a huge *labbu*-monster[61] (a type of serpent) ravages the land, various gods are afraid to fight it, so they ask Tišpak to slay the beast.[62] He does so, with his bow and arrow, and is rewarded with kingship of the land. Furthermore, the poem may have been composed for similar reasons. Tišpak was a new, foreign deity who competed with and replaced the older warrior god Ninazu as city god of Ešnunna in the Old Akkadian period (Jacobsen, 1932: 58, 1934: 20-8). He takes over not only Ninazu's role, but also his temple (Jacobsen, 1932: 55) and *mušhuššu*-dragon (Wiggermann, 1989: 121). Thus this text tells of how he saved the land from destruction and justifies his rise to kingship. In fact, Ninazu is another of Ninurta's names preserved in *Anzû* at III.139 (on the witness GM1): Ninurta is absorbing the identity of the god that Tišpak replaced as well as Tišpak himself.[63]

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[60] There is another text which seems to tell a similar story: KAR 6 (edited by Lambert, 2013: 384-6), where a serpent is created in the ocean, and the birth goddess Aruru calls on her son Nergal to vanquish it. No more of the plot survives, however, to establish its relationship to the other texts, other than that it is a variation on a similar theme, and that Nergal and Ninurta are often syncretised.

[61] It is unclear whether ***labbu*** should be translated as 'lion' or 'raging'. Wiggermann argues it is an epithet of the serpent, 'the raging one' (1989: 118), but given the popularity of composite monsters in Mesopotamian literature the possibility that this is a lion-snake hybrid cannot be ruled out (first suggested by Heidel, 1963: 141; also Foster, 2005: 581). There are archaic seal impressions which may depict such a creature (see Lewis, 1996: 35-6). cf. Cunningham 1997, text 63: an incantation concerned with a chaos monster which is referred to as both piriĝ (lion) and ušumgal (dragon/snake).

[62] See Lambert (2013: 365) for the suggestion that Enlil created the monster in the first place to kill off the human race like in *Atr.*

[63] Wiggermann RLA IX: 333 notes that Tišpak and Ninazu do not become indistinguishable like Enki and Ea or Inana and Ištar, but are listed separately in god lists from OB onwards. After Ešnunna was conquered by Hammurapi there are no more references to a cult of Ninazu but Tišpak is still worshipped in the north (Wiggermann, *ibid*). There is some evidence for later syncretism of Ninurta with Ninazu: they are equated in two SB god lists CT 25, 8:8, and CT 25, 13:8, and the Gula hymn of Bulluṭsa-rabi (Lambert, 1967: 118 line 53) mentions Ninazu among her spouses, along with Ninurta, Ningirsu, Pabilsaĝ, Zababa, Uta-'ulu, and Lugalbanda, nearly all of whom are included among Ninurta's names in *Anzû*.

It seems likely then that *Anzû* would allude to this poem, if Ninurta is indeed taking over the conquests and attributes of Tišpak. Since both poems originate from the Old Babylonian period, one might ask how we can be sure that *Anzû* draws on *Labbu* and not the other way round. Not only is Ninurta is given Tišpak's name near the end of *Anzû*, suggesting assimilation of his deeds, and not only are there similarities between the gods' attributes, but *Anzû* appears to have taken over certain elements from *Labbu* and uses them in a consciously competitive way. The passage describing the battle between Tišpak and the *labbu*-monster contains an intriguing detail:

[^{d}BAD$^{?}$] *pa-a-šu$_2$ i-pu-uš-ma a-na* ^{d}[MUŠ$_2$ *i-zak-kar*]
šu-uš-ḫi-it ur-pa mi-ḫa-a [x x x]
ku-nu-uk-ku na-piš-ti-ka i-na pa-ni-ka [*tu-mu-uḫ*]
us-kam$_2$-ma lab-ba du-[*kam$_2$-ma*]
u$_2$-ša$_2$-aš$_2$-ḫi-it ur-pa mi-ḫa-a [x x x]
ku-nu-uk-ku na-piš-ti-šu$_2$ ina pa-ni-šu$_2$ [*it-mu-uḫ*]
is-su-kam$_2$-ma lab-bi [*i-du-uk*]

[*Ea*] prepared to speak, [saying to Tišpak]
"Fling up a cloud, [*raise*] a storm,
[Hold] the cylinder seal of your throat[64] in front of you,
shoot (an arrow) and [kill] the *labbu*."
He flung up a cloud, [*raised*] a storm,
[He held] the cylinder seal of his throat in front of him,
he shot (an arrow) [and killed] the *labbu*.

CT 13: 34 (edition Lambert, 2013: 364-5) rev. 1-7

As in *Anzû*, a god is giving advice to the warrior on how to defeat his opponent. Foster has restored 'Ea?' probably via analogy with *Anzû* (2005: 581-2). This similarity in plot is one element that *Anzû* takes over from *Labbu*: Ninurta fights a similar *kind* of battle to

[64] Cylinder seals were usually strung on a cord and worn around the neck; 'cylinder seal ofyour throat' probably refers to this. I envisage Tišpak holding it in his bow-hand as he shoots the arrow.

establish his credentials as a warrior god, but will perform more impressively than Tišpak. This is brought out by the different advice given.

Tišpak carries a cylinder seal with him into battle, which gives him the power to defeat the monster (Goff, 1963: 208). The seal was an attribute of Ninazu, appearing in an incantation (KAR 88 Fr. 4 r. iv 12; dupl. *STT* 217: 29) ^{na4}*kunuk*(KIŠIB) ^{d}*nin-a-zu ša*$_2$ *māḫira*(GABA.RI) *lā*(NU) *išû*(NU TUKU-*u*) 'seal of Ninazu that cannot be withstood', and he is 'seal-keeper' of the netherworld (kišib-gal kur-ra-ke; [*ka*]-*ni-ik erṣeti*(KUR-*ti*$_3$) in another collection of bilingual incantations (Ebeling, 1953: 388: 60-1; dupl. STT 210 r. 8') (Wiggermann, 1989: 124). This is another example of Tišpak collecting the attributes of the god which he replaced. Notably, Ninurta is called the seal-keeper of Enlil in *An-gin*$_7$ 93, *Lugal-e* 236, and a Sumerian temple hymn (Sjöberg & Bergmann, 1969: 20 text no. 5, line 71) (Annus, 2002: 82-3).

Even more interesting is the fact that the seal functions as an amulet here, carried by the hero to ensure success.[65] This makes it analogous to the tablet of destinies in *Anzû*, both magical objects which aid their possessor in battle. The tablet of destinies and the cylinder seal have more in common than this, however: both are symbols of authority. Seals symbolised authority, including legitimate ownership of documents or objects, the tablet of destinies symbolised ownership of power over the universe. Both were worn as prominent symbols of this authority. The seal dedicated to Marduk by the king Marduk-zākir-šumi (VA Bab 646, RIMB *2:* 104 ff.) is perforated, and bears an inscription calling it: *si-mat kišādi*(GU$_2$)-*šu*$_2$ *elli*(KU$_3$), 'fitting for his holy neck', implying that it was worn on a cord. The tablet of destinies was held at the breast (*Enūma Eliš* IV.122 *ir-tuš it-muḫ*), meaning that it too was displayed on

[65] The evidence for cylinder seals being used as amulets in rituals has been collected by Goff (1963: 195-211).

the body as a symbol of the power it conferred (George, 1986: 139). There is symbolic equivalence between divine seals and the tablet of destinies, too: the seal impression of Aššur impressed on Esarhaddon's vassal treaties calls itself: ^{na4}*kunuk*(KIŠIB) *šīmāti*(NAM)^{meš}, 'seal of destinies', and its function was to confer the highest divine authority on the document, making it equivalent to the tablet of destinies, which itself bore a seal (*Enūma Eliš* IV.122; George, 1986: 139-41). The shifting of the motif from the god's cylinder seal to the tablet of destinies is a natural one, then, since the two were functionally equivalent.

However, the tablet of destinies has not been incorporated into *Anzû* in exactly the same way as the cylinder seal. Instead, we find a reversal: instead of the warrior hero holding the magic object, it is carried by the enemy he fights. This variation on plot raises the stakes in *Anzû*: Ninurta is up against a more formidable enemy, not just a monster which is ferocious enough to require a magical defeat, but one which can use magic against him. Furthermore, Ninurta will kill this monster by subverting the magical object even though it is not in his possession, showing him to be a superior warrior. This is brought out further by comparing the advice given to both gods: Ninurta is told to use trickery, but only magic can improve Tišpak's chances.

The tablet of destinies has been substituted for the cylinder-seal amulet to raise the stakes again: the monster does not have just any magical object in its possession, but rather the power of Enlil himself. This again elevates the abilities of Ninurta for being able to defeat an opponent with such power at his command.

The scale of the crisis in *Anzû* is more severe in another way, as the existence of the gods is more directly threatened (Wiggermann, 1989: 119). In *Labbu*, the monster is rampaging over the land, and the gods' reasoning for wanting it eliminated is not entirely clear, though one could easily suppose that if mankind is destroyed there will be no one to

provide offerings for them, as in *Atraḫasīs*. In *Anzû* the threat to the gods is more explicit: their authority is taken away: ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$-*u*$_2$-*ta il-te-qe*$_2$ *na-du-*$^{\lceil}$*u*$_2$$^{\rceil}$ [*par-ṣí*], 'he took the Enlilship, the [divine powers] were overthrown!' (I.82 = I.109). Furthermore, Tišpak's victory takes place in a time when cities are already built, whereas *Anzû* does not mention human beings, and the implication is that it is set in a more primordial time, before the Igigi have cult daises and before the rivers carry water (I.15-18).[66] This shifts the significance from the historical and specific (the arrival of Tišpak in Ešnunna) to the cosmological and general (the ascent of Ninurta as warrior deity of Mesopotamia *par excellence*). The other gods listed also belong to particular cities in a way Ninurta does not: Ninurta does have a specific cult city (Nippur), but he was also worshipped all over Mesopotamia, as was Enlil, the main city god of Nippur. This is not the case for Ištaran of Dēr or Zababa of Kiš, or the other minor deities Pabilsag (Isin and Nippur), Pisag-Unug (Uruk), or Panigarra (Adab), or even of Ningirsu, a god specific to the city of Girsu, although they could have shrines outside their own cities (George, 1992: 489-91, passim).

This motif from *Labbu* has been incorporated into *Anzû* in a careful and deliberate way. If the poet had wanted to merge Ninurta with Tišpak, he could have simply given him a cylinder seal to carry into battle, but the process is more sophisticated than this and is designed to show Ninurta to be superior to the warrior deities that came before him. Just as *Labbu* relates how Tišpak took over from the older Ninazu as a new, young, warrior god, taking over his previous attributes, so *Anzû*'s allusions remind us of this to show Ninurta taking over yet again.

This analysis has focused on Ninurta rather than Ningirsu primarily because of the evidence of the names at the end of the SB poem, which call him both Tišpak and Ningirsu.

[66] This kind of *hysteron proteron* strategy will be discussed further below.

We do not know whether or not the OB version concluded in this way. Although the tablet of destinies and Anzû's magic spell do appear in OB *Anzû*, perhaps implying that it was Ningirsu who took over these motifs from Tišpak first,[67] this seems unlikely because the syncretism of Ningirsu with Ninurta took place so early on (by the middle of the third millennium at the latest, Streck, RLA IX: 512), that by the OB period the two gods were already considered identical. Therefore, when Tišpak's importance declined due to Hammurapi's conquest of Ešnunna in the OB period, Ninurta and Ningirsu would already have been synonymous.

Atraḫasīs

There is a notable similarity between the roles played by the birth goddess Mami (also called Nintu) in both *Atraḫasīs* and *Anzû*. In Old Babylonian *Atraḫasīs,* the gods call upon her to create mankind, in order to relieve the gods of their labour and thus save Enlil from the rebellion threatening his existence. In both versions of *Anzû*, she is called upon to beseech her son to fight. However, in the Old Babylonian *Atraḫasīs* and the Standard Babylonian *Anzû* she is rewarded with a new name:

> *pa-na-ma* ^{d}*ma-mi ni-ša-si-ki*
> *i-na-an-na be-le-*[*et*] *ka-la i-li lu-u*$_2$ ⌜*šu-um*⌝*-ki*
>
> "Formerly we used to call you Mami,
> "Now let 'Mistress of All the Gods' be your name"
>
> OB *Atr*. I.246-7

> *pa-na-ma* ^{d}*ma-mi-*⌜*tu*$^{?}$⌝ [*ni-ša-si-ki*]
> *e-nen-ni be-let kul-la*[*t* DINGIR^{meš} *lu-u*$_2$ *šum*(MU)*-ki*]

[67] Although it seems likely that the victory was won in the same way, by subverting the power of the tablet of destinies, it should be noted that the details of the battle itself are lost in the OB poem.

"Formerly [we used to call you] *Mamītu*,[68]

"Now let 'Mistress of All [the Gods' be your name]'

SB *Anzû* I.181-2

This is not the same as in the Old Babylonian *Anzû*, where she is already called Bēlet-ilī at the point where she is first introduced (line 36).[69] It seems that the birth goddess has a traditional role as a helper in crisis situations such as this one, and this is why she is called upon in both Old Babylonian texts at this point in the story. Just as Ea/Enki has the traditional role of offering clever advice, so she often appears when the solution requires creation or persuasion. However, Standard Babylonian *Anzû* has not merely placed her in her typecast role, but chooses to make this the moment she receives her new name. Rather than being crowned 'Mistress of All the Gods' for relieving them from their corvée work, the poet of *Anzû* re-writes her story so that her most worthy achievement is her enlistment of Ninurta's help.[70] The two lines which state this are a close paraphrase of *Atraḫasīs*, saying the same thing in only slightly different words, and thus invoke this earlier explanation. It is yet another exaltation of this victory of Ninurta, that his mother should be honoured for her part in this story rather than any other. That *Anzû* should incorporate the naming of Bēlet-ilī into a text about the naming of Ninurta is another indication of its synthesizing nature: that this

[68] Mammītu is another name for Mami, a possible restoration suggested by A. R. George (private communication). The OB forerunner to *An = Anum* TCL 15, 10 names Mammītu as the spouse of Nergal in 419, who is more usually called Mami. In *An = Anum* itself ^{d}*ma-mi-tum* occurs in V.299 as the spouse of Nergal, with the variant in ms. C (K 266) of ^{d}*ma-mi-e*. However, Mammītu does not appear in the 45 names of Bēlet-ilī (II.1-45).

[69] She is referred to as *bēlet-ilī* at SB I.171 and 176 before she is formally given this name, which acknowledges that it is a traditional epithet. The bestowal of it as an honour here, however, is still important.

[70] It also presents her as having a special role regarding the assignment of divine responsibilities. Although the text is broken, from the surrounding context it looks likely that she gave supremacy to Enlil and kingship to Anu: ^{d}*en-lil$_2$-u$_2$-ti* [*a-na a-ḫi-ia x x*] / *a-na* ^{d}*a-nim šar-ru-u*[*t šamê*(AN-*e*) *uš-mad-di*], 'Supremacy [to my brother…] / to Anu [I assigned] the kingship [of heaven] / (I.205-6, restorations by Hallo & Moran, 1979: 88).

story, set in a mythical time before the establishment of cult daises and when the great rivers do not yet flow, has cosmological significance, that Ninurta's victory was the driving force behind changes in the divine hierarchy in a fundamental way.[71]

The honorific re-naming of Ninurta's mother also takes place in *Lugal-e.* Formerly called Ninmaḫ (369, 388, 391; also referred to once as Nintu at 409), Ninurta gives her the new name of Ninḫursaĝa (^{d}nin-ḫur-saĝ-ĝa$_2$), 'Lady of the Mountains' in honour of his victory (396, also at 408, 588, 644). The situation in *Anzû* is closer, however, to that in *Atraḫasīs* than *Lugal-e*: in *Lugal-e* it is Ninurta himself that bestows the new name upon his mother, while in the two Akkadian poems it is the assembly of gods that do so. In *Lugal-e* it takes place after Ninurta's victory, and in *Atraḫasīs* it takes place after the goddess has created man. In both of these instances the name is a reward for something that has already been accomplished. In SB *Anzû,* however, it is given before she asks Ninurta to set out, as a kind of anticipatory reward for her role in enlisting him (M. Vogelzang, 1986: 68) . This is comparable to the bestowal of kingship on Marduk in *Enūma Eliš* before he sets out to fight Ti'āmtu (IV.14-15). It seems, then, that the naming of Bēlet-ilī has been incorporated from the version in *Atraḫasīs,* as part of the synthesis of Akkadian traditions like that of those related to Tišpak, and its occurrence in *Lugal-e* is a related but separate tradition.

The Return of Lugalbanda

As we have seen, *Anzû* has much in common with the Sumerian poems about Ninurta, and those featuring other Semitic warrior gods. It is not unexpected, then, that it would also be comparable with a Sumerian poem featuring Anzu, *The Return of Lugalbanda.*

[71] cf. Hallo & Moran, 1979: 69.

This time the interaction is not thematic or structural, but allusions are made through particular images.

The Return of Lugalbanda (henceforth *Lugalbanda*) opens with Lugalbanda, son of the king of Uruk, lost in the mountains. He has become separated from the army on its way to campaign against Aratta. He comes across a nest of Anzu-chicks, tidies it up, and adorns the birds with kohl. When Anzu returns, he is pleased to find his offspring have been treated so well, and offers Lugalbanda four different sets of rewards. The second offer is:

> ^{d}šara$_2$ dumu ki aĝ$_2$ ^{d}inana-gin$_7$
> ti zu$_2$-zu-a u$_4$-gin$_7$ e$_3$-i$_3$
> GIL-ak iti$_6$-gin$_7$ e$_3$-i$_3$
> ti zu$_2$ lu$_2$ ra-ra-bi muš-ša$_3$-tur$_3$ ḫe$_2$-e
>
> Like Šara, beloved son of Inana,
> shoot out your barbed arrows like a sunbeam,
> shoot out reed arrows like moonlight!
> May the barbed arrows be a horned viper to those they hit!
>
> *Lugalbanda* 142-5

Lugalbanda, however, refuses, since he has his own specific request to make. He asks for the ability to run exceptionally fast, as fast as light itself (168-77). Anzu grants his request, and Lugalbanda uses this power to catch up with the army. He then uses it to return speedily to Uruk to ask Inana for success in the battle.

In Akkadian *Anzû*, when Bēlet-ilī is encouraging Ninurta we find an image that resonates with the Sumerian *Lugalbanda*:

> *tu-lul* ^{giš}*qašta*(PAN) *šu-ku-du im-ta li-me-šu*[72]
>
> Draw the bow, let the arrow become poison to him!
>
> SB *Anzû* II.10

[72] Var: E has ⌜*li-bil-lu*⌝ and F has ⌜*li-bi$_2$-lu*⌝, 'let the arrows bring poison!' The line is also present in the OB version which has *li-*⌜*ib-lu*⌝. On *li-me-šu* see Moran (1988: 25 n.7).

There is no indication that Ninurta's arrows are actually poisoned; the image is purely metaphorical. Furthermore, it is unique in Akkadian. There are only three comparable cases: two in *Erra* at I.7 and I.38 which are both allusions to *Anzû* and *Lugalbanda,* and another which is a negative variation, and so not very close.[73] It seems likely, then, that this is an allusion to *Lugalbanda* 145: ti zu$_2$ lu$_2$ ra-ra-bi muš-šag$_4$-tur$_3$ ḫe$_2$-e, 'May the barbed arrows be a horned viper to those they hit!' an image which is also unique in Sumerian poetry. The only similar image compares a bow to a dragon: ^{ĝeš}pan-ĝu$_{10}$-u$_3$ muš-ḫuš-gin$_7$ ⌜gu⌝ ḫa-ma-bur$_2$-re / $^{(ĝeš)}$ti zu$_2$ igi-ĝu$_{10}$-še$_3$ sim-gin$_7$ ḫe$_2$-ĝir$_2$-ĝir$_2$-re, 'my bow bares its teeth like a mušḫuš dragon; / barbed arrows speed before me like swallows' (Šulgi D 12-13) (Black, 1998: 145), but even here the arrows themselves are swallows, making it sufficiently different.

Of the three SB manuscripts that preserve *Anzû* II.10, only R has *līmēšu* and two have *lībillū,* whereas the OB version has *liblū.* The allusion is thus also present in the OB version, but more explicit in one strand of the SB version, an embellishment that was added to the text. *Lugalbanda* was indeed known as late as the first millennium, and clearly continued to be important if allusions to it were being added to existing Akkadian stories.

What would it mean if Bēlet-ilī's speech refers to a speech of Anzu in *Lugalbanda*? The encouragement given to Ninurta as he is about to fight Anzû would echo Anzu's own words. Anzu was offering Lugalbanda the powers of a great archer, with special efficacy for his arrows. By way of illustration, he compares these powers to those of an archer god: 'Like Šara' (^{d}šara$_{2...}$-gin$_7$ 142). But here Ninurta's mother is spurring him on with these same

[73] It is in fact an interlinear translation of a Sumerian hymn to Nabû: ^{ĝeš}šu-nir-zu ušumgal ka-bi-ta uš$_x$ nu-bi-iz-e-de$_3$, *kak-ka-ka u$_2$-šum-gal-lu ša iš-tu pi-šu im-tu$_2$ la i-na-at-tu$_2$-ku,* 'your weapon is a dragon from whose mouth poison does not drip' (4R 20 No. 3:15f).

wishes. This in effect would turn Anzu's words back on him in an ironic way: in the previous poem he offered a hero powers of supreme archery, but here these same powers are about to be used against him - Ninurta kills Anzû with an arrow.

This conversation between Lugalbanda/Ninurta and Anzu cannot be sequentially transposed to the back-story of *Anzû*, since the poem begins from the point of Anzû's birth and takes place before the creation of cities and men. Nonetheless, the allusion recalls it. The episodes do not have to fit sequentially in order to fit together or to allude to each other: *Lugal-e* and *An-gin*$_7$, for example, two different Sumerian compositions about Ninurta's exploits, do not agree on the monsters he defeated, or with the account in Akkadian *Anzû*, and yet were grouped together in post-Old Babylonian libraries and treated as complementary (Cooper, 1978: 11-12). While the Akkadian poem absorbs different parts of Anzu and Ninurta mythologies, it is not necessarily trying to replace them in the same way it might be trying to replace the mythology of Tišpak. Reminding us of this other episode in Anzu's mythology perhaps even engenders a kind of reverse intertextuality (explored further below): the next time one reads *Lugalbanda* and hears Anzu offering this kind of power as a gift, we remember the Akkadian poem and the hero that destroys him, and are made to think 'be careful what you offer!'[74]

A different interpretation could place more emphasis on the assimilating nature of *Anzû*, and read this as a transference of power away from Anzû to Bēlet-ilī. The shifting of the motif emphasises the shifting of benevolence, for Anzu is not bestowing magic gifts upon heroes any more. Rather, it is now Bēlet-ilī who encourages the protagonist with the same

[74] Particularly as Anzu's first speech concludes at 109 with kur-re gaba-šu-ĝar ⌜nam⌝-mu-ri-in-tuku-un: 'I will let you have no opponent in the mountains!' a title which is eerily reminiscent of Ninurta, particularly *An-gin*$_7$ 159 kala-ga kur gaba nu-gi4-me-en: 'I am the strong one, unopposed in the mountains'.

wish. Taking away this positive aspect from Anzu and transferring it to someone else serves to intensify the negative characterisation of him in this story: this time he is *lem-na an-za-a,* 'evil Anzû' (II.21, 117, 139, III.20, 36, 62, 116) and nothing else.[75]

There is an added irony in the comparison to Šara in the original simile in *Lugalbanda,* in that Šara was one of the gods asked to kill Anzû before Ninurta. Šara refused. So Ninurta's abilities are now not only like those of Šara, but surpass them, yet another declaration of Ninurta's superiority.[76] It is worth mentioning here that a quite extensive poem existed on the deeds of Girra, the other god who is asked to fight Anzû and refuses, *Girra and Elamatum* (edition Walker, 1983), which consisted of seven tablets probably running to about 350 lines (Walker, 1983: 145). Unfortunately only 51 lines of the seventh tablet of this Old Babylonian composition are extant, many of them broken, which describe Enlil fixing the fate of Girra after his victory over Elamatum. It seems probable that SB *Anzû* would allude to this composition given the similarity in their subject matter and the implicit comparison between the two gods, but not enough of the text survives to make any comparison possible.

Anzu's relationship with Enlil is also quite different in *Lugalbanda:* here he is appointed by Enlil to be the gatekeeper of the mountains, and has the power to fix destinies:

a-a-ĝu$_{10}$ ^{d}en-lil$_{2}$-le mu-un-tum$_{2}$-en
kur-ra ^{ĝeš}ig-gal-gin$_{7}$ igi-ba bi$_{2}$-in-tab-en
nam u$_{3}$-mu-tar a-ba-a šu mi-ni-ib-bal-e

My father Enlil brought me here.
He made me bar the front of the mountains like a great door.
If I decide a fate, who can overturn it?

Lugalbanda 101-3

[75] On the basis of the portrayal of Anzu in *Lugalbanda*, Hruška argues that Anzû was originally benevolent in Sumerian mythology but that his character changed in the Old Babylonian period (Hruška, 1975: 127 cf. also Landsberger, 1961: 10-21; Cooper, 1978: 154).
[76] Ninurta was in fact identified with Šara in the Sumerian *Song of the hoe* (Annus, 2002: 154).

In *Anzû* Enlil gives him custodianship of another entrance, the entrance to Enlil's shrine. This time, of course, he abuses his position, stealing the tablet of destinies: another reversal of good Anzu to evil Anzu. The language used in *Anzû* when Enlil appoints him recalls this line in *Lugalbanda,* using the same concept of 'blocking':

ᶠlipᵀ-tar-rik ina at-ma-ni šu-bat ᶠkiᵀ-[iṣ-ṣi]

"Let him always block (the way) in the cella, the seat of the [shrine]"

Anzû I.56

The verb *parāku* is by no means an obvious choice here – since the purpose of his presence is to guard the shrine, *naṣāru* could just as well have been used. It is likely then that this line deliberately reflects Anzu's role in *Lugalbanda,* which the plot of *Anzû* is about to subvert.[77] Furthermore, Anzu's ability to fix destinies is mentioned immediately after his role of blocking the mountains, and in the Akkadian poem his appointment as guardian results in him stealing the tablet of destinies; in *Anzû* no such power to determine fates is bestowed on him, but he acquires it illegitimately. As Annus points out, Anzû now becomes the one who needs to be blocked: Ninurta's mother later tells him to block Anzû, *lip-tar-rik-šu₂ gu-um-mur-ta a-šam-šu-ut-tu₂,* 'Let the dust storm[78] totally[79] block him!' II.9 (2002: 125). *Enūma Eliš* will interact with this concept again in the murder of Apsû (see pp. 196-8).

[77] Annus mentions this parallel, but not as an allusion (2001: 125). Black considers line 102 formulaic, since it occurs in exactly the same form in *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta* 224, and in a similar form in *Lugal-e* 351 but with 'wall' instead of 'door' (1998: 127). Even if this is the case, it is perfectly possible for a text to allude to a particular use of a formulaic line in a specific context (Currie, 2006: 5, with further literature).

[78] Choosing the variant from ms. F, which is singular, rather than the other three manuscripts which have *ašamšātu* plural although the verb is singular.

[79] We would normally expect *gummurti* in construct before a genitive, but here *gummurta* must be in adverbial accusative.

Lamentations

Some intriguing parallels to Anzû's spell can be found in *balaĝ* lamentations (noted by Annus, 2001: xii) and in the *Curse of Agade.* They suggest that Anzû is quoting the traditional language of lamentation which is usually associated with the great gods, thus putting him dangerously on their level. It may also be ironic, since lamentation is a strategy used by human beings to appease the gods, but here it is used as a weapon against one of them.

In *Anzû,* the spell he utters against Ninurta's incoming arrows is:

qa-nu-um-ma ša$_2$ [*tal*]*-li-ku tu-ra a-pu-uk-ka*
mu-um-⌜*mu*⌝ ^{giš}*qaštu*(PAN) ⌜*a*⌝*-na qi*$_2$*- ša*$_2$*-ti-ki*
šer$_2$*-a-nu a-na ša*$_2$*-šal-li immeri*(UDU.NITA$_2$) *kap-pu ana iṣ-ṣu-ri tūrā*(GUR)^{meš}

"Shaft that has come, turn back to your reed bed,
"*Crafted* bow (turn back) to your forests!
"Bowstring to sheep sinew, feather to the bird – turn back!"

Anzû II.63-5

In *Gudnim Ekura,* a ritual lament to appease the heart of Ninurta, we find the lines:

šul ni$_2$-te-a-ni mi$_2$ zi iri$_4$-in-ga-am$_3$-me
[šul?] ^{d}nin-urta ni$_2$-te-a-ni mi$_2$-zi iri$_4$-in-ga-am$_3$-me
[80][e$_2$ ki-]⌜bala⌝ a ga$_2$ za-e ga$_2$-[e] za-e a ga$_2$-e ga$_2$-e[81]
[e$_2$-ki-bala im-zu abzu-ba me-na] mu-un-na-an-gi$_4$-gi$_4$
[e$_2$-ki-bala gi-zu ĝeš-gi-ba me-na mu-un-na-an-gi$_4$-gi$_4$]
[e$_2$-ki-bala ĝeš-ur$_3$-zu tir-tir-ba me-na mu-un-na-an-gi$_4$-gi$_4$]

The youth praises himself,
[the *youth*] Ninurta praises himself:
"[House of the hostile] land! Oh I! You! I! You! Oh I! I!
"[House of the hostile land, when will your clay] return [to its abzu?]
"[House of the hostile land, when will your reeds return to their canebrake?]
"[House of the hostile land, when will your beams return to their forests?']

[80] Restorations from parallel passage in *Ursaĝ Mešarur,* 165-71 (Cohen, 1975).
[81] This line is corrupt. Collation was not possible at this time.

[*eṭ*]-*lu*$_4$ *iṭ-ḫe-ma ra-man-šu*$_2$ *ki-niš u*$_2$*-kan-na*
[...]
[*at*]-*ta* MIN *a*$^{!}$(*e*)-*na-ku* MIN
[...]-*x-e : ul i*$^{!}$(*u*$_2$)-*tar*
[...]-*u*$_2^{?}$ *qa-ni-ka ana ap-pi-šu*$_2$*-nu i-*[*tar*$^{?}$]
[...]-*x-x gu-šu-ru ana qiš-ti-šu-nu i-*[*tar*$^{?}$]

The youth approached, he praises himself,
[…]
"you DITTO, I DITTO
"[…] … will not return
"[…] … will your reeds [return] to their canebrake?
"[…] … the beams [return] to their forest?

Gudnim Ekura 86-91, edition Cohen, 1988 vol II: 446

This *balaĝ* is only attested in the first millennium, long after *Anzû* was written, and so we may at first think that the *balaĝ* must be quoting *Anzû.* Ninurta may be announcing to the land that he is about to destroy it. If Ninurta is quoting his old enemy Anzû here the lines may be interpreted ironically: Ninurta is praising himself by referring to the weapons of an enemy he once defeated, and now he will cause as much devastation as Anzû did, or perhaps more. Instead of the weapons of the hero being transferred to the enemy, as we have seen elsewhere, the weapons of the enemy are transferred to the hero, to be used against the enemy.

However, the passage occurs in many other places. A very similar passage occurs in the *širnamšub* to Ninurta *Ursaĝ Mešarur* in lines 165-71 (parallel noted in edition by Cohen, 1975). Furthermore, *Gudnim Ekura* is not the only *balaĝ* to contain this parallel. *Abzu Pelam* has a similar passage, and yet this *balaĝ* has nothing to do with Ninurta at all:

im-zu abzu^{l}-be$_2$-eš i-gi-gi i-bi [...]
gi-zu ne$_2$-eš ki-be$_2$-eš i-gi-gi i-⌜bi⌝ [...]
mu-šu-ur-zu te-te-er-be$_2$-eš i-gi-⌜gi⌝ [...]

Your clay returns to its Abzu... […]
Your reeds now return to their place... […]
Your beams return to their forests […]

Abzu Pelam b+110-12 (edition Cohen, 1988)

It is difficult to see what this could have to do with *Anzû* or how any reference to the poem could make sense. The late *balaĝ*s are not particularly distinct, as they share long passages and are quite repetitious, which makes it possible that the language has been cut-and-paste from *Gudnim Ekura* without regard for the implications of its literary background.

The situation becomes clearer once we take into account another parallel in the *Curse of Agade* (henceforth *CA*), which is at least as old as Old Babylonian in date, if not older:

im-zu abzu-ba ḫe$_2$-eb-gi$_4$
im ^{d}en-ki-ke$_4$ nam-ku$_5$-ra$_2$ ḫe$_2$-a
še-zu ab-sin$_2$-ba ḫe$_2$-eb-gi$_4$
še ^{d}ezinu$_2$-e nam ku$_5$-ra$_2$ ḫe$_2$-a
ĝeš-zu tir-bi-a ḫe$_2$-eb-gi$_4$
ĝeš ^{d}nin-ildu$_2$-ma-ke$_4$ nam-ku$_5$-ra$_2$ ḫe$_2$-a

May your clay return to its Abzu,
may it be clay cursed by Enki!
May your grain return to its furrow,
may it be grain cursed by Ezinu!
May your wood return to its forest,
may it be wood cursed by Ninildum!

CA 231-6 (edition Cooper, 1983)

Given that *CA* also shares much language with the other city laments and *balaĝ*s, it seems likely that this passage may be part of this shared language. Since the imagery occurs in much later *balaĝ*s, this OB attestation may suggest that it existed already in *balaĝ*s of the OB period. It seems more likely that the *balaĝ*s precede the city laments, since the city laments

themselves mention ritual lamentation (Cooper, 2006: 41), rather than the late *balaĝ*s showing a degeneration of material coming primarily from the city laments (as H. Vanstiphout, 1986b). It is possible, of course, that the allusion is specifically to *CA*, but this does not seem to add very much in the way of particulars. The context of this passage in *CA* is the curse of the great gods upon Agade, an image of total annihilation. This is the same function of the image in the two *balaĝ*s quoted above. Either way, the effect is the same: when Anzû utters his spell, his words do not simply bring about the destruction of Ninurta's weapons but carry overtones of the devastation of the whole land. This unsettling allusion hints at what Anzû is capable of if not stopped, and thus heightens the importance of Ninurta's battle. Once again, allusion raises the stakes.

To put the traditional language of annihilation into Anzû's spell would be an innovative re-application of it. Anzû's cry is called ***ikkillu*** in *Anzû* II.49, which is another word for ritual wailing (CAD I: 58), and may signpost the allusion to ritual laments (suggested by Amar Annus, private communication). To have Anzû uttering these words shows the extent of his power, putting him on the level of the great gods in terms of the destruction he can cause. In *CA* these words are uttered by the great gods as a curse on Agade, in *Gudnim Ekura* they are spoken by Ninurta as a foreshadowing of the devastation he is about to cause, and in *Abzu Pelam* too it is a description of destruction caused by divine anger. Because he has the tablet of destinies, Anzû can act on the level of the great gods. This is another example of the kind of reversal where motifs usually applied to gods have been transferred to their enemies in order to make them more fearsome and more difficult to defeat.

Furthermore, the reason for singing a lamentation is to soothe a god's anger, so that he ceases attacking and causing destruction. Since Ninurta is attacking Anzû, countering Ninurta with a type of lament is an ingenious tactic. However, it is a subversion of the

lament, turning a pious gesture into a weapon. This subversion adds to the characterization of utterly evil *lemnu Anzû*. The once-guardian of Enlil's shrine is now subverting cultic practices against the gods - a complete reversal in behaviour. His words do not appease the god's heart, but infuriate it further.

Reverse intertextuality

The kind of competitive relationship to earlier works outlined here is a well known phenomenon in Latin poetry. Virgil's *Aeneid* incorporates the great poems that preceded it, and thus presents itself as the culmination of literary history. For example, it remodels episodes from the *Iliad* in such a way that makes the *Aeneid* seem the inevitable result of the events of the *Iliad* when one re-reads Homer's poem. For example, *Aeneid* 3.156-60 where the Penates appear to Aeneas in a dream announcing his goal is Italy, is modelled on *Iliad* 20.302-8, where Poseidon predicts Aeneas as the future leader of his people. After this, 'one cannot but read the original Homeric prophecy as transformed into a predictor of empire' (Armstrong, 2006: 140). Ovid, in the *Metamorphoses,* responds competitively yet again to the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid,* and even the way that Virgil redefines Homer: where the *Aeneid* functioned as 'a treasury of literary history' (Armstrong, 2006: 131), Ovid begins his poem from the beginning of time, encompassing all possible history as well as all literary genres. In particular, the way that Ovid incorporates events from the *Aeneid* into the *Metamorphoses* changes our perspective on Virgil's poem, so that 'it turns out that the *Aeneid* was only ever about metamorphoses, if only it had been told properly' (Robinson, 2006: 213). 'Rather than construct himself as an epigonal reader of the *Aeneid,* Ovid is constructing Virgil as a hesitant precursor of the *Metamorphoses*' (Hinds, 1998: 106).

I suggest that a similar dynamic is at work with both *Anzû* and *Enūma Eliš*. *Anzû*, in setting itself in a primeval time before the waters of the two rivers flowed, before cities and human history, establishes its primacy over the other poems with which it interacts. The poem which is secondary in terms of literary history anchors its narrative earlier in time than the poem which precedes it, a technique which Classicists call *hysteron proteron* ('the later one earlier') (e.g. Currie, 2006: 35, with n. 152). It declares this to be the definitive account of Ninurta's rise to power, and Ninurta is given these new identities before the other gods could have been able to exercise them. Ninurta is named Tišpak and Lugalbanda in this primeval time, and thus has always been Tišpak and Lugalbanda.[82]

At the same time, *Anzû* acknowledges that other accounts exist, but by taking elements from them, it overrides them and puts itself into the earlier picture. This is the effect of the allusions to *Lugalbanda:* it is impossible to read *Lugalbanda* after *Anzû* and not think of *lemna Anzâ* rather than the benevolent bird which helps man. Anzu's identity has been changed for ever: we know that after this he will always be a terrifying monster.[83] Tišpak's magic seal taken over and transformed into the tablet of destinies is another example: after reading *Anzû*, it no longer seems heroic for the god to have such magic assistance, an unfair advantage, even, since Ninurta needs no such aid, even when his opponent uses magic

[82] The use of naming as a way of legitimising something new and innovative has parallels in Classical literature too: Hesiod's account of Aphrodite's birth from the sea is not traditional, and is explained by the etymology of her name: τὴν δ᾽ Ἀφροδίτην / ἀφρογενέα τε θεὰν καὶ ἐυστέφανον Κυθέρειαν / κικλήσκουσι θεοί τε καὶ ἀνέρες, οὕνεκ᾽ ἐν ἀφρῷ / θρέφθη, 'Gods and men call her Aphrodite, the foam-born goddess and well-crowned Cytherea, because she grew in the foam' *Theogony* 195-8 (own translation). Hesiod thus justifies an untraditional story with the authority of a name, or perhaps etymologising inspired it in the first place (see Currie, 2011: 64).

[83] Even when he is useful, for example, when his image is set over temple doors in order to protect them, he is able to do so because of his terrifying power rather than his desire to help mankind. When Anzu appears in similes the point of comparison is his terrifying appearance and fierce aspect, e.g. *mu-daḫ-ḫi-ṣi-a kīma*(GIN$_7$) *an-ze-e eli*(UGU)-*šu$_2$-nu i-še-'i*, 'my warriors flew against them like Anzû (inscription of Ashurnaṣirpal II, RIMA 2: 260: 74); *la-ab-bu-ma šam$_2^!$-ru ki-ma an-zi-i ša-nu-u$_2$ nab-ni-ta*, 'they are raging, fierce, strange in shape like Anzû' (Assyrian troops in the Tukultī-Ninurta epic, ii 37 (edition Machinist, 1978).

against him. Knowledge of *Anzû* actually detracts from Tišpak's achievements. When Šar-ur appears in *Anzû* he does not try to dissuade his master from fighting, as he does in *Lugal-e.* He expresses no doubt about his capabilities. This makes Ninurta appear mightier in *Anzû* than he did in *Lugal-e*: victory does still not come easily, but there is no doubt that it will be achieved. This is in spite of the fact that in *Lugal-e* he is already established and powerful, while in *Anzû* he is relatively unknown. That Šar-ur does not doubt him, despite his unproven credentials, is another way of increasing his strength over that in the earlier poems, one that is brought to the fore when Šar-ur pleads with Ninurta not to fight Asag in *Lugal-e*. As Fowler says, 'we should not shy away from accepting that intertextuality works both ways' (Fowler, 2000: 130).

Enūma Eliš engages in the same kind of competitiveness again with *Anzû.* Most obviously, it models the battle of Marduk against Ti'āmtu on that of Ninurta against Anzû, gives Ninurta's weapons to Marduk, and concludes with an even longer and more impressive list of names (Lambert, 1986). This relationship will be fully explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Enūma Eliš and *Anzû*

Intertextuality between *Ee* and *Anzû* is by now well acknowledged. This was first established by Lambert (1986), based not only on similarities of plot but the use of Ninurta's epithet ***mutīr gimilli abīšu*** and similar phrases (*Ee* II.127, 156, III.10, 58, 116, 138, IV.13, VI.105, 163) and the line ***ša$_2$-a-ru kap-pi-šu ana bu-us-ra-a-ti lib-lu-u-ni*** (*Anzû* II.18) re-manifesting as ***ša-a-ru il-ta-nu a-na bu-us-rat uš-ta-bil*** (*Ee* IV.132). Dalley wrote that 'considerable similarities are evident' between the two poems, but put this down to a common stock of poetic motifs (Dalley, 2000: 230-31). Frahm briefly noted that *Ee* draws on motifs from *Lugal-e* and *Anzû* (2010: 5). Machinist (2005) refined this examination of intertextuality between the poems by establishing that *Ee* is based on the same structure as *Anzû*, as well as including some details from it, and is meant to be recognised as such. His explanation of the motivating ideology is worth quoting *in extenso*:

> The similarities with and modifications of the Anzu text...allow us to appreciate more precisely what Enuma elish is about. As most scholars would acknowledge, it is about legitimacy – the legitimacy of Marduk as supreme sovereign and of his Babylon as the cosmic centre. To make this argument, the text has to show how Marduk comes to appropriate and integrate the essential Mesopotamian notions about sovereignty and order. It does so by pointing to itself, as it were, as a deliberately composite work, whose composite quality, marking out and combining the leading textual traditions about sovereignty and order...is intended to underscore Marduk as the composite and so supreme ruler.
>
> (Machinist, 2005: 45)

This insight explains just why *Ee* interacts with so many different poems and texts, and why these interactions are not always smooth and invisible but stand out and demand our attention: if Marduk's superiority to previous heroes went unnoticed, he would seem far less impressive or deserving of the high position which *Ee* bestows upon him. This is why we can speak of direct allusion in *Ee* that is intended to be recognised, rather than saying that it uses its predecessors as skeletons to imitate for convenience.

As Machinist goes on to say, since Marduk is young and needs to obtain this sovereignty through a remarkable deed, the obvious model is Ninurta's battle against Anzû (2005: 45). But the choice is more than simply the closest situational match: by Neo-Assyrian times this battle had become the paradigm of heroism, the ultimate story of a rise to power (Annus, 2001: xxi), and there is reason to think that it had this status before then, too, since the epic of *Gilgameš* describes the battle against Humbaba in language that evokes *Anzû*, and in an OB *Gilgameš* excerpt tablet the fourth dream foretells the monster's defeat by showing Ninurta's victory over Anzû (Annus, 2001: xii; George, 2003: 242-5). Not to have dealt with it in describing Marduk's ascent would have been to ignore a significant rival, a serious gap in the argument, as it were.

Marduk achieves his victory in his own way, following Ninurta's precedent to some extent but out-doing him on several counts. Basing his actions on those of Ninurta in the *Anzû* poem and drawing attention to them signals to the audience that Marduk is the new embodiment of ultimate power and victory: as Ninurta was the supreme warrior deity, allusions to his exploits show that Marduk has replaced him in this capacity. Yet this process is far more sophisticated than just having Marduk kill Anzû – the crisis now at hand is far graver than the one Ninurta had to deal with. Rather than just kill one monster, Marduk has to kill an opponent who heads an entire army of monsters. As Machinist remarks, 'the point

of *Enūma Eliš* is to show Marduk appropriating and surpassing his model' (2005: 45). References to Ninurta's task – heroic in its time – within a larger, more complex narrative elevates Marduk's own achievement: he is not only as good as Ninurta was, he is better.[84]

After summarising Machinist's comparisons of *Anzû* and *Ee*, Seri comments that '*Enūma Eliš*'s imitation of the structure of *Anzû* encapsulates borrowings of motives, themes, details, and verbatim lines' (2014: 101) – a wide range of allusive techniques. This chapter explores in detail how these numerous allusions bring out Marduk's superiority. From the very first time he appears in the text, Marduk's ascent to the rank of great warrior god is connected with Ninurta's, and Marduk is presented as the new Ninurta by borrowing his epithets and attributes. However, while Ninurta is the good son who avenges a slight to his father's power and restores Enlil's authority, Marduk's intervention has greater significance, as he saves all the gods from annihilation. Perhaps the most prominent allusions are the blood on the wind and the tablet of destinies, two motifs from *Anzû* which have been skilfully woven into a new scenario in *Ee* in order to emphasise aspects of Marduk's powers which Ninurta did not possess. Allusions are made on the structural level too, as *Ee* adapts various aspects of the structure of *Anzû* to underline its own ideology: the names of Marduk, the strategy of *hysteron-proteron*, the repeated passages, and the character of Šar-ur have all been played with and presented as improvements. The technique of transferring the weapon from the hero to the enemy is found here too, as in the battle itself Tiʾāmtu's poisonous monsters are equated with Ninurta's 'poisoned' arrows. However, this process is more elaborate than in *Anzû*, since the enemy's weapon is also transferred to Marduk, in the form

[84] The wide-reaching influence of *Enūma Eliš* meant that this assimilation was adopted by other compositions; e.g., two devotional poems addressed to Marduk allude to his killing of Anzû (Al-Rawi, 1992 = Oshima, 2011: prayer 2; Craig, ABRT I, 29-31 + 2 x = SAA III, 2 = Oshima, 2011: prayer 15).

of the magic spell. Marduk's enemy is more difficult to defeat than Ninurta's, but Marduk is more than a match for any possible attack.

Marduk as the new Ninurta

Marduk is connected with Ninurta from his very first appearance. When Ea summons him to urge him to fight Ti'āmtu, Marduk is described with Ninurta's epithets, and the scene echoes Ninurta's initiation into the top level of the pantheon. The summoning to a 'place of his secret' (*a-šar pi-riš-ti-šu*$_2$) connects Marduk with Ninurta's hearing of the secret of the gods at the point at which he attains a high position (*Anzû* III.31), but Marduk goes one better, for this moment also marks his becoming a god of magic.

When Marduk is summoned, the language describing him echoes the *Anzû* prologue:

ap-lu$_4$ *ga-aš-ru mu-tir-ru gi-mil-lu a-bi-*[*šu*]
ḫa-'i-iš[85] *tuq-ma-te* ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) *qar-du*
⌜*il*⌝*-si-ma* ^{d}*e*$_2$*-a a-šar pi-riš-ti-šu*$_2$
[*ka*]-⌜*inim*⌝*-ma-ak libbi*(ŠA$_3$)*-šu*$_2$ *i-ta-mi-šu*

The mighty heir, avenger of [his father,[86]
hastener to battle, Marduk the valiant,
Ea summoned (into) the place of his secret.
He spoke to him the magic words of his heart:[87]

Ee II.127-30

gašru ('mighty') is the epithet used of Ninurta in the *Anzû* prologue and emphatically repeated (I.2, I.4, and I.14). Its prominent position in the prologue reflects its role later in the story, since *gašru* is also the title offered to Adad, Girra, and Šara if they conquer Anzû, but

[85] So ms. A, var. H: *ḫa-ia*^{i}(ṢI)*-aš*$_2$ (emendation *AHw*).
[86] *mutīr gimilli* can also be translated as 'who does a service/favour', but considering its original attachment to Ninurta who avenges his father Enlil by reclaiming the tablet of destinies in *Anzû*, I prefer 'avenger' here.
[87] For *ka-inim-ma-ak* as 'incantation' rather than 'plan' I follow Kämmerer & Metzler (2012: 170).

which only Ninurta earns and obtains (Hallo & Moran, 1979: 72). *qardu* ('valiant') occurs in I.7 and I.13 and is a standard epithet of Ninurta (Tallqvist, 1938: 425). Although it is used of other gods too (mostly warriors but also more unexpectedly Damkina and Ninlil, Tallqvist, 1938: 161), its clustering with *gašru* and *ḫā'iš* contributes to a specific association with Ninurta, for *Anzû* I.14 also combines these two in the context of battle: ⌜*ga*⌝-*aš*$_2$-*ra ha-a-a-ša*$_2$[88] *mut-tab-bi-la qab-la a-nun-te,* 'mighty hastener, who always carries the battle (and) combat.' Hallo and Moran note the similarity of *Ee* II.128 to this line (1979: 92). *ḫayyāšu,* as they note, is extremely rare, like much of the diction in the prologue, and in fact is only attested once[89] outside *Anzû* and *Ee* (Hallo & Moran, 1979: 74).

The place of his secret, *ašar pirišti,* has resonances with Ninurta too. He is called EN AD.ḪAL – *bēl pirišti* – in *Anzû* III.133, and at III.31 Dagan exhorts: [*liš-me*]-⌜*ma*⌝ *ša*$_2$ *ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš} *pi-riš-tu*$_2$, '[let him hear] the secret of the gods,' marking Ninurta's ascent to a prominent position in the pantheon. At this point in *Ee,* Ea is summoning Marduk in order to tell him about the opportunity that has arisen for him, encouraging him to go to Anšar and offer to fight Ti'āmtu. This is the first time he is presented as a Ninurta-like figure, and marks his step into the warrior role. Thus Ea's calling him to a place of secrets echoes Ninurta's initiation into the top level of the pantheon. However, Ninurta is granted these privileges *after* his victory, while Marduk is granted them even before he volunteers to fight. Not only does this underscore Marduk's inherent superiority, but it also lends inevitability to his victory and his final supremacy.

Ea's speech to Marduk here is described as *ka-inim-ma-ak,* a word which may be connected with magic, and thus by implication with secret knowledge. Based on its context

[88] *ḫa'iš* is a cognate from the same root as *ḫayyāša,* so *Ee* adapts the word while referencing its source.
[89] In the *Marduk Prophecy*, line 1: [d]*ḫa-a-a-šum,* which appears to be the name of a little-known primeval deity (Borger, 1971: 5, 17).

in *Ee, AHw I*: 420 suggests a translation of 'Wunsch'. However it is also a subscript in incantations and *šu'illakku*-prayers meaning 'words to be recited' (Mayer, 1976: 23; *AHw III:* 1262), and Kämmerer and Metzler translate it 'Beschwörung' (2012: 170). *ka-inim-ma-ak* occurs again at *Ee* V.114 when the gods are installing Marduk as their sovereign:

> *e-nu-ma a-na* ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) *id-di-nu šar-ru-ta*
> *ka-inim-ma-ak dum-qi*$_2$ *u*$_3$ *tas-me-e šu-a-šu*$_2$ *iz-zak-ru*
>
> When they gave the kingship to Marduk,
> they spoke formulas of goodwill and obedience to him
>
> *Ee* V.113-14

The translation 'formula' suggested by CAD K:36 is convenient since it covers both possible meanings of *ka-inim-ma-ak* as specifically incantatory or a more general utterance as some kind of prepared text. If we interpret *ka-inim-ma-ak* as 'wish' (as *AHw I*: 420), here it would be an expression of the gods feeling well-disposed towards their new king. If we take it to mean the words of an incantation, they are pronouncing words to establish these attitudes and to ensure that they endure in future.

Returning to II.130, if *ka-inim-ma-ak* means 'incantation', Ea's speech to Marduk takes on a new resonance: his words are charged with magic power. Since Ea is the god of magic, this is highly appropriate. That *ka-inim-ma-ak* is found only in conjunction with incantations and prayers strongly suggests a ritual/magical association. The recitation of prayers is in some way magical, since prayers are also texts recited to bring about a particular desired outcome. Ea is, in fact, ordering Marduk to do something for him, which is not so different from the aim of a prayer. This is especially pertinent since the goal is to soothe Anšar's anger, a common purpose of prayers. Ea says:

[^{d}]*marduk*(AMAR.UTU)*-mi mil-ka še-mi aba*(AD)*-ka*
at-ta-ma ma-ri mu-nap-pi-šu lib-bi-šu$_2$
⌜*mut*⌝*-ti-iš* AN.ŠAR$_2$ *qit-ru-bi-iš ṭe-ḫe-e-ma*
[*e*]*-pu-uš pi-*[*i-ka*] *i-zu-za e-ma-ru-uk-ka ni-i-ḫu*

"Marduk, think, listen to your father,
"You are my son,[90] who can soothe his (Anšar's) heart.
"Advance close[91] in front of Anšar,
"prepare to speak – he was angry,[92] (but) at the sight of you is calm.

Ee II.131-134

Ea's words here thus probably have the force of a magical prayer. Sure enough, his instructions to Marduk have their intended effect, for Anšar is glad to see his great grandson (*lib*$_3$*-ba-šu ṭu*$_2$*-ub-ba-a-ti im-la*, 'his heart became full with joy', II.137) and agrees to his demands.

On balance, then, *ka-inim-ma-ak* probably means something like 'magic words'. Given the rarity of the word (it is not attested elsewhere in narrative poetry), it seems likely that these two uses in *Ee* are linked: its occurrence in V.114, the point where Marduk is given his supreme position, echoes its use in II.130, when the opportunity to gain it was first given to him. A word with special magical force is thus used at two important points in the arc of Marduk's rise to power. Ninurta 'hears the secret' at the point of his acceptance into the high pantheon, and Marduk hears the *ka-inim-ma-ak* at his corresponding point. Ea is of course the god of magic, a role which Marduk also takes over from him (see p. 136 ff.). Thus, being summoned to the place of Ea's secret (knowledge) also marks the beginning of Marduk becoming a god of magic himself.

[90] Var. H: *ma-ru*, 'the son'
[91] This is the only attestation of *qitrubiš* not in the context of battle (CAD Q: 282). Hence perhaps we can infer some military undertones in its appearance here: that the attempt to soothe Anšar is conceived of as some sort of military effort.
[92] Lambert interprets *i-zu-za* as a corrupt imperative of *izuzzu*, translating 'take your stand' (2013: 473).

The dutiful son

Ninurta is the dutiful son of Enlil, who wins back his father's lost power and restores his authority to him. *Ee* refers to this a number of times, by calling Enlil *abu* ('father') in VII.136 at the point where he gives his name to Marduk, and by giving Marduk Ninurta's epithet *mu-tir-ru gi-mil-lu a-bi-šu*$_2$ 'avenger of his father' (II.127). Hence overtones of the relationship between Ninurta and Enlil are imparted to Marduk. There are significant differences between them, however: Marduk is the avenger of all the gods, his ancestors, not only his father (Ea), and his destiny is therefore of more significance. All the gods are under threat from Ti'āmtu, and Marduk's victory saves them all.[93] At the same time, Marduk is summoned by his father, and so responds to his call for help as Ninurta did, [94] with the added twist that Ea was one of the gods initially asked to fight Ti'āmtu but who turned back in fear. Marduk then supersedes his father, as he becomes a god of magic and creation (see chapter two p. 136 ff. and chapter three p. 168 ff.).

