Early Mesopotamian Divination Literature

Ancient Magic and Divination

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Early Mesopotamian Divination Literature

Its Organizational Framework and Generative and Paradigmatic Characteristics

By

Abraham Winitzer

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For Sarah and Shammai

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Abbreviations and Conventions

1 Bibliographical Abbreviations and Short Titles

AHw	W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*
AO	Musée du Louvre tablet number
ARM	*Archives Royales de Mari*; vol. 26/1; see Bibliography *sub* Durand
BDB	*A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*
BLO	U. Koch-Westenholz, *Babylonian Liver Omens*
BM	British Museum tablet number
Bo	Boğazköy liver model number; see Bibliography *sub* De Vos
Boissier, *Choix*	A. Boissier, *Choix de textes relatifs à la divination assyro-babylonienne*
Boissier, *DA*	A. Boissier, *Documents assyriens relatifs aux présages*
Borger, *Zeichenliste*	R. Borger, *Assyrisch-Babylonische Zeichenliste*[4]
BRM	*Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan*
CAD	The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago
CDA	*A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*
CH	Codex Hammurabi
CMAA *Padānum* OB	*California Museum of Ancient Art*; no. 30 see A. Winitzer, "A New Collection of *Padānum* and Related Omens in Los Angeles," pp. 162–182, in Bibliography
CT	*Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*; vol. 44 see Bibliography *sub* Pinches
CUSAS	*Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology*; vol. 18 see Bibliography *sub* George
Emar	D. Arnaud, *Recherches au pays d'Aštata, Emar*
Fs Lambert	A. R. George and I. Finkel, eds., *Wisdom, Gods and Literature*
GAG	W. von Soden, *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik*[3]
GHK	E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*[28]
GVG	C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*; 2 vols.
HSM	Harvard Semitic Museum tablet number
Huehnergard, *Grammar*	A Grammar of Akkadian[3]
IM	Iraq Museum tablet number
Izbu	Teratological omens edited in E. Leichty, *The Omen Series Šumma Izbu*

$I_2$6	Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts number; see Bibliography *sub* Khait
Jastrow, *Dictionary*	M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
Jeyes, Compendium	see score of Tablet Carré in U. Jeyes, "A Compendium of Gall-Bladder Omens Extant in Middle Babylonian, Nineveh, and Seleucid Versions," in Bibliography
K	Kouyunjik collection (British Museum) tablet number
KAL	Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts; vol. 5 see Bibliography *sub* Heeßel.
KAR	E. Ebeling, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts: Autographien*
Koch, *Multābiltu*	U. Koch, *Secrets of Extispicy*
L	see Bibliography *sub* Leiderer
Labat, *Manuel*	R. Labat and F. Malbran-Labat, *Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne*[6]
Labat, *TDP*	R. Labat, *Traité akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux*
LAOS	Leipziger altorientalistische Studien; vol. 1 see Bibliography *sub* Oshima
MAH	Musée d'Art et ed d'Histoire (Geneva) tablet number
MDP	*Mémoires de la délégation en Perse; Mémoires de la délégation archéologique en Iran*; vol. 57 see Bibliography *sub* Labat and Edzard
MSL	*Materialen zum sumerischen Lexikon; Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon*
OBE	see Bibliography *sub* Jeyes
OI	Oriental Institute tablet number
Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*	G. Pettinato, Die *Ölwahrsagung bei den Babyloniern*
PRT	E. Klauber, *Politisch-religiöse Texte aus der Sargonidenzeit*
PSD	*The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania*; see also: psd.museum.upenn.edu
RA	*Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*
RlA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie*
SAA	State Archives of Assyria; vol. 4 see Bibliography *sub* Starr; vol. 8 see Bibliography *sub* Hunger
Scheil A	see tablet A in V. Scheil, "Nouveaux présages tirés du foie," in Bibliography

Scheil B	see tablet A in V. Scheil, "Nouveaux présages tirés du foie," in Bibliography; reedited in K. Riemschneider, "Ein altbabylonischer Gallenomentext," in Bibliography
Schileico A	see W. Schileico, "Ein Omentext Sargons von Akkad und sein Nachklang bei römerischen Dichtern," p. 214, in Bibliography
Schileico B	see W. Schileico, "Ein Omentext Sargons von Akkad und sein Nachklang bei römerischen Dichtern," pp. 215–216, in Bibliography
Sokoloff, *Dictionary*	M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*
SpTU	*Spätbabylonische Texte aus Uruk*; vol. 1 see Bibliography *sub* Hunger
Šumma ālu	Terrestrial omens from the series *šumma ālu*; see Bibliography *sub* Moren and also Freedman.
TCL	Texts cunéiformes du Louvre; Musée du Louvre. Département des antiquités orientales. Textes cunéiformes; vol. 6 see Bibliography *sub* Thureau-Dangin
TIM	*Texts in the Iraq Museum*; vol. 9 see Bibliography *sub* Dijk
UCP	University of California Publications in Semitic Philology
VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek
VAT	Staatliche Museen (Berlin) tablet number
Waltke-O'connor, *Syntax*	B. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*
Wehr, *Dictionary*	H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*
YOS	Yale Oriental Studies; vol. 10 see Bibliography *sub* Goetze

2 Other Abbreviations and Conventions

A	Apodosis	LB	Late Babylonian (Uruk)
adj.	adjective	m(.)	masculine
Akk.	Akkadian	MB	Middle Babylonian
Arab.	Arabic	ms(s).	manuscript(s)
(J)Aram.	(Jewish) Aramaic	NA	Neo Assyrian
Aṣ	Ammiṣaduqa	NP	Noun Phrase
DN	divine name	OB	Old Babylonian
ED	Early Dynastic	ob.	obverse
Eth.	Ethiopic	P	Protasis
f(.)	feminine	PA	Peripheral Akkadian
Heb.	Hebrew	p.c.	personal communication
l(l).	line number(s)	p(l.)	plural

PN	personal name	[ ]	restored text
r.	reverse	[...]	missing text
RN	royal name	...	obscure text
s(.)	singular	< >	omitted by scribe
SB	Standard Babylonian	<< >>	repeated by scribe
Sd	Samsuditana	{ }	erased by scribe; items
Sem.	(Proto) Semitic		comprising set
Si	Samsuiluna	( )	word(s) supplied by editor
Sum.	Sumerian	/	alternate reading
verb.	verbal	//	parallel (texts)
writ.	written	√	lexical root
WS	West Semitic	>	changes to; greater/more
YN	year name		than
1	first person	<	derives from; less than
2	second person	*	reconstructed form or
3	third person		phoneme
x	illegible sign	?	meaning or reading
⇒	then		uncertain
↔	corresponds to	!	read thus
→	leads to	/ /	phonetic value
←	leads to	| |	absolute value
=	equals	:	is to
≠	does not equal	::	as
≒	approximates, relates to	∈	is member of set
⌜ ⌝	text partially illegible		

Introductory Note: Text Citation, Translation, Transcription, and Secondary Literature

Sigla of Cited Texts

With the exception of those omen collections published in independent and well-known volumes such as *YOS* 10, U. Jeyes' *Old Babylonian Extispicy* (*OBE*), or A. George's recent *CUSAS* 18, citations from omen collections herein follow the standard practice in secondary literature on Old Babylonian extispicy, which cites omen collections by their museum number rather than by their places of publication. The reason for this, other than consistency, owes to the belief that the recognition of a given collection is distinguishable more easily in this manner; the other option, that of references to pages from this-or-that *RA* volume (the publication place of the many texts edited by Nougayrol), seems too confusing, if admittedly less cumbersome. To offset any inconvenience this may present the reader, a catalogue of all texts appearing in publications other than *YOS* 10, *OBE*, and *CUSAS* 18, with museum catalog numbers, as well as relevant facts of publication, edition, and bibliography appears at the end of this section.

Text Quotation and Reference

At times for reasons of economy only an omen's protasis or apodosis is quoted in the discussion of texts. Where this is so the given entry's unquoted portion is referred to simply as "Protasis" or "Apodosis" in the quotation itself. Regardless of these abbreviations, the citation of quoted passages refers to the entire omen entry or passage, not merely to the line(s) in which a given protasis or apodosis appears. Occasionally, however, where passages from cited examples are discussed in the body of the text, only a relevant portion is quoted; in such cases the appearance of three dots (…) indicates the abridgment of certain information. Where this occurs what has been omitted can be accessed in full in the citation of the example from which the passage is quoted.

The quotation of texts that have been quoted earlier on includes references to the original place of discussion, which includes the relevant text-critical and other philological notes.

Transcription (Normalization)

Vowel lengths follow the system set forth in Huehnergard, *Grammar*. The employment of half-brackets (⌜ ⌝) is intended only when truly necessary, i.e., when a reading remains tentative because of the partial break. Mimation has been assumed unless the given collection from which a passage is quoted is consistent about its loss. Anticipated sound changes, like *nm* > *mm*, or frequent features of Late OB, like the contraction of vowel sequences *ia, ea*, and the like, have not been assumed. A future edition of the collections will follow the more standard procedure. The common occurrence of the ominous mark often spelled *ṢI*/*ṢÍ-iḫ-ḫu*(*-um*), sometimes rendered *dīḫu*/*diḫḫu* (e.g., Maul 2013: 77; see also Heeßel 2012: 89) has been rendered *ziḫḫum* regularly for the sake of uniform convention. Names of zones, where mentioned not as part of a quotation of a cited passage, are normalized according to theoretically expected sound changes (e.g., *naplaštum*, not *naplastum*).

Translation

Where possible translations have tried to remain faithful to the Akkadian, rendering, for instance, the predicative adjective meaning of *paṭer*, "was split," rather than "split." Not infrequently, however, for felicity's sake this seemed unattainable. It seems a fact that the ancients themselves, even in the rather standardized form of the omen collections, took poetic license as well, for instance replacing one preposition with a (nearly) synonymous counterpart. In such occasions, again for reasons of a better English expression but also of consistency, I have taken liberties with which others may disagree. For this it is my hope that the accompanying Akkadian version presented in normalization here functions as an honest broker.

The same is true for the rendering of passages that are broken: as with the sparing employment of half-brackets, I have avoided applying square brackets for parts of English words in cases in which the reading is certain. Little, as an esteemed colleague impressed upon me, can be gained by the rendering of "… p]l[ac]e" for … *m*]*a*[*šk*]*an* when the latter is not in doubt and immediately present for comparison—save perhaps the repelling of those readers who do not thrive on the obscure for its own sake. This logic is also extended to the case of restorations of portions of words omitted by scribes; thus *šum*<*ma*> is rendered as "If," not "I<f>," and so forth. Translations of whole words or phrases broken or omitted but not in doubt are indicated accordingly, as these tend to be less disruptive to readers.

Renderings of the liver's anatomical zones or certain fortuitous marks have been capitalized when these are judged to represent, via metonymy or the like, proper names. This, for example, is the sense of the rendering of *rē'ûm* as "the Shepherd," the specialized variation of the generic *martum*, or "gallbladder," or of *erištum* as "a Request(-mark)." In some cases conventional translations have been kept, this despite newer and ingenious proposals. Thus, for example, we have maintained the rendering of the *naplaštum* as the "View," despite the term's rendering in George 2013 as the "eye-slit." The case of the above-mentioned *ziḫḫum*, which George (ibid.) takes as a "cyst" has been left untranslated, owing to prevailing uncertainties about its identification and even reading.

Secondary Literature

This study was sent off to press in the summer of 2015. I have tried to refer to all relevant secondary literature that had appeared to that point, but have been able to make only minimal use of materials that have come out thereafter. Some, including a late-2015 guidebook to the first-millennium divination literature (see bibliography *sub* Koch) or a 2016 discussion of Mesopotamian philosophical thinking (see bibliography *sub* Van de Mieroop), would certainly have challenged my discussion at various points, though it is my hope that the basics of my argument will stand the test of immediate time.

Catalogue of OB Extispicy Collections Not Included in *CUSAS* 18, *OBE*, and *YOS* 10

Museum Number / "Name"	Place of (Re-)Publication	Place of Edition	Bibliography
A. 1413	*ARM* 26/1 (microfiche)	*ARM* 26/1, 66 no. 3	Durand 1988
A. 2365	*ARM* 26/1 (microfiche)	*ARM* 26/1, 66 no. 2	Durand 1988
A 7893	Greengus Ishchali, 278, pl. XCIII	None	Greengus 1978
AO 7028	*RA* 38 (1941), 80–1	*RA* 40 (1946), 56–81	Nougayrol 1941; 1946
AO 7029	*RA* 38 (1941), 82	*RA* 40 (1946), 81–5	Nougayrol 1941; 1946
AO 7030	*RA* 38 (1941), 83–4	*RA* 40 (1946), 90–7	Nougayrol 1941; 1946
AO 7033	*RA* 38 (1941), 88	*RA* 40 (1946), 85–90	Nougayrol 1941; 1946

Museum Number / "Name"	Place of (Re-)Publication	Place of Edition	Bibliography
AO 7539	*RA* 65 (1971), 70, 72	*RA* 65 (1971), 67–84	Nougayrol 1971a
AO 9066	*RA* 44 (1950), pls. I–II, IV	*RA* 46 (1950), 23–33	Nougayrol 1950
BM 12875	*RA* 67 (1973), 51	*RA* 67 (1973), 50–2	Aro and Nougayrol 1973
BM 13915	*RA* 67 (1973), 54	*RA* 67 (1973), 52–6	Aro and Nougayrol 1973
BM 22694	*RA* 67 (1973), 43, 45	*RA* 67 (1973), 41–50	Aro and Nougayrol 1973
BM 78241	*CT* 44 37	None	Nougayrol 1969: 152–3
HY 150 = IM 85030	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 247–9; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 41–2	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
CMAA030(–C0001)	*ZA* 103 (2013), 167–9	*ZA* 103 (2013), 162–6, 170–8	Winitzer, 2013
HY 154	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 251; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 43	Veldhuis 2006: 492 (partial)	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985; Veldhuis 2006: 492
HY 203	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 253; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 39	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
HY 206	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 253; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 38	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
HY 208	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 255; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 37	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
HY 223	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 259; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 35	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
HY 225	*Sumer* 40 (1979–1981), 259; *Mesopotamia* 20 (1985), 34	None	Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985
I_26 1325	Saveliev 1985, no. 2; *B&B* 6 (2012), 54	*B&B* 6 (2012), 36–7	Khait 2012
I_26 1664	Saveliev 1985, no. 1; *B&B* 6 (2012), 54	*B&B* 6 (2012), 37–8	Khait 2012

(cont.)

Museum Number / "Name"	**Place of (Re-)Publication**	**Place of Edition**	**Bibliography**
$I_2$6 1663 + 1661	Saveliev 1985, no. 3 and 6; *B&B* 6 (2012), 55	*B&B* 6 (2012), 38–41, 50	Khait 2012
$I_2$6 1660	Saveliev 1985, no. 7; *B&B* 6 (2012), 56	*B&B* 6 (2012), 41–8, 51–2	Khait 2012
$I_2$6 1662	Saveliev 1985, no. 5; *B&B* 6 (2012), 57	*B&B* 6 (2012), 48–9	Khait 2012
YBC 11102 + $I_2$6 1653	*YOS* 10 30; Saveliev 1985, no. 4; *JCS* 63 (2011), 73–6	*JCS* 63 (2011), 73–6	Khait 2011
IM 85441; Sib 388 (no. 5)	*Iraq* 56 (1994), 39–40	*Iraq* 56 (1994), 39	Al-Rawi 1994
IM 106795 (no. 6)	*Iraq* 56 (1994), 41	*Iraq* 56 (1994), 41	Al-Rawi 1994
IM 13706	*TIM* 9 78	None	Van Dijk 1976
IM 13353	*TIM* 9 79	None	Van Dijk 1976
IM 13402	*TIM* 9 80	None	Van Dijk 1976
IM 11053	*TIM* 9 81	None	Van Dijk 1976
LAOS 1, 51 (SIL 5)	*LAOS* 1, pl. XXXIII	*LAOS* 1, 83–5	Oshima 2011
MAH 15874	*RA* 44 (1950), pl. III–IV	*RA* 46 (1950), 33–40	Nougayrol 1950
MAH 15994	*RA* 63 (1969), 154	*RA* 63 (1969), 153–7	Nougayrol 1969; Glassner *ZA* 99 (2009), 40–1; Winitzer forthcoming a
Ni. 1218	None	*ZA* 77 (1987), 194–6	Kraus 1987
Schileico A ($I_2$6 1724)	*AfO* 5 (1928–29), 214; *B&B* 6 (2012), 53	*AfO* 5 (1928–29), 214–5; *B&B* 6 (2012), 34	Schileico 1928–29; Khait 2012
Schileico B	*AfO* 5 (1928–29), 215; *B&B* 6 (2012), 54	*AfO* 5 (1928–29), 215–8; Koch 2005: 225 *B&B* 6 (2012), 34–6	Schileico 1928–29; Koch 2005: 225 Khait 2012
Scheil A	*RA* 27 (1930), 142	*RA* 27 (1930), 141–8	Scheil 1930
Scheil B	*RA* 27 (1930), 149	*RA* 27 (1930), 148–54	Scheil 1930; Riemschneider 1965
VAT 602	*RA* 46 (1950), pl. IV	*RA* 46 (1950), 16–21	Nougayrol 1950
VAT 4102	*RA* 46 (1950), pl. IV	*RA* 46 (1950), 12–6	Nougayrol 1950

(Re-)Editions of Published Omen Collections

Text Publication	Edition/Translation
MAH 15874	Glassner 2009a: 40–1
MAH 15994: 6–7, 13–14	Glassner 2009a: 21
OBE 1: 7–14	Glassner 2009a: 43
VAT 602	Glassner 2009b
YOS 10 14:	
YOS 10 15: 6–10	Glassner 2009a: 38–9
YOS 10 16: 5–7	Glassner 2009a: 39
YOS 10 17: 7, 30–32, 36, 40–41, 43, 47, 48–61	Glassner 2009a: 38, 39, 42–3
YOS 10 22	Glassner 2009a: 61–2
YOS 10 24	Hecker 1986; Glassner 2009a: 63–7
YOS 10 26	Glassner 2009a: 67–76
YOS 10 40: 15–18	Glassner 2009a: 19
YOS 10 45	Glassner 2009a: 77–81
YOS 10 61: 6–7	Glassner 2009a: 20

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 The Problem of Mesopotamian Divination Literature

The study of Mesopotamian divination literature or, more specifically, the omen collections reflecting the various divination techniques from ancient Mesopotamia, has occupied a curious place within its parent discipline of Assyriology. On the one hand, there exists a virtual consensus on the significance of this genre; the sheer size of the corpus—second only to the administrative textual remains, and comprising the largest proportion of the scholarly and literary record—has been sufficient to impress modern students of its place and weight in Mesopotamian culture.[1] On the other hand, Bottéro's observation that "[t]his gigantic mine of information does not seem to have been sufficiently explored yet by Assyriologists," made over three decades ago, remains true even today.[2] Indeed, Koch recently reaffirmed this opinion, remarking that Mesopotamian divination literature has received a "somewhat stepmotherly treatment in modern Assyriological research," notwithstanding a "revived" interest in the subject during the last generation.[3]

The fact remains that, to date, there have been only provisional attempts to explore divination texts from within, in a manner that might shed light on their organization, interpretive assumptions, and, ultimately, underlying reasoning. As a result, literary competence in this material lags behind that achieved in better-known cuneiform genres. Things are brighter for the subjects often grouped alongside divination texts under the rubric of scholarly literature. Not only does one find today impressive overviews of or introductions to different

1 See, e.g., the opinion of the so-called casuistic literature in Landsberger 1976: 13–4, and especially the overall assessment of divination in Oppenheim 1977: 206–7; also Edzard 1999: 264. On the significance of this material, see the recent characterization of Mesopotamia in Frahm 2011: 20 as a "divination culture," which is largely based on the place of the omen collections and the scholarship surrounding these, along with the learned texts this literature engendered.

2 Bottéro 1992: 126; also von Soden 1994: 154.

3 Koch 2015: 11; and cf. the somewhat similar opinion in Edzard 2004: 545, quoted below. To be precise, Koch is referring to divination, not divination literature, although it is plain that she means the latter, especially since she justifies her opinion by citing the lack of any comprehensive publications or treatments of divinatory series.

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facets of the Mesopotamian scholarly textual record, including mathematics,[4] medicine,[5] astrology and astronomy,[6] commentaries,[7] and the lexical-list tradition,[8] among others; more significantly, these surveys typically succeed in advancing beyond formal descriptions of the literature to provide more sophisticated statements on underlying societal assumptions and beliefs. For the bulk of the divination literature, the situation is undeniably different.[9] Koch's new guidebook to the (largely) first-millennium Mesopotamian divinatory texts, which reiterates the significance of the overall corpus and its place in the Mesopotamian literary record, represents a significant development,[10] and her assessment of what remains to be done and to be gained should serve as an important reminder and an encouragement:

> The creation of the corpus of divination texts was in itself a major accomplishment of Mesopotamian culture.... For this reason, we may expect some of the salient features of Mesopotamian thought and beliefs to be reflected here. Unravelling the hermeneutic codes of divination is a challenge for modern scholars, one which could yield important insights into the worldviews of the ancient Near East, since the norms, values and conceptualizations of the surrounding society are often mirrored in the rules of association and interpretation applied in divination.[11]

There are, of course, some good explanations for the disparity between the attention given to divination literature and that bestowed on other genres of scholarly cuneiform texts. Methodologically, the task of preparing text editions generally takes priority over broader interpretive works, and the preparation of editions of the omen collections has proceeded slowly. From *Bārûtu*, the standardized series of SB extispicy, the branch of divination with which this study is concerned, first fruits have only appeared relatively recently.[12] The extispicy collections from the formative OB period under consideration here have not

4 E.g., Robson 1999; 2008; Proust 2007.

5 E.g., Stol 2000; Geller 2010; Scurlock 2014.

6 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 1995; Brown 2000; Rochberg 2004.

7 Frahm 2011.

8 Veldhuis 2014a.

9 Excluding, that is, the astrological material noted above. On the place of Maul 2013 with respect to this issue, see below.

10 Koch 2015.

11 Ibid.: 5.

12 Koch-Westenholz 2000; 2005; for an overview of the entire series and related materials, see now id. 2015: 94–122.

fared much better. The publication and edition of new texts a generation ago[13] and others more recently[14] has added significantly to the overall corpus, while studies of specific issues raised by these texts offer a hint of what stands to be gained from their careful consideration.[15] Yet the bulk of the material (including most of *YOS* 10, still the largest repository of OB omen texts[16]) remains either unedited or in need of updated, uniform editions.[17]

It is also true that divination literature tends to be technical, with each divinatory technique employing its own highly specialized vocabulary. In the case of extispicy, the modern student must master a good bit of anatomy along with its extensive nomenclature, which forms a veritable *imago mundi* within the semiotic system of divination.[18] Not surprisingly, the task of unlocking these mysteries has taken considerable time and energy.

Still, one must ask whether the relative scarcity of modern editions and the inherent difficulty of divinatory literature are sufficient to explain its second-rank treatment. It is also likely that interest in Mesopotamian divination literature has lagged because it neither corresponds to a modern category nor appeals to contemporary literary preferences.[19] In fact Bottéro had speculated about this as well, wondering "whether the main reason [for the relative neglect of omen texts] is not that divination is considered, consciously or unconsciously, to be a simple superstition, trivial, outdated, and not really deserving of attention."[20] The recent opinion by Koch, cited in part above, certainly echoes this reflection.[21] The possibility that the appreciation of Mesopotamian divination literature has suffered on account of its diminished standing in modern sensibilities thus seems worthy of further consideration.

To demonstrate the substance of this claim, one need only survey the following results from a short experiment, which was undertaken with the purpose of

13 Jeyes 1989.

14 See especially George 2013; also Winitzer 2013.

15 E.g., Richter 1993; 1999; Glassner 2004c; 2009a; Winitzer 2010; 2011a; forthcoming.

16 Goetze 1947b. But see now Glassner 2009a for editions of some of this material.

17 For a tally of these, see the tabulation of all the collections in this study's preface.

18 See Starr 1983; 1990; Meyer 1987; Jeyes 1989; Leiderer 1990; Koch-Westenholz 2000; Koch 2005; Glassner 2005c; Maul 2013: 64–100. For a word on the Mesopotamian extispicy diviner, who mediates between anatomical concerns and their social signification, see Glassner 2005a.

19 On modern challenges to the categorization of Mesopotamian literature, see, e.g., Krecher 1978; Vanstiphout 1993; Black 1998; Veldhuis 1998; 2004: 39–80; Wilcke 2006; Michalowski 2006b; 2011: 47; 2010; Gadotti 2014: 51–3, 93–9.

20 Bottéro 1992: 126.

21 Koch 2015: 11.

assessing the Assyriological opinion of omens as literature—no simple matter, admittedly, given the typical challenges in defining the latter term. Still, a cursory perusal of *CAD* reveals that, where it appears, the citation of data from the omen collections is subsumed under a host of different categories. Thus, along with references to passages from omen texts under the elementary rubric "in omens," one also finds these cited under "in lit.,"[22] alongside examples from belletristics.[23] Yet elsewhere a line is drawn between materials from the omen collections and what is deemed literature. On some occasions this is implied in categories such as "in lit. (omens),"[24] "in lit. *and* omens,"[25] "in hist., lit., *and* omens,"[26] or the like, distinctions that by their very existence suggest a difference between one and the other(s). Elsewhere this is done more explicitly, with quotations from omen passages separated from those considered (more) literary and appearing in sequential categories, as when "in lit." is followed by "in omen texts,"[27] or when "in omens" precedes "in lit. and hist.,"[28] or even where "in omens, rit., and scholarly texts" is differentiated from "in lit."[29] And this classificatory challenge extends beyond the question of the omen collections as literature per se. That a categorization of omens under the rubrics of religion or magical and medical writings is not typically afforded by *CAD* either is evident in such sequences as when "in omens" precedes "in rel. and lit.,"[30] or when "in lit." is followed by "in magic and med. contexts" and finally "in omens."[31]

The preceding exercise is admittedly not systematic, though it is significant that essentially the same point concerning Assyriology's sense of the omen collections within the broader Mesopotamian intellectual achievement may be reached via other routes. Revealing in this respect is the following remark by D. O. Edzard, who, reviewing the place of omens within Mesopotamian literature, concludes that:

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22 E.g., *CAD* G, 35; cf. *CAD* P, 297.

23 E.g., *CAD* Ṣ, 53, where quotations from omen texts appear under one heading with those from Nergal and Ereškigal, Erra, and the Cuthean Legend.

24 E.g., *CAD* E, 53.

25 See e.g., *CAD* A/2, 27; B, 284; R, 234 (emphasis added).

26 E.g., *CAD* R, 119 (emphasis added).

27 E.g., *CAD* B, 284; E, 283; Q, 143.

28 E.g., *CAD* M/1, 26.

29 *CAD* Š/1, 265.

30 *CAD* Ṣ, 216–7.

31 *CAD* Š/2, 319–20.

> [s]tiefmütterlich behandelt sind jene altbabylonischen Sammlungen von ominösen Vorder- und Nachsätzen—Protaseis und Apodoseis—die sich als kleine Kunstwerke entpuppen, wenn man sich bemüht, sie als Ganzes zu sehen und zu analysieren. Es enthüllen sich dann Systeme, die nicht nur technisch, sondern auch gedanklich-sprachlich geistreich wirken und damit vielleicht den Anspruch haben, wenigstens in die Nähe von "Literatur" gerückt zu werden.[32]

The remarkable ambivalence toward the omen collections as literature witnessed in these words finds a fitting counterpart in Assyriological attitudes concerning the place of the omen collections in the assessment of Mesopotamian religion or even Mesopotamian divination. In the first case, consider, for example, a student of Mesopotamian religion curious not only about how the Babylonians divined messages from their gods but also about what, in terms of its recording and further learning, the ancients did with their received instruction. In the pages of Jacobsen's celebrated history of the broader subject, he will find a single sentence on divination and its "technical literature."[33]

In the more specific case of Mesopotamian divination, the important, recent monograph on the topic by Maul proves especially instructive.[34] In painstaking detail and often-ingenious analysis, Maul reconstructs various aspects of the divinatory system, many of which were known previously only briefly and disjointedly. Yet when it comes to the earliest omen collections, key aspects of these texts—their artistic sophistication ("kunstvoll komponierte didaktische Meisterstücke"), compositional origins, curricular standardization, and even textual serialization[35]—are not treated in any substantial way, with next to nothing on their place in the religious or intellectual formation and development of Mesopotamian diviners or divination.[36] Indeed, not infrequently it seems as if Maul contrasts Mesopotamian divination as reflected in the copious extispicy collections from the second millennium onward with an earlier phase of this phenomenon that is deemed more authentic. This is the sense one gets from a comparison of the following statements, which on the one

32 Edzard 2004: 545.

33 Jacobsen 1976: 84.

34 Maul 2013.

35 Ibid.: 216–7.

36 But cf. ibid. 191–5 for a brief introduction to the logic of the early extispicy collections. On the other hand, Maul's stimulating discussion (ibid.: 277–95) of extispicy texts of the first millennium dwells on not only the complex interactions among scholars and diviners but also the textual innovations for which these figures were responsible.

hand highlight a veritable chasm between the act of divination and divinatory texts, and on the other hand attribute variance among related collections to competing, established academic curricula rather than an active, individual concern with textuality as a new—and in the long run the dominant—form of divinatory expression:

> [W]ir sollten uns nicht—so wie Babylonier und Assyrer—täuschen lassen von der Flut an Schriftquellen zur Eingeweideschau, die die Gelehrtenkultur des zweiten und ersten vorchristlichen Jahrtausends hervorgebracht hat, und unseren Eindruck von der Frühzeit der Opferschau hiervon bestimmen lassen.[37]

And:

> Kompendien dieser Art, die zwar das gleiche Thema behandeln, aber unterschiedlichen Städten Babyloniens stammen, weisen trotz zahlreicher Parallelen beachtliche inhaltliche Abweichungen auf und künden so von dem Nebeneinander unterschiedlicher Opferschauerschulen in der altbabylonsichen Zeit.[38]

Now the preceding discussion does not intend to suggest that divination literature has been ignored altogether in the study of ancient Mesopotamian religion or divination.[39] When Assyriological scholarship does address the omen collections, however, it often does so to shed light on subjects that, strictly speaking, are not central to the collections themselves. Not infrequently, such scholarship assesses the contribution of the collections to other intellectual achievements, within Mesopotamia and even beyond.

One instructive example demonstrating this point involves two renowned and related older works by Goetze[40] and Finkelstein,[41] along with more recent literature that engages these works or the texts they concern.[42] Goetze

37 Maul 2013: 184.

38 Ibid.: 216; cf. ibid.: 192.

39 Indeed, examples to the contrary include some of the more basic statements on Mesopotamian religion; see, e.g., Oppenheim 1977: 171–227, 367–75, especially 207–27; Bottéro 2001: 170–85.

40 Goetze 1947a.

41 Finkelstein 1963.

42 E.g., Grayson 1966; 1980: 148, 188–94; Reiner 1974; Cooper 1980; Starr 1986; Hallo 1991: 155–61; see also Van Seters 1983: 77–9; Glassner 1983; 1986: passim; Van de Mieroop

entertained the possibility that Mesopotamian omens contain allusions to real historical events; Finkelstein went so far as to attribute the achievement of Mesopotamian historiography by and large to the drive for knowledge that is manifest in the omen collections, particularly in the so-called historical omens. That these ideas have been rightly dismissed in subsequent literature is of little consequence here; what is presently germane is the fact that at no stage of the discussion were the omens at issue contemplated in their literary context. This is certainly the case with respect to the initial publications, which by their own admission concern matters outside of the omen collections. Yet it is equally true for the more recent writings, which, having pointed to paronomasia or other hermeneutics that undercut claims of the empiricism of historical omens, are ultimately no different in terms of their concern with the literature from the cases of Goetze and Finkelstein.[43]

Another particularly salient illustration of the tendency to treat divination literature as an ancillary to a larger discussion is the debate over its status as a form of scientific expression, which is complicated by widely varying notions of what constitutes science[44] and (correspondingly) varying degrees of apologetics as to why this "lukewarm"[45] form of expression deserves admission into the history of that discipline. To be sure, this question, to which this study turns briefly in its closing as well, is both engaging and of considerable consequence. Yet, in most cases, evaluations of the scientific qualities of divination literature fail to grapple with the more urgent question of how the people who assembled these collections understood them to function.

It is thus hard to avoid the conclusion that the questions that motivate a significant number of studies of Mesopotamian divination literature actually reflect modern intellectual concerns, and that ancient Mesopotamian intellectual concerns, particularly those related to the content, organization, and interpretation of the omen collections, consequently receive short shrift. This is

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1999: 32–3; Pientka-Hinz 2008: 23–4; Haul 2009: 81–5, 214–7; Michalowski 2011: 212–5; Schaudig 2012; forthcoming.

43 See, e.g., Cooper 1980: 101–2; Van de Mieroop 1999: 33. Somewhat better is Michalowski 2011: 212–5, which acknowledges the significance of the textual context of the historical omens for their proper appreciation, but which nonetheless exaggerates the necessity of knowing a text's provenance for the purposes of interpretation.

44 See, e.g., von Soden 1936: 460 (cf. id. 1994: 145–72); Speiser 1941: 3–4; Neugebauer 1957: 2; Bottéro 1974: 171–3; 1992: 125–37; Oppenheim 1977: 248; 1978: 636; Larsen 1987; Limet 1982: 25–8; Jeyes 1992; Rochberg 1990; 1996; 1999; 2010a; 2010b; Geller 2010: 39; see also Veldhuis 1997: 143–50. On opinions of the place of Mesopotamian science within the history of science in general, see Rochberg 2004: 14–43; 2014; Veldhuis 2014a: 2–6.

45 Borrowing from the title of Larsen 1987; see further below.

not to deny that there are important questions, including those concerning the origins of history writing or scientific reasoning, that justify the Assyriologist's attention, especially if he wishes to advocate for divination literature's contribution to later historical or scientific thought.[46]

Yet historical-comparative approaches to the omen collections that seek to utilize them simply for their potential to elucidate the development of Mesopotamian historiography or science run the risks associated with *a priori* reasoning, in this case of obfuscating the very nature of Mesopotamian divination literature by "preempt[ing] the categories"[47] through which its producers conceived it. Rather, the possibility of making use of divinatory literature to illuminate other topics presupposes a clear sense of its basic form and content. The same principle extends to the important question of how the scholasticism manifest in the collections should ultimately be understood. To wit: does this scholastic activity, admittedly removed from an original "folksy craft,"[48] represent a technical distortion of an authentic mode of religion, or is it to be construed as a new form of religious expression, imbued with scientific qualities and aspirations? This question, too, cannot be answered without first coming to terms with the system of thought that underlies the omen collections.

An almost parallel set of concerns with respect to the lexical-list tradition has been raised repeatedly in recent years by Veldhuis.[49] According to him, questions of meaning, and the Mesopotamian quest for the meaning of meaning, are central to understanding the Mesopotamian literary achievement, no less so than the laborious task of reconstructing this literature itself.[50] The same may be said concerning the omen collections. Literary competence in this realm must rise to a level commensurate not only with that attained in other branches of Mesopotamian learning, but also with our comprehension of the broader phenomenon of Mesopotamian divination itself, at least if we hope to understand the omen collections in a way that resembles how their authors conceived of them. In short, if we intend to situate the omen collections accurately within the context of Mesopotamian civilization and its intellectual

46 The same point seems to hold for more recent efforts to shed light on a relationship between Mesopotamian divination and law based on formal and substantive similarities between the omen collections and cuneiform law "codes"; see, e.g., the recent efforts in Fincke 2006–2007; Glassner 2012a; Guinan 2014; Rochberg 2016.

47 To borrow a phrase from Henry Kissinger.

48 Koch-Westenholz 2000: 19; see also Oppenheim 1956: 242; 1977: 210, 213–6; Starr 1983: 8; most recently Maul 2013: 182–5.

49 Veldhuis 1997; 1998; 2004; cf., however, id. 2014a: 425–9.

50 So, e.g., Veldhuis 1998: 79; pace id. 2014a: 429; also id. 2014b: 30–1.

achievements and goals—whether they lie in the realm of literature, religion, or science—the literature must be allowed to speak for itself. This study thus presents a new approach to Mesopotamian divination literature, in particular to the omen collections relating to extispicy that first developed in the OB period, that aims to recover the intellectual discourse out of which this literature crystallized.

1.2 Toward a New Approach

In order to reconstruct the context from which the literature emerged, this study aims to separate the early extispicy omen collections from extispicy as it was practiced in Mesopotamia up to and including the period of the formation of the collections, and to examine the former independently of the latter.[51] To achieve this goal, this study sidesteps most questions concerning both the *Sitz im Leben* of divination, in particular extispicy,[52] and its religio-conceptual framework;[53] similarly, it does not concern itself in great detail with the preparatory stages of divination or the particulars of its examinations and their initial recording.[54] To be sure, these are all important matters that cumulatively promise to lead to a comprehensive understanding of Mesopotamian divination. However, the present work limits itself to the omen collections themselves and asks what may be learned about Mesopotamian divination from these texts.

That this approach should be heralded as new may seem overstated. After all, as noted above, some provisional studies of omen collections do exist,[55] and a few among these address some aspects of the organizational and hermeneutic frameworks discussed in the present study.[56] Yet earlier attempts to understand

51 Or at least almost fully so; see Chapter 2 (§ 2.1.2.1) for the discussion of the so-called *amūtu*-omens and their proximity to the reports and Chapter 3 (§ 3.2.1) for a discussion of the "first paradigm" of divination and its relation to the empirical background, at least as reflected in the reports.

52 See, e.g., Charpin 2011; Maul 2013: 21–109, 181–235.

53 See Steinkeller 2005; Lambert 2007: 1–20; Wilcke 2007: 224–44; Fincke 2006–2007; 2009; Maul 2013: 21–8, 38–49; Rochberg 2016.

54 See Starr 1983a; Glassner 2010; Maul 2013: 29–109.

55 E.g., Brown 2000: 105–60; De Zorzi 2011; Glassner 1983; 1984; 2004c; 2009; Guinan 1989; 1990; 1996b; 2002a; 2002b; Nougayrol 1976; Richter 1993; 1994; 1999; Rochberg 1996.

56 See especially Bottéro 1974: 179–89; Guinan 1996a; Jeyes 1980; Starr 1974; 1975; 1978; 1983: 8–24; Heeßel 2012b; Maul 2013: 64–100.

the inner logic of the collections, particularly those concerning extispicy, have been sporadic and unsystematic, resulting in various misconceptions.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the modern preoccupation with the empirical basis of the omens.[57] Notwithstanding the general recognition that in the recording and arranging of omens in the collections, "*gaps* were filled by omens created for the purpose on the basis of some principle,"[58] all too frequently this activity is characterized, in the manner of the preceding quote, as exceptional, an aberration rather than the rule. Such a view not only does significant damage to the understanding of the omen collections, it ironically obscures evidence of a scientific mode of inquiry in this literature, the very prize these efforts typically seek.

For instance, the judgment that "the relationship between protasis (observed phenomenon) and apodosis (postulated future event) [of divination literature] is … in essence based on empiricism"[59] permits the conclusion that the literature's casuistic sentences reflect a "simple formula (with *insignificant variations*)"[60] around which the omens were framed. Yet as the following analysis makes plain (see Chapter 2), such variations are anything but insignificant and in fact hold the key to understanding a good deal concerning the actual generation of information within individual omens. In the same vein, even though he elsewhere advocates the approach promoted in this study, Bottéro's failure to recognize the ubiquity of the collections' creative and generative[61] elements leads him to make claims such as the following:

> [m]any … omens … have preserved enough particular elements for us to recognize easily a concrete and particular event or anecdote, a *fait divers*, taken from the daily routine.[62]

And:

> [i]l semble que les oracles aient été marqués profondément par les commencements empiriques de la divination deductive … les événements ainsi rattachés aux présages en vertu de la maxime: *post hoc ergo*

57 For a general comment on different assumptions about empiricism as seen in Assyriological literature, see Brown 2000: 109–10.

58 Hunger and Pingree 1999: 6 (emphasis added).

59 Larsen 1987: 212.

60 Larsen 1987: 211 (emphasis added).

61 On these terms, see below.

62 Bottéro 1992: 132.

> *propter hoc* … C'est pourqoui les prédictions anciennes, remplies de détails superfétatoires, ont un caractère si réaliste et, pour tout dire en un mot, anecdotique … Les seuls traits qui préviennent de considérer tous ces cas comme autant d'anecdotes, sont leur verbe au futur et l'absence de notes individuelles: noms propres de personnes et de lieux et coordonnées chronologiques.[63]

In support of his claim that events described in the omens reflected actual occurrences, Bottéro marshals three omens from the OB extispicy collections.[64] Yet, ironically, each of these is readily and properly explicable in terms of the literature's organizational and hermeneutic frameworks. That this could be overlooked may seem initially surprising, but less so when one recalls the persistence of ill-defined conceptions of empiricism and scientific thought[65] and the alleged presence of both in the omen collections generally.

As a counter to these approaches, this study proposes to focus on the early extispicy collections and to work outward from these texts. This approach, to anticipate my findings, posits that the overwhelming majority of omens in these collections were created or generated on the basis of deductive reasoning.[66] This is not to deny that some omens in these collections were based on observation; to the contrary, as is suggested below, the system responsible for the construction of the omen collections demanded some empirical basis for its initial operation.[67] Yet, as will be demonstrated, already in the case of the OB extispicy collections the search for empiricism is, for all intents and purposes, bound to fail,[68] since it grossly underestimates the extent of the deductive side

63 Id. 1974: 165–6.

64 Ibid: 166; the omens are *YOS* 10 21: 7–8 (= ex. 4.9); 41: 40–42 (= ex. 3.2); 46 iii 10–13.

65 The problem is not limited to Assyriology, of course, but rather goes to the very question of what constitutes ancient science. An accessible introduction to this problem, enumerating no less than eight different views, may be found in Lindberg 1992: 1–20. The most eloquent and persuasive recent efforts to define science in relation to Mesopotamian divination appear in Rochberg 1999; 2009; 2010a; 2010b.

66 For similar judgments, see, e.g., Koch-Westenholz 1995: 18–9; Brown 2000: 109; Rochberg 2010a: 20; and especially Bottéro 1974: 88–9, 99–123; 1992: 125–37, who suggests the term "deductive divination" to describe the type of divination exemplified by the extispicy collections.

67 Pace Koch 2015: 14–5, which seems to be based on a narrow sense of empiricism that categorically denies this possibility even with respect to all the early liver models; a more nuanced and less rigid reflection on this matter appears in Maul 2013: 210–4.

68 Unless, that is, in the manner adopted in Rochberg 1999: 565–6, empiricism is pushed aside in favor of a more open-ended notion such as "observability," which only demands

of the process and thus assumes that parts of these texts are unaffected by the processes of textualization and may be salvaged from the rest. The approach advocated here and undertaken below is thus new in that it operates under an assumption that differs from previous studies in terms of quality as well as quantity.[69] And while ultimately it arrives at provisional answers to some of the same questions posed about Mesopotamian divination in earlier works, it does so on the basis of the early omen collections and the window they provide on the Mesopotamian divination of that period.

The preceding remarks are not intended to suggest that all prior studies of Mesopotamian divination literature understood every omen to be based on empirical observation. In fact, most grant that there is some degree of transition already in the OB collections from an early empirical stage to another, more scholarly and systematic in nature. Indeed, there appears to be a consensus that, regardless of its original purpose or purposes,[70] by the Old Babylonian period Mesopotamian interest in divination extended beyond an apparent initial intent of forecasting specific future events[71] and into a scholastic realm. This requires that we adjust our perception of the work of diviners to include considerable literary activity. Evidence from this period suggests that

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that omens describe what is believed to be "potentially observable." In such a case, omens "cease to be observations as such, becoming rather abstractions resting upon empirical as well as theoretical foundations"; see also id. 2011: 620–1. A somewhat similar case appears in id. 2009; 2010a, which, however, puts the matter in terms of potentiality or conditionality. Regardless of how it is framed, as observed in Rochberg 2010a: 22, conception must not be mistaken for perception, with the Mesopotamian omen collections fitting squarely in the former camp.

69 The closest analog is that found in Brown 2000: 101–60, esp. 129–39. However, that effort represents only an outline and is based on first-millennium celestial divination literature, in which the matter of empiricism in omens is relatively easy to settle (on account of impossibilities such as the occurrence of lunar eclipses on moonless nights; see further, e.g., Rochberg-Halton 1987: 38–40; Britton and Walker 1996: 42; Brown 2000: 109).

70 For a recent discussion of this distinction, namely, concerning the evolution in early Mesopotamian divination from cultic-based concerns in its initial stage to military matters in the late third millennium, see Maul 2013: 182–91.

71 That the earliest recording of omens was intended for posterity is, characteristically, never explicitly spelled out in the ancient texts. It is a modern and probably sound assumption that this was the purpose of omen records; see, e.g., Nougayrol 1944: 36; Finkelstein 1963: 463–4; Starr 1983: 9. Still, that divination methods such as extispicy were employed to forecast future events is made plain in numerous ways, for instance by the many extant reports of examinations undertaken for various reasons, some as seemingly trivial—and thus telling—as the assessment of the profitability of the future sale of wares or of a gemstone; on the latter, see Wilcke 1990: 302–3; Veldhuis 2006: 488–9.

individuals bearing the title *bārûm* (Sum. máš.šu.gíd.gíd), lit. "(extispicy) seer," and operating, at least in part, as trained diviners probably produced some of the very collections comprising the corpus.[72] For this reason, the following discussion has retained the designation "diviner" for those persons who are posited to have compiled or transmitted the texts under consideration. If this postulation of multiple duties for some diviners seems confusing, one would do well to recall parallels in classificatory challenges for other learned Mesopotamian figures—for instance, those involving the *ṭupšar Enūma Anu Enlil*[73] or *asû*/*mašmaššu*/*āšipu*.[74] It is hoped that future discoveries will shed more light on the curriculum of the OB *Opferschauschüler* and the institutional context (an *Opferschauschule* [?]) in which such training took place.[75]

1.2.1 *The Collections' Organizational Framework and Generative and Paradigmatic Characteristics*

The compilation of omens in collections introduced a new conception of divination in Mesopotamia. In their new format, omens derived from actual observation became subject to pressures from both their immediate and broader literary environment. It was probably at this juncture, for instance,

72 See the discussion of the Diviner's Archive and texts potentially related to it below.

73 See Rochberg 2000; 2004: 219–36; also Robson 2011: 558 (with bibliography); Koch 2015: 24 (with bibliography).

74 See, e.g., Scurlock 1999; Jean 2006; Geller 2010: 43–55.

75 Borrowing from the designations in Maul 2013: 216. Little is known about the educational institutions for training in extispicy in this period, despite assumptions of their existence in Richter 1993 and Glassner 2009a (see further below); also Maul ibid. But the common supposition nowadays in Assyriology (e.g., Veldhuis 2011: 85) that the school curriculum known from OB Nippur was followed in all contemporary Babylonian cities cannot account for the whole picture of education in this period, since it leaves little room for instruction in divination literature or, for that matter, much else that was in Akkadian. That instruction in the latter language and its literature took place in this period—and not tangentially—seems obvious and is corroborated by the finding of multiple copies of texts such as literary letters (see Kleinerman 2011: 3 n. 16) and, among other genres, the omen collections themselves. Whether a stark contrast existed between the training needed for this level of literacy, described as "technical" for the omen collections (Veldhuis 2011: 73–4), over against the more "scholarly" training associated with the lexical lists (ibid.: 74–86), remains to be proven; whether the seat of training in Akkadian was as different from that imagined for the Sumerian counterpart as some suppose (Michalowski 2011: 214; cf. Robson 2011: 562) remains to be seen as well. In the meantime, one is well advised to recall the warning in George 2005: 131, 135 against those assumptions concerning OB educational facilities that approach things from external perspectives or are grounded in different periods.

that diviners embraced the casuistic sentence structure so common in Mesopotamian literature[76] as their chief literary form. Yet this process of compilation brought about changes considerably greater than the reformulation of preexisting materials according to new conventions. The study of the collections demonstrates unequivocally two additional changes, fundamental to the very meaning of Mesopotamian divination literature. These are: (1) the generation of new hypotheticals, along with their respective interpretations, by analogy to established omens and by way of implicit principles of hermeneutics; and (2) the systematic organization of older and newer material in accordance with implicit principles.

In so doing, diviners may well have drawn from other orbits of learning, most notably the lexical lists and law collections. Yet, in its sheer scope the activity was without parallel and consequently must be regarded as radical.[77] Indeed, it is not too much to say that, in the two overlapping activities of the generation of new information as well as its organization, the diviners began to conceive of an overarching idea for the systematization of knowledge in the collections. I have described this idea in terms of the collections' generative and paradigmatic characteristics, by which I mean the theoretical basis assumed and utilized by Mesopotamian diviners in their creation and compilation of the omen collections. The present study seeks to explain the makeup of this theoretical foundation in terms of the elements comprising it and the assumptions it incorporated.

My choice of the terms "generative" and "paradigmatic" has not been made hastily. More than once the option to describe the sum of the processes they represent by using the more generic and probably less contentious phrase "interpretive framework" seemed appealing. Yet in the study of the collections and their constituent parts it repeatedly became apparent that two fundamental characteristics of this literature—the generative and the paradigmatic—would be lost were they not illuminated externally. Accordingly, a word on each term and the manner in which it is hoped they shed light on the collections follows.

With respect to the second lexeme, I have borrowed intentionally from Thomas Kuhn and his introduction of the idea of paradigm shifts to account

76 See, e.g., Bottéro 1974: 81, 173; Landsberger 1976: 13–4. For more recent thinking about the proximity between the law and omen collections with respect to this structure, see, e.g., Fincke 2006–2007; Maul 2013: 358 n. 35; Guinan 2014; Koch 2015: 5; Van de Mieroop 2016: 195.

77 Cf. Bottéro 1974: 173.

for the basic conception of the nature of scientific revolutions.[78] Though, to be sure, the deductive nature of omen collections differs fundamentally from the experimental foundation of modern science,[79] this echo still seems appropriate for the present purposes, and finds corroboration in Brown's employment of the term "paradigm" in his analysis of Mesopotamian celestial divination literature.[80] In one sense, my use of the term strives merely to describe the theoretical framework of the omen collections and its basic concepts and assumptions. But there is more to it than that: the characterization of the literature as paradigmatic in the present study also owes to a second and more basic sense of the term "paradigm." Specifically, this involves the considerable degree to which individual juxtaposed omens in the collections are organized in actual gradation paradigms—like those known from the law collections[81]—that elaborate on particular variables (e.g., spatial orientation, colors, numbers, etc.).[82] Accordingly, it may be said that the broader paradigmatic character of the collections' organization represents the sum total of all such paradigms, theoretical and real.

A similar polyvalence presents itself in the case of "generative." I use it primarily to describe the extensive effort by diviners to generate new omens from existing ones on the basis of hermeneutic and organizational principles. Yet "generative" is also a loaded term, since it echoes the label of Chomsky's famous insight concerning the manner in which the development of language operates at its deepest level.[83] The resonance here is intentional and suggests that during the development of the omen collections the Mesopotamian diviner conceived of and began to lay the groundwork of a system for the gathering and assembly of information that would or at least theoretically could be all-encompassing. Corresponding to the way language "makes infinite use of finite media,"[84] the diviner realized the theoretically infinite potential of the combinatorial system presented by the omen collections. With the aid of hermeneutic and organizational associations and schemes—these being akin to the rules or principles of a language's grammar[85]—the diviner began

78 Kuhn 1996.

79 For a brief discussion of this matter, see the conclusion to this study.

80 Brown 2000: 105–60, esp. 126. Note, however, that Brown's use of the term, while not entirely different than my own, still centers on the first-millennium celestial divination literature, which intersects to a considerable extent with the astral sciences of that age.

81 See, e.g., Finkelstein 1981: 34.

82 For a recent word on this attribute of the omen collections, see Rochberg 2009.

83 For an accessible introduction to Chomsky's ideas, see Pinker 1995.

84 The phrase, attributed to Humboldt, was noted in Pinker 1995: 83.

85 For a word about this connection, see Chapter 2 (esp. n. 2).

manipulating data from a finite number of empirical omens to generate new ominous possibilities, in theory limitless.

To be sure, no evidence exists to suggest that this encyclopedic ideal was contemplated outright. In keeping with the general Mesopotamian attitude toward abstract thinking,[86] there exist no explicit theoretical statements to this effect, certainly not in the historical period under consideration. Indubitably our pointing to generative and paradigmatic characteristics in the omen collections would have struck the Mesopotamian diviner, whose thinking was limited by the collections' actual organizational framework, as foreign.[87] However, to echo Kuhn, the articulation of a paradigm is not something required of its earliest proponents. To the contrary, one must understand "how very limited in both scope and precision a paradigm can be at the time of its first appearance."[88] The abstraction of a paradigm's rules, he adds, is secondary to the basic sense of the paradigm itself: "[people] can agree in their *identification* of a paradigm without agreeing on, or even attempting to produce, a full *interpretation* or *rationalization* of it."[89] As this study of the omen collections strives to demonstrate, one cannot but conclude that a similar inchoate sense of a broader theoretical framework characterizes the manner in which Mesopotamian divination literature, already in its formative phase, came to be understood by the diviner.

1.2.2 *The OB Extispicy Collections—Provenance and Context*

Where, when, and in what context did the collections' conception and composition take place? Although our investigation does not focus on the *Sitz im Leben* of extispicy, something must nonetheless be said about the background that fostered this creative explosion.[90] The textual corpus stemming from OB extispicy is, as already noted, unrivaled by those from any other branch of divination in the earlier periods of Mesopotamian history, in terms of both its quantity (116 collections; ca. 2,000 entries)[91] and the sophistication of its

86 For a discussion of this point, see, e.g., Machinist 1986.

87 On these limitations in paradigmatic thinking with respect to the collections, see Rochberg 2009: 12, 19.

88 Kuhn 1996: 23.

89 Kuhn 1996: 44 (emphasis in original).

90 For the characterization of the new developments in writing in this period as revolutionary, see Veldhuis 2011: 72; 2014a: 223–5; also Glassner 2009a: 1–2.

91 Calculating the total amount of OB divination literature known up to that time (before the publication of *OBE*, *CUSAS* 18, and other texts still), Jeyes 1980b: 107 put the figures at 88 texts and 2,700 omens, of which 80% concerned extispicy; while more recently, Richardson 2010a: 241–2 n. 82 calculated a total of 3,193 OB extispicy omens alone, on

contents.[92] Unfortunately, however, it is difficult to contextualize this corpus on account of its scattered and incomplete state. We lack satisfactory answers to many basic questions, such as those concerning the collections' origins. Studies that are based on precise findspots of texts from this period, such as investigations of a scribal school in Nippur[93] or even a small scholarly "library" from Mê-Turan,[94] are not possible. And little can be said about the identities of most diviners (but see below), certainly not to the degree that we can speak of the OB clergy at Ur and their relations to one another or to temple or palace infrastructures,[95] or of the intellectual and familial circles of an individual scribe and his literary achievement.[96]

For the majority of texts under consideration, external evidence of their provenance is scant or nonexistent.[97] In addition, with the possible exception of two cases, the collections from Babylonia proper are anonymous.[98] Better is our knowledge of the texts from the Sealand:[99] of the twelve known divinatory texts, five (including three of the nine extispicy collections) mention persons in their colophons, of whom two are explicitly identified as diviners, another

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the basis of the added material in the *OBE* texts as well as his inclusion of ominous statements from extispicy reports and liver models. But both of those numbers seem too high. For a tabulation of all the OB extispicy collections except for those published in *YOS* 10, *OBE*, and *CUSAS* 18, see the preface to this study. The figures given in the text above include the texts from *YOS* 10, *OBE*, and *CUSAS* 18 (Sealand and Tigunānum).

92 It does not, however, seem to contain examples of forerunners of the first-millennium *Bārûtu* series, as do one of the OB *šumma ālu* texts (Joannès 1994) and especially the OB celestial omens (Rochberg 2006: 341; George 2013: 70–84), which even provide evidence of a common textual tradition in different OB cities (Sippar, Dūr-Abiešuḫ; see George 2013: 70–1).

93 Robson 2001.

94 Cavigneaux 1999.

95 Charpin 1986.

96 Van Koppen 2011.

97 Michalowski 2006a: 254–5 speculates (but cf. id. 2011: 214) that most of the known OB omen collections, such as those in *YOS* 10, come from a specific estate in Larsa, and this idea, though unsubstantiated, is taken up and even accepted elsewhere, e.g., Glassner 2009a: 20; George 2013: 27, 132; Koch 2015: 87.

98 These are: *OBE* 1 and 4. For *OBE* 1, if one follows the restoration in Glassner 2009a: 8, the colophon reads: [šu.nígin 60]+16 ki.gub [... S]I$^{?}$-*at* [šu NP] máš-šu-gíd-gíd [mu *am-miṣa-du-qá* lu]gal.e [(...)]. For *OBE* 4, following Glassner 2009a: 8–9, the colophon reads: [... ^{i}]^{ti}zíz u$_4$.9.kam [...] *sa-am-sú-i-lu-na* lugal kiš [mu kur nu še.ga.ne.ne] bí.in.sì.sì.ga. A possible third case involves *OBE* 19, which, if one takes l. 9 in the manner suggested to me by P. Steinkeller, reads: ⌜dumu *iš*⌝-*bi*-$^{(<d>)}$-*eš*$_4$-*tár* máš-šu-gíd-gíd.

99 For an overview of these texts, see George 2013: 129–42.

as a foreman diviner, and a fourth as the son of a probable diviner.[100] The colophons of two of these texts contain year names of king Pešgaldaramеš[101] of the first Sealand dynasty, in the time following the fall of Babylon.[102]

As for the rest of the divination texts treated in this study, the small minority whose provenance is certain do not represent any of the more substantial collections. Indeed, the extispicy texts unearthed in the course of excavations are mainly reports or liver models. Aside from the well-known models from Mari,[103] texts found *in situ* include eleven reports from Sippar-Amnanum,[104] seven reports (?) from Tell Yelkhi,[105] one four-column but badly damaged collection from Ishchali or its vicinity,[106] two short collections from Mari,[107] and two models from Tell Haddad (Mê-Turan).[108]

For a few other texts, a little information regarding origins can be inferred with varying degrees of confidence. The Mari text *ARM* 26/1 3 bears a resemblance to other scholarly materials from that site.[109] Two collections published early on by Scheil reportedly come from Larsa.[110] One three-column fragment of a large text from Istanbul has a Nippur museum number.[111] *YOS* 10 60 (OI A 7762) is said to hail from either Ešnunna or the broader Diyala region,[112] while according to its BM numbers (U 443 [7752] + U 7759), *OBE* 10 probably comes from Ur[113] and is assumed to be early on orthographic grounds.[114]

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100 The references appear in: *CUSAS* 18 22 r. 28'–29' (*Palāšu-līrik*, *akil bārî* [omens concerning the behavior of a sacrificial lamb]); 25 r. 14'–15' ([...]-*ibni* [extispicy]); 28 (*Ištar*-[...]-*nīrī* [extispicy]); AO 7539: left edge (*Ikūn-pī-Ištar mār Ilīyātum* ⌜...⌝ [intestines]); and *CUSAS* 18 30 r. 39–40 (*Ilīyātum* [*akil b*]*ārî* [apodoses of omens of uncertain kind]).

101 These appear in *CUSAS* 18 28 r. 15' and 32:3'.

102 See Brinkman 2003–4; Dalley 2009: 2–11.

103 See Meyer 1987a; also id. 1993.

104 These are mentioned in Tanret 2011: 283 but remain unpublished.

105 HY 150; 154; 203; 206; 208; 223; 225, published in Saporetti 1979–1981; Rouault and Saporetti 1985.

106 Text 278 (pl. 93) in Greengus 1979.

107 *ARM* 26/1 nos. 2 and 3; edited in Durand 1988: 65–8. Note, too, the mention in Durand 1997–2000, 3: 92 of additional divination texts from Mari.

108 Texts 5 and 6 in Al-Rawi 1994: 38–41; see Meyer 2003; Glassner 2005b: 277–8.

109 Durand 1988: 67.

110 These are designated Scheil A and B in this study; see Scheil 1930: 141.

111 Kraus 1987: 194–6.

112 Records at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago list both alternatives; pace Jeyes 1989: 8.

113 Another omen text from Ur is BM 113915, an OB *Šumma ālu* collection, edited in Weisberg 1969–1970.

114 Jeyes 1989: 6.

Most significant is the case of *OBE* nos. 1, 8–9, 11–16. Jeyes, who published these texts, posited that they originated in Sippar on the basis of their inclusion in the BM collection 1902–10–11, which seems to derive from that city.[115] On the basis of *OBE* 4, whose colophon lists a Samsuiluna year name,[116] she dated texts 2–3, 5–6 to this reign as well, and *OBE* 1, 7–9, and 11–16 to that of Ammiṣaduqa.[117] Additional texts from the same collection published recently by Richardson offer support for Jeyes' opinion concerning provenance but challenge her dating proposals. These texts, grouped together as "The Diviners' Archive," concern the business affairs of two diviners, Rīš-Marduk and Sîn-nādin-šumi, working in connection with Sippar's famous Šamaš temple.[118] Their attested period of activity, from Aṣ 07 to Sd 14, may match Jeyes' date range, but only partially. Yet at least three extispicy reports[119] bearing the same collection number hint at the possibility that these two diviners were true to their title, and, if this is the case, they may have also compiled, copied, or made use of the aforementioned *OBE* texts. The evidence is, admittedly, circumstantial[120]—though not dismissible.[121] That individuals known as or presumed to be diviners appear in the colophons of three of the Sealand collections mentioned above further supports this possibility.[122]

Internal evidence is also of considerable help for drawing some basic distinctions. The classification of the texts as northern and southern on the basis of Goetze's pioneering work on OB dialects and their paleographic

115 Jeyes 1989: 4, which actually suggests a Sippar origin for all the *OBE* texts except no. 10; cf. George 2013: 27. According to Jeyes 1989: 187 n. 6, an OB collection of physiognomic omens (*TBP* 62 [Si 33]; see Böck 2000: 302–5) and an unpublished text containing dream omens (BM 96951 [1902–10–11, 5]; referred to more recently in *CAD* Ṭ, 3) also belong to this collection. The four OB celestial omen texts discussed in Rochberg 2006 and George 2013: 70–84 do not come from this collection but probably come from Sippar as well (George ibid.: 70).

116 *OBE* 4 l.e. l. 2. reads: [...] ⌜*sa-am*⌝-*sú-i-lu-na* ⌜lugal kiš⌝ 3. [.....]bí.in.sì.sì.⌜ga⌝, which corresponds to Si 20.

117 Jeyes 1989: 5. Jeyes bases her judgment in part on the year names in the colophons of *OBE* 1 (see n. 98 above; Glassner 2009a: 8), which may correspond to Aṣ 1, and *OBE* 11 (mu *am-mi-ṣa-du-qá* lugal mu.sar.e [...]), which is unknown (ibid.: 7).

118 Richardson 2010b: 58–69.

119 Richardson 2002: nos. 1 and 2; and see id. 2010: 58 n. 141. A fourth, appearing in Richardson 2002: no. 3, is BM 26594 (BM collection 98-5-14), from another archive from Sippar that overlaps with the Diviners' Archive; see Richardson 2010b: 50–8.

120 So Michalowski 2011: 214.

121 A comparison of paleographic and orthographic features in the collections and the archival texts is a desideratum.

122 Another such case may include *OBE* 19; see n. 98 above.

and (especially) orthographic representation[123] remains a valuable tool for analysis,[124] especially when such findings can be confirmed by other means. This is the case with the *OBE* texts said to be from Sippar, which, as summarized by Jeyes, exhibit many of Goetze's northern features.[125] The recognition of these epigraphic matters also proves instrumental in sorting out some differences in the technical details of the liver's zonal designations, which vary at times according to region. This is the case for the collections *OBE* 2–4, as well as at Mari and Elam, for example, in which the View, rendered igi.bar/*naplaštum* in southern texts, appears as igi.tab/*naplasum*.[126] The case of Mari is especially intriguing, since a good portion of the technical terminology known from there (in letters describing extispicy examinations) seems at first blush non-Babylonian; along with striking evidence of differences in Mari's extispicy practices,[127] the distinctive terminology has been taken as indicative of a Syrian, pre-Babylonian extispicy tradition.[128] However, as convincingly demonstrated by Glassner,[129] this possibility must be rejected, since the terminology that had been considered unique to Mari finds parallels in texts from Babylonia and Susa.

The cumulative picture is, in sum, one of unity with regional variation. Notwithstanding gaps in our knowledge concerning matters of provenance and dating, the texts' agreement on innumerable details at various levels makes it plain that they share a common ancestry. As such, to study them collectively seems less objectionable than would otherwise be the case. Moreover, the corpus is sufficiently large to allow for some conclusions about its common intellectual effort, without this being necessarily invalidated by particular exceptions.

A different set of challenges presents itself when one turns to consider the collections' place in a Mesopotamian curricular context. Initially things seem promising: the collections, after all, bear unmistakable hints of curricular pedagogy. Brief texts comprised of one or two omens (e.g., *YOS* 10 6 [2 entries]; 37 [1 entry]; *OBE* 19 [2 entries; lenticular]), a short list of partial

123 Goetze 1945; Goetze 1947b: 1.

124 Note, however, Kraus 1950: 142–3 on potential pitfalls to Goetze's approach, as well as more recent reassessments of it in Glassner 2009a: 7, 18–21; Maul 2013: 217. The matter deserves renewed study.

125 Jeyes 1989: 5; e.g., Tv signs for the emphatic /*ṭ*v/, Sv signs for /*s*v/, BI (read *pí*) for /*pi*/, *y* for /-*ay*(*y*)*a*-/ as *a*-*ia* or *ia*-*a*, etc.

126 Jeyes 1989: 53; George 2013: 29.

127 The point is made vividly in *ARM* 26/1, 102–3.

128 E.g., Durand 1988: 64; cf. Maul 2013: 186.

129 Glassner 2005b.

protases without their accompanying apodoses (*YOS* 10 29), and short collections with brief entry counts (e.g., *YOS* 10 21 [šu.nígin 8 mu.bi, "total: 8 (are) its entries"], 28 [8 mu.bi, "8 (are) its entries"]) make it clear that this literature was taught and learned, presumably by those with vocational interests. Yet problems quickly arise when one tries to describe in more detail the specific setting of this activity and its curriculum, and to assess its product in terms of scope and authority. Fortunately, two important studies by T. Richter[130] and J.-J. Glassner[131] have made significant inroads into these matters. A synopsis of these works thus follows.

Richter, following Jeyes,[132] argued in favor of the existence of an OB *bārûtum* series and thought it to be immense, on the order of 100 tablets.[133] Indeed, he believed that such a series was even quoted by shorter texts, which, in turn, were arranged in sub-series of their own. His theory rested on a novel interpretation of those tablets from OB collections that bear a KI+# subscript, which, against earlier opinions,[134] Richter explained as a label identifying an *Auszugstafel* of a respective *Hauptserie*.[135]

As key evidence for his thesis, Richter turned to one group of collections bearing a KI+# notation as a colophon, namely those concerning the zone known as the View, or *naplaštum* (AO 9066; *YOS* 10 14; 15; 16; MAH 15874), and pointed to parallels between each of these texts and sequential sections of the longest known *naplaštum* collection, *YOS* 10 17. These impressive findings suggested to Richter that the shorter texts depended on the longer *YOS* 10 17.[136] In a second case study, Richter considered the Palace Gate, or *bāb ekallim*, collections (especially *YOS* 10 22–27), of which one, *YOS* 10 22, bears a KI 1 notation and corresponds in many parts to another, *YOS* 10 24. Richter explained this in essentially the same manner as he did the *naplaštum* texts: the number in the notation refers to a *bāb ekallim* (sub-)series from which *YOS* 10 22 was quoted.[137]

130 Richter 1993.

131 Glassner 2009a; see also id. 2012: 161–8.

132 Jeyes 1989: 9, 11.

133 Richter 1993: 130. For his justification, see n. 138 below. Note, too, the brief recent remark in Maul 2013: 217 on this question, which seems to accord with Richter's conception.

134 For a summary of these, see Richter 1993: 123.

135 For a tabulation of all these texts, see Glassner 2009a: 25.

136 Richter 1993: 123–7. Richter's layout is not quite as clear-cut as he presents it to be. For a discussion of one such parallel, which undercuts the precision in Richter's case, see Glassner 2009a: 40 n. 83. In fairness, however, Richter does allow for fluidity in the manner in which the excerpt texts quote from their sources.

137 Richter 1993: 127–8. A third case study concerning such intertextual relations involved *YOS* 10 47–49, three omen collections pertaining to observations of the behavior of the

In sum, while allowing for variations in text serialization and the arrangement of entries within collections, Richter's reconstruction nonetheless presumed an OB *bārûtum* series equal in length and perhaps also authority to the standardized counterpart from the first millennium. This series, moreover, served as the inspiration for an eclectic compilation of materials, and these materials were, in turn, serialized; the product of this process accounts for a significant portion of the texts known to us.

A very different interpretation of the same findings appears in the more recent work of Glassner, which contitutes a part of a wide-ranging study of the collections' production. Indeed, in a sense, Glassner conceived things in reverse: according to him, those shorter texts marked by the KI+# notations, which he labeled *manuscrits d'apprentissage*, represented sources from which longer omen collections, dubbed by him *manuscrits de fixation*, derived. This did not necessarily mean, however, that in the OB period a master *bārûtum* series existed in the manner envisioned by Jeyes and Richter. Glassner's rereading of a crucial datum in the colophon of *OBE* 11 refuted earlier ideas about this alleged series' assumed size.[138] Still, it was not implausible to him that some texts, such as the aforementioned *YOS* 10 17 and 24,[139] could have comprised series, with the identification of an apparent incipit in one such case supporting this possibility.[140]

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sacrificial lamb (subject of a forthcoming edition by Y. Cohen), one of which states that it was part of a series (šu.nigin 48 mu.bi.im / 1.kam, "total of 48 entries of [tablet] one" [*YOS* 10 48:49–50]); see Richter 1993: 122, 129–30.

138 The issue turns on the reading of a portion of the colophon from *OBE* 11 r. 2', which Jeyes 1989: 145–6 and Richter 1993: 121 and n. 3 rendered as: DUB-*pí* 90 ⌜*ka*⌝-[…] and understood as referring to a "tablet 90" of an alleged series. Yet, as explained in Glassner 2009a: 7, this reading and interpretation cannot stand, since upon collation it becomes clear that what had been taken for "90" (i.e., 60 + 30) is actually the beginning of a reference to the tablet's scribe, namely: DUB-*pí* ^{m}30-⌜*ka*⌝-[…], "tablet of *Sîn-ka*[…]"; similarly Heeßel 2012a: 15 n. 173. On the first part on this colophon, see n. 140 below.

139 More specifically, these and others belonging to a sub-category of the im.gíd.da/*giṭṭum* tablet type; see ibid.: 2009: 6–7.

140 Ironically, this alleged incipit is in fact the first portion of the colophon from *OBE* 11 (see n. 138 above), which Glassner 2009a: 7 reads: 60 giš.tukul *ki-ma ri-*⌜*im*⌝-[*ma*$^{?}$-*tim*$^{?}$ *ša-ki-in*] and translates "60 (*sentences*); *l'arme est comme une per*[*le*$^{?}$]" (r. 1'). However, I follow A. George in reading what is taken for 60 as a DIŠ. The latter is often—indeed, even in this very study (see Chapter 2, n. 5)—taken to mark the conditional *šumma* in omens and is thus assumed to be identical to it and its other logographic representations (see esp. Fincke 2006–07: 133–9); but it is in fact functionally different (see ibid.: 134 and n. 18; *CAD* Š/3, 126; Rochberg 2009: 10): it marks an entry (rendered thus: ¶) and can appear along with BE or *šumma* in the same text (for examples, see *CAD* Š/3, ibid.). Its appearance in

Whatever the case, Glassner believed that it was insufficient to conceive of the activity behind the collections merely in terms of textual transmission. As he saw it, another dimension of the texts—equally significant and operating in tandem with their didactic side—accounted for their manifest variety:[141] the creative ways in which the collections compile their information from different sources. As an example of this, Glassner returned to *YOS* 10 9,[142] a short collection of 13 entries (34 ll.), which he presented as a prime lesson in logical reasoning by a master teacher. This lesson, moreover, was not drawn from any single preexisting work, since the text takes up ominous conditions from unrelated zones and presents these in new combinations. Yet *YOS* 10 9 was not alone in this respect. Employing text- and source-critical tools, Glassner pointed to similar (if less dramatic) findings in other collections and wondered about the extent to which this sort of creativity could explain the formation of many of the longer collections.

While it may initially seem that Glassner's bottom-up conception of the collections' development stands at odds with the top-down version suggested by Richter, a reconsideration of the assumptions of both studies actually points to important areas of agreement between them. After all, both Richter and Glassner assume that some collections are textually dependent on others, and that a dynamic and ambitious process of citation and rearrangement of textual materials resulted in the formation of new collections. And though the matter of institutional and pedagogical context is not addressed by either author in any detail, it seems reasonably certain that Glassner's passing remark that the compilation of new collections occurred well beyond the elementary level of education[143] would meet with little objection from Richter.

To be sure, neither Richter nor Glassner accounts for all the relevant data in their respective reconstructions.[144] More problematic, perhaps, is that both authors extrapolate from texts that may represent exceptions rather than rules in the presentation of their respective theses. The most prominent case involves the *naplaštum* texts described above and the relations between this

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the *OBE* 11 colophon probably functions in that capacity; pace Jeyes 1989: 148; Glassner 2009a: 7 n. 19.

141 Ibid.: 15–6, 19–24.

142 See already Glassner 2004c; 2009a: 19.

143 Ibid.: 7–8.

144 Little is said, for instance, about the multi-column collections (some with surviving colophons), including *YOS* 10 31; 33; 36; 46; *OBE* 3; 5 (but cf. ibid.: 7). Presumably these represent copies of passages in established series (for *YOS* 10 31, see now the parallel *YOS* 10 31 iii 20-v 30 // *CUSAS* 18 10 i 12'-iii 17 [George 2013: 39–44]), yet, if so, their relationship to single-column texts such as *OBE* 1 and *YOS* 10 17 demands elaboration.

zone's shorter alleged *Auszugstafeln*/*manuscrits d'apprentissage* (AO 9066; *YOS* 10 14; 15; 16; MAH 15874) and the longer, supposed *manuscrit de fixation*/*Hauptserie*-portion (*YOS* 10 17). As noted, the findings concerning those collections involving extispicy's first zone expose an undeniable relationship between the shorter and longer varieties that, in one way or another, implies a measure of textual authority for *YOS* 10 17. However, the expectation of similar results elsewhere proves unwarranted: there is no indication that each of the other zones had become defined to the same extent as the View.[145] This last point finds backing in the publication of an important new text from extispicy's second zone, the Path, or *padānum*.[146] This text, at first glance the equal of *YOS* 10 17 in terms of scope, upon closer inspection divulges a mixing of traditions (i.e., from other zones) that relate only nominally to the second zone; this mixing suggests that the literature relating to the *padānum* was not as standardized as that of its immediate neighbor.[147]

In the end, then, questions predictably outnumber answers, with the texts offering tantalizing but ultimately insufficient data for a definitive statement on the issues of curriculum or text status raised above. Yet it should also be clear that shortcomings in specific matters do not take away from the broader picture, specifically with respect to the considerable interaction of these texts with one another. In a real sense, this activity—and the additional organizational, creative, and generative expression it promotes—stands behind much of what is described in this book. That a description of these matters should proceed without a clear sense of context is admittedly less than ideal, but it is certainly not a sufficient reason to abort the whole process.

1.3 Overview

This study thus aims to present the organization of the early Mesopotamian divination literature, specifically the OB extispicy collections, with particular attention to its generative and paradigmatic characteristics. A thorough exploration of these matters demands the analysis of three autonomous frameworks: (1) the technical framework, concerned with the physical side of extispicy (i.e., the exta's anatomical zones and the ominous occurrences in these zones);

145 Including the *bāb ekallim*; pace Richter 1993: 127–8.

146 Winitzer 2013.

147 Winitzer 2013: 180–1. Note, too, the appearance of similar findings from *YOS* 10 18, the other extant OB *padānum* collection that might qualify as a portion of a *Hauptserie* (Richter) or *manuscrit de fixation* (Glassner).

(2) the hermeneutic framework, involving the signification of the various components of the technical framework (i.e., the meanings of ominous conditions); and (3) the organizational framework, by which information is ordered within individual omens, on the one hand, and across units of two or more entries on the other. Such a comprehensive exploration, however, is beyond the scope of this study. *Faute de mieux*, this work focuses on the organizational framework, which regularly takes into account facets of the technical and hermeneutic frameworks and which, in the course of this analysis, emerges as the most influential of the three for the composition of the collections.

For the reasons just discussed, the presentation of the organizational framework was initially planned as a single chapter in a larger study. Yet it soon became apparent that a systematic mapping of this material would far exceed this limit. Qualitatively, too, it became apparent that the material that had initially been gathered under a single rubric, namely, the organizational framework, in fact belonged under two separate headings. These correspond to the collections' horizontal (or: syntagmatic) and vertical (or: paradigmatic) axes and concern the manner in which data in individual omens and omen groupings were collected, organized, and presented. Although these axes interact with one another in various ways, it was deemed best for the purposes of this study to present them separately in order to give equal conceptual weight to each. Still, it became clear in the course of this work that, in terms of both quantity and quality, the vertical axis, with its focus on inter-omen organization, presented more variety than its horizontal counterpart and its inner-omen concerns.

Accordingly, the discussion of the organizational framework consists of two main parts. The first, comprised of Chapter 2, centers on inner-omen organizational matters, or the ways in which individual omens were composed. In the second and larger part, comprised of Chapters 3–5, the subject shifts to inter-omen organizational concerns, which span several entries in a graded series. More specifically, Chapter 3 considers the simplest form of gradation: opposition. Chapters 4–5 turn to more elaborate forms of gradation found in omens arranged according to what is described below as the principle of pointillism.

An explanation of parameters is in order. Despite its title, this study focuses almost exclusively on divination literature relating to extispicy, the main technique of Mesopotamian divination in the OB period. As noted above, what can be said presently about the literature of other divinatory techniques from OB Mesopotamia is for the most part insufficient for a full-blown synthesis, and the incorporation of materials associated with those techniques into a consideration of the overall interpretive framework of extispicy would require the unwarranted assumption that the same level of systematization

had been reached in all the branches of divination literature. In terms of temporal scope, with the (partial) exception of the Sealand collections, materials from post-OB collections have been ignored almost entirely.[148] That studies of Mesopotamian divination tend to patch together evidence from different historical periods into a synthetic whole is understandable but nonetheless problematic.[149] In the present case such an approach, which would risk obfuscating the already slippery concepts of generative and paradigmatic organizational logic, has been avoided where possible.

An additional word on terminology is in order. In this study I employ two terms to describe what seem to be different qualities of textual innovation prompted by the organizational framework's generative and paradigmatic characteristics; these qualities are said to be either creative or generative. By "creative" I mean those appreciable smaller changes that result from the active process of compiling smaller units of literature into larger ones. A good example of this involves the phenomenon of textual harmonization, whereby an originally autonomous text assimilates to another under the pressures of a new environment.[150] In the following pages it shall be seen that the omen collections offer many examples of this phenomenon in the form of smaller changes, such as the unexpected appearance of a lemma in a given entry, that were seemingly motivated by that entry's juxtaposition to another entry. As for the term "generative," I mean the active process by which the diviner appears to have calculated a new omen, or the bulk of a new omen, on the basis of an established omen as well as on organizational and hermeneutic factors. A prime example of this type of textual innovation involves the right/left paradigm, according to which two related omens differ in their respective protases only in terms of a factor of direction (right/left) and in their apodoses in one detail (e.g., the king/king's enemy will conquer x), a phenomenon that must be construed in large part as an act of deduction.

148 One collection, *KAR* 150, is an OB original known in Assyrian copy. The choice to include the Sealand texts, which appear to date from just after the fall of Babylon (George 2013: 129) and which exhibit distinctive characteristics in every aspect of their writing (ibid.: 131–40), was not made lightly. Yet, despite their differences from the OB corpus, on occasion these show, in terms of content, an impressive degree of connection with the earlier texts (cf., e.g., *CUSAS* 18 25 and *YOS* 10 46 [see George 2013: 171–5])—more so than is typically the case for the SB counterparts. Thus, their use in the present context seemed sufficiently defensible, though this has been done in a limited manner nonetheless.

149 So, e.g., Starr 1974; 1975; 1983a: 8–24; Meyer 1987a: 81–180; Jeyes 1989. The most recent example of this is Maul 2013.

150 For an example of this phenomenon elsewhere in Mesopotamian literature, see Abusch 2002: 197–216.

Admittedly, this distinction between creative and generative activity is qualitative in nature, and as such is not problem-free. On many occasions the task of discerning when a relatively small change rises to the level of generative activity has proven difficult. Furthermore, it is true that both terms ultimately represent constituent parts of what I have described as the organization's broader generative and paradigmatic characteristics, and as such could be understood as generative in that sense of the word. The same issue of polyvalence presents itself with respect to the label "creative" too, since, strictly speaking, everything meeting the standard of what constitutes generative can rightly be thought of as encompassing what is labeled creative. Despite these problems, on the whole this distinction has proven both useful in assessing the diviner's activity and helpful in rendering these assessments in presentable form, and has thus been maintained. The sobering recognition by Edward Sapir that "all grammars leak" adorning a celebrated article on the workings of Sumerian comforted me in my early days of cuneiform studies; it is my hope that this pearl of wisdom does the same for readers of the following.

CHAPTER 2

Inner-omen Organization

2.0 Inner-omen Organization

This chapter describes those methods employed in the organization of information within individual OB extispicy omens. These inner-omen considerations involve issues surrounding the basic casuistic formula by which the vast majority of omens in the collections are conveyed (§ 2.1). A systematic investigation of the omen collections uncovers several types of casuistic sentences. These are characterized by the presence of complex protases (§ 2.1.2) and especially apodoses (§§ 2.1.3–2.1.4), the latter either coordinated formally (§ 2.1.3) or joined by asyndeton (§ 2.1.4). The impressive array of techniques for the systematization of data even within individual omens testifies not only to the collections' process of organizing knowledge but also to its very generation, especially by means of different structures of organization—what we have described as the organizational framework.

2.1 The Individual Omen as a Syntagm

An individual omen within the casuistic-sentence scheme represents a single relational episode. It is a statement that connects an individual element X with a defined event Y, creating an indivisible bond between that element and the event with which it is related. In semiotic terms it is a union of a sign and its signification, an invariant form and its invariant meaning. In extispicy this involves the ominous occurrence concerning some anatomical element (the sign) and the interpretation assigned to that occurrence (the signification).

For Mesopotamian divination, this relationship has generally been described as a syntagm, and has also been likened to the configuration of rearranged or shaken physical objects in divination systems of other cultures.[1] As with the explication of such physical configurations, the interpretation of any omen protasis and the relationship between a given protasis and its complement apodosis has been described as syntagmatic, borrowing the structuralist

1 Guinan 1989: 229.

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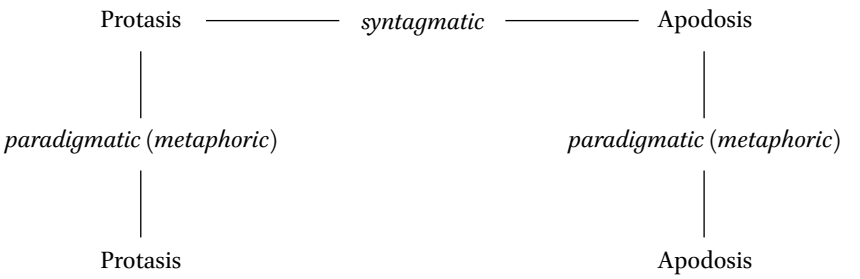

FIGURE 2.1 *Structuralist model of divination literature* (*after Brown 2000: 131*).

model proposed by Lévi-Strauss.[2] This configuration of a structuralist model to the collections, adopted with some modification in Figure 2.1 below, is especially instructive for our purposes, since it stresses the theoretical integrity of individual omen entries.

Whereas the collections, read vertically, underscore the paradigmatic relationship between individual omens (inter-omen relationships), things along the horizontal axis, within individual omens (inner-omen relationships), are supposedly fused by the casuistic sentence into an "invariant correlation."[3] In fact, this is what is encountered typically: in the majority of individual omens, the casuistic sentence may be understood as a type of syntagmatic unit.[4] In such cases both protasis and apodosis are of the simple variety; that is, they contain only one hypothetical or interpretive possibility (§ 2.1.1).

However, in a substantial number of omens one encounters either a complex protasis or apodosis in which the hypothetical occurrence (protasis) or its interpretation (apodosis) lists two or more options (§§ 2.1.2–2.1.4). This fact has important consequences for both the applicability of the structuralist model to the omen collection and, more importantly, questions surrounding the status of individual omens in the collections. Specifically, what is the meaning of alternative hypothetical or interpretive possibilities? Do these provide evidence of a process of systematization even on the horizontal axis of the collections? How do omens with complex protases or apodoses reflect the goals underlying the collections' composition? The following investigation

2 Brown 2000: 130, after Lévi-Strauss 1966: 198–210. Of course in the semiotics of textual analysis and language more generally the idea of syntagmatic (and paradigmatic) relationships goes back to Saussure (1916) 2011. For an appreciation of this with respect to the Mesopotamian omen collections, see Rochberg 2009: 11, 22.

3 Rochberg 1999b: 566.

4 Brown 2000: 131.

takes up these questions, proceeding according to the different ways in which syntagmatic alternation is encountered.

2.1.1 *Simple Protasis—Simple Apodosis*

The majority of omens in the collections adhere to the well-established casuistic form, in which the conditional sentence consists of two parts: the protasis, typically beginning with *šumma*, "if," and the apodosis.[5] These are represented in the scheme "If X, (then) Y," where X stands for a particular condition and Y its meaning. The case presented in X is typically described in the past tense, while its interpretation in Y is normally rendered as taking place at a future time. Rather frequently, however, protases are formulated with a predicative adjective, implying a so-called stative understanding for the case described. On rare occasions one also encounters entries predicated on durative forms. Similarly, the forecast described in Y is at times described as taking place in the present. And in the case of the historical omens, the predictions in the apodoses frequently tell of the given event as having taken place in the (remote) past. An in-depth study of the issue of temporality in divination literature lies beyond the scope of this investigation; for the present purposes, a basic consideration of the implication of tense on the question of the omens' compositional manner must suffice.

2.1.2 *Omens with Complex Protases*

A small number of omen protases reveal an unexpected variable in their syntagma. The choice presented for each of these variables is not limitless; rather, the suitable value is to be selected from a finite set comprised of two options reported in the protasis. Presumably this selection could be made by anyone so inclined. In seemingly every instance what is undetermined is the number of the condition or mark that represents the omen's main concern, as in the following example:

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5 On the writings of *šumma* in the OB omen corpus, see, e.g., Fincke 2006–2007: 134, which takes the DIŠ sign appearing in many such collections as the introductory marker of individual entries as a writing for the standard Akkadian conjunction. However, for others (for which, see Chapter 1, n. 138 above) the sign merely marks a new entry (as in its use in lexical lists; see Veldhuis 2011: 75) and, as such, is better rendered with the conjunction implicit, in the manner of George 2013: passim, as: "¶ (If)." My rendering of DIŠ as *šumma* in this study is merely conventional, since, as Rochberg 2009: 10 notes, with or without explicit marking, the logical relationship between protasis and apodosis remains the same.

2.1. *šumma ina libbi naplaštim šīlū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *petû šutebrû* ⇒ Apodosis 'If in the middle of the View (**either**) **two** (**or**) **three** holes were open all the way through' (*YOS* 10 17:59).

In one instance the variable is possibly a color qualification, though it may well be that the two options here are to be understood correlatively, not as alternatives to one another:[6]

2.2. [*šumma ina…… manzāzim lipûm kīma ka*]*kkūtim* ***aruq u sām*** ⇒ Apodosis '[If in the…… of the Presence a fatty tissue, (looking) like] a lentil, was (**either**) **green-yellow or red**' (*OBE* 1 r. 2).

Whatever the case, the level of flexibility permitted in this protasis type does not rise above a relatively minor fine-tuning of the case stipulated; one does not encounter anything approaching the depiction of distinct ominous phenomena, whether in a single zone or many.[7]

Nonetheless, the implication of the presence of indeterminacy within these syntagmatic units poses a challenge to any empirically based conceptual framework of omens and omen literature. It is difficult to conceive how an expert diviner, aptly capturing such detail as the precise angle of a Weapon's positioning toward specific zones,[8] or a *ziḫḫu*-mark's uninterrupted wending from the Path to the Crucible's rear,[9] would elsewhere settle for an estimate of the number of Weapons or *ziḫḫu*-marks theoretically observed, as in the following examples, respectively:

2.3. [*šumma ina r*]*ēš padānim kakkū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *šaknū* ⇒ Apodosis '[If in] the head of the Path (**either**) **two** (**or**) **three** Weapons were situated' (*YOS* 10 18:24).

2.4. [*šumma …*] *padānim ziḫḫū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *nadû* ⇒ Apodosis '[If …] the Path (**either**) **two** (**or**) **three** *ziḫḫu*-marks were situated' (*YOS* 10 18:53).

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6 Cf. *OBE* 14 ob. 27–29, esp. 29 (white → green); *CT* 44 37 ob. 12–17, esp. 16 (red → green → white), where it is clear that the multiple colors listed for each option are to be understood inclusively. However, in these examples one of the colors from either complex is mentioned in the preceding omen, thus making an exclusive reading for that color very unlikely.

7 In contrast with the so-called *amūtu*-omens discussed below (§ 2.1.2.1).

8 Corresponding to the four entries in *YOS* 10 18:25–28, immediately following ex. 2.3.

9 Corresponding to *YOS* 10 18:54, the very entry following ex. 2.4.

It may be argued, of course, that such examples simply reflect an effort on the part of the diviner to streamline two nearly identical possibilities, which derive from some experiential reality. This has been the traditional explanation for the related phenomenon of alternative interpretations in omen apodoses; but the possibility must remain open that this indeterminacy reflects conceptual variation rather than different sources.

The prospect that these "either … or" protases reflect a generative impulse or, at the very least, that their form in the collections differs considerably from their hypothesized empirical basis, increases when one notes that, in almost every instance, these occur within a broader paradigmatic elaboration of some ominous finding. In other words, as part of a systematization effort to articulate some ominous condition, the collections occasionally include a protasis that is in part open-ended. A case in point, known in duplicate, involves two sequential entries (ll. 27–28) deriving from a tradition of omens concerning the Increase:

2.5. *YOS* 10 35:27–29 (// AO 7033:11–15)[10]

27. (*šumma*) *ina muḫ*(*ḫi*) *ṣibtim šīlū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *nadû* ⇒ Apodosis
28. (*šumma*) *ina muḫ*(*ḫi*) *ṣibtim šīlū* ***ḫamšat šeššet*** *nadû* ⇒ Apodosis
29. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum* ***palšat***[11] ⇒ *šatammū*[12] *ekallam imallalū kurusissū šamaššammī mātim ikkalū*[13]

27. '(If) (**either**) **two** (**or**) **three** holes were situated atop of the Increase'
28. '(If) (**either**) **five** (**or**) **six** holes were situated atop of the Increase'
29. '(If) the Increase was (**thoroughly**)[14] **punctured** ⇒ *šatammu*-officials will eat the palace clean; (or:) *kurusissu*-rodents will consume the flax of the land.'

The prospect of the appearance of a given number of holes in this zone has plainly been worked into a paradigmatic form in order to articulate a gradation of the "observed" cases and their respective predictions (see § 5.4). Following

10 The quoted passage reflects a reconstruction from both versions.

11 Text: *pa*^{l}(PI$^{?}$/PA$^{?}$)-*al-ša-at*; cf. Glassner 2009: 56: *pa-al-ša-at*.

12 Reflecting the writings š[à.tam]^{r}e^{1}.ne in *YOS* 10 35 and ^{r}šà.tam^{1}.<meš> in AO 7033.

13 The singular form *ikkal* in *YOS* 10 35 is understood as a collective; see the plural subject of both versions as well as the plural verb in the AO 7033 source.

14 This proposed sense, based on context, is elaborated below and more extensively in § 5.4.1.3.2.

the initial two entries, each taking up the possibilities of "two or three" and "five or six" holes respectively—one imagines the complete paradigm accounting for the possibility of four holes as well—the text moves to contemplate what must be construed as the ultimate-case scenario: an Increase "(thoroughly) punctured (with holes)." That this formulation intends to convey something of the *ad infinitum* principle is reinforced if we compare this line (l. 29) to its parallel from a third Increase collection, *OBE* 10:

2.6. [*šu*]*mma ina pūt ṣibtim šīlū sebet šaknū* ⇒ [*t*]*ibût kurusissim*[15] 'If seven holes were situated in the front of the Increase ⇒ (it forecasts) an onslaught of the *kurusissu*-rodent' (*OBE* 10:64–65).

This passage, which also forms a part of a numerical gradation concerning multiple Increases (from two on; *OBE* 10:51–65), moves on to consider the unusually high number of seven such zones as its ultimate possibility. In all likelihood this number was intended to reflect one of the Mesopotamian figurations for totality (§ 5.4.1.3); fittingly, this omen represents the final entry of its collection.

In l. 3 of the following example, the undetermined variable is conveyed by way of the expression *adi* + x-*šu*, "up to its x (parts),"[16] where x represents a given numeral, and thus the options for the variable may be represented as less than or equal to x:

2.7. *OBE* 14 ob. 1–3

1. *šumma rēš libbi šatiq* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma rēš libbi šinā* ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma rēš libbi* ***adi erbīšu*** *ištuq* ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If the heart's top was split (in one place)'
2. 'If the heart's top (was split in) two (parts)'
3. 'If the heart's top was split **up to its four** (parts).'

15 Here spelled: *ku-ru-us-sí-is-sí-im*. I tentatively maintain the dictionaries' accepted normalization of the non-syncopated form, even though the present writing, with the indication of the doubled consonant, adheres better to the expected syllabification.

16 Note that *adi* followed by a numeral does not always bear the open-ended sense inherent in "up to." For instance, in *YOS* 10 11 i 14–21 (= exx. 2.99; 5.60, ll. 14–21 [§ 5.4]), the phrase *adi šalāšīšu* must be translated simply as "into (its) three (parts)."

The two omens preceding this entry—the opening entries of the collection—concern the same topic: splits in the heart's top. In the first instance this region is descibed as *šatiq*, "split," with an implied result of two lobes. The following entry describes it simply as "two," though one must assume that the intent here was to convey two split tops, for a total of three lobes. In l. 3, the text moves to consider a heart split "(in) up to four (places)," which must refer to either three or four splits resulting in four or five lobes. Unfortunately the apodoses corresponding to these entries are broken, and no parallel to this elaboration is known. Still it seems likely that here too the text strives to present the notion of an increasing number of splits in the heart, carrying this idea to its logical end. The number four, like seven, is frequently employed to express totality or completion in Mesopotamian writings (see § 5.4.1.3.1).

In a unique case from *KAR* 150, one witnesses a variation on the *adi* + x-*šu* expression in an attempt to convey abstraction (see § 5.4.1.3.2):

2.8. *šumma šumēl martim piṭrum* ***erbet ḫamšat šeššet adi mādūti*** *puṭṭur* ⇒ Apodosis 'If (on) the left of the gallbladder a fissure was split up (**either**) **four**, **five**, **six** (**times**), (**or**) **up to many** (**more**)' (*KAR* 150:18).

The text lists three possibilities for the number of fissures in the gallbladder (four through six), but then suggests that the same prediction would apply in cases where the number of fissures was far greater, literally "up to many (more)."[17] In theory this could include seven or eight or—why not?—even twenty-three fissures; in short, the possibilities, left undefined, are infinite. Unfortunately, whether this presentation can be attributed to the OB original cannot be said. Whatever the case, the antecedants of this form of thought and expression are indisputably evident in the cases studied above.

It thus seems unlikely that the renderings of "two or three" or "five or six" holes in ex. 2.5, or the three or four splits implied in ex. 2.7, l. 3, are to be attributed merely to scholastic shorthand. Nor does it make sense that the employment of this literature would have tolerated approximation or generalization. Rather, in their paradigmatic context these protases exhibit a certain goal-orientation, extrapolating the possibilities of the imaginable to their logical conclusions. Toward that end, the diviner occasionally used an "x or y" convention in omen protases. However, judging from the disproportionately high number of alternative interpretations in the corresponding apodoses, this convention was not tolerated easily within the casuistic framework.

17 The entire gradation appears as ex. 5.92 in § 5.4.1.3.2 below.

2.1.2.1 The *amūtu*-omens and Congeners

A second group of omens bearing complex protases was the subject of a study by T. Richter.[18] These omens, three in Richter's count (exx. 2.15–2.17 below), come from YOS 10 11, a collection bearing an unusually high number of scribal errors of almost every variety imaginable.[19] The text plainly represents the work of an unskilled and, more importantly where extispicy is concerned, inexperienced hand. In a number of cases it frames individual casuistic sentences from the perspective of the entire liver, which, in the manner of many liver models,[20] it refers to as *amūtum* (thus: *šumma ina amūtim; šumma amūtum*):

2.9. *šumma ina amūtim erbe naplasātum*[21] *ištēniš izzazzā* ⇒ Apodosis 'If in the liver four Views are present at the same time' (YOS 10 11 i 23–27).

2.10. *šumma ina amūtim kakkum ištu warkat tākaltim ana danānim iṭṭul* ***u*** *šīlum ina birīšunu nadi* ⇒ Apodosis 'If in the liver a Weapon faced from the rear of the *Pouch*[22] to the Strength **and** a hole was situated between them' (YOS 10 11 i 28–35).

2.11. *šumm*[*a ina amūtim*] *erbe naplasā*[*tu*]*m* ⇒ Apodosis 'If [in the liver] (there were) four Views' (YOS 10 11 ii 3–6).

Additional cases employing *amūtum* in their protases are known from elsewhere in OB extispicy. These—notably three consecutive entries from one collection, Schileico B—conceive of the liver as an organ in its entirety:

2.12. *šumma amūtum šār erbettīša šīpētim*[23] *maliat* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver was filled (in) all its directions by foot-marks' (Schileico B:1–2 [1–3]).

2.13. *šumma amūtum eli amūtim rakbat* ⇒ Apodosis 'If one liver was riding atop (another) liver' (Schileico B:3–5 [4–6]).

18 Richter 1999.

19 Richter 1999: 401–4.

20 Especially the famous cases from Mari; see Rutten 1938.

21 Text: *na-ap-la-sà-tum*$^{!}$(TIM).

22 The translation follows Richter 1999: 404, "Tasche"; cf. CAD T, 62, which, like Starr 1983a: 54, takes this as a part of the liver in this context.

23 See Khait 2012: 34–35 for this preferable reading over against an earlier option.

2.14. *šumma amūtum šīlī saḫrat-ma u šutebrû* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver was surrounded by holes and they were perforated all the way through' (Schileico B:6–7 [7–9]).

Jeyes had taken all these *amūtu*-omens as suggestive of a different extispicy inspection method;[24] however, Richter pointed out that in two instances (exx. 2.9–2.10) these omens differ from the typical casuistic kind only formally and could be restated easily to conform to expected convention.[25] He held further that those examples are to be counted along with additional omens (exx. 2.12–2.14; 2.19) in which the inspection conceives of the liver as an organ in its entirety.[26] Richter did not offer a full explanation of these examples, though he did not believe that these omens derived from an otherwise unknown method of inspection.

By contrast with these formally distinct cases, Richter observed that in three instances the apparent differences extend beyond matters of form. Rather, these convey multiple scenarios in each protasis, of which only the last appears connected with the respective apodosis:

2.15. *šumma amūtum naplaštam padānam bāb ekallim martam īšu* ***u*** *ina ubānim elēnum nīdi kussîm ekim* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver has a View, Path, Palace Gate, (and) gallbladder, **and** the Throne's Base was hiding above in the Finger' (*YOS* 10 11 ii 33–iii 2).

2.16. *šumma amutum bāb ekallim martam ubānam*[27] *īšu* ***u*** *naṣrapti imittim naplaštam ikšudam* ***u*** *ṣibtum ana kakkim itūr-<ma>*[28] *naplaštam iṭṭul* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver has a Palace Gate, gallbladder, (and) Finger, **and** the Crucible of the right side reached up to the View, **and** the Increase turned to a Weapon <and> faced the View' (*YOS* 10 11 iii 3–12).

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24 Jeyes 1978: 232; however, Jeyes' contention that these represent forerunners of the later *amūtu*-omens in tablets 14–16 of *Multābiltu*, which Koch 2005: 225 also accepts, seems unlikely.

25 Richter did not discuss ex. 2.11 in this context, perhaps because of the break in the text. But elsewhere (1999: 402) he restored the break as I do, and thus it seems that this omen should be grouped with exx. 2.9–2.10.

26 Richter 1999: 405–7.

27 Text: *ú-ba-nam*[1](NIM); cf. Richter 1999: 402.

28 Following the suggestion in Richter 1999: 408, though elsewhere (e.g., iii 19 [ex. 2.17]) the text omits such expected coordination.

2.17. *šumma amūtum naplaštam padānam bāb ekallim martam īšū<-ma> ubānum ana meḫret ṣibtim ikpiṣ* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver has a View, Path, Palace Gate, and gallbladder, <**and**> the Finger opposite the Increase was concave' (*YOS* 10 11 iii 18–22).

In the protases from these examples the statements previous to the ultimate clause declare the normal presence and appearance according to the formula x *išû* (where x represents a given zone)—the same formula that is standard in the checklists from examinations of diviners known from extispicy reports. Moreover, in their account of the various zones that appear normally these protases do not stray from the zonal order attested in the reports. On these grounds Richter took these omens as distinct from the *amūtu*-omens above and concluded that they represent reports embedded in an unusual but nonetheless standard omen collection:

2.18. *šumma martum qaqqad ṣērim ubānum qaqqad erbim ibtani* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the gallbladder has formed the head of a snake (and) the Finger the head of a locust' (*YOS* 10 31 xii 45–xiii 5).

2.19. *šumma amūtum igrur-ma piṭram bābam lā īšu bāb ekallim martum u ubānum lā ibašši* ⇒ Apodosis 'If the liver was round, and has no fissure (and) Gate, (and) neither the Palace Gate, gallbladder, nor Finger is there' (*YOS* 10 31 xiii 6–18).

2.20. *šumma šinā bāb ekallim*[29] *martum ubānam ilwī-ma rēssa ina birīšunu ištakan kakki imittim martam rakib ina šumēl tākaltim šīlum pališ-ma uštebri* ⇒ Apodosis 'If there were two Palace-Gates, (**and**) the gallbladder surrounded the Finger **and** its head was situated between them, (**and**) a Weapon at the right was riding the gallbladder; (**and**) in the left of the liver[30] a hole was punctured all the way through' (Scheil B:41–43).

2.21. *šumma bāb ekallim šinā-**ma** šalāš kalītum **u** ina imitti*[31] *martim pilšū šinā palšū-ma šutebrû* ⇒ *amūt Ap[iš]alîm ša Narām-Sîn ina pilšim ikmûšu* 'If there were two Palace-Gates **and** three kidneys **and** in the right of the

29 For a construct form for a dual, cf. *rēš* (*re-eš*) *libbi šinā* in ex. 2.7, l. 2. On the plural of compound nouns generally, see *GAG* § 59a*.

30 I tentatively take *tākaltum* as a synonym of *amūtum* here; thus the omen relates to the *amūtu*-omens in more than just its complex protasis.

31 Text: *i-mi-tim*.

> gallbladder two punctures went all the way through ⇒ (it is) the omen of the Apišalian, whom Narām-Sîn took prisoner from the breach (of the city wall)' (*YOS* 10 24:9; cf. *YOS* 10 22:4).

The prospect of reports embedded in omen collections has significant implications for the understanding of the evolution of divination literature and its transmission, though naturally the limited extent of this phenomenon prevents broad interpretive pronouncements. Still one cannot help but wonder about the relationship between such report-omens and the far more conventional casuistic variety met in the omen collections. Unfortunately a full-scale study of these important issues lies beyond the scope of the present investigation. But inasmuch as these omens hint at an alternative manner of record, one that, though limited in scope, coexisted with its conventional counterpart in the omen collections, a preliminary word about this group and its place within the casuistic literature seems in order.

While Richter's analysis of the report-omens themselves is persuasive, a reconsideration of the relation between this subgroup and the broader group of *amūtu*-omens points to shortcomings in his presentation. One problem concerns ex. 2.10, which, though Richter had taken as an *amūtu*-omen in form alone, appears in fact to be comprised of a complex protasis,[32] and thus represents a possibility unaccounted for in his typology. Another involves ex. 2.19, which, while initially concerned with the liver as a whole, follows in its second part the form and order of a report,[33] and as such complicates things further still. And exx. 2.18 and 2.20 bear mentioning as well, since these include complex protases describing records of two or more zones following the standard order,[34] though these do not bear the *amūtu*-omen formulation explicitly.

This brief reexamination of the data suggests a more complicated picture than that reported by Richter. While exx. 2.10; 2.18–2.20 do not fall squarely within either the category of real report-omens or the form-based *amūtu*-omens, all exhibit features of both groups. It thus seems that the distinction

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32 Richter 1999: 404–5 omits l. 31 (= *u šīlum ina birīšunu nadi*) in his reading of this protasis.

33 The observation in Riemschneider 1962: 89 (noted in Richter 1999: 406 n. 14) that this omen concerned the whole of the liver was not based on the initial clause of the protasis but rather on the cumulative listing of unusual findings from various zones.

34 Thus one finds the sequences *martum* → *ubānum* in ex. 2.18 and *bāb ekallim* → *martum* (→ *ubānum* +) in ex. 2.20. Noteworthy too is the fact that ex. 2.18 directly precedes ex. 2.19 and thus appears to have comprised, along with it, a short section of this omen type. On ex. 2.20, see already Riemschneider 1965: 145.

between the report-omens and the larger *amūtu*-omen group is less pronounced than Richter originally supposed. In fact it is possible that any such classification imposes itself falsely upon the data. It may be that these simply reflect different points of a transmission process, a process in which the scribal trainee strove to "translate" the *Vorlagen*-reports into standard omen entries, apparently with varying degrees of success. From this perspective of literary transmission, the report-omens and the non-report *amūtu*-omens may provide an important clue—perhaps even the missing link—to the much-debated course of the evolution of the omen collections. Unfortunately, for the time being this question must remain open. For our purposes it must suffice to note that these omens shed further light on the casuistic divination literature by providing another form of complex protases, one in which normal and abnormal features were recorded together. And while it appears that, by the time of their inclusion in the collections, only the last clause affected the forecast in the apodosis, one still finds in these examples irrefutable evidence of a different manner for the recording of omens. This alternative manner recurs in at least one historical omen (ex. 2.21) and underscores further the possible antiquity of the form, as well as the standardized aspect of its casuistic counterpart.

2.1.3 *Simple Protasis—Complex Apodosis*

These fall into two main groups: (a) those apodoses that are joined formally by coordination and (b) those that are not. A survey of the first class according to their identifiable types follows in § 2.1.3.1 and subsections. A discussion of those complex apodoses not formally coordinated appears in § 2.1.4 below.

2.1.3.1 Joined by Coordination

More often than not, distinct clauses making up complex apodoses are somehow coordinated, either unmarked by a conjunction or marked by some other explicit marker of coordination. Five major types of coordination can be identified: (1) the coordinators *ū, ū lū, lū,* and *–ma* (§ 2.1.3.1.1); (2) various patterns employing the conjunction *šumma* (§ 2.1.3.1.2); (3) the *ana* + Noun Phrase construction (§ 2.1.3.1.3); (4) the "secondary interpretation" (*šanûm šumšu*) formulae (§ 2.1.3.1.4); and (5) the "uncertain date/interpretation" (*ūmam rīqam*/*rīqūssa*) expressions (§ 2.1.3.1.5). An analysis of each follows.

2.1.3.1.1 *ū, ū lū, lū, -ma*

As is typical in Akkadian, alternation between two or more clauses in omen apodoses may be expressed by the conjunction *ū*, "or":

2.22. Protasis ⇒ *eleppum malītum iṭebbu* ***ū*** *erītum ina alādīša imât* 'The loaded boat will sink, **or**: a pregnant woman will die while giving birth' (*OBE* 1 ob. 6).

Literary competence enables the understanding of the forecast in ex. 2.22: the loaded boat image is a well-established metaphor in the Sumerian-Akkadian birth incantations for a woman in labor.[35] Thus the two clauses making up the apodosis should not be taken conjunctively, as constituent parts of one idea; rather, they are to be read as distinct alternatives—the first a metaphorized version of the second.

More frequently, use of the conjunction "or" to express coordination employs one of the several patterns of the form *ū lū*, "(either) … or":

2.23. Protasis ⇒ *tašnintum ummānum ana pī šāpirīša ul uššab* ***ū lū*** *šarrum ana p*[*ī mā*]*likīšu ul uššab* '(It predicts) rivalry: (either) the army will not abide by its commander, **or**: the king will not abide by his counselor(s)' (*YOS* 10 11 i 8–10).

2.24. Protasis ⇒ *nārum issekker mûša ibbalū erṣetam ilūša izzebūši mātum ḫarbūtam illak* ***ū lū*** *palûm inakker* 'The canal will become dammed up; its waters will dry up; (or:) the land—its gods will abandon it; the land will become a wasteland', **or**: the dynasty will change' (*YOS* 10 5:1–10).

2.25. Protasis ⇒ ***lū*** *ēnum wedûm* ***lū*** *pašīšu wedûm imât šanûm šumšu Ki-iš*[36] *nārim* '**Either** an important *ēnu-* **or** *pašīšu*-priest will die; (or) its second interpretation: (it forecasts) the … of the river' (MAH 15874:20–21 // *YOS* 10 17:54).[37]

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35 This is already realized in Jeyes 1989: 104. For a bibliography of the Sumerian and Akkadian childbirth incantations see Cunningham 1997, to which add van Dijk and Geller 2003: 20–5 (text 4) and Kt 90/k, 178:1–23 in Michel 2004.

36 Jeyes 1989: 104; Glassner 2003: 118; 2009: 41, 42, reads *qí-iš* and understands this phrase as describing death, euphemistically, referring to the result in the river ordeal as its "gift." This solution seems unlikely to me, and notably was not shared by either *CAD* or *AHw* (s.v. *qīšum*).

37 Cf. *OBE* 10:3–5 (collated): Protasis ⇒ [*lū ugb*]*abtum imât* [(*ū*) *l*]*ū pašīšum i*[*m*]*ât* '[(Either)] an *ugbabtu*-priestess will die or: a *pašīšu*-priest will die.'

2.26. Protasis ⇒ *ina aḫitti*[38] *awīlim* [*ma*]*mman imât ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar*[39] [*šan*]*ûm šumšu namtalli qablītim* '**Either** someone will die from among the man's dependents, **or**: the river will … the man; its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse of the middle watch' (MAH 15874:4–6).

In a few instances, *lū* appears alone in a coordinating function, as is known for late OB:[40]

2.27. Protasis ⇒ *tibût ḫupšī miqitti ummāni* ***lū*** *tibût Elamtî* '(it forecasts either) an uprising of the rabble (and/or?) the downfall of the army, **or**: the uprising of the Elamite (army)' (AO 7539:10 // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 12').

2.28. Protasis ⇒ *nēšum innammar-ma ina pāni abullim*[41] *pagram inaddi* ***lū*** *nakrum pagram inaddi* '(Either) a lion will be seen and it will lay a corpse down in front of the city gate, **or**: the enemy will lay a corpse down'[42] (*YOS* 10 21:5–6).

In the following example, the enclitic particle *–ma* appears to serve as a coordinator that denotes alternative predictions as well:

2.29. Protasis ⇒ *ummā<num> ašar illaku zittam ikkal-***ma** *marṣum imât* 'the army will enjoy profit wherever it goes, ***but*** (if the omen concerns the infirm): the infirm will die' (*TIM* 9 80:35; cf. *OBE* 4:9'–12').

However, this isolated case may represent a simple error, with the coordinating element to be emended as *<šum>ma*; if so, this case most probably belongs in the following section. An apodosis nearly parallel to this one is noteworthy in this regard: in ex. 2.34 below, in place of *–ma* one finds coordination by way of *šumma* "(either) … or." Still one cannot fully discount the possibility that

38 Text: *a-ḫi-it-ti*; pace Glassner 2004a: 40.

39 On the challenges to this word's reading, see n. 118 below.

40 See *GAG* § 117d.

41 Text: *a-bu-lim*, though it is possible that its BU sign represents a bad WI (two additional horizontals); in that case the resulting *a-wi-lim* would comprise a part of an apodosis nearly identical to that of l. 8 of the same text: *nēšum ina pāni awīlim pagram inaddī-ma iddâk*, "a lion will lay a corpse in front of a man and then be killed."

42 Text collated. Pace Bottéro 1992: 132: "a lion, after having killed someone before the city-gate, will be killed himself" (conflated with ll. 7–8); see ex. 4.9; *CAD* N/2, 194.

among its various functions,[43] the enclitic particle also served in the coordination function supposed above.

2.1.3.2 (ø) ...(*u*) *šumma*, (ø) ...*šumma* ... *u šumma*, (ø) ... *u šumma* ... *u šumma*

The conjunction *šumma*, "if," typically the marker of protases in omens and other conditional sentences, also appears in several patterns in some omen apodoses as a marker of alternative interpretative outcomes for otherwise unequivocal forecasts:

2.30. *YOS* 10 41:40–44

40–42. Protasis ⇒ *ālum ša ana lawê*[*šu*] *tallaku ana pānīka gišram inakkisa*[*m-ma*] *ittaṣṣiakkum*
43–44. ***u šumma*** *ana āl na*[*kr*]*im tallak ina pānīka* min *inaddī-ma itta*[*ṣ*]*ṣi atta ana ālim nadîm terrub*

40–42. Protasis ⇒ 'The town, [to] which you are going to lay siege, will tear down the bridge before you [and] come out against you'
43–44. '**But if** you are going to an enemy town—in your presence: ditto; he (= the enemy) will leave (the city) abandoned; you will enter into the abandoned city.'

2.31. Protasis ⇒ *gallûm*[44] *ina rēš šarrim izzaz* ***u šumma*** *nāram tallak ti*[*bû*]*t agîm gal*[*tim*] 'A *gallû-demon* will await the king, **but if** you are going to the river: (it forecasts) a rise of a terrifying wave' (*CT* 44 37 ob. 19).

2.32. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum ā*[*l*.....] ***šumma*** *tēšûm saḫmaštum ina māt*[*i*.....] 'The enemy [will.....] the city [.....]; (**but**) **if** (there is) chaos and insurrection in the land [.....]' (*OBE* 2:2'–3').[45]

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43 See *GAG* § 123a, and cf. §§ 117b-c for *u* and *ū* (*lū*).

44 Reading follows Nougayrol 1969: 153 n. 2; Jeyes 1989: 120. That this word refers to the demon by that name is uncertain (so Nougayrol, loc. cit.), though the cameos of various demons in OB omen apodoses—e.g., the evil *rābiṣum* (*ARM* 26/1 3:11; *CUSAS* 18 10 iv 20); *šūlum*, the cough demon (*YOS* 10 31 iii 27–31 // *CUSAS* 18 10 i 16'–18'); *kūbum*, the deified stillborn child (e.g., *YOS* 10 57:16)—lend it support. On the idiomatic meaning of *ina rēšim* with *uzuzzum*, see *CAD* R, 279.

45 Reading follows Jeyes 1989: 113, though, as such, the alternative scenario depicted is admittedly unusual and nonspecific, sufficiently so for A. George to suggest that in this case the *šumma* marks the repeat of the protasis that precedes it, in a manner known elsewhere in second-millennium divination literature, e.g., *CUSAS* 18 18 (Tigunānum) ob. 6–10,

2.33. Protasis ⇒ *mār rabi sikkati kussiam iṣabbat* ***šumma*** *gallābu bēlšu idâkma ina kussi bēlīšu uššab* 'A lock-master will seize the throne, (**but**) **if** (it concerns) a barber: he will kill his lord and sit in his lord's throne' (AO 7539:12–13; cf. // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 16').

2.34. Protasis ⇒ ***šumma*** *ana ḫarrānim ummānī ašar illak*[*u zittam ikkal*] ***šumma*** *ana marṣim* [*imât*/*iballuṭ*][46] ***šumma ālam lawiāt***[47] *ša libbi ālim uṣṣ*[*iam-ma šēpīka inaššiq* (?)][48] '(If it is) for a campaign: my army [will enjoy plunder] wherever it goes; **but** if (it is) for the infirm: [he will die/heal]; **but if you are besieging a city**: the *ruler*[49] of the city will come out [*and kiss your feet*]' (*OBE* 4:9'–12').

A longer form of this type of qualification is known from Mari; here a couple of examples, appearing in at least two variations, can take up to three interpretative possibilities:

2.35. Protasis ⇒ *nēkemtum rabītum* [*n*]*akrum išaḫḫiṭ-ma būlam ittabbal* ***šumma*** *mīlum imallā-ma ebūr* [*mā*]*tim ileqqe* ***u šumma*** *ana marṣ*[*i*]*m imât* '(It forecasts) great loss:[50] the enemy will raid (your land) and carry off the herd(s); (**or**) **if** a flood is filling up: it will take (away) the standing crop of the land; **or if** (it is) for the infirm: he will die' (*ARM* 26/1 3:3–6, cf. ll. 10–12, 13–14).

2.36. Protasis ⇒ *awīlum ina pušqim uṣṣi* ***u š***[***umm***]***a*** *ana* [*m*]*arṣim iballuṭ* ***u šumma*** *ḫ*[*al*]*iqšu*[51] *ištu ūmī mādūtim utta* 'The man will come out from (his) straits; **or if** (it is) for the infirm: he will heal; **or if** (it concerns) his lost property: after many days he will find (it)' (*ARM* 26/1 3:7–9).

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r. 13'–17', and more frequently in later texts. If so, this case would offer another type of reference marker to preceding data in omen entries, concerning which, see §§ 3.1.2–3.

46 Restoration difficult. On the basis of context Jeyes expected a positive prediction, but the parallel apodosis in *TIM* 9 80:35 describes just the opposite.

47 On this unusual 2ms predicative adjective form (expected: *lawiāta*), see *GAG* § 75c, which takes the final vowel as contracted (*lawât*); for an interpretation of the *Sitz im Leben* of the phrase *ālam lawûm*, see Stol 2003; cf. Jeyes 1989: 44.

48 Restoration follows Jeyes 1989: 124, which is based on the nearly parallel apodosis of BM 22694:58–60 and which seems appropriate contextually.

49 On *ša libbi ālim* as "ruler," see *CAD* N/2, 58. Jeyes' suggestion of "townsman" seems less likely in this context, but elsewhere, e.g., *YOS* 10 40:5–8 (= ex. 3.64), it seems fitting; so also *CAD* A/1, 390.

50 Pace Durand 1988: 66 n. 327, who understands the phrase as "= l'ennemi."

51 On this form, probably either an error or a Mari variant for *ḫaliqtašu*, see Durand ibid.: 68.

However, elsewhere coordination by way of *šumma*, in tandem with other possibilities, suggests that the range of its meaning could extend beyond offering interpretations perceived as exceptional, to those that are more situational/conditional:

2.37. Protasis ⇒ ***šum<ma>*** *ḫarrānam tallak nakram tad*[*âk*] *ūma rīqa mīli irti*[*m*] '**If** you undertake a campaign: you will kill the enemy; (or) for an uncertain date (it means): success'[52] (AO 7028:1 [1–2]).[53]

2.38. Protasis ⇒ ***šumma*** *šarrum ana ḫarrānim itebbe ḫarrānum ana ḫarrānim* [*inaddīšu*] *ūmūšu iriqqū ina kakkī arbūt umm*[*āni*/*m*/*ka*] '**If** (for) a king going on a campaign: from one campaign to another [he will wander] (and) his days will be idle; in warfare: (it forecasts) a rout of the/your army' (CMAA030–C0001 r. 6–7; cf. *YOS* 10 11 i 14–21 [= ex. 2.99 below]).

It remains to be seen whether the use of the form *šumma …*(*u*) *šumma*, expressing two (or more) disjunctive but equally likely ideas in the "either … or" sense was tolerated within the context of omen apodoses.[54] Thus far no such example has turned up.

2.1.3.3 *ana* + Noun Phrase[55]

With this type of construction an apodosis qualifies the applicability of the omen result to a specific type of person, such as the king (*šarrum*) or more specifically his extispicy performance (*nēpešti šarrim*), the omen's client (*bēl immerim*), the merchant (*tamkārum*), the commoner (*muškēnum*), the infirm (*marṣum*), the unclean (*musukkûm*),[56] or to a particular situation, such as

52 *CAD* M/2, 72 translates the idiom *mīli irtim* as "pride," while I/J, 185 renders it as "success, courage." Both possibilities fit the omens in different contexts, and it may well be that the former represents the phrase's primary sense while the latter its derived one. See further the commentary on ex. 2.216 (§ 2.1.4.2.7) below.

53 That elsewhere in this text (ll. 8 [10–11], 10 [14–15], 21 [30–31]) alternative interpretations are headed with the *šanûm šumšu* formula and perhaps, in one case, asyndetically (l. 5 [6], see below) adds credence to the supposition that the usage of the *ūmam rīqam* formula in the present instance is not accidental.

54 For the use of this form elsewhere in Akkadian, see *GAG* §§ 157a, 162b.

55 Previous discussions in Bottéro 1974: 181; Durand 1988: 66–67; Jeyes 1989: 45, 48; Maul 2013: 194 and n. 43.

56 For an alternative sense of this term ("une classe sociale"; *musuqqû*?), see Glassner 2004a: 50.

national, military, or economic interests, the country (*mātum*), the enemy (*nakrum*), warfare (*kakkum*), the undertaking of a campaign (*ḫarrānum*), the besieging of a city (*ālam lawûm*), or to more personal matters, such as one's lost property (*ḫaliqšu*). In general the apodoses with this type of construction state the unqualified clause first and then turn to the particular case introduced by the *ana* + noun phrase (NP) construction. For example:

2.39. Protasis ⇒ *ilum ikkal* ***ana kakkim*** *tēšûm* 'pestilence; **for warfare**: (it means) chaos' (*CT* 44 37 ob. 8).

2.40. Protasis ⇒ *ummānī īṣṭu ummāna mātta idâk* ***ana tamkārim*** *kišid qāti* 'My small army will defeat a great army; **for the merchant**: (it forecasts) gain (*OBE* 18:4–7).

2.41. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum adi pāni abullīka idukka* [***a***]***na muškēnim*** *ibissûm* 'The enemy will defeat (you all the way) to your city gate; **for the commoner**: (it means) financial ruin/loss' (*TIM* 9 79:17–19).

In the last example, a 2ms pronominal suffix directs the opening clause to an unspecified "you"; this is presumably the king, with the secondary option turning to the commoner. It appears that the organization within apodoses bearing these expressions follows a hierarchical order, according to which national concerns, including their embodiment in the figure of the king, take precedence over lesser or more personal matters. Thus in a few occasions, an omen's apodosis qualifies matching interpretations so as to apply to the king or national concerns first, then to a commoner or an ill individual:[57]

2.42. Protasis ⇒ *šarrum erṣetam lā ša*[*ttam*] *qāssu ikašša*[*d*] ***u ana awīlim mušk***[***ēn***]***im*** *kišid qātim* 'The king will seize a land not his; **or for a commoner**: (it forecasts) gain' (*ARM* 26/1 2:6–13).

2.43. Protasis ⇒ *ina kakkim tēšûm* ***ana marṣi*** *tēšê*[58] *mūtim imaqqutaššum-ma imât* 'In warfare: (there will be) chaos; **for the infirm**: the chaos of death will fall upon him and he will die' (*YOS* 10 17:43).

In the case of the king-commoner differentiation of the penultimate example, the stock image figuratively describing a king's victory is reconfigured into a

57 So already Oppenheim 1956: 239.

58 Text: *te-ši*.

more concrete form (and cf. ex. 2.40 above). In the last case, the prediction of chaos (*tēšûm*) in the event of warfare is applied to the specific case of the chaos of death (*tēšê mūtim*),[59] described here as befalling (*maqātum*) the patient, with the anticipated lethal consequences explicitly promised. Analogously, it may be seen that where the celestial counterpart of the king appears (ex. 2.39), the deity precedes the terrestrial interpretation (*tēšûm*) with an alternative mythological understanding to the same effect (*ilum ikkal*).

The *ana* + NP construction exhibits some variation. For example, the typical application of a forecast to a commoner (*ana muškēnim*) is rendered in a collection from Mari as *ana awīlim muškēnim*.[60] In another instance from Mari, the qualification of one alternative with *ina* is found in place of *ana*: "If (it is) in (the service of) an extispicy performance for a king" (*ina nēpišti šarrim*;[61] and cf. also ex. 2.43). At other times, a verb can accompany the prepositional expression, describing the omen as befalling (*maqātum*) the specific person at hand, here, the omen's client (sheep's owner):

2.44. Protasis ⇒ *nantallûm* ***šumma ana bēl immerim imtaqtam*** *imât* '(it forecasts) an eclipse; (**but**) **if it** (i.e., the omen) **has befallen the sheep's owner**: he will die' (*YOS* 10 11 iii 13–17).

Elsewhere a prediction specific to the omen's client connects, without the preposition *ana*, not to a preceding apodosis but rather to an entire omen. This is the well-known liver model describing Sîn-iddinam's visit to the Šamaš temple, where the text begins by saying that the model itself preserves the appearance of the liver that fell (*maqātum*) to Sîn-iddinam and then moves to the specific matter at hand:

2.45. *annītum amūtum ša šarrim Sîn-iddinam ša ina bīt Šamaš ina elūnim iqqûma imqutaššum bēl immerim nakram idarris-ma eli lā šattim ittazzaz* 'This (exact appearance of the) liver fell to king Sîn-iddinam, when he (lit., who) offered a sacrifice in the Šamaš temple during Elul; (**for**) **the sheep's owner**: he will throw back the enemy and control what is not his' (*YOS* 10 1:1–7).[62]

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59 Compare this expression with the Šamaš Hymn's depiction of the sun god defending captives *ina tēšê qabal mūt*[*i*] "in a chaotic struggle with death" (l. 185). For other references of chaos in the context of an individual's suffering, see *CAD* T, 376.

60 *ARM* 26/1 2:6–13.

61 Cf. *ARM* 26/1 3:10–12; *YOS* 10 11 ii 20–23; AO 9066:40–43; Scheil B:19–20; *CUSAS* 18 25 ob. 2'.

62 This notorious example has seen more than its share of misinterpretations. Most, following the original reading and translation proposed in Goetze 1947a: 265, have misread the

In a few instances where the apodoses are comprised of more than two clauses, the *ana* + NP construction is used along with other means of coordination:

2.46. Protasis ⇒ *awīlum ina pušqim uṣṣi* ***u š[umm]a ana [m]arṣim*** *iballuṭ* ***u šumma ḫ[al]iqšu*** *ištu ūmī mādūtim utta* 'The man will come out from (his) straits; **and if** (**it is**) **for the infirm**: he will heal; **and if** (**it concerns**) **his lost property**: after many days he will find (it)' (*ARM* 26/1 3:7–9 [= ex. 2.36]).

2.47. Protasis ⇒ ***šumma ana ḫarrānim*** *ummānī ašar illak*[*u zittam ikkal*] ***šumma ana marṣim*** [*imât*/*iballuṭ*] ***šumma ālam lawīāt*** *ša libbi ālim uṣṣ*[*iam-ma šēpīka inaššiq* (?)] '(**If it is**) **for a campaign**: my army [will enjoy plunder] wherever it goes; (**and**) **if** (**it is**) **for the infirm**: [he will die/heal]; (**and**) **if you are besieging a city**: the *ruler* of the city will come out [*and kiss your feet*]' (*OBE* 4:9–12 [= ex. 2.34]).

2.48. Protasis ⇒ *ina bīt ilim asakkum innakkal ēnum uštaḫḫa šarrum ṣalma ippuš-ma šanûm ušerreb* ***ana muškēnim*** *imât-ma bīssu issappaḫ* 'A taboo will be infringed in a temple; (or:) an *ēn*(*t*)*u*-priestess will be defiled; (or:) the king will fashion a statue but someone else will introduce (it into the temple); (**or if it is**) **for a commoner**: he will die and his household will be scattered' (AO 9066:47–53; cf. *YOS* 10 17:82, 85–87).

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signs preceding the verb *imqutaššum* as I and LU, analyzing them as I.LU, the writing for Sum. (^{giš})kun$_4$, Akk. *simmiltum*, "stairs," and have subsequently missed the technical sense of *maqātum* in this context. Thus, e.g.: 'This (is) the liver concerning King Sîn-iddinam upon whom in the temple of Šamaš in the month of Elūnum the stairs fell' (Goetze, ibid.); 'omen concerning RN *ša ina* É ^{d}UTU *ina elūnim* [*igārum*?] *i-qú-ma imqutaššum* upon whom [a wall?], having buckled, fell in the Šamaš temple at the *elūnu* festival' (*CAD* Q, 98).

The latter possibility assumes erroneously that the form underlying *i-qú-ma* is **iqūmma* (< *iqūp-ma*, from *qâpum*, "to buckle, cave in"). Even if one assumes the atypical sound change *pm* > *mm* (see Richter 1992: 20), the expected form with a subordinate marker would still need to be *iqūpū-ma*. When one factors into consideration the unwarranted emendation supplying the object (*igārum*; collation demonstrates that the text is not broken), the conclusion seems inevitable that this interpretation must be rejected.

Notably, the passage's correct reading was already proposed in *CAD* E, 136; also Starr 1983: 13–14, who notes *maqātum*'s technical sense; Jeyes 1989: 192 n. 66; Richter 1992: 20 (with additional references); Pientka-Hinz 2008: 24. This less fantastic reading bears on the broader discussion of historical omens in the context of Mesopotamian historiography, since at least in this instance one allegedly bizarre episode concerning a semi-legendary figure can be eliminated.

Finally, in a few omens, the *ana* + NP construction heads an apodosis with only one interpretation:

2.49. Protasis ⇒ ***ana šarrim*** *na'id* '**For the king**: it is cause for worry' (*YOS* 10 33 i 16–17 // 39 r. 4).

2.50. Protasis ⇒ ***ana bēl***[63] ***immerim*** *murṣam ukāl* '**For the sheep's owner**: he will contain a disease' (*YOS* 10 31 v 13–17 // *CUSAS* 18 10 iii 6–9).

2.51. Protasis ⇒ ***ana kakki*** *arbūtum* '**For warfare**: (it is) a rout' (*YOS* 10 33 v 24–25).

2.52. Protasis ⇒ ***ana kakki*** *arbūtum šarrum <m>aṣ<ṣa>rātīšu ipaṭṭaram*[64] '**For warfare**: (it is) a rout; (or [?]) the king will vacate his garrisons' (*YOS* 10 33 v 39–41).

Presumably the intent in such cases was for a greater degree of specificity in the respective apodoses. Yet how do such cases relate to the previous type, in which the *ana* + NP construction sets up a secondary interpretive possibility? With the evidence at hand, it is impossible to say in which direction this phraseology evolved: whether from an expression used exlusively to denote alternative specific interpretations to one stressing a single subject, or the other way around.

2.1.3.4 *šanûm šumšu* and Variants[65]

Alternative interpretations in OB extispicy omens are most commonly marked and introduced by the expression *šanûm šumšu*, "its second interpretation (lit., entry, line),"[66] as in the form:

X ⇒ Y *šanûm šumšu* Z

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63 *CUSAS* 18 10 iii 8: *be-lí*.

64 Text: *i-pa-ṭa-<<⌜ṭa?⌝>>-ra-am*. Justification for the emendations to the preceding word finds support in two occurrences of the same word in apodoses from the same column (ll. 21, 32), both plural; see also n. 216 to 2.128.

65 This section draws on Winitzer 2011a.

66 That *šanûm* derives from the verb meaning "to do again" (*CAD* Š/1, s.v. *šanû* A [< Sem. √*ϑny*]) and not the homonym meaning "to change, be(come) different" (*CAD* Š/1, s.v. *šanû* B [< Sem. √*šny*]) is clear from the fact that *šanûm* precedes *šumšu*, which suggests that it is an ordinal number, not an adjective. In the later omen collections when the number of variants for a given entry increases to list three, four, and even eleven forecasts, these are also enumerated by ordinals.

where X represents a given omen's protasis, Y its first interpretation, and Z its second.[67] Over sixty such occurrences are known in the OB extispicy corpus,[68] exhibiting an impressive degree of uniformity. For example:

2.53. Protasis ⇒ *bīt awīlim issappaḫ* ***šanû šumšu*** *mukīl rēš le*[*muttim*] 'The household of the man will be scattered; **its second interpretation**: (it predicts) an evil spirit' (AO 7028:8 [10–11]).

2.54. Protasis ⇒ *mārū ina bū*[*ši*] *abīšunu zīttam izuzzū*[69] ***šanûm šumšu*** *bīt awīlim issappaḫ* 'The sons will divide the inheritance from their father's belongings; **its second interpretation**: the man's household will be dispersed' (*YOS* 10 41:33–34).

2.55. Protasis ⇒ *šarrum bēl parṣim inassaḫ-ma bēl parṣim išakkan* ***šanûm šumšu*** *kakki misarrātim* 'The king will remove one officeholder and appoint an(other) officeholder; **its second interpretation**: (it represents) the (sign known as the) "Weapon of the Belts (?)"'[70] (*YOS* 10 46 ii 15–18).

The expression is rendered typically in Akkadian, with only a handful of instances manifesting variation in phraseology or writing. In three omens from *YOS* 10 25', including the following example, the expression is rendered logographically as mu.ni.ki.min:[71]

2.56. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum ana libbi ālim irrubam-ma ālum* ⌜*e*⌝*bū*[*ršu*][72] *ikammu* ***šanû šumšu*** (**mu.ni.ki.min**): *bīt awīlim ekallum ukannak* 'The enemy will enter into the heart of the town, (of) the town—he will capture its harvest; **its second interpretation**: The palace will place the man's household under seal' (*YOS* 10 25:9', cf. ll. 50', 55'; Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*, I: 65 [OB lecanomancy]).

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67 For a brief discussion, see Bottéro 1974: 182.

68 For a tally, see Jeyes 1989: n. 128, to which add *YOS* 10 17:88 and CMAA030–C0001 r. 43–44, and discount one reference of *YOS* 10 34:10 (listed twice).

69 The collated text reads: ⌜*i*⌝*-zu-az-*, and, with *CAD* Z, 81 is taken as reflecting a G form, not an N (pace *CAD* Z, 83).

70 On this expression, see provisionally Richter 1994: 237–8.

71 A slightly varied fourth example, ki.min, appears in *CUSAS* 18 22 (Sealand) r. 9'; see George 2013: 150.

72 Restoration tentative, though *bu* is almost certain upon collation. For a similar reading, see Jeyes 1989: 61. A parallel tradition of these alternatives may be found in *YOS* 10 26 iii 44–49, in the apodoses of two separate sequential omens.

In the following case it appears twice in a single apodosis—a unique case in the extant OB corpus:

2.57. Protasis ⇒ *lumun libbi* [***šanûm š***]***umša*** *ibissûm* [***šalšum*** (?)] ***šumša*** *murṣum* '(it forecasts) sorrow; **its** [**second**] **interpretation**: losses; **its** [***third***] **interpretation**: disease' (*YOS* 10 33 i 25–27).

In this instance the possessive pronominal suffix bound to *šumu* is unexpectedly feminine,[73] though the text is broken where the ordinals are expected; this prevents the ascertaining of whether these agreed with the 3f. suffix[74] or whether the expression took on the ordinal commensurate with the number of variants offered.

Twice the logogram man/min$_3$ marks the alternative interpretation, as in the case of the following example:

2.58. Protasis ⇒ *mār šipri ša sarr*[*ātim dan*]*nātim iṭeḫḫea* ***šanîš***/***šanûm*** (**man**/**min**$_3$) *ina tillātīka ālum ikkaššad* 'A messenger bearing dangerous lies will approach; (**its**) **second** (**interpretation**): a town from among (those providing residence for) your auxiliary-troops[75] will be conquered' (*OBE* 13 r. 12–13; cf. id. l. 16).

Jeyes[76] related these writings to the adverbial form *šanîš* (man) common in SB *Barûtu*[77] and included this factor among the diagnostic details that testify to a northern dialect evident in most of her corpus. However, the logogram may simply stand for *šanû*, since logographic writings for *šanîš* normally include the phonetic complement *–iš* (i.e., man-*iš*; 2-*iš*).[78] It may be that the

73 These possibly represent errors by analogy to the rule of chiastic concord, which applies only to cardinals, not ordinals (*GAG* §§ 139f, l), and begins with three, not two. The simpler and more likely solution suggested to me by J. Huehnergard posits that the feminine suffix here probably refers to *amūtum*.

74 But cf. *CAD* I, 3, citing the text of this example: "[*šanûm š*]*umša* ... [*šalšum*] *šumša*."

75 On the residence of these foreign contingents outside the main city, see Charpin 2004: 280–1.

76 Jeyes 1989: 12–14, 45.

77 In *KAR* 150 r. 1–2, *šanîš* appears syllabically (writ. *ša-ni-iš*), though we must exclude this datum from the present discussion on account of the possibility of a later contamination.

78 *CAD* Š/1, 386.

underlying Akkadian represents an abridged form of the *šanûm šumšu* expression with a nominalized understanding of the ordinal number, namely, "the second (interpretation)."[79]

On account of its prevalence, it may seem that a study of the expression's distribution in the OB extispicy corpus would yield important information on its use. But a categorization of its occurrences proves difficult. Jeyes' contention that it is peculiar to the southern dialect—and that by contrast one finds its reflex *šanîš* (or the abridged form *šanûm*) in the few cases from the northern texts—may prove correct.[80] Still, texts in which the *šanûm šumšu* expression occurs cannot be assigned even approximately to any period within OB. Nor does it hold that it is mainly the longer collections that include it.[81] In several instances the expression appears in some of the longer collections from each of Goetze's paleographic types[82] (e.g., *YOS* 10 24 [archaic]; *YOS* 10 46 [young]; *YOS* 10 17; 18 [mixed]); in other long collections, however, their dating also spanning the OB range, it appears only once (*YOS* 10 26[83] [mixed]) or not at all (*YOS* 10 33 [archaic]; *YOS* 10 44 [mixed] *YOS* 10 11; 31 [young]). Conversely the expression appears in some of the shorter "collections"; indeed one finds it in *YOS* 10 37, a text that technically does not even measure up to the latter label (1 omen, 7 lines).

Nor does a comparison of the expression's appearance in parallel texts, such as the long *naplaštum* collection *YOS* 10 17 and the shorter texts concerning the same zone, offer conclusive evidence for its use. For instance, exx. 2.60 and 2.62 from the shorter collection *YOS* 10 16 record two alternative forecasts each, while only one interpretation appears in each of the parallel omens (exx. 2.59 and 2.61, respectively) in the longer *YOS* 10 17—even though overall in that collection *šanûm šumšu* appears more frequently than in any other OB omen text (15 times):

79 This shorter variant may also occur in *YOS* 10 36 i 6, though text breaks prevent a conclusive word on this matter.

80 Jeyes 1989: 45. However, before such a point is accepted, a new systematic study of these assumed traditions is a desideratum, especially in light of all the texts now available.

81 Contra Jeyes 1989: 45.

82 Goetze 1947b: 1, 13–6.

83 Indeed for this text a colophon states that this collection has exactly 100 omens (šu.nigin 100 ká é.gal [*YOS* 10 26 iv 29]). Clearly this is no simple exercise tablet.

2.59. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul u šīrum lupput ⇒ pī ilim išanni šinīt ṭēmim* 'If the View was turned 90° so that it faced the gallbladder and the flesh was damaged[84] ⇒ the god's utterance will change; (this means) a *loss of reason*'[85] (*YOS* 10 17:42).

2.60. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma u šīrum lummu*[*n*] …[86] ⇒ [*š*]*arram māssu ibbalakkassu* ***šanûm šu***[***mšu*** …] 'If the View was turned 90° and the flesh was in poor condition … ⇒ concerning the king—his land will rebel against him; [**its**] **second interpretation**: […]' (*YOS* 10 16:11–12).

2.61. *šumma rēš* [*naplaš*]*tim ibbalkit ⇒ pûm lā kīnum* 'If the View's top was turned 90° ⇒ (it represents) an unreliable (omen) statement' (*YOS* 10 17:44).

2.62. [*šumma r*]*ēš naplaštim ibbalkit ⇒ nipḫu pûm lā* [*kīnum* ***šan***]***ûm šu***[***mšu***] ⌜*ana*⌝[87] *kakkim* …[…] '[If] the View's top was turned 90° ⇒ (it is) a *nipḫu*, (which means) an un[reliable] (omen) statement; **its second interpretation**: *for* warfare […] …' (*YOS* 10 16:13–14).

On the other hand, ex. 2.63 represents an instance where an alternative interpretation marked by the formula appears in *YOS* 10 17, while in the parallel omen, ex. 2.64, from another short collection, *YOS* 10 14, it does not:

2.63. Protasis ⇒ *Adad iraḫḫiṣ* ***šanû šumšu*** {[*Meslamt*]*aea* …}[88] *ana ekallim irrub* 'Adad will devastate; **its second interpretation**: {Meslamtaea …} will enter into the palace' (*YOS* 10 17:48).

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84 As this discussion makes plain, the translation "to be abnormal" appearing in *CAD* L, 91a for the D predicative adjective describing ominous features is inaccurate; in this regard see also the discussion of exx. 4.15–4.16 (§ 4.1.1.1).

85 On the challenges to understanding the sense of this idiom, see most recently George 2013: 31–2, 197; also Westenholz and Sigrist 2006: 7–8. For the related and more common construction *ṭēm* X *šanûm*/*šunnûm*, see *CAD* Š/3, s.v. *šanû* B.

86 The writing *lu-mu-u*[*n*] based on Goetze's copy stands according to a collation by G. Beckman *apud* Richter 1993: 134. Following the break after *lummun* one finds ⌜*x ta*?⌝ at the tablet's edge.

87 Or: *ina* (text: ⌜*x-na*⌝)?

88 Glassner 2009: 38 and n. 80 (l. 47) collated this as ^{d}[mes.lam.t]a.è.a x KAL and thought the tablet's scribe erased the god's name without replacing it. Richter 1993: 135 also assumed the signs were purposefully erased but took the subject as the enemy, translating: "in den Palast wird er (der Feind?) eintreten."

2.64. Protasis ⇒ *šarrum kabtūtīšu idâk-ma bīšāšunu u makkūršunu ana bītāt ilāni izâz* 'The king will kill his nobles and distribute their goods and property among the temples' (*YOS* 10 14:8–9).

In short, no simple and overarching explanation can account for the distribution of the *šanûm šumšu* expression, to say nothing of its employment and meaning. Still, given the high degree of uniformity among its attestations along with its seemingly straightforward literal sense, it seems reasonable to conceive of the *šanûm šumšu* expression as a formula, one that made up part of the technical side of the omen collections. In effect this view reflects the common position holding that, by definition, the apodosis of any omen that includes the *šanûm šumšu* formula incorporates alternative and thus variant traditions. It is to the issue of possible sources behind such variants marked by the *šanûm šumšu* formula that we now turn.

The presence of variant traditions marked by the *šanûm šumšu* formula among omen collections was recognized early on. For example, Goetze, in the opening page of *YOS* 10, speculated that the *šanûm šumšu* formula indicates that "several versions [of a given omen or its interpretation] must have already been current."[89] Similarly Nougayrol, in treating one such example, held that it, "comme tous les textes hammourabiens [i.e., the other OB extispicy collections] en général, est une compilation."[90]

Remarkably, however, the consideration of what exactly is meant by "versions" or "compilation[s]," and by extension the *šanûm šumšu* formula itself, seems to have been almost entirely overlooked. From their words it appears that Goetze and Nougayrol understood alternative interpretations introduced by the *šanûm šumšu* formula as representing distinct traditions, each already based in the written record. Accordingly, a formulaic rendering for the formation of individual omens of this type might resemble Equation 1:

Equation 1. $P_1 \Rightarrow A_1 + P_1 \Rightarrow A_2 = P_1 \Rightarrow A_{1+2}$

in which the resulting complex apodosis (A_{1+2}) represents a literal compilation of two previously separate, presumably written traditions. Admittedly it is not hard to imagine a scribe faithfully drawing on two omens from different collections to produce a synthetic third. And yet there exists little evidence to back this conception. Granted, the burden of proof here is considerable. Short of the improbable prospect of uncovering a colophon citing its sources, one

89 Goetze 1947b: 1.

90 Nougayrol 1950: 25. The passage concerning which this comment is made is AO 9066: 15–17.

must settle for the occurrences of those sources independently of the complex apodoses from which they are known (though this would still not settle the issue). And still only one case can currently be mustered in this position's support: a tradition known from two collections, *YOS* 10 33 and 34, in which independent omens with apodoses bearing one forecast each in one collection, *YOS* 10 33, combine to form complex entries with alternative interpretations in the other, *YOS* 10 34. A comparison of these collections presents a good starting point for the following discussion.

2.65. *YOS* 10 33 iii 27–45:

Top of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 27–30 Protasis (a) ⇒
sarrum in[*a*] *libbi mātim lū rēša lū amtam ana* [*mātim*] *nakartim ušeṣṣe*
'A criminal from the midst of the land will let either a male or female slave escape to a hostile [land]'

Middle of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 31–33 Protasis (b) ⇒
apil awīlim wa[*ṣû*]*tam illak*[*-ma*] *bīt ab*[*īšu*] *usappa*[*ḫ*]
'The man's heir will gad about [and] squander [his] father's household'

Bottom of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 34–36 Protasis (c) ⇒
aššat awīlim waṣûtam illak-m[*a*] *makkūr*[91] *mutīša u*[*sa*]*ppa*[*ḫ*]
'The man's wife will gad about and squander her husband's valuables'

Top of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 37–39 Protasis (a') ⇒
[*ḫa*]*lṣī*[92] *ālāni ša nakrīka tuš*[*erre*]*b*[93]*-ma šallatam tušeṣṣea*[*m*]
'You will penetrate the districts of the cities of your enemy and bring forth plunder (from them)'

Middle of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 40–42 Protasis (b') ⇒
tu<*še*>*rrem-ma ina abunnat nakrī*[*k*]*a šallatam tušeṣṣeam*
'You will penetrate and bring forth plunder from the epicenter of your enemy('s land)'

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91 Text: *ma-ak-kù*$^{!}$(MU)*-ur*.

92 Text: [*ḫa-a*]*l-ṣi*$^{!}$(AD).

93 Or: *tu-š*[*i-re-e*]*m-ma*; according to the collation by J.-J. Glassner: *tu-*[*ši-ri-b*]*a-*[*m*]*a*.

Bottom of the *māt ubānim*
ll. 43–45 Protasis (c') ⇒
ina zibbat māt nakrīka [*tušerr*]*eb*[94]*-ma šalla*[*tam tušeṣ*]*ṣeam*
'[You] will penetrate in(to) the rear of enemy's land and bring forth plunder (from it).'

2.66. *YOS* 10 34:7–16, 18–22:

Top of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 7–11 Protasis (a + a') ⇒
sarru[*m ina*] *libbi mātīka lū rēšam l*[*ū amt*]*am* [*ana m*]*āt nakrim ušeṣṣ*[*e* ***šanûm***] ***šumšu*** *tušerreb-ma ina ḫa*[*lṣī nakr*]*im šallatam tušeṣṣeam*
'A criminal [from] the midst of your land will let either a male or female slave escape [to] the enemy's land; **its** [**second**] **interpretation**: You will penetrate and bring forth plunder from the districts of the enemy'

Middle of the *māt ubānim*

ll. 12–16 Protasis (b + b') ⇒
[*api*]*l awīlim waṣûtam illak-ma* [*bī*]*t abīšu usappa*[*ḫ …*]
tušerr[*e*]*b-ma* [*in*]*a abunnat māt nakrīka* [*ša*]*llatam tušeṣṣeam*
'The man's heir will gad about and squander his father's household [***its second interpretation***:] You will penetrate and bring forth plunder from the epicenter of your enemy's land'

Bottom of the *māt ubānim*
ll. 18–22 Protasis (c + c') ⇒
[*ašš*]*at awīlim waṣûtam i*[*llak-ma …*] *awīlim usa*[*ppaḫ……. tuše*]*rreb-ma ina zib*[*bat māt*] *nakrim šallatam* [*tušeṣṣeam*]
'The man's wife [will gad about and] squander the [*property*/*household*] of the man; [***its second interpretation***:] you will penetrate and [bring forth] plunder from the rear of the' enemy's [land].'

That the shorter collection, *YOS* 10 34, represents a rough duplicate of the second half of the longer *YOS* 10 33 was already recognized by Goetze.[95] The parallel passage *YOS* 10 33 iii 27–45 // *YOS* 10 34:7–16, 18–22 explores the concealment of the land of the finger (*māt ubānim*). The version from *YOS* 10 33 records two sets of three omens each, both sets following the common

94 Text: [*tu-ši-r*]*e-eb*[1](E); according to the collation by J.-J. Glassner: [*tu-ši*]*-ri-ba-ma*.

95 Goetze 1947b: 14; also Jeyes 1989: 197 n. 128.

Top → Middle → Bottom[96] scheme (hereafter: T → M → B; see § 4.2.1) and both having identical protases. In the version from *YOS* 10 34, each of the T → M→ B protases occurs only once, with the separate apodoses from the distinct omens in *YOS* 10 33 appearing as alternative interpretations to one another. The tablet of *YOS* 10 34 is unfortunately poorly preserved, with breaks in two of the three places where the stitch between the first and second apodoses is expected. But in the first of the three omens from that text (ll. 7–11) the *šanûm šumšu* formula does appear as the coordinating element between what are here alternative predictions of the same omen.[97] And though it cannot be stated with certainty, there is no reason to assume that in the remaining two omens things would be any different.[98] The passage from *YOS* 10 34 thus provides compelling evidence that two different interpretations for the same scenario, known in one instance as distinct units, could elsewhere appear as alternative interpretations.

And yet in this case the distinct units are proximate to one another in the same source (i.e., *YOS* 10 33), such that one could reasonably claim that this example does not adequately demonstrate the existence of distinct written traditions. These texts may simply reflect different styles of compilation of materials from yet another source, perhaps even several sources. Nor can it be ruled out that the unique repetitive presentation observed in ex. 2.65 reflects an attempt by the scribe to break up the complex apodoses of a *Vorlage* that looked like ex. 2.66. Thus, while the parallel passages from exx. 2.65 and 2.66 reflect clear efforts at the manipulation or compilation of written traditions in the manner imagined by Goetze and Nougayrol, still this case cannot be counted on to provide the conclusive word on those variants' precise origins.

Further, elsewhere the nature of such variant interpretations appears more complicated than the model assumed by Goetze and Nougayrol. As noted earlier, the majority of omens with alternative interpretations are known from only one source, and for this reason insights into their makeup must be arrived at on the basis of internal analysis. Yet such an approach points to unmistakable traces of other considerations at work, which extend beyond the text or source-critical factors observed.

This was the judgment of Bottéro, whose reading of alternative interpretations situated the phenomenon within a broader framework of scholastic

96 For *išdum* as "bottom" in Top → Middle → Bottom schemes, see, e.g., ex. 2.72 below.

97 Also noted by Jeyes 1989: 197 n. 128.

98 Collation of *YOS* 10 34 reveals that the space in the break in l. 14, where one would expect to find one of the *šanûm šumšu* attestations, is larger than what Goetze's copy indicates.

hermeneutics.[99] Bottéro argued that a forecast labeled secondary represents overwhelmingly the attempt to extend a particular forecast's applicability to different contexts—to interpret further the interpretation itself. He reasoned that this is the sense of the *šanûm šumšu* formula, which typically does not mark a different interpretive record ("exégèse different") but rather signals a reapplication of the interpretation to a different subject ("autre-façon-de formuler l'oracle").[100] According to Bottéro, the resulting apodosis's polyvalence ("polyvalence de l'apodose") hints at a widespread deductive application of empirically based omens.

As shall be seen below, Bottéro's insight represented a major advancement in the understanding of the phenomenon and significance of alternative interpretation in Mesopotamian divination literature. An examination of the data leaves no doubt that the hermeneutic considerations he highlighted must figure prominently in any discussion of alternative interpretation in divination literature. Indeed, building on Bottéro's foundation, the analysis undertaken below attempts to present a typology of the different employments of the *šanûm šumšu* formula according to various hermeneutic assumptions. The findings suggest a degree of deductive reasoning for alternatives even greater than that imagined by Bottéro.

Yet there remains the matter of the origins of alternatives marked by the *šanûm šumšu* formula. Bottéro himself did not deny the possibility that in some cases variant interpretations, especially those seemingly irreconcilable from the perspective of hermeneutics, arose from different interpretive "schools," each, perhaps, basing its respective tradition on empirical grounds.[101] And even if, as he speculated, these represent only a small portion of all attested cases, nevertheless one cannot help but wonder about the sources of such alternatives. Indeed, the matter raises some fundamental questions about the meaning of alternative interpretation in Mesopotamian divination. To wit: were such hermeneutically based alternatives already preserved in written records? If not, to what degree do they reflect calculated extensions of empirical predecessors? And finally, what does the phenomenon of alternative interpretation as witnessed in such examples say about the creation and development of Mesopotamian divination literature?

Whether these questions can be fully answered remains unclear. However, a reexamination of the evidence sheds some new and unexpected light on

99 Bottéro 1974: 179–83.

100 Ibid.: 182.

101 Ibid.: 183 and n. 2.

these matters, particularly in terms of the textual setting of alternative interpretation. It is significant to note that the preceding discussion focused on the apodoses of those omens with alternative interpretation marked by the *šanûm šumšu* formula, with little being said of their corresponding protases. Thus one might expect that, as in the case of exx. 2.65 and 2.66 above, such alternatives stem from omens with identical protases, that is, from separate attestations of the same omen tradition. The evidence, however, shows otherwise: a systematic consideration of the data reveals that forecasts marked by the *šanûm šumšu* formula do not necessarily stem from two separate attestations of the same ominous occurrence. In some cases, these derive from entries whose protases are related to, but are not identical with, one another, and combined in what may seem to be a rather free form of association. The resulting entry is thus somewhat less predictable than its counterpart described above: whereas the apodosis juxtaposes two individual traditions fully intact, what is reported in the protasis corresponds to one of the original hypotheses but not the other, or to some amalgam of the two. In contrast to the earlier formulation, the findings in these examples might resemble Equation 2, where $P_x \neq P_y$, and P_z can equal either P_x or P_y, or some combination of P_x and P_y:

Equation 2. $P_x \Rightarrow A_1 + P_y \Rightarrow A_2 = P_z \Rightarrow A_{1+2}$

If this difference should seem trivial, then findings to this effect from three case studies presented below reveal the considerable repercussions for both the understanding of the phenomenon of alternative interpretation in Mesopotamian divination and, more broadly, the very development of the omen collections themselves. Specifically, these cases prove that the significance of the syntagmatic relationship between protasis and apodosis in a given omen could be subordinated to factors wholly external to the omen itself. Often these derived from literary-based decisions involving the creation of new omens or parts of omens from older materials. Thus we find that creative considerations factor significantly in the generation of divination literature. Anything but trivial, then, these instances beg a review of the question of the overall meaning of alternative interpretations, and of the function(s) of the *šanûm šumšu* formula between them.

In order to appreciate these matters, the following presents three case studies of passages from omen collections employing the *šanûm šumšu* formula. Each of these highlights a different literary-based motivation behind the appeal to this formula in specific omens, whose make-up offers clues of the free form of association described above. In toto these cases militate against the understanding that any entry containing a forecast preceded by *šanûm šumšu*

inevitably represents the compilation of two competing interpretations of an identical omen.

Case A: Creating the Ultimate Scenario
This first case involves a *bāb ekallim* tradition concerning the meaning of multiple such zones. This tradition occurs three times in different collections: *YOS* 10 22; 24; and 26:[102]

2.67. *YOS* 10 22:11–12

11. *šumma bāb ekallim šalāšat* ⇒ *ilū*[103] *mātim ekallam iredd*[*û*]
12. *šumma bāb ekallim erbet* ⇒ *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫlu*[*qtim*]

11. If there were three Palace Gates ⇒ the gods of the land will have claim on the palace'
12. If there were four Palace Gates ⇒ (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction.'

2.68. *YOS* 10 24:10–11

10. *šumma bāb ekallim šalāšat* ⇒ *ilū*[104] *mātim ekallam ireddû* ***šanû šumšu*** *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqtim*
11. *šumma bāb ekallim erbet* ⇒ *tibût šar ḫammê* ***šanû šumšu*** *ḫišbu*[105] *ana ekallim ul irrub*

10. 'If there were three Palace Gates ⇒ the gods of the land will have claim on the palace; **its second interpretation**: (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction'

102 Glassner 2009a: 47–50, 61–76 edits these and also provides a short comparative study of them.

103 Text: *ì-lí* (// *YOS* 10 24:10); see also n. 104 below.

104 Text: *ì-lí* (// *YOS* 10 22:11). In both cases the verb is 3mp. Perhaps the error owes to a confusion with what must have been a somewhat different option for this omen's apodosis, as witnessed in *YOS* 10 26 i 21–22. I thus emend both occurrences to the correct nom. pl. form. For similar judgments, see this passage's translations in Hecker 1986–1991: 75; Glassner 2009a: 62, 65.

105 For this reading, over against *ḫiṣbu*, see *GAG* § 30g; George 2013: 32.

11. 'If there were Palace four Gates ⇒ (it forecasts) an uprising of a usurper king; **its second interpretation**: (the) products will not enter into the palace.'

2.69. *šumma* ⌜*šalāšat*⌝[106] *bāb ekallim* ⇒ *ili awīlim ekallam iredde* ***šanûm šumšu*** *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqt*[*im*] 'If there were three Palace Gates ⇒ the man's god will have claim on the palace; **its second interpretation**: (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction' (*YOS* 10 26 i 21–22).

Each of these passages turns to consider the possibility of three Palace Gates, with the initial results nearly identical: all three forecast deities with claims against the palace. Here, however, the traditions diverge, with exx. 2.68, l. 10 and 2.69 recording as an alternative interpretation one of the historical omens about Ur-III's Ibbi-Sîn. In both instances the *šanûm šumšu* formula introduces these alternatives. Example 2.67 records this forecast as well (l. 12), but in this case as the interpretation for the presence of four Palace Gates. The possibility of four Palace Gates is also considered in ex. 2.68, l. 11, but here the accompanying interpretation brings up two additional scenarios, the second of which itself is preceded by a *šanûm šumšu* formula.

How should the relationship among these[107] omens be undersood? The following analysis assumes that the scribe's *Vorlage* in exx. 2.67 and 2.68 already included the complex apodosis of ex. 2.69. Two points support this. First, in ex. 2.69, which has no omen describing four Palace Gates, the Ibbi-Sîn forecast still appears as an alternative interpretation. Second, in ex. 2.68, which includes the Ibbi-Sîn prediction as the secondary interpretation for its penultimate case but where the gradation runs to four Palace Gates, the introduction of the usurper king tradition suggests that the interpretation for three Palace Gates may have been seen as fixed.[108]

Taking the complex apodosis of ex. 2.69 as most original, we see that the scribes of exx. 2.67 and 2.68, wishing to extend their study of multiple Palace Gates so as to include the possibility of four, did so in one of two ways. In ex. 2.67 the scribe opted to break up a complex apodosis into two unconnected forecasts. In ex. 2.68, on the other hand, the choice was made to bring in a

106 Text collated, revealing that a good amount of the space of the sign is effaced (pace Goetze's copy); the reading proposed here seems plausible even without appeal to the parallel traditions.

107 Already noted in Goetze 1947a: 262 n. 54.

108 This is not to say that the text of *YOS* 10 26 represents the earliest stage of this tradition, though it or its like was probably the *Vorlage* for *YOS* 10 22 and *YOS* 10 24.

different tradition for the task. Here the concluding case of four Palace Gates predicts an uprising by a usurper king (*tibût šar ḫammê*), a motif plainly intended to represent the ultimate- or worst-case scenario.[109] Elsewhere in the omen literature this forecast promotes just this sense of total disarray:

2.70. *šumm*[*a ina amūtim*] *erbe naplasā*[*tu*]*m* ⇒ *šarrū ḫammê kibrāt mātim itebbûnim annûm imaqqut annûm itebbe* 'If [in the liver] (there were) four Views ⇒ usurper kings will rise up (from [?]) the (four) corners of the land: this one will fall; that one will rise' (*YOS* 10 11 ii 3–6).

2.71. *šumma marrātum ḫamiš* ⇒ *šarrū ḫammê itebbûnim* 'If (there were) five gallbladders ⇒ usurper kings will rise up' (*YOS* 10 31 ii 13–15).

In these examples, the forecast of usurpers accompanies ominous possibilities that were conceived of as ultimate- or worst-case scenarios, interpreting the possibility of four (or five[110]) zones in the respective protases. The creator of *YOS* 10 24 artfully selected this motif from his stock for the sake of the formation of the ultimate case of multiple Palace Gates.

What thus becomes apparent is that the presence or absence of complex apodoses at this stage of the tradition's transmission owes not to decisions about the inclusion or deletion of textual variants, nor even to hermeneutic alternatives. Rather, the matter appears to reflect the intent of a particular scribe to mold a given text in a deliberate manner. On this occasion this involved the construction of a numerical gradation to account for multiple Palace Gates, with four as the ultimate scenario. The shuffling of the Ibbi-Sîn forecast or the incorporation of the one describing usurper kings within this scheme underscores the free-association character of the broader exercise.

Case B: Constructing a Symmetric Structure Scheme

Another case manifesting this free-association approach occurs in a parallel between MAH 15874 (exx. 2.72–2.73) and *YOS* 10 17 (exx. 2.72 and 2.74). The former text is again a shorter collection that is perhaps an extract from or *Vorlage* to a longer text similar to the latter. A comparison of the structure of both texts appears in Table 2.1 below.

109 For a discussion of this motif in its gradational context, see § 5.4.1.3.1.

110 For an explanation of this unexpected number, see the discussion of ex. 5.82 (§ 5.4.1.3.1).

2.72. MAH 15874:1–9 (text a') // *YOS* 10 17:49–51[111]

1–3. // 49. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim ina imittim*[112] *šīlum nadi* ⇒ (a' adds:[113] *ina nišūt awīlim ū lū*) *ina aštapir bīt awīlim*[114] *mamman*[115] *imât* ***šanûm šumšu*** *namtalli barārtim*

4–6. // 50. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina imittim*[116] *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina aḫitti*[117] *awīlim mamman imât* (a' adds: *ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar*[118]) [***šanû***]***m šumšu*** *namtalli qablītim*

7–9. // 51. *šumma ina išdī naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina nišūt awīlim* (a' adds: *ū lū ina aštapir awīlim*[119]) *mamman*[120] *imât* ***šanûm šumšu*** *namtalli šāturrim*

1–3. // 49. 'If a hole was situated in the View's head in the right ⇒ someone will die from among (a' adds: the man's family or from among) the servants of the man's household; **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the dusk watch'

4–6. // 50. 'If a hole was situated in the View's middle in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's dependents (a' adds: or: the river will … the man); **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the midnight watch'

7–9. // 51. 'If a hole was situated in the View's base in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's family (a' adds: or from among the servants of the man's <household>); **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the dawn watch.'

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111 The quoted passage reflects a reconstruction from both versions. Significant differences are noted within the text above and in the following notes.

112 The MAH 15874 version has: *i-<na i>-mi-it-tim*.

113 The probability that the a' additions in the MAH 15874 version reflect a secondary development seems in keeping with what appears below about this text, as well as with the parallel to this passages's middle entry in Bo 2 a:1–2, which accords with the initial forecast of *YOS* 10 17:50 but not MAH 15874:4–6.

114 The MAH 15874 version has: *aštapir awīlim*; see below and n. 119.

115 The *YOS* 10 17 version has: *mammanan*; see below and n. 120.

116 The MAH 15874 version has: *i-<na i>-mi-it-tim*.

117 The *YOS* 10 17 version has *aḫiāt*.

118 Readings and translations for the verb in question have ranged, including *i-ba*$^{?}$*-ar*, "saisira" (Nougayrol 1950: 34); *izear* "(haßt)!" (*AHw*, 748); *i-na*$^{!}$*-ar* "kill!" (Jeyes 1989: 104; Glassner 2003: 118); "mettre … à mort" (Glassner 2004a: 50; 2009: 40–1, with collation: *i-***na*!-**a*[*r*]).

119 The MAH 15874 version has: *aštapir awīlim*; see above and n. 114.

120 The *YOS* 10 17 version has: *mammanan*; see above and n. 115.

2.73. MAH 15874:10–22

10–11. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ īnī*[121] *awīlim šarrum inassaḫ*

12–13. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû-ma šišītam ḫarmū ⇒ īnā awīlim izzazzā*[122]

14–15. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ šarrum ina bīt mayyālīšu igallut*

16–18. *šumma ina išdī naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ mīlu illakam-ma itâr* ***šanûm šumšu*** *īnī*[123] *mār ekallim šar<rum> inassaḫ*

19. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim ina libbī*[*ša šī*]*lum nadi ⇒ namtallû*

20–21. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina l*[*ibbīš*]*a šīlum nadi ⇒ lū ēnum wedûm imât lū pašīšu wedûm imât* ***šanûm šumšu*** *Ki-iš nārim*

22. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina* [*libbīš*]*a šīlū šinā nadû ⇒ mīlu ṭaḫdum illakam*

10–11. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's head ⇒ the king will tear out the eyes of the man'

12–13. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's head and they are covered by a membrane ⇒ the man's eyes shall remain (in place)'

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121 Text: *i-in*.

122 The writing here, *i-*⌜*ni*⌝ IN?/LÚ? *i-za-za-a*, is problematic. Richter 1993: 137, following Nougayrol 1950: 36, emended the text as: *i-*[*n*]*i-in* <lú> *i-za-za-a*, and translated it as "werden *die* Augen <des Mannes> starr bleiben" (emphasis original). However, this emendation is unsatisfactory, since according to it *i-*[*n*]*i-in*, which would have to be the *nomen regens* and in the nom. case, is here a gen.-acc. unbound form. The similar reading in Glassner 2009a: 41: *i-ni-i<n* l>ú *i-za-za-a* is no better, and the translation, "les yeux de <l'intéressé> seront fixes (il sera aveugle)" is incorrect (for an explanation, see Winitzer 2011a: 88 n. 41). Only partially better is *i-*⌜*ni*⌝ lú! *i-za-za-a*, which as such mirrors the suggested reading in Glassner 2009a: 41 n. 85 of the parallel in *YOS* 10 17:60, but whose f.pl. intransitive verb can correspond neither to the dual *īnī* (gen.-acc.) nor to the *awīlum* (in whichever case). Then again, the unexpected gen.-acc. unbound form of this word appearing in the parallel tradition in ll. 16–18 below (see n. 123) suggests that this text's scribe was confused by the tradition and perhaps also the similarity between the IN and LÚ signs. Admittedly the present solution demands emendation to the expected nom. form (but cf. the same apodosis in *YOS* 10 25:10': *i-ni* lú lugal *i-na-sà-aḫ*; also *ilī* for *ilū* in *YOS* 10 22:11; 24:10), but otherwise it works well.

123 Text: *i-ni-*<<*in*>>.

14–15. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's middle (and ditto [?]) ⇒ the king will be frightened[124] in his bedroom'

16–18. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's base (and ditto [?]) ⇒ a flood is coming but will turn back; **its second interpretation**: the king will tear out the eyes of someone of the palace'

19. 'If a hole was situated in the View's head in its middle (part) ⇒ (it forecasts) an eclipse'

20–21. 'If a hole was situated in the View's middle in its middle part ⇒ either an important *ēnu*-priest or a important *pašīšu*-priest will die; **its second interpretation**: (it is) a … of the river'[125]

22. 'If two holes were situated in the View's middle in its middle part ⇒ a huge flood is coming.'

2.74. *YOS* 10 17:52–61

52. [*šumma r*]*ēš naplaštim šuqqū-ma šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ṣe*[*ḫrum išt*]*u ūrim imaqqut*

53. [*šumma ina r*]*ēš naplaštim ina libbim šīlum nadi* ⇒ ⌜*šarrum*/*awīlum*⌝[126] *mūt š*[*ī*]*mtīšu imât* ***šanû šumšu*** *namtallûm*

54. *šumma* [*in*]*a qabliat naplaštim ina libbim š*[*īlum nadi*] ⇒ [*lū*] *ēnu wedûm imât lū pašīšu w*[*ed*]*ûm imât* ***šanû šumšu*** *Ki-*[*iš*][127] *nārim*

55. *šumma ina išdī* [*naplašti*]*m ina libbim šīlum n*[*adi*] ⇒……[128]

56. *šumma naplaštum ina iš*[*d*]⌜*āt*⌝[129] *imittam u šum*[*ēla*]*m š*[*īlum*] *nadi* ⇒ *m*[*īlu*]*m illakam-ma itâr*[130]

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124 *Galātum* means also "to have premature emissions" (*CAD* G, 11, mng. 1b), and Nougayrol 1950: 37; *CAD* M/1, 120a take this to be this omen's sense (see *BAM* 183:31, cited in *CAD* M/1, 118–9). This suggestion seems possible (note the reference to the extraction of bodily parts in ll. 10–11, 16–18, as well as the flood imagery in ll. 16–18) but must be substantiated by additional evidence.

125 See n. 36 above.

126 Text difficult. The reading of ⌜lú⌝ in Meyer 1987: 95 is rejected in Glassner 2009a: 42 and n. 87, which reads l[ug]al, in part owing to *YOS* 10 41:29 (not a parallel tradition).

127 On attempts at the reading of this word, see n. 36 above.

128 Glassner 2009a: 42–3, who recently read this as *mi-qí-ti x-da-x-x-*KI-*im*, "chute de…," offered less than previously in Glassner 2004a: 49–50 but more than I could in Winitzer 2011a: 88 and n. 45. I maintain what seems to me the cautious option.

129 So Glassner 2009a: 55 (pace Winitzer 2011a: 88); but see n. 136.

130 So too Glassner 2009a: 42.

57. *šumma birī*[*t nap*]*laštim u padānim šīlum* [*nad*]*i* ⇒ *ayyumma ina* [...]*Ki imât*
58. *šumma ina libbi nap*[*la*]*štim šīlū šinā* ⇒ *mīlum nēḫum*[131] *illaka*
59. *šumma ina libbi naplaštim šīlū šinā šalāšat petû šutebrû*[132] ⇒ *mīlum illakam-ma biblum mātam ubbal*
60. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēla*[*m nadû-ma šišītam ḫarmū*] ⇒ ⌜*īnā*⌝[133] *awīlim ittazzazzā*[134]
61. *šumma ina rēš* [*naplaštim šīl*]*ū šinā-ma* [*imittam u šu*]⌜*mēlam*⌝[135] [*nadû* ⇒ *īnī* (*mār* [?]) *awīli*]*m-ma šarrum inassaḫ*

52. '[If] the View's head was elevated and a hole was situated (in it) ⇒ a youth will fall from the roof'
53. '[If] a hole was situated [in] the View's head in the middle ⇒ the *king*/*man* will die a natural death; **its second interpretation**: (it forecasts) an eclipse'
54. 'If a hole [was situated] in the View's middle in the middle part ⇒ [either] a known *ēnu*-priest or a known *pašīšu*-priest will die; **its second interpretation**: (it is) a ... of the river'
55. 'If a hole was situated in the View's base in the middle ⇒.....'
56. 'If a hole was situated (<*in*>) the View, in the base[136] on the right and left ⇒ a flood is coming but will turn back'
57. 'If a hole was situated between the View and the Path ⇒ someone will die in/from [the ...] ...'
58. 'If in the View's middle (were) two holes ⇒ a *moderate* flood is coming'

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131 According to Glassner 2009a: 42: *né-ḫu*-um*!<<UM(?)>>.

132 Text: *šu-te*$^{!}$(TU)*-eb-ru*.

133 Pace *AHw* 410: <*eli*> *awīlim i-ta-za-az-za*; and Glassner 2009a: 42 and n. 88: [*i-n*]*i* lú *i-ta-za-az-za*, whose translation of this passage, "les yeux de <l'intéressé> seront fixes (il sera aveugle)," accords with his reading of ex. 2.73, ll. 12–13 and is equally problematic for the same reasons; see n. 122 above.

134 Pace Richter 1993: 137, who emended the verb, presumably so that it would mirror the form in MAH 15874: 13. But the writing is clear *i-ta-za-az-za* (so Glassner 2009a: 42) and surely represents a reciprocal Nt form (Huehnergard 2002: 166) intended to resonate with the duality of the protasis.

135 Pace Glassner 2009a: 42 and n. 89: *ši-na-ma* [*ši-ši-tam ḫa-ar-mu* (?)].

136 The unusual bound plural atop the absence of a preposition before the View render the syntax of this protasis difficult, though a minor rearrangement of words (**šumma ina išdāt naplaštim*) would remedy things.

59. 'If in the View's middle (either) two (or) three holes were perforated all the way through ⇒ a flood is coming and the devastating flood will sweep away the land'
60. 'If in the View's head two holes [were situated] on the right and left [and they are covered by a membrane/film] ⇒ the eyes of the man shall remain'
61. 'If in [the View's] head two holes and [*were situated at the right and*] *left* ⇒ the king will tear out [the eyes of] that very[137] person.'

Lines 1–9 of MAH 15874 parallel those of *YOS* 10 17:49–51[138] (ex. 2.72) in a gradation paradigm studying, again from the perspective of the T → M → B scheme, the meaning of a hole (*šīlum*) in the View's right. After this point the texts diverge, with MAH 15874 moving to consider the meaning of two holes (*šīlū šinā*) according to the same T → M → B scheme (ex. 2.73, ll. 10–18). By contrast, *YOS* 10 17 follows with additional omens dealing with a single hole (ex. 2.74, ll. 52–57) before turning its attention to two holes (ll. 58–61).

Of interest here are the omens forming the second of the T → M → B schemes in MAH 15874 (ex. 2.73, ll. 10–18), specifically the final omen in that sequence. This unit is comprised of nine lines, like its predecessor (ll. 1–9), but the similarities end here. Unlike the previous unit, this one does not limit its creative license to the (apparent) addition of alternative forecasts to a received, and perhaps authoritative, tradition. Rather, the content of this unit reflects the willful construction of a T → M → B scheme from disparate places in the corresponding passage from *YOS* 10 17 and possibly another source. The opening two entries (ll. 10–13) appear to be duplicates of *YOS* 10 17:60–61 or its like,[139] albeit in reverse. A parallel for the next omen (ll. 14–15) is not known from *YOS* 10 17, or for that matter from elsewhere in OB extispicy, and consequently it is difficult to speak about its origin or source.

But something may be said about the final omen in this gradation (ll. 16–18, boxed and shaded in Table 2.1). The case clearly represents a conflation of

137 The reference is to the previous omen. The inclusion of the emphasizing particle *-ma* possibly stems from the fact that in this omen the "person" is designated a *mār awīlim* and not merely an *awīlum* as in the previous entry; cf. MAH 15874:18.

138 Notwithstanding the exception of the bipartite structure of the first forecast in each of the opening three entries in the MAH 15874 version.

139 In addition to those differences between *YOS* 10 17 and the shorter collections relating to it discussed earlier, note too the different verb forms in one parallel (*izzazzā* [ex. 2.73, l. 13] // *ittazzazzā* [ex. 2.74, l. 60]) as well as the absence in ex. 2.73, ll. 10–11 of the emphasizing, non-coordinating particle *–ma* that appears in ex. 2.74, l. 61.

TABLE 2.1 *Comparison of structure of* MAH *15874 and* YOS *10 17:49–62*

	Zonal Location	Side	Mark(s)
MAH 15874			
ll. 1–9	Top/ Middle/ Bottom	Right	1 Hole
ll. 10–18	Top (x 2)/ Middle/ Bottom	Right and Left	2 Holes
ll. 19–21	Top; Middle/ [?]	Ø	1 Hole
l. 22	Middle	Ø	2 Holes
***YOS* 10 17**			
ll. 49–51	Top/ Middle/ Bottom	Right	1 Hole
l. 52	Top	Ø	1 Hole
ll. 53–55	Top/ Middle/ Bottom	Middle	1 Hole
l. 56	Bottom	Right and Left	[1 Hole (?)]
l. 57	Halfway to other zone	Ø	1 Hole
l. 58	In Zone's midst	Ø	2 Holes
l. 59	In Zone's midst	Ø	2 or 3 Holes
ll. 60–61	Top Top	Right and Left	2 Holes
l. 62	Top	Ø	1 Hole

two separate traditions from a single source like *YOS* 10 17. The author of MAH 15874 brought together two unrelated omens in order to account for all the necessary variables in the protasis: ex. 2.74, l. 56 supplied the essential zonal location in the View's base (*naplaštum ina iš*[*d*]⌜*āt*⌝), while ex. 2.74, l. 61 offered the called-for two holes ([*šīl*]*ū šinā*). The result represents an amalgam

of the two, a fact reinforced by the omen's apodosis, whose second interpretation, introduced by the *šanûm šumšu* formula, is essentially the apodosis of ex. 2.74, l. 61, while the first reflects the apodosis of ex. 2.74, l. 56. The possibility that this conflated entry comes from another, unknown source seems unlikely but is actually immaterial since, if such were the case, one would need to explain how the constituent parts of this hypothesized composite are found in *YOS* 10 17 as the independent apodoses of two unrelated omens.

In several ways, then, the tradition shared between ex. 2.74, ll. 56 + 61, and ex. 2.73, ll. 16–18 presents compelling evidence of a process of construction involved in the compilation of the omen collections. In this instance the culprit is the composer of MAH 15874. This text's author, striving to establish a T → M → B scheme in ex. 2.73, ll. 10–18, showed a willingness to graft a new omen from two unrelated species: the originally separate omens of ex. 2.74, ll. 56 + 61 (or their like). The *šanûm šumšu* formula appears in that capacity, preceding what previously had been the entire and freestanding apodosis of ex. 2.74, l. 61. The author of MAH 15874 thus marks the secondary forecast, though not for the reason suggested by Goetze's or Nougayrol's combinatorial model, nor even for that proposed by Bottéro's hermeneutics-based variants. Rather, the matter is to be ascribed to literary considerations, that is, to the decision to reformat a tradition like *YOS* 10 17—a text that follows different organizational principles from those of MAH 15874 (cf. Table 2.1)[140]—according to the T → M → B schemes in MAH 15874 as well as that text's alternation between one and two holes. The appearance of a secondary forecast in ex. 2.73, ll. 16–18 seems to be no more than a by-product of that undertaking.

Case C: Assimilation from Paradigm Pressure

A final instructive instance of the employment of a *šanûm šumšu* formula in the construction of divination literature appears in a passage known from only one source:

2.75. AO 7028:9–11 (12–17)

9. [*šumma d*]*anānu rēssu uššur* ⇒ *zabiltum šata*[*m ekallim*[141]] *awâtim uštenešše*

140 Notably, the alternation between one and two holes in MAH 15874 seems to have enjoyed a measure of priority over the T → M → B scheme in ex. 2.73, l. 22, though why the author did not wish to settle both with an entry like ex. 2.74, l. 55 is unclear.

141 Reconstruction follows *CAD* Z, 8; Bottéro 1973: 141, cf. *YOS* 10 11 v 14; 24:29; 25:63; 26 i 36–37, iv 11–12; 35:29 // AO 7033:14–15.

10. [*šumma danā*]*n*[142] *zabiltim paṭer* ⇒ *ākil karṣīka* [*ka*]*rṣūšu ula immaḫḫarū*[143] ***šanû šumšu*** *ša liš*[*āni* ……]
11. [*šumma danān za*]*biltim paṭer-ma u tari*[*k*] ⇒ *ša lišāni iṣṣabbat-ma* [*iddâk* (?)]

9. '[If] the Strength—its head was loosened off ⇒ (it forecasts) betrayal: the *šatammu*-official of [the palace] will repeatedly reveal secrets'
10. '[If] the Strength of Betrayal was (also) split ⇒ concerning the one who slanders you—his accusations will not be accepted; **its second interpretation**: an informer [will ……]'
11. '[If the Strength of] Betrayal was (also) split and dark ⇒ the informer will be seized and [*killed*].'

The three omens comprising this passage build on the interpretive association between the ideas of division and the illicit conveyance of information, in this case concerning the *danānum*, or "Strength." That the second and third omens link with the first, further developing its subject, is evident from the zone's reference as the Strength of Betrayal (*danān zabiltim*); undoubtedly this metonymic designation derives from the heading of the apodosis for the first omen (i.e., *danān zabiltim* ← *zabiltum*). Additionally, one notes a plain and common developmental relation between the second and third entries: the final omen introduces the variable of shade (*tarik*) into the data from the previous entry. If one correrlates these points, the purpose of the alternative interpretation appearing in the second omen, though damaged in part, appears nonetheless clear. Shared content as well as juxtaposition seems to have played a creative role in the interpretation of the second omen, in which the addition of the secondary forecast about the informer (*ša lišāni*) correlates the prediction about the slanderer (*ākil karṣim*) to that of the following line (i.e., *ša lišāni* [l. 10] ← *ša lišānim* [l. 11]), thus assimilating the two. (That no such assimilation was sought between the first and second omens likely owes to the difference in

142 Pace Nougayrol 1946: 56; CAD Z, 8: [*šumma da-na*]*-nu za-bi-il-tim paṭer*, which leads to intolerable syntax, as evinced by its translation: "If the *danānu* (predicting) betrayal is split." What appears in Nougayrol 1941: 80 as a NU is in fact the right side of AN.

143 Pace CAD R, 270, which labels the passage "difficult," reading: […] *re-ṣú-šu ula imaḫḫaru*. I owe this reading to A. George, who likens the idea here to CUSAS 18 25 ob. 18 and YOS 10 46 iii 17, which describe a forecast concerning the non-acceptance of denunciations. The writing *i-ma-ḫa-ru* need not prevent taking the verb as an N; cf. *i-ṣa-ba-at-ma* in l. 11; and cf. *im-ma-ḫa*$^{!}$(ZA)*-ar* in CUSAS 18 25 ob. 18.

ominous conditions described in these entries.) Once more, then, the appearance of an interpretation headed by the *šanûm šumšu* formula, though again textually grounded, ultimately appears to be the product of a certain paradigm pressure in the eyes of its composer.[144]

The three cases A–C studied above provide irrefutable evidence that the mere appearance of the variant predictions introduced by the *šanûm šumšu* formula is not, in and of itself, proof of the gathering of existing divergent traditions, certainly not written ones. Other considerations, including some motivated by the collections' organizational concerns, played a significant part in the formation of omens with variants labeled as "secondary." This is not to say that no apodosis containing a prediction preceded by a *šanûm šumšu* heading represents the compilation of two written traditions. Nor do the findings above necessarily deny some textual basis for every variant presented as a *šanûm šumšu*. To the contrary, each of the above case studies underscores the textuality of what, for different reasons, is labeled as this sort of forecast. But on the basis of these cases it is clear that a textual origin of a secondary prediction does not exclude the possibility of a creative quality to that forecast, which, if taken from existing entries, must nonetheless be regarded as a new species in its eventual formulation. And since it is evident that considerations beyond the mere compilation of text variants played a decisive role in the labeling of certain predictions as "secondary," it becomes clear that an explanation of those forecasts headed by the *šanûm šumšu* label, as well as a comprehension of the role of the label itself, must be sufficiently inclusive to account for the various factors that present themselves in an investigation of the relevant data.

One such factor, weighing heavily in the cases presented above, appears to have been the construction of gradation paradigms in the collections. As has already been seen, associations among paradigmatically related elements (e.g., *šatammum* ↔ *ākil karṣim* ↔ *ša lišānim* in ex. 2.75) served as links at the inter-omen organizational level, and thus comprised one of the two basic structural building blocks of the collections. The other is that which is witnessed at the level of inner-omen organization, namely those syntagmatic relationships evident either within a given protasis or apodosis, or, alternatively, between them. Of course the latter option is expressed via associations mediating between the conditions reported in a particular omen's protasis and its interpretation in the apodosis.

144 A similar harmonization of apodoses occurs a few entries below ex. 2.75, in AO 7028:14–16 (21–23); see ex. 4.76 (§ 4.2.1.4).

Indeed, hermeneutically based associations play a leading role in the appearance of certain forecasts labeled "secondary." The examination of such forecasts leaves little doubt that their relation to the corresponding protases is achieved by means of hermeneutics. Where each of two such forecasts interprets a given omen according to two conventional associations (e.g., *šīlum* ↔ *mūtum* and *šīlum* ↔ *namtallûm* in exx. 2.72 and 2.74 above), or where one finds that a secondary prediction follows an identical interpretive line as its primary counterpart and differs from it only in minor detail (e.g., *nupāram* vs. *bīt papāḫim* in ex. 2.83; *rubûm* vs. *sukkallum* in ex. 2.84 below), it becomes clear that the *šanûm šumšu* formula serves to coordinate two interpretations generated on the basis of hermeneutics. Admittedly, the possibility that alternative predictions in these types of examples reflect distinct written records cannot be excluded unequivocally, especially in those examples where only one textual witness is attested. Still, it is quite implausible that two analogous predictions, when they display considerable similarities or a parallel interpretative line, reflect the scrupulous recording of empirical observation. This implausibility is especially evident when we recall that even some entries boasting only a single interpretation are best understood as having a deductive substructure formed by means of interpretive associations between protasis and apodosis.

The last point is critical for the present purposes, since the question of the origins of a particular secondary forecast proves misguided where it can be demonstrated with relative certainty that it, along with its preceding alternative, are both the products of generative reasoning. And though it appears below that several preconceived notions motivated the diviner to (re)constitute an entry so as to incorporate an alternative interpretation under the *šanûm šumšu* umbrella, for the overwhelming majority of cases these notions appear to be motivated by hermeneutic considerations. Put simply, the *šanûm šumšu* formula appears to serve primarily as a link between hermeneutic, and not source or text, alternatives; accordingly, its explanation must be sought in the rationale behind the juxtaposition of two alternative predictions and the characteristics of each case of such juxtaposition.

The following presents an initial attempt at a typology of these characteristics, with attention paid to the apparent function of the secondary alternatives in each subtype. The provisional nature of this effort must be stressed, since some of the cases already surveyed (e.g., exx. 2.53, 2.55) do not fit any of the types delineated; and it is not unlikely that future study will demand a reassessment of some of the subtypes posited. Still, the manifestation of a hermeneutic foundation in the vast majority of entries whose apodoses describe secondary interpretations bolsters the basic argument that variant interpretations in omen apodoses do not testify to variant written traditions *a priori*, and

it is all but certain that these are not attributable to empirical considerations alone.

Five distinct types may be pointed to among the secondary forecasts labeled *šanûm šumšu*. These are: (a) competing, hermeneutically based associations; (b) major alternation in readings of a single, hermeneutically based association; (c) minor alternation in readings of a single, hermeneutically based association; (d) the qualification of mirror-image or contradictory forecasts; and (e) the qualification of a forecast's range. An exposition of each follows.

2.1.3.4 (a) *Competing, Hermeneutically Based Associations*

The first subtype is comprised of omens whose alternative interpretations are mediated by two distinct associations. Instances of this subtype were already encountered. In the three successive omens in ex. 2.72 above, two main forecast groups correspond to the T → M → B scheme describing a hole in the View in the right side. These describe two options: (a) three[145] scenarios concerning a person's impending death (following the form *ina* X *mamman imât*, "someone from X will die," where X = *aštapir bīt awīlim*, "servants of the man's household," *aḫiāt awīlim*, "the man's dependents," and *nišūt awīlim*, "the man's family," respectively); and (b) eclipses for the three watches in the day (following the form *namtalli* Y, "an eclipse of Y," where Y = *barārtum*, "evening watch," *qablītum*, "middle watch," and *šāturrum*, "third watch," respectively). Things are actually a bit more complicated in (a), in which an additional option coordinated by *ū lū* appears in each omen, which in the second entry seems to incorporate an altogether different topic (i.e., the river) and in the first and the third entries conflates the predictions with one other.[146]

Nevertheless, overall it appears that the tradition preserved in these duplicates recalls two basic interpretations for the reported finding: death and eclipse. Both these options represent well-known forecast possibilities for the occurrence of holes. While these often occur together (e.g., ex. 2.74, l. 53), they also occur as distinct possibilities (e.g., ex. 2.73, l. 19). Indeed, ex. 2.76 below, describing the situation of a hole between two zones, offers the prediction of an eclipse as its primary forecast, but then adds that if this omen concerns the individual submitting the query[147] a different prediction applies: death. Analogously, it would seem that the *šanûm šumšu* formula in ex. 2.72 serves to

145 Following the full sequence in version a'.

146 Cf. the parallel tradition in *YOS* 10 17, which maintains the interpretations concerning the servants of the man's household and the man's servants distinct.

147 The implicit contrast here is between the former and the king (see § 2.1.3.3 above).

coordinate conventional interpretations for the same finding. It remains to be determined whether there existed also some implied understanding regarding the applicability of one prediction over against the other, like that witnessed in ex. 2.76:

2.76. *šumma ina birīt ṣibtim u ubānim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *nantallûm šumma ana bēl immerim imtaqtam imât* 'If a hole was situated in between the Increase and Finger ⇒ (it forecasts) an eclipse; (but) if it (i.e., the omen) has befallen the sheep's owner: he will die' (*YOS* 10 11 iii 13–17).

There exist other subtypes of omens in which both an alternative interpretation preceded by a *šanûm šumšu* formula as well as the first interpretation appear coordinated to the protasis via a conventional hermeneutic association. Unlike subtype (a), however, in the remaining subtypes the differences between the predictions do not lie in the correspondences of each to a separate interpretative path. Rather, what is described in the second alternative accords with the first in terms of hermeneutics; where these differ is in the manner in which the signified is depicted.

2.1.3.4 (b) *Major Alternation in Readings of a Single, Hermeneutically Based Association*

The second subtype is characterized by a single interpretive association running through both alternatives but expressed differently. The ideas common to either alternative in each of these apodoses are fairly transparent: movement of Self ("your" land's goods ↔ prince) to Other (foreign land) in ex. 2.77; plagues affecting Self (army ↔ land) in ex. 2.78; inundation (rain ↔ flood ↔ deluge) in exx. 2.79–2.80; an attack in a locale[148] presumed safe (inner palace ↔ safe area) in ex. 2.81; the enemy's penetration into the Self's ("your") guarded (literal and figurative) domain (foundation structure ↔ secret) in ex. 2.82.

2.77. Protasis ⇒ *būši mātīka ana māt nakrīka uṣṣi* ***šanû šumšu*** *rubûm ṭārid*[*ūtam il*]*lak* 'The goods of your land will go out to the enemy's land; **its second interpretation**: the prince will go into exile' (*YOS* 10 24:17; cf. *YOS* 10 17:35).

148 While *ērib ekallim* refers literally to persons, not space, it seems clear that this term's choice here intends to underscore the privileges of this functionary concerning the entry (*erēbum*) into the palace's more private areas.

2.78. Protasis ⇒ *amūt Erra u Me*[*sla*]*mtaea*[149] *ša ina idi ummānim illakū* ***šanû šumšu*** *mūtānū ina mātim ibbaššû*[150] '(It is) an omen of Erra and Meslamtaea, who will march alongside the army; **its second interpretation**: there will be plagues in the land' (*YOS* 10 17:37).

2.79. Protasis ⇒ *mīlum illaka*[*m*] ***šanûm šumšu*** *zanān šamêm akāl šallatim* 'A flood is coming; **its second interpretation**: (it forecasts) rain from heaven (and/or:) the consuming of plunder' (*YOS* 10 22:25–26).

2.80. Protasis ⇒ *butuqtum ibbattaq biblum mātam ub*[*bal*[151] (...)] *rubûm ḫarrān illaku ul iturram* ***šanûm šum***[***šu*** *Adad iraḫ*]*ḫiṣ* 'The sluice will burst (and) a devastating flood will sweep away the land [(and/or...?)] the prince will not return from the campaign he undertakes; **its second interpretation**: [Adad] will inundate' (*YOS* 10 16:4–6).

2.81. Protasis ⇒ *ina ērib ekallim ayyāmma zuqaqīpu izaqqat* ***šanûm šumšu*** *ummānum ina qaqqar šulmīša nakrum ikašša*[*daš*]*šī-ma idâkši* 'A scorpion will sting someone from among the palace personnel; **its second interpretation**: (concerning) the army—the enemy will catch up and defeat it in friendly territory' (*YOS* 10 21:9–10 // *CUSAS* 18 24 r. 32').

2.82. Protasis ⇒ *asurrāk*[*a nakerka*/*nakrum*] *ušaplaš* ***šanû šumšu*** *pirišta*[*ka*ʾ *u*]*šeṣṣe*[152] '[Your/the enemy] will tunnel through your foundation structure; **its second interpretation**: he will divulge [*your*] secret' (AO 7028:15 [22–23]).

The differences between the alternatives in each of these examples are clearly not the result of two discrete hermeneutic associations, as with those examples of type (a). Rather, this type of alternation appears to represent different ways of expressing the same interpretive notion.

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149 On the writing of Erra as ^{d}KIŠ^{èr}-ra, see Steinkeller 2004: 175 n. 4; the writing of Meslamtaea, which appears here as: ^{d}me[s.lam].ta.è^{i}(DU).a, is explicable as a minor scribal omission (<UD>.DU).

150 Text: *i-ba-aš-*<<*ši*>>*-šu*.

151 Text collated, revealing the beginnings of what may be an UB or a BA.

152 Nougayrol 1946: 58 restores this verb and and its counterpart in the previous entry as 3mp forms, seemingly to allow for impersonal passive translations ("on divulguera"). But this is unnecessary: the hermeneutic of a breach of guarded things common to both forecasts suggests that the subject of the second option is to be supplied from the first.

2.1.3.4 (c) *Minor Alternation in Readings of a Single, Hermeneutically Based Association*

In terms of their agreement with the accompanying protasis, initial and secondary forecasts in this type share a single interpretative path, as in the case of (b) above. The difference between these types is one of degree: alternative interpretations in (c) agree with their counterparts in all but a single detail:

2.83. Protasis ⇒ *nupāram* [*išāt*]*um ikkal* [***šanû***]***m šumšu*** *bīt papā*⌜*ḫim*⌝ *išātum ikkal* 'Fire will consume the workhouse; **its second interpretation**: fire will consume the *cella*' (*YOS* 10 40:9–11).

2.84. *šumma bāb eka*[*llim šinā-m*]*a birītīšunu qûm ṣabit* ⇒ *rubûm irbam ikkal* ***šanû šumšu*** *sukkallum irbam ikkal* 'If there were two Palace Gates and a filament was caught between them ⇒ the prince will consume income; **its second interpretation**: the *sukkallu*-official will consume income' (*YOS* 10 24:5).

2.85. *šumma bāb ekallim šinā-ma*[153] *birīšunu qûm ṣabit* ⇒ *sukkallum irbam i*[*maḫḫar*] 'If the Palace Gate was (in) two (parts) and between them a filament was caught ⇒ the *sukkallu*-official will receive income' (*YOS* 10 22:2 // *YOS* 10 26 i 14–15).

For instance, in ex. 2.83 the alternatives differ only in the object (workhouse ↔ cella) to be consumed by fire. Similarly, in ex. 2.84, two theoretically distinct alternatives disagree only with respect to the consuming agent (prince ↔ *sukkallu*-official). Example 2.85, which parallels ex. 2.84, notably records the apodosis with only one interpretation. Whether the secondary alternative in ex. 2.84 represents an *ad hoc* generative-based creation by the diviner of *YOS* 10 24 is impossible to ascertain. However, what may be said is that the use of the *šanûm šumšu* formula was not reserved exclusively for cases in which alternative interpretations presented two altogether different ideas; in these cases, the formula seems to be employed in a manner no different than the *lū … lū* construction seen above (cf. exx. 2.73, ll. 20–21; 2.74, l. 54).

2.1.3.4 (d) *Qualification of Mirror-image or Contradictory Forecasts*

At times the *šanûm šumšu* formula precedes alternatives that qualify a particular omen's forecast on the basis of the right/left paradigm. In these instances

153 In the version from *YOS* 10 26 i 14–15 the numeral precedes the mention of the Palace Gates.

what is said to be the alternative interpretation represents the mirror image of the first interpretation, as in the following cases:

2.86. Protasis ⇒ *sukupti ummān nakrim* ***šanû šumšu*** *šubtum nēḫtum* '(It forecasts) the defeat of the enemy's army; **its second interpretation**: (it forecasts) a secure dwelling' (AO 7028:21 [30–31]).

2.87. Protasis ⇒ *ebūr nakrīka takkal* ***šanû šumšu*** *ebūr mātim iššer* 'You will consume the harvest of your enemy; **its second interpretation**: the harvest of the land will thrive' (*TIM* 9 80:3).

2.88. Protasis ⇒ *ṭū*[*b*] *libbi šubtum nēḫtum* ***šanû šumšu*** *nēkemtum* '(It forecasts) well-being: a secure dwelling; **its second interpretation**: (it forecasts a) loss' (*YOS* 10 20:7).

In these cases one witnesses something of a zero-sum logic with respect to the perceived opposition between Self ("you"; "the land") and Other ("the enemy"): in ex. 2.86 the idea of a peaceful dwelling appears inversely proportional to the defeat of the enemy; in ex. 2.87 a bountiful harvest represents the inverse of one's consumption of the enemy's ingathering. This is likely the explanation for ex. 2.88 as well,[154] which otherwise might be taken as placing in sequence two contradictory interpretations, thereby violating Nougayrol's *principe de cohérence*.[155] In short, the alternatives in each of these omens represent two sides of the same coin. Do such pairings reflect different traditions compiled from disparate (written) sources, or rather are they restatements based on hermeneutics? As ever, this question of origins remains indeterminate; yet, significantly, in either event it is clear that the *šanûm šumšu* formula could be employed to introduce alternatives that relate to each other in accordance with principles of a larger interpretative framework.

2.1.3.4 (e) *Qualification of a Forecast's Range*

There exist several terms that appear in tandem with the *šanûm šumšu* formula to qualify an omen's applicability across a range of possible situations. One way in which this qualification is expressed is by means of the term *pisiltum*,

154 So Jeyes 1989: 88; and cf. ex. 2.143 below.

155 Nougayrol 1956: 8; similarly Starr 1983a: 24. Whether the recognition of such logic brings complex OB apodoses closer to their first-millennium counterparts, against Nougayrol's distinction concerning these groups (ibid.: 9–10; also Heeßel 2001–2002: 25), demands consideration.

which defines omens as "disqualified," in a manner that appears to be made explicit on some occasions in first-millennium divination literature.[156] An OB lecanomancy omen offers good testimony of this sense for the term:

2.89. Protasis ⇒ *marṣam murussu išannīšu* ***ana ḫarrānim*** *pisiltum* 'The disease *will derange* the infirm;[157] **for a campaign**: (it is) a disqualified (omen)' (Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*, I:46[158]).

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156 *CAD* P, 424 offers no translation of this term in this sense, though *CAD* T, 39, citing this text, renders it as "failure." *AHw*, 867 posits "Zwischenfall, Fehlschlag," while another earlier possibility (Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*, 2: 40) offered "Enttäuschung"; cf., too, "misadventure" (Koch 2005: 606). The plural form, *pislātum*, appearing unqualified in hemerologies, has understandably been rendered in various ways, including "échec (?)" (Labat 1939: 78, 191), "Nichterfüllung des Wunsches" (*AHw*, ibid); "accidents" (Isma'el and George 2002: 251 and passim), "contrattempo" (Casaburi 2003: 147), and "setbacks" (Livingstone 2013: 18 and passim). However, in two at least two cases in first-millennium divination literature the term appears to be glossed in a manner that sheds light on what may actually be its original sense: *pislātu*/*pislāte lā kašād ṣibûti*, "*p.* (means) not achieving (its intended) purpose" (Boissier DA, 46:17 [SB extispicy]; *KAR* 384:14 [SB *Šumma ālu*]). The possibility that *pisiltum* served to convey's an omen's failure to meet its occasioned purpose and, consequently, marked its own disqualification is supported by comparative lexicography as well. The word has numerous important cognates in elsewhere in Semitic, among them the Aramaic nominal forms *p^{e}sūl(t)ā* (Sokoloff, *Dictionary*, 916) as well as the Hebrew *pāsūl* and *paslūt* (Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1192, 1198). All these are technical terms that share the basic sense of the root: to be(come)/render unfit or disqualified from a particular status, in this case *kašrūt*. As the following discussion contends, this is its sense in the OB divination literature as well. If so, the earlier translation proposals of "failure," "échec," or "Fehlschlag" cited above may be fitting in some cases, though in need of clarification concerning what is labeled as such (pace, e.g., Labat ibid.: 78 n. *ad* l. 69).

157 *CAD* Š/1, 404 includes a passage from this text (also from *YOS* 10 25:58' [ex. 2.129]: *marṣu murussu išanniaššu*) with others said to describe change in the course of diseases, though it does not distinguish cases such as the present instance, in which *šanûm* in the G appears unexpectedly transitive, from most others, which are active-intransitive (e.g., *murussu išanni*, "his illness will change" [Labat, *TDP* 108 iv 11]). My translation strives to rectify this on the one hand while recalling the more specific sense of *šanûm* with respect to illness and mental state on the other. The option offered in Pettinato *Ölwahrsagung*, 2: 29 ("die Krankheit packt den Kranken ein zweites Mal") takes the verb incorrectly from *šanûm* A, which is not transitive in the G.

158 The initial portion of an SB extispicy apodosis recalls the secondary option here: Protasis ⇒ *ana ḫarrāni pislāti* [*ummānka ṣummirātīša ul ikaššad marṣu iballuṭ*] (*BLO* 97 r. 4' // *STT* 2 308+ i 7–8; cf. *KAR* 423 i 69–70). However, the plural form in that instance as well subsequent scenarios described (especially the latter) make it clear that on this occasion the term must mean something else, probably anticipatory of the following, specific cases.

The initial forecast in this passage concerns the infirm; however, when turning to the interpretive possibility of a campaign, its statement is too terse to concern actual subject matter and must thus be understood in a technical sense in the manner proposed here. The word *pisiltum* should therefore be understood to be a technical term delineating a given omen's interpretive range, which here declares an omen result unfit for a particular situation described.

Elsewhere the stated disqualification is not case specific. In the following two examples, the secondary interpretations declare that the omens within which they occur are disqualified in a broad sense:

2.90. Protasis ⇒ [*r*]*igmu* ***šanûm šumšu*** [*pi*]*siltum* '(It forecasts) clamor;[159] **its second interpretation**: (it is) a disqualified (omen)' (AO 9066:15–17).

2.91. Protasis ⇒ *taGriātum* ***šanûm šumšu*** *pisiltum* '(It forecasts) *hostilities*;[160] **its second interpretation**: (it is) a disqualified (omen)' (AO 9066:35–39).