Enlil is called father (*a-bu*) at *Ee* VII.136, at the crucial moment when Enlil bestows his own name (^{d}EN.KUR.KUR) on Marduk. This, of course, contradicts the account of Marduk's genealogy in tablet I where Ea is his father, and has been noted as bizarre: Vanstiphout calls it the only piece of evidence for a possible multilayered genesis of *Ee* (1992: 47), while Annus adduces it as evidence for a connection between Ninurta and Nabû, whose father also alternates between Enlil and Ea/Enki in different sources (2002: 82). However, the line in question is not a literal statement that Enlil is Marduk's father, rather, *abu* is just an epithet

[93] Or, interpreted another way, Ninurta protected Enlil's authority, while Marduk fought to get it for himself (Katz, 2011: 130).
[94] Ninurta was asked by his mother, Bēlet-ilī (*Anzû* I.198-II.27), who was instructed to do so by Ea (I.159-75). *Ee* sidelines mothers and goddesses more generally (with the exception of Ti'āmtu, who is vilified) in favour of male gods (Harris, 1993: 115).

describing Enlil at this point without saying whose father exactly he is. *abu* is often used to mean 'male ancestor' in *Ee*. For example, phrases like *ilānī* (DINGIR)^{meš} *abbī*(AD)^{meš}-*ia* at III.6 must mean 'the gods my ancestors' rather than 'fathers' since Marduk has only one biological father.[95] In II.11 Ea addresses Anšar as *a-bi,* even though just two lines previously he is more accurately described as Ea's grandfather, *a-bi a-li-di-šu* (II.9). Anšar is called Ea's father in II.60, II.61, II.91, and [II.85], and likewise Anšar refers to Ea as *ma-ri,* 'son' (II.53) although he is more accurately his grandson. Marduk addresses Anšar as *a-bi* in II.139 and Anšar calls Marduk *ma-a-ru* in response (II.149), though he is more properly his great-grandfather.

Yet that the epithet *abu* is used to refer to Enlil at this point at all must be significant and does imply a connection with Marduk. On one level it can be explained by the Ninurta/Marduk assimilation: at the moment when Enlil hands over his position, he hands it over like a father to his son, a dynastic transfer of power from the former head of the pantheon to the new one. At the same time, it implies Marduk has superseded Ninurta in the role of Enlil's son, particularly since Ninurta's role as the good son is so prominent in *Anzû* (see previous chapter).This is not meant literally, but rather is about status relations. It has been argued that one reason behind the syncretism of Marduk with Asalluhi may have been to give him a more prominent ancestry by making him the son of Ea/Enki, and thus justifying his higher position in the pantheon (Lambert, 1975b: 194).

An association with Enlil here, therefore, may have a similar effect, and yet again, the substitution is more than a simple one. Ninurta fulfils his duty as a good son by avenging his father, but Marduk has no such familial obligation to deal with Ti'āmtu. He is enlisted by his father, Ea, but he goes to Anšar and asks for the mission rather than being called on by the

[95] Other similar uses: Marduk takes his place *ma-ḫa-riš ab-be$_2$-e-šu* (IV.4); *ki-ma ṣi-it pi-i-šu i-mu-ru ilānū*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *abbū*(AD.AD)*-šu* (IV.27).

assembly of gods. Taking up the challenge and his rightful place in power is then more of an active choice for Marduk than it was for Ninurta, implying he knows his destiny and is well prepared to rise to it.

At this important point in the narrative Marduk is called *mu-tir-ru gi-mil-lu a-bi-šu*$_2$ 'avenger of his father' in line 127, which is an epithet of Ninurta,[96] although it is not used in *Anzû*. This epithet is in fact used nine times of Marduk in *Ee (*II.127, 156, III.10, 58, 116, 138, IV.13, VI.105, 163.[97] In the case of Ninurta, *abīšu* refers to his father Enlil, whom he avenged by slaying Anzû and regaining the tablet of destinies. Marduk is not literally avenging his father, Ea, but the phrase still makes sense without the allusion, since the idiom *târu gimilli* can also mean 'to do a favour.' However, the Ninurta overtones in the phrase are strong. As Marduk's father is not supreme god, the relationship between Marduk and Anšar, his great-grandfather, is more important in this regard than that between Marduk and Ea. Marduk comes to the aid of his great-grandfather, rather than his father, since his great-grandfather is the head of the assembly of junior gods. Marduk himself echoes the phrase *mu-tir-ru gi-mil-lu a-bi-šu*$_2$ when he speaks to Anšar:

> *šum-ma-ma a-na-ku mu-tir gi-mil-li-ku-un*
> *a-kam-me ti-amta-ma u*$_2$*-bal-laṭ ka-a-šu*$_2$*-un*[98]
>
> "If I am (to be) your avenger,
> "bind[99] Ti'āmtu and restore life to you (the gods)
>
> *Ee* II.156-7

[96] Lambert, 1986: 59; Lambert, 1971: 337 citing the prayer SBH 12 = Cohen, 1988: 479-99, and the ritual text KAR 307 = Livingstone, 1989: text 39.
[97] The idiom from which the participial phrase is derived occurs once as an imperative addressed to Ti'āmtu in I.123 when her children are imploring her for help: *gi-mil-la-šu-nu tir-ri*$_3$, 'avenge them!' There could be some interesting intratextuality here to explore, but unfortunately the first half of both lines of the couplet are broken, making interpretation difficult.
[98] Var. I: *ka-tu-un*
[99] For 'bind' rather than the more general 'defeat' see Lambert (2013: 471).

Enlil is largely sidelined in *Ee.* It is somewhat ironic, then, that *mu-tir gi-mil-lu a-bi-šu*$_2$ refers to Ninurta's avenging of a slight to his father, when *Ee* itself slights Enlil by mostly leaving him out. Enlil's role in *Anzû* has been taken over by Anšar in *Ee,* with important differences. Anšar is head of the assembly of junior gods rather than the supreme head of the pantheon, and derives his authority from being one of the primeval gods. He is not so much of a rival to Marduk's supreme power, then, as he might have been in a position more directly corresponding to that of Enlil. Furthermore, Marduk's ascendancy is ratified in the assembly, giving it *legal* weight. This is extraordinary, and lends more legitimacy to the event.

Blood on the wind

The blood on the wind that announces Marduk's victory is one of the most well known allusions to *Anzû.* Lambert observed that it is adapted from the wind carrying Anzû's feathers to Ekur as a way of Ninurta's victory. However, at the same time, he implied that the borrowing was clumsy and had not been well integrated: while feathers naturally float on a wind, blood would not travel so easily (1986: 59). The motif stands out and draws attention to itself as a borrowing. However, this need not be a signal of awkwardness: a closer analysis will reveal that it is much better integrated than often supposed. Marduk is a storm god fully in control of the winds, and the supernatural powers of the gods are not constrained by what would seem logical to us in the natural world.

The motif first occurs when the gods encourage Marduk before he sets out for battle:

a-lik-ma ša₂ ti-amti nap-ša₂-tuš pu-ru-u'-ma
ša-a-ru da-mi-ša₂ a-na bu-us-ra-ti li-bil-lu-ni

"Go and cut off the life of Ti'āmtu!
"Let the winds carry her blood as good news." [100]

Ee IV.31-32

Indeed, after Marduk slays Ti'āmtu, just as the gods had wished:

u₂-par-ri-i'-ma uš-la-at da-mi-ša
ša-a-ru il-ta-nu a-na bu-us-ra-ti uš-ta-bil

He cut open the arteries of her blood,
the north wind sent it as good news.

Ee IV.131-2

The context of the motif in *Anzû* is the encouragement given to Ninurta, first by his mother Bēlet-ilī before he sets out for battle, then by Ea during the battle itself, via a message related by Šar-ur:

šu-ri-iḫ[101] *nap-šat-su an-za-a ku-mu-ma*
ša₂-a-ru kap-pi-šu ana bu-us-ra-a-ti lib-lu-u-ni

"Destroy his life, bind Anzû!
"Let the winds carry his feathers[102] as good news.

Anzû II.17-18 = 113-4 = 135-6

What has not yet been pointed out is that the previous line in *Ee*, IV.31, is also extremely reminiscent of *Anzû.* It uses different vocabulary but expresses the same idea – an

[100] It is not clear whether *bu-us-ra-ti* is singular or plural. CAD suggests that *busratu* is a biform of *bussurtu,* which would allow it to be singular here (B: 346). Worthington notes that the ms. which writes *bu-us-ra-tum* (ms. B) has a consistent habit of writing singular nouns and adjectives with stem-final t with the ending *-tum,* regardless of grammatical case, while writing feminine plurals in *-āti* or *-ēti* (2012: 280-1). This increases the evidence for taking it as singular. In *Anzû* there are, however, two plene writing of this word in ms. R in lines II.18 and II.136 (as opposed to four non-plene writings: in F, E, and R II.114, and in F II.18). There are no plene writings of the word in *Ee.* Whether the word is singular or plural does not make much difference for the meaning. For *bu-us-ra-ti* rather than *pu-uz-ra-ti* see Lambert (2013: 475).
[101] Var. g: *su-ri-iḫ* (II.113 and 136), also with the meaning 'destroy' (D imperative *sarāḫu* rather than Š imperative *arāḫu* II).
[102] Var. R II.136: *ka-pa-šu₂*, 'feather'.

exhortation to kill the enemy – just before taking the image of the winds bearing glad tidings.[103] It is the whole couplet which is being invoked here, and in the same context as in *Anzû*. Whereas Ninurta receives far more lines of encouragement (27 from his mother and 23 from Ea), these two are all that Marduk gets. The implication is that he simply does not need any more than this simple instruction, as it is preceded by a long passage of praise instead. The long exhortations of *Anzû* are here replaced by only two lines evoking it.

The substitution of blood on the wind for feathers on the wind is widely believed to be a clumsy adaptation. Feathers, the argument goes, are easily carried on the wind, whereas blood is not (Lambert, 1986: 59). This seems to me to be an unnecessary criticism: we are in a mythological world where anything is possible. Marduk's creation and subsequent destruction of a constellation (IV.25-6) shows the extent of his power to make the universe follow his whim. If Marduk can use the winds as weapons in battle and direct them into Ti'āmtu's belly with such precision (IV.96-99), he can make them do whatever he wants – they are no longer ordinary natural phenomena subject to what we consider logically possible. We do not ask whether it is plausible for Ti'āmtu to be incapacitated by swallowing the wind, or even whether it is plausible that she could swallow it at all, rather we accept this as belonging to the logic of the story. Feathers may naturally float on a wind, but Marduk as a storm god is in charge of the winds and thus can make them do as he wishes.[104] In a storm, the wind carries drops of rain, so for a wind to carry drops of blood can be seen as a logical utilisation of the storm god's powers. Lambert, who first noticed the substitution of blood for feathers, said that the version in *Anzû* is 'more convincing' (1986: 59), but this need not be

[103] cf. Halton (2009: 53 ff.) on allusions which use different vocabulary.
[104] cf. Foster's interpretation of *uš-ta-bil* as a causative Š perfect: 'He let the North Wind bear (it) away as glad tidings' (2005: 461). The Š-stem could also be interpreted as 'He made the North Wind bear (it) away', although we would then expect *šāru* to be in the accusative.

interpreted as a value judgement – merely an observation about the sequence of the borrowing.

The tablet of destinies

The presence of the tablet of destinies in *Enūma Eliš* is, like the blood on the wind motif, a clear signpost of the text's dependence on *Anzû* (Lambert, 1986: 58). However, it is also much more than this, for comparing the way it is deployed and its relative significance in the two poems emphasises the differing values of *Ee.* When it first appears, it creates the expectation that Qingu will be, like Anzû, difficult to defeat, but this expectation is undermined. Here the tablet of destinies is no magic object, but has become an abstract symbol of legitimate power. Despite its name, it is not needed by any of the gods to decree destinies, except by Qingu, which signals his weakness. This downgrading of the tablet's powers emphasises Marduk's natural abilities, for unlike his enemy Qingu or his predecessor Enlil, he does not need such an object to exercise supreme rule. As with the blood on the wind, the tablet of destinies has been rather better integrated than is often thought, and a closer examination will reveal how it is consistent with the aims and aesthetics of *Ee.*

As Lambert points out, *Anzû* is about the theft and recovery of the tablet (1986: 58) and it is an object central to the plot. Its theft causes a crisis of power among the gods and incites Enlil to seek out a champion to defeat Anzû and bring it back. Anzû's possession of the tablet is the very reason why he is such a dangerous threat, both to the established order of gods and as an opponent in battle, since he can use it to cast spells. In *Enūma Eliš,* however, the tablet of destinies is not central to the plot, rather it is one of many elements which have been woven into this densely composite poem, and as such is no longer the most important.

It is often thought that the only reason that *Enūma Eliš* includes the tablet of destinies is because its plot is copied from *Anzû* and the tablet has been incorporated 'ineptly' (as Lambert puts it, 1986: 58) as a matter of necessity: it was important in *Anzû*, and since *Anzû* provides the basic structure of both plot and ideology in *Enūma Eliš,* the tablet had to be worked into *Enūma Eliš*, even if it did not fit very well.

Such a view is limited, however, as it deflects attention away from the ways in which the tablet is significant in *Enūma Eliš.* A comparison of the ways the tablet has been deployed in the two poems can tell us much more about *Enūma Eliš* than that it was dependent on Ninurta mythology. Furthermore, inconsistency may not be such a sign of lack of sophistication as is sometimes supposed. Calling *Enūma Eliš* 'inept' for this reason is reminiscent of the way that older scholarship on Homer used to criticise certain lines and episodes in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as inconsistent and, therefore, betrayals of the poem's composition as an inelegant stitching-together of other stories, and condemned Homer's ability as a poet (see Kakridis, 1949: 7-10). However, more recent scholarship has considered these same inconsistencies as important, not only as clues to the 'sources' of the Homeric poems, but also as more active signposts of Homer's own aims and aesthetic. A more nuanced appreciation of the poetics at work has made these episodes seem not clumsy but skilful, a clever way of playing with the existing tradition and the expectations that the audience would have had (see Currie, 2006).

For example, when Odysseus' nurse Eurycleia is washing his feet and recognises his scar, she cries out his name – his wife Penelope is sitting in the same room, but does not hear this revelation because the goddess Athena 'turned her mind away' (*Odyssey* 19.471-9). Penelope's behaviour was considered implausible, and it was posited that Homer must have been adapting a scene from an earlier version of the story where Penelope did recognise her

husband at this moment – but had not adapted it very well (Fernandez-Galliano, 1992: 183-4; for summary of views see Russo, 1992: 7-9). More recent readings of the same scene have redeemed this implausibility by suggesting that it plays on the audience's awareness of the earlier version (Rutherford, 1996: 71), or is in fact a deliberate strategy of allusion to it which increases the dramatic irony in the Odyssean scene (Currie, 2006: 17-23).

Kakridis, a neo-analyst arguing for such a more nuanced understanding of Homeric poetics, warned against using logical contradictions as a mark of a lack of poetic skill: 'It is of no importance whatever if a scene is natural or unnatural...nor if a scene contradicts an earlier or later scene in the poem. What is important is that the constituents of the scene fulfil its poetic purpose' (1949: 8). He reminds us, too, that 'when a poet plans a scene for a certain aesthetic purpose he will contrive to serve this purpose by means of the details' (1949: 8). That is, when something seems contradictory to us, we must not be too quick to assume that the 'contradiction' is not in fact consistent with the overall design of the poem. Are these inconsistencies really inconsistent, or have we merely failed to understand?

Thus the development of readings in Homeric scholarship over the last century may provide us with some useful parallels for our understanding of the composite nature of *Enūma Eliš*, and show us a way to develop more nuanced interpretations. We should not be too quick to condemn its details as leftovers from a process of amalgamation. Rather, it is up to us to make the interpretive effort to understand why these details have been left in. As with the supposed awkwardness of the motif of blood on the wind, which is not so awkward when one considers Marduk's powers as a storm god and his power over natural phenomena, there may be other ways of viewing these details which make more sense than we have realised. Or we may be applying the wrong criteria of 'consistency', expecting the logic of the 'real world' to apply to stories set in a mythological realm. We should remember,

too, the high esteem in which *Enūma Eliš* was held in ancient Mesopotamia. This is a culture which did have poems with a high degree of artistic unity at a detailed level (see e.g. Worthington, 2011 on *Gilgameš*). As the central poem to the theology of Marduk, widely diffused across Mesopotamia and copied well into the late periods even after this theology was declining, it seems unlikely that it would have occupied such a position if it were indeed such a rough-edged composite as some criticisms imply.

The inconsistencies according to Lambert are as follows: Ti'āmtu gives the tablet to Qingu on appointing him head of her army (I.157), but there is no explanation of how the tablet came into her possession. There is no implication that she stole it as *Anzû* did. Then Marduk declares that Qingu had no right to it (IV.81-2, 121), takes it from him and fastens it to his own chest (IV.122) but then gives it away to Anu (V.69-70). These details are thought to stand out as not making sense with the main line of the narrative, and hence show up the poem's clumsy dependence on the earlier story. This section will explore how the use of the tablet of destinies in *Ee* is at least coherent with the way that the poem positions itself in relation to *Anzû*, as one of many in the web of allusions.

More recently, Lambert suggested that the reason that Qingu holds the tablet is that he is the equivalent of Enmešarra, an ancient deity who was defeated in battle by Marduk and executed (2013: 453). This seems to have been the subject of a text dubbed *Enmešarra's defeat* (edition Lambert, 2013: 281-98), although the surviving copy is Seleucid or Parthian and it is uncertain how far back the story can be dated. Since Enmešarra was Enlil's father in some traditions, Lambert suggests that Enmešarra would have held the tablet of destinies before him, although this is not attested (2013: 453). Thus Qingu as his equivalent also had to possess the tablet, which the author of *Ee* accomplished by having Ti'āmtu give it to him, since she was the main enemy. This is an intriguing possibility and we should remain open

to it. However, the extant portion of the text *Enmešarra's Defeat* does not give us enough to be able to say much more about any connection between Enmešarra and Qingu.[105]

The tablet first appears when Tiʾāmtu gives it to Qingu at I.157, when she gives him supreme command over her army. The whole passage from here to the end of the tablet (I.157-162) is replete with inter- and intra-textuality.

id-din-šum-ma ṭuppi šīmāti(DUB.NAM.MEŠ) *i-ra-tuš* u_2*-šat-mi-iḫ*
ka-ta qibīt(DU_{11}.GA)[106]*-ka la in-nen-na-a li-kun* [*ṣi-it pi-i-ka*]
in-na-nu[107] ^{d}*qin-gu šu-uš-qu-u*$_2$ *le-qu-u*$_2$ [^{d}*a-nu-ti*]
a-na[108] *ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *mārī*(DUMU)^{meš}*-šu ši-ma-*ʳ*ta iš*ˀ*-ti-ma*

ep-šu pi-i-ku-nu ^{d}*girru*(GIŠ.BAR) *li-*ʳ*ni-iḫ*ˀ*-ḫa*
im-tuk[109] *kit-mu-ru ma-ag-ša-ru liš-rab-bi-ib*

She gave him[110] the tablet of destinies, made him hold it to his breast,
"May your command not be changed, may [your utterance] endure!"
"Now Qingu is raised high and has taken [the Anuship], [111]
"and has decreed destinies for the gods his children.[112]

"Let your spoken word quench fire!
"Let your accumulated poison weaken strength."

Ee I.157-62

Qingu's possession of the tablet is an immediate reminder of *Anzû*. It creates the expectation that Qingu will be a formidable enemy to defeat, since three opponents refused to fight Anzû before Ninurta agreed, and even Ninurta's first attempt failed, requiring the

[105] For more on Enmešarra and Qingu see Lambert (2013: 285-7) and chapter three (pp. 153, 172).
[106] I read KA.TA.DU_{11}.GA as a logogram based on the variant *ka-at* in ms. B and *Nabnītu* IV.69 which reads ʳkaˀ-ta-ʳdug_4-gaˀ = [qi_2*-bi-it pi-i*].
[107] Var. D: *e-nen-na*
[108] Vars. D: *ina,* 'among'; G: *an,* abbreviated form of *ana* written to make a graphical pattern of three DINGIR signs in a row.
[109] Ms. D (K3938 = CT 13, 3) has *im-tuk-aš,* which Lambert considers a scribal error and corrects to *im-tuk-nu*, a shortened form of *-kunu* (2013: 58, 472). Alternatively it could be an inferior variant reading: *im-tuk ina kit-mu-ru*, 'your poison through accumulation' (Kämmerer & Metzler, 2012: 150).
[110] Ms. B leaves out 'him'.
[111] Restoration based on parallel lines. Var. b (Lambert): *e-nu-ti,* 'the lordship'.
[112] Ms. B omits this line.

tricksy advice of Ea to succeed. *le-qu-u*$_2$ [^{d}*a-nu-ti*][113] may be an echo of Anzû taking the *enlilūtu* (^{d}*en-lil*$_2$*-u*$_2$*-ta il-te-qi*$_2$ *na-du-*^{r}*u*$_2$$^{\neg}$ [*par-ṣi*], 'He took the Enlilship, [the divine powers] were overthrown!' SB *Anzû* I.82). However, this expectation will be overturned: Qingu turns out to be quite easy to defeat, dispatched in a single line (IV.119). Furthermore, even the terrifying Ti'āmtu is not as great a difficulty for warrior Marduk as Anzû was for Ninurta. There is no failed first attempt and the duel is swiftly won (Vanstiphout, 1992: 43-4 n.23). This is not to say that Ti'āmtu and Qingu are not as great a threat as Anzû – there is still the motif of two gods too terrified to fight them before Marduk volunteers. Rather, the ease with which Marduk conquers these enemies is contrasted with the difficulty of the challenge for Ninurta. For more on this see the section on structure below.

The passage is intra-textual too, for it foreshadows the enthroning of Marduk (Labat, 1935: 32). As a condition for giving his assistance, Marduk demands the authority to decree destinies and for his utterances to be irrevocable, the same powers Ti'āmtu declares Qingu to have.

> *ina upšu'ukinnaki*(UB.ŠU.UKKIN.NA-*ki*)[114] *mit-ḫa-riš ḫa-diš tiš*$_2$*-ba-ma*
> *ep-šu*$_2$[115] *pi-ia ki-ma ka-tu-nu-ma ši-ma-ta lu-šim-ma*
> *la ut-tak-kar mim-mu-u*$_2$ *a-ban-nu-u a-na-ku*
> *a-a i-tur a-a in-nen-na-a si*$_3$*-qar šap-ti-ia*
>
> "Sit joyfully together in Upšu'ukkinnakku,
> "(May) my spoken word be like yours, let me decree destinies!
> "Let anything I create not be altered,
> "may the pronouncement of my lips not reverse or be changed."
>
> *Ee* II.159-62

[113] The restoration is from the parallel II.45, ms C. There *e-nu-ti*, 'lordship', is a variant in ms. A, which does not substantially affect the meaning.
[114] Var. O and P+: UB.ŠU.UKKIN.NA-*kam*, a spelling probably influenced by the Sumerian writing -kam for a genitive (-ak) plus enclitic copula (-am).
[115] Var. P+: *ep-ša*

And when the gods bestow supreme power on Marduk they decree the following:

iš-tu u_4*-mi-im-ma la in-nen-na-a* qi_2*-bit-ka*
šu-uš-qu-u_2 u_3 *šu-uš-pu-lu ši-i lu-*u_2 *qātu*(ŠU)*-ka*
lu-u_2 *ki-na-at ṣi-it pi-i-ka la sa-ra-ar* si_3*-qar-ka*
ma-am-ma-an i-na ilānī(DINGIR.DINGIR) *i-tuk-ka la it-ti-iq*

"From this day may your command not be changed.
"To raise high and sink low, may this be (in) your hand.
"May your utterance endure, may your word not be false.[116]
"None among the gods will cross your boundary.

Ee IV.7-10

lā innennâ qibītka in line seven is parallel to *qibīt*(DU_{11}.GA)*-ka lā innennâ* in I.158 referring to Qingu, and *lū kīnat* is the stative form of *kânu,* the same verb used in I.158, *likūn,* referring to Qingu's utterance. They thus bestow the same authority on Marduk as Ti'āmtu bestowed on Qingu, although this time it is legitimate. The position Ti'āmtu declares for Qingu:

ad-di ta-a-ka ina ukkinni(UKKIN) *ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *u*$_2$*-šar-bi-ka*
ma-li-ku-ut ilānī(DINGIR)^{meš} *gim-ra-at-su-nu qa-*$^{\lceil}$*tuk*$^{\rceil}$*-ka uš-mal-li*

"I cast your spell, I made you great in the assembly of gods,
"kingship of the gods, all of them, I put in your hand."

Ee I.153-4

is exactly that which will later be given to Marduk:

^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) *at-ta-ma mu-tir-ru gi-mil-li-ni*
ni-id-din-ka šar-ru-tu$_4$[117] *kiš-šat kal gim-re-e-ti*
ti-šam-ma i-na ukkinni(UKKIN) *lu-*u_2 *ša*$_2$*-qa-ta a-mat-ka*
^{giš}*kakkū*(TUKUL)^{meš}*-ka*[118] *a-a ip-pal-ṭu-*u_2 *li-ra-i-su na-ki-ri-ka*

"You are Marduk, our avenger!
"We gave you[119] kingship of the totality of everything, of all things.
"Sit in the assembly, let your word be supreme!
"May your weapons not miss, may they smite your enemy!

Ee IV.13-16

[116] Var. L: *la ša-na-an,* 'not be rivalled'
[117] Var. L: [*šar*]*-ru-ti*
[118] Var. B: *kak-ki-ka*
[119] Var. L: *i nid-din-*$^{\lceil}$*ka*$^{\rceil}$, 'let us give you'

When Marduk captures Qingu, he takes the tablet of destinies from him, seals it and fixes it to his own chest (IV.120-122). The tablet of destinies becomes here a symbol of legitimate rule and power rather than illegitimate rule and power. Lambert remarks that this episode is not well integrated, since Marduk declares that Qingu had no right to the tablet without any explanation for this comment (Lambert, 1986: 58). Nor is it clear how Ti'āmtu came to have the tablet, rather, it appears out of nowhere.

A non-poetic source describing the tablet of destinies, the draft inscription of Sennacherib K 6177 + 8869 (published by George, 1986), makes clear in the opening lines what its significance is: *ri-kis* ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$-*u*$_2$-[*ti*], 'the bond of supremacy' (line 1), which equals lordship over the gods of sky and earth, *be-lu-ut ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš} *ša*$_2$ *šamê*(AN-*e*) *u*$_3$ *er-ṣe*-[*ti*] (line 2) and kingship over the Igigi and Anunnaki (*šarrūt*(LUGAL)-*u*$_2$-*ut* ^{d}*i*$_2$-*gi*$_3$-*gi*$_3$ *u*$_3$ ^{d}*a-nun*-[*na-ki*], line 3). Aššur's possession of the tablet in this text is, then, proof of his position as ruler over all the other gods.

It seems likely that the tablet is an emblem of authority rather than a magical object which confers it (cf. George, 1986: 139). I suggest that the de-emphasis of the tablet of destinies in *Ee* is another way of emphasising Marduk's natural powers, showing that he does not need magical objects to succeed, while his opponents do. This is a similar kind of strategy to that employed by *Anzû*, where the magical object is transferred from the hero to his enemy to give more credit to Ninurta for being able to win. Marduk does not need the tablet of destinies either, for he is powerful enough already. This explains why he can give it away to Anu in V.69-70.

This de-emphasis of the tablet is complemented by the reiteration of the power to decree destinies without it, which is an ability of the supernal gods in *Ee*. Ea calls Anšar *mu-šim-mu ši-im-ti*, 'who decrees destinies' at II.61 and 63, which is echoed by Marduk's demands

at the end of the tablet when he asks Anšar, *ep-šu*$_2$ *pi-ia ki-ma ka-tu-nu-ma ši-ma-ta lu-šim-ma*, '(May) my spoken word be like yours, may I decree destinies' (II.160). But Anšar and Marduk are not the only ones to enjoy this power, rather, all the great gods do.[120] They are given the same epithet as Anšar (the restoration seems likely) at III.130: *ilānū*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *rabûtu*(GAL.GAL) *ka-li-šu*$_2$*-nu mu-ši-mu* [*šīmāti*(NAM)^{meš}], 'All the great gods who decree [destinies]', and it is these gods as a collective whom Anšar orders to decree Marduk's destiny as their leader: *ši-mat-ku-nu ar*$_2$*-ḫiš ši-ma-šu*$_2$, 'quickly decree your destiny for him' (III.65 = III.123). None of these gods need to possess the *ṭuppi šīmāti* in order to decree destinies. This is also the case outside of *Ee*, for example, the great gods as a collective are called *ilānū*(DINGIR)^{meš} *rabûtu*(GAL)^{meš} *bēlū*(EN)^{meš} *ši-ma-a-ti* in an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar (VAB 4: 150, A iii 6). Other individual gods are said to possess this power, for example Ea is *be-el šīmāti*(NAM)$^{[meš]}$ in *Maqlu* VI.60 and *šar*$_3$ *šīmāti*(NAM)^{meš} in DT 1 (Lambert, 1960: 112, 2); Šamaš is *bēl*(EN) *ši-mat māti*(KUR) (Mayer,1976: 506, 113); Mammītu is creator of fate(s) in *Gilgameš* X.320, as is Nintu in *Atraḫasīs* III vi 47.

The decreeing of destinies then, both in *Ee* and in the tradition outside it, is an attribute of a class of powerful gods and is not dependent on possessing the tablet of destinies, which is rather a symbol of the very highest authority. However, Qingu is precisely *not* one of these high-ranking gods. It is possible therefore that the reason he needs the tablet in *Ee* is because he cannot decree destinies without it, or do very much else. When *Ee* opens, Marduk is not one of these gods either, hence he needs to ask for the power to decree destinies. The assembly of gods are still able to decree Marduk's destiny in IV.1-18, however,

[120] It is largely for this reason I have taken *ki-ma ka-tu-nu-ma* in II.161 as 'like you' rather than 'instead of you' (as Heidel, 1963: 29 followed by Lambert, 1964: 4, 2013: 73). Although the sense of 'instead of' may well be present, given Marduk's eventual supremacy, I prefer to emphasize the sense of 'like you' to show that Marduk is rising in status from a much lower rank.

without the tablet in their possession, for presumably Qingu must have it (Lambert, 2013: 451). The difference in status is also marked by the differing ways that the gods address each other in tablet II: Ea addresses Anšar in hymnic form, with four lines of repeating parallelism common of hymnic beginnings (II.61-4). Anšar then addresses Ea in the same way (II.139-42). However, when Ea then speaks to Marduk he does not use this form of address (II.131 ff.). When the assembly of gods bestows supreme power on Marduk, they *do* use this parallelism (IV.3-6), marking his ascent to a new rank.

Qingu, in decreeing destinies for *ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *mārī*(DUMU)^{meš}-*šu*$_2$, 'the gods, his children'(I.160) has a limited amount of power. It is not entirely clear who Qingu's children are. Presumably they make up part of the army, although when Ti'āmtu gives birth to her host at I.132-46 there is no mention of any father, and Qingu appears to be chosen as her spouse after the birth has taken place (I.146-7). Although Ti'āmtu puts into his hands *ma-li-ku-ut ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš} *gim-ra-at-su-nu*, 'kingship of the gods, all of them' (I.154), this either refers to the gods that are her children, rather than the supernal gods whom they are fighting against, or expresses an aspiration rather than a reality, as subsequent events show.

The fact that he needs the tablet of destinies in order to achieve this level of power, whereas the supernal gods (including Marduk) do not, is actually a sign of Qingu's weakness. It is significant that possession of the tablet is of no help to him whatsoever in battle. Unlike Anzû he is unable to use it against his opponent, who quickly deprives him of it without a fight. Unlike Anzû, Qingu is not the main opponent, merely Ti'āmtu's commander-in-chief. That he is the one to wield the tablet of destinies and not Ti'āmtu is another instance of its downgrading – it is not held by the main enemy in *Ee*, but by a secondary, weaker opponent.

That the ability to decree destinies is mentioned so often in *Ee* de-emphasises the importance of the *ṭuppi šīmāti* even further, and implies that by holding it Qingu has less of an advantage than Anzû did when it really was the embodiment of supreme power. When it is first mentioned at the climax of *Ee* tablet I, its resonances give the impression that a powerful opponent has been created. This not only reflects on Qingu but also on Ti'āmtu as the one who has the power to bestow it upon him (Sonik, 2012: 390). The associations of destinies that creep in in tablets II and III begin to undermine this, until the battle itself in tablet IV where Qingu is easily defeated and the tablet plays no part. Perhaps it is Qingu's failure to use the tablet at all which indicates his ineptitude.

Returning then to the problem of how Ti'āmtu got the tablet of destinies in the first place, there are a few possibilities as to how we interpret its sudden and unexplained appearance. Annus suggests that Ea may have taken the tablet from Apsû after killing him, but that it 'returned' to Ti'āmtu in the same way that it returned to the Apsû in *Ninurta and the Turtle* (2002: 149). The tablet would naturally reside in the Apsû since this location is traditionally the source of wisdom; Ti'āmtu would then have inherited it from her late husband (2002: 149-50). Sonik suggests that Apsû and Ti'āmtu held it jointly as joint custodians of the watery realm, and so Ti'āmtu is the legitimate owner of the tablet at the beginning of the poem (2012: 389-90). These interpretations are based on the appearance of the tablet in the text 'The Twenty-One Poultices' (edition Lambert, 1980b) where it is the property of Ea, guaranteeing his supremacy in the Apsû. There it is called *mal-ṭar* ^{d}*a-nu-ti-ia*, 'document of my Anuship' (line 6), and the apkallû of Eridu bring it to Ea in the Apsû, suggesting this was its original home. The tablet is also associated with the Apsû in *Ninurta and the Turtle*. However, if it were the case that the tablet originally and legitimately belonged to Ti'āmtu, she should surely be free to give it to Qingu if she wished. Furthermore, Apsû

and Ti'āmtu may have been invented specifically for *Ee* (see introduction and p. 149 ff.), in which case their legitimate possession of the tablet may not have been obvious and may have been unnecessary to explain.

Another possibility is that we infer how Ti'āmtu came to have the tablet by comparison with *Anzû*, and assume that she must have stolen it. It is perfectly reasonable to posit that the audience could have assumed this, given how obvious a signpost the *ṭuppi šīmāti* is to this particular poem. How and why Ti'āmtu stole it is not important, for the tablet has been downgraded in *Ee* to merely symbolic value rather than an actual source of power and trouble.

In my view, however, it is irrelevant how Ti'āmtu got hold of the tablet of destinies – it has been downgraded so much that its irrelevance is precisely the point.[121] Perhaps we are supposed to be surprised at its sudden appearance and the lack of attention given to it, for it is precisely this which emphasizes how far in significance it has fallen.

The poem may be silent on this point simply because it is not important to the present narrative, and in fact would introduce all sorts of distractions and complications into it. If it had been stolen, to narrate this would make *Ee* into another story about the theft of the tablet of destinies, which is not the point at all, only a side detail to emphasise other aspects of Marduk's superiority to Ninurta. It would put undue emphasis on an object which was only ever peripheral to the plot. Secondly, it would raise the question of whom she stole it from. In the universe of *Ee* it cannot have been Enlil, who is largely irrelevant. In *Ee* the tablet of destinies does not seem to have a designated legitimate owner like it does in *Anzû*, and to make Marduk its first adds to his status. Even Marduk does not hold on to it for very long, handing it over to Anu in V.69-70, which Lambert suggests is an aetiology for how Anu came

[121] Cf. Lambert (2013: 451) 'one is left with the feeling that the author did not take it too seriously'.

to possess the tablet, which was the situation by the time of *Ee*'s composition (1986: 58). This may also be another slight to Enlil, since the tablet belonged to him in *Anzû*, but here is given to someone else. But stealing the tablet from Anu would not make much sense, since the conflict is between Ti'āmtu and Anšar. Anšar is the object of Ti'āmtu's rebellion rather than the sky god Anu because the scale of the crisis is so much bigger in *Ee* than in earlier stories: the writing of Anšar is the whole circle of heaven, and so *Ee* is the story of the sea against the highest heavenly region and all the gods which it encompasses.

Silence on a particular point can, however, also be a form of allusion – making reference by refusing reference (Dowden, 1996: 55; Currie, 2006: 7). In Homer as here, to go into explanations might tie the poem up too much with a previous tradition which the poet is trying to break away from. For example, Homer never explains Agamemnon's comment that Calchas has a habit of making evil prophecies at *Iliad* I.106. The reference is to the prophecy which led to the sacrifice of Iphigenia, but to go into this would also involve supernatural events which are deliberately excluded from the *Iliad,* which prefers to portray a more realistic world (Dowden, 1996: 55, with further examples). It is a way of differentiating the values and aesthetic of the poem from those which preceded it. Similarly any explanation about how Ti'āmtu got the tablet of destinies would tangle the poem up in side tracks which conflict with the story *Ee* is trying to tell. And yet, knowledge of Anzû's theft of the tablet of destinies from Enlil helps us appreciate why the situation in *Ee* is so different. There it was the source of ultimate power, but in *Ee* it is almost as insignificant as Enlil is. The point of the tablet of destinies may be that it is now an insignificant weapon against Marduk's awesome power (and that Marduk's power supersedes that of its previous owner, Enlil), but the full understanding of why and how and what that means for the ideology of *Ee* is only possible

once the reader makes the comparison between *Ee* and *Anzû* and makes these connections, as is the case for all allusions.[122]

The world of *Ee* has changed since the world of *Anzû*, and the power of Marduk is not limited by any magical object, but is above everything. Vanstiphout argues that when Marduk is appointed supreme god he is placed above all other elements in the universe, including the tablet of destinies (1992: 54-55). This is why Qingu is unable to turn the tablet to his advantage, as Marduk 'is mightier than the tablet of destinies, since his victory over Ti'āmtu and her host is not dependent on this' (Vanstiphout, 1992: 55). Marduk's power over the constellations also places him higher than any other destiny-ordaining authority, since the movements of the stars communicate the fates which have been fixed by the gods, messages which communicate divine will to mankind. Control of the stars is a display of, therefore, the ultimate control over destinies (Vanstiphout, 1992: 55).

This also makes a point about Marduk and Ninurta – Ninurta subverts the power of the tablet to achieve his victory, but Marduk does not need to. His power is not dependent on it, while Qingu's 'authority' is entirely reliant on it. For Ninurta the tablet was an obstacle – for Marduk it is irrelevant. When he takes it from Qingu, seals it and affixes it to his own chest, the action is symbolic of his ultimate power over all destinies. That he gives it away to Anu is not an inconsistency, rather, it is an expression of this supremacy, that he does not need such an object in order to have the powers that he does. Further, through this action, Anu becomes subordinate to Marduk.[123] Sonik draws attention to the tact of this gesture, that Marduk honours his predecessor and guarantees the continuity of Anu's position as nominal

[122] cf. Machinist (2005: 44) on the deliberately partial explanation of circumstances behind the creation of man in *Ee* as a strategy to force the reader to compare the situation with that in *Atraḫasīs* – to be explored in chapter three.

[123] Cf. Sonik (2012: 392), who agrees that Marduk no longer needs the tablet at this point, though she differs on its importance beforehand.

head of the pantheon while at the same time becoming the one to actively lead it (2012: 392-3). It also evokes comparison with Ninurta, who returned the tablet to Enlil after his battle with Anzû, yet Anu is not implied to be the original owner, but the recipient of Marduk's generosity (Sonik, 2012: 393).

The lack of significance of the *ṭuppi šīmāti* in *Ee* can also be read as yet another slight against Enlil, whose authority was thrown into chaos by the theft of the tablet. This is another example of reverse intertextuality which makes the story of *Anzû* and its premise seem petty in comparison to the grand crisis and powers on display in *Ee*: Enlil's power cannot be all that great or secure if it can so easily be overturned. The relegation of the tablet to a less important position – necessary to Qingu, but not to any of the gods who matter – is also a relegation of Enlil, placing him among this lower order of gods with inferior powers. Vanstiphout suggests that the older traditions present in *Ee*, such as the tablet of destinies which was once an object of great power and significance, 'remain incorporated as incomplete foreshadowings of the eternal truth and order' (1992: 56). One could also view it as a reminder of the limitations and shortcomings of previous gods of the old order, in contrast to the might of Marduk, whose rise to power is unfolding before us now.

Structural imitations and adaptations

Ee imitates and adapts the structure of *Anzû* in several ways. The most obvious is the list of Marduk's names at the end of the poem, which is far longer than Ninurta's. Enlil and Ninurta are both gods of Nippur, and so Marduk's superseding them is part of the elevation of his city of Babylon over the original centre of religion in Mesopotamia. The setting of *Ee* at the very beginning of time establishes Marduk's primacy over the other gods, since his story,

and creation of the world itself, takes place at a time before Ninurta could have fought his battle, a technique which Classicists call *hysteron proteron.* At the same time as out-doing Ninurta, however, the names in *Ee* have the additional function of signalling Marduk's take-over from Enlil. This can be seen in another adaptation, mainly the choice of the gods who are asked to fight Tiʾāmtu: Ea and Anu rather than Adad, Girra, and Šara, who are asked to fight Anzû. The omission of Enlil is conspicuous, and contributes to the allusions to the astrological omen series *Enūma Anu Enlil* (*EAE*) to write Enlil out of his traditional role. The repeated passages found in this section, the terrifying description of Tiʾāmtu's army and the narration of Anu and Ea going towards her but turning back out of fright, emphasise the panic among the old gods and their failure in dealing with the threat: they are all talk and no action, whereas Marduk speaks little but accomplishes victory swiftly. Finally, the deified weapon as a speaking character has been worked into *Ee,* but adapted for a different purpose: whereas Šar-ur was Ninurta's vizier and messenger, Marduk needs no such assistance, and the character manifests as the vizier of a less powerful character, Anšar. This helps to show that the primeval head of the assembly of gods, the ancestor of all, is still less important than Marduk.

The names

Anzû ends with a list of names bestowed on Ninurta, indicating which gods had been assimilated to him. In *Anzû* this is a statement that Ninurta is taking over the deeds of Tišpak and Lugalbanda, among others. *Ee* similarly ends with a list of names. This is not a common way of ending a poem, in fact, I am not aware of any other examples. Given the numerous other deliberate connections between *Ee* and *Anzû*, it seems very likely that the list of names

at the end of *Ee* is an imitation of the conclusion of *Anzû* (cf. Katz, 2011: 132). As such, Marduk out-does Ninurta in being given more names, for Marduk is given 50.[124] Eighteen are preserved in the extant manuscripts of *Anzû.* Although the tablets are fragmentary towards the end and we cannot be certain how many names there were, if section ν as labelled by Saggs is indeed a colophon (Saggs, 1986: 2) it appears that there would not be much space for many more before the end of the poem, meaning that 50 names is certainly more than Ninurta would have had.

However, while Ninurta's names often clearly declare him to have absorbed the identities of other gods (Ningirsu, Nisaba, Tišpak, Lugalbanda, etc), Marduk's 'names' are not so obviously those of the gods he has overtaken. While some may indeed be clues to assimilations (e.g. Addu at VII.119), most are more properly titles, some of which belonged to other gods first, some of which were originally Marduk's. The mechanics of the name-giving works differently, then, in *Ee.* It is possible that the names and their explanations derive from a god list (see introduction p. 38). In *Ee* each name has an explanation of its meaning, often translating Sumerian into Akkadian, whereas in *Anzû* each name is given only one line, in most cases with the place in which Ninurta is worshipped under that name. Whether or not the names of Marduk come from one particular god list, they certainly share characteristics of god lists, another facet of *Ee*'s highly composite nature.[125]

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[124] The exact number of names is 51. Talon counts 52 because he counts *ma-ru* ^{d}*šam*(UTU)-*ši*, 'The Son, the Sun!' in VI.127 as a name (2005: 115). However, the list of 50 is clearly designed to be a set, for before it begins the gods declare *i-nim-be*$_2$*-e*$_2$*-ma ḫa-ša*$_2$*-a šu-me-e-šu*$_2$, 'let us pronounce his 50 names!' (VI.121) and afterwards it is said that the great gods have pronounced his 50 names (VII.144). Enlil gives his name to Marduk as the penultimate name (VII.136), and it would make far more sense for this to be the 50th rather than the 51st, given that Enlil's number is 50. When Ea bestows his name as the 51st (VII.140) it actually comes after the statement that the list of 50 is concluded (VII.137).

[125] Although there are examples of lesser literary compositions following after lexical lists (see Civil, 1987), these do not show the same level of sophistication as *Ee.*

Marduk is not explicitly given the name 'Ninurta', then, but there is no need for the assimilation to be spelled out: by the time we reach the end of *Ee* there have been so many connections with *Anzû* that it would have been obvious to the Mesopotamian reader. Furthermore, Ninurta is not the only important assimilation and not the one that requires the most attention drawn to it: Marduk is not only replacing the young warrior deity, but also Enlil, the head of the pantheon himself. Enlil has been edited out of the narrative - where it is plot-driven, the focus is on Ninurta connections - but the section with the names at the end is where the ultimate transfer of power takes place, and accordingly it is Enlil who is emphasised there rather than Ninurta.

The gods of the Nippur pantheon do not feature much in *Ee.* This is consistent with the ideological trend from the Kassite period onwards which elevated the newly powerful city of Babylon and its god Marduk above the older cities central to Mesopotamian religion. For example, 'Eridu' became the name of a district in Babylon, later coming to stand for the city itself (George, 1992: 19). The text *Tintir = Babylon* has some interesting evidence for Babylon's absorption of the identities of other cities. It shares a common ideology with *Ee*, in that *Tintir* elevates Babylon above Nippur and Eridu in the same way that *Ee* elevates Marduk over the gods of the Nippur pantheon (George, 1992: 6-7) and his father Ea. Babylon is called by uz$_3$-sag an-ki-a, a synonym of Nippur's traditional epithet DUR.AN.KI at *Tintir* I.35 (George, 1992: 261). The last line of *Tintir* tablet I gives Babylon the name DIM.KUR.KUR.RA^{ki} (I.51), a climactic position parallel to that of the last name of Marduk in *Ee,* the title of Enlil ^{d}EN.KUR.KUR.RA (George, 1992: 262). The title of Enlil's city has thus been given to Marduk's city in the same way that Enlil's title has been given to Marduk (George, 1992: 262). Which text came first, however, is difficult to establish, and it is important to note that *Tintir* does not exclude Enlil in the way that *Ee* does: Enlil continued to have a renowned

cult at Enamtila in Babylon, and at I.42 he is named as the creator of Babylon (George, 1992: 7). Be that as it may, there is a certain competitiveness here between the cities paralleled by that between their gods as portrayed in *Ee* and *Anzû.* As Babylon is the new Nippur, so Marduk has absorbed the gods of Nippur, becoming the new Ninurta and the new Enlil.

Structural adaptations, *hysteron-proteron*, and repetition

The structural scheme which Machinist notices is the same in *Ee* as in *Anzû* is that of the disturbance of order and its consequences (2005: 39). Both stories begin with an initial order, which is disrupted by the appearance of a powerful enemy. The gods that represent order react, a champion is found, a battle takes place, and then the champion is integrated into the order which has been re-established (Machinist, 2005: 39). These steps in the plot take place in the same sequence in both poems. However, the adaptations made in *Ee* show a competitiveness towards the poem it imitates which is similar to that shown by *Anzû.* While *Anzû* begins with a hymnic prologue in praise of Ninurta, *Ee* begins with a theogony. *Ee* thus begins not with the established order of divine rule as *Anzû* does, but before this order has been created, with the emergence of the universe itself (Machinist, 2005: 42). This is the same *hysteron proteron* technique that we saw with *Anzû* and *Labbu* and *Lugalbanda*, where *Anzû* grounded itself in a time before the creation of cities to show that Ninurta superseded Tišpak and Lugalbanda before these gods and the peoples and cities mentioned in their poems ever existed. Likewise, the story of Marduk is set at the beginning of time, before the story of Ninurta could have taken place, and before Enlil was ever made chief god – another way that *Ee* edits Enlil out of the divine hierarchy.

Machinist remarks that the disturbance of order and the reaction of the gods has been enlarged in *Ee* since the first disturbance, Apsû, is followed by a second one, that of Ti'āmtu and her children (2005: 43). This adaptation allows for an extra episode to prefigure the main event of the poem: the younger Ea's conquering of the older Apsû foreshadows the victory of the young Marduk (Machinist, 2005: 43). Marduk is Ea's son and will soon be following in his footsteps, even superseding him.

There is another adaptation to this schema in that after his victory, Marduk creates the world and establishes sanctuaries and positions for the other gods, in other words, the final world order as the Babylonians knew it: 'If Ninurta, by defeating Anzû is able to correct a disturbance to an already existing order, Marduk's achievement is to bring order into existence in the first place' (Machinist, 2005: 45). Ninurta restores the order as ruled by Enlil, but Marduk creates one in which he alone is supreme (Machinist, 2005: 45). This addition to the schema of order disturbed and re-established is another example of *hysteron proteron*, showing Marduk to out-do his predecessors before they have actually accomplished their deeds.

As in *Anzû,* in *Ee* other gods are asked to face the enemy and refuse before the eventual champion appears, but in *Ee* the motif has been streamlined. In *Anzû* there are three unwilling gods, while there are two in *Ee* (Machinist, 2005: 41). Then Ninurta makes two attempts, while Marduk only needs one. The effect of this is to speed up Marduk's victory, making it seem superior and effortless in comparison to Ninurta's, while still showing that the enemy is formidable enough that only Marduk could defeat her. As Vanstiphout points out, 'in the ideology of our poem it has to be excluded that Marduk should fail, even at first try' (1992: 44 n.23).

The extent to which *Ee* imitates and adapts the repetition which is part of the structure of *Anzû* is worth exploring. Vogelzang (1988: 203-24) shows how the repetitions introduced into SB *Anzû* as compared with OB *Anzû* create patterns of expectation and suspense, an intentional technique rather than 'an unmotivated craving for repetition' (1988: 220). These repetitions of passages, motifs, and phrases reinforce the thematic and structural unity of the poem (Vogelzang, 1988: 219). The same can be said for *Ee*: it has not copied the repetitions exactly as they are in *Anzû,* but rather the way that it integrates and expands these repetitions has particular effects which are consistent with other ideas expressed in the poem.

In *Anzû,* Anu makes the same plea to each of the gods he approaches (Adad I.90-103, Girra I.115-124 , Šara I.136-145), each of whom give him the same reply (I.104-114, I.125-135, I.146- 156). In *Ee,* Anšar makes the same request of both Ea and Anu but uses different words rather than a verbatim repetition. When he addresses Ea he does so with a hymnic form of parallelism (II.73-6), thus according him great respect (Ea had himself addressed Anšar in the same way at II.61-4, so this is a form of reciprocity). When addressing Ea, he tells him he can use his magic spell to pacify Ti'āmtu, thus tailoring his approach to the god's unique ability (II.78). When asking Anu he makes no mention of using a spell but rather asks him to pacify Ti'āmtu with words of supplication (*a-mat un-nin-ni,* II.102). It is worth noting that Anu was in *Anzû* the beseecher and is now the beseeched, relegated from holding supreme power to being one of the cowardly gods who will not fight.

While in *Anzû* the refusal of the gods is repeated, its counterpart in *Ee* is a little more than this. There is a description of the god setting off, but once he has seen Ti'āmtu he is terror-stricken and turns back. In *Ee* this is identical in both cases (II.79-94, II.103-118). This

small modification serves to prolong the failures of the older gods, which will add to their contrast with Marduk.

The use of the phrase *i-tu-ra ar-ki-iš* 'turn back' may be an allusion to Ninurta's arrows which were turned back by Anzû (*qa-nu it-tu-ra* 'the reed-arrow was turned back' II.61 =77 = 92); just as in *Anzû* the arrows approach the monster and turn back, in *Ee* the gods approach the monster and turn back, as ineffective as Ninurta's first round of arrows. In *Anzû* the gods refuse to go in the first place (I.156 = [114] = [135]), making this approach and retreat of the gods of *Ee* closer to the arrows than to the three gods in *Anzû*. The monsters in Ti'āmtu's army are also referred to in similar terms as Ninurta's poisoned arrows (see below p. 132 ff.). But when Ea and Anu approach, as Anšar's equivalents of Ti'āmtu's frontline, they do turn back in fear, unlike Ti'āmtu's monsters. Ti'āmtu wishes her monsters to be unlike Ninurta's failed arrows, and the first two gods to approach her – like these same arrows – retreat.

The particular gods chosen are also significant. In *Anzû* they are Adad, Girra, and Šara, a storm god, a fire god, and a warrior god, but the first two also have warrior aspects (Vogelzang, 1988: 157), and at least one of them features in his own narrative fighting a chaos-monster ('Girra and Elamatum,' edition Walker, 1983). Ninurta is shown to out-do the gods whose aspects he shares, for Ninurta is a storm god as well as a warrior. In *Ee* the failed challengers are Ea and Anu. Ea is the god of cunning solutions, but here he fails, even though it was his advice in *Anzû* that won Ninurta his victory. Ea is told to use magic (II.78), but fails to do so. Anu is addressed as a warrior (*ka-šu$_2$-šu$_2$ qar-ra-du*, 'Mighty weapon, warrior' II.97), but fails to live up to expectations. Marduk surpasses both of them: he goes into battle holding a spell on his lips, but has no need to use it, for his warrior strength and tactics are all that is required.

Anu and Ea are two of the traditional triad of great gods to which some other accounts attribute the creation or organisation of the universe. They also feature in the triad at the beginning of *Atraḫasīs* (I.12-18) where it is described how the drawing of lots gave Anu dominion over the sky and Ea dominion over the Apsû.[126] The third god of the triad, conspicuously missing from this group of supposedly all-powerful gods, the first ones to be thought of who might be able to defeat Tiʾāmtu, is of course Enlil. Since there are three gods approached in *Anzû,* we might well expect three gods in the corresponding part of *Ee* which imitates it, and particularly since Anu, Enlil, and Ea make up such a familiar grouping of the supreme gods. The omission of Enlil here is therefore particularly conspicuous.

The astrological omen compendium *EAE* begins with Anu, Enlil, and Ea creating heaven and earth, establishing the positions of the stars, and measuring out the lengths of the day, month, and year, just as Marduk does in *Ee* V.1-45 (Horowitz, 1998: 147). That the opening section of tablet V parallels lines of *EAE* was first noted by Landsberger and Kinnier Wilson (1961: 172) and again more recently by Foster (2005: 463) and Seri (2006: 515). *The Exaltation of Ištar* has the same three gods appointing the moon and sun gods to oversee the running of the heavens, parallel to Marduk's entrusting of the night to the moon god at *Ee* V.11-12 (Horowitz, 1998: 145). Given the importance of *EAE,* and the prominence of this tradition in its opening line, the very title by which the text was known and catalogued, we can safely assume that this was a well known tradition. Marduk, then, is in tablet V usurping the traditional deeds of Anu, Enlil, and Ea in creating and regulating the universe. Marduk usurps the responsibilities of more minor gods too, as the stars' positions are regulated by the moon and sun in *The Exaltation of Ištar*, while in *Ee* they are marked out by Marduk's planet Nēberu (Horowitz, 1998: 145), another transference of power from relatively minor

[126] *The Exaltation of Ištar* also refers to this division of lots at line 25 (Horowitz, 1998: 144).

gods to the newly omnipotent Marduk. Lambert remarks that the sun and moon have been downplayed in this part of *Ee*, since they were normally visible manifestations of high-ranking divinities, but here are treated as impersonal objects – 'Marduk's supremacy in this text tolerates no rivals' (2010: 24).

Line VI.64 reads: *a-na* ^{d}*a-nim* ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ ^{d}*e*$_2$*-a u ša-a-šu*$_2$ *u-kin-nu šub-tu*, 'For Anu, Enlil, Ea, and him (i.e. Marduk) they founded a dwelling'. Anu, Enlil and Ea here mentioned together are a syncretism for Marduk (Foster, 2005: 471 n.3). Including Marduk in the list is another way of expressing it: he is last in the list and trumps them all.[127] Foster cites VII.136 and 140, where Enlil and Ea bestow their names on Marduk, and VI.147, where it is said that Anu gave him the name Asalluhi, even though in VI.101 this name was given to Marduk by Anšar. Foster suggests that this substitution was made because the poet was trying to include Anu as the third member of the triad to give a name to Marduk (2005: 475 n.2), thus completing his syncretism with it. If Marduk is indeed to be identified with this triad, which the parallels with *EAE* support, the failure of Ea and Anu to confront Ti'āmtu is another indication of Marduk superseding them. The omission of Enlil as a possible challenger is all the more conspicuous, and is consistent with the poem's exclusion of him until the end.

When Šar-ur reports the status of the battle to Ea in *Anzû*, Ninurta first tells him what to say (II.72-85), which is itself largely a repetition of the scene as it was first narrated (nine lines are an exact repetition of lines II.61-69). Then Šar-ur repeats the message verbatim (II.88-101, a repetition of 14 lines). Ea gives him a message to deliver to Ninurta (II.105-124), which Šar-ur duly repeats (II.128-147, 20 lines). *Ee* imitates this structure but extends it to include even more repetitions: Ea tells Anšar of Ti'āmtu's plans, his speech in II.15-48 a repetition of

[127] Ms. F in fact reads: *a-na* ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ ^{d}*e*$_2$*-a u* ⌜*šu*⌝*-a-šu*$_2$, 'For Marduk, Enlil, Ea and him', presumably an error resulting from this idea. The order of the gods is inverted in ms. I (from Sultantepe) which reads: *ana* ^{d}[*e*$_2$*-a* ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$] ^{d}*a-nim u* ⌜*šu*$^{!}$*-a*$^{!}$*-šu*⌝

the description of Ti'āmtu's host in I.129-162 (34 lines repeated). But this same description recurs yet again when Anšar tells Kakka[128] to inform Laḫmu and Laḫāmu of the situation. Anšar's speech at III.15-52 repeats II.11-48 (38 lines), and at III.58-64 includes a repetition of Marduk's acceptance speech at II.156-162 (seven lines). Kakka's relaying of Anšar's message at III.71-124 repeats III.13-66.

Whereas in *Anzû* the passage describing the formidable opposition recurs three times, in *Ee* it recurs four times. Furthermore, the repeated passages are much longer: seven, 34, 38, and 54 lines in *Ee,* compared with nine, fourteen, and 20 in *Anzû*. Foster points out that this technique emphasises speech as characteristic of the old gods, as compared with the swift action of the young Marduk: 'by the climax of Tablet III, speech occurs within speech within speech within speech' (2005: 438). The imitation and extension of this device from *Anzû,* then, has two effects. Firstly it shows Marduk as more effective and autonomous than Ninurta, for it is not his words that are carried back and forth. The only words of his that are repeated are the terms which he demands in return for going into battle. Secondly, this shift of repetition away from Marduk and towards the other gods, with the length so greatly increased, serves to increase the sense of panic among them as the terrifying appearance of Ti'āmtu is described again and again, but despite all their talk they are not able to act. As Labat puts it, the repeated passage constitutes a leitmotif which underscores Ti'āmtu's formidable terror and gives more emphasis to Marduk's rapid victory (1935: 31). Marduk speaks comparatively little, but is effective and swift in his actions. Marduk is thus contrasted with and elevated over both Ninurta in *Anzû* and the old order of gods in *Ee.*

[128] This name can also be read Kaka. I choose the spelling Kakka because of the pun on ***kakkum***, as explained below p. 128.

Character adaptation: Šar-ur and Kakka

The figure who delivers these messages, Kakka, is the vizier of Anšar in *Ee*. However, this is unusual. Kakka was worshipped in Assyria as a minor god,[129] but there is no evidence for any cult of his in Babylonia, hence it has been remarked that the reason for his appearance in *Ee* is unclear (Steinkeller, 1982: 293). In the Sultantepe version of *Nergal and Ereškigal* he is the messenger of Anu, where the Amarna version has an anonymous messenger (***mār šipri***) instead, leading Steinkeller to suggest that his appearance in the Sultantepe text is an Assyrianising feature (Steinkeller, 1982: 290). Why then is a minor Assyrian deity suddenly Anšar's vizier in this very Babylonian poem? The reason may be found in word play: the name of Kakka is written ^{d}GA.GA, an Old Akkadian spelling which normally does not change, but is glossed with ka-ka in *An: Anum* I.32 (Edzard, RLA V*:* 288) and in Mari and Terqa can be spelled *gag-ga*, $^{(d)}$*ka-ak-ka,* and $^{(d)}$*ka-ka* (Steinkeller, 1982: 290). ^{d}GA.GA is therefore normally read ^{d}*ka*$_3$*-ka*$_3$*. kakkum* is Akkadian for 'weapon', and so the name of Kakka references the deified weapon character from *Anzû* and *Lugale* and points to the fact that it has been incorporated into *Ee* as well.

Another instance of word play between ^{d}GA.GA as 'Kakka' and *kakkum* may be found in the birdcall text (Lambert, 1970) where the call of the bird of Papsukkal is connected to Kakka and a weapon:

> *it-ti-du-u*^{mušen} *iṣṣūr*(ᵀMUŠENᵀ) $^{[d]}$*pap-sukkal* ^{d}*ka*$_3$*-ka*$_3$ *uḫ-ta-bil a-na* ^{giš}*kakki*(TUKUL) RI ŠID ŠID
>
> (STT 341 and K 10823 line 3)[130]

[129] Kakka also has connections with healing, e.g. Edzard RLA V: 288, Lambert, 2013: 397-8.

[130] A similar text KAR 125 has a different call for the bird of Papsukkal: ^{mul}*sipa-zi-an-na uḫ-ta-*ᵀ*bil*ᵀ[...] (line 16). Lambert translates 'Sipazianna has been ravaged' (1970: 115). However this is not a simple variant and KAR 125 differs from STT 341 and K 10823 in a number of other details, so this need not contradict the interpretation of *uḫ-ta-bil* proposed below.

Lambert translates this as 'The francolin is the bird of Papsukkal. 'Kakka has been ravaged, to the weapon...' (1970: 113). He notes that ŠID ŠID can be read as *imtanannu*, 'keeps on reciting' but since the meaning of the RI is unclear does not translate these last three signs (Lambert, 1970: 116). However, RI could be a scribal error for MUŠEN (just one extra vertical wedge), and *ḫabālu* could be *ḫabālu* IV, 'to bind', rather than II, 'to do wrong'. This seems more likely in light of the fact that this root is connected with the word *ḫābilu*, 'hunter, trapper' (CAD Ḫ: 6), a word which goes naturally with birds, and which CAD (Ḫ: 7) cross-references to bad$_3$ Unu^{ki}.ga gu.mušen.na.gin$_7$ edin.na ḫe$_2$.ni.la$_2$.la$_2$, 'May the wall of Uruk lie stretched out on the plain like a bird's snare' (OECT 1 pl. 6 ii 14). So if we interpret *uḫ-ta-bil* as *uḫtabbil*, a Dt preterite with Dt as the passive form, the sense could come out as '"Kakka was bound to the weapon!" the bird continually calls'. This is admittedly hypothetical since only the G stem is attested for *ḫabālu* IV. The speculation of the meaning for the Dt follows those attested for *ḫabālu* II and III. In any case, whatever the exact interpretation of the line, *Kakka* (^{d}*ka*$_3$-*ka*$_3$) is found in close conjunction with *kakkum* (^{giš}TUKUL). Wordplay between the god Kakka and the word for weapon, *kakkum*, is thus attested outside of *Ee*. Furthermore, the birdcall text may depend on *Ee* for this wordplay – line 16 quotes *Ee* VII.35 and the bird of Ti'āmtu appears in line 9, so the text is responding to or dependent on *Ee* in other ways.

In this way wordplay connects the name of Anšar's messenger to the original weapon, Šar-ur, and indicates that the deified weapon motif is being referenced here too. Šar-ur was in *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* Ninurta's personified weapon who carried messages between his master and Ea/Enlil, which is the role that Kakka fulfils here as Anšar's vizier. This explains why this minor god has been chosen for this role – he is not the vizier of the warrior protagonist, as Šar-ur was in *Lugal-e* and *Anzû*, but the vizier of a less important character.

In *Lugal-e,* Šar-ur's role is extensive. He first reports the threat of Asag to Ninurta, and tries to dissuade him from fighting. Then we see him relaying messages between Ninurta and Enlil, transmitting Enlil's encouragement to the battlefield. Šar-ur attacks, and then pleads with Ninurta again to give up, finally praising him when he has succeeded. In *Anzû,* his role is still an important one, although less directly, since he relays the crucial advice that secures the victory. In *Ee* however he has been relegated to a more trivial position, carrying messages between Anšar and the other gods, rather than from the battlefield.

What is the point of keeping a form of the deified weapon in at all in such a relegated role? One might at first think that this is a remnant of structural copying, that in taking over elements of the *Anzû* story *Ee* has re-used the motif of Šar-ur without retaining its meaning (cf. Burkert (1992: 92) and West (1997: 383) on the 'trivialization' of Apsû and Tiʾāmtu in the *Iliad*). The motif in *Ee* is closer to the one in *Anzû* than to the one in *Lugal-e,* and on the basis of this we might at first think that it is more likely to be referencing *Anzû* than *Lugal-e.* However, as we shall see, there are other indications that *Ee* is aware of and references *Lugal-e,* so we should not assume that the chain of connection is so simple. If the author was aware of the portrayals of Šar-ur in both poems, the audience could well have been also. Since in *Anzû* Šar-ur is a messenger rather than an agent of attack, he is not obviously a weapon (Machinist, 2005: 53). However, the word play of 'Kakka' and ***kakkum*** in the name of Anšar's messenger actually draws attention to the original function of this messenger figure in *Lugal-e* which was glossed over in *Anzû.* Furthermore, awareness of this 'trivialization' may in this case be precisely what contributes the meaning to its re-use.

Unlike some of Ninurta's other traditional weapons, such as the bow used to shoot Anzû, (for other allusions to Ninurta's weapons in *Ee* see Lambert, 1986: 59), Šar-ur himself has not been taken up by Marduk. Marduk carries a mace (***miṭ-ṭa,*** IV.37), the class of weapons

to which Šar-ur belongs, but other than using it to crush Tiʾāmtu's skull at IV.130 it plays no further part, and is not given a name to individualise it. Contrast these two brief mentions with the vividly-related description of Šar-ur's onslaught in *Lugal-e* which spans thirteen lines (252-64). Šar-ur's role in *Anzû* is only that of a messenger and he is not described as playing any part in the attack itself. However, in *Ee* the mace, de-personified as it is, does not relay any message from Marduk. The motif of a speaking weapon-assistant been allocated to a different god altogether, to Anšar. This contributes to the characterisation of Marduk noted above of acting swiftly and not in need of advice. Taking away the help in battle which we would expect him to have also increases his autonomy, Marduk is not in need of help from any other character that can act independently, rather, the mace has been stripped of its individuality and is merely an instrument to be used by him. The trivialization of both the 'weapon' character Kakka and of the mace from Šar-ur to inanimate object is thus another demonstration of Marduk's superiority over Ninurta. In a sense, it points out that the role of the vizier, though presented as important, is in fact trivial in comparison to what the god can achieve on his own. That Marduk has no vizier at all is perhaps an indication of how new and unestablished he is. Yet once he is in power he is quite capable of ruling without one, perhaps in contrast to the previous chief god Anšar.

Kakka's message describes the terrifying appearance of Tiʾāmtu and her army, and announces that Marduk is willing to fight her on the condition that he receives a reward. This mimics the situation in *Anzû* and *Lugal-e,* where Šar-ur reports Anzû's upper hand against Ninurta, and the terrifying attributes of Asag respectively, but with an important difference: while the message in the earlier poems aimed at acquiring help for Ninurta or dissuading him from fighting altogether, Kakka's description is aimed at persuading the gods to give Marduk what he wants. It is not the hero who is in the weak position as in the earlier poems,

but the other gods, and Marduk who can save them if they will agree to his terms, rather than the situation with Ninurta in *Anzû* who is in need of saving in the midst of battle, or in *Lugal-e* where Šar-ur thinks he is not strong enough to face the Asag.

The battle: poisonous monsters, 'poisonous' arrows

Allusions to Ninurta's battle with Anzû are made in connection with Marduk and his enemies through a number of subtle devices. Most obviously, Marduk kills Ti'āmtu with a bow and arrow, the same way that Ninurta dispatched Anzû. More subtle, however, is the way the poison is deployed in the two poems: Ti'āmtu's poison-filled monsters refer back to Bēlet-ilī's image wishing for Ninurta's arrows to be like poison to his target, a transfer of weapons from the hero to the enemy such as was found between *Labbu* and *Anzû*. This has the same function as in *Anzû* of making the opponent more formidable than their literary predecessors. However, it is more complex, as it can also be interpreted as an ironic jibe at Ninurta's failures. Furthermore, Marduk is well prepared to deal with this extra threat, as he goes into battle equipped with an antidote. Despite this, Ti'āmtu does not get the chance to deploy her poisonous creatures, as Marduk swiftly kills her in a duel of single combat. The anti-climax to this thread of allusions is yet another way of emphasising Marduk's superiority to Ninurta, this time by undercutting a motif that was set up to be important. It is a reversal of expectations, first using the allusions to build tension, then shattering it with their eventual irrelevance.

Lambert demonstrates that the number eleven in the description of the enemies faced by Marduk – eight specific monsters in Ti'āmtu's army plus three generic descriptions of them (I.133-46) – are equivalent to the number of Ninurta's traditional enemies in *An-gin*$_7$

and *Lugal-e* (1986: 57-8).[131] 'Thus the informed Babylonian was expected by the author of Enūma Eliš to note the total of eleven monsters...and to grasp that Marduk was replacing Ningirsu/Ninurta as the prime monster slayer' (Lambert, 1986: 58). While Lambert notes that the individual monsters themselves have no connection to those in Ninurta texts, the section describing Ti'āmtu's preparation of her host for battle does contain an allusion to *Anzû* in particular, the first to appear in the poem.

> [*zaq*]-⌜*tu-ma*⌝ *šin-ni la pa-du-u at-ta-'i-*[*i*]
> *im-tu ki-ma da-mu zu-mur-šu*$_2$*-nu uš-ma-al-*⌜*li*⌝
>
> Sharp of tooth, merciless[132] in *fang*[133]
> She filled their bodies with poison instead of blood
>
> *Ee* I.135-6 = II.21-2 = III.83-4

In I.162 (and its repetitions II.48 = III.52) Qingu also mentions the *imtu* when he decrees destinies for the monsters at the climax of tablet I:

> *ep-ša pi-i-ku-nu* ^{d}*girru*(GIŠ.BAR) ⌜*li-ni*⌝*-iḫ-ḫa*
> *im-tuk kit-mu-ru ma-ag-ša-ru liš-rab-bi-ib*
>
> "Let your spoken word quench fire,
> "let your accumulated poison weaken strength."
>
> *Ee* I.161-2

The poison is therefore set up as a prominent part in the attack. Lines I.136 and I.162 also form part of the passage which is repeated three times, meaning that the poison is re-iterated in the context of Ti'āmtu's fearsome host eight times in total, a repetition which insists on being remembered.

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[131] He originally included *Gudea Cyl. A xxv.25-xxv.13* in this list but later modified it, saying that there were only seven monsters in the Gudea passage which were later re-interpreted as eleven by *An-gin*$_7$ and *Lugal-e* (2013: 203-4).

[132] Lambert ms. cc omits *la,* a scribal error.

[133] *at-ta-'i-i* (or *an-ta-'i-i* in ms. R, ⌜*at*⌝*-ta-'a-am* in Lambert ms. b(ff)) is a hapax.

Just as Ti'āmtu's 'weapons' are poisonous, so, metaphorically, were Ninurta's arrows in *Anzû:* Bēlet-ilī calls out, *šu-ku-du im-ta li-me-šu,* 'let the arrow become poison to him!' (II.10). The motif comes up yet again in *Erra,* when Erra *i-ta-mi ana* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}-*šu*$_2$ *lit-pa-ta i-mat mu-u-ti* ('says to his weapons, 'Smear yourselves with deadly poison!'' I.7-8). Four lines later in *Ee* there is another sentence which may equate Ti'āmtu's monsters of attack to Ninurta's arrows. Ti'āmtu urges:

a-mi-ir-šu$_2$*-nu šar-ba-bi-iš li-iḫ-ḫar-*[*mi-im*][134]
zu-mur-šu$_2$*-nu liš-taḫ-ḫi-ṭam-ma la i-ne*$_2$*-'u-u*$_2$ *i-*[*rat-su-un*][135]

"May the one who sees them [collapse] in weakness!
"Let their bodies keep leaping and let them not turn back [their breast]

Ee I.139-40 = II.25-6 = III.87-8

The meaning of the line is that the monsters will not retreat or bow out from their onslaught. Ti'āmtu's wish, then, may refer to the fate of Ninurta's arrows in the face of Anzû's magic spell: she demands that her weapons will not be turned back or deflected. The verb used in *Anzû* is always *târu* (*qa-nu-u it-tu-ra* 'the reed-arrow was turned back' II.61 =77 = 92), so the verb here is different — but *nê'u* has the same meaning ('to turn back') and so the reference is probably present.

This is strikingly similar to *Anzû*'s reversal of the situation in *Labbu,* transferring the weapon of the hero to the enemy. There, Tišpak carried a magic seal which helped him defeat the Labbu. In *Anzû* the magic object was not given to Ninurta but to Anzû, in order to make him more difficult to defeat and thus make Ninurta's achievement more impressive. A similar technique has been deployed here in *Ee:* Ti'āmtu is now the one with the poisoned

[134] Vars. C: *šar-*⌜*ba-ba*⌝; I: *šar-ba-ba liš-*[*ḫar-mi-im*], in adverbial accusative.
[135] Restorations are from paralleled lines.

'weapons' which Ninurta had, rather than Marduk.[136] However, Ti'āmtu's words acknowledge Ninurta's failed attempts against Anzû. Anzû 'turned back' Ninurta's arrows both in the sense of deflecting them away from their target, but also 'turned' them 'back' into the materials from which they were made. Thus this line could also be interpreted as a rather smug exclamation, hinting at a previous failure of the illustrious god that Marduk is supposedly superseding, whilst also saying she will not make the same mistake herself. The irony works on two levels, however, as unlike Ninurta Marduk does not have a failed initial attempt, but succeeds with his first strike: the joke is on Ti'āmtu.

This probable play with *Anzû* raises the question of whether *Ee* was also aware of how *Anzû* had played with exactly the same episode in *Labbu* in a very similar way. Just as Tišpak's weapon was given to Ninurta's enemy, Ninurta's weapon has been given to Marduk's enemy, not directly, but through allusion.

While Ti'āmtu is one step ahead of Ninurta, so to speak, declaring that she can match the type of attack a new Ninurta-figure is likely to launch at her, Marduk is also prepared to face it:

> *i-na šap-ti-šu ta-a* u_2*-kal-la*
> *šam-mi im-ta bul-li-i ta-me-eḫ rit-tuš-šu*
>
> On his lips he was holding a spell,
> he was grasping in his hand a plant that extinguishes poison[137]
>
> *Ee* IV.61-2

However, despite all this, the poison plays no part in the actual battle (and neither does the spell in IV.61 – see next section below). Ti'āmtu and Marduk duel, and the venomous monsters do not attack him. Perhaps the point of this is to undermine Ti'āmtu's

[136] The teeth of Marduk's horses bear poison (*šin-na-šu-nu na-ša*$_2$*-a im-ta,* IV.53), but they are not the main agents of attack.
[137] Var. J: ⌜*im*⌝*-ti*, 'poisons,' probably genitive by attraction.

smugness, as she does not even have a chance to use her poisonous weapons. Marduk calls for a duel of single combat:

> *lu-u₂ ṣa-an-da-at um-mat-ki lu-u₂ rit-ku-su šu-nu* ^{giš}*kakkū*(TUKUL)^{meš}*-ki*
> *en-di-im-ma a-na-ku u ka-a-ši i ni-pu-uš ša₂-aš₂-ma*
>
> "Although your army is drawn up, although these weapons of yours are joined together,
> "Draw close, you and I, and let us do battle!"
>
> *Ee* IV.85-6

This may have been a wise tactic on his part, since it avoids having to fight vast numbers of creatures and means he can dispatch their leader first and then deal with the rest more easily. The epithet given to Marduk as he is about to fight Ti'āmtu is *apkal*(ABGAL) *ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš}, 'sage of the gods,' (IV.93), emphasising his wisdom at this crucial point. He is then able to throw the net over her, thrust in the wind, and kill her with exactly the same blow as Ninurta dealt Anzû: an arrow (*Ee* IV.101-3, *Anzû* III.13-16).

Magic: from Anzû to Ti'āmtu to Marduk

As we have seen, allusions connect Ti'āmtu with Ninurta's weapons, so that she can claim to be a match for Marduk. However, the situation also works in reverse, as Anzû's weapon – the magic spell – has not only been given to Ti'āmtu as the equivalent of Anzû, but has been transferred to Marduk as well. This correlates with *Anzû* as Ninurta harnesses Anzû's spell to use it against him, thus also uses magic. Marduk goes into battle holding a spell ready on his lips (IV.61-2, see quotation above), however, we never actually see Marduk using this spell. The reference to Marduk as *apkal*(ABGAL) *ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš}, 'sage of the gods' at IV.93 may hint at his magical abilities: Marduk is also given this epithet in the incantation

series *Šurpu*, e.g. IV.98, VIII.88, as is his father Ea who instructs him on how to drive out demons (Denning-Bolle, 1992: 36, 42). It is another name which shows his absorption of his father's identity as a god of magic. The hint to his incantatory powers is dropped, but without showing them in action. Similarly, Ti'āmtu casts a spell at I.153, IV.71 and IV.91, but the effects of her magic are vague and unspecified. At I.153 the purpose of it is presumably to make Qingu great, but we are not told exactly how it works or what it does:

> *ad-di ta-a-ka ina ukkin*(UKKIN) *ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *u*$_2$*-šar-bi-ka*
> *ma-li-ku-ut ilānī*(DINGIR.MEŠ) *gim-ra-at-su-nu qa-tuk-ka uš-mal-li*
>
> "I cast your spell, I made you great in the assembly of gods.
> "Kingship of the gods, all of them, I put in your hand.
>
> *Ee* I.153-4

In IV.71 she casts it before speaking to Marduk in a way that aims to undermine his confidence:

> *id-di* ⌜*ta*⌝*-*[*a-ša*] *ti-amtu ul u*$_2$*-ta-ri ki-šad-sa*
> *i-na šap-ti-ša*$_2$ *lul-la-a u*$_2$*-kal sar-ra-a-ti*
>
> Ti'āmtu cast [her] spell, not turning away,[138]
> holding falsehoods and lies on her lips
>
> *Ee* IV.71-2

It is unclear how this works. The 'lies' could be a way of describing the deceitfulness of the magic. However, it is worth noting that only a trace of the 'ta' remains, so caution is needed. Whatever the exact workings of it, it fails, since Marduk replies unshaken. Ti'āmtu's only real attempt to use magic in battle is at IV.91:

> *i-man-ni šip-ta it-ta-nam-di ta-a-šu*$_2$
> *u*$_3$ *ilānū*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *ša*$_2$ *tāḫāzi*(ME$_3$) *u*$_2$*-ša-'a-lu šu-nu* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}*-šu*$_2$*-un*

[138] i.e. straight ahead, without wavering.

she was reciting the incantation, continually casting her spell,
and the gods of battle were sharpening their weapons

Ee IV.91-2

However the effects are not narrated and so presumably the spells are either ineffective or Marduk snares her in the net before she can finish them.

Vogelzang notes that in *Ee* both force and magic are incorporated into the figure of one god, while in *Anzû* they are a collaboration of Ninurta and Ea, noting that Marduk is the son of Ea and so inherits his power (1988: 160). But Marduk does not use spells in the battle at all, just as he does not use the antidote to the poison. Magic is a weapon in his arsenal available to him, but he does not need to use it. This contrasts with Ea's method of defeating Apsû, by stealth with magic. The reason could well be narrative simplicity: the defeat of Ti'āmtu already involves three different weapons, and to add magic as well could result in an overly complex situation which would detract from the speed and effectiveness of the blow. Spells and antidotes are mentioned only briefly because to give them more space would be unnecessary, perhaps even make Marduk look weak to have to rely on so many different aids. Their inclusion are subtle references which point to the range of powers under Marduk's command, rather than being thrown in for the sake of completeness and then forgotten about.

Marduk's role as lord of incantations is important in *Ee*. Anšar gives him the name ^{d}ASAR.LU$_2$.ḪI as his second name (VI.101), which appears seventh in the list of names proper (VI.147). The fact that his parents are Nudimmud and Damkina in *Ee* (I.78-80) probably derives from his syncretism with Asalluhi, since Enki and Damkina are Asalluhi's parents according to the god-list *An: Anum,* with which *Ee* has so much in common, and Asalluhi is the name which connects Enki and Damkina with Marduk in the list (Seri, 2006: 510-11).

Furthermore, Marduk takes over from his father Ea in various subtle ways, including as the lord of incantations.[139] It is important, then, to mention at this point in the poem that he is able to use magic against Tiʾāmtu. But to portray him as a young, powerful god on the rise, it makes most sense to focus on his martial abilities, since these are what can most effectively distinguish him from the old gods (who can, after all, use magic, since Ea uses it to kill Apsû). While extremely wide in the scope of its syncretisms and synthesis of different traditions, *Ee* cannot emphasise everything at once, as to do so would result in confusion and chaos. Hence Marduk's other abilities and roles are hinted at and alluded to, but not always fully demonstrated.

[139] This will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Enūma Eliš and *Atraḫasīs*

A number of motifs found in *Atraḫasīs* recur in *Ee.* These can be grouped broadly into those referring to the threat of destruction, and those dealing with new creations. The terrible clamour that prevents a god from sleeping, the resulting plan to destroy the beings creating the noise, and the intervention of Ea to save those beings form one set of correspondences which connect the dethroned Apsû with a now displaced and obsolete Enlil. This is reinforced by allusions to other depictions of Enlil losing power, such as the theft of his tablet of destinies in *Anzû,* and a portrayal of Marduk in a role which Enlil occupied in Sumerian poetry, that of Enlil the fowler. The sleep disturbance motif is repeated again when the junior gods are restless, amplifying the pattern and bringing it to its climax. The creation motifs form another set, connecting Marduk with Ea: the creation of man in *Ee* draws on the same episode as told in *Atr,* and shows Marduk superseding his father as creator god, even instructing Ea. Allusions to *Atr* in *Ee* therefore contribute towards both Marduk's takeover as head of the pantheon and as a son outgrowing his father, although in a new and subtle way which differs from the other techniques we have seen so far.

That Marduk replaces Enlil in *Ee* is well known. The 50 names of Marduk correspond to Enlil's symbolic number, 50,[140] and Enlil himself hands over his title to Marduk at VII.136, the only god to do so directly. Enlil does not even appear in the narrative until IV.146 when Marduk assigns him his place in the universe (Lambert, 1984: 5), and even here he is part of

[140] There are a number of other references connecting Marduk to the number 50, see Seri, 2006: 511.

the triad of Ea, Enlil and Anu rather than appearing as a character in his own right. It is the last line of Tablet IV, a climactic position where Marduk, having conquered Ti'āmtu, now exercises power over the former heads of the world order. The next mention of Enlil at V.8 is in a similar context: Marduk is fixing the astrological relationships of Enlil and Ea in relation to the position of Nēberu, his own star. Enlil's next appearance is in V.80 where he gives Marduk gifts, again not on his own but together with Anu and Ea. This grouping appears again at VII.6 when Marduk is named as the one who implements the decrees of Anu, Enlil, and Ea. As Lambert remarks, the sidelining of Enlil is 'downright spiteful treatment of the old head of the pantheon' and 'he only appears where he can contribute to Marduk's greater glory' (1984: 5).

However, I want to suggest that the dethroning of Enlil takes place even earlier in the poem, right at the beginning, in fact, and is enacted in a very subtle way using the figure of Apsû. Apsû is a figure that symbolically represents Enlil and the old world order he stands for. As Apsû is overthrown, a number of allusions to *Atraḫasīs* connect him with Enlil as presented in that poem. Apsû complains of being disturbed and suffering from lack of sleep, and this is the trigger for him to declare he will destroy the source of the noise by putting an end to his children's behaviour. It is not explicitly stated how he intends to 'destroy their behaviour' (*luš-ḫal-liq-ma al-kat$_3$-su-nu*, I.39), but we can infer that he plans to kill his children from the distressed reaction of Ti'amtu in line I.45, when she asks: *mi-na-a ni-i-nu ša$_2$ ni-ib-nu-u$_2$ nu-uš-ḫal-laq-ma*, 'What? Shall we destroy the ones we created?' Furthermore the plan is twice referred to as as evil (*le-mut-ta* I.44, *lem-ne$_2$-e-ti* I.52), as is Enlil's plan to destroy noisy behaviour, the deluge, which is called: *ši-ip-ra le-em-na*, 'an evil deed' (*Atr* II.viii.35). Ea, the god of cunning and trickery, steps in to save these beings from annihilation. The threat of the irresponsible ruler god who is about to misuse his power with disastrous consequences is

removed, and order is (temporarily) restored.[141] The dethroning of Apsû, then, alludes to what happens to Enlil as a result of the rise of Marduk.

Given that one of the most significant themes of *Ee* is Marduk becoming supreme god, we might think it rather curious that the poem makes so little mention of Enlil, the former supreme god. Perhaps he is now considered so irrelevant that he is simply ignored (cf. Lambert, 1984: 6; Seri, 2006: 517), or perhaps it would have been too inconvenient or distracting to have incorporated a direct defeat of Enlil in the poem when there is already so much going on. Enlil is not an ancestor of Marduk, so perhaps did not fit into a poem which is genealogical from the very beginning. However, I argue that the defeat of Enlil *is* present in the poem on the level of allusion. The latter explanations account for why it is accomplished in such a subtle way.

I suggest that the reason for telling of the overthrow of Apsû in *Ee* is to connote the overthrow of Enlil by allusion. Marduk takes over from Enlil without any struggle; it is an event which is not 'narrated' as such, but is suggested by subtleties in the earlier Apsû story. Various allusions connect Apsû to Enlil, so that when Apsû is deposed, this symbolises the deposition of Enlil. This is a technique found in Classical literature, for example, in the *Iliad,* the death of Hector connotes by symbolism the fall of Troy (XXII.410-11), and the death of Patroclus connotes by allusion the death of Achilles (XVI.914ff, and throughout books XVIII and XXIII). The difference is that the death of Achilles is told in a (now lost) poem the *Memnonis,* meaning that the *Iliad* can allude to the way it was presented in this earlier poem (for more detail see p.160), whereas alluding to fall of Troy is to allude to an event more generally. Another example of this in Babylonian literature may be the death and funeral of

[141] Katz notes that the noise disturbance motif occurs in both texts and that Apsû takes Enlil's place, but does not explore the significance of this (2011: 129).

Enkidu in *Gilgameš.* This has been argued to connote by allusion the death and funeral of Gilgameš himself, since the description in *Gilgameš* is very close to that in the Sumerian *The Death of Bilgames* (Currie, 2011). The overthrow of Enlil may or may not have been the subject of its own story, but regardless of whether the allusion is to a specific text or to a more general idea, I envisage something similar here, that Apsû represents Enlil and the downfall of one alludes to the downfall of the other.

The story of Apsû does have other functions in the poem: it makes sense for a poem about creation to tell how this cosmic region came into being. It gives Ea a sub-plot, which as we shall see, has implications for Marduk as his son, and it triggers Tiʾāmtu's anger and attack. However, the violence of the takeover is of particular interest, and since it is unusual it is worth thinking about what else it could mean.

Noise and the deluge

Apsû and Enlil both want to destroy the noise which prevents them from sleeping. However, Apsû is portrayed as even worse than Enlil, for Apsû takes delight in his murderous plan, whereas Enlil showed only annoyance. Alternatively, setting up Apsû as a figure for Enlil may be a comment on Enlil's original behaviour, and may imply that the reactions shown by Apsû were indirectly ascribed to Enlil.

The first allusion to *Atraḫasīs* is the terrible clamour raised by the offspring of Apsû and Tiʾāmtu:

i-nen-du-ma at-ḫu-u₂ ilānū(DINGIR-*nu*)^{meš}
e-šu-u₂ ti-amta-ma na-ṣir-šu-nu iš-tab-bu[142]
da-al-ḫu-nim-ma ša₂ ti-amti ka-ras-sa
i-na šu-'a-a-ri šu-u'-du-ru qe₂-reb an-duru₂-na

The gods, brothers, banded together,
confusing Ti'āmtu, their clamour grew ever louder,
disturbing Ti'āmtu's insides,
causing trouble with dancing in the midst of Anduruna

Ee I.21-4

Apsû is disturbed by this noise and complains it is preventing him from sleeping:

im-tar-ṣa-am-ma al-kat₂-su-nu e-li-ia
ur-ri-iš la šu-up-šu-ha-ku[143] *mu-ši-iš la ṣa-al-la-ku*
lu-uš-ḫal-liq-ma al-kat₂-su-nu lu-sa-ap-pi-iḫ
qu-lu liš-ša₂-kin-ma i[144] *ni-iṣ-lal ni-i-ni*

Their behaviour troubled me,
by day I am allowed no rest, at night I cannot sleep![145]
Let me destroy, let me thwart their behaviour,
let silence be established so we may sleep!

Ee I.37-40

This motif harks back to the complaint of Enlil in *Atraḫasīs*:

⌜*ma*⌝-[*tum ki-ma li*]-⌜*i i-ša*⌝-*ab-bu*
i-na [*ḫu-bu-ri-ši-na*] *i-lu* ⌜*it*⌝-*ta-*⌜*a'-da*⌝-*ar*

[^{d}*en-lil₂ iš-te-me*] *ri-*⌜*gi-im*⌝-*ši-in*
[*iz-za-kar₃ a*]-*na i-li* ⌜*ra*⌝-*bu-tim*
[*ik-ta-ab-ta*] *ri-gi-im a-wi-lu-ti*
[*i-na ḫu-bu-ri-ši*]-*na u₂-za-am-ma ši-it-ta*

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[142] On reading *šabû* rather than *šapû* see Lambert (2013: 470).
[143] Ms. b (Lambert) has *šu-up-šu-ḫa-ak,* abbreviating the final syllable. This may be to parallel I.50 where all the manuscripts abbreviate *šupšuḫāta* to *šupšuḫāt.*
[144] Ms. E omits *i,* perhaps a copying error.
[145] Ms. M (Middle Assyrian, from Assur) omits lines 37-8 and, interestingly, I.115-16, where the gods later declare they too cannot sleep. This manuscript also alters line 40, reading [. . .] ⌜*mu*⌝$^{?}$-*šis lu ne₂-ḫe-et*, 'let her rest at night', referring to the stirred-up Ti'amtu. So there was one copy of the text which leaves out this allusion. Why this is, we cannot say. That it does it in two different places may indicate that it was deliberate rather than a simple copying error. Not all the mss. from Assur omit the allusion, however, as ms. N does contain lines 115-16, meaning that it is particular to manuscript M rather than indicating some other standard version known at Assur.

[the land] was quaking [like a bull]
the god was troubled by [their clamour].

[Enlil heard] their noise,
[saying] to the great gods,
'The noise of mankind [has become burdensome],
[through their clamour] I am deprived of sleep.

OB *Atr* I.354-9[146]

This is followed by the sending of plague to diminish the population, and, of course, eventually the deluge, in Enlil's determination to annihilate mankind. Labat first pointed out that the reasons Apsû gives for wanting to destroy his offspring are trivial, comparing him to Enlil in *Atraḫasīs* and suggesting that this is the source of the motif (1935: 29).[147] In both cases, we have noise disturbing the god, who conceives a murderous plan to kill off the offenders. The verbs used are even the same: in *Ee* we have *ištabbu* (I.22) and *šu'durū* (I.24), while in *Atr* we have *išabbu* (I.354) and *itta'dar* (I.355). In both passages too the noise is made by entities which the god has himself had a role in creating – for Apsû they are his offspring, for Enlil they are the people he ordered to be created to take over the labour of the Igigi. This sets up Apsû as an Enlil-like figure who shows contempt for the beings he has helped create.

It is clear that Enlil is condemned for sending the deluge in the poem of *Atraḫasīs.* The laments of the mother goddess add a sense of pathos and regret that speak against Enlil's decision (*Atr* III.iii.34-54; III.iv.4 ff.; III.v.37-vi.4) and the other gods weep with her (III.iv.15). She outright accuses Enlil (and Anu[148]) of not thinking it through – *ša la im-ta-al-ku-u$_2$-ma iš-ku-nu a-bu-ba*, 'who did not consider and sent the deluge' (III.v.42). Moran observes that when

[146] The restorations are from parallel lines in tablet II.i.3-8
[147] Since then the comparison has also been briefly made by e.g. Moran (1971: 42); Michalowski (1990: 388-9); Seri (2006: 17); Sonik (2008: 741); Katz (2011: 129).
[148] It is worth noting that Enlil is not the only one blamed for the flood. Bēlet-ilī directs her reproach against Anu too for his absence (III.51-2), and the whole assembly of gods has agreed to let it happen (II.viii.34; III.vi.7-8). Nevertheless, Enlil is the one who sends the deluge and so he is more to blame than the other gods.

the house of 'warrior Enlil' is besieged, 'the only occasion he has to display his valour, he pleads with Nusku for protection and cowers behind him in fear' (1971: 43). Enlil is 'a power seriously flawed by fear, childish resentment, a certain obtuseness, and, above all, a wrath that can issue in completely irresponsible violence' (Moran, 1971: 44). Marduk never displays any of these characteristics in *Ee*. The pathetic picture of the gods suffering extreme hunger and thirst in *Atr* (III.iv.15-22) and later swarming around the sacrifice like flies in desperation (III.v.34-5) is an illustration of the consequences of Enlil's ill-considered decision. The deluge is explicitly called *ši-ip-ra le-em-na*, 'an evil deed' in II.viii.35. Nevertheless, *Atr* ends with praise of Enlil, and acknowledges his awesome and terrible destructive power (Jacobsen, 1976: 121). Yet even this may be double-edged: Kilmer draws attention to a possible word-play between *šanittu*, 'praise', and *'šanītu'*, 'hostility' in the penultimate line, and *narbû*, 'greatness' and *narbu*, 'softness', or *narrubu*, 'rout' or 'flight' in the final line, which may refer to Enlil's cowardice at the time of the first rebellion and his absence during the most terrifying part of the flood (1996: 138). There is plenty of hostility towards Enlil, then, to be found in *Atraḫasīs*.[149]

Atraḫasīs is itself a complex and intertextual poem. There are many plot parallels, for example, with *Enki and Ninmaḫ* (edition Lambert, 2013: 330-45), with Enlil acting in very similar ways to Enki in similar situations. This Sumerian composition, like *Atr*, states that the junior gods were bearing the toil, digging the canals. They complain of this imposition, blame Enki rather than Enlil for it, and rebel against him. Enki is sleeping comfortably, and is woken up by his mother, who tells him that the gods are smashing up something (the passage is broken, but probably their tools, if the parallels with *Atr* are anything to go by), and she begs him to create a substitute for the gods so they can be freed from their toil. This

[149] And in the flood narrative in *Gilgameš*, which depends on it, see Wilcke (1999: 94).

is very close to what happens in *Atr*: Enlil is asleep when the gods bring their burning tools to his gate, and is woken up by Nusku who tells him what is happening, and suggests that he summon Anu and Enki to help. Enki then suggests that man be created to assume the gods' work. The parallels are so close we may suspect that *Atr* is taking *Enki and Ninmaḫ* as a model,[150] but transfers all the blame ascribed to Enki onto Enlil. It is Enki who has responsibility for ordering the world in many Sumerian texts, such as *Enki and the World Order,* where Enlil authorises him to decree destinies for all the gods. It is possible, then, that the author of *Atr* took this tradition which portrays Enki in a bad light and transferred it to Enlil, a different god he wanted to portray unfavourably. Katz, however, suggests that *Ee* may be drawing directly on *Enki and Ninmaḫ* as well as *Atr,* since this Sumerian poem portrays Namma as the watery mother, analogous to Ti'āmtu (2011: 128). For a recent study of Namma see Lambert (Lambert, 2013: 427-36).

Like Enlil, Apsû too is condemned for his impulsive decision to destroy the junior gods. Like Enlil, he does not think it through but exclaims it in a moment of sleep-deprived frustration. Ti'āmtu's emotional words are reminiscent of the laments of the mother goddess Nintu in *Atraḫasīs* after the flood, when she regrets how she allowed her creations to be destroyed (*Atr* III.iii.34-54).

> *mi-na-a ni-i-nu ša₂ ni-ib-nu-u₂ nu-uš-ḫal-laq-ma*[151]
> *al-kat₃-su-nu lu šum-ru-ṣa-at-ma i ni-iš-du-ud ṭa-biš*
>
> 'What? Shall we destroy the ones we created?
> Although their behaviour may cause suffering, let us endure it well.
>
> *Ee* I.45-6

[150] Machinist suggests the tradition represented in *Atr* draws on the tradition represented in *Enki and Ninmaḫ,* but does not talk about it in terms of modelling on texts (2005: 44).
[151] Ms. M has *nu-ḫal-laq-ma,* the D-stem rather than the ŠD-stem, but this does not affect the meaning.

Lambert notes I.45 as a topos, citing the parallels in PBS 1/2 113 iii.8 and Lambert, 1960: 190, 11-12 (2013: 470). The first of these is an OB Lamaštu incantation and, crucially, quotes the words of the weeping Aruru, another name for the mother goddess. It is tempting to posit this as a line originally from *Atr,* since there are broken passages where such a line could have been. One line is missing from the end of Bēlet-ilī's lament in III.iii. There is also a large gap in II.viii where only four lines survive of the whole column. Since in the preceding column Enki refuses to be complicit in Enlil's plan to send a flood, saying *a-na mi-nim tu-ta-am-ma-*⌜*ni*⌝ [. . .] / *u*$_2$*-ub-ba-al qa*$_2$*-ti a-na* ⌜*ni*⌝-[*ši-ia-ma*], 'Why will you bind me with an oath [. . .]? Am I to bring my hands against [my people]?'(II.vii.42-3), it seems possible that a rebuke along similar lines from Bēlet-ilī could follow. Lambert, 1960: 190 is a Middle Assyrian fragment of 'The Fable of the Fox,' where it is likely that its citation of this line is intended to be humorous. It is uttered by the Fox as a plea to Enlil not to kill him in the context of a drought – perhaps a cheeky quotation of the mother goddess' words to Enlil in *Atr,* where she pleaded with him not to destroy the human race through a flood.

Whether the line in *Ee* quotes a specific line from *Atr* or more generally recalls Bēlet-ilī's laments, Ti'āmtu's reaction is very different. Bēlet-ilī is lamenting after the destruction, uttering regrets. However, this mother goddess, Ti'āmtu, will not give her consent to the plan, but will intervene to save her children. Ti'āmtu's impassioned protests and sympathy for her troublesome offspring contrast with the cruelly indifferent attitude of Apsû, and may in fact explain why Ti'āmtu is presented in a sympathetic light in this part of *Ee,* while later on she is an enemy of the established order to be destroyed at all costs. Jacobsen comments on the emphasis of her maternal nature as oddly unexpected, saying: 'So odd is this sympathetic treatment of the archenemy that one can hardly escape feeling that the author is here in the grip of conflicting emotions' (1976: 187). However, at this point in the story

Ti'āmtu is not yet the archenemy: sympathy with her here highlights antipathy towards Apsû (and by extension, Enlil), hence has the function of initially turning us against a different enemy.

Further criticism of Apsû's attitude is implicit in lines 51 and 52, where after Mummu urges him to destroy his children, Apsû's reaction is to rejoice because of the evil he plotted:

> *iḫ-ʳduˀ-šum-ma apsû*(ABZU) *im-me-ru pa-nu-šu*
> *aš-šum lem-ne$_2$-e-ti ik-pu-du a-na ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *ma-re-e-šu*
>
> Apsû was pleased with him, his face brightened,
> because he plotted evil deeds against the gods his sons.
>
> *Ee* I.51-2

Such a reaction portrays Apsû as even more cruel than Enlil, who is not presented as actually pleased to be destroying mankind in the text of *Atraḫasīs*. But setting up Apsû as a figure for Enlil can also be read as a comment on the behaviour of Enlil himself, perhaps indirectly ascribing Apsû's reactions to Enlil in *Atr*. Here is an instance of reverse intertextuality, re-shaping our view of Enlil indirectly through the reactions of Apsû who is compared to him.

The personification of Apsû

The murder of Apsû does not appear anywhere else in Babylonian mythology. In fact, it contradicts explanations given elsewhere for how Ea came to dwell in the Apsû. Therefore I suggest this betrays the fact that the story of the murder of Apsû has been invented for the purposes of *Ee*, to support the narrative arc of Marduk's rise to power.

Ti'āmtu is relatively new to Babylonian mythology and literature (see introduction), but the character of Apsû may be even newer: he may have been invented specifically for

Ee.[152] In Sumerian mythology, Abzu is merely a region of the cosmos and never a personified figure. He does not appear in any of the Babylonian god lists as anything other than a cosmic region in titles of Enki/Ea (e.g. *An: Anum* 140-143), and the situation is the same in the Sumerian lists from Fara (Deimel, 1923: 9-10).[153]

The murder of Apsû is not attested outside *Ee* either, which suggests that it may have been invented specifically for this poem. It conflicts with the explanation given in *Atraḫasīs* for how Ea came to live in the Apsû; there, after the casting of lots (OB I.11-12), Ea simply goes down to the domain allotted him (OB I.14), and the narrative continues.

˹su[?]˺[154]*-tam i-ḫu-zu ˹le˺-ti-ša*
is-qa$_2$*-am id-du-u*$_2$ *i-lu iz-zu-zu*
˹a-nu˺ i-te-li ˹ša˺-[me]-˹e˺-ša
[^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *i-ḫu-uz*[155]*] ˹er˺-ṣe-tam ba-u*$_2$*-la-˹tu˺-uš-šu*
[ši-ga-ra] ˹na˺-aḫ-ba-lu ti-a-am-tim
[it-ta]-˹ad˺-nu a-na ^{d}*en-ki na-aš-ši-˹ki˺*
[iš-tu a-nu]-˹um˺ i-lu-˹u$_2$ *ša˺-me-e-ša*[156]
[u$_3$ ^{d}*en-ki a-na] ˹ap˺-si-[i i]-˹ta˺-ar-du*

They took the *container* by its side
they cast the lot, the gods divided.
Anu had gone up to the heavens,
[Enlil took] the earth for his subjects.
[The bolt], the bar of the sea
[they had given] to Enki the leader.

[152] Also suggested by Katz, who bases her suspicion on Apsû's parallel function to Ti'āmtu, whom she considers to be based on Nammu (2011: 128).
[153] For a recent study of Apsû see Lambert (2013: 217-18).
[154] I suggest this sign might be restored as 'su'. The sign is broken in both the OB and SB mss. George & Al-Rawi remark that there is not enough space on the (SB) tablet for von Soden's restoration 'ku' (1996: 184). The SB sign cannot be 'su' as it lacks a second vertical wedge. However in the OB text it is possible that 'su' could fit here and makes good sense, since *sūtu* can mean not only a measure of grain but also the container for such a measure, and can be spelt syllabically in OB texts, e.g. *i-na su*$_2$*-ut tab-ki*, 'in the *sūtu* of the granary' UCP 9 332 no. 7, line 10 (CAD S: 420). This would render the same meaning as that proposed by von Soden for *kutam* as a flask for containing the lots (1978: 54).
[155] Restored after SB version.
[156] Understanding this form as a terminative *–ša(m)* or *–iša(m)* (Lambert & Millard, 1969: 148).

[After Anu][157] had gone up to the heavens
[and Enki] had gone down [to] the Apsû

OB *Atr* I.11-18 (text based on Lambert & Millard, 1969)

There is no mention of any kind of power struggle. This may simply be because it was not relevant to the story of *Atr*, but there is no hint of any power struggle in other sources either. *The Exaltation of Ištar* (edition Hruška, 1969) also refers to an uncontroversial division of power at line 25, saying that Anu, Enlil and Ea *u_2-za-ʾi-i-zu zi-za-a-tim*, 'shared out the shares'. *Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld* (11-12) presents a similar story regarding An and Enlil, where they simply go to their domains without anyone assigning them or there being any dispute. The assignation of the Abzu is absent from *Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld*, where instead Enki sails to the Netherworld ('kur', line 16). Enki appears as god of the Apsû in the very next line, implying that perhaps this region existed already before heaven and earth were created (Horowitz, 1998: 136).

The version of events presented in *Ee* is quite different to this casting of lots, or the uncontroversial divisions in the Sumerian poems, and may be intended to override it. Closer to the traditional division of the cosmos is Marduk's division of the universe in VI.39-44, where he assigns 300 Anunna gods to Anu above, and 300 to the netherworld below. Thus after the disturbance to the traditional way of doing things, Marduk resolves it and organises the universe in the familiar way. The substitution of a more violent sequence of events at the beginning creates a more turbulent world for Marduk to enter into; it makes the crisis which

[157] I follow Lambert's restorations, which are based on the structure of the preceding lines which mention Anu and Ea alternately. It is not certain that these lines contained the same text as the SB text from Sippar, which reads *šu-ut ^{d}a-nim i-lu-u_2 ša-me-e-šu / šu-u_2-ut ^{d}e_2-a ap$^{?}$-sa$^{?}$-a-šu it-tar-du*, 'those of Anu went up to heaven / those of Ea went down (to) the Apsû' as George & Al-Rawi point out there may not be enough space on the tablet for line 18 to contain this text (1996: 184-5). Restoring the lines after the SB version would not in any case affect the general meaning of the lines.

he is to resolve a long-standing one that has been brewing even since before he was born. Furthermore, Marduk is stepping in to end a crisis which his father Ea was partly responsible for stirring up. This also parallels Ninurta in *Anzû,* who also helped his father out of a crisis, but differs in that the crisis in *Anzû* was not the father's fault. This difference emphasises Marduk's superiority to his father. Thus we can see there are reasons for introducing this episode into *Ee* which are relevant to the story of Marduk. That they are so relevant and do not appear elsewhere should alert us to the possibility that they were invented for this purpose.

There is, however, a possible background for this violent usurpation in the type of myth represented by the *Theogony of Dunnu* (edition Lambert, 2013: 387-95). In this text, successive generations kill their fathers (and mothers too) and take the kingship from them. Although this is the only text of its kind to survive from Mesopotamia, and narrates the succession of gods only for the city of Dunnu, it is possible that other such myths existed that told of the violent overthrow of gods. For example, it is often posited that Hesiod's *Theogony* has an ancient Near Eastern background, using the comparanda of *Ee* and the Hurro-Hittite Kumarbi cycle (e.g. Walcot, 1966: 42; M. L. West, 1997: 278 ff.). Hesiod's *Theogony* is another tale of violent overthrow among the gods: the chief god Ouranos was overthrown by his son Kronos, who in turn was defeated by his son Zeus, who thus came to be head of the pantheon. Although there are very few surviving texts of this type in Mesopotamian literature, it is possible that they are the lone survivors of traditions that ascribed similar deeds to a great many more deities – compare, for example, the warrior god narratives which survive in enough detail to be examined by this thesis (*Labbu*, *Anzû*, *Ee*), the others which are more fragmentary but probably followed a similar plot (*Girra and Elamatum*, Nergal and the sea-snake KAR 6), and the Hittite Kumarbi cycle. The murder of Apsû, then, while not

actually attested elsewhere, may follow a pattern in divine succession narratives which would not make it bizarre.

Two near identical lists of defeated gods (O 175 rev. and AO 17626, late Babylonian texts from Uruk, edition Livingstone, 1986: 190-204) are called 'the seven defeated Enlils' by O 175 rev. (7 ^{d}EN.LIL$_2^{meš}$ *ki-šit-ti*), implying that 'Enlil' is now synonymous with 'defeated' and overthrown. The lists in fact give seven pairs of gods:

^{d}DUMU.ZI	^{d}*a-nu*$_3$
^{d}*qin-gu*	^{d}EN.ME.ŠAR$_2$.RA
^{d}*mu-um-<mu>*	^{d}PAP.SUKKAL[158]
^{d}*al-la*	AN.ŠAR$_2$
^{d}*a*$_2$*-sag*$_3$	*an-tu*$_4$
^{d}*nu-nu*	^{d}LUGAL.DU$_6$.KU$_3$.
^{d}*a-la-la*	^{d}EN.KI

napḫar(PAP) 7 ^{d}EN.LIL$_2$.^{meš}
ki-šit-ti

O 175 rev, text appearing around the right edge of a ritual diagram (Livingstone, 1986: 194)

The context is a ritual for covering the kettle drum. These gods are identified with the seven eyes of a *manzû*-drum, and may be connected with the seven sons of Enmešarra.[159] Among these gods are Anu, Qingu, Mummu, Alla, and Enki – characters from *Ee* and *Atr.* The last line, *napḫar*(PAP) 7 ^{d}EN.LIL$_2$ *ki-šit-ti,* translates literally as: 'total: 7 Enlils of conquest'(or in apposition '7 Enlils, the booty'), meaning they have been defeated or taken captive. If it meant that the Enlils were the conquerors, *kišitti* would precede the divine name. It is likely, then, that 'Enlil' in this list refers to the vanquished.

In the SB version of *Atr* from Sippar, when the leader of the rebellion (here called 'Alla') is slaughtered in order to make mankind, he may be called 'an Enlil of a former time':

[158] AO 17626 here has ^{d}*il-lab-rat.*
[159] See Lambert (2013: 212-13) and Linssen (2004: 94 ff.) for discussion.

^{d}*alla*(NAGAR) *ša*$_2$ *i-šu-u*$_2$ *i-lam ṭe*$_3$*-e-ma*
⌜^{d}*alla*(NAGAR)⌝ ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *it-bu-ḫu-u-šu ma-aḫ-ri-tim*

Alla who had the divine inspiration[160]
Alla they slaughtered, an Enlil of a former time[161]

SB *Atr* II.103-4 (text from George & Al-Rawi, 1996)

These lines are extremely difficult, and are probably corrupt. George and Al-Rawi suggest that ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ and *ma-aḫ-ri-tim* belong together but have been separated by a disturbed word order, and they translate 'an Enlil of old' (1996: 171). However this is grammatically unparalleled. We might consider the possibility that a *ša* has been omitted from this line before Enlil, which would then translate 'Alla, whom Enlil previously slaughtered'. Another possibility could be that an *ana* has been omitted in the same place, so the line should read 'Alla they previously slaughtered for Enlil.' Either of these would make good sense in the context, since the following lines describe Bēlet-ilī mixing clay with his blood. George and Al-Rawi's interpretation is not the only possible one, but if line 104 does connect Alla with Enlil, then the idea of Enlil as a defeated god may be present in SB *Atr* itself. In any case, this view of Enlil as defeated does exist in later texts, as demonstrated by the texts on the ritual interpretation of the kettledrum ritual.

[160] George & Al-Rawi consider the word order disturbed here, suggesting that *i-lam* properly belongs with ^{d}*alla*(NAGAR) rather than *ṭe*$_3$*-e-ma* (1996: 187). However *i-lam* could go with *ṭe*$_3$*-e-ma,* translated as 'divine inspiration' (see Wilcke, 1999: 80 n. 29). This would connect with the idea that man's intelligence derives from the god's blood (Abusch, 1998: 368-78).
[161] The translation of this line follows George & Al-Rawi (1996: 171).

Overthrowing the bad kings

The point of reminding us of Enlil while killing off Apsû is to remind us why Enlil needs to be overthrown: Apsû is a bad king, just as bad as Enlil, or even worse. Ea's overthrow of Apsû paves the way for a legitimate succession by Marduk. Rather than taking the throne by force, Marduk inherits it from his father. The 'bad' king who threatens to destroy his offspring, is thus replaced by Ea, the god of wisdom, lending further legitimacy to Marduk's reign: the bad king whose plans threatened catastrophe is replaced by a good king (Sonik, 2008: 741). Sonik also notes that Apsû's behaviour is similar to Enlil's in this regard: the motives behind their evil plans are the same, they threaten the same action, and both are thwarted by Ea (2008: 741). Although Ea is not explicitly called a king in *Ee,* ^{d}lugal-du$_{6}$-ku$_{3}$, 'king of the pure place,' referring to the Apsû, is a name used for Ea in *Iqqur īpuš.* The name is explicitly identified with Ea in the commentary CT 41 39 rev. 8: '^{d}lugal-du$_{6}$-ku$_{3}$-ga = ^{d}*e$_{2}$-*⌜*a*⌝. One of Marduk's titles at the end of *Ee* is ^{d}dumu-du$_{6}$-ku$_{3}$, 'son of the pure place' (VII.99), which would be a natural adaptation of Ea's title for his son. Thus the idea of Ea being 'king' of the Apsû was established elsewhere, and in giving Marduk this title *Ee* implies that he is Ea's successor in this regard. More can be added to Sonik's analysis of the kingship motif. The language used to describe the murder of Apsû is that of a military conquest, reminiscent of royal inscriptions:

> *ul-tu lem-ne$_{2}$-e-šu$_{2}$ ik-mu-u$_{2}$ i-sa-a-du*
> ^{d}*e$_{2}$-a uš-ziz-zu ir-nit-ta-šu$_{2}$ eli*(UGU) *ga-ri-šu$_{2}$*
>
> After Ea bound and smote his enemies,
> had achieved the victory over his foes,
>
> *Ee* I.73-4

Mummu is held on a lead rope (I.71) in a manner reminiscent of the language of Neo-Assyrian kings. Yet it is not a battle being described here – Ea creeps up to cast a spell on Apsû and then kills him while he is asleep. We may note the irony that Apsû wants to kill his offspring because he cannot sleep, and yet it is while he is asleep that he is killed (as also observed by Sonik, 2008: 8, n. 16). The battle-like language used to dress up a 'victory' won through trickery contrasts with and foreshadows the actual battle which Marduk will fight against Ti'āmtu, and the legitimate, visible, impressive way he will win his supremacy as opposed to the subterfuge and trickery employed by his father here. The stripping of Apsû's crown and the founding of a residence over him sounds very much like the dethroning of a king rather than simply a god of a particular domain.