At first glance these statements seem to contradict the respective first interpretations, which seem legitimate, if vague. A more likely explanation for these is that the disqualifications in the second interpretations apply to all save the former possibilities. It is unclear whether the applicability of the first interpretations could extend to cover specific situations, say clamor in one's house or *hostilities* while on campaign. If not, then it would seem that these secondary interpretations actually declared each omen unfit for all intents and purposes; perhaps better translations for the secondary statements in these examples would thus be the looser "its real/practical interpretation (is that it is) an unfit (omen)."

A different manner by which an omen is said to be unreliable employs the adverb *ullu*, which, while unique to the OB extispicy corpus, indicates elsewhere a negative answer, even a "firm negation" (*ullu kīnum*).[161] To judge from the following example, it is unlikely that *ullu* functions in the exact manner of the *pisiltu*-forecasts, since unlike those instances the apodosis in this

159 Following *CAD* R, 331; but cf. Nougayrol (1950: 25): "plaintes."

160 So *CAD* T, 39, where it appears as a *hapax*; *AHw*, 1300 offers "Prozess?" but then suggests an alternate reading of *takrītum*, "Verkürzung?" about which it is equally unsure. That the form represents **taggerātum*, "denunciations" (sg. *taggertum*, cf. ex. 2.218, l. 25; *YOS* 10 46 iii 12, 16, 20, etc.) would require the emendation *ta-ag-*<*ge*>*-ra*$^{!}$(RI)*-a-tum*, which seems unlikely.

161 *CT* 39 41:11 (= *Šumma ālu*, tablet 95), cited in *CAD* K, 390.

passage is unambiguous, seemingly without the need for disqualification of the omen for ill-defined scenarios:

2.92. [*šumma rēš libbim u*]*rqam kīma unqim lawi* ⇒ *rubâm kišpū ṣabtū* ***šanû***/***šanîš*** *ullu* '[If the top of the heart] was surrounded by a yellow-green (patch) like a ring ⇒ witchcraft will seize the prince; (**a**) **second** (**interpretation**): (it is) not (a reliable omen)' (*OBE* 13 r. 16).

More likely, its sense in this instance is of an omen perceived as somehow unreliable—though notably the view was not shared in a duplicate tradition:[162]

2.93. [*šumma rēš libbi urqa*] *kīma unqi lawi* ⇒ *rubâ*$^{!}$ *kišpū ṣabtū* '[If the top of the heart] was surrounded by a [yellow-green] (patch) like a ring ⇒ witchcraft will seize the prince' (*OBE* 14 ob. 16).

Additional support for this role of the *šanûm šumšu* formula may be found upon consideration of a similar qualification of the more familiar term *nipḫum* (for which, see § 2.1.4.2.3). For this, the following parallel examples are especially instructive:

2.94. [*šumma r*]*ēš naplaštim ibbalkit* ⇒ *nipḫu pûm lā* [*kīnum* ***šan***]***ûm šumšu*** ⌜*ana*⌝ *kakkim* ...[...] '[If] the head of the View was turned 90° ⇒ (it is) a *nipḫu*, (which means:) an un[reliable] (omen) statement; **its second interpretation**: for warfare [...] ...' (*YOS* 10 16:13–14 [= ex. 2.62]).

2.95. *šumma rēš* [*naplaš*]*tim ibbalkit* ⇒ *pûm lā kīnum* 'If the head of the View was turned 90° ⇒ (it represents) an unreliable (omen) statement' (*YOS* 10 17:44 [= ex. 2.61]).

Example 2.94 contains a more elaborate apodosis than its counterpart in ex. 2.95. Specifically, the shared verdict that the omen is unreliable (*pûm lā kīnum*) is subsumed in ex. 2.94 under the *nipḫum* designation (see 2.1.4.2.3). But the apodosis of ex. 2.94 moves forward to admit another interpretation for the omen, and though the text breaks off before the subject of the second meaning can be established, it is clear that the omen, declared as technically unreliable

162 The suggestion in Jeyes 1989: 44 that the negation may reflect a later query, as at a time when undergoing a campaign, seems unlikely. Possibly the omen's unreliable sense stemmed from the complex web of meanings surrounding the seizure-by-witchcraft motif and the omens that led to them.

in the main, nonetheless maintains a specific application for which it appears to be fit. If so, it would seem that the *šanûm šumšu* formula here introduces a partial exception to what precedes.

In these examples, then, the *šanûm šumšu* formula serves to introduce a second interpretation that qualifies the range of particular omens. Specifically, it precedes the technical term *pisiltum*, which disqualifies a given omen's authority over what is not explicitly stated, *ullu*, which declares an omen to be unreliable, and *nipḫum*, which may function much like *pisiltum*.

2.1.3.5 *ūmam rīqam, rīqūssa*

The final way in which alternative apodoses are formally coordinated in complex apodoses involves the expression *ūmam rīqam*, understood loosely as "for an uncertain date," or the related expression *rīqūssa*, "its uncertain (interpretation)."[163] Together these occur some twenty times in the corpus,[164] appearing in omen apodoses in a manner similar to the *šanûm šumšu* formula:

Protasis ⇒ X *ūmam rīqam* / *rīqūssa* Y

where again X stands for the first forecast in the given apodosis and Y the second.[165] From context it seems that the two expressions bear a similar sense and should be seen as variations of the same idea. This is supported by the fact that in an omen known in duplicate, one finds the first expression in one version and the second in the other:

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163 On the relation between these forms and their readings and meanings from etymological and contextual perspectives, see below.

164 For a list of most occurrences in OB extispicy and a brief analysis, see Jeyes 1989: 45; for many post-OB references, see *CAD* R, 266.

165 In one case, where the *ūmam rīqam* expression appears at the beginning of the entire apodosis, the long forecast following it is in fact comprised of two seemingly separate ideas:

"Protasis ⇒ ***ūma rīqa*** *rigmu ina bīt awīlim iššakkan tibût ākilti* '**For an uncertain date**: there will be crying in the man's house; (it forecasts) a plague of caterpillar(s)' (AO 7539:29–31)."

In all likelihood this represents an error or some other irregularity (note that the passage comes from a text now understood related to the Sealand collections recently studied in George 2013: 129–229; the peculiarities of these texts are many, as reiterated above), though it is unclear whether it is merely the *ūmam rīqam* that is out of place or, rather, the expression along with the following first forecast. However, as will be demonstrated below, more often than not the expression goes with the shorter or more general forecast, in which case it would seem as if it was intended to precede the prediction for the plague.

2.96. *šumma bāb ekallim sunnuq* ⇒ *ina kakkim nakrum ummānam ussar* ***ūmam rīqam*** *šatammū ekallam usannaqū* 'If the Palace Gate was fastened shut ⇒ in warfare the enemy will enclose the army; **for an uncertain date**: *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace' (*YOS* 10 24:29).

2.97. *šumma* <*bāb*> *ekallim sunnuq* ⇒ *ina tāḫāzim ummānam nak*[*rum*] *usannaq* ***rīqūssa*** *šatammū ekallam usanna*[*qū*] 'If the Palace <Gate> was fastened shut ⇒ in battle the enemy will shut the army tight; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace' (*YOS* 10 26 i 26–27).

Despite this clear parallel there remains a good deal of confusion regarding the precise meaning of these expressions. Jeyes, who read the single-word form as *rēqūssa* and translated it as "its (the omen's?) remoteness,"[166] apparently understood the term as an abstract noun (< *rēqum* + the *-ūt* abstract suffix), deriving from *rêqum*/*ruāqum*, the reflex of Sem. √*rḥq*, "to withdraw, go away, recede." For Jeyes this represented a variant of the longer *ūmam rēqam* expression, the verb behind the latter term being the same *rêqum*. The dictionaries, however, disagree. Both read the abstract noun as *rīqūtum*, "emptiness," deriving from *râqum*/*riāqum*, the reflex of Sem. √*rwq*/*ryq*, "to be(come) empty."[167] On the other hand, both agree that the adjective in the longer variation derives from *rêqum*/*ruāqum* and rendered it as *rēqam*.[168] And this confusion is not limited to modern interpretation: already in antiquity the homophones seem to have been mixed up, along with *arākum*, "to be(come) long," as is evident from the logographic writing sud for all three.[169] Indeed, the writing *i-na* ud sud for *ina ūmi rīqi* is attested in post-OB omen collections:

2.98. Protasis ⇒ *ana kakki miqitti ummāni* ***ina ūmi rīqi*** (ud sud) *mūtānū ina māti ibbaššû* 'For warfare (it forecasts) the downfall of the army; **for an uncertain date**: there will be plagues in the land' (*Emar IV* 670:27–28 + *KAR* 465 r. 9 [MB/SB extispicy]).[170]

166 Jeyes 1989: 45 and n. 126.

167 *CAD* R, 374; *AHw*, 988.

168 *CAD* R, 266; *AHw*, 971.

169 Labat, *Manuel*, no. 373. The writing sud is attested in a few bilinguals for *râqum* (*CAD* R, 177), though seemingly not for *rêqum*.

170 Edited in Koch-Westenholz 2000: 75.

This confusion, along the expressions' documented interchange in at least one instance (exx. 2.96 and 2.97 above), makes it unlikely that these should reflect two separate and unrelated words or concepts. Yet the unravelling of this problem proves more difficult than expected. The spellings for *rīqa*(*m*) and *rīqūssa*, consistently written with the sign RI for /*ri*/ or /*re*/ and, as is typical, without extra vowel signs, are not helpful in the matter. It is true that outside the context of OB divination the abstract noun *rīqūtum* (i.e., < *râqum*/*riāqum* [< Sem. √*rwq*/*ryq*]) is widely attested, referring in its primary sense to physical objects like boats or wagons, and qualifying time by extension;[171] by contrast there is no evidence for an independent abstract noun deriving from *rēqum* (excluding Jeyes' putative *rēqūssu*). Presumably these were the motivating factors behind the dictionaries' shared decision to understand the abstract noun as *rīqūtum*, related to *râqum*/*riāqum* and not *rêqum*.

The reasons for interpreting the adjective in the longer variation as *rēqam*, "distant" (i.e., < *rêqum*/*ruāqum* [< Sem. √*rḥq*]) are less clear. To be sure, there is the abstract adjective *rēqūtum* in the construct *ūm rēqūtim*, "distant day,"[172] which refers to remote time in the past or future. However, also known is the expression *ūmum rīqum*, "work-free day, holiday," attested in a number of contexts and periods.[173] The same expression bears the sense of "a moonless day" within the context of celestial divination.[174] But in all probability the meanings of "holiday" and "moonless day" are derivative from a primary sense of *rīqum* as "empty," and thus should be avoided in the present context.[175]

There is also evidence from within OB extispicy collections pointing in this direction. The possibility of "empty" with a sense of "moonless" for the adjective

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171 See, e.g., *CAD* R, 374.

172 See *CAD* R, s.v. *rēqu* 1b.

173 See *CAD* R, s.v. *rīqu* 2c; note its opposition to *ūmū ša šipri*, "work days," at Emar.

174 See van Soldt 1995: 62 (with reference).

175 Pace Arnaud 1987: 291: "jour de fête" (*Emar* 670 [= ms. E in *BLO*, 70–77], ll. 17, 27) for *ina ūmi rīqi*; cf. Koch-Westenholz: "in the future" (*BLO*, 73, 75). Similarly the translation of "on a ferial day" for the same idiom (*CAD* A/2, 508) must be excluded, especially because of the radical shift in meaning from the term's classical Latin sense of "holidays" or "festivals" to the ecclesiastical, in which it designates days that were considered non-sacred, as with Hebrew *yôm ḥôl*.

Indeed, the evolution in the meaning of Hebrew *ḥôl* (< Sem. √*ḥll*; cf. Akk. *ellum*, "pure," Arab. *ḥalla*, "to untie, release, undo, clear, exonerate, etc.," but also *ḥalāl*, "[legally or religiously] permissible"), is probably the closest analogue to what is found here: in the Hebrew Bible the term means only "profane, common" in the sacred/profane bifurcation, that is, not marked as sacred; only in post-Biblical writings does the term come to approximate the Christian feria.

in the following example must be ruled out, since otherwise the forecast of an eclipse on the *ūmam rīqam* would have to be regarded as non-sensical:[176]

2.99. Protasis ⇒ *ālik ḫarrānim ḫarrānum ana ḫarrānim inaddīšu ūmūšu iriqqū* ***ina ūmim rīqim*** *nantallû* 'The expeditionary force will go from one campaign to another—its days will be idle; **for an uncertain date** (it forecasts) an eclipse' (*YOS* 10 11 i 14–21).

It is more likely that the adjective was intended to denote a temporal segment or date perceived as indeterminate, as does English "open" to describe a date not fixed; this nicely complements the implied vagueness of the army's peripatetic wanderings in the preceding forecast. In fact the phraseology of the latter forecast provides an important clue in support of this interpretation. One learns there that, in its roaming, the army is to remain idle (*ūmūšu iriqqū*), a turn of phrase whose literal sense is "its (i.e., the army's) days will be void (of action)." It is likely that the verb here, *râqum*/*riāqum*, was the trigger of the following prediction being designated for an undetermined (*rīqum*) date.

It thus seems likely that both *ūmam rīqam* and *rīqūssa* reflect *râqum*/*riāqum* and must precede forecasts whose precise time frame or, as is suggested below, other determinants, are not clearly defined and are thus uncertain.[177] Accordingly, in what follows the expression of *rīqum*/*rīqūssa* is understood as a label denoting an indeterminate or tentative ("open") day or date or, from a semiotics perspective, interpretative possibility.

Further support for the interpretation of *ūmam rīqam* denoting an indeterminate time may be mustered from a number of examples:

2.100. Protasis ⇒ *āl pāṭīka ibbalakkatka* ***rīqūssa*** *kakki bartim* 'A town of your environs will revolt against you; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): (it forecasts) a Weapon of Revolt' (*YOS* 10 15:9–11).

2.101. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum mātam ušadda* ***rīqūssa*** *miqitti bēl niqîm* 'The enemy will put the land in ruins; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): (it forecasts) the downfall of the one providing the (sheep) offering' (*YOS* 10 26 i 8–9).

176 For this reason the translation in *CAD* A/2, 508 for the line, "eclipse on a *ferial* day" (emphasis mine), obfuscates the problem.

177 This understanding admittedly approaches the implicit sense commonly assumed. Perhaps only the suggestion in Nougayrol 1946: 61 to connect these temporal distinctions with that of the later *adannum* rests outside the general consensus.

2.102. Protasis ⇒ [*nakrum ina l*]*ibbi mātim*[178] *gišimmarī ša bītāt ilānī itta*[*nakki*]*s-*⌜*ma*?⌝[*ana išāti in*]*addi*[179] ***ūmam rīqa*** *ṭēm awīlim imaqqut* '[*The enemy in*] the midst of the land will repeatedly cut down the date-palms of the temples *and* throw (them) [into *a fire*]; **for an uncertain date**: a man will become *depressed* (*YOS* 10 17:4).

Whether the subject matter of the initial forecast in a case like ex. 2.102 reflects a historical reality is doubtful. However, what is plain is that such a forecast represents a more immediate or more primary concern than the predictions that follow. For instance, the initial interpretation in ex. 2.103 is predicated on the association between a hole and death, and its application is owed to the common relation between the Path (*padānum*) and a campaign (*ḫarrānum*):

2.103. *šumma* [*in*]*a libbi padānim ša imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlum ina ḫarrān illaku imarraṣ-ma imât* [***ū***]***mam r***[***īq***]***am*** *mūt ilīšu awīlum imât* 'If a hole was situated in the midst of the Path of the right ⇒ the man will get sick as he sets out on a campaign[180] and consequently die; **for an uncertain date**: a man will die a death (decreed) by his god'[181] (*YOS* 10 18:56).

Why or how this omen's protasis relates to the case of a non-campaigner in its secondary application is less clear. In keeping with the *šīlum* ↔ *mūtum* association, death is predicted for the man in this option, too. But this is described in more opaque terms (*mūt ilim*), something that must owe to the lack of qualification concerning the forecast's subject (i.e., no mention of a campaign). One must conclude that this was the motivation behind the inclusion of the second prediction under the "uncertain date" label.

A similar picture appears in the case of the following example, in which the initial forecast, with its second-person subject, presents again a more defined scenario than does the second. The primary prediction is qualified once more as applying to a campaign (*ḫarrānum*), thus matching the protasis' subject (*padānum*):

178 Emendation: *ma-tim-*<<*e*>>. Or is this perhaps a poorly written giš?

179 Collation and suggested restoration courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

180 For the reference by the relative clause to the journey, not the man, see the discussion of this omen as ex. 4.87, l. 56 below.

181 For recent if different opinions on the sense of this phrase, see Fincke 2013; Attinger 2014.

2.104. [*šumma padān*]*u ana kakki itūr* ⇒ *šum<ma> ḫarrānam tallak nakram tad*[*âk*] ***ūma rīqa*** *mīli irt*[*im*] '[If the] Path turned to the Weapon ⇒ if you are going on a campaign: you will defeat the enemy; **for an uncertain date**: (it forecasts) success' (AO 7028:1 [1–2]).

It may be that this example's initial forecast of victory combined with its egocentric perspective to fuel further interpretive speculation. If so, the forecast of pride could represent an extension from the main concern of the omen's interpretation and its reliance on the *padānum* ↔ *ḫarrānum* association. This possibility would also shed light on that forecast's uncertain date, which here too marks a forecast unqualified by the aforementioned hermeneutic.

For ex. 2.105, the association between the protasis and first prediction seems transparent:

2.105. *šumma ina bāb ekallim šīrum parik* ⇒ *nakrum abullam iddil* ***ūmam rīqam*** *kurrum iššaqqal*[182] 'If in the Palace Gate a fleshy membrane was lying crosswise ⇒ the enemy will lock the city gate; **for an uncertain date**: the *kor*-measurement will be weighed' (*YOS* 10 24:32).

The observation of a fleshy membrane blocking the Palace Gate prefigures the enemy's locking of the city gate. The weighing of the *kor*-measurement represents a secondary interpretation of the omen's primary concern; its subject is only indirectly associated with the variables described. But its inclusion under the "uncertain date" label is understandable in this context: at an undetermined point, and as a result of the actualization of the first forecast, economic woes are predicted.[183]

Other uncertain predictions include similar vaguely worded and even stereotypical predictions, such as a Weapon of Revolt,[184] the downfall of the

182 Emendation: *i-iš*^{ri}(ŠA)-*ša-qá-al* or *i-<<ša>>-ša-qá-al* (so *CAD* K, 565).

183 As Jeyes 1989: 141–2 observes, the precise sense of this and related forecasts remains elusive, such that the possibility that this case refers to "a disastrous shortage within a besieged city" (ibid.: 141) seems unlikely. It may be that a statement as that appearing here highlighting limited resources had assumed a stereotypical sense, and stood in contrast with others that stressed a boundless agricultural yield (e.g., *kurru uktammar*, "the *kor*-measurement will be heaped up"; see Heeßel 2012a: 229). The assumption of a historical background for either scenario seems unwise.

184 *YOS* 10 15:9–11 (see ex. 2.100 above).

omen's client,[185] famine,[186] an attack (probably of locusts),[187] a reign's end,[188] and so on. This reality was presumably what led Jeyes to observe that predictions that follow the *ūmam rīqam* / *rīqūssa* expressions typically "consist of a generalized statement."[189]

However, in some instances the predictions following these do not seem more general than their previous counterparts. Secondary predictions may describe scenarios that must be regarded as being either no more (ex. 2.108) or even less (exx. 2.106–2.107) general or standardized than their counterparts. With these it seems that the ultimate question is not one concerned with the degree of generality but rather the extent to which these forecasts stand outside the realm covered by the omens' standard hermeneutics. In this light temporal uncertainty represents but one of several possible factors that might merit a label of "unclear":

2.106. *šumma imitti ḫašî u šum*[*ēl*] *ḫašî turrukat* ⇒ *šamûm rabbīt*[*um*][190] *izannan* ***ūmam rīqam*** *šarrum māssu mar*[*ušt*]*am ukall*[*a*]*m* 'If the lung was dark on the right and left ⇒ heavy rain will come down; **for an uncertain date**: the king will show his land hardship' (*YOS* 10 36 i 8–11).

2.107. [*šumma ina warki na*]*ṣraptim ša imittim ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ [*šamûm* (...) *iza*]*nnun* ***ūmam rīqam*** *naṣirti awīlim uṣṣi* '[If] *ziḫḫu* was situated [in the back] of the Crucible of the right ⇒ it will (...) rain; **for an uncertain date**: the man's treasure will disappear' (MAH 15994:31–32).

2.108. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum* ...[...] *izabbil būlī ilum ikkal* ***ūmam rīqa***[***m*** *nak*]*rum ina ḫalṣīka*[191] *šallatam ušeṣṣe* 'The enemy will carry off ...[...]; (or) pestilence (lit., the god) will consume the herds; (or) **for an uncertain date**: the enemy will take out plunder from your fortress' (*YOS* 10 20:15).

For both exx. 2.106–2.107, it is notable that the first forecast, in each case predicting rain, follows well-established associations between a zone's darkness (*tarākum*) or the presence of *ziḫḫu* and rain. By contrast, what appears in the

185 *YOS* 10 26 i 8–9.

186 See *YOS* 10 33 i 10–11, reading [*s*]*unqum* (so *CAD* S, 385), contra Jeyes 1989: 45.

187 VAT 4102:3 (cf. // *BLO* 76:3–4).

188 CMAA030–C0001 ob. 29–30.

189 Jeyes 1989: 45.

190 For this reading, see *CAD* R, 15, 17, after Mayer 1994: 117.

191 Text: *ḫal*^{al}*-ṣi-ka*.

secondary forecasts, especially when compared to their primary counterparts, cannot be described as flowing naturally from the respective protases on the basis of hermeneutics. The idea that a king should instigate difficulty for his own land (ex. 2.106) runs counterintuitive to both common sense and, more importantly, the logic of the omens themselves. Its explanation can only be one that loosely parallels the first prediction: an agency of power (heavens // king) offers something that is unexpectedly negative (heavy rains // hardship). Similarly for ex. 2.107, the interpretation in the omen's second forecast approaches something of a parable: the markers predicting rain are taken to represent the idea of the exiting of something precious (lit., "treasure," *naṣirtum*; but note also the *naṣraptum* ↔ *naṣirtum* alliteration).

On the basis of these observations it is possible to refine the understanding of forecasts preceded by the *ūmam rīqam*/*rīqūssa* labels further. It is evident that the secondary forecasts following these expressions in exx. 2.106–2.108 are not more general than are their primary counterparts. Rather, in its own way each represents an abstraction of the meaning of the omen's primary sense, one determined to a lesser degree by the variables of the protasis and their conventional hermeneutic values. It appears that it was this less literal following of the casuistic law that consequently marked these interpretations as such.

To be sure, there are occurrences where the labels *ūmam rīqam*/*rīqūssa* do not adhere to either of the patterns just outlined. In fact, in a few instances forecasts following these seem to reflect less of an indeterminate or loose interpretation of the omen, or even an abstraction of the previous forecast, than other considerations entirely. In the case of ll. 44–46 of the following example, if the proposed restoration proves correct, one witnesses something like the zero-sum logic noted in some of the *šanûm šumšu* alternative predictions above (§ 2.1.3.4 [d]).

2.109. *YOS* 10 33 iv 42–46

42–43. *šumma ina imitti ubānim šīlum šakin ⇒ miqitti u*[*m*]*mānīka*
44–46. *šumma ina šumēl* [*ubān*]*im šīlum šakin ⇒ miqit*[*ti nakrim*] ***rīqūssa*** *awīlum b*[*i*]*blāt libbīšu qā*[*ssu*] *ikaššad*

42–43. 'If a hole was situated in the Finger's right ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of your army'
44–46. 'If a hole was situated in the Finger's left ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat *of the enemy*; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): the man will achieve his heart's desires.'

The forecast common to both entries in this passage—two sequential omens organized according to the right/left paradigm—is predicated on the relation between a hole in the Finger and the idea of defeat (*miqittum*), presumably as part of the interpretative association between piercedness and death. That the man described in the second forecast should achieve his heart's desires is, at first glance, an unexpected outcome for the findings reported in the protasis or even the opening forecast of military defeat. Here it appears that the *rīqūssa* label, having little to do with any indeterminate sense of the forecast itself, seems primarily involved with a clarification of a perceived ambiguity stemming from the extension (and application) of the omen's interpretation according to the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism related to the right/left paradigm (§ 3.3.1).[192]

In the following example it may be that *rīqūssa* precedes a prediction that may have been lifted from another context entirely (ex. 2.111), possibly on account of the alliteration (*ittaṭlū* ↔ *itallal*) in the two entries' protases:

2.110. *šumma kakki imittim šinā-ma it*[*taṭlū*] ⇒ *gabaraḫḫi ummānī*[*ya*] ***rīqūssa*** *nakrum ana salīmi*[*m*] *išapparakkum-ma issaḫḫar būlka iḫḫaz*[193] 'If (there were) two Weapons of the right and they faced one another ⇒ (it forecasts) a rebellion of [my] army; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): the enemy will ask you for a peace-agreement, but turn away and seize your cattle' (*YOS* 10 46 iv 11–15).

2.111. *šumma kakki imittim* <*ū*>*talla*[*l*][194] ⇒ *nakrum ana salīmim išapparakkum-ma issaḫḫar būlka izzib* 'If the Weapon of the right was suspended ⇒ the enemy will ask you for a peace-agreement, but turn away and desert your cattle' (*YOS* 10 43:8–12).

Indeed, it is important to recognize that an investigation of the *ūmam rīqam*/*rīqūssa* labels, as with other such formulae, must not overlook their context within the interpretative system in whose service they were employed.

192 On which, see, e.g., Starr 1983: 13; Guinan 1996.

193 There is no reason to assume that *i-ḫa-az* represents a corruption for *i-zi-ib* in the parallel omen *YOS* 10 43:12, pace *CAD* A/1, 183b; it is equally likely that these represent variants of a common tradition.

194 Text collated. The emendation of the verb as a Dt owes to this form's appearance elsewhere in the collections, e.g., *YOS* 10 20:7; 31 iv 32, as well as the more frequent attestations of the verb in the D; see *CAD* A/1, 330–1. A Gt form is also possible, though this is unattested in extispicy.

A reminder of this point comes from a comparison of two parallel traditions concerning the meaning of a filament's presence in the Palace Gate, preserved in the following two examples:

2.112. *šumma ina bāb ekallim qûm parik* ⇒ *agûm itebbeam eleppātim uṭebbe* ***rīqūssa*** *kišpū awīlam ṣabtū* 'If in the Palace Gate a filament lay crosswise ⇒ a wave will crest up and sink the boats; **its uncertain** (**interpretation**): witchcraft seizes the man' (*YOS* 10 26 i 34–35).

2.113. *YOS* 10 24:41–42

41. *šumma ina pāni bāb ekallim qûm parik* ⇒ *tībi šārim agûm itebbeamma eleppātim uṭebbe ina kakkim ummānum irrur-ma kakkīša itabbak*
42. *šumma ina pāni bāb ekallim qûm mar'um*[195] *parik* ⇒ *lumun libbim ašarēd ekallim nakrum ileqqe awīlam kišpū ṣabtū*

41. 'If in the front of the Palace Gate a filament lay crosswise ⇒ (there will be) a gust of wind (and/so?) the wave will crest up and sink the boats; in warfare: the army will become panic-striken and lay down its weapons'
42. 'If in the front of the Palace Gate a *thick* filament lay crosswise ⇒ (it predicts) sorrow; (or:) the enemy will take the first in rank of the palace; (or:) witchcraft will seize the man.'

The secondary prediction of ex. 2.112 appears in the same capacity in ex. 2.113 as well, but this occurs not in the parallel to ex. 2.112 (l. 41) but rather in the following omen (l. 42). The latter entry, in turn, does not appear in the former, much larger, OB *bāb ekallim* collection *YOS* 10 26.[196] Thus, it appears that one interpretation of a filament's presence in the Palace Gate, namely, the seizure of a man by witchcraft, is associated with two distinct observations in as many collections (i.e., *YOS* 10 24 and 26). An exploration into this matter, and specifically how the interpretation of witchcraft came to be marked as uncertain in ex. 2.112, proves instructive in this respect.

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195 I take the writing *mar-ḫu-um* as reflecting √*mr'*, "thick" (so *CAD* M/1, 281, 306), and not a *hapax* adjective from *marāḫum*, whose meaning is not established (*CAD* M/1, 265: "to allow to be[come] spoiled [?]"; cf. *AHw*, 608). See further n. 198 below.

196 It may be that *YOS* 10 26 i 33, the entry previous to ex. 2.112, represents a rough parallel to ex. 2.113, l. 42. Still, even if this were the case, the uncertain interpretation of ex. 2.112 must be accounted for.

The hermeneutic at work in exx. 2.112 and 2.113, l. 41 is that of a reversal in spatial orientation. The horizontality (*parik*) of the filament in the (upright) Palace Gate predicts the fate of the ships (ex. 2.112) as well as the army (ex. 2.113, l. 41). In the first option it is the verticality in the depiction of the storm's development (*tībi; itebbeam* [< *tebûm*, "to rise"]) that brings about the sinking of the ships; for extra measure this relationship is secured by the assonance between *tebûm* and *ṭebûm*. Likewise in the second scenario, where the image of weapons, presumably understood as previously raised for battle,[197] are predicted to be laid down, with the verb *tabākum* also reminiscent of *tebûm* in terms of sound. These predictions are therefore linked to the precise quality of the mark observed in the Palace Gate. By contrast, the second, *rīqūssa* prediction of ex. 2.112 regarding witchcraft no doubt relates on analogy with the association of seizure by encirclement with magic, although only loosely. The case in ex. 2.113, l. 42 is more difficult to explain, since, as noted, the understanding of *mar'um* there is not certain.[198]

It is safe to assume that a prediction of seizure by witchcraft does not represent the strict interpretation of the syntagm described in the protasis of exx. 2.112; 2.113, l. 41. Perhaps the idea of a filament's very presence in the Palace Gate was suggestive of seizure of the latter by the former, thus giving rise to the witchcraft prediction. However it was justified, the decision to incorporate the prediction of witchcraft in ex. 2.112 under the *rīqūssa* label betrays an awareness of this interpretation as somehow external to the omen's basic sense. It may be that this understanding owed itself to the fact that the forecast of witchraft was known as the accepted interpretation for a specific physiological reality or realities, perhaps even the written one of the parallel tradition known from ex. 2.113. Whatever the case, in its incorporation here this prediction exemplifies the use of the *ūmam rīqam* label in the service of the creation of a new omen interpretation generated from others already known.

2.1.4 *Joined with Asyndeton*

In ex. 2.113, l. 42 from the previous section, the forecast of seizure by witchcraft follows two other predictions, one of sorrow and the other of enemy action in the palace; yet none of these bears any marker of formal coordination. In

197 In keeping with the image commonly encountered in battle cries, e.g., *kakkīšunu tazaqqap*, "you lift up their weapons!" (Erra IV 33); *lū tebû lū zaqtū kakkūya*, "may my weapons be raised and sharp!" (VAB 4 82 ii 30 ff.).

198 Whatever its identity, a wordplay with the second prediction seems almost certain: the reference to an *ašarēdum* in the forecast evokes the common adj. *maḫrûm*, "first (in rank)," with which *mar'um* (writ. *marḫum*) must have resonated.

fact, this lack of formal coordination between alternative interpretations occurs in a number of examples already presented (e.g., exx. 2.24; 2.27; 2.43; 2.48; 2.79; 2.108; cf. 2.82; 2.88; also 2.196–2.198). These are said to be joined with asyndeton. Apodoses with asyndetically joined clauses feature two or, in one example, three, forecasts that are not formally connected, whether by conjunction or any of the other coordinating formulae surveyed above. Apodoses of this sort break down into two basic types: (1) those with two full forecasts and (2) those featuring a lemma or short general expression followed by a longer, main prediction.

2.1.4.1 Complex Apodoses with Asyndetically Joined Full Forecasts

The lack of explicit coordination between clauses challenges the identification of complex apodoses of this sort. Nonetheless, on the basis of context and, occasionally, parallel texts or traditions, their existence is beyond doubt. Thus, it may safely be said that the apodoses of several examples below are, upon comparison with parallel traditions (exx. 2.115; 2.117), comprised of separate ideas and clauses, each to be taken as an alternative interpretation to its counterpart(s). To take the first such pairing:

2.114. Protasis ⇒ *lumun libbim ibissûm*[199] ***ū*** *murṣum* '(It forecasts) sorrow; (**or:**) losses; **or**: disease' (*CUSAS* 18 10 i 21'–23' // *YOS* 10 31 iii 36–40).

2.115. Protasis ⇒ *lumun libbi* [***šanûm š***]***umša*** *ibissûm* [***šalšum*** (?)] ***šumša*** *murṣum* '(it forecasts) sorrow; **its** [**second**] **interpretation**: losses; **its** [***third***] **interpretation**: disease' (*YOS* 10 33 i 25–27 [= ex. 2.57]).

The complex apodosis from ex. 2.114 has a parallel in ex. 2.115, but, as discussed earlier, in the latter instance each of the three predictions is introduced by a variant of the *šanûm šumšu* formula. It stands to reason that the apodosis of ex. 2.114 be read as containing three separate outcomes as well. Admittedly, the protases of these examples are not related, and no self-evident hermeneutic presents itself in the case of ex. 2.114, where the entire omen is intact. It is possible that this terse, tripartite forecast had achieved some degree of autonomy independent of any particular ominous finding, and ex. 2.115 represents an attempt to explicate or break up with the aid of the coordinating formulae what was perceived as a difficult or bulky apodosis.

Whatever the outcome of this specific instance, the finding of additional cases of complex apodoses comprised of asyndetically joined alternatives

199 The *YOS* 10 31 version has: *i-bi-us-sú*.

finds support when these can be paired with parallel traditions. Such is the case in the following pair of examples:

2.116. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum palšat* ⇒ *šatammū ekallam imallalū kurusissu šamaššammī mātim ikkal* '(If) the Increase was punctured (with holes) ⇒ *šatammu*-officials will eat the palace clean; (**or**:) the *kurusissu*-rodent will consume the flax of the land' (*YOS* 10 35:29 // AO 7033:14–15 [= ex. 2.5, l. 29]).

2.117. [*šu*]*mma ina pūt ṣibtim šīlū sebet šaknū* ⇒ [*t*]*ibût kurusissim* 'If seven holes were situated in the front of the Increase ⇒ (it forecasts) an onslaught of the *kurusissu*-rodent' (*OBE* 10:64–65 [= ex. 2.6]).

Example 2.116 is itself known in duplicate from the collections *YOS* 10 35 and AO 7033—the ultimate entry in a gradation listing an ascending number of holes in the Increase (see §§ 2.1.2; 5.4.1.3.2). A comparison to another, more loosely related *ṣibtum* collection, *OBE* 10, secures the interpretation of the second clause in ex. 2.116 as an alternative to the first: here the final entry of the parallel holes-in-the-Increase passage assumes a different form, with the unusually high number of seven as opposed to the more abstract protasis of ex. 2.116 providing the ultimate-case scenario. The prediction of a *kurusissu*-rodent plague from ex. 2.117 is different from the version found in ex. 2.116, and one must presume that the latter instance reflects a different tradition (which in itself may represent a compilation of two distinct traditions). Nonetheless, in all likelihood the clauses in ex. 2.116 were not understood as having merged into a two-part forecast; rather, these were probably taken as alternative interpretations to the same omen.

Another instructive instance of the presence of asyndetically joined alternatives in an omen apodosis presents itself when one compares parallels among one of the historical omens. Memory of the legendary Kug-ba'u, the "alewife"-turned-queen of Early Dynastic Kiš,[200] survives in no less than seven omens from varying periods. The "historiette"[201] concerning her call appears as the second forecast of an omen reporting the unusual appearance of a Weapon within a hole in the gallbladder's right:

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200 See briefly Edzard 1980–1983: 299. My normalization of the PN here is merely conventional. On the difficulties in the reading and pronunciation of kug-^{d}BA.Ú, particularly in the third millennium and the OB period, see Marchesi 2002; Rubio 2010: 36–9. On the possible double entendre involving her occupation, see n. 205 below.

201 Borrowing the term proposed in Reiner 1974: 261.

2.118. *šumma ina imitti*[202] *martim ina libbi šīlim kakkum šakin* ⇒ *ummānī nakrum idâk-ma ittûya itebbû-ma nakram idukkū amūt Kubbaba*[203] *ša tibê šalamtum*[204] *qa*[*šat tāḫ*]*āzim* (^{giš}p[an$^{!}$ m]è$^{?}$) *muḫrī* 'If a Weapon was situated in the right of the gallbladder, in the middle of a puncture ⇒ the enemy will defeat my army but my neighbors will rise up and kill the enemy; (**or**: it is) the omen of Kug-ba'u, as (in) "Rise up, O corpse, receive the *bow of battle*!"' (*YOS* 10 46 v 10–14).

The first prediction correlates conventionally with the data in the protasis: the positive end to the described conflagration, with the king's allies (lit., "neighbors") subsequently defeating the enemy, corresponds to the unexpected auspicious finding of a Weapon within the inauspicious hole on one's own side (i.e., the right). That Kug-ba'u is recalled at this point has little to do with the preceding prediction; elsewhere (e.g., exx. 2.119–2.121 below) this tradition stands on its own. Its inclusion in ex. 2.118 possibly owes to a loose connection to the idea of an unlikely resurrection,[205] which, once achieved, would foster renewed war.

2.119. Protasis ⇒ *amūt Kubba*[*ba*[206]*sāb*]*ēti* [*tib*]*ê* ([ku]r) *šalamtum qašat* [*qabli* (murub$_4$)/*tāḫāzi* (mè)? *muḫ*]*rī* '(it is) the omen of Kug-ba'u, the alewife (as in): "Rise up, O corpse, receive the bow of [battle!]"' (*CUSAS* 18 27: r. 11'–12').

202 Text: *i-mi-tim*.

203 Text: *ku-ub-ba-bu-ú*.

204 With the new parallel in ex. 2.119 and the recurrence of *šalamtum* in the nominative, earlier struggles with the reading of this phrase (Finkel 1983–1984a: 12 n. 48; Jeyes 1989: 165) can be discounted.

205 In this respect the possibility seems likely that the awkward *ša tibê* owes to a drive for a paronomastic connection with *sābītum*, her occupation, appearing in exx. 2.119–2.121 (and note too the *tebûm* in the protasis of ex. 2.118). Together with the swipe at her sexuality elsewhere (see SAA 8 241:1–3), it is interesting to think about whether these omens convey a sense of the absurd about an alewife—with all this term's connotations (and cf. Steinkeller, *apud* Harris 1990: 222 n. 15)—who rose to save the land.

206 It is difficult to determine whether the writing of the PN here, *ku-up-pa-*[*x*], hints at a different pronounciation of the name. This passage comes from one of the Sealand omen collections recently published in George 2013: 129–227, which, as discussed above, are full of unusual writing conventions.

2.120. Protasis ⇒ *amūt Kubbaba sābīti ša tibê-ma* (zi-*ma*)[207] *qašta* (pan)[208] *muḫrī* '(It is) the omen of Kug-ba'u, the alewife, as (in): "rise up and receive the bow!"' (*BLO Pān tākalti* 15:60).

2.121. Protasis ⇒ *amūt Kubbaba sābīti ša tibê-ma* (zi-*ma*) *qašat* (SAL KUR)[209] *qabli muḫr*[*ī*] '(It is) the omen of Kug-ba'u, the alewife, as (in): "rise up and receive the bow of battle!"' (K 2722+:4, in *JCS* 29, 159).

In short, the availability of parallel traditions to cases such as exx. 2.116 and 2.118 facilitates their reading and the determination that their apodoses are comprised of asyndetically joined alternatives. As may be expected, however, those occasions where parallels can help sort out such matters represent the exception, not the rule. The majority of such omens have no extant duplicates, and consequently one must rely on internal analysis to isolate alleged individual predictions. Fortunately, some telltale traits aid in this task. As with secondary forecasts of explicitly marked types, two basic and interrelated conditions distinguish the subject of an unmarked alternative interpretation from that of its counterpart: (1) a topical independence of the two alternatives and (2) a roughly parallel hermeneutic for both options with respect to the accompanying protasis. Where these conditions are not met, it is unlikely that two asyndetically joined independent clauses in an omen's apodosis represent alternative interpretations. For example, it cannot be said that the initial gust of wind (*tībi šārim*) in ex. 2.113, l. 41 represents a distinct prediction from the cresting wave described in the following clause (*agûm itebbeam*). Instead, these clauses should be read as either correlative, namely, "(there will be) a gust of wind *and* the wave will crest," or consequential, namely, "(there will be) a gust of wind *and so* the wave will crest." Moreover, the description of the rising storm comprises only the first half of the first forecast, providing the scenario that leads up to the main matter of the first forecast: the descent of the boats. In other words, the wind and waves constitute a part of the first forecast, not an alternative to it.

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207 Following the reading proposed in *CAD* Q, 149; Koch-Westenholz 2000: 401 opts to take the sign following zi as a badly written determinative: zi ^{giš}ban.

208 See *CAD* Q, 149 for collation by C. Walker; pace Koch-Westenholz 2000: 401: *ša* zi giš$^{!}$.ban.

209 Starr 1979: 159–60 notes that the signs can be read as *šal-mat* or *qa*$^{!}$*-šat*, though he does not come down on the side of either. While it does not call for emendation, the former possibility seems unlikely. In exx. 2.118 and 2.119, where *šalamtum* appears, it is not in the absolute state. Further, in these examples the preceding imperative *tibê* is not followed by a coordinating *–ma*; the opposite is the case here.

On the other hand, additional examples of complex apodoses appear to be comprised of mutually exclusive forecasts joined asyndetically. By contrast with what was observed concerning ex. 2.113, l. 41 above, the apodoses of these examples do not seem to be consequentially or even correlatively related. These appear to satisfy the conditions set out above, with the individual predictions able to stand independently of one another, and with each pair of predictions employing similar hermeneutic strategies.

For instance, common to the possibilities of an attack by a lion or a man's slicing of his own finger in ex. 2.122 is a notion of bodily injury, the result of which was likely anticipated by the observation of a hole in the Palace Gate. The independence of these predictions is highlighted via ex. 2.123, in which two sequential omens describing holes in the Palace Gate predict the attack of a lion and the prick of a thorn, respectively.[210] In all probability, then, each of the clauses in ex. 2.122 is intended as exclusive of the other:

2.122. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim šīlum nadi ⇒ šiḫiṭ nēšim awīlum ina mākalim ubāššu ilappat* 'If a hole was situated in the heart of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) an attack of a lion; (**or**:) a man will hurt his finger with a knife'[211] (*TIM* 9 80:40).

2.123. *YOS* 10 26 ii 30–31

30. Protasis ⇒ *šiḫiṭ nēšim*
31. Protasis ⇒ *miḫiṣ ṣillîm*

30. '(It forecasts) an attack of a lion'
31. '(It forecasts) the prick of a needle.'

In addition, in the following example, the initial forecast of heavy snow bears no relation to the following one concerning regicide, yet both describe situations for which the result is both severe and counterintuitive (i.e., precipitation detrimental for barley; hometown unsafe for king). This line of reasoning seems in keeping with the protasis, which describes a doubly strong force (two Weapons) that is counterintuitive in its orientation (facing the Palace Gate from the rear):

210 And cf. § 4.1.2.2 on ex. 4.43.

211 For *mākalum* as "knife," see Durand 1989: 19.

2.124. *šumma warkat amūtim šinā kakkū šaknū-ma libbi bāb ekallim iṭṭulū ⇒ šalgu še'am imaḫḫaṣ šarram ina libbi ālīšu idukkūšu* 'If two Weapons were situated behind the liver and they faced the Palace Gate ⇒ snow will ruin the barley; (**or:**) they will kill the king in the middle of his town' (Schileico A:1–6).

At times one detects two different hermeneutic associations mediating between the omen's protasis and each of the variant predictions. The pairing of predictions for an eclipse and a notable person's demise is attested widely, but typically the two are explicitly marked as alternatives (see § 2.1.3.4 (a)). Still, it is all but certain that the two forecasts in the following example, though unmarked, are intended in the same manner:

2.125. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum tarkat ⇒ namtallû miqitti wedî* '(If) the Increase was dark ⇒ (it forecasts) an eclipse; (**or:**) the downfall of a famous person' (*YOS* 10 35:30 // AO 7033:16 cf. *YOS* 10 11 iii 13–17).

A more complex picture presents itself in the following example:

2.126. *šumma ṭulīmum ziqtī sāmūtim mali ⇒ ummānātī ina ṣērim ṣūmum iṣabbat še'am samānum iṣabbat* 'If the spleen was full of red pocks ⇒ thirst will seize the troops in the hinterland; (**or:**) *samānu*-disease will seize the barley' (BM 22694:22–23).

Already both predictions in this entry rely on paronomastic connections between the (color of the) sign (*ziqtī sāmūtim*, "red pocks,") and the signified (*ṣūmum*, "thirst"; *samānum*, "*samānu*-disease").[212] But the forecast of the barley's *samānu*-disease adds the dimension of color to the mix, relating this term to the red pocks in the protasis on the basis of its assumed etymology.[213] Whether it was on the basis of this double connection that the prediction of *samānu*-disease could not be resisted cannot be said for certain. Whatever the case, it is clear that neither a correlative nor a consequential relationship with the first predition can explain its inclusion in this entry.

In the following example, it is true that the two clauses making up the apodosis can be understood as either correlative or consequential:

212 Noted as well by Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 48.

213 For the native etymological analysis of *samānum* < *sâmum*, "to be red," see Finkel 1998: 72.

2.127. (*šumma*) *šittā ṣibātum irtadiā* ⇒ *makkūr awīlim īṣum ana mādi itâr awīlum ana pānīšu imaṣṣi* '(If) two Increases lay adjacent to one another ⇒ the man's scanty property will become plentiful; (**or:**) the man will become prosperous' (AO 7033:1–2 // *YOS* 10 35:21).

Still the probability that (a) the second clause should be formally uncoordinated with the first, especially if the consequential sense were intended, and that (b) both have *awīlum* as their subject (as opposed to the pronoun *šū*) seems low. More likely these too represent mutually exclusive statements, approaching the meaning of two Increases in different ways.

Finally, the notice of divine abandonment as a consequence of the abandonment of the city gate in the following example is, theologically speaking, unexpected:[214]

2.128. [*šumma*] *ṣēr ubānim šalāštūšunu rubū'ā puṭṭurū* ⇒ [*maṣṣ*]*arātum uḫtabbatā-ma abu*[*llum a*]*rbūtam* [*ill*]*ak ilū mātam i*[*zzib*]*ūši* '[If] the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them[215]—were split four ways ⇒ the guards will be scattered and so the city gate will go to ruins;[216] (**or:**) the gods will abandon the land' (*YOS* 10 33 v 31–33).

A correlative sense is possible, but on account of the disparity in subject matter and sphere (humans/terrestrial; deities/celestial), the two clauses still read as essentially independent of one another, with two separate but parallel recipes for disaster, each applying to a different realm.

Not infrequently, alternative predictions in asyndetically formulated apodoses are geared toward specific persons or situations. This manner of qualification calls to mind cases of the *ana* + NP construction discussed above (§ 2.1.3.3), which single out subjects such as persons or situations (e.g., the

214 Such a reading would seem to contrast with basic Mesopotamian theology, which generally attributes divine alienation not to human behavior but rather to the whim of the gods. This is true for the case for the Sumerian city laments and even the Curse of Agade (Cooper 1983: 29–30), in which this theme plays a prominent role.

215 On this translation and the reading of *ša-la-aš*-TAM-*šu-nu*, see n. 149 on ex. 5.148 (§ 5.4.1.3.1).

216 The reading and translation of the first forecast agrees with *CAD* M/1, 334, which rejects the earlier reading offered in *CAD* H, 10: [*m*]*a-ra-tum uḫ-ta-ab-ba-ta-ma abu*[*šina*] *arbūtam illak*, "the daughters will be abducted and their father will become a fugitive." The latter image is unknown in the omen collections, while concern over garrisons and guards is common in this literature, recurring in fact in *YOS* 10 33 v 20–21, 39–41 (= ex. 2.130), just a few lines above and below the present entry.

infirm, military campaigns) for which an alternative interpretation was applicable. In those instances, however, it was the *ana* + NP construction that delineated the scope of a given forecast and marked it as distinct; by contrast, no such signposts present themselves here. Still, in a few instances the line between asyndetically joined apodoses and those of the marked variety seems rather fine indeed.[217] In the following examples, it is not difficult to appreciate how the second prediction applies only for a particular, explicitly delineated case:

2.129. Protasis ⇒ *mīlum gapšum illakam marṣu murussu išanniaššu* 'An overbearing (seasonal) flood will come; (**or**: for) the infirm—the illness will *derange* him'[218] (*YOS* 10 25:58').

2.130. Protasis ⇒ *ana kakki arbūtum šarrum <m>aṣ<ṣa>rātīšu ipaṭṭaram* 'For warfare: (it is) a rout; (**or**:) the king will vacate his garrisons' (*YOS* 10 33 v 39–41 [= ex. 2.52]).

2.131. Protasis ⇒ *ālum ša ana lawêšu tallaku innaddī-ma*[219] *ittaṣṣi nipḫu pûm lā kīnum marṣu imât* 'The city to which you are heading to lay siege will be abandoned and (its people) will come out (**or**: it is) a *nipḫu*-prediction, (which is) an unreliable (omen) statement; (**or**: for) the infirm—he will die' (*KAR* 150:7–8).

2.132. Protasis ⇒ *awīlum ṣummurāt uṣammaru qāssu ikašša*[*d āl*]*i lawiāt* [*an*]*a libbīšu terrub* 'The man will attain all to which he strives; (**or**: concerning) the city which you are besieging—you will enter into its midst' (*YOS* 10 9:15–18).

The preposed topic of the second clause in ex. 2.129, *marṣum* ("the infirm"), in the expected nominative, is functionally identical to the expression *ana marṣim* ("for the infirm") in several examples surveyed above (see § 2.1.3.3). Here the idea of an overbearing natural calamity in the first forecast fits nicely with that of an illness overtaking its patient in the second. It may be that, with

217 So Bottéro 1974: 181.

218 On the need for a transitive meaning for this verb in the present forecast, see n. 157 to ex. 2.89.

219 Text: *i-na-ad-di-ma*, which permits the taking of the form as a G (*CAD* L, 74; N/1, 77) or an N (A/2, 370); the latter seems preferable here, though note the apodosis of *YOS* 10 41:43–44 (= ex. 3.2), in which a forecast close to this one has *nadûm* in the G.

the aid of the preposed subject, the sense of the former scenario was extended so as to apply to that of the latter. Another example of this use of topicalization presents itself in ex. 2.132, where the reference to a second person ("you") in the second forecast may reflect an extispicy taken during a siege[220] or, more likely, the application of the fulfillment-of-the-desire motif to the possibility of the king's siege of an enemy town (see below § 2.1.4.2.7).

Similarly, predictions beginning with *ina kakkim*, "in warfare," as in the case of the following three examples, may in fact represent no more than a variant of *ana kakkim*, one of the *ana* + NP constructions discussed above:

2.133. Protasis ⇒ *ina kakkim tēšûm ana marṣi tēšê mūtim imaqqutaššum-ma imât* 'In warfare: (there will be) chaos; (**or**:) for the infirm: the chaos of death will fall upon him and he will die' (*YOS* 10 17:43 [= ex. 2.43]).

2.134. Protasis ⇒ *ugbabtum uštaḫḫa ina kakki ḫimṣāt nakrīka takkal* 'The *ugbabtu*-priestess will be defiled; (**or**:) in warfare: you will consume your enemy's plunder' (AO 9066:40–43).

2.135. *šumma naplaštum rēssa ipṭur ⇒ ina rēš eqlim ummānam ilūša izzibūši ina kakkim miqitti ālik pāni ummānīya* 'If (concerning) the View, its head was split ⇒ in the (campaign's) destination: (concerning) the army—its gods will abandon it; (**or**:) in warfare: (it forecasts) the downfall of the vanguard of my troops' (*YOS* 10 11 ii 20–23).

Particularly intriguing among these cases is ex. 2.135, which provides a unique window on the implication of this type of subject-specific qualification. Here, in contrast to the first forecast, in which the mention of the army's destination (*rēš eqlim*; lit., "the head of the field") links that prediction with the protasis (*rēssa*), the more general qualification of *ina kakkim* in the second forecast does not offer a comparable associative possibility. The latter prediction's highlighting of the army's vanguard—the one who walks at the head (*ālik pānim*) of the troops—must derive from this difference. If correct, it would appear that the initial formulation of the second clause actually affects the (second) forecast itself, with mention of the vanguard compensating for the more indefinite *ina kakkim*—especially when compared with the parallel *ina rēš eqlim* from the first option. And, if unexpected initially, it must nonetheless be stressed that this active role of a subject-specific prediction certainly reflects generative thinking, which (re)configured the solution in the second interpretation so as

220 See Jeyes 1989: 44; Stol 2003.

to account for this lack of paronomastic association. It thus goes without saying that the apodosis of ex. 2.135 contains two mutually exclusive alternatives, intended for slightly varying target scenarios.

Finally, a word is in order about the relationship between asyndetically joined predictions and others coordinated formally, especially where these types occur in the same apodosis. Even a cursory look reveals that these were not necessarily construed as equals in the eyes of their authors; nor do they seem to have been utilized indiscriminately. Rather, one senses that particular types of coordination were occasionally employed for specific purposes and in particular settings. This observation implies that a defined sense existed for different coordinating methods, which raises the question of the extent of such systematization. Unfortunately a detailed investigation of this intriguing possibility, which would entail a full exposition of all interrelations among alternative interpretations in apodoses, lies beyond the scope of this study. Moreover, there are a number of instances for which a definitive statement about the relationship between two coordinators cannot be secured. Still, on occasion the appearance of a hierarchical ordering of predictions (as borne out by their methods of coordination) seems inescapable, as two examples below (exx. 2.137–2.138) readily attest.

In fact, the hierarchical ordering of interpretive possibilities in omen apodoses was already seen, for instance in the passage that reappears below as ex. 2.136. In this passage the first prediction in each entry, coordinated by the conjunction *ū lū*, differs substantially from the second. In the latter case the *šanûm šumšu* formula precedes an alternative prediction in each of the three entries that introduces an entirely new interpretation based on a hermeneutic association independent from the one that gave rise to the first forecast(s). By comparison, the alternative option offered within the first forecasts in the first and third entries[221] seems minor and, more importantly, contingent on the information that precedes it.[222] Thus, at least for this case the conjunction *ū lū* is employed in the coordination of alternatives that, by comparison with the entirely different *šanûm šumšu* alternatives, display modest differences:

221 On the *crux* in the middle omen, see § 2.1.3.4 (a) above.

222 Whether or not this reflects a late-stage conflation as hypothesized above (the parallel tradition to this example, *YOS* 10 17:49–51 [see ex. 2.72] supports this possibility) is irrelevant in this regard.

2.136. MAH 15874:1–9 (text a') // *YOS* 17:49–51 (= ex. 2.72)

1–3. // 49. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ (a' adds: *ina nišūt awīlim ū lū*) *ina aštapir bīt awīlim mamman imât* ***šanûm šumšu*** *namtalli barārtim*
4–6. // 50. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina aḫitti awīlim mamman imât* (a' adds: *ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar*) [***šanû***]***m šumšu*** *namtalli qablītim*
7–9. // 51. *šumma ina išdī naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina nišūt awīlim* (a' adds: *ū lū ina aštapir awīlim*) *mamman imât* ***šanûm šumšu*** *namtalli šāturrim*

1–3. // 49. 'If a hole was situated in the View's head in the right ⇒ someone will die from among (a' adds: the man's family or from among) the servants of the man's household; **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the dusk watch'
4–6. // 50. 'If a hole was situated in the View's middle in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's dependents (a' adds: or: the river will … the man); **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the midnight watch'
7–9. // 51. 'If a hole was situated in the View's base in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's family (a' adds: or from among the servants of the man's <household>); **its second interpretation**: (it is) an eclipse in the dawn watch.'

Elsewhere, however, one finds other markers, including the *ū lū* conjunction or the *ana* + NP construction, delineating interpretations that seem more divergent with respect to others asyndetically joined. A case in point presents itself in the following example:

2.137. Protasis ⇒ *nārum issekker-ma mûša ibbalū erṣetam ilūša izzibūši mātum ḫarbūtam illak* ***ū lū*** *palûm inakker* 'The canal will become dammed up and its waters will dry up; (**or**:) the gods of the land will abandon it; the nation will go to ruins; **or:** the dynasty will change' (*YOS* 10 5:1–10).

The forecasts describing the land's imminent desolation in this passage differ qualitatively and formally from the following prediction of dynastic change, the latter introduced explicitly by the conjunction *ū lū*. The former scenarios call to mind ex. 2.129 above, in which oracles of impending disaster were also conveyed for both the heavenly and earthly spheres. In the present instance

this terrestrial/celestial juxtaposition is even more striking, imparting a sense of divine immanence by way of an artful word play (note the assonant pair *mûša* ↔ *ilūša* and the pairing of the 3mp forms *ibbalū* ↔ *izzibū*). In a manner analogous to what was noted concerning ex. 2.129, it is possible that the predictions of drought and divine abandonment in this case were also understood as correlative ideas, though here too these must be taken as originally independent (with priority given to the second statement). Yet an awareness of the drought/divine-abandonment parallel underscores their mutual disparity from the final forecast, which predicts a political revolution. Perhaps this difference accounts for the formal coordination of this latter option.

A stronger case for this type of differentiation among alternative interpretations is evident in the following example, where, following three asyndetically joined predictions, a fourth is explicitly marked as applying "for a commoner" (*ana muškēnim*):

2.138. *šumma naplaštum ana erbe*(*t*)[223] *puṭṭurat* ⇒ *ina bīt ilim asakkum innakkal ēnum uštaḫḫa šarrum ṣalma ippuš-ma šanûm ušerreb* ***ana muškēnim*** *imât-ma* [*b*]*īssu issappaḫ* 'If the View (ditto and [?]) was split up into four (parts) ⇒ a taboo will be infringed in a temple; (**or**:) an *ēn*(*t*)*u*-priestess will be defiled; (**or**:) the king will fashion a statue but someone else will introduce (it into the temple); (**or**) **for a commoner**: he will die and his household will be scattered' (AO 9066:47–53 [= ex. 2.48]).

Each of the first three predictions concerns some form of cult-related transgression by either the temple or palace. Therefore, the application of the omen to a commoner in the fourth prediction represents a shift in focus. Arguably it was the quartered occurrence of the View that inspired the idea of four predictions in this complex apodosis. It is possible that in its current form the apodosis represents either a conflation of two separate sources or, more simply, an extension of the apodosis' tripartite structure so as to provide a message on a par with the findings reported in the protasis. In any event, what is noteworthy is the manner by which form balances subject: in contrast to the first three predictions, the extension to the commoner in the fourth forecast is explicitly marked as such.

223 Text: 4. The options given represent the absolute masculine (*erbe*) and feminine (*erbet*; also *erbetti*) forms, though which is fitting here is difficult to say without a clear antecedent ("parts").

2.1.4.2 Lemma: Longer Interpretation

A second apodosis type exhibits the juxtaposition of two uncoordinated clauses. Apodoses in this type are comprised of short expressions[224] followed by longer and more detailed predictions. Omens with these apodoses thus follow the form

X ⇒ Y; Z

where X represents the protasis of a given omen, Y the short expression, and Z the longer and more detailed prediction. The initial expressions Y are frequently comprised of no more than a single word, always a noun and often a substantive. In the remaining cases these appear as two-word phrases, almost invariably taking the form of a genitive chain.[225]

In some cases, however, these single- and two-word expressions stand alone as the sole interpretation for the given omens in which they occur:

2.139. Protasis ⇒ ***šēp ubārim*** '(It is) **the foot-mark** (**which signifies**) **an alien** (**force** [?])' (*YOS* 10 27:4–5).

2.140. Protasis ⇒ ***nipḫum*** '(It is) a ***nipḫu***-prediction' (*CT* 44 37 r. 19).

2.141. Protasis ⇒ *ina kakkim* ***tēšûm*** *ana marṣi tēšê mūtim imaqqutaššum-ma imât* 'In warfare: (there will be) **chaos**; (or:) for the infirm: the chaos of death will fall upon him and he will die' (*YOS* 10 17:43 [= exx. 2.43, 2.133]).

2.142. Protasis ⇒ [***t***]***ašnintum*** '(It predicts:) **combat**' (*YOS* 10 42 ii 48).

Additionally, in a few instances these expressions occur as the explicitly marked secondary or tentative predictions of particular entries. In other instances short expressions resembling the ones listed above appear as the primary forecasts in complex apodoses, between predictions bearing one of the formulae studied above:

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224 For a somewhat comparable grouping of terms from the OB lecanomancy corpus, see the so-called "Allgemeine Aussagen" in Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* I: 188–93, 205–8.

225 But cf. *ARM* 26/1 3:3–6 (= exx. 2.35, 2.148).

2.143. Protasis ⇒ *ṭūb libbi šubtum nēḫtum šanû šumšu* ***nēkemtum*** '(It forecasts) well being: a secure dwelling; its second interpretation: (it forecasts a:) **loss**' (*YOS* 10 20:7 [= ex. 2.88]).

2.144. Protasis ⇒ *āl pāṭīka ibbalakkatka rīqūssa* ***kakki bartim*** 'A town in your outskirts will rebel against you; its uncertain (interpretation): (it is) **a Weapon-mark** (which signifies) **revolt**' (*YOS* 10 15:9–11).

2.145. Protasis ⇒ ***taGriātum*** *šanûm šumšu pisiltum* '(It forecasts) ***hostilities***; its second interpretation: (it is) a disqualified (omen)' (AO 9066:35–39 [= ex. 2.91]).

Further, there exist other such single-word (e.g., *pisiltum, pitruštum, šulmum*) or construct (e.g., *manzāz* + DN) forecasts in OB omen extispicy apodoses that appear in scholarly literature alongside those terms comprising the constituents of the group Y under consideration here,[226] but whose investigation is omitted below. The reasoning for this owes to formal considerations: the present study concerns only those occasions that adhere to the X ⇒ Y; Z form presented above. Thus, statements following the *manzāz* + DN form and declaring the presence of a particular deity, while intriguing in terms of their theological implications, are unknown from extispicy as precursors to further qualification;[227] for this reason these expressions are not dealt with below.

From a formal standpoint, these examples do not differ from those instances in which short expressions appear either alone in simple apodoses or as alternative interpretations in complex apodoses, marked by some form of explicit coordination; as such their analysis belongs in the sections concerning such matters (§§ 2.1.1; 2.1.3.1), where in fact they have received due consideration. It may well be the case that future discovery will demand reassessment of a given expression previously unknown in extispicy, either entirely or as part of an apodosis following the X ⇒ Y; Z form.

For the time being, what is of interest among these short expressions is what remains: those comprising a component of the apodoses in which they appear

226 E.g., Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* 1: 205–8; Richter 1994: 241–4.

227 Over against the case in OB lecanomancy collections, e.g.:

"Protasis ⇒ ***manzāz*** *Šamaš* (^{d}utu) *erišti šamšim* (*ša-am-ši-im*) '(It forecasts) **the presence** of *Šamaš* (which represents:) a request for a sun disk' (Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*, 1:59 [OB lecanomancy]).

Protasis ⇒ ***manzāz*** *Ea*/*Sîn erišti nārim* '(It forecasts) **the presence** of *Ea*/*Sîn* (which represents:) a request for a canal' (Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung*, 1:61 [OB lecanomancy])."

and whose asyndetic connection to the following, more detailed forecasts demands study within the framework of the omen collections' organization. Within this framework, the pertinent questions about a given short expression Y involve its relationships with the preceding protasis X, as well as with the following, longer prediction Z. The following examination suggests that statements of the Y type had achieved a standing of lemmata, prefixing the following longer forecasts Z and anticipating their sense. The findings below indicate that these lemmata were employed in the creation of omen interpretations, and as such comprise an aspect of generative expression. Moreover, these are demonstrated to occur in contexts different from those of their original entries (see especially §§ 2.1.4.2.3; 2.1.4.2.5–2.1.4.2.6 below); in such contexts these established a certain autonomy in terms of meaning, which apparently invited further interpretive speculation and prompted further creativity. In other words, these short expressions, once employed as lemmata in complex omen apodoses, became themselves the recipients of interpretation.

Of course any discussion of a given short expression's derived or specialized sense demands a consideration of the expression's origin and development. In order to understand the newfound relations of these lemmata to the longer forecasts that follow, it is first necessary to look into their background. However, as even a cursory investigation of the evidence makes plain, no single explanation encompasses the development of every term Y, nor of its appearance in these complex apodoses. To the contrary, different paths appear to account for the occurrences of particular lemmata in given examples.

Perhaps the most obviously relevant examples are those that adhere to anticipated hermeneutic associations or principles. Lemmata in this group are mainly comprised of those constructs whose *nomen regens* bears the same name as one of the better-known ominous marks of extispicy that is actually specified in the corresponding protasis. The position of such lemmata, between the protasis and its full-blown interpretation, seems to bridge the metonymic sense of that mark with its non-metonymic signification. Thus, for instance, short expressions concerning specific "requests," s. *erištum* (in construct, *erišti* + NP), appear in omens whose protases mention the mark by the same name and whose following longer predictions elaborate on the desired item (§ 2.1.4.2.1). Similarly, short expressions concerning Weapons, s. *kakkum* (in construct, *kakki* + NP), occur on occasion as the intermediaries between protases bearing this mark and longer interpretations that ostensibly clarify the preceding lemmata:[228]

228 Short expressions mentioning *kakkum* are treated in Richter 1994: 239 n. 83 and 241 n. 87, where a detailed collection of the *kakki* + NP and *šēp* + NP constructions also appears.

2.146. *šumma ina išdī naplaštim ina šumēlim kakkum šakin-ma bāb ekallim iṭṭul* ⇒ ***kakki bartim***[229] *nabalkatti ālim* 'If in the base of the View in the left a Weapon was situated and it faced the Palace Gate ⇒ (it represents) **a Weapon of Revolt**: (it means) a revolt of the city' (*YOS* 10 15:3–4).

2.147. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim kakkum nadī-ma martam iṭṭul* ⇒ ***kak rīṣi*** *ilum rēṣūt awīlim illak* 'If in the head of the View a Weapon was set and it faced the gallbladder ⇒ (it represents) **a Weapon of Help**: the god will go to the man's aid' (AO 9066:7–11 // *YOS* 10 17:17).

Still, on occasion one encounters different hermeneutic associations mediating between protasis and an apodosis's lemma. For example, paranomastic factors appear to contribute to the heraldry of the following omen's interpretation as a great loss (*nēkemtum rabītum; ušamqit* ↔ *nēkemtum*):

2.148. *šumma padānum ana imittim u šumēlim ušamqit* ⇒ ***nēkemtum rabītum*** *[n]akrum išaḫḫiṭ-ma būlam ittabbal šumma mīlum imallā-ma ebūr [mā]tim ileqqe u šumma ana marṣ[i]m imât* 'If the Path dropped way down to the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) **great loss**: the enemy will raid (your land) and take away the herds; (or) if the seasonal flood fills up (then [?]) it will carry off the standing crop of the land; or if (it is) for the infirm: he will die' (*ARM* 26/1 3:3–6 [= ex. 2.35]).

While a connection between the notion of descent on the one hand and loss or plundering on the other is attested in divination literature, typically the mention of a *nēkemtum* in an apodosis appears where the predicate of the corresponding protasis describes said descent with *ekēmum*. By contrast, the verb found here, *šumqutum*, "to drop, fall way down,"[230] appears in the entries just

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Surprisingly, *šēp* + NP expressions always appear as part of longer descriptive forecasts, never as part of Y in the X ⇒ Y; Z form under consideration here; consequently, they are not a subject of study below. By contrast, as examples exx. 2.146–2.147 make plain, one does encounter omens whose apodoses start with lemmata mentioning particular weapon-marks and then follow with a second, more descriptive forecast. In fact, Richter 1994: 244–6 identifies specific conditions prompting certain *kakki* + NP expressions. If true, this finding would further buttress these expressions' standing as lemmata, adding yet another example of the preplanning involved in the composition of the omens.

229 Text: *ba-ar*^{i}(šI)-*tim*; see *CAD* B, 114; Richter 1994: 227.

230 Here, as well as in the preceding and following entries in this collection, the verb must be taken as intransitive, likely in an elative sense, perhaps by analogy to *šupšuqum* (cf. *pušqu* in ll. 2, 7).

above and below this example as well, where it relates to a person's *pušqum*, "hardship." What prompted the qualification of loss with great (*rabītum*) is a curious matter, though perhaps this owes to the (unusually long) extent of the Path's descent. Whatever the case, it appears that the lemma served to link the protasis and the multiple full-length interpretations, integrating forecasts describing losses of different sorts in an uncomplicated and thus novel manner.

But the understanding of the role of these short expressions as intermediaries between a protasis and its interpretation does not apply in every case. For those short expressions consisting of a single word, for instance, the matter is more complicated, since for a good number of these there exists no mark by the same name, nor any obvious paronomastic connection. Moreover, not infrequently these comprise the *nomina actionis* of scenes depicted from apodoses in extispicy. In fact, in a couple of cases studied below (§§ 2.1.4.2.5–2.1.4.2.6) lemmata appear paronomastically related not to elements from the preceding protases but rather to those of the following, longer predictions: the expressions *millatum* and *tašnintum* herald forecasts whose predicates at times include the verbs *malālum* and *šanānum* from which these terms derive. And though a precise explanation for the development of these expressions and their employment in certain apodoses remains wanting, it is all but certain that in one way or another these correspond fundamentally with the following longer forecast, not the preceding protases.

It thus appears that there can be little hope of finding one overarching explanation to account for these short expressions, nor a single avenue that traces the manner by which these assumed their place in various omen apodoses. To the contrary, the analysis below points to different factors behind their inclusion in the interpretation of different omens. Yet despite the complex nature of this *Vorstufe*, or perhaps on account of it, it is the resemblance among the formulations of the lemmata comprising group Y as they appear in the X ⇒ Y; Z form that catches the eye and invites further inquiry. And indeed, the degree of standardization apparent in these short expressions, along with the belief that they reflect preconceived meanings within a technical or hermeneutic framework, has generated its fair share of interest; especially prominent in this respect has been the attention drawn by the mention of certain ominous marks and *termini technici*.[231]

But this ingenuity is not limited to the apodotic rendering of particular ominous marks (e.g., *kakkum; erištum*) or to the apparent technical sense of other expressions (e.g., *nipḫum*). Derived meanings of these sorts are evident in virtually every example where these short expressions appear. Indeed, it may be said that this is the hallmark of such lemmata. Moreover, as is suggested

231 See, e.g., Starr 1975; Richter 1994.

below, it is in their (re-)formulation according to the X ⇒ Y; Z form that some of these expressions became specialized in terms of meaning and, in turn, invited their own interpretation. The study of individual lemmata appearing within the X ⇒ Y; Z form illustrates this point plainly. It is to this effort that we now turn.

2.1.4.2.1 *erišti* + *Noun Phrase*

Short expressions describing particular requests figure among those whose *nomen regens*, here *erištum* ("request, demand"), bear a name identical to one of the marks that regularly appears in extispicy protases (i.e., *erištum*, "the Request-mark"). *Erištu*-expressions occur in apodoses of non-extispicy OB omens as well,[232] where not infrequently they follow statements declaring the presence of specific gods (*manzāz* DN, "presence of DN"), apparently as explanatory glosses on them.[233] Among extispicy omens, however, their situation is somewhat different.[234]

In extispicy, *erištu*-expressions are unattested as interpretative comments of previous statements, be they declarations of a given deity's presence or anything else. Rather, each appears to be the recipient of a following comment containing a forecast slightly longer than the *erištu*-expression itself. These longer forecasts appear to pick up on the topic of the request and to detail some point implicit in the *erištu*-expression itself. The position of *erištu*-expressions, sandwiched between the protases on the one hand and longer interpretations on the other, places them among other such lemmata and secures for them an integral part in the current investigation. Three cases where *erištu*-statements are followed by a longer forecast are discussed below. These offer an unusually penetrating look into the relationship between this lemma and the longer forecasts following it.

We begin with the following example, which, unlike the other cases, has no known parallel. Here one encounters in the apodosis the forecast "the enemy will demand a fortress of you" following the expression *erišti dūrim* ("a request of a fortress"):

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232 For two such examples, see n. 187 above.

233 See Winitzer 2010: 186–89.

234 In addition to the examples presented below, *erištu*-expressions appear in mostly broken contexts in *YOS* 10 33 iv 62–63 and *OBE* 1 r. 2.

2.149. [*šumma in*]*a maškan danāni erištum* ⇒ ***erišti dūr***[***i***] *nakrum dūram irriška* '[If] in the place of the Strength (was) a Request-mark ⇒ (it is) **a request of a fortress**: the enemy will request a fortress of you' (AO 7028: 16 [24–25]).

Certainly the *erištu*-expression in this omen's apodosis agrees with its protasis on the basis of paronomasia. Accordingly, the enemy's request relates to the appearance of the Request-mark earlier, while the requested object, a fortress (*dūrum*), corresponds to the idea of strength represented by the zone by that name, *danānum* ("the Strength")—itself a term related to *dannatum* ("fortress"), a word common in omen texts.[235] What remains unclear from this request expression are the identities of the parties involved: who is the agent of this request, and of whom is it made? Fittingly, the forecast that follows supplies precisely this information. The request's source is stated to be the enemy" (*nakrum*), while its appeal is directed internally, according to the Self ("you")/ Other ("the enemy") (or *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis*) symbolism.

In two additional cases, with the benefit of surviving duplicates or parallel traditions for individual omens, an even better look is afforded into the meaning of predictions following *erištu*-expressions. In both instances it is clear that these function in the manner observed for ex. 2.149; namely, each articulates the information implicit in the preceding request statement. For instance, in l. 11 of the following example, "the enemy will request your land" clarifies the *erištu*-expression, "(it is) a request of land":

2.150. *YOS* 10 25:11'–12'

11. [*šumma ina imit*]*ti bāb ekallim er*[*i*]*štum* ⇒ ***er***[***i***]***šti erṣetim*** *nakrum erṣetka irriška*
12. [*šumma ina šumēl*] *bāb ekallim erištum* ⇒ *e*[*rṣ*]*et nakrīka terriš*

11. '[If] a Request-mark (was) [in the] right of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) **a request of territory**: the enemy will request of you your land'
12. [If] a Request-mark (was) [in the left] of the Palace Gate ⇒ you will request the territory of your enemy.

By contrast, in the reverse omen (l. 12), no *erištu*-expression appears; here the mirror image of the secondary phrase in l. 11 functions as the entire apodosis. It is not easy to tell whether the apodosis in l. 12 was used as a secondary

235 See, e.g., the examples cited in *CAD* D, 89.

interpretation in l. 11, explaining the otherwise vague *erišti erṣetim*, or whether, conversely, the longer forecast in l. 11, inasmuch as it specifies both agent and patient, was chosen as the entire apodosis in l. 12. Whatever the case, the statement "a request for land" in l. 11, specifying only the requested object, is followed by a longer comment that spells out the identity of the request's agent and its recipient.

The final case to consider, an omen known from two versions, varies slightly from the pattern evinced in the previous instances. Here, in the *erištu*-expression common to both versions, it is the request's agent, a deity, that is made known; yet as to the object of this divine request—no trivial matter from a theological point of view—the version in the first instance remains silent, while the version in the second (with the *erištu*-expression followed by a longer forecast) specifies precisely this matter:

2.151. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim erištum* ⇒ ***erišti ilim rabîm*** 'If at the head of the View (there was) a Request-mark ⇒ (it is) **a request of the great god**' (*YOS* 10 17:66).

2.152. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim erištum* ⇒ ***erišti ilim rabîm*** *ša ginêm ilum irriš* 'If in the head of the View (was) a Request-mark ⇒ (it is) **a request of the great god**: the god requests a regular offering' (AO 9066:26–28).

Once more it is evident that the *erištu*-expression common to these parallels owes itself to a paronomastic association with the protasis: the idea of the deity's request relates to the appearance of the Request-mark (*erištum*) in the protasis. Yet the usual connection between the View and the divine realm is further defined here, with the head (*rēšum*) of the View corresponding to the qualification of the deity as great (*rabûm*). By contrast, the object supplied in the secondary prediction, a regular offering (*ša ginêm*), does not correspond to any datum in the protasis.

Despite differences in their overall subject and even in the specifics of the respective *erištu*-expressions, the three cases discussed above in which a secondary interpretation follows the initial request statement (exx. 2.149; 2.150, l. 11; 2.152) reveal important and telling similarities. It seems evident that the secondary forecasts common to these examples operate on a different plane from that of the paronomastic. The paronomastic hermeneutic, it was observed, seems to have provided the capability to bridge the protases and *erištu*-expressions in these examples. However, to judge from the appearance of the secondary, longer forecasts in certain environments, such paronomastic

associations may have been deemed insufficient to the interpretative task at hand; what followed appealed to another basic hermeneutic tool: the right/left opposition and the related *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism.

Granted, only ex. 2.150 explicitly mentions the right and left spatial considerations in the omen protases. Nonetheless, it is certain that the right/left opposition plays a seminal role in the interpretation of each of the secondary forecasts and is also responsible for the additional information included in them. In ex. 2.149 it was the absence of a right/left factor that prompted the identification of the request's agent as the enemy. As has been observed,[236] Mesopotamian divination approached the universe from an egocentric point of view, such that, where no specification of *pars familiaris*/*hostilis* appears, the interpretation in the apodosis assumes this orientation as its default. The fact that the secondary interpretation renders the enemy as the request's author is thus due to the assumption that the setting is one's own (Self), not that of the Other (the enemy). Similarly, the reference to a regular offering in ex. 2.152 is predicated on the appearance of the great god, an appearance ordained by a sound View and the implicit understanding that one is dealing with the *pars familiaris*. Thus, what one finds on the basis of the evidence from these complex apodoses is the coexistence of two separate systems of interpretation, each operating according to its own hermeneutic principles and reacting in turn to different factors in the omen protases.

But why should these omens have bothered to pave two somewhat redundant interpretative paths where elsewhere one appears to suffice? After all, there is no shortage of attested omens that report an *erištum* in their protases and that are interpreted by way of a single, paronomastically based prediction in the form of the longer, non-lemma variety; evidently for such examples no introductory *erištu*-expression was deemed necessary. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is ex. 2.154, whose protasis reports nothing concerning right/left orientation and whose apodosis is comprised of one long forecast. Nor can it be held that longer forecasts are mandatory for omens whose meaning calls for some elaboration on the notion of a request. Examples to the contrary have already been met (exx. 2.150, l. 12; 2.151), and others may be added (e.g., exx. 2.157–2.159). Thus it would seem that the presence of the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form cannot be attributed to formal constraints. The following cases illustrate this point:

236 Starr 1983a: 15–6; Guinan 1989: 229–30.

2.153. *šumma ina sippi bāb ekallim ina imittim* ***erištum*** ⇒ *nakrum ina zumrīka* ***eršētīšu*** *ileqqe* 'If a **Request-mark** was in the doorjamb of the Palace Gate in the right ⇒ the enemy will take his **requests** from you (*YOS* 10 11 v 14–17; cf. id., 18–21).

2.154. *šumma ina libbi danānim* ***erištum*** ⇒ *mimma waqram ša li*[*bbī*]*ka*[237] *ilum* ***irriška*** 'If a **Request-mark** (was) in the midst of the Strength ⇒ the deity will **request of you** something precious' (*YOS* 10 21:2).

2.155. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki imittim* ***erištum*** ⇒ *ummānī itti ilim ana dâkim* ***eršet*** 'If a **Request-mark** (was) in the top of the Weapon of the right ⇒ (it means that) the defeat of my army **is requested** from the god' (*YOS* 10 46 iii 40–41; cf. // Bo 17 c 2 [Hittite apodosis]; also *CT* 44 37 ob. 3).

2.156. *šumma ina muḫḫi ṣibtim* ***erištum*** *tarkat* ⇒ *erišti ina bīti awīli innerišu ul innaddin* 'If a **Request-mark** was dark in the top of the Increase ⇒ the **request** which **was requested** in the man's house will not be granted' (AO 7029:3–5).

2.157. [*šumma ina warki na*]*ṣraptim ša imittim kakkum šakim-m*[*a manzā*]*z imittim iṭṭul* ⇒ ***erišti Ištar***[***ān***?][238] '[If] a Weapon was situated [in back of] the Crucible of the right and it faced the station of the right (side) ⇒ (it represents) **a request of *Ištar***[***ān***]' (MAH 15994:33–34).

2.158. [*šumma ina mašk*]*an danāni kakkum šumēlam itt*[*azziz*] ⇒ [***er***]***išti kakki u šurinni*** '[If] a Weapon stood (facing) leftward [from] the place of the Strength ⇒ (it represents) **a request for a weapon and emblem**' (AO 7028:12 [18–19]).

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237 Text: *li*-[...]-*ka**; collation courtesy J.-J. Glassner. The proposed reading is also supported by paronomastic considerations (i.e., *libbum* ↔ *libbum*).

238 Text: *e-ri-iš-ti* DINGIR KA ⌜X⌝, the latter portion of which is taken upon collation in Glassner 2009a: 21 n. 48 as ^{d}KA.*D[I]. But this reading remains uncertain, not merely owing to the unexpected occurrence of this DN and all on its own; cf. MAH 15994:1–5. From the copy what appears of the last sign could easily represent just a scratch; if so, it may be that the line ended with the KA sign, the latter representing the 2.m.s pronominal suffix, with the apodosis as a whole to be read *erišti ilīka*, "a request of your god."

2.159. *šumma ṣibtam qûm ṣabi<t> paṣī-ma imtanaqqut* ⇒ ***erišti daltim*** ⌜ *...*⌝[239]
'If a white filament is seizing the Increase and is falling about ⇒ (it represents) **a request of *a* ... *door***' (*TIM* 9 80:8).

If it is unlikely that formal considerations compelled these twofold interpretations, then their presence must be explained by a perceived need for additional specificity. It is certainly tempting to conceive of the longer, secondary forecasts as glosses on the preceding, shorter *erištu*-expressions, and hence the interpretative aims of the former as ancillary to the latter. Further, as was suggested above, one may even speak about the motivation behind such inner-apodotic interpretation. Indeed, a comprehensive look at all pertinent examples supports our earlier speculations about a connection between the secondary forecasts in exx. 2.149; 2.150, l. 11; 2.152 and right/left spatial designations in their respective protases: in seven of eight omens (88%) that concern some notion of a request and where the right/left designation is reported, only one interpretation is recorded (notably, it is twice comprised of an *erištu*-expression alone [exx. 2.157–2.158]); conversely, four of six entries (67%) that share the same notion but do not specify a right/left designation feature either a twofold interpretation (twice) or an apodosis comprised of a single, long prediction (twice).[240]

But the possibility of an evolutionary process in the reverse direction cannot be discounted completely. At least on occasion it may have been the case that a longer interpretation begot a shorter *erištu*-expression, whether by analogy to other such entries or, more generally, under pressure from the more pervasive Lemma: Longer Interpretation form. In this regard it is significant that each of the cases with secondary interpretations represents itself as a kind of request statement, predicated on the verb *erēšum* ("to request, demand"). It cannot be ruled out that a lemma may have been extracted from such cases. Indeed, it may have been thought that the *erištu*-statement would serve to bridge the metonymic sense of that mark (i.e., *erištum*, "the Request[-mark]") with its non-metonymic signification (i.e., *erēšum*, "to request [something of someone]").

This question cannot be settled with the data presently available. However, regardless of the particular direction in which these apodoses expanded, the appearance of the two predictions in exx. 2.149; 2.150, l. 11; 2.152 testifies to an act of inner-apodotic exegesis on the part of the diviner. In one way or

239 Two signs are only partly visible. Richter 1994: 244 n. 95 omits these in his reading of the apodosis.

240 Note that one of the two exceptions, ex. 2.151, has ex. 2.152 as its duplicate.

the other this building effort must be appreciated as a generative one, whose bricks lay nearby in the data from the adjacent protases, and whose mortar the hermeneutic principles (paronomasia; right/left) supplied. Yet it was the organizational framework with its Lemma: Longer Interpretation form that provided the blueprint for the whole enterprise. It is not too much to say, then, that in its entirety this effort is emblematic of generative thought and expression in its most basic sense.

2.1.4.2.2 *nanmurtum and pitruštum*

Among the lemmata surveyed in these pages the case of *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* stands out in terms of the scholarly attention these terms have received.[241] Their technical status in omen apodoses was recognized early on by Nougayrol, who termed these "signes spéciaux," though he never delivered a promised study of them.[242] That task was taken up initially by Starr,[243] and the topic was revisited more recently and briefly by Richter.[244] Starr, striving for a systematic understanding of both terms, claimed that a statement of *nanmurtum* occurs when an ominous finding appears simultaneously on a zone's right and left and is said to be light (*nawir*), while *pitruštum* occurs when the double finding is said to be dark (*tarik*):[245]

2.160. *šumma nīši rēš*[246] *iṣṣūrim imittam u šumēlam nawir* ⇒ ***nanmurtum*** 'If the *lift* of the bird's head is bright on the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) ***confrontation***' (*YOS* 10 53:14 [OB bird physiognomy]).

2.161. *šumma PuGlum*[247] *imittam u šumēlam tarik* ⇒ ***pitruštum*** 'If the … was dark on the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) ***disengagement***' (*YOS* 10 36 iv 14–15).

241 The following discussion does not entertain the evolution of these terms, especially *pitruštum*, in first-millennium extispicy; see Koch 2005: 10–21; Heeßel 2012b: 25–6; Maul 2013: 94–5.

242 Nougayrol 1956: 11; 1971: 80.

243 Starr 1975; 1978.

244 Richter 1993: 139–41.

245 Starr 1975: 241. For additional examples of omen pairings relating shade and these terms, though notably in the reverse in terms of signification, see *CUSAS* 18 22 [Sealand] ob. 21–22, r. 25'–26' (brought to my attention by A. George).

246 Cf. *nīš rēšim*, "head lift," as an anatomical part of the lungs, discussed in Starr 1990: xlvii–xlviii.

247 This term's reading and identity remain uncertain; see most recently *CAD* P, 476.

Based on etymology and what he described as "verbal elaboration[s]"—what I refer to as Longer Interpretations—following some of these statements, Starr further suggested that both *nanmurtu-* and *pitruštu*-forecasts correlate with military matters, finding again a basic difference between them. According to him, whereas *nanmurtum* (< *nanmurum*, "to confront") signals "confrontation, engagement," *pitruštum* (< *pitrusum*, "to be mutually cut off, divided") suggests the opposite, namely, "disengagement":[248]

2.162. *šumma* [*padānum in*]*a*ʔ *i*[*mittim*] *u šumēlim šēpān nan*[*murā* ⇒ ***n***]***anmurtum*** *itti nakrim tannamma*[*r*] 'If (concerning) the [Path] *in* the right and left—two Feet were facing one another ⇒ (it forecasts) ***confrontation***: you will meet up with the enemy' (CMAA030–C0001 ob. 29–30).

2.163. Protasis ⇒ ***pitruštum*** *atta u nakrum ul tannamma*<*rā*>[249] '(it represents) **disengagement** (which means): the enemy and you will not confront each other' (*YOS* 10 53:28 [OB bird physiognomy]).

Though impressive for its neatness, Starr's reconstruction did not adequately present the whole picture necessitated by the evidence. This point emerged clearly from Richter's brief word on the topic.[250] The most glaring flaw involved Starr's claim concerning the matter of a mark's coloration as a criterion for either label. As Richter made plain, this was simply untrue, since several omens making no mention of this datum nonetheless earn interpretations bearing *nanmurtu-* and *pitruštu*-expressions:[251]

2.164. *šumma ḫašûm imittam u šumēlam šēpān šak*[*n*]*ā* ⇒ ***nanmur***[***tum***] 'If concerning the lung—two Feet were situated on the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) ***confrontation***' (*YOS* 10 36 iii 10–11).

2.165. *šumma ina qabliat*[252] *naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭ*[*lū*] ⇒ ***nanmurt***[***um***] 'If in the View's middle two Weapons faced one another on the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) ***confrontation***' (*YOS* 10 15:15–16 // *YOS* 10 17:32).

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248 Ibid.: 242.

249 Emendation follows Starr 1975: 242.

250 Richter 1993: 139–41. In fact Starr 1975: 241 n. 3 actually conceded this much, but relegated it to a footnote.

251 See already ex. 2.162.

252 Text: murub_4-*at*; so *CAD* Q, 4; contra *CAD* R, 220: *ra-aṭ* for *rāṭu*, "channel, runnel."

Further, Starr's contention that these terms concern military contexts "usually, if not exclusively"[253] may demand revisiting as well. The problem involves the possibility of circular reasoning, since Starr's "verbal elaboration[s]" cannot guarantee the original sense of the technical terms. In some cases, such as the following example, a connection of *nanmurtum* or *pitruštum* to military affairs seems uncertain:

2.166. [*šumma pad*]*ānu lā ibaššī-ma u pušqum imittam u šumēlam a*<*na*> *ramā*[*nī*]*šu ipšuq* ⇒ ***pitruštān*** '[If the] Path is not there and the Narrowing narrowed on the right and left onto itself ⇒ (these constitute) **two *pitruštu***-signs' (YOS 10 20:5).

That the dual form *pitruštān* in this entry's apodosis connotes two distinct episodes of military disengagement seems dubious; more plausibly this simply refers to the findings in the protasis, which are here interpreted as two *pitruštu*-signs.

In sum, the evidence paints a picture more complex than that first presented by Starr. Granted, some of his findings cannot be dismissed: most obviously, his correlation of identical marks on a zone's right and left to predictions of *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum*, with these terms stressing duality and reciprocity. Yet other occurrences do not withstand renewed scrutiny. And the prospects of unraveling a systematic logic to account for every occasion of these terms seems even more improbable than before.

Happily, such is not our task. In the present context the significance of these terms involves the relatively lesser point concerning their occurrence within the framework of the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form, and for this the evidence available proves sufficiently instructive. The issue returns to Starr's "verbal elaboration[s]," concerning which the data is actually scarcer than first suggested, with only one such attestation in the case of OB extispicy. This is ex. 2.162, which finds a *nanmurtu*-expression before the longer phrase *itti nakrim tannammar*, "you will meet up with the enemy." This example presents the clearest evidence in favor of what Starr presumably meant by "verbal elaboration": a short narration that glosses the technical term with the verb to which the term relates.

Statements of this sort do occur elsewhere, though they do not operate in precisely the same manner as ex. 2.162. Example 2.163, for instance, contains

253 Starr 1975: 242. To be precise the claim is made concerning *nanmurtum*, though from the context it appears that *pitruštum* was imagined in the same way.

a phrase almost identical to that of ex. 2.162, but formulated negatively (*ul tannammarā*), since on this occasion it glosses *pitruštum*, not *nanmurtum*. In the first of the following two examples, a nearly identical version of exx. 2.162 and 2.163 (but without the negation) actually occurs without the expected *nanmurtum* preceding it, while in the second a full-length forecast predicated on *nanmurum* anticipates the statement of *nanmurtum šumšu*, "its (= the preceding) interpretation (is called a) *nanmurtum*," the latter patently glossing what precedes, not the other way around:

2.167. Protasis ⇒ *atta u nakrum tannammarā* 'the enemy and you will confront each other' (*YOS* 10 53:8 [OB bird physiognomy]).

2.168. Protasis ⇒ *ṣābī u ṣābi nak*[*r*]*im* [*innam*]*marū-ma tāḫāzam*[254] [*ul*]*a ippešū* ***nanmurtum*** *šumšu* 'The enemy's army and my army will confront each another but will not do battle: its (= the preceding) interpretation (is called a) ***nanmurtum***' (Nougayrol, *RA* 61 [1967]: 29, ll. 46–53 [OB bird physiognomy]).

Given this evidence, a revisiting of Starr's earlier contentions concerning *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* is in order. The fact that these prompted interpretive statements suggests that their meaning was not universally clear-cut. As such it cannot be taken as certain that these Longer Interpretations—Starr's "verbal elaboration[s]"—accurately grasped the sense of *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* in every instance in which they occurred. The case of ex. 2.168 provides an instructive example of this point, since one might have assumed on the basis of the negation of the confrontation statement (*tāḫāzam ula ippešū*) that this apodosis would have qualified as a *pitruštum*, not a *nanmurtum*.

Nor should a one-way evolutionary course for these be assumed, from lemma to interpretive gloss. While it is clear that on some occasions the technical terms engendered verbal elaboration, it seems equally certain that on others the reverse process took place. And it is not inconceivable that further cross-pollination occurred, as in the case of ex. 2.163, which elaborates on *pitruštum* by way of the narration of its doppelganger;[255] nor would it be surprising if an omen were to turn up in which a *nanmurtu*-forecast was followed by a longer interpretation employing *pitrusum* but in the negative, or even by

254 Text: *ta-ḫa-za*$^{!}$(ZI)-*am*.

255 The claim in Starr 1975: 242 that verbal elaborations employing *pitrusum* never complemented *pitruštu*-forecasts is speculative at best.

other variations on the theme of military engagement, phrased in ways different than those encountered here.

What becomes clear is that the Lemma: Longer Interpretation offered the diviner an outlet through which the interpretation of an identical finding on a zone's right and left could be worked out. That the technical terms *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* crystalized providing shorthand exegesis for different variations of such occurrences already points to a certain degree of hermeneutic preplanning; that these occasioned their own interpretation—or elsewhere glossed such interpretation—testifies to the ongoing vitality of this process. But perhaps most impressive is the simple fact that this process of lemmatization and interpretation participated in the framework of generative expression in OB divination literature, providing via the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form creative solutions for complex findings.

2.1.4.2.3 *nipḫum and Variants*

The case of *nipḫum*, lit., "blowing, swelling, flaring up," is arguably the most complex among the apodotic lemmata under consideration.[256] The term, whose accepted understanding in the OB collections is partly challenged below, appears over twenty times in them[257] in a perplexing number of formal variations. Along with the masculine singular form, one encounters two forms in the plural, one feminine and one masculine.[258] These plural forms appear exclusively as the *nomina regens* of construct chains, qualified most

256 See previous discussions in Nougayrol 1971: 81; Labat 1974: 81; Starr 1975: 245–6; Jeyes 1980a: 26–7; Jeyes 1989: 88–9. One factor responsible for the challenge to understand this lemma owes to the retrojection by some (e.g., Durand 1988: 332) of its sense in first-millennium divination literature, where it functions as a "joker" that overturns the valence of a forecast, onto the counterpart from OB times. As the following discussion makes clear, even in the OB period the expression's meaning varied according to context. For a discussion of the term in its first-millennium context, see Koch 2005: 10–21; Winitzer 2011b: 209–11; Heeßel 2012b: 25–6, 33–4; Maul 2013: 96–99.

257 These include: *YOS* 10 16:13–14; 17:44; 31 iii 20–26, vi 43-vii 47; ix 45–53; 42 iv 8–10; 44:11, 67, 72, 73; 50:12; 46 iii 30–31; AO 7539; AO 7539:33, 34b; CMAA030–C0001 ob. 29–30; *CT* 44 37 r. 19; *CUSAS* 18 23:33'; *KAR* 150:2, 4, 5, 6, 7–8; *OBE* 1 ob. 24; Scheil B:19–20.

258 *AHw*, 791; *CAD* N/2, 242 has the plural of *nipḫum* as (exclusively) *nipḫātum*; cf. Riemschneider 1965: 141–2. Clearly, however, a case like ex. 2.174, l. 34b below testifies to a masculine plural form as well (so too *YOS* 10 44:11). Additionally, on account of reasons discussed below, it seems unlikely that these should be seen as biforms, though it is noteworthy that in the apodoses of AO 7539:34b and *KAR* 150:4, apparently duplicates of one another, the term appears once as masculine (AO 7539:34b) and once as feminine (*KAR* 150:4).

frequently as "of the diviner(s)" or, less often, "of the enemy" (*nipḫāt*/*nipḫū bārîm*/*nakrim*). In a similar manner, the expected singular bound form is attested once (*YOS* 10 46 iii 30–31), as *nipiḫ ummānīya*, "a *nipḫum* of my army." This may be the sole instance of a construct singular form, though complicating matters is the writing *ni-ip-ḫi nakrim* (*YOS* 10 50:12), undoubtedly a bound form too, albeit an unexpected one and of unclear number.[259] It may be tempting to dismiss the latter writing as erroneous, especially since the duplicate tradition (*YOS* 10 44:11) has in its place the standard m.pl. *nipḫū*, but this spelling reappears as a free form in no less than three instances.[260] However, these all come from *KAR* 150 (ll. 3, 5, 17), the OB collection known in Assyrian copy, and thus may reflect later influence.

Despite this variation, some coherence in the *nipḫu*-expression's application seems apparent. It is notable that in every instance where the expression stands on its own it is masculine and usually singular. By contrast one encounters overwhelmingly plural and largely feminine forms where these appear in construct chains. It seems clear that these patterns cannot be conceived of as fortuitous; to the contrary, they offer a glimmer into the logic of this expression's application, and the following discussion exposes a further aspect of this reality. In all, such planning will be shown to build on the collections' organizational framework as the foundation of the expression's derived and perhaps even generative senses.

Several instances in which *nipḫum* appears as an unbound form followed by a longer prediction or interpretative statement provide a good starting point to the investigation. On a couple of such occasions these predictions or statements relate to those occurrences where the expression appears in construct; more frequently, however, the expression is followed by the statement *pûm lā kīnum*, "(it is) an unreliable (omen) prediction." It is based on these instances that the established understanding of *nipḫum* as an "unreliable, false prediction" rests.[261] Of interest here is the relation between the *nipḫu*-expression and these following, longer *pûm lā kīnum* statements. An analysis of the data

259 The same spelling for *nipḫum*, which appears in *CUSAS* 18 23: 33' in the apodosis *ni-ip-ḫi* izi *ri-iġ-m*[*u*-(*um*)], is explained in George 2013: 157 as potentially resulting from crasis and syncopation, from **nipiḫ išātim*. It is interesting to consider whether the same development occurred elsewhere and actually saw the *nomen regens* dissociate from its construct *nomen rectum*, thus giving rise to this biform.

260 A possible fourth may be found in *VS* 24 116:28 (see ex. 3.25), though the form there may be masculine plural (so Mayer 1987: 249).

261 See, e.g., *CAD* N/2, 242.

demonstrates that when it precedes these statements, *nipḫum* does not bear what appears elsewhere as its literal sense; nor does it connect paronomastically with data from the accompanying protases. In other words, when appearing alongside the statement *pûm lā kīnum* the sense of *nipḫum* is secondary. As shall be seen, this sense paved the way for the development of *nipḫum* into a lemma with its own technical sense.

In order to demonstrate this complex development, a review of earlier conceptions of *nipḫum* as a lemma denoting an unreliable omen is first in order. To this end five examples studied below are particularly instructive, since these provide, either via a parallel tradition (exx. 2.169–2.170) or the juxtaposition of related entries of which (at least) one bears the *nipḫu*-expression (exx. 2.171–2.173), a clear sense of the relation between the expression and what appears to be an explanatory gloss on it, namely, the *pûm lā kīnum* statement.

We begin with the following examples, two passages concerning the View (*naplaštum*), one from the longest known collection (*YOS* 10 17) and the other from one of the related shorter ones:

2.169. *šumma rēš* [*naplaš*]*tim ibbalkit* ⇒ *pûm lā kīnum* 'If the head of the View was turned 90° ⇒ (it is) an uncertain prediction' (*YOS* 10 17:44 [= ex. 2.61]).

2.170. [*šumma r*]*ēš naplaštim ibbalkit* ⇒ ***nipḫu*** *pûm lā* [*kīnum šan*]*ûm šu*[*mšu*] ⌜*ana*⌝ *kakkim* …[…] '[If] the head of the View was turned 90° ⇒ (it is) a ***nipḫu***-prediction (which means:) an un[reliable] (omen) statement; its second interpretation: *for* warfare […] …' (*YOS* 10 16:13–14 [= exx. 2.62, 2.94]).

In ex. 2.169 the *pûm lā kīnum* statement appears independently, whereas in the preserved duplicate from ex. 2.170, a *nipḫu*-expression precedes the statement about the omen's unreliability, and an alternative interpretation follows it. If one disregards for the moment the secondary interpretation in ex. 2.170, it seems that the statement of an unreliable prediction common to both versions functions as an interpretation to the omens. It is not improbable then that the *nipḫum* preceding the *pûm lā kīnum* statement in the version from ex. 2.170 should have a meaning close to that of the statement itself, as indicated by the translation offered there. Admittedly, this is not the only way in which two asyndetically joined phrases can be understood; theoretically, one could read these as competing interpretations (see § 2.1.4.1 above). Yet buttressing this suggestion are the following examples:

2.171. *KAR* 150:2–3

2. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum rēš martim iṭṭul ⇒ pûm kīnum*
3. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum išdī ubānim iṭṭul ⇒ **nipḫu** pûm lā kīnum*

2. 'If in the left of the gallbladder a fissure faced the head of the gallbladder ⇒ (it represents) a reliable (omen) statement'
3. 'If in the left of the gallbladder a fissure faced the base of the Finger ⇒ (it is) a ***nipḫu***-prediction (which means:) an unreliable (omen) statement.'

In ex. 2.171, the apodosis of the second omen, in contrast to its preceding, reliable (*pûm kīnum*) counterpart, commences with an expression of *nipḫum* and then follows with an unreliable (*pûm lā kīnum*) statement. It is significant to note that the corresponding protases for these interpretations are probably intended as a contrastive pair, owing to the angles taken as diametrically opposed that are described in each (i.e., *rēš martim*/*išdā ubānim*). The same juxtaposition occurs in the following entry:

2.172. *KAR* 150:16–17

16. *šumma šumēl martim adi šinā paṭer ⇒ pûm kīnum*
17. *šumma šumēl martim adi šalāš paṭer ⇒ **nipḫi***

16. 'If the left of the gallbladder was split in two ⇒ (it is) a reliable (omen) statement'
17. 'If the left of the gallbladder was split in three ⇒ (it represents a) ***nipḫu***-prediction.'