There are other details to suggest that Apsû is a bad king: quite apart from his whimsical decision to kill those he is responsible for, he takes the bad advice of his vizier (*sukkallu*) Mummu. Mummu counsels him like a type of king, telling him what he wants to hear, and leading him further down the path of folly. There is further irony, if we take Lambert's meaning of *mummu* as 'wisdom' (1969: 250), in that the character Mummu is not wise at all. Furthermore, it reflects badly on Apsû that his wisdom is located outside himself, that he needs the advice of this character, whereas Marduk's wisdom is innate and independent. This is all part of the picture of disorder which precedes and contrasts with Marduk's reign of orderliness.

The parallels between the two not only reinforce the wickedness of Apsû's reign by comparing him with Enlil, but also remind us of how bad Enlil was. This adds further legitimacy to Marduk's assumption of supreme rule – he takes over from inadequate predecessors. Furthermore, this engenders reverse intertextuality when we next come to read *Atraḫasīs*: when Enlil complains of the clamour of mankind and is condemned for the

destruction he sends upon them, we cannot help but think of the new world of Marduk, the events of *Ee,* that Enlil is on the way out.

The role of Ea

Ea has a similar role in *Ee* to the one he plays in *Atraḫasīs*. As Vanstiphout notes: 'Ea, having striven from the beginning of time to avert cosmic and earthly danger by wit and stratagem, here has the same role' (1992:45). In *Atr*, Ea was the one who intervened on man's behalf to save them from the destruction of Enlil. In *Ee*, Ea intervenes to save the gods from the destruction of Apsû. Here again, Ea comes to the rescue of those in the same predicament as before – beings threatened with annihilation because of their noise. Interestingly, this puts the gods in *Ee* in the same place as mankind in *Atr* (Kragerud, 1972: 40), a situation very reminiscent of *Atr's* first line, ***inūma ilū awīlum***, 'when the gods were like men'.[162] Here the gods are indeed like men! This is most likely not a coincidence. As part of its rewriting of mythical history, *Ee* has incorporated the situation at the beginning of *Atr* into its own story. The gods are metaphorically like men at the start of *Atr,* and so they are at the start of *Ee* too.

The killing of Apsû comes as a complete surprise, however, to anyone expecting Ea to behave in his characteristic way. In *Atr* Ea flouted the commands of Enlil by forewarning and helping his favourite mortal, thus subverting Enlil's authority by a kind of trickery. However, in *Ee* he actually kills Apsû – an extreme move. This kind of violence is threatened by other characters in *Atr* – when the Igigi revolt over their forced labour they advance towards Enlil's gate with tools set on fire (I.ii.64-9) declaring war (I.ii.61-2). In the late

[162] The line is controversial; for discussion see George & Al-Rawi, 1996: 147. Whether one translates this line as above or as simply 'when the gods were man,' the gods are likened to human beings in at least a metaphorical sense.

Assyrian text (in which part the OB text is unfortunately broken) they exclaim *i ni-na-ra-aš-*[*šu*], 'let us kill him!' (K 10082 ms. J line 1), probably referring to the supervisor whom Enlil appointed over them (the Sippar SB text has *al-ka-nim guzzalâ*(GU.ZA.LA$_2$)$^{a?}$ *i ni-na-ra-x-x*, 'Come, let us kill the steward!' I.41, and the SB fragment from Babylon has [*i*] ⌜*ni*⌝*-im-ha-aṣ-ma* ^{giš}*gu-za-la* <*la*>*-bi-*<*ru*>*-ti*, 'let us strike the steward of old!' line 49). Thus the threat of violence towards Enlil is certainly present in *Atr*, if not carried this far or originating from Ea. Murdering Apsû is surprising behaviour for Ea, who is known for his trickery and cunning: nowhere else does he directly attack anyone. It may make more sense, however, if it is necessary for him to be the one symbolically to kill Enlil, now required by the logic of the story. Perhaps also both the original ancestors have to be removed for the new world order to arise: as Marduk kills Ti'āmtu, so his father Ea kills Apsû – father and son each kill one of the original couple. Or perhaps it is simply part of *Ee*'s rewriting of mythical history to show the gods behaving differently from the way they are portrayed in earlier compositions.

The stripping of the crown

There are further resonances of Enlil with Apsû in the murder scene which contribute to the image of Enlil's dethroning. The stripping of Apsû's regalia (I.67-8) is reminiscent of Enlil in *Anzû* stripping for his bath (*Anzû* I.79-80). Enlil takes off his crown and regalia when he goes to his bath, and it when he is in this vulnerable state that Anzû is able to snatch the tablet of destinies and deprive him of his power. Somewhat similarly, Apsû too must be divested of his symbols of office before Ea can kill him (*Ee* I.67-9). One might also think of *Ištar's Descent*, where Ištar is stripped of her symbols and clothes one by one as she advances through each gate of the netherworld. Here too the undressing corresponds to a loss of

power. That Apsû's items are taken away by force as opposed to Apsû removing them himself is another example of the increase of violence in *Ee* from its predecessors. In *Anzû*, Enlil bathes in the *ellūti mê,* the pure waters (*Anzû* I.65, 79), while in *Ee* the murder of Apsû takes place in the waters also (*Ee* I.63), because Apsû himself is the embodiment of the freshwater domain. Both gods have their crowns removed (*šaḫ-ṭu-ma ina* ^{giš}*kussi*(GU.ZA) *a-gu-šu šak-nu*, 'Stripped, his crown placed on the throne,' *Anzû* I.80; *iš-ta-ḫaṭ a-ga-šu*$_2$, 'He stripped off his crown,' *Ee* I.67). Enlil has his symbol of ultimate power stolen, the tablet of destinies, while Apsû is stripped of his aura, which has a similarly disempowering effect. In I.68 Ea takes Apsû's aura and puts it on himself, effecting a direct transition of power:

> *ip-ṭur rik-si-šu iš-ta-ḫat a-ga-šu*$_2$
> *me-lam-mi-šu it-ba-la šu-u*$_2$ *u*$_2$*-ta-di-iq*
>
> He untied his sash,[163] he tore off his crown,
> he removed his aura, he put it on himself.
>
> *Ee* I.67-8

These links between Apsû and Enlil – the noise complaint as a trivial motive for killing his children, the similarities in the roles of Ea and the mother goddesses, and the resemblances between the moments of disempowerment – create a network of implications that when Apsû is overthrown, so at the same time is Enlil. *Ee* may not tell explicitly of the overthrow of Enlil by Marduk, because Enlil is overthrown by allusion already at the very start of the poem.

This is another example of the poet of *Ee* using more subtle literary techniques than he is often given credit for. Rather than simply copying the noise and sleep deprivation motif from *Atr* and pasting it in in a haphazard way, he has integrated it so subtly that it has largely escaped scholarly attention. Labat (1935: 29), Moran (1971: 42), Jacobsen (1976: 167),

[163] Differently Lambert: 'He split (Apsû's) sinews, ripped off his crown' (2013: 55).

Michalowski (1990: 389), Machinist (2005: 44 n.30), Seri (2012: 17), Sonik (2008: 741), Katz (2011: 129), and Kvanvig (2011: 79) remark on it, but not at any length.

A speculative neo-analytical[164] approach might even suggest that there may have been a story about the murder of Enlil which parallels the murder of Apsû. Similar arguments have been made for the *Iliad,* suggesting that the death of Patroclus parallels the death of Achilles himself in an earlier poem which has been lost, the *Memnonis* (Schadewaldt, 1951; see e.g. Kullmann, 1960). The existence of the *Memnonis* is hypothetical, and has been suggested based on this parallel and others, as well as later summaries of lost early Greek epics. The death of Achilles is not related in the *Iliad:* however, it is proposed that the audience who knew the *Memnonis* would recognise the death of Patroclus as that of Achilles himself in the earlier poem, and take it as a chilling foreshadowing of what was to come after the end of the *Iliad*. For all Marduk's taking over from Enlil in *Ee,* there are very few references to the former head of the pantheon in this poem. We are reminded again of the Homeric technique of making reference by refusing reference, that not mentioning something can ironically draw all the more attention to it (Currie, 2006: 7, 39-40; Dowden, 1996: 55 specifically on the *Memnonis*). It is possible that the allusion connecting Apsû to Enlil is a clue that an earlier story telling of the murder of Enlil did indeed exist, but has been sidelined by *Ee* in favour of other narrative motifs. I raise this merely as a possibility: a poem or story specifically about the murder of Enlil did not have to exist in order to allude to the idea of Enlil being deposed.

[164] For overviews of neo-analysis see Clark, 1986; Willcock, 1997.

The second sleep disturbance

The noise and sleep-deprivation motif does not disappear with the murder of Apsû. It surfaces again when Marduk's winds as playthings roil Ti'āmtu and her offspring. This repetition of the motif in a different form intensifies the pattern and brings it to its climax. This time, a disturbance of sleep will set in motion another plan for destruction which cannot be so easily squashed, as the distresed creatures amass an army to bring down the whole established order. The situation is now reversed – the gods who were once causing disturbance and lack of sleep are now suffering the same malady, and they are described in the same way as Apsû was:

> *dal-ḫa-at ti-amtu-ma*[165] *ur-ra u mūša*(GE_6) *i-dul-lu*
> *ilānū*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *la šup-šu-*⌜*ḫu*⌝ *i-za-ab-bi-lu ša*$_2$*-ri-ša*$_2$
> *ik-tap-du-ma kar-šu-us-su-nu le-mut-ta*
> *a-na ti-amti um-mi-šu-nu šu-nu iz-zak-ru*[166]
>
> Ti'āmtu was disturbed, day[167] and night she wandered about.
> The gods, not allowed to rest, endured in the wind.[168]
> They plotted evil in their hearts,
> they spoke to Ti'āmtu, their mother[169]
>
> *Ee* I.109-12

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[165] Variants: mss. S and FF have *tiamta-am-ma,* giving her a traditional accusative case vowel.
[166] Var. g (Lambert): (-)*šu-un iz-zak-*⌜*kar*⌝, 'speaking' (singular).
[167] Var. S and FF: *ur-ri,* plural.
[168] The line is problematic. Three mss. have *šu-up-šu-ḫa,* which could be a Š infinitive in adverbial accusative, meaning 'in not being allowed to rest'. Ms. FF probably reads *šup-šu-*⌜*ḫu*⌝, as suggested by Worthington (2012: 111 n. 386), which could be a locative ending with the same meaning. However, the simplest explanation (and thus perhaps the most likely) is that *šupšuḫū* is a stative, and the other manuscripts are corrupt. This is the interpretation I follow. I take *šarīša* to be a adverbial (supported by the variant in ms. BB which has ⌜*ša*$_2$⌝*-a-ri-šam)*. Variant: ms. FF has *ša*$_2$ *a-ri-*⌜*ša*⌝, 'that of her approach', a misunderstanding of the text possibly taken to mean that the winds were the sign of her approach. This ms. usually writes ša$_2$ as an independent word and ša for a syllable within a word (Worthington, 2012: 277-8).
[169] Variant: ms. FF has *a-na ti-amti a-ḫu šu*$_2$*-nu-tu iz-zak-*[*ru*] 'the brothers, they spoke to Ti'amtu'.

Now it is the gods' turn to plot *lemutta*, 'evil', just as Apsû did, and for the same reason. They protest to their mother:

ib-ni-ma ša$_2$-ar er-bet-ti ša$_2$ pu-luḫ-ti
šu-ud-lu-ḫu kar-ša-ki-ma ul ni-ṣal-lal ni-i-nu

"He created four fearsome winds,
"they stir up your insides, we cannot sleep!"

Ee I.115-16[170]

⌜kar$_3$⌝-ra sar-ma-a'-ni ḫu-um-mu-ra i-na-tu-ni
⌜šu⌝-uz-bi-⌜il⌝ ab-ša$_2$-na la sa-ki-pi i ni-iṣ-lal ni-i-ni

"Lay down our drudgery,[171] our eyes are squinting,
"remove the yoke which cannot be pushed off, let us sleep!"

Ee I.121-2

A word of particular interest here is *abšānum*, 'yoke'. This is the metaphor used in *Atr* to refer to the toil suffered by the Igigi:

at-ti-i-ma ⌜ša$_3$⌝-as-su$_2$-ru ba-ni-⌜a-at⌝ a-wi-lu-ti
bi-ni-ma lu-ul-la-a li-bi-il$_5$ ab-ša-nam
ab-ša-nam li-bi-il ši-pi$_2$-ir ^{d}⌜en-lil$_2$⌝
šu-up-ši-ik ili(DINGIR) *a-wi-lum li-iš-ši*

"You are the womb, creatress of mankind,
"create primeval man, let him bear the yoke,
"let him bear the yoke, the work (imposed by) Enlil,
"let man carry the toil of god."

Atr I.194-7

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[170] Ms. M (Middle Assyrian, from Assur) omits these two lines. Ms. N, however, also from Assur, includes them, see above p. 144 n. 145.

[171] The first half of this line is problematic. Kämmerer & Metzler suggest 'Betrachte? unserer Fron', reading the trace on ms VV as ⌜*ba*$^{?}$⌝-*ra* (2012: 140). However this is not a usual imperative form (which would be *biri*). The sign read as ⌜*ba*$^{?}$⌝ I read as ⌜*kar$_3$*⌝ interpreting it as from *karāru*, 'to put down'. *karra* would thus be a G imperative with ventive ending. Lambert reads ⌜*am*⌝-*ra*, 'consider' (2013: 57-8). Ms. VV is the only exemplar of the first two signs of this line, and is a Neo/Late Babylonian school text. For the translation of *sarmā'u* as 'drudgery' *contra AḪw II*: 1029 see Lambert (1974b: 86), who argues it is not the same word as *sarmānu*, 'arms'.

The burden to which the metaphorical yoke in *Ee* refers is the exhaustion of being unable to sleep, as in *Atr* it is the forced labour and by extension the exhaustion it causes.

What is the effect of invoking the motif again? The repetition of it contributes to the build-up of tension and is a sinister hint at the scale of the crisis to come. The noise/sleep issue in *Atr* causes the sending of the deluge – the ultimate, legendary force of destruction in Mesopotamian mythology. In *Ee* the same distress persuades Ti'āmtu to amass an army against the gods in retribution. Perhaps the implication is that the threat that follows will be on a similar scale to that of the deluge, especially since Ti'āmtu is nothing less than the personified sea, a huge body of water threatening catastrophic destruction. Seen in this way, Ti'āmtu herself *is* the deluge.

Thus before 'Enlil' (Apsû) can annihilate mankind (the gods his children), 'Enlil' is swiftly neutralised before he can send the deluge (or cause any harm). However, the junior gods are then themselves disturbed by Marduk, who is just as innocent as they were in not intending any harm, and this second sleep disturbance provokes a 'deluge' (immediately after the disturbance the gods petition Ti'āmtu, I.111 ff.). Enlil's traditional weapon is thus taken away from him and put into the hands of lesser enemies, in a move somewhat similar to the way that Tišpak's seal became Anzû's tablet of destinies, and Ninurta's poisoned arrows are equated with Ti'āmtu's monsters. It is worth noting that one of Marduk's weapons is called *abūbu* at IV.49, so we could see this as transferring a weapon of Enlil's to Marduk. Marduk's possession of the deluge as weapon originally has more to do with his taking over attributes of Ninurta in *Lugal-e* (see chapter four, pp. 182-4), but in light of the allusions to *Atr* and the ousting of Enlil, the resonance with Enlil is there all the same. The effect here is one of disempowerment; it is another way to subtly diminish Enlil without even

mentioning him, and downgrading his powers by transferring them to other characters. The same is true of the tablet of destinies itself in *Ee* – Enlil's weapon is transferred to Qingu, and turns out to be utterly useless. The 'deluge' in the form of the angry onslaught of the sea (Ti'āmtu) is still of course a considerable threat in *Ee* – but one that crucially does not result in the obliteration of its target, but is defeated by Marduk. In a sense, then, Marduk does battle with a subtle incarnation of Enlil's weapon and defeats it, thus defeating Enlil without him even being present.

Enlil the fowler

Another role of Enlil which Marduk may take over is one found in Sumerian poetry: Enlil the fowler. Marduk's use of a net is usually ascribed to a dependence on Ninurta mythology. However, the net is also a traditional weapon of Enlil, and this may also be behind why Marduk acquires a net as weapon. Unlike Enlil, however, Marduk hunts down only those deserving of punishment.

Marduk creates the net (*saparru*) as one of his weapons at IV.41, and encircles Ti'āmtu in it at IV.95. Lambert suggested that the net was a result of a syncretism with Ninurta, since a net is a more suitable device for catching a bird rather than the sea, and so it may have derived from some version of the capture of Anzû now lost to us (1986: 59). His implication is that it is a clumsy borrowing. Recently Seri has agreed that the net is an intertextual borrowing from 'the Anzû myth', but has shown that it has been integrated in a more sophisticated way: after creating the earth, Marduk spreads the net and releases everything inside it. Thus the net is mentioned at both the beginning and the end of the creation of the universe, showing that the net itself is 'the matrix of creation' (Seri, 2012: 15). However, there

may be even more to the net than this, and it may not derive only from Ninurta's battle with Anzû.

As Lambert himself notes, Ninurta bears no net in the *Anzû* poem. The inference is made based on a simile referring to the snaring of Anzû by Nergal (often assimilated with Ninurta) in *Erra* III.C.33 (although the word for 'net' is itself restored), and a bilingual litany to Nabû where he is described as the one who caught the Anzû bird in a net (*še-e-tu*$_2$) (Lambert, 1971: 344: 14). This litany is based on syncretism with Ninurta, since it mentions Ninurta's traditional exploits (Lambert, 1986: 59). Further evidence to add to this is that there is a Sumerian hymn which urges Nergal to catch enemies buru$_5$ mušen-gin$_7$ 'like small birds' (Sjöberg, 1973: 5: 60). Although no mention is made of a net, this can probably be inferred since it is the normal way to catch birds. The image of Ningirsu on the stele of the vultures also shows him holding enemies in a large net, so the image was clearly borrowed by other warrior gods at an early stage. Curiously enough, Ningirsu also grasps Anzû in his hand at the top of the net (cf. Seri, 2012: 21). Perhaps the strongest evidence comes from *Lugale,* where Ninurta himself is often metaphorically referred to as a net (13, 122, 126, 136, 137 see chapter four p. 185). Ninurta's other weapons are also used as epithets for him (e.g. Šar-ur addresses him as ^{ĝeš}šita$_2$ an-na, 'mace of heaven' at 123), so we may infer from this that the net was a weapon used by Ninurta also.

However, Ninurta is not the only god to use a net. Jeremy Black explored the imagery of Enlil the fowler in Sumerian literature, which occurs especially in balaĝs (1996: 26). Similes describe him as catching people in his net like birds. They are often used in conjunction with devastating invasions by mountain dwellers, when Enlil is deemed responsible. The paradox of the use of both of his titles 'father Enlil' and 'Lord of the land' depict the theological problem of the benevolent father also being an incomprehensible destroyer of mankind

(1996: 26). Marduk is also often said to possess these two apparently conflicting attributes (in *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*, for example), which is natural enough given that he, like Enlil, now holds the highest position in the pantheon and thus has ultimate responsibility for allowing mankind to perish or be saved. However, Enlil also catches enemies in his net (as in Black, 1996: 27 example 1: SBH p. 130 no. I 16-23 = Cohen, 1988: 154, 9-12). The presentation of Enlil as a fowler implies that he is 'a skilled huntsman who has made deliberate, careful preparations for catching his prey' and suggests his 'deep and impenetrable mind' (Black, 1996: 26). This also parallels the character of Marduk as a god of rational order, and indeed, matches the way that he so quickly ensnares and kills Ti'āmtu: this is no chaotic or difficult combat, but a skilled and efficient trapping.

The net imagery used to depict Enlil is not only used for snaring birds but also for catching fish and there are instances of the two images being used side by side. Fishing and fowling are often linked, not just in literary texts, but also in administrative texts relating to the real world (Salonen, 1973: 23). Salonen makes the point that such a relationship is natural since both professions use similar equipment, the net (1973: 23), making it plausible that the associations of Ninurta snaring Anzû, Enlil the fowler, and Enlil the fish-snarer co-exist in *Ee.* Two literary examples which refer to fishing and fowling consecutively are bilingual, showing that the imagery has crossed over from Sumerian into the Akkadian language (examples 1 and 3 in Black, 1996: 27-8 = SBH p. 130 no. I 16-23 and Eršemma no. 160: 33-36). The words for fishing nets and nets for catching birds are frequently the same: *šētu* and *saparru* are both used for both contexts (Salonen, 1973: 43-5; 1970: 64).

Lambert argued that it makes no sense for a net to be used against the sea, that this is another disjointed adaptation of a motif which properly belongs to another context (1986: 59). While it would indeed seem odd to use a bird-net against the sea, there is another possibility

that has so far been overlooked: that it is a fishing net. The *Anzû* prologue alludes to an otherwise unknown battle of Ninurta against *ku-sa-rik-ki ina qe$_2$-reb tâmti*(A.AB.BA) 'the kusarikku in the midst of the sea'(I.12), and it would be logical enough to use a net to catch a water-dwelling creature. Ti'āmtu is not literally the sea but also some kind of physical animal, since she has features including a stomach, skull, and tail. Most interesting of all is the simile at IV.137:

> *iḫ-pi-ši-ma ki-ma nu-nu maš-ṭe-e a-na ši-ni-šu*
> *mi-iš-lu-uš-ša iš-ku-nam-ma ša-ma-mi uṣ-ṣa-al-lil*
>
> He split her in two like a fish for drying,
> Half of her he set up and roofed the heavens[172]
>
> *Ee* IV.137-8

This simile comparing Ti'āmtu to a fish strengthens the idea that she could have been caught with a fishing net rather than one for netting birds, and shows that the image is in fact coherent after all. Cutting a fish in half after catching it so that it could be dried more easily was the normal everyday practice in Mesopotamia; the simile thus casts Marduk in the role of fisherman.

The literary syncretism here of Marduk with Enlil the fisherman shows Marduk taking over Enlil's characterisation as a terrifyingly skilled hunter. While Enlil's attacks could be directed either against enemies or against his own people (as in, for example, the *Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur,* where he attacks both), Marduk only hunts the enemy Ti'āmtu and her army, directing his powers solely towards the enemies of the gods. Marduk casts Ti'āmtu's allies into the net (*sa-pa-riš*) at IV.112. Catching them like fish

[172] The variant *ša-ma-ma* (ms. B) has been explained as a crasis with *u$_2$-ṣa-al-lil,* with *ša-ma-ma* representing */šamām/* using a CV-CV spelling for CVC (Worthington, 2012: 183). The same may be true for the variant *nu-nu* for */nūn/* in the previous line on the same manuscript (Worthington, 2012: 183 n. 607), or *nūnu* could be a literary construct state.

implies their weakness as well as his skill – they are more like unsuspecting and defenceless prey than warriors who provide any real challenge. The net thus emphasises similarity between Marduk and Enlil in terms of their supreme power, while at the same time as clearly showing the difference in ethos between them.

Creations

The pattern of *Ee* upstaging earlier poems that we have seen commonly in relation to *Anzû* is evident again in relation to *Atr*, as the creations in *Ee* out-do those in its predecessor. After Ea deposes Apsû, it is Ea's turn to be superseded by Marduk. Parallels with *Atraḫasīs* not only contribute to Marduk's takeover from Enlil as a ruler, but also to his takeover of the role of his father Ea as a creator god. However, this is a slightly different kind of take-over from what we have seen earlier: rather than rendering the preceding god superfluous as was the case for Ninurta and Enlil, Ea still keeps the attributes which Marduk inherits from him (Vanstiphout, 1992: 46) and remains in a respected position. However, Marduk will be shown to be cleverer and more effective even than his father.

Ea, a younger god, kills and deposes the older gods Apsû and Mummu. This is parallel to the activities of the young god Marduk, who kills the older Tiʾāmtu and Qingu, and takes supreme power, a parallelism that has the effect of foreshadowing (Machinist, 2005: 43). In this way Ea's deeds prefigure Marduk's (Talon, 2002: 266). Marduk's battle is a greater challenge since it involves open combat, while Ea kills his opponent by stealth – hardly a fair fight. The scale of Marduk's battle is also much larger, since while Ea defeated one sleeping Apsû and his vizier Mummu, Marduk is up against not only Tiʾamtu and her commander-in-chief Qingu but also a huge army of her creatures. Thus Marduk has done

more to deserve his position than his father, and is shown to be much more powerful. As Ea created his domain out of the body of his defeated enemy, so Marduk creates his domain out of Ti'āmtu, although it is the domain he rules over rather than simply the place in which he lives. He then goes further than his father in the scale of his creation, creating the heavens and stars and regulating the cosmos (Seri, 2006: 517).

The creation of Marduk's dwelling, Esagil, supersedes Ea's Apsû. Esagil is specifically called a *meḫret apsî,* a counterpart to Apsû at VI.62. There are parallels to this in *Tintir* IV.1-2 where Esagil is also said to be a *meḫret* of Apsû and Etemenanki a *meḫret* of Ešarra (George, 1992: 58, 296; Horowitz, 1998: 123). This is also part of the exaltation of Babylon above Eridu as the first city. In the bilingual creation of the world by Marduk, Esagil and Babylon supersede Eridu and Apsû as well (Horowitz, 1998: 123). At the beginning it states that no cities had yet been built, including Nippur, Uruk, and Eridu. abzu nu-du$_3$ *ap-su-u$_2$ ul e-pu-<uš> eri$_4$-du$_{10}$ ul ba-ni* eridu^{ki} nu-dim$_2$, 'Apsû was not built, Eridu was not created,' (line 8, edition Lambert, 2013: 366-75). All that existed was the sea, and the first thing to be created in this text was Eridu and Esagil (line 11). However, here Eridu probably refers to the old religious quarter of Babylon that was named Eridu, since Esagil was located in this quarter and is mentioned in the same line (George, 1992: 19, 252). Thus here is another text, like Tintir itself, equating the cultic heart of Babylon with the traditional primeval city of Mesopotamian tradition. This bilingual creation text is also interesting because it may well have been based on an original where Enki was the protagonist, not Marduk: the protagonist is initially Ea, who founds Esagil in the Apsû and is referred to as ^{d}lugal-du$_6$-ku$_3$-ga in line 13 (George, 1992: 252; Lambert, 2013: 367-9). Marduk is called ^{d}dumu-du$_6$-ku$_3$ in *Ee* at VII.99, linking the two characters. These texts are evidence for the kinds of syncretisms that were taking place between Marduk and Ea, syncretisms which are also expressed in the text of *Ee.*

In *Ee* IV.138-46 Marduk creates the heavens (*šamû*, *ašratu*) and the shrines of Ešgalla and Ešarra. This not only parallels and supersedes his father's creation of the Apsû but also subverts the casting of lots. Ešgalla is probably another name for Apsû (Lambert, 1975a: 57, 2013: 197), and so perhaps refers to Ea's shrine in that region (cf. George, 1986: 136). Marduk assigns the highest heavens to Anu, Ešarra (the region of the sky below it) to Enlil, and Ešgalla to Ea. Thus instead of these three gods dividing the shares between them, or casting lots to assign them at random, Marduk has decided their places for them. Horowitz remarks on the parallel between this section and *Atr*, saying that the earth's surface does not exist yet at this point in *Ee,* and so Enlil is sent to Ešarra, the cosmic roof (1998: 113). However the sequence here is surely more deliberate: Enlil is being kept out of the way, so that Marduk can have control over the earth (cf. Lambert, 1975b: 58).

Several scholars have noted the parallels between the creation of man in *Atraḫasīs* and *Ee*, e.g. Lambert (1994: 567), Foster (2005: 469), Machinist (2005: 43), Seri (Seri, 2006: 515, 2012: 17, 2014: 98), Katz (2011: 131).[173] *Atr* is, like *Ee,* about a rebellion of junior gods against the head of the pantheon. This rebellion results in the creation of man in both stories. In *Atr*, creating mankind to bear the toil of the gods was Ea's idea. Ea and Nintu then collaborate to create man from clay and the blood of a slain god, the one who led the rebellion. In *Ee* the situation is parallel: Ea creates man from clay and the blood of Qingu. However, the idea is Marduk's: giving him the inspiration, as it were, shows him to be the clever one, and Ea merely an instrument of his will (Foster, 2005: 469; Seri, 2006: 515):

> *šip-ru šu-u₂ la na-˹ṭu˺-u₂ ḫa-sa-si-iš*
> *i-na nik-la-a-ti ša₂* ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) *ib-na-a* ^{d}NU.DIM₂.˹MUD˺

[173] Lambert also notes that the gods' demand that Marduk provide food offerings for them was meant to recall *Enki and Ninmaḫ*, where this was the duty of mankind (2013: 455).

That work is not suitable to understand,
by the ingenuities of Marduk, Nudimmud created.

Ee VI.37-8

This is also a reversal of the typical situation where a father gives advice or instructions to a son. In *Utukkū lemnūtu* (edition Geller, 2007), Marduk asks Ea for advice, but here Marduk gives instructions to his father (Seri, 2014: 101).

That Qingu is the divine being who is slain (VI.29-34) and provides the divine material for mankind's creation also explains why Marduk has two enemies. Ninurta had just one, Anzû, but Marduk has two because he creates two different things from their bodies. Ti'āmtu's body becomes the earth and heavens, and Qingu's blood is used to create mankind, female and male principles for different aspects of creation. In *Atr,* the god Wê was the one who had 'the inspiration' (*ṭēmu*) for the uprising against Enlil (Moran, 1970: 51-2; Alster, 2002: 38), and thus his blood is what imparts intelligence and an immortal spirit to mankind (I.223-30; (Geller, 1993: 65; Abusch, 1998: 368-78). However, in *Atr* he seems only to exist for the sake of the pun between his name and the word for man, *awīlum* (Alster, 2002). The god Wê does not feature as a character any earlier in the narrative than when his blood is needed as an ingredient. Indeed, when Nusku asks who was responsible for instigating the rebellion, the answer is that all of the gods have declared war (I.146, restored from SB II.33). One of them has to die and provide their blood, but which does not seem to matter.

This is not to dismiss the importance of puns, however. In fact, Qingu's name is probably a pun as well. It may derive from Sumerian kiĝ$_2$, 'to work' (Jacobsen, 1984: 16; Wilcke, 1999: 79). This, too, can be compared with *Atr:* the name of the slaughtered god in the

SB version is Alla,[174] which may be a pun on Sumerian a1, 'hoe', an implement of work (Wilcke, 1999: 79). Thus the name Alla alludes to work, but Qingu's very name signifies it.

In *Ee* the accusation against Qingu is as follows:
^{d}*qin-gu-ma ša$_2$ ib-nu-u$_2$ tu-qu-un-tu*
[175]*ti-amta uš-bal-ki-tu-ma ik-ṣu-ru ta-ḫa-a-zu*[176]

It was Qingu who made war,
made Ti'āmtu rebel and drew up[177] the battle

Ee VI.29-30

Qingu is blamed as the one who 'made war' (*ib-nu-u$_2$ tu-qu-un-tu*) and 'made Ti'āmtu rebel' (*ti-amta uš-bal-ki-tu-ma*), although the events of tablet I show quite the reverse: Ti'āmtu is the one who raises up Qingu and appoints him as general of her army. Lambert suggests this reveals that Qingu is the equivalent of Enmešarra, who led a rebellion of his sons and was defeated in battle (2013: 287, 455). Both Qingu and Enmešarra occur in lists of defeated Enlils (see above p. 153), and Qingu is said to have seven sons (like Enmešarra) in the mystical explanatory text KAR 307 rev. 18. (edition Livingstone, 1986: 124). Thus it does seem possible that Enmešarra is behind Qingu. However it is difficult to say more than this, since the portion which survives of the text *Enmešarra's Defeat* unfortunately relates neither the battle itself nor Enmešarra's actual execution.[178]

The line may make more sense in the context of an allusion to *Atr.* Perhaps Qingu is assigned some sort of agency in order for his contribution to mankind to have real meaning. This may be another example of *Ee*'s one-upmanship over earlier accounts, for Wê is not a

[174] Also in the bilingual creation text KAR 4, a Middle Assyrian tablet from Assur.
[175] Variants: mss. E and M insert the conjunction *u$_3$* 'and'.
[176] We expect an accusative traditionally, *ta-ḫa-za,* as *ta-ḫa-zu* cannot be the subject of *ik-ṣu-ru.* However, of the three mss. which preserve the end of this line, one is a clear ZU (ms. F), one is a damaged ZU (A), and the third is a damaged ZI (N). Ms. F does elsewhere write a nominative ending for an accusative, for example in VI.33 *a-me-lu-tu* where I and O have *a-me-lu-ta,* and in VI.77 [*taq*]*-rib-tu* where A has *taq-rib-ti* and I has *taq-rib-tam*.
[177] Var. j (Lambert): *ik-me-šu$_2$-ma,* 'bound'.
[178] For the collected evidence on Enmešarra see Lambert, 2013: 285-7.

'real' character with any role prior to his slaughter, but Qingu is, even if he is a rather weak one whom Marduk can defeat in a single line.[179] In a way, then, the account in *Ee* makes slightly more sense than the one given in *Atr.* Qingu exists not merely for the sake of a pun, but for a purpose: he has a coherent role in the story as the equivalent of Anzû, as well as serving as the life-blood of man. Once again, something in *Ee* that may seem to have been taken over merely because of its relationship to an earlier poem can actually be shown to be integrated *more* coherently than it was in the original poem itself.

Freedom from toil

As in *Atr,* the creation of man in *Ee* means that the gods are exempt from labour. However, in *Atr* Enlil was the one responsible for forcing the gods to work in the first place, whereas in *Ee* Marduk steps in as liberator:

> *i-na da-mi-šu*$_2$ *ib-nu-u*$_2$[180] *a-me-lu-ta*
> *i-mid dul-li ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR)*-ma ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *um-taš-šir*$_3$
>
> With his blood they created mankind,
> he (Marduk) imposed the toil of the gods (on man), and set the gods free.
>
> *Ee* VI.33-4

It is not obvious what this toil is, since the surviving text says little about it. Machinist suggests that the explanation as to why a substitute would be needed has been deliberately omitted as 'a kind of rhetorical gapping that forces an attentive reader to go back to the story as found in *Atraḫasīs* and see how *Ee* has played with and adapted it' (2005: 44 n.30).

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[179] Note the variant of line I.112 in ms. BB which seems to attribute a speech to Qingu: see above page p. 161 n. 165.

[180] Variant: F (from Assur) has *ib-*⌜*na*⌝, which Kämmerer & Metzler suggest is a dual (2012: 253), or alternatively *ib-na* could be a crasis with *a-me-lu-ta*. Lambert uses *ib-*[*na*] in his composite text, interpreting the subject as Ea in the singular (2013: 112).

However, there is another passage which refers to this toil, although it is both brief and extremely damaged. At the end of tablet V, when the gods are rejoicing over Marduk's announcement that Babylon is to be created and all the gods shall gather there for festivals, four fragmentary lines attested by only one or two manuscripts hint at work:

x [...] ⌜*sat*⌝-*tuk-ka-ni li-bil-lu-ni*
⌜ṢI⌝ [. . .] ⌜NI⌝
ma-na-ma šip-ri-ni $\check{s}a_2$ *ni-*⌜*i*?⌝-[*ni . . .*]
$a\check{s}_2$-*ru-*⌜*uš-*$\check{s}u_2$⌝ [. . .] ⌜*ma*⌝-*na-aḫ-taš x* [. . .]

... let them bring our regular food offerings,
...
whoever ... our task which we ...
in his/its place ... his/its toil...

Ee V.139-42

It seems that the gods recognise that in order for all of them to be provided with food offerings, someone has to work in order to produce them. Here they may be choosing someone to force this labour upon, either for the first time, or instead of labour that they have been carrying out themselves up until now. Marduk's speech at the beginning of tablet VI, announcing his idea to create mankind, may be a response to this, an alternative which means that none of the gods has to toil.

When one thinks back to *Atr,* one cannot help but remember that the forced labour there had been imposed by Enlil. It is *šipir Enlil,* 'the task of Enlil' (I.196), meaning that it was assigned by him, and the rebellion in *Atr* which results in the creation of man is a rebellion against Enlil. Given that Marduk is replacing Enlil, the contrasts in their behaviour are clear: Enlil was the harsh and thoughtless god who imposed a burden on the gods, while Marduk does no such thing but begins by releasing them from any such obligation, even one which they themselves may elect. Marduk's rule, then, will clearly be very different from the regime he is taking over. Furthermore, Marduk's creation of mankind is also a comment about his

cleverness about his consolidation of power, since by ensuring that the gods are happy from the very beginning he is ruling out any possibility that they will rebel against him as they did against Enlil in the past. Not only is Marduk not like Enlil, but he is learning from Enlil's mistakes.

The creation of Babylon

The creation of man is followed by one last group of creations: that of Babylon (VI.57), the shrines of Esagil (VI.62) and those of the other gods (VI.68). *Ee* is fundamentally a Babylonian poem that exalts the place of the city of Babylon through the exaltation of its chief god Marduk. It is fitting, then, that the climax of the creative sequence should be Babylon and Esagil, followed by feasting and celebration.

However, it is notable that the gods themselves choose to do this building. After mankind has been created, the gods thank Marduk for liberating them and in gratitude offer to build him Babylon and Esagil (VI.48-54). This is despite the fact that human beings have just been created specifically in order to do this kind of work so the gods do not have to. That they freely choose to work on Marduk's behalf even after he has liberated them from toil, whereas in the past they rebelled against working for Enlil, is high praise indeed, and that Babylon should be built by a work force of freely willing gods rather than humans elevates the city's splendour to a cosmological level.

Allusions to *Atr* remind us of the necessity of Marduk's rise: Enlil was a thoughtless, irrational ruler who imposed forced labour on his divine subjects, and would have wiped out humankind without a second thought. Ea intervenes to avert the catastrophe: his murder of

Apsû gets rid of both bad kings, deposing Enlil symbolically at the same time as killing Apsû, and makes the peaceful succession of a good king possible. However the gods who once prevented Apsû from sleeping are now disturbed by the winds of Marduk; now they are the ones who are linked with Enlil through allusion, and it is they who metaphorically send the 'deluge' both in the form of Ti'amtu and as a general force of destruction. Another nod towards Enlil's indiscriminate violence may come from the connection between Marduk and Enlil the fowler. Marduk uses his net only to trap his opponents, whereas Enlil is depicted in this way in reflections on the unpredictable nature of his power, which could turn against his own people as readily as their enemies. Next it is Ea's turn to be superseded by his son, as Marduk's creations outdo those of his father both earlier in *Ee* and also in *Atr.* Finally, Marduk's creation of man takes place under very different circumstances from those in *Atr,* showing Marduk as more benevolent and wiser than his predecessors. Allusions to *Atr,* then, can be seen to fit into a wider schema of Marduk's suitability to rule in contrast to those who came before him: he is not only a great warrior, but a clever and compassionate king.

Chapter Four

Enūma Eliš and *Lugal-e*

Parallels between *Ee* and *Lugal-e* have been acknowledged by several scholars. Jacobsen briefly mentioned 'vague echoes of Lugal-e' in *Ee*, suggesting that Ninurta's building of the mountain range and invention of irrigation may be behind Marduk's re-organisation of the universe, and that the trial of Qingu and bestowing of offices on the other defeated enemies is reminiscent of Ninurta's judging of the stones (1976: 167). Van Dijk, in his edition of *Lugal-e*, compared the plots of the two poems in more detail, pointing out the similarities between the battles, the weapons of the protagonists, and the banquets at the end, as well as suggesting that the mountain which Marduk may have piled up on top of Ti'āmtu at V.53 (the word 'mountain' is restored) draws on Ninurta's heaping up of the stones (1983: 10-34). He suggests this is due to direct borrowing. Annus remarks that the transformation of Ti'āmtu into the boat Sirsir, which becomes Marduk's vehicle, 'gives an impression of shared mythic thought' with Ninurta's return from battle in a divine boat in *Lugal-e,* and also the return of Gilgamesh to Uruk (2002: 170). Machinist includes *Lugal-e* in his article on *Anzû*, *Ee*, and *Erra and Išum*, noting that the plot of *Lugal-e* follows the same schema of order and disorder as these three later poems*:* initial order is disturbed by encroaching enemies, a hero battles them, the hero establishes a new order, is re-integrated, and returns home triumphantly (2005: 53). He points out that *Lugal-e* was copied right into the first millennium, and so in theory would have been available to the authors of all three of these later poems (2005: 59). There are abundant references to Asakku in ritual and mystical texts of the first

millennium (see e.g. van Dijk, 1983: 25-7), and allusions to *Lugal-e* in the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon (Parpola, 2001), so allusion to *Lugal-e* in *Ee* is by no means an isolated phenomenon. Commentary texts connect Asakku with the other defeated enemies of Ninurta, for example, the cultic commentary K 3476 (Livingstone, 1989: 91, 52) and the Marduk Ordeal (Livingstone, 1989: 93, 15) both refer to the defeat of Anzû and Asakku (by Marduk, assimilated with Ninurta). They also mention Asakku in connection with Ti'āmtu (van Dijk, 1983: 25). These myths, then, were seen as comparable by ancient scholars.

Some of these allusions have a similar effect as the allusions to *Anzû,* in that they contribute to the picture of Marduk as a warrior who is both like and better than Ninurta. Marduk's adoption of Ninurta's weapons is one such aspect: the couplet which describes Marduk shattering Ti'āmtu's skull with a mace echoes two lines in *Lugal-e* describing Ninurta's mace Šar-ur; Marduk harnesses the winds as a weapon as does Ninurta; both gods arm themselves with the deluge before going into battle; while Ninurta is called 'net' as an epithet, Marduk actually uses a net against Ti'āmtu; and finally, Marduk's bow is explicitly renamed after Ninurta's spear, 'long wood'. There is no need for Marduk to have so many weapons; the bow and arrow which he borrows from Ninurta in *Anzû* would have been enough to slay Ti'āmtu, and the omnipotent image which the poem projects suggests that he does not need to rely on so many accessories to accomplish his goal. It is likely that so many different weapons are mentioned, then, because of their resonances with *Lugal-e,* particularly since many of them seem to allude to specific lines of *Lugal-e* rather than merely occurring because they featured in that poem.

The opponents in battle, too, owe something to *Lugal-e.* Both Asag and Ti'āmtu spawn their own demonic army, a member of which is chosen to be its leader. Thus Qingu corresponds to U_2 in this scenario. Here we have an interesting combination of allusions, for

Ee also strongly suggests that Qingu will be like Anzû, alluding to two alternate possibilities at the same time, one from *Lugal-e*, one from *Anzû.* The allusions to *Anzû* may lead us to expect that Marduk's battle against Qingu will be of similar difficulty to that of Ninurta against Anzû. However, this is a misdirection, and perhaps we are left thinking that we should have paid more attention to the similarities between Qingu and U_2 instead, for they are a better predictor.

Allusions to *Lugal-e* also fill in another part of the jigsaw of *Ee,* providing another source for Marduk's creation and organisation of the world after Ti'āmtu's defeat. In both poems, the defeated opponent is used to create a region of the cosmos: Asag's liver becomes the netherworld, while Ti'āmtu's liver becomes the upper regions. Ninurta controls the destructive mountain waters with a dam and invents irrigation: Marduk holds back the waters of Ti'āmtu and at the same time opens up the sources of springs and rivers from her. It is important to note *hysteron-proteron* here again: Ninurta diverts the waters, but Marduk brings them to earth in the first place. Finally, Ninurta decrees destinies for his 50 defeated enemies, and Marduk has 50 destinies decreed for him, a reversal which expands the scope of Marduk's powers and trivialises the power to decide fates.

Marduk therefore imitates Ninurta in more than his warrior aspects: while we might expect the parallels between them to be mainly in their battles, Marduk's actions after the battle parallel Ninurta's just as closely. These particular post-battle parallels are not found in *Anzû,* however, but in *Lugal-e.* This, along with other examples, shows that the influence of *Lugal-e* on *Ee* did not only come indirectly through *Anzû* but also directly from *Lugal-e* itself.

It is especially noteworthy that the sequence of events after the battle take place in the same order in both poems. This implies that not only is *Ee* drawing on *Lugal-e* in various details, but also on its structure.

Weapons

Marduk's weapons have many parallels with Ninurta's weapons in *Lugal-e.* Marduk carries a mace (*miṭṭu*) into battle at IV.37 and uses it to crush Ti'āmtu's skull at IV.130. He is accompanied by the winds of the four directions that Anu gave to him at birth (I.105-6) as well as seven winds which he made himself (IV.41-7). These play an important role in incapacitating Ti'āmtu (IV.96-100). At IV.49 the last and therefore presumably most terrifying weapon Marduk takes up is the deluge (*a-bu-ba*).

At first we might think that these weapons derive from *Anzû,* given that *Ee* has a strong relationship to *Anzû* in other respects. Ninurta's mace Šar-ur[181] is a prominent character in *Anzû*, and Ninurta is also accompanied into battle by seven evil winds (e.g. II.4, II.39, II.149, II.153).[182] As for the deluge, Ninurta's mother's instructions are to *ri-ḫi-iṣ er-ṣe-tu ib-ba-nu-u$_2$ šu-bat-su su-uḫ-ḫi,* 'Flood[183] the earth where he was made! Destroy his dwelling!' (II.6) and *šadê*(KUR-*e*) *qer-bit-su-nu ri-ḫi-iṣ dul-liḫ-ma*, 'Flood and stir up the mountains and their meadows!' (II.20, II.116, II.138). Immediately after killing Anzû it is said that Ninurta flooded the mountains (III.17-20) which may be literal since Ninurta is a storm god, or it may be metaphorical, given the common use of the deluge image for destruction.

However, the way that these weapons are mentioned actually matches *Lugal-e* more closely than *Anzû.* In *Anzû,* Šar-ur is a personified weapon who relays messages: in *Ee* the equivalent is Kakka, rather than the mace Marduk carries into battle. In *Anzû,* Šar-ur is not a

[181] Šar-ur figured prominently in Ningirsu mythology and was prominent in Lagaš II (see e.g. the Gudea cylinders). However it seems unlikely that this would be remembered at the time of the composition of *Ee,* since there is no evidence that these texts were known.
[182] These references are to the SB version, as the corresponding parts in the OB version are broken or lost. What survives of the OB version matches the SB version fairly closely. The extant portion of the OB text is not one where Šar-ur is featured.
[183] Variants: g and F have ⌜*ni*⌝-*iḫ*-⌜*ma*⌝, 'calm'.

weapon used in Ninurta's attack. Šar-ur does, however, have an active role in the battle in *Lugal-e*:

> ĝeš tukul za3-sag2 di-da kur-re izi ba-sum
> ĝeš mi-tum-e zu2 šeš -a saĝ im-tu10-tu10
>
> The trampling weapon set fire to the mountain,
> the mace (with) bitter teeth struck heads
>
> *kak-ku mun-dar-su ana šadî*(KUR-*i*) *i-ša*$_2$*-ta id-di*
> *miṭ-ṭu ša*$_2$ *šin-na mar-ru um-ma-nu u*$_2$*-kam-mar*
>
> The trampling weapon set fire to the mountain,
> the mace which is bitter in tooth piled up the people.
>
> *Lugal-e* 256-7

For za3-saĝ2…du11 as equivalent to *sakāpu* 'to push down' see Sjöberg (1970: 89). The verb literally means 'to push with the shoulder'. This is the only attestation of *mundarsu*, a Gt participle of *darāsu* 'to trample'. The equivalence between *darāsu* and za3-sag2…du11 may also be attested in the Middle Babylonian lexical list *Erimḫuš* in II.204 in an entry following x.KIN = [*sa*]-*ka-pu*, [...] = *da-ra-su* (MSL XVII: 38, for discussion see Seminara, 2001: 284).

This can be compared with what Marduk does in *Ee* IV.129-30:

> *ik-bu-us-ma be-lu*$_4$ *ša*$_2$ *ti-a-ma-tum i-šid-sa*
> *i-na mi-ṭi-šu la pa-di-i u*$_2$*-lat-ti muḫ-ḫa*
>
> The lord trampled Ti'āmtu's lower body,
> with his merciless mace he shattered her skull.
>
> *Ee* IV.129-30

In both *Lugal-e* and in *Ee* we have a word for 'trampling' (za3-sag2…du11, *mun-dar-su*, and *ik-bu-us-ma*) and the mace crushing heads in consecutive lines. Thus this use of Marduk's mace in *Ee* seems more likely to be inspired by *Lugal-e* than *Anzû*, and it is closer to the Sumerian text of *Lugal-e* than to the Akkadian.

Winds and storms also feature prominently in *Lugal-e.* Ninurta rode on the eight winds (im-8) towards the rebel land (77), and his advance in the midst of a storm (u_4) is referred to in 691 and 694. He fitted an evil wind (im-ḫul) onto a pole (ĝeš-a – literally a piece of wood) before battle (81), and Šar-ur uses a wind (tu_{15}) to scatter the people during the battle (253). At the end Enlil states that he gave Ninurta the storm to use against the rebel land (688). Enlil mentions the winds during the battle at 218 also, but the translation of the line is uncertain.

The line im-ḫul u_{18}-lu ĝeš-a mu-un-du_3, 'He fitted the evil wind and the south wind to a pole' is slightly closer to *Ee*'s use of the winds than *Anzû's,* since here Ninurta seems to be deliberately harnessing them as a weapon, as Marduk does, while Ninurta in *Anzû* is accompanied by winds as part of his terrible onslaught but does not use them to do something specific as Marduk does (sending them into Ti'āmtu's belly). It is possible, then, that Marduk's use of the wind as a specific weapon may hark back to *Lugal-e.* The winds were given to Marduk by Anu as a gift, and likewise in *Lugal-e* the winds are a gift given by Enlil, whereas in *Anzû* there is no mention of Ninurta receiving them from anyone.

Van Dijk pointed out that the deluge is the weapon of both Marduk and Ninurta (1983: 24). It is mentioned in *Ee* IV.49:

> *iš-ši-ma be-lu$_4$ a-bu-ba* ^{giš}*kakka*(TUKUL)*-šu$_2$ rabâ*(GAL*-a)*
> ^{giš}*narkabti*(GIGIR) *u$_4$-mu la maḫ-ri ga-lit-ta ir-kab*
>
> The lord raised the deluge, his great weapon,
> he rode the unrivalled, fearsome storm chariot.[184]
>
> *Ee* IV.89-50

[184] Var. L and N: *maḫ-ḫi-rat,* 3*s* feminine stative,'the chariot of the storm is unopposable,' which does not fit the line as well. We may consider this an inferior Sultantepe variant.

There may be a parallel in *Lugal-e* line 82, where Ninurta takes up the deluge in preparation for battle:

mar-uru$_5$ še-ba mu-un-ne-en-gub

He set the deluge on his *arm*

a-bu-bu ina kit-tab-ri-šu$_2$ iz-za-az-zu

The deluges stand on his arm

Lugal-e 82

The meaning of še is obscure here in the original Sumerian. Black et al. translate this line as 'He placed the quiver on its hook (?)' (2004: 166) according to context, but there is no other attestation for 'še' with this meaning. The Middle Assyrian list *Nabnītu* has ŠE = ***ki-it-ta-ab-ru*** in E 51f (MSL IX: 10), and is followed by ***upnu***, 'fist', while the post-OB lexical list *Aa = nâqu* gives the equivalence ŠE = ***kit-tab-rum*** (MSL XIV: 467), both of which match the Akkadian version of this line. These may be late attempts to rationalise difficult meanings, or may perhaps hint that *Lugal-e* itself was composed later than the third millennium, at a time when 'še' had acquired this meaning.

It is ambiguous in the Sumerian as to whether mar-uru$_5$ means 'deluge,' 'quiver,' or 'tempest'. Although a-ma-ru traditionally means 'deluge' while e$_2$-mar-uru$_5$ is usually translated as 'quiver' and mar-uru$_5$ as 'stormwind' the terms were confused by the Old Babylonian period (Eichler, 1993: 90-4), perhaps already in the Neo-Sumerian period (Chen, 2013: 21-2). The Akkadian interlinear translation gives *a-bu-bu* for mar-uru$_5$, implying that the Akkadian scribes understood it as 'deluge'. As Seminara has shown, however, the Akkadian lines are often more of a reinterpretation than a strict translation (2001). There may in fact be a deliberate ambiguity as to whether mar-uru$_5$ means 'deluge' or 'quiver' in *Lugal-e*, since in *An-gin$_7$* there is a similar ambiguity: mir lu$_2$-ra te-a ^{ĝeš}pan mar-uru$_5$-ĝu$_{10}$

mu-da-an-ĝal$_2$-la-˹am$_3$˺, 'I bear the wind which attacks men, my bow and quiver' or 'my deluge-bow'[185] (142) (Chen, 2013: 21 n.1). In the previous line (141), a-ma-ru me$_3$-a, 'deluge of battle' is an epithet of the mace (šita$_2$). It is possible then that mar-uru$_5$ too is a quiver called 'the deluge', that it carries both meanings at once. This epithet for Ninurta's weapon may ultimately derive from Ningirsu mythology, as the Gudea cylinders make numerous references to Šar-ur as a-ma-ru 'the deluge' (e.g. A XV:24; B VII:14; B VIII: 2, edition Römer, 2010).

If, then, mar-uru$_5$ also means 'quiver', *Lugal-e* 82 also has a parallel with *Ee* IV.38:

iš-ši-ma ^{giš}*miṭṭa*(TUKUL.AN) *im-na-šu u$_2$-ša-ḫi-iz*
^{giš}*qašta*(PAN) *u* ^{kuš}*iš-pa-tu$_4$ i-du-uš-šu i-lu-ul*

He raised the mace, grasped it in his right hand,
he hung the bow and quiver on his arm

Ee IV.37-8

In any case, there is no description of taking up weapons in *Anzû* as there is in *Ee* IV.35-49 and *Lugal-e* 78-82. Thus Marduk arming himself with the deluge may echo Ninurta arming himself with the deluge before going into battle in *Lugal-e*.

Marduk's bow is, however, connected to *Lugal-e,* even though the bow itself might not be found in that poem. When the gods are admiring Marduk's bow and net after the battle, Anu gives the bow the name *i-ṣu a-rik,* 'long wood'. 'Long wood' is the literal translation of ĝeš-gid$_2$-da, a prominent weapon of Ninurta's in *Lugal-e,* in this context to be translated spear.[186] As Lambert observes, the *Ee* commentary STC II 63 notes at this point (r. 5): ĝeš-gid$_2$-da *a-rik-˹tu˺* (1986: 59). The interlinear Akkadian in *Lugal-e* is *ar-ka-a-ti* for ĝeš-

[185] Variants: ms. P has ˹a-ma-ru˺, 'deluge', instead of mar-uru$_5$, and ms. Aa has ti e$_2$-mar-uru$_5$-ĝu$_{10}$. There may be confusion or deliberate ambiguity here too

[186] For ĝeš-gid$_2$-da as spear see Salonen (1965: 84-5); Englund (1990: 75 n. 247). In the OB list *Ur$_5$-ra* = *ḫubullu* 551 ĝeš-gid$_2$-da appears in a section dealing with weapons (Veldhuis, 1997: 163).

gid$_2$-da at 78 and 259. Marduk's weapon, then, is being re-named as one of Ninurta's weapons. This re-naming in *Ee* may be another example of 'reverse intertextuality'. Re-naming Marduk's bow as Ninurta's spear affects the interpretation of *Lugal-e* as well as of *Ee*: after reading this part of *Ee,* a reader coming across Ninurta's spear in *Lugal-e* will now be reminded of Marduk's weapon, since they have the same name. The effect is to plant the idea of the equivalence of Marduk and Ninurta in Ninurta's own poem.

The net with which Marduk ensnares Ti'āmtu also has a precedent in *Lugal-e.* In line 13 Ninurta is called ur-saĝ sa-šu$_2$-uš-gal lu$_2$-erim$_2$-ra šu$_2$-a, 'warrior, great net spread over the enemy', at 122 he is called sa-šu$_2$-uš me$_3$, 'net of battle,' and he is compared to a net in a simile at 126: sa-par$_3$-gin$_7$ u$_3$-mu-e-dub, 'after encircling (the enemy) like a net'. In *An-gin$_7$* Ninurta declares that he holds the sa-al-kad$_4$, 'alkad-net' (136) and the sa-šu$_2$-uš-gal 'great net' (137). Ninurta's other weapons are also used as epithets for him (e.g. Šar-ur addresses him as ^{ĝeš}šita$_2$ an-na, 'mace of heaven' at 123), so we may infer from this that the net may have been a weapon used by Ninurta elsewhere in mythology (see also chapter three p. 165).

Opponents

Lambert pointed out that the total number of creatures created by Ti'āmtu to be Marduk's enemies at I.133-46 is eleven, the same number of defeated enemies ascribed to Ninurta in *Lugal-e* 128-34, *An-gin$_7$* 51-63, and *Gudea Cyl. A XXV-XXVI* (1986: 57-8; see also Wiggermann, 1992: 143). None of the monsters in *Ee* match these ones, with the possible exception of the snake, which is ***bašmu*** in *Ee* and ušum in the other three texts, neither do

these lists match each other. This is, then, an allusion to Ninurta mythology more generally rather than an allusion to one of these texts.

However, there may be a more specific parallel between Marduk's enemies and Ninurta's in *Lugal-e:* Qingu and the U_2 ('plant') stone, to be identified as emery (Heimpel, Gorelick, & Gwinnett, 1988). Asag appoints the U_2 stone king over the demons he begets, who then go off to raid cities:

kur-ra ša$_3$ i-me-ni-in-u$_5$ numun ba-tal$_2$-tal$_2$
teš$_2$-ba mu bi$_2$-ib-sa$_4$ ^{na4}U$_2$ lugal-bi-še$_3$
muru$_2$-ba am-gal-gin$_7$ a$_2$ ba-ni-ib$_2$-il$_2$-il$_2$-i
^{na4}su-u ^{na4}saĝ-kal ^{na4}esi ^{na4}uz ^{na4}ka-gi-na
ur-saĝ ^{na4}nu$_{11}$ gar$_3$-ra-du-um-bi iri ba-ab-lah$_4$-lah$_4$[187]

It (Asag) mounted the heart of the mountain, spreading seed.[188]
Unanimously they called the U_2 stone their king.[189]
Like a great bull it raised its horns in their midst.
Su-u-stone, Saĝ-kal-stone, Diorite, Uz-stone, Haematite,
and the hero Alabaster, its warriors, are carrying off the cities.

ša$_2$-da-a uš-tar-kib ze-ra ur-tap-piš
mit-ha-riš šum-šu$_2$ im-bu-u šam-mu ana šar-ru-ti-šu$_2$-nu
ina bi-ri-šu$_2$-nu ki-ma ri-i-me ra-bi-e qar-na-a-šu$_2$ it-ta-na-aš$_2$-ši
^{na4}MIN ^{na4}*sag-kal* ^{na4}*u$_2$-šu-u* ^{na4}*u-zu* ^{na4}*ša$_2$-da-nu*
qar-ra-du ^{na4}MIN *qar-rad-su-nu a-la-a-ni i-šal-lal-šu$_2$-nu-ti*

It mounted the mountain, it spread seed.
Altogether they called 'plant' their king.
Like a great bull it was continually raising its horns in their midst.
DITTO-stone, Saĝ-kal-stone, Diorite, Uzu-stone, Haematite,
oh hero (=Ninurta[190]), DITTO-stone, their hero, is plundering the cities.

Lugal-e 34-8

[187] Variant: ba-ab-DU-DU to be read re$_7$-re$_7$, 'they were plundering' (see Geller, 1985: 216).
[188] So the bilinguals. The monolingual manuscripts have: kur-ra ša$_3$ i$_3$-ni-bal numun-bi ba-tal$_2$-tal$_2$, 'It (Asag) produced offspring in the mountain, spreading its seeds.'
[189] I take U_2 to be the object of line 35 rather than the subject (as Black et. al., 2004: 230) because U_2 is the first stone that Ninurta curses after the battle, implying he had an important role (416-34). He is clearly one character rather than a multiplicity of stones (as the verb in the Akkadian is plural).
[190] Interpretation following Seminara (2001: 57).

Ti'āmtu, like Asag, has spawned her own demonic army. Asag's horde, although made of stones, are probably demonic in nature since they were born from the earth, which is common for demons (van Dijk, 1983: 21). One might compare the origin of the Sebettu, who in *Erra* are said to be the result of Anu sowing his seed in the earth (I.28-9), and the birth of Anzû, who sprung from the earth in the mountain (*Anzû* I.52-3).

At *Ee* I.147-52, Ti'āmtu chooses Qingu from her offspring to be commander of her army. This is parallel to U_2 as one of Asag's offspring being chosen as leader of the army of stones. Like Qingu, U_2 does not play a large role in the rest of the battle, and is not mentioned again until after it is over (416 ff.). We see here how U_2 could have been the inspiration for the figure of Qingu. However, as explored in chapter two (pp. 107-8), Qingu's role has been built up in such a way that we expect him to play more of a part, to be more of an Anzû figure than the easy defeat that he is. U_2 is not built up in quite the same way. This could be an interesting misdirection, alluding to two different possibilities at once: the *Anzû* allusions seem to be more prominent, but in fact Qingu will turn out to be more like U_2, not very important after all.

Further parallels can be found between Ti'āmtu's monsters and *Lugal-e.* She fills the bodies of the monsters with poison (***imtu***), i.e. venom, at I.135. This may be a more specific reference to *Lugal-e,* since venom is a weapon of Ninurta. At 106: en-e ki-bal-a-še$_3$ uš$_{11}$-ze$_3$-a i-ni-in-de$_2$, ,'the lord poured/dripped poisonous gall over the enemy land'. At 229 Ninurta is described as a-ma-ru ⌜uš$_7$⌝ [...da$^?$]-ĝar-ra, 'deluge suffused [with] poison (literally 'heaped up' or 'accumulated'), and the version of the line in the bilingual text has a-ma$_2$-uru$_5$ ⌜uš$_7$⌝ [igi-še$_3$] ⌜mu-un⌝-šar$_2$-ra lu$_2$-erim$_2$-še$_3$ su$_3$-su$_3$-de$_3$, 'the deluge spread venom [before it], to sprinkle it on the enemy'. Ninmaḫ describes Ninurta as: u$_4$

sumur ki-a du uš$_{11}$ gaba-ba ĝar-a, 'the raging storm walking on earth, putting poison in its (the earth's) chest (374).

As noted in chapter two (p. 132 ff.), Ti'āmtu's monsters can be equated with Ninurta's poisoned arrows. The fact that Ninurta also carries poison in *Lugal-e* explains the motif's occurrence in *Anzû* in my opinion (although it could also be drawn from a common mythological background), but there are interesting differences in the ways they have been deployed in the two poems. Seminara has shown that there are parallels between the language of Ninurta's battle with Asag and exorcistic literature, where the sprinkling of gall and poison is the weapon of demons against the sick (2004: 246-8). There is nothing like this to be found in *Anzû*, which does not speak of Ninurta 'sprinkling' poison. Asag is certainly considered a demon by the Old Babylonian period, if not explicitly in *Lugal-e* itself: Asag is included among the demons of *Udug-ḫul* in tablets from the OB Nippur (e.g. III.3) (edition Geller, 2007). This would then show Ninurta attacking Asag with the same weapons that demons themselves use. This is consistent with the way that Ninurta and Asag are described in similar language which portrays them as a match for each other, as explored earlier (pp. 62-3, see also Feldt, 2011: 143), and as attested also by the passage just quoted, since ur-saĝ iri lah$_4$-lah$_4$, relating to the stones in line 38, is traditionally an epithet of Ninurta (Cooper, 1978: 118). Asag is a threat to Ninurta because is he is like him, but similarly Ninurta can also play demons at their own game.

Seminara makes an interesting suggestion about a shift in portraying gods more anthropomorphically in Akkadian poetry than in Sumerian. Ningirsu's heart produces poison like a snake in Gudea *Cyl. A* X 21-3. Ninurta sprinkles poison in the Sumerian bilingual *Lugal-e*, but in the Akkadian text su$_3$-su$_3$-de$_3$ ('to sprinkle') has not been translated, but replaced with *i-ra-aḫ-ḫu-uš* (from *raḫāšu*) which may mean 'he was moving',

which would have no basis in the Sumerian (Seminara, 2004: 244). The verb is rare, however, with only three attestations in Akkadian texts in CAD (CAD R: 75) [191] so this meaning cannot be completely certain. Interestingly one of these other occurrences is in OB *Anzû* at line 58 (= SB II.7) where the meaning of 'move towards' does seem to fit. Annus restores the line by analogy with the SB version as [*pu-lu-uḫ-tum*] ˹*li*˺-*ir-ta-ḫu-ša e*-[*li-šu*], (2001: 35) 'let [terror] move [over him]'.

Seminara suggests the substitution of *raḫāšu* might show a preference for portraying gods with more human weapons than animal ones (2004: 249). One might also compare *Lugal-e* line 10 where the OB Sumerian describes Ninurta as ušum ni$_2$-ba gur-gur, 'snake who turns on himself[192],' while the bilingual versions reinterpret ušum as munšub (= *šar-tum*, 'hair') (van Dijk, 1983: 5; Seminara, 2001: 222). This would fit well with the portrayal of Ninurta in *Anzû* as using poison for his arrows rather than his own gall, and of Marduk as having nothing to do with poison at all. In fact, Marduk's horses are the ones whose teeth bear poison (IV.53), animals rather than the god himself, and Marduk carries an antidote to poison into battle with him (IV.62). This shows the disassociative reactionary process going one step further, since not only is this aspect of Ninurta transferred away from Marduk onto his animals, but an antidote to it is introduced. Ninurta is not associated with antidotes in this way, and so Marduk has a new quality which yet again adds to his superiority over his predecessors.

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[191] ˹*li*˺-*ir-ta-ḫu-ša eli*(UGU)-*šu*$_2$ OB *Anzû* RA 46 92: 58; *ik-kab-ba-su-ma ul i-ra-aḫ-ḫu-šu*$_2$, 'they will be subjugated and will not mobilize(?) ABL 622+129 r. 10; *u*$_3$ *ia-ar-ḫi-ša šarru*(LUGAL) *be-li ṣābē*(ERIN$_2$)^{meš} *pi*$_2$-*ṭa*$_2$-˹*ta*$_5$˺ 'let the king my lord mobilize the archers' EA 137: 97; [*lu*]-˹*ra*˺-*aḫ-ša*$_2$-*a-ka* in CT 53 400 r.6 has been collated as [*lu*]-˹*ra*˺-*aḫ-ṣa-a-ka* in SAA 15: 129 r.6.

[192] i.e. coils? See Heimpel, 1968: 518; Seminara, 2001: 221.

Establishing order

New creation

The most detailed parallels come after the battle. As in *Ee,* there is a good deal more action in *Lugal-e* after the defeat of the enemy: the invention of irrigation, the decreeing of destinies for the stones, and much praise of Ninurta. Asag is dealt with by line 330, the climax of tablet VII, but the poem runs to 726 lines (over sixteen tablets). The poem is not only about the battle against Asag but the re-establishment of order afterwards, including many new creations. Similarly, the battle is over in *Ee* before the end of tablet IV (line 132), but the poem itself is seven tablets long. Looking at the poem as a whole, the battle ends at line 594 out of a total of 1092, so like *Lugal-e,* the second half of the poem is devoted to decreeing new destinies and creating a new world order. As the details of the parallels will show, the structure of *Ee* may be based on this underlying structure of *Lugal-e* to an extent.

The first parallel is the use of the dead opponent to create part of the cosmos. After defeating Asag, Ninurta decrees that his body will become the netherworld:

ur$_5$-ra-am$_3$ bar-bi irigal ḫe$_2$-em,

"Let this, its body become the netherworld!"

šu-u$_2$ ˹zu˺-[mur-šu$_2$] lu ša$_2$ qab-rim

"Let this, [its body] be of the grave,"

Lugal-e 329

The Akkadian here renders irigal as *qabru,* 'grave', rather than 'netherworld'. irigal is often translated as 'netherworld' following Lambert's reading of the emesal name of Nergal ^{d}umun-irigal as 'lord of the underworld' (lit. 'great city') (1973: 356), but this has been

challenged by Katz, who notes that it is consistently translated as *qabru* by the bilingual texts and therefore should be understood as a euphemism for 'grave' (2003: 339 n.4). While many of the occurrences of this word in Sumerian literary compositions could be translated as either 'grave' or 'netherworld' and still make sense,[193] there is more difficulty in this particular case. What would it mean for Asag's body to become the grave? It cannot be a grave for its own body, and so only makes sense on a literal level if it means the grave for all human beings, that is, the netherworld. If the grave is the entrance to the road leading to the netherworld (Katz, 2003: 45), perhaps the distinction is not so great after all: it is a *pars pro toto.* A bilingual incantation listing demons from different regions of the earth includes irigal among them: udug edin-na udug ḫur-saĝ-ĝa$_2$ udug a-ab-ba udug irigal-la-ke$_x$: *u$_2$-tuk ṣe-e-ri u$_2$-tuk šadî*(KUR-*i*) *u$_2$-tuk tam-ti*^{3} *u$_2$-tuk qab-ri,* 'demon of the steppe, demon of the mountain, demon of the sea, demon of the grave' (ASKT 11: 2-3), implying that irigal is a region such as the netherworld. A line in *Utukkū lemnūtu* equates *qabru* with the netherworld when Namtar is described as: udug gal irigal-la kur ⌜nu⌝-gi$_4$-gi$_4$-ke$_4$: *u$_2$-tuk-ku rabû*(GAL-*u*) *ša$_2$ qab-ri* ⌜*er-ṣe*⌝*-ti la ta-ri,* 'the great demon of the grave, the land of no return' (STT 2, 173: 1f).

This is the only known reference to the creation of the netherworld (Horowitz, 1998: 348), and it seems to be the only reference to Asag as the netherworld. The most common term for netherworld is 'kur', 'the mountain,' although ki (in expressions such as ki-bad 'the far-off land') and arali (as a name for the netherworld) are also used (Katz, 2003: 103, 8, 2). Ninurta creating the netherworld out of Asag, then, may be a radical departure from this

[193] *Gilgameš and Ḫuwawa A* 11: irigal kur nam-gu$_2$-ka?-ke$_4$! lu$_2$ la-ba-an-da$_{13}$-da$_{13}$-a, 'that the netherworld, the land of submission, will spare no one' or alternatively 'that the grave, the netherworld of submission'; *The Death of Ur-Namma* 42: dub-šen šu za-gin$_3$ niĝ$_2$-nam iri$_{11}$-gal-la, 'a chest with a lapis lazuli handle (containing) everything (needed for) the netherworld/grave (lit. 'of the netherworld/grave').

tradition, perhaps similar to how Marduk's creation of the sky and earth out of Tiʾāmtu was also starkly different from the existing accounts of creation. The two are strikingly parallel (van Dijk, 1983:10; Horowitz, 1998: 349). There is no mention of a netherworld being created in *Ee:* perhaps this is because the netherworld is already thought to be Asag, or because the semantic range of *erṣetu* already encompasses the realm beneath the earth as well as its surface.[194]

In *Lugal-e* 329, ur$_5$-ra-am$_3$ can also be understood as 'liver'. While the Akkadian translates it as 'this' (*šu-u*$_2$),[195] only one manuscript preserves the first part of the line in Akkadian, and elsewhere there is plenty of bilingual evidence that ur$_5$ could be understood as *kabattu,*[196] the word used for liver in *Ee* V.11. There may, then, also be an even more specific parallel with Marduk creating something useful out of Tiʾāmtu's liver:

> *ip-te-ma abullāti*(KA$_2$.GAL)^{meš} *ina ṣe-li* [*ki-lal*]*-la-an*
> *ši-ga-ri u*$_2$*-dan-ni-na*[197] *šu-me-la* [*u*] ⌜*im*⌝*-na*
> *ina ka-bat-ti-ša*$_2$*-ma iš-ta-kan* ⌜*e*⌝-[*la*]-⌜*a*⌝*-ti*
>
> He opened up gates on both sides of her ribs,
> he strengthened bolts[198] on the left [and] right,
> in her liver he established the upper regions.
>
> *Ee* V.9-11

[194] E.g. Ištar's Descent line 85 ^{d}*iš-tar a-na erṣeti*(KI-*ti*$_3$) *u*$_2$*-rid ul i-la-a,* 'Ištar has gone down to the netherworld (but) has not come up' (edition Lapinkivi, 2010).
[195] For 'liver' see Flückiger-Hawker (1999: 359), although the evidence is from a much earlier period. For 'this' see Attinger (1993: 176-7).
[196] E.g. in lexical texts: Syllabary A Vocabulary A 12': ur UR$_5$ = *ka-bat-tu*$_2$*; Aa* = *nâqu*: V/2: 159 [u$_2$-ru UR$_5$] = ⌜*ka*⌝*-bat-tum*; Izi H 186: u$_2$-ur UR$_5$ = *ka-*⌜*bat-tum*⌝; in a bilingual *eršaḫunga*-prayer K 4891+K 5348A+K 20238 5'-6': ur$_5$-ĝu$_{10}$ a-še-er-bi : *ka-bat-ta ta-ni-iḫ-ša*$_2$, 'My liver, its lament! : The liver, its lament!' (Maul, 1988: 360); in a bilingual *balaĝ*-hymn to Nergal (Spar & Lambert, 2005: no. 9) rev.10': ur$_5$-zu-a im-ma-al : *ina ka-bat-ti-ka lib-ši,'* let it be in your liver: let it be in your liver' (CAD K: 12). *kabattu* is often translated 'mind' in these kinds of lamentation texts, but it literally means liver, as the liver was seen as the seat of the emotions.
[197] Var. B: *ud-dan-ni-na,* Dt perfect, paralleling the perfects in the following line.
[198] Var. L: *ši-ga-ra,* 'the bolt'.

This is the opposite of what Ninurta made Asag's liver into: the upper regions rather than the netherworld. The term *elâtu* is often paired with *šaplātu,* meaning 'heavens' and 'netherworld' respectively (Horowitz, 1998: 116, 227). If we take ur$_5$-ra-am$_3$ as 'liver' in *Lugal-e* 329, then we have another inversion here: for instead of creating the lowest regions out of Ti'āmtu's liver, Marduk creates the high ones.

Controlling the waters

After Ninurta defeats Asag, he invents irrigation. *Lugal-e* 334-46 describes the situation before his intervention: waters are described as not regulated in any way, but pouring down into the fields and causing destruction. The gods are subject to corvée work, carrying the hoe and basket. The Tigris does not carry fresh water,[199] and there is famine. This is presented as a problem which Ninurta cleverly solves.

> u$_4$-bi-a a-silim ki-ta du a-gar$_3$-ra nu-um-de$_2$
> a-šed$_4$ du$_8$-du$_8$-u$_3$ u$_4$ zal-le-da-gin$_7$ kur-ra e$_2$-ri-a ba-ni-˹ib$_2$˺-il$_2$-a
>
> At that time fresh water coming from the earth did not pour over the fields,
> cold water was amassed, like a passing storm it brought devastation to the mountain.
>
> *Lugal-e* 334-5[200]

Ninurta's solution is to pile up stones to block these waters so they can be controlled and flow onto the fields.

> ur-saĝ-e mu-un-galam iri teš$_2$-teš$_2$-bi ˹mu˺-[un]-uš$_2$
> a-kala-ga na$_4$ im-da-an-sa$_2$
> i-ne-eš$_2$ a kur da-ri$_2$-še$_3$ ki-a nu-um-e$_{11}$[201]-de$_3$

---

[199] compare also *Anzû* I.17-18 where the Tigris and Euphrates exist but do not yet carry water.
[200] No Akkadian survives for this passage.
[201] The bilingual text reads bad$_3$ 'high' for e$_{11}$. There is only one bilingual manuscript for these lines and it is very late (Seleucid). Seminara suggests this substitution is the result of the similarity of e$_{11}$ to

The hero was clever, he dammed up the cities all together.
He equalled the mighty water[202] with stones
so that now mountain water will never again go down onto the land.

qar-ra-du ik-[*kil-ma a-li*] ⌜*mit*⌝*-ḫa-*⌜*riš*⌝ [*is-se-kir*][203]
me-e dan-nu-[*te i-na*] ⌜*ab*⌝*-ni iš-nu*[!?](copy BE)-[*un*][204]
i-na-an-na mu-[u_2 *da-ri*]*-iš iš-tu er-ṣe-ti ana šadî*(KUR-*i*) *ul* ⌜*il*⌝*-lu-*u_2

The hero [was clever], [he dammed up the cities] all together.
He *equalled* the mighty water [with] stones.
now [forever] the waters will not go up from the earth to the mountains.

Lugal-e 353-5

The term 'equalled' here must mean that he built a pile of stones tall or strong enough to resist the water.

The corresponding passage in *Ee* is this:

iḫ-pi-ši-ma ki-ma maš-ṭe-e a-na ši-ni-šu
mi-iš-lu-uš-ša iš-ku-nam-ma ša-ma-mi[205] u_2*-ṣa-al-lil*
iš-du-ud maš-ka ma-aṣ-ṣa-ra u_2*-ša-aṣ-bit*
me-e-ša la šu-ṣa-a šu-nu-ti um-ta-'i-ir

He split her in two, like a fish for drying,
half of her he set up to roof the heavens,
he stretched out the skin,[206] he stationed a guard
and ordered them not to let her waters escape.

Ee IV.137-40

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the Akkadian *elû*, which is often equated with bad$_3$ (2001: 300), for example in the post-OB list Aa VIII/2: 56-7 (MSL XIV: 499).

[202] Variant: T_1 has u_5 'deluge'.

[203] The restorations here are van Dijk's, from the Sumerian.

[204] Following the reading and restoration in CAD Š I: 366. Geller restores *me-e dan-nu-*[*te* $ša_2$] ⌜*ab*⌝*-ni iš-tel-*[*lu*], 'the mighty water which sharpened the stone,' from homophony of sa_2 with sa, for which there is lexical evidence for the meaning *šêlu*, but as he himself notes, water is more likely to smooth stone than sharpen it (1985: 218).

[205] The variant *ša-ma-ma* (ms. B) may be explained as a crasis with u_2*-ṣa-al-lil*, see p. 167 n. 172.

[206] Note Talon's alternative reading par_2*-ka* for *maš-ka* (2005: 56), which he translates 'Il tira le verrou' (2005: 94). The reading PAR_2 for MAŠ is attested from the Old- to Late-Babylonian periods (Borger, 1991: 10). The meaning of 'bolt' for *parku* is attested but only twice (CAD P: 188). It could also be translated as 'he dragged (it) across', with *parku* deriving from *parāku*, harking back again to Ea's blocking of Apsû/Mummu. The meaning of 'transverse' for *parku* is attested more often than that of 'bolt' (CAD P: 187).

Ti'āmtu is herself the watery creature here in need of restraint, but the principle is the same: Marduk is ensuring that the waters will be controlled so as not to cause further devastation.

Further controlling of Ti'āmtu's waters comes in tablet V:

> *iš-kun qaq-qad-˹su¹˺ ina ˹muḫḫi*(UGU)˺-[*šaˀ šaˀ-da*]-˹*a*˺ *iš-pu-uk*
> *nag-bu up-te-˹et˺-ta-a ˹mû*(A)˺-*uˀ it-tešˀ-bi*
> *ip-te-e-ma ina īnī*(IGI.II)-*šaˀ pu-˹ra˺-*[*at-ta*] ˹*i*˺-*di-ig-lat*
> *na-ḫi-ri-šaˀ up-˹te˺-ḫa-a ˹rēšī*(SAG$^{?}$)˺-*šuˀ e-te-ez-ba*
> *iš-pu-uk ina ṣer-ti-šaˀ ˹šaˀ˺-*[*de*]-˹*e*˺ *bi-ru-ti*
> ˹*nam*˺-*ba-˹'i*˺ *up-ta-li-šaˀ ana ba-ba-˹lim*˺ *kup-pu*
>
> He set (down) her head and heaped up a [*mountain*] on top of it,
> he opened up a spring, it began to fill with *water*[207]
> From her eyes he opened the Euphrates (and) Tigris,
> he sealed her nostrils, he left her *head.*
> On her udders he heaped up [mountain] mounds
> he drilled waterholes to carry off the catchwater.
>
> *Ee* V.53-8

By unblocking the waters of Ti'āmtu, Marduk creates the two great rivers. He then blocks up her nostrils, probably in order to divert the waters to their proper place. Drilling through the mountains most likely has the same motive. Marduk here goes further than Ninurta does in *Lugal-e:* Ninurta merely diverts the waters, but Marduk also puts them on earth in the first place. The probable heaping up of a mountain upon Ti'āmtu's head and udders is likely to be a borrowing from all the heaping up that Ninurta does in *Lugal-e:* the heaping up of the crushed pieces of Asag into a pile at 296, the heaping up of cold waters at 335, and the heaping up of the stones to form a dam at 354 (van Dijk, 1983: 27, 34).

More specific links with Marduk as the inventor of irrigation can be found in the section of names beginning with Enbilulu. Enbilulu is:

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[207] Landsberger & Kinnier Wilson restore this word as *a-*<*gu*>*-uˀ*, 'torrent' (or 'wave') (1961: 160).

ša$_2$ *ri-i-ta maš-qi*$_2$*-ta uš-te-eš-še-ru u*$_2$*-kin-nu a-na māti*(KUR)
miṭ-ra-a-ti u$_2$*-pat-tu-u u*$_2$*-za-'i-i-zu mê*(A)^{meš} ⌜*nuḫši*(ḪE$_2$.NUN)⌝

the one who put in good condition the pastures and watering places and established
them for the land,
who opened watercourses, distributed abundant waters

Ee VII.59-60

Epadun is:

^{d}MIN(=*enbilulu*) ^{d}E.PA$_5$.DUN *bēl*(EN) *namî*(A.RI.A) *u a-*⌜*te-e*⌝ *ša*$_2$*-niš* ⌜*li-zak-ru*⌝
gugallû(GU$_2$.GAL) *šamê*(AN-*e*) *erṣetim*(KI-*tim*) *mu-kin-nu apšenni*(AB.SIN$_2$)
ša$_2$ *me*$_2$*-reš-ta elleta*(KU$_3$-*ta*) *u*$_2$*-kin-nu ina ṣe-e-ri*
i-ka u$_3$ *pal-ga uš-te-še-ru uṣ-ṣe-ru ap-ki-sa*

Secondly let them call[208] Enbilulu Epadun, lord of the cultivated land and the flood,[209]
irrigator of heaven and earth, establisher of the furrow,
who established pure farmland in the steppe,
put in good condition ditch and canal, marked out the furrow

Ee VII.61-3

And yet again, Enbilulu-Gugal is *gugallû*(GU$_2$.GAL) *miṭ-rat ilānī*(DINGIR.DINGIR), 'canal inspector of the watercourses of the gods' (VII.64). Three names thus associate Marduk with inventing irrigation, originally accredited to Ninurta in *Lugal-e.* It is possible, indeed quite likely, that the names themselves go back before *Ee,* and so are more of the result of Marduk's syncretism with Ninurta rather than being chosen specifically because they allude to *Lugal-e.* Nonetheless, their inclusion here does remind us of *Lugal-e,* and forms a neat part of the picture.

It is also possible that this blocking of the waters is behind the curious use of *parāku* at *Ee* I.70:

[208] Var: H: *iz-zak-*[*ru*], I: *iz-zak-*⌜*ru*⌝, 'they call him'.
[209] Variant: ms F has *bēl*(EN) *za-ri-qi a-*⌜*te-e*⌝, 'lord of sprinkling the flood'.

ik-mi-šu-ma apsâ(ABZU) *i-na-ra-aš*$_2$*-šu*
^{d}*mu-um-mu i-ta-sir*$_3$ *eli*(UGU)*-šu*$_2$ *ip-tar-ka*

He bound Apsû and killed him,
Mummu he confined, he (Ea) blocked him (Apsû).

Ee I.69-70

The term *parāku* has been translated several different ways.[210] It is a rare word, and was also used of Anzû at two points in the *Anzû* poem: first when Anzû is appointed guardian of Enlil's shrine (I.56) and secondly when Bēlet-ilī exhorts Ninurta's dust storms to block him in battle (II.9). Its reoccurrence here is therefore noticeable (Annus, 2002: 125). In *Anzû*, *parāku* is used with its second meaning of 'to block' or 'obstruct' (CAD P: 153). Recalling this imparts certain undertones to what is done with Mummu. It could emphasise that he is useless as a guard: as Anzû is associated with blocking the entrance to Enlil's shrine, and in *Lugalbanda* guarding the entrance to the mountain, so Mummu's failure to protect Apsû is highlighted by the reversal of Ea 'blocking' him rather than Mummu successfully blocking Ea. It may be significant in this regard that it was Ea who uttered the words at *Anzû* I.56. It may also depict Mummu himself as an enemy like Anzû simply to connect him with Apsû. Anzû himself becomes an enemy needing to be blocked, as when Bēlet-ilī exhorts, *lip-tar-rik-šu*$_2$ *gu-um-mur-ta a-šam-šu-ut-tu*$_2$, 'Let the dust storm totally block him!'[211] *Anzû* II.9 (Annus, 2002: 125). So Ea's blocking of Mummu here is a fulfilment of the desired blocking of Anzû. Annus' interpretation of *eli*(UGU)*-šu*$_2$ here as blocked 'from above' (2002: 125) may be relevant in this case, since Anzû is a bird flying in the sky.

However, *Lugal-e* probably gives us the clearest picture of what is actually happening here. Apsû is a body of water, and Mummu may be intended to block Apsû's waters. This

[210] Foster: 'locked him securely' (2005: 441), Lambert: 'handled roughly' (2013: 55), Bottéro & Kramer: 'barrant sur lui la porte' (1989: 607), Dalley: he 'laid him across him' (2000: 235).
[211] For notes on this line see p. 82.

would mean that Ea is confining the waters so that he is able to build his dwelling without it being destroyed. This would be either by using Mummu as the block (following Dalley's translation of 'laid him across him', 2000: 235), or meaning that Ea's dwelling is the block, and is more effective than Mummu had been previously. This latter option would translate I.70 as 'Mummu he confined, he (Ea) blocked him (Apsû) more than him (Mummu),' which would explain *eli*(UGU)-$šu_2$. Confining the waters is part of Ea establishing order after his victory, just as Ninurta did. Since Ti'āmtu's waters need to be confined to be kept under control it makes sense that Apsû's waters would need to be as well. This also adds to the parallels between Ea's victory over Apsû and Marduk's over Ti'āmtu – both victors control the waters of their defeated enemies.

The gods in *Lugal-e* are subject to heavy labour (334-9), just as they are in *Atraḫasīs,* and as hinted at in *Ee.* However, there is no specific mention in *Lugal-e* that Ninurta frees them from it: inventing irrigation makes it easier for them, but does not absolve them of it altogether. Marduk, however, not only is responsible for watering the lands and preventing destruction by flood, but also creates mankind to exempt the gods from the work, thus going further than Ninurta in his beneficence. The blocking and controlling the flow of waters may also loosely draw a contrast with Enlil, who unleashed a deluge of water in order to destroy humankind rather than help them.

50 destinies, 50 names

After blocking the waters with stones, Ninurta sets about decreeing the destinies of the stones, rewarding those who were on his side and punishing those who were against him. This is echoed by Marduk's punishment of Qingu, demanding that the one who started

the rebellion be surrendered (VI.21-38) and transforming other defeated gods into images guarding the gate of his temple (Jacobsen, 1976: 167). Perhaps it is also echoed, more vaguely, by Marduk's assigning positions for the Anunna and Igigi (VI.39-46), for Ninurta's judgements are not all curses but alternate between curses and allotting uses for the stones. It is interesting to note that four of the stones are given new names: Asag is renamed zalag (327-8), U_2 (emery) is renamed ^{na4}gug, 'carnelian' (432), saĝkal is renamed: ul_4-ab sar-ra-ab, 'Run away, hurry!' (460) and ḫaštum is to be called $ḫaš_2$-tum, 'ditch' (606-9). Even more interestingly, the total number of stones on which Ninurta passes judgement is 49, and including Asag itself totals 50 – the same number as the number of Marduk's names in *Ee.* The usual explanation for the number of Marduk's names is that he replaces Enlil whose number is 50 (RLA III: 500; Lambert, 1984: 3; Seri, 2006: 507). However, this match with the number of stones in *Lugal-e* is unlikely to be coincidence, and may well also be part of the picture.

This raises a number of questions. What is the significance of the number 50 in *Lugal-e*? It may derive from Ningirsu mythology, since Ningirsu's temple in Lagaš e_2-ninnu translates as 'House Fifty'. The meaning of this is unclear: it may be short for 'the house of fifty white anzu-birds' ⌜e_2⌝-ninnu $anzu_2$-bar_6-bar_6-ra (*Cyl. A* VII.2, edition, Römer, 2010) (George, 1993: 134), though Edzard argues against this since Eninnu is never followed by the genitive suffix –a(k), and if 50 referred to the anzu-birds it would have to stand after $anzu_2^{mušen}$ in the construction (1997: 4-5). Falkenstein suggested that the number 50 here simply stands for 'countless' or 'everything', perhaps referring to the me (1966: 116-17). He also noted that there is no connection of Enlil with 50 in the Gudea cylinders, and suggested that Enlil's association with this number is later than this text (1966: 117). Since the meaning

of 50 in Ningirsu mythology is unknown, it is difficult to interpret what its influence might have been on *Lugal-e.*

Could it be that since Ninurta is Enlil's son, the stones are perceived as a threat to Enlil, and that their number matches his is a mark of the stones equalling Enlil's power, a true threat? This may be why Enlil cries out in fear during the battle with Asag (187-90). Ninurta is given the epithet dumu ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$, 'son of Enlil' 23 times in the section with the stones, and frequently throughout the whole composition. Is Ninurta already equalling his father Enlil in defeating an equivalent number of his enemies? In the god list K 170, both Ninurta and Enlil are connected with the number 50, as line 3 reads: 50 ^{d}*nin-urta mār*(DUMU) ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ 50 (Livingstone, 1986: 32).[212] *Aa* = *nâqu* in II/4 = 12.201-4 also groups both Enlil and Ninurta under the number fifty (nin-nu-u) (MSL XIV: 285). In *Lugal-e* line 12 Ninurta is called lugal dumu ^{d}en-lil$_2$-le ni$_2$-te-na diri-ga, 'king, son whom Enlil has exalted over / made greater than himself'.[213] There may, then, be some precedent for Marduk matching Enlil already in *Lugal-e.* It may be relevant that in *An-gin*$_7$, Ninurta is given Enlil's title lugal kur-kur-ra,'king of all the lands' (106), closely resembling the title of Enlil which is given to Marduk in *Ee,* ^{d}EN.KUR.KUR (VII.136). Marduk's superseding Enlil may then to some extent be following Ninurta's superseding of Enlil.

The 50 names and 50 stones also correspond structurally and stylistically. Both passages use a great deal of hermeneutic play, full of esoteric interpretations and re-

[212] Although the list is Neo-Assyrian (the colophon designates it as the possession of Nabû-zuqup-kēnu, a scholar in the time of Sargon and Sennacherib), it has been argued that it goes back to Old Babylonian times since it gives Marduk the number 10 (line 12) (Böhl, 1936: 193). The practice of associating gods with numbers goes back to the Ur III period (Gelb, 1961: 213 n.275). The earliest manuscripts of Aa = *nâqu* date to the Middle Assyrian period (this line has no equivalent in the older Proto Aa). In the Kassite *An = Anum* Marduk is associated with the number 50, being given 51 names (Ea is given 41 names, also one more than his mystical number) (Lambert, 2013: 149-50).

[213] So five mss. Four mss including the bilinguals have ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$, 'son of Enlil exalted in himself'.

interpretations (van Dijk, 1983: 45). They both appear almost at the very end of the poem and appear in the context of decreeing of destinies. The process of giving names to Marduk is also described as decreeing his destinies:

> *u_2-ši-bu-ma ina ukkinni*(UKKIN)*-šu$_2$-nu i-ban-nu-u ši-ma-a-ti-šu$_2$*
> *ina me$_2$-e-si nag-ba-šu-nu u-zak-ki-ru-ni šum*(MU)*-šu$_2$*
>
> They sat down in their assembly to create his destinies,
> in all their rites they spoke his name.
>
> *Ee* VI.165-6

Furthermore, just before Marduk's new destinies are decreed, Anu decrees destinies for Marduk's bow and gives it three new names as well (VI.86-92). This section, then, corresponds to Ninurta decreeing new fates for the stones, four of which, as already listed, include new names. It is a curious kind of reversal: instead of being the one to decree destinies, Marduk has destinies decreed for him. This is mainly because the naming expresses a hand-over of power, emulating the end of *Anzû* where Ninurta is given at least 18 new names and out-doing him on this count (see p. 118 ff.). However it also fits with the way that decreeing destinies has been downplayed in *Ee* as part of the downgrading of the tablet of destinies: in this poem it is more of an honour to have titles bestowed upon you than to be able to bestow them, the latter being more of a minimum requirement for being a god than a mighty climax of an exaltation. It is another example of the technique of reversal we have already seen used many times as a way of transforming an earlier poem. Furthermore there is another reversal in the function of naming in *Lugal-e* and *Ee*. In the former poem, naming has a limiting purpose: it specifies the destinies (both favourable and unfavourable) and confines the stones to them. In *Ee,* however, naming has an expansive function, enlarging the scope of Marduk's powers and all the realms over which he has authority. This is also the case in *Anzû*, where the new names bestowed on Ninurta merge him with other

gods and thus expand his domains. Thus resonances with both *Lugal-e* and *Anzû* are present in the naming section of *Ee* with complementary effects.

Ninurta receives praise on his return, firstly from the boatmen who sing to him on the barge (20 lines, 652-71), then by the Anunna who address a prayer and supplication to him (a-ra-zu-a šudu$_3$, line 681), and finally by Enlil (16 lines, 684-700). Machinist remarks how the final blessing pronounced by Enlil on Ninurta in *Lugal-e* (684-700) recalls the blessings heaped on Ninurta in *Anzû* and on Marduk in *Ee* (2005: 53). Priase of Ninurta over 37 lines is a significant length, but it is still nothing like the amount Marduk receives in the 50 names.

Praise by Enlil, however, can be compared with praise by Anu and Anšar in *Ee*, which again underscores how Anšar has replaced Enlil in *Ee*. At the beginning of his speech, Enlil remarks how he gave Ninurta the storm and the club to use as weapons in the battle (688-9). Anu takes no such credit for Marduk's victory, rather, all the gods admire the bow and net (V.83-5), both of which Marduk had made himself (IV.35, 40). Enlil pronounces for Ninurta bal sa$_6$-ga nu-kur$_2$-ru, 'an unchanging, good reign', ti u$_4$ su$_3$-ra$_2$, 'life of distant days,' i.e. eternal life, and ĝiškim ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$, 'the favour of Enlil' (698). This last phrase indicates that Ninurta is still subordinate to Enlil.[214] Anšar, however, declares that Marduk's word will be supreme, and he will have no rival to his kingship (VI.103-6), although there are also added instructions to make sure that he provides food offerings for the gods (V.109-117). A reader who remembered these parallels could notice how much more respect and power Marduk has been given after his victory than Ninurta was after his.

There is one more difference between Marduk and Ninurta in this sequence of events. Ninurta is reminded to assign destinies for his defeated enemies the stones by Aruru (413-

[214] cf. Parpola's interpretation of this passage as taking Ninurta to be identical with the human king, on the grounds that only in this context does the bestowing of eternal life make sense (2001: 186).

15), whereas Marduk does this of his own accord, a god who takes the initiative and whose plans are all his own.

These similarities can be summarised in table-form, in the order the events occur in *Lugal-e.* The weapons are not listed here, since they occur in many different places throughout both compositions.

Lugal-e	*Ee*
U$_2$ chosen as the leader of the rebel army, but does not play an important role in the battle itself	Qingu chosen as the leader of the rebel army, but does not play an important role in the battle itself
Ninurta uses the winds, the gift of Enlil, as a weapon in battle	Marduk uses the winds, the gift of Anu and others he made himself, as a weapon in battle
Ninurta uses poison as a weapon	The weapon of the hero is transferred to the weapon of the enemy in *Ee* as here it is Ti'āmtu's monsters who are filled with poison
Ninurta called the net of battle, perhaps after a weapon he used elsewhere	Marduk uses a net in battle
Ninurta's mace plays an active part in the battle	Marduk uses a mace as a weapon in battle rather than as a messenger (as Ninurta does in *Anzû*)
Ninurta creates the netherworld from Asag's liver	Marduk creates the earth from Ti'āmtu's body, and the 'upper regions' from Ti'āmtu's liver
Ninurta piles up stones to hold back the waters	Marduk stretches out Ti'āmtu's skin to hold back her waters (and earlier Ea may have blocked Apsû's waters)
Ninurta diverts the waters to their proper place	Marduk creates the water supply in the first place and directs it to its proper place.
Ninurta's invention of irrigation eases the gods' toil	Marduk frees the gods of toil altogether by creating man
Ninurta decrees destinies for the stones	Marduk punishes Qingu and finds places for the other defeated enemies
Ninurta decrees destinies for 50 stones	The gods decree Marduk's destiny by awarding him 50 new names
Enlil praises Ninurta	Anu and Anšar praise Marduk

Table 1.

These events occur in the same order in both poems. This is particularly true after the battle with the re-establishment of order with new creations, limitations, and new destinies. It looks like the structure of *Ee* has been based on the structure of *Lugal-e* to some extent.

One may wonder whether or not these plot similarities are not simply due to a common folktalke pattern. Indeed, as has been pointed out by Feldt, this particular plot structure does follow one of the archetypal folktale trajectories identified by Vladimir Propp (Feldt, 2011: 144-5). This trajectory consists of the emergence of the threat, the emergence of the hero, the hero's journey, the battle, initial setback, consultation with a third party, victory over the monster, punishment of the enemy and re-establishment of order, return home, and praise or reward. However, the similarities between our two poems go much further than this: turning the defeated monster into a cosmic/geographic feature or establishing water supplies for agriculture are not to be found in all monster combat myths, after all. The many specific textual allusions enumerated in this chapter argue for *Lugal-e* as a model for *Ee,* at least in the section following the battle.

The implications of this are twofold: firstly, the Ninurta allusions do not simply come from the Akkadian *Anzû,* but also from the older Sumerian poem relating Ninurta's deeds, and they exhibit the same competitiveness towards Ninurta in both poems. Not only does Marduk always match and out-do Ninurta in *Anzû,* but Ninurta in *Lugal-e* as well. This shows an all-encompassing attempt to portray Marduk as superior to Ninurta in both of the most important poems narrating his rise to power. Secondly, it shows that responding to the Sumerian tradition was just as important as responding to the Akkadian one in accomplishing this. The effect of many of the allusions to *Lugal-e* is broadly the same as those to *Anzû*, but recognising allusions to *Lugal-e* tells us something about the esteem in which

Sumerian poetry was still held at the time *Ee* was written: it was still important, still recognised, and still contributed meaning.

However, where allusions to *Lugal-e* differ from allusions to *Anzû* is in that allusions to *Lugal-e* do not only invoke Ninurta's warrior aspect but also his role in creation and re-establishing order. Ninurta is more than a warrior deity: he is also an agricultural one, and one who administers justice. These aspects are not present in *Anzû*, but they are in *Lugal-e.* *A*llusions to *Lugal-e* in *Ee,* then, reveal this other side of Ninurta's character which Marduk is adopting.

The question arises whether or not new poems such as *Ee* are supposed to replace the poems with which they compete. The incorporation of elements from older poems into newer ones also occurs with the flood story of *Atr* in *Gilgameš,* as well as in the Ninurta/Marduk poems under discussion here. In my opinion, this is unlikely. Firstly because none of these texts disappear, but continue to be copied right into the late period. In the case of *Lugal-e,* this may be because it may have been used in rituals for the king in a way that *Ee* was not. The poems had different purposes. This is also the case for *Atr*, since a Standard Babylonian version continued to be copied in the first millennium long after the writing of *Gilgameš.*

Even with the gods themselves it is not simply a case of Marduk replacing Ninurta, however. The statue of Marduk was the main object of veneration in the chapel of Ninurta both in Esaĝil and in Ninurta's temple Eḫursaĝtilla, but the localities themselves were still ascribed to Ninurta rather than to Marduk, and so this is best interpreted as Ninurta forming one aspect of Marduk (George, 1997). Marduk takes on different aspects of the other gods, absorbing them rather than outright replacing them. In this case there is no conflict with the Ninurta-aspect of Marduk continuing to be celebrated in its own poems. A Babylonian

reader of *Lugal-e* who believed that Marduk and Ninurta were one and the same may have understood that he was reading about an aspect of Marduk. This interpretation again need not conflict with the understanding that Marduk was superior to Ninurta, for Ninurta had, after all, been reduced to an aspect. Thus a late Babylonian reader of *Lugal-e* could perhaps interpret the text in either way: as if Marduk himself were performing these deeds, or as if the protagonist was a different god inferior to Marduk.

Perhaps the most important point, however, is that if the original poems were lost, the significance of the take-over/absorption would be lost also. If we understand exactly how far superior Marduk was to Ninurta through comparison with earlier poems, it means more than it would if we simply had a list of impressive deeds, even if we knew that they had once been accomplished by another deity. Although it cannot be proven, I suspect that the ancient Mesopotamians felt the same way: if the older poems were obsolete, they would have stopped copying them, and the fact that they continue to allude to *Lugal-e* even in poems as late as *Erra* shows that understanding these older poems was still seen as important for understanding new poems.

Another observation to be made is that it is largely the underlying structure of *Lugal-e* that has provided the underlying structure for the second half of *Ee.* This is comparable to the structure of *Erra,* which is modelled on the *Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur*, to be explored in chapter seven. Structural adaptations are also at work in the way that *Ee* plays with *Anzû,* and so this type of borrowing does not come only from Sumerian poems. It may be an important clue, however, to what we should be looking for when we analyse resemblances between poems, another type of allusion which is less obvious than, for example, direct quotation, and yet just as important in contributing meaning.

Chapter Five

Erra: Allusions to *Anzû* and *Lugal-e*

We have seen manifold ways in which Marduk is presented as a new Ninurta figure in *Ee* via allusions to *Anzû* and *Lugal-e.* The *Poem of Erra and Išum* also interacts with these two Ninurta poems, but to very different ends. The character linked to Ninurta is not the warrior god on the attack (Erra), but Išum, the one who pleads against this violence, in a subversion of heroic norms. Erra is equated with Ninurta's opponent, Anzû, and Marduk is linked with Enlil, whom Anzû tricked into giving up the tablet of destinies. Allusions to *Lugal-e* connect Išum not only with Ninurta but also with his vizier Šar-ur, using these different associations to emphasise different aspects of his character. As Erra's weapons, the Sebettu also draw on Šar-ur, the deified weapon of Ninurta. Išum's role as a protector of mankind is brought out also by his comparison to a door locked before the Sebettu, a line which probably refers both to Ea in *Atraḫasīs* and Ninurta in *Lugal-e* at the same time. The techniques are varied and complex, but all work towards the same goal of elevating Išum as a new type of hero. Išum does not have the same heroic background as Ninurta, and thus the Ninurta associations help to build up this image.

Although *Erra* is later than *Ee,* Marduk's 'replacement' of Ninurta in *Ee* has not entirely ousted the older warrior god. Assyrian royal inscriptions often depict the king as the image of Ninurta against Anzû in battle. This cosmic conflict has become a paradigm for all terrestrial conflicts, of good versus evil, alongside *Ee* rather than instead of it (Annus, 2001: xxi). Allusions to *Lugal-e* in Assyrian royal inscriptions accomplish more or less the same goal

(see e.g. Maul, 1999: 210; Parpola, 2001: 185). *Erra* is a Babylonian poem and so one might expect it to uphold *Ee* as the standard model of heroism, but it does not. As we shall see in the next chapter, allusions to *Ee* actually emphasise Babylon's fall from former glory, and it is Ninurta as presented in *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* who is invoked as an example of greatness.

The dynamic at work between *Erra* and *Anzû* is similar to that between *Ee* and *Anzû*. As we have seen in *Ee,* references to Ninurta's task – heroic in its time – within a larger, more complex narrative elevate Marduk's own achievement: he is not only as good as Ninurta was, he is better. In the same way Išum is compared to Ninurta, implying that Išum's approach is superior to that of the traditional Ninurta paradigm: Išum's weapons of language and persuasion are of more use in turbulent times than the strength shown by Ninurta in battle. Ninurta took the advice of Ea in using word play to defeat his opponent, thus the power of language is also important in *Anzû.* However, Išum himself possesses this eloquence in *Erra,* and does not depend on Ea for it. This is similar to how Marduk in *Ee* was shown as an improved version of Ninurta, since Marduk did not need advice - neither does Išum, rather, he is the one giving advice to Erra. Thus a strategy of Ninurta's which originated with Ea has been given wholly to Išum, underlining the superiority of this new hero, who is Ninurta and Ea in one.

Anzû – Išum as Ninurta

Connections between *Erra* and *Anzû* have long been evident. Several scholars have noted that the prologues of the two poems are strikingly similar (e.g. Saggs, 1986: 2; Dalley, 2000: 204; Annus, 2001: xxv; Machinist, 2005: 32, Krebernik, 2008: 56). Annus remarks that this indicates a similarity in meaning and theological implications between the two poems

(2001: xxv). Further evidence for a connection between the two works comes from a large tablet (GM1, Saggs, 1986) which contains passages from both *Erra* (on the damaged obverse) and *Anzû* (on the reverse), indicating that the two texts were meant to be read together, or at least were grouped together by this particular scribe.[215] The tablet was found in the temple of Nergal at Tarbiṣu, and was clearly written by an expert: the writing is meticulous, and contains one gloss and a colophon (Saggs, 1986: 2). This is not the random co-occurrence of scribal exercises but a deliberate arrangement. Furthermore, since Nergal forms the subject of one of the poems in his incarnation as Erra, there may be a theological reason behind the grouping. Saggs suggests this reason might be a close relationship between Nergal and Ninurta (1986: 2). However, the allusions to *Anzû* in the poem of *Erra* itself make a much stronger equation of Išum with Ninurta.

A text commemorating the donation of Anzû-birds to this temple uses epithets of Išum which are also used in *Erra* (Weissert, 1997: 193). Išum is called *na'du*, 'the famous one,' and *ša qātāšu asmā*, 'the one 'whose hands are fitting,' which Weissert observes together evoke line 4 of *Erra*: *ṭa$_2$-bi-ḫu na-a'-du ša$_2$ ana* ˹*na-še-e* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}˺*-šu$_2$ ez-zu-ti qātā*(ŠU^{II})*-šu$_2$ as-ma*, 'the famous slaughterer whose hands are fitting to carry his fierce weapons.' The fact that *Erra* was brought to mind by Anzû-birds and Nergal indicates a connection between the two mythologies. Significantly, the particular allusion chosen recognises the importance of Išum to the cult. Annus even proposes that on the occasion described by this inscription, Išum was identified as Ninurta, the slayer of Anzû (2001: xxvi). As we shall see, this identification finds strong support in the poem of *Erra* itself.

[215] The tablet probably had space for a third poem (Al-Rawi & Black, 1989: 111, 122), which Machinist speculates could have been *Enūma Eliš*, on the basis of the intertextual connections between the three (2005: 33-4).

Išum is the new rescuer of men and gods from chaos and destruction, the real hero of the poem (Bottéro, 1985: 277). This is a radical statement, yet the basis for it can be seen outside the text. A recent study of Išum by Weiershäuser highlights Išum's benevolence towards mankind (2010). In incantations he is invoked for protection, as ***sukkal sūqi*** ('vizier of the street,' *Bīt mēseri* II.74), ***nāgir sūqi*** ('herald of the street,' *Udug-ḫul* 5), and ***nūr nišīka*** ('light of your people,' *Udug-ḫul* 6, 125, 150) (2010: 354). Išum is asked to stand by the patient in a healing ritual in *Udug-ḫul* 15.92, he appears in a list of divine statues to have healing spells recited in front of them (Zimmern, *AB* 12, no. 53), and is called upon in a Neo-Assyrian Namburbi-ritual, (Maul, 1994: 358, lines 28-38). From this evidence, Weiershäuser concludes that the main function of Išum was to protect men from evil. His friendly disposition is evident in all texts (2010: 371), particularly in popular religion (Edzard RLA V: 214). Thus the poem's invocation of Išum as a hero protecting the people against the violence wreaked by Erra is coherent with his personality as attested elsewhere (on his role as intercessor cf. Bodi, 1991: 264).

What is striking is how the elevation of Išum contrasts his approach to a violent situation with Ninurta's: warriors need not always use brute force. Although quite capable of violence, Išum chooses not to use it, opting for persuasion instead. This is partially determined by his traditional relationship to Erra, which is not that of two hostile enemies such as Ninurta and Anzû or Marduk and Ti'āmtu, but that of vizier (***sukkallu***) and master. Yet Išum does not behave in this way in the poem (Hruška, 1973: 5); it is remarkable that the subordinate stands up to his superior in such a way, conversing with him like an equal. The comparison with Ninurta thus elevates his courage to heroic stature.

Išum's reputation as an intercessor can also be found in the *Underworld vision of an Assyrian crown prince* (edition Livingstone, 1989: no. 32), where in r. 16 he is described as: ^{d}*i*-

šum ma-lik-šu$_2$ *mu-kil ab-bu-ut-ti ēṭir*(KAR-*ir*) *napišti*(ZI-*ti*$_3$) *ra-'i-im ki-na-a-ti*, 'Išum, his (Nergal's) counsellor, intercessor, the one who saves life, who loves the truth' (Weiershäuser, 2010: 369). Here Išum plays the same role as in *Erra*, calming Erra so that he does not kill the prince and so he might live to sing Erra's praises (r.17).[216] This is more or less the same principle found in the poem: at the end Erra proclaims that whoever praises him shall be spared and protected (V.49-56). It is also the principle behind the success of Išum's speeches: as we shall see, by bewailing Erra's destruction he acknowledges his power, an indirect form of praise which finally placates the heart of the god (cf. Bottéro, 1985: 276-7).

Išum thus has the right background to step up as a new type of hero. We can now examine the allusions which present him as such in more detail. A brief summary of *Anzû* and *Erra* together will show the main points of comparison.

In *Anzû*, the Anzû bird becomes jealous of Enlil's power and steals the tablet of destinies which bestows this power. Chaos results, the divine order is overturned – without the tablet, Enlil cannot retain control. Anu asks three gods to fight Anzû and recover the tablet, but none of them agrees. It is Ninurta who accepts the challenge. However, his might in battle is useless against Anzû's magic spell, which turns his arrows back into the raw materials from which they were made. It is only when Ea recognises that Anzû's power is in his faculty of speech that Ninurta is able to defeat him, using word play as a trick (Reiner, 1985: 64). Ea advises that Ninurta cut off Anzû's wings, saying: *liṭ-ṭul-ma kap-pa-šu*$_2$ ⌜*lit*⌝*-ba-la zi-kir pi-i-šu*$_2$ 'Let him see his wings, let them take away speech from his mouth' (II.109). Sure enough, when Ninurta cuts off Anzû's wings, he cries: *ka-pa a-na ka-pa*, ('Wing, (come back) to wing!') (III.13). Anzû tries to use the power of the tablet of destinies to recover his lost wings

[216] This Neo-Assyrian text appears to be later than *Erra*, so this portrayal of Išum may have been inspired by the poem of *Erra* itself.

rather than deflect Ninurta's next attack. However, in doing so, he calls the feathers of Ninurta's arrows to him instead, thus bringing about his own demise.[217] Anzû's main defence was a verbal one, but it was outwitted.