In this case, the corresponding protases feature a 2 → 3 numerical gradation, which elsewhere is demonstrated to have correlated with contrasting statements in their respective pronouncements (§ 5.4.1.2).

Remarkably, in no omen whose apodosis includes the *pûm lā kīnum* statement does the accompanying protasis describe a zone or mark as filled, swollen, or the like. Conversely, in not even one apodosis in which a *nipḫu*-expression occurs and whose accompanying protasis concerns something filling a given zone or mark does the *pûm lā kīnum* statement appear. The two entries from the last example to be looked at on this matter are perhaps the most telling in this regard:

2.173. *YOS* 10 44:72–73

72. *šumma šēpum ina libbi šēpim* ⇒ ***nipḫu*** *ummānka ana ālim rīqim irrub*[(*-ma …*)][262]
73. *šumma ina šumēl martim šēpum ubānam i*⌜*ṭṭu*⌝[*l*][263] ⇒ ***nipḫu*** *pûm lā* [*kīnum*]

72. 'If one Foot (was) inside (another) Foot ⇒ (it represents a) ***nipḫu***-prediction: your army will enter into an empty city [(*and …*)]'
73. 'If in the left of the gallbladder a Foot *faced* the Finger ⇒ (it is a) ***nipḫu***-prediction, (which means) an un[reliable] (omen) statement.'

In l. 72 the appearance of one Foot in another—in other words, one filling the other—is initially deemed a *nipḫum* and then followed by a longer forecast that corresponds hermeneutically to the protasis (i.e., "your army will enter into an empty city"). The interpretation of l. 73, whose protasis does not concern the conditions described above, is also labeled a *nipḫum*; but notably here the text glosses the expression with the *pûm lā kīnum* statement, which was apparently deemed unnecessary in the immediately preceding entry.

These observations, summarized in Table 2.2 below, cannot be ascribed to coincidence. The total absence of the *pûm lā kīnum* longer interpretation on *nipḫu*-expressions in omens whose protases record conditions of bloatedness or the like on the one hand, and its repeated appearance in apodoses that include *nipḫu*-expressions and whose matching protases do not concern such conditions on the other, point to an original background or context for *nipḫum* in the interpretation of omens describing the swelling or filling of a given mark or zone.

It thus appears that the lemma of *nipḫum* originally related hermeneutically to conditions of swelling, bloatedness or the like, conditions that were subsumed under the basic sense of *napāḫum* ("to be blown, bloated, swollen"). Example 2.174 following Table 2.2 seems to recall just this foundational connection:

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262 There is room for several additional signs after the *-ub*, and on the basis of the compactness of the line (collated) it seems as if additional information followed. A restoration of *-ma ikaššad* or the like would make sense; cf. *YOS* 10 42 iii 33.

263 Text: *i-*⌜*ṭù*$^{?}$⌝*-u*[*l*$^{?}$].

TABLE 2.2 *Summary of data concerning nipḫu-expressions*

Text	Zone filled with …	Statement of *nipḫum*	Explanation
AO 7539:33	Wind	*nipḫu*	*kakkū napḫūtu ina māti*
AO 7539:34a	*nuppuḫū*	Ø	*nabalkut ḫupši*
AO 7539:34b	Blood	*nipḫū bārî*	*miqitti ummāni*
YOS 10 31 iii 20–26 // vi 43–vii 47	Blood	*nipḫāt bārîm*	*miqitti ummānim*
Scheil B:19	Boils	*nipḫāt bārîm*	*ina tāḫāzim nakrum ummānam isakkipam*
YOS 10 44:11 // 50:12	Second ominous mark	*nipḫi/u nakrim*	Ø
YOS 10 44:72*	Second ominous mark	*nipḫu*	*ummākka ana ālim rīqim irrub*[(*-ma …*)]
YOS 10 31 ix 45–53	Blood	*dipār nikurtim*	*išātum ina mātim ittananpaḫ*
YOS 10 44:73*	Ø	*nipḫu*	*pûm lā kīnum*
KAR 150:2–3	Ø	*nipḫu*	*miqitti ummāni*
KAR 150:7–8	Ø	*nipḫāt bārîm*	*pûm lā kīnum …*
KAR 150:15–17	Ø Ø	*nipḫi*	*pûm kīnum* // Ø
YOS 10 16:13–14 (// *YOS* 10 17:44)	Ø	*nipḫu*	*pûm lā* [*kīnum*] …
YOS 10 17:44 (// *YOS* 10 16:13–14)	Ø	Ø	*pûm lā kīnum*

2.174. AO 7539:33–34b (l. 34a // *CUSAS* 18 31 r. 38'; l. 34b // id. r. 49')

33. *šumma qerbū šāra malû* ⇒ ***nipḫu*** *kakkū* ***napḫūtu*** *ina māti ibbaššû*
34a.[264] *šumma qerbū* ***nuppuḫū*** ⇒ *nabalkut ḫupši*
34b. *šumma qerbū dama malû* ⇒ ***nipḫū*** *bārî miqitti ummāni*

264 Line breakdown and numbers follow Nougayrol 1971: 81.

33. 'If the intestines were filled with wind ⇒ (it represents) a ***nipḫu***-prediction: there will be battle **flare-ups** (lit., *flaring* weapons) in the land'
34a. 'If the intestines **were bloated** ⇒ (it forecasts) the revolt of the rabble'
34b. 'If the intestines were filled with blood ⇒ (it represents) ***nipḫu***-predictions of the diviner; (it means:) the downfall of the army.'

In l. 33 from this passage, which describes the bloatedness of the small intestine, the *nipḫu*-expression heads a longer prediction with the unique locution of *kakkū napḫūtu*, translated loosely as "battle flare-ups" (lit., "*flaring* weapons"). Even in a figurative sense the use of an adjective of *napāḫum* in this image is unusual, and one must assume that that word and image owe themselves somehow to what precedes.[265] But how? Nougayrol's skepticism about the possibility of a literal sense here ("luttes enflammées"[266]) did not take into account our findings above: the agreement between the sense of *nipḫum* as an unreliable prediction and respective protases that do not concern matters of filling, swelling, or the like. Here, then, with a protasis describing bloatedness (*šāra malû*), a sense for *nipḫum* as an unreliable prediction (*pûm lā kīnum*) would not only be unexpected but actually uncalled for. A more literal translation, such as "flare-up," seems to offer a better fit in this case. Whether the longer prediction represents a secondary interpolation (or vice versa) is unclear, but, as the text stands, an understanding of *nipḫum* as the lemma of what follows is unavoidable. Here then one finds direct evidence indicating that the term bore a sense different from that of an "unreliable, false prediction," a sense closer to the basic meaning of its root, √*npḫ*.

Further support for this point comes from what may initially seem like an unsuitable source:

2.175. *YOS* 10 31 ix 28–53

28–35. *šumma martum imittaša damam pullâm*[267] *pašiš* ⇒ *ekallam išātum ikkal*

265 So Nougayrol 1971: 81; *CAD* N/1, 296.

266 Nougayrol 1971: 81; and cf. the ambiguous translation in *CAD* N/1, 296: "it is an indecisive (protasis), there will be undecided (or: flaring up) battles (lit. weapons) in the country."

267 Tentatively following *CAD* P, 505, which connects this term with an attestation of the same spelling in an omen entry that is preceded by another mentioning *sūma ṣarpu*, "dyed with red." *CAD* B, 310 had earlier sought to emend this word here and two entries

36–44. *šumma martum šumēlša damam šābulam pašiš ⇒ ina ālim bīt awīlim išātum ikkal*
45–53. *šumma martum būdāša damam pullâm paššā ⇒* ***dipār*** *nikurtim išātum ina mātim* ***ittananpaḫ****(****a****)*[268]

28–35. 'If the gallbladder—its right side—was smeared with *p.-red* blood ⇒ fire will consume the palace'
36–44. 'If the gallbladder—its left side—was smeared with dried blood ⇒ fire will consume a man's house in the city'
45–53. 'If the gallbladder—its (two) shoulders were smeared with *p.-red* blood ⇒ (it forecasts) a **torch** of war: fire **will flare up repeatedly** in the land.'

Though the interpretation of ll. 45–53 is not explicitly called a *nipḫum*, there is good reason to conceive of its own fire signal, *dipārum*, as a close relative of *nipḫum* and its longer prediction as a virtual twin of that in ex. 2.174, l. 33 ("there will be battle flare-ups in the land"). The unique announcement of a "torch of war" (*dipār nikurtim*) may well recall a *nipḫu*-expression, and all the more so when one realizes that the identical Sumerian lexeme, izi.gar, underlies both *dipārum* and *nipḫum*.[269] Why one label and its accompanying forecast should hint at (or conceal) the other, however, is less certain. Perhaps *dipārum* appears here in the place of its more common counterpart on account of the mitigating factor of paradigm pressure (omens predicting fire); a more likely possibility is that the gallbladder in the protasis is described as (fully?) smeared with blood, but not, strictly speaking, filled with it. And these explanations need not be mutually exclusive.

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below as <*šā*>*bulam*, thereby bringing these into line with the middle entry's *šābulam*, a known description of blood. But the spelling of the lexeme showing the doubling of the *l* (*bu-ul-la-am*; ll. 31, 48) in first and third entries, over against that of *šābulam*, as expected without gemination (*ša-bu-la-am*; l. 39), militates against this possibility.

268 Collation by J.-J. Glassner renders this as *it-ta-na-an-pa-aḫ-***ḫ*[*a*], agreeing essentially with the word's normalization in some citations (e.g., *CAD* D, 157) as *ittananpaḫ*[*ḫa*]. But this reading is not problem-free, since it accepts an unexpected doubling of the ultimate consonant before the ventive. If one assumes that this is not simply an error (perhaps by analogy to those verbs in which the consonant would double under similar conditions), one could remedy the situation in one of two ways: *it-ta-na-an-pa-*<<*aḫ*>>-⌜*ḫa*⌝ would render a correct representation of *ittananpaḫa*; while *it-ta-na-an-pa-aḫ-*<<⌜*ḫa*⌝>>, the reading assumed in Riemschneider 1962: 68 and *CAD* N/1, 269, would do away with the ventive.

269 See below and n. 224.

However this matter is settled, it is noteworthy that in contrast to the more localized depictions of the preceding entries, where fire is described as consuming (*akālum*) a palace or a man's house, in ll. 45–53 the prediction employs the verb *napāḫum* in its description of a recurring if vague scene of flare-ups "in the land." And this vagueness is accentuated further by the use of the iterative Ntn-stem, a fitting match for the duality reported in the protasis (both shoulders), in contrast with the singular right or left sides of the previous entries (on this R → L → R+L gradation, see § 4.2.2.2.2). In all, the image in ex. 2.175, ll. 45–53 is nearly identical to the equally indeterminate prediction in ex. 2.174, l. 33, in which battle flare-ups, also "in the land," are foreseen in general terms. For this reason, the sense of conflagration suggested by the image of a *dipār nikurtim* cannot be very distant from that of *nipḫum*, or flare-up, in ex. 2.174, l. 33.

If the similarities between these examples highlight an early understanding of *nipḫum* as "flare-up," then their differences serve to expose further the relations between predictions of *nipḫum* and a larger category of technical terms expressing indeterminacy in omen apodoses. As is demonstated below, an appreciation of these relationships helps to contextualize the *nipḫu*-expression, especially in what its original sense was, and subsequently to shed more light on its later figurative adaptation. Especially significant in this respect are the terms *pitruštum* and *nanmurtum* discussed above (§ 2.1.4.2.2). A connection among these, particularly the one between *pitruštum* and *nipḫum*, has been realized for some time,[270] though this was based on first-millennium data, specifically from *Multābiltu*, which provides native definitions of the terms.[271]

Yet on the basis of the preceding discussion it seems possible to push things a bit further. It was observed in the treatment of ex. 2.175, ll. 45–53 that the finding of blood on both the right and left sides differentiated that entry from those immediately preceding it on the one hand and from the counterpart omen in ex. 2.174, l. 33 on the other, which describes intestines filled with wind. However, said formation is by no means without parallel. Similar ominous findings, concurring on a zone's right and left, are not only known elsewhere but, as discussed, represent the hallmark of and common denominator between *pitruštum* and *nanmurtum* predictions. Seen in this light, it may be said that the label of *dipār nikurtim* in ex. 2.175, ll. 45–53 relates to those conditions that typically trigger *pitruštum* or *nanmurtum* interpretations, since the longer prediction following that label also recalls at least one prediction of *nipḫum* (i.e., ex. 2.174, l. 33). It thus seems logical that the *nipḫu*-expression might also

270 E.g., von Soden 1958: 256–7; Starr 1975: 245–6. The idea goes back to Klauber, *PRT*, xxiv.

271 See the discussion in Starr 1975: 245–6.

relate to these technical terms. Granted, in that case—as for the bulk of those omens whose predictions include a *nipḫum*—it is not the concurrence of the same mark on a zone's right and left that triggers special comment but rather a condition of zonal swelling or bloatedness, which renders its features impossible to read and thus hinders the diviner from "produc[ing] an unambiguous omen result."[272] Still, in one way or another it may be said that each of these statements was intended as a caution[273] when the ominous description in the protasis somehow overstepped the limits of the basic semiotics range, rendering the hermeneutic framework inoperable. It should come as no surprise then that, like *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum*, the *nipḫu*-label in ex. 2.174, l. 33 also anticipates combat whose outcome is less than certain. That these terms were all subsumed under one grouping in the first millennium—those described under the rubric *annûtu* izi.gar.meš, perhaps best rendered as "these are (all various types of) *nipḫu*s[274]—may thus have solid backing in the earliest periods of Mesopotamian divination literature.

It is not unlikely that with the gradual standardization of the technical terms, what was perceived as being even more difficult than the already challenging conditions prompting *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* forecasts—namely, conditions of zonal swelling or bloatedness that stymied any analysis of a protasis described as such—was deemed fitting to merit a label of *nipḫum*. The illegiblity of the *nipḫum* omens, in contrast to the intelligible and thus interpretable *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* varieties, fostered for the former a signification of total incomprehensibility as far as the diviner was concerned; according to the collections' hermeneutics this all but assured for his client not the (dis)engagement of his army but, most frequently, its (or his) systemic demise or defeat, as the following examples make plain:

2.176. Protasis ⇒ ***nipḫāt*** *bārîm miqitti ummānim* '(It represents) ***nipḫu***-predictions of the diviner (which forecast [?]) the defeat of the army' (*YOS* 10 31 iii 20–26 // id., vi 43–vii 1 // *CUSAS* 18 10 i 12'–15').

2.177. Protasis ⇒ ***nipḫāt*** *bārîm miqitti ummāni* '(It represents) ***nipḫu***-predictions of the diviner (which forecast [?]) the defeat of the army' (*KAR* 150:4).

272 Jeyes 1989: 89.

273 As is suggested below (§ 2.1.4.2.4), this is the essential sense of the related term *tešmûm*.

274 *Multābiltu* 2–3:122 in Koch 2005: 125.

2.178. Protasis ⇒ [***n***]***ipḫum*** *šarrum ḫarrān illa*[*ku*] *u*[*l*] *iturram ūmam rīqam taqt*[*īt*] *palê*[*m*] '(it represents) a ***nipḫu***-(prediction): the king will not return (from) the campaign on which he is going; for an uncertain date: (it forecasts) the end of the dynasty' (CMAA030–C0001 ob. 29–30).

2.179. Protasis ⇒ *ālum ša ana lawêšu tallaku innaddī-ma ittaṣṣi* ***nipḫu*** *pûm lā kīnum marṣu imât* 'The city to which you are heading to lay siege will be abandoned and (its people) will come out (or: it is) a(n uncertain) ***nipḫu***-prediction, (which is) an unreliable (omen) statement (which forecasts that) the infirm will die' (*KAR* 150:7–8 [= ex. 2.131]).

In this vein it is unsurprising to find in an extispicy omen from Susa a forecast predicting the manifestation of many *nipḫu*-omens, preceded by another forecast with a well-known topos guaranteeing total breakdown—namely, divine abandonment:

2.180. Protasis ⇒ *mātu ilūša izzibūši* [*il*]*ū ina* ***nipḫāti*** *irteneddû*[275] 'The land—its gods will abandon it; (or:) the gods will pursue (the land) continuously with ***nipḫu***-predictions' (*MDP* 57 3 r. 1–2).

Indeed, a sense of the severity of omens deemed as *nipḫum* for the diviner is already evident in one OB apodosis, where, in what may be a reference to

275 I read *ir-te-ne-ed*$^{!}$(IŠ)-*du* on the basis of the parallel dingir.meš izi.gar uš.meš in K 57:13 in Nougayrol 1967: 36; cf. Jeyes 1989: 30. A sense for *redûm* of "pursuit" by deities is common in omens, with Gtn-stem forms attested in just this capacity, e.g., *girri nakrīka terteneddi* (*YOS* 10 44:26, 66).

However, the verb was read as *ir-te-ne-iš-ša*$_4$ and normalized *irteneššā* in Labat and Edzard 1974: 64, and cf. *CAD* R, 193b, which also accepts this as an unusual Gtn form of *rašûm*. As such, the missing subject was filled, with the subsequent translation of: "[les devins] ne cesseront d'être impliqués contradictoirement dans les dissensions" (ibid.: 71). This solution has its merits, such as the reading *ša*$_4$ for DU, which appears in Susa texts, even in this very line (dinger.meš-*ša*$_4$); but it is also not without problems. For one, the translation offered is difficult to justify. The suggestion (ibid.: 81) that (*ina*) *nipḫāti rašû* be compared with *amāta rašû*, "to be involved in litigation" is unconvincing; in omen entries *rašûm* is typical in protases, not apodoses, with a sense of "to exhibit, feature," i.e., to manifest outward, not inward. And this possibility underplays the significant difficulties posed by the presence of *ina* (by contrast, see *CAD* R, 238a for the locution *ina* X). Nor does this explanation account for either the unexpected *e*-coloring or the unexpected fem. pl. or ventive ending.

extispicy taken during a military campaign, the reality of these is equated to and preceded by the additional lemma *tēšûm*, "chaos":[276]

2.181. Protasis ⇒ [... *ina*[277] *ummā*]*nīya isâr*[278] *tēšû* ***nipḫāt*** *bā*[*rî ina b*]*irīni*
'[...] *will whirl* [*among*] my *troops*; chaos (which means: there will be) ***nipḫu***-predictions for the diviners from among us' (*OBE* 1 ob. 24).

As usual, more evidence is needed before the precise manner of and motivation behind the development in the meaning of *nipḫum* can be pinned down. Fortunately, however, at issue here is not this evolution but rather the manner in which the *nipḫu*-expression is employed in the bulk of the known examples, and happily a precise understanding of the former does not appear to be a prerequisite for the latter. What is clear is that in the majority of examples where some form of the label appears, and in all in which it is qualified by "the diviner" (*nipḫāt bārîm*), the term must be regarded as having begun to shed its association with its basic sense of swelling or bloatedness, since a primary sense for *nipḫum* in such cases would render nonsensical apodoses. The cases involving the *pûm lā kīnum* gloss may actually represent a more advanced stage in this development, since, as was demonstrated above, in these cases the protases do not concern anything relating to the term's original sense (< *napāḫum*).

The examples with *pûm lā kīnum* offer the clearest testimony of a derived, technical sense for *nipḫum*, one that apparently invited a measure of interpretation. This interpretive manner is not dissimilar to that already noted among some omen apodoses describing another loaded notion: the divine

276 Cf. *YOS* 10 17:43 (= ex. 2.141 above) for what seems like another attempt to understand the implications of this loaded term. For further discussion of its appearance in some apodoses, see Jeyes 1989: 113.

277 Following Jeyes 1989: 98, 101; see next note.

278 Collation supports Jeyes' reading. Jeyes 1989: 98, 108 takes this as the 3ms of *sârum*, "to whirl, dance," referring to a *meḫûm*, or "violent storm," which she restored in the break. This possibility is intriguing and, as Jeyes noted, fits well with what follows. In fact this verb is attested in omen literature, in an apodosis of an OB extispicy omen no less:

"Protasis ⇒ *šarram ina libbi ekallīšu usarrūšu*[!](*ú-sà-ru-ú-*⌜UR[?!]⌝)*-ma idukkūšu* 'They will surround the king and murder him in his own palace' (*YOS* 10 46 iv 19–21 [= ex. 5.84, ll. 19–21; see also *CAD* D, 38])."

Still the restoration of *meḫûm* seems premature, and, owing to the considerable breaks, a verdict on *sârum* cannot be offered.

presence (*manzāz* DN).[279] As was demonstrated recently,[280] in some of those cases where signification for apodotic statements proclaiming a divine presence is offered in the respective protasis (in the form of fitting similes; see § 5.2), no explanatory gloss describing some request by the deity appears in the respective apodosis (represented with **Ø** in the example below); where no such clarity is initially afforded, compensatory explanation follows in the form of a divine request (*erišti* Y):

2.182. Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* 1:57–60

57. *šumma ištu qabliat ummatim šulmum išḫiṭ-m*[*a*][281] *ibteli* ⇒ *manzāz Sîn* ***erišti kaspim***
58. *šumma šamnum mê ina nadêka* ***qarnīn***[282] *irtaši* ⇒ *manzāz Sîn* **Ø**
59. *šumma ana qabliat šamnim mê ina nadêka rebiat šamnim iprus* ⇒ *manzāz Šamaš* ***erišti šamšim***
60. *šumma* (*šamnum*) *ana qabliat šamnim mê ina nadêka* ***kīma kakkabim išḫiṭ*** ⇒ *manzāz Šamaš* **Ø**

57. 'If from the middle of the mass a(n oil-)bubble rose up and has burst ⇒ (it represents) the presence of Sîn: **a request for silver**'
58. If the oil, in your pouring water (on it), has taken (the shape of) **two horns** ⇒ (it represents) the presence of Sîn; **Ø**'
59. 'If in your pouring water into the middle of the oil one fourth of the oil separated ⇒ (it represents) the presence of Šamaš: **a request for the sun disk**'
60. 'If in your pouring water into the middle of the oil (the oil) **rose like a star** ⇒ (it represents) the presence of Šamaš; **Ø**.'

A similar picture may now be appreciated for the case of *nipḫum*. Among omens offering no signification for an interpretation predicated on the sense of *napāḫum*, the appearance of *nipḫu*-expressions appears to have invited further clarification. Said clarification provided by the *pûm lā kīnum* gloss compensated for the fact that the *nipḫum* label preceding it no longer maintained the metonymic quality it originally held. The question remains as to the meaning of the expression elsewhere, among those instances where it is not followed by

279 See § 2.1.4.2, including the reasoning behind the exclusion of this expression's consideration in this forum.

280 Winitzer 2010: 186–89.

281 One ms. has *ipṭuram-ma*, "detached"; see Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* 2: 22, 41.

282 One ms. has *qannīn*; see Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* 2: 22, 41; *GAG* § 35d.

the *pûm lā kīnum* statement. While this must remain an open matter for now, it is important to recall that typically in such omens the concern of the protases involves some condition of swelling or the like. Thus it is not improbable that some metonymic sense of *nipḫum* was maintained in such cases, even if vague, perhaps akin to English "blow-up." In this manner *nipḫum* approximates other apodotic lemmata, such as the expressions of *erištum* discussed above, which relate to some datum in the accompanying protasis.

From an organizational standpoint, then, the relation between the *nipḫu*-expression and its stereotypical renderings must be understood as having been devised *a priori*, derivative not of an empirical background but rather of deductive reasoning. Such reasoning sought to express meaning for what became in the final analysis a sign in its own right: *nipḫum*. Accordingly, the interpretative predictions that often follow the *nipḫu*-expressions cannot be regarded as reflecting empirical findings; rather, within the scope of the collections' hermeneutic and organizational frameworks they suggest a certain creativeness, one that built on existing concepts toward the generation of new ones. From the collections of the first millennium it is evident that this process did not cease: the lemma was defined anew in the effort to standardize all of extispicy's technical terms; but the genesis of this development already appears in literature from the OB period.

2.1.4.2.4 *tešmûm*

The term *tešmûm*, "caution,"[283] occurs twice before longer forecasts describing future military engagements stressing reciprocity:

2.183. *šumma sippi bāb ekallim imittam u šumēlam paṭer* ⇒ ***tešmû***[***m***] *šarrān ittakkirūn*[*im*] 'If the Palace Gate's doorjamb was split on the right and left ⇒ (it calls for) **caution**: two kings will become hostile to one another' (*YOS* 10 26 iii 19–20).

2.184. *šumma būd*(*ā*) *ḫašîm imittam u šumēlam ipṭur* ⇒ ***tešmûm*** *ṣābāka*[284] *ša ana girrim taṭarradu itti nakrim innammar* 'If the *shoulder region* of the lung was split on the right and left ⇒ (it calls for) **caution**: your army, which you are sending on a campaign, will meet up with the enemy' (*YOS* 10 36 i 38–40).

283 Pace *CAD* T, 374, which renders the term in these contexts as "compliance," qualifying it further as "with a god's or ruler's will."

284 Text: *ṣa-ba-a-*⌜*ka*⌝, apparently the singular accusative form, occurs instead of the expected nominative *ṣābka* or *ṣābūka*. The incorrect form is likely due to an attraction to the subordinate clause's verb (suggestion courtesy J. Huehnergard).

In ex. 2.183 reciprocity is conveyed by the dual subject (*šarrān*) and *nakārum* in the Gt-stem, the latter underscoring a sense of mutual estrangement. In ex. 2.184 the longer forecast pictures the mutual sighting of one's ("your") army and that of the enemy by way of *nanmurum*, a verb associated with and at times appearing beside its substantive, *nanmurtum*, "(mutual) engagement, confrontation" (§ 2.1.4.2.2). In light of their emphasis on duality and reciprocity, it may not be surprising to realize that the protases of these examples concern the same type of occurrence as that which defines *nanmurtu-* and *pitruštu*-forecasts: an identical ominous finding on a given zone's right and left. On the basis of this commonality the conclusion seems inevitable that the *tešmû*-expression relates somehow to those of *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum*. Indeed, in a post-OB omen collection, extant in a MB version along with two others from the first millennium,[285] an entry has *tešmûm* as its secondary, indeterminate forecast, while its primary is labeled a *pitruštum*:

2.185. *šumma martum imittam u šumēlam idkuš-ma u dikšūša qutušša iṭṭulū* ⇒ ***pitruštu*** *ina ūmi rīqi* ***tešmû*** 'If the gallbladder was pierced on the right and left and its pierced parts faced its neck ⇒ '(it represents) a ***pitruštu***-forecast; its uncertain (interpretation): (it calls for) **caution**' (Jeyes, Compendium ob. 34).

In terms of the OB cases at hand, the call to caution appears at least formally identical to those describing military (dis)engagement and labeled either *nanmurtum* or *pitruštum*. It is not implausible that *tešmûm* forecasts operated similarly in terms of their function, and perhaps were even conceived of as part of the category to which *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* (as well as *nipḫum* and *dipārum*?) belong. As to the exact purpose of this directive, and thus its relation to the better-known counterparts, one can only speculate at present. For Jeyes, who translated *tešmûm* as "hearing," the term represents a less ambiguous divine communication than the counterpart *pitruštum*,[286] but this argument seems to be based on the premise that etymology secures meaning. The issue is further complicated by the imprecise sense of the criteria for *nanmurtum* or *pitruštum* forecasts.

This challenge notwithstanding, what is important to recall is that not every case that ostensibly qualified for *nanmurtum* or *pitruštum* status is explicitly labeled as such (e.g., ex. 2.167 above). Nor does the converse hold: of the instances that do record either of these lemmata, detailed predictions

285 Jeyes 2000.

286 Ibid.: 367.

(e.g., exx. 2.183–2.184) follow only a minority. Clearly this type of verbal elaboration on the technical terms was not perceived as prerequisite for their recording; nor were the lemmata understood as mandatory where said elaboration appears on its own. As suggested above, it seems inescapable that the decision to include either the technical terms in an already existing forecast, or vice versa, to elaborate on them by the addition of a longer if stereotypical prediction, rested on the whim of the diviner.

For this reason, the decision in favor of such interpolation was deemed above to reflect a desire for interpretation, which reflects of a creative undertaking. A case examined above in the section on *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* provides an especially instructive example for the present discussion:

2.186. Protasis ⇒ *ṣābī u ṣābi nak*[*r*]*im* [*innam*]*marū-ma tāḫāzam* [*ul*]*a ippešū* ***nanmurtum*** *šumšu* 'The army of the enemy and my army will confront each another but will not do battle: its (= the preceding) interpretation (is called a) ***nanmurtum***' (Nougayrol, *RA* 61 [1967]: 29, ll. 46–53 [OB bird physiognomy] [= ex. 2.168]).

In this omen, the statement *nanmurtum šumšu*, "its (= the preceding's) interpretation (is called a) *nanmurtum*," follows the initial prediction, offering by way of its unusual secondary place and unique formulation a precious example of scribal didacticism. As suggested above, the initial forecast's indeterminacy—confrontation without battle—was probably the mitigating factor behind the gloss; in light of this, perhaps a better reading for it would be: "this interpretation (still qualifies as) a *nanmurtum*." The case of *tešmûm* may not be much different. That the diviner saw fit to append to predictions of potential military confrontation a cry for caution may owe to similar considerations. After all, it is the fundamentally equivocal nature of signs on both right and left that gave rise to the technical terms of *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* and to this branch of the hermeneutics in the first place.

2.1.4.2.5 *millatum*

A prediction of *millatum*, or "looting," sometimes precedes the more detailed forecasts describing the ongoing consumption or stealing by *šatammu*-officials or thieves. The substantive is almost unattested outside of these examples;[287]

287 It appears in an apodosis from one of the recently published Sealand collections, which reads: Protasis ⇒ *mil*[*lat*]*um pirittum ina bīt amēli ṣītum*, "looting; terror in a man's house; loss" (*CUSAS* 18 28 ob. 13). An additional case may be that of Ni 1218, 11: 1–4, whose apodosis

its understanding by the dictionaries[288] thus reflects its sense in the present context, along with that of the related verb *malālum*, "to consume":[289]

2.187. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim qûm šakin-ma išqallal ⇒* ***millatum*** *šatammū ekallāti/ekallam imallalū*[290] 'If in the middle of the Palace Gate a filament was situated and suspended ⇒ (it forecasts) **looting**: *šatammu*-officials will eat the palaces clean' (*YOS* 10 11 iv 12–15 // *YOS* 10 25:63').

2.188. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum palšat ⇒ šatammū ekallam imallalū kurusissū šamaššammī mātim ikkalū* '(If) the Increase was (thoroughly) punctured ⇒ *šatammu*-officials will eat the palace clean; (alternatively:) *kurusissu*-rodents will consume the flax of the land' (*YOS* 10 35:29 // AO 7033:14–15 [= ex. 2.5, l. 29]).

2.189. *šumma bāb ekalli elēnu bāb ekalli ⇒ ekallu ekalla imallal* 'If (there was) a Palace Gate above (another) Palace Gate ⇒ one palace will consume the other' (*SpTU* 1 80:12 [SB extispicy]).

The appearance of *millatum* in the apodosis above represents an instance in which a short apodotic lemma owes itself neither to a correspondence to a mark by the same name nor to any obvious paronomastic connection with the corresponding protases (similarly *tašnintum*; see § 2.1.4.2.6). Rather, it seems clear that the lemma relates to the longer forecasts in exx. 2.187 and 2.188 (and cf. ex. 2.189). In fact, in the case of ex. 2.187, *millatum* heads the longer forecast "*šatammu*-officials will eat the palaces clean," with the latter employing *malālum*. As such, this lexeme figures as the *nomen actionis* of the subsequent scene, with the apodosis adhering to the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form.

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is rendered: x x x x *šatammū ekallam ištanarriqū* in Kraus 1987: 194. Unfortunately the edition by Kraus provides no copy of the text.

288 *CAD* M/2, 69; *AHw*, 652. On the word's development and semantic range, see Winitzer 2007: 426–33.

289 *CAD* M/1, 160; *AHw*, 594.

290 The example reflects a reconstruction from both versions. Individually each looks as follows:

"*šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim qûm šakin-ma išqa<ll>al ⇒ millatum šatammū ekallāti imallalū* (*YOS* 10 11 iv 12–15);

[*šumma ina* (*libbi* [?]) *bāb ekallim q*]*ûm išqallal ⇒ millatum šatammū ekallam imallalū* (*YOS* 10 25:63')."

In other cases, it is difficult to understand the longer forecasts as anything other than glosses on this unusual lexeme, and of *millatum* as a lemma that invited interpretation:

2.190. [*šumma ina* (?) *bāb ekalli*]*m šīrum*[291] *kupput-ma išqallal* ⇒ [***millat***]***um*** *sarrūtum ekallam išt*[*ana*]*rriqū* '[If in (?) the] Palace [Gate] a tissue was compacted and suspended ⇒ (it forecasts) **looting**: thieves will keep] stealing from the palace' (*YOS* 10 26 iv 11–12).

2.191. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim pūṣum kupput* ⇒ *tadâ*[*k*] *nakram* ***millatum*** *šatammū ekallam ištanarri*[*qū*] 'If in the middle of the Palace Gate a white spot was compacted ⇒ the enemy you will defeat;[292] (or: it forecasts) **looting**: *šatammu*-officials will keep stealing from the palace' (*YOS* 10 26 i 36–37).

It is tempting to imagine that upon this term's coining in the context of ex. 2.187 or its like, a diviner opted to employ it in analogous situations, thereby extending its semantic range so as to cover a more general sense of looting, such as those appearing in exx. 2.190–2.191. Yet one must beware of such imaginative temptations. It is conceivable, even likely, that the term was established outside these contexts[293] and that the diviner, wishing to elaborate on it in the examples above, glossed it in various ways.

Irrespective of how the development of *millatum* is ultimately understood, it is the relative autonomy of that forecast within the omens surveyed that is significant in the present discussion. That the label is not bound to any one specific forecast is clear from what appears in the examples above (namely, *šatammū … imallalū*; *šatammū … ištanarriqū*; *sarrūtum … ištanarriqū*).[294] Nor can it be said that the most common among these forecasts, that of the all-consuming *šatammu*-officials, is bound inextricably to the label of *millatum*. In ex. 2.188 the same prediction appears without any such introduction (and cf. ex. 2.189). In short, while it appears that the initial forecast predicting looting at times relates literally to a prediction describing a matching act, the apodotic framework seems to have tolerated various combinations of this lemma with

291 Here spelled: *ši-ir-ru-um*; see *CAD* Š/3, 113b.

292 Translation intended to reflect the awkward Akk. syntax.

293 See n. 287 above.

294 Another such case occurs in *YOS* 10 24:29 (= ex. 3. 101, l. 29), with the verb *sunnuqum* describing the *šatammu*-officials' behavior. The trope appears in SB extispicy as well; see *CAD* Š/2, 187; *KAL* 5 22:14', 17'; 26:3'.

longer clauses that followed, in accordance with hermeneutic considerations or poetic license. One thus confronts an unmistakable generative effort behind these omen's composition, an effort that employed existing forms in the creation of new interpretative possibilities.

2.1.4.2.6 *tašnintum*

A similar case to *millatum* presents itself with respect to *tašnintum* (< *šanānum*), "rivalry."[295] This lemma precedes the longer interpretation in the opening entry of the large OB *bāb ekallim* collection *YOS* 10 26, as well as in two shorter collections concerning this zone that share much with their longer counterpart:

2.192. [*šumma bāb*] *e*[*kallim šinā*] ⇒ [***t***]***ašnintum*** *kussûm kussiam išannan*[296]
'[If (there were) two] Palace [Gates] ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**: one throne will rival another' (*YOS* 10 26 i 1 // *YOS* 10 22:1).

2.193. *šumma bāb ekallim šinā* ⇒ ***tašnintum*** *kussûm kussiam išannan šanû šumšu lā meḫerka itebbeakkum-ma idâkka* 'If (there were) two Palace Gates ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**: one throne will rival another; its second interpretation: your unequal will rise up against you and kill you' (*YOS* 10 24:1).

A parallel omen from another *bāb ekallim* collection words this forecast a bit differently, possibly owing to the twist in the accompanying protasis:

2.194. *šumma šinā bāb ekallim ritkubū* ⇒ ***tašnintum*** *kussûm kussiam itabbal*
'If two Palace Gates were riding one another ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**: one throne will carry away the other' (*YOS* 10 23 ob. 13).

As noted above for *millatum*, here too it is evident that the mention of *tašnintum* precedes forecasts different from those to which it is literally related. No attestation of the *kussûm kussiam išannan* prediction is attested independently of a preceding *tašnintum*, though this may reflect no more than the accidents of discovery. Certainly *tašnintum* appears in omens other than those concerning Palace Gates or those describing rivalry with *šanānum*, suggesting that it, like *millatum*, circulated beyond its native environment—whatever that may have been.

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295 The proposal in Lenzi 2006 for a second *tašnintum*, perhaps meaning "repetition" or "teaching," does not apply to any of the cases under discussion here.

296 As it appears, this example represents a reconstruction from both versions.

On the basis of the preceding as well as the following pair of examples, it appears that the prediction of *tašnintum* was a preferred interpretation for the occurrence of the entanglement of a zone with an unexpected doppelganger; that this drew in part on an assumption of a hermeneutic relation with *šanûm*, "second, other," seems probable:

2.195. [*šumma šinā ṭu*]*līmū ištēniš izzazzū* ⇒ ***tašnintum*** *kussûm kussian išannan* '[If two] spleens stand together as one ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**: one throne will rival another' (*YOS* 10 41:57 // (?) BM 22694:1).

2.196. ⌜*šumma šinā*⌝ *tallū* ⇒ [***t***]***ašnintum*** 'If (there are) *two* diaphragms ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**' (*YOS* 10 42 ii 48).

Indeed, in the case of the last example, whose protasis reports merely two diaphragms, *tašnintum* appears without further elaboration, its meaning apparently sufficiently clear on its own.[297]

A final and noteworthy case concerning *tašnintum* finds the lemma preceding a complex forecast having little to do with either the idea of rivalry or, from the perspective of the protasis, the entanglement of two zones.[298]

2.197. *šumma padānum imittam u šumēlam*[299] *ipšuq* ⇒ ***tašnintum*** *ummānum ana pī šāpirīša ul uššab ū lū šarrum ana p*[*ī mā*]*likīšu ul uššab* 'If the Path was narrow on the right and left sides ⇒ (it predicts) **rivalry**: (either) the army will not abide by its commander(s), or: the king will not abide by his counselor(s)' (*YOS* 10 11 i 8–10 [= ex. 2.23]).

This example leads to the inescapable conclusion that, like *millatum*, the sense of *tašnintum* maintained a certain leeway, allowing for its combination with predictions different from those with which it was literally related. The creative side of this activity does not seem hard to appreciate.

297 Notably, this is also the first entry of a section exploring various cases of two diaphragms (*YOS* 10 42 ii 48–58).

298 Though presumably the depiction of the Path's narrowing on the right and left sides, perhaps to the point of contact, justified the term. It also bears mention that this entry is situated within a numerical gradation concerning two zones (*padānum* and *naplaštum*) and juxtaposed to an entry which seems to describe a *padānum* atrophied into two parts (*YOS* 10 11 i 11–14).

299 Text: *šu-me-lam*!(LIM).

2.1.4.2.7 *kišittum*

Given its infrequency in the omen collections (one attestation[300]), it may be surprising that the assurance of *kišittum* (< *kašādum*), "conquest," should prove to be another instructive example for the understanding of short apodotic lemmata and their relation to the following, longer forecasts. Yet this is in fact the case. Thus, one reads the following in the opening lines from Scheil A:

2.198. *šumma ina kiṣirti šumēlim kakkum šakim-ma ana māt ubānim iṭṭul* ⇒ ***kišittum*** *āl lawiāt ana libbīšu terrub* 'If a Weapon was situated in the Ridge of the left and it faced the land of the Finger ⇒ (it forecasts) **conquest**: you will enter into the midst of the city which you are besieging' (Scheil A:1–2).

In truth *kišittum* is more established in OB extispicy than may first seem the case: it appears more frequently in the construct *kišid*/*kišitti qātim*, lit., "conquest of the hand," the latter itself a nominal locution of the even more widespread idiom, *qātum kašādum*, "to capture." It should thus come as only a minor surprise to learn that two omens, the protases of which are unrelated to each other or to that of ex. 2.198, but which employ the idiom *qātum kašādum*, shed a good deal of light on this term's background. More importantly, an examination of these examples sheds new light on the background of this lemma and underscores further the creative and generative aspects behind their composition:

2.199. Protasis ⇒ *šarrum erṣetam lā šattam* ***qāssu ikaššad*** *u šumma ālam lawiāt ana libbīšu terrub* 'The king **will conquer** a land not his; and if you are besieging a city, you will enter into its midst' (*YOS* 10 4:1–10).

2.200. Protasis ⇒ *awīlum ṣummurāt uṣammaru* ***qāssu ikašša***[***d*** *āl*]*i lawiāt* [*an*]*a libbīšu terrub* 'The man **will attain** all to which he strives; (or: for) the town which you are besieging—you will enter into its midst' (*YOS* 10 9:15–18 [= ex. 2.132]).

Along with their unrelated protases, these omens vary in the phraseology of their first predictions. In each, one encounters as its subject, respectively *šarrum* and *awīlum*, a formulaically expressed coveted object (*erṣetam lā šattam*, "a land not his"; *ṣummurāt uṣammaru*, "the enterprise he pursues"), the successful capture of which is expressed with the idiom *qātum kašādum*.

300 But see *CAD* K, 451, s.v., for additional SB examples.

However, in their secondary predictions these omens share much more with each other as well as with ex. 2.198. The utterances directed at the second person and describing a successful siege of a city are nearly identical in all three apodoses, right down to the unusual 2ms predicative adjective form *lawiāt*.[301] That this correspondence owes to mere chance seems unlikely, and even less so when one recalls what is common to the initial forecasts of all three omens, namely, some sense of conquest predicated on *kašādum*. Rather, it seems probable that there existed a tradition that juxtaposed predictions of conquest with others describing successful city sieges, and that these omens represent reflexes of that tradition.

Two additional omens bring this picture into sharper focus. In terms of their protases, these do not relate to each other or, for that matter, to exx. 2.198–2.200. However, where they resonate with the examples above is in their apodoses, which advance the prediction of a city's besieging in a manner ensuring some overall connection among all these entries (and cf. ex. 2.203):[302]

2.201. Protasis ⇒ *ša libbi ālim uṣṣiam-ma šēpīka inaššiq* ***ana libbi āli lawītīka terrub*** 'the *ruler* of the city will come out and kiss your feet (**and**) **you will enter into the midst of the city you are besieging**' (BM 22694:59–60).

2.202. Protasis ⇒ *ana ḫarrānim ummānī ašar illak*[*u zittam ikkal*] *šumma ana marṣim* [*iballuṭ* (?)] *šumma* ***ālam lawiāt*** *ša libbi ālim uṣṣ*[*iam-ma šēpīka inaššiq* (?)] '(If it is) for a campaign: my army, wherever it goes, [will enjoy plunder]; and if (it is) for the infirm: [he will *heal*]; and if **you are besieging a city**: the *ruler* of the city will come out [*and kiss your feet*]' (OBE 4:9'–12' [= exx. 2.34, 2.47]).

It is true that these examples do not speak explicitly of conquest; they do, however, seem to share the pronouncement concerning the defeat of an anonymous *ša libbi ālim*, "the *ruler* of the city."[303] The differences here may owe to hermeneutic considerations—concern with low elevation and descent (*šaplum, maqātum*) in these examples' protases may connect with the feet-kissing imagery in the apodoses—though this remains uncertain. Whatever the case, once more it appears that the siege forecast occurs in tandem with

301 See n. 47 above.

302 Note the 2ms predicative adjective form *lawiāt* in ex. 2.202, which recalls those in exx. 2.198–2.200 and is also found in ex. 2.203.

303 On this translation, see n. 49.

a recurrent motif, one not far removed from that of conquest and the idiom *qātum kašādum*.

The case of ex. 2.202 is particularly instructive for the present discussion, since the siege reference in it actually serves as one of the three introductory formulae to the alternative interpretations of that entry (see § 2.1.3.2). It would seem that in its appearance here the phrase represents a reformulation of the longer, recurrent prediction, probably for the sake of consistency with the other alternatives. From this perspective one may better gauge why the suggestion (discussed in § 2.1.4.1) that the apodosis of ex. 2.199 hints at an *ad hoc* application of an existing omen during a siege must be rejected (the same holds for exx. 2.198 and 2.200). To be sure, each of the interpretations of these omens reflects a particular elaboration on the conquest forecast, though not in a manner that could be described as spontaneous.

2.203. Protasis ⇒ ***āl lawiāt*** *ana libbīšu* [*terrub* (?)] '(Concerning) **the city which you are besieging**—[you will *enter*] into its midst' (*YOS* 10 46 iv 23–24).

It is tempting to understand *kišittum* in the case of ex. 2.198 in a manner comparable to that of *ālam lawiāt* in ex. 2.202. It is all but certain that, along with those predictions employing *qātum kašādum* in exx. 2.199–2.200, the term *kišittum* in ex. 2.198 reflects an established tradition that related the theme of conquest with forecasts about successful city sieges. In all likelihood the diviner responsible for the term's appearance was conscious of this tradition and decided to render the reflex of such statements here as merely *kišittum*. Of course, without the benefit of duplicates to ex. 2.198 it is unfeasible to reconstruct the term's specific background in the present context. Still, it seems likely that, like *ālam lawiāt* in ex. 2.202, *kišittum* here represents an abbreviation of more detailed predictions, such as those in exx. 2.199–2.200, especially when one considers what may have been the motivation behind this decision. A clue is afforded toward that end in an omen appearing just below the one quoted as ex. 2.198 in Scheil A, the apodosis of which, concerning the besieged city and also directed at the second person, clearly picks up on and further develops the subject of ex. 2.198:

2.204. Protasis ⇒ ***ālum***[304] ***ša ana lawêšu tallaku*** *dūršu imaqqut* '(**Concerning**) **the city to which you are going to besiege**—its wall will fall' (Scheil A:7–8).

304 Text: *a-lam*; cf. *ta-al-la-ku*$_{13}$(KUM) in same line.

It appears then that the diviner, aware of what was to come, redacted ex. 2.198 in a manner befitting the overall concern of that portion of this collection. Within that context the heading of *kišittum* in ex. 2.198 serves creatively as a lemma for what is to come.

2.1.4.2.8 *ṭūb libbim*, *uluṣ libbim*, *ḫiššat libbim*, *lumun libbim*, *mīli irtim*

General expressions conveying feelings or emotional states, including *ṭūb libbim*, "well-being," *uluṣ libbim*, "joy," *ḫiššat libbim* "elation,"[305] *lumun libbim*, "sorrow," or *mīli irtim* "pride, success," take up entire apodoses in entries from various OB divination collections.[306] For instance, in the following example a prediction of *lumun libbim* constitutes the full interpretation of an omen whose concern about dried *ziḫḫum* in the Palace Gate triggers elsewhere more specific forecasts describing personal loss (exx. 2.206–2.207):[307]

2.205. *šumma ina bāb ekallim ziḫḫum ruššuk* ⇒ ***lumun libbi*** 'If in the Palace Gate (there was) *ziḫḫu* (and it) was dried ⇒ (it forecasts) **sorrow**' (*YOS* 10 22:18 [20]).

2.206. *šumma ina bāb ekallim ziḫḫum n*[*ad*]*ī-ma mu*[*ḫ*]*ḫašu šukkuṣ* ⇒ *marṣu ina murṣīšu imât* 'If *ziḫḫu* was situated in the Palace Gate and its top was dried ⇒ the infirm will die from his illness' (*YOS* 10 26 iv 24–25).

2.207. [*šumma ina … p*]*adānim ziḫḫum ruššuk* ⇒ *rubûm ina ḫarrān illaku imaqqut* '[If in the … of] the Path (there was) *ziḫḫu* (and it) was dried ⇒ the prince, in the campaign he is undertaking, will collapse' (*YOS* 10 18:52).

Elsewhere the statements *uluṣ libbim* and *lumun libbim* follow one another in two apparently related omens seemingly concerned with related findings:

2.208. *YOS* 10 25:66'–67'

66. [*šumma ina bāb ekallim* (?) …] … *sūmum nadi* ⇒ ***uluṣ libbim*** '[If] a red coloration …[…] was situated [*in the Palace Gate*] ⇒ (it forecasts) **joy**'

305 So Jeyes 1989: 160. Lit., "swelling of the heart," but glossed as *uluṣ libbi* in Koch, *Multābiltu* 2:24; cf. English "swell."

306 On *lumun libbim* as such, see briefly Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* 2: 205.

307 Admittedly, these are not exact duplicates of ex. 2.205.

67. [*šumma ina bāb ekallim* (?) … *p*]*ūṣum nadi* ⇒ ***lumun libbim*** '[If] a white coloration [……] was situated [*in the Palace Gate*] ⇒ (it forecasts) **sorrow**.'

Not infrequently, as in the following pair of examples, these expressions make up one of several independent alternative interpretations, in both the coordinated and uncoordinated types:

2.209. Protasis ⇒ ***lumun libbi*** [*šanûm š*]*umša ibissûm* [*šalšum* (?)] *šumša murṣum* '(it forecasts) **sorrow**; its [second] interpretation: losses; its [*third*] interpretation: disease' (*YOS* 10 33 i 25–27 [= exx. 2.57; 2.115]).

2.210. Protasis ⇒ ***lumun libbim*** *ibissûm ū murṣum* '(it forecasts) **sorrow** (or:) losses; or: disease' (*CUSAS* 18 10 i 21'–23' // *YOS* 10 31 iii 36–40 [= ex. 2.114]).

In all likelihood *ṭūb libbim* and *ḫiššat libbim*, although unattested in this independent manner, functioned in these capacities as well. In all these examples, such expressions serve not as lemmata introducing longer interpretations but as forecasts in and of themselves.

However, on occasion these expressions occur as introductory clauses in various apodoses, followed by longer and more specific forecasts. As such they constitute the first component in the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form and thus merit consideration in the present context. Examples where expressions of emotional state occur in what appear as introductory labels to longer, more detailed predictions that follow include the following:[308]

2.211. *OBE* 14 ob. 4–5

4. Protasis ⇒ ***ḫiššat libbim*** *ummānī* [*rēš e*]*qlīša ikaššad*
5. Protasis ⇒ ***ḫiššat***[309] ***libbim*** *ummān nak*[*ri rēš*] *eqlīša ikaššad*

4. '(It means) **elation**: my army will reach its destination'
5. '(It means) ***elation***: the army of the enemy will reach its [des]tination.'

308 See additionally *OBE* 14 ob. 10.

309 One expects *lumun* or the like according to the right/left opposition guiding the two lines of this passage. In all likelihood this is a mistake, probably owing to dittography.

The challenge faced when trying to grasp the meaning of these expressions in this context differs from other short apodotic expressions discussed above. For, unlike their counterparts (for instance *nipḫum* or *millatum*), general expressions of feelings or emotional states cannot properly be conceived as lemmata; nor can the longer predictions following them be taken as interpretative glosses on such statements. One hazards to guess how, for example, declarations such as "joy" or "sorrow" could be meaningfully construed as triggers for specific forecasts. The motivation behind their place within the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form must thus be explained differently. Indeed, to the extent that it may be demonstrated that such expressions are neither lemmata preceding longer forecasts nor integral parts of them, the possibility must be entertained that these were inserted at the beginning of apodoses in order to serve as interpretative cues for what followed. The challenge these expressions present in the context of the current discussion is thus twofold: first, one must demonstrate that these are in fact peripheral to the longer, main predictions that follow; second, the purpose for their inclusion must also be entertained. Unsurprisingly, with the evidence at hand an examination of these matters leaves many unanswered questions. Still, on the basis of a few instructive cases, some provisional suggestions are proposed below:

2.212. [(*šumma*) *ṣibtum*] ⌜*kīma a*⌝*ban suluppim* ⇒ ***uluṣ libbi*** [*aššat*] *awīlim zika<ra> ullad* '[(If) the Increase] (was) like the date's pit ⇒ (it signals) **joy**: the man's [wife] shall bear a male. (*YOS* 10 35:36–37).

2.213. [*šumma ṣ*]*ibtum kīma aban iṣṣūrim* ⇒ [*aššat awīl*]*im zikaram ullad* '[If] the Increase (was) like a "bird-stone" ⇒ the man's [wife] shall bear a male' (*OBE* 10:27–29; cf. *YOS* 10 11 v 12–13; 42 ii 27–28; *BLO* 27:6).

The peripheral nature of at least one of these expressions appears clearly in ex. 2.212. Among those omens predicting the birth of male offspring, only here is the news qualified as joyful. That this tiding should prompt delight is, of course, unsurprising; however, this recurrent prediction accords with the stereotypical form *aššat šarrim*/*awīlim zikaram ullad* ("the king's/man's wife shall bear a male"),[310] and as such the anticipatory *uluṣ libbim* in ex. 2.212 must be regarded as an interpolation. This point finds backing when one notes that the similarities between exx. 2.212 and 2.213 are neither coincidental nor the products of independent calculations. The collections from which these are quoted, *YOS* 10 35 (// AO 7033) and *OBE* 10 respectively, parallel one another

310 See *CAD* Z, 110–1 (with additional examples from non-extispicy OB omens).

at times, with exx. 2.212 and 2.213 representing one such instance. Still, both versions contain evidence of a loose transmission process and manipulation of the received tradition.[311] The expression of *uluṣ libbim* in ex. 2.212 represents one instance of such reformulation. As to the specific reasoning behind this interpolation, unfortunately one can only speculate.

However, in two other cases some indication as to the purpose of these expressions is more apparent. These cases are unrelated to one another in terms of subject or form, but the appearance of the expressions *ṭūb libbim* and *lumun libbim* in them furnishes their host apodoses with a clear valence, respectively positive and negative, perhaps because these had been previously perceived as insufficiently clear. As such, it would seem as if these expressions were introduced into such contexts in an explanatory role, fitting into the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form's first position in a way that helped explain the main prediction in the second:

2.214. [*šumma pad*]*ānu imittam uḫtallal* ⇒ ***ṭūb libbi*** *šubtum nēḫtum šanû šumšu nēkemtum* '[If] the Path was suspended on the right ⇒ (it forecasts) **well-being**: a peaceful dwelling; its second interpretation: (it forecasts a) loss' (*YOS* 10 20:7 [= exx. 2.88, 2.143]).

This passage, discussed earlier (§ 2.1.3.1.4 (d)), contains a complex apodosis consisting of alternative interpretations that seem initially incompatible with one another. However, as was suggested above, the apparently contradictory predictions of *šubtum nēḫtum* ("a restful seat") and *nēkemtum* ("loss") are to be understood as representing two sides of the same coin according to the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism, presented here in sequence via the mediation of the *šanûm šumšu* clause. Accordingly, the prediction of *šubtum nēḫtum* refers to oneself (in keeping with the omens' egocentric perspective), while that of *nēkemtum* to the enemy. This reading finds support when considering the *ṭūb libbi* that precedes both predictions. The expression was probably introduced into this entry by the diviner in an explanatory role, specifically on account of perceived ambiguities stemming from this entry's unusual juxtaposition of short forecasts.[312]

311 This point was alluded to above (§ 2.1.2) in the discussion of exx. 2.5–2.6 and is taken up again more extensively in § 5.4.1.3.2.

312 Admittedly, the appearance of *lumun libbim* ("sorrow") in ex. 2.215, l. 42, the apodosis of which is also comprised of two alternative interpretations, cannot be ascribed to the same motivation.

The case apparent in l. 36 of the following example, where the terse and difficult forecast of *nikip ubānim* ("a *stubbing* to the *toe*") follows the statement of *lumun libbim*, bolsters the suggestion of these expressions' explanatory role:

2.215. *YOS* 10 24:36–37, 39, 42

36. Protasis ⇒ ***lumun libbim*** *nikip ubānim*
37. Protasis ⇒ *ubān šarrim ša qātīšu imarraṣ*
39. Protasis ⇒ *ina nikip ubānim awīlum imât*
...
42. Protasis ⇒ ***lumun libbim*** *ašarēd ekallim nakrum ileqqe awīlam kišpū ṣabtū*

36. '(It forecasts) **sorrow**: the *stubbing* of the toe[313]'
37. 'A king's finger from his hand will go bad (from infection)'
39. 'From the *stubbing* of the toe the man will die'
...
42. '(It predicts) **sorrow**: the enemy will take the first in rank of the palace; (or:) witchcraft will seize the man.'

The apodoses of two of the following three entries from that collection (ll. 37, 39) describe injuries to fingers, with both cases explicitly pointing out the outcome, respectively, sickness or death for the injured. Indeed the forecast of *nikip ubānim* from l. 36 recurs in l. 39, but with the fatal consequence there specified. It is not unlikely that by comparison to these cases, and especially on account of their juxtaposition to l. 36, the diviner opted to gloss the brief and comparatively vague forecast of l. 36, refashioning it in effect for this particular context. In terms of the gloss itself, it is not improbable that this was conceived by analogy to what was to come in l. 42. Naturally, this interpretation remains speculative; without the benefit of parallels it is impossible to speak with certainty about the purpose and place of the *lumun libbim* heading in l. 36.

But the possibility that a certain level of paradigm pressure could affect a given omen's interpretation and account for the presence of a short apodotic expression finds support elsewhere. This is likely the case in ll. 5–7 of the

313 On the meaning of *nakāpum* in this phrase, which remains unclear, see the recent discussion in George 2013: 164. I follow George's interpretation. The translation of "toe" here stands in contrast with the following line, which specifies the finger of the hand (suggestion courtesy J. Huehnergard).

following example, where the initial declaration of *mīli irtim*, here "pride," precedes the longer forecast about the army's upset victory:

2.216. *YOS* 10 11 i 5–10 (ll. 8–10 = exx. 2.23; 2.197)

5–7. *šumma padānum k*[*īm*]*a qaštim* ⇒ ***mīli irtim*** *ummān šarrim ištum ummān nakrim māttam idâk*
8–10. *šumma padānum imittam u šumēlam* ***ipšuq*** ⇒ *tašnintum ummānum ana pī šāpirīša ul uššab ū lū šarrum ana p*[*ī m*]*ālikīšu ul uššab*

5–7. 'If the Path (was) like a bow ⇒ (it forecasts) **pride**: the small army of the king will defeat the numerous army of the enemy'
8–10. 'If the Path **was narrow** on the right and left ⇒ (it predicts) rivalry: (either) the army will not abide by its commander(s), or: the king will not abide by his counselor(s).'

It will be recalled that forecasts of pride are typically associated with reported findings of unusual width (*rapāšum*) for a given mark or zone. However, as there is no other known mention of the simile *kīma qaštim* ("like a bow") in OB extispicy, it is difficult to say whether this simile maintained this signification.[314] Yet it is likely that the image was of a taut bow, whose belly, in Akkadian *irtum*, "chest,"[315] was equated with width.[316] The inclusion of *mīli irtim* in the apodosis of this omen thus fills out the paradigm as the counterpart to the narrow (< *pašāqum*) Path of ll. 8–10.

This reading, which attributes the factor of paradigm pressure to the appearance of a short apodotic lemma in a certain omen, is reinforced by another instance in which a *mīli irtim* forecast seems due to factors external to the omen in which it appears. Though in all likelihood a zone's likening to the *akkullu*-hammer was regarded as positive (for the party represented by the side in which it occurs), its interpretation in the first entry from the following example surely relates to the juxtaposition of that entry to the imagery in the following omen:

314 Where this image occurs in first-millennium extispicy collections (e.g., *BLO* 27:21 and *BRM* 4 13:6–7), the respective apodoses concern military matters.

315 See, e.g., SB Anzû II 60: *ina irat qašti qanâ ubilšum*, "he placed an arrow in the bow's belly against him."

316 For potential support of this reading, see now *CUSAS* 18 8:3–4, an omen whose protasis reports a concave Crucible and whose apodosis includes the *mīli irtim* expression.

2.217. *YOS* 10 28:3–4 (l. 4 // *YOS* 10 31 ii 16–23)

3. *šumma martum rēssa kīma qaqqad akkullim* ⇒ ***mīli irtim***
4. *šumma martum rēssa kīma ṣillêm*[317] ***iqtin*** ⇒ *šarrum mātam nakartam upallaš*

3. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its top (was) like the head of an *akkullu*-hammer ⇒ (it forecasts) **pride**'
4. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its top (was) **thin** like a pin ⇒ the king will pierce an enemy land.'

The occurrence of the *akkullu*-hammer simile in SB omens[318] is instructive in this regard, since these, which describe military supremacy, say nothing concerning pride. It appears thus that this prediction in exx. 2.216, ll. 5–7 and 2.217, l. 3 is to be explained by analogy, by way of these entries' juxtaposition to the omen that followed each of them. This factor of paradigm pressure is responsible for the forging of short apodotic expressions elsewhere as well (see § 2.1.4.2.9). Indeed, the consequences of paradigmatic relations on numerous facets of individual omens are multifaceted, and these are the concern of chapters 3–5. For the moment, however, it suffices to regard such effects on the purported creation of the introductory forecast of ex. 2.216, ll. 5–7. If correct, it is not unfair to say that on this account the omen's meaning was based on the generation of new information (*mīli irtim*) from the preexisting materials at the diviner's disposal.

2.1.4.2.9 *tazzimtum*

Analogy and paradigm pressure, pointed to as an explanation for the declaration of *mīli irtim* ("pride, success") in ex. 2.216, ll. 5–7 above, may account for a report of *tazzimtum* ("complaint") as well:

2.218. BM 22694:25–27

25. *šumma ṭulīmum lip*[*t*]*ātim mali* ⇒ ***taggertum*** *ibbašši*
26–27. *šumma ṭulīmum kappā*[*šu*] *šarūrī maliā* ⇒ ***tazzimtum*** *ina ḫarrānim ummānī ina šubtīša unakkar*

317 *CAD* L, 157; Q, 163 reads the simile as *kīma* DUB *lē'im* (*le-e-im*), and translates (Q, ibid.) "as a writing board." But this must be rejected in light of the parallel with the *YOS* 10 31 text (so already Riemschneider 1962: 105, 107), in which the lexeme is written: *ṣi-il-li-im*.

318 These include *CT* 28 46:7; 31 26 r. 3 (gallbladder); *BRM* 4 13:48 (intestines).

25. 'If the spleen was full of (discolored) spots ⇒ there will be **denunciation**'
26–27. 'If the spleen—[its] (two) lobes were full of *shoots* ⇒ (it forecasts) a **complaint**: in the campaign my army will move away from its encampment.'

Elsewhere *tazzimtum* almost always appears in constructs (e.g., exx. 2.219–2.222; 2.224; but cf. ex. 2.225), which often refer to human complaints, directed at a higher authority, either divine or regal (exx. 2.219–2.221; 2.224; but cf. ex. 2.222):

2.219. *YOS* 10 33 v 5–10

5–7. Protasis ⇒ ***tazzimti*** *mātim ilum imḫur*
8–10. Protasis ⇒ [...] ... *ri*[*g*]*ma ša Adad na*[*zām*] *mātim ilum imḫur*[319]

5–7. 'The deity received the **complaint** of the land'
8–10. '... the roar of Adad; the deity received the complaining of the land.'

2.220. Protasis ⇒ [***t***]***azzimti*** *mātim ilum išemm*[*e*] 'the deity will hear the **complaint** of the land' (*OBE* 9:16').

2.221. Protasis ⇒ ***tazzimti*** *ṣib*[*itt*]*i ana šarrim* '(It forecasts) a **complaint** from the *prison* to the king' (*YOS* 10 48:41; cf. // *YOS* 10 49:13 [OB sheep physiognomy]).

2.222. Protasis ⇒ [***t***]***azzimti*** *māti ana šarri* ***tazzimti*** *ili ana amēli* '(It forecasts) the **complaint** of the land to the king; (or:) the **complaint** of the (personal [?]) god to the man' (*MDP* 57 4 r. 18 [MB extispicy]).

2.223 Protasis ⇒ *ummākka ina šupat* [*wašb*]*at ītanarrar* 'Your army will be constantly agitated in the encampment in which it is dwelling' (*YOS* 10 17:12a).

2.224. [*šumma li*]*bbu uṭṭēti*⌜*m peṣâtim malī-ma*⌝ [*u*] *waṣiā* ⇒ ***tazzimti*** *ummānim* '[If] the heart was full of white moles and they were protruding ⇒ (it forecasts) the **complaint** of the army' (*YOS* 10 42 i 24–25; cf. ex. 2.225).

319 Reading of line courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

2.225. *šumma pad*[*ānum š*]*irširrī mali* ⇒ ***tazzimtum*** 'If the Path was full of chain-marks—(it forecasts) **complaint**' (CMAA030-C0001 r. 35; cf. ex. 2.224).

In light of its frequent attestation in constructs, the *tazzimtum* statement in ex. 2.218 is difficult to explain and may even seem out of place, especially at first glance. Yet Jeyes' insight[320] that this apodosis shares with others (e.g., ex. 2.223) a tradition reporting the angst of troops amid a campaign merits further consideration. Indeed, in this regard one can point to at least one other prognosis describing the army's complaint (ex. 2.224), though quite possibly the difficult annotation at the end of the following example, *šēp tazzimtim*, "a (*military*) *force* of complaint (?)," fits here as well:[321]

2.226. Protasis ⇒ *nakrum itebbeam iṣabba'*[322] *qadum rīṣīšu u tillātīšu ālka ilawwī-ma ina* <*p*>*ilšim ana libbīšu irrub* ***šēp tazzimtim*** 'The enemy will rise up (and) *wage war*, together with his helpers and auxiliary troops he will encircle your city and enter into its midst via a breach; (it represents:) a (***military***) ***force* of complaint**' (*YOS* 10 3).

But what might explain the manner in which this detail is reported in ex. 2.218, ll. 26–27? Why should *tazzimtum* not be qualified as elsewhere, or, more simply, be incorporated into the main prediction or, simpler still, comprise it (exx. 2.225–2.226)? The motivation behind the appearance of *tazzimtum* (< *nuzzumum*) here becomes more intelligible if viewed against the backdrop of the preceding entry in l. 25, whose interpretation of a similar "observation" in the spleen elicits the prediction of the lexeme *taggertum* ("denunciation" [< *nuggurum*]). The latter, if not a hyponym of *tazzimtum*, certainly shares with it the noun pattern *taprīst*, the assonance (including an identical vowel pattern [/a-i-u/] and syllabic structure [*taz*/*zim*/*tum* ↔ *tag*/*ger*/*tum*]) between the two being entirely obvious.[323]

Examples like this one, and like that forecasting pride in ex. 2.216, ll. 5–7 above, serve as reminder that, as elsewhere, an analysis of a particular omen entry in terms of both its protasis and interpretation must not overlook the broader context in which it appears. The gradation paradigms, which, as

320 Jeyes 1989: 182.

321 Cf. Stol 2003.

322 Following the tentative reading (*i-ṣa-ba-aḫ* [< *ṣabā'um*]) in Stol 2003.

323 It should be noted in this respect that BM 22694, the text from which this example is quoted, elsewhere discloses a penchant for paradigmatic (i.e., inter-omen) assonance and alliteration.

the next chapters convey, appear in the omen collections in an impressive array of variations, exerting considerable pressure on individual entries and inevitably pushing them to conform to their larger structures. The results of this organizational effort, as already witnessed here, bore on more than a few occasions creative results. What remains to be seen is the sheer scope and magnitude of this enterprise.

CHAPTER 3

Inter-omen Organization (1)

3.0 Inter-omen Organization (1)

With this chapter our attention turns to the other basic organizational framework in the omen collections, the one involving relations among individual omens. In contrast to the various inner-omen organizational concerns analyzed in the previous chapter, which run horizontally across the syntagma of individual omens, inter-omen organizational structures run along a vertical axis through individual omens in a given collection (see Figure 2.1). The relationship among affiliated elements in individual omens—for instance, colors of a particular mark mentioned in juxtaposed entries—is described in structuralist terms as metaphoric. In the present work this metaphoric relationship, when extended to include all the components of the juxtaposed entries, is referred to as paradigmatic. Along with the protasis—apodosis syntagmatic relationship, paradigmatic relationships between respective protases or apodoses represent a basic order of the omen collections. Both are ubiquitous in the collections, and each frequently plays an effective role in the articulation of the other.[1] Together these form the legs on which the organizational framework stands, providing the structure for the broader interpretive framework in the collections.

We have already encountered examples of the complementarity and intertwining of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships appearing in the collections. The present chapter explores this phenomenon in greater detail. This basic interplay between the horizontal and vertical axes invalidates any conception of the omen collections that stresses the priority or prevalence of either the syntagmatic or the paradigmatic dimensions.[2] Accordingly, the exploration of paradigmatic relationships below does not stress the superiority of this side of things; it merely seeks to expose their manifest variety.

3.1 Gradation

Individual omens are seldom recorded randomly within the omen collections. Overwhelmingly, their arrangement follows two basic principles that order

1 For this point concerning laws in Mesopotamian legal collections, see Eichler 1987: 72.

2 Pace, e.g., Pongratz-Leisten 1999: 14; Brown 2000: 114.

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individual entries within larger units. These two principles—opposition and pointillism—refer to the manner by which individual omens are arranged in gradation units of different sorts and sizes, and are the subject of an extensive investigation in what follows in this chapter (§§ 3.2–3.4) as well as in the following two (Chapters 4 and 5). As discussed earlier, in this work we refer to a single such unit, comprised of two or more individual omens that relate to one another according to organizational principles, as a gradation paradigm (or gradation for short).

An examination of the evidence points to the conclusion that the process of the organization into gradation paradigms was not a passive activity; rather, this was a dynamic undertaking, which invariably affected previously unaffiliated entries in their new settings. This process frequently inspired actual changes in the composition of pre-existing omens and even generated new omens according to the order imposed by the gradation paradigm. In short, inter-omen organization was a creative and generative process. The outlining of underlying organizational structures and principles thus sheds important light on what we have described as the collections' generative and paradigmatic characteristics.

The sheer quantity of entries betraying some sort of paradigmatic relationship to others in their proximity is matched only by the richness in the qualitative types of those relationships. Indeed, it appears as if virtually every entry appearing in a given collection has been organized according to some paradigmatic pattern and principle. What other conclusion concerning this question can be drawn upon the consideration of the short collection *YOS* 10 27, whose colophon tells us that its four omens concerning the Palace Gate are "non-standard," perhaps even "non-canonical" (4 *bāb ekallim lā kīnūtum*), but which nonetheless sees fit to arrange its entries (ex. 3.1)[3] according to a well-known paradigmatic pattern contrasting the position of the Increase with that of the Yoke('s Increase)?

3.1. *YOS* 10 27:6–11 (// *YOS* 10 9:7–12)[4]

6–8. *šumma kakkum ina bāb ekallim šakim-ma* ***ṣibtam iṭṭul*** ⇒ *kīdêtīka*[5] *nakrum izzib*

3 Whether the same can be said for the first two entries (ll. 1–5) is impossible to say owing to text breaks.

4 For a discussion of this example in the context of the zonal opposition, see § 3.3 below.

5 Reading follows one of the expected plural forms in *CAD* K, 345; text: *ki-di-ti-i-ka*, perhaps to be emended: *ki-di-i-ti-ka*? Cf. n. 7.

9–11. *šumma kakkum ina bāb ekallim šakim-ma* ***ṣibat nīrim***[6] ***iṭṭul*** ⇒ *kīdêti*[7] *nakrīka tezzib*

6–8. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Palace Gate and it **faced the Increase** ⇒ the enemy will leave your outer regions'
9–11. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Palace Gate and it **faced the Yoke's Increase** ⇒ you will leave your enemy's outer regions.'

Needless to say, this example cannot constitute the basis of any claim about the prevalence of paradigmatic expression in the collections; it is cited here merely to illustrate the nature of this type of expression and its apparent ubiquity in the collections.[8] If the predominant role of gradation paradigms in the organization of the omen collections is to be stressed, this must be backed by further evidence. For this reason a systematic analysis of the evidence of paradigmatic expression in the collections is required, and it is to this end that the present chapter and the two following are devoted.

3.1.1 *Challenges to the Identification of Gradation Paradigms*

The convergence of several factors may explain why the place of gradation paradigms was not appreciated sooner in the comprehension of the omen collections, at least not to the extent suggested here. The most basic reason for this oversight stems from the absence, until now, of a systematic treatment of the collections. In terms of specific challenges, however, the following discussion outlines three main obstacles to the identification and interpretation of gradation paradigms: explicit-yet-unmarked reference to preceding omens; implicit reference to preceding omens; and the effect of one omen on entries following it. It must be stressed that the following discussion is not intended to be exhaustive, either in terms of the examples quoted or with respect to the phenomena to which these examples attest; rather, it provides a starting point to the following, which will shed light on some of the problems facing the interpretation of paradigmatic expressions in the collections.

3.1.2 *Explicit Reference to Preceding Omens*

One significant factor contributing to the relative inattention paid to gradation in the organization of the omen collections involves the presence of a

6 For the understanding of this construction, see n. 108 below.

7 Reading follows one of the expected plural forms in *CAD* K, 345; cf. n. 5.

8 In fact, if this example and perhaps *YOS* 10 27 as a whole represent an excerpt from a standardized series, then it should not be surprising to find the quoted entries organized in the manner known in the standard collections (see Glassner 2004: 66–7).

considerable number of paradigms that do not seem to adhere to more stereotypical exemplars. The largest contingent of this group consists of passages in which one or several omens following the first entry refer(s) implicitly or explicitly to the opening entry and, in so doing, alter(s) their appearance from what it would otherwise be. In the post-OB collections this type of reference to a preceding omen is typically more explicit, standardized, and common—and thus more recognizable—than is the case among their OB counterparts. On the other hand, in OB collections explicit, formal reference to a previous entry is exceedingly rare. The following example may well represent the sole instance of this:

3.2. *YOS* 10 41:40–44

40–42. Protasis ⇒ *ālum ša ana lawê*[*šu*] *tallaku ana pānīka gišram inakkisa*[*m-ma*] *ittaṣṣiakkum*
43–44. *u šumma ana āl na*[*kr*]*im tallak ina pānīka* **min** *inaddī-ma itta*[*ṣ*]*ṣi atta ana ālim nadîm terrub*

40–42. Protasis ⇒ 'The town, to which you are going to lay siege, will tear down the bridge before you [and] come out against you'
43–44. 'But if you are going to an enemy town—in your presence: **ditto**; he (= the enemy) will leave (the city) abandoned; you will enter into the abandoned city.'

If the use of a ditto mark to refer explicitly to information from a preceding omen represents a unique occurrence in OB omen collections,[9] this does not mean that this example employs this feature in the manner of the later collections. Even a cursory reading of this passage leaves no doubt that ll. 43–44 do not constitute a separate omen entry; rather, these lines refer to the omen described in ll. 40–42 and are to be taken as a variation of the apodosis in those lines, which is organized according to the *ø … u šumma* form (see § 2.1.3.2). It is not clear how the second possibility spelled out in ll. 43–44 differs from the one in ll. 40–42; presumably any city that one sets out to besiege would constitute an enemy's city (*āl nakrim*). Still, ll. 43–44 supply additional information regarding the enemy's abandonment of the town (*inaddī-ma ittaṣṣi*) and one's ("your") successful penetration into abandoned enemy territory (*atta ana ālim*

9 One does find the ditto marker elsewhere, as in *CUSAS* 18 24 ob. 10 (and cf. *YOS* 10 25:50'), where it refers to the protases of the same entry.

nadîm terrub). What precedes these two statements in ll. 43–44, *ina pānīka* min, "in your presence: ditto," refers to the preceding description in the apodosis from ll. 40–42, which holds true here as well: the inhabitants of the city "will tear down the bridge and come out against you" (*gišram inakkisam-ma ittaṣṣiakkum*).

The use of the ditto sign thus formally indicates the repetition of corresponding information from the preceding apodosis. However, this is not the only manner in which omens in OB collections explicitly refer to preceding entries. Another method employed for this pupose involves the quotation of (part of) an apodosis by the protases of entries below it. This method plays a part in a more extensive organizational technique in the collections, in which apodoses of certain entries affect protases in succeeding entries. An illustration of this method appears below.

The example in question was discussed previously (§ 2.1.3.4 [c]) in connection with the occurrence of the *šanûm šumšu* formula in l. 10. In that context it was noted that the omens in ll. 10–11 link with that in l. 9, with the unusual phrase Strength of Betrayal (*danān zabiltim*) in ll. 10–11 deriving in all probability from the short apodotic expression of betrayal (*zabiltum*) in l. 9 (i.e., *danān zabiltim* [ll. 10–11] ← *zabiltum* [l. 9]). However, left unaddressed was what the Strength of Betrayal actually means, as well as how the *zabiltum* in l. 9 relates both to the protasis it purportedly interprets and also to the *danān zabiltim* in ll. 10–11. In order to answer these questions, we must first re-examine this related series of omens:

3.3. AO 7028:9–11 (12–17) (= ex. 2.75)

9. [*šumma d*]*anānu rēssu uššur* ⇒ ***zabiltum*** *šata*[*m ekallim*] *awâtim uštenešše*
10. [*šumma* ***danā***]***n zabiltim*** *paṭer* ⇒ *ākil karṣīka* [*ka*]*rṣūšu ula immaḫḫarū šanû šumšu ša liš*[*āni*……]
11. [*šumma* ***danān za***]***biltim*** *paṭer-ma u tari*[*k*] ⇒ *ša lišāni iṣṣabbat-ma* [*iddâk*]

9. '[If] the Strength—its head was loosened off ⇒ (it forecasts) **betrayal**: the *šatammu*-official of the [palace] will repeatedly reveal matters'
10. '[If] **the Strength of Betrayal** was (also) split ⇒ concerning the one who slanders you—his accusations will not be accepted; its second interpretation: an informer [will……]';

11. '[If **the Strength**] **of Betrayal** was (also) split and dark ⇒ the informer will be seized and [killed].'

A consideration of the formulation of all three omens in this example points to a likely solution. Two factors noted earlier help in this regard: (1) *ša lišānim* in l. 10 likely represents an addition to conform its entry to what follows in l. 11; (2) the introduction of the variable of shade (*tarik*) in the protasis of l. 11 builds on the previous data in l. 10. To these points the following may now be added. It seems that the seizure and killing of the informer in l. 11 corresponds to the shade variable (*tarik*), and thus represents the difference between the interpretations in l. 10 and l. 11. As far as the two alternative interpretations of the omen in l. 10 are concerned, matters do not proceed well for the denouncer (*ākil karṣim*) in the first interpretation, though not as badly as in the case of l. 11; and it is reasonable to assume that a prediction concerning the informer (*ša lišānim*) in the second alternative ran along the same lines as the first. By contrast with ll. 10–11, in l. 9 the palace *šatammu*-official is the culprit, and, to judge from the depiction of his habitual action, a successful one at that. The composite picture from these omens thus seems intent on presenting a devolving progression of success by the different agents of betrayal.

In addition, it is probable that the predictions in l. 10 with respect to l. 9 reflect the effect of the additional variable *paṭer* appearing in the former, in a manner akin to the role of the additional variable *tarik* in l. 11 in that entry's interpretation. Thus, along with its relation with the interpretation of l. 11, the nuance in the interpretation(s) from l. 10 was intended to resonate with that of l. 9. It is hardly surprising then that this line contains lexical material bridging itself with both l. 9 (*zabiltum* ↔ *danān zabiltim*) and l. 11 (*ša lišānim* ↔ *ša lišānim*).

Indeed, it is not inconceivable that ll. 9–11 were originally unrelated to one another. This would explain the switch of *šatam ekallim* in l. 9 to *ākil karṣim* in l. 10 (in the first forecast) and *ša lišānim* in l. 11 (i.e., *šatam ekallim* → *ākil karṣim* → *ša lišānim*), with the stitching visible before the second alternative in l. 10 representing an attempt to conform the three entries into the present paradigm. One consequence of this process was the abbreviation of the protases of ll. 10–11, instead conforming the latter to the apodosis of l. 9. Accordingly, the locution *danān zabiltim* in ll. 10–11 actually assumes the data from the protasis in l. 9, *danānu rēssu uššur*.[10] The conditions reported in ex. 3.3 and their interpretations may be restated as follows:

10 The point seems to be understood by *CAD* Z, 8, though for the reasons noted earlier (§ 2.1.3.4 [c] n. 118), I diverge from the restoration proposed there.

9. *danānu* ***rēssu uššur***	⇒ (**successful**) habitual betrayal
10. *danānu* ***rēssu uššur*****(*-ma*)** ***paṭer***	⇒ **non-reception** of denouncer …
11. *danānu* ***rēssu uššur*****(*-ma*)** ***paṭer-ma tarik***	⇒ **capture and killing** of informant

FIGURE 3.1 *Restatement of Ex. 3.3.*

The quotation of a portion from the apodosis of this example's initial entry by the two following counterparts seemingly obscures the gradation apparent when these omens are reformulated in the manner suggested in Figure 3.1. But it is important to recognize that such judgment takes the *danān zabiltim* locution as no more than scholastic shorthand. However, it may be that this phrase actively promoted this gradation's formation and thus cannot be taken as little more than its outer layer.

Our interpretation of the background of the *danān zabiltim* quotation finds support from a simpler yet more impressive instance of this type of explicit quotation. This appears in a passage from *YOS* 10 46, a long five-column collection concerning the Weapon (*kakkum*):

3.4. *YOS* 10 46 ii 33–44[11]

33–35. *šumma* ***kakki imittim ina nār amūtim meḫret abullim šakim****-ma maṣraḫ martim iṭṭul* ⇒ *kakki rīṣi*
36–37. *šumma* ***kakki rīṣi*** *ṣibtam iṭṭul* ⇒ *rēṣka būšīka ikkal*
38–39. *šumma* ***kakki rīṣi*** *suḫḫur* ⇒ *rēṣūya ipaṭṭarūninni*
40–41. *šumma* ***kakki rīṣi*** *tarik* ⇒ *rēṣīya nakrum idâk*
42–44. *šumma ina muḫḫi* ***kakki rīṣi*** *erištum šaknat* ⇒ *rēṣūya itti ilim ana dâkim ṭardū*

33–35. 'If **the Weapon of the right was situated in the liver's River opposite the City Gate** and faced the gallbladder's cystic duct ⇒ (it is) the Weapon of Help'
36–37. 'If **the Weapon of Help** faced the Increase ⇒ your helper will consume your valuables'
38–39. 'If **the Weapon of Help** was turned back ⇒ my helpers will desert me'
40–41. 'If **the Weapon of Help** was dark ⇒ the enemy will defeat my helpers'

11 This passage is edited in Richter 1994: 233–4, which, however, does not take the entries following ll. 33–35 in the sense taken here.

42–44. 'If a Request-mark was situated in the top of **the Weapon of Help** ⇒ my helpers will be sent out with (the support of) the god to defeat (the enemy).'

In this passage's first entry (ll. 33–35), a specific situation of a Weapon of the right "in the liver's River opposite the City Gate" and facing the gallbladder's cystic duct prompts a prediction of a Weapon of Help (*kakki rīṣim*). What follows in the next four entries (ll. 36–44) reflects an elaboration of the condition laid out in the first. In a manner reminiscent of the *danān zabiltim* case, these four entries pick up on the apodosis of the first omen in their respective protases. The *kakki rīṣim* described in ll. 36–44 thus corresponds to the condition predicted in ll. 33–35[12] that prompted this forecast in the first place, and each of the omens following the first introduces its own variable to the *kakki rīṣim*. The respective apodoses make it clear that the interpretation of each of these omens stands on two legs: (1) the meaning of the *kakki rīṣim* in ll. 33–35 and (2) the additional factor introduced in each respective entry.

Unlike the case of ex. 3.3, which employs the locution *danān zabiltim* for the purpose of harmonizing dissonant traditions, this example seems to reflect a single, originally unified idea. Reference to the *kakki rīṣim* in the entries from ll. 36–44 may have been intended simply as shorthand; after all, the Weapon's description in ll. 33–35 is cumbersome. But it appears that the incorporation of this term in ll. 36–44 allowed the author of this passage to explore the deeper meaning of the *kakki rīṣim* forecast, which evidently concerned military allies in different scenarios. To what extent this quotation affected the formation of this paradigm is uncertain, yet it stands to reason that this convention facilitated the overall process in some capacity. Thus, along with the ditto of ex. 3.2, exx. 3.3 and 3.4 demonstrate that omens in the OB collections could refer explicitly to information in a preceding entry by quoting (part of) the apodosis of that entry as a summary of the preceding condition.

12 Whether the Weapon that faces the gallbladder in ll. 33–35 is to be taken as part of what comprises the *kakki rīṣim* quotation in the following entries is unclear. On the one hand, the *kakki rīṣim* forecast in the first omen seems based on the entire protasis, including the directional factor. Moreover, elsewhere where a *kakki rīṣim* occurs (*YOS* 10 17:17 // AO 9066: 7–11), it reportedly faces the same direction (cf. *YOS* 10 33 ii 45–46). On the other hand, the second omen in the paradigm (ll. 36–37) itself includes a statement about the Weapon's direction, which seems like an alternative to the preceding. Since it seems unlikely that a Weapon was conceived as facing both gallbladder and Increase, the second option is to be preferred.

3.1.3 *Implied Reference to Preceding Omens*

As we have seen, some omens explicitly reference previous entries; however, it is overwhelmingly the case that omens referring to preceding entries do so only implicitly. Usually the recognition of gradation paradigms employing this method poses no serious obstacles in terms of reading comprehension. A modicum of literary competence and common sense help to navigate through terrain that, though uncharted, nonetheless represents a mere extension of the known. The following example illustrates this point well:

3.5. *YOS* 10 44:1–10 (ll. 1–9 // id.: 63–71 [protases only] // *YOS* 10 50:1–9)[13]

1. *šumma ina šumēl tākaltim šēpum* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma* (**ditto**) *šittā šēpān* ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma* (**ditto**) *šalāš šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
4. *šumma* (**ditto**) *erbe šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
5. *šumma* (**ditto**) *ḫamiš šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
6. *šumma* (**ditto**) **šediš šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
7. *šumma* (**ditto**) *sebe šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
8. *šumma* (**ditto**) *samāne šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
9. *šumma* (**ditto**) *tiše šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
10. *šumma* (**ditto**) *ešer šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If a Foot (was) in the left of the *tākaltu*
2. 'If two Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
3. 'If three Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
4. 'If four Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
5. 'If five Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
6. 'If six Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
7. 'If seven Feet (**were the left of the *tākaltu***)'
8. 'If eight Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
9. 'If nine Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***)'
10. 'If ten Feet (**were in the left of the *tākaltu***).'

13 For similar enumerations of fissures (*piṭrum*) in two additional collections, see Khait 2012: 41–8, 51–2.

It is fairly obvious that the entries in ll. 2–10 assume the same zonal locality as that specified in l. 1, merely extending the omen concerning the Foot tenfold, according to a numerical paradigm.[14]

At times variation in a gradation paradigm is sufficiently minor as to be indistinguishable from a mere scribal oversight. For instance, in the following example it is difficult to tell whether the omission of *immaḫḫaṣ*[15] is explicable either as implied by analogy to the previous and following entries or as the result of an error somewhere in the chain of transcription:[16]

3.6. *YOS* 10 31 iii 45–iv 6 (// *CUSAS* 18 10 ii 3–10' [restored])

iii 45–iii 49. Protasis ⇒ *sukkalmaḫḫum immaḫḫaṣ*
iii 50–iii 54. Protasis ⇒ *bārûm* (<***immaḫḫaṣ***>)
iv 1–iv 6. Protasis ⇒ *zabardabbûm immaḫḫaṣ*

iii 45–iii 49. 'The chancellor will be killed'
iii 50–iii 54. 'The diviner (<**will be killed**>)'
iv 1–iv 6. 'The *chief armorer* will be killed.'

However, elsewhere things become more complicated, especially where there is a significant break in the text. Thus, for instance, that ex. 3.7, l. 2 represents the contrastive pairing to l. 1 or, even more closely, its parallel in ex. 3.8 has gone almost unnoted:[17]

3.7. *YOS* 10 17:1–2

1. [*šumma naplaštam īš*]*u* ⇒ ***niqi awīlim itti ilim*** *maḫir*
2. [*šumma naplaštam lā īšu*] ⇒ *ula izziz*[18]

14 So already Goetze 1947a: 258 n. 38. For a discussion of this example and its parallels (= exx. 5.54–5.56), see § 5.4.

15 Written *im-ma-ḫa-aṣ* above and below, so an alleged omission would probably not be of only one sign.

16 Riemschneider 1962: 58 opted for the latter option; similarly George 2013: 40; but cf. Römer 2004: 395, 404.

17 Nougayrol 1950: 23–4; Richter 1993: 135–6. For a discussion of the paradigmatic logic behind these passages (exx. 3.27–3.28), see § 3.2.2.

18 Cf. this line's restoration and emendation in Glassner 2009: 45: [diš igi.bar *la i-šu* dingir] <*i-na ni-qí* lú> *ú-la* *(erasure) *i-zi-iz*.

'[If] it has [a View] ⇒ **the man's sacrifice** is acceptable **for the god**'
2. '[If it does not have a View] ⇒ (**ditto**) has not appeared.'

3.8. [*šumma napl*]*aštam īšu* ⇒ [*ilum i*]*na niqi awīlim izziz* '[If] it has a View ⇒ [the god] has appeared in the man's sacrifice' (AO 9066:1–2).

Elsewhere, as with the following example, a proper reading can be compromised by the fact that the amount of implicit information taxes the reader's competence:

3.9. *YOS* 10 41:69–71

69–70. *šumma* ***kalītum ša imittim īriq-ma*** *ina imittim ṭeḫiat* ⇒ *lā wālittum ullad*
70–71. *šumma ina imittim-ma ṭeḫiat-ma u*[19] *tarkat* ⇒ *ullad-ma* [*i*]*mât*

69–70. 'If **the kidney of the right was green-yellow and** it lay close in the right ⇒ the barren woman will give birth'
70–71. 'If (**ditto**) and it lay close in the right and it was dark ⇒ she will give birth but she/it (= the baby) will die.'

It is initially difficult to ascertain what the second entry in this passage takes from the first. Clearly it refers to the same kidney mentioned just above,[20] though beyond that things become uncertain. On the one hand, the reference to the impending birth in the interpretation of the second entry demands that all the variables of the previous omen be assumed; on the other, it is reasonable to conclude that the statement of dark shade in the second entry—even if in the negative[21]—was a substitute for the color green-yellow mentioned in the first. Fortunately, a solution seems viable in this instance: though it is unclear to whom the prediction of death refers, both alternatives depend on the

19 Text: *ù* <<*la*>>; cf. *CAD* T, 235, which also emends the passage, citing it as: *kalītum … la tarkat*. Yet this option, or for that matter the reading of the negative particle *ula*, violates the darkness ↔ death association and must be deemed incorrect. The option to read over this as *ūla*, "or," seems unlikely, since according to *CAD* U/W, 69 this particle is unattested in OB, and in any case this word is rarely written with an *ù* sign. The latter point holds for *ula* as well.

20 Unusually, the second entry begins in the middle of a line, following the last word of the first entry.

21 See n. 19 above.

interpretive association between the color green-yellow and water/irrigation, and, by extension, fecundity and birth; thus the statement concerning the kidney's green-yellow coloration is assumed in both cases.

Similarly, it must be the case that the Weapon in the second entry of the following example refers back to the first and assumes the variables of its protasis:

3.10. *YOS* 10 9:15–20 (ll. 15–18 = ex. 2.132 [apodosis only])

15–18. *šumma* ***kakkum ina nīrim šakim-ma abul kutum libbim iṭṭul*** ⇒ *awīlum ṣummurāt* [*u*]*ṣammaru qāssu ikašša*[*d ā*]*li lawiāt* [*an*]*a libbīšu terrub*

19–20. *šumma kakki imittim pališ* ⇒ *āli lawiāt napīša immar*

15–18. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Yoke and faced the City Gate of the intestine's cover ⇒ The man will attain all to which he strives; (or: concerning) the city which you are besieging—you will enter into its midst'

19–20. 'If (**ditto and**) the Weapon in the right was punctured ⇒ the city which you are besieging will breathe easily.'

Aside from the fact that the apodosis in ll. 19–20 builds on the second interpretation from the previous entry (note again the repeated, unusual 2ms predicative adjective form *lawiāt*), the additional information in the second entry assumes what was described in the previous. Only this reading explains adequately the prediction in ll. 19–20: the forecast of the city's feeling the breath likely refers to its escape from the siege,[22] given the fact of the hole on the Weapon's right; but this meaning is still effectively unintelligible without the benefit of the information provided in the previous entry. In other words, the puncture in the Weapon's right (ll. 19–20) is meaningful in this context[23] only in relation to the additional data from the previous entry, specifically the Weapon's facing the heart's cover—a transparent allusion to a (besieged) city wall—along with its City Gate.

Still more problematic are cases such as the following, in which two entries appear predicated on the contrast between *elēnum*, "above," and *šaplānum*, "below," the directions in which a Weapon (explicitly mentioned in l. 13 and implied in l. 14) is pointed:

22 For thoughts on this image and its possible interpretation, see Glassner 2004: 67, 78.

23 A puncture on the Weapon's right may be meaningful elsewhere in and of itself. For various anomalies occurring to the Weapon on the right, without explicit reference to a zone in which said Weapon appears, see, e.g., *YOS* 10 46 iii 23 ff.; *CUSAS* 18 25 r. 4'–10'; 26:25'–26'.

3.11. Scheil A:13–14

13. *šumma* ***ina išdī kussîm ša ubānim kakkum šakim-ma*** *ana elēnu iṭṭul ⇒ ina mā*[*t* (?) ...]
14. *šumma ana šaplānu iṭṭul ⇒ ša taṣbatu tanaššâm-ma tattab*[*bal*]

13. 'If **in the base of the throne of the Finger a Weapon was situated and** it faced upward ⇒ in the *land* [*of* ...]'
14. 'If (**ditto** [?]) it faced downward ⇒ whatever you seized you will lift up and carry away.'

However, it is difficult to tell whether all the information about the Weapon from l. 13 is to be read into l. 14. This seems to have been the intent, though certainty on this occasion is compromised by the break in l. 13.

Similarly, in the following example, it is difficult to determine whether or not the information from the first entry, which concerns the View's top (ll. 35–39), is to be assumed for the following entries, which shift the focus to the View's middle (ll. 40–43) and base (ll. 44–46), as well as the zone as a whole (ll. 47–53):

3.12. AO 9066:35–53 (ll. 35–39 = ex. 2.91; ll. 47–53 = 2.138)

35–39. *šumma rēš napla*[*štim* ***zuqqur***[24]***-ma ka***]***kk***[***um ina muḫḫīša***] ***ušappil-ma*** *ipṭur ⇒ taGriātum šanûm šumšu pisiltum*
40–43. *šumma ina qabliātīša ipṭur ⇒ ugbabtum uštaḫḫa ina kakki ḫimṣāt nakrīka takkal*
44–46. *šumma išissa ipṭur ⇒ šarrum ṣalmam ippuš šanûm ušerreb*
47–53. *šumma naplaštum ana erbe*(*t*) *puṭṭurat ⇒ ina bīt ilim asakkum innakkal ēnum uštaḫḫa šarrum ṣalma ippuš-ma šanûm ušerreb ana muškēnim imât-ma bīssu issappaḫ*

35–39. 'If the head of the View [**was *protuberant***] **and a Weapon** [***in its top***] **was situated low and** was split ⇒ '(It forecasts) *hostilities*; its second interpretation: (it is) a disqualified (omen)';
40–43. 'If in its middle (**ditto and** [?]) it was split ⇒ an *ugbabtu*-priestess will be defiled; (or:) in warfare: you will consume your enemy's spoils'

24 Emending slightly a suggestion in Nougayrol 1950: 27; see also *CAD* Z, 56 for supporting examples; but cf. *CAD* Š/1, 426.

44–46. 'If its base (**ditto and** [?]) was split ⇒ the king will fashion a statue, (but) another will introduce (it into the temple)'

47–53. 'If the View (**ditto and** [?]) was split up into four (parts) ⇒ a taboo will be infringed in a temple; (or:) an *ēn*(*t*)*u*-priestess will be defiled; (or:) the king will fashion a statue but someone else will introduce (it into the temple); (or) for a commoner: he will die and his household will be scattered.'

The complexity of the matter becomes apparent when one considers the entries' apodoses. The forecasts recorded for these omens do not adhere to what one might otherwise expect according to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic considerations. Why should a change in orientation according to the T → M → B spatial scheme offer as counterparts for a difficult and limited interpretation (ll. 35–39) two or three unrelated yet sensible predictions (ll. 40–46)? Compounding things further is the fact that the fourth entry (ll. 47–53), which seemingly relates to the preceding three omens[25] and whose second and third interpretations resemble or parallel that of the preceding, second and third entries (ll. 40–46), nonetheless differs in its first interpretation from that of ll. 35–39.[26]

One could cite additional examples of gradations in which omens refer implicitly to previous entries—and not a few, in fact, are included in the analysis of various organizational techniques below. But the present survey has already exposed qualitative challenges in the assessment of paradigmatic organizational expressions in the omen collections. One additional such challenge, alluded to in the discussion of exx. 3.3–3.4 above and deserving of a more detailed consideration, is the subject of the following section.

3.1.4 *Apodotic Effects on Following Protases*

The discussion of exx. 3.3–3.4 above (§ 3.1.2) demonstrated the use of portions of apodoses from certain entries in gradation paradigms in the protases of following entries in those paradigms; however, both quantitatively and qualitatively this practice is more widespread than its occurrence in those examples might otherwise indicate. The phenomenon of an apodosis affecting the protases following it is discernible in a number of gradations and presents the reader with certain additional challenges involving the delineation and interpretation of such passages, as is evident in the following case:

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25 See § 5.3.1 (ex. 5.49) below.

26 It is understandable why Nougayrol 1950: 27–8 took the second and third entries as describing no more than a fissure in the middle and base of the View, respectively.

3.13. *YOS* 10 18:59–60

59. [*šumma … pad*]*ānim ina šumēlim šīlum pūṣam*[27] *nadi* ⇒ ***zuqaqīpum*** *awīlam* ***izaqqa***[***t***]
60. [*šumma … pa*]*dānim ina šumēlim šīlum u kakkum* ***zuqqutum*** *šaknū* ⇒ *ina nikip alpim* [*awīlum imât* (?)]

59. '[If] a hole with white coloration was situated [in the … of] the Path in the left ⇒ a **scorpion will sting** the man'
60. '[If] a hole and a **pointed** Weapon were situated [in the … of] the Path in the left ⇒ [*the man will die*] from the gore of an ox.'

The prediction in l. 59 of this passage describes the stinging by a scorpion, a common interpretive motif for the occurrence of a hole.[28] Here and elsewhere this interpretation appears in proximity to others describing different animal attacks, such as goring by an ox; in fact, this is what one finds in the following entry of ex. 3.13 (l. 60) as well as in ex. 3.14, ll. 5–6. Yet nowhere else among the OB collections is a Weapon described as pointed (*zuqqutum*).[29] Nor can it be said that the Weapon's pointedness per se is responsible for the goring ox prediction in l. 60, since no mention of this attribute is made elsewhere where this interpretation is employed, for instance in ll. 5–6 of the following example:

3.14. *YOS* 10 23 r. 4–6

4. *šumma ina sippi imitti bāb ekallim šīlum ipluš-ma uštebri* ⇒ *ina* ***ziqit zuqiqīpi*** *awīlum imât*
5. *šumma ina sippi šumēl bāb ekallim šīlum nadi* ⇒ ***nikip alpim***
6. *šumma ina sippi šumēl bāb ekallim šīlum ipluš-ma uštebri* ⇒ *ina* ***nikip alpim*** *awīlum imât*

4. 'If a hole (was situated and) was pierced fully in the right doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from **the sting of a scorpion** a man will die'
5. 'If a hole was situated in the left doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) **the gore of an ox**'
6. 'If a hole (was situated and) was pierced fully in the left doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from **the gore of an ox** a man will die.'

27 Text: *pu-ṣa-am*; on the syntax, see *CAD* P, 540.

28 E.g., *YOS* 10 21:9–10; *YOS* 10 25:33'.

29 This adjective seems to appear only once, in *YOS* 10 44:58, in that occasion describing a Foot.

Another explanation for its presence here must therefore be sought. One reasonable option would attribute the inclusion of the word *zuqqutum* in ex. 3.13, l. 60 to the influence of l. 59 and the presence there of *zuqaqīpum* and *zaqātum* (i.e., *zuqaqīpum … izaqqat* → *zuqqutum*). Admittedly, it is impossible to say with certainty whether this purported influence is responsible for the appearance of a goring ox in l. 60, such that l. 60 may have been taken as derivative of l. 59. Nevertheless, the possibility that the appearance of the word *zuqqutum* in l. 60 is to be explained by its juxtaposition to similar-sounding words in the previous entry seems plausible, especially in light of further evidence attesting to this possibility.