In *Erra,* the god Erra becomes jealous of the power of Marduk (who has now replaced Enlil in the pantheon), and tricks him into surrendering power. References to the tablet of destinies are made in conjunction with this (III.D.9; IV.44). Erra, now in control, causes devastation in an attempt to gain recognition of his might. The panicked gods hold an assembly but are powerless to do anything. Ištar fails to dissuade Erra. It is Išum who succeeds, after several failed attempts, by giving Erra the recognition he craves as a mighty warrior. Išum's defence of the people against the violence inflicted by Erra is a verbal one, but this time it is successful.

These topoi do occur in other Akkadian works of literature. However, the textual connections, and particular thematic relevance of these two compositions strengthen a claim of direct allusion. In *Anzû*, it is language which has the real power of defence: without it Anzû cannot utter his magic spell, and is vulnerable to Ninurta's attack. The power of language is a major theme of *Erra* (Machinist & Sasson, 1983: 226): the composition is dominated by speeches, in particular the showdown of words between Erra and Išum that form the real 'battle' of the text: it is through persuasion rather than violence that Išum placates Erra. However, whereas in *Anzû* language is the counter-attacking weapon of the

[217] This is following the text of the Assur manuscript LKA 1. The Sultantepe version has *kap-*[*pi*] *kap-pi i-šas-si,* 'He called 'My wings, my wings!', which implies that Anzu is so shocked by what has happened that he forgets to use the tablet of destinies (M. Vogelzang, 1989: 71). Cf. the interpretation of Reiner (1985: 64-5), that while intending to recover his severed wings, Anzû inadvertently utters the call of an ordinary bird instead - *kappī* is a bird call attested in a scholarly list (edition Lambert, 1970). Thus after crying 'my wing', Anzû loses the ability to formulate human words and can only sound the chirps of birds. This is more likely to be a secondary development rather than inherent in the *Anzû* poem itself, however.

aggressor, and it is neutralised by violence (cutting off Anzû's wings), in *Erra* we have an inversion: violence is the weapon of the aggressor (Erra) and it is neutralised by language (Išum's speeches). This is another example of the newer text improving on its model, this time by reversing its themes, and thereby proposing a very different ideal.

The similarities begin with the prologues:

> [*bi*]-⌜*in*⌝ *šar*(LUGAL) *da-ad-mi* ⌜*šu*⌝-[*pa-a na-ram* ^{d}*ma-mi*]
> [*ga-aš*$_2$]-*ra lu-uz-za-mur* ⌜*ilu*(DINGIR)⌝ [*bu-kur*$_2$ ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$]
> [^{d}]*nin-urta šu-pa-a* ⌜*na*⌝-[*ram* ^{d}*ma-mi*]
> ⌜*ga*⌝-*aš*$_2$-*ra lu-ut-ta-a'-id* ⌜*ilu*(DINGIR)⌝ [*bu-kur*$_2$ ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$]
>
> [Scion] of the king of inhabited regions, [resplendent one, beloved of Mami],
> let me sing of the [mighty] one, divine [son of Enlil],
> Ninurta, resplendent one, [beloved of Mami],
> let me praise the mighty one, divine [son of Enlil].
>
> SB *Anzû* 1-4

> ⌜*šar*(LUGAL)⌝ *gi-mir da-ad*$_2$*-me ba-nu-u kib-*[*ra-a-ti.....*]
> ^{d}*ḫendur-saĝ-ĝa*$_2$ *mār*(DUMU) ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *reš-*⌜*tu*⌝-[*u.....*]
> *na-aš*$_2$ *ḫaṭ-ṭu ṣir-ti na-qid ṣal-mat qaqqadi*(SAG.DU) *re-'u-u* [*te-ne-še-ti*]
> ^{d}*i-šum ṭa*$_2$*-bi-ḫu na-a'-du ša*$_2$ *ana* ⌜*na-še-e* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}-⌝*šu*$_2$ *ez-zu-ti qātā*(ŠU^{II})- *šu*$_2$ *as-ma*
>
> King of all inhabited regions, creator of the [world...]
> Hendursaga, first-born son of Enlil, […]
> bearer of the exalted sceptre, shepherd of the black-headed, herdsman [of the people]
> Išum, zealous slaughterer, whose hands are suited to bear fierce weapons
>
> *Erra* 1-4

The addressee of the *Erra* prologue is a subject of much debate due to the missing parts of the first two lines. Erra, Išum, and Marduk have all been proposed.[218] Išum is the

[218] Erra: Gössmann (1955); Marduk: Reiner (1958); Išum: Falkenstein (1959), Edzard (*RLA* V: 166), Cagni (1969: 139-40; 1977: 85), Wilcke (1977: 196), Machinist & Sasson (1983: 222-3), Dalley (2000: 313), Machinist (2005: 57). Farber (2008) argues the first line is addressed to Erra, but the others refer to Išum.

most likely candidate, since Ḫendursaĝa is one of his names (Edzard, RLA V: 213; Cagni, 1969: 139-40; Attinger and Krebernik give an extensive list of god lists where the two are equated, 2005: 22 ff.). Furthermore, he is named at the beginning of line four, and it is a convention of Akkadian poetry to name the addressee at the beginning of the third or fourth line after a string of epithets introducing them (as Machinist & Sasson, 1983: 222-3).

The prologue of *Erra* takes *Anzû* as a starting point (Machinist, 2005: 32) and develops it further,[219] shaping it for its own purposes. The addressee of the *Anzû* prologue, Ninurta, is the 'scion' of the king of inhabited regions; the addressee of *Erra's* is of higher status, simply 'the king of all inhabited regions.' This may be compared to Marduk's surpassing of his model Ninurta in *Enūma Eliš.* A similar phenomenon occurs in the second line: Ninurta is 'son' of Enlil (*bu-kur*$_2$), but Išum is 'first-born son'[220] of Enlil (*mār*(DUMU) ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *reš-*^{r}*tu*^{1}-[*u*]), according him a still higher status than this standard epithet shared not only with Ninurta but many gods. Enlil had many sons; to be one of them was unremarkable, but to be *mār*(DUMU) ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *reš-*^{r}*tu*^{1}-[*u*] singles him out.

Both the epithets given to Išum in the first line, *šar gimir dadmē,* and *bānû kibrāti,* are epithets of Marduk (Reiner, 1958: 42). Marduk, however, is weak and easily duped in this poem; the transfer of his epithet to Išum shows who really has the power. It ought to have been the head of the pantheon who brought an end to Erra's chaos. Instead, it is a younger god, just as in *Enūma Eliš* the older gods stood back while Marduk faced Ti'āmtu. Now it is Marduk's turn to be sidelined as a younger god takes the stage. In fact, he is sidelined to such an extent that at the end of the poem it is Erra who decrees the restoration of Babylonia.

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[219] cf. Wilcke on its transition from hymnic prologue into narrative (1977: 196).

[220] Some scholars translate *bukru* as 'first-born,' based on analogies with Hebrew (following *AHw*), so it is possible that *mār*(DUMU) *reštû* is a gloss on *bukru.* However, there is little evidence for the word having this meaning in Akkadian, since it can be accompanied by *reštû* as well (CAD B: 310).

Marduk has faded out of the narrative completely, usurped by Erra even after his appeasement, Babylon itself now under Erra's control (Machinist, 2005: 48).

In *Anzû*, the second half of the first line gives an epithet connecting Ninurta to his mother, a key character persuading him to fight. The same epithet occurs again in line three. In the corresponding position in *Erra,* in place of *na-ram* ^{d}*ma-mi* we have *na-qid ṣal-mat qaqqadi*(SAG.DU), 'shepherd of the black-headed people.' One effect of substituting an epithet for a divine relation is to concentrate the credit for Išum's deeds; by not connecting him to any other god, the glory of winning round Erra is solely his. Moreover, the choice of epithet expresses that it is for the sake of Babylonia that Išum intervenes, rather than for the sake of family ties, which in *Anzû* are Ninurta's motivation for action. The exact placing might imply that the people have petitioned him to take action, just as Mami asked Ninurta for help. The lamentation allusions that occur in the poem support this reading, as we shall see later: lamentations are emotive ritual requests made by people of gods, beseeching them to use their powers to benefit their people. The prologue anticipates this in its praise of the hero.

Since Išum is substituted for Ninurta, an equation between the two is implied. The lines that follow praise Išum as a mighty warrior, and Ninurta is, of course, a warrior deity. Erra is Išum's opponent in the dialogues of the poem, and is equated with Ninurta's opponent Anzû twice in *Erra*, at III.C.33 and IV.44 (see next section below). Why, though, would the poet of *Erra* want to stress Išum's martial strength at the start of a poem in which he will use words rather than weapons? If we take into account the underlying associations of Ninurta and Anzû, set up as fearsome opponents who will face each other in one-to-one combat, this beginning becomes more coherent: by setting up Išum as Erra's military equal,[221] it is clear that he could stop him with violence if he chose to do so. Machinist suggests that,

[221] The epithet 'warrior' (*qarrādu*) is frequently used of both of them.

as in *Anzû*, 'the neutralising deity must take on the violent qualities of the deity he opposes,' (2005: 47). However, the fact remains that Išum does *not* use violence to stop Erra. His choice to use words instead is crucial, and is not due to a lack of other options but is a valid alternative. A reminder of this soon follows, when Erra: *i-ta-mi ana* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}-*šu*$_2$ *lit-pa-ta i-mat mu-u-ti* ('says to his weapons, 'Smear yourselves with deadly poison!'' I.7).[222] This reminds us of Ninurta's battle with Anzû, in which Ninurta's arrows are compared to poison (*šu-ku-du*[223] *im-ta li-me-šu*, 'let the arrow become poison to him!' II.10). These are, however, useless against Anzû's magic words. This allusion is not meant to change tack by equating Erra with Ninurta,[224] but to remind us of the parallel situation in which verbal weapons overcame weapons of force, and thus hints at why Išum, the warrior, will use this strategy later in the poem.

Erra as Anzû

Machinist has outlined the basic resemblances between Erra and Anzû in their respective poems: both are supposed to be performing guard duty for the chief deity, both challenge his authority and disrupt his cosmic order by taking a key possession, and both then become the source of a chaos which must be neutralised (2005: 46). Erra does not take the tablet of destinies from Marduk, but he takes the range of powers it symbolises. Marduk uses the image in a simile when he is lamenting that he gave away his power unwittingly:

[222] The image also has resonances with Ti'amtu's army and Qingu in *Ee,* for which see below pp. 253-4.
[223] Variants E: *šu-ku-da*; R: ⌜*šu-ku*⌝*-du-ka*,'your arrow.'
[224] Nergal is sometimes equated with Ninurta (Wiggermann, RLA IX: 221), but this need not contradict the different choice of this poem. Also cf. below n. 266.

[*u*'$_3$-*a*] ⌜*bābili*(TIN.TIR)⌝^{ki} *ša*$_2$ *ki-ma ṭuppi šīmāti*(DUB NAM.MEŠ) *ina qātī*(ŠU^{II})-*ia*$_2$
aṣ-ba-tu-šu$_2$-*ma la u*$_2$-*maš-ša*$_2$-*ru-šu*$_2$ *ana mam-ma*

[Ah, Babylon], which I gripped in my hands like the tablet of destinies,
releasing it to no one!

Erra IV.44

It is as if Erra, like Anzû, has snatched it away. Now Erra has also taken Babylon from Marduk – even at the end of the poem it is Erra who decrees its restoration, not the city's chief god (Machinist, 2005: 48).

Anzû is mentioned by name at III.C.33 when Išum, speaking of Erra, says: *ki-i ša*$_2$ *lem-na an-za-a a-na ke-me-šu*$_2$ *šu-par-ru-ra-*[*at še-et-su*], 'As if to catch the evil Anzû, his [net is] spread out!' This reference compares Erra to Ninurta, the slayer of Anzû, but it is surely ironic: the nets are in fact for the ordinary people dying in Erra's rampage.[225] The irony is increased in light of the previous references which have implicitly equated Išum with Ninurta and Erra with Anzû: far from trying to catch Anzû, Erra is himself behaving like Anzû.[226]

This reference, then, points to the misdirection of power. The idea is also present in a preceding line where Išum compares Erra's attack on the people of Babylon to Nergal's attack against Asakku: *ša*$_2$ *qurādu*(UR.SAG) ^{d}*nergal*(U.GUR) *ki-i u*$_4$*-me tāḫāzi*(ME$_3$) *a-sak-ki* [. . .], 'whom the wariorror Nergal [*overwhelmed*] like the storm of battle against Asakku […] (III.C.31). Instead of overwhelming Asakku, Erra is overwhelming the people. We may take

[225] Surviving texts of *Anzû* mention no net, but since it is a natural weapon to use against a bird it is an obvious image to use here to refer to the fight. Cf. Lambert (1986: 59) who notes that Marduk's use of a net against Ti'āmtu in *Enūma Eliš* (IV.95) is a potential reference to a version of *Anzû*, since a net is unsuitable for catching the sea, but a normal way of catching a bird. See chapter three p. 164 ff.

[226] Machinist offers a different interpretation: since Erra is referred to as Nergal in the preceding line (III.C.31), together with his conquest of the *Asakku*-demons, a famous exploit of Ninurta, this shows that Erra must conquer himself, and therefore take on the character of Ninurta instead of the character of Anzû (2005: 48). This would then be a redirection of Erra's violence to its proper place, using it in a constructive way. However, this too would be ironic, since the phrase comes well before Erra relents (IV.131 ff.) and is in the context of Išum's pity for the people (III.C.30-1).

this as an allusion to the story told in *Lugal-e* of Ninurta's battle against Asag, since Nergal and Ninurta were sometimes syncretised.[227] However, the poem of *Erra* refers often to *Lugal-e* as we know it, with specific textual allusions, so why the change of name here? It seems unlikely that here it would switch to alluding to a tradition more generally when it so often elsewhere alludes to *Lugal-e* as a particular text. Perhaps the reason is that Išum is connected with Ninurta in a positive way so often in this poem, that here when the comparison is a negative one, it is to more explicitly connect the doer of the evil deed with Erra. The warrior overwhelmed the people instead of the enemy, and hence he is named as one who is conveniently syncretised with both Ninurta and Erra, but who has no association with Išum.

The misdirection of power will be corrected at the end of the poem when Išum's rhetoric finally succeeds and Erra's violence is turned away from the undeserving people of Babylonia and onto their enemies. Išum attacks the Šaršar mountain, the home of the Suteans, but also the birthplace of Anzû and the place to which he took the tablet of destines (Annus, 2001: xxv). The mountains are the location of Ninurta's victories, over both Asag and Anzû. Thus there is a further equation between Išum and Ninurta in Išum's flattening of the mountain, since both restore divine order: Ninurta by eliminating Anzû, Išum by eliminating the Suteans (Annus, 2012: 32) and bringing an end to Erra's violence. This is the final attack on the idea of Anzû, when Erra's association with it is destroyed and he is rehabilitated as a god in his proper place, no longer rebellious, brought under control.

[227] E.g. in the SB theological text KAR 142 (edition Pongratz-Leisten, 1994: 221) Nergal is named as one of the seven Ninurtas (i 23). An Eršemma whose subscript designates it as an Eršemma of Ninurta begins by addressing Nergal (Cohen, 1981: 143-4). They are identified at least as early as the OB period, as both are sons of Enlil who avenge their father (von Weiher, 1971: 12). Lambert points out that IV R 30, 1 - one of the texts collected by von Weiher in his study of Nergal – is in fact a Ninurta text because it alludes to *Lugal-e* (Lambert, 1973: 356).

Stripped of power

Erra persuades Marduk to give up his seat by asking him why his garments are dirty (I.127-28). This is the pretext for Marduk to set off for the Apsû where the cleaning can take place. This resonates with *Anzû* where Enlil strips for his bath. When Enlil is divested of his crown, his symbol of lordship, this is the moment for Anzû to seize his power by flying off with the tablet of destinies. Similarly, when Marduk is divested of his crown and his garments cleaned, Erra takes his place and disaster follows (Gössmann, 1955: 82; Krebernik, 2008: 56). The head of the pantheon in both cases is displaced while a force of chaos takes control (Machinist, 2005: 46-7), which helps to establish Erra as an Anzû-like demonic figure. There is also a verbal connection with the description of the crown as being stripped off:

e-nu-ma ^{d}*en-lil*$_2$ *i-ra-mu-ku mê*(A)^{meš} *ellūti*(KU$_3$)^{meš}
šaḫ-ṭu-ma ina ^{giš}*kussi*(GU.ZA) *a-gu-šu šak-nu*
ṭuppi šīmāti(DUB.NAM.MEŠ) *ik-šu-da qa-tuš-šu*
^{d}*en-lil*$_2$*-u*$_2$*-tu il-te-qu*$_2$ *na-du-*^{r}*u*$_2$^{1} [*par-ṣu*]

When Enlil was bathing in the pure waters,
stripped, his crown placed on the throne,
he (Anzû) took the tablet of destinies in his hand!
He took supremacy, [authority] was overthrown!

Anzû I.79-82

At *Erra* III.C.46 when Erra is rebuking Išum for trying to dissuade him, he sums up the situation:

mātāti(KUR.KUR) *nap-ḫar-ši-na i-ku-na mi-i-na*
a-ge-e be-lu-ti-šu$_2$ *iš-ta-ḫaṭ*
šarru(LUGAL) *u rubê*(NUN)^{meš} x x (x) x *i-maš-šu-u*$_2$ *par-ṣi-šu*$_2$-[*un*]
ne$_2$*-ep-ta-šu*$_2$ *ip-ta-ṭar*
qa-bal ilānī(DINGIR)^{meš} *u amēli*(LU$_2$) *ip-paṭ-ṭa-*^{r}*ra*^{1}-[*ma*] *a-na ra-ka-si iš-ši-*[*ṭa*]

What is left of all the lands?
He (Marduk) stripped off the crown of his lordship.
King and princes … forget their authority/rites.
He has undone his girdle,
the bond between the gods and man is undone, difficult to tie (again)!

Erra III.C.45-9

Here too the crown has been 'stripped off'(*šaḫāṭu*), recalling Enlil's loss of regalia and loss of power. Like Enlil, Marduk has lost his power and the result is anarchy. However, there is a difference, for while Enlil lost his power by accident, Marduk willingly surrendered his. Enlil undressed for a bath with no suspicion that this would lead to the theft of the *ṭuppi šīmāti,* while Marduk knew that danger could follow his departure to the Apsû for a clean up. This contributes to the image of Marduk as even more irresponsible than Enlil.

Interesting too is the use of *parṣū* (literally 'rites' or 'responsibilities') in both passages. In *Anzû* it primarily refers to the cosmic order (equivalent to the Sumerian me), signifying that the regulations holding the cosmos together have been overthrown. It also probably refers to Enlil's divine responsibilities, that is, the responsibilities of rule, which he is no longer able to carry out. The use of the stative with *parṣū* as subject puts the emphasis on the *parṣū* rather than Enlil, emphasising that Enlil lost his power by accident. In *Erra,* however, it is Marduk who took off his own crown and the mortal rulers who are now powerless. In one sense, it is because their authority is useless now that Marduk has abandoned them: they can do nothing without the support of the gods, and now that this cosmic order has unravelled. However, the 'divine responsibilities' can be cultic ones in the case of mortals. Forgetting them implies that they have neglected Marduk's cult, and thus are partially to blame for their situation. Thus both men and gods are responsible for the destruction that occurred.

At the same time, Marduk's undressing recalls the murder of Apsû in *Ee:*

ip-ṭur rik-si-šu iš-ta-ḫat a-ga-šu
me-lam-mi-šu it-ba-la šu-u_2 u_2-ta-di-iq

He (Ea) untied his (Apsû's) sash, he stripped off his crown,
he removed his aura, he[228] put it on himself.

Ee I.67-8

This has interesting implications given the equation of Marduk and Enlil. As we saw in chapter three, the murder of Apsû may be a symbolic way of dethroning Enlil. Perhaps, then, this allusion to the dethroning of Apsû is also an ironic reference to Marduk's deposing of Enlil – now Marduk himself is being overthrown. In any case, the taking off of royal garments is a well-established symbol of loss of power in both these earlier two poems, and the recurrence of it in *Erra* is a sure sign of things to come.

Lugal-e

As we saw in *Ee,* the portrayal of Marduk as a Ninurta-figure drew not only on the Akkadian prototype of *Anzû* but the Sumerian one of *Lugal-e* too. The situation is the same in *Erra:* Išum is connected with Ninurta through allusions to *Lugal-e* as well as *Anzû.* However *Lugal-e* also makes another important contribution in the form of Šar-ur, who is the literary ancestor of both Išum as Erra's vizier, and the Sebettu as Erra's weapons. In this split, two different characters allude to the same figure, an unusual technique which adds much to the characterisation of all involved. The positive attributes of Šar-ur (persuasion for the good, eloquence, the good vizier) have been given to Išum, while the negative (destructiveness in battle, persuasion towards violence) is reflected by the Sebettu.

[228] HH has 'Ea' ($^{d}e_2$-*a* instead of *šu-*u_2)

Jeremy Black stated in passing that *Lugal-e* clearly formed a model for *Erra* (1992: 86). The article is concerned with the structure of Sumerian narrative poetry, and so the implication is that it is the narrative structure which is similar in the two compositions. They certainly begin in a similar way with a hymn of praise and an incitement to battle, which may encourage us initially to compare *Lugal-e* to *Erra* before it diverges from it. *Lugal-e* opens with a hymn of praise to Ninurta, while *Erra* opens with a hymn of praise to Išum, who is likened to Ninurta in subtle ways. Most striking is the description of Ninurta in *Lugal-e* line 5:

˹en˺ šu silig-ga ĝeš mi-tum-se$_3$ ĝal$_2$

Lord whose mighty hand is for the mace[229]

be-lu ša$_2$ ina qa-ti-šu$_2$ el-le-tu$_4$ mi-iṭ-ṭa na-šu-u$_2$

Lord who bears the mace in his pure hand

Lugal-e 5

The Sumerian line seems to be echoed by *Erra* line 4 describing Išum as the slaughterer *ša$_2$ ana na-še-e* giš*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš} *ez-zu-ti qātā*(ŠU^{II})*-šu$_2$ as-ma*, 'whose hands are fitting to bear fierce weapons'. We have already seen many connections to Ninurta as represented in the Akkadian *Anzû* poem, but this is perhaps the clearest connection of Išum to Ninurta seen so far. Later Šar-ur addresses Ninurta as: lugal-ĝu$_{10}$ lu$_2$ iri-ni-še$_3$ gur-ra, 'my king, who turns (sympathetically) towards his city,' or in the Akkadian: *be-lu$_4$ ša$_2$ ana a-li-šu$_2$ ta-ia-a-ri*, 'lord who is turning (sympathetically) towards his city' (*Lugal-e* 33). So too does Išum show care for the people of Babylon in *Erra* in his passionate verbal defence. As is the case in *Ee*, the connection to Sumerian forerunners is also important, as well as Akkadian ones, although overall the Akkadian paradigm of Ninurta in *Anzû* is more prominent.

[229] I.e. suitable for bearing the mace

In my view it is the character of Šar-ur that is the most important borrowing from *Lugal-e*, as he serves as a model for two important figures in *Erra:* Išum and the Sebettu.

Šar-ur is a deified weapon who acts as Ninurta's vizier in *Lugal-e.* He fights alongside him (and ahead of him), relays messages, and gives him advice. Išum has a similar role in *Erra*: he is Erra's 'vanguard' *ālik maḫri* (e.g. I.11, 99, 105, 108), used as Erra's 'weapon' to enact destruction, as Erra commands him to lead the Sebettu into battle at the start (I.95-99) and he leads them against mount Šar-šar at the end (IV.139-50). The Sebettu are the ones who actually cause the destruction, directed by Išum, and so are more directly analogous to Šar-ur in this respect. It is stated explicitly at the beginning that Anu gave them to Erra specifically to be his *kakkū ezzūti,* his raging weapons (I.44).

Immediately after the hymn of praise, Šar-ur announces the terrible deeds of Asag and asks Ninurta what can be done to oppose it (*Lugal-e* 24-69). Implicit in this speech is his confidence that Ninurta can overcome Asag: ĝeš$_{rab_3}$ diĝir-re-e-ne na-dab$_5$-en, 'you will force it into the shackles of the gods' (57). In *Erra,* the Sebettu make an early appearance after the hymn (*Erra* I.23-43) and persuade Erra to take up arms in a lengthy speech (*Erra* I.44-91). This is where Išum and the Sebettu diverge: what is interesting is how both allusive descendants of Šar-ur persuade Erra to take different approaches. The Sebettu urge violence, Išum urges against it,[230] and Erra is caught in between two opposing arguments. In *Lugal-e,* Šar-ur actually tries to persuade Ninurta *not* to fight Asag (135-50). At first he is ignored, and ever-obedient, assists in the battle. But later he tries again (265-80). This seems to be the prototype of Išum's pleas for Erra to desist from his violence, for Išum is not disobedient

[230] Assuming that it is Erra speaking to his heart in I.13-14 rather than Išum. See note 237 below (p. 230) for further discussion.

either, not refusing to carry out Erra's plans, but simply putting forward his opinion on them.

The reasoning of both characters, however, is very different. Šar-ur's main concern is that Asag is too strong and Ninurta will not be able to defeat him. Išum, on the other hand, laments the suffering which Erra has inflicted on his people. This split fits well with the themes of *Erra* as enacting battles of language as well as force, and marks it out as a different kind of poem from the heroic narratives which preceded it, those that follow the pattern of *Lugal-e* (*Anzû* and *Ee*). It also adds to the characterisation of both Išum and Erra. By using the Sebettu as the actual agents of violence, Išum is not the one to directly carry it out, which adds to his portrayal as a saviour of his people rather than their destroyer. As for Erra, no doubts are shown about his ability to defeat his chosen target. However, his target is innocent people. When one compares this 'battle' with the battle in *Lugal-e,* far from seeming all powerful and superior, Erra seems petty and wantonly destructive, for he has not chosen a worthy opponent such as Asag, but is cutting down defenceless humans. This may be read as subverting the interactions of *Ee* and *Anzû* with their predecessors: there we saw competition, where each poem gave its hero a more formidable rival, a bigger challenge, and greater glory. *Erra* does the opposite.

There is one final curiosity that may resonate with *Lugal-e*, a reflection on the loss of saviour warrior figures in changing times. In *Erra* I.150, Marduk asks,

> *a-li* ^{giš}*mēsu*(MES) *šīr*(UZU) *ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš} *si-mat šar*(LUGAL) *gim-ri*[231]
> *iṣ-ṣu el-lu eṭ-lu ṣi-i-ru ša*$_2$ *šu-lu-ku a-na be-lu-ti*
>
> "Where is the mēsu tree, flesh of the gods, symbol[232] of the lord of all?
> "The pure wood, exalted youth who is appropriate for lordship?
>
> *Erra* I.150-51

[231] So ms. B; S has *gi-mir*.
[232] Or 'suitable for the lord of all'.

He is referring to the mes tree, a sacred tree used to make divine statues, lamenting that its absence means he cannot refurbish his own image. There is a bilingual pun in line 151 since Sumerian mes without a giš determinative means 'young man', Akkadian *eṭ-lu* (Cagni, 1977: 35), although on a concrete level *eṭ-lu ṣi-i-ru* here describes a young tree, a sapling.

Noegel suggests that Marduk is here speaking a pun on his own name, which is sometimes written ^{d}MES (2011: 176). However, I think it interesting to note that Ninurta in *Lugal-e* is called a great mes tree. This may be another reflection of Marduk's now distant take-over from Ninurta. The passage in *Lugal-e* reads:

> en mes maḫ ˹gan$_2$˺-e a-du$_{11}$-ga ur-saĝ a-ba za-gin$_7$
> lugal-ĝu$_{10}$ za$_3$-zu ba-ra-ga-an-til ba-ra-ga-an-tuš ba-ra-ga-u$_3$-tu[233]
>
> Lord, great mes tree in a watered field, hero, who is like you?
> My king, beside you there is no one else, no one can sit (beside you), no one is born (like you)!
>
> *Lugal-e* 310-11

In both cases the mes tree is a symbol of scarcity, a rare treasure. In *Lugal-e* it is used to show Ninurta's uniqueness among all the gods. It may be possible, then, to read Marduk's comment in *Erra* as a double reference to Ninurta: at the same time as lamenting the lack of suitable wood for his statue, he may be lamenting the lack of a strong young hero such as Ninurta to intervene to save the gods from decline. The epithet *šar gimri* here refers to Marduk (Reiner, 1958: 42). However, note that *sīmat šar gimri* in line 150 is written *gi-mir* in manuscript S, which may betray a connection to Išum, described in line 1 as *šar gimir dadmē*. As we have seen, Išum is often connected with Ninurta, thus a double-meaning could be at play.

[233] No Akkadian lines are preserved.

The lack of a traditional Ninurta-figure, a warrior who would protect Babylon, is further brought out by a re-use of Ninurta's epithet *mutīr gimilli*, 'the avenger'. In *Erra* IV.23 the governor of Babylon is called *mu-tir gi-mil bābili*(KA$_2$.DINGIR.RA)^{ki} 'avenger of Babylon' or 'the one who does a favour to Babylon'. Since the governor's actions are abominable, inciting his own troops to plunder his city rather than protect it, this is likely to be ironic. *mutīr gimilli* is a well known epithet of Ninurta in *Anzû*, the one who avenges his father and helps him by recovering his lost power. Thus ironically comparing the governor of Babylon to Ninurta underscores just how unlike Ninurta he is, and how absent is this traditional warrior figure.

Išum the door

Išum is portrayed as a saviour of mankind in an intriguing line which alludes both to Ea in *Atr* and Ninurta in *Lugal-e* at the same time. Išum is said to be the door holding the Sebettu back and keeping them under control:

> ^{d}*i-šum dal-tum-ma e-dil pa-nu-*$^{\lceil}$*uš*$^{\rceil}$*-*[*šu*]*-*$^{\lceil}$*un*$^{\rceil}$
>
> Išum is the door locked before them[234]
>
> *Erra* I.27

Calling Išum a door marks him out as a moderator of violence, since he can either open the doors of destruction or close them and bring it to an end (George, 2013: 52). However, the intertextual associations of the line invoke the holding back of destruction in different forms. We are reminded of *Atr*, where Ea is given custodianship of 'the bolt, the bar of the sea,' *šigaru naḫbalu tâmti* (OB I.15; SB V.53-4; 57-8). By releasing this bolt, Ea helps

[234] So ms. S; B has *pa-nu-uš-šu*, 'before him'.

mankind avoid famine by unleashing an abundance of fish. In a passage in the SB version Enlil rebukes him, saying that he had commanded:

> [*ši-ga-ru na-aḫ*]-*ba-lu tam-ti*
> [*at-ta ta-na*]-⌜*aṣ*⌝-*ṣa-ra qa*$_2$-*du laḫ*$_3$-*mi-ka*
> [*tu-ma-aš*$_2$]-⌜*šer*$_3$⌝ *a-na nišī*(UG$_3$)^{meš} *mi-šer*$_3$-*tu*$_2$
>
> "[that the bolt], the trap of the sea,
> "[you should] stand guard over, together with your hairy hero-men.
> "[(But) you let loose] abundance for the people!
>
> SB ms. x rev ii 4-6 (tablet 'VI'?) (text from George & Al-Rawi, 1996)

Calling Išum the door (*daltum*) links him with Ea as a protector of mankind, for he too is the only thing standing between them and their destruction. Išum will be the one to save them in the end, as Ea was. Crucially, however, the detail is reversed: Išum must *not* draw back the bolt if he is to save mankind. Whether nor not he does is unknown, since the critical parts of tablets II and III are damaged. However at III.C.40 ff. comes another reflex of *Atr*, when Erra rebukes Išum:

> *ša*$_2$ ^{d}*i*$_2$-*gi*$_3$-*gi*$_3$ *ṭe*$_3$-*en-šu-nu ti-de-ma ša*$_2$ ^{d}*a-nun-na-ki mi*$_3$-*lik-šu*$_2$-*un*
> *a-na nišī*(UG$_3$)^{meš} *ṣal-mat qaqqadi*(SAG.DU) *ur-ta ta-nam-din-ma uz-zu-un*$^{!}$(AN)-*ši-na tuš-pa-te*
> *min*$_3$-*su ki-i la mu-de-e ta-ta-me at-ta*
> *ki-i ša*$_2$ *a-mat* ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU) *la ti-du-u ta-mal-li-kan-ni ia-a-ši*
>
> You who know the plan of the Igigi, the counsel of the Anunnaki,
> you give orders to the black-headed people, you give them understanding![235]
> Why do you speak like an idiot?
> You counsel me like one who does not know Marduk's word!
>
> *Erra* III.C.40-4

This is reminiscent of Ea's behaviour in *Atr*, as he tells the mortal Atraḫasīs of Enlil's plans to destroy mankind against his will. It seems like Erra may be referring to or

[235] Or perhaps, 'would you give orders…' as Foster (2005: 899).

anticipating a similar plan on Išum's part and squashing it: indeed, we hear nothing of any attempt to warn mankind of the coming destruction.

However, Išum as the door also harks back to *Lugal-e,* where it is said of Ninurta:

bad$_3$ maḫ-gin$_7$ kalam-ma igi-ba bi-in-tab-ba

He barred the front of the land[236] like a great wall

⌜ki⌝-ma du-ur ra-bi-i pa-an ma-a-ti ⌜i⌝-[di-il]

He [bolted] the front of the land like a great wall

Lugal-e 351

Ninurta is piling up the stones to build a dam to keep destructive waters under control. This is an act of benevolence towards the people, since the control of water stops it causing destruction, enables them to cultivate fields, and puts an end to famine. Thus Išum is again linked with Ninurta as a saviour of mankind, not only through *Anzû* but also through the definitive Sumerian poem about his deeds.

The image of bolting like doors occurs also in the Sumerian *Lugalbanda,* this time applied to Anzu: kur-ra ^{ĝeš}ig-gal-gin$_7$ igi-ba bi$_2$-in-tab-en, 'He (Enlil) made me bar the front of the mountains like a great door' (*Lugalbanda* 102). In this poem Anzu is not yet evil, and so his blocking of the mountain is benign. Indeed, since the mountains are traditionally the home of monsters and enemies, he is fulfilling an important protective function. Given the equations of Erra with evil Anzû elsewhere in the poem, if Anzu in *Lugalbanda* is recalled at this point in *Erra,* there is a hint of irony; Išum is being connected with 'good' Anzu in opposition to Erra who is connected to 'evil' Anzû.

[236] Var. K$_1$: uĝ$_3$-ba, 'the people'.

This allusion to *Lugal-e* and (possibly also) *Lugalbanda* resonates with the allusion to *Atr*, since Ea as guardian of the bolt of the sea implicitly also has the function of holding back water. Although the flood in *Atr* seems to come from the sky in the form of a storm rather than being a surge of the sea, the link now made via *Lugal-e* to dangerous water is threatening and ominous. The allusions to the different texts therefore work together to portray Išum as a door holding back a cataclysmic force of destruction. The Sebettu have the potential to unleash a catastrophe on the scale of the deluge itself.

A hint of the coming 'deluge' of Erra's destruction comes even earlier, when his heart urges him: [237]

> ^{d}*er$_3$-ra ti-bi-ma ina sa-pan ma-a-ti*
> *ki-i nam-rat kab-ta-at-ka u$_3$ ḫa-du-u lib-bu-uk*
>
> Arise, Erra! In overwhelming the land
> how bright your mood and joyful your heart will be!
>
> *Erra* I.13-14

Those who know Ea's rebuke to Enlil in *Gilgameš* XI will be put on alert at this, since there Ea proposed alternatives to the deluge such as:

> *am-ma-ku taš-ku-nu a-bu-ba*
> ^{d}*er$_3$-ra lit-ba-am-ma māta*(KUR) ⌜*liš*⌝-[*giš*]
>
> Instead of the deluge you caused
> Erra could arise to slaughter the land! [238]
>
> *Gilg* XI.194-5

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[237] Following Müller's attribution of these lines, which solves the difficulties raised by other possibilities (1995: 352). Some commentators ascribe I.13-14 to Išum (Hruška, 1973: 5; Machinist & Sasson, 1983: 222; Farber, 2008: 264), which would make him the one inciting Erra to violence. This is somewhat odd, since it clashes with the role Išum plays in the rest of the poem as the moderator of Erra's wrath (Cagni, 1977: 85, n.6). Cagni proposes that Erra is addressing himself here. Müller is more specific in explaining how this works, that he is addressing his heart, which dramatises the conflict within him. See Weiershäuser, 2010: 359-64, with further literature, for previous attributions. It is worth remembering that the ambiguity may well be deliberate, as may other ambiguities in the poem (Noegel, 2011: 186-7).

[238] Var. J$_1$: *nišī*(UG$_3$) 'the people'.

This allusion was noticed by a Classicist (Haubold, 2002: 8), although there it was proposed that *Gilg* alludes to *Erra.* Far more likely it is the other way round, that *Erra* exploits the content of earlier poems for its own ends. In *Gilg* the slaughter of Erra is suggested as a less severe punishment: that plague or war would be a more moderate way of reducing the population than drowning all living creatures. The poem of *Erra* dramatizes this suggestion as Erra does indeed rise from his bed to slaughter the land (Haubold, 2002: 8 n. 33). However, the result is a disaster not less than the deluge but equal to it, or so the other allusions to *Gilg* in *Erra* imply (see below p. 255 ff.). The allusion has the potential to lull us into a false sense of security: yes the slaughter will be great, but not as great as it could have been. Later allusions suggest otherwise.

Chapter Six

Overturning the old order: *Erra* and *Enūma Eliš*, *Atraḫasīs, Gilgameš*

Enūma Eliš, *Atraḫasīs,* and *Gilgameš* are all classics of Akkadian literature, a core part of the scribal curriculum, widely known and copied right into the late period. *Enūma Eliš* narrates the creation of the world and cosmic order by Marduk. *Atraḫasīs* explains how man was created in order to provide offerings for the gods and survived extinction by the deluge. *Gilgameš* explores mortality and civilization. *Erra,* a poem of destruction, undoes everything which these poems create. Erra unravels Marduk's cosmic order (Machinist, 2005: 47), destroys men with a metaphorical deluge comparable to that of *Atraḫasīs,* and annihilates civilization through civil war. Allusions in *Erra* to these poems show that war not only causes inevitable misery and desolation, but is actually the antithesis of the values embodied by these three poems central to Babylonian culture. At the same time, there is an implied criticism of the protagonists of these classic works. *Erra* shows them to be weak and ineffectual, expressing profound disillusionment with this pantheon. All of these poems in their own way reflect on the proper relationship between man and god, and *Erra*, in its own reflections upon these previous presentations, has much to add to the discussion.

Enūma Eliš

Enūma Eliš is the source of more allusions in Mesopotamian literature than any other text; royal inscriptions in particular allude to it when casting the king in the role of Marduk's agent on earth, vanquisher of enemies of the state, and supreme hero.[239] The poem can be interpreted as an expression of Babylonian nationalism[240] (cf. Jacobsen, 1976: 189-91), and may have been composed during a nationalistic revival under Nebuchadnezzar I (Lambert, 1984: 4, 2013: 442-3). Unsurprisingly then, it is used pessimistically by *Erra*, a poem lamenting the shattered unity of Babylonia.

The re-use of *Ee* in later periods emphasises the military aspect in a way that may be more prominent than was originally intended. The Assyrian attempts to appropriate *Ee* for their royal ideology after the sack of Babylon support the conclusion that it had come to be read as an expression of nationalism. Three tablets substitute the Assyrian national god Aššur for Marduk by replacing his name with AN.ŠAR$_2$, and other prayers and theological texts make the same change (Lambert, 1997b: 77-9, 2013: 5-6). The Assur and Nineveh versions of the *Marduk Ordeal* (34 and 35 in Livingstone, 1989) even claim to quote *Ee* saying: *ki-i šamê*(AN-*e*) *erṣeti*(KI-*ti*$_3$) *la ib-ba-nu-ni* AN.ŠAR$_2$ *it-*[*tab-ši*], 'When heaven and earth were not created, Aššur came [into being]'[241] (34.54; 35.44-45), a phrase that dramatically alters the opening of the Babylonian poem (Lambert, 1997: 98) and places Aššur as foremost of the

[239] e.g. Sennacherib's battle at the Halule, and other texts from his propaganda: see Weissert (1997: 196), Frahm (2010: 8, n.21); inscriptions of Sargon II (Renger, 1986: 127 n.52); opening up gates in Ti'āmtu's ribs (*Ee* V.9) is alluded to by both Sargon and Sennacherib in their building accounts (Kämmerer & Metzler, 2012: 41); passages in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III may allude to *Ee* and *Anzû* (Annus, 2002: 97).

[240] E.g. by the scribes in Uruk, who stopped copying it after they were no longer subject to Babylonian domination (Frahm, 2011: 361-2).

[241] Translation by Livingstone.

gods. This demonstrates the ideological value of re-interpreting *Enūma Eliš,* and that it was seen as the text for enthroning the powerful.

The atmosphere in *Erra* is very different. In this poem Babylon is no longer a great military power with Marduk at its side, for not only does Babylonia seem to have been ravaged by outside enemies, but cities within the region have taken up arms against each other, and the people of Babylon burn their own sanctuaries. The ideal of militarism has gone far astray, to the extent that, 'the denunciations of violence are so eloquent and lengthy that this poem can scarcely be read as anything but condemnation of civil strife as a violation of the cosmic order,' (Foster, 2007: 67). While *Enūma Eliš* was read as a celebration of Babylonia, *Erra* laments its turning in on itself, and uses allusions to *Ee* to express its reversal of fortune. So too does it emphasise the weakness of Marduk, the god who had helped them achieve their former supremacy: the hierarchical system of rule in heaven has collapsed.

Turning Marduk's own poem against him

Enūma Eliš establishes Marduk's absolute control over the other gods, and the security of his position is expressed numerous times (e.g. VII.13-14). *Erra,* however, turns Marduk's absolute power against him. In *Enūma Eliš,* when Marduk is bargaining with Anšar over his reward for vanquishing Ti'āmtu, he proposes:

ina upšu'ukinakki(UB.ŠU.UKKIN.NA-*ki*)[242] *mit-ḫa-riš ḫa-diš tiš*$_2$*-ba-ma*
ep-šu$_2$[243] *pi-ia ki-ma ka-tu-nu-ma ši-ma-ta lu-šim-ma*
la ut-tak-kar mim-mu-u$_2$ *a-ban-nu-u a-na-ku*
a-a i-tur a-a in-nen-na-a si$_3$*-qar šap-ti-ia*

[242] Var. O and P+: UB.ŠU.UKKIN.NA-*kam,* a spelling probably influenced by the Sumerian writing -kam for a genitive (-ak) plus enclitic copula (-am).
[243] Var. P+: *ep-ša*

"Sit joyfully together in Upšu'ukkinakku,
"(May) my spoken word be like yours, let me decree destinies!
"Let anything I create not be altered,
"may the pronouncement of my lips not reverse or be changed."

Ee II.159-62

It is this irrevocability that Erra uses to trick Marduk. He tricks him into giving up his seat willingly – once he does so, his decision cannot be altered. This problem is raised again in the Me-Turnat tablet II: Ištar (written ^{d}*in-ni-na*) seems to break up the argument between the gods by saying that Marduk's word is unalterable, therefore there is nothing they can do (Al-Rawi & Black, 1989: 118-19, col. iii 22'-23'). It is ironic that the 'lord of wisdom' should be tricked in such a way into an impossible bind. His authority is thus severely undermined.

The finality of Marduk's will resurfaces in the argument between Erra and Išum when Erra justifies his behaviour as in accordance with it. He says that Išum's attempts to stop him amount to a transgression of Marduk's word (III.43, III.56). By this he means that he is only acting as Marduk did when he caused the deluge, and that if Marduk was justified then, so Erra, who intends to replace him, is justified now (Cagni, 1977: 47). This highlights a key theological difficulty: one could argue that the deluge of Marduk/Enlil was provoked, while Erra's analogous behaviour is driven only by his own desire for destruction, and, therefore, that Erra is twisting this argument to his own reckless advantage. However, it must be remembered that Marduk's rationale is unexplained, and what provoked Enlil was not the wickedness of mankind that needed punishment, but simply the noise of human activity and productivity, caused by overpopulation. Human beings were thus hardly more deserving of annihilation at the hands of Marduk than they are now at those of Erra. As well as reflecting badly on Erra, this argument undermines Marduk, calling into question the basis of his supreme judgement.

It is also possible that the specific way in which Erra tricks Marduk is drawn from a subversion of one of Marduk's own titles. In *Enūma Eliš* VII.82, the tenth title is: A.GILIM.MA *ša*$_2$*-qu-u*$_2$ *na-si-iḫ a-gi-i* ('AGILIMMA, the lofty one, remover of the crown). The removing of the crown and belt is a crucial part of the surrendering of power: *Erra* III.C.46-9 specifies this as the moment of the dissolution of the bond between god and man (quoted above pp.220-21). The removal of crown and sash was also an important part of the murder of Apsû in *Enūma Eliš,* as only then is Ea able to kill him:

> *ip-ṭur riḫ-si-šu iš-ta-ḫaṭ a-ga-šu*$_2$
> *me-lam-mi-šu it-ba-la šu-u*$_2$ *u*$_2$*-ta-di-iq*
> *ik-mi-šu-ma apsâ*(ABZU) *i-na-ra-aš*$_2$*-šu*
> ^{d}*mu-um-mu i-ta-sir*$_3$ *eli*(UGU)*-šu*$_2$ *ip-tar-ka*
> *u*$_2$*-kin-ma eli*(UGU) *apsî*(ABZU) *šu-bat-su*
> ^{d}*mu-um-mu it-ta-maḫ u*$_2$*-kal ṣer-ret-su*
>
> He (Ea) untied his sash, he tore off his crown,
> he removed his aura, he put it on himself.
> He bound Apsû, he killed him.
> Mummu he confined, he (Ea) blocked him (Apsû).[244]
> He founded his dwelling upon Apsû,
> he grasped Mummu, holding his lead rope.
>
> *Ee* I.67-72

This passage corresponds to *Erra* in three ways: first, there is the removal of symbols of divinity in the form of physical adornments. Whereas these are taken away by force in *Enūma Eliš,* Erra gets Marduk to surrender them voluntarily. This is another example of the use of verbal strategies rather than physical force in *Erra:* even though Erra yearns for violence and has to be talked out of it, it is pertinent to note that he is only in a position to inflict it because he used persuasion himself in tricking Marduk. Second, Erra wants to make

[244] For this line cf. pp. 197-8.

Marduk's dwelling his own, just as Ea makes Apsû his abode.[245] Whereas in *Enūma Eliš* the act is physical and founded upon the actual body of the old god, in *Erra* a non-violent method is employed – Marduk is persuaded to leave. Thirdly, Mummu is held by a 'lead-rope' (*ṣerretu*), a cord with which domestic animals are led by the nose. This became a metaphor for power over someone (George, 1992: 256-7), which Išum uses of Erra when he exclaims, *ṣe-ret šamê*(AN) *tam-ḫat* ('You hold the lead-rope of heaven,' III.D.3).

When Išum says this, however, he means it in an additional sense. The *ṣerretu* has cosmic significance – it is the term used for the bond between heaven and earth (George, 1992: 256). *Enūma Eliš* V.65-8 relates Marduk fixing heaven and the underworld in position, and the *ṣerretu* is the cable connecting them.[246] Not only is Erra now fully in control of the gods, but he has possession of this crucial link between divinity and humankind, previously only held by Marduk, and now broken (III.49). Other cosmic links of this kind existed; for example, Nippur was considered the cosmic navel of Ninurta (Reynolds, 2010: 294), but the primary bond between heaven and earth is that of the home city of the head of the pantheon. Thus when Išum cries: *ša*$_2$ DIM.KUR.KUR.RA^{ki} *āl*(URU) *šar*(LUGAL) *ilānī*(DINGIR)^{meš} *ri-kis mātāti*(KUR.KUR) *tap-ta-ṭar ri-kis-su*, 'You have undone the bond of Dimkurkurra, the city of the king of the gods, the bond of the lands' (IV.2), he emphasis that the vital bond between Babylon (Dimkurkurra) and heaven is the one on which everything depends.

In *Erra,* Marduk is nothing like the warrior of his youth. Instead he is old, shabby, forgetful, and easily duped, called 'senile' by Landsberger (1967: 198). Whereas *Enūma Eliš* states: *ina sa-ba-si-šu uz-za-šu ul i-maḫ-ḫar-šu ilu*(DINGIR) *ma-ma-an* ('When he is angry no god can face his rage' VII.154), he responds to Erra's trickery with an ineffectual lament of despair

[245] Röllig observed that Erra's entry into Babylon at the end of tablet I questions Marduk's competence as ruler of the gods (*apud* Hruška, 1973: 4).
[246] Cf. Ashurbanipal's acrostic hymn to Marduk, Livingstone 1989: no. 2 rev. 8.

(IV.36-44). In fact, Marduk ought to be able to appease wrathful gods. The explanation of his name TUTU includes:

> *lib-ni-ma šipta*(EN_2) *ilānū*(DINGIR.DINGIR) *li-nu-ḫu*
> *ag-giš lu te-bu-u*$_2$ *li-ne*$_2$*-'u-u*$_2$ [*i-rat-su*]*-un*
>
> Let him devise[247] the spell so that the gods can be at rest.
> Should they have risen in anger, let them turn [back].
>
> *Ee* VII.11-12

But in *Erra* he does not even attempt it; it is Išum who will appease Erra's anger, stepping into Marduk's former role. This places Marduk among the old order of gods: when he was young he came forward to solve a crisis that his superiors could not, now it is he who has to stand back while a younger god steps in. The aforementioned allusions connecting Išum with Ninurta are pertinent here. *Enūma Eliš* assimilated Marduk to the role of Ninurta through its relationship with *Anzû,* replacing him as the supreme warrior deity (Lambert, 1986). Now, however, there is another god taking over Ninurta's role as Marduk once did, a new Ninurta supplanting Marduk.

Marduk is also replaced by Erra himself as the god of Babylon. In tablet V, Erra takes up his residence in Emeslam, where all the gods gaze at him in awe (V.1-3). Gössmann has pointed out that this episode resembles the enthronement of Marduk in *Ee* IV.1ff before all the gods and, more specifically, *Ee* VI.17 ff. (1955: 81). Here Marduk asks the assembled gods who was responsible for instigating the battle (VI.21-26). The passage in *Erra* reverses this, as Erra confesses that he himself was excessive in his slaughter, and praises Išum for intervening and so bringing it to an end (V.5-15). Where Marduk asks the gods a question, Erra orders them to be silent while he speaks, emphasising his absolute authority. Marduk organises the stations of the gods, and commands them to build the city of Babylon (VI.39-

[247] Var. R: *li-im-ni-ma* 'recite'.

58). Similarly, Erra decrees the restoration of Babylonia and the destruction of its enemies (V.25-38). Erra thus supplants Marduk at the very peak of his glory.

Marduk's weakness in *Erra* may reflect a loss of his perceived power in real terms (Hruška, 1973: 4-5; Frahm, 2011: 347). Considerable anguish is expressed over the ravaging of Babylonia described in the poem; perhaps this was seen as Marduk's failure to protect his people. Particularly since the royal tradition frequently placed Marduk at the king's side in battle, or represented the king as Marduk's agent on earth, the failure of the king to repel military disaster could be interpreted as abandonment by his patron god.[248] It is unusual, however, for this feeling to manifest itself as loss of confidence, let alone as such a negative portrayal of the god; usually people blamed themselves for suffering and disaster. They responded with admissions of their guilt and promises of future devotion, in the hope of calming the god's angry heart and winning back his favour.[249] There are cases where the speaker does not understand the reason for the abandonment, such as *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi* III.14, and the *Babylonian Theodicy* IV.19, but these do not turn the speaker's anger back on the god. Nevertheless, we find little explicit condemnation of human behaviour in *Erra* and the unflattering portrayal of Marduk cannot be explained away.

Twice it is said that Marduk has risen from his dwelling (II.30; III.44). This, too, has a connection with the real world beyond the poem: the god was thought to dwell in his cult statue in the temple, and when such a statue left the temple, if for example it was abducted by an enemy, it was thought that the god himself had deserted the city. In *Erra*, Marduk leaves his dwelling to have his regalia cleaned as if he were a dilapidated cult statue. Once

[248] cf. *The Curse of Agade*; the *Marduk Prophecy*; a bilingual Babylonian historical epic RIMB 2 nos. 8-9.
[249] See e.g. one prayer to Marduk (Oshima, 2011: 346-53), and two prayers to personal gods (Lambert, 1974a: 274-7; Maul, 1988: 216-28 no. 40-42).

the cult statue, and thus also the real god, leaves his dwelling, he no longer protects the city (Cagni, 1977: 33). This may reflect contemporary feeling towards historical events; if Marduk had left Babylon, this would explain her vulnerability to the disasters which inspired the poem – her god had forsaken her. Nor was it entirely undeserved, for the people were responsible for neglecting his statue (Cagni, 1969: 35). However, it is not simply a case of Marduk neglecting his people in return, since he left for a temporary period of refurbishment, not to desert Babylon. Indeed, he specifically expresses concern over what will happen when he leaves, and Erra needs to reassure him that all will be well (I.170-89). The tricking of Marduk implies some lack of culpability on the part of the Babylonians (Bottéro, 1985: 264), since their fate is no longer controlled by their god's rational wisdom.

Loss of confidence in the old order reaches beyond Marduk, however. When stating his reasons for bloodshed, Erra remarks: *ilānū*(DINGIR)^{meš} *nap-ḫar-šu$_2$-nu ṣal-ʳtaʾ šaḫ-tu / u$_3$ nišū*(UG$_3$)^{meš} *ṣal-mat* [*qaqqadi*(SAG.DU)] *le-*[*qu-u$_2$*] *ši-ṭu-tum* ('All the gods are afraid of battle / and the black-[headed people hold] (them) in contempt!' I.119-120). This seems to be borne out in tablet II (though fragmentary). The Sippar tablet BM 37331 (Lambert, 1980a: 78-9) preserving the beginning of tablet II, tells that when Marduk left his abode the Igigi and Anunnaki fled to their homes (8-9). In the Me-Turnat tablet, the gods discuss the situation with apprehension (Al-Rawi and Black, 1989: 112). In particular they are afraid because the star that represents Erra, the Fox star, is glaring with a fierce aura, indicating his extreme anger (iii.10'-15').[250] Whatever their exact words in this scene, many of which are lost, their attempt to stand up to Erra is feeble. Ištar attempts to dissuade him, but the scene is over in one line:

[250] This is just one example of the events of the poem corresponding with ominous celestial events in *Enūma Anu Enlil* (Cooley, 2008). See also Cooley 2013: 107-8.

ana ^{d}*er-ra uš-te-mi-iq-ma ul i-man-gu-ra* ('She prayed to Erra but he would not agree…' c1/30'). [251] This behaviour echoes the cowardice of the gods in *Enūma Eliš,* none of whom dared to face Ti'āmtu. The same situation recurs in *Anzû,* which is the source of the motif in *Enūma Eliš.* In both earlier poems, the cowardice of the old gods is contrasted with the vigour and courage of the new god.

Some disillusionment with the old order, then, is already implicit in this motif. We might compare this attitude with *Gilgameš,* which portrays the gods as afraid of the deluge, curled up like dogs, and crowding around sacrifices like flies (XI.113-15; XI.161; George, 2003: 515). Enlil in particular is reprimanded, when Ea accuses him of lack of foresight for causing the deluge (XI.181-95).

Atraḫasīs and the deluge

The cosmic deluge caused by Enlil, related in *Atraḫasīs* and the eleventh tablet of *Gilgameš,* is one of the most pervasive motifs in Mesopotamian literature. The imagery of the terrifying flood as a metaphor for fearsomeness in battle and terrible destruction stretches all the way back to the third millennium (e.g. the Cylinders of Gudea, cf. Chen, 2013) and continues to be used in the latest literature of the first. Inevitably, then, the poem of *Erra,* with violence as its central theme, will engage with it.

By attributing the deluge of long ago to Marduk, *Erra* links Marduk with that old and irrelevant ruler Enlil. This identifies Marduk as part of the old order of gods who are no longer powerful in an ironic twist: Marduk once replaced Enlil, but now Marduk is impotent and obsolete himself, replaced by Erra. Since Anu gave the Sebettu to Erra so that he could

[251] Text from tablet II is a composite of Al-Rawi and Black (1989) supplementing Cagni (1969).

cause this kind of destruction whenever he wishes, Anu too is part of this old order who see nothing wrong with the mass killing of human beings. However, Išum challenges this attitude and pleads on mankind's behalf when the slaughter becomes excessive. In this, he combines two roles, that of the young warrior god who intervenes when the old gods cannot keep the cosmic order under control, and that of Ea, who is the voice of moderation and negotiation, the problem-solver. As such, Išum is a 'warrior of reason'. At the same time, Erra is identified with Enlil as the one who wreaks destruction on the scale of the deluge. We are encouraged to see him as even more irresponsible than Enlil as his reasons are more trivial: noise is not the real reason for his rampage, it is only a pretext for sheer indulgence in butchery.

In line I.132, Marduk himself says:

ul-tu ⌜*ul*⌝*-lu a-gu-gu-ma ina šub-ti-ia at-bu-ma aš*$_2$*-ku-na a-bu-bu*

Long ago when I became angry and rose from my seat, I caused the deluge

Erra I.132

The poem of *Erra* is the only surviving work to blame Marduk for the deluge .This plays on the audience's awareness that Marduk had replaced Enlil, but attributes Enlil's bad qualities to Marduk as well as his position as supreme ruler. The deluge is Enlil's worst act; it is portrayed as irresponsible and short-sighted, other gods rebuke him for it, and the rebellion of Ea and Atraḫasīs against him is portrayed as right and sensible. Attributing the deluge to Marduk shows him to be just as irresponsible as Enlil: by allowing Erra to have full sway, he allows a second metaphorical deluge of destruction to take place.

Numerous allusions paint Erra's destruction as a deluge. Although this was a cliché of Mesopotamian literature, here the image does more than emphasise the magnitude of the

calamity. Allusions in *Erra* refer specifically to the original deluge narrated in *Atraḫasīs* and *Gilgameš*. For example, Erra speaks of his own destruction in terms that echo *Gilgameš*:

> *tar$_2$-kul-la lu-us-su-uḫ-ma lit-te-eq-lep-pa-a* ^{giš}*eleppu*(MA$_2$)
> *sik-kan-na lu-uš-bir-ma la im-me-da ana kib-ri*
> *tim-ma lu-uš-ḫu-uṭ-ma lu-us-su-ḫa si-mat-su*
>
> Let me rip out the mooring-pole so that the ship keeps drifting away,
> Let me break the rudder so it cannot land at the shore,
> Let me tear out the mast, let me rip out its rigging.
>
> *Erra* IV.118-20

In *Gilgameš* at line XI.102, in the description of the flood, we are told: ⌜*tar*⌝*-kul-li* ^{d}*er$_3$-ra-kal i-na-as-saḫ* ('Errakal was ripping out the mooring-poles'). This line also appears in similar permutations in OB and NA *Atraḫasīs* (Lambert & Millard, 1969: II.vii.51; U.15), and these are Errakal's only appearances in mythology. Errakal is found as a name of Nergal in god lists from the OB period onwards, listed after Erra.[252] This is therefore a reference to Erra's role in the original deluge. The language is the same, and the one line taken from the traditional narratives has been expanded into three, showing the god's wrathful desires intensifying (for analysis of these lines see Foster, 2007: 107). This amounts to a desire to re-enact the previous devastation.

The deluge appears again in the connection with the Sebettu, Erra's agents of destruction. It seems that the role of the Sebettu is to stir up old trouble, whipping up a conflict from long ago. The Sebettu themselves say that the Anunna gods cannot fall asleep for the clamour of mankind when they incite Erra to battle (I.82), once again pitting human noise against divine rest as in *Atr* (Kvanvig, 2011: 172). They urge Erra to act *a-di ma-a-*⌜*tu*⌝ *nap-ḫar-ša$_2$ ir-bu-u$_2$ eli*(UGU)*-ni*, 'before the whole land becomes greater than us!' (I.79), which

[252] Erragal in the OB Weidner god list *AfK* 2, 17: 17 and the OB list from Susa MDP 27, 286 ii 2', Errakal in the later lists *An = Anum* VI.10 and CT 25, 35 r. 15 ff (Wiggermann, RLA IX: 217-18).

recalls the increase in *Atr* I.353, [*ma-tum ir-ta-pi$_2$-iš*] *ni-šu im-ti-da*, '[the land extended], the people became many' (Kvanvig, 2011: 172). In the first description of the Sebettu it is said that Anu gave them to Erra so that:

> *ki-i ša$_2$ nišī*(UG$_3$)^{meš} *da-ad$_2$-me ḫu-bur-ši-na eli*(UGU)*-ka im-tar-ṣu*
> *ub-lam-ma lib$_3$-ba-ka ana ša$_2$-kan ka-ma-ri*
> *ṣal-mat qaqqadi*(SAG.DU) *a-na šu-mut-ti šum-qu-tu bu-ul* ^{d}ŠAKKAN$_2$
> *lu-u$_2$* ^{giš}*kakkū*(TUKUL)^{meš}*-ka ez-zu-ti šu-nu-ma lil-li-ku i-da-a-ka*
>
> If the clamour of the people of the inhabited regions troubles you
> and your heart resolves on destruction,
> to kill the black-headed (and) fell Šakkan's herd,
> let them be your fierce weapons, and let them march at your side!'
>
> *Erra* I.41-44

This refers to the reason for Enlil's flood, the unbearable noise of human activity which so disturbed him that he could not sleep. The idea presented here is that the gods see killing off part of the population when their noise becomes bothersome as reasonable and legitimate. The deluge is the classic method of doing this. Anu in *Atraḫasīs* does not intervene to prevent the destruction (OB III.v.40), and even supports Enlil when he is angry at Ea for circumventing him (OB III.vi.11-14). Thus speaking to Erra in these terms condones and encourages this behaviour.

However, the use of the phrase 'black-headed (people)' (*ṣal-mat qaqqadi*(SAG.DU)), reminds us that not all gods hold this attitude: Išum is called shepherd of the black-headed people in the prologue at I.3, implying that he is the saviour of men,[253] helping them to escape the worst excesses of irresponsible gods, just as Ea did in *Atraḫasīs*.

Išum is not the only one to challenge the excesses of irresponsible gods. In *Erra* tablet II, one god vents their frustration that Marduk has handed over power to Erra:

[253] See Weierhäuser (2010: 355-8) for Išum's role as a protector of mankind outside this poem and see above pp. 211-12.

min$_3$*-su aš*$_2$*-šu ḫu-bu-uš pa-an mê*(A)^{meš} . . . ⌜*a-me-lu*⌝*-ti*
ša ana šu-uḫ-muṭ ⌜*tak-li*⌝*-me* ^{d}*a-*⌜*nun*⌝*-*<*na*>*-ki ab-nu-u*$_2$ *ana-ku*
ina la a-dan-ni-šu id-di-in rubû(NUN) ^{d}*marduk*(AMAR.UTU)
ana sa-pan mātāti(KUR.KUR) *ḫul-lu-uq nišī*(UG$_3$)^{meš}*-šin ik-pu-ud lemuttu*(ḪUL-*tu*$_2$)

Why, because of foam on the surface of water,
did prince Marduk give at the wrong time the […] of mankind,
whom I myself created to bring quickly the *taklīmu* offerings of the [Anunnaki?]
To flatten the lands, to destroy their people, he plotted evil.

Erra II.11/26-14/29

This image of foam is also used at IV.68 to refer to the corpses of men floating on the water. Here it refers to 'a passing whim' (Foster, 2005: 891). When we put together these instances, the image comes to express trivial destruction, referring to both the slaughter of men and the levity of its justification. The same image is used of Marduk's irresponsible decision to hand power to Erra, and of Erra's subsequent rampage. Furthermore, it recalls the corpses of men compared to flies floating on the water in *Atr* III.iv.6 (Kvanvig, 2011:173), a direct link to the flood of Enlil.

Such a comment on the irresponsible behaviour of the god, and care for human beings in defiance of it, is found also with reference to the original deluge: Ea in *Atraḫasīs* saved mankind from Enlil's flood, and rebukes him for it in *Gilgameš* (XI.183-95).[254] We cannot be sure which god makes this comment in *Erra* – the parallel sentiment may suggest it is Ea who speaks here too (as Al-Rawi & Black, 1989: 112), but the fact that he delivers the next speech makes this less likely as he seems to be replying to it. The reference to humans as *ša...abnû anāku* 'whom I myself created' in line 13/28 may imply the speaker is Ea or Bēlet-ilī, since both were involved in the creation of men in *Atr.* The sentiment is also parallel with the

[254] Cf. above pp. 227-9.

laments of the mother goddess in *Atr*, as she regrets the sending of the deluge (III.iii.34-54; III.iv.4 ff.; III.v.37-vi.4), so perhaps it is more likely that she is speaking here. Whichever deity utters these words, the rebuke is a protest against both Marduk and Erra for acting with the same irresponsibility shown by Enlil. They are reproached for causing destruction for trivial reasons, just as Enlil was, equating them with this reviled figure.

Later on the same tablet, Erra gives instructions to prevent any god from giving exactly the same kind of assistance to men as Ea did in *Atraḫasīs*, commanding all of them to withhold gifts and ignore supplications: [*ṣal-mat*] ˹*qaqqadi*(SAG˺.DU) *i-šas-su-ka-ma e tam-ḫu-ra su-up-pe-*˹*šin*˺, ('[The black-headed] will cry to you: but you should not accept their prayers' II.c.23/11). It was through the mass entreaties to the god causing each specific affliction that men had evaded Enlil's first two attempts to destroy them. Erra, too, is aware of precedent, and he is not leaving any such loophole for his plans to be thwarted; he is as unreasonable as Enlil and even more bent on destruction.

Disturbed sleep – Atr and Ee

The motif of sleep deprivation found in both *Atr* and *Ee* is used in interesting ways in *Erra.* While parallels with *Atr* connect Erra with Enlil, at the same time there are parallels between Apsû and Ti'āmtu and Erra. Thus as well as being linked to the irrational ruler of former times, Erra is equated with a terrible threat to the cosmic order. Having two associations present as one figure alludes to two different poems is a technique that will be seen more than once in this poem.

Unlike in the case of Enlil in *Atr*, noise is not the cause of Marduk's deluge or Erra's rampage. Marduk does not state the reason for his anger when he recounts the story, but that

he rose from his seat implies that he left the temple, a deliberate abandonment of a guilty people (Cagni, 1977: 33). He makes no complaint of their noise. Although Anu's words at I.41-44 imply that noisiness is legitimate ground for slaughter, noise is not cited as a reason for Erra's discontent. Nor is this implied by the initial provocation,

> *[d]er$_3$-ra ti-bi-ma ina sa-pan ma-a-ti*
> *ki-i nam-rat kab-ta-at-ka u$_3$ ḫa-du-u lib-bu-uk*
> *[d]er$_3$-ra ki-i ša$_2$ a-me-li dal-pi i-da-a-šu$_2$ an-[ḫa]*
>
> Arise, Erra, and by flattening the land
> how cheered your mind will be, how your heart will rejoice!
> Erra's limbs are [weary] like those of a man who cannot sleep.[255]
>
> *Erra* I.13-15

The use of a simile is interesting here. Saying that Erra's limbs are *like* (*ki-i*) those of a man who cannot sleep may exclude sleep deprivation from the actual cause of restlessness. His state is 'like' that of someone who is sleep-deprived, rather than being sleep-deprived himself. Alternatively, the important point of comparison may be that Erra is like a man, which reinforces the accusations made elsewhere that Erra is behaving like a human (see below pp. 258-9).

The mention of sleeplessness reminds us of the parallel situation in *Atraḫasīs,* and thus invites a comparison with Enlil, who destroyed men because he could not sleep. Enlil's response was disproportionate and thus condemned (e.g. *Atraḫasīs* OB I.v.42). Erra's response is an overreaction just as violent as Enlil's, as his rampage threatens to wipe out all of Babylonia (IV.1-127, given the archaic name 'Akkad'). We are encouraged to see him as just as irresponsible as Enlil, if not more so, for he is not suffering the same conditions. At the beginning he is not eager for action until goaded by the Sebettu. Although the Sebettu claim

[255] Taking lines 13-14 as Erra's heart speaking to him (Müller, 1995: 352).

that noise is preventing the Anunna gods from sleeping (I.82), this cannot be Erra's real motivation; he never mentions it himself and it is never referred to again.

Machinist and Sasson argue that violence can produce rest through the 'cleansing exhaustion' it creates (1983: 224). However, at IV.104 ff. Išum reels off a long list of the peoples Erra has devastated, adding: *u₃ na-ḫa-am-ma ul ta-nu-uḫ,* 'Yet you could not rest at all!' (IV.112). When Erra does eventually relent, it is not because he has been satiated by more killing, but because he is swayed by Išum's last speech. Annihilating the source of noise, then, as in *Atraḫasīs,* does not result in rest, and can be read as another critique of the mass slaughter of men.

Disturbance of sleep in *Erra*, then, is no more than a pretext for violence. This is reinforced by the reversal of motives: Enlil wreaks destruction in *Atr* because his sleep is disturbed, but Erra's sleep is disturbed because he is compelled to wreak destruction. That is, Enlil's primary goal is rest, and he uses violence to obtain it, while Erra's goal is violence for its own sake. This is a reversal of the situation in *Atr,* a classic allusive technique which brings out the differences between the two characters as well as their similarities. That both characters are in a state of rest at the beginning emphasises the difference in their circumstances. For Enlil, rest is a desired state which is interrupted by the noise of humans, and so he acts to silence them. Erra too was perfectly happy dallying in his bedroom when the poem opens, however, he is interrupted by the Sebettu goading him into action.[256] While Enlil is roused by anger towards the noise which he decides to eliminate, Erra's mind is changed by the restlessness of his weapons who desire war for its own sake. They were given

[256] For a different reflection on rest and violence in *Erra* see Machinist & Sasson (1983). One may also think of *Enki and Ninmaḫ,* where a sleeping Enki is woken by Namma, urging him to do something because the gods are smashing their tools in protest at their forced labour. Enki's solution is to create mankind to do the work. Erra, on the other hand, is roused from his bed to destroy, not create.

to him to use when he has had enough of clamour (I.41-44), but rather than being his weapons to use when he sees fit, the weapons persuade *him* to wreak destruction. This presents Erra as a fickle god who is not in control of his own decisions but is easily manipulated by outside forces. This can be compared with the depiction of Marduk, who was alarmingly easily persuaded to give up his seat although fully aware of the potential consequences. Marduk is not the only one to be manipulated by chaotic forces. This paints a frightening picture of the cosmos, no longer upheld by the rational decisions of the great gods.

However, Erra's fickleness has positive consequences for mortals. For just as the Sebettu can persuade Erra to begin his rampage, so too Išum can persuade him to stop. This is underlined by the repetition of the phrase which marks the turning point. At the end of the speech of the Seven which successfully persuades Erra to take up arms it is said:

> *a-mat* ^{d}*sebettu*(IMIN.BI) *iq-bu-u*$_2$ *ki-i u*$_2$*-lu šamni*(I$_3$.GIŠ) *eli*(UGU)*-šu* ⌜*i*⌝*-ṭib*
> *i-pu-uš-ma pa-a-šu i-zak-kar ana* ^{d}[*i*]-⌜*šum*⌝
>
> The word the Seven spoke pleased him like the finest oil.
> He opened his mouth to speak to Išum
>
> *Erra* I.93-4

At the end of Išum's speech which successfully persuades Erra to lay these arms down it is said:

> *a-mat* ^{d}*i-šum iq-bu-šu*[257] *ki-i u*$_2$*-lu šamni eli*(UGU)*-šu* ⌜*i*⌝*-ṭib*
> *u*$_3$ *ki-a-am iq-ta-bi qu-ra-du* ^{d}*er*$_3$*-ra*
>
> The word Išum spoke to him pleased him like the finest oil
> and warrior Erra spoke thus:
>
> *Erra* IV.129-30

[257] Mss. A and B both have *iq-bu-u*$_2$, in closer parallel with I.93.

By extension this expresses the idea that the gods can be influenced by mortal prayers as well as other divine figures, which is expressed again in the poem's function as an amulet (V.57-8).

However, the stirring up of Erra from his state of rest to murderous destruction also has parallels with *Ee.* As noted in the chapter on *Ee* and *Atr,* there are already parallels between Apsû and Enlil. *Erra* alludes to both *Atr* and *Ee* at the same time.

The situation in *Erra* is similar to that at the beginning of *Ee.* Bodi has noted a parallel between Erra and Mami sleeping together and Apsû and Tiāmtu mingling their waters, a state of rest and leisure at the start of both poems which is soon to be interrupted.[258] The parallels continue: Erra is stirred up by the goading of the Sebettu, and thus persuaded to get up from his bed and start killing mankind. This recalls Apsû and Tiʾāmtu being stirred up by their children (I.21-5, I.37-40): Apsû (also like Enlil in *Atr*) cannot sleep for the clamour, and in a fit of rage resolves to kill his children who are the source of the disturbance. What is different in *Erra* is that the agents of the stirring and the object of rage are not the same; these roles have been split up and given to different characters, resulting in a more complex poem (something which also happens with the borrowings from *Lugal-e* – see above p. 222 ff.).

Erra overturns the values established by *Ee.* It is fitting, then, that at its start it should echo *Ee,* in what will become a grim parody of sorts. Apsû and Tiʾāmtu's mingling results in new birth followed by Apsû's threat of destruction, but Erra skips straight to the destruction without any initial procreation. In *Ee* that threat was neutralised first by Ea and the subsequent threat was dealt with by Marduk – no destruction ever materialised. In *Erra* the

[258] As argued at the Ghent Rencontre 2013 (private communication, publication forthcoming).

destruction is very real. As noted earlier, Apsû's destruction at least was provoked: Erra's decision to kill off humans seems even more whimsical, and even worse.

Verbal echoes also help to establish a connection, as *marāṣu* and *dalāḫu* are used in both poems. In I.41-44 (quoted above p. 244) it is stated that Anu gave the Sebettu to Erra to be his weapons when, troubled by the noise of the people, he resolves to kill them. The word *imtarṣu* in line 41 is of interest here. The verb used for Apsû and Ti'āmtu's distress is also *marāṣu*, firstly for Ti'āmtu:

> *im-tar-ṣa-am-ma ep-še-ta-šu-un e-li-ša*[259]
> *la ṭa-bat al-kat*$_3$*-su-nu*[260] *šu-nu-ti i-ga-mi*$_3$*-la*
>
> Their action troubled her,
> their behaviour was not good, (but) she would indulge them.
>
> *Ee* I.27-8

Similarly Apsû declares:

> *im-tar-ṣa-am-ma al-kat*$_2$*-su-un e-li-ia*
> *ur-ri-iš la šu-up-šu-ḫa-ku mu-ši-iš la ṣa-al-la-ku*
>
> "Their behaviour troubled me,
> "by day I am allowed no rest, at night I cannot sleep'
>
> *Ee* I.37-8

The verb *marāṣu* is not rare, but the use of it reinforces the parallel in plot, echoing the situation in *Ee.* We find another similar echo in *Erra* I.70 where the Sebettu describe the destruction they long for:

> *ḫur-sa-a-ni zaq-ru-ti liš-mu-ma* [*li-tab-bi*$^{?}$]*-tu-ma liš-pi-la re-*$^{\lceil}$*ša*$_2$$^{\rceil}$*-šu-un*
> *ta-ma-a-ti gal-la-ti liš-ma-ma* [*lid*]-$^{\lceil}$*dal*$^{\rceil}$*-ḫa-ma li-ḫal-li-qa* $^{\lceil}$*me*$^{\rceil}$*-šer*$_3$*-ta-šin*

[259] Lambert ms. a (=K&M FF) has $^{\lceil}$*e*$^{\rceil}$*-li-šu-un*$^{!}$, which would mean 'troubled them', but seems to be a scribal error since the same line also has *ep-še*$^{!}$(BU)*-ta-šu-un,* and the next line has *al-su-nu* for *al-kat*$_2$*-su-nu.*

[260] Lambert ms. a has *al*$^{!}$*-*<*kat*$_2$>*su-nu* $^{\lceil}$*šu-nu-ti*$^{\rceil}$ *i-ta-*$^{\lceil}$*ṣi*$^{?\rceil}$, 'he went out'.

"Let the high mountains hear and their peaks [be utterly destroyed] and lie low!
"Let the rolling seas hear and be stirred up, let them destroy their produce!

Erra I.69-70

The first line echoes Ninurta's exploits in the mountains, while the language in the second line echoes the physical disturbance of Ti'āmtu when she is roiled up by Marduk:

ib-šim ep-ra me-ḫa-a u_2*-ša*$_2$*-az-bal*
u_2*-šab-ši a-ga-am-ma* u_2*-dal-laḫ*$_3$ *ti-amta*

He created dust, he made a storm bear it up,
he created a wave to stir up Ti'āmtu

Ee I.107-8

The verb used is *dalāḫu* in both instances. We find another occurrence of *marāṣu* in *Erra* I.78, where the Sebettu themselves use it of their incitements:

bu-ul ^{d}*šakkan* ⌜u_3⌝ ⌜*nam*⌝*-maš-še-e le-qu-u še-ṭu-ut-ni*
qu-ra-du ^{d}*er*$_3$*-ra ni-qab-bi-kum*$_2$*-ma at-mu-ni* [*li*]-⌜*im*⌝*-ru-uṣ*
a-di ma-a-⌜*tu*⌝ *nap-ḫar-ša*$_2$ *ir-bu-u*$_2$ *eli*(UGU)*-ni*
min$_3$*-de-ma at-ta še-ma-ta a-mat-ni*

"The herds of Šakkan and the wild beasts hold us in contempt!
"Warrior Erra, we are talking to you, may our speech be troubling!
"Before the whole land becomes greater than us
"perhaps you will hear our words!

Erra I.77-80

Why should the Sebettu's rousing of Erra echo the stirring up of Ti'āmtu in *Ee?* It is a harbinger of the threat to come, that the scale of the intended destruction parallels that of Ti'āmtu and her army. This is reinforced by a line describing one of the Sebettu themselves which recalls Ti'āmtu's monsters. Anu, decreeing the destinies of his new creations, says:

i-⌜*ta*⌝*-*[*mi*] *ana šal-ši zi-im la-bi lu šak-na-*⌜*ta*⌝*-ma a-mir*$_3$*-ka liḫ*$_4$*-har-miṭ*

He says to the third, "May you have the face of a lion, may the one who sees you dissolve (in fear)!"

Erra I.34

Compare this with Ti'āmtu's exhortations to her army:

a-mi-ir-šu$_2$-nu šar-ba-bi-iš li-iḫ-ḫar-[*mi-im*]
zu-mur-šu-nu liš-taḫ-ḫi-ṭam-ma la i-ne$_2$-'u-u$_2$ i-[*rat-su-un*]

"Let the one who sees them collapse in weakness!
"Let their bodies keep leaping, not turning [their breast]!"

Ee I.139-40

The verbs (*naḫarmuṭu* and *naḫarmumu*) sound similar (only one consonant different) and have a similar meaning in these contexts. Furthermore, he fills the seventh with poison:[261]

se-ba-a i-mat ba-aš$_3$-me i-ṣe-en-šu$_2$-ma šum-qi$_2$-ta na-piš-ta

He loaded the seventh with poison of the bašmu-snake, (saying) "Wreck life!"[262]

Erra I.38

This motif also occurred at the very beginning of *Erra* when Erra *i-ta-mi ana* ^{giš}*kakkī*(TUKUL)^{meš}*-šu$_2$ lit-pa-ta i-mat mu-u-ti* ('says to his weapons, "Smear yourselves with deadly poison!"' I.7-8), harking back to Ninurta's 'poisonous' arrows in *Anzû*. Similarly Ti'āmtu fills her creatures with poison (*imtu* in all three cases):

[*zaq*]-⌜*tu*⌝*-ma šin-ni la pa-du-u at-ta-'i-*[*i*]
im-tu ki-ma da-mu zu-mur-šu$_2$-nu uš-ma-al-⌜*li*⌝

Sharp of tooth, merciless[263] in *fang*[264]
She filled their bodies with poison instead of blood

Ee I.135-6 = II.21-2 = III.83-4

[261] These connections between the Sebettu and Ti'āmtu were first spotted by Gössmann (1955: 82), although his explanation was that: 'Der Dichter des Era-Epos konnte natürlich nicht neue Wesen entstehen lassen'.
[262] Var. B: *u$_2$-šam-qat* 'he made it wreck life'.
[263] Lambert ms. cc omits *la*, a scribal error.
[264] *at-ta-'i-i* (variants: R *an-ta-*⌜*'i-i*⌝, ⌜*at*⌝*-ta-'a-am* in Lambert ms. b(ff)) is a hapax.

Cooley has compared the description of the Sebettu in *Erra* I.31-8 with a passage describing seven monsters in *Bilgames and Huwawa* 34-44, suggesting the similarities may be due to a common stock description of monsters in Mesopotamian mythology (2013: 89-90). It is likely that *Erra* is based on such a tradition, but the details which allude to *Ee* are *not* found in *Bilgames and Huwawa,* suggesting that while the description was rooted in tradition, the allusions were deliberately added.

Filling the last Sebettu with poison comes in a prominent position. It comes at the climax of the list of the Sebettu's destinies, putting us in mind of Ti'āmtu's army. These links between Erra's weapons and Ti'āmtu's paints Erra as a comparable threat to the cosmic order, and, in particular, as an opponent of Marduk. This is borne out when it is revealed that his next step is to plot to remove Marduk from his throne (I.123). However, Erra easily persuades Marduk to relinquish control. This is a reversal of the original situation in *Ee,* where it is Marduk who finds it easy to defeat his formidable enemy. The tables have turned: now Marduk is the one who is easily overpowered.

The context of these particular lines (*Erra* I.34 and 38) is also revealing, as they are part of a chain of allusions. Firstly, we have the description of Išum as a door, which reminds us of Ninurta's protective aspects in *Lugal-e* (see above p. 227 ff.). Immediately following in the next line comes the description of the birth of the Sebettu, born of Anu's seed sown in the earth (*Erra* I.28). This very much recalls the birth of Asag: an-e ki sig$_7$-ga ĝiš$_3$ im-ma-du$_{11}$ 'heaven copulated with verdant earth' (*Lugal-e* 26-7). While this is a standard aetiology for demons, the other more specific references to *Lugal-e* early on in *Erra* put us in mind of that poem, which makes us more likely to be reminded of its demonic antagonist here. Then shortly afterwards come the lines connecting the Sebettu to Ti'āmtu's army (I.34 and 38). These images all work together to portray the Sebettu as instruments of chaos. This is

consistent with their general character as known from elsewhere, but this is enriched by the references to the other stories, which hint that they could be repeated here.

The two usages of clamour (*rigmu* / *ḫubūru*) in Akkadian poetry for both constructive human activity and destructive sounds of war (see Michalowski, 1990: 389; Foster, 2005: 31) are set against each other in *Erra*. The noise of Erra's violence, a negative force, threatens to drown out the noise of civilization. This is made explicit by the speech of the Sebettu, who long to hear battle cries (I.61) instead of the sounds of civilization (I.81). Given the overall atmosphere of the poem, the latter is clearly preferable to the former. What seems to be happening is a regression from civilization, as represented by constructive activity, the bustle of cities, and co-operation, to a more primitive and desolate state of wilderness, individualism, and violence.

A time before the flood - Gilgameš

The Sebettu's praise of the warrior's life spells out this regression, scorning the city life and all it represents (cf. Pongratz-Leisten, 2001: 221).[265] They scorn the eating of bread (I.49), prefer water from skins to brewed beer (I.58), and exalt the makeshift shelter rather than a palace with foundations (I.59). In I.76-7 they ask:

> *qu-ra-du* ^{d}*er*$_3$*-ra min*$_3$*-su ṣēra*(EDIN) ⌜*tu-<maš>-šir*$_3$⌝*-ma*[266] *tu-šib ina* ⌜*āli*(URU)⌝
> *bu-ul* ^{d}ŠAKKAN$_2$ ⌜*u*$_3$ *nam*⌝*-maš-e-e le-qu-u še-ṭu-ut-ni*
>
> Warrior Erra, why did you abandon the steppe and dwell in the city?
> Šakkan's herds and the wild beasts hold us in contempt!
>
> *Erra* I.76-7

[265] See Pongratz-Leisten (2001) for the opposition between city and countryside in a variety of texts.
[266] So S; var. I: *tu-x-*⌜*šar*⌝*-*[*ma*] = *tu-maš*$^{?}$*-*⌜*šar*⌝*-*[*ma*]? (Cagni, 1969: 65).

The concepts and language in this speech are closely comparable to those in the first tablet of *Gilgameš,* which describes the civilization of Enkidu from wild man to civilized man, moving from the steppe to the city. *ṣēru*(EDIN) appears ten times meaning 'steppe,'[267] Enkidu is frequently referred to as belonging to a herd of wild animals (*būlu*, *būl nammašê*, *būl ṣēri*(EDIN).[268] This is the location and condition of the *lullû,* the primitive man, but Šamhat comes to civilize Enkidu and bring him to the city (I.207-212). After Enkidu has sexual intercourse with Šamhat, his herds run away from him (I.196-8). The city is a symbol of civilization (cf. George, 2003: 527): the Sebettu's condemnation of city-life, their praise of the wild, and rebuke of Erra for the taming of his violence, together imply that violence is a regressive state, a wildness more suited to beasts than men. When plotting his actions, Erra delights in the thought of beasts of the steppe running about in the squares of the city (II.41-2), the symbol of the destruction of civilization altogether and its return to the wild. Gössmann draws parallels between *Erra* I.85-7 and *Gilg* IX.8 ff (1955: 82), the grief-stricken wandering of Gilgameš through the mountains after the death of Enkidu perhaps being recalled here as a reminder of the tragic consequences of battle which the Sebettu are so eager to pursue. *Erra* I.48 may be connected with this, where the Sebettu ask Erra: *ki-i šer*$_3$*-ri la-*$^{\lceil}$*'i*$^{\rceil}$ *tu-šib ina bīti*(E_2), 'how can you sit in the house like a weak baby?' Worthington raises the possibility that this is a quotation from *Gilg* I.255 = II.107: *ki-i šer*$_3$*-ri la-'i u*$_2$*-na-ša*$_2$*-qu šēpī*(GIR_3)^{meš}*-šu*$_2$, 'they kissed his feet like a weak baby'(2012: 304 n.981). If so, this could be

[267] I.102, 103, 132, 133, 159, 160, 179, 198, 208, 223. The word *ṣēru* also appears eleven times with a prepositional meaning, an unusually high frequency which we may suspect deliberately reinforces the centrality of the steppe to this tablet.
[268] I.111, 112, 117, 127, 142, 145, 154, 163, 166, 172, 173, 176, 177, 187, 196, 198, 208. Cf. Fleming & Milstein (2010: 23-32) for the origins of Enkidu in the wild.

another ironic link which points to the deaths soon to result from the behaviour stirred up by this attitude.

In the wild and on the battlefield, violence is unrestrained, whereas in the city it is controlled. In *Gilgameš* this is a complex theme which, rather than simply drawing a black-and-white contrast between primitive violence and enlightened city life, explores the place and direction of force, for in some senses the wild man tames the city man. This, too, is the case in *Erra,* since it ends not with the cessation of violence but its direction against Akkad's enemies rather than Akkad's own people. *Gilgameš*, too, begins with misdirected force used against the king's own people.[269]

There are other instances of moving backwards in the poem. The Sebettu exclaim ⌜*bu*⌝-*lum li-ru-ur-ma li-tur a-na ṭi-iṭ-*⌜*ṭi*⌝, 'May the herd shake and turn back into clay!' (I.74), a line which recurs at IV.150. This metaphor for death may have a more particular resonance here with the theme of regression, a return to bare materials, from complex things to primitive ones. It recalls the spell of *Anzû,* which turns arrows back into their constituent parts (III.63-5), equating them with this earlier threat, but while Anzû only attacked Ninurta's arrows, the Sebettu will go much further. The motif also occurs in Bēlet-ilī's lament in *Gilgameš* XI.119: u_4-*mu ul-lu-u*$_2$ *a-na ṭi-iṭ-ṭi lu-u*$_2$ *i-tur-ma* ('That distant day has turned to clay!'), and Atraḫasīs' own description of the devastation caused by the deluge: u_3 *kul-lat te-ne*$_2$*-še-ti i-tu-ra a-na ṭi-iṭ-ṭi,* ('all the people had turned to clay' XI.135).[270] Clay as the raw material for the initial creation of man, described in *Atraḫasīs,* occurs in *Gilgameš* also, when Aruru creates Enkidu by throwing down a pinch of clay on the steppe (I.102). The use of the motif of living things returning to

[269] Gössmann notes that the description of Uruk at IV.52-62 is reminiscent of *Gilgameš:* Erra placed an irresponsible governor over the city who: *uš-šis-si-na-ti-ma par-ṣi-ši-na i-te-*⌜*ti*⌝-[*iq*], 'distressed them and [transgressed] their rites' (IV.60) (1955: *ad loc*. IV.53, 59).
[270] Neither of these images are used in the Old Babylonian *Atraḫasīs,* so the idea may be a late one.

clay, then, resonates with the destruction caused by the deluge, as well as the language of annihilation found in lamentations, echoed by Anzû's spell (see p. 83 ff.).

Although flood imagery is common in Mesopotamian poetry, in *Erra* we have a network of specific references to the original flood, which together imply that the destruction wreaked by Erra is so devastating that its only parallel is the original cosmic flood itself. In addition, the language of 'returning' to an unworked state suggests a return to an older time before clay was made into a man: so many are dead that it is as if mankind had never been created. The deluge was a significant turning point on the Mesopotamian mythic timescale; to return to a point in time before the deluge is to return to the beginning of historical time.

Atraḫasīs famously opens with the line: *i-nu-ma i-lu a-wi-lum*, 'When the gods were men' (line 1), interpreted to mean 'when the gods were *like* men' (Groneberg, 1978: 20). When Išum, then, says to Erra: *i-lu-ut-ka tu-ša$_2$-an-ni-ma tam-ta-šal a-me-liš* ('You have changed your divine nature and become like a human!'[271] IV.3), the connection with one of the most popular Akkadian works is instantly present. The first meaning of this rebuke is that Erra has 'behaved like an insensate mortal' (Cagni, 1977: 49), however, it is also more: Erra has regressed to the divine equivalent of a primitive state, a state that the gods were in only before the flood. At II.B.27 it is stated: ^{d}*er$_3$-ra i-tam-ma-*[*a*] *kīma*(GIN$_7$) *amēli*(LU$_2$) ('Erra speaks like a man'), but it is unclear what this refers to since this part of the tablet is broken. The rebuke at the beginning of tablet IV precedes a description of Erra entering Babylon and stirring it to civil war. The human-like behaviour is probably twofold: the irresponsibility of such an act, and the act of rebellion itself. In *Atraḫasīs* it is the god Wê who instigates the rebellion against Enlil. This god appears nowhere else in Akkadian literature as preserved and may have been invented specifically for this story: his name is perhaps a pun on *awīlum*

[271] As translated by Cagni.

ilū, a reversal of *ilū awīlum* in the first line (Alster, 2002: 37), or simply a pun on *awīlum* (Foster, 2005: 236 translates the name of the god as Awila). His blood is mixed with clay to produce man, and thus explains the origin of the rebellious human spirit, surviving both in the heartbeat and in the name of man (*awīlum*) (Foster, 2005: 236 n.1). Wē-ilu's rallying cry is: *al-ka-nim i ni-iš-ši-a i-na šu-ub-ti-šu*, 'Come, let us remove (him) from his dwelling!' (I.44, 58, 60) – which matches Erra's desire to unseat Marduk: *ina šub-ti-šu$_2$ a-de-ki-ma* ('I will rouse him from his dwelling,' I.123). Atraḫasīs the man is also the rebellious one in thwarting Enlil's plans to destroy the human race, by not only surviving himself, but taking with him on board the boat the means to revive human civilization. Erra is behaving and speaking like a man, then, chiefly in his rebellion against the head of the pantheon.

Erra is not the only god to move backwards. Regression is represented in a more explicit way by Marduk going back down to the Apsû, his place of birth in *Enūma Eliš* (I.80). The physical location of his movement corresponds with his loss of power – he moves back to the place where he dwelt before the slaying of Ti'āmtu, and at the same time as he loses his supremacy he moves back to where he came from before he earned it, to infancy and powerlessness.

Marduk's defeat and Erra's victory

Echoes of Marduk's victory can be found in Marduk's lament for his city:

u'$_3$-a bābilu(TIN.TIR)^{ki} *ša$_2$ ki-ma* ^{giš}*gišimmari*(GIŠIMMAR) *qim-ma-tu$_2$ u$_2$-ša$_2$-aš$_2$-ri-ḫu-u$_2$-ma*
ub-bi-lu-šu$_2$ ša$_2$-a-[*ru*]

Ah, Babylon, whose crown I made as splendid as a palm tree, but the wind
has carried it away!

Erra IV.40

The image of the wind carrying away palm fronds is reminiscent of the feathers carried on the wind in *Anzû* and the blood carried on the wind in *Ee.* In those compositions, this was a sign of defeat of the enemy, a way of announcing triumph in battle. Here too the wind carries away leaves as a sign of defeat. However, the perspective has changed – instead of a defeat which is cause for celebration, it is cause for despair. Marduk is unable to save his own city from Erra's destruction: he has already lost the battle without even engaging in it. The allusion to his former victory is bitterly pertinent.

Given that it is Marduk uttering these words, the connection with *Ee* is most immediate. However, the knowledge that Marduk was syncretised with Ninurta and took over from him means that the allusion to *Anzû* can also refer to Marduk. That is, the feathers on the wind can be thought of as announcing Marduk's victory, if he and Ninurta were considered to be the same figure. Alternatively, the three images can be seen as a chain of symbols of conquest: the blood on the wind symbolises Marduk's takeover from Ninurta, while the leaves on the wind symbolise Erra's takeover from Marduk, since the destruction of Babylon is Erra's victory. This may even be an allusion to the allusion in *Ee*, since the blood on the wind motif is so prominent and significant.

At the climax of the poem of *Erra,* all the progress made by gods and men has been undone. The bond of heaven and earth is broken, war is annihilating civilization, and Erra is behaving like a man, not a god. Even Marduk – a once-young and powerful god who could save the gods from any crisis – is now old, incapacitated, and has returned to his infant home. The chaos threatened if Erra continues is equivalent to a return to a prehistoric stone

age, since for the Mesopotamians the cosmic deluge, whose imagery is interwoven with the narrative, represented the beginning of historical time. The crisis is the most severe since the flood itself, warranting lamentation on an exceptional scale as a desperate attempt to avert the evil.

Chapter Seven

Erra and *The Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur*

Erra is a poem of national disaster. As we have seen, the destruction wreaked against Babylonia is comparable to that caused by the original deluge, undoing all the progress of civilization and killing all in its path. We have seen, too, that Išum is presented as the protector of Babylonia and its people, his lengthy descriptions of the violence an impassioned plea for Erra to desist. Above all, the quotation of Marduk's lament for Babylon within Išum's speech in tablet IV naturally invites comparison with Mesopotamian lamentation poetry, particularly the Sumerian city-laments. M. Green identifies the six basic themes of the genre: destruction, assignment of responsibility for the destruction, abandonment of the city by its god, restoration, return of the god, and presentation of a prayer (1975: 295). All six are present in *Erra*, to such a remarkable degree that it is highly likely that the poem draws on this genre,[272] developing its themes in its own way and fusing them with its other narrative programmes and Akkadian heroic poetry.[273]

There is striking evidence that later Mesopotamians saw a connection between *Erra* and *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur* (henceforth *LSU*). A late scholarly text from Uruk, W.20030, 7, lists renowned ancient kings together with their associated ***apkallu*** or ***ummânu*** (edition van Dijk, 1962: 44-5; copy van Dijk & Mayer, 1980: 89). The text

[272] I follow Green (1975) and Vanstiphout (1986a) in taking the city-laments together as a genre.
[273] Cf. George, noting that *Erra* and the city-laments express the same myth (2007: 13).

begins with seven pairs of antediluvian kings and sages before moving on to name scholars known to us from historical periods as the *ummânū* along with their associated kings. These include Sîn-lēqi-unninni, the author of *Gilgameš* (paired with Bilgames), and Esagil-kīn-apli, the compiler of several series of scholarly texts including *Sakkikū* and *Alamdimmû* (pairing lost). In line 13 Kabti-ilānī-Marduk is paired with Ibbi-Sîn, king of Ur whom *LSU* describes being led off to the land of Elam in chains.

> [*ina tar-ṣi i*]-˹*bi*˺-^{d}sîn(30) *šarri*(LUGAL) ^{m}*kabti*(IDIM)-*il*-^{d}*marduk*($ŠU_2$) ^{lu2}*um-man-nu*
> In the time of Ibbi-Sîn, the king, Kabti-il-Marduk was scholar.
>
> *The Uruk List of Kings and Sages* line 13, (edition van Dijk, 1962: 44)

The function of this text is to provide a mythological 'genealogy' for the scholars of Uruk by connecting them with their antediluvian counterparts and earlier famous kings (Lenzi, 2008: 161-2). The connection between the kings and their sages or scholars is not always clear. In the case of Sîn-lēqi-unninni, however, it is obvious that he was not contemporary with king Bilgames but rather wrote *about* him. Perhaps then we can deduce the same connection between Kabti-ilānī-Marduk and Ibbi-Sîn: the scholars of Uruk recognised that *Erra* was based on *LSU* at least on some level, and thus associated the author of *Erra* with the king featured in *LSU*.

All the surviving manuscripts of Sumerian city-laments are Old Babylonian in date. This has led some scholars to propose that they did not survive the Old Babylonian period and the canonisation process of the Kassites (discussed further below). Instead, the genre's characteristics were absorbed into the ritual lamentation texts that continued to be re-copied after the city-laments were no longer written (H. Vanstiphout, 1986b: 8). These *balaĝs* and *eršemma*s continued to play an active part in ritual into the Seleucid period (Cohen, 1988: 14-

24). Cultic calendars show that they were regularly recited, prescribed for certain days each month; for example, one Neo-Assyrian calendar lists eleven *balaĝs* to be recited to Assur in the month of Šabāṭu, and at least eight in Addaru (K.8207 *apud* Cohen, 1988: 22). Other texts specify the recitation of lamentations in Hellenistic Uruk and Babylon during building-rituals (e.g. TU 45 and 46, Linssen, 2004: 101-4). Thus this genre is well-attested in the first-millennium.

The *balaĝs* are closely related to the city-laments in style and form, even sharing whole passages (Cohen, 1988: 34 ff. cf. Löhnert, 2009: 3-10). This was first observed by Jacobsen (1941: 222-3), who noted that the *Ur Lament* (henceforth *LU*) is much like a *balaĝ* in nature as a lament for a major public disaster. These *balaĝs* were performed during rituals concerning the demolition and reconstruction of temples, a theme appropriate to the city-laments which are concerned with the destruction and restitution of cities (Jacobsen: 1941: 222-3). There is some internal evidence that the city-laments may have been performed in ritual contexts when they were first composed (Michalowski, 1989: 23-4; 48-51). Since they are far removed in time from the early first millennium, however, it may seem more likely that the lamentation passages in *Erra* were inspired by these first-millennium *balaĝs*, which may draw on city-laments as distant antecedents, rather than by the city-laments themselves.

However, there are also significant differences between *balaĝs* and city-laments, and consequently Tinney argues there is insufficient evidence for a dependent relationship between them (Tinney, 1996: 51, *contra* Cohen, 1974: 11). They share the theme of the destruction of cities and temples; both make allusions to sheepfolds and cattle-pens, and both express the idea that the gods, though capricious, can be appeased. Yet the historiographical aspect of the city-laments is absent from the *balaĝs* (Black, 1991: 31). This historical dimension is crucial to *Erra*; its narrative concerns a specific time and place, unlike the *balaĝs* which were

general and recited on different occasions. Furthermore, as Tinney notes, the *balaĝs* lack the promise or fulfilment of restoration, an aspect which is found in all the city-laments, and in *Erra*. These are two important features which *Erra* shares with the city-lament genre and not with the later *balaĝ*s. Furthermore, Cooper has since challenged Vanstiphout's chronology of lamentation development, adducing that the city-lament genre must have existed even before the *Curse of Agade* (often considered a forerunner) (2006: 40), and that ritual laments probably preceded the literary works (2006: 45).

The connection between *Erra* and the city-laments goes further still. Remarkably, the poem of *Erra* mirrors the *Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur* (henceforth *LSU*) in structure at a detailed level. When the plot events of *LSU* are analysed *kirugu*-by-*kirugu*[274] and compared with those of *Erra* (tablet-by-tablet), several correspondences appear (see table 2).

[274] Plot analysis of *LSU* based on that of Michalowski (1989).

LSU		*Erra*	
Kirugu 1:	The gods' intention to destroy Sumer is narrated.	Tablet I	Erra tells of his intention to cause destruction.
Kirugu 2:	Begins with the god Zababa abandoning his dwelling (Kiš). The gods of various cities in Sumer abandon their cities and there is lamentation.	Tablet II (fragmentary)	Begins with Marduk rising from his dwelling. The gods in assembly are concerned about Erra's anger (fragmentary).
Kirugu 3:	The destruction reaches Ur. Nanna beseeches Enlil, describing the city's plight and pleading for its restitution.	Tablet III	Erra begins to carry out his destruction. Išum appeals to Erra, describing the plight of Babylon and rebuking him for it. Erra replies that the gods have made their decision and implies that Išum is foolish for opposing it. Išum responds. Erra responds (lost). Išum responds.
Kirugu 4:	Enlil replies that Ur's fate is decreed and Nanna should not waste his time weeping. The main description of the destruction of Ur. Includes the cessation of justice and cult activity. Nanna pleads with Enlil again. This time he relents and declares that Ur shall be restored. Nanna returns to his city.	Tablet IV	Išum's speech continues. The main description of the destruction of Babylon, and other cities. In Uruk there is a corrupt governor and cultic activity has ceased. Most, if not all, of the tablet is a speech of Išum, aiming to persuade Erra to desist. This time he relents. The destruction is turned back on Babylon's enemies.
Kirugu 5:	The destruction is turned back on Ur's enemies. Ur's prosperity is restored. Prayer that it may continue.	Tablet V	Erra returns to his dwelling in Emeslam. Erra declares Babylon is to become prosperous again.

Table 2.

Most of the events take place in the same order and in the same tablet as they do in the *kirugu.* This is striking because it implies that *Erra* does not draw on lamentation in a general way or on the city-lament genre as a whole, but on this composition in particular or another based on it. The *kirugu*/tablet division is actually found on the Ur witnesses UET 6/2, 132 and UET 6/2, 133 (Dahl, 2011: 76). The city-laments have little in common other than their general subject matter (Michalowski, 1989: 5-6), each composition treating the same themes and topoi in its own way; they therefore vary significantly in structure and detail (Tinney, 1996: 20). For example, the agent of destruction is 'either a storm or enemy invasion or both, but the distribution and treatment varies,' so that only in *LSU* is the storm turned back upon the invading enemies (Tinney, 1996: 20) – and in *Erra* (IV.131-50). The similarity between the beginnings of both poems is also significant, since they differ from the other city-laments; *LU,* the *Eridu Lament* (henceforth *LE*), and the *Nippur lament* (henceforth *LN)* open with the destruction already taking place, and the *Uruk Lament* (henceforth *LW,* for Warka) with a description of the gods conspiring to create a monster. It is also worth noting that the other city laments are more specific in their concern for one city, whereas *LSU* speaks of the whole area of Sumer as well as its capital city of Ur: so too, *Erra* centres on Babylon, but is also a lament for the whole of Babylonia, taking into account the cities of Sippar, Uruk, Dūr-Kurigalzu, and Dēr (IV.50 ff.).

It is the distribution of the similarities that most strongly suggests a connection with *LSU.* This is the only lamentation to have five *kirugu*s: *LU* has eleven, *LE* has at least eight, *LW* has at least twelve, and *LN* has twelve (Michalowski, 1989: 6). Likewise, five tablets is an unusual length for the author of *Erra* to have chosen. There is no standard format or length for Akkadian heroic poetry, but the other models that influence *Erra* are quite different: *Anzû* has three, *Enūma Eliš* has seven, *Atraḫasīs* three in the OB version and at least six in the Late

Babylonian version, and *Gilgameš* twelve (or eleven). There is thus no Akkadian precedent for *Erra*'s arrangement over five tablets.

The main obstacle to this hypothesis is the lack of manuscripts of *LSU* (or any Sumerian city-lament) after the Old Babylonian period. Yet this may only be an accident of survival. A bilingual inscription of Nebuchadnezzar I (RIMB 2 B.2.4.8-9) describes Marduk abandoning his city in language extremely similar to that of the city laments, showing that this genre had not completely died out (Dalley, 2005: 278). A tradition of Akkadian lamentations based on Sumerian models in the Old Babylonian period is implied by a list of eight compositions designated as laments for Bēlet-ilī, six of them with Akkadian titles (Löhnert, 2009: 13). An Akkadian translation of *kirugu*s two and perhaps three of the *balaĝ* uru$_2$ am$_3$-ma-ir-ra-bi is also known from this period (UET 6/2, 403; Wassermann, 2003, Wassermann & Gabbay, 2005). This portion of text corresponds to the lament of Inana over her destroyed city. It is very unusual for an Akkadian translation to appear without the Sumerian text (it is never the case for *Lugal-e,* for example), and tantalisingly suggests that the city lament as a stand-alone piece may have crossed over into the Akkadian tradition. The lament for a city is, at least, clearly the part of the text that was of interest to whoever copied it. One might compare *Gilg* XII which is a translation of the Sumerian *Bilgames, Enkidu, and the Netherworld*, or *Ištar's Descent* (Wassermann & Gabbay, 2005: 74), although *Ištar's Descent* is an adaptation of *Inana's Descent* rather than a straightforward translation; these versions of Sumerian texts have indeed become part of Akkadian literature.

Akkadian laments from the late period are also known: one for a woman dead in childbirth (Livingstone, 1989: 37-8), one for Dumuzi (Livingstone, 1989: 39-41) and one in the

manner of a lament for Dumuzi (Lambert, 1983: 211-15).[275] This last text has been compared with *Erra* (Foster, 2005: 952) since it is primarily about the effects of war, specifically the laments of women for their dead husbands. Scholars have debated whether it was written in response to a specific historical event (see Lambert, 1983: 211). That the author of the primary publication suggested it had been originally inspired by the destruction of Sumer and was re-copied when Babylon was under foreign domination in the Seleucid period (Pinches, 1901: 196-9) reflects the similarity of its language to Sumerian laments. We have here the most likely example of a late Akkadian text based on Sumerian prototypes, with all evidence for the intervening period lost. It is therefore also possible that *Erra* was based on a later Akkadian composition, extremely similar to *LSU* in theme, structure, and plot, rather than *LSU* itself. Since this is impossible to verify, we must work with the original Sumerian text in our comparison and let the results speak for themselves.

Drawing on *LSU* rather than one of the other city laments has ideological implications. Green observes that *LSU* identifies Ur with its long dynastic reign as the target for the gods' anger, whereas in *LW,* for example, it is directed towards all mankind (1984: 254). By modelling itself on *LSU* rather than a different city-lament, *Erra* is comparing the fallen power of Babylon and the cities in its domain with the famous dynasty of Ur. It is laying claim to an identity of power and splendour, rather than, for example, the religious centrality that would stem from a comparison with *LN* and Nippur. It may also draw on its reason for the gods' disfavour given at 366-9 – that the length of the city's reign appointed by fate was simply over (see below).

[275] Cf. also the laments of personal distress of Ashurnasirpal (von Soden, 1977), Ashurbanipal (Luckenbill, 1927: 377-8), and Nabû-šuma-ukīn (I. Finkel, 1999). A Middle Assyrian bilingual prayer of Tukulti-Ninurta laments how Assyria's enemies plot its destruction (Ebeling, 1918: 62-70).

An additional feature of *LSU* adds to this theological speculation. Green notes that while *LU* and *LE* rebuke their city gods for having abandoned them, *LSU* is different in that Nanna remains loyal to his city and pleads with Enlil on its behalf (1984: 254). This is the key similarity between *LSU* and *Erra,* for by making Išum plead with Erra, the poem casts Išum in the role of benevolent city god and Erra in the role of apathetic and hostile chief god. It is also significant that Erra fills the role of Enlil and not Marduk; we have already seen how Erra usurps Marduk's primacy and power, and this is another allusion that reinforces the idea.

There are differences, too, of course. It is evident that much more happens in tablet I of *Erra* than in *kirugu* 1 of *LSU,* for example, but this is because *Erra* is not a lament for Babylon within the genre of city-laments, but a heroic narrative fused with the structure of a city-lament. Indeed, it is because of this combination that while it is clear that tablet IV of the poem draws heavily on laments, their influence upon the other tablets is less obvious.

Structure, details, and meaning thus combine to provide a reasonable basis for speculation about influence. Scholars use these criteria in researching the relationship between Greek and Near Eastern literature (e.g. Burkert, 1992: 88; Penglase, 1994: 7-11), an endeavour that also compares compositions far apart in time with little intervening material. Parallels are thought to be more likely to be significant when they occur at a similar structural point in both texts, are sufficiently detailed, and have the same meaning or function in both. The parallels between *LSU* and *Erra* meet these criteria; we can now examine the allusions in more detail.

LSU and *Erra* in detail

LSU opens by announcing the gods' intended destruction of Ur in 54 lines. This opening is unique among the city-laments, which almost all begin with the destruction already taking place. *LW* opens by briefly announcing the gods' decision to destroy Uruk (I.1-8, fragmentary), but the narrative quickly moves on to the creation of their monster (I.9-12). *Erra* also begins, after the short prologue, with Erra announcing his destructive intention (I.6-9). There is also a delay in action while Erra hesitates (I.15-20). The Sebettu are now introduced to spur him on (I.23 ff.). They utter a long speech (I.60-75) encouraging Erra to act on his impulses. Išum makes his first address to Erra, who tells him to be quiet and lists his destructive qualities in ten lines (I.109-118). All of this is part of the announcement of the devastation to come.

Kirugu 2 of *LSU* begins with the god Zababa abandoning his dwelling in his city of Kiš: ^{d}za-ba$_4$-ba$_4$ ki-tuš [ki-aĝ$_2$-ĝa$_2$-ni giri$_3$ kur$_2$ ba-ra-an-dab$_5$], 'Zababa [took an unfamiliar path away from his beloved] dwelling,' (116).[276] This is the first in a list of gods abandoning their cities, followed by their lamentation. The second tablet of *Erra* begins with Marduk abandoning his dwelling: ⌜*it*⌝-*bi-ma i*†-*na šub-ti-šu*$_2$ *a*-⌜*šar*⌝ [*la a-ri*], 'he rose from his dwelling, an [unapproachable] place' (II.1). Unlike Zababa, he is not the first in a sequence to do so – in *Erra* this is the only abandonment, but it is a crucial one upon which the plot turns. The other cities in Babylonia, like the others in Sumer, do suffer devastation, but this is to be related later in tablet IV, for the focus is primarily on Babylon and on setting up the conditions for the destruction to take place. In *LE* the gods destroy their cities but specifically do not abandon them (*kirugu* 6.7'= 13' = 19' = 24'). In *LN* it is only implied that Enlil has left

[276] Text based on Michalowski (1989).

his dwelling, since he is beseeched to return to it at 146. In *LU* and *LW* all the city deities abandon Ur and Uruk respectively (*LU*: 1-36; *LW:* 2.21'-25'). *LSU* begins *kirugu* 2 by listing the desertion of the gods of the cities of Sumer, but when it comes to Ur in *kirugu* 3, its patron deity and thus the most important deity, Nanna, is the focus of the narrative. The effect of an allusion to *LSU*, then, is to put Marduk in the role of these lesser deities who leave their dwellings early on in the poem, abandoning hope at an early stage.