The following example, appearing just a few entries below ex. 3.13 in *YOS* 10 18, supplies just such evidence of assimilation in adjacent omen entries:

3.15. *YOS* 10 18:64–72

64. [*šumma ina padān*]*im šīlum nadi* ⇒ Apodosis
65. [*šumma ina padā*]*nim šīlū šinā nadû* ⇒ Apodosis
66. [*šumma ina padā*]*nim šīlū šalāšat nadû* ⇒ Apodosis
67. [*šumma ina pad*]*ānim šīlū sadrū* ⇒ *nakrum* ***mê*** *ubattaqam-ma* ***mālak*** …[…[30] *šanûm šu*]*mšu nakrum ummānam isser-ma idâk*
68. *šumma in*[*a* ***k***]***ibir*** *padānim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *nārum* [*awīlam*] *iKia*[*š*][31]
69. *šumma ina* ***liwiat*** *padān imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ …[…] *ū lū* … […]'
70. *šumma ina šumēl padānim šīlum nadi* …[(…)] ⇒ Apodosis
71. *šumma elēnu*[*m*] *padānim šīlū šalāšat sa*[*drū* (…)] ⇒ Apodosis
72. *šumma a*[*na*][32] *pāni padānim šīlū šalāšat sad*[*rū* (…)] ⇒ Apodosis

64. '[If] a hole was situated [in] the Path'
65. '[If] two holes were situated [in] the Path'
66. '[If] three holes were situated [in] the Path'
67. '[If] (many) holes were aligned [in] the Path ⇒ the enemy will breach the **water** (channels) and the **watercourse** … […] its [second] interpretation: the enemy will surround and defeat the army'
68. 'If a hole was situated in the **bank** of the Path ⇒ the **river** will … [… the man].'
69. 'If a hole was situated in the **edge** of the Path of the right ⇒ … […] or … […]'

30 Text: *u*[*m*?……]; perhaps *mālak u*[*mmānim iṣabbat*] (cf. *CAD* M/1, 158)?

31 On the reading of this word, see the discussion on the related form in ex. 2.25 above.

32 Collation courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

70. 'If a hole was situated ...[(...)] in the left of the Path'
71. 'If three holes were aligned [(...)] above the Path'
72. 'If three holes were aligned [(...)] before the Path.'

Outside of ex. 3.15, l. 68, a zonal location called the bank (*kibrum*) is unattested for the Path (*padānum*).[33] Yet an extensive tradition does exist concerning the subject of this entry, in terms of both protasis and apodosis, with several omens bearing similar or even identical apodoses to that in l. 68, including the following examples:[34]

3.16. MAH 15874:20–22 (ll. 20–21 // *YOS* 10 17:54)

20–21. *šumma ina* ***qabliat*** *naplaštim ina l*[*ibbīš*]*a šīlum nadi ⇒ lū ēnum wedûm lū pašīšu wedûm imât šanûm šumšu Ki-iš nārim*
22. *šumma ina* ***qabliat*** *naplaštim ina* [*libbīš*]*a šīlū šinā nadû ⇒ mīlu ṭaḫdum illakam*

20–21. 'If a hole was situated in the **middle** of the View in its heart ⇒ 'Either an important *ēnu-* or *pašīšu*-priest will die; its second interpretation: the ... of the river'
22. 'If two holes were situated in the **middle** of the View in its heart ⇒ a very large flood is coming.'

3.17. *šumma ina* ***qabliat*** *naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi ⇒ ina aḫitti awīlim* [*ma*]*mman imât ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar* [*šan*]*ûm šumšu namtalli qablītim* 'If a hole was situated in the **middle** of the View, in the right side ⇒ Either someone will die from among the man's dependents; or the river will ... the man; its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse of the middle watch' (MAH 15874:4–6 [= ex. 2.26]).

Significantly, however, in all these instances the accompanying protasis describes a hole in the middle (*qablītum*) of the Path/View, not its bank (*kibrum*). It thus seems clear that *kibrum* in ex. 3.15, l. 68 represents the spatial counterpart to *qablītum* and possibly even a reference to it, albeit probably one specific to this text.

33 It does appear in connection to other zones, e.g., *CUSAS* 18 23:22'-24' (*pû ṭābû* [Sealand]).

34 In addition to exx. 3.16–3.17, see also *OBE* 1 ob. 7 and *TIM* 9 78:15. The tradition common to these examples is discussed in Jeyes 1989: 104 and Glassner 2003: 118.

Whence, then, the reference to *kibrum* in ex. 3.15, l. 68? An answer to this question avails itself when one considers the preceding entry (l. 67). Despite its damaged state, references in the apodosis to a watercourse (*mālakum*) and to water (*mû*) can be made out, the latter concerning the enemy's breaching (*batāqum*) the water supply in what is typically described as a breach (*butuqtum*).[35] That ex. 3.15, l. 68 should locate the reported hole on the "bank" in the Path, its own version of a channel, becomes immediately intelligible in this light. To wit: the specification of the Path's location in l. 67 as its *kibrum* was born on account of the juxtaposition of the entries in ll. 67 and 68 (i.e., *mê batāqum* + *mālakum* [+ (?)] → *kibir padānim*).

Moreover, unlike the case of ex. 3.13, in this instance the parallels to ex. 3.15, l. 68 enable us to distinguish between tradition and innovation. On account of these, it seems highly unlikely that the language concerning the river (*nārum … Kiāšum*) in l. 68 is native to this context; the wording of that apodosis cannot be explained as derivative of the juxtaposition of ll. 67 and 68.

Actually, in terms of textual history, it may well be that things here are to be conceived the other way around: it is a distinct possibility that the forecast about the river in l. 67 is to be credited for the placement of the entire entry (l. 68) in its current location. After all, with the exception of l. 68 and the two entries following it (ll. 69–70), ll. 64–72 of *YOS* 10 18 represents an integrated unit organized around a numerical paradigm concerning the effects of 1, 2, or 3 holes in the Path, in different configurations. In that context ll. 68–70 appear to break an otherwise coherent sequence, suggesing that these lines may have been inserted into a passage in which l. 67 was previously followed by what is now l. 71.

Still, as I have argued, the reference to the Path's *kibrum* suggests that the juxtaposition of ll. 67 and 68 appears to have had its effects on l. 68. And this creative twist was probably not the only result of this union: the report of the right Path's edge (*liwiat padānim*) in the next entry (l. 69) may itself be unique. Its occurrence here may owe to an analogy with the *kibir padānim* of the previous line. If so, one finds here an unusually complex example of the creative and generative effects of the organizational framework, with the apodosis of one entry (l. 67) setting off a chain reaction of textual assimilation in the following.

A final instance where the apodosis of one entry affects the protasis of the next provides a better perspective on the qualitative extent of the broader phenomenon. In this instance the relation between an apodosis and the following protasis appears based on a different hermeneutic from those manifest in exx. 3.13 and 3.15. The prediction of famine (*ḫušaḫḫum*) in the land as

35 See *CAD* B, 356, s.v. *butuqtu*, esp. 2b.

the interpretation of the occurrence of an open (?) gallbladder (l. 18) is followed by an omen (ll. 19–20) concerning a gallbladder full of a type of boil called *bubu'tum*:

3.18. Scheil B:18–20

18. *šumma martum petât* ⇒ ***ḫušaḫḫu*** *ina mātim ibbašši*
19–20. *šumma martum* ***bubu'tam*** *maliat* ⇒ *nipḫāt bārîm ina tāḫāzim nakrum ummānam*[36] *isakkipam*

18. 'If the gallbladder is *open* ⇒ there will be **famine** in the land'
19–20. 'If the gallbladder is full of ***bubu'tu*-boils** ⇒ (it forecasts) *nipḫu*-predictions for the diviner; (and/or:) in warfare: the enemy will defeat the army.'

The appearance of *bubu'tum* is otherwise unattested in OB extispicy[37] and thereby merits consideration. While it is conceivable that the occurrence of this term here is merely fortuitous, it seems somewhat suspicious that even among the considerable number of omens which speak of zonal filling[38] the mention of this feature is unknown. One likely explanation for its occurrence involves its conditioning by an external factor, here the mention of *ḫušaḫḫum* in the previous line. A bridge between these terms was almost certainly forged by the common word *bubūtum*, "famine,"[39] a word synonymous with *ḫušaḫḫum* and a (near) homonym of *bubu'tum*. In other words, a paronomastic connection between *ḫušaḫḫum* and *bubu'tum* was forged via an intermediary referred to only implicitly (i.e., *ḫušaḫḫum* ~ **bubūtum* ↔ *bubu'tum*).

Support for this proposition may be gleaned from ex. 3.19, an omen appearing on a liver model from Boğazköy, whose protasis parallels the one in ex. 3.18, ll. 19–20 but whose apodosis speaks of thirst (*ṣūmum*), seizing one's army:

3.19. *martum* ***burbu'tam*** *mali* ⇒ *ummānī* ***ṣūmu*** *iṣabbat šumma <ana> awīlim bennu iṣabbassu* '(If) the gallbladder is full of ***burbu'tu*-boils** ⇒ **thirst** will seize my army; if <for> a man: epilepsy will seize him (Bo 3).'

36 Text: *um-ma-nam*$^{!}$(NIM).

37 It does appear in later texts; see *CAD* B, 300–1, and the discussion below.

38 I.e., those that signal *nipḫu*-predictions; see § 2.1.4.2.3.

39 *CAD* B, 301 (= *bubūtu* "A").

In this instance the hermeneutic also runs through the implicit intermediary **bubūtum* (i.e., *burbu'tum* ~ **bubūtum* ↔ *ṣūmum*), but does so within a single omen entry, not vertically across two entries. It is unclear to what extent the entry in ex. 3.18, ll. 19–20 is the product of its present situation. It seems probable, however, that the choice of *bubu'tum* in this omen's protasis was conditioned by the situation of this omen vis-à-vis the apodosis of the previous entry.

Admittedly, it is often impossible to distinguish with absolute certainty those cases where a given entry's apodosis "telescopes"[40] its subject onto the protasis of the next entry from others in which two omens appear to have been brought together on account of similarities in subject (as suggested concerning ex. 3.15, ll. 68–70 above), including those between the apodosis of one omen with the protasis of another. Thus the "progression analogue" noted by Nougayrol[41] in the following example, which was discussed earlier in the context of the *nipḫum* lemma (§ 2.1.4.2.3), may be the product of an apodosis affecting, indeed, creating, a following protasis (i.e., *nipḫum* [l. 33] → *nuppuḫū* [l. 34a]), with that protasis (l. 34a) in turn exerting its influence on the composition of the following entry (l. 34b). Yet alternatively, it may simply be that l. 34a was juxtaposed to l. 33 on account of their similarities, or even inserted—somewhat clumsily—between ll. 33 and 34b:

3.20. AO 7539:33–34b (l. 34a // *CUSAS* 18 31 r. 38'; l. 34b // id. r. 49'; [= ex. 2. 174])

33. *šumma qerbū šāra malû* ⇒ ***nipḫu*** *kakkū* ***napḫūtu*** *ina māti ibbaššû*
34a. *šumma qerbū* ***nuppuḫū*** ⇒ *nabalkut ḫupši*
34b. *šumma qerbū dama malû* ⇒ ***nipḫū*** *bārî miqitti ummāni*

33. 'If the intestines were filled with wind ⇒ (it represents) a ***nipḫu***-forecast: (perhaps there) will be battle **flare-ups** (lit., *flaring* weapons) in the land'
34a. 'If the intestines **were bloated** ⇒ (it forecasts) the revolt of the rabble'
34b. 'If the intestines were filled with blood ⇒ (it represents) ***nipḫu***-forecasts of the diviner; (it means:) the defeat of the army.'

The following example, yet another passage from *YOS* 10 18, provides another clear instance of the difficulties in choosing between these options:

40 Following the description in Nougayrol 1976: 345 and n. 22; previously Weidner 1952–1953: 74 ff.

41 Nougayrol 1971: 81.

3.21. *YOS* 10 18:51–52

51. [*šumma … p*]*adānim ziḫḫum nadi* ⇒ *adirāt nakrim i*[*na*] *libbi ummānim nadi*[*ā* (…) *ummānum*] *ana ḫarrān illaku* ***mê šamê*** [***i***]***šatti***
52. [*šumma …*] *padānim ziḫḫum* ***ruššuk*** ⇒ *rubûm ina ḫarrān illaku imaqqut*

51. '[If] *ziḫḫu* is situated [*in* the … of] the Path ⇒ the fear(s) of the enemy will be set in the heart of the army [*or: the army*] **will drink rainwater** on the campaign it undertakes'
52. '[If] the *ziḫḫu* was **dried** [*in* the … of] the Path ⇒ the prince, in the campaign on which he will go, will die (from thirst [?]).'

How is the relationship between this passage's two entries to be understood? Is the description of the dried *ziḫḫum* in the second conditioned by the forecast mentioning water in the first? If so, are we to read into the prediction of the prince's death in the latter entry something from that of the former? No definite answers to these questions can be given without the benefit of parallel traditions or additional evidence, and maybe not then either; consequently it is difficult to speak about the specific paradigmatic nature of this example. Granted, the entries appear to follow a basic pointillistic gradation (see § 4.1.1), with the *ruššuk* variable added to the previous line's reported condition (*ziḫḫum nadi*).[42] But to what degree the mention of this variable may have been determined by the apodosis of l. 51, and thus to what extent the appearance of the entire omen in l. 52 may be attributed to generative considerations and not simply to organizational considerations, is, as we have suggested, undeterminable.

On one level these distinctions should not pose a real source of concern. From a broader perspective, each option exemplifies gradation of one sort or another, and the attempt to isolate one from the other seems at times no more fruitful than would be an effort to isolate and delineate the bearing of individual waves in a meandering stream. The collections progressed along numerous courses, flowing gently from a groove in the surface of one entry to a notch in another. At innumerable points one may observe the subtle evolution in the details of one entry from those of the previous. This fluidity is in fact the very essence of gradation, the interruption of which, or even the isolation of a particular unit thereof, arguably threatens what Mary Douglas described as the

42 The absence of *nadi* in l. 52 is not a matter of real concern; see § 3.1.3 above.

"total structure of thought"[43] of an intellectual system removed from our own. At least in part, this dilemma may explain why gradation has typically been described only in the broadest, most general terms.

Nevertheless, the effort to outline individual gradation paradigms and, to the extent possible, to extract from them the structures and principles mediating their make-up is essential to the understanding of inter-omen organization and the place of this part of the organizational framework within the larger whole. Where patterns in the sequencing of entries can be demonstrated, the attempt to articulate the structures and principles upon which said patterns are built provides us with the opportunity to appreciate the nature of the collections' paradigmatic thought structure—a structure that was overwhelmingly preplanned and predictable and that provided the basis for generative thought and expression. To be sure, there is scarcely one area of the following investigation that does not betray some significant exception to the given structure or principle being described. Yet precisely on account of such exceptions one is reminded of the fact that, where they are discernible, organizational structures or principles are neither fortuitous nor part of the natural order of things. Exceptions to rules can often provide more credence to a given model than does the model itself.

The following presents an initial attempt at the classification of gradation in the omen collections. Our investigation begins in this chapter with what is described as simple gradation: (binary) opposition (§ 3.2). Upon describing the basic form and its likely origins (§§ 3.2.1–3.2.4), we move to consider several of its most prominent manifestations in the collections (§ 3.3–3.4). These involve the anatomical opposition in terms of spatial positioning (§ 3.3), including spatial positioning according to the right/left paradigm (§ 3.3.1), as well as opposition of zonal properties (§ 3.4). In the following chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) we turn our attention to complex forms of gradation, those subsumed under the label of pointillism.

3.2 Simple Gradation: Opposition

3.2.1 *Initial Considerations*

The basic paradigmatic unit in the omen collections is composed of two entries whose reported conditions are presented in opposition to one another.[44] A wide variety of subjects in the collections is treated via this fundamental

43 Douglas 1984: 42.

44 So, e.g., Glassner 1984a: 24; cf. id. 2004: 68; also Heeßel 2012b: 21–22.

logical scheme. Qualitatively these subjects encompass abnormalities of every conceivable sort: the absence of a zone over against its (normal) presence; the occurrence of an ominous mark in a zone's right and left, top and bottom, front and back, etc.; the positioning of a zone or zonal region in two diametrically opposed angles; and the presentation of a considerable number of zonal properties and traits understood or perceived in opposition to one another. Simply put, every imaginable condition or state deemed ominous was or at least could be conceived in a contrastive pairing with another omen describing the opposite.

The pervasiveness of this structure in the collections is such that, at times, the interpretations of two entries that cannot be regarded as true opposites, appear nonetheless to have been finessed in order to fit a contrastive pairing form.[45] It was suggested above that this sort of leveling represents in part the inevitable result of the organization of entries in the collections, and in what follows this phenomenon is demonstrated in greater detail. However, before the various manifestations of contrastive pairings can be discussed, a theoretical matter must be addressed concerning the impression of the ubiquity of this structure in the collections. Additionally, a consideration of the background of this structure is necessary, since, as is argued below, an appreciation of the background and early development of this form clarifies considerably its prevalence in the collections. These two issues are taken up in what follows.

Any statement asserting so central a role to a simple structural dichotomy in the organization of the omen collections may strike the informed modern ear as simultaneously familiar and suspicious. The question of the place of hierarchical structuring, especially binary opposition, as a central organizational principle of human thought has been at the bottom of an impressive array of intellectual trends in the twentieth century—those inaugurated in the first half of that century by what came to be designated as "structuralism" and subsumed in the century's latter half under the umbrella term of "critical theory."[46] A linchpin of the multifaceted critique of structuralism in critical theory has revolved around the denial, or at least the considerable limitation, of the centrality of hierarchical structures such as binary opposition in the organization

45 For an example of this point, see Nougayrol 1969: 156–7; and see the discussion below (§ 3.4) for more on this matter in the broader context of the collections' organizational characteristics.

46 The following foray into structuralism and critical theory has benefited from several entries in *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism* (Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman 2005–2012).

of human thought, precisely those to which structuralism afforded so prominent a role.

It must be granted that across a wide range of disciplines, from the humanities to the social sciences, post-structural criticism and critical theory have generally served as important correctives to the excesses and pitfalls of structural analyses and of the structuralist enterprise. Yet the fruits of structural analyses cannot be entirely gainsaid, even if the parent discipline is currently out of vogue. Structuralism still enjoys a wide audience, amazingly even in some of the very post-structuralist critiques leveled against structuralist theory itself. In this regard it must be avowed that the present study makes significant use of structuralist terminology in its own way: in describing the organizational framework according to horizontal and vertical axes, for example, and in the description of the inner- and inter-omen relationships as syntagmatic and metaphoric/paradigmatic, we have consciously adhered to structuralist models first articulated by Lévi-Strauss[47] and applied to the study of the Mesopotamian omen collections by Guinan[48] and especially Brown.[49] What remains to be seen is the extent to which the place afforded to binary opposition in structuralist thought is reflected in the organization of the omen collections.

However, rather than engaging in a protracted discussion of these theoretical matters, which would take us far afield, the following discussion relies on the evidence from the omens themselves to steer us toward some understanding of the role of opposition in the formulation of particular entries and, more generally, the formation of the collections. The study of the collections and their origins points unmistakably to the fact that underlying Mesopotamian divination was a basic form of binary opposition, which Starr aptly described as its "first paradigm";[50] yet the full extent of this phenomenon—including its influence on the genesis and development of creative expression in the omen collections—has not been adequately appreciated. How, if at all, these findings might influence the broader understanding of structuralism remains outside the parameters of the current study.

Some years back Starr described the opposition evident in the conditions conveyed by the verbal pairs *nawārum*/*tarākum*, "to be bright/dark," and *kapāṣum*/

47 Perhaps most impressively in Lévi-Strauss 1966.

48 See, e.g., Guinan 1989.

49 Brown 2000.

50 Starr 1983a: 18; see previously Starr 1974: 22.

naparqudum, "to be concave/convex," as operating paradigmatically in the omen collections.[51] Though the examples he gleaned to illustrate this point do not stem from extispicy collections,[52] the contrast uncovered between the verbs in each pairing extends to extispicy omens as well, as the following examples make plain:

3.22. *YOS* 10 42 ii 29–32

29–30. *šumma rēš libbi* ***tari***[***k*** ⇒ *miqitti* (?)] *ālik pāni* [*ummānim*]
31–32. *šumma rēš libbi* ***nawir*** ⇒ [*ālik*] *pāni ummānim ṭēmam u*[*šanna* (?)]

29–30. If the top of the heart was **dark** ⇒ [(it forecasts) the *downfall* of] the vanguard of the [army]'
31–32. If the top of the heart was **bright** ⇒ the vanguard of the army [will *change*] (his) mind.'[53]

3.23. *TIM* 9 80:3–4 (= ex. 2.87, l. 3)

3. *šumma ṣibtum* ***kapṣat*** ⇒ *ebūr nakrīka takkal šanû šumšu ebūr mātim iššer*
4. *šumma ṣibtum* ***napar***[***qud***]***at*** ⇒ *ebūrka nakrum ikkal bīši mātim uṣṣi*

3. 'If the Increase was **concave** ⇒ you will consume the harvest of your enemy; its second interpretation: the harvest of the land will thrive'
4. 'If the Increase was **convex** ⇒ the enemy will consume your land's harvest; (or:) the property of the land will be lost.'

One finds in these examples the identical contrastive pairings to those described by Starr: the conditions of *tarākum* and *naparqudum* appear fundamentally opposed to *nawārum* and *kapāṣum*, respectively. Moreover, since by

51 Starr 1983a: 18; more recently Heeßel 2012a: 54 (with additional references). For a description of these pairings in the context the broader phenomenon of opposition in zonal properties, see § 3.4. The suggestion that *kapāṣum* and *naparqudum* represent a contrastive pair goes back to Goetze 1957: 102–3.

52 These stem from the *šumma immerum* collections *YOS* 10 47; 48; and 53.

53 If this reconstruction stands, does "change of mind" here suggest that the herald will opt to abstain from the campaign and, in so doing, spare himself from his fate as predicted in the previous omen? If so, this would mean that the idiom *ṭēmam šanûm*/*šunnûm* was not understood as uniformly negative.

default each pair of omens assumes a right-side orientation[54] for the findings concerning the heart's top (ex. 3.22) and the Increase (ex. 3.23) respectively, the meaning of each condition stands in agreement with the earlier findings concerning valence: *tarākum* and *naparqudum* have a negative value and thus are positive when occurring in the enemy side; *nawārum and kapāṣum* are positive in value and would only be negative from the egocentric perspective when occurring in the left. Thus Starr was only partially right in observing that the contrast between members of these pairings frequently represents "nothing more than a logical outcome of the opposition between the right and the left";[55] on the basis of cases such as exx. 3.22–3.23 it is clear that the pairings *nawārum*/*tarākum* and *kapāṣum*/*naparqudum* wield a paradigmatic structure that does not rely on the articulation of the factor of basic spatial orientation (i.e., right/left) to express meaning. These and other such pairings offered the diviner paths along which findings could be more fully articulated—the right/left opposition representing merely the most prominent among these avenues.

Starr's choice for the study of the pairings of *nawārum*/*tarākum* and *kapāṣum*/*naparqudum* is attributed to their common occurrence in the Rituals of the Diviner text YOS 11 23 that was the focus of his work. However, as is demonstrated below, the occurrence of contrastive pairings in the omen collections is far more widespread and fluid than these two pairings might otherwise indicate. And more significant than the extent of this reality is its basis. In a real sense each and every omen describing an anomalous condition of some region may be said to exist in contrast with what was understood, more often than not implicitly, as the normal condition of that region and encapsulated in the verb *šalāmum*, "to be whole(some), sound, normal" or the like.[56] In this regard Starr could not have put it better when he noted that:

> [a]ll [anomalous] conditions noted above [= *paṭer, ekim, šatiq, kaṣiṣ, pališ, nakis, leti*, and the like] are deviations from the wholesome, sound, normal condition, expressed in Akkadian by the verb *šalāmu*.... [A]ny organ said to be sound (that is, *šalim*) on the right, results in a favorable prediction; conversely, any organ said to be its opposite, that is, split, cut,

54 In keeping with the egocentric point of Mesopotamian divination view, discussed in § 2.1.4.2.1.

55 Starr 1983a: 24.

56 As Starr 1974: 20 observes, the verbs describing this state in omen entries, viz., *išûm*, *šakānum*, and *bašûm*, are "for all practical purposes interchangeable." Starr ibid.: 19 is certainly correct that in terms of function, this is the precise sense of *šalāmum*, the verb most common in the reports.

> lacerated, perforated, and the like on the right, results in an unfavorable prediction.[57]

Since by definition each omen entry represents some abnormality in a given locality in the exta, every omen, regardless of whether or not the matter is explicitly stated, must exist in diametric contrast to the sound state of the selfsame locality. This point may be rendered figuratively, as in Figure 3.2, where each of the variables from {X, Y, Z} represents an individual entry from an omen collection while those from {X', Y', Z'} represent the theoretically normal forms of those omens:

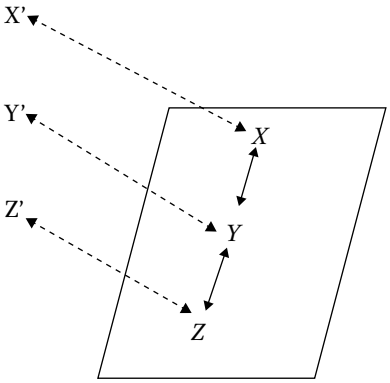

FIGURE 3.2
Inter-omen relations from a synchronic and diachronic perspective.

It may thus be said that coexistent with the synchronic relationship of any omen Y with its juxtaposed entries X and Z (i.e., X ↔ Y ↔ Z) in a given collection, there also existed an implied diachronic contrast between omen Y and the theoretically normal form of the subject of Y, which is represented by "omen" Y' (i.e., Y ↔ Y').[58]

A testament to this expression of binary opposition between the normal and abnormal in extispicy may be observed in OB extispicy reports, in which soundness clearly stands in contrast with what was deemed ominous:

57 Starr 1983a: 18.

58 That the description of Y' as an "omen" is rendered in quotation marks owes to the fact that, strictly speaking, this hypothesized form would not constitute an omen, but would rather resemble an entry from a report.

3.24 *mazzāzam īšu padānam īšu bāb ekallim šalim šulmu parku šakin martum šalmat ubānum šalmat ḫašû u libbu šalmū šinšeret tīrānu têrtum immer kuṣṣim*[59] *šalmat mimma lā tanakkud* 'It had a Station; it had a Path; the Palace Gate was intact; a crosswise Well-being was (normally) situated; the gallbladder was intact; the Finger was intact; the lungs and the heart were intact; (there were) twelve coils (of the small intestine). (Thus) the extispicy (taken) of the *winter* sheep is sound; do not worry about anything' (*CT* 4:34b).[60]

Here in fact the point is made explicitly, with the assurance to the patient ("you") to worry about nothing concerning the sound extispicy (*têrtum … šalmat*). The latter judgment certainly refers cumulatively to the intact status recorded previously for each of the zones studied; from this angle it is clear that something worthy of worry—what would be deemed ominous—would necessarily stray from the sound or normal. To be sure, accounts of the normal condition or presence of various zones in extispicy reports are typically interrupted by statements about what had been observed as abnormal. Moreover, according to conventional wisdom, it is the latter, standard, report type, which provided the data for the individual entries in the omen collections. Despite the fact that the limitation and qualification of this conventional model represents in no small part the *raison d'être* of this study,[61] it must be granted that this example provides compelling testimony in support of the existence of a basic normal/abnormal binary opposition, at least as it is reflected in the reports.

A comparison between ex. 3.24 and another report, ex. 3.25, not only confirms this last point, but more importantly offers a backdrop against which the expression of binary opposition in the omen collections may be better grasped. Example 3.25 below is perhaps unique among the OB reports in that it relates each of the regions and even subregions it describes with what look like apodotic predictions.[62] While no parallel to a single complete entry (that

59 Following *CAD* K, 595 and Starr 1974: 19, but reading *ku*^{l}(IZ)-*ṣí-im*; pace Koch-Westenholz 2002: 135 (*im-me-er ez-zi-im*, "a sheep for an angry (god)"), which makes no mention of *CAD* or Starr's proposed emendation.

60 Most recently edited as no. 15 in Koch-Westenholz 2002: 135–6.

61 After all, the basic problem facing us involves the task of distinguishing between omens whose protases derive from an extispicy examination and others that were generated deductively, by analogy to other omens and on the basis of the organizational and hermeneutic framework.

62 Another is *CUSAS* 18 5, though, as A. George reminds me, this is probably an academic model. Whether *VS* 24 116 formally qualifies as representative of the report genre demands further consideration.

is, the reported condition combined with its interpretation) is known from the extispicy collections, several of the predictions are attested in the collections in related contexts.[63] It would thus seem that at least some of the findings and respective predictions of ex. 3.25 offered real prospects for entries in omen collections and are possibly even quoted in collections unknown as of yet.[64] Admittedly, in ex. 3.25 it is not only zones with ominous findings that are afforded this level of scrutiny. The small number of statements describing the normal appearances of certain zones (ll. 1, 7, 8, 9, 32) are also followed by respective "apodoses"; however, on at least one occasion (l. 32) and possibly a second (l. 8) such statements simply appear to restate the meaning of the zone by qualifying its metonymic nature with the otherwise absent context. Besides, as is demonstrated below (§ 3.2.2), the omen collections themselves did not omit all reference to the normal state of various zones.

3.25. *vs* 24 116[65]

1. *manzāzam īšu* ⇒ [……]
2–3. *padān imittim a*[*na*……] ⇒ *ummānam i*[……]
4–6. *ana šumēlīšu* […] ⇒ *awīlum ḫarrānam ša pānūšu* [*iš*]*šak*[*nu*][66] *inaddī-ma šanītam i*[*llak*]/*i*[*ttallak*]
7. … *īšu* ⇒ *šubtum* …[…]
8. *danānam īšu* ⇒ *danān aw*[*īlim* (…)]
9. *bāb ekallim* [*šal*]*im* ⇒ *bāb ekallam awīlum i*[*ddil*]
10–11. *sipp*[*i i*]*mitti bāb ekal*[*lim* …] ⇒ *bussurat lā ḫadê ana* [……]
12–13. *šulma ul īšu* ⇒ *lā ṭūb libbim ana šāpirim*/*waklim iššakkan*
14–16. *ina imitti martim ina mišlim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlam murṣum kabtum iṣabbat*
17–19. *martum imittam išdāša kīnā šumēlam nasḫat* ⇒ *išdān kīnātum*
20–22. *martum ana bāb ekallim pānūša saḫrū* ⇒ [*t*]*ayyārāt ilim ana awīlim ibbaššiā*

63 See Mayer 1987: 250–1. For l. 3 see *YOS* 10 11 ii 22–23; for ll. 4–6 see *BLO* 94 r. 4–5; for l. 9 see *YOS* 10 24:27, 32; 26 iv 7; on ll. 10–11 see *YOS* 10 25:28'; 26 ii 13–16 and n. 67 below.

64 Of course the reverse is also possible: it may be that the author of ex. 3.24 drew on omen collections in the composition of his "report"; however, this possibility would not alter our suggestion of there being contact between this text and the collections.

65 An edition of this text appears in Mayer 1987: 245–53, with many restorations accepted here.

66 Or: [*iš*]*šak*[*nūšim*]; cf. Mayer 1987: 246.

23–25. *padān šumēlim ana imittim suḫḫur ⇒ tībi nakrim itti ḫāpirim/ ḫabbatim* (^{lú}sa.gaz) *ana awīlim itabbia*
26–28. *ina naṣrapti šumēl tākaltim šuppul-ma piṭrum paṭer ⇒ piṭir nipḫi*
29–31. *padān imittim ša ina qaqqar šumēlim ana naṣra<p>tim pānūša suḫḫurū ⇒ tībi nakrim lā kašdu*
32. *ubānum šalmat ⇒ šulum awīlim*
33–35. *ṣēr ubānim šuppul-ma piṭrum paṭer ⇒ awīlum ša iša*[...] *ana awāt zikari*[*m*$^{?}$ ...]
36. *nīrum gumpuš ⇒ tībi* [...]
37–38. *ṣibtum ana imit*[*tim*] ...[...] ⇒ *awīlum ebūršu i*[...]
39. *imitti ḫašî kīma puḫālim ibašši* ⇒ [.....]
40. *ṣēr imitt*[*im an*]*a šumēlim šu* ...[...] ⇒ [.....]
41. *ubān hašî qablītum kīma Pu*.....] ⇒ [.....]
42–43. *talli libbim*..... ⇒ [.....]
43. .....
44. [*šinš*]*eret* [*tī*]*rānū* ⇒ [.....]
45. *têrtum ša*[*lmat* ...]
46. *ana aḫuzzat*[*im*.....]
47–48. (*waraḫ*) *Nisānim* [...] *šanat*$^{?}$ *šarrum*$^{?}$ (mu lugal) [.....]

1. 'It had a Stand ⇒ [.....]'
2–3. 'The Path of the right [was ...] to [...] ⇒ the army ... [... will ...]'
4–6. 'To its left [... *was* ...] ⇒ the man will abandon the campaign which (earlier) was decided upon and will go (out) on another'
7. 'It had a ... ⇒ the *seat* ...[...]'
8. 'It had a Strength ⇒ (*it forecasts*) the man's strength [...]'
9. The Palace Gate was whole ⇒ the man will [*lock*] the Gate of the Palace'
10. The doorjamb of the right of the Palace Gate [was ...] ⇒ unfavorable news [will *reach*[67]] (to) [*the* ...]'
12–13. 'It did not have a Well-being ⇒ grief will be established for the administrator/overseer.'
14–16. 'In the right of the gallbladder in the middle a hole was situated ⇒ a serious illness will seize the man'
17–19. 'The gallbladder on the right—its base was firmly established; on the left it was torn out ⇒ (it predicts) established foundations'
20–22. 'The gallbladder—its front sides were turned to the Palace Gate ⇒ there will be forgiveness of the god for the man'

67 The missing verb here is probably *našûm*; cf. *YOS* 10 25:28'; 26 ii 13–16.

23–25. 'The Left Path was turned to the right ⇒ an attack of the enemy: with the Hapiru (or: a robber) he will arise against the man'
26–28. 'In the Crucible the left of the Pouch is lowered and a fissure was open ⇒ *the* fissure (*of*) *nipḫu*-prediction(s)'[68]
29–31. 'The Path of the right which (was) in the region of the left—its front sides were turned to the Crucible ⇒ (it forecasts) an unsuccessful attack of the enemy'
32. 'The Finger was intact ⇒ (it forecasts) the man's well-being'
33–35. 'The back region of the Finger was lowered and a fissure was open ⇒ the man who ...[...] according to the word of the man [...]'
36. 'The Yoke was huge ⇒ the attack of [...]'
37–38. 'The Increase to the right *was* [...] ... ⇒ 'the man will [...] his harvest'
39. 'The right of the lung looked like a ram's stud ⇒ [.....]'
40. 'The Plain of the right to the left was ...[...] ⇒ [.....]'
41. 'The middle finger of the lung [*was*] like a ...[...] ⇒ [.....]'
42–43. 'The diaphragm..... ⇒ [.....]'
44. '(There were) twelve coils (of the small intestine) ⇒ [.....]'
45. 'The extispicy was complete [...]'
46. 'For the marriage [.....]'[69]
47–48. '(Date:) Nisān [...], the year *when* the king [.....].'

The stark contrast between exx. 3.24 and 3.25 on the one hand and the remarkable similarity between the "entries" of ex. 3.25 and typical omens from the collections[70] on the other is especially instructive for our purposes. Plainly, the "entries" of ex. 3.25, whose non-interpretive portions alone find counterparts in other OB reports, were understood, like their counterparts, in fundamental opposition with what is described as occurring normally. This point is brought home most clearly when one considers the small bit of evidence from ex. 3.25 ostensibly at odds with the rest: in ll. 8 and 32, amid the litany of abnormalities, the records of normal and sound zones appear no different than comparable statements in other reports, such as those in ex. 3.24. As we

68 The syntax for *piṭir ni-ip-ḫi* is unclear on account of the same unusual spelling of the bound singular form of *nipḫu* in *YOS* 10 50:12; see § 2.1.4.2.3; Mayer 1987: 248, 252.

69 On *aḫuzzatum* as "marriage," see excursus B in Mayer 1987: 248–62; for a tentative translation of the remaining part of the line as [ist er günstig], see ibid.: 248.

70 With the exception of the initial *šumma* of the omens' casuistic formulation, one is hard-pressed to find a single meaningful difference.

have suggested, the "apodosis" of l. 32 (and perhaps that of l. 8) offers not a genuine forecast but rather what appears merely as a definition of the metonymic zonal aspect (but see § 3.2.2 below).[71] No matter the unusual nature of ex. 3.25, it is clear that in this case too the abnormal was conceived in diametric opposition to what was assumed as the (theoretical) sound state of a given zone. Surely no diagnostician reading the results of ominous findings in zone upon zone from this example could have reassured his client to "worry about nothing." The basic logic of the reports, as evinced by their repeated recourse to statements such as *aḫītam išûm*, "it (= the extispicy) has adverse (features)" and call for an additional examination (*piqittum*) makes plain,[72] would have rendered this option unthinkable.

Our affirmation of the normal/abnormal opposition as the basic order in the reports sheds considerable light on what is the fundamental organizational structure underlying the collections as well. This should come as no great surprise. A genetic connection between the reports and the collections has long been contended,[73] and one need not entertain the whole problem anew to acknowledge the fact that there is merit to this basic claim. The formal proximity between the "entries" of ex. 3.25 and standard omens in the collections alone verifies that, to some extent, conditions described in omen protases must have arisen from what reportedly deviated from the normal in the reports. Yet it is the employment and influence of the first paradigm in the collections, not its background, that is significant for our purposes. It is thus perhaps paradoxical that it is just in this regard that the earlier highlighting of the contrast between the formulations in exx. 3.24 and 3.25 proves especially revealing.

Thus, if the opposition of normal/abnormal is to be recognized as the basic organizational structure in the reports, and if, as indeed it would seem, records of the abnormal findings from the reports furnished the collections with a basic building block (i.e., the protases of individual omens), then one might expect to find some vestige of the record of those zones deemed sound or normal in the collections as well. In fact, an examination of the collections affirms that this

71 What is thus curious is why the author of ex. 3.25 included apodotic forecasts in ll. 8 and 32 in the first place. This is possibly to be attributed to the paradigm pressure exerted by this unusual text, for which apparently one was urged (as a matter of pedagogy?) to supply an interpretation for each reported condition. Still, this question, which goes to the heart of the meaning of ex. 3.25 and, by extension, to the relation of the reports to the collections, deserves a more detailed study.

72 See Goetze 1957: 95–96.

73 See, e.g., Starr 1974: 19.

is precisely the case. As the following discussion (§§ 3.2.2–3.2.4) makes plain, an important reflex of this record is indeed preserved in the omen collections.

This finding not only underscores the presence of this opposition in the conceptual makeup of the collections' organizational framework; it also relays important information about the nature of this first paradigm in the collections themselves. What follows demonstrates that, contrary to the assumptions implicit in the model described above, the universal polarity or opposition of the first paradigm of divination was not limited to the realm of theory. Rather, in the context of the omen collections the diviner made use of this organizational structure creatively, whether on its own (§ 3.2.2) or in conjunction with additional hermeneutic and organizational tools (§§ 3.2.3–3.2.4). In the course of the composition of the omen collections, the first paradigm of divination transformed from a theoretical organizational structure to one used in the actual generation of omen entries.

3.2.2 *išûm* / *lā išûm and Variants*

As noted above, a vestige of the opposition manifest in the reports survives in the collections themselves. On occasion a collection includes a statement concerning the most basic reality about a given "observed" zone: its very presence (< *išûm*). However, it is certain that the intended sense of *īšu* statements in such contexts extended beyond a mere record of presence, suggesting rather the normal status of the described zone. Of course this is precisely the case for the reports as well, in which the reporting of a given zone as *īšu* is for all intents and purposes synonymous with predicate adjectives such as *šakin* ("is [normally] situated"), *šalim* ("is [present in] whole"), or even *kīn* ("is [in] proper [condition]").[74] Functionally speaking, therefore, no difference is to be seen between *īšu* statements and counterparts describing a zone as *šakin* or *kayyān*:

3.26. *YOS* 10 23 ob. 1–2

1. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***īšu*** ⇒ *ina mazzā*[*z t*]*azzazzu ilum ušallamka*
2. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***lā īšu*** ⇒ *mātam ilūša izzibūši*

1. 'If **it has** a Palace Gate ⇒ in whichever stance you take the deity will protect you'
2. 'If **it does not have** a Palace Gate ⇒ the gods will abandon the land.'

74 See n. 56. For instances of the descriptions of zones as *šalim* or *šakin* in the reports, see ex. 3.24; for similar depictions with *kīn*, see *CAD* K, 160b.

3.27. *YOS* 10 17:1–2 (= ex. 3.7)

1. [*šumma naplaštam **īš**]**u** ⇒ *niqi awīlim itti ilim maḫir*
2. [*šumma naplaštam **lā īšu***] ⇒ *ula izziz*

1. '[If] **it has** [a View] ⇒ the man's sacrifice is acceptable for the god'
2. '[If **it does not have** a View] ⇒ (ditto) has not appeared.'

3.28. [*šumma napl*]*aštam **īšu*** ⇒ [*ilum i*]*na niqi awīlim izziz* '[If] **it has** a View ⇒ [the god] has appeared in the man's sacrifice' (AO 9066:1–2 [// *YOS* 10 17:1] [= ex. 3.8]).

3.29. *šumma padānum **šakin*** ⇒ *ilum kibis awīlim ušeššer* 'If a Path **was situated** (normally) ⇒ the god will set straight the man's route' (*YOS* 10 11 i 1–2; cf. ex. 5.66 [§ 5.4.1.1]).

3.30. *šumma danānam **īšu*** ⇒ *ṣilli ili eli awīlim i*[*bašši*] 'If **it has** a Strength ⇒ divine protection will be upon the man' (AO 7028:7 [9]).

3.31. *šumma šulmum **kayyān*** ⇒ *ina niqi awīlim ilum iz*[*zaz*][75] 'If the Well-being (appeared) **normal** ⇒ the god will appear in the man's sacrifice' (*ARM* 26/1 3:18).

It is striking that entries concerned with the (normal) presence of a given zone typically appear at the top of their collections. Examples 3.26, l. 1; 3.27, l. 1; 3.28; and 3.29 clearly testify to this point. Additionally, in AO 7028, a collection comprised of omens reporting on two different zones (*padānum* [ll. 1–6]; *danānum* [ll. 7–26]), the entry concerned with only the presence of the Strength (ex. 3.30) appears as the very first line in its respective section, immediately following a double line demarcating the former from the current topic.[76]

Additionally, in exx. 3.26 and 3.27, the omens describing the presence of a zone (l. 1 of these entries) are followed by their diametrically opposite

75 Reading follows Durand 1988: 66, presumably relying on the verb in the same formula in l. 1, which he restores as: [*i-za-a*]*z*. However, the preterite form *izziz* seems possible too, especially in light of the parallels in cases such as exx. 3.27 and 3.28.

76 Example 3.31 is the apparent exception to this pattern; however, it does begin a new section in *ARM* 26/1 3 and, moreover, comprises the first entry of a numerical sequence (see further ex. 5.71 in § 5.4.1.2). In all likelihood its place in the collection is to be attributed to these factors, which explains its apparent exception to the rule as just that.

conditions, whose predictions are fittingly antithetical to the interpretation of entries asserting normality. In contrast to various zones' sound states, predicting divine consent, support, or protection (exx. 3.26, l. 1; 3.27, l. 1; 3.28–3.29; 3.31), the entries describing the absence of the selfsame zones forecast the deity's abandonment (exx. 3.26, l. 2; 3.27, l. 2). Evidently in all these examples, the zone's presence or absence was equated with the theological metaphor of divine presence or abandonment, respectively. One wonders to what extent this signification reflected a coherent and consistent article of faith within the diviner's system of hermeneutics, from which additional theological ominous postulates could subsequently be generated. It is true that other conditions, unrelated to a zone's presence or absence, were interpreted in the same vein;[77] thus, the equation of zonal soundness and divine presence in extispicy, though appealing, cannot explain the range of speculation about this point.

Whatever the case regarding the latter point, in the context of the organizational framework, that which is most significant concerning exx. 3.26–3.30 has already been noted above: their supreme, almost anticipatory, placement in their respective collections. Following each of these examples, the collections turn to deal with more typical concerns, describing abnormalities of one sort or another in the very zone for which the issue of (normal) presence had first been explored, though now in more specific terms and in greater detail. It thus seems that the idea of a given zone's (normal) state with which certain collections commence was intended to define them and to spell out the structural opposition that, when not explicit, must be the underlying assumption. Why no explicit statement to this effect appears in the majority of the collections is uncertain—and is especially curious in cases, as in the following example, when the contrast between what is reported and the normal state is clearly evident:[78]

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77 What is more, on the basis of the evidence from exx. 3.26 and 3.30–3.31, it is clear that Nougayrol 1950: 23 (more recently Glassner 1984a: 30) oversold the case for the direct correspondence between the zone *manzāzum*/*naplaštum* and the idea of divine presence, or, more precisely, the implied exclusivity of this semiotic relationship.

78 The reading of l. 4 in this passage leaves little doubt that ex. 3.32, which explores the meaning of the Narrowing to the Path, defined itself at least conceptually against the idea of a normally situated Path (*padānum šakin*). Indeed it is not unlikely that a precursor to ex. 3.32, whether conceptual or real, included a line that preceded ex. 3.32, l. 1 and dealt with a narrowing of the Path's right (i.e., **šumma padānu imittam ina ramānīšūma ipšuq*); thus the organization would have followed the common sequence: R → L → (R → L →) R+L (see § 4.2.2.2.2). Additional support for this reconstruction comes from l. 5, which repeats the previous line's information in the negative (*lā ibašši*). Thus, even in the

3.32. *YOS* 10 20:1–5

1. *šumma pušqum šumēlam ina ramānīšū-ma ipšuq* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma padānu imittam i*[*pšu*]*q u* [*libb*]*i pušqim paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma padānu šumēlam ipšuq u libbi pušqim paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
4. *šumma padānu* ***šakin****-ma u pušqum imittam u šumēlam ana r*[*amānī*]*šu ipšuq* ⇒ Apodosis
5. *š*[*umma*] *p*[*ad*]*ānu* ***lā ibašši****-ma u pušqum imittam u šumē*[*l*]*am a*<*na*> *ramā*[*nīšu*] *ipšuq* ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If the Narrowing on the left was itself narrow'
2. 'If the Path on the right was narrow and the middle of the Narrowing was split'
3. 'If the Path on the left was narrow and the middle of the Narrowing was split'
4. 'If the Path **was situated** (normally) and the Narrowing narrowed onto itself on the right and left'
5. 'If the Path **is not there** and the Narrowing narrowed onto itself on the right and left.'

Nevertheless, it seems clear that, in their placement at the top of their respective collections, these presence-statement omens were intended to serve as the foundation for what followed such that each of the following entries was understood as derivative from a theoretical state of soundness. In this regard, Figure 3.3 below, slightly altered from Figure 3.2 above, portrays more clearly the manifestation of the first paradigm in the omen collections. According to this version, using the previously mentioned set {X, Y, Z}, omen X is identical to omen X' (i.e., X = X'), and on at least one occasion the sequence X↔Y↔Z is interrupted by the omen -X, the opposite of omen X (i.e., X/X' = |-X|). Thus, beyond providing the diviner with the basic theoretical paradigm in his conceptualization of the interpretive framework, it is clear that this first paradigm of divination was employed in the actual generation of omens.

After all, it is clear that this paradigm did not operate exclusively *in absentia*,[79] as the (hidden) reference point against which omens would define themselves when introducing the additional variables—those variables that were their real concern. Rather, it appears that the diviner employed the

juxtaposition of ll. 4–5 one encounters an underlying opposition of presence/absence (here: *šakin*/*lā ibašši*) that seems to serve in moving things along.

79 Borrowing Saussure's language, as described in Jakobson 1987: 99.

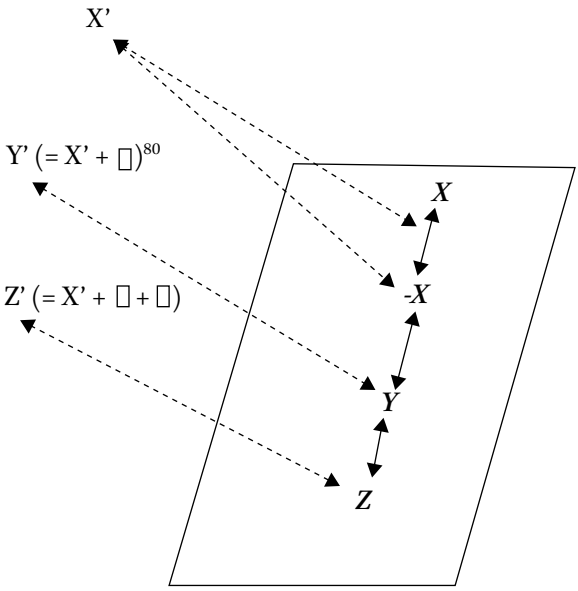

FIGURE 3.3 *Generative expansion on the basis of the first paradigm.*

basic opposition of normal/abnormal in and of itself to express meaning. This must be the explanation for the pairing of absence/presence in exx. 3.26–3.31, where the paradigm not only served as the exclusive arbiter of meaning but also promoted generative growth. How else could we account for those entries describing zonal absence in exx. 3.26 and 3.27, each transparently a product of deductive reasoning? There is no reason to suppose that the diviner, eager to provide a frame for a given collection, did not compose both entries in these pairings—or for that matter every entry in exx. 3.26–3.31—in an attempt to clarify a principle that elsewhere, while operative, must nonetheless be gleaned from context. Thus, one learns that the first paradigm served in a concrete manner in the organizational framework, figuring as a "real" paradigm in the actual composition and interpretation of certain omens. Unlike the case of the reports, where the record of a zone's status was selected from the two options, in the collections both options of the normal/abnormal factor could occur *in presentia*,[81] in combination as a contrastive pairing (see Figure 3.3).

80 On this pointillistic sequence, see § 4.1.1 below.

81 Once more borrowing Saussure's terminology.

Moreover, additional evidence of this phenomenon (§§ 3.2.3–3.2.4) makes plain that this was not an isolated event particular to the unique position of the *īšu*-statement omens. To the contrary, it is evident that omens concerned with topics beyond the mere normal presence/absence of given zones also made explicit reference to these basic conditions.

3.2.3 *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um*

On the basis of a few additional passages one learns that the first paradigm was itself the subject of elaboration and adaptation in the recording of omens. This is the sense one gets when confronting declarations of the conditions of various zones as "wholly sound, normal" (*kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um*).[82] Statements declaring the wholly sound condition of a given zonal region occur sporadically and appear to serve as the foil to secondary statements within the protases of the same entries, whose very appearance is by definition abnormal but for which a specific deviation from the normal is offered nonetheless. Secondary statements of this sort typically describe the occurrence of a duplicate zonal region and are concerned with details of that region's positioning. For instance, in the following example, a second middle finger of the lung appears where only one is expected, rests atop the first, normally situated one, and faces an unexpected direction:

3.33. *šumma šittā ubānāt ḫašîm qabliātum* ***kayyāntum kayyāttum-ma***[83] *šanītum ina muḫḫīša izziz-m*[*a*] *ibbalkit-ma ur'udam iṭṭul* ⇒ *apil šarrim kussiam iṣabba*[*t*] 'If (there were) two middle fingers of the lung (and the first) was **wholly normal**, the second stood atop it and turned and faced the trachea ⇒ the heir of the king will seize the throne' (*YOS* 10 39 ob. 3–4).

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82 Translation reflects an elative sense for the reduplicated adjective, one of the well-documented possibilities for this construction in Semitic generally (*GHK* § 123c) and Akkadian specifically, e.g., *apputtum apputtum*, "pretty please!" (*CAD* A/2, 191); *danniš danniš*, "exceedingly well" (*CAD* D, 91–92). However, it is conceivable that, in at least some occasions, this statement is to be read predicatively, viz., "the sound (one) is sound." Ex. 3.33, in which the second adjective is followed by the enclitic *-ma*, is suggestive of this last possibility, recalling protases in which a "second" zone is contrasted with its sound counterpart (e.g., *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina imittim šakin*, 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the right' [*YOS* 10 24:12; = ex. 4.32, l. 12]). Whatever the case, the conclusion seems inescapable that this reduplication was intended to emphasize the expected zone's soundness.

83 The writing *ka-a-a-tum-ma* reappears in ll. 7, 9, 11 below (6 times) and thus, unlike the previous word (written *ka-a-a-an-tum*) is not emended.

In addition, *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* statements often constitute part of a contrastive pairing of omens, with each entry describing the zonal duplicate's abnormality from opposing perspectives. For instance, in the following case the second Palace Gate in the first entry (ll. 5–6) is said to be in the right of the normally situated one, whereas in the second entry (ll. 7–8) it is found to its left:

3.34. *YOS* 10 22:5–8[84]

5–6. *šumma bāb ekallim **kayyānum kayyānum**-ma šanûm ina **imittim** šak[in] ⇒ nakrum ekallaka iredde būš mātīka nakrum i[kkal]*
7–8. *šumma bāb ekallim **kayyānum kayyānum**-ma šanûm ina **šumē**[**lim** šakin] ⇒ ekal nakrīka teredde buš māt nakrīka ta[kkal]*

5–6. 'If the Palace Gate was **wholly normal** but a second one was situated in the right ⇒ the enemy will take hold of your palace (or) the enemy [will consume] the goods of your land'
7–8. 'If the Palace Gate was **wholly normal** but a second one [was situated] in the left ⇒ you will take hold of your enemy's palace (or) you [will consume] the goods of your enemy's land.'

This contrastive pairing formulation was not restricted to omens describing abnormalities of zonal duplicates. This formulation could involve a single zone whose appearance was wholly sound in every manner save one:[85]

3.35. *YOS* 10 23 ob. 9–10

9. *šumma bāb ekallim **kayyānum kayyānum** ina imittim šakin ⇒ kabtu kīma bēlīšu imaṣṣi*
10. *šumma bāb ekallim **kayyānum kayyānum** ina šumēlim šakin ⇒ erṣet nakrīka tatabbal*

9. 'If the Palace Gate was **wholly normal** (but) was situated in the right ⇒ an important person will be equal to his lord'
10. 'If the Palace Gate was **wholly normal** (but) was situated in the left ⇒ you will carry off (the goods of) your enemy's land.'

84 Restorations follow Glassner 2009a: 61.

85 The possibility that the second part of the protases in this passage refers to a second anomalous Palace Gate standing in contrast to the normal first must be rejected; cf. the four entries in *YOS* 10 23 ob. 5–8, each of which concerns one Palace Gate.

Thus it would seem that statements affirming the wholly sound state of a given zonal region, which serve to contrast that region and its anomalous counterpart, did so in a manner that was worked into the collections' organizational framework. Soundness in such cases serves as the backdrop to more complex if nonetheless prefigured structures.

Still, it is probable that the idea behind *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* statements goes back to the basic polarity between a given zone's theoretically sound state and any deviation from that state. Thus, notwithstanding their contextual setting in the collections, the conceptual roots of statements professing the total normality of a given zone must have been identical to that responsible for other statements concerning zonal presence or absence. Support for this point comes from several angles.

First, it can hardly be a coincidence that each of the *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* statements reiterates[86] what is patently a matter of the first paradigm. This much was seen in the case of ex. 3.31 above, in which the reference to the Well-being as *kayyān* ("normal")[87] reflects an alternative manner of expressing a zonal region's sound state, akin to *īšu, šakin*, or *šalim* (on the latter, see below). The prediction following the declaration of normal presence in ex. 3.31, which forecasts the god's acceptance of the divination (*ilum ina niqi awīlim izziz* [// ex. 3.28; cf. exx. 3.26, l. 1; 3.27, l. 1]), confirms this point beyond doubt. In this regard it is also telling that those entries in which a certain zone is described as *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* usually appear, like those examples describing the (normal) presence or absence of various zones, near the top of their respective collections. For instance, the omens comprising ex. 3.35, located a few lines below those entries describing the Palace Gate's presence or absence (ex. 3.26 above), are separated by just a handful of omens concerned with other fundamental characteristics, such as the zone's width and location.[88] And even, if in the manner of their appearance in the collections, it is clear

86 The repetition of words in order to express emphasis in Semitic is well known; see *GVG* 1 § 282. Surprisingly, to my knowledge there does not appear to be a treatment of this phenomenon in Akkadian, despite the fact that Brockelmann already included Akkadian examples in his general treatment from 1913. For a short statement on the juxtaposition of adverbs in Akkadian, see *GAG* § 131d. For other means of expressing emphasis by reduplication in Akkadian, see, e.g., *CAD* A/2, 191: *apputtum apputtum*, "please, please"; *CAD* D, 91–2: *danniš danniš*, "exceedingly well."

87 On this *status absolutus* adverbial form, see *GAG* § 133n.

88 In fact, if ll. 9–10 actually do refer to a second Palace Gate, then the matter becomes even clearer: the stressing of the sound state of the first Palace Gate in ex. 3.35 in order to highlight the anomalous condition of the presence of a second has the effect of referring the reader back to ll. 1–2 (= ex. 3.26).

that *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* statements stand at a considerable remove from their conceptual roots, on occasion a vestige of the basic sense of what was meant by *kayyān(t)um* makes its way therein and thus offers a glimpse into the transformation of this idea into the collections' literary structures.

The following passage is remarkable in this regard, in particular the two omens preserved in ll. 13–18:

3.36. *YOS* 10 13:6–21

6–8. [*šumma naplaštum* ***kay***]⌜***yāntum ka***⌝***yyāntum***-<*ma*> *šanī*[*tum ina* (?) *s*]*ippi šumēl bāb ekallim* [*šakn*]*at* ⇒ *ilū šabsū*[*tu*]*m ana māti*[*m iturr*]*ūni*[*m-m*]*a* [*mātum*] *šubtam nēḫtam uššab šarrum* [*māta*]*m lā* [*šattam q*]*āssu ikaššad*[89]

9–12. *šumma naplaštum* ***kayyāntum kayyāntum***-<*ma*> *šanītum ina w*[*arki* (?)] *naṣraptim ša imittim šaknat* ⇒ *ilū ina zumur m*[*ātim u*]*dapparū nawûka ana dannatim ipaḫḫurū nakrum* ⌜*uše*⌝*rrebam-ma ina libbi mātīka šallatam ušeṣṣe šanûm šumšu* [*nak*]*rum ina ālīšu uššab*[90]

13–15. *šumma naplaštum* ***kayyāntum kayyāntum***-*ma šanītum rēssa* [*ina* (?)] *kayyāntim šaknat-ma rēssa bāb* [*e*]*kallim iṭṭu*[*l*] ⇒ *ilū ipaḫḫurū-ma milkam lā da*[*mq*]*am ima*[*lli*]*kū*

16–18. *šumma naplaštum* ***kayyāntum kayyāntum***-*ma šanītum iš*[*tu*] *šumēl b*[*āb ekall*]*im išdudam-ma*[91] *rēš naplaštim kašdat* ⇒ *ilū šabsūtu*[*m*] *ana mātim iturrūnim-ma mātum šubtam nēḫtam uššab*

19–21. [*šumma naplaštum* ***k***]***ayyāntum kayyāntum***-*ma šanītum ina sippi šumēl bāb e*[*kallim ša*]*knat-ma u rēssa ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul* ⇒ [*bīš*] *nakrīka taṣabbat-ma makkūršu immašša*'[92]

6–8. '[If the View] was **wholly normal**, and a second one was [situated *in*] the doorjamb of the left of the Palace Gate ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and [the land] will dwell peacefully (or:) the king will conquer a land not [his]'

89 The apodosis of this entry appears to parallel *YOS* 10 17:9–10, though the latter actually represents a parallel of AO 9066:3–4.

90 Text: *ú*!(I)-*ša-ab*.

91 Text: *iš*-<<TU>>-*du-da-am-ma*; already noted in Goetze's copy.

92 Glassner emends the verb to *ta*!(I)-*ma-ša-aḫ*; if correct, the apodosis would read: "you will seize your enemy's [*goods*] and plunder his valuables."

9–12. 'If the View was **wholly normal**, and a second one was situated to the *rear* of the Crucible of the right ⇒ the gods will withdraw from the whole of the land; your herds will gather into the fortress; the enemy will penetrate into and take out spoils from the heart of your land; its second interpretation: the enemy will dwell in his town'

13–15. 'If the View was **wholly normal**, and a second one (was there, and) its top is situated [*in*] the normal one and faced the Palace Gate ⇒ the gods will assemble but come to an unfavorable decision'

16–18. 'If the View was **wholly normal**, and a second one extended up from the left of the Palace Gate and was reaching the top of the (normal) View ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and the land will dwell peacefully'

19–21. '[If the View] was **wholly normal**, and a second one was situated in the doorjamb of the left of the Palace Gate and its head turned and faced the gallbladder ⇒ you will seize your enemy's [*goods*] and his valuables will be plundered.'

Both entries in ll. 13–18 describe a second anomalous View, in addition to the one said to be wholly sound. In the first entry (ll. 13–15), the anomalous second View appears situated in the place of the normal counterpart, facing the Palace Gate; in the second entry (ll. 16–18) it is said to extend from (the left of) the Palace Gate to (the top of) its normal counterpart. Notwithstanding the differences in their formulation, it would seem that the second entry represents a standard pointillistic extension of the first (see § 4.1), with the anomalous View having reached and returned from what in the previous omen was merely the object toward which it was oriented.

In all likelihood, the mention of an unfavorable decision (*milkam lā damqam*) in the interpretation of ll. 13–15 is to be ascribed to the Palace Gate ↔ conveyance association, as well as to the outward-facing position (negative from the egocentric viewpoint) of the anomalous View. The reference to deities in this omen and the others in this example (except ll. 19–21) undoubtedly relates to the statements concerning the View's sound presence in the respective protases. Though typically one might expect to find the report of a fully intact View signifying the presence of a deity,[93] here things are complicated

93 This assertion does not contradict the earlier objection (n. 77) to Nougayrol's position about the signification of the View/Stand. As stated, it was Nougayrol's implied exclusivity of a sound View's/Stand's signification that is doubtful. However, like other zones

by the occurrence of two Views, which corresponds to the reference of plural gods, of which only one can be regarded as normal.

It may seem paradoxical then that, on account of the overly extended anomalous View, the interpretation of ex. 3.36, ll. 16–18 comes full circle and refers back to or preserves an interpretive tradition from the first paradigm of divination. Yet it is just this bridging of the Palace Gate (Y) and the (normal) View (X) by the second, anomalous View that paves the way for the angry gods' propitious return. Here a vertical reading of the two entries together clarifies the hermeneutic basis of each, with ll. 16–18 looking like the consummation of ll. 13–15. As intimated above, the language of both entries is especially revealing: the layout of the anomalous View in ll. 16–18, reported in reverse (*ištu* Y *šadādum-ma* X *kašādum*), seems intended to offset what was described in ll. 13–15 ([*ina* X] Y *naṭālum*).

Indeed, if read independently of what precedes it, one would likely assume that the interpretation of ll. 16–18 builds on a previous statement describing the gods' abandonment of the land. However, the apodosis of ll. 13–15 makes no clear mention of the divine abandonment theme, since the gods' unfavorable decision should not be taken as tantamount to their abandonment.[94] It is tempting to speculate about the origins of these omens: could the second have been generated by the first? Naturally such speculation is futile with the evidence at hand. Still, it is not too much to say that ll. 16–18 build on ll. 13–15 in a way that implies an opposition between the two entries, and it is not unlikely that the juxtaposition of these entries was consciously designed to create this effect.

Thus, it appears as if the finding of an abnormal second View in the entries from ex. 3.36 was perceived as an outgrowth of what otherwise was a condition understood as essentially akin to those reported in exx. 3.26–3.30 above. To be sure, this logic is self-contradictory on one level: by definition the occurrence of two zones cannot be equated with the expected single zone;[95] however, as is elsewhere the case, here too it would seem that the practical side of hermeneutics was kept at a considerable distance from its theoretical underpinnings and that the conceptual challenge presented to the interpretive scheme by the appearance of multiple Views was not scrutinized to the extent that one may

described as intact or sound, a View/Stand in its expected state was also connected to the idea of divine presence and its corollaries.

94 Though admittedly one of the reflexes of the conveyance theme is the "defection" of persons and goods.

95 The point is discussed at length in § 5.4.1.1.

otherwise expect. Yet once again more evidence is necessary for any certain verdict in this regard.

In terms of our present concern, what is especially remarkable about ex. 3.36 is the manner in which it affords us the opportunity to recognize the adaptation of and elaboration on the first paradigm via its meandering and juxtapositions. After all, it is the implicit reference to a sound View that enables the exploration of the meaning of various hypothetical conditions, all of which build on a baseline summarized neatly as *kayyāntum kayyāntum*. And while the paternity of no single entry can be established with certainty, it seems likely that the evolution of the broader tradition was manipulated creatively on the basis of the meaning of the first paradigm and its underlying binary opposition.

3.2.4 *šalāmum*

Additional evidence illustrates further the extent to which the normal occurrence of zones or marks was used in conceptualizing and formulating omens. In a few examples the verb *šalāmum* distinguishes between the intact and the abnormal. Notably, like those omens describing a zone as *kayyān*(*t*)*um kayyān*(*t*)*um*, where examples employing *šalāmum* to distinguish the normal from the unsound appear, these too are incorporated into structures of contrastive pairings:

3.37. *OBE* 1 r. 20–21

20. [*šumma* ...] ... *u* ***têrtum šalmat*** ⇒ *ummānka ina rēš eqlīša imarraṣ*
21. [*šumma* ...] ... *u* ***têrtum lā šalmat*** ⇒ *ummānka ina rēš eqlīša ilum izêr*

20. '[If ...] ... and **the extispicy was** (otherwise) **sound** ⇒ your army will fall ill in (reaching) its destination'
21. '[If ...] ... and **the extispicy was** (otherwise) **unsound** ⇒ the deity will turn away[96] from your army in (reaching) its destination.'

Though largely broken, this example appears to present two juxtaposed entries in which the reported finding is considered in addition to what is described alternatively as *šalmat*/*lā šalmat*, "sound/unsound." The word *têrtum*, which the following *šalmat*/*lā šalmat* statements qualify, likely refers to the overall extispicy examination, of which the findings reported in these entries represent

96 For this sense of *zêrum* with respect to relations between gods and men, see *CAD* Z, 98.

only a part; it is therefore the reflex of those summary statements recorded at the end of reports (see, e.g., exx. 3.24–3.25 above).[97] How this notation is to be understood vis-à-vis the interpretive framework is not fully clear. It is possible that the *têrtum* (*lā*) *šalmat* statement affected the interpretation of the omen itself, either ameliorating or exacerbating whatever the forecast may otherwise have been. If so, perhaps the more severe prediction in l. 21 is to be explained by the compounding of the specific issue at hand with an overall-unsound report.[98] Whatever the case, what is significant about these entries is what they reveal about the omen collections, or at least *OBE* 1, in relation to the normal/abnormal opposition underlying divination: these omens define themselves by employing this basic dichotomy, despite their integration into the contrasting pairing or, for that matter, the larger *OBE* 1 collection itself.

A somewhat related formulation presents itself in the following examples, which, as discussed earlier, represent either rough duplicates of one another or reflexes of a common source:

3.38. *YOS* 10 16:9–12 (ll. 11–12 = ex. 2.60)

9–10. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma u šīru* ***šullum*** ⇒ *n*[*ārum*] *iḫḫerrē*[*-ma*] *ina aḫīša*[99] *šubtum ušša*[*b*]

11–12. [*šum*]*ma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma u šīrum* ***lummu***[***n***] … ⇒ [*š*]*arram māssu ibbalakkassu* ***šanûm šu***[***mšu*** …]

9–10. ‘If the View was turned 90° and the fleshy tissue **was kept in good condition** ⇒ a canal will be dredged (again) [and] in its bank (re)settlement will take place’

11–12. ‘If the View was turned 90° and the fleshy tissue was **deteriorated** … ⇒ concerning the king—his land will rebel against him; [its] second interpretation: […].’

97 Pace Jeyes 1989: 102, 111, who understands the statements *têrtum* (*lā*) *šalmat* as referring to the omen itself, relating them to *nipḫu*-predictions on the basis of *Multābiltu*. Disregarding the fact that in the OB collections the sense of *nipḫu*-statements differs from those of the later periods (see § 2.1.4.2.3), the suggestion that *têrtum* in ex. 3.37 refers to the omen entries themselves seems nonsensical, since no omen can be described as (un)favorable pending the interpretation of its finding.

98 As shall be seen, a similar interpretion emerges from exx. 3.38 and 3.39 below.

99 Text: *a-ḫi*$^{!}$(AḪ)*-ša*.

3.39. *YOS* 10 17:41–42 (l. 42 = ex. 2.59)

41. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul u šīrum* ***šalim*** ⇒ *nāru lā ḫerītum iḫḫerre*
42. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul u šīrum* ***lupput*** ⇒ *pī ilim išanni šinīt ṭēmim*

41. 'If the View was turned 90° and faced the gallbladder and the fleshy tissue was **sound** ⇒ a canal not dredged will be dredged (again)'
42. 'If the View was turned 90° and faced the gallbladder and the fleshy tissue was **damaged**[100] ⇒ the god's utterance will change; (this means) *a loss of reason*.'

An initial reading of these examples is deceptive: what they describe is seemingly not the View itself but rather a mark known as *šīrum*, "fleshy tissue";[101] however, this sense cannot be correct, since omens never differentiate between sound and damaged ominous marks.[102] Moreover, if *šīrum* were an independent mark one would expect some statement regarding the mark's location in the zone. As such, the fleshy tissue noted in these entries must be understood as part of the View itself. Therefore, the entries of these examples, like those of ex. 3.37, combine a particular attribute (the View's 90° turning) with a broader statement on the View's soundness (i.e., its tissue as either intact or impaired). But in contrast with the concern manifest in ex. 3.37 for the overall extispicy (*têrtum*), in these examples it is the more limited domain of zonal soundness that is at issue.

As to the reason for this unusual formulation, once more one can only speculate. What is clear is that the distinction made between the contrasting states of the fleshy tissue determines the valence of the respective interpretations. No other difference is to be found between each member of the pairings. Once more then, it is the opposition of normal/abnormal states, in this case of the fleshy tissue, that purveys the meaning for a gradation paradigm.

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100 As this discussion makes plain, the translation "to be abnormal" appearing in *CAD* L, 91a for the D predicative adjective describing ominous features is inaccurate; in this regard see also the discussion of exx. 4.15–4.16 (§ 4.1.1.1).

101 In fact, this is a well-known mark in extispicy.

102 What one does find are reports of the effect of certain marks on the physical condition of the zone, e.g., *ziḫḫum* described as having "consumed" (*īkul*) the regions in which it appears (MAH 15994:19–20).

In sum, exx. 3.38 and 3.39, together with ex. 3.37 and those examples above employing the *kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um* statement, represent variations on the first paradigm in extispicy. Along with those passages discussed above dealing merely with a zone's presence or absence (exx. 3.26–3.31), these examples testify to the persistence of the binary opposition of normal/abnormal in the collections, which provided the basic order in the reports. Yet once more it is the way in which this concern manifests itself in the omen collections that is especially telling: in those examples immediately at hand (exx. 3.37, 3.38–3.39), both elements of each normal/abnormal opposition appear embedded in a paradigmatic pairing, in combination with one another as well as with other variables. In this regard it is clear that these examples bear further witness to the considerable conceptual distance between any empirical stage of divination and the literary context of the collections. It is thus unlikely that each scenario among these pairings faithfully reflects an empirically based record. More reasonable is the assumption that at least some entries from among the examples surveyed represent the product of a generative process, which extrapolated both protasis and interpretation by analogy to counterparts, some perhaps empirically based. Thus, it becomes evident that the creative use of the first paradigm of divination in the composition of the omen collections was more extensive than previously imagined—and this invites further questions regarding the extent of this practice and its influence elsewhere.

As ever, the answering of such questions proves more difficult than their posing. Yet here too it is important to realize that, in no small measure, process is more important than product: ultimately what is significant for our purposes is an awareness of the generative enterprise itself. In the final analysis, Starr's contention that it was upon divination's first paradigm that other organizational structures were elaborated seems more certain than ever. In a real sense each of the structures described below may be said to reflect back on this basic distinction.

3.3 Anatomical Opposition: Spatial Positioning

A substantial subgroup of simple paradigms depicting the opposition of two omen entries involves the specification of contrasting spatial points, or antipodes. Sequential protases organized according to this factor are nearly identical to one another, with the exception of the two divergent locations highlighted in each entry. At times antipodes are established by means of

pairing two terms representing an inherent binary opposition. The most prominent among these is the well-known pairing of right and left. Aside from the right/left pairing, other common cases of binary opposition are those contrasting up or above with down or below. The former is represented most frequently by the terms *eliš* (upward), *rēš* X (the top of X), or *ina muḫḫi* X (atop X), the latter by either *šapliš*/*šapal* X (downward/beneath X) or *išid* X (the base of X).

For instance, the two entries in the following example are identical to one another in all but the direction in which the Weapon faced: *eliš*, or upward, and *šapliš*, or downward, while the reverse order of these coordinates appears in the second example below:

3.40. *YOS* 10 21:4–6

4. *šumma ana pāni danānim kakkum šakim-ma* ***eliš*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ Apodosis
5–6. *šumma ana pāni danānim kakkum* <(*šakim-ma*) ***š***>***apliš*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ Apodosis

4. 'If a Weapon was situated toward the front of the Strength and faced **upward**'
5–6. 'If a Weapon <(was situated)> toward the front of the Strength and faced **downward**.'

3.41. *YOS* 10 33 ii 24–27

24–25. *šumma ubānam kakkum* ***šapliš*** *rakib* ⇒ *kakkum nûm*
26–27. *šumma ubānam kakkum* ***eliš*** *rakib* ⇒ *kakki nakrim*

24–25. 'If a Weapon was riding on the Finger **downward** ⇒ the weapon is ours'
26–27. 'If a Weapon was riding on the Finger **upward** ⇒ (it is) the enemy's weapon.'

More elaborate descriptions of ominous findings are no different. The contrast drawn between the first and second entry in each of the following examples concerning the second, anomalous middle finger of the lung (*ubān ḫašîm qablītum*) is conditioned by the statements about the place of the second finger, namely below or atop the Turban of the lung (*šapal*/*ina muḫḫi kubuš ḫašîm*):

3.42. *YOS* 10 39 ob. 11–16

11–13. [*šumma šittā ubānāt ḫ*]*ašîm qabliātum*[103] *kayyāttum kayyāttum šanītum* ***šapal*** *kub*[*uš ḫašîm izziz*]*-ma* [*pānūša m*]*aškanša iṭṭulū ⇒ mātum ša qātī bēlīša ippu*[*ṣu ana bē*]*līša iturram*

14–16. [*šumma šittā*] *ubānāt ḫašîm qabliātum kayyāttum kayyāttum-ma šanītum* ***ina muḫḫi*** *kubu*[*š ḫašîm izz*]*iz-ma pānūša maškanša iṭṭulū ⇒ āl pāṭi nakrīka mansâm išappa<ra>kkum*[104] *mātum qātī bēlī<ša> inappaṣ*

11–13. '[If (there were) two] middle [fingers] of the lung, (one) wholly normal, the second [stood] **beneath** the Turban of [the lung] and [its front side] faced its (normal) seat ⇒ the land which had rejected its lord will turn back [to] its lord'

14–16. '[If (there were) two] middle fingers of the lung, (one) wholly normal and the second stood **above** the Turban of [the lung] and its front side faced its (normal) seat ⇒ the border town of your enemy will send a signal up to you (and) the land will reject <its> lord.'

3.43. AO 7030:1–11

1–6. [*šumma u*]*bān ḫašîm qablītum kayyāntum kayyāntum* [*šanītum*] ***ina šapal*** *kubuš ḫašîm* [*izzi*]*z-ma pānūša kayyāntam iṭṭulū ⇒ mātum ša bēlša izēru* [*b*]*ēlša elīša ittazzaz*

7–11. *šumma ubān ḫašîm qablītum kayyāntum kayyāntum šanītum* ***ina muḫḫi*** *kubuš ḫašîm izziz-ma pānūša kayyāntam iṭṭulū ⇒ mātum …*[105]

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103 The zonal location is written in the text simply as šu.si *ḫa-ši-im* murub$_4$ (= *ubān ḫašîm qablītum*) even where, as here, two regions are described (so ll. 3–4, 7–8). While to my knowledge the writing in the plural is unattested, it nonetheless seems correct where the reference to two such regions is clearly stated.

104 Restoration follows the suggestion in *CAD* M/1, 390. Note, too, the separate classification in *CAD* of *maššû* B (maš.sud), "a symbol or signal" (ibid.), from *massû* (maš.sud), "leader" (ibid., 327). By contrast, *AHw*, 619, which does not split these, understands the lexeme in this passage as "Anführer."

105 Text: *ú-ta*$^{?}$/*ša*$^{?}$-WI, read *ú-ta-wi* and, rightly hesitantly, translated with the preceding word as: "le pays se conjurera (?)" in Nougayrol 1946: 90–1.

1–6. '[If] the middle finger of the lung was wholly normal and [a second one] stood **in the bottom** of the Turban of the lung and its front side faced the normal one ⇒ (concerning) the land, which hated its lord—its lord will triumph over it'

7–11. 'If the middle Finger of the lung was wholly normal and a second one stood **in the top** of the Turban of the lung and its front side faced the normal one ⇒ the land will….'

A glance at the following example provides compelling testimony of the extent to which this opposition functioned as the decisive factor in the consideration of different ominous conditions in one zonal locality and their articulation within a lengthier paradigmatic format:

3.44. *OBE* 1 r. 10–15

10. [*šum*]*ma* ***rēš*** *manzāzim lariam īšī*[106]*-ma u kakkum irdēšu ⇒ girrī ina māt nakrim ummān manamma tadâk*
11. [*šum*]*ma* ***išid*** *manzāzim lariam īšī-ma u kakkum irdēšu ⇒ girri nakrim ina libbi mātīya ummān manamma tadâk*
12. [*šumma* ***r***]***ēš*** *manzāzim lariam īšī-ma u* [*erb*]*assu paṭer ⇒ girrī ina māt nakrim šallatam mā<ttam> uppâm*
13. [*šumma* ***i***]***šid*** *manzāzim lariam īšī-ma u erbassu paṭer ⇒ girri nakrim ina libbi mātīya šallatam ušeṣṣe*
14. [*šumma*] ***rēš*** *manzāzim lariam īšī-ma ina libbīšu šīlum nadi ⇒ girrī ina māt nakrim imaqqut*
15. [*šumma* ***iš***]***id*** *manzāzim lariam īšī-ma ina libbīšu šīlum nadi ⇒ girri nakrim ina mātīya imaqqut*

10. 'If the **head** of the Presence had a fork and a Weapon followed it ⇒ (during) my expedition you will defeat someone's army in the enemy's land'
11. 'If the **base** of the Presence had a fork and a Weapon followed it ⇒ (during) the enemy's expedition you will defeat someone's army in the heart of my land'
12. '[If] the **head** of the Presence had a fork and split in its four (parts) ⇒ my expedition will acquire for me much plunder from the enemy's land'

106 On the "jünger" form *īši* (for *īšu*), see *GAG* § 106r.

13. '[If] the **base** of the Presence had a fork and split in its four (parts) ⇒ the enemy's expedition will take out plunder from the heart of my land'
14. '[If] the **head** of the Presence had a fork and a hole was situated in its heart ⇒ my expedition will collapse in the enemy's land'
15. '[If] the **base** of the Presence had a fork and a hole was situated in its heart ⇒ the enemy's expedition will collapse in my land.'

The up/down opposition could also be employed in seemingly unconventional ways. For instance, at times both antipodes appear within the same entry. In such cases the purpose of the dual reference is to describe one member of a contrastive pairing in relation to the other.[107] For instance, in the case of ex. 3.45, this involves the turning of one extreme of the zones to the other (thus: top to base [ll. 49–51]; base to top [ll. 52–54]):

3.45. *YOS* 10 42 ii 49–54

49–51. [*šumma*] *šinā tallū* ***iš***[***issunu***] *ištēn-ma* [***muḫḫ***]***ašunu*** *ana šinā itūr* ⇒ *rīṣī u ti*[*ll*]*āti tarašši*
52–54. *šumma šinā tallū* ***muḫḫašunu*** *ištēn-ma* ***išissunu*** *ana šinā itūr* ⇒ *rīṣūka u tillātūka ipaṭṭarūka*

48–51. '[If] (concerning) two diaphragms—**their base** (forms) a unit but **their top** turned into two (parts) ⇒ you will acquire helpers and auxiliary troops'
52–54. 'If (concerning) two diaphragms—**their top** (forms) a unit but **their base** turned into two (parts) ⇒ your helpers and auxiliary troops will desert you.'

A different twist is presented by passages in which the terms conveying the up/down antipodes are not immediately transparent. Occasionally, such a pairing incorporates anatomical details from the particular zone with which it is concerned. For instance, in the following example the pairing of the gallbladder's top (*rēš martim*) with the cystic duct (*maṣraḫum*) is based on that zone's anatomy, which regularly took the latter feature for that organ's bottom side (i.e., *rēš martim/maṣraḫ martim*):

107 As is demonstrated below, this reality presents itself with the right/left opposition as well.

3.46. *YOS* 10 46 i 43–47

43–44. *šumma kakki imittim ina rēš martim šakim-ma **rēš martim** iṭṭul* ⇒ *šarrum mālikī irašši*
45–47. *šumma kakki imittim ina rēš martim šakim-ma ibbalkit-ma **maṣraḫ martim** iṭṭul* ⇒ *šarrum mālikī ul irašši*

43–44. 'If the Weapon of the right was situated in the gallbladder's top and faced the **top of the gallbladder** ⇒ the king will acquire advisors'
45–47. 'If the Weapon of the right was situated in the gallbladder's top and turned 90° so that it faced the **cystic duct of the gallbladder** ⇒ the king will not acquire advisors.'

Spatially based opposition is also attested in contrastive pairings featuring variables that are not inherently opposite. In such instances, the reference to zones or zonal locations furnishes the contrastive element. In the following example, already met above, the impulse toward opposition probably stands behind the reference to the Yoke's Increase, an otherwise unattested region of that zone:

3.47. *YOS* 10 27:6–11 (// *YOS* 10 9:7–12) (= ex. 3.1)

6–8. *šumma kakkum ina bāb ekallim šakim-ma ṣibtam iṭṭul* ⇒ *kīdêtīka nakrum izzib*
9–11. *šumma kakkum ina bāb ekallim šakim-ma **ṣibat**[108] **nīrim** iṭṭul* ⇒ *kīdêti nakrīka tezzib*

6–8. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Palace Gate and it faced **the Increase** ⇒ the enemy will leave your outer regions'
9–11. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Palace Gate and it faced **the Yoke's Increase** ⇒ you will leave your enemy's outer regions.'

To judge by the contrasting interpretations of this example, the two zonal points mentioned in this pairing were conceived as diametrically opposed. Additional support for this reading comes from this example's pairing of one

108 For this reading, see Glassner 2004: 63 and n. 3; also Nougayrol 1968: 45; Jeyes 1989: 72; *CAD* Ṣ, 161; N/2, 264; and Richter 1992: 251; pace Glassner 1984a: 22 and Leiderer 1990: 69, who had read *zibbat* ("Schwanz").

spatial coordinate with the Yoke, which elsewhere figures in a similar fashion, no doubt owing to its relatively remote location on the liver:[109]

3.48. *YOS* 10 18:27–28

27. *šumma in*[*a šum*]*ēl padānim kakkum šakin-ma* ***nīram*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ *ina* ⌜*libbi* (?)⌝[*māt* (?)] *nakrim ša* [*lišānim* (?) …[110]]
28. *šumma ina* […] *padān šumēlim kakkum šakin-ma rēš* ***padān imittim*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ *ša li*[*šānim*] *ina libbi mātīka nadi šanû šumšu nēšum innandar*

27. 'If a Weapon was situated in the left of the Path and it faced the **Yoke** ⇒ in *the middle of* [*the land*] of the enemy an [*informer* …]'
28. 'If a Weapon was situated in the […] of the Path of the left and it faced the top of the **Path of the right** ⇒ an informer is situated in the middle of your land; its second interpretation: a lion will prey (in your land).'

Additional such pairings include the following cases, the interpretations of which suggesting that the localities specified in the protases were also construed in opposition to one another:

3.49. *YOS* 10 42 iv 16–20

16–18. *šumma ina muḫḫi nīri warkat ṣibtim kakku šakim-ma* ***ṣibtam*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ *nakrum ana ālīka irrubam*
19–20. *šumma ina muḫḫi nīri kakku šakim-ma* ***naplaštam*** *iṭṭul* ⇒ *nakrum ana mātim urrada*

16–18. 'If a Weapon was situated in the top of the Yoke behind the Increase, and it faced the **Increase** ⇒ the enemy will come into your town'
19–20. 'If a Weapon was situated in the top of the Yoke (behind the Increase?), and it faced the **View** ⇒ the enemy will come down to the land.'

109 See also the pairing of the Yoke with the Path in *YOS* 10 17: 40, 43 (the pairing is interrupted by *YOS* 10 17:41–42 [= ex. 3.39]).

110 Glassner restores here: *nadi*.

3.50. *OBE* 14 r. 8–9

8. *šumma tal libbim* ***ana rēš*** <***libbim***> *ukkuš* ⇒ *mātum ana dannatim ipaḫḫur*
9. *šumma tal libbim* ***ana nīri*** *ukkuš* ⇒ *rubûm māssu nadītum* [*ušešš*]*eb*

8. 'If the diaphragm was displaced **toward the top of the** <**heart**> ⇒ the land will gather into a fortress'
9. 'If the diaphragm was displaced **toward the Yoke** ⇒ the prince will (re-)settle his abandoned land.'

It must be reiterated that in none of these cases are the enumerated reference points inherently opposite. Yet what is significant for our purposes is what these examples reveal about the extent to which spatial positioning could be contemplated in the organization and formulation of omens. Where the position of an abnormal condition could not be fixed in accordance with established antipodes such as above/below (or right/left; see § 3.3.1), the situation of said condition, and consequently its meaning, could be nonetheless established. This involved the appeal to zonal reference points. Naturally the texts are silent as to why a given zonal location was understood as favorable over against another. However, what is clear is that each of these examples represents the application of a common principle, regardless of whether the specific reference points are paralleled elsewhere in similar conceptualizations. In this manner, the factor of spatial positioning could play an integral part in the collections' organization, even in cases where the abnormality reported was conceived as unconventional in the strict technical sense.

3.3.1 *Spatial Positioning according to the Right/Left Paradigm*

Much has been made of the right/left opposition in the hermeneutics of Mesopotamian divination, extispicy included. As Starr asserted in his analysis of this matter, this factor "represents a major principle of prognostication in Mesopotamian extispicy."[111] Starr was also correct in noting that to some extent "additional causal relationships between protasis and apodosis in the Old Babylonian extispicy texts are in reality nothing more than a logical outcome of the opposition between the right and the left."[112]

In contrast to the attention paid to hermeneutic considerations of the right/left factor in the collections, little has been said about the role of this

111 Starr 1983a: 15.

112 Ibid.: 24.

opposition from the organizational perspective. Yet even a cursory look at the collections makes plain the fact that the right/left opposition played an important role in organization. As is observed below, it is overwhelmingly the case that an omen describing one member of this pairing is accompanied by another entry mentioning the other. Almost every extispicy collection features at least one section whose entries take up and are organized by the opposition of right and left;[113] in some cases, for instance *OBE* 16, this factor seems to determine the make-up of the entire (?) collection. In short, beyond the right/left opposition's contribution to the collections' horizontal interpretive axis of individual omens, this pairing enjoyed a significant—and, it will be seen, generative—role on the vertical plane.

Now the significance of this expression from the organizational perspective has not gone completely unnoticed. Oppenheim, in his assessment of the diviners' penchant for such contrastive pairings, saw an important purpose for this practice, one that enabled, via systematic permutations, indirect expression of abstract reasoning:

> Instead of expressing general principles of interpretation in abstract terms, the scribes strove to cover the range of possibilities by means of systematic permutations in pairs (left-right, above-below, and so on).[114]

Along with other such pairings, the occasion of two entries organized according to the right/left opposition represented for Oppenheim further evidence of the "theoretical aspirations"[115] of the diviner. Yet Oppenheim did not comment on how this theoretical framework was or could be employed in the composition of the collections, nor which omens, given his assessment, would be exposed as the product of deductive reasoning.

To be sure, the undertaking of the study of right/left pairings presents challenges. It is impossible to provide a full account of every instance of the pairing of two entries according to the right/left factor, let alone to attempt a comprehensive study of all these occurrences. Beyond the numerous examples fit for

113 Exceptions include AO 9066, MAH 15874, and *YOS* 10 14, three of the shorter texts relating to the longer OB *naplaštum* tradition known in part from *YOS* 10 17. However, it may be the case that, owing to their status either as excerpt or student texts, these collections simply reflect sections from the tradition in which the right/left opposition was not at issue. More remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that *YOS* 10 17 itself does not appear to contain any sections organized according to the right/left pairing.

114 Oppenheim 1977: 211.

115 Ibid.: 211.

study, there exist others which are partially broken but reveal a right/left organizational scheme nonetheless. Still, some basic observations can be made regarding the occurrences for which both protases and apodoses survive. The following discussion represents an initial step in this direction.

Mention of right and left occurs most frequently with regard to the zonal location in which an abnormal finding is reported. Often the right/left distinction describes the specific location of a mark and its description in a given zone, and elsewhere this distinction is employed to pinpoint the place of the zone's abnormal condition. While it seems as if every zone could be conceived as having right and left sides, it is also apparent that certain zones, for instance the Palace Gate and lung, were conceived more frequently in this manner than some others, such as the Presence.[116] The following examples may offer a sense of the pervasiveness of this pairing in the collections:

3.51. *OBE* 1 ob. 15–16

15. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *manzāzim qû iṭebbē-ma ina padānim rakba*[117] ⇒ *ummānī ina tebêša imaqqut*
16. *šumma ina* ***šumēl*** *manzāzim qû iṭebbē-ma ina padānim rakba*[118] ⇒ *ummān nakrim ina tebêša imaqqut*

15. 'If a filament submerged in the **right** of the Stand so that it was riding up in the Path ⇒ during its attack my army will collapse'
16. 'If a filament submerged in the **left** of the Stand so that it was riding up in the Path ⇒ during its attack the enemy's army will collapse.'

3.52. *YOS* 10 26 ii 39–40

39. [*šumma*] ***imitti*** *bāb ekallim pališ* ⇒ *bīši mātīka a*[*na …*]
40. [*šumma*] ***šumēl*** *bāb ekallim pališ* ⇒ *bīši māt nak*[*rīka ana …*]

39. '[If] the Palace Gate's **right** was punctured ⇒ the goods of your land [will …] to […]'
40. '[If] the Palace Gate's **left** was punctured ⇒ the goods of the land of [your] enemy [will … to …].'

116 Recall that the Presence is a secondary designation of the View (*naplaštum*), a zone that is the subject of several collections making no mention of right/left opposition.

117 Text: *ra-ak*^{i}(KI)-*ba*.

118 Text: *ra-ak*^{i}(KI)-*ba*.

3.53. *YOS* 10 26 iii 52–55

52–53. *šumma ina sippi* ***imitti*** *bāb ekallim šēpu ana libbi bāb ekal*[*lim erbet*] ⇒ *šēp dumqi*[*m*]
54–55. *šumma ina sippi* ***šumēl*** *bāb ekallim šēpum ana bāb ekallim er*[*bet*] ⇒ *šēp lemuttim*

52–53. 'If in the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's **right** a Foot [was entering] into the midst of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) a foot-mark (signifying) good (news)'
54–55. If in the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's **left** a Foot was entering into the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) a foot-mark (signifying) bad (news).'

3.54. *YOS* 10 28:5–7

5. *šumma martum rēssa ana* ***imittim*** *kīma qaran iskurim* ⇒ *šarra nakerka ina kipir*[119] *kišādim ukannašūnikkum*
6–7. *šumma martum rēssa ana* ***šumēlim*** *kīma qaran iskurim* ⇒ *ana šarrim nakrīka ina kipir kišādim ukannašūka*

5. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the **right** (was) like a crescent's horn ⇒ the king, your enemy, will be made to submit to you *by the lopping off of neck*(*s*)'
6–7. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the **left** (was) like a crescent's horn ⇒ you will be made to submit to a king, your enemy, by *the lopping off of neck*(*s*).'

119 The understanding of the writing *ki*-PI-*ir* here and in l. 7 by *CAD* K, 400 as *kipru*, a *hapax legomenon* meaning "neckstock (?)" is, while faithful to the writing of the second sign, contextually based and thus hard to defend; cf., too, *CAD* K, 448. *AHw*, 471 understands this a form of *kibrum*, and thus to be translated as a "Rand des Halses"; cf. [*ku*]*bur kišādim*, clearly a body part, in Hg B IV l. 7 (*MSL* 9, 34). Most convincing is George 2013: 183, which, on the basis of a bilingual proverb containing the parallel gú kud.kud.du // *muka*[*ppir kišādi*], "a lopper of necks" (Akk.), connects this to *kapāru* B, "to crop, trim lop," in this instance of the neck. A version of this apodosis appears in *CUSAS* 18 26:19': *nakarka ina kipir kišādi ana salīm*[*i išapparakku*], which George renders as "your enemy [will sue] for peace in abject submission" (ibid.: 179). For reasons to be explored elsewhere soon, I tentatively prefer to read the image more literally, though with the figurative in mind.

3.55. *YOS* 10 36 i 44–47

44–45. *šumma būd ḫašîm **imittam** šutašnû-ma paris ⇒ qitrubiš nakrum ikkimka*
46–47. *šumma būd ḫašîm **šumēlam** šutašnû-ma paris ⇒ nakram qitrubiš tekkim*

44–45. 'If the shoulder region of the lung was detached twice **on the right** ⇒ in hand-to-hand fighting the enemy will capture you'
46–47. 'If the shoulder region of the lung was detached twice **on the left** ⇒ in hand-to-hand fighting you will capture the enemy.'

3.56. OBE 14 ob. 34–35

34. *šumma rēš [libb]im **imittam** qê itaddu ⇒ kiṣirti rubêm*
35. *šumma rēš libbim **šumēlam** qê itaddu ⇒ kiṣirti rubêm ša nakrim*

34. 'If the top of the heart on the **right** was covered with filaments ⇒ (it forecasts) an obstruction for the prince'
35. 'If the top of the heart on the **left** was covered with filaments ⇒ (it forecasts) an obstruction for the enemy's prince.'

3.57. *YOS* 10 40:15–18

15–16. *[šumma] ubān ḫašî qablītum rēssa*[120] *qûm ṣabit-ma ana **imittim** iṭṭul ⇒ miqitti ālik pāni*[121] *ummānim*
17–18. *šumma ubān ḫašî qablītum rēssa qûm ṣabit-ma*[122] *ana **šumēlim** iṭṭul ⇒ miqitti ālik pāni*[123] *ummān nakrim*

15–16. '[If] (concerning) the middle finger of the lung—a filament was seizing its head so that it looked to the **right** ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of the army's vanguard'
17–18. 'If (concerning) the middle Finger of the lung—a filament was seizing its head so that it looked to the **left** ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of the enemy's army's vanguard.'

120 Text: *re-*<<X>>-⌜*sa*⌝; see Glassner 2009: 19.
121 Text: *pa*^{1}(IZ)*-ni*.
122 Text: *re-sa*^{1}(Ú) *qú-*<*ú*>*-um ṣa-bi-*⌜*it*⌝*-ma*^{1}(TI); see Glassner 2009: 19.
123 Text: <<*iṣ*>> *pa-ni*; see Glassner 2009: 19.

3.58. *OBE* 12:4–5

4. *šumma ubān ḫašîm kidītum ša* ***imittim*** *šatqat ⇒ rubûm ti*[*llassu išallass*]*u*
5. *šumma ubān ḫašîm kidītum ša* ***šumēlim*** *šatqat ⇒ nakrum tilla*[*ssu iš*]*allassu*

4. 'If the outer Finger of the lung of the **right** was split ⇒ the prince—[his] auxiliary troops [will rule] him'
5. 'If the outer Finger of the lung of the **left** was split ⇒ the enemy—[his] auxiliary troops will rule him.'

3.59. *OBE* 14 ob. 42–45

42. *šumma rēš libbim* ***imittam*** *lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina mātim ibbašš*[*i*]
43. *šumma rēš libbim* ***šumēlam*** *lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina māt nakrim ibbašši*
44. *šumma rēš libbim* ***imittam*** *lipia kussū-ma u tarik ⇒ Adad ina mātim iraḫḫiṣ*
45. *šumma rēš libbim* ***šumēlam*** *lipia kussū-ma u tarik ⇒ Adad ina māt nakrim iraḫḫiṣ*

42. 'If the top of the heart on the **right** was bound with fatty tissue ⇒ there will be abundance in the land'
43. 'If the top of the heart on the **left** was bound with fatty tissue ⇒ there will be abundance in the enemy's land'
44. 'If the top of the heart on the **right** is bound with fatty tissue and it was dark ⇒ Adad will devastate in the land'
45. 'If the top of the heart on the **left** was bound with fatty tissue and it was dark ⇒ Adad will devastate in the enemy's land.'

3.60. *YOS* 10 36 iv 21–24

21–22. *šumma ur'udum šīram lawi u* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm šatiq ⇒ dūr nakrīka tanaqqar*
23–24. *šumma ur'udum šīram šīrum lawi u* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šatiq ⇒ āl dūrīya nakrum inaqqar*

21–22. 'If the trachea was surrounded by fleshy membrane and the lung's **left** was split ⇒ you will tear down the (city) wall of your enemy'

23–24. 'If the trachea was surrounded by fleshy membrane and the lung's **right** was split ⇒ the enemy will tear down my walled city.'

The right/left designation was also employed where two identical zones were considered. Such a scenario could derive from either the occurrence of a second, abnormal zone to the right or left of its wholly sound (*kayyān(t)um kayyān(t)um*) counterpart or simply where two zones were normally expected but one, either the right or the left, was deemed ominous for one reason or another:

3.61. *YOS* 10 26 i 4–7

4–5. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum kayyānum-ma ša* ***šumēlim*** *naplaštam u padānam īšu ⇒ ekal nakrim qātum ikaššad*
6–7. [*šu*]*mma bāb ekallim kayyānum kayyānum-ma ša* ***imittim*** *naplaštam u padānam īšu ⇒ ekallani qātum ikaššad*

4–5. 'If the Palace Gate was wholly normal but the one of the **left** has a View and a Path ⇒ someone will conquer the enemy's palace'
6–7. 'If the Palace Gate was wholly normal but the one of the **right** has a View and a Path ⇒ someone will conquer our palace.'

3.62. *OBE* 16 r. 18–19

18. *šumma kalītum ša* ***imittim*** *tarkat ⇒ miqitti ummānīya*
19. *šumma kalītum ša* ***šumēlim*** *tarkat ⇒ miqitti ummān nakrim*

18. 'If the **right** kidney was dark ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of my army'
19. 'If the **left** kidney was dark ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of the enemy's army.'

In addition, reference is occasionally made to both the right and left sides in the same entry. As was noted earlier, the purpose of this dual reference appears varied, and it is not always fully intelligible; yet it is seemingly the relation of one side to the other that brings about the reference to both. Thus, for instance, in the following example it is the concealment of one side by the other, the left by the right and then the right by the left, respectively, that is at issue; those cases where ominous findings are reported in both sides are generally no different:

3.63. *YOS* 10 33 iv 14–19

14–16. *šumma ina ṣēr birītim ša ubānim* ***imittum***[124] ***šumēlam*** *ītekim ⇒ ina bīti nakrīka mimma lā kâm teleqqe*
17–19. *šumma ina ṣēr birītim ša ubānim* ***šumē***[***lu***]***m***[125] ***imittam*** *ītekim ⇒ nakarka ina* [*b*]*ītīka mimma lā šâm ileqq*[*e*]

14–16. 'If in the middle region of the Finger the **right** concealed the **left** ⇒ you will take something not yours from your enemy's household'
17–19. 'If in the middle region of the Finger the **left** concealed the **right** ⇒ your enemy will take something not his from your household.'

3.64. *YOS* 10 40:5–8

5–6. [*šumma ubā*]*n ḫašî qablītum* ***imittaša*** *šamiṭ-ma u* ***šumēlum imittam*** *īkim ⇒* [*ša ṣē*]*rim ša libbi ālim idâṣ*
7–8. [*šumma ubān ḫ*]*ašî qablītum* ⌜***šumēl***⌝***š***[***a*** *š*]*amiṭ-ma u* ***imittum šumēlam*** *īkim ⇒* [*ša l*]*ibbi ālim ša ṣērim idâṣ*

5–6. '[If the] middle finger of the lung on its **right** was torn away so that the **left concealed the right** ⇒ [the one] from countryside will dupe the *city dweller*'[126]
7–8. '[If the] middle [Finger] of the lung on its ***left*** was torn away so that the **right concealed the left** ⇒ *the city dweller* will dupe the one from the countryside.'

124 Text: *i-mi-tum*!(TAM); and see the note on the next entry.

125 *CAD* E, 68 reads this as *šumēlam*, a parallel to the erroneous writing of *imittum* in the previous entry. Yet what is visible of the sign to the right of the break looks like the end of an UM. Note, too, the correct formulation in both directions (i.e., *i-mi-tum šu-me-lam* and *šu-me-lum i-mi-tam*) appears no less than three other times (ll. 24–25, 26–27, 28–30) in what follows.

126 The sense of *ša libbi ālim* here as "city dweller, townsman," and not "city ruler," is largely contextual, but see *CAD* A/1, 390 and the discussion of ex. 2.34 above.

3.65. *CT* 44 37 ob. 4–7

4–5. [*šumma ina ekal* (?) *ubānim i*]*na* ***imitti*** *ubānim pillurtum-ma* ***imittaša*** *nawir* ***šumēlša*** *tarik* ⇒ [……] *ana nīš ilim išapparūnikkum-ma ul tatamma*

6–7. [*šumma ina ekal* (?) *ubanim inā*] ***šumēl*** *ubānim pillurtum-ma* ***šumēlša*** *nawir* ***imittaša*** *tarik* ⇒ […… *ana n*]*īš ilim išapparūnikkum-ma tatamma*

4–5. '[If *in the* Finger's *Palace*] in the Finger's **right** (there was) a Cross, and **its right** was bright (while) **its left** was dark ⇒ [……] they will send to you for an oath but you will not swear (it)'

6–7. '[If *in the* Finger's *Palace* in] the Finger's **left** (there was) a Cross, and **its left** was bright (while) **its right** was dark ⇒ [……] they will send to you for an oath and you will swear (it).'

These omens referring to both right and left are arranged in a similar manner to those mentioning one side or the other: overwhelmingly these entries are organized as contrastive pairings. Yet, notably, on occasion where the mention of right and left in the same omen includes reports of ominous findings in both sides, one encounters a twist to the organizational structure:

3.66. *YOS* 10 36 ii 10–27 (cf. ll. 35–41)

10–12. *šumma* ***imitti*** *<ḫašîm> ekim u* [*š*]*ēpum i*[*na*] ***šumēlim*** *u libb*[*i*] *nēkemtim tarik* ⇒ *šall*[*a*]*t išallalu nakrum idâk*

13–15. *šumma* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm ekim u šēpum ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm u libbi nēkemtim tarik* ⇒ *šallat tašallalu tadâk*

16–18. *šumma* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm ekim <u> ina libbim ziḫḫu nadi ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šēpum* ⇒ *nakrum šallat i*[*š*]*allalu Adad iraḫḫiṣ*

19–21. *šumma* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm ekim u ina libbīša ziḫḫu nadi ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šēpum* ⇒ *šallat ašallalu Adad iraḫḫiṣ*

22–24. *šumma* ***imitti*** [*ḫašîm*] *eki*[*m-<ma>*[127] *n*]*ēkemtaša ṣabtat <ina>* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm šēpu*[*m*] ⇒ [*n*]*akrum šallassu ula ušeṣṣe*

25–27. *šumma* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm ekim-ma kašdat ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šēpum* ⇒ *šallat tašallalu ula tušeṣṣe*

127 Restoration follows Glassner, who notes that there is not enough room in the break for the sign.

10–12. 'If <the lung's> **right** was concealed and a Foot (was) in the **left** and the middle of the hidden part was dark ⇒ the enemy will kill the captive he will capture'

13–15. 'If the lung's **left** was concealed and a Foot (was) in the lung's **right** and the middle of the hidden part was dark ⇒ you will kill the captive you will capture'

16–18. 'If the **right** of the lung was concealed <and> in the middle *ziḫḫu* was situated (and) in the lung's **right** (was) a Foot ⇒ (concerning) the enemy—Adad will devastate the plunder he will capture'

19–21. 'If the **left** of the lung was concealed and in *its* middle *ziḫḫu* was situated (and) in the lung's **right** (was) a Foot ⇒ Adad will devastate the plunder I will capture'

22–24. 'If the **right** of the [lung] was concealed *and* its concealed part was seized (and) <in> the lung's **left** (was) a Foot ⇒ the enemy will not take out his plunder'

25–27. 'If the **left** of the lung is concealed and (the concealed part) was captured (and) in the lung's **right** (was) a Foot ⇒ you will not take out the plunder you capture.'

In ll. 16–27, part of a longer passage describing varied conditions of a concealed (*ekim*) side of the lung, alternatively either the right or the left, along with a Foot on the opposite side, the organizational framework appears to articulate virtually every possible combination of the two given variables. Here, then, paradigmatic expression according to the right/left opposition seems to extend beyond the two-line contrastive pairings discussed thus far. In what follows (§ 3.4) additional types of examples of such extended expression will be explored.

But from even this provisional survey, it is apparent that the right/left opposition, so conspicuous and meaningful a factor in the interpretation of individual omens, occupies an important place in the paradigmatic side of the collections as well. The collections' organization often incorporates right/left opposition, whether in the form of the simple contrastive pairing or in more elaborate ones, such as that witnessed in ex. 3.66, ll. 16–27, or those to be explored later (§ 4.2.2). However, perhaps most significant is the recognition that this organizational technique was clearly a major part of the collections' generative expression. Approximately 90% of the omen pairings whose protases differ from one another only according to a right/left opposition are accompanied by apodoses that are (near) inverses of one another. Given this impressive figure, it is safe to assume that, at least in part, such mirror-image pairings represent the product of deductive reasoning. Thus, regardless of whether or

not it was always intended as such, it seems clear that the employment of the right/left hermeneutic on the horizontal axis exercised a profound effect on the vertical one as well.

This is not to say that every entry in these pairings represents the mirror image of its juxtaposed counterpart, to be taken as the product of simple deduction. If this were so, it would be hard to explain why the interpretations of the following entries differ so significantly from one another:

3.67. *YOS* 10 33 v 14–17

14–15. *šumma* ***šumēl*** *ubānim ana* ⌜*šalāšat*⌝ *ipṭur* ⇒ *damum*[128] *iššakkan*
16–17. *šumma* ***imit*****⌜*****ti*** *ub*⌝*ānim*[129] *ina išdīša ana šalāšat ipṭur* ⇒ *ana ekallim ina alākīšu awīlum iḫaddu*

14–15. 'If the Finger's **left** was split into *three* ⇒ there will be blood(shed)'
16–17. 'If the Finger's **right**, in its base, was split into three ⇒ the man will be happy while going to the palace.'

3.68. *YOS* 10 39 ob. 7–10

7–8. *šumma šittā ubānāt ḫašîm qabliātum kayyāttum kayyāttum-ma šanītum ina* ***imittim*** *ṭeḫiat* ⇒ [*ummān*]*um ašar illaku zīttam ikkalam pānūša idanninū*
9–10. [*šumma šittā ubā*]*nāt ḫašîm qabliātum kayyāttum kayyāttum-ma šanītum ina* ***šumēlim*** *ṭeḫiat* ⇒ [*rubû*]*m* (?) *ṭarīdūtam illak*

7–8. 'If (there were) two middle fingers of the lung, (one was) wholly normal, the second was approaching in the **right** ⇒ the army, wherever it goes, will enjoy profit (from plunder)—*its appearance will become mighty*'[130]
9–10. '[If] (there are) two middle fingers of the lung, (one was) wholly normal, the second was approaching in the **left** ⇒ the *prince* will go into exile.'

128 Text: *da*[1](IŠ)*-mu-um*.

129 Text: <<*i-na*>> *i-mi-it-*⌜*ti*?⌝ (x)? šu⌝.si.

130 *CAD* P, 95 translates this passage as "its prestige will increase" and lists it under a separate lexical category for *pānū* that is comprised of this case alone. Mayer 2010: 311 understands the literal sense as implying "ihr Selbstbewußtsein wird steigen." My less idiomatic option is informed by what precedes; accordingly, the repeated material gains enjoyed by the army will embolden it, thus offering it an air of confidence.

3.69. *YOS* 10 36 iii 1–5

1–2. *šumma ina* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm šēpum u piṭrum ina* ***imittim*** ⇒ *na<kr>um*[131] *irrubam-ma šallatam ušeṣṣe*
3–5. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šēpum u piṭrum ina* ***šumēlim*** ⇒ *šēpka ana māt nakrim urrad-ma wāṣiam ileqqe*

1–2. 'If in the lung's **left** (was) a Foot and a fissure in the **right** ⇒ the enemy will enter in here and take out plunder'
3–5. 'If in the lung's **right** (was) a Foot and a fissure in the **left** ⇒ your expedition will descend onto the land of the enemy and will take whoever comes out.'

From these examples it is evident that omens with parallel protases that differ only according to the right/left factor cannot be taken automatically as reflecting generative expression. The substantial differences between the apodoses of the cases just surveyed suggests that the overall picture is more varied, with some cases of right/left omen pairings seemingly having little to do with deductive reasoning.

On the other hand, at times differences between apodoses actually support a generative reading for both. Note, in particular, the resultative sense of the prediction in ll. 8–9 of the following example:

3.70. *YOS* 10 39 r. 6–9

6–7. *šumma ubān ḫašî qablītum maškanša īzibam-ma ina piṭir* [***i***]***mit***[***tim*** (<*izziz-ma*>) *pān*]*ūša maškanša iṭṭulū* ⇒ *mātum rēʾīša ibbalakka*[*t*]
8–9. *šumma* [*ub*]*ān ḫašîm qablītum maškanša īzibam-ma ina piṭir* ***šumēlim*** ⌜*iz*⌝*zi*[*z-ma*] *pānūša maškanša iṭṭulū* ⇒ *mātum ša rēʾīša ibbal*[*kitu*] *rēʾīša elīša izzaz*

131 Text: lú.<kúr>-*um*. Jeyes 1989: 37 reads this without emendation, as *awīlum*, but this is unlikely for two reasons. First, since this is a *pars hostilis* entry, the expected subject is the enemy, with the counter in the following entry (ll. 3–5) relating the *pars familiaris* turning to "you." Second, as with the latter entry, when the text of *YOS* 10 36 speaks of a figure related to the *pars familiaris*, it is almost always the second-person "you"; no other mention of "the man" appears in this long text.

6–7. 'If the middle finger of the lung left its place and [(<stood>)] in the **right** fissure [(<and>)] its front faced its place ⇒ the land will rebel against its shepherd'

8–9. 'If the middle finger of the lung left its place and *stood* in the **left** fissure [*and*] its front faced its (original) place ⇒ (concerning) the land that rebelled against its shepherd—its shepherd will prevail over it.'

Though the statement in the second entry from this passage does not reflect the diametric opposite of the previous entry's interpretation, it obviously depends on information from that entry, which indeed it includes as background information for its forecast. Thus, at least in this instance it would seem as if an apodosis that is not a mirror image of the one preceding is nonetheless the result of generation.

In fact, in other instances it appears that the structure deriving from the right/left opposition affects the interpretation of the omens in that pairing. This may be appreciated when one recalls what was observed earlier (§ 2.1.4.2.1) concerning the following example in the context of the study of the *erištu*-expressions:

3.71. *YOS* 10 25:11'–12' (= ex. 2.150)

11. [*šumma ina* ***imit***]***ti*** *bāb ekallim er*[*i*]*štum* ⇒ *er*[*i*]*šti erṣetim nakrum erṣetka irriška*

12. [*šumma ina* ***šumēl***] *bāb ekallim erištum* ⇒ *e*[*rṣ*]*et nakrīka terriš*

11. '[If] a Request-mark (was) [in] the **right** of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) a request of territory: the enemy will request of you your land'

12. [If] a Request-mark (was) [in the **left**] of the Palace Gate ⇒ you will request the territory of your enemy.

As was contended in the previous chapter, it is ultimately uncertain which of the apodoses in this example reflects an assimilation to the other. And yet in one way or another it seemed certain that one of the two evolved to complement its partner. In other words, not only does one witness the product of generative logic horizontally in l. 11, between the *erištu*-expression and the following longer interpretation (in whichever direction this occurred); one finds evidence of this thrust at the vertical level as well, according to the right/left opposition.

The same phenomenon likely accounts for the alternative interpretation in the following example. In § 2.1.3.1.4 (d) it was suggested that, as part of the zero-sum logic and in order not to violate Nougayrol's *principe de cohérence*, the secondary prediction of a loss (*nēkemtum*) in l. 7 must refer to the enemy:

3.72. *YOS* 10 20:7–8 (l. 7 = ex. 2.88)

7. [*šumma padā*]*nu* ***imittam*** *uḫtallal* ⇒ *ṭū*[*b*] *libbi šubtum nēḫtum šanû šumšu nēkemtum*
8. *šumma* [*padānu*] ***šumēlam*** *uḫtallal* ⇒ *išdā*[132] *nakrim kīnātum*

7. '[If] the Path was suspended on the **right** ⇒ (it forecasts) well-being: a peaceful dwelling; its second interpretation: (it forecasts a) loss'
8. '[If the Path] was suspended on the **left** ⇒ (it forecasts that) the foundations of the enemy will be sound.'

We are now in a better position to say something about the motivation behind the inclusion of that secondary interpretation: quite possibly it was borne out of the juxtaposition of that line with the following apodosis. Accordingly, the prediction in l. 8 of the enemy's sound state (lit., foundations) contrasts nicely with the—now even more sensible—interpretation of loss. And the pairing of *nēkemtum* (< *ekēmum*) and *kīnātum* (< *kânum*) is meaningful in another way, since the two words echo the opposition between two frequently anatomical conditions (i.e., concealment, as conveyed by *ekēmum*, and soundness, as captured by *kayyān*/*kayyān*(*t*)*um* [< *kânum*]).

This process of harmonization may also stand behind the common portion of the interpretations of the omens in the following example, though we are afforded no clue in this instance as to the reasoning behind the twofold apodosis in ll. 44–46, or, in the event that such a harmonization took place, in which direction the process proceeded:

3.73. *YOS* 10 33 iv 42–46 (= ex. 2. 109)

42–43. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *ubānim šīlum šakin* ⇒ *miqitti u*[*m*]*mānīka*
44–46. *šumma ina* ***šumēl*** [*ubān*]*im šīlum šakin* ⇒ *miqit*[*ti nakrim*] *rīqūssa awīlum b*[*i*]*blāt libbīšu qā*[*ssu*] *ikaššad*

132 Text: *iš-da*^{I}(DI).

42–43. 'If a hole was situated in the Finger's **right** ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of your army'

44–46. 'If a hole was situated in the Finger's **left** ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat *of the* [*enemy*]; its uncertain (interpretation): the man will achieve his heart's desires.'

Of course certainty in such matters is hard to come by. It has been observed repeatedly that it is difficult to determine with certainty which entries in gradations such as ex. 3.73 or, for that matter, in the majority of the right/left passages cited above, have been generated on the basis of their neighbors. In most cases it is easier to speak broadly about the presence of generative-based expression than to identify precisely which entry or portion thereof reflects the product of such activity. Still, as the preceding discussion has tried to illustrate, this uncertainty must not overshadow what seems indisputable about the overall picture. Regardless of their individual histories, examples of gradations organized according to right/left opposition must be understood as representing the product of generative thought. In this respect uncertainty about the nature of the process of textual generation should not call its existence into doubt.

There is a final point to be made concerning the characteristics of right/left opposition from the organizational perspective. The plethora of examples in this grouping permits for an initial typology of what this work describes as generative expression. Toward that end the following may be said. The preceding discussion has highlighted at least two types of right/left oppositional pairings. The larger group from the examples above belongs to what has been described as the mirror-image variety, in which the two entries of a given gradation represent right/left-based inverses of one another. Less frequent are cases such as exx. 3.70–3.72, in which the interpretation of one of the entries extends beyond a simple function of deduction, building on the right/left opposition in some unconventional manner. An accounting for these differences lies beyond the scope of the present parameters.[133] For the moment, what is significant to recognize is the organizational mechanism that enabled this expression to flourish: the opposition of right and left.

133 It remains to be seen whether these types or others appear elsewhere, where the right/left opposition occurs in expanded forms, and, if so, how frequently; on these matters, see §§ 4.2.2.2.1–4.2.2.2.2.

3.4 Opposition in Zonal Properties

The contrastive pairing of omen protases extends beyond that of the opposition of absence/presence of a particular zonal region or of a spatial pairing, such as the pairing of right/left. Along with these important organizational structures, a survey of the collections reveals additional oppositional pairings concerning various anomalous findings. In the main these deal with irregularities intrinsic to the particular zonal region under scrutiny. These include mass (strength), length, width, density, and shade. Elsewhere one encounters opposition concerning attributes that are extrinsic to the zone itself, such as its height or position with respect to a particular vantage point, its covering (presumably by another region) or the lack thereof, or its connection to or severance from the larger whole, a particular zone or even a zonal region. Finally, contrast is even occasionally drawn between two varieties of a certain ominous mark, apparently regardless of location. Among these varieties one finds the grit of two strands of *ziḫḫum*, a hole's puncture or lack thereof, and a particular Weapon's shade.

It is thus clear that the notion of contrast served as a major outlet in the exploration of the signification of extispical details.[134] The diviner could record in successive entries a given condition and its purported opposite, employing what might initally seem as natural contrastive pairings. However, it is important to recall that our understanding of the sense of opposition in such pairings is often based on context, and, as we have repeatedly observed, context is derivative of the organizational framework, which functions as the final arbiter of meaning. The case of contrastive omen pairings is no exception. The following example provides perhaps the quintessential case in point, with successive entries describing the heart as *epiq*, "massive, solid" (< *epēqum*, Sum. lagab) and *kīma kalīt birkim*, "like a scrotum/testicle(s)":[135]

3.74. *YOS* 10 42 i 2–6

2–3. [*šumma libb*]*u* ***epiq*** ⇒ *amūt Gelga*[136] [*ša māḫ*]*iram lā īšû*
4–6. [*šumma l*]*ibbu* ***kīma kalīt birkim*** ⇒ [*amūt*] *Rīmuš ša wardūšu ina kunu*[*kk*]*ātīšunu idūkūšu*

134 On semantic opposition in general in Akkadian, see, e.g., Freydank 1999.

135 On challenges to this term's understanding, see Goetze 1947b: 9 n. 65; *AHw*, 425: "etwa Scrotum?"; Starr 1983a: 95, and cf. *CAD* K, 74: "testicles."

136 On this abbreviated form of Gilgameš's name in the OB period, see George 2003: 78.

2–3. '[If] the heart **was massive** ⇒ (it is) the omen of Gilgameš, [who] had no rival'
4–6. '[If] the heart (was) **like a scrotum/testicle(s)** ⇒ (it is) [the omen of] Rīmuš, whose servants killed him by their (cylinder) seals.'

While the assumption that the simile in ll. 4–6 was intended to contrast the preceding description of a massive heart seems reasonable enough, it cannot be held that this image represented the natural choice for diametric opposition. Nor is the meaning of a massive heart in ll. 2–3 entirely unambiguous, although as the following suggests, the intended meaning concerns strength. What is clear is that the size of this organ per se is not at issue, as is demonstrated by the following example, found just a few entries below in the same collection of heart omens, *YOS* 10 42; here the positive valence is borne by a heart not large in size but rather contracted, and thus presumably hardened (*ebēṭum*, Sum. lagab as well):

3.75. *YOS* 10 42 i 11–13b

11–12. *šumma libbu **ītebiṭ** ⇒ libbi ummānim irabbi*
13–13b. *šumma libbu **irtaqiq** ⇒ mātum iṣeḫḫer*

11.-12. 'If the heart **has tightened** ⇒ the courage of the army will increase'
13–13b. 'If the heart **has become fine**[137] ⇒ the land('s population) will shrink.'

Thus, with respect to ex. 3.74, the question that arises is: in what way, if at all, do its constituent entries assume the status of a contrastive pair? An answer to this question presents itself upon reconsideration of these entries. These pit the tradition of Gilgameš' incomparable dominion against the seemingly comic scene of Rīmuš' murder by his own servants, likely eunuchs, and their (cylinder) seals.[138] In relation to these predictions, the aforementioned protases take clear meanings, conveying a sense of strength versus impotence that exceeds their plain-sense signification(s). This is not to suggest that the

137 That the semantic range of *raqāqum* extends beyond the translation in *CAD* R, 167 ("to become thin") is clear from context as well as the following lexical evidence: sal.sal = *ru-up-*[*pu-šu*], *ru-uq-*⌜*qu*⌝*-qu*, *uṣ-*[*ṣu-u*] (Izi J ii 25 ff. [*MSL* 13, 213]).

138 Though "(sealed) tablets" is also possible, I prefer the translation posited above, in part owing to the possibility of taking it euphemistically, or at least as a *double entendre*. Might this lend support in this instance for an implicit meaning of *wardū* as eunuchs?

depiction of a heart as massive or likening it to a scrotum or testicles were the stuff of pure fancy. To the contrary, an image nearly identical to the latter is witnessed elsewhere in the following example, the interpretation of which, albeit concerning Maništušu, not Rīmuš,[139] obviously shares with the tradition evinced in ex. 3.74:

3.76. *šumma libbum kīma iškī immerim ⇒ amūt Maništīšu ša ekallûšu* [*i*]*dūkūšu*
'If the heart (was) like a sheep's testicles[140] ⇒ (it is) the omen of Maništušu, whose palace officials killed him' (*YOS* 10 9:21–23).

Certainly, however, there existed alternative ways for the diviner to have conveyed the "observed" findings in the case of ex. 3.74. Thus the choices made in this instance cannot be divorced from the larger context of the omens themselves. The contrast between Gilgameš and Rīmuš, as well as that between the traditions of dominion versus powerlessness circulating about these figures, play here an effective role in the organization of the *epēqum*/*kīma kalīt birkim* oppositional pairing. There is no evidence to suggest whether the contrasting of *epēqum* with *kīma kalīt birkim* was established elsewhere; in all likelihood however, barring a possible duplicate here or there, it was not. Additional evidence demonstrates that a heart's qualification as *epiq* could be foreboding to oneself:

3.77. *šumma libbum epiq ⇒ āl šarrim ḫar*[*būtam ill*]*ak* 'If the heart was massive ⇒ the king's city will become a wasteland' (*YOS* 10 41:72).

3.78. *šumma dūr libb*[*i ep*]*iq ⇒ nak*[*rum*] *dūrānīka* [*ub*]*ba*[*t*][141] 'If the Fortress of the heart was massive ⇒ the enemy will destroy your fortresses' (*YOS* 10 42 ii 19–20).

One must thus conclude that it was specifically for the purpose of ex. 3.74 that the sense of *epēqum* as massive was made into the paragon of desirable strength, to be countered fittingly by an image which may have been understood as "limp, flimsy," in the negative senses of weak and vulnerable.

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139 Could this mix-up relate to the alternative tradition of these kings' sequence in an early Sumerian King List version and elsewhere? On the latter, see Steinkeller 2003: 272.

140 Or, taking the plural for a collective, "scrotum"; cf. the equation of *išku*/*iškū* and *kalīt birki* (Hg. B IV 215 [*MSL* 9, 34]).

141 Restoration follows *CAD* D, 196.

This is not to deny that some oppositional pairings work independently from the organizational framework. As several examples discussed above make plain, there exist instances where the oppositional states taken as ominous and reported in consecutive omens do not ride on their placement in the collections. For example, the entries in the following example and their likely parallels differ solely in the manner of the described hole's puncture or lack thereof:

3.79. *YOS* 10 26 ii 43–46 (and cf. ex. 3.80)

43–44. [*šum*]*ma šīlum ina bāb ekallim ipluš-ma ana ša*[*plānum*] ***uštebri*** ⇒ *kubrum ina danna*[*tim uṣṣi*]
45–46. *šumma šīlum ina bāb ekallim ipluš-ma* ***lā uštebri*** ⇒ *ina dannatim* ⌜*ul*⌝[*uṣṣi*]

43–44. 'If a hole in the Palace Gate **was punctured all the way through** downward ⇒ the (army's) *main force*[142] will [escape] from difficulty'
45–46. 'If a hole in the Palace Gate **was not punctured all the way through** (downward) ⇒ it [will] *not* [escape] from difficulty.'

3.80. *YOS* 10 25:29'–30' (and cf. ex. 3.79)

29. [*šumma ina bāb ekalli*]*m šīlum ipluš-ma* ***uštebri*** ⇒ *eleppaka*[143] *ina dannatim uṣṣi*
30. [*šumma ina bāb ekallim š*]*īlum ipluš-ma* ***lā uštebri*** ⇒ *eleppaka*[144] *ina dannatim ul uṣṣi*

29. '[If in the] Palace [Gate] a hole **was punctured all the way through** ⇒ your boat will escape from difficulty'
30. '[If in the Palace Gate] a hole **was not punctured all the way through** ⇒ your boat will not escape from difficulty.'

These pairings and the conceptualization behind them reflect, in a manner analogous to the basic reporting of the presence or absence of a given zone or of a zone's state as either sound or somehow compromised, the defining

142 For this translation, see ex. 4.15 and n. 39 below.
143 Text: *e-li-pa-*<<*ti*>>*-ka*; so *CAD* E, 92.
144 Text: *e-li-ip-pa-*<<*at*>>*-ka*; so *CAD* E, 92.

concern regarding the occurrence of a hole. Small wonder that the forecasts concerning one's army or ships in the respective predictions of these pairings relate directly to this detail via the idea of escape (< *waṣûm*).

Moreover, a couple of other pairings may be said to have assumed the level of real paradigmatic opposites. These include the pairing of *kapāṣum* and *naparqudum* noted above,[145] taken by Starr to mean "to be concave/convex,"[146] respectively, as well as that of *tarākum* and *nawārum*,"to be dark/light, bright":[147]

3.81. *YOS* 10 36 i 29–37

29–30. *šumma ḫašûm šār erbettīša* ***kuppuṣat*** ⇒ *šinā šarrū nakrūtum irrubūnim-ma ālī šarrim ilawwû*
31–33. *šumma ḫašûm šār erbettīša* ***naparqudat*** ⇒ *šarrum u*[148] *nakrūtum salīmam išakkanū-ma māssunu aburri uššabū*
34–35. *šumma būd ḫašîm qerbēnum imittam u šumēlam* ***kuppuṣ***[149] ⇒ *nawûka ana āl dūrim ikammis*
36–37. *šumma būd ḫašîm imittum u šumēlum* ***naparqudū*** ⇒ *māt ikmisu ana aburri uṣṣiam*[150]

29–30. 'If the lung (in) its four cardinal points **was concave** ⇒ two enemy kings will invade and besiege the king's cities'
31–33. 'If the lung (in) its four cardinal points **was convex** ⇒ the king and (his two) enemies will make peace and their people(s) will dwell in the pasture fields'
34–35. 'If the shoulder region of the lung in the inside on the right and left **was concave** ⇒ your herds will gather into a walled city'
36–37. 'If (in the inside of) the shoulder region of the lung the right and the left **were convex** ⇒ the population, which was gathered, will come out into the pasture fields.'

145 See § 3.2.1 and n. 51. In addition to the two passages presented below attesting to this opposition, cf. VAT 602:1–2, which contrasts *kapāṣum* with *nabalkutum*, though, as Glassner 2009b: 42 notes, *naparqudum* is expected here as well.

146 According to Jeyes 1989: 142: "to bend forward/backward."

147 Starr 1983a: 18–22.

148 With *CAD* A/1, 91, I take the *ú* following the lugal sign as a conjunction, not a plural marker (i.e., lugal-*ú*). Admittedly the latter option would better reflect the two hostile kings from the previous entry.

149 Text: *ku-pu*-IṢ; see next note.

150 Text: IṢ-*ṣe-a-am*; see previous note.

3.82. *TIM* 9 80:3–4 (= ex. 3.23)

3. *šumma ṣibtum **kapṣat** ⇒ ebūr nakrīka takkal šanû šumšu ebūr mātim iššer*
4. *šumma ṣibtum **napar**[**qud**]**at** ⇒ ebūrka nakrum ikkal bīši mātim uṣṣi*

3. 'If the Increase **was concave** ⇒ you will consume your enemy's harvest; its second interpretation: the land's harvest will thrive'
4. 'If the Increase **was convex** ⇒ the enemy will consume your harvest (or:) the property of the land will be lost.'

3.83. *OBE* 14 ob. 48–50

48. *šumma ina rēš libbim lipû kīma kakkūti nadī-ma u **tarik** ⇒ ṣīt bārîm*
49–50. *[šumma ina rēš libbim lip]û kīma k[akkūt]i nadī-ma u **nawir** ⇒ bārû [šum(i) damiqti i]leqqe*

48. 'If in the top of the heart the fatty tissue was situated like a lentil and **was dark** ⇒ (it predicts the) defection of the diviner'
49–50. 'If in the top of the heart the fatty tissue was situated like a lentil and **was light** ⇒ the diviner will acquire [a good reputation].'[151]

3.84. *YOS* 10 46 iv 3–10

3–6. *šumma kakki imittim ši[nā-m]a itbû-[ma] šaplûm **tari**[**k** .....] ⇒ Apodosis*
7–10. *šumma kakki imittim šinā-[ma itbû-ma] šaplûm **nawir** ...[...] ⇒ Apodosis*

3–6. 'If there were two right Weapons and they stood up (vertically) [and] the lower one **was dark** [.....]'
7–10. 'If there were two right Weapons [and they stood up (vertically) and] the lower one **was light** ...[...].'

Finally, common sense suggests the inclusion of a few additional pairings, such as to be(come) long/short (*arākum*/*karûm*), or to make high/low

151 For a broader word on predictions concerning the diviner's reputation, see Jeyes 1989: 19–20.

(*šuqqûm*/*šuppulum*), as well as the adjectives describing the *ziḫḫum* as hard/soft (*dannum*/*nurrubum*):

3.85. AO 7539:45–46 (// *CUSAS* 18 31 r. 61'–62')

45. *šumma qerbū* ***kurrû*** ⇒ Apodosis
46. [*šumma qe*]*rbū* ***arrakū*** ⇒ Apodosis

45. 'If the intestines **were short**'
46. 'If the intestines **were long**.'

3.86. *YOS* 10 24:16–17

16. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakim-ma šanûm* ***ušaqqī****-ma elēnu šakin* ⇒ *būši māt nakrīka ana mātīka irrubam*
17. *šumma bāb e<kallim> kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm* ***ušappil****-ma warkat amūtim šak*[*in*] ⇒ *būšī*[152] *mātīka ana māt nakrīka uṣṣi šanû šumšu rubûm ṭārid*[*ūtam ill*]*ak*

16. 'If the normal Palace Gate was situated (regularly) and another **was lying high** on the (liver's) top ⇒ the valuables of your enemy's land will come into your land'
17. 'If the normal Palace Gate was situated (regularly) and another **was lying low** on the liver's rear ⇒ the valuables of your land will go out into your enemy's land; its second interpretation: the prince will go into exile.'

3.87. *CT* 44 37 ob. 11–12

11. *šumma ina rēš ubānim ina imitti ubānim ziḫḫum* ***nurrubu*** *nadi* ⇒ *ina libbi* [*šattim š*]*amûm mitḫāriš* [*izann*]*un*
12. *šumma ina rēš ubānim ziḫḫum* ***dannum*** *nadi* ⇒ *ummākk*[*a d*]*annatum iṣabbat*

11. 'If **soft** *ziḫḫu* was cast in the head of the Finger in the Finger's right ⇒ in the middle of the [*year*] rain will come down *all the time*'[153]

152 Text: *bu*-<<BE>>-*ši*; so *CAD* B, 355; Richter 1994: 222 n. 34.

153 Restoration and translation follows *CAD* M/2, 134, though note that *mitḫāriš* can also be taken in spatial terms as "everywhere."

12. If **hard** *ziḫḫu* was cast in the head of the Finger (in the Finger's right) ⇒ difficulty will seize your army.'

Still, for many of the examples propounding some conditional opposition in two successive omens, a certain leeway is detected between the underlying notion of opposition and the manner in which this notion was conveyed in different contexts. Put another way, a degree of variability seems to have been tolerated in the phraseology of opposites in what are nonetheless well-established contrastive pairings. This is further evident in the contrast appearing in the next three examples, of *rapāšum*, "to be(come) wide," with not only *qatānum*, "to be(come) narrow, thin," but elsewhere *sunnuqum*, here meaning "to close, fasten shut," and (implicitly) *pašāqum*, "to be(come) narrow":

3.88. *YOS* 10 59:3–4

3. *šumma martum mēdeḫtum edḫessī-ma* ***ina i***[***mittim ir***]***piš-ma ina šumēlim iqtin*** ⇒ *erṣet nakrim t*[*ata*]*bbal*
4. *šumma martum mēdeḫtum*[154] *edḫessī-ma* ***ina šumēli***[***m i***]***rpiš-ma ina imittim iqtin*** ⇒ *nakerka erṣe*[*tka i*]*tabb*[*a*]*l*

3. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—a patchwork was covering it and it **was wide in the right and narrow in the left** ⇒ you will plunder the territory of the enemy'
4. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—a patchwork was covering it and it **was wide in the left and narrow in the right** ⇒ your enemy will plunder [your] territory.'

3.89. *YOS* 10 26 i 25–27 (ll. 26–27 = ex. 2.97)

25. *šumma <bāb> ekallim* ***irpiš*** ⇒ *ayyābūka ana abullī*[*ka*] *irrubūnikkum*
26–27. *šumma <bāb> ekallim* ***sunnuq*** ⇒ *ina tāḫāzim ummānam nak*[*rum*] *usannaq rīqūssa šatammū ekallam usanna*[*qū*]

25. 'If the Palace <Gate> **was wide** (**open**) ⇒ your enemies will enter in via [your] city gate to you'
26–27. 'If the Palace <Gate> **was fastened** (**close**) **shut** ⇒ in battle the enemy will shut the army tight; its uncertain (interpretation): *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace.'

154 Text: *me*^{l}(DIŠ)-*de-eḫ-tum*.

3.90. *YOS* 10 11 i 5–10 (= ex. 2.216; ll. 8–10 = ex. 2.197)

5–7. *šumma padānum* ***k*[*īm*]*a qaštim*** ⇒ *mīli irtim ummān šarrim īštum ummān nakrim māttam idâk*
8–10. *šumma padānum* ***imittam u šumēlam ipšuq*** ⇒ *tašnintum ummānum ana pī šāpirīša ul uššab ū lū šarrum ana p*[*ī m*]*ālikīšu ul uššab*

5–7. 'If the Path (was **wide**) **like a bow**[155] ⇒ (it forecasts) pride: the small army of the king will defeat the large army of the enemy'
8–10. 'If the Path was **narrow on the right and left** ⇒ (it predicts) rivalry: (either) the army will not abide by its messenger(s), or: the king will not abide by his counselor(s).'

Plainly, for *rapāšum* no single one of these possibilities can be deemed the exclusive antonym. Rather, each option must be viewed as providing a nuanced response in the specific context in which this opposition appears, and within a more general underlying oppositional structure pitting width versus narrowness.

A similar picture emerges when one turns to other such pairing groups. One such case involves *raqāqum*, "to become thin," attested above in ex. 3.75, ll. 13–13b to describe an expanded—and thus thin(ner)—heart, in contrast with the contracted one (*ebēṭum*) in the previous entry (ll. 11–12). By contrast, in the following example along with *ṣeḫērum*, "to be(come) small," the same verb seems to oppose *rabûm*, "to be(come) great, large":

3.91. BM 22694:43–45[156]

43. *šumma ṭulīmum eli miniātīšu* ***irabbi*** ⇒ [*maḫī*]*rum illiam*
44. *šumma ṭulīmum* ***irtaqiq*** ⇒ *ma*[*ru*]*št*[*um im*]*aqqut*
45. *šumma ṭulīmum* ***iṣṣeḫer*** ⇒ *tarbaṣ* [*awīlim*] *iṣeḫḫer*

43. 'If the spleen **is larger** than its (normal) proportions ⇒ *price*(*s*) will rise'
44. 'If the spleen **has become thin** ⇒ *trouble* will occur'
45. 'If the spleen **has become small** ⇒ the (number of animals in the) [man]'s pen-fold will shrink.'

155 On this simile's relation to the concept of width, see the discussion of ex. 2.216 in § 2.1.4.2.8.

156 Restorations follow Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 44.

Attachment of a certain zone or zonal region to an adjacent one is in at least two examples expressed via *emēdum* (in the G and Ntn, respectively),[157] while the verbal range conveying the opposite notion of separation includes both *parāsum* and *dakāšum*:

3.92. *YOS* 10 42 iii 36–37

36. *šumma tallu* ***dakiš*** ⇒ *lumun libbi*
37. *šumma tallu* ***emid*** ⇒ *imid ilim*

36. 'If the diaphragm **was severed** ⇒ (it forecasts) sorrow'
37. 'If the diaphragm **was attached** (lit., clinging) ⇒ (it forecasts) divine support.'

3.93. *YOS* 10 36 iii 28–30

28. *šumma warkat ḫašîm* ***ittenmid*** ⇒ *salīm*[*um*] *iššakkan*
29–30. [*šumma w*]*arkat ḫašîm* [...] ...[...] *ina urʾudim* ***paris*** ⇒ [...]*rīka nakrum itabbal*

28. 'If the back part of the lung(s) **has become joined** ⇒ a peace treaty will be established'
29–30. '[If in (?)] the back part of the lung(s) [...] ...[...] **was separated** from the trachea ⇒ the enemy will carry off your [...].'

It should be noted that for its part *dakāšum* does not elicit an automatic pairing with *emēdum*. In a passage from a non-extispicy collection,[158] it stands in contrast with *tiṣbutum*:

3.94. *YOS* 10 45:71–74[159]

71–72. *šumma sikkat ṣēli šalāš-ma ina qablītīšina* ***da***<***k***>***šā****-ma* << ...>> *m*[*uḫḫašina* ...] ⇒ Apodosis
73–74. *šumma sikkat ṣēli šalāš-ma ina qablītīšina* ***tiṣbutā****-ma mu*[*ḫḫašina* ...] ⇒ Apodosis

157 In *OBE* 14 ob. 23–26 (cf. ll. 14–15) the same idea is described with *kamûm*, "to be bound," and contrasted with *uššurum*, "to be free(d)."

158 Discussed in Glassner 2009a: 50–1.

159 I follow Glassner's reading of the zone (ibid.: 51) and in his restorations (ibid.: 78).

71–72. 'If (there were) three ribs and they **were separated** (from each other) in their middle and [their] top [...]'
73–74. 'If (there were) three ribs and they **were connected to one another** in their middle and [their] top [...].'

Finally, one may well imagine different and more precise antonyms to *ṣullulum*, "to roof, cover," than *nepelkûm*, "to be(come) wide (open)," though perhaps on account of its Sumerian equivalent, è (= UD.DU, lit., "to go to the light"; cf. *apûm*), the latter word was seemed a fitting choice:

3.95. *YOS* 10 24:20–21 (// *YOS* 10 22:14–15)

20. *šumma bāb ekallim **ṣullul** ⇒ ṣilli ilim eli awīlim ibbašši*[160]
21. *šumma bāb ekallim **nepelku** ⇒ hušaḫḫum ibbašši*

20. 'If the Palace Gate **was covered up** ⇒ there will be divine protection upon the man'
21. 'If the Palace Gate **was wide open** ⇒ there will be famine.'

In the final analysis, it appears that the opposition evinced in many of these pairings cannot be described as absolute, such that in retrospect the universality witnessed in the cases of *kapāṣum*/*naparqudum* and *nawārum*/*tarākum* seems more the exception than the rule. More frequently one finds that a contingency on the circumstances of particular contexts dictates the specific appearance of such pairings. From this angle it should not be surprising to learn that among the pairings discussed, only a handful convey in their respective apodoses the more theoretical diametric or mirror-image type of opposition that one might have expected to find in every case. Perhaps then, as Starr seemed to imply, it is better to speak here of "paradigmatic patterns"[161] for contrastive pairings—not of full-fledged paradigms.

Nevertheless, in their exploitation of established contrastive notions, these pairings could serve as an ideal framework for paradigm building. Lines 3–4 of the following example represent a textbook case of this point: the *rapāšum*/*sanāqum* opposition in these provides the springboard for two predictions—respectively about stable income and divine anger—that seem initially unrelated. And though, as we have seen, the question of zonal width was a common venue for exploring oppositional values, the pairing here represents in all

160 Text: *i-ba-aš-ši-i* (cf. *ib-ba-aš-ši-i* in l. 21); but cf. *ib-ba-aš-ši* in the parallel *YOS* 10 22:15.
161 Starr 1983a: 18.

likelihood a secondary creative effort, using traditions known to us from fellow *bāb ekallim* collections, such as that found in ex. 3.97,[162] and by analogy to the previous couplet and its concern about divine presence or absence:

3.96. *YOS* 10 23 ob. 1–4 (ll. 1–2 = ex. 3.26)

1. *šumma bāb ekallim īšu ⇒ ina mazzā[z t]azzazzu ilum ušallamka*
2. *šumma bāb ekallim lā īšu ⇒ mātam ilūša izzibūši*
3. *šumma bāb ekallim **irtapiš** ⇒ irbum ana ekallim irrub*
4. *šumma bāb ekallim **saniq** ⇒ ilum eli awīlim šabus*

1. 'If it has a Palace Gate ⇒ in whichever stance you take the deity will protect you'
2. 'If it does not have a Palace Gate ⇒ the gods will abandon the land.'
3. 'If the Palace Gate **has become wide** (**open**) ⇒ income will enter into the palace'
4. 'If the Palace Gate **was fastened** (**shut**) ⇒ the god will be angry with the man.'

3.97. *YOS* 10 24:22–23, 29

22. *[šumma s]ippi imitti*[163] *<bāb> ekallim **irpiš** ⇒ mazzāz ili awīlim*
23. *[šumma bāb] ekallim **irtapiš** ⇒ ayyābūka ana [a]bullīka irrubūnim*
...
29. *šumma bāb ekallim **sunnuq** ⇒ ina kakkim nakrum ummānam ussar ūmam rīqam šatammū ekallam usannaqū*

22. '[If] the right doorjamb of the Palace <Gate> **was wide** (**open**) ⇒ (it forecasts) the presence of the man's personal god.
23. '[If the] Palace [Gate] **has become wide** (**open**) ⇒ your enemies will enter in via your city gate.'
...
29. '[If] the Palace [Gate] **was fastened shut** (**close**) ⇒ in battle the enemy will enclose the army; for an uncertain date: *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace.'

162 See also ex. 3.89.

163 Text: *i-mi-tim*.

Thus in a certain sense this opposition may be said to have had a generative effect, making use of existing conventions to build new ideas and structures. Of course this process was already observed above, albeit in reverse: in the case of ex. 3.74, with the aid of the legendary forecasts about Gilgameš and Rīmuš, the suggestion of opposition in the protases was solidified, and, it is not too much to say, generated.[164]

164 For other examples of paradigm organization making use of the historical omens, see *YOS* 10 46 v 1–14 and *TIM* 9 79:1–19.

CHAPTER 4

Inter-omen Organization (II): Complex Gradation

4.0 Inter-omen Organization (II): Complex Gradation

The following continues the discussion of the organizational framework of the OB omen collections. In terms of subject, this chapter and the next resume the evaluation of what was described in chapter 3 as inter-omen organization. More specifically, of interest here is the inter-omen organization evinced in complex gradation, or the expression of omens relating to one another but not according to a principle of opposition. The principle behind the organization of omens in complex gradation is referred to here as pointillism.

The term pointillism is borrowed from the lexicon of the visual arts, where it refers to the painting form in which the juxtaposition of many points of primary colors generates the range of secondary colors necessary for the depiction of the visual subject. Its application to the omen collections is not original to the present context: the term has seen use in the description of the formulation of the collections by Glassner.[1] As the following seeks to explain, the term pointillism in this study is intended to designate a principle encompassing two different types of complex gradation. Each of these is based on a distinct form and each assumes distinct organizational and interpretive characteristics. Yet, common to both is the juxtaposition of individual entries in units in which the gradation is not characterized by the opposition of two extremes but rather by the minimal change of a single variable. In order to illustrate this phenomena, the label of pointillism was deemed an appropriate fit.

It should be noted that, in the study of the law collections, what is designated here as pointillism has received different descriptions: among these are the "principle of gradation"[2] and "the principle of the creation of a legal statement by juxtaposing individual legal cases with one another."[3] These descriptions have been passed over in the present study for a couple of reasons. The former option, gradation, though perhaps simpler than pointillism, could not be used here since in this study that term is employed more broadly, incorporating the

1 Glassner 1984. Presumably Glassner's employment of the term has its visual arts background in mind, though the point is not made explicitly.

2 Finkelstein 1981: 34.

3 Eichler 1987: 72.

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principle of opposition (i.e., simple gradation) as well.[4] The latter possibility was simply too cumbersome. Besides, insofar as no systematic study of the organizational framework of the law collections has been completed,[5] the specific qualifications of these principles remain unclear—and thus their applicability to the omen collections seems ill advised.

4.1 Pointillism in Complex Gradation

An assessment of the OB extispicy collections reveals two main types of pointillism in complex gradation. These are referred to in this study as agglutinative and paradigmatic, and the discussion that follows (§§ 4.1.1–4.1.4) presents a description of both.[6] In the remainder of the chapter (§ 4.2), a few of the more prominent structures or organizing methods of the paradigmatic type of complex gradation are explored individually; these deal with the organization of omens according to the spatial-positioning schemes, including the sequences Top → Middle → Bottom (T → M → B), Right → Middle → Left (R → M → L), and Right → Left → Right + Left (R → L → R+L).

However, before moving to describe what is meant by the agglutinative and paradigmatic types of complex gradation, a word about these labels is in order, especially within the broader framework of what we have called pointillism. It must be stated at the outset that the matter of terminology here has not been taken lightly. The introduction of new terms—the implicit or stated goal of which is invariably the improvement on earlier descriptions—is typically welcomed with roughly the same exuberance displayed in the anticipation of an unpalatable medicine. The present instance, it is expected, constitutes no exception.

Nevertheless, in light of the focus and goals of this study, a nomenclature that is at least partially new seems a necessity. Accordingly, the terms agglutinative and paradigmatic have been favored over others that, to varying degrees and in non-divinatory contexts, have analogous connotations. Among these the labels of concatenation, enumeration, interrelated and independent

4 In the study of the law collections, gradation is frequently seen in contrast to opposition.

5 To be sure, there have been significant forays; among these, in addition to above-listed works by Finkelstein and Eichler, one must include the important studies Petschow 1965; 1968; more recently Eichler 2009; also Roth 2013; 2014.

6 These terms, known in descriptions of different aspects of language or languages in linguistics (for paradigmatic, see § 2.1 above; on agglutination, see Sapir 1921: 127–56), are employed here merely formally, in the manner described below.

chains, and syntactic parallelism, have all been employed in Assyriological literature to describe one type of gradation or another. Additionally in this context one must also make mention of the structuralist distinction between the paradigmatic set and the syntagmatic chain, terms that have now been employed in Assyriology—even in the study of divination literature—in a manner overlapping some of the designations employed here. A review of all these terms along with the counterparts preferred here is offered below.

The basic criterion for what is described here as the agglutinative form of pointillism is the repetition and expansion of the data of one entry's protasis by the protasis of the next. It is the explicit reference to the preceding protasis that is the defining characteristic of this type. Accordingly, gradation in passages formulated according to an agglutinative form of pointillism shifts from one entry to the next by the addition of a variable or variables to all the constituents of the previous entry.

By contrast, in the paradigmatic form of pointillism, a given variable in the broader protasis refers only indirectly to its counterpart from a preceding or following entry. If one reads vertically only the protases in which these variables appear, what becomes clear is that the variables comprise a set that is paradigmatic in the sense that the relation among them is contrastive and mutually exclusive; only one variable from the members of a set—e.g., one among a set of colors, shapes, or numbers—is used in a given protasis.

The study of Mesopotamian poetics has been the beneficiary of considerable interest in Assyriology,[7] especially with respect to incantations from the late third and early second millennium.[8] In this context, several important contributions have advanced our understanding of poetic forms that, as one study put it, "when brought together, provide the composition with its poetic quality."[9]

One such form or compositional device, discussed most notably by Reiner[10] and Veldhuis,[11] has been termed "concatenation" or "chains with interdepen-

7 Noteworthy are Wilcke 1976; Westenholz and Westenholz 1977; Michalowski 1981; 1992; Reiner 1980; 1985a; Civil 1987; Farber 1990; Veldhuis 1990; 1991; 1993; 1999; 2004; Moran 1993a; Black 1998; Wasserman 2003; as well as several of the papers in Vogelzang and Vanstiphout 1992; 1996.

8 Westenholz and Westenholz 1977; Michalowski 1981; 1992; Reiner 1980; 1985a; Farber 1990; Veldhuis 1990; 1991; 1993; 1999; Wasserman 2003.

9 Michalowski 1981: 3. To be precise, Michalowski speaks of "structural principles" here, not "poetic forms," as in Veldhuis 1993 or "compositional devices" in Reiner 1980: 11; 1985a: 96. For reasons already discussed and in keeping with Michalowski's own attempt to sidestep technical terminology, I have opted for the more generic-based labels.

10 Reiner 1980: 11–2; 1985a: 95–7.

11 Veldhuis 1990; 1993.

dent members."[12] These designations highlight the linkage of a particular unit from one line with that from another. Accordingly, several varieties of concatenation are possible and are in fact attested, even in the limited scope of Reiner's and Veldhuis's studies of OB incantations.

Another such form, labeled "enumeration" in a study of Sumerian literature by Civil, lists, in the course of a passage and according to a discernible pattern, "terms of a lexical set."[13] As described by Civil, this form is identical to what elsewhere is referred to as "chains without interrelated or interlocking (or with independent) members."[14] Such chains, comprised of independent members, are also well attested in Mesopotamian poetry.[15] Indeed, this compositional device is but a variety of syntactic parallelism,[16] the basic poetic form alleged in much of early poetry world-wide,[17] including elsewhere in the ancient Near East.[18]

It is not difficult to see that to a significant extent the descriptions of these poetic forms echo what was described above as the agglutinative and paradigmatic types of pointillism. Specifically, in its inclusion of a protasis from one omen in that of the following, the agglutinative form of pointillism may be said to represent an example of concatenation. Correspondingly, in the reliance by two or more juxtaposed omen entries on individual variables from a set, the positions of which in each entry are exactly parallel, the agglutinative form of pointillism may be counted as an example of syntactic parallelism or enumeration. As such, one might wisely ask why, in light of the existence of this rich terminological array, should new nomenclature be called for?

Two main factors militate against the employment of the existing terminology in the present context. Most obvious is the one involving suitability. Generally speaking, it is within the context of the study of poetics and, more specifically, poetry that this terminology belongs. Regarding the omen collections, even if they are granted the label of literature (as noted in Chapter 1,

12 The former is actually the description of the latter in the classification of Stith Thomson 1966: 5, 546 no. Z40. I have maintained both on account of the normative use of the latter by Veldhuis (but see Veldhuis 1993: 49).

13 Civil 1987: 37; and see below and n. 20.

14 Reiner 1985a: 96; Veldhuis 1993: 48.

15 As demonstrated by Veldhuis 1993: 50; pace Reiner 1980: 11; 1985a: 96.

16 Reiner 1980: 11; 1985a: 96.

17 For an introduction to this vast subject, see the classic article by R. Jakobson, reprinted in Jakobson 1987: 145–79, 514–20.

18 The literature on parallelism in Canaanite and Hebrew poetry is also immense; see Cross 1998: 99–145 (with bibliography). For a recent, brief word on parallelism in cuneiform literature, see Kleinerman 2011: 86–88.

a matter that is by no means self-evident), they remain at a considerable remove from anything approaching normative conceptions of poetry. And while it is true that poetic features and language are attested in literature that falls outside the confines of poetry,[19] the applicability of terminology from the discipline of poetics in the present context seems questionable.

More significant is a related factor, concerning the matter of specificity. As described above, even in the limited area of OB incantations several forms of concatenation are known. The same may be said for the form described as enumeration, especially once its relation with syntactic parallelism is recognized. Yet with respect to the omen collections it is essentially only one species of each form—if for a moment this terminology is allowed—that is investigated below. More precisely, as described above (see also § 4.1.1), the agglutinative form of pointillism concerns a form of concatenation whereby every variable from one omen's protasis is taken up in the counterpart from the following entry; other forms, including forms attested in the collections, are excluded from consideration for reasons explained below. From this angle a classification of the agglutinative form of pointillism as a subtype of concatenation would perhaps not be unwarranted after all.

The reasoning behind the appellation of the paradigmatic form of pointillistic expression is a bit more complicated to explain. It was already noted that the term paradigmatic is well known in the structuralist distinction between the paradigmatic set and the syntagmatic chain;[20] moreover, it was also seen that this pairing has been used constructively in studies of Akkadian divination literature.[21] Indeed, these labels, or the corresponding references to the horizontal and vertical axes or planes of the text, are employed elsewhere in this very study. In light of this, the logic of the potentially confusing reference to a paradigmatic form of pointillistic expression may reasonably be questioned; a term like enumerative, with its base established in Assyriological studies of non-poetic literary genres,[22] may thereby seem preferable.

However, as stated in this study's introduction, the choice of paradigmatic in this work was made consciously on account of this term's polyvalence. In the

19 The point is made with respect to Mesopotamian literature in Veldhuis 2004: 45–7 (with references to earlier opinions).

20 See these designations' classic if difficult description in Lévi-Strauss 1966: 205–8.

21 Especially in Guinan 1989; Brown 2000; also Rochberg 2009.

22 The designation of enumeration, with reference to Civil 1987, is picked up in Rubio 2003 in the context of a broader look at Sumerian literature and also in Michalowski 2006: 162, in his analysis of the so-called Tummal Chronicle.

broader sense, this involves the possibility of the application of the Kuhnian sense of paradigm to the study of Mesopotamian divination literature with respect to Mesopotamian divination. Yet even in the more limited capacity intended below, the paradigmatic qualification bears something of its Kuhnian ring.[23] For this reason, where different examples of pointillism of the paradigmatic type are analyzed in the following discussion, the question that inevitably arises is what is meant by paradigmatic. Put another way, to what degree were sequences, in terms of both their organization and related interpretions, understood as incontrovertible in the mind of the diviner? In other words, do sequences arranged according to the paradigmatic type of pointillism in fact constitute paradigms? As is seen below, answers to this basic question vary in significant ways from one case to another. Nonetheless, the underlying issue remains, and for this reason the label has been retained.

4.1.1 *Pointillism of the Agglutinative Type*

Pointillistic expression adhering to the agglutinative type follows the basic form:

$$P_X \rightarrow P_{X+Y} (\rightarrow P_{X+Y+Z} \rightarrow \ldots \infty)$$

where protasis P_{X+Y} represents the addition of any variable (Y) onto P_X, the protasis of the preceding entry, such that the second protasis (P_{X+Y}) builds on some aspect mentioned in the first (P_X). Some examples follow:

4.1. *OBE* 14 ob. 10–11

10. [*šumma rēš lib*]*bi elīta ikpil-ma nawir* ⇒ Apodosis
11. [*šumma rēš li*]*bbi elīta ikpil-ma nawir-**ma šutebru*** ⇒ Apodosis

10. '[If the top] of the heart was curled and bright'
11. '[If the top] of the heart was curled, bright, **and** (**the brightness**) **went all the way through**.'

23 Of course the term paradigm, which precedes Kuhn, was adopted by him precisely on account of its provisional status, one that is, in his words (1996: 10), "sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve."

4.2. *YOS* 10 46 iii 40–44 (ll. 40–41 = ex. 2.155)

40–41. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki imittim erištum* ⇒ Apodosis
42–44. *šumma* ***kakki imittim ana erištim ittūr*** ⇒ Apodosis

40–41. 'If in the top of the Weapon of the right (there was) a Request-mark'
42–44. 'If (ditto and) **the Weapon of the right has turned to the Request(-mark)**.'

4.3. *YOS* 10 46 iii 54–58

54–55. *šumma kakki imittim muḫḫašu qûm ṣabit* ⇒ Apodosis
56–58. *šumma* [*kakki*] *imittim muḫḫašu qûm ṣabit-****ma*** [***u q***]***ablāšu palšā*** ⇒ Apodosis

54–55. 'If (concerning) the Weapon of the right—a filament was seizing its top'
56–58. 'If (concerning) [the Weapon] of the right—a filament was seizing its top **and its middle parts were punctured**.'

The sequence $P_X \rightarrow P_{X+Y}$ could extend to consider yet additional variables (e.g., Z; hence: P_{X+Y+Z}):

4.4. *YOS* 10 24:1–3

1. *šumma bāb ekallim šinā* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma bābū ekallim šinā-****ma ritkubū*** ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma bābū ekallim šinā-****ma ritkubū-<u>ma u birītīšunu qûm ṣabit</u>*** ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If the Palace Gate was two-fold'
2. 'If the Palace Gate was two-fold **and the two parts were riding atop one another**'
3. 'If the Palace Gate was two-fold **and the two parts were riding atop one another <u>and a filament was seized between them</u>**.'

At least theoretically this chain could proceed *ad infinitum* (… ∞), though at present no example comprised of more than three entries is known.

More frequently, passages exhibiting this type of pointillism consist of only two entries. Moreover, even where a third entry does follow, one often observes

some divergence from the basic form just outlined. Such cases follow the variant form(s):

$$P_X \rightarrow P_{X+Y} \rightarrow P_{X+Z} \,/\, P_{X'(+Z)} \; (\rightarrow \ldots \infty)$$

according to which the third protasis either (a) omits the second variable (Y); (b) omits the second variable (Y) and somehow reconfigures the first (X'); or (c) even omits any additional variable (Y or Z) and merely reconfigures the first (X'). Examples of these subtypes to this variant form appear below:

4.5. *YOS* 10 33 ii 28–38

28–30. *šumma ina ṣēr birītim kakkū*[24] *šinā ittaṭlū* ⇒ *šarrānu ina puḫrim innammarū*
31–34. *šumma* <*ina*> *ṣēr birītim kakkū šinā ittaṭlū-**ma ina birīšunu** [**pi**]**ṭrum** ⇒ šarrān ipaḫḫurū-ma*[25] [*itt*]*addinū*[26]
35–38. [*šumma ina*] *ṣēr birītim kakkū šinā* [*itt*]*aṭlū-**ma warki išdīšu** [**...**] **... nadû** ⇒ šarrān* [*ina pu*]*ḫrim ul ittaddinū*[27]

28–30. 'If in the middle plain two Weapons faced one another ⇒ kings will see one another in a meeting'
31–34. 'If <in> the middle plain two Weapons faced one another **and in between them** (**was**) **a fissure** ⇒ two kings will gather and come to a compromise with one another'
35–38. '[If in] the middle plain two Weapons faced one another **and behind its base** [**...**] **... were situated** ⇒ the two kings will not come to a compromise with one another [in] the meeting.'[28]

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24 Text: *ka-ak*-KUM, here and in the next two entries as well; an emendation can be avoided (though cf. the following notes) if the last sign is read as ku_{13} (already in OB), though this seems odd. Still the sense of the clause is surely that of the common finding elsewhere of two weapons in relation to one another. Could this be an instance of *casus pendens*?

25 Text: *i-pa-ḫu-*<<*ur*>>*-ru-ma*.

26 Text: [*it-t*]*a-ad-di*(KI)*-i-nu*; on the form and its meaning, see the following note.

27 Reading ⌜*it*⌝*-ta-*⌜*ad-di*⌝*-nu*, though the copy may intend ⌜*it*⌝*-ta-di*(sup. ras)*-nu*. Jeyes 1989: 136 reads ⌜*uš*⌝*-ta-*⌜*ad-di*⌝*-nu*, seemingly understanding this as an even more exceptional form of the Št-lexical durative *uštaddan* (see *GAG* § 94c*). Though the meaning intended in both entries seems indeed to accord with those of *nadānum* in the Št, the writings here and in the previous entry, with *i* theme vowels and an initial *it* in this entry, must represent Gt durative forms.

28 Pace *CAD* P, 491, which takes *puḫrum* in omens in its sense of "assembly." For additional evidence of the non-technical sense of this term in OB times, see Charpin 2007: 180–1.

4.6. *YOS* 10 36 i 43–47 (ll. 44–47 = ex. 3.55)

43. *šumma būd ḫašîm imittam paris ⇒ nēkemtum*
44–45. *šumma būd ḫašîm imittam **šutašnû-ma** paris ⇒ qitrubiš nakrum ikkimka*
46–47. *šumma būd ḫašîm **<u>šumēlam</u> šutašnû-ma** paris ⇒ nakram qitrubiš tekkim*

43. 'If the shoulder region of the lung on the right was detached ⇒ (it forecasts) loss'
44–45. 'If the shoulder region of the lung was **detached twice** on the right ⇒ in a close battle the enemy will conquer you'
46–47. If the shoulder region of the lung was **detached twice <u>on the left</u>** ⇒ in a close battle you will conquer the enemy.'

4.7. MAH 15994:21–26

21–22. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim ša imittim ina qablim ziḫḫu nadi ⇒ rukūb šarrim iṭebbu*[29]
23–24. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim ša i*[*mi*]*ttim ina qablim ziḫḫu nadī-**ma u šīrum katimšu** ⇒ eleppāti ištānu*[30] *iṣabbat*
25–26. [*šumma*] *ina warki naṣraptim **meḫret nīrim** ziḫḫu nadi ⇒ elep Dilmun*[31] *iṭebbu*

21–22. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the back of the Crucible of the right in the middle ⇒ the king's barge(-boat) will sink'
23–24. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the back of the Crucible of the right in the middle **and fleshy tissue was covering it** ⇒ the north wind will seize the boats'
25–26. '[If] *ziḫḫum* was situated in the back of the Crucible **opposite the Yoke** ⇒ a Dilmunite boat will sink.'

Together these configurations bear witness to the rich tapestry of pointillism, and each may justifiably be described as pointillistic in nature. Certainly

29 So CAD R, 409; text: *i-ṭe-bu-ú*, an example of a *plene* spelling in *Auslaut* common, as A. George reminds me, in southern tablets.

30 Text: *iš*^{ti}(DA)*-ta-nu*.

31 Or: *eleppu tilmunnītum*, "a Dilmun-style boat"; on these, see Potts 1995.

these forms maintain the criterion of having interdependent members in their chains, and as such represent further examples of what Reiner, following Stith Thompson, referred to as concatenation.[32] Perhaps more significant still is the fact that the diviner probably conceived of them in this manner, making use of each of these formal variations as needed. However, strictly speaking, to the extent that it is to be accepted as normative in the present context, these variations violate the basic agglutinative form outlined above, even if in a case such as ex. 4.6 this is instigated by the interpolation of the right/left factor. Moreover, unlike the simple pattern of the basic form, the variety witnessed in passages framed around these configurations challenges attempts at the qualification of generative effects. Thus, for our purposes, in order to understand better the agglutinative form and its generative effects, the following discussion excludes from consideration those passages that do not adhere to the basic form.

4.1.1.1 Generative Employment of Pointillism of the Agglutinative Type

For the sake of convenience and in order to begin to appreciate how this form functions generatively, let us consider the following examples in which the second entry predicts death. This forecast is reached when a standard mark or condition appearing in or near the zone or mark includes a hole (*šīlum*), shading (*tarākum*), or blood (*damum*):[33]

4.8. *YOS* 10 14:5–7

5. *šumma naplaštum kīma baddim ⇒ aššat awīlim innīak*
6–7. *šumma naplaštum kīma baddim-**ma u šīlum ina libbīša nadi** ⇒ aššat awīlim innīak-ma mussa iṣabbassī-ma idâkši*

5. 'If the View was like the BAD sign ⇒ the man's wife will commit adultery'
6–7. 'If the View was like the BAD sign **and a hole was situated in its midst** ⇒ the married woman will commit adultery but her husband will seize and kill her.'

32 Reiner 1985a: 96 and n. 3.

33 For a summary of many interpretive associations with death in the OB collections, see Jeyes 1980b: 119–20.

4.9. *YOS* 10 21:5–8 (ll. 5–6 = ex. 2.28)

5–6. *šumma ana pāni danānim kakkum <ša>pliš iṭṭul ⇒ nēšum innammar-ma ina pāni abullim pagram inaddi lū nakrum pagram inaddi*
7–8. *šumma ana pāni danānim kakkum iṭṭul* ***u ina birīšunu***[34] ***šīlum nadi*** *⇒ nēšum ina pāni awīlim pagram inaddī-ma iddâk*

5–6. 'If a Weapon was facing below, toward the Strength ⇒ (either) a lion will be seen and it will lay a corpse down before a man; or: an enemy will lay a corpse down'
7–8. If a Weapon is facing (below?), toward the Strength **and a hole was situated in between them** ⇒ a lion will lay a corpse down before a man and (then) it will be killed.'

4.10. *OBE* 14 ob. 22–24 (cf. ex. 4.50)

22. *[š]umma rēš libbim ziqtī saḫir u ziq[tūšu šu]kkusū ⇒ tibût ḫupši ana rubêm*
23–24. *šumma rēš libbim ziqtī saḫir-ma u ziqtūšu šukkusū* ***u rēš ⌜libbim kami u tar⌝ik***[35] *⇒ ḫupšum ibbalakkat-ma rubûm imaqqut*
22. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by pockmarks and [its] pockmarks were dried up ⇒ (it forecasts) a uprising of the rabble against the prince'
23–24. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by pockmarks and its pockmarks were dried up **and the top of the heart was bound and dark** ⇒ the rabble will rebel and the prince will fall.'

4.11. *OBE* 14 r. 14–16 (cf. l. 13)

14. *šumma rēš tal libbim pūṣa nadi ⇒ kabtum ya'umma sim[mu in]a zumrīšū-ma ana ekallim inaddû*

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34 Text: *bi-ri-<<ši>>-šu-nu*; so *CAD* B, 247; also possible is: *bi-ri-ti*^{i}(ŠI)*-šu-nu*.

35 The copy seems to suggest that a zag (= *imittum*) may follow the $šag_4$ sign, as apparent in the text's transliteration in Jeyes 1989: 157, though not in its translation (ibid.: 161). If it is there, in all likelihood it represents a mistake that is to be omitted, since the right and left appear as ordered pairings in this text, and nowhere near this line.

15–16. *šumma rēš tal libbim pūṣa nadī-**ma ina libbi pūṣīšu damu ittallak*** ⇒ *kabtum ya'umma simmu ina zumrīšū-ma ana ekallim inaddûšu-ma iṣṣabbat*

14. 'If the diaphragm's top had a white coloration ⇒ some important person (with) *simmu*-disease on his body will be cast into the palace'

15–16. 'If the diaphragm's top had a white coloration **and blood was flowing away from the middle of its white** (**part**) ⇒ some important person (with) *simmu*-disease on his body will be cast into the palace and imprisoned (= die?[36])'.

4.12. *YOS* 10 46 iv 35–37

35. *šumma kakki imittim kaṣiṣ* ⇒ *arbūt ummānīya*

36–37. *šumma kakki imittim kaṣiṣ-**ma u tarik*** ⇒ *miqitti ummāniya*

35. 'If the Weapon of the right was trimmed ⇒ (it forecasts) my army's flight'

36–37. 'If Weapon of the right was trimmed **and dark** ⇒ (it forecasts) my army's defeat.'

It is instructive to note that the first entries in each of these passages share little with each another, either in terms of the hypothesized conditions (View like BAD sign; Weapon facing Strength; dried pockmarks around heart; white coloration on diaphragm; lacerated Weapon) or their interpretations (adultery; corpse's deposit by lion/enemy; revolt of rabble; quarantine [?] for infirm; army's rout). Plainly, no specific environment was viewed as the precondition for the generation of such death forecasts. It is thus clear that this common denominator reflects not a single hermeneutic association but rather various manipulations of the interpretive framework.

These introductory words are by no means intended to present a monolithic picture of pointillism as limited to conditions predicting death. To the contrary, the occurrence of the secondary variable in an entry of a certain gradation, whether concerning an ominous mark or anomalous condition, could alter the interpretive course in different ways, including results with positive

36 The suggestion that this passive form of *ṣabātum* is to be understood euphemistically as referring to death is conjectural but seems reasonable, especially in light of the reference in the protasis to the flow of blood. On blood as a referent for death in omens, see Jeyes 1980b: 109; cf. id. 1989: 169.

outcomes. To offer but one example, in the following passage the qualification of the report of two holes from ll. 10–11 as covered in ll. 12–13 results in the neutralization of the previously inauspicious forecast:

4.13. MAH 15874:10–13 (= ex. 2.73, ll. 10–13; cf. 2.74, ll. 60–61)

10–11. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ īnī awīlim šarrum inassaḫ*
12–13. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû-**ma** **šišītam ḫarmū** ⇒ īnā awīlim izzazzā*

10–11. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's head ⇒ the king will tear out the eyes of the man'
12–13. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's head **and they were covered by a membrane** ⇒ the man's eyes shall remain (in place).'

Here the interpretive association is transparent: the idea of coverage was conceived as benefic, as in the manner of English "umbrella"; correspondingly, the man is said to be spared the plucking out of the eyes forecasted in the previous entry.

The previous example is also instructive in bringing into question the nature of the supplementary variable. To what degree the hermeneutic valence of *ḫarāmum* evident in it reflects a standard associative value is unclear. Certainly it seems as if its employment in this instance is case-specific—that is, determined by the subject in ll. 10–11, and therefore probably selected for the composition of this passage with precisely this sense in mind. Indeed, on the basis of additional evidence it seems as if at times the secondary variable was not conscripted for its standard associative values at all. The following example illustrates the point well:

4.14. AO 7029:1–5 (// *OBE* 10:32–33 [protases only (?)]; ll. 3–5 = ex. 2.156)

1–2. *[šumma] ina muḫḫi ṣibtim e[ri]štum ⇒ ⌜a/ina⌝ ṣibit ⌜bī⌝tīka*[37] *ilum* (<*ul*>) …[38]
3–5. *šumma ina muḫḫi ṣibtim erištum **tarkat** ⇒ erišti ina bīti awīli innerrišu ul innaddin*

37 The reading ⌜*qá*⌝*-ti-ka* seems possible too. On *ṣibit qātim* as "security," see *CAD* Ṣ, 166; but cf. *bīti awīli* in the next entry (ll. 3–5).

38 Text: *i-ZI-IB-ka*; see following note.

1–2. '[If] a Request-mark (was) in the top of the Increase ⇒ the god will (<*not*>) ...[39] you *to*/*from* the *holding* of your *household*'

3–5. 'If a Request-mark (was) in the top of the Increase (**and**) **it was dark** ⇒ the request which will be made in a man's house will not be granted.'

Notwithstanding difficulties in the reading and interpretation of the first entry, it is obvious that the addition of the factor of shade (*tarākum*) in the second does not herald those forecasts commonly signified by this variable (i.e., those involving death). Rather, the qualification of the Request-mark as dark appears to negate (*ul inaddin*) what must have been a positive prognostication in the former entry, and thus it seems that the shade factor served to invert the valence of the forecast. To what degree this technical value of *tarākum* was understood by the diviner as conventional is unclear. However, what seems certain is that this purported value of *tarākum*, being only one of several interpretive associations, must have been selected consciously here for the desired outcome. The appearance of *tarākum* in ll. 3–5 thus sheds light on one way in which the principle of pointillism was employed for the purposes of generative interpretation.

Further support for this line of reasoning may be adduced from a related phenomenon, observed in the following two examples:

4.15. MAH 15994:17–20

17–18. *šumma ina warki na*[*ṣr*]*aptim ša imittim ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ [*t*]*ibût kubrim*[40]

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39 The expectation of a positive forecast was presumably the reasoning behind the translation "un dieu exaucera largement pour toi les vœux de ta [?] mai[son]" in Nougayrol 1946: 82, though the understanding (ibid.: 83) of the verbal form as *i-ṣí-ip-ka* (< *eṣēpum*, "to double"?) is not reflected in the dictionaries. The most obvious solution, *izzibka*, "he will desert you," would work if a missing negation particle were supplied.

40 Pace CAD K, 484, whose translation takes *kubrum* here as in YOS 10 26 ii 43–46 (ex. 3.79). However, others, beginning with this text's original editor, have read this as reflecting the *gubrum* of CAD G, 118; see Nougayrol 1969: 155–6 (*ku-up-ri-im*; "*cantonment* [?]"); Jeyes 1989: 106 ("reed hut"); Glassner, p.c. (*gu*$_5$*-ub-ri-im*; "la hutte de berger"); and cf. CAD T, 392. The matter finds its most recent and best treatment in George 2013: 139, which, aided by a new attestation spelled *ku-uB-ri* and unmistakably referring to a shepherd camp (// SB *Gilgameš* II 37), makes it plain that *gubrum*/*guprum* was also spelled with an intital /*k*/. As such, the term must extend here and elsewhere (AO 7539:75–76 [ex. 4.18]; YOS 10 18:46, 48 [ex. 4.19, ll. 46, 48]) to refer to military encampments. Yet, the option of an army's "mass force" in omen apodoses should not be rejected entirely, since elsewhere, including

19–20. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim ša imittim ziḫḫu* ***qaqqaršu īkul-ma*** *nadi ⇒ miqitti kubrim*

17–18. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated behind the Crucible of the right ⇒ (it forecasts) an uprising of the *camp*'
19–20. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated behind the Crucible of the right **and consumed its (own) region** ⇒ (it forecasts) the defeat of the *camp*.'

4.16. VAT 4102:3–4 (// *BLO* 76:3–4 [SB])

3. [*šumma nīru*] *meḫret ṣibti kīma šinnī mušṭi p*[*uṭṭ*]*u*[*r*] ⇒ [……] *ina ūmim rīq*[*i*]*m tib*[*ût erbim* (?)]
4. [*šumma*] *n*[*ī*]*ru me*[*ḫ*]*ret ṣibti k*[*ī*]*ma šinnī mušti puṭṭur-****ma lupput*** ⇒ [*ina pāni*[41] …] *ū lū Ummān-manda itebbeam-ma ana libbi mātī ša nakri i*[*maqqut*]

3. '[If the Yoke] was split like the teeth of a comb opposite the Increase ⇒ [……]; for an uncertain date: an onslaught [*of locusts*]'
4. '[If] the Yoke was split like the teeth of a comb opposite the Increase **and it was damaged**[42] ⇒ [*in the presence of* …] or: barbarian hordes[43] will rise up but will [*collapse*][44] in the midst of the land of the enemy.'

The second entry in each of these examples takes up the anomalous findings from the first entries—respectively, *ziḫḫum* in the Crucible's posterior and the Yoke's crenellated appearance—and extends them so as to consider secondary characteristics or effects. In the case of ex. 4.15, *ziḫḫum* is now said to consume its local environment (*qaqqaram akālum*). An interpretation of this more complex condition follows suit: whereas the previous forecast depicts the *kubru*'s rise (*tibût kubrim*), one reads now of the same body's defeat (lit. collapse; *miqitti kubrim*). A similar situation presents itself in ex. 4.16, in which the second

in our corpus (*KAR* 150 r. 10–13 [ex. 4.31, ll. 10–13]), this idea is expressed unambiguously with *nakbatum*, "main force (of an army)."

41 Following tentatively the restoration in Nougayrol 1950:13.

42 On this translation see, ex. 3.39, l. 42.

43 On the identity of this group, see Adalı 2011. The SB parallel has Subartu in place of Ummān-manda.

44 Restoration follows *BLO* 76:4, which takes *maqātum* in the apodosis as referring to the collapse of the invading forces; similarly Starr 1993: 232.

entry (l. 4) records the anomalous zone itself as damaged (*lupputum*). While parts of the apodoses of both entries in this passage are missing, what survives reveals a parallel interpretive development to that witnessed in ex. 4.15: in the first entry at least one forecast seems to refer to an onslaught (*tibûtum*), while in the second entry at least one of the interpretive options describes the rise (*tebûm*) of an army as well as its defeat (*maqātum*).

Thus, despite their differences, exx. 4.15 and 4.16 display an important measure of commonality: reports of the corrosive effect (*akālum*) or quality (*lupputum*) of their primary findings appear to trigger the same interpretive development, conveyed in each case by a verbal and spatial sequence denoting rising and falling, respectively (i.e., *tibûtum* [< *tebûm*] → *miqittum* [< *maqātum*]). It thus seems that these examples share a common gradation pattern that conceptualized the corrosion depicted in exx. 4.15, ll. 19–20 and ex. 4.16, l. 4 according to the established pairing of *tebûm* and *maqātum* (more on which below). The occurrence of this secondary condition appears to have signaled some reversal of the deleterious effects of those anomalous findings from the first entry in each passage.

The application of the contrastive pairing of *tebûm* and *maqātum* in the examples just discussed is especially revealing when considered against other known attestations of these paired terms. The employment of this pairing is paradigmatically inexact;[45] not infrequently it is used with a complimentary or even resultative sense for the second member in the given sequence. Note, for instance, the sense of *tebûm* connoting an illness' passing in the following passage, which calls for the statement concerning the aforementioned (?) bout (< *maqātum*) of the *bennu*-disease:

4.17. *YOS* 10 41:53–54

53. Protasis ⇒ *benni*[46] *eli mārī awīlim* ***imaqqut***
54. Protasis ⇒ *benni* ***ša imqutu itebbe***

53. '*Bennu*-disease **will befall** the sons of an *awīlum*'
54. 'The *bennu*-disease **which befell** (ditto [?]) **will pass**.'

45 This point is already made in Nougayrol 1969: 156–7.

46 Text: *be-en*$^{!}$(EL$^{!?}$)-*ni*. On the *status absolutus* form here and in the next entry, see GAG § 62e; Stol 1993: 134. On the identity of this disease, likely epilepsy, see Stol 1993: 5 and passim.

Conversely, in the following example, the defeat (collapse) of the *kubrum* seems somehow conditioned by the earlier mention of storms, which, if only by association, nonetheless implicates the description of a strong wind's surge (*tībum*) in the final outcome (i.e., *tībi šārim* → *miqitti kubrim*; cf. ex. 4.19):

4.18. *šumma ina qutun qerbī ziḫḫu nadī-ma ana šaplānu inaṭṭal* ⇒ ***tībi*** *šāri danni ina meḫê* ***miqitti*** *kubri* 'If in the small of the intestines *ziḫḫum* was situated and it was facing downward ⇒ (it forecasts) a **surge** of a strong wind (such that) via the *m.*-storm the **defeat** of the army's camp[47] (will occur)' (AO 7539:75–76).

4.19. *šumma qerbū kalûšunū-ma dukkušū* ⇒ ***tibût*** *ḫupšī* ***miqitti*** *ummāni lū tibût Elamti* 'If all of the intestines were (thoroughly) *bulging*[48] ⇒ (it forecasts) the **onslaught** of the rabble (and consequently [?]) the **defeat** of the army; or: the onslaught of Elam' (AO 7539:10; cf. // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 12').

It is not at all unlikely that the authors of exx. 4.15–4.16 were aware of this interpretive tradition (note the mention of the *kubrum* in exx. 4.15 and 4.18) and adopted it in order to help convey the neutralizing effect of the local secondary process (i.e., corrosion) on the primary finding. Significantly, in at least one other passage, already met but quoted again below, the additional finding[49] of corrosion does not alter the previous interpretation in the manner that exx. 4.15–4.16 would have us expect:

4.20. *YOS* 10 17:41–42 (= ex. 3.38)

41. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul u šīrum šalim* ⇒ *nāru lā ḫerītum iḫḫerre*
42. *šumma naplaštum ibbalkit-ma martam iṭṭul u šīrum* ***lupput*** ⇒ *pī ilim išanni šinīt ṭēmim*

47 For this translation, see n. 40 above.

48 For this translation and the most recent discussion, see George 2013: 216, 221, which builds on earlier opinions that held that, in the extispicy literature, *dikšum*/*dakāšum* must connote a swelling of some sort, not the sense of "piercing" suggested in *CAD* D, 34–35 (cf. *AHw*, 151: "ausbeulen, auftreiben").

49 Recall that the description of the fleshy tissue as "sound" in l. 41 of ex. 4.20 does not represent a variable in the true sense but merely reflects a statement of the tissue's non-anomalous state.

41. 'If the View was turned 90° and faced the gallbladder and the fleshy tissue was sound ⇒ a canal not dredged will be dredged (again)'
42. 'If the View was turned 90° and faced the gallbladder and the fleshy tissue was **damaged** ⇒ the god's utterance will change—(it forecasts) *a loss of reason*.'

It thus seems that the gradation apparent in exx. 4.15–4.16 reflects case-specific concerns, seemingly related to the pairing of *tebûm* and *maqātum* in the respective predictions.

The final case to be examined in this regard is the following example:

4.21. *YOS* 10 24:33–34, 35 (= exx. 4.48, ll. 33–35)

33. *šumma bāb ekallim šīrum ediḫ ⇒ ālum ibbalakkat-ma bēlšu idâk*
34. *šumma bāb e<kallim> šīrum ediḫ-**ma u aban suluppim īrub** ⇒ ḫušaḫḫum ša šalmātum innandû ibbašši*
35. *šumma bāb ekallim šīram **udduḫ** ⇒ amūt Šulgi ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

33. 'If fleshy tissue was covering the Palace Gate ⇒ the city will rebel and kill its lord'
34. 'If fleshy tissue was covering the Palace Gate **but a date pit entered** (**it**) ⇒ there will be a famine in which corpses will be left lying (unburied)'
35. 'If the Palace Gate **was thoroughly covered** by fleshy tissue ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

In its second entry, this passage considers a variation on the basic condition—the covering (*edēḫum*) of the Palace Gate by fleshy tissue—though the first variation recorded is anything but conventional.[50] Regardless of this fact, it is

50 While the finding of (the likeness of) a date's pit in the exta is attested elsewhere (e.g., in *YOS* 10 35:36–37), this was not a standard ominous mark. It is thus tempting to wonder whether, in terms of its origins, this omen reflects something of the contextual setting behind the extispicy collections. For A. George this ingeniously recalls those omen protases in which the diviners speak—even in the first or second person—of their examination of apertures in the exta; e.g., *u šittā ubānātīya ana libbi ubbal*, "and I can put two of my fingers inside" (*YOS* 10 25:13'); *ana libbīšu šittā ubānātūka irrubā*, "two of your fingers can go inside it" (*YOS* 10 24:30); *ana pilšīšu ubānī ušerreb*, "I can insert my finger into its cavity" (*YOS* 10 42 iii 31–32); see also *YOS* 10 46 i 12–36 // *CUSAS* 18 25 ob. 4–9. If so, George continues, this may suggest that the diviners used a date stone to probe smaller sizes. In

this omen's current setting that is instructive for our purposes. Along with the previous entry, this omen anticipates what was conceived as the ultimate case of a fleshy tissue's covering of the Palace Gate, a case whose interpretation recalls a historical omen concerning Šulgi attested elsewhere (see further § 4.1.2.3).

In fact, along with this interpretation, the latter omen is known from a parallel, though in that source it is not preceded by two entries counterpart to ll. 33–34:

4.22. [*šumma bāb ekallim*] *šīram udduḫ ⇒ amūt Šulgi ša Tappā-daraḫ inēru*
'[If the Palace Gate] was thoroughly covered by a fleshy tissue ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who defeated[51] Tappa-daraḫ' (*YOS* 10 26 iv 10).

As is suggested below (§ 4.1.2.3), it may be that in the context of ex. 4.21, ll. 33–34 were placed specifically in a preparatory role for l. 35 in order to provide a gradual lead to the developed sense of the D-stem *udduḫum* (i.e., the sequence G → G + … → D; see § 5.3). From this perspective the meaning of the unusual observation in l. 34 becomes more intelligible, as does its accompanying forecast. And though a claim that l. 34 was specifically generated for this purpose may be unwarranted, the contention that this entry's placement in the present context reflects an exercise in creative thought does not seem unreasonable.

In sum, when describing pointillism of the agglutinative type it is insufficient merely to demonstrate its occurrence in a wide variety of environments or to point to the diversity of topics it admits in such instances. Certainly these are crucial tasks, without which little can else be said. Yet what is arguably most significant about this form is the manner by which it itself acts as the final arbiter of meaning for a given variable. As we have seen, this sometimes entailed bestowing upon a reported condition or finding a meaning otherwise unexpected; on other occasions it meant the employment, or perhaps the

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any case the appearance of this qualification between the first and third entries in this gradation sheds light on the fine distinction here between *edēḫum* and *udduḫum*. I cannot resist a digression to consider Heb. *kᵉzayit*, "like an olive," the rabbinic conceptual unit of measurement for small volumes whose origins, just as this world's very concept of measurement units (*qᵉnê middâ*, lit., "reeds for measurement"; cf. Akk. *qanûm*, "measuring rod") ultimately go back to the material world of the ancient Near East.

51 My translation accords with the statement of Tappa-daraḫ's capture in ex. 4.21, l. 35. On this ruler's life after his defeat by Šulgi, see Biggs 1997c: 170 n. 5; Sharlach 2006: 388; Molina 2012.

creation, of unconventional material for the purpose of paradigm building. It would thus seem as if yet another facet of the overall organizational structure played an effective role in the composition of the omen collections, making use of well-established interpretive associations or perhaps even real findings for its own case-specific purposes.

4.1.1.1.1 *Anatomical Mapping*

A subtype of this type of pointillism involves the employment of what is here described as anatomical mapping for the purposes of interpretive deduction. Here the diviner makes use of the technical framework to derive meaning. Accordingly, the extent of a given ominous occurrence is measured by reference to particular zones of the exta, in order to determine the severity of the anomalous finding.

In a sense it may be said that gradations based on these sorts of measurements do not vary significantly from what was described above. This reliance on the technical details has as its goal the qualification of a given anomalous finding, and such qualifications, while based initially on anatomical mapping, are in the end no different from those cases that are based on established interpretive associations. Yet two characteristics of this subtype argue in favor of its independent consideration, even if, as the following discussion demonstrates, these also point to an unorthodox approach to gradation by way of anatomical mapping.

First, examples that fall into this subtype follow the agglutinative model in the verbal manner defined above only on some occasions. On others, the gradation is conveyed in spatial terms. Thus, in an example examined below (ex. 4.27), the View is described in the first entry as having drawn near to the Path (*ana padānim iqterib*) and in the second as having passed it (*padānam ībir*); these two statements do not adhere verbally to the agglutinative type of pointillism. It may thus be argued that this alternative manner of articulation presents sufficient grounds for the dismissal of passages such as this one from consideration under the agglutinative rubric. Yet it is significant to note that in some cases this spatially agglutinative subtype does actually correspond to a verbally articulated example—see, e.g., exx. 4.23 with 4.27 (and see Fig. 4.1)—and is thus identical to the more typical sort for all intents and purposes.

Moreover, it may be that certain sequences of spatial measurements, such as those evaluating the distances of a given finding from a zone, had achieved a degree of consistency within the interpretive framework. In this respect a preference for spatial mapping may reflect an understanding of this type of formulation as standardized, which may have even invited a loose manner of formulation of this information on some occasions. Admittedly this is

speculative, and it may be that future consideration will assign passages formulated in this manner elsewhere. However, what is beyond speculation—and what is of central importance for our purposes—is the generative contribution of this subtype to the interpretive framework of the omen collections. In this regard passages formulated according to a spatial-based anatomical mapping behave in a manner commensurate with counterparts framed around the conventional verbal formulation type.

An impressive reliance on anatomical mapping for the purpose of generative calculation appears in the following example, ll. 7–8:

4.23. *OBE* l r. 6–8

6. [*šumma* (...) *manzāzum* ...]-*ma ina qablītim paṭer* ⇒ *ūmū*[52] *rubêm gamrūtum*
7. *šumma manzāzum īrik-ma padānam ipṭur* ⇒ *rubûm ina ḫarrān illaku qaddadāniš ittallak*
8. *šumma manzāzum īrik-ma padānam* ***u naṣraptam*** *ipṭur* ⇒ *rubûm ina ḫarrān illaku mītam iturram*

6. [If (...) the Station ...] and was split in the middle ⇒ the days of the prince are over'
7. If the Station was elongated and split the Path ⇒ the prince will walk away from the campaign bowed down.
8. If the Station was elongated and split the Path **and the Crucible** ⇒ the prince will return dead from the campaign.

Here the Station is said to split other zones—the Path in l. 7 and the Path and Crucible in l. 8—to and past which it presumably extends. A review of the basic zonal mapping of the Babylonian liver (Figure 4.1 top) demonstrates that what is described here was envisioned linearly, with the Station extending in one direction of the liver. Moreover, a vertical reading of the apodoses in these entries suggests that the predictions concerning the prince correspond to this linear development. Thus, whereas in l. 7 the prince is depicted as walking, head bowed, away from a campaign, a more severe forecast follows in l. 8, with the prince returning dead from the campaign.

A consideration of this gradation against the background of the preceding entry is especially instructive. While in this entry it is the Station itself that is split, the same interpretive association (between *paṭārum* and the prince's

52 Text: UD-*mu*$^{!}$(MI).

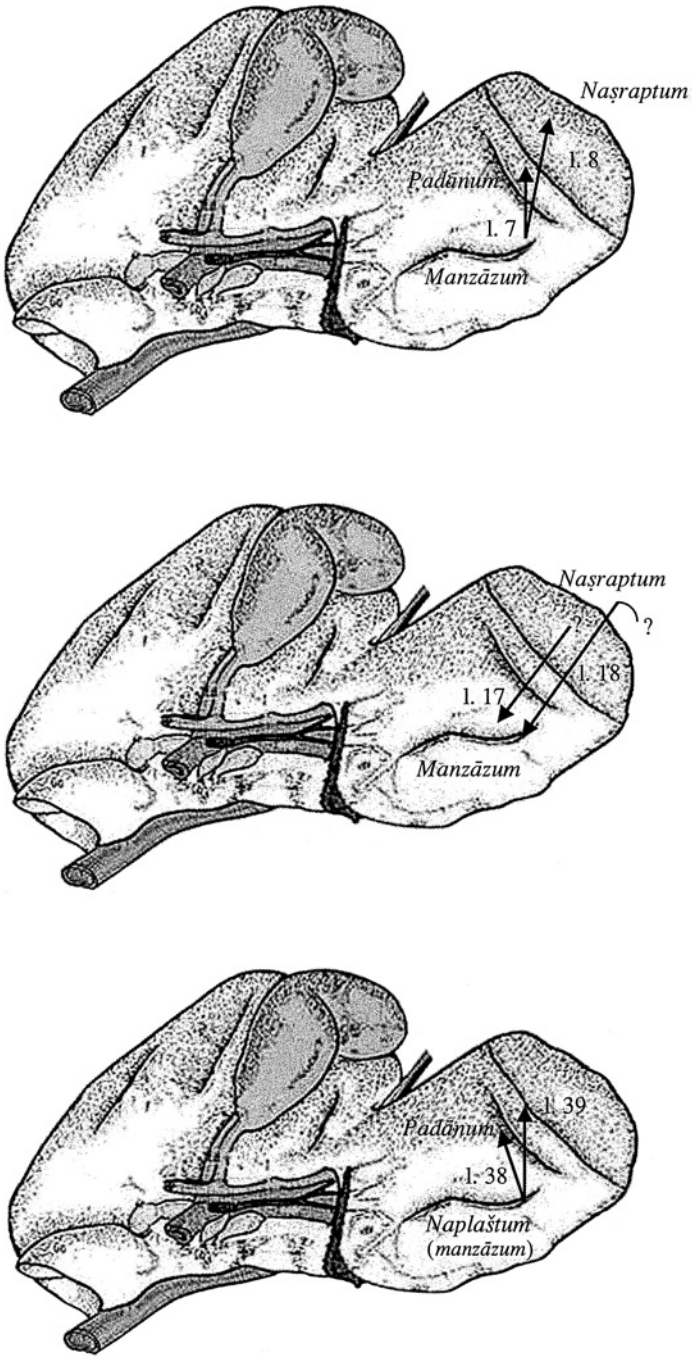

FIGURE 4.1 *Prefigured anatomical mapping in Exx. 4.23, 4.24, 4.27 (respectively).*

demise) that runs through ll. 7–8 also mediates between the protasis and apodosis of l. 6. Presumably this was the idea that motivated the placement of ll. 7 and 8 at this point. Significantly, however, a gradation that moves from the Path to the Crucible is not unique to this passage: to judge by some examples below, it is not unlikely that the Path → Crucible sequence enjoyed something of a common currency and was applicable to various situations as seen fit. It seems plausible then that the diviner responsible for *OBE* 1, interested in exploring further the basic premise of l. 6, made use of this sequence to articulate that line of reasoning, extending it to its maximal point in l. 8. If so, a judgment of this organizational structure as generative in its effect certainly seems warranted.

As stated, the Path → Crucible sequence is not unique to ex. 4.23. It recurs elsewhere, including the following example, though from a different starting point and concerning different anatomy:

4.24. *YOS* 10 20:17–18

17. *šumma ištu ruq*[*q*]*i* [*na*]*ṣraptim ša i*[*mi*]*ttim šēpum padānam*[53] *ībir* ⇒ *šēp lemuttim adirātum marṣum imât*
18. *šumma ištu* [*ruqqi naṣ*]*raptim ša imittim šēpum padānam ībir*[54] (<***u***>) ***warki naṣraptim kašdat*** ⇒ [*awīlum*[55] (*ina*) *ḫarrān il*]*laku ul iturram*

17. 'If from the Hollow of the Crucible[56] of the right a Foot crossed over the Path ⇒ (it is) a foot-mark (of) evil (which spells [?]) misfortunes (*and*/*or*/*which means*) the infirm will die'
18. 'If from the [Hollow] of the Crucible of the right a Foot crossed over the Path (<**and**>) **was reaching the back of the Crucible** ⇒ [the *man*] will not return [(from) the campaign] he undertakes.'

Here things develop according to an ordering technique, well established in individual complex apodoses, in which the applicability of a certain prognosis is extended from one sphere to another (see § 2.1.3.1.3). In this case a prediction of death, which in the first entry concerning an infirm (*marṣum imât*) may be said to concern the private sphere, shifts its focus in the next onto what must

53 Text: *pa-da-nam*$^{\text{I}}$(NIM).

54 Text: *i-bi-ir*$^{\text{I}}$(TIM).

55 Restored by analogy to entry in l. 20 below; suggestion courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

56 For this translation, see Jeyes 1989: 56, after Nougayrol 1946: 63–4.

be a royal figure, for whom death during a campaign is forecast according to a well-known trope (*ina ḫarrān illaku ul iturram*). Common sense suggests that the diviner intended to convey for these forecasts a sense of increased gravity via this sequence, progressing from bad to worse, though such a claim cannot be maintained on intuition alone. However, what does seem clear is that an established interpretive apodotic sequence coincides with the conditions reported in the protases; and thus even without further evidence it is likely that this case of anatomically based pointillism may have been conceived as sufficiently standard to occasion a prefigured counterpart in the apodoses.

Yet additional evidence does exist relating this type of interpretive calculation on the basis of anatomical geography. One such instance appears in the following example, which seems less precise than the previous passage regarding the reported anatomical details, but is nonetheless clear regarding the relation between the protases and the personal → royal gradation evinced in the corresponding apodoses:

4.25. BM 12875:20–28

20–25. *šumma padānum* ***ana ruqqi amūtim*** *imtaqut* ⇒ *ana marṣim ūmūšu gamrū imât*
26–28. *šumma* ***in***[57] ***gimrīšu*** *imtaqtam* ⇒ *palûm gamer*

20–25. 'If the Path has collapsed **onto the *thin part* of the liver** ⇒ concerning the infirm: his days are over; he will die'
26–28. 'If (ditto) has collapsed **in its entirety** ⇒ the reign is over.'

This passage concerns the collapsed status of the Path: in the first entry it is said to reach liver's thin part; in the second the condition is reportedly more extensive, as the text puts it, "in its (= the Path's) totality" (*in gimrīšu*). The forecasts corresponding to this gradation follow suit: as part of the death forecast for an infirm in the first entry the text offers the stereotypical comment, "his days are over" (*ūmūšu gamrū*); in the following entry, for which the apodosis of the first entry seems to have served in a creative capacity (i.e., *ūmūšu gamrū* → *in gimrīšu*; see § 3.1.4),[58] the same language is employed to describe the reign's fate (*palûm gamer* [< *gamārum*]). Though perhaps unconventional in terms of the elements in the gradation of its protases, it is nonetheless clear

57 Text: *in* <<NI>>.

58 This point was already observed by Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 52, who describe the protasis of ll. 26–28 as "une sorte de glose reprenant, avec une nuance, la sentence précédente."

that an anatomically based gradation structures this example and also serves a creative role in its entries' composition.

No doubt shortcomings in our understanding of the exta's anatomy, such as those involving the identification of the Crucible's *ruqqum* in ex. 4.24, l. 17, or that of the whole liver in ex. 4.25, ll. 20–25, hinder our full appreciation of this form of pointillism; this inadequacy is even more obvious in cases where the ominous subject falls outside of the scope of hepatoscopy. For instance, in the following example an excerpt from a collection dealing with zones of and around the heart (*OBE* 14), one senses from the gradation witnessed in the forecasts that the description of the diaphragm's turn to the tendon in the second entry signifies an extension of the picture presented in the first:

4.26. *OBE* 14 r. 18–19

18. *šumma tal libbim eli tal libbim rakib u itti kayyamāni rakis* ⇒ *mār*[59] *rubêm kussi abīšu iṣabbat*
19. *šumma tal libbim eli tal libbim rakim-**ma u ana šer'āni itūr*** ⇒ *mār rubêm kussi abīšu iṣabbat-ma kakkūšu imarrirū*

18. 'If the diaphragm was riding over a(nother) diaphragm and it was tied with the normal one ⇒ the prince's son will seize his father's throne'
19. 'If the diaphragm was riding over a(nother) diaphragm (and ditto [?]) **and it turned to the tendon** ⇒ the prince's son will seize his father's throne but his weapons will prevail.'

However, a conclusive word is not possible at present, since the identity of the *šer'ānum* and its physical relation to the diaphragm remain unclear.

Finally, it must be stressed that while this subtype of pointillism is highly organized and defined, it does not appear to have been immune to exceptions. The following example demonstrates this clearly:

4.27. *YOS* 10 17:38–39 (l. 38 // AO 9066:12–14)

38. *šumma naplaštum **ana padānim iqterib*** ⇒ *ilum zenûm ana awīlim iturra*
39. *šumma naplaštum **padānam ībir*** ⇒ *rubûm ḫarrān illaku imaqqut*

59 Following Jeyes 1989: 159, I ignore the SAL sign preceding the dumu, which appears to have been erased by this text's scribe.

38. 'If the View **has drawn near to the Path** ⇒ the angry god will return to the man'
39. 'If the View **crossed over the Path** ⇒ (on) the campaign on which he goes the prince will fall (dead).'

This passage, which manifests a Path → Path + … sequence (*ana padānim qerēbum → padānam ebērum*) and a personal → royal (*awīlum → rubûm*) interpretive gradation, appears functionally equivalent to the one observed in ex. 4.23, ll. 7–8, and, to a lesser extent, in ex. 4.24, though it does not conform in terms of its forecasts to the bad → worse interpretive pattern witnessed in those instances. How is this divergence to be accounted for if the characterization of anatomical mapping as a subtype of pointillism is to be maintained?

An answer to this question may involve the recognition that, not infrequently, one interpretive association could be compromised by contact with another. In the case at hand, the unexpected auspicious forecast in l. 38 is probably attributable to another hermeneutic, witnessed in passages such as the second entry of the following example, in which the View approaches another zone (here the Palace Gate), and, in so doing, crosses the site of the Path:

4.28. *YOS* 10 13:6–8, 16–18 (cf. ex. 3.36)

6–8. [*šumma naplaštum kay*]*yāntum kayyāntum-*<*ma*> *šanī*[*tum ina* (?) *s*]*ippi šumēl bāb ekallim* [*šakn*]*at* ⇒ *ilū šabsū*[*tu*]*m ana māti*[*m iturr*]*ūnim-ma* [*mātum*] *šubtam nēḫtam uššab šarrum* [*māta*]*m lā* [*šattam*] *qāssu ikaššad*

…

16–18. *šumma naplaštum kayyāntum kayyāntum-ma šanītum iš*[*tu*] *šumēl b*[*āb ekall*]*im išdudam-ma*[60] *rēš naplaštim kašdat* ⇒ *ilū šabsūtu*[*m*] *ana mātim iturrūnim-ma mātum šubtam nēḫtam uššab*

6–8. '[If the View] was wholly normal <and> a second one was [situated *in*] the doorjamb of the left of the Palace Gate ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and [the land] will dwell peacefully (or:) the king will conquer a land not [his]'

…

16–18. 'If the View was wholly normal and a second one extended up from the Palace Gate's left and was reaching the top of the (normal) View ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and the land will dwell peacefully.'

60 Text: *iš-*<<TU>>*-du-da-am-ma.*

In this example it is the occurrence of a second Path that prompts this interpretation, which is reflected in the following related passages as well:

4.29. [*šumma šittā*] *naplasātum* ⇒ *ana awīlim ilum zenûm iturram* '[If (there were) two] Paths ⇒ For the man: the angry god will return' (AO 9066:3–4).

4.30. [*šumma šittā naplasātum i*]*ttaṭlā*[61] ⇒ *ilū zenûtum ana māt*[*im i*]*turrūnimma* ⌜*šubtam*⌝ *nēḫtam* [*ušš*]*ab* '[If two Paths were] facing one another ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and it will dwell in peace' (*YOS* 10 17:9).

Why the interpretation of ex. 4.27, l. 38 should share an associative principle with exx. 4.28–4.30, or, alternatively, why the sequence Path → > Path in ex. 4.27, elsewhere seemingly associated with a fixed tradition in terms of its interpretation, should stray from this veritable *communis opinio*, remains ultimately unclear.

Yet it may still be said that this anatomical mapping type of pointillism fits in the broader context of the organizational framework. After all, as is demonstrated repeatedly, no matter the level of orchestration in the sequences making up gradations, there were always exceptions on the interpretive side of things. This much was true even in the articulation of interpretations for entries based on opposition, as was observed in the previous chapter (e.g., § 3.4). When it comes to complex gradation, as the following discussion demonstrates, exceptions in the interpretations of passages framed around set schemes not only work to delineate the generative and paradigmatic characteristics of the collections' organization; their very presence amounts to a characteristic in its own right.

4.1.1.2 Interpolation with Other Interpretive Principles or Associations

Not infrequently the agglutinative type of pointillism combines with other organizational or interpretive principles or associations. Among the latter none is more common than the right/left factor. Happily, owing to the steadfastness of the right/left opposition, these passages present no significant problems for their modern interpreter, even when the combination of independent principles appears fully intertwined.

Thus, in the case of the following passage from *KAR* 150, the occurrence of one hole within another (ll. 10–13) intensifies the interpretation of the initial right/left paradigm. Whereas in the first two entries the collapse portrayed

61 Text: [*i*]*t-ta-aṭ-lu*.

centers on individuals (the prince and enemy, in accordance with right/left), in the latter two the forecasts shift their focus onto the whole of the armed forces:

4.31. *KAR* 150 r. 8–13

8. *šumma birīt imittim u šumēlim ina imittim šīlum nadi ⇒ rubûm ina pāṭīšu imaqqut*
9. *šumma birīt imittim u šumēlim ina šumēlim šīlum nadi ⇒ nakrum ina pāṭīšu imaqqut*
10–11. *šumma birīt imittim u šumēlim ina imittim šīlum **ina libbi šīlim** nad[i] ⇒ ummān rubêm ina nakbatīša imaqqu[t]*
12–13. *šumma birīt imittim u šumēlim ina šumēlim šīlum **ina libbi šīlim** nadi ⇒ ummān nakrim ina nakbatīša imaqqut*

8. 'If a hole was situated between the right and left (of the gallbladder) in the right ⇒ the prince will collapse at his (land's) border'
9. 'If a hole was situated between the right and left (of the gallbladder) in the left ⇒ the enemy will collapse at his (land's) border'
10–11. 'If a hole was situated **in the midst of a**(**nother**) **hole** between the right and left (of the gallbladder) in the right ⇒ the prince's army will collapse in its main mass'
12–13. 'If a hole was situated **in the midst of a**(**nother**) **hole** between the right and left (of the gallbladder) in the left ⇒ the enemy's army will collapse in its main mass.'

A similar forecast intensification is witnessed in the following example as well, in which the factor of shade (*tarākum*) is added to the already ominous occurrence of a second Palace Gate, and in which predictions concerning the appropriation of income shift from the interests of individuals (one's estate; proceeds of servants) in ll. 12, 14, to royal concerns (control of palace) in ll. 13, 15:

4.32. *YOS* 10 24:12–15

12. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina imittim šakin ⇒ ayyumma imât-ma ridûssu ana ekallim irrub*
13. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina imittim šakin-**ma u tarik** ⇒ ekallaka nakrum iredde*
14. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šak[in-m]a šanûm ina šumēlim šakin ⇒ ereb ana šarrim īrubu ana wardī irrub*
15. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina šumēlim šakin-**ma u tarik** ⇒ ekal nakrīka teredde*

12. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the right ⇒ someone will die and his estate will go to the palace'
13. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the right **and it was dark** ⇒ the enemy will take control of your palace'
14. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the left ⇒ the income which had gone to the king will (now) go to the servants'
15. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one is situated in the left **and it was dark** ⇒ you will take control of your enemy's palace.'

It seems as if the drive for interpolation could at times take priority over other considerations in the collections' organization. This, at least, is the sense one gets from what appears to be the interruption of certain organizational structures, such as right/left opposition (e.g., ex. 4.32; cf. ex. 4.34 below). Yet, as ex. 4.31 above or ex. 4.33 below illustrate, interpolation of this sort was not the only option for the scribe; one could just as easily set the expanded entries after the two that articulate the primary condition according to the variables of right and left.

A more interesting case of such interpolation presents itself with the following example:

4.33. *OBE* 14 ob. 42–45 (= ex. 3.59)

42. *šumma rēš libbim imittam lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina mātim ibbašši*
43. *šumma rēš libbim šumēlam lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina māt nakrim ibbašši*
44. *šumma rēš libbim imittim lipia kussū-**ma u tarik** ⇒ Adad ina mātim iraḫḫiṣ*
45. *šumma rēš libbim šumēlam lipia kussū-**ma u tarik** ⇒ Adad ina māt nakrim iraḫḫiṣ*

42. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue on the right ⇒ there will be abundance in the land'
43. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue on the left ⇒ there will be abundance in the land of the enemy'
44. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue on the right **and it was dark** ⇒ Adad will devastate in the land'

45. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue on the left **and it was dark** ⇒ Adad will devastate in the enemy's land.'

The manner by which the factor of shade is employed in this passage is not immediately apparent. That the reporting of fatty tissue (*lipûm*) predicts abundance (*ṭuḫdum*) in ll. 42–43 probably owes to a folkloric association between fat and something that necessitates rain, such as an abundant agricultural yield. The additional shade factor in ll. 44–45, being the only difference from ll. 42–43, must be credited with the inauspicious forecasts in these entries. Now, in itself *tarākum* is also a herald of rain, and it would seem that its mention here, in addition to the previous data, was read algebraically and negatively, with the twofold signification of rain—that is, too much rain—rendered mythopoeically according to the standard trope describing a land's devastation by Adad. Yet the possibility that *tarākum* here was interpreted more technically as a negation marker in a manner akin to what was observed above (e.g. ex. 4.13) cannot be ruled out. In spite of this ambiguity, once more the passage remains straightforward in terms of the interplay between the two variables.

The final passage to be considered in this group demonstrates the employment of pointillism of the agglutinative type in a heretofore-unencountered qualification of a well-attested fortuitous mark:

4.34. *YOS* 10 23 r. 3–6 (ll. 4–6 = ex. 3.14)

3. *šumma ina sippi imitti bāb ekallim šīlum nadi ⇒ ina ērib ekallim epqu*
4. *šumma ina sippi imitti bāb ekallim šīlum **ipluš-ma uštebri** ⇒ ina ziqit zuqiqīpi awīlum imât*
5. *šumma ina sippi šumēl bāb ekallim šīlum nadi ⇒ nikip alpim*
6. *šumma ina sippi šumēl bāb ekallim šīlum **ipluš-ma uštebri** ⇒ ina nikip alpim awīlum imât*

3. 'If a hole was situated in the right doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ among the palace-enterers there will be *epqum*'[62]
4. 'If a hole (ditto and) **was pierced fully** in the right doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from a scorpion's sting a man will die'

62 *CAD* E, 292, reading the underlying signs as *ib-ba*, renders the meaning as obscure. Starr 1983a: 86 translates the apodosis as: "there will be loss of income for the palace," a logical idea that is nonetheless without known justification for the lexeme. By contrast, Richter 2003: 441 takes *epqum* as the disease (leprosy) by that name "Beim Betreten des Palast *epkum*-Krankheit."

5. 'If a hole was situated in the left doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) the gore of an ox'
6. 'If a hole (ditto and) **was punctured fully** in the left doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from an ox's gore a man will die.'

In combination with the right/left opposition, the occurrence of a hole in the doorjamb of the Palace Gate is considered from what was construed as its fundamental property: the degree of its puncture. Concerning this second factor one encounters a sequence, twice repeated, describing the hole's condition: in the first case (ll. 3, 5) it is merely described as being situated; in the second (ll. 4, 6) it is declared to be completely punctured. In the case of the second cycle (ll. 5–6) the apodoses of this gradation match their hypotheses neatly: whereas the situation of a hole anticipates the goring by an ox in l. 5, in l. 6, where the hole is described as fully punctured, said goring is predicted to have fatal consequences. And a partially parallel interpretive sequence regarding scorpion stings is apparent in l. 4. Why, therefore, the preceding entry (l. 3) strays from what is otherwise an orderly symmetrical pattern—one expects the apodosis of l. 3 to read *ziqit zuqiqīpim*—remains unclear.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt about the prescripted nature of this passage, nor that of exx. 4.31–4.33 above. Notwithstanding the particular concerns of each, the evidence encountered in these cases points to a sophisticated integration of pointillism with other organizational structures, chiefly the right/left factor—for the most part with predictable results.

4.1.2 *Pointillism of the Paradigmatic Type*

A different and more prevalent type of pointillism is the paradigmatic type. Entries of passages exhibiting gradation of this type are related to one another by a paradigmatic set of variables, which are not related explicitly to one another. This paradigmatic type of pointillism follows the form:

$$P_X \rightarrow P_Y \rightarrow P_Z \, (\rightarrow \ldots \infty)$$

where the variable Y in the protasis P_Y approximates the counterpart X in the previous protasis P_X (and so forth), but Y is not comprised of X plus an additional free-standing factor (□). Rather, the variables X and Y and Z are all members of a paradigmatic set. In symbolic terms:

$$X, Y, Z \, (\ldots \infty) \in \{X, Y, Z \, (\ldots \infty)\}.$$

The implicit nature of the paradigmatic relationship among variables presents a new set of challenges, the common denominator among these being the very recognition of a particular sequence or a paradigmatic set. In contrast to its explicit nature in the agglutinative type, with the paradigmatic type of pointillism the relationship among individual omens in a given sequence must be inferred from context. It is well established that the identification of the underlying categories for items related paradigmatically almost invariably presents significant challenges in the study of different facets of human cognition.[63] This is especially pronounced on those occasions in which the constituent members of a purported category or sequence are otherwise poorly attested, which almost inevitably calls into doubt the very existence of the category under scrutiny. The study of the pointillism in the omen collections presents a special challenge in this respect.

To be sure, in several sub-categories of this type of pointillism the identification of members of a certain sequence presents no trouble. Included among these are some of the categories considered in depth below, including those involving spatial positioning (§ 4.2) with elaborations framed around the T → M → B, R → M → L, or R → L → R+L schemes, or those employing colors (§ 5.1) or numbers (§ 5.4). Against this background, one might wonder whether the remarks above were not unjustly pessimistic. Yet other cases in which complex gradation of the paradigmatic type is identified—including cases employing visual images (§ 5.2), grammatical forms (§ 5.3), and paronomasia (§ 5.5)—serve as a reminder of the difficulties that lie ahead. In fact, not infrequently no verdict can be rendered about the paradigmatic nature of a given passage. This holds even in cases where, on the basis of similarities in the protases of several entries, it is clear that the grouping of those entries has been carefully orchestrated. In what follows, several such cases are analyzed with the purpose of shedding light on some of the difficulties that are faced in an evaluation of complex gradation of this paradigmatic type.

The following example represents a good introduction to these matters:

4.35. *OBE* 16 r. 36, 40–41

36. *šumma illabbuḫḫu imittam* ***kupput*** ⇒ [Apodosis]
...
40. [*šumma illabb*]*uḫḫu* ***imittam u šumēlam sek***[***ret***] ⇒ [Apodosis]
41. [*šumma illa*]*bbuḫḫu* ***ṣemre***[***t***] ⇒ [Apodosis]

63 A comprehensive articulation of this point appears in Lakoff 1987.

36. 'If the bladder was **compacted** on the right side'
    ...
40. '[If] the bladder was **blocked** on the **right and left**'
41. 'If] the bladder was ***stopped up***[64] (ditto [?]).'

This passage, which enumerates via the sequence[65] *kupputum* → *sekērum* → *ṣemērum* (to be compacted → to be blocked → to be *stopped up*) various conditions of blockage in the bladder, may represent some expression of paradigmatic thought, with the evidence of paronomasia in the final entries (i.e., *sekret* ↔ *ṣemret*) further buttressing this claim. Still, little can be said about the nature of this gradation, since the terms are sufficiently uncommon so as to elude any meaningful qualification. Nor can clarification be sought in a comparison of the counterpart apodoses, which, as we have observed, often prove to be a bellwether of the nature of complex gradation, but which are missing here in their entirety.

One does not necessarily fare better even where the corresponding apodoses are intact, as the following example makes plain:

4.36. *YOS* 10 18:62–63

62. [*šumma ina padān*]*im šīlum nadī-**ma šutebru** ⇒ biblum mātam ubbal*
63. [*šumma ina padān*]*im šīlum **šūšur-ma** nadi ⇒ miqit igārim šanû šumšu ina karašim nakrum išaḫḫiṭ*

62. '[If] a hole was situated [in the] Path **and went all the way through** ⇒ a flood will sweep the land away'
63. '[If] a hole was situated **straight** [in] the Path ⇒ (it forecasts) a collapse of a wall; its second interpretation: the enemy will make a razzia into the military camp.'

The two omens in this passage share the report of a hole situated in the Path. As elsewhere where an omen cluster about holes appears, this passage concerns

64 The tentative suggestion in *CAD* Ṣ, 126 "to become distended (?)" (*AHw*, 1090, "aufgetrieben, aufgedunsen sein") seems unconvincing for the sense here, all the more so in light of comparative evidence for the root, such as Aram. √*ṣmr*, "to restrict or stop a flow" (Sokoloff, *Dictionary*, 967).

65 The interruption of ll. 37–39 and the mention of both right and left in l. 40 appear to reflect a continuation of earlier considerations, esp. *OBE* 16 r. 33, 34–35.

itself with this feature's more detailed depiction. Accordingly, in the first entry one reads of the hole's complete perforation (*šutebrûm*), whereas in the second it is seemingly its angle that is at issue, the verbal hendiadys (*šūšurum-ma nadûm*) apparently alluding to the hole's (axis') perpendicular angle vis-à-vis the Path. Therefore, with their common subject and shared interest, it is not unreasonable to assume that these entries reflect generative thinking; at the very least, their juxtaposition points to a certain level of creative planning. Yet a check of the respective apodoses for verification of generative activity proves sobering: these appear to be unrelated to one another, and thus the possibility of all but the most basic level of organization derivative from a process of redaction must here be dismissed. In the end it appears that this passage offers no meaningful advancement over a case such as ex. 4.35 above in terms of evaluating the presence of pointillism.

Things are not much better in a case such as the following either, despite the fact that there a reading along the vertical axis, that is, between the two corresponding protases as well as the respective apodoses, reveals connections:

4.37. *YOS* 10 31 iv 12–24 // [*CUSAS* 18 10 ii 5'-10']

12–18. *šumma martum qablāša **iṭḫâ***[66] ⇒ *ina ṣērim ina dannatim šarrum uṣṣi*
19–24. *šumma martum qablāša*[67] ***ṣabtā*** ⇒ *šarram šūt rēšīšu idukkūšu*

12–18. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its middle regions **came close** (to each other) ⇒ the king will come out from danger on the (battle)field'
19–24. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its middle regions were **in contact** (with each other) ⇒ the eunuchs of the king will kill him.'

Thus, while the two juxtaposed entries here, each concerned with some sense of contact (*ṭehûm, ṣabātum*) of the gallbladder's middle regions, share an interpretive theme about an endangered king, questions remain about the background of these omens and the degree to which one may have affected the creation or wording of the other. Accordingly, to take a cue from the corresponding apodoses, it might be asked why and how *ṭehûm* implies an external context, while *ṣabātum* appears to be associated with an internal one. Should

66 I follow the convincing reading and commentary in George 2013: 40, 42; pace Römer 2004: 395, 404, who reads ⌜*da*⌝-*ḫa-a*, from the unusual *daḫûm*, "to beat, press down."

67 Text: *qá-ab-la-ša*$^{!}$(ŠU).

one assume that this passage strove to convey a sense of progression, which put forth two conditions whose relation enjoyed a common understanding? No satisfactory answers can be offered for these queries, and once more nothing meaningful can be said regarding the organizational logic responsible for the individual entries of this example, let alone the possibility that it reflects a measure of generative expression.

Finally, perhaps the strongest indication of our limitations in identifying cases of this type of pointillism presents itself in the case of the following seemingly straightforward example:

4.38. *YOS* 10 31 x 8–14

8–10. *šumma martum* ***ina ḫimṣi*** ⇒ *mašrûm*
11–14. *šumma martum* ***lipiam kussât*** ⇒ *mašrûm*

8–10. 'If the gallbladder (was) **in *ḫimṣu*-fatty tissue** ⇒ (it forecasts) wealth'
11–14. 'If the gallbladder was **bound with *lipû*-fatty tissue** ⇒ (it forecasts) wealth.'

In this instance successive omens describe the gallbladder's occurrence within *ḫimṣum* and *lipûm*, two kinds of fatty tissue. The same prediction of *mašrûm*, "wealth," appears in the apodoses of both entries—a nearly unique[68] occurrence in the OB extispicy collections. How is one to explain this anomaly? Were these entries recalled and brought together by virtue of their identical forecast? Or, alternatively, was the logic of one entry carried over to the other, displacing in the process a previous interpretation and providing an example of the harmonization of originally distinct cases? It is also possible that both entries reflect the product of a creative diviner, who, eager to illustrate his learning, expounded on the motif associating fat with abundance. Finally, the possibility cannot be ruled out that this repetition reflects a simple error, which found the scribe either repeating himself or, noting perhaps the similarity of the protases, unconsciously copying the apodosis of ll. 8–10 again in ll. 11–14.

The foregoing discussion of exx. 4.35–4.38 was intended to illustrate some of the problems inherent in the analysis of pointillism of the paradigmatic type. It should be clear from this discussion that the task of identifying passages comprised of this organizational form is not a simple matter and assumes

68 But cf. ex. 4.61 below. For an example of two identical protases in sequence, see *CUSAS* 18 7:1–4.

a measure of uncertainty—even where one ultimately attributes a given passage's organization to this form. Perhaps paradoxically, however, where a certain passage does meet a reasonable standard for having been molded according to a paradigmatic type of pointillism, and where, additionally, a regular correspondence is evident between the organizational structure and interpretive sequence, a proposal suggesting that such a passage reflects the labor of a generative enterprise becomes increasingly attractive.

This is the reality behind the majority of the structures investigated further below. In terms of the variables themselves, two broad categories span the gamut of the passages collected and studied: those formulated nominally and those formulated verbally.[69] It is to the first of these that we now turn our attention.

4.1.2.1 Nominally Formulated Examples

The following example serves as a good introduction to those passages that exhibit the nominally formulated paradigmatic type of complex gradation:

4.39. *YOS* 10 36 iii 40–iv 1

40–41. *šumma ur'udum* ***damam*** *mali* ⇒ *wāšib ekallim* [*pi*]*ištam ušeṣṣe*
42–43. [*šumma ur'u*]*dum* ***šammī*** *mali* ⇒ *wāšib āli*[*m pirištam*][70] *ušeṣṣe*
iv 1. *šumma ur'udum* ***mê*** *mali* ⇒ *šamûm izannun*

40–41. If the trachea was full of **blood** ⇒ the palace dweller will divulge a secret'
42–43. [If] the trachea was full of ***grass***(-***seeds***)[71] ⇒ the city dweller will divulge [a secret]'
iv 1. If the trachea was full of **water** ⇒ it will rain.'

69 For a similar categorization, see Meyer 1987a.

70 For this restoration, see *CAD* A/1, 384; Jeyes 1989: 27.

71 For the reading of grass in this line, see *CAD* Š/1, 317, though cf. the tentative possibility of "plants" in *CAD* U/W, 268; my suggestion that this may refer to seeds rather than the plant itself owes to the findings of other grains and kernels (e.g., *uṭṭatum, kukrum* [see ex. 4.40, l. 18 and n. 73 below]) on such occasions. Another intriguing possibility was suggested to me by A. Wilent, who, noting that the entries above and below concern the abnormal finding of liquids, wondered whether *šammī* (*ša-am-mi*) is perhaps an error for *šamni* (**ša-am-ni*), "oil." However, a conclusive word on this option as well as those above must await a parallel text or tradition.

This passage explores the meaning of three cases in which the trachea is described as filled with different substances. A concern about the divulging of information common to the first two entries turns to one concerning rain in the third; this was undoubtedly prompted by the mention of water in the corresponding protasis. It is also hard to miss the interpretive association witnessed in the first two cases between the leak's source and the anomalous finding: from an internal perspective, appropriate for the topic of the divulging of state secrets, the progression moving from within the palace outward corresponds well with the respective findings of blood, which is an internal reality from an egocentric perspective, and grass or seeds, which are part of the external world (i.e., palace : city :: blood : *grass*).

Therefore, from a pointillistic perspective, it is not difficult to appreciate the manner by which this passage, and especially ll. 40–43, makes use of a paradigmatic relationship among members of a common set {*damum*; *šammum*; *mû*} to generate meaning(s). The second and third entries do not relate to the first and the second, respectively, in the agglutinative manner described above, but there is no mistaking the fact that the diviner selected his data carefully, with the purpose in the first two instances of exploring the interpretive idea common to both. From this angle the deviation in the third omen's interpretation is a bit surprising. Yet, as additional evidence makes plain, this is by no means a unique occurrence in the collections—a point that hints at some implicit limitations of paradigmatic expression (see further § 4.1.4).

A similar case presents itself in the following example:

4.40. *OBE* 14 ob. 18–21 (cf. ex. 4.50)

18. [*šumma rēš*] *libbim* ***kukrī*** *saḫir* ⇒ *rubûm mārū ekallīšu ibarrūšu*
19. [*šumma rē*]*š libbim* ***papparḫītam*** *nadi* ⇒ *mazzāz Allat*
20. [*šumma rē*]*š libbim* ***kaksî***[72] *saḫir* ⇒ *mārū rubêm ana lemuttim ana abīšunu itebbûnim*
21. [*š*]*umma rēš libbim* ***ziqtī*** *saḫir-****ma u rēš libbim puṭṭur*** ⇒ *rubûm tillātūšu izzibāšu*

18. '[If the top] of the heart was surrounded by ***kukru***(*-seeds*)[73] ⇒ (concerning) the prince—his palace servants will rebel against him'

72 Text: *ka-ak-*<<KU>>*-si*.

73 On the likelihood that in such comparisons it is the seeds that are meant, and not their plant, see Jeyes 1989: 161, 166.

19. '[If] the top of the heart was situated in a **purslane(**'s-design) ⇒ (it forecasts) the presence of Allat'
20. '[If] the top of the heart was surrounded by **arrowhead**(-mark)s ⇒ the prince's sons will rise up against their father for evil (purposes)'
21. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by **pockmarks and the top of the heart was split up** ⇒ (concerning) the prince—his auxiliary forces will desert him.'

Here the heart's top is said to be surrounded by or situated inside various marks or designs. It is unclear what, if anything, is represented by the organization apparent in the sequence of these (i.e., *kukrum* → *papparḫītum* → *kaksûm* → *ziqtum*); this order does not correspond to one known from lexical lists, for instance, and though the possibility of a shape-based organization cannot be ruled out, nothing certain can be said concerning this possibility either. Still, by virtue of the related subject in the apodoses of ll. 18, 20, and 21,[74] a paradigmatic relationship for the set {*kukrum, papparḫītum, kaksû, ziqtum*} seems probable. The interpretations of these three entries share a base motif of unexpected rebellion by those expected to be loyal (*mārū ekallim* → *mārū rubêm* → *tillatum*, "palace servants" → "prince's sons" → "auxiliary force"). As to why a particular finding anticipates one variation of this theme over against another, once more we can only speculate. Still it would be surprising if some order in the arrangement of these shapes with respect to their corresponding interpretations did not reign, as is seen elsewhere.

The logic in the sequencing of the constituent members of a paradigmatic set can be understood more clearly in cases in which the employment of this type of order makes use of the better-known fortuitous marks. With respect to the following example, for instance, it would seem that the respective occurrences of a hole (*šīlum*), *ziḫḫum*, and a Request-mark (*erištum*) atop a Weapon of Distress (*kakki lumun libbim*), were organized according to a set pattern:

4.41. *TIM* 9 80:30–32

30. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki lumun libbim* ***šīlum*** *nadi* ⇒ *awīlum lumun libbim ṣarpam imm*[*ar*][75]

74 Note that l. 19, which breaks the sequence, also differs from the other lines in the manner by which the protasis is worded. Why, however, the *papparḫītum* design should anticipate the presence of Allat is unclear.

75 Richter 1994: 220–1 restores *i-ma*-[*at*] and translates: "der Mensch wird an schmerzhafter Trauer sterb[en]." He also considers the alternative restoration of *i-ma*-[*ar*], but opts

31. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki lumun libbim* ***ziḫḫu*** *nadi* ⇒ *awīlum ina gilit<tim> lā awātīšu ušaṣṣe*[76]
32. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki lumun libbim* ***erištum*** ⇒ *awīlum lumun libbim ina labîšu*[77] *ul immar*

30. 'If **a hole** was situated in the top of the Weapon of Distress ⇒ the man will experience painful heartache'
31. 'If ***ziḫḫum*** was situated in the top of the Weapon of Distress ⇒ the man, in fear, will divulge a secret not his'
32. 'If (there was) **a Request-mark** in the top of the Weapon of Distress ⇒ the man will not experience heartache from *his groaning*.'

If the progression in the apodoses can be assumed to be logically organized, then this would mean that the passage moves from the more ominous to the less: whereas on the basis of the finding of a hole in the Weapon in l. 30 the man is predicted to experience (*immar*) heartache, a similar condition is said to be avoided (*ul immar*)[78] in the forecast of l. 32. How l. 31 and the finding of *ziḫḫum* fits in between these poles is not fully clear, though it is noteworthy that in this intermediate position one reads of (induced?) terror for the man, yet also of what seems like an avoidance of out-and-out treason, relaying rather the secrets of another. These difficulties serve as a good reminder of those challenges in the study of pointillism described above.

4.1.2.2 Verbally Formulated Examples

Those passages organized according to a verbally formulated paradigmatic type of complex gradation are grouped around a set of related verbs, whose subject typically concerns the anomalous finding's qualification. In some instances it is the relationship of a given fortuitous mark with respect to the zone in which it occurs that is at issue. In the following example, for instance, it is

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against this option on the basis of the writing *i-mar* for this same form in l. 32. While a prediction of death fits nicely as an interpretation of the finding of a hole (and additionally *mâtum* appears in the apodosis of the previous entry), one expects *ina* to precede the fatal condition (cf. ll. 31 and 32), and the possibility of emending to correct this omission is excluded by the unambiguously accusative adjective (writ. *ṣa-*$^{\lceil}$*ar*$^{\rceil}$*-pa-am*). Besides, *lumun libbim* typically connotes "sorrow" or the like and is mentioned before injuries or illnesses that are the cause of death, though on its own it is not a fatal condition.

76 On this form in OB, see *GAG* §106m.

77 Richter 1994: 220–1, who reads the signs as *i ša*/*ta la nu*, offers no translation.

78 If Richter's restoration for l. 30 (see n. 75) proves correct, one would find an even more impressive ordering at work: death from illness → partial capitulation from suffering → no significant experience of illness.

the finding of a filament or filaments at the heart's top that is the idea common to the entries, with the verbal elements ({*ṣubbutum, ṣabātum, ḫanāqum*}) qualifying the degree of seizure:

4.42. *YOS* 10 42 ii 33–37

33–34. *šumma rēš libbi qê* ***ṣubbut*** ⇒ *kiṣir libbi ilim ana awīlim ul paṭer*
35. *šumma rēš libbi qûm* ***ṣabit*** ⇒ *ālik pāni ummānim qātum ikaššad*
36–37. *šumma rēš libbi qûm* [***ḫ***]***aniq*** ⇒ *ālik pāni ummānim dannatam immar*

33–34. 'If the top of the heart **was** (**thoroughly**) **seized by filaments** ⇒ the anger of the god at the man will not abate'
35. 'If **a filament was seizing** the top of the heart ⇒ someone will capture the army's herald'
36–37. If **a filament was constricting** the top of the heart ⇒ the army's herald will experience difficulty.'

In the following passage the verbal choice ({*nadûm, palāšum, šelûm*}) used to describe the nature of a hole above the Palace Gate specifies the degree of the hole's perforation:

4.43. *YOS* 10 26 ii 30–32

30. *šu*[*mma*] *elēnum bāb ekallim šīlum* ***nadi*** ⇒ *šiḫiṭ nēšim*
31. *šu*[*mma*] *elēnum bāb ekallim šīlum* ***pališ*** ⇒ *miḫiṣ ṣillîm*
32. *šu*[*mma e*]*lēnum bāb ekallim šīlum* ***šeli*** ⇒ *wāṣi abullim nēšum idâk*

30. 'If a hole was **situated** above the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) an attack of a lion'
31. 'If a hole was **punctured** above the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) a prick of a thorn'
32. 'If a hole ***pierced through***[79] above the Palace Gate ⇒ the lion will kill the one who goes out of the gate.'

Elsewhere, where no marks are said to occur, this type of pointillism is used in the description of anomalous zonal conditions, as seen in the following passage:

79 Meaning uncertain; see *CAD* Š/2, 275.

4.44. AO 7539:52–53 (l. 53 // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 2l'a [apodosis only])

52. *šumma qerbū* ***ittaptilū*** ⇒ *šībūt āli ṭēmšunu išanni*
53. *šumma qerbū* ***ḫitlupū*** ⇒ *šaggašātu ina māti ibbaššâ*

52. 'If the intestines **had become *plaited*** ⇒ (concerning) the city elders—their (ability to) reason will *change*'[80]
53. 'If the intestines were ***intertwined*** ⇒ there will be massacres in the land.'

The task of discerning what was intended by the organizational sequencing of these passages presents a considerable challenge. At first glance it may appear that the matter is here less confusing than is true elsewhere—for instance, in the case of the nominally formulated group discussed above (§ 4.1.2.1) or the mixed variety studied below (§ 4.1.2.3), since, in cases such as ex. 4.42, the first progression (*ṣubbutum* → *ṣabātum*) points unmistakably to a progression from a greater degree of seizure to a lesser one;[81] likewise, though in reverse, for ex. 4.43, the verbal progression (*nadûm* → *palāšum*; "to be situated" → "to puncture") indicates at least for the hole an increase in perforation.

However, one soon realizes that these observations do not account for the whole picture. In both exx. 4.42 and 4.43 the final verbal element presents problems for the understanding of the broader progression. In each case uncertainty persists concerning the relationship between the respective third case and what precedes, while in ex. 4.43 even the verb's basic meaning remains unclear. For ex. 4.43 these ambiguities carry through into the apodotic column: if it is agreed that the linear logical progression implied by the *nadûm* → *palāšum* sequence extends to the entire scope of this passage, one must wonder how a prick of a thorn reflects a harsher predicament than the attack of a lion. This type of problem is often even more difficult to sort out where the logic of the verbal sequence is less certain. With respect to ex. 4.44, for instance, though it is clear on both internal grounds (*patālum*, "to be plaited" ↔ *ḫitlupum*, "to be intertwined"; note the paranomasia) and external ones (see ex. 4.45 below) that the situation of its constituent entries is not accidental, one struggles to say anything about the relationship between said entries, whether in terms of their reported conditions or their interpretations.

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80 Pace *CAD* Š/2, 393: "the elders of the city will change their counsel"; cf. id. Š/1, 393: "the city elders will become disloyal." On the well-known, if difficult, idiom, see Chapter 2, n. 85.

81 This holds regardless of one's understanding of the function of the D-stem *ṣubbutum* in this context. On this matter, see generally Kouwenberg 1997: 151–3; but cf. § 5.3.

In sum, it is apparent that passages appearing to have been composed according to a verbally formulated type of complex gradation do not provide an exception to interpretive challenges already met. While it seems that scholasticism must frequently account for the organization of passages bearing a complex gradation of this sort, for a number of these one fails to explain this organization's internal logic.

4.1.2.3 Nominally and Verbally Formulated Examples

Not infrequently one encounters both nominally and verbally formulated subtypes of the paradigmatic type of pointillism in the same passage. This should occasion little surprise. After all, the distinction between these two subtypes may well reflect a modern sensibility not necessarily shared by the Mesopotamian diviner. The following example, for instance, excerpted from the same text as that behind ex. 4.44 above and sharing a good deal with it, makes use of elements from both a verbal paradigmatic set (*kaṣārum, patālum*) as well as a nominal one (*ḫimṣum*; note too the simile in l. 25):[82]

4.45. AO 7539:25–26 (l. 25 // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 21'b [protasis only])

25. *šumma qerbū* ***kīma kippê***[83] ***kaṣrū*** ⇒ *nakrum mātam ana dannati upaḫḫar*
26. *šumma qerbū* ***ina ḫimṣi patlū***[84] ⇒ *nakrum mātam ana dannati upaḫḫar rubûm ina ekallīšu ūtassar*

25. 'If the intestines were **knotted like *coils***[85] ⇒ the enemy will gather the land into a fortress'
26. 'If the intestines were **twined within** (**fatty**) ***ḫimṣu*-tissue** ⇒ the enemy will gather the land into a fortress (and/or:) the prince will be enclosed in his palace.'

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82 For a similar case involving qualifications of *ḫimṣum*, see Boissier, *Choix*, 92:11–12 (SB).

83 The form *ki-ip-pe-e* in AO 7539:25 is paralleled by *ki-ip-pe* in *CUSAS* 18 31:21b, but recurs just lines below in l. 24' of the latter text as *ki-ip-pe-e*. It thus seems likely that the word is to be taken as plural, *kippê* (with *ki-ip-pe* in l. 21b perhaps a case of a defective spelling; see George 2013: 137). In terms of meaning, George's translation of "a skipping rope" in l. 21b takes the word as *keppûm* (*CAD* K, 312), a lexeme with a fitting vocalic ending but with no attestation in omen protases. By contrast, George's rendering of the lexeme as "coils" in l. 24' assumes a relation with *kippum* (*CAD* K, 399–400), which seems unknown with long final vowels but which is well attested as a simile in omen protases, but nonetheless seems more likely.

84 The emendation *pa-at-lu*$^{!}$(MU) follows *CAD* P, 271 and, earlier, Nougayrol 1971: 80.

85 On this translation, see n. 83.

It may be that this example's protases were intended to be understood sequentially, with the anomalous findings reported in them concerning the intestines, respectively bound like a loop and twined within fatty *ḫimṣu*-tissue (i.e., *kīma kippim kaṣārum* → *ina ḫimṣim patālum*), reflecting an order in which the second condition was perceived as more severe than the first. If common sense hints at this reading, no certain verdict may be issued in this regard nonetheless. The possibility cannot be discounted that in the apodosis of l. 26, which seems to contain two asyndetically joined forecasts (see § 2.1.4), the apparently more grievous outcome in the second entry actually reflects a repetition of the first with an alternative possibility. If so, questions quickly arise about the origins of these alternatives and their relationship to one another, as well as to the preceding entry's forecast.

Thus, one soon learns that this subtype of paradigmatic gradation provides no exception to the challenges that elsewhere impede assessments of sequences exhibiting other forms of complex gradation. As is the case elsewhere, it is here a question of the extent to which a given sequence of omens may be said to conform to an established paradigmatic form, or, alternatively, the degree to which the entries represent the product of generative expression. Indeed, if anything is certain about passages combining verbal and nominal forms it is the fact that, owing to the diverse nature of their formulations, they are even harder to categorize meaningfully.

And yet, it is beyond question that the diviner made extensive use of this mixed form, as the following case study illustrates. A comparison of exx. 4.46–4.48 (also 4.49; see below) provides an intriguing instance of the use of complex gradation in the creation of divination literature:

4.46. *YOS* 10 26 i 25–32 (ll. 26–27 = ex. 2.97)

25. *šumma* <*bāb*> *ekallim* ***irpiš*** ⇒ *ayyābūka ana abullī*[*ka*] *irrubūnikkum*
26–27. *šumma* <*bāb*> *ekallim* ***sunnuq*** ⇒ *ina tāḫāzim ummānam nak*[*rum*] *usannaq rīqūssa šatammū ekallam usanna*[*qū*]
28–29. *šumma* <*bāb*> *ekallim* ***peḫi*** ⇒ *wāṣi abullīya nak*[*rum*] *idâk*
30. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***šīram īpiq*** ⇒ *nakrum abullaka irrub*
31–32. *šumma* ***ina pāni*** *bāb ekallim* ***šīrum kupput-ma šakin*** ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša Tappā-daraḫ ikmû*

25. 'If the Palace <Gate> was **wide** (**open**) ⇒ your enemies will (come) to [your] city gate (and) come in unto you'

26–27. 'If the Palace <Gate> was **fastened** (**close**) **shut** ⇒ in battle the enemy will shut the army tight; its uncertain (interpretation): *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace'
28–29. 'If the Palace <Gate> was **sealed** ⇒ the enemy will kill the one who goes out of my city gate'
30. 'If the Palace Gate was **solid with a fleshy tissue** ⇒ the enemy will enter (via) your city gate'
31–32. 'If **fleshy tissue compressed** (**into a pellet**) **was situated** in front of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

4.47. *YOS* 10 26 iv 7–12 (l. 10 = ex. 4.22)

7. [*šumma ina bāb ekallim* ***šīrum***] ***parik*** ⇒ *na*[*krum*] *abullaka* [*i*]*ddil*
8–9. [*šumma bāb ekallim* ***li***]***pišt***[***am mali***] ⇒ *abull*[*um*] *i*[*nne*]*ddil* [*ālum marušt*]*am* [*i*]*mmar*
10. [*šumma bāb ekallim*] ***šīram udduḫ*** ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša <T>appā-daraḫ inēru*
11–12. [*šumma ina bāb ekalli*]*m* ***šīrum kupput-ma iš***[***qa***]***llal*** ⇒ [*milla*]*tum sarrūtum ekallam išt*[*ana*]*rriqū*

7. '[If in the Palace Gate **a fleshy tissue**] **was lying crosswise** ⇒ the enemy will lock your city gate'
8–9. '[If the Palace Gate **was filled**] **by a *lipištu*-membrane** ⇒ the city gate will be locked (and [?]) the city will experience difficult time(s)'
10. '[If the Palace Gate] was **thoroughly covered by a fleshy tissue** ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who defeated Tappa-daraḫ.'
11–12. '[If in] the Palace [Gate] **a fleshy tissue was compressed** (**into a pellet**) **and is suspended** ⇒ (it forecasts) *looting*: thieves will keep stealing from the palace.'

4.48. *YOS* 10 24:27–29, 33–35, 40 (l. 29 = ex. 2.96; ll. 33–35 = ex. 4.21)

27. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***epiq*** ⇒ *nakrum abullam iddil*
28. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***lipištam mali*** ⇒ *abullum innendil ālum maruštam immar*
29. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***sunnuq*** ⇒ *ina kakkim nakrum ummānam ussar ūmam rīqam šatammū ekallam usannaqū*
…

33. *šumma bāb ekallim šīrum **ediḫ*** ⇒ *ālum ibbalakkat-ma bēlšu idâk*
34. *šumma bāb ekallim šīrum **ediḫ-ma u aban suluppim īrub*** ⇒ *ḫušaḫḫum ša šalmātum innandû ibbašši*
35. *šumma bāb ekallim šīram **udduḫ*** ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

...

40. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim **šīrum kupput-ma šakin*** ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

27. 'If the Palace Gate was **solid** (with a fleshy tissue?) ⇒ the enemy will lock the city gate'
28. 'If the Palace Gate was **filled by a *lipištu*-membrane** ⇒ the city gate will be locked (and) the city will experience difficult times'
29. If the Palace Gate was **fastened** ⇒ in warfare the enemy will enclose the army; for an uncertain date: *šatammu*-officials will keep tight control of the palace'

...

33. 'If fleshy tissue was **covering** the Palace Gate ⇒ the city will rebel and kill its lord'
34. 'If fleshy tissue was **covering** the Palace Gate **but a date pit entered** (it) ⇒ there will be a famine in which corpses will be left lying (unburied)'
35. 'If the Palace Gate was **thoroughly covered** by fleshy tissue ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

...

40. 'If **compressed fleshy tissue was situated** in the middle of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

4.49. [*šumma bāb ekallim*] ***lipištam mali*** ⇒ *abullum inneddil-ma ālum maruštam immar* '[If the Palace Gate] **was filled by a *lipištu*-membrane** ⇒ the city gate will be locked and the city will experience difficult time(s)' (*YOS* 10 25:15').

It is not easy to speak about the manner by which these passages relate to one another. As has been observed on several occasions already, there are numerous points of contact between *YOS* 10 24 and *YOS* 10 26,[86] two collections of Palace Gate omens from which exx. 4.46–4.48 are quoted. Nevertheless, on the basis of discrepancies in the material common to these examples it is plain

86 And see Glassner 2009a: 47–50.

that other factors, and perhaps even additional sources, are to be credited with the manifest variety. One need only note the differences among the versions in the description of Šulgi's handling of Tappa-daraḫ, or the discrepancy in the manner of the alternative interpretation formulae in ex. 4.46, ll. 26–27 and ex. 4.48, l. 29[87] to begin to appreciate this point.

This is not the place to attempt a comprehensive reconstruction of the textual history behind these passages, which at any rate may not be feasible with the present evidence. Yet it is precisely on account of the variations among these passages that their comparison yields revealing facets about the compositional nature of complex gradation. A brief consideration of the makeup of exx. 4.46–4.48 thus follows.

Common to all three passages is an exploration into the meaning of blockage of the Palace Gate. In that capacity the passages make use of what clearly was a common pool of material, each organizing this shared stock in accordance with its desired outcome. Unfortunately, some of the challenges described earlier recur here: the understanding of the nuances of anomalous terms in these omens is suspect, and consequently the interpretation for passages that would assume confidence in the terms' precise qualitative aspects would be imprudent. Moreover, it cannot be held that the formulations encountered follow a paradigmatic set of elements or established schemes, such as the set {Top, Middle, Bottom} within the T → M → B scheme. Nor is there any indication, to judge from the corresponding apodoses, that these formulations were conceived paradigmatically, as is encountered elsewhere where passages are arranged in accordance with established schemes or paradigmatic sets of elements.

Still, on the basis of the accompanying forecasts it is clear that a semblance of order was attempted in the organization of these entries. The diviner used the pointillistic form to arrange different sequences whose schemes conformed to particular notions he wished to convey. Why one order was opted for in one collection over against a second order in another is a matter of significant interest but of equal uncertainty; this may possibly reflect nothing more than scribal proclivities. Regardless of this question, however, in their compositional structures exx. 4.46–4.48 all exhibit the hallmarks of paradigmatic complex gradation of the mixed type.

For instance, in ex. 4.46, following the opening entry that poses the meaning of a wide (open) (*rapāšum*) Palace Gate, four successive entries explore different conditions of the Gate's blockage. The sequence runs: fastened → sealed → (made) solid by a fleshy tissue → (with) compressed fleshy tissue in front

87 Discussed in § 2.1.3.5.

(*sunnuq → peḫi → šīram īpiq → šīrum kupput-ma šakin*). And while the provisional nature of each verb's precise sense must again be stressed, it would appear that the diviner attempted to form a gradation expressing an increase in the Palace Gate's blockage. Certainly on the basis of the counterpart apodoses, which describe an enemy drawing progressively closer from the egocentric perspective (i.e., victory in battle[field] → siege of city → entry into city),[88] this seems to have been the intended effect. Indeed, as shall be seen, even the prediction concerning Šulgi's triumph over Tappa-daraḫ, though not a part of this sequence, assumes nonetheless its position in the passage's end for a specific purpose and thereby participates in its own manner in the passage's overall thrust.

In fact the tradition recalling the encounter between Šulgi and Tappa-daraḫ[89] appears three additional times in exx. 4.47–4.48[90] and, as with ex. 4.46, furnishes those passages with the prediction of either the ultimate or penultimate entry in their gradations. As is discussed elsewhere (see §§ 2.1.3.4; 5.4.1.3.1), the placement of one of the historical omens in the end of certain gradations was intended to convey a sense of finality, with the recollection of a legendary episode serving as the interpretation of an ultimate-case scenario. A comparison of exx. 4.47–4.48 demonstrates this use of the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ tradition, but in addition highlights the characteristics of this freedom in each version's formulation.

Accordingly, it is readily apparent that, in addition to the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ omen, the opening two entries in exx. 4.47–4.48 share a tradition whose interpretation concerns the enemy's locking of the city gate (see also ex. 4.49). Notably, this shared information was put to use in these examples in a similar manner to that described regarding ex. 4.46: from the apodotic perspective one again observes a sequence suggesting that its constituent parts were conceived in a graded sense (i.e., enemy locks city gate → locked gate [and thus] difficulty for city). In the case of ex. 4.47, this gradation is followed by the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ omen, and one must assume that in this penultimate setting the entry was understood as representing a more severe condition than the preceding.

Support for this reading comes from ex. 4.48, l. 35, in which the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ forecast appears with the same protasis as that of its counterpart in ex. 4.47, l. 10. In this example it is as the final entry in a small section of omens that employs complex gradation of both the agglutinative and the

88 For other examples of the use of distance and space in the interpretations of complex gradations, see § 4.2.1.1 below.

89 On the historical background of which, see the sources listed in n. 51 above.

90 And once more in *YOS* 10 22:17.

paradigmatic types (see § 4.1.3); and, notwithstanding the purpose of this unique elaboration, it is clear that the historical omen forms the interpretation of the ultimate hypothesized condition. Why then this entry occupies the penultimate rather than the final position in ex. 4.47 is uncertain, though it bears noting that the following entry in that passage (ll. 11–12) recalls the final omen in ex. 4.48 (l. 40), both concerning compressed fleshy tissue (*šīrum kupputum*), and could thus represent an effort to telescope ex. 4.48, l. 40 onto ex. 4.47, ll. 7–10, uniting in the process two separate traditions.

Despite these and other difficulties in matters of textual history,[91] what becomes apparent upon the comparison of all these traditions is what is ultimately most important for our purposes: the impressive manner by which the diviner made use of complex gradation of the paradigmatic type in order to work out nuances of particular interpretive themes. In this respect it is important to recall that, despite their differences, exx. 4.46–4.48 share not only specific information but, more importantly, a common approach to the presentation of that information. Yet it is equally significant to note that there existed a substantial degree of flexibility in the manner by which this presentation could proceed.

It is on account of the latter point that, despite their commonalities, no apodotic series is entirely parallel to that of any other; for instance, one finds no counterpart to the progression regarding the enemy drawing progressively closer in ex. 4.46 in exx. 4.47–4.48. The rationale for this organization in ex. 4.46 seems particular to that passage. This may explain why the entry in l. 30 from ex. 4.46, whose apodosis is otherwise parallel to two entries from exx. 4.47–4.48 (in the case of ex. 4.48 the protases are essentially identical as well), would here appear slightly altered (i.e., **iddil* > *irrub*). Similarly, it may be that the author of ex. 4.48, who, apparently opting to expand upon or introduce the entry concerned with total coverage (*udduḫum*) of the Palace Gate (l. 35), inserted ll. 33–34 into their current position (i.e., *edēḫum* […] [ll. 33–34] < *udduḫum* [l. 35]).

One could go on, though this would risk entry into even further speculation. Besides, the most significant result to take away from this discussion is an awareness of the existing mediation between tradition and innovation in the formation of complex gradation. The discussion that follows, concerning the combination of the agglutinative and paradigmatic types of complex gradation, picks up this very issue and develops it further and in a new direction.

91 One such case involves explaining the purpose and location of ex. 4.48, l. 29, the parallel of ex. 4.46, ll. 26–27, which in the latter passage opens the sequence concerning closed Palace Gates.

4.1.3 *Combination of the Agglutinative and Paradigmatic Types*

In separate discussions of the agglutinative and the paradigmatic types of pointillism above, two segments of the following example were studied individually:

4.50. *OBE* 14 ob. 18–24 (ll. 18–21 = ex. 4.40; ll. 22–24 = ex. 4.10)

18. [*šumma rēš*] *libbim* ***kukrī*** *saḫir* ⇒ *rubûm mārū ekallīšu ibarrūšu*
19. [*šumma rē*]*š libbim* ***papparḫītam*** *nadi* ⇒ *mazzāz Allat*
20. [*šumma rē*]*š libbim* ***kaksî*** *saḫir* ⇒ *mārū rubêm ana lemuttim ana abīšunu itebbûnim*
21. [*š*]*umma rēš libbim* ***ziqtī*** *saḫir-ma* ***u rēš libbim puṭṭur*** ⇒ *rubûm tillātūšu izzibāšu*
22. [*š*]*umma rēš libbim* ***ziqtī*** *saḫir* ***u ziq***[***tūšu šu***]***kkusū*** ⇒ *tibût ḫupšim ana rubêm*
23–24. *šumma rēš libbim* ***ziqtī*** *saḫir-ma* ***u ziqtūšu šukkusū u rēš*** ⌜***libbim kami u tar***⌝***ik*** ⇒ *ḫupšum ibbalakkat-ma rubûm imaqqut*

18. '[If the top] of the heart was surrounded by ***kukru***(-*seeds*) ⇒ (concerning) the prince—his palace servants will rebel against him'
19. '[If] the top of the heart was situated in a **purslane**(-design) ⇒ (it forecasts) the presence of Allat'
20. '[If] the top of the heart was surrounded by **arrowhead**(-mark)s ⇒ the prince's sons will rise up against their father for evil (purposes)'
21. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by **pockmarks and the top of the heart is split up** ⇒ (concerning) the prince—his auxiliary force will desert him'
22. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by **pockmarks and its pockmarks were dried up** ⇒ (it forecasts) a revolt of the rabble against the prince'
23–24. 'If the top of the heart was surrounded by **pockmarks and its pockmarks were dried up and the top of the heart was bound and dark** ⇒ the rabble will rebel and the prince will die.'

It is not difficult to see that certain paradigmatically expressed themes run through both segments without a break. It is thus also instructive to consider these segments from the broader perspective of ex. 4.50. As the following demonstrates, the combination of the agglutinative and paradigmatic types

of pointillism observed in this passage is attested elsewhere in the collections; the manner by which such cases figure in the generative and paradigmatic characteristics of the collection's organizational framework is of particular interest in this respect.

In l. 21 of ex. 4.50, the final entry of the first segment, one encounters the report of the additional condition of the heart's splitting (*u rēš libbim puṭṭur*), along with that portion of the predicate common to every entry in ll. 18–21 ({*kukrum; papparḫītum; kaksû; ziqtum*} *saḫir*/*nadi*).[92] Though in one sense it may be said that this addition breaks the strict pattern of ll. 18–21, a closer examination of this datum clarifies its role in the broader context of ex. 4.50: it is apparent that l. 21 acts to stitch the preceding material (ll. 18–20), or more precisely, the organizational structure of this material, with the counterpart from what follows (ll. 22–24). Indeed, it is clear that the two segments comprising ex. 4.50 do not merely adjoin one another, since, were that the case, one might expect an additional entry to intervene between ll. 18–20 and 21–24 with a condition such as **šumma rēš libbim ziqtī saḫir* ("If the top of the heart was surrounded by pockmarks"). Therefore, a more accurate breakdown of ex. 4.50 would render two segments, ll. 18–20 and 22–24, which share l. 21 between them.

In fact, the occurrence of this combination of pointillistic types is not an uncommon phenomenon. To the contrary, this organizational structure reflects one of the collections' major building blocks. And though this is not the place in which a comprehensive study of the broader techniques of redaction in the collections can be embarked upon, one particular feature in this respect is noteworthy nonetheless: the effects of the interface of different organizational structures in a given passage on its interpretive framework. Accordingly, what follows considers two additional instances of the combination of the agglutinative and paradigmatic types of pointillism, with special attention paid to the manner in which the junction of the two organizational structures affects broader interpretive matters.

The following passage offers another example in which one pointillism type operates within the other:

4.51. *KAR* 150:7–13 (ll. 7–8 = ex. 2.131)

7–8. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum ina libbi piṭri ⇒ ālum ša ana lawêšu tallaku innaddī-ma ittaṣṣi nipḫu pûm lā kīnum marṣu imât*

92 Recall that l. 19, in which the exceptional verb *nadi* occurs, also violates the interpretive pattern of ll. 18–21; see n. 74 above.

9–10. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum ina libbi piṭri* ***u kakkum imḫuršu*** ⇒ *nakrum alāk birtīšu inaddī-ma ummān rubêm irrub*

11. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum ina libbi piṭri* ***u šīlum nadi*** ⇒ *ālam* [*š*]*a tallaku taṣabbat*

12–13. *šumma ina šumēl martim piṭrum ina libbi piṭri* <***u***> ***erištum nadiat***[93] ⇒ *rubûm bīši qātīšu ušaddanūšu*

7–8. 'If in the gallbladder's left (there was) a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure ⇒ the city to which you are heading to lay siege will be abandoned and (its people) will come out; (or: it is) a *nipḫu*-prediction, (which is) an unreliable (omen) statement; (or: for) the infirm—he will die'

9–10. 'If in the gallbladder's left (there was) a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure **and a Weapon faced it** ⇒ the enemy will neglect the patrolling of his fort and (so) the prince's army will enter it'

11. 'If in the gallbladder's left (there was) a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure **and a hole was situated** (***in it***) ⇒ you will seize the city to which you are going'

12–13. 'If in the gallbladder's left (there was) a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure <**and**> **a Request-mark was situated** (***in it***) ⇒ concerning the prince—they will make him give up his personal possessions.'

Notable in this respect is the report of the occurrence of three well-known marks (*kakkum, šīlum, erištum*) in the second through fourth omens, in addition to the condition reported in the initial one. The three entries making up omens 2–4 proceed according to the nominally formulated paradigmatic type, with each employing one mark from the set {*kakkum, šīlum, erištum*} in its formulation. But in the manner of this example's broader organization, the gradation evinced in omens 2–4, call it paradigm Y, actually figures within another gradation, call it paradigm X, this one agglutinative in nature. From the perspective of paradigm X, the formula common to each of the entries in paradigm Y represents the second leg in the sequence *piṭrum ina libbi piṭrim* → *piṭrum ina libbi piṭrim u* $Y_{\square}$ … ("a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure" → "a fissure in the middle of a(nother) fissure and $Y_{\square}$ …"), where $Y_{\square}$ represents one possibility from among the set {*kakkum, šīlum, erištum*}. Thus, it appears that paradigm Y figures as a subset of paradigm X and that the overall sequence of ex. 4.51, expressed formulaically as $P_X \rightarrow P_{X+Y_1} \rightarrow P_{X+Y_2} \rightarrow P_{X+Y_3}$, reflects a mix

93 Text: *na-<<ad>>-di-a-at*.

of pointillism of the agglutinative ($P_X \rightarrow P_{X+Y}$) and the paradigmatic ($P_{Y_1} \rightarrow P_{Y_2} \rightarrow P_{Y_3}$) types.

It is remarkable that despite the complex nature of the reports of anomalous findings in the entries of ex. 4.51, the interpretation of the entire passage exhibits a measure of coherence. Indeed, it may be that it was owing to the incorporation of paradigm Y into the framework of paradigm X that this reality took shape. After all, at least in part the interpretation of the first entry is granted the status of a *nipḫu*-forecast, which undoubtedly rests on the description in the protasis of one mark within another (see § 2.1.4.2.3). From this angle the opening forecast of ll. 7–8 seems unexpected, and it is thus not unreasonable to assume that its appearance, or at least its place in the apodosis, reflects a certain degree of paradigm pressure by the broader passage. Of course, without the benefit of parallel traditions to this omen no clear verdict can be issued on this matter. Still, this possibility must be taken seriously—especially in light of other passages comprised of both types of pointillism, in which, at the juncture between the types, a putative harmonization of this sort is not to be found.

A case in point may be found in the following example:

4.52. *YOS* 10 31 vi 23–35

23–25. *šumma martum* ***lubbukat*** ⇒ *mīlum illakam*
26–30. *šumma martum* ***nuḫḫutat*** ⇒ *mīlum ina nārim ittazzaz*[(*zam*)][94]
31–35. *šumma m*[*artum*] ***waṣia***[***t-ma***] ***nuḫḫutat*** ⇒ *lupnum ana …*[95]

23–25. 'If the gallbladder was **macerated** ⇒ a flood will come'
26–30. 'If the gallbladder was **trimmed** ⇒ the flood will *stay*[96] in the river'
31–35. 'If the gallbladder was **protruding** [**and**] **trimmed** ⇒ (there will be [?]) poverty for …'

94 Text: *it-ta-za-*⌜*az*⌝[(…)]. Opinions regarding what may be in the break include: *it-ta-za-a*[*z*] (Riemschneider 1963: 64; Jeyes 2000: 370); *it-ta-za-*⌜*az*⌝-[*x*]/*it-ta-za-az-*[*x*] (*CAD* M/2, 72; U/W, 387); *it-ta-za-a*[*z-za*] (*AHw*, 410; Huehnergard 2002: 166 n. 14). A ventive ending is possible (cf. *illakam* in the previous entry) but is unnecessary, as suggested in Riemschneider's and Jeyes' options.

95 At present I cannot improve on the reading of this apodosis (*lu-up-nu-um ana x x x x*) in *CAD* L, 252.

96 So Jeyes 2000: 370; *AHw*, 410: "zum Stehen kommen."

This passage appears to present another instance of the combination of the agglutinative and paradigmatic types of pointillism, though in terms of order, in reverse. Accordingly, and to the extent that the two ominous conditions are related paradigmatically, the sequence *lubbukat* → *nuḫḫutat* ("macerated" → "trimmed") in the first two entries reflects a verbally formulated paradigmatic type of pointillism. By contrast, the agglutinative type mediates between the latter two entries: *nuḫḫutat* → *waṣiat-ma nuḫḫutat* (trimmed → protruding and trimmed). Thus, it appears that this example offers another case of the incorporation of one pointillism type within the other.[97] In symbolic form this sequence may be expressed as: $P_X \rightarrow P_Y \rightarrow P_{Y+\square}$

Notably, in this instance the shift from the paradigmatic to the agglutinative types seems to be mirrored in the apodoses of this passage's entries, specifically in the change of subject from the first two entries to that of the third. Despite difficulties in its reading owing to textual breaks, it is clear that the apodosis of the final omen does not continue the flood interpretive tradition reflected in the first two.[98] Why this should be so is unclear. This divergence may possibly reflect the bringing together of originally distinct units, though once more any such suggestion must remain speculative without the benefit of parallel traditions.

Yet even if this conjecture proves correct, one would have expected to find what is witnessed elsewhere where the composite nature of a passage can be pointed to: a trace of the effects of paradigmatic pressure, perhaps in the form of a harmonizing alternative interpretation, as in the manner suggested for ex. 4.51; yet this is not the case here. For some reason this example, while plainly betraying a measure of premeditation in terms of the organization of its entries, can nonetheless not be counted among those passages that reflect a full-fledged generative exercise.

In terms of the broader repercussions for understanding the organization and interpretation of the omen collections, exx. 4.50–4.52 thus serve as good indicators of both the scope of the organizational framework and its limitations. In terms of scope, one is reminded by these examples of other instances of textual harmonization, whereby the assembly of disparate information plays an effective, indeed, a creative, role in the actual composition of certain

97 The likelihood that the condition reported in the first entry is assumed implicitly in the second and third seems remote.

98 In all probability the damaged ending, comprised of only four signs, simply specified the subject of the famine, with "land" (*mātum*) being the logical choice; see *CAD* L, 252, s.v. *lupnum*.

passages. However, one also learns from these passages that the intersection of different organizational structures figured at times as the limit of a particular episode of paradigmatic expression and the beginning of another. In fact, at such junctures the overall interpretive framework frequently betrays its unevenness, which offers an important perspective on the limitations of pointillism. A brief word on this topic follows.

4.1.4 *The Limitations of Pointillism*

The examination of pointillism above has on occasion exposed passages whose constituent entries, while appearing to conform to a prescribed organizational sequence, exhibit apodoses whose interpretations diverge from the expected. One such aberration was encountered in the case of the Path → Crucible (or: Path → > Path) sequence, an established organizational scheme of the anatomical mapping sort discussed above (§ 4.1.1.1); this was ex. 4.27, quoted again as the following passage, whose interpretations stray from the expected bad-to-worse pattern:

4.53. *YOS* 10 17:38–39 (= ex. 4.27)

38. *šumma naplaštum* ***ana padānim iqterib*** ⇒ *ilum zenûm ana awīlim iturra*
39. *šumma naplaštum* ***padānam ībir*** ⇒ *rubûm ḫarrān illaku imaqqut*

38. 'If the View **has drawn near to the Path** ⇒ the angry god will return to the man'
39. 'If the View **crossed over the Path** ⇒ (on) the campaign on which he goes the prince will fall (dead).'

Similarly, concerning ex. 4.54, discussed earlier in the context of nominally formulated examples of the paradigmatic type of pointillism (§ 4.1.2.1), the interpretive sequence in the first two entries concerning the divulgence of information by different agents is abandoned, unexpectedly at first glance, in the third:

4.54. *YOS* 10 36 iii 40—iv 1 (= ex. 4.39)

40–41. *šumma ur'udum* ***damam*** *mali* ⇒ *wāšib ekallim* [*pi*]*ništam ušeṣṣe*
42–43. [*šumma ur'u*]*dum* ***šammī*** *mali* ⇒ *wāšib āli*[*m piništam*] *ušeṣṣe*
iv 1. *šumma ur'udum* ***mê*** *mali* ⇒ *šamûm izannun*

40–41. If the trachea was full of **blood** ⇒ the palace dweller will divulge a secret'
42–43. [If] the trachea was full of ***grass***(-***seeds***) ⇒ the city dweller will divulge [a secret]'
iv 1. If the trachea was full of **water** ⇒ it will rain.'

While explanations for the interruptions in the interpretive associations of both these examples were posited above, one is well-served to reconsider them from a perspective that surveys the limitations of pointillism more broadly, in terms of both its organizational and hermeneutic frameworks. Indeed, that one is confronted with unexpected twists to established gradation patterns seems a matter of course. Exceptions to organizational and/or interpretive sequences occur in every type of gradation, even those that constitute exemplars of paradigmatic gradation.

The following example is another case in point and, on account of its straying from one of the more formalized sequences investigated below (T → M → B; see § 4.2.1), a particularly intriguing one at that:

4.55. *YOS* 10 44:21–23

21. *šumma šēpum* [***qu***]***tun*** *martim kašdat* ⇒ *nakrum ina ḫalṣīka šallatam ušeṣṣe*
22. *šumma šēpum* ***qabliat*** *martim kašdat* ⇒ *nakrum ina libbi māti šallatam ušeṣṣe*
23. *šumma šēpum martam* ***lā ikšudam*** ⇒ *nakram tukarra*

21. 'If the Foot was reaching the **bottom** (lit., **thin part**) of the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will take out plunder from your outer districts'
22. 'If the Foot was reaching the **middle** of the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will take out plunder from the heart of the land'
23. 'If the Foot **did not reach** the gallbladder ⇒ you will cause the enemy hardship.'

If one reads it vertically, the final entry in this passage comes as something of a surprise. In keeping with the T → M → B organizational scheme seemingly behind the first two entries (albeit in reverse), one might have expected this entry to have taken up the case of a Foot at the gallbladder's top, and its apodosis to have described, according to this sequence's spatial interpretive theme (see § 4.2.1.1), the enemy's removal of plunder from one's palace (i.e., the land's innermost space). The improbable finding met in l. 23 may be explained in

one of several ways. It may be that a diviner, whether unintentionally or by design, skipped the scheme's logical conclusion, shifting his attention to the more general statement in l. 23, which runs opposite both to ll. 21–22 and to what is expected in l. 23. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to suppose that this passage's author felt sufficiently acquainted with the articulation of the anticipated T → M → B scheme to allow himself a measure of improvisation.

To the extent that this speculation accurately reflects some stage in this passage's transmission, it is significant to recall that the alleged free form of composition witnessed in ex. 4.55, or for that matter exx. 4.53–4.54 above, is not restricted to pointillism. Analogous phenomena were observed in the investigation of other structures of the organizational framework, both in its horizontal and vertical dimensions. For example, in Chapter 2 the analyses of alternative interpretations as well as the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form shed light on similar occurrences in the construction of individual omens (see § 2.1.3.4 and, more generally, § 2.1.4.2). Similarly, in the concluding pages of the discussion of contrastive pairings in Chapter 3 a certain fluidity was demonstrated in the manner in which contrastive terms become paired: it was suggested that these pairings at times have less to do with any theoretically established binary opposition and more with the particular and case-specific interests of a diviner (§§ 3.3–3.4).

With respect to the bulk of the contrastive pairings examined in Chapter 3, we suggested that this fluidity speaks against the understanding of certain sequences as full-fledged paradigms; rather, we argued that a more prudent way to conceive them is as paradigmatic patterns (§ 3.4). An analogous case can be made for the horizontal realm: if anything was learned in the discussion of markers of alternative interpretation in the omen collections, it was that one cannot point to any one explanation to account for their presence, whether from the organizational or hermeneutic perspective. The same holds for the many examples of the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form, concerning which, it was observed, the crystallization of certain forecasts in the form of lemmata offered the diviner the prerogative to adapt these in new contexts, which at times had little to do with the lemmata's original senses.

A similar picture is encountered when it comes to pointillism. What might initially appear to be a predictable sequence divulges in due course an unexpected twist or turn. Examples 4.53–4.55 above provide good illustrations of this point with respect to the organizational sequence. Yet, not infrequently this matter is disguised, revealing itself only in that sequence's corresponding interpretation(s). The following two cases provide instances of this point and serve as a final reminder of the limitations of pointillism in terms of the predictability of omen interpretation within collections' organizational framework.

We begin with the following passage, which expectedly connects the mention of *ziḫḫum* in the place of the missing View in ll. 4–6 with either inclement conditions (flooding, devastation by Adad) or events derivative of, or at least associated with, these conditions (severance of sluices, "severance" of prince's expedition):

4.56. *YOS* 10 16:4–8 (ll. 4–6 = ex. 2.80 [apodosis only])

4–6. *šumma naplaštum lā ibaššī-ma ina ma*[*ška*]*nīša ziḫḫu* [*nadi*] ⇒ *butuqtum ibbattaq biblum mātam ubb*[*al* (...)] *rubûm ḫarrān illaku ul iturram šanûm šum*[*šu Adad iraḫ*]*ḫiṣ*
7–8. *šumma naplaštum lā ibaššī-ma ina ma*[*šk*]*anīšu* [*ziḫḫu nadī-**m***]***a u tarik*** ⇒ *namtalli* [d][*Sîn*][99]

4–6. 'If the View was not there and *ziḫḫum* [was situated] in its stead ⇒ a sluice will burst and a flood will sweep the land [*and*/*or*] the prince will not return (from) the campaign he undertakes; [its] second interpretation: [Adad] will devastate'
7–8. 'If the View was not there and *ziḫḫum* [was situated] in its stead **and it was dark** ⇒ (it forecasts) an eclipse of [*the moon*].'

One might also expect the addition of the shade factor in the protasis of the following entry to prompt a forecast thematically related to those in ll. 4–6. Yet, this is not the case: notwithstanding the break in the text, it seems clear that the apodosis of ll. 7–8 deals not with foul weather but rather with an eclipse.[100] Of course the latter also reflects an attested association with the factor of shade, and thus in terms of hermeneutics it may not be said that the omen in ll. 7–8, if read syntagmatically, is in any way illogical. Still, when considered paradigmatically—that is, in the broader context in which this entry occurs—the forecast of an expected eclipse seems unexpected.[101]

A similar case presents itself with the following example:

99 Following the tentative suggestion of J.-J. Glassner.

100 There is not enough room in the break to suppose that a second forecast followed.

101 Unless, that is, the secondary meaning of *biblum*, "day of the disappearance of the moon" (*CAD* B, 222), triggered an association with *namtallû*. I owe this intriguing possibility to A. Wilent.

4.57. MAH 15994:9–16

9–10. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim ša imittim šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim napiḫ ⇒ kakki Šarrū-kīn*

11–13. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim ša imittim šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim*(<-***ma***>) ***u nasiḫ*** *⇒ ina ālānīka aḫûtim ištēn*(*am*) *nakrum iṣabbat-ma zikaršu u šinnitašu idâk*

14–16. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim* [*ša*] ***šumēlim*** *šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim-**ma u nasiḫ*** *⇒ ina ālāni nakrīka ištēn*(*am*) *taṣabbat-ma zikar*[*š*]*u u šinništašu tadâk*

9–10. 'If in the back of the Crucible of the right a fleshy membrane was inflated like a mushroom's cap ⇒ (it represents) the Weapon of Sargon'

11–13. If in the back of the Crucible of the right a fleshy membrane (ditto) like a mushroom's cap **and it was torn out** ⇒ from your outer towns the enemy will seize one and kill its male and female (population)'

14–16. If in the back of the Crucible [of] **the left** a fleshy membrane (ditto) like a mushroom's cap **and it was torn out** ⇒ from the towns of your enemy you will seize one and kill its male and female (population).'

With the exception of the change in the right/left factor in ll. 14–16, the two entries in ll. 11–16 differ from the initial omen in ll. 9–10 only by their added mention of the fleshy tissue's torn state. In this respect, therefore, the lack of any discernible relation between the Sargon forecast of ll. 9–10 and those of ll. 11–16 comes as somewhat of a surprise, even given the relatively limited level of conformity witnessed in omen groupings based on similes (see § 5.2). From this one can only conclude that, while the common subject of their protases is presumably what brought the three entries in this example together, this organizational undertaking was not the final arbiter of meaning in terms of omen interpretation. To be sure, in a number of earlier complex-gradation examples the opposite has been suggested or demonstrated. It is clear that in some environments a harmonization of previously varied traditions did take place, with the various forms or sequences of inner- and inter-omen organization generating new, deductively based possibilities.

Yet it is plain that this was not uniformly the case. Regardless of whether they represent the gathering of information from disparate sources or merely

aberrations in established organizational and hermeneutic sequences, what is clear from the examples studied above is that the pointillistic arrangement of information did not inescapably level (pre-)existing diversity, let alone dictate new, deductively based possibilities that completely conformed to a prescribed message. And while it may justly be said that the very act of ordering individual entries within a given unit constitutes a creative act in its own right, the interpretive enterprise in the omen collections was not without inconsistencies, even in those instances involving complex gradation in which the organizational framework provided an impressively intricate and favorable framework for the employment of hermeneutics.

Of course elsewhere, in an impressive array both in terms of its variety and its number, this same enterprise did succeed in providing structures and forms that were not only conducive for hermeneutics but which, in fact, generated what are predictable interpretations. Accordingly, in what follows we turn our attention to some of the more prominent examples of these forms and structures, and we survey their influence in the overall interpretive framework.

4.2 Spatial Positioning in Complex Gradation

Some of the most frequent and, in terms of their consistency, impressive examples of passages exhibiting pointillism concern various elaborations on the spatial positioning of a given anomalous finding. The study of the employment of space in the formulation of passages bearing pointillistic expression seems therefore to be a good place to which we now turn. Yet even in limiting things in this manner the corpus of omens is too broad and varied to enable an all-encompassing analysis. Thus, in what follows we limit our investigation to the most common complex gradation sequences employing spatial positioning. Two broad groups are considered: (1) the organizational structures or sequences comprised of the set {Top, Middle, Bottom} and (2) those based on the set {Right, Left, Right and Left}.

4.2.1 *The Top → Middle → Bottom Scheme*

A particularly common example of complex spatial gradation involves a sequence of three omen entries that considers a given occurrence in the top, middle, and bottom of a given zone, zonal region, or ominous mark.[102] Almost

102 In addition to those discussed below, other examples of the T → M → B scheme include the following (largely broken) passages: Scheil A:35–38; *YOS* 10 17:68–70; 33 ii 54, 55-?; 42 iv 43–45; AO 7539:82–86. Another complex example appears in ex. 5.18 below. However,

invariably the order of entries in this tripartite gradation starts from what is described or, less frequently, viewed as the top and proceeds downward; on this account and for brevity's sake this sequence is abbreviated as T → M → B. The attestation of the T → M → B scheme has not been ignored in previous treatments of various omen collections, and specific examples of it have been described in limited detail.[103] Yet little if anything has been said concerning the question of its paradigmatic status or the extent to which it was recognized as such by the diviner. The following discussion seeks to redress this matter.

Four salient characteristics become apparent when assessing the considerable evidence of the T → M → B scheme. First and most notably, several recurrent themes appear in the articulation of the interpretations of the scheme's comprising units. Common among these is the apparent attempt to relate the T → M → B scheme into some coherent and meaningful theme—in other words, to translate this organizational framework into a cogent interpretive counterpart. As is argued below, this first characteristic, which to varying degree may stand behind the others, presents the most compelling case for our understanding of the T → M → B scheme as having been a veritable paradigm in the mind the diviner. A second characteristic is the manifest variation on the particular interpretive themes. For example, among those cases defining the T → M → B scheme in temporal or spatial terms, one encounters various expressions or conceptions of time and space. As is argued below, this variety is tied to the manipulation of individual variables of each passage within a given thematic framework. The third characteristic involves the creative or generative aspect of such passages, since an impressive array of passages can be pointed to where it seems clear that omens were generated on the basis of the T → M → B scheme and a given interpretive theme, whether from other preexisting entries or otherwise. Finally, the fourth characteristic involves the seemingly invariable appearance of exceptions to what has just been outlined. These characteristics are considered in the context of the interpretive themes in due course below.

4.2.1.1 The Spatial Interpretive Theme

Among the more dynamic expressions of the paradigmatic nature of the T → M → B scheme is the one relating it with various conceptions of physical space. At least seven such examples are known, and it is likely there are

in that instance the sequence is integrated into a structure organized according to colors and is thus discussed in that context (§ 5.1).

103 See already Scheil 1930: 146; also Biggs 1969: 161; Starr 1983a: 90, 115; Jeyes 2000: 366–8; George 2013: 171.

others still.[104] Common to all these is the equation between anatomical spatial configuration for a particular zone on the one hand and real-world geographical space on the other. However, it is significant to recognize that this equation is not unique to passages framed around the T → M → B scheme; one need only note the diversity in the organization of pairings according to contrastive spatial positioning (§ 3.3) to realize this much. It seems only natural to wonder about the relation between those examples of pairings arranged according to spatial positioning and those complex gradations organized according to the same factor (see also § 4.2.2).

Despite the variations of this scheme's interpretive possibilities, it is plain that in some manner each of the cases is based on a manipulation of the right/left opposition (§ 3.3.1) and, typically, the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism relating to this pairing. The clearest expression of this relationship appears in the second set of predictions[105] from ex. 4.58 as well as those of ex. 4.59 below. In these instances the respective association between the T → M → B (B → M → T in ex. 4.58) and Right → Middle → Left (or R → M → L; L → M → R in ex. 4.58) sequences is made explicitly:

4.58. Scheil A:26–32

26–28. *šumma tī<bi>*[106] *šumēlim ina* ***maṣraḫ*** *martim šakim-ma martam …*[107] ⇒ *nakrum ina ṣilli tamḫê ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš šumēl ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

29–30. *šumma tībi šumēlim ina* ***qabliat*** *martim šakim-ma martam …* ⇒ *nakrum ina muṣlālim*[108] *ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš abunnat ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

31–32. *šumma tībi šumēlim ina* ***rēš*** *martim šakim-ma martam …* ⇒ *nakrum ina ṣīt šamši ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš imitti ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

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104 See also *CUSAS* 18 25 r. 11'-13' (and note the other passages employing the T → M → B scheme from that text, quoted as 4.59; 4.66–4.67 below). The passage *YOS* 10 42 iii 25–30 is a probable ninth example (but note the wording there in l. 25).

105 For the first set, see § 4.2.1.2 below.

106 The BI sign, missing in the copy, appears in the transcription in Scheil 1930: 146.

107 The three signs here and in the same formulation in the following entries, seemingly UD[?]/ERIN$_2$-*Pi-iD*, undoubtedly represent a G predicative adjective, though of which verb is unclear. One might expect *lapātum*, for an association with the same verb in the apodosis, or alternatively *ṣabātum* (though it seems unlikely the signs are to be read *ṣab-bì-it* for *ṣabit*); other possibilities, such as *ebēṭum*, are less likely.

108 Text: *mu-uṣ*$^{\text{I}}$(ṢI)*-la-lim*.

26–28. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **cystic duct** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at dusk (or:) he will smite your army's left (flank)'
29–30. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **middle** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at midday (or:) he will smite your army's core'
31–32. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **top** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at dawn (or:) he will smite your army's right (flank).'

4.59. *YOS* 10 46 i 1–11 (// *CUSAS* 18 ob. 25:1–3;[109] cf. exx. 4.66–4.67 [= *YOS* 10 46 i 12–23; 24–36])[110]

1–3. *šumma kakki imittim ina **rēš** martim šak[im-ma] martam īmid-ma šumēlam inaṭṭa[l] ⇒ imitti nakrīka ta[d]â[k]*
4–7. *šumma kakki imittim ina **qa**[**b**]**liat** martim šakim-ma martam īmid-ma šumē[lam inaṭṭ]al ⇒ [abunnat] nakrīka tadâk*
8–11. *šumma kakki imittim ina **maṣraḫ** martim šakim-ma martam īmid-ma [š]umēlam inaṭṭal ⇒ šumēl nakrīka tadâk*

1–3. 'If the Weapon of the right was situated in the gallbladder's **head** [and] clung to the gallbladder and was facing the left ⇒ you will defeat your enemy's (army's) right (flank)'
4–7. 'If the Weapon of the right was situated in the gallbladder's **middle** and clung to the gallbladder and was facing the left ⇒ you will defeat your enemy's (army's) [center]'
8–11. 'If the Weapon of the right was situated in the gallbladder's **cystic duct** and clung to the gallbladder and was facing the left ⇒ you will defeat your enemy's (army's) left (flank).'

The predictions in these examples of a strike against one's own army or that of the enemy, at either its right or left flanks or even its core, are not intended symbolically as a statement on said strike's overall outcome; rather, right and

109 Note, however, the change of agent and patient in the apodoses of this version.
110 As noted by Starr 1983b: 115, this passage forms part of a larger passage, 36 lines in total, in which two additional T → M → B schemes appear. Needless to say, the integrity of this section is remarkable in terms of its organization and hermeneutics and should ideally not be split into its constituent parts as is the case here (something done for practical reasons only).

left are actually to be understood here in their literal sense. Nor for that matter does the occurrence on the gallbladder's middle in exx. 4.58, ll. 29–30 and 4.59, ll. 4–7 equate with either a neutral or ambiguous interpretation, as is the case elsewhere (e.g., ex. 4.60).[111] Perhaps unexpectedly, therefore, one finds in these examples an understanding of the R → M → L sequence, and for that matter the right/left opposition, that varies from the more typical signification(s) of right (and middle) and left.

By contrast with exx. 4.58–4.59, elsewhere where the T → M → B scheme conforms to an expression of physical space, it does so in ways more in keeping with the typical symbolism of the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition. However, perhaps paradoxically, since such associations do not define space in terms of right and (middle and) left per se, cases that interpret the T → M → B scheme according to the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition appear at first less conventional than exx. 4.58–4.59. Nevertheless, as is evident below, there can be no doubt regarding the decisive role played by the T → M → B scheme in the organization and creation of this type of paradigmatic interpretation.

The following passage offers an instructive example of the extent of the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism:

4.60. *YOS* 10 15:12–19 (cf. // *YOS* 10 17:31–33; ll. 15–16 = ex. 2.165)

12–14. *šumma ina* ***rēš*** *naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭlū* ⇒ *šarrum ayyumma ana salīmim išapparakku*[*m*(*-ma*)] *salīmšu teleqqe atta ina bartim būl*[*šu tezzib*]

15–16. *šumma ina* ***qabliat*** *naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭ*[*lū*] ⇒ *nanmurt*[*um*]

17–19. *šumma ina* ***išdī*** *naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭ*[*lū*] ⇒ *ana šarrim ayyimma ana salīmim taša*[*ppar*(*-ma*)] *salīmšu teleqqē šū ina bartim bū*[*lka izzib*]

12–14. 'If in the View's **top** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ some king will send (word) up to you for a peace agreement (and) you will accept his peace, (but) you, in a rebellion, [will abandon his] herd'

15–16. 'If in the View's **middle** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ (it forecasts) confrontation'

111 For a discussion of this general phenomenon, see § 4.2.1.6.

17–19. 'If in the View's **base** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ you will send (word) to some king for a peace agreement ([and]) you will indeed accept his peace, (but) he, in a rebellion, [will abandon your] herd.'

One must assume that the trickery depicted in the predictions of the first and third entries denotes a favorable turn of events on the part of its perpetrator. Clearly the apodoses from these entries stand in opposition to one another and represent, at least in part, the product of a generative-based logic. The *nanmurtu*-forecast of the middle entry is also notable in this regard and must also reflect deductive calculation.[112]

Thus, it is clear that this example makes use of the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition to indicate both the favorability of the particular omens and their feasibility: in the case of the feasible top and bottom entries, abandonment (of one's peace-treaty obligations?) implies escape, presumably in the direction of one's territory, and is thus to be reckoned favorably for its perpetrator; in the unfeasible middle, the *nanmurtu*-forecast entry reflects the reciprocity of this action, with the two sides canceling each other out, which renders the interpretation as neither favorable nor unfavorable. In sum, the T → M → B scheme in this example serves as the framework for a highly ordered paradigm, one which processes various data in the interpretive calculations, but which ultimately revolves around the top/middle/bottom variable in determining the viability of its predictions.

In the following example a(n enemy) force is depicted entering one's own territory, with varying degrees of success:

4.61. *YOS* 10 44:31–35

31. [*šumma šēpum ina* ***rē***]***šīša*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *šēp irrubakkum ina rēš eqlīša takaššassī*[*-ma*] *tadâ*[*kši*]

32–33. [*šumma šēpum ina* ***q***]***ablītīša*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *šēp irrubakkum ina erṣet ramānīša* [*takašš*]*assī-ma tadâkši*

34–35. [*šumma šēpum ina* ***išdī***]***ša*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *šēp irrubakkum ina erṣet ramānīša* [*takašša*]*ssī-ma tadâkši*

31. '[If (concerning) a Foot]—a hole was situated [in] **its top** ⇒ you will catch up to [and] slay the force coming your way in its destination'

112 On this point, see § 4.2.1.6, and note the parallel discussed in § 4.2.2.2.2.

32–33. '[If (concerning) a Foot]—a hole was situated [in] **its middle** ⇒ you [will catch] up to and slay the force coming your way in its own land'

34–35. '[If (concerning) a Foot]—a hole was situated [in] **its** [**base**] ⇒ you [will catch up] to and slay the force coming your way in its own land.'

Most probably the interpretation corresponding to the entry concerned with the top, which finds the enemy force reaching its destination,[113] that is, the domain of the *pars familiaris*, owes to a connection between the top and the *pars familiaris*. Correspondingly, the bottom entry describes the thwarting of the force in its own land, in other words, in the region understood as the *pars hostilis*. That from the egocentric vantage point the former entry is considered inauspicious and the latter auspicious supports the position that the T → M → B scheme often correlated with the *pars familaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism, although, as we have already noted, this is not always the case. As to why the apodosis of the middle entry anticipates verbatim that of the bottom, no certain answer can be offered—though it seems likely that this represents an instance of dittography at some level of the transmission process.[114]

An understanding of the logic behind this example helps to clarify the reasoning behind others as well. Indeed, an analogy may be drawn between the hermeneutic of this text and another occurring in the remaining passages that interpret the T → M → B scheme in terms of physical space. As in the last passage, the top-down progression appearing in the protases of exx. 4.62–4.63 below reflects a manipulation of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism, albeit in a different variation from what has been encountered. In these examples, progression through space is envisioned in only one direction and in only one side of the bipartite visual field, advancing, from an egocentric perspective, either toward the *pars familiaris* or the *pars hostilis*, according to the remaining variables of the protasis. Let us consider these in turn:

4.62. *YOS* 10 42 iv 31–36

31–32. *šumma ina* ***rēš*** *nīri kakkabum sāmum šakin* ⇒ *ina aḫiāt ālim išātum innappaḫ*

113 Note too the paronomastic association between "top" and "destination" (*rēšum* ↔ *rēš eqlim*).

114 For another possible such instance, see ex. 4.38 above.

33–34. *šumma ina* ***qabliat*** *nīri kakkabum sāmum šakin*[115] ⇒ *ina qabliat ālim išātum innappaḫ*
35–36. *šumma ina* ***qutun*** *nīri kakkabum sāmum šakin* ⇒ *ina libbi ālim išātum innappaḫ*

31–32. 'If a red star was situated in the Yoke's **top** ⇒ fire will blaze in the outskirts of the city'
33–34. 'If a red star was situated in the Yoke's **middle** ⇒ fire will blaze in the middle of the city'
35–36. 'If a red star was situated in the Yoke's **bottom** (lit., **thin part**) ⇒ fire will blaze in the midst of the city.'

4.63. *CT* 44 37 r. 3–5

3. [*šumma*] *ekal ubānim ina* ***rēš*** *ubānim ekim* ⇒ *nakrum ina libbi mātīya šallatam* [*ušeṣṣe* (?)]
4. [*šu*]*mma ekal ubānim ina* ***qabliat*** *ubānim ekim* ⇒ *nakrum ina ekallīya šallatam u*[*šeṣṣe* (?)]
5. *šumma ekal ubānim ina* ***išid*** *ubānim ekim* ⇒ *ilum ik*[*kal*][116]

3. '[If] the Finger's Palace was hidden in the Finger's **top** ⇒ the enemy [*will bring out*] plunder from my land'
4. 'If the Finger's Palace was hidden in the Finger's **middle** ⇒ the enemy [*will bring out*] plunder from my palace'
5. 'If the Finger's Palace was hidden in the Finger's **base** ⇒ the god will consume (i.e., pestilence).'

In the first example, the inauspicious forecast of fire common to all three entries is formulated according to the interpretation of the T → M → B scheme and envisioned as moving progressively inward (from the vantage point of the Self) within the domain of the *pars familiaris*—from the edge of town to its midst. The second example likely represents a similar instance, at least in the first two entries, in which the T → B shift is also reflected in a movement inward, deeper within the *pars familiaris*.[117]

115 Text: *ša-ki-in-*<<MA>>.

116 Text: *i-k*[*al*]; contra Jeyes 1989: 17, who reads *i-pa-*[*al*] and understands the god as "answering." Note this same (common) forecast in ob. ll. 8, 13 of this same text, with the verb written *i-kal* in both cases.

117 The apparent divergence of the third entry from this pattern is puzzling. One possible reason why the image was selected was for its sense of ubiquity, with the deity's imagined

The same logic appears, albeit with an opposite orientation, in the following example:

4.64. *YOS* 10 33 iii 37–45 (= ex. 2.65, ll. 37–45; cf. ex. 2.66)

37–39. *šumma māt ubānim* ***rēssa*** *ek*[*im*][118] ⇒ [*ḫa*]*lṣī alānī ša nakrīka tuš*[*erre*]*b-ma šallatam tušeṣṣea*[*m*]
40–42. *šumma māt ubānim ina* ***qablīša*** [*e*]*kmet* ⇒ *tu*<*še*>*rrem-ma ina abunnat nakrī*[*k*]*a šallatam tušeṣṣeam*
43–45. *šumma māt ubānim ina* ***išdīša*** *ekmet* ⇒ *ina zibbat māt nakrīka* [*tušerr*]*eb-ma šalla*[*tam tušeṣ*]*ṣeam*

37–39. 'If the land of the Finger was hiding in its **head** ⇒ you will penetrate the districts of the cities of your enemy and bring forth plunder (from them)'
40–42. 'If the land of the Finger was hiding in its **middle** ⇒ you will penetrate from the epicenter of your enemy('s land) and bring forth plunder (from it)'
43–45. 'If the land of the Finger was hiding in its **base** ⇒ you will penetrate in(to) the rear of enemy's land and bring forth plunder (from it).'

Accordingly, the favorable prediction concerning one's taking of plunder from enemy lands common to each of the entries advances (from one's own perspective) progressively outward, deeper within the region of the *pars hostilis*—from the enemy's (outermost) city districts to his land's rear.

It thus seems clear that the manner in which space is imagined in the preceding examples differs from what was observed for the cases of exx. 4.60–4.61. As we have seen, while both groups derive meanings for their omens on the basis of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism, with exx. 4.62–4.63 events are portrayed as occurring in only one side of the bipartite field. In this regard it is noteworthy that the middle entry in exx. 4.62–4.64 corresponds neatly to the midway point of the one-sided spatial progression in each passage: the city's middle (ex. 4.62, ll. 33–34) or the land's epicenter (ex. 4.64, ll. 40–42). In other words, middle does not mean here what it means elsewhere, that is, the

destruction seemingly everywhere—in a manner not too dissimilar from the general or abstract sense of final entries of color-based gradations (see § 5.1).

118 On the masculine form, whose subject is *rēssa*, cf. ex. 4.74 (= *YOS* 10 33 iii 27–36) below.

neutral and at times even ambiguous midpoint between *pars familiaris* and *pars hostilis* (or right and left). Rather, meaning in exx. 4.62–4.64 seems derivative of the manner in which the T → M → B scheme is applied.

What is particularly interesting about this last point and, more broadly, what is most significant for our purposes about the spatial interpretive theme involves our improved understanding of the employment of the scheme in the ordering and interpretation of particular omen gradations. After all, it is apparent that even among the cases of the (geographical) space-interpretive theme for the T → M → B scheme, different metaphorical-interpretive ideas applied in different situations, evidently in keeping with the information supplied in the omens' protases (summarized in Table 4.1 below). In this regard it is striking that, among those examples whose forecasts adhere to the more conventional application of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* hermeneutic (e.g., exx. 4.58–4.60), the conditions described in the protases do not seem clear in terms of the spatial orientation of their ominous mark. By contast, where the protasis's syntagm describes a clearer setting for the scene, in either the *pars familiaris* (e.g., ex. 4.62) or the *pars hostilis* (e.g., ex. 4.64), the T → M → B scheme, when employed, serves in qualifying gradations in more detailed and consequently creative ways.

TABLES 4.1A–D *Calculations of Space according to the Top→ Middle → Bottom Scheme*

a. Exx. 4.58 and 4.59:

Location	Ex. 4.58	Location	Ex. 4.59
Bottom	Left	**Top**	Right
Middle	Middle	**Middle**	Middle
Top	Right	**Bottom**	Left

b. Ex. 4.60:

Location	Correspondence: ideational	Correspondence: logical
Top	Craftiness by self	*Pars Familiaris*
Middle	*Nanmurtu*-forecast	Middle
Bottom	Craftiness by enemy	*Pars Hostilis*

TABLES 4.1A–D *Calculations of Space according to the Top→ Middle → Bottom Scheme* (cont.)

c. Ex. 4.61

Location	Correspondence: spatial (inter-regional)	Correspondence: logical
Top	Enemy's destination (*ina rēš eqlīša*)	*Pars Familiaris*
Middle	?	Middle (?)
Bottom	Enemy's own land (*ina erṣet ramānīša*)	*Pars Hostilis*

d. Exx. 4.62–4.63:

Location	Correspondence: spatial (inner-regional): Ex. 4.62	Correspondence: spatial (inner-regional): Ex. 4.64	Correspondence: spatial (inner-regional): Ex. 4.63
Top	City's edge (*aḫiāt ālim*)	Cities' outer districts (*ḫalṣū alānī*)	Land's midst (*libbi mātim*)
Middle	City's middle (*qabliat ālim*)	Land's epicenter (*abunnat mātim*)	Palace (*ekallum*)
Bottom	City's heart (*libbi ālim*)	Land's rear (*zibbat mātim*)	Pestilence (*ilum ikkal*)

Granted, with the data at hand it would be unwise and perhaps impossible to map out a comprehensive statement for every interpretive variation witnessed and theoretically conceivable, and it may be that a comprehensive logic or thematic structure was never fully articulated (on this point, see § 4.2.1.5 below). Nonetheless our findings illustrate that some degree of systematization did reign in the interpretation of the T → M → B scheme in terms of physical space. Therefore, it may be said that, inconsistencies aside, the spatial interpretive theme provided at least one coherent[119] option for the interpretation of

119 My use of coherence over against consistency with respect to metaphorical constructs builds on Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 41–5.

complex gradations organized according to spatial positioning data, specifically data centered on the T → M → B scheme.

4.2.1.2 The Temporal Interpretive Theme

A second interpretive theme to the T → M → B scheme, almost as common as the one concerning space, involves temporal considerations. A considerable number of passages in which the theme is attested are known, and, as in the case of those passages concerning the spatial theme, these too testify to the malleability of the idea they advance, especially in the manner by which time and its progress[120] was envisioned. Moreover, in several of these passages the idea of temporal progression also proves instructive in terms of its conceptual proximity to other interpretive themes, including that of space. In what follows these two angles—the multifaceted character of the temporal interpretive theme and its similarities to counterpart metaphors—are explored. It shall be seen that these offer instructive evidence about the creative and generative processes at work behind the passages in which omens are ordered in the T → M → B scheme and are interpreted according to the theme of the progression of time.

In fact, an equation relating a T → M → B scheme with a temporal progression was encountered earlier in the discussion of the spatial interpretive theme. The following passage already appeared above (§ 4.2.1.1), where its discussion focused on the second set of predictions, those concerning which side of the army is to be struck. Yet in the counterpart first set the same passage also correlates the T → M → B scheme with a temporal progression (dusk → midday → dawn) describing times at which an enemy is forecast to battle one's army:

4.65. Scheil A:26–32 (= ex. 4.58)

26–28. *šumma tī<bi>šumēlim ina* ***maṣraḫ*** *martim šakim-ma martam … ⇒ nakrum ina ṣilli tamḫê ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš šumēl ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

29–30. *šumma tībi šumēlim ina* ***qabliat*** *martim šakim-ma martam … ⇒ nakrum ina muṣlālim ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš abunnat ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

120 As Lakoff and Johnson 1980 demonstrate, it is virtually impossible to speak about the idea of time without resorting to some metaphorical construct in which that idea is embodied. This reality poses a challenge for the discussion below, since it is difficult to appraise the Mesopotamian take on this matter without the mixing in of modern metaphors. *Faute de mieux*, I have tried to base my judgments on the plain sense of the text, something facilitated by the framework of the T → M → B scheme.

31–32. *šumma tībi šumēlim ina* ***rēš*** *martim šakim-ma martam … ⇒ nakrum ina ṣīt šamši ittīka tāḫāzam ippuš imitti ummānīka nakrum ilappat*

26–28. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **cystic duct** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at dusk (or:) he will smite your army's left (flank)'
29–30. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **middle** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at midday (or:) he will smite your army's core'
31–32. 'If the Left's Rise was situated in the gallbladder's **top** and it was … the gallbladder ⇒ the enemy will do battle with you at dawn (or:) he will smite your army's right (flank).'

At first glance the progression of time in this sequence may seem puzzling. However, it must be recalled that ex. 4.65 is unique among those passages organized according to the T → M → B scheme in presenting its sequence in reverse (B → M → T). Thus, the passage of time from dusk to dawn via the midday hour does not represent an aberration from the expected; it is simply to be regarded as the reverse of more typical forward progressions, much like the left to right sequence of the spatial metaphor in the second alternatives discussed above.

Along with this example, other gradations describing the forward progress of time as a mirror of the T → M → B scheme occur in three passages below. Among these the following example depicts the procession of time according to a sequence analogous to that of the previous passage:

4.66. *YOS* 10 46 i 12–23 (cf. // *CUSAS* 18 ob. 25:4–6; exx. 4.59 [*YOS* 10 46 i 1–11]; 4.67 [*YOS* 10 46 i 24–36])

12–15. *šumma kakki imittim ina* ***rēš*** *martim ubān lā ṭeḫiam šakim-*[*ma*] *šumēlam inaṭṭa*[*l*] ⇒ *ina šiḫiṭ šamši nakram tasa*[*kkip*]
16–19. *šumma kakki imittim ina* ***q***[***abl***]***ia***[***t***] *martim ubān lā ṭeḫiam šakim-ma š*[*u*]*mēlam inaṭṭal* ⇒ *ina muṣlālim nakram tasakkip*
20–23. [*šumma kakki im*]*ittim ina* ***maṣraḫ*** *martim* [*ubān lā ṭ*]*eḫiam šakim-ma* [*šumēlam*] *inaṭṭal* ⇒ [*ina kins*]*ikkim nakram tasakkip*

12–15. 'If the Weapon of the right—not approaching (more than) a Finger (away in length)[121]—was situated in the gallbladder's

121 The understanding of this difficult clause is considerably aided by the parallel tradition in *CUSAS* 18 ob. 25:4–6, which has in its place *ubān issī-ma*, "(is) one Finger away (from it)"; see George 2013: 172.

head [and] was facing the left ⇒ you will repulse the enemy at sunrise'

16–19. 'If the Weapon of the right—not approaching (more than) a Finger (away in length)—was situated in the gallbladder's **middle** and was facing the left ⇒ you will repulse the enemy at midday'

20–23. '[If the Weapon of the right—[not] approaching (more than) [a Finger] (in length)—was situated in the gallbladder's **cystic duct** and was facing [the left] ⇒ you will repulse the enemy [in] late afternoon.'

Interestingly, despite their common interpretive theme, these texts are not identical to one another in terms of their phraseology. For instance, ex. 4.66, which relates the T → M → B scheme to the passage of time from morning to evening, differs from ex. 4.65 in the terminology used for these purposes: in ex. 4.65 these are called respectively *ṣīt šamšim* and *ṣilli tamḫê*, dawn and dusk, while in ex. 4.66 the same periods are referred to as *šiḫiṭ šamšim* and *kinsikkum*, sunrise[122] and late afternoon (see Table 4.2a below).

Nor is the time frame by which forward progress is conveyed identically from text to text. A different perspective from that of morning to evening occurs in the following two examples; while these also depict a forward progression, their depiction uses the three prototypical markers of nighttime: *barārtum* → *qablītum* → *šāt urrim*, dusk watch → midnight watch → dawn watch:[123]

4.67. *YOS* 10 46 i 24–36 (cf. // *CUSAS* 18 ob. 25:7–9; exx. 4.59 [*YOS* 10 46 i 1–11]; 4.66 [*YOS* 10 46 i 12–23])

24–28. [*šumma kakki imittim ina* ***rēš*** *m*]*artim šittā ubā*⌜*nātim*⌝ [*l*]*ā ṭeḫiam šakim-m*[*a*] *šumēlam inaṭṭal* ⇒ *ina barārtim nakram tasakkip*

29–32. *šumma kakki imittim ina* ***qabliat*** *martim šittā ubānātim lā ṭeḫiam šakim-ma šumēlam inaṭṭal* ⇒ *ina qablītim nakram tasakkip*

33–36. [*šumma*] *kakki imittim ina* ***maṣraḫ*** *martim šittā ubānātim lā ṭeḫiam šakim-ma* [*š*]*umēlam inaṭṭal* ⇒ *ina šāt urrim nakram tasakkip*

122 For a more specific sense of *šiḫiṭ šamšim*, see Heimpel 1997.

123 Note that the textual juxtaposition of exx. 4.66–4.67 renders a complete daily cycle: *šiḫiṭ šamšim* → *muṣlālum* → *kinsikum* → *barārtum* → *qablītum* → *šāt urrim*; see further below.

24–28. '[If the Weapon of the right]—not exceeding two Fingers (in length)—was situated [in the] gallbladder's [**head**] and was facing the left ⇒ you will repulse the enemy in the dusk watch'
29–32. 'If the Weapon of the right—not exceeding two Fingers (in length)—was situated in the gallbladder's **middle** and was facing the left ⇒ you will repulse the enemy in the midnight watch'
33–36. '[If] the Weapon of the right—not exceeding two Fingers (in length)—was situated in the **cystic duct** of the gallbladder and was facing the left ⇒ you will repulse the enemy in the dawn watch.'

4.68. MAH 15874:1–9 (text a') // *YOS* 10 17:49–51 (= exx. 2.72; 4.73)

1–3. // 49. *šumma ina **rēš** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ (a' adds: *ina nišūt awīlim ū lū*) *ina aštapir bīt awīlim mamman imât šanûm šumšu namtalli barārtim*
4–6. // 50. *šumma ina **qabliat** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina aḫitti awīlim mamman imât* (a' adds: *ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar*) [*šanû*]*m šumšu namtalli qablītim*
7–9. // 51. *šumma ina **išdī** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina nišūt awīlim* (a' adds: *ū lū ina aštapir awīlim*) *mamman imât šanûm šumšu namtalli šāturrim*

1–3. // 49. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **head** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among (a' adds: the man's family or from among) the servants of the man's household; its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the dusk watch'
4–6. // 50. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **middle** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's dependents (a' adds: or: the river will … the man); its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the midnight watch'
7–9. // 51. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **base** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's family (a' adds: or from among the servants of the man's <household>); its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the dawn watch.'

More impressive than these prescribed conceptions of time are those in several passages in which time is imagined in broader, less delineated terms. The following example represents one such case, with three temporal points forecasting the harvest's destruction at different stages of the agricultural cycle:

4.69. *TIM* 9 78:5–7

5. *šumma ina* ***rēš*** *naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u sām ⇒ inib šattim Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
6. *šumma ina* ***qabliat***[124] *naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u sām ⇒ ḫurpa Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
7. *šumma ina* ***išdī*** *naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u sām ⇒* ⌜*up*⌝*lētim*[125] *Adad iraḫḫiṣ*

5. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's **top** and it was red ⇒ Adad will devastate the year's (first) fruit(s)[126]'
6. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's **middle** and it was red ⇒ Adad will devastate the early crop'
7. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's **base** and it was red ⇒ Adad will devastate the late crop.'

From the prediction of the damage to the early fruit in the first entry, the text moves to what follows in the agricultural cycle, with the forecasts of the middle and final entries finding the same fate for the early crop and late crops, respectively. In all likelihood the reference here is to the main agricultural staple, grain(s), the subject of similar forecasts describing Adad's devastation elsewhere.[127] As is well known, the Mesopotamian grain harvest was comprised of different parts, of which the earlier centered on barley and the later on wheat.[128]

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124 Text: $\text{murub}_4^{!}$(⌜RA?⌝); noted already in the copy by van Dijk.

125 This reading, following *AHw*, 1423 and *CAD* U/W, 180, now finds support in a Sealand *šumma izbu* omen, whose apodosis reads: *ḫurpī uplāti Adad iraḫḫiṣ* KIMIN *ūmū* [*īṣūtum* (?)], "Adad will devastate the early and late crops; ditto: *few* days" (*CUSAS* 18 29 r. 34'); see also the sequence x še *ḫurpu* x še *uplētu*, x early barley, x late barley (UCP 10 110 no. 35:25).

126 The translation of *inib šattim* in *YOS* 10 33 iv 59–60 by *CAD* I, 145 as "ripened fruit" is unjustified. More likely this phrase reflects an abbreviation or ellipsis of *inib pān šattim*, or "early fruiting"; see *CAD* I/J, 145; M/2, 298.

127 E.g., *Adad še'am awīlūtim ir*[*aḫḫiṣ*], "Adad will devastate barley and people" (*YOS* 10 39 ob. 38); *Adad maškanāti iraḫḫi*[*ṣ*], "Adad will devastate the threshing-floors" (*CUSAS* 18 14:43). Indeed, a passage from the text from which the present example stems may itself supply important evidence in this respect: a devastation of early crops by Adad (*ḫurpa … Adad iraḫḫiṣ*) in l. 12 is followed by a reference to barley and flax (*še'am u šamaššammī*) in ll. 13–14, though unfortunately a break in that entry prevents a clear sense of what is the precise forecast with respect to these items; see further ex. 5.10.

128 See briefly Postgate 1992: 169–70.

It is thus tempting to read these contextual details into the present passage, though caution seems advisable in light of the limited evidence at hand.

In the following instance the T → M → B scheme corresponds to the time remaining before an infirm person's predicted death:

4.70. *YOS* 10 33 iii 4–9

4–5. *šumma ubānum* ***r***[***ēssa*** *pališ*] ⇒ *ana sebet*[129] *ūmī* [*mar*]*ṣ*[*u im*]*ât*
6–7. *šumma ubānum ina* ***qablī***[***ša***] *pa*[*lšat*] ⇒ *ana erbet ūmī marṣu imâ*[*t*]
8–9. [*šumma u*]*bānum* ***išissa*** *pališ* ⇒ *ana* [*... ū*]*mi*/*ī* [*marṣu*] *imât*

4–5. 'If (concerning) the Finger, [its] **head** [was punctured] ⇒ the infirm will die within seven days'
6–7. 'If the Finger, [its] **middle part** was punctured ⇒ the infirm will die within four days'
8–9. 'If (concerning) the Finger, its **base** was punctured ⇒ [the infirm] will die within [...] day(s).'

The measure appears to diminish according to the move from the top down, with the greatest span corresponding to the top entry, a shorter period to the middle, and presumably a shorter period still to the bottom.[130] Why the specific figures of seven and four (and [?]) days were selected is difficult to say.

Whatever the case, it would seem for this passage that the movement from the top downward is interpreted as a regression of time, from a furthermost point in the future to one closer to the present. This case is interesting in another manner: unlike the cyclical-temporal sense in the previous examples, here time appears to be construed linearly. Furthermore, as noted, since the greatest span of time in this example corresponds to the Top entry, and the shortest presumably with the Bottom, it becomes evident that the articulation of the temporal interpretive theme in this example assumes an orientation whereby the top of the T → M → B scheme corresponds to the future and the bottom to the present. Two points follow from this conception of time. First, from an egocentric perspective it is apparent that the top-down procession presupposes a present-day vantage point, that is, one that conceived the future at a

129 The reading of this number and the following as cardinals is uncertain; as is well known, the ud.x.kam formula served the expression of ordinals as well. Happily, the meaning of the passage in either case would remain the same.

130 Of course without the figure from the final entry (ll. 8–9) in this example it is not altogether certain that this is the case. Still, in light of the overall pattern this seems logical, and one imagines that the number in the break in ll. 8–9 is either 1 or, less likely, 2 or 3.

distance and the present as nearby. Second, to the extent that the delay of death was understood as advantageous, it is also clear that the idea of time in ex. 4.70 intertwines with an additional temporal metaphor—namely, time as a valuable entity—with more time viewed as favorable to less, as in our own culture.[131]

Considerably different is the case of ex. 4.69, in which time progresses forward and no obvious vantage point can be supposed. And certainly this example diverges from ex. 4.70 in terms of the linear presentation of time, since if, theoretically, the sequence in it were extrapolated, time would assume the cyclical nature that characterizes the passing of seasons; the same would not hold for ex. 4.70, for which in theory an extension of time, pinning the infirm person's death even further in the future, would logically be translated into even more favorable forecasts.

Regardless of these difficulties and differences, what is common to and arguably most illuminating about the employment of the temporal interpretive theme in both these examples is the reasoning underlying their progression of time. The time conceptualizations in these examples certainly owe much to the interpretive framework, and thus one is well served to review the hermeneutic associations underlying these examples. These involve *ziḫḫum* in ex. 4.69, which, as is the case here, is also linked elsewhere to forecasts describing a devastation by Adad, and a punctured zone in ex. 4.70, which elsewhere is frequently associated with death. Additionally, no explicit right/left variable appears in either example, which, as observed earlier, means that by default both assumed an egocentric orientation.

Thus, it is clear that the syntagma common to the entries of both exx. 4.69 and 4.70 spelled trouble for oneself, that is, the *pars familiaris*, and in this context the T → M → B scheme served an important role in the qualification of the inauspicious predictions. The interpretation of anatomical space in terms of a temporal gradation in these examples thus functions like the expression of spatial positions in some of the examples studied above. In those instances it was observed that the application of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism is employed to qualify broader forecasts about some form of (military) engagement within either the *pars familiaris* or *pars hostilis*. It was seen that this was achieved by way of a linear progression that moves inwardly from the outermost reaches of either the *pars familiaris* or the *pars hostilis* to the innermost point. In this manner what is inauspicious for oneself or the enemy is given depth and nuance via the interpretation of the T → M → B scheme. It may now

131 On this supposition behind many metaphorical concepts about the value of time, see Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 7–9; for a more detailed discussion of the metaphorization and categorization of time, see Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 137–69.

be seen that one finds the same interpretive principle at work in at least one of the passages employing the temporal interpretive theme as well.

Indeed, it is not unlikely that the case of ex. 4.70 operated by analogy to this logic, equating the present—that is, what is construed as nearby—with the *pars familiaris*. This suggestion is buttressed by the time-as-value metaphor noted in this example, which seems to assess the longer span(s) of time more favorably than the shorter ones. The predictions in these passages being negative, the temporal interpretive theme qualifies the general pronouncement and defines it further as things progress deeper into the *pars familiaris.* One could imagine that this would have worked in the opposite direction as well concerning negative forecasts about the enemy (i.e., deeper in the *pars hostilis*), though evidence is needed to verify this hypothesis.

TABLES 4.2A–C *Calculations of time according to the Top → Middle → Bottom scheme*

a. Temporal Progression—Day Cycle[132]

Location	Ex. 4.65[133]	Ex. 4.66	Exx. 4.67, 4.68
Top	Dawn (*ṣīt šamši*)	Sunrise (*šiḫiṭ šamši*)	Dusk watch (*barārtum*)
Middle	Midday (*muṣlālum*)	Midday (*muṣlālum*)	Midnight watch (*qablītum*)
Bottom	Dusk (*ṣilli tamḫê*)	Late afternoon (*kinsikkum*)	Dawn watch (*šāt urrim*)

132 Cf. also *CT* 51 152:4–6 (SB extispicy; Starr 1983b: 115):

Location	Interpretation
Top	Dawn (gi_6.sá.a = *kaṣâtu*)
Middle	Midday (an.bar_7 = *muṣlālu*)
Bottom	Evening (an.usán = *šimētān*)

133 Order of entries inverted for the sake of comparison.

b. Temporal Progression—Seasonal Cycle

Location	Ex. 4.69
Top	Devastation of year's first fruit (*inib šattim*)
Middle	Devastation of early crop (*ḫurpum*)
Bottom	Devastation of late crop (*uplētum*)

c. Temporal Regression—Linear

Location	Ex. 4.70
Top	Death for infirm in 7 days
Middle	Death for infirm in 4 days
Bottom	Death for infirm in [...] day(s)

Whatever the case, one thing that is clear with respect to the temporal interpretive theme is arguably its most significant attribute: its very existence, with the transformation it facilitates from the spatial orientation of the T → M → B scheme to the temporal realm. Indeed, as we have seen, in at least one instance (ex. 4.65) the point is made essentially explicitly, with the temporal interpretive theme juxtaposed as an alternative to the spatial one. Elsewhere (ex. 4.70) this connection seems implicit and indirect and, as suggested earlier, based on the application of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* symbolism, with a focus on one side from this pairing. The latter is likely the reasoning behind exx. 4.66–4.69 as well, in which the progression appears to base itself on the top entry as corresponding to the beginning of a linear span and the bottom to the end. In ex. 4.66 this is achieved by equating the top with sunrise, in exx. 4.67 and 4.68 with the first of the night watches, and in ex. 4.69 with three distinct points in the agricultural cycle. That these two options represent two sides of the same coin seems certain when one realizes that exx. 4.66 and 4.67 comprise one long and uninterrupted passage, *YOS* 10 46 i 12–36, in which two cycles in the T → M → B scheme correspond to a six-stage, 24-hour period that begins with

the dawn (*šiḫiṭ šamšim* [ll. 12–15]) of one day and ends with that (*šāt urrim* [ll. 33–36]) of the next.[134]

In short, time was conceived in different ways in the omen collections according to a number of factors, hermeneutic or otherwise. Time could be imagined linearly or cyclically, and as moving, from one's own perspective, either forward or backward. Such varied conceptions open a window into the mind of the diviner and offer insights not only into the employment of the temporal interpretive theme but, more importantly, the creative and generative processes behind the formation of these passages. To be sure, in implementing different conceptions the diviner did not invent anything new. As in most civilizations, Mesopotamian concepts of time were both multifaceted and complex—and in full bloom in the written record.[135] Thus it may not be said that, with their interest in this topic,[136] the omen collections stand apart significantly from other writings.

However, what is outstanding about the conception of temporal space in the present context is the unifying factor behind the diverse expressions exhibited in the texts we have studied. For notwithstanding the malleability manifest in these variations, it is clear that the temporal interpretive theme operated within the collections' broader hermeneutic framework. As we have seen, this framework enabled the translation of the T → M → B scheme according to a diviner's prerogative and as a particular situation called for. Within this framework the T → M → B scheme was occasionally rendered in temporal terms.

A final consideration of exx. 4.65 and 4.68 illustrates this point in the starkest terms possible. The juxtaposition of an alternative set of interpretations in both these instances permits a comparison of the manner in which the temporal interpretive theme stood against others, in the case of ex. 4.65 involving space and in ex. 4.68 social hierarchies (see § 4.2.1.3). Accordingly, in ex. 4.65 the dusk → midday → dawn progression corresponds to the passage from Left → Middle → Right; in ex. 4.68 the sequence of three nighttime watches matches up with what appears to be, from an egocentric perspective and according to

134 See already n. 123.

135 For a brief summary of time in Mesopotamian thought, see Glassner 2004b: 3–33, esp. 7–10. However, as this discussion demonstrates, I cannot concur with the statement there (ibid.: 7) that "Mesopotamia did not know linear time."

136 Though not in the manner articulated earlier on, most famously in Finkelstein 1963, where, briefly stated, a "strong empiricist" model of divination is directly and in large part responsible for the development of Mesopotamian historiography and the latter's interest in the reckoning of time. For more recent appreciations on this matter, see Glassner 2001; 2004b.

the theme of social hierarchies, an inward progression from the outer reaches to the innermost part of the *pars familiaris*. A summary of these findings appears in Table 4.3:

TABLE 4.3 *Comparison of interpretive structure(s) in Exx. 4.65 and 4.68*

Ex. 4.65	**Ex. 4.65**	**Direction of progress**	**Ex. 4.68**	**Ex. 4.68**
Dusk (*ṣīt šamšim*)	Left	*Pars hostilis* / Outer *pars familiaris*	Man's household servants	Dusk watch (*barārtum*)
Midday (*muṣlālum*)	Middle	↓	Man's dependents	Midnight watch (*qablītum*)
Dawn (*ṣilli tamḫêm*)	Right	*Pars familiaris* / Inner *pars familiaris*	Man's family	Dawn watch (*šāt urrim*)

An examination of the data from exx. 4.65 and 4.68 proves illuminating. That the labels corresponding to dusk and dawn are aligned here—the former representing the first entry, the latter the last—is hardly coincidental. However, by no means should this configuration be held as universal. The reverse is attested elsewhere: as discussed above, in ex. 4.66 it is sunrise and late afternoon that correspond with the first and third entries, respectively (see Table 4.2a). It may thus be asked why dusk and dawn were assigned their respective slots in exx. 4.65 and 4.68. And why, moreover, was the conventional T → M → B scheme turned on its head (⇒ B → M → T) in ex. 4.65?

Answers to these questions reveal themselves when one factors in the remaining passages we considered that incorporate the temporal interpretive theme. As noted earlier, in the case of ex. 4.70 the linear and unidirectional conception of time understands the top entry as the least unfavorable and the bottom as the most inauspicious. It was argued that this progression operates according to the symbolism of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition; more specifically, it acts to qualify one of these fields. Accordingly, the shift from top to bottom represents a move deeper into the *pars familiaris* (i.e., far away → close by from the present-day perspective). The same logic is actually

operative in the alternative interpretations of exx. 4.65 and 4.68 as well: with ex. 4.65 this comes through in the L → M → R sequence of the spatial interpretive theme;[137] with ex. 4.68 it is the logic of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition that determines the inward progression toward the most intimate according to the social theme (§ 4.2.1.3).

Thus, at least in part the organization of exx. 4.65 and 4.68 adheres to the logic of the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition. Yet, upon reconsideration it seems as if this logic must have extended to the predictions mediated according to the temporal interpretive theme as well. Each, it appears, had been positioned in coordination with the other interpretive theme in its respective passage, such that dusk would correspond with the forecast associated with the *pars hostilis* (ex. 4.65: Left; ex. 4.68: man's households servants) and dawn with the *pars familiaris* (ex. 4.65: Right; ex. 4.68: man's family).

From this angle the questions raised earlier all but answer themselves. The assignment of time in its respective slots in exx. 4.65 and 4.68 (and the reversal of its actual course in ex. 4.67, as well as the inversion of the tripartite anatomical structure in ex. 4.65) were undertaken in order to compute the interpretive results—though with a foregone conclusion. Time in these examples would have to agree with a preconceived scheme, a scheme framed on the *pars familiaris* → *pars hostilis* sequence and ordered from the less to the more inauspicious within one of these fields. In short, the foregoing analysis reveals that, notwithstanding the varied nature of the representations of time in those passages that convey meaning for the T → M → B scheme in terms of the temporal interpretive theme, all these follow one rule. And once more it becomes clear that this rule builds on established organizational and hermeneutic ideas that promoted generative-based expression in the omen collections.

4.2.1.3 The Social-Hierarchies Interpretive Theme

A third interpretive theme for the T → M → B scheme relates it to different social hierarchies. At least three examples belonging to this type are known.[138] Each of these sequences interprets the tripartite zonal progression according to hierarchies whose life setting range from the private or semi-private sphere to the public-royal. Of interest here, as earlier, is the relation between the T → M → B scheme and the elements comprising each interpretive sequence, and the possibility that the latter were derived according to the former.

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137 While it is true (as was argued earlier in § 4.2.1.1) that left and right in this passage are to be understood literally, namely, as the left and right flanks of the army, this does not mean that this surface structure was not based on the *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis* opposition.

138 And see ex. 4.74 in § 4.2.1.4.

In the case of the following example, the sequence of *mār šarrim* → *lā ḫassum* → *mār muškēnim* (son of the king → idiot → commoner), appears to convey a regression in social standing:

4.71. AO 7539:7–9 (cf. // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 9'-11')

7. [*šumma qerbū aš*]*ar* ***mušēribti*** *dakšū* ⇒ *mār šarri kussia iṣabba*[*t*]
8. [*šumma qe*]*rbū ina* ***abunnatīšunu*** *dakšū* ⇒ *lā ḫassu māta ibêl*
9. [*šumma q*]*erbū ina* ***qutnīšunu*** *dakšū* ⇒ *mār muškēni kussia iṣabbat*

7. '[If the intestines] were *bulging* at the **entrance duct** ⇒ a son of the king will seize the throne'
8. '[If] the intestines were *bulging* in **their center part** ⇒ an idiot will rule the land'
9. '[If] the intestines were *bulging* in **their thin** (**part**) ⇒ a commoner will seize the throne.'

The same logic potentially accounts for the sequence *sukkalmaḫḫum* → *bārûm* → *zabardabbûm* (chancellor → diviner → chief *armor bearer*) in the following passage; this might explain the placement of the *sukkalmaḫḫum* (< sukkal. maḫ), in the top position, though it is unclear whether this stems from paronomasia (i.e., maḫ/*ṣīrum* ↔ *rēšum*) or a real or perceived understanding of the Mesopotamian palace's social make-up:

4.72. *YOS* 10 31 iii 45–iv 6 (// *CUSAS* 18 10 ii 3–10' [restored]; = ex. 3.6 [apodoses only])

iii 45–iii 49. *šumma martum* ***appaša*** *damam lapit* ⇒ *sukkalmaḫḫum immaḫḫaṣ*
iii 50–iii 54. *šumma martum* ***qablāša*** *damam laptā* ⇒ *bārûm* (<*immaḫḫaṣ*>)
iv 1–iv 6. *šumma martum* ***šapassa*** *damam lapit* ⇒ *zabardabbûm immaḫḫaṣ*
iii 45–iii 49. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder, its (**top**) **tip** was smeared with blood ⇒ the chancellor will be killed'
iii 50–iii 54. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder, its **middle parts** were smeared with blood ⇒ the diviner (<will be killed>)'
iv 1–iv 6. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder, its (**bottom**) "**lip**" was smeared with blood ⇒ the chief *armor bearer* will be killed.'

Yet any hope of a single line of reasoning underlying the passages exhibiting the social-hierarchies theme is dashed when one turns to the following example. In this instance the T → M → B scheme is matched by the sequence of a man's household servants → dependents → family,[139] ostensibly representing, in terms of one's own social circles, an inward progression toward the most intimate:

4.73. MAH 15874:1–9 (text a') // *YOS* 10 17:49–51 (= exx. 2.72; 4.68)

1–3. // 49. *šumma ina **rēš** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ (a' adds: *ina nišūt awīlim ū lū*) *ina aštapir bīt awīlim mamman imât šanûm šumšu namtalli barārtim*
4–6. // 50. *šumma ina **qabliat** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina aḫitti awīlim mamman imât* (a' adds: *ū lū nārum awīlam i-x-ar*) [*šanû*]*m šumšu namtalli qablītim*
7–9. // 51. *šumma ina **išdī** naplaštim ina imittim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ina nišūt awīlim* (a' adds: *ū lū ina aštapir awīlim*) *mamman imât šanûm šumšu namtalli šāturrim*

1–3. // 49. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **head** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among (a' adds: the man's family or from among) the servants of the man's household; its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the dusk watch'
4–6. // 50. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **middle** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's dependents (a' adds: or: the river will … the man); its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the midnight watch'
7–9. // 51. 'If a hole was situated in the View's **base** in the right ⇒ someone will die from among the man's family (a' adds: or from among the servants of the man's <household>); its second interpretation: (it is) an eclipse in the dawn watch.'

The logic underlying this last sequence seems explicable, since the inward progression toward one's own family corresponds to an egocentric point of view. As we have seen, whether one is speaking about a spatial movement from far away to nearby, or a temporal one from future time to present day, other passages sharing this vantage point are all predicated on the opposition of *pars*

139 On the secondary nature of the altenatives in the MAH 15874 version of this passage (a'), see the discussion of this passage (ex. 2.72) in Chapter 2.

TABLE 4.4 *Social hierarchies according to the Top → Middle → Bottom scheme*

Location	Ex. 4.71	Ex. 4.72	Ex. 4.73
Top	Son of king (*mār šarrim*)	Chancellor (*sukkalmaḫḫum*)	Man's household servants (*aštapir bīt awīlim*)
Middle	Idiot (*lā ḫassum*)	Diviner (*bārûm*)	Man's dependents (*aḫiāt awīlim*)
Bottom	Commoner (*mār muškēnim*)	Chief *armor bearer* (*zabardabbûm*)	Man's family (*nišūt awīlim*)

hostilis and *pars familiaris*. It is thus likely that here too things progressed according to this principle, though here the top entry (i.e., the one for which a death forecast for someone from among the *aštapir bīt awīlim* is predicted) is better described not as a positive option but as the least negative one. As it stands here the sequence progressing from the least to the most inauspicious reflects a qualification of only one field, in this case the *pars familiaris*. As to why this interpretative line was articulated via the set {*aštapir bīt awīlim, aḫiāt awīlim, nišūt awīlim*} and not one based on a more conventional *pars hostilis*/*pars familiaris* opposition, one can only speculate.

As compared with that of ex. 4.73, the logic of exx. 4.71 and 4.72 proves more difficult to explain (see Table 4.4). In the case of the better-understood ex. 4.71, even if one reasonably assumes that the equation of the top with prince and the bottom with commoner reflects the Mesopotamian social hierarchy, it remains unclear how this passage was grasped in its cultural context. Was the seizure of a throne by one's own son considered more appalling than were the same act committed by a *muškēnum*? No certain answer can be offered to this question, nor to the analogous one concerning ex. 4.72, where even the correlation between the T → M → B scheme and the *sukkalmaḫḫum* → *bārûm* → *zabardabbûm* stratification presents considerable obstacles. In short, what principle, if any, guided the diviner in the assembly of these entries remains unclear (but see §§ 4.2.1.5–4.2.1.6).

4.2.1.4 Other Interpretive Themes

Additional interpretive themes are attested for omen gradations framed around the T → M → B scheme. These could seemingly cover an array of topics. In the following example the predictions center on the squandering of goods in one's domain:

4.74. *YOS* 10 33 iii 27–36 (= ex. 2.65, ll. 27–36 [apodoses only])

27–30. *šumma māt* [*u*]*bānim* ***rēssa*** *eki*[*m*] ⇒ *sarrum in*[*a*] *libbi mātim lū rēša lū amtam ana* [*mātim*] *nakartim ušeṣṣe*
31–33. *šumma māt ubānim ina* ***qablīš***[***a*** *ekmet*] ⇒ *apil awīlim wa*[*ṣû*]*tam illak*[(*-ma*)[140]] *bīt ab*[*īšu*] *usappa*[*ḫ*]
34–36. *šumma māt ubānim ina* ***išdīša*** *ek*[*im*][141] ⇒ *aššat awīlim waṣûta*[*m*] *illak-m*[*a*] *makkūr*[142] *mutīša u*[*sa*]*ppa*[*ḫ*]

27–30. 'If (concerning) the Finger's land, its **head** was hidden ⇒ a criminal will bring out either a male or female slave from the midst of the land to a hostile [land]'
31–33. 'If the Finger's land [was hidden] in its **middle** ⇒ the man's heir will gad about [and] squander [his] father's household'
34–36. 'If the Finger's land was hidden in its **base** ⇒ the man's wife will gad about and squander her husband's valuables.'

A different concern occurs in the following passage, which relates the T → M → B scheme to a natural calamity, with ruinous effects to the land's agricultural supplies either implied or spelled out:

4.75. AO 7539:77–80

77. *šumma ina* ***rēš*** *girginnê qerbī ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ *Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
78. *šumma ina* ***qabal*** *girginnê qerbī ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ *karê šarri bulṭitta illappatū*
79–80. *šumma ina* ***qutun*** *girginnê qerbī ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ *šāru lemnu itebbâm-ma še'um iḫalliq*

77. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the **head** of the … of the intestines ⇒ Adad will devastate'
78. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the **middle** of the … of the intestines ⇒ the royal stores will be infested by beetles'

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140 The space in the break permits this restoration, though cf. *CAD* A/1, 315 and A/2, 175, which restore the verb without the following conjunction.

141 Text: *e-k*[*i-im*], perhaps in agreement with a singular *išdum* (cf. *YOS* 10 34:6); and cf. ex. 4.64 (= *YOS* 10 33 iii 37–45), ll. 37–39 above.

142 Text: *ma-ak-ku*^{i}(MU)-*ur*; already noted in Goetze's copy.

79–80. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the **thin** (**part**) of the … of the intestines ⇒ a dangerous wind will rise up and (so) the barley will be lost.'

Finally, in the following example a common thread seems to be extraction or penetration of things kept under guard, probably by one's enemy:

4.76. AO 7028:14–16 (21–25) (l. 15 = ex. 2.82; l. 16 = ex. 2.149)

14. [*šumma danānu*] ***rēssu*** *pališ* ⇒ *pirištaka u*[*šeṣṣe*[143]]
15. [*šumma danān*]*u ina* ***qablīšu*** *pališ* ⇒ *asurrāk*[*a nakrum*/*nakerka*] *ušaplaš šanû šumšu pirišta*[*ka*ʾ *u*]*šeṣṣe*
16. [*šumma in*]*a* ***maškan*** *danāni erištu* ⇒ *erišti dūr*[*i*] *nakrum dūram irriška*

14. '[If (concerning) the Strength]—**its head** was punctured ⇒ he [will divulge] your secret'
15. '[If] the Strength in **its middle** was punctured ⇒ [your/the enemy] will tunnel through your foundation structure; its second interpretation: [he] will divulge [*your*] secret'
16. '[If] in the **place** of the Strength there was a Request-mark ⇒ (it is) a request of a fortress: the enemy will request a fortress of you.'

Thus, it becomes evident once more that the identification of an interpretive theme in a group of passages formed around the T → M → B scheme does not guarantee a clear sense of the interpretations' order. In only one of the three examples surveyed in this section (reviewed in Table 4.5 below) is the reasoning behind the pointillistic progression sufficiently intelligible. This is the case of ex. 4.76, in which the T → M → B scheme corresponds to an increasingly more grievous series of forecasts from one's own perspective. This point is made apparent if one accepts the idea that the secondary forecast in the second entry is not original to it, but rather reflects the diviner's copying of the apodosis of the previous entry, in all probability so as to harmonize l. 14 with l. 15.[144] Accordingly, the original interpretive progression that corresponds to the T → M → B scheme runs: secret → foundation structure → fortress, with the object breached or extracted more considerable at each turn.

143 Pace Nougayrol 1946: 58 (*ú-še-ṣi-u*); see note to ex. 2.82.

144 For another example of this sort of textual harmonization from the same collection, see the discussion of ex. 2.75 in § 2.1.3.4.

TABLE 4.5 *Miscellaneous hierarchies predicated on the Top → Middle → Bottom scheme*

Location	Ex. 4.74	Ex. 4.75	Ex. 4.76
Top	Criminal lets slave escape (*sarrum rēšam/amtam …*)	Adad devastates (*Adad iraḫḫiṣ*)	Enemy (?) divulges secret (*pirištam ušeṣṣe*)
Middle	Heir squanders father's estate (*apil awīlim bīt abīšu …*)	Royal stores infested with beetles (*bulṭītam karê šarri illappatū*)	Enemy (?) tunnels through foundation structure ([…] *asurrâm ušaplaš*)
Bottom	Wife squanders husband's goods (*aššat awīlim makkūr mutīša …*)	Wind rises, grain lost (*šārum itebbâm-ma še'um iḫalliq*)	Enemy demands your fortress (*nakrum dūram irriška*)

By contrast, the interpretive sequences of exx. 4.74–4.75, while attesting to a measure of orchestration on the part of their authors, elude us in terms of their logic, at least in any satisfactory manner. If one reads from bottom to top, the progression in ex. 4.75 may reflect a bad-to-worse ordering, with the destruction of (filled?) storehouses being more severe than that of pre-harvested grain, and the shift from the natural sphere (wind, beetles) to the supernatural (Adad); but this remains uncertain. The case of ex. 4.74 is altogether opaque:[145] how any of its entries should be construed vis-à-vis the others in terms of either subject or object is unclear.

Despite these difficulties it may tentatively be said that to some extent exx. 4.74–4.76 resonate with counterparts encountered earlier with respect to the other interpretive themes surveyed and, as such, enhance even further our understanding of the T → M → B scheme's employment for generative purposes. For one thing, as was true for the better-established themes above, the sequence of at least one passage here also appears predicated on the basis of the *pars hostilis*/*pars familiaris* symbolism, namely, ex. 4.76, whose *pirištum* → *asurrûm* → *dūrum* progression again follows the unidirectional course from the least-negative option to worse scenarios.

And though little could be said about the organization of exx. 4.74 and 4.75, with these passages too a comparison may be drawn with what has already

145 Even given the first entry's paranomasia, i.e., *rēšum* (Top) ↔ *rēšum* (slave).

been encountered, as well as with other issues discussed below (§ 4.2.1.5). After all, exx. 4.74 and 4.75 shed further light on the fact that the interpretive expression of the T → M → B scheme does not seem to have reached the same creative heights everywhere. Such uneven interpretive results for passages formulated around the T → M → B scheme were noted earlier, even for cases involving well-established interpretive themes, such as those concerning space or social hierarchies. Examples 4.74 and 4.75 may provide two further instances of such unevenness, which may prove to have a mitigating influence upon the assessment of the T → M → B scheme in terms of its paradigmatic status. Naturally, any such assessment demands a solid comprehension of the data, which, as the previous discussion makes plain, remains beyond reach.

4.2.1.5 Limitations and Exceptions

The closing words in the preceding section remind us of the fact that, despite the rich and multifaceted generative-based interpretive enterprise prompted or at least fostered by the T → M → B scheme, on occasion we find anomalies from the perspective of the organizational framework. Yet it is not impossible that the occasional inability to understand the structure of some passages does not reflect our own shortcomings; rather, it may be that such disorder is to be credited to the passages' authors. It is not inconceivable that at times an interpretive sequence was not ironed out fully, with a diviner seemingly unperturbed by an occasional rough edge of a paradigm under composition. If this possibility seems difficult to accept, one need only refer to passages such as the following to realize that, from an organizational perspective, in some instances an interpretive articulation of the T → M → B scheme was even less polished than what seems to be the case for some of the passages met above.

Indeed, it is clear that, in terms of its predictions, not every passage structured according to the T → M → B scheme even follows an ordered interpretive theme of one sort or another. The following example is instructive in this respect:

4.77. MAH 15874:12–18 (= ex. 2.73, ll. 12–18)

12–13. *šumma ina **rēš** naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû-ma šišītam ḫarmū ⇒ īnā awīlim izzazzā*
14–15. *šumma ina **qabliat** naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ šarrum ina bīt mayyālīšu igallut*
16–18. *šumma ina **išdī** naplaštim šīlū šinā imittam u šumēlam nadû ⇒ mīlu illakam-ma itâr šanûm šumšu īnī mār ekallim šar<rum> inassaḫ*

12–13. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's **head** and they were covered by a membrane ⇒ the man's eyes shall remain (in place)'
14–15. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's **middle** (and ditto [?]) ⇒ the king will be frightened in his bedroom'
16–18. 'If two holes were situated on the right and left in the View's **base** (and ditto [?]) ⇒ a flood is coming but will turn back; its second interpretation: the king will tear out the eyes of someone of the palace.'

This passage was the subject of a thorough discussion in Chapter 2 (§ 2.1.3.1.4) in connection with the *šanûm šumšu* formula in ll. 16–18. In that context it was argued that this passage's author grafted ll. 16–18 from two previously unrelated entries for the sake of the construction of the T → M → B scheme before us. It was also noted that this was the background for the setting of ll. 12–13 as well, since the duplicate to this entry from *YOS* 10 17 does not appear in the context of a T → M → B scheme. In this light, it seems unsurprising that this passage does not adhere to a more typical ordering.

It is important to recognize that this last passage is not unique in this respect, as appears from a consideration of the following example:

4.78. *YOS* 10 17:44–46 (l. 44 = ex. 2.61)

44. *šumma* ***rēš*** [*naplaš*]*tim ibbalkit* ⇒ *pûm lā kīnum*
45. *šumma ina* ***q***[***a***]***blīša*** *ibbalkit* ⇒ *bīt*[*um r*]*abûm ibbalakkat ina mazzāz ummānīka ummān nakrim izzaz*
46. *šumma ina* ***išdīša*** *ibbalkit* ⇒ *šarrum ṣalam īpušu šanûm ušerreb*

44. 'If the View's **top** was turned 90° ⇒ (it represents) an unreliable (omen) statement'
45. 'If in **its middle** it was turned 90° ⇒ a great house will revolt; (or:) the enemy's army will stand in the place of your army'
46. 'If in **its base** it was turned 90° ⇒ (concerning) the king—an image he had made—another will bring (into the temple).'

Somewhat surprisingly, this passage is excerpted from *YOS* 10 17, the collection that purportedly provided the fodder for ex. 4.77 and, as discussed in this study's first chapter, is possibly a version of an OB *naplaštum* main

series[146]—and thus seemingly an unexpected site of disorderliness. But this seems to be the case, and the existence of yet other cases betraying a degree of interpretive disorganization in passages framed around the T → M → B scheme buttresses the claim further still.[147]

4.2.1.6 Summary

In the final analysis, despite its impressive showing earlier on, a case for the T → M → B scheme as reflective of a fixed paradigm at the level of others, such as those studied below that expand the right/left paradigm, seems difficult to uphold. The passages just discussed illustrate that a theme-based sequential arrangement of omen interpretations in three succeeding entries was not a foregone conclusion for the employment of the T → M → B scheme. As exx. 4.77–4.78 make plain, the reverse is true: the sequence could be used for the harmonization of previously unrelated material, even material whose subject does not share a particular interpretive theme.

It is important to recognize the fact that, as is the case elsewhere where textual harmonization is detected, such examples of harmonization represent creative undertakings in their own right. Indeed, as is suggested elsewhere, at times one can see where this process inspired the generation of new information, and the reality confronted for some of the passages arranged according T → M → B scheme constitutes no exception. In this context it is also important to recall the diversity of the subject matter treated in the forecasts. Undoubtedly it is the range of subjects covered in these forecasts—a range emphasized not only by the varied nature of the interpretive themes but also by the different topics addressed by them—that is the most exceptional feature of those passages framed around the T → M → B scheme. And though it may be the case that a majority among these reflects a common underlying *pars familiaris*/*pars hostilis*-based logic, certainly the variety manifest on the surface level bespeaks an environment conducive to the creative application of the T → M → B scheme.

A final aspect of the passages we have investigated is telling in this respect. A high percentage of those passages organized according to the T → M → B scheme quoted above features some form of alternative interpretation in the apodoses of one or more of the passage's constituent entries. Even more

146 Assuming, that is, that the explanation of the relationship between these texts in Richter 1993 is accepted over that in Glassner 2009a (see § 1.2.2).

147 E.g., *YOS* 10 20:14–16; 17:53–55 (= ex. 2.74, ll. 53–55); 33 iii 46–51.

striking is the fact that, of these, half record an alternative in only its middle entry or, in the case below, refer to this entry as a *nanmurtu*-forecast:

4.79. *YOS* 10 15:12–19 (= ex. 4.60; cf. // *YOS* 10 17:31–33; ll. 15–16 = ex. 2.165)

12–14. *šumma ina **rēš** naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭlū ⇒ šarrum ayyumma ana salīmim išapparakku*[*m*(*-ma*)] *salīmšu teleqqe atta ina bartim būl*[*šu tezzib*]

15–16. *šumma ina **qabliat** naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭ*[*lū*] ⇒ *nanmurt*[*um*]

17–19. *šumma ina **išdī** naplaštim kakkū šinā imittam u šumēlam ittaṭ*[*lū*] ⇒ *ana šarrim ayyimma ana salīmim taša*[*ppar*(*-ma*)] *salīmšu teleqqē šū ina bartim bū*[*lka izzib*]

12–14. 'If in the View's **top** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ some king will send (word) up to you for a peace agreement (and) you will accept his peace, (but) you, in a rebellion, [will abandon his] herd'

15–16. 'If in the View's **middle** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ (it forecasts) confrontation'

17–19. 'If in the View's **base** two Weapons faced one another on the right and the left ⇒ you will send (word) to some king for a peace agreement ([and]) you will indeed accept his peace, (but) he, in a rebellion, [will abandon your] herd.'

This concentration of alternative interpretations is in itself deserving of comment, but even more so in the case of those passages that record it in the middle entry. Why should the middle entry be the bearer of greater interpretive uncertainty than its counterparts above and below? An answer to this question becomes apparent when one recalls that, more than once, the middle entry in such passages represent a hypothetical point between the *pars familiaris* and *pars hostilis* (or right and left). As such, the middle, representing on such occasions an expansion from a binary opposition, sensibly came to represent something ambiguous, not prone to simple interpretation. Thus, that a higher number of middle entries should register some measure of ambiguity should be of little surprise. The issue was one that derived from the intersection of organizational and hermeneutic realities and, as such, reflects another prime example of one of the products of the generative thought.[148]

148 For the same phenomenon concerning passages formulated according to the R → M → L tripartite sequence, see § 4.2.2.2.1 below.

4.2.2 *The Elaboration of the Right/Left Paradigm*

In Chapter 3 the role of the right/left factor was examined in the organization of simple paradigms, those consisting of the opposition of two omens predicated on a contrastive pairing. In that context it was noted that there exist more elaborate gradations predicated on this factor. The current section examines these in detail. Elaborations on the right/left paradigm are manifest in two main forms: (1) those integrated into larger paradigmatic contexts; and (2) those expanded by considering the additional occurrence of the same ominous condition either (a) at the midpoint between right and left (R → M → L) or, alternatively, (b) on both right and left (R → L → R+L).

4.2.2.1 Integration of the Right/Left Pairings into Larger Paradigmatic Contexts

In the first instance, one encounters the integration of simple right/left opposition within larger organizational units. One manner in which this is achieved involves the agglutinative form discussed above. The following example provides a simple illustration of the workings of this type of integration:

4.80. MAH 15994:9–16 (= ex. 4.57)

9–10. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim* ***ša imittim*** *šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim napiḫ* ⇒ *kakki Šarrū-kīn*

11–13. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim* ***ša imittim*** *šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim*(-<***ma***>) ***u nasiḫ*** ⇒ *ina ālānīka aḫûtim ištēn*(*am*) *nakrum iṣabbat-ma zikaršu u sinništašu idâk*

14–16. *šumma ina warki naṣraptim* [***ša***] ***šumēlim*** *šīrum kīma nipiḫ kamūnim-****ma u nasiḫ*** ⇒ *ina ālā*[*ni*] *nakrīka ištēn*(*am*) *taṣabbat-ma zikaršu u sinništašu tadâk*

9–10. 'If in the back of the Crucible of the **right** a fleshy membrane was inflated like a mushroom cap ⇒ (it represents) the Weapon of Sargon.'

11–13. 'If in the back of the Crucible of the **right** a fleshy membrane (ditto) like a mushroom cap **and it was torn out** ⇒ from among your outer towns the enemy will seize one and kill its male and female (population)'

14–16. 'If in the back of the Crucible [of] the **left** a fleshy membrane (ditto) like a mushroom cap **and it was torn out** ⇒ from among the towns of your enemy you will seize one and kill its male and female (population).'

This passage was met earlier in the context of the discussion of the limitations of complex gradation. On that occasion it was noted that, despite the common concern of all three entries and the passage's obvious agglutinative structure, there appeared to be no relation between the Weapon of Sargon interpretation of the first entry and the two mirror-image interpretations of the second and third.

What was notable about this example in the context of the earlier discussion was the absence of any visible marks of harmonization between these juxtaposed sections. Yet as was suggested above, it is precisely the lack of cohesion in this passage that underscores the apparent organizational effort to bring together similar omens such as these concerning the mushroom's cap. Thus, the juxtaposition of two disparate units speaks to a process of integration, perhaps even redaction—and bears witness to yet another creative act on the part of the diviner.

The collections manifest other ways in which paradigms based on the right/left opposition were integrated into broader units. One such instance involves the following example, in which a right/left elaboration appears amid two other entries paired according to a top/bottom contrast:

4.81. *YOS* 10 26 ii 37–42 (cf. id., ll. 35–36, 43–48)

37–38. [*šumma b*]*āb ekallim ana* ***elēnum*** *pališ* ⇒ *amūt TE-E*[*nlil*[149] *ša š*]*ū u ummānšu ina pilšim iddu*[*kkūšu*]
39. [*šumma*] ***imitti*** *bāb ekallim pališ* ⇒ *bīši mātīka a*[*na …*]
40. [*šumma*] ***šumēl*** *bāb ekallim pališ* ⇒ *bīši māt nak*[*rīka …*]
41–42. [*šumma*] *bāb ekallim ana* ***šaplānum*** *pališ* ⇒ *redût ayy*[*imma ša*]*rrum ana ekallim ire*[*dde*]/*ire*[*ddēšu*]

37–38. '[If the] Palace Gate was punctured **above** ⇒ (it is) the omen of TE-Enlil, [who] himself was killed along with his army in the breach'
39. '[If] the **right** of the Palace Gate was punctured ⇒ the goods of your land [will …] to […]'
40. '[If] the **left** of the Palace Gate was punctured ⇒ the goods of the land of [your] enemy [will … to …]'
41–42. '[If] the Palace Gate was punctured **below** ⇒ the king will confiscate someone's inheritance for the palace.'

149 The restoration follows the parallel in *YOS* 10 23 r. 12; 26 ii 33. On the name's reading and identification as Warad-Enlil, king of Umma, and this figure's historiographical context with respect to the great revolt against Narām-Sîn, see Haul 2009: 62–94, esp. 80–3.

In another instance, the setting of the Request-mark according to right/left follows an entry, similarly phrased in terms of zonal orientation (*ina* x *ṣibtim šaknat*), but with that ominous mark reported in a zone's top:

4.82. *OBE* 10:32–40

32–33. [*šumma i*]*na* ***rēš*** *ṣi*[*btim*] *erištum šaknat* ⇒ [...] ... *ti abnim*
34–37. [*šumma i*]*na* ***im***[***i***]***tti*** *ṣibtim* [*er*]*ištum* [*ša*]*knat* ⇒ [*nakar*]*ka mimma išapp*[*a*]*rakkum-ma* [*mimma ša*] *libbīšu il*[*e*]*q*<*q*>*e*[150]
38–40. [*šumma ina* ***šumēl***] *ṣibtim erištum šaknat* ⇒ [*mimma*] *ša libbīka* [*tel*]*eq*<*q*>*e*[151]

32–33. '[If] a Request-mark was situated in the Increase's **top** ⇒ (it is) [a ...] ... of stone'
34–37. '[If] a Request-mark was situated in the Increase's **right** ⇒ your [enemy] will send something to you (but) will take [something that] he fancies'
38–40. '[If] a Request-mark was situated [in the] Increase's [**left**] ⇒ *you* will take [something] that you fancy.'

Notably, as with ex. 4.80 above, in exx. 4.81–4.82 the right/left entries are not harmonized into the larger units; rather, in both cases these appear to have been inserted between or attached to other entries with which they share a common subject.[152] This fact is underscored when one compares the integrity of the broader units against that of merely the right/left entries in each. The mirror-image quality of the right/left pairings leaves little doubt that these entries represent the product of deductive reasoning; the same cannot be said for the larger units. On the basis of this evidence it must be concluded that, along with ex. 4.80, exx. 4.81–4.82 attest to the fact that a pairing of entries organized according to the right/left opposition and attached to other entries bearing a similar subject did not necessarily effect the resulting unit. Thus, we learn once again that textual harmonization was not a universal reality.

However, elsewhere pairings of right/left entries do appear harmonized into larger organizational schemes. This too was witnessed earlier for some of the

150 Following Jeyes 1989: 138, I emend the broken spelling *i-*⌜*le-eq*⌝*-e*.
151 Following Jeyes 1989: 138, I emend the broken spelling [*te-le*]*-eq-e*.
152 It is possible that the process evolved in the reverse direction, in other words, that miscellaneous non-right/left entries were tacked onto the right/left originals, though this would not alter my argument.

simple right/left pairings above, and one may assume that here too some degree of harmonization took place as a result of paradigm pressure. Of course establishing which entry in a given example has conformed to others is an almost hopeless task. Indeed, the idea of probing into the textual history of many paradigms of this subtype seems ill-conceived, since it cannot be established that these larger organizational units do not represent a primary stage of composition. The following two examples are cases in point:

4.83. *OBE* 14 ob. 4–9

4. *šumma rēš libbim **imittam** nawir ⇒ ḫiššat libbim ummānī* [*rēš e*]*qlīša ikaššad*
5. *šumma rēš libbim **šumēlam** nawir ⇒ ḫiššat libbim ummān nak*[*rim rēš*] *eqlīša ikaššad*
6. *šumma rēš libbim **imittam** nawir **šumēlam** tarik ⇒ ummānī līt* ⌜*ummān nakrim*⌝ *išakkan*
7. *šumma rēš libbim **šumēlam** nawir **imittam** tarik ⇒ ummān nakrim līt ummānīya išakkan*
8. *šumma rēš libbim **imittam** nawir u tarik ⇒ pirittu eli ummānīya imaqqut*
9. [*šumma r*]*ēš libbim **šumēlam** nawir u tarik ⇒ pirittu eli ummān nakrim imaqqut*

4. 'If the heart's top was bright on the **right** ⇒ (it predicts a) joy of the heart: my army will reach its destination'
5. 'If the heart's top was bright on the **left** ⇒ (it predicts a) joy of the heart: the army of the enemy will reach its destination.'
6. 'If the heart's top was bright **on the right**, dark **on the left** ⇒ my army will establish victory over the enemy's army'
7. 'If the heart's top was bright **on the left**, dark **on the right** ⇒ the enemy's army will establish victory over the my army'
8. 'If the heart's top was bright and dark **on the right** ⇒ terror will fall upon my army'
9. 'If the heart's top was bright and dark **on the left** ⇒ terror will fall upon the enemy's army.'

4.84. *OBE* 14 ob. 42–45 (= ex. 4.33)

42. *šumma rēš libbim **imittam** lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina mātim ibbašši*
43. *šumma rēš libbim **šumēlam** lipia kussu ⇒ ṭuḫdu ina māt nakrim ibbašši*

44. *šumma rēš libbim* ***imittam*** *lipia kussū-****ma tarik*** ⇒ *Adad ina mātim iraḫḫiṣ*
45. *šumma rēš libbim* ***šumēlam*** *lipia kussū-****ma tarik*** ⇒ *Adad ina māt nakrim iraḫḫiṣ*

42. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue **on the right** ⇒ there will be abundance in the land'
43. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue **on the left** ⇒ there will be abundance in the land of the enemy'
44. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue **on the right and it was dark** ⇒ Adad will devastate in the land'
45. 'If the heart's top was tied with fatty tissue **on the left and it was dark** ⇒ Adad will devastate in the enemy's land.'

There is nothing to suggest that the symmetry manifest in these passages reflects a secondary development in which previously unrelated and dissonant entries were harmonized. The permutations in these examples, which in both cases result from the addition of the shade variable to the right/left factor, may simply reflect the impulse to generate interpretive possibilities on the basis of hermeneutics and organization.

The following examples, already met above, similarly display a high degree of harmonization:

4.85. *YOS* 10 24:12–15 (= ex. 4.32)

12. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina* ***imittim*** *šakin* ⇒ *ayyumma imât-ma ridûssu ana ekallim irrub*
13. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakin-ma šanûm ina* ***imittim*** *šakim-****ma tarik*** ⇒ *ekalka nakrum iredde*
14. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šak*[*in-m*]*a šanûm ina* ***šumēlim*** *šakin* ⇒ *ereb ana šar īrubu ana wardī irrub*
15. *šumma bāb ekallim kayyānum šakim-ma šanûm ina* ***šumēlim*** *šakin-****ma tarik*** ⇒ *ekal nakrīka teredde*

12. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the **right** ⇒ someone will die and his estate will go to the palace'
13. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the **right and it was dark** ⇒ the enemy will take control of your palace'

14. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the **left** ⇒ the income which had gone to the king will (now) go to the servants'
15. 'If the Palace Gate (was) normally situated and a second one was situated in the **left and it was dark** ⇒ you will take control of your enemy's palace.'

4.86. *YOS* 10 23 r. 3–6 (= ex. 4.34)

3. *šumma ina sippi **imitti** bāb ekallim šīlum nadi ⇒ ina ērib ekallim epqu*
4. *šumma ina sippi **imitti** bāb ekallim šīlum **ipluš-ma uštebri** ⇒ ina ziqit zuqiqīpi awīlum imât*
5. *šumma ina sippi **šumēl** bāb ekallim šīlum nadi ⇒ nikip alpim*
6. *šumma ina sippi **šumēl** bāb ekallim šīlum **ipluš-ma uštebri** ⇒ ina nikip alpim awīlum imât*

3. 'If a hole was situated in the **right** doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ among the palace-enterers there will be *epqum*'
4. 'If a hole (ditto and) **was pierced fully** in the **right** doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from a scorpion's sting a man will die'
5. 'If a hole was situated in the **left** doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it forecasts) the gore of an ox'
6. 'If a hole (ditto and) **was pierced fully** in the **left** doorjamb of the Palace Gate ⇒ from an ox's gore a man will die.'

While one must allow for the possibility that some such cases represent efforts to harmonize previously disparate entries, it is equally likely that these passages reflect a calculation based on hermeneutics, employing the right/left opposition and a degree-of-perforation gradation.

Regardless of the precise textual history of any particular case, what is here paramount about these examples is what they collectively reveal about the expansion of the right/left paradigm. It is clear that the integration of right/left pairings with other materials took place and that the results of this process opened up redactional choices that effected changes in the composition of various entries. These changes, brought about by the integration of disparate materials into a larger whole, are properly understood as generative.

4.2.2.2 Expansion of the Right/Left Paradigm

The second type of elaboration on the right/left opposition involves the occurrence of an ominous condition on both the right and left, and either between

or in both right and left. While both of these subtypes clearly use the organizational framework for the purpose of generative expression, each appears to have developed according to patterns unique to its structure. Accordingly, what follows describes these subtypes individually.

4.2.2.2.1 *Ominous Occurrences at the Midpoint between Right and Left*

Passages with right/left pairings in addition to entries occurring between right and left exhibit shared characteristics for the meaning of the intermediate omen. Common among these are interpretations emphasizing what is either literally a middle position or figuratively a neutral or ambiguous one—that is, somewhere between those of the favorable and unfavorable entries. At times the relation between sign and signified in these cases is clear and direct. One such instance, whose middle entry conveys a simple and literal sense, is the following:

4.87. *YOS* 10 18:56–58 (cf. ibid., ll. 73–75; l. 56 = ex. 2.103)

56. *šumma* [*in*]*a libbi padānim ša* ***imittim*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlum ina ḫarrān illaku imarraṣ-ma imât* [*ū*]*mam r*[*īq*]*am mūt ilīšu awīlum imât*
57. [*šumma in*]*a libbi pad*[*āni*]*m ina* ***qablītim*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlum ina qabal ḫarrānim imarraṣ-ma imât*
58. [*šumma ina libb*]*i pad*[*āni*]*m ina* ***šumēlim*** *šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlum ina rēš eqlim imarraṣ-ma imâ*[*t*]

56. 'If a hole was situated in the midst of the Path of the **right** ⇒ the man will get sick in a campaign which he will undertake and consequently die; for an uncertain date: a man will die a death (decreed) by his god'
57. '[If] a hole was situated in the midst of the Path in the **middle** ⇒ the man will get sick and die in the journey's middle'
58. '[If] a hole was situated [in] the midst of the Path in the **left** ⇒ the man will get sick and die in the (journey's) destination.'

The common subject of these omens' apodoses[153] follows a typical egocentric perspective, according to which the campaign of the man, representing the familiar or self (< *pars familiaris*) in the Self-Other bifurcation, proceeds from the right side to the left. That the latter refers to the campaign's

153 On the secondary interpretation of l. 56, see the discussion of ex. 2.103 (§ 2.1.3.5).

TABLE 4.6 *Tabular representation of the gradation in Ex. 4.87*

Position	Journey's Stage
Right	Start (*ina ḫarrān illaku*)
Middle	Middle (*qabal ḫarrānim*)
Left	End (*rēš eqlim*)

destination owes to the association between the left side and the foreign or enemy region (< *pars hostilis*). The shift from right to left thus corresponds directly in terms of time and space to the envisioned journey in the apodoses (Table 4.6), with the middle region in this arrangement representing the campaign's middle.

Like most of the passages formulated according to the T → M → B scheme above, it is probable that the conformity of protases with apodoses in this example reflects the application of deductive reasoning in the formation of an ordered gradation. More significant still is what this example reveals about the actual application of this reasoning. After all, since the right/left opposition represented a basic organizational structure from which the diviner built more complex structures, it is clear that this example offers an unmistakable case of the creation of new information (l. 57) from established data (ll. 56, 58). Moreover, the actual editorial history here is essentially irrelevant, since regardless of whether or not l. 57 represents a later addition to a preexisting opposition of ll. 56 and 58, it is certain that conceptually the idea conveyed in this middle entry represents an outgrowth of the oppositional pairing of right and left. This example thus illustrates two sequences or, perhaps better, operations, of a paradigmatic generative manipulation: (1) a deductively based calculation according to the right/left opposition; (2) an expansion of the pairing into the tripartite structure that admits a middle option.

However, more often a more indirect association mediates between the protasis of the middle entry and its interpretation. Additionally, and in a manner related to what was described above for some of the passages built on the T → M → B scheme, certain gradations framed around the R → M → L scheme hint at the fact that a certain vagueness was conceived as inherent to the paradigm structure itself. In such cases, the middle entry describes alternative scenarios that only thinly disguise their generated nature or even external origins. The following example illustrates this nicely:

4.88. *OBE* 10:1–7

1–2. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *ṣibtim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *awīlum iššegge*
3–5. [*šu*]*mma ina* ***qabliat*** *ṣi*[*btim šīlum* (*nadi*)] ⇒ [*lū ugb*]*abtum i*[*m*]*ât* [(*ū*) *l*]*ū pašīšum imât*
6–7. [*šumma i*]*na* ***šumē***[***l*** *ṣ*]*ibtim šīlum* [(*nadi*)] ⇒ [*kalbū*[154] *iš*]*šeggû*

1–2. 'If a hole was situated in the Increase's **right** ⇒ the man will become mad'
3–5. 'If [a hole] (was situated) in the Increase's **middle** ⇒ [(either)] an *ugbabtu*-priestess will die or: a *pašīšu*-priest will die'
6–7. '[If] a hole (was situated) in the Increase's **left** ⇒ [*dogs*] will become rabid.'

The first and third entries in this passage are based on the right/left opposition, which here relates the finding of a hole with madness. Why the subject of the middle entry should diverge from the hole ↔ madness association is unclear, at least initially, but an illuminating explanation for this presents itself upon further consideration.

A remarkably similar apodosis to this passage's middle entry occurs in the following text which, while unrelated to ex. 4.88 in terms of zone, shares with the middle entry the case of a hole in a zone's middle:

4.89. *šumma* ***ina qabliat*** *naplaštim ina l*[*ibbīš*]*a* ***šīlum nadi*** ⇒ *lū ēnu wedûm imât lū pašīšu wedûm imât šanûm šumšu Ki-iš nārim* 'If **a hole was situated in** the View's **middle** in its middle part ⇒ either an important *ēn*(*t*)*u*- or *pašīšu*-priest will die; (or) its second interpretation: (it forecasts) the … of the river (MAH 15874:20–21 [// *YOS* 10 17:54]; [= exx. 2.25; 2.73, ll. 20–21]).'

Significantly, in this example a much more common tradition mediates between protasis and apodosis, which relates holes with death. It thus seems likely that the author of ex. 4.88, looking for an interpretation befitting the middle, indeterminate, entry of the uncommon association involving madness, incorporated a version of this apodosis into ll. 3–5 from a tradition unrelated to the one responsible for ll. 1–2 and 6–7.

154 Owing to the plural verb, I tentatively follow the suggested restoration and its justification in Jeyes 1989: 137, 141; but see n. 155.

Thus, like ex. 4.87 above, ex. 4.88 provides compelling evidence of the expansion of a right/left pairing according to generative principles. However, unlike the case of ex. 4.87, the forecast in the middle entry of ex. 4.88 does not represent the literal median between the forecasts of the right and left entries. Perhaps such an option was unknown for the hole ↔ madness hermeneutic (for what could be the middle between rabid dogs[155] and one's own madness?), which explains the appeal to an external tradition in the manner suggested. If so, the appearance of the middle entry here testifies both to the priority of the right/left opposition in the organizational framework and the effectiveness of this basic structure in the creation of new ominous possibilities.

Elsewhere it is the actual prediction of the middle entry that is ambiguous, typically in terms of valence, as is the case with the following example:

4.90. *YOS* 10 33 ii 45–53

45–46. [*šumma ina š*]***umēl*** *ubānim kakkum nadī-ma* [*išid u*]*bānim iṭṭul ⇒ kak rīṣi*
47–50. *šumma ina* ***ṣēr birītim*** *kakkum nadī-ma išid ubānim iṭṭul ⇒ bēl lumnīka ana tēmīqi/ī usaḫḫarakka*
51–53. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *ubānim kakkum nadī-ma išid ubānim iṭṭul ⇒ kak bartim*

45–46. '[If] a Weapon was situated [in] the Finger's **left** and it faced the Finger's [base] ⇒ (it is) the Weapon of Support'
47–50. 'If a Weapon was situated in the (Finger's) **middle region** and it faced the Finger's base ⇒ your adversary will make you turn to prayer(s)'
51–53. 'If a Weapon was situated in the Finger's **right** and it faced the Finger's base ⇒ (it is) the Weapon of Rebellion.'

In this example, in contrast with the favorable Weapon of Help of the left entry and the unfavorable Weapon of Rebellion of the right,[156] the interpretation for the same occurrence in the Finger's middle region tells of the enemy making "you" turn to prayer. In order to appreciate its meaning, this passage must be read in the context of several other entries describing a reversal-of-fortune

155 Taking these as the disease's expected carrier and thus the omen as not unfavorable. However, a more usual interpretation here would likely match the left with the enemy, and in that case offer the possibility of a neutral middle option.

156 For these signs, see Richter 1994: 226–37.

theme in terms of one's relations with the enemy.[157] In these, initial good relations with one's enemy quickly degenerate. It is likely that the implication of the middle entry's prediction in this example bears a similar sense, although what, exactly, the turn to prayer connotes is difficult to say. Whatever the case, by contrast to the unwavering descriptions of the counterparts in the preceding and following entries, the sense of this forecast is intended to convey an uncertain and indecisive message.

A similar explanation presumably accounts for the following example as well:

4.91. *YOS* 10 18:46–48

46. [*šumma i*]*na i*[***mitt***]***i*** *padānim ziḫḫum nadi* ⇒ *nakrum kubram inandiam-ma nāṣiršu u*[*ṣṣiam*]
47. [*šumma*] *ina* [***qabal*** (?)] *padānim ziḫḫum nadi* ⇒ *rigma<t> Adad*[158] *mātum*(KALAM) *ittananda*[*r*]
48. [*šumma ina* ***šumē***]***l*** *padānim ziḫḫum nadi* ⇒ *nakrum kubram inaddiam-ma nāṣir*[*šu uṣṣi*]*am-ma ina ramānīšū-ma itâ*[*r*]

46. '[If] in the Path's **right** *ziḫḫum* was situated ⇒ the enemy will *abandon* the (army's) encampment[159] but his guard [will *come out*]'
47. '[If] in [*the*] Path's [***middle***] *ziḫḫum* was situated ⇒ the land will become worried repeatedly from Adad's thunder(ings)'
48. '[If in] the Path's **left** *ziḫḫum* was situated ⇒ the enemy will *abandon the* (army's) encampment but his guard will [*come*] out and return all alone.'

157 E.g., ex. 4.79 above.

158 *CAD* R, 332, took the underlying *ri-iġ-ma*-^{d}im as an example of a sandhi-writing; cf. *CAD* A/1, 106; *AHw*, 982; Jeyes 2000: 369. Yet the following parallel apodosis from an OB extispicy collection (unavailable to *CAD* A/1) militates against this possibility:

"Protasis ⇒ ⌜*ri-iġ*⌝*-ma-at* ^{d}im *ma-*⌜*tum*$^{!}$⌝(⌜TAM⌝) *i-ta-na-dar*$_6$ 'The land will become worried repeatedly by Adad's thunder(ings)' (*TIM* 9 78:10)."

It seems clear in this instance that the underlying first word is not *rigmum* but rather either the plural *rigmātum* or a hypothesized singular biform **rigmatum*. The first option is viable if the land is taken as the subject and read in the nominative (thus: *ma-*⌜*tum*$^{!}$*/tú*⌝), in the manner similar to that suggested by *CAD* A/1, 106 for the entry above: "thunder, the country will become worried."

159 For this translation, see ex. 4.15 and n. 40 above.

Notwithstanding the precise sense of this passage's first and third entries, once more it seems clear that their symmetry reflects deductive reasoning. More difficult to explain is the interpretation of the middle entry. It is tempting to read the recurrence conveyed in its forecast, conveyed by the iterative sense of the Ntn verbal form, as intended to reflect something ill-defined and indecisive. The employment of a *tan*-stem in this manner was observed earlier,[160] though the most widespread exposition of this phenomenon appears among those omens discussed in the following section that record ominous findings on both the right and left sides of a given zone.

Significantly, as is the case elsewhere with respect to other well-established organizational structures, here too one encounters occasional exceptions to an otherwise impressive semblance of order. In a few instances the formulation of the middle entry of a passage framed according to the R → M → L sequence does not follow the interpretive line just described, as the following case demonstrates:

4.92. *YOS* 10 20:22–24

22. *šumma ištu warki naṣraptim šēpum* ***imitti***[161] *padānim ībir-ma naplaštam iṭṭul* ⇒ *šēp Elamtim*
23. *šumma ištu warki naṣraptim šēpum* ***qabal*** *padā*[*nim īb*]*ir* ⇒ *rubûm ḫarrān illaku ul iturram*
24. *šumma ištu warki naṣraptim šēpum padān* ***šumēlim*** *ībir-ma nap<l>aštam*[162] *ikšud* ⇒ *mūtānū ina mātim ibbaššû*

22. 'If from the Crucible's back a Foot crossed over the **right** of the Path and faced the View ⇒ (it is) a foot-mark (representing) the Elamite (army)'
23. 'If from the Crucible's back a Foot crossed over the **middle** of the Path ⇒ the prince will not return from the campaign which he will undertake'
24. 'If from the Crucible's back a Foot crossed over the *Path of the* ***left*** and reached the View ⇒ there will be epidemics in the land.'

In this example, in no way does the prediction of l. 23 represent a middle ground between ll. 22 and 24; indeed, even the latter pairing, opposite in

160 E.g., ex. 2.175 (§ 2.1.4.2.3).

161 Text: *i-mi-*⌜*ti*⌝(⌜TIM⌝).

162 Text: *na-ap-<la>-as-tam*.

theory according to the right/left opposition, bear no resemblance to each other either. To what extent this passage's forecasts were understood as related to one another on the basis the paradigmatic organization of their respective protases is thus unclear. However, it is significant to note that, in terms of formulation, the protases themselves also differ from one another.[163]

It is thus reasonable to assume that this example reflects the assembly of unrelated traditions concerning the passing of a Foot situated in the Crucible and extending past the Path's right, middle, and left regions.[164] That the assembly of such traditions should employ a R → M → L scheme, even if this scheme's conventional interpretations should be wasted upon this instance, should come as no great surprise, since analagous situations presented themselves with respect to the T → M → B scheme.[165] The picture supplied by this example in terms of our appreciation of the R → M → L scheme thus recalls what was observed earlier for the T → M → B scheme. While it is evident that in the R → M → L scheme the organizational framework provided another impressive vehicle for the creative ordering of omens in the collections and, moreover, appears to have served as a framework for the generation of deductively based entries, still one learns that this structure did not wield an absolute sway over gradations framed around it. Thus, once more it appears that the organizational framework had its limitations.

4.2.2.2.2 *Corresponding Ominous Findings on Both Right and Left*

The other subtype of gradation paradigms involving expansion of the right/left opposition describes an ominous finding that occurs respectively on a region's

163 Indeed, in addition to smaller differences in the entries' phraseology (cf. l. 22: *ībir-ma … iṭṭul*; l. 23: *ībir*; l. 24: *ībir-ma … ikšud*), it is unclear whether the *padān šumēlim* mentioned in l. 24 is even the same (second) zone as that described in ll. 22–23, since this is the name of another zone (the eighth) that was interwoven at times in *padānum* collections (see Winitzer 2013: 180–1). And though the mention of the Foot's reaching the View, which is located near the Path, militates against reading this as the eighth zone in this instance, the issue remains unclear.

164 The question of the actual editorial history here is again irrelevant, since my point holds even if it could be demonstrated that this passage's author conceived of all three entries himself. What matters is the fact that these entries do not reflect the product of a deductively based calculation.

165 See especially exx. 4.77–4.78 (§ 4.2.1.5). It will be recalled that in one of those cases (ex. 4.77), it was not even clear whether the protases of the composite entries are fully related to one another, whereas in the other (ex. 4.78, l. 44) one entry is unexpectedly declared to be "unreliable" (*pûm lā kīnum*), while the others feature ordinary, if unrelated, interpretations.

right, left, and both right and left sides (R → L → R+L). At least ten examples of this paradigm are attested.[166]

The occurrence of an ominous finding on both the right and left sides of a given region is not unique to this form of pointillistic expression. This configuration appears elsewhere, including contexts in which the R+L entry participates in the articulation of other forms of paradigmatic expression, as in the case of the following examples:

4.93. *YOS* 10 42 iii 5–9

5–7. *šumma ta*[*llu* ***imi***]***ttam***[167] *dunnun-ma* …[…] ⇒ Apodosis
8–9. *šumma tallu* ***imittam*** [***u šum***]***ēlam*** *dunnun* ⇒ Apodosis

5–7. 'If the diaphragm was very hard on the **right**'
8–9. 'If the diaphragm was very hard on the **right** [**and**] **left**.'

4.94. *YOS* 10 26 iii 19–26 (ll. 19–20 = ex. 2.183)

19–20. *šumma sippi bāb ekallim* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *paṭer* ⇒ *tešmû*[*m*] *šarrān ittakkirūn*[*im*]
21–22. *šumma sippi* ***šumēl*** *bāb ekallim ana* ***šinā*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
23–24. *šumma sippi* ***imitti*** *b*[*āb ekal*]*lim ana* ***šalāšīšu*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
25–26. *šumma sippi* ***šumēl*** *bāb ekallim ana* ***erbīšu*** *paṭe*[*r*] ⇒ Apodosis

19–20. 'If the Palace Gate's doorjamb was split **on the right and left** ⇒ (it calls for) caution: two kings will become hostile to one another'
21–22. 'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's **left** was split in **two** (places?)'
23–24. 'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's **right** was split in **its three** (places?)'
25–26. 'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's **left** was split in **its four** (places?).'

Still, the greatest concentration of these entries occurs in gradations describing the finding of an ominous mark according to the R → L → R+L scheme. Therefore, it may not be surprising to learn that passages framed around this scheme, and particularly the interpretation of the R+L entries in them, reveal

166 In addition to those examples discussed below, see also *YOS* 10 33 iv 24–30; 35:14–16.
167 Text: [*i-m*]*i-tam*^{1}(TIM).

unmistakable signs of a deductively based manipulation that demand our assessment in the present context. Accordingly, the following discussion seeks to highlight the employment of the R → L → R+L scheme and particularly the final R+L entry in it.

In four examples of the interpretation of the R+L entry, one encounters two of the technical terms of extispicy studied earlier (§ 2.1.4.2.2): in exx. 4.95–4.97, variations of *pitruštum*, "disengagement," appear as the interpretations of the double occurrence; in ex. 4.98 a *nanmurtum*, "confrontation," appears in the same place. As has been demonstrated, the occurrence of both forecasts is at least partly explicable in terms of hermeneutics, with some of the conditions producing these labels explained above.

4.95. *YOS* 10 36 iv 10–15[168] (ll. 14–15 = ex. 2.161)

10–11. *šumma puGlum* ***imittam*** *tarik* ⇒ *ša lišānīya ina mātim ittanallak*
12–13. *šumma puGlum* ***šumēlam*** *tarik* ⇒ *munût kīsim ina māt nakrim ittanallak*
14–15. *šumma puGlum* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *tarik* ⇒ *pitruštum*

10–11. 'If the … was dark **on the right** ⇒ my informer will walk around in the land'
12–13. 'If the … was dark **on the left** ⇒ the accounting of capital will go continuously in the land of the enemy'
14–15. 'If the … was dark **on the right and left** ⇒ (it forecasts) *disengagement*'

4.96. *YOS* 10 20:2–4, 5 (l. 5 = ex. 2.166)

2. *šumma padānu* ***imittam*** ⌜*ipšuq*⌝ *u* [*lib*]*bi pušqim paṭer* ⇒ *ašar tapṭuru* ([…]) *ana nakrim ina nipḫi talla*[*k*]
3. *šumma padānu* ***šumēlam*** *ipšuq u libbi pušqim paṭer* ⇒ *na*[*ker*]*ka ašar ipṭuru … ina nipḫi illakakkum*
4. *šumma padānu šakin-ma u pušqum* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *ana r*[*amānī*]*šu ipšuq* ⇒ *šubtum ana šubtim iššer*
5. [*šumma pad*]*ānu lā ibaššī-ma u pušqum* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *a*<*na*> *ramā*[*nīš*]*u ipšuq* ⇒ *pitruštān*

168 A new entry, not represented here, begins in the second half of l. 15; see ex. 5.58 (§ 5.4).

2. 'If the Path narrowed **on the right** and the midst of the Narrowing was split ⇒ (from) wherever you broke camp ([...]) you will go toward the enemy *by mistake*'[169]
3. 'If the Path narrowed **on the left** and the midst of the Narrowing was split ⇒ your enemy, (from) wherever he broke camp, ... will come to you *by mistake*'
4. If the Path was (normally) situated and a Narrowing on the **right and left** narrowed onto itself ⇒ one (military) encampment will charge at the other'
5. [If] the Path is not there and a Narrowing narrowed **on the right and left** onto itself ⇒ (these constitute) two *pitruštu*-signs.'

4.97. *YOS* 10 60:9–17

9–11. *šumma*[170] *ubānum kīma qanni eṣem*[*ti*]*m ana* ***imittim*** *kappat*[171] ⇒ *šarram ana māti nakarti iṭarradūšu*

12–13. *šumma ana* ***šumēlim*** *kappat* ⇒ <*šarrum*> *ina ṣā*[ʳ]*bi*[ˀ][172] *ina mātīšu ittanallak*

14–15a. *šumma ubānum* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *paṭrat*[173] ⇒ *pitrus*

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169 The translation of this apodosis is uncertain but assumes the reference to the chance encounter in this and the next entry (over against the more balanced scene in l. 4) as a *nipḫu* owes to something to this term's technical sense; the latter, as noted above (§ 2.1.4.2.3), is typical in cases of one ominous finding inside the other, though admittedly this concerns reports of zonal filling or bloatedness. Cf. the tentative option in *CAD* N/2, 242: "you will march against the enemy at sunrise (?)."

170 With the exception of this collection's first entry, all others represent the conjunction *šumma* as BI, perhaps a variant of BE. This may have been a conscious writing in the mind of this tablet's author, but in light of considerable other problems in this text, one is justified to reckon it an error.

171 Text: *ka-pa*[ˡ](AP)-*at*; see the following entries.

172 My reading and restoration follows *CAD* A/1, 324; Bottéro 1973: 127.

173 I follow tentatively *CAD* P, 175, which cites the protasis of this entry mostly in translation: "If the 'finger' is split at the right and at the left *pí-it-ru-ús*." This option, seemingly preferable for not calling for text emendations, nonetheless reads over two lines to form the 3fs predicative-adjective *paṭrat*, which appears as: *pa-aṭ-*/*ra-at*. In so doing the third entry also breaks from the previous two in terms of the condition described, though, as A. Wilent observes, this may be ascribed to the paronomastic considerations (here: *paṭrat* ↔ *pitrus*) discussed below (§ 5.5). Indeed, it is not implausible that—in the mind of an excited scribe—this was also the motivation for splitting a word over two lines.

9–11. 'If the Finger was bent to the **right** like a bone's *spur*[174] ⇒ they will exile the king to a hostile land'
12–13. 'If the Finger was bent to the **left** ⇒ <the king> will move around in his (own) land with his army'
14–15a. 'If the Finger was split **on the right and left** ⇒ (the omen) is ambiguous.[175]'

4.98. *YOS* 10 36 iii 6–11 (ll. 10–11 = ex. 2.164)

6–7. *šumma ina* ***šumēl*** *ḫašîm šēpum ⇒ šēp nakrim ana mātīka urrad*
8–9. *šumma ina* ***imitti*** *ḫašîm šēpum ⇒ šēpka ana māt nakrim urrad*
10–11. *šumma ḫašûm* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *šēpān šaknā ⇒ nanmur*[*tum*]

6–7. 'If a Foot (was) in the lung's **left** ⇒ the attack of the enemy will go down to your land'
8–9. 'If a Foot (was) in the lung's **right** ⇒ your attack will go down to the enemy's land'
10–11. 'If concerning the lung—two Feet were situated **on the right and left** ⇒ (it forecasts) *confrontation*.'

As discussed earlier, the basic criterion behind the declaration of *pitruštu*- and *nanmurtu*-forecasts is the simultaneous incident of an ominous mark on a zone's right and left sides. Which of these reciprocal forecasts would be highlighted in a given case depended on additional variables (e.g., the mark's shade). However, as noted earlier, this did not account for every scenario in which one encounters these terms; nor did the previous discussion explain cases in which *pitruštu*- and *nanmurtu*-forecasts are expected but do not occur.[176] In other words, the picture is not fully clear, with more information needed in order to work out exactly what constitutes each interpretation.

However, in the organizational framework there exists a considerable untapped resource for the advancement of our understanding of *pitruštu*- and *nanmurtu*-forecasts. After all, as we have seen, entries reporting the simultaneous incidence of an ominous mark on the right and left sides do so not infrequently within the framework of a R → L → R+L scheme. As such, it seems logical that, if indeed this sequence genuinely reflected an established paradigm in the mind of the diviner, one would expect to find some commonality

174 Following *CAD* Q, 139, which takes the form from *qarnum*.
175 Another translation possibility is: "(this constitutes) a *pitruštu*-sign"; see § 2.1.4.2.2.
176 As noted earlier, this point is conceded in Starr 1975: 241 n. 3 and 243 n. 13.

among the various interpretations of R+L entries in such sequences. This in fact turns out to be just the case.

Nearly all of the final entries among the various cases bearing R → L → R+L schemes that are not explicitly labeled as either *pitruštum* or *nanmurtum* share a concern for the indeterminate nature of a particular (in)action. More often than not this is expressed by way of the stress of the given action's reciprocity, which, as already suggested, is related to the meanings of the terms *nanmurtum* and *pitruštum* themselves. Elsewhere a sense of vagueness conveys this indeterminacy less directly, via the description of some phenomenon that is recurrent and correspondingly vague. As is argued below, these two themes of reciprocity and vagueness are not unrelated.

In the first instance, the reciprocal nature of an ominous occurrence appearing on both the right and left of an entry's protasis often plays out in the action portrayed in the respective apodosis. Whereas the interpretations of the right and left entries serve as mirror images of a particular scenario for the enemy and oneself, the prediction accompanying the ensuing R+L entry manifests a sense of distance from the preceding parameters, as is evident in the following example:

4.99. *YOS* 10 36 iii 14–19

14–15. *šumma* GÚ.MAR[177] *ḫašîm* ***imittam*** *šatiq* ⇒ *āl wašbāti*[178] *innaqqar*
16–17. *šumma* GÚ.MAR *ḫašîm* ***šumēlam*** *šatiq* ⇒ *āl nakrim innaqqar*
18–19. *šumma* GÚ.MAR *ḫašîm* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *ekim* ⇒ *kamûm kāmîšu ikammu*

14–15. If the lung's … was split **on the right** ⇒ the city in which you are residing will be destroyed'
16–17. If the lung's … was split **on the left** ⇒ the city of the enemy will be destroyed'
18–19. If the lung's … was hidden **on the right and left** ⇒ a captive will capture his captors.'

177 It is tempting to read this term, otherwise unidentified, as an alternate writing for gú.mur, the Sum. equivalent of *ur'udum*, "windpipe, trachea," a common zone taken as part of the lung. However, a substantial section of omens describing this zone and rendered gú.mur appears just below this passage in *YOS* 10 36 iii 39–iv 27, and it seems unlikely that the two terms would describe the same zone in such proximity to one another. For additional unidentified zones of the lung, see Starr 1983b.

178 On this 2ms predicative adjective form, see *GAG* §§ 75b–c.

In this example the focus in the apodosis of the final entry shifts from the contrast of the *pars familiaris* v. *pars hostilis* in the preceding entries to a more general depiction of a captive who is said to capture his captors.[179] What is noteworthy for our purposes concerning this final entry is its cryptic sense. No clue is offered as to the identity of either agent or patient; each, in theory, can represent the enemy or oneself. The reciprocal sense in this instance, while clearly echoing the double occurrence in the protasis, nonetheless rises above the particulars of the constituent parts to deliver a more general and thus elusive interpretation. It is of little surprise, then, that later reflection would actually read such a prediction as tantamount to a *pitruštu*- or a *nanmurtu*-forecast.

Indeed, the original sense of military (dis)engagement common to *pitruštu*- and *nanmurtu*-forecasts figures in several passages organized according to the R → L → R+L scheme, even if these do not employ the terms explicitly. Consider, for instance, the following example:

4.100. *YOS* 10 36 i 21–24

21. [*šumma ḫašûm*] *naparqud*[*a*]*t* ⇒ <*šarrum*> *māssu ibbalakkassu*
22–23. [*šumma ḫa*]*šûm* ***imitti*** *ḫašêm* ***u*** [***šum***]***ēl*** *ḫašêm* [*n*]*aparqudat* ⇒ [*a*]*ḫum ana aḫi*[*m k*]*akkam ul inaddi*
24. [*šumma ḫašûm* ***šum***]***ēlam*** *ittalqat*[180] ⇒ *miḫiṣ qaqqad nakrim*

21. '[If the lung] was concave ⇒ <*concerning the king*>—his land will rebel against him'
22–23. '[If] the lung was concave (on) the lung's **right and left** ⇒ one brother will not put down (his) *weapon* against the other'
24. '[If the lung] was *destroyed* **on the left** ⇒ (it forecasts) the complete defeat of the enemy.'

In the middle entry of this example, the statement describing mutual brotherly disengagement calls to mind the proposed definition of *pitruštum* and hints at a relationship between the R+L entry in the R → L → R+L scheme. That this is the case finds support among other R → L → R+L elaborations: in ex. 4.96 above, the condition interpreted as a *pitruštu*-forecast in l. 5 represents the converse of the previous entry, which, tellingly, envisions a scene of mutual engagement (*šubtum ana šubtim iššer*, "one encampment will charge at the

179 That the specific word choice in this apodosis diverges from the preceding two no doubt owes to this entry's paronomastic association of *ekēmum* ↔ *kamûm*.

180 Collation and reading courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

other"). It is likely that the *pitruštu*-forecast in l. 5 was understood as representing the opposite reality, that is, the disengagement of two encampments.

Disengagement is likely also the main sense of the interpretation of the following example's final entry:

4.101. *YOS* 10 20:11–13

11. *šumma padānu* ***imittam*** *ūtallal ušteš*[*šer*][181] ⇒ [*ummānum* (?)] *rēš eqlīšu ikaššad zīttam ikkal*
12. *šumma padānu* ***šumēlam*** *ūtallal ušte*[*šše*r] ⇒ [*ummānum* (?)] *rēš eqlīšu ul i*[*k*]*aššad*
13. *šumma padānu* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *ūtall*[*al* (*ušteššer*)] ⇒ [*ummānum*/*mātum*] *šubtam nēḫtam uššab*

11. 'If the Path was suspended and set straight **on the right** ⇒ [the *army*] will reach its destination (and) enjoy shares (of plunder)'
12. 'If the Path was suspended and set straight **on the left** ⇒ [the *army*] will not reach its destination'
13. 'If the Path was suspended (and set straight) **on the right and left** ⇒ [the *army*/*land*] will dwell in peace.'

In contrast with the straight suspension of the Path on either the right or left, conditions that respectively herald a journey's consummation or lack thereof, the possibility of the same occurrence on both sides triggers the common forecast describing a peaceful dwelling. Admittedly this depiction does not carry an element of mutuality; in keeping with what has been demonstrated, one might have expected that a more fitting interpretation for this entry would offer some homogenized formulation reflecting the sum of one's own forecast and that of the enemy. However, it must be realized that the events forecast in the previous entries appear to focus only on one's own army,[182] and thus the logical outcome of this paradigm must reflect an internal scene of neutrality; accordingly,

181 Though this text does not appear in the dictionaries, I restore the verb as an $Št_2$ of *ešērum*, "to be set straight." The sense of *šutēšurum* as "to set straight/aright" appears in connection to paths, furrows, and the like (see *CAD* E, 360), a fitting idea for the apodoses in this line and the next, which concern the endpoint of journeys.

182 The right/left opposition mediating these lines precludes the possibility that the subject in l. 12 describes the enemy. Of course, according to the zero-sum logic, the army's failure in l. 12 is for all intents and purposes equivalent to the enemy's success.

one's own peaceful dwelling must be understood as the equivalent of détente on the international scene. Thus, though it cannot qualify as a *pitruštu*-forecast in the strict sense, the apodosis of this example's last entry seems to reflect the type of deduction that elsewhere produces this type of forecast.

Additional evidence points to similar conclusions. In the following example, discussed earlier (§ 2.1.4.2.3), the double ominous occurrence of the last entry appears to correlate with apodosis's description of the onset of recurrent fires in the land:

4.102. *YOS* 10 31 ix 28–53 (= ex. 2.175)

28–35. *šumma martum **imittaša** damam pullâm pašiš ⇒ ekallam išātum ikkal*
36–44. *šumma martum **šumēlša** damam šābulam pašiš ⇒ ina ālim bīt awīlim išātum ikkal*
45–53. *šumma martum **būdāša** damam pullâm paššā ⇒ dipār nikurtim išātum ina mātim ittananpaḫ*(*a*)

28–35. 'If the gallbladder—its **right** side—was smeared with *p.-red* blood ⇒ fire will consume the palace'
36–44. 'If the gallbladder—its **left** side—was smeared with dried blood ⇒ fire will consume a man's house in the city'
45–53. 'If the gallbladder, its (**two**) **shoulders** were smeared with *p.-red* blood ⇒ (it forecasts) a torch of war: fire will flare up repeatedly in the land.'

In the earlier analysis of this passage it was argued that the initial short expression *dipār nikurtim* ("a torch of war") is to be related to the more common *nipḫu*-forecast, a technical term appearing in environments in which a certain degree of indeterminacy concerning the ominous mark prevails. Furthermore, it was also suggested that the longer interpretation implies a relation with the indeterminate *nipḫu*-forecasts, in terms of both the verb itself (*napāḫum*, whence *nipḫum*) and its iterative form (*itanpuḫum*). In short, as suggested earlier, the interpretation of ll. 45–53 in this example reflects a connection of the *dipār nikurtim* with other technical terms—most prominent among them being *nipḫum*—employed to mark ambiguous omens.

As stated earlier, the exact quality of the indeterminacy signified by the *dipār nikurtim* is probably not identical to either *pitruštu*- or even the seemingly more related *nanmurtu*-forecasts. Nonetheless, once again it is evident that the ambiguous forecast(s) in this entry are connected with the double

occurrence reported in the protasis.[183] And, indeed, as suggested above, it is not improbable that the choice of the Ntn of *napāḫum* itself reflects an explicit attempt to convey an indeterminate or vague sense for the verb.[184]

Further supporting evidence for this claim appears in the gradation of the following example:

4.103. Scheil B:7–11

7–8.	*šumma martum* ***imittum ana šumēlim šumēlum ana imittim*** *iddakaš* ⇒ *ayyumma ana mitgurt*[*im*] *išapparakkum*
9.	*šumma* ***šumēl*** *martim ana šaplānu idkuš* ⇒ *miqitti ekal nakrim*
10–11.	*šumma martum* ***imittam u šumēlam*** *tidkušat* ⇒ *wāšib maḫrīka pirištaka uštaneṣṣe*

7–8.	'If the gallbladder *became bulged together* (from) **right to left** (and) **left to right** ⇒ someone will send word to you for concord'
9.	'If the **left** of the gallbladder *bulged* downward ⇒ (it forecasts) the collapse of the palace of the enemy'
10–11.	'If the gallbladder *was bulging mutually*[185] **on the right and left** ⇒ the one who sits before you will repeatedly reveal your secret.'

While this passage does not fully adhere to the R → L → R+L scheme, it seems clear that its author conceived of the R+L omen as building on (at least) the previous, or L, entry (l. 9).[186] The third entry in this passage, which describes the coterminous severance of the gallbladder's right and left, relates this occurrence to the habitual disclosure (*šuteṣṣûm* [Štn]) of secrets. If, on the face of it, the appearance of an iterative verbal form for the R+L entry evokes comparison with ex. 4.102, ll. 45–53 above, then further consideration of this omen suggests that a connection between its interpretation and that of ex. 4.102, ll. 45–53 runs even deeper. Remarkably, a parallel to this omen from later periods interprets the same ominous finding as a *piruštum*:

183 On the lemma *tešmûm* and its connection to *nanmurtu-* and *pitruštu*-forecasts, see § 2.1.4.2.3.

184 See the discussion of ex. 2.175 above.

185 For a different sense of the verb's meaning, see Streck 2003: 73.

186 On the G-preterite → Gt shift in verbal forms, see § 5.3 below.

4.104. *šumma martu* ***imitta u šumēla*** *itkušat*[187] ⇒ *pitruštu* 'If the gallbladder was severed **on the right and left**' (Jeyes, Compendium ob. 33).

Moreover, this same entry reappears in the *Multābiltu* section of SB *Bārûtu*, selected there as one of the textbook examples of *pitruštu*-forecasts (in the text's own summation: *annâti pitrusāti* "[all] these [previous omens] are *pitruštu*s"):[188]

4.105. *šumma martu* ***imitta u šumēla*** *itkušat*[189] ⇒ *têrtu šî* [*lā šalmat*] 'If the gallbladder was severed **on the right and left** ⇒ the aforementioned omen was [not sound]' (Koch, *Multābiltu* 2–3:57 [SB *Multābiltu*]; cf. ibid. l. 58).

Naturally these later interpretations of this omen cannot simply be retrojected back onto ex. 4.103, ll. 10–11 and heralded as its true or conclusive realization. Nevertheless, in light of the evidence gathered here, it may be said that the habitual sense of the interpretation of ex. 4.103, ll. 10–11 as well as that of ex. 4.102, ll. 45–53 cannot be conceived as merely fortuitous. Rather, in these examples it appears that the iterative verbal forms are employed to convey something of the vagueness which elsewhere is seen as the fundamental quality of both *nanmurtu*- and *pitruštu*-forecasts. Here too then the picture that emerges is one in which interpretive traditions accord with preconceived notions.

In all, then, the impressive degree of commonality among the interpretations of the final entries in passages organized according to the R → L → R+L scheme invites the question of the paradigmatic nature of this sequence. Admittedly, as we have seen, not every example of this sequence declares the interpretation of its R+L entry to be a *nanmurtu*- or a *pitruštu*-forecast; conse-

187 Ms. A (= Tablet Carré [MB]): *idkuš*. The parallel of this G preterite of *dakāšum* (which recurs in the next line of ms. A [l. 34]) secures the interpretation of the form *itkušat* as an aberrant form of the Gt predicative adjective of the same verb; for a discussion of this form and the related *itkumat*, see CAD A/1, 265.

188 Koch, *Multābiltu* 3:75; also observed in Jeyes 2000: 367.

189 Koch 2005: 117 reads the writing *it-ku*-MAT as representing the verbal form as *itkumat* ("atrophied" [< *ekēmum*]). She notes (ibid.: n. 179), however, that the reading is uncertain, hypothesizing that this word may derive from *atkušum* ("to move away"). However, she also claims that the proposal by CAD A/1, 265 to take *it-ku*-MAT here as *itkušat* (< *dakāšum*, "to be bulging") "carries little conviction." While clearly the problem needs revisiting in a manner more thorough than the present context permits, on the basis of the parallels above it seems highly likely that the same verb appears in each of these texts. Tentatively, I adhere to *CAD*'s proposal.

quently, to the extent that the presence of these forecasts in a given sequence is understood as the defining and indispensable characteristic of the paradigmatic nature of said sequence, it could be argued that many of the passages framed around the R → L → R+L scheme do not meet the requirements necessary to merit the label of "paradigmatic." Yet, as we have seen, it is also clear that each of the exceptions to the rule shares much with counterparts labeled *nanmurtu*- or *pitruštu*-forecasts—too much to be ascribed to coincidence.

It would thus seem that the R → L → R+L scheme was understood as a paradigm in the mind of the diviner, even if that gradation was not fully standardized in its form. The implications of this finding for the broader discussion of the generative and paradigmatic nature of the OB divination literature are significant. That the R → L → R+L scheme was understood paradigmatically by the diviner strongly suggests what may already have been suspected: the form was manipulated to generate new ominous hypotheses and their accompanying interpretations. As ever, where, when, and why certain pairings and not others were expanded upon in this manner remains unknown. Nonetheless, as part of the development of the literary body of the collections, it seems certain that the diviner flexed this muscle as well, achieving striking results in the course of the exercise.

CHAPTER 5

Inter-omen Organization (III)

5.0 Complex Gradation (II)

The following continues the discussion of the paradigmatic type of pointillism from the previous chapter; the placement of this material under a separate heading reflects only practical considerations.

5.1 The Employment of Variables of Colors

The place of color-based classification in the omen collections was made plain by Landsberger, whose study of colors in Sumerian and Akkadian led him to observe that these texts share with the *Listenwissenschaft* and even literary texts the recording of colors in a stereotypical range.[1] According to passages encountered in the standard version of ḪAR.ra = *ḫubullu* (henceforth Hh.), the color scheme runs: white → black → red → speckled/multicolored → and green-yellow (*peṣûm*/babbar → *ṣalmum*/gi_6 → *sāmum*/sa_5 → *burrumum*/gùn → *warqum*/sig_7).

More recently, in his study of the lexical lists, Veldhuis described this sequence as a "paradigmatic set"[2] whose consistent order appears in passages even where the item described cannot possibly exist in every possible variety. For Veldhuis this was evidence of the "generative power of the set," whereby the appearance of an object in a particular color—green-yellow in the particular case under study—"trigger[s] the whole set of colour items."[3] Now Veldhuis had contended that by and large this sort of systematization represents a post-OB phenomenon.[4] However, as is seen below, evidence exists for the employment of color as an organizational tool in the OB extispicy collections. Moreover, it is clear that, with the aid of this organization and classification, the diviner

1 Landsberger 1967a: 140. For a more recent word on the place of colors in the first-millennium celestial omens of *Enūma Anu Enlil*, see Verderame 2004.

2 Veldhuis 1997: 127.

3 Veldhuis 1997: 128–9.

4 Quoting Veldhuis 1997: 129: "[t]he colour terms show that paradigmatic sets grow considerably in importance after the Old Babylonian period." Presumably he means this only for the lexical lists, though he does not make this clear.

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created or generated new omen entries on the basis of pre-existing ones, precisely in the manner suggested by Veldhuis for literature from later periods.

Admittedly, one does not find among the OB extispicy collections a single example of a passage bearing the complete paradigmatic color scheme just described. However, it must be realized that the evidence from other genres from the same period is scarce. There exists a handful of cases from the OB forerunners to the standard version of Hh. exhibiting this sequence, yet these too exhibit inconsistency in a given set's order.[5] The problem is even more pronounced for the evidence marshaled by Landsberger, the overwhelming majority of which does not exhibit the color scheme, either in its entirety or its sequence.

For example, a passage from Nabnitu,[6] while evidently concerned with the arrangement of color lexemes, presents a red → green → white sequence that neither adheres to the standardized scheme nor features its entire run. A similar picture emerges from the omen collections. Among the diverse corpus, many examples include various sequences with only a fraction of the full range. For instance, a passage from an OB physiognomic collection concerning hair records a red → black → white gradation and may reflect a reversal of the white → black → red sequence, but in any case it still does not represent the full range.[7] A similar reality occurs in the case of extispicy, concerning which no evidence of the color scheme in its full form is known from any period.[8] Granted, it was not Landsberger's aim to describe the history of the color scheme, or of its employment across the various textual genres. However, for our purposes the matter of color ordering and schematization is of consequence. Therefore, in what follows, a survey of the color sequences in the collections is presented, along with the implications of such sequencing for the collections' organizational framework and the generative expression it helped to support.

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5 The examples cited in Veldhuis 1997: 127 are from the Nippur forerunner to Hh. (*MSL* 8/1, 83–88), ll. 101–6, 149–51, 186–90, 236–40.

6 Nabnitu XXI (= XXII) 228–41 (*MSL* 16, 198–9), cited in Landsberger 1967a: 141 (§ c α).

7 Landsberger 1967a: 143 (§ c ε), quoting VAT 7525 ii 37–41; for an edition of the full text, see Köcher and Oppenheim 1957–1958. By no means is a completed paradigm worked out in the first-millennium standardized physiognomic omens: in *Alamdimmû* one finds mention of hair color concerning hair in II 87–9, 94–5 (red → black → red, black → red); VIII 85 (red); see Böck 2000: 81, 113.

8 Landsberger 1967a: 144 (§ c ι).

5.1.1 *Paradigmatic Complex Gradation Using Variables of Color*

Before moving forward, a word about the subject of color attribution within extispicy is in order. With one exception, where it occurs in hepatoscopy, color gradation seems concerned with ominous marks, not the zones in which these occur. This observation holds for the intestines as well, though not for other regions of the exta, in which the subject defined by color is often the given organ under examination, for example, the heart, lungs, kidneys, diaphragm, and spleen. Furthermore, it is evident that color designation occurs almost exclusively for a select group within the ominous marks. These include specific pock- and granular-like marks (including the *kasûm*, *merḫum*, *uṭṭatum*, and *ziqtum*), filaments (*qûm*), and the enigmatic *ziḫḫum*. Notably, in this collection one does not encounter the metonymy-based terms such as the Weapon, Request, Foot,[9] or the other common features such as the hole reported in extispicy omens.

These findings cannot be accidental. Rather, they point to a well-defined use of color attributes that cannot be purely theoretical speculation. As is demonstrated below, one finds evidence of generated omens describing marks in shades that were probably never observed. However, one also learns that such scholasticism appears to have had its limits and that, like other categorical or organizational criteria, the attribution of color in the collections, while diverse, was not applied haphazardly.

With this in mind we may turn to some examples that provide evidence of organization according to color:

5.1. *OBE* 1 ob. 12–14

12. [*šumma manzāzum*] *qê* ***sāmūtim*** *ṣubbut* ⇒ *miqitti ašarīdīya*
13. [*šumma manz*]*āzum qê* ***ṣalmūti*** *ṣubbut* ⇒ *miqitti kubrim*
14. [*šumma*] *manzāzum qê* ***peṣûtim*** *ṣubbut* ⇒ *ummānī rīqūssa iturram*

12. '[If the Presence] was seized by **red** filaments ⇒ (it forecasts) a defeat of my first-in-rank'
13. '[If] the Presence was seized by **black** filaments ⇒ (it forecasts) a defeat of the mass (of the army)'
14. '[If] the Presence was seized by **white** filaments ⇒ my army will return here empty-handed.'

9 Excepting ex. 5.8.

5.2. *OBE* 14 r. 22–23

22. *šumma ina išid tal libbim ziḫḫum temer-ma u **sām*** ⇒ *rubûm ina ḫarrān illaku ul iturra*
23. *šumma ina išid*[10] *tal libbim ziḫḫum*[11] *temer-ma u **ṣullum*** ⇒ *bēl immerim mê imallâ*

22. 'If in the diaphragm's base *ziḫḫu* was buried and it was **red** ⇒ the prince will not return from a campaign he will undertake'
23. 'If in the diaphragm's base *ziḫḫu* was buried and it was **deep black** ⇒ the sheep's owner will be well-provided with water.'

5.3. BM 22694:30–32

30. *šumma ṭulīmum kappāšu **sāmā*** ⇒ *mīlum illakam šamû izannun*
31. *šumma ṭu*[*līmum **p***]***eṣi*** ⇒ *ḫušaḫḫu ina mātim ibbašši*
32. *šumma* [*ṭu*]*līmum **sūmam** itaddu* ⇒ *rīt būlim išātum ikkal*

30. 'If (concerning) the spleen—its lobes were **red** ⇒ a flood will come (or:) it will rain'
31. 'If the spleen was **white** ⇒ there will be a famine in the land'
32. 'If the spleen was full of **red spots** ⇒ fire will consume the cattle's pasture.'

5.4. *OBE* 14 ob. 23–26 (cf. id., ll. 14–15)

23–24. *šumma rēš libbim ziqtī saḫir-ma ziqtūšu šukkusū u rēš libbim kami u **tarik*** ⇒ *ḫupšum ibbalakkat-ma rubûm imaqqut*
25–26. *šumma rēš libbim ziqtī saḫir-ma ziqtūšu šukkusū u rēš libbim uššu*[*r u **s***]***ām*** ⇒ *rubûm ḫupšu*[12] *ibbalakkat-ma ḫupša ša ibbalkitūšu ušam*[*qataššu*]

23–24. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by pockmarks but its pockmarks were dried up and the heart's top was bound and **dark** ⇒ the rabble will rebel and the prince will fall'

10 Text: $šag_4$.

11 Text: *ṣi*^{i}(ZA)-*iḫ-ḫu-um*.

12 Text: *ḫu-up-ša*, though this must reflect an error; cf. Jeyes 1989: 161.

25–26. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by pockmarks but its pockmarks were dried up and the heart's top was freed and **red** ⇒ (concerning) the prince—the rabble will rebel, but he will put [down] the rabble who had rebelled against him.'

5.5. *YOS* 10 42 iii 39–40

39. *šumma tallu **sām** ⇒ našpakātum ḫalâm illappatā*
40. *šumma tallu **peṣi** ⇒ ašqulālum mātam iṣabbat*

39. 'If the diaphragm was **red** ⇒ the granaries will be affected by black mildew'
40. 'If the diaphragm was **white** ⇒ an *ašqulālu*-(atmospheric phenomenon) will seize the land.'

5.6. *OBE* 14 ob. 36–37

36. *šumma rēš libbim kasî **arqūtim** itaddu ⇒ rubûm ina sikri mālikī irašši*
37. *šumma rēš libbim kasî **sāmūtim** itaddu ⇒ rubûm ina mārī ekallīšu mālikī iraš[š]*

36. 'If the heart's top was thoroughly full with **green-yellow** *kasû*-seeds ⇒ the prince will acquire advisers from (among) the harem'
37. 'If the heart's top was thoroughly full with **red** *kasû*-seeds ⇒ the prince will acquire advisers from (among) his palace officials.'

The range of colors attested in these passages and others below is identical to the one delineated by Landsberger. There is not a single case of a color or shade (on this distinction, see below) unknown from that ubiquitous set. In some instances the sequence follows that of the later standardized order, either as expected or in reverse, albeit never in its full range.[13] However, in the majority of cases no relation to that order may be claimed.[14] Accordingly, it is clear that if one approaches it from the perspective of the standardized Hh. color scheme, a suggestion of a full-blown paradigm in the OB extispicy collections is untenable. And yet evidence of the use of color in the collections in

13 E.g., exx. 5.4, 5.9 (black/dark → red); 5.11, 5.23 (black/dark → white).

14 E.g., exx. 5.5 (red → white); 5.8 (white → red); 5.9 (green → red); 5.20 (green-yellow → [green-yellow and] dark); 5.19, ll. 27–29 (red → white → white and green-yellow); 5.7 (black → green-yellow → red, green-yellow, and white [= multicolored?] → red).

an organizational capacity is unmistakable, and, as will be seen, some level of paradigm-based generative calculation appears likely as well.

As witnessed above, typically color sequences in the collections are comprised of two or three entries. However, the following example records nearly the entire paradigmatic set:

5.7. *CT* 44 37 ob. 13–14, 16–17

13. *šumma ina rēš ubānim ziḫḫum* ***ṣalim*** *u šīrum akil* ⇒ *ilum ikkal*
14. [*šumma*] *ina rēš ubānim ziḫḫum* ***warqum*** *nadi* ⇒ *ummānī mû ikallû*
16. [*šumma ina r*]*ēš ubānim ina imitti ubānim ziḫḫu nadī-ma* ***sām waruq u peṣi*** ⇒ *Adad Irra-giš*[*ram uš*]⌜*eṣṣe*⌝[15]
17. [*šumma ina rē*]*š ubānim ina imitti ubānim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***sūmam*** *ṣarip* ⇒ *tēšûm ina mātim i*[*bbašši*]

13. 'If in the Finger's top (there) was **black** *ziḫḫum* and the flesh was consumed ⇒ (it means) the god will devour'
14. '[If] there was **green-yellow** *ziḫḫum* in the Finger's top ⇒ the (flood) waters will detain my army'
16. '[If in] the Finger's top, in the right of the Finger, *ziḫḫum* was situated and it was **red, green-yellow, and white** ⇒ Adad *will send forth* Irra(-)*gišram*[16]'
17. '[If in] the Finger's top, in the right of the Finger, *ziḫḫum* was situated and it was **dyed red** ⇒ there [will be] chaos in the land.'

In terms of color prevalence, red generally seems to be the most common, followed by white and black. However, just what constitutes the latter is less clear, since occasionally it appears that *tarik* (< *tarākum*, Sum. gi_6), "dark," interchanges with *ṣalim* (< *ṣalāmum*, Sum. gi_6), "black."[17] Thus, an entry describing ergot as "dark" has the same mark as "black" in a duplicate (exx. 5.19,

15 Reading follows the tentative proposal in Nougayrol 1969: 153; cf. *CAD* R, 67: *Adad ir-ra-gi-iš-*[*ma*]⌜*x x-zi-iḫ*(?)⌝, "Adad will rumble (?) and [...]."

16 See previous note. If this reading stands, one could perhaps read *gišrum* as a variant of *gašrum*, a term associated with Erra (see Steinkeller 1987: 165–6 and n. 27), though, as A. George reminds me, such forms seem restricted to (SB) Assyrian; see *CAD* G, 57. Might this refer then to a barricade or bridge in an otherwise unknown mytopoeic statement about the gods mentioned? If such a possibility seems unlikely, one is well to recall a case such as *CUSAS* 18 27 r. 34'; see further George 2012.

17 This holds in terms of the hermeneutic associations of both as well.

l. 33 // 5.23, l. 11), and the final entry in each sequence of the thrice-repeated shade pattern of ex. 5.17 interchanges between *ṣalmum* (l. 60) and *tarik* (ll. 68, 73) in its description of *ziḫḫum*. Such overlap may owe to the fact that the proposed original sense of *tarākum*, "to bruise" (Ger. "schlagen"), renders its object in English as "black and blue" (Ger. "braun und blau").[18]

The precise identification of the color red is also a matter of some uncertainty, owing to this color's periodic qualification as being dyed, as in the final entry from the last passage or the following example:

5.8. *YOS* 10 44:45–46

45. [*šumma šēpum …*]*ša* ***pūṣam*** *nadi* ⇒ *appārātum ibbalā ḫušaḫḫu ina mātim ibbašši*
46. [*šumma šē*]*pum* ***sūmam ṣarpat*** ⇒ *nakrum ana dannāt m*[*āt*]*īka išātam inaddi*

45. '[If the Foot], its […] had a **white** coloration ⇒ the reed marshes