In *kirugu* 3 the destruction hits Ur, and Enlil inflicts famine and treachery on the city (296-9 ff.). In *Erra* it is probably in tablet III that Erra begins his onslaught; we have heard extensively about Erra's plans for destruction, but we do not know what has taken place until we hear Išum's account (III.C.58 ff.). Cagni suggests it was narrated in the lacunae in tablet III, or that it was never described outright and we only hear of it through Išum's speeches (1969: 208-10). Either way, the destruction must happen at this point in the narrative. Again, Erra is in a role structurally corresponding to that of Enlil, emphasising the power he enjoys (cf. Cagni, 1969: 221, who suggests that Erra compares himself with Marduk here).

Išum is distressed by Erra's excessive violence and demands an explanation. In the course of the conversation, he catalogues its effects in another description of the destruction. This corresponds structurally to the plea of Nanna in *kirugu* 3 of *LSU.* Nanna makes two pleas to Enlil, the first unsuccessful (341-56), the second successful (451-8). Išum has one long conversation with Erra spanning III.C.1 - IV.127. Here he describes the catastrophe striking. In *LSU* this is given by the narrator between the pleas of Nanna, but here they are spoken by Išum; thus the main event occurs in a structurally similar place in both poems.

Although the length of their speeches is different and the description that comes from the narrator in *LSU* is told through Išum's perspective in *Erra*, both Nanna and Išum remind

their interlocutor what he has done in the hope that this will move him to desist. Nanna's first plea emphasises that with the people destroyed, there is no one left to bring offerings to Enlil, and thus he is acting against himself (341-47). Išum does not employ this tactic and the majority of his speech is the description of the suffering Erra has caused. He expresses care for the Babylonians, calling them *nišīya*, 'my people' at III.C.30. Thus, although Išum is never explicitly called a city-god of Babylon, he is placed in the role of one, interceding to protect it.

At the beginning of *kirugu* 4, Enlil replies to Nanna's plea by telling him not to waste his time weeping for Ur; its appointed time has come and he should give up hope (361-70). This is expressed in legalistic language: di-til-la inim pu-uḫ$_2$-ru-um-ma-ka šu gi$_4$-gi$_4$ nu-ĝal$_2$ / inim du$_{11}$-ga an ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$-ka šu bal-e nu-zu, 'The case, the word of the assembly cannot be reversed, / it is not known to overturn the word spoken by An and Enlil (364-5). However, Enlil is also sympathetic: [dumu]-ˈĝu$_{10}$ˈ dumu gi$_7$ ni$_2$-za-bi-me-en er$_2$-ra <a$^{?}$>-na-bi-me-en, 'My [son], you are a noble son in your own right, why are you in tears?' (362a) and ^{d}nanna-ĝu$_{10}$ na-an-kuš$_2$-kuš$_2$-u$_3$-de$_3$ iri^{ki}-zu e$_3$-bar-ra-ab 'My Nanna, do not exhaust yourself, leave your city!' (370). Towards the end of tablet III (C.40-65, though note that the length of the gap between C and D is unknown), Erra responds to Išum's speech by telling him that the decision has been made by the Igigi, Anunnaki, and Marduk, and asking him: *min$_3$-su ki-i la mu-de-e ta-ta-me at-ta* 'Why are you talking like one who is foolish?'(III.C.42) Both replies indicate that the destruction has been decreed and therefore it is irrational to oppose it.

The responses occur at slightly different points in the *kirugu*/tablet schema but at the same point structurally. Their contents are near-identical but with very different tones; just as Erra goes further than Enlil in his motives for destroying humankind as shown in the previous chapter, here he goes further than Enlil again in his lack of care. Enlil is sympathetic

towards Nanna, Erra is aggressive. Enlil's decision to destroy Ur results from a cruel but principled decision that the dynasty has reigned too long.[277] Erra invokes the same principle here, but he is twisting it, for he obtained Marduk's word by trickery.

The allusion to *LSU* may present an implicit theological explanation for the downfall of Babylon, a contrast with the fate of Ur. In *Erra* there is no decision that, like Ur, Babylon's appointed reign had simply come to an end; Marduk's himself utters a lament of regret at IV.40-44.[278] Erra's ravaging of Babylonia is based not on a decision that its hegemony had lasted too long, but on the desire for personal recognition. *Erra* thus uses the departure from its model, the omission of any explanation, to emphasise its own rationalisation: the destruction is not the inevitable result of a fixed and necessary decree, but of out-of-control forces that need to be calmed. The cause of this is complex and unclear, particularly the balance of human and divine responsibility, since there has been neglect on both sides.

Kirugu 4 describes the destruction of Ur after Nanna abandons it, 379-448: the main attack of the invading enemies, the hunger ravaging the people, the destruction of the palace, and the wrecking of the sanctuary. Throughout, the people lament their dire situation. In tablet IV of *Erra* comes the main description of the destruction of Babylon: Erra aims arrows at the walls and kills the gate-keeper, Babylonians attack their own city, and the governor orders his troops to kill and loot indiscriminately (IV.6-35). In both poems the description begins at the city walls and moves inwards towards the palace.

[277] See Chen (2013: 223-5) for variation among the city laments regarding the reason for the destruction.
[278] Although afterwards he curses the city (IV.46-9; Cagni, 1977: 51 (*contra* Cagni, 1969: 229) identifies these lines as belonging to Marduk), it appears that he does so in horror at the misdeeds of the Babylonians, provoked by Erra. Thus this is not approval of Erra's plan.

The lament of Marduk (IV.40-44) does not seem to have a particular antecedent in the city-laments.[279] There is one image, however, that stands out: Marduk compares Babylon to a date palm at IV.40. The image of the date palm is used in *kirugu* 4 of *LSU,* describing the felling of the statue of Nin-e'iga (413-417). This comes at the climax of the poem and is its greatest horror, as are the events narrated on tablet IV of *Erra.* The destructions of other Babylonian cities: Sippar, Uruk, Dūr-Kurigalzu, and Dēr, are also lamented in tablet IV at 50-86, whereas in *LSU* the fates of cities other than Ur come in *kirugu* 2.

In *kirugu* 4, as a result of the destroyed buildings and people, judicial administration and cult activity cease in Ur (438-448). This may be a topos, as there is mention of it in *LW* in the second *kirugu* (A.2, A.4), although the surrounding lines are so fragmentary it is impossible to know how much emphasis it was accorded. What is important is that the topos occurs in the same place in *Erra* as it does in *LSU,* in *kirugu* 4 and tablet IV, following the main episode of destruction. Since this theme is more important in *Erra* than in *LSU* it occurs several times rather than in one block. First, the people's revolt against the governor of Babylon, followed by the governor himself who incites his troops against his own people; second, the governor of Uruk; third, the inhabitants of Dēr, who: *kit-ta* ⌜u_2-*maš*⌝*-ši-ra-ma iṣ-ba-ta pa-rik-ta*, ('forgot righteousness and took up violence', IV.73), for which their god Ištarān forsakes them. Tablet IV is the climax of the poem, and the emphasis of this theme here makes it clear that the brutality of civil strife, lawlessness and violence is the most intense sorrow of the whole poem. While in *LSU* the climax perhaps was the destruction of the statue of the goddess Nin-e'iga (the turning point of *kirugu* 4, see Dahl, 2011), the climax here is the

[279] Van Dijk suggests that Marduk's curse at IV.46-9 may echo a passage in *kirugu* 4 of *LSU*, 402 ff. (*apud* Cagni, 1969: 229). The passage in *Erra* is difficult to interpret, but seems to be about the scarcity of water (Cagni, 1977: 51). However, in the cited passage of *LSU* the water is in abundance and is metaphorical.

people's destruction of themselves. A comparison of the differences here at the same structural point is thus beneficial in bringing out the values of each poem.

Kirugu 4 ends with Enlil relenting and declaring that Ur shall be restored. *Kirugu* 5 begins with the destructive storms that blew on Sumer turning back to their source. *LSU* is the only city-lament where this happens, saying: u$_4$ ki-en-gi-ra ba-e-zal-la kur-re ḫe$_2$-eb-zal, 'The storm that passed over Sumer indeed passed over the foreign land[280]' (486). Lines 488-90 specify which lands: Tidnum, Gutium, and Anšan - those of the enemy invaders. Famine too has been inflicted upon the enemies just as it was upon Ur (492). Likewise at the end of Išum's speech at the end of tablet IV, Erra relents, decrees that the destruction shall be turned back on the enemies of Babylonia and that an Akkadian (*ak-ka-du-u$_2$*, IV.136) will rise to destroy and rule them all (IV.131-6). This goes one step further than *LSU*, or any of the city-laments, since *LSU* ends with prayers of abundance for Ur and does not express hopes of conquering its enemies. If anything, the sentiment is the opposite in *LSU*, expressing the wish that: an-ki niĝin$_2$-na uĝ$_3$ ⌜saĝ si$_3$⌝-ga, 'in the whole universe the people be cared for' (513).

The theme of the Akkadians dominating their enemies comes up again during Erra's instructions for Akkad's restitution at V.27-30. The element of revenge present in *LSU* (and not in the other city-laments) is thus extended to include ruling over the invaders, particularly specifying the hauling in of booty at V.30 and tribute (*biltu*) at V.35. However, although they have the semblance of topoi that we might expect in the other city-laments, the other blessings of restitution are found only in *LSU.* The multiplication of the people (V.25), the safety of the roads (V.26), and the abundance of the fields and waters (V.33-4, 37) are absent from *LU,* which prays for a restoration but is not specific about the details. *LN* refers

[280] Var. KK: kur-kur-ra 'lands'.

to the rebuilding of houses, the sprouting of seeds, and the multiplication of animals (252-8) but not the multiplication of people, and is primarily concerned with resumption of cult. The situation is the same in *LW*, and the part which would have mentioned restoration is lost in *LE*.

The whole passage in *Erra* has the ring of pseudo-prophecy, which suggests the poem was composed after this restitution had been made, a celebration of the king who had made it possible. It is comparable with the *Marduk Prophecy* in this respect, perhaps composed in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I: Marduk predicts that a king of Babylon will renew the sanctuaries, bring Marduk back into Babylon, and smash Elam (iii 9 – iv B'), which Nebuchadnezzar had duly accomplished.[281] Restored social harmony, and fruitful fields and watercourses also occur here. Yet *Erra*'s prophecy has a different, additional focus, repeatedly speaking of tribute. Even the renewed produce of the sea and fields are both described as *biltu* (V.33-4), and Erra's instructions end by culminating with the command that the governors of all other cities must defer to the provisioner of Esagil: *za-nin* e_2*-sag-il*$_2$ *u bābili*(KA$_2$.DINGIR.RA)^{ki} *šakkanakkū*(GIR$_3$.ARAD)^{meš} *kal ālānī*(URU.URU) *epišta*(DU$_3$)*-šu*$_2$*-nu li-bi-lu ša*$_2$*-a-*[*šu*], 'As for the provisioner of Esagil and Babylon, may the governors of all the cities[282] bring (the results of) their labour to him' (V.38), perhaps another reference to tribute (Cagni, 1969: 253).

Erra returns to his seat at the beginning of tablet V: *ul-tu* ^{d}*er*$_3$*-ra i-nu-ḫu ir-mu-u*$_2$ *šu-bat-su*, 'When Erra had calmed down and occupied his dwelling,' (V.1). Nanna had returned to his city at the end of *kirugu* 4, immediately after the favourable reply from Enlil (475-477a), and the turning back of the destruction happens after this (483-491, the beginning of *kirugu*

[281] Or see Nielsen (2012) for a date during the reign of Esarhaddon.
[282] Var. O: *kal da-ad*$_2$*-me*,'all the inhabited regions,'perhaps alluding back to I.1.

5). In *Erra* these two events have been reversed, presumably since although it is Išum who carries out this destruction, Erra is the abstract force which causes it and so cannot be said to be appeased until it has been carried out. Thus established in his peaceful dwelling, he announces the regeneration of Akkad (V.25-38).

The epilogue is influenced by that of *Enūma Eliš* (Foster, 2007: 67), which claimed to be divinely revealed and exhorted all to reflect on its message, passing it on to future generations, celebrating the power of Marduk (VII.145-62). *Erra* takes this pattern, transferring its praise to its own deity rather than Marduk, who is completely absent and replaced by Erra in triumph (Machinist, 2005: 221). There may even be a subtle mocking of Marduk's 50 names in *Erra* V.44: *e-da šu-ma ul u$_2$-rad-di a-na muḫ-ḫi,* 'not a single line did he add in addition.' Noegel has pointed out that *šumu,* 'line' also has the meaning of 'name' (2011: 180): it may be possible to read this as an ironic dig at Marduk, hinting that Erra does not need a heaping-up of names to establish his supremacy. *Ee* ends with the instruction that Marduk's names should be remembered, taught, and discussed:

> *li-iṣ-ṣab-tu$_2$-ma maḫ-ru-u li-kal-lim*
> *en-qu mu-du-u mit-ḫa-riš lim-tal-ku*
> *li-ša$_2$-an-ni-ma a-bu ma-ri-iš li-ša$_2$-ḫi-iz*
> *ša$_2$* ^{lu2}*rē'î* (SIPA) *u na-qi$_2$-di li-pat-ta-a uz-na-šu$_2$-un*
>
> Let them be understood, let a leading man explain them,
> let the wise and the intelligent discuss them together,
> let the father repeat them, let him teach[283] (them) to his son,[284]
> let him open the ears of the shepherd and herdsman.[285]
>
> *Ee* VII.145-8

[283] Var. C: *lu-ša$_2$-ḫi-*[*iz*], ' let me teach'.
[284] Var. B: *ma-ri,* 'the son'.
[285] i.e. the king.

At the end of *Erra* we also find instructions for an audience, not of Erra's names, but of the poem itself. The poem also goes further than *Ee* in making promises about what its spread can accomplish, proclaiming the power of Erra in contrast to that of Marduk in a strikingly competitive way. It declares that the recitation of the poem will have protective and apotropaic properties and bring good fortune:

ilu(DINGIR) *ša*$_2$ *za-ma-ru ša*$_2$*-a-šu*$_2$ *i-na-du ina a-šir*$_3$*-ti-šu*$_2$ *lik-tam-me-ra ḫe*$_2$*-gal*$_2$*-lum*
u$_3$ *ša*$_2$ *u*$_2$*-šam-sa-ku a-a iṣ-ṣi-na qut-rin-na*
šarru(LUGAL) *ša*$_2$ *šu-mi u*$_2$*-šar-bu-u*$_2$ *li-be-el kib-ra-a-ti*
rubû(NUN) *ša*$_2$ *ta-nit-ti qar-ra-du-ti-ia i-dab-bu-bu ma-ḫi-ra a-a ir-ši*
^{lu2}*nāru*(NAR) *ša*$_2$ *i-ṣar-ra-ḫu ul i-mat ina šip-ṭi*
eli(UGU) *šarri*(LUGAL) *u rubê*(NUN) *da-mi*$_3$*-iq at-mu-šu*$_2$
^{lu2}*ṭupšarru*(DUB.SAR) *ša*$_2$ *iḫ-ḫa-zu i-šet ina māt*(KUR) ^{lu2}*nakri*(KUR$_2$) *i-kab-bit ina māti*(KUR)*-šu*$_2$
ina a-šir$_3$*-ti um-ma-a-ni a-šar ka-a-an šu-mi*$_3$ *i-zak-ka-ru u*$_2$*-zu-un-šu*$_3$*-nu a-pet-ti*

For the god who praises this song, may abundance be piled up[286] in his sanctuary,
but he (the god) who considers it bad, may he not smell incense!
May the king who extols my name[287] rule the (whole) world!
May the prince who declares the praise of my heroism[288] have no rival!
May the singer who sings (this poem) in lament not die in the judgement,
but his speech will be favourable[289] to king and prince.
The scribe who learns it will escape the enemy land and will be respected in his (own) country.
In the sanctuary of the scholars where they constantly speak my name, I will open their ears.

Erra V.49-56

This brings us back to lamentation poetry: *ṣarāḫu* in line 53 means specifically 'to sing lamentation' (CAD Ṣ: 99), a reference which may suggest ritual performance. We know that lamentations were sung during rituals in the first millennium, specifically building-rituals (Linssen, 2004: 100), to appease the anger of the god whose sanctuary had to be demolished

[286] Var. P: *ḫe*$_2$*-gal*$_2$*-la*, 'may he pile up abundance'.
[287] Var.B: ⌜*šu-ma*⌝, 'the name'.
[288] Var. O: *qar-ra-du-ti*, 'heroism'.
[289] Var. KP: *li-ṭib*, 'may [his speech] please'.

(Cohen, 1981: 48-9). While the lamentation-priest (*kalû*) took primary responsibility, references in the astronomical diaries show that the exorcist (*āšipu*) was also involved (Linssen, 2004: 107). We may note that three copies of *Erra* (KAR 166, 168, 169) were found in the house of a family of exorcists at Assur (N 4, Pedersén, 1986: 56); it is thus possible that they found some practical purpose for the text (see also on amulets below). *Balaĝ* lamentations were regularly performed in ritual throughout the late period (Cohen, 1988: 14 ff.), and it is therefore more likely that in this respect, *Erra* was inspired by one of these more contemporary practices. The function of these laments was to appease the wrath of angry gods and thereby avert catastrophe. The details were generalised so as to apply to any situation, and the *balaĝs* were recited regularly in case the gods had been accidentally offended.

Throughout *Erra,* Išum uses the same principles as these ritual lamentations: that praise of a deity's power will soothe his wrath. Bottéro suggests that Išum's approach in fact reflects a theology current at the time, that the way to approach the gods in times of trouble was not to plead or reproach but to flatter (Bottéro, 1985: 277). This concept does not come from *LSU* or the city-lament genre but is a function of the *balaĝs*. The reason for Erra's anger is a lack of recognition. His demonstration of power is a bid for respect. The Sebettu persuade him to go on the warpath by emphasising that it will subject all men and gods to him (I.61-6), and their words please him because they elevate and honour him. Thus when Išum describes at length the havoc and desolation that Erra has caused, Erra is pleased that his power is acknowledged; it is flattery (Bottéro, 1985: 270). At III.D.1-15 his summary of all the gods who bow to him and the domains under his control ends with *u*$_3$ *ta-ta-mi ina lib*$_3$*-bi-ka um-ma le-qu-u še-ṭu-ti,* 'yet you say in your heart, "they hold me in contempt!"?' Parts of this passage, in fact, could be compared with the language of hymns, particularly III.D.9: *gi-mir*

par-ṣi-ma ḫa-am-ma-ta, 'you gather all the divine powers to yourself,' which is common in hymns to many different gods (CAD P: 200-201).[290] Išum is, in some ways, then, speaking a hymn to Erra.[291]

In IV.87-112 his summary of the effects of Erra's actions concludes with the line: *u₃ na-ḫa-am-ma ul ta-nu-uḫ,* 'Yet you could find no peace at all!' With these words Išum tells Erra that he has obtained the recognition he desired and should now be satisfied. As soon as Erra has heard this last summary, the narrator remarks: *a-mat* ^{d}*i-šum iq-bu-šu₂ ki-i u₃-lu šam-ni eli*(UGU)*-šu₂ i-ṭib,*' the word Išum spoke pleased him like the finest oil,' (IV.129), the same line that followed the speech of the Sebettu at I.93 with Išum's name substituted for theirs. When he feels honoured, Erra is finally willing to stop.

Išum's strategy of praising a deity in the hope they will alleviate suffering and illness is also typical of incantations (Mayer, 1976: 309-33). Incantations and prayers often include a lament describing the petitioner's circumstances (Mayer, 1976: 67-118). There are also instances where the petitioner reproaches the god for the evils he has caused him to suffer (Mayer, 1976: 106-8). It is quite possible that *Erra* could have been composed not only as a literary text but with a specifically practical purpose in mind (cf. Cagni 1977: 14; Hecker, 1974: 15). At V.57-8 the text specifies that the tablet itself has protective functions:

> *ina bīti*(E₂) *a-šar ṭup-pu ša-a-šu₂ šak-nu* ^{d}*er₃-ra li-gug-ma liš-gi-šu₂* ^{d}*se-be-et-*⌜*ti*⌝
> *pa-tar šip-ṭi ul i-ṭe-ḫi-šu-ma ša₂-lim-tu šak-na-as-su*
>
> In the house where this tablet is placed, let Erra become furious,[292] let the Sebettu slaughter -

[290] Cf. *The Great Prayer to Ištar* (Reiner & Güterbock, 1967) lines 8-10, accompanied by ritual instructions.
[291] Cf. Hecker on the intention to praise as a function of hymn and epic (Hecker, 1974: 70 ff.).
[292] Variants K: *lu a-gu-ug-ma;* O: <*lu*> *a-gu-ug-*⌜*ma*⌝, 'although Erra may be furious'.

the sword of punishment/plague shall not come near it and good fortune is decreed for it.

Erra V.57-8

These lines could be interpreted in different ways. Firstly, that even when Erra and the Sebettu may be raging, their wrath (sword of punishment), or plague, the characteristic weapon of Erra, shall still not touch the house. Alternatively, the angry deities may be intended to be the agents of protection, warding off evil forces from the house. The ambiguity is probably deliberate, so as for both meanings to be potent at once.

The end of *Erra* affirms this principle: praise of Erra will avert his harmful blows in all their forms, but specifically recitation of this poem, in effect a lament to appease the heart of Erra, is promoted. One need not even recite it; it is enough to hang it up in the house. It may be that the physical presence of the words effects a constant 'recitation' of the poem, akin to the way that dedicating a statue in a temple meant the dedicator was continually praying. The principle of lamentation is thus reified as an amulet. In corroboration of the poem's own statement, examples of the poem have indeed been found on amulet-shaped tablets (KAR 169; King, 1896: 54-7, 58-9; Lambert, 1962b), and one amulet (BM 118998) has been found inscribed with an extract from the poem, the last thirteen lines of tablet III, Išum's praise of Erra (see Reiner, 1960). The tablet from Ur published by Lambert (1962b) has 'two corners cut away and a horizontal hole pierced through the remaining tab, as though to fit the tablet into a frame' (1962b: 119). The magical and ritual use of literary texts is often a secondary development (Hecker, 1974: 15-16), but here the text explicitly recommends itself for this purpose. This confirms the validity of our search for references to ritual and prayer: since Kabti-ilānī-Marduk declares that the poem has a practical function, it is likely that other

references to religious practices and the principles by which they operate have been worked into the text, as this chapter has found.

The net of Enlil

There is at least one image in *Erra* that comes from *balaĝs* rather than *LSU*. The image of Erra hunting down people in the city streets with nets is not only a reflex of Anzû, but also recalls Sumerian laments where Enlil catches men in his terrible net. As explored earlier when comparing Marduk to Enlil the fowler (see chapter three p. 164 ff.), Enlil's destruction of men, often his own people, is compared to the hunting of birds in Sumerian laments, and used as 'a mystical reflection on the god's violent power' (Black, 1996: 26). If Marduk had taken over from Enlil as fowler, now Erra has taken over from Marduk; Marduk has abandoned his city and left Erra to run wild. However, while Marduk used the net to trap only the monstrous Ti'āmtu, Erra is using it to bring down innocent civilians. Erra's indiscriminate use of the net is thus closer to Enlil's in the Sumerian laments.

Black mentions an image from *Erra* in his article as a comparison (1996: 27 n. 13):

a-šib bābili(KA_2.DINGIR.RA)^{ki} *šu-nu-ti* $šu_2$*-nu iṣ-ṣu-ru-um-ma ar-ra-šu-nu*
ana še-e-ti tak-miš-$šu_2$*-nu-ti-ma ta-bi-ir ta-ta-bat qu-ra-du* $^{d}er_3$*-ra*

"Those inhabitants of Babylon – they are the bird and their decoy -
"you snared them in nets, trapped and killed them, warrior Erra!

Erra IV.18-19

He considers it an imprecise image, since 'it functions only on the level of drawing into the net'. However, if the image of fowling called up this mystic contemplation on Enlil's awesome power and incomprehensible judgement, I would argue that it does the same here for Erra too. Erra's desire to destroy Babylon *is* difficult to understand, as are Enlil's reasons

for turning against his own people. Attributing motives to malevolent gods is difficult. The people of Babylon may have deserved Marduk's neglect if they had neglected his statue, but this by no means implies that they have provoked Erra's fury. Perhaps this problem of theodicy may be interpreted as the tenor of a comparison between Erra and Enlil, the incomprehensibility of their will, the indiscriminate targets of their wrath. The attack is impersonal and inescapable.

The man in charge of the city says to his mother:

lu-u$_2$ *ni-mut* ⌜*it*⌝-[*ti*$^?$] ⌜*a*$^?$⌝-*ḫa-*⌜*miš*$_2$$^?$⌝
aš$_2$*-šu*$_2$ *ta-ad-di-ni-in-ni a-na āli*(URU) *ša*$_2$ *dūr*(BAD$_3$)*-šu*$_2$ ⌜*in*$^?$*-naq*$^?$*-ru*$^?$⌝
nišū(UG$_3$)^{meš}*-šu bu-lu-um-ma* ⌜*ma*⌝*-ḫi-ṣu il*$_3$*-ši-in*
u$_3$ *ša*$_2$ *še-ti-šu*$_2$ *in-ša*$_2$ *pi-qa-tum-ma ḫa-*'*i-i-ri la iš-lu-pu-ma i-mu-tu i-na* ^{giš}*kakki*(TUKUL)

If only we had died *together*!
For you gave me to a city whose wall is *demolished*!
Its people are herds, the one who fells them is their god,
and he is the one whose net is tight-meshed, they did not pull husbands out (of it), they died by the weapon.

Erra IV.91-4

Comparing the people to animals dehumanises them, and ironically casts them as legitimate prey. The context of this image, the moving lament of a man who has lost everything in the destruction of his city, is pertinent, since it is in laments for destruction that this image of Enlil is found.[293]

Another echo of the *balaĝ*s may be found in Erra's incitations to himself at the start of the poem:

^{d}*er*$_3$*-ra ti-bi-ma ina sa-pan ma-a-ti*
ki-i nam-rat kab-ta-at-ka u$_3$ *ḫa-du-u lib-bu-uk*

[293] E.g. *Ame Amašana* line 12 (edition Cohen, 1988: 152-174).

Arise, Erra! In overwhelming the land
how bright your mood and joyful your heart will be!

Erra I.13-14

The Sebettu also say to Erra in I.46: *te-bi i-zi-iz-ma,*'Arise! Stand up!' A similar sentiment is found in *Gudnim Ekura,* lines 74-81 (edition Cohen, 1988: 440-56), where Ninurta is urged to 'arise! Mount up!' over and over again (u$_5$-e-a zi-ga / *ti-bi ri-kab*), that is, he is encouraged to begin the destruction. The concept is one which is common to the *balaĝ*s, since a similar incitation can be found in *Ušumgin Ni Sia* (a+103-4), for example.

The resemblance is admittedly slight, but if this goading of Erra has parallels in ritual laments it would have interesting implications. Laments are sung to avert disaster, but the citation of a lament here would cause disaster. This would be a striking literalisation of the lamentation and a subversion of its intent. The poem of *Erra* expresses despair at the failure of the older gods and established order; perhaps this subversion could be a comment about the failure of traditional rites to prevent the wars and devastation that ran through Babylonia in the early first milennium. As explored earlier (p. 83 ff.), *Anzû* may also subvert a lament by putting one in the mouth of Ninurta's enemy Anzû, using lamentation not as a way to calm an attacking god, but as an aggressive weapon against him. This would be a similar tactic, using the language of lament to spur on the god to initiate destruction rather than as part of a ritual of appeasement to persuade him to stop.

Ritual laments were performed on occasions where there was a risk of harming the divine image, such as the restoration of a temple or refurbishment of a cult statue (Löhnert, 2011: 412). It is interesting to note, then, that the poem of *Erra* contains an episode about the refurbishment of Marduk's statue (I.127 ff.); incorporating elements of lament into the poem makes sense in this context. Ironically, however, the laments are not addressed to Marduk,

the god who is likely to be angered if some mistake were made, but to Erra. Viewed in this light, Marduk's lament in tablet IV (40-44) becomes ironic, for such a lament should be performed for him, not uttered by him, and is another aspect of Marduk's replacement by Erra.

Both sides of the lamentation tradition, then, may have influenced *Erra.* The *balaĝ*s with their depiction of Enlil the fowler, their incitations of the god to violence, and the fundamental idea behind them, that evil can be averted through appeasement and praise, while *LSU* provides a model of a city lament that memorialises Babylon falling from its former splendour.

Conclusion – a self-conscious tradition

The aim of this study was to interpret allusions in *Anzû*, *Enūma Eliš*, and *Erra*, to see how much more meaning could be unlocked by reading the poems in this way. The range and complexity of allusion found is considerable and often surprising, demonstrating that allusion is an integral part of Akkadian poetics. Reading these poems from an intertextual perspective reveals much more about them than reading them in isolation. *An-gin*$_7$, for example, is helpful for understanding *Anzû* even if *Anzû* does not specifically allude to *An-gin*$_7$. The potential for looking at these poems 'intertextually' in a more general sense is huge and is beyond the scope of this study.

Findings of individual chapters

Chapter one examined allusions in *Anzû* to *Lugal-e*, *Labbu*, *Atraḫasīs*, *The Return of Lugalbanda*, and the language of *balaĝ*-laments. Many of the allusive strategies found in *Ee* have already been used in *Anzû*. For example, the way Marduk in *Ee* is elevated above Ninurta by alluding to his poem is a strategy already used by *Anzû* to elevate Ninurta, who out-does Tišpak by alluding to his poem *Labbu*. Allusions to *Lugal-e* strengthen the portrayal of Ninurta as a mighty warrior in his battle against Anzû by borrowing elements from his famous battle against Asag. However, the battle against Anzû is re-cast as Ninurta's definitive victory instead of this earlier one: the poem is set in a primeval time before the battle against Asag could have taken place, and allusions to *Atraḫasīs* proclaim Ninurta's mother's role in his victory to be her most important deed instead of her role in the creation

of man. Allusions to *The Return of Lugalbanda* aid this programme by overriding the earlier positive portrayal of Anzu: *Anzû* is now evil, and this is projected back on to the earlier text. An example of such *lemuttu* may be found when language of lamentation is subverted in Anzû's spell. This language is usually used in attempts to soothe Ninurta's heart, but here is turned into a weapon against him.

Chapter two is dedicated to allusions in *Enūma Eliš* to *Anzû*, perhaps the most sustained and detailed engagement between two poems found in this study. The allusions work together on many different levels to portray Marduk as the new Ninurta, borrowing lines and phrases, Ninurta's epithets and weapons, and motifs such as the tablet of destinies. The differences between Marduk and Ninurta are just as important as their similarities, for these underscore the superiority of Marduk: Marduk needs no weapon vizier for help in battle or advice from Ea, but the personified weapon character has been given instead to a weaker character, Anšar; Marduk is not coming to the aid of his father, but of all the great gods with no direct familial obligation to do so. This last difference also provides an opportunity to explore how Marduk takes over from his father, Ea, as god of magic. The allusions can be very subtle, such as when Tiʾāmtu's exhortations to her monsters echo Bēlet-ilī's exhortations to Ninurta, as if to mock Ninurta's earlier failings. This particular example also echoes a technique found in *Anzû*, where the weapon of the hero is transferred to the enemy to make him more difficult to defeat. Allusions to *Anzû* also denigrate Enlil, for Marduk does not need the tablet of destinies to exercise power. These are backed up on the structural level, for example, as only two gods are approached before Marduk instead of three, speeding up his inevitable victory, and the choice of deities as Anu and Ea conspicuously omits Enlil, another slight to the supreme god of the *Anzû* poem.

Chapter three explores allusions in *Ee* to *Atraḫasīs.* Apsû's sleep disturbed by noise connects him directly with Enlil, who also plotted to destroy the source of the clamour. When Apsû is murdered by Ea, a number of allusions to *Atr* imply that at the same time Enlil is symbolically dethroned, a subtle way of dealing with the former head of the pantheon without Marduk having to confront him directly. The effect of this is to remind us why Enlil needs to be overthrown, for both Apsû and Enlil are bad kings who contrast greatly with Marduk's new regime. This programme is reinforced by another allusion to Enlil's loss of power, his undressing for the bath where Anzû steals the tablet of destinies, and a depiction of Marduk as like Enlil the fowler/fisherman in Sumerian laments, another example of Marduk usurping Enlil's characteristics. Allusions to *Atr* also contribute to a different aspect of Marduk's superiority, his taking over of Ea's position as supreme creator god. The creation of mankind parallels that in *Atr* but in *Ee* the idea is Marduk's and he delegates the task to Ea. Furthermore, the being who is slain and whose blood will be a key ingredient has a more coherent role in the story of *Ee* than of *Atr,* for while Wê comes into *Atr* at this moment only, for the sake of a pun, Qingu is the equivalent of Anzû and a leader of the enemy horde from the very start. The creation of man draws yet another contrast between Marduk and Enlil, for Enlil had originally imposed forced labour on the gods, but one of Marduk's first acts as king is to exempt them from such toil.

Chapter four examines allusions in *Ee* to *Lugal-e.* In some cases, such as with the many different weapons Marduk uses which originate with Ninurta in this poem, these complement the allusions to *Anzû* which show Marduk as the new Ninurta. Qingu may parallel the leader of Asakku's army, U_2, which combined with the connection of Qingu to Anzû may play an allusive trick on the attentive reader who expects Qingu to be like Anzû when he turns out to be more like U_2. Perhaps more unexpectedly, however, there are also

parallels with Ninurta's restoration of order after the battle: the creation of a cosmic feature out of the dead opponent's body, the proper direction of the waters, and the 50 'destinies' decreed for Marduk. That these occur in the same sequence suggests a structural borrowing as well as specific details. The post-battle allusions work together with the references to *Atr* that portray Marduk as the highest creator god, for not only is he superseding Ea in this respect, but also Ninurta. Allusions to both Sumerian and Akkadian tradition therefore work togther to promote Marduk as the the all-encompassing supreme god.

Chapter five examines allusions in *Erra* to *Anzû* and *Lugal-e* which portray Išum as the new Ninurta. This is just as competitive as Marduk's relationship with Ninurta, but the new ideal proposed is very different from that of the earlier poems: it is dialogue which is the supreme weapon, persuasion rather than might. Erra is equated with Anzû, the rebellious threat to the cosmic order, and Marduk with Enlil, the ineffective ruler who allowed chaos to take over through his own negligence. Išum draws on Ninurta from both poems, and is also the equivalent of Ninurta's deified weapon, Šar-ur, who has a persuasive role in *Lugal-e* as well as fighting alongside him. However, Šar-ur has another analogue in *Erra* in the form of the Sebettu, deified weapons who use their persuasive powers to incite Erra to destruction. This is an interesting split of the character into two opposing forces, perhaps a theological justification for the changeability of the god caught between them. At the same time, the lack of a strong warrior Ninurta figure is alluded to in Marduk's rhetorical lament for the whereabouts of the *mēsu*-tree, and the ironic reference to the treacherous governor of Babylon as *mu-tir gi-mil bābili*(KA_2.DINGIR.RA)^{ki}. Išum is connected with yet another character, Ea in *Atr* in his concern for protecting mankind when he is called the door bolted before the Sebettu. This allusion refers to both *Atr* and *Lugal-e* at the same time, invoking both Ninurta's blocking of destructive waters and Ea's letting loose of water and fish to save mankind from

Enlil's drought. This chapter reveals Išum to be a complex character which alludes to no less than four other precedents at once.

Chapter six considers allusions in *Erra* to *Ee*, *Atr*, and *Gilgameš*. These three poems have been treated together because the references to them paint a picture of the cosmos unravelling and regressing to a primitive state. Allusions to *Ee* turn Marduk's own poem against him, emphasising how the cosmic order he created is disintegrating while he is too weak to prevent it. *Erra* even turns specific pronouncements of *Ee* against Marduk, using the irrevocability of his word to trick him. Both Marduk and Erra are connected with Enlil – Marduk as the now old and irrelevant ruler, and Erra as the irresponsible god who is stirred from sleep and provoked him to mass slaughter, but with even less justification than Enlil. As Marduk once replaced Enlil, so Erra now replaces Marduk as the supreme ruler of Babylon. The Sebettu are connected with Ti'āmtu's army, painting Erra as an equivalent threat, especially to Marduk. Erra is much more powerful than Marduk and has taken over from him as the one in control of Babylon. Erra's destruction is described as deluge in a way that harks back to the orignal deluge sent by Enlil as narrated in *Atr* and *Gilgameš*, a destruction so terrible that it threatened the very existence of the gods. *Erra* thus reanimates the clichés of the universal flood by investing it with specific meanings: this new deluge of destruction threatens to surpass even the original symbol of the worst catastrophe possible, another example of the poem surpassing its models. The references to the cosmic deluge also refer to antediluvian times, presenting misdirected violence as a regression from the values of civilization. Allusions to *Gilgameš* present the war cries of the Sebettu as antithetical to the city and its way of life. The motif of living things returning to clay as a metaphor for death may allude to the destruction caused by the deluge, and further underlines this un-making of sophisticated things: as with Marduk's order, so with the creations and progresses made by

mankind. Even Erra, one of the gods, regresses, accused of becoming like a man, the state of all the gods at the beginning of *Atraḫasīs,* and Marduk reverts to a powerlessness like that of his infancy.

Chapter seven found that the underlying structure of *Erra* parallels that of *The Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur.* By comparison, Marduk is placed in the role of a god who abandons his city, while Išum is the one who pleads on its behalf. Erra takes the role of Enlil, the one with ultimate power over the city's fate, yet while Enlil is impassive towards it, Erra is aggressive. The comparison with *LSU* rather than one of the other city laments implies a reason for Babylon's fall: no dynasty lasts forever, and its time is simply up. However, Erra is not simply evil but also has a proper place in the cosmic hierarchy, since the poem ends with him ruling Babylon in place of Marduk, his rage redirected to a useful end. The effect is to show the potential for violence to overwhelm even the highest level of control in the universe, revealing an insecurity that was felt and expressed by lamentation in regularly performed rituals, just in case a god was angry or needed appeasing. This element of contingency may answer the question of why the protagonist was not named Nergal but Erra, a minor deity who had assimilated with him long ago: this minor god wreaks his destruction because he craves acknowledgement. The poem thus serves as a reminder that even lesser gods are capable of disastrous punishment should they not be honoured accordingly, and that in such circumstances their force can overpower even major gods such as Marduk. Praise and prayer are humanity's only strategies in such circumstances, as exemplified by the city-laments. The principle behind Išum's long pleas to Erra, which are essentially lamentations, is probably inspired by the *balaĝ*s: that praising a god by cataloguing the devastation they are capable of causing may persuade them to desist. Elements from these ritual lamentations may also be found in *Erra.*

The range of allusive techniques

A wide variety of allusive techniques has emerged from these poems. An overview is given here.

Character comparisons are perhaps the most frequent technique explored in this thesis. Competitive comparisons implying the superiority of the newer figure are found in *Anzû* when Ninurta is compared to Tišpak of *Labbu*, in *Ee* when Marduk is compared to Ninurta of *Anzû* and *Lugal-e,* and in *Erra* when Išum is compared to Ninurta of *Anzû.* The comparisons can be negative also, denigrating the figures in the current poems by association with a tainted past: both *Ee* and *Erra* compare characters to Enlil of *Atr:* in *Ee* it is Apsû, while in *Erra* it is both Marduk and Erra. The case of Apsû and Enlil is particularly subtle and complex, for the comparison overthrows Enlil by allusion. When Apsû is murdered he is connected to Enlil, implying that it is Enlil who is symbolically dethroned.

However, comparisons do not have to be hostile. *Erra* also shows Išum acting in the roles of different figures from other poems in a way that respects them: Šar-ur of *Lugal-e,* Ea of *Atr,* and Nanna from *LSU.* While *Anzû* and *Ee* draw on characters in order to supersede them, and by implication belittling them, *Erra* borrows the qualities of characters from earlier poems in order to enrich its hero Išum without any attempt to 'improve' on them. It is an honorific type of allusion rather than a competitive one. It is also notable that one character can draw on so many others in the same poem.[294]

Invoking characters from earlier poems creates powerful expectations which are sometimes fulfilled, sometimes subverted. *Erra* compares Erra to Anzû, painting him as an equivalent threat to the cosmic order. Similarly, allusions connect the Sebettu to Ti'āmtu's

[294] Cf. also the way that the sleepless Erra at the start of the poem may be compared with both Enlil of *Atr* and the stirred-up Ti'āmtu of *Ee* (chapter six, p. 246 ff.).

army in *Ee*, which has the same effect. Our expectations are reversed when it comes to Qingu, a complex figure who may allude to two of Ninurta's opponents: U_2, the leader of Asag's army of stones in *Lugal-e*, and Anzû. Qingu is set up as an Anzû-figure in a way that leads us to expect he will be just as challenging an opponent for Marduk as Anzû was for Ninurta, but this is not the case: Marduk dispatches him swiftly and easily, demonstrating his superior strength. This has the potential to be an allusive trick: for Qingu turns out to be more like U_2 than Anzû after all, despite the way that the allusions encourage us to expect the opposite.[295] Connecting the Sebettu with Ti'āmtu's army takes on another meaning in light of Marduk's easy victory, for it reminds us of Marduk's glorious triumph shortly before he is outwitted by Erra. This emphasises how far in power he has fallen by reversing the roles: long ago, Marduk easily defeated his opponent, but now he is the one easily defeated by Erra.

In addition to this, we should note **the reappearance of one particular character** in different forms in these poems, a borrowing which can tell us much about the individual aims of each. Šar-ur is the mighty weapon of Ninurta in *Lugal-e*, serving not only as a physical object, Ninurta's mace, but also his vizier and messenger. When Šar-ur turns up as a messenger of Ninurta in *Anzû*, another poem about Ninurta's exploits, it is a strong indication of borrowing from *Lugal-e* where he appeared in a similar role, and we are bound to compare his character in both poems. In *Lugal-e* he joined Ninurta fighting against the stones, but *Anzû* he has no role in the battle and serves only as a messenger, concentrating the credit for the victory with Ninurta and Ea. In *Ee*, Kakka is probably a deified weapon

[295] Another example of this kind of tactic may be seen in *Erra* I.13-14 which alludes to *Gilg* XI.194-5 (see pp. 230-31). Interpreting the allusion may lead us to expect that the destruction caused by Erra will not be as devastating as the deluge: however, later allusions imply the opposite, that the destruction *is* as ruinous as that of the deluge.

serving a similar function as a messenger, but he is no longer associated with the hero of the poem, but has been given to Anšar. This downgrading of the vizier-weapon increases the prestige of Marduk, who is able to act alone, and reflects unfavourably on Ninurta who needed Šar-ur at his side. In *Erra,* Šar-ur has been split into two different characters: the Sebettu on the one hand, the weapons of Erra, harking back to the original, impressive stature of Šar-ur in *Lugal-e,* and Išum on the other, as the vizier who tries to reason with his master, also in *Lugal-e.* Šar-ur has been reclaimed, not as merely a weapon in a supporting role as he was in *Anzû* and Kakka was in *Ee*, but as an important character who wins the real victory. Tracing this figure through these three poems demonstrates the ways that allusion to the same element can be used in different compositions, and the complexity that it can reach.

Reversals

Reversal of motifs in earlier poems is a common technique. In *Anzû* the language of the spell which is shared with the language of ritual laments subverts a pious gesture by turning it into a weapon, transferring the destruction associated with the great gods to their enemy. Sleep disturbance in *Erra* reverses the motif in *Atr*: Enlil wreaks destruction because his sleep is disturbed, but Erra's sleep is disturbed so he can wreak destruction. While Ninurta in *Lugal-e* created the netherworld out of the corpse of his enemy, Marduk in *Ee* created the upper regions from the dead Ti'āmtu. In *Ee* Marduk has destinies decreed for him as well as decreeing destinies of his enemies, a reversal and addition to the destinies decreed by Ninurta in *Lugal-e*. This also reverses the function of naming, as it is limiting in *Lugal-e,* but expansive in *Ee*. In *Erra,* Išum the door holding back destruction invokes Ea who

guards the bolt of the sea in *Atr*, but whereas Ea opened the bolt to save mankind, Išum must keep it locked.

A particular type of reversal is the transference of weapons from the hero the enemy in order to increase the hero's prestige. Tišpak's magic seal (*Labbu*) becomes the magical tablet of destinies (*Anzû*). Ninurta's poisoned arrows (*Anzû*) become Ti'āmtu's poison-filled monsters (*Ee*). In *Ee* this goes one step further and the weapon of the enemy is also transferred to the hero: Ti'āmtu is equipped with magic, harking back to the weapon of Anzû, but so is Marduk. This is consistent with the way that *Ee* gathers all the divine power to Marduk: he is prepared for everything, and superior in everything. This is reminiscent of *Lugal-e,* where Asag is a threat because he is like Ninurta, and equally Ninurta is a match for Asag because he is like him. *Erra* breaks this chain of interaction and makes a transference directly from *Anzû*: in *Anzû* language is the weapon of the enemy, neutralised by an attack which turns his own language against him, but in *Erra* language is the weapon of the hero, as Išum uses it to dissuade Erra from his violence.

Multiple reference[296]

Just as one character can allude to several others (Marduk, Išum, Erra), it is also possible for the same line or passage to refer to multiple different texts at once. The palm fronds carried on the wind in *Erra* may allude to both *Anzû* and *Ee* at the same time, perhaps even acknowledging the way that *Ee* alludes to *Anzû* (see below p. 300). The sleeplessness motif in *Erra* resonates with both *Atr* and *Ee,* showing Erra to be a threat to the cosmic order in two different ways. Išum as the door bolted before the Sebettu (*Erra* I.27) refers to both Ea in *Atr* and Ninurta in *Lugal-e,* alluding to two poems to make the same point. It may even

[296] Term coined by Thomas (1986).

also allude to *Lugalbanda* as well. This is the beginning of a dense passage of allusions (I.27-38) where I.28 recalls *Lugal-e* and I.34 and I.38 recall *Ee,* interweaving allusions to two (or three) different texts. This reinforces the portrayal of the arising threat by highlighting different aspects via allusion to different sources.

Structural allusions

Ee and *Erra* both resemble earlier poems (*Anzû, Lugal-e, LSU*) in terms of their structure. The similarities and differences between the plots of these poems are illuminating, and contribute substantially to the ideologies of *Ee* and *Erra.* I call these 'structural allusions' because the meaning that can be derived from noticing them is significant: they are as worthy of note as a quotation or borrowed motif, and deserve to be interpreted as such.

The most striking structural borrowing is the way that *Erra* is based on the structure of *LSU.* The same events take place in the same order, even occurring on the same tablet of *Erra* as kirugu of *LSU.* This is unlikely to be coincidence. Marduk is implicitly put in the role of a city god who readily abandons his people, while Erra corresponds to Enlil. Išum takes the role of Nanna, who intercedes on his city's behalf, showing that while Erra may be all-powerful it is Išum whom the people can trust. Whereas *LSU* states that Ur falls because its appointed reign is over, *Erra* conspicuously omits any such explanation.[297] By contrast, Babylon has suffered because the gods in charge of its fate are subject to unpredictable forces, just as mortals are. This is a sophisticated theological explanation of events on earth, for it admits a complex mix of factors.

[297] This may be a form of 'rhetorical gapping' like that noted by Machinist in *Ee* with the absence of an explanation for the creation of man (2005: 44 n.30). See p. 173.

There are also notable similarities between the structures of *Ee* and *Lugal-e,* also likely to be deliberate. The sequence of events after the battle in *Ee* seems to follow that of *Lugal-e,* with the creation of cosmic features out of the enemy corpse, the controlling of the waters, the easing of toil or freeing from it altogether, and the decreeing of 50 destinies. It has long been recognised that *Ee* draws on the structure of *Anzû* (Lambert, 1986), but now we can see that it may also draw on the structure of *Lugal-e,* the most popular Sumerian poem about Ninurta's definitive battle. Again, recognising the similarities and differences between the two creates meaning: rather than only creating the netherworld, Marduk creates the upper world and the upper regions of sky; Marduk not only diverts the water supply but creates it to begin with; Marduk not only eases the toil of the gods but frees them from it completely; Marduk not only decrees destinies for his defeated enemies but has them decreed for him, in a reversal of what it means to be a great god. It is interesting to note that these structural allusions in *Ee* show the same pattern of competition that is found in so many other places in the poem: out-doing earlier gods is fundamental to every part of *Ee.* This is different from how *Erra* uses structural allusions, which often has the effect of character comparison or irony.

This kind of structural play can also be seen with Akkadian compositions. The Akkadian poems about warrior gods winning their status (*Labbu, Anzû, Ee*) all follow a very similar trajectory, which makes deviation noticeable. For example, in *Ee* Marduk succeeds on his first attempt, unlike Ninurta in *Anzû,* and only two unwilling gods are asked to fight the monster, whereas in *Anzû* there were three. This is not necessarily simply because all poems about warrior gods would have followed a standard pattern, since the situation at the beginning of *Lugal-e* is different from that at the beginning of these three poems: when the chaos-monster arises, Šar-ur goes directly to Ninurta to ask him to fight it (rather than a

relative as in *Anzû* or *Ee*), and without approaching any others first. It is likely, then, that the parts of *Ee* which correspond to the similar plot of *Anzû* are deliberately modelled on *Anzû.* Not enough of *Labbu* survives to determine the extent to which *Anzû* may do the same, but the prevalence of this strategy – seen with three different poems now – tells us that this structural play is an allusive approach in its own right.

Hysteron-proteron

Hysteron-proteron is a Classical term meaning 'the later one earlier'. We have seen it as a literary device in the Akkadian poems, where they attempt to situate themselves earlier than other poems as a claim to the superiority of their version of events. *Anzû* is set in a primordial time before the rivers flow, thus before Tišpak, Lugalbanda, or any other god superseded by Ninurta could have accomplished their deeds. Now established at this early point in time, *Anzû* re-names Mami as Bēlet-ilī, an episode that also occurs in *Atr.* The effect of this is to re-cast her role in Ninurta's victory as her most glorious deed, an alternative – and earlier – account of her re-naming. The poet of *Ee* also uses this technique by setting the poem not just before the flowing of the rivers but before the very creation of the world: while Ninurta restores order after his victory, Marduk creates it to begin with.

Reverse intertextuality

Another way of trying to alter the literary past is by reverse intertextuality, where allusions in one poem to another change the way that the earlier poem itself is interpreted. In *Anzû,* Bēlet-ilī's words of encouragement to Ninurta when he is about to fight Anzû echo Anzû's own words in the poem of *Lugalbanda.* The next time we come to read *Lugalbanda* it

adds a touch of dramatic irony as we recall what happens later in Anzû's story. The way that *Ee* slights Enlil through allusions to *Atr* mean that when we next hear Enlil complaining of noise in *Atr* we are now reminded of Marduk's replacement of him in *Ee.* The way that the tablet of destinies is downgraded in *Ee* contributes to this effect, for the next time we come to read *Anzû* it reflects badly on Enlil that his power should depend on such an inconsequential object when Marduk's does not. Finally, re-naming Marduk's bow with the name of Ninurta's spear in *Lugal-e* plants the equivalence of Marduk and Ninurta in Ninurta's own poem, making it seem as if Ninurta had only ever been an aspect of Marduk.

Allusions to allusions

There are some instances which raise the possibility of whether the Babylonian poets were consciously playing with the techniques used by their predecessors. The palm fronds carried on the wind in *Erra* IV.40 hark back not only to the blood on the wind in *Ee* but also the feathers on the wind in *Anzû.* Since this line is uttered by Marduk, whose glorious victory and takeover from Ninurta are expressed by the allusion in *Ee,* and in *Erra* the line expresses his fall from power, it may be an allusion to an allusion. This may be reinforced by *Erra* I.150-1 when Marduk laments the loss of the *mēsu* tree. He may be speaking a pun on his own name, but Ninurta is also compared to a mes tree in *Lugal-e* (310-11). This may then allude to Marduk's superseding of Ninurta as all-powerful warrior long ago, at a time when this is clearly no longer the case. A similar case is the reference to the murder of Apsû when Marduk is stripped of his crown. Since the murder of Apsû may be a symbolic way of deposing Enlil, and Marduk is now himself being 'deposed', this may be an ironic allusion to Marduk's former superseding of Enlil.

Another possible example can be found in *Ee* with the weapon transference already mentioned. *Anzû* plays with *Labbu* by turning Tišpak's magic seal into the tablet of destinies, and giving the magical object to the enemy instead of to the hero. *Ee* does something very similar: the concept of Ninurta's poisoned arrows is borrowed but transferred to Marduk's enemy instead of to Marduk himself, and appears in the form of Ti'āmtu's poisonous monsters. This is reinforced by Ti'āmtu's words at I.139-40 (= II.25-6 = III.87-8) which may even allude to Ninurta's initial failure to defeat Anzû: as she exhorts her army not to turn back, we may recall how Ninurta's arrows were 'turned back' into their constituent parts by Anzû's spell.

Ee may be imitating the way that *Anzû* imitates *Lugal-e* when it gives Marduk and Ti'āmtu similar attributes. Both Ninurta and Anzû are described in similar terms with storm and flood imagery in *Anzû,* which may be a borrowing from *Lugal-e,* which uses the same technique. The effect of this is to emphasise both the threat posed by the enemy and the hero's potential to match it. In *Ee,* both Marduk and his opponents are able to use magic, which may be a manifestation of this strategy.

Thus it is possible that this re-use of techniques may demonstrate that the later poets were aware of what the earlier poets were doing.

Implications for literary history

Hysteron-proteron, multiple reference, reverse intertextuality, structural allusions, and allusions to allusions (although the last three are not termed as such) are well known in Classical literature. This has not been a systematic attempt to classify the techniques of Akkadian poetry according to Classical terminology, which often does not exactly

correspond anyway,[298] but an attempt to read the poems with a similar approach to see what can be uncovered. The terms used here are sometimes used slightly differently in Classics with more specific referents, but the underlying concepts are broadly similar. Treating these Akkadian poems as sophisticated and worthy of close-reading has revealed a great deal of nuance and complexity, and demonstrates that they deserve to be interpreted on a deeper level. The richness of the Mesopotamian literary tradition can only be fully appreciated when we take into account its intertextuality.

The importance of Sumerian is confirmed in these poems. Both *Ee* and *Erra* play with the structures of Sumerian poems, and all three allude to *Lugal-e. Anzû* also alludes to *Lugalbanda.* These Akkadian poems also draw on the language of Sumerian ritual lament, as when Anzû utters a passage from the *balaĝ*s in his spell, when Marduk uses a net against the sea and when Erra hunts down people in the streets like Enlil with his net. This shows that knowledge of Sumerian poems was just as important for interpretation as Akkadian ones, that they were not merely copied in late periods but fully engaged with, and used creatively to produce meaning in new compositions. They were not fossilised and obscure, but alive and well understood. That *Erra,* a first-millennium composition, echoes *LSU,* a poem thought not to have survived the Old Babylonian period, raises intriguing questions about the continuity of the tradition.

That *Erra,* the latest poem included here, constantly refers to *Lugal-e, Anzû*, *Enūma Eliš, Atraḫasīs*, and *Gilgameš* confirms that these poems were the important classics in the first

[298] E.g. allusion to allusion resembles the phenomenon that Classicists call 'window reference', but window reference is more precise, consisting of 'the very close adaptation of a model, noticeably interrupted in order to allow reference back to the source of that model: the intermediate model thus serves as a sort of window onto the ultimate source, whose version is otherwise not visible. In the process the immediate, or chief, model is in some fashion "corrected"' (Thomas, 1986: 188). The potential allusions to allusions found here are less specific than this, and so I have used a different term.

millennium, knowledge of which was an essential key to interpretation. We are fortunate indeed to have the majority of the text of these poems: as interactions with them in *Anzû*, *Ee*, and *Erra* have so far shown, we can be optimistic that a deeper understanding of Mesopotamian literature is possible using the texts we already have.

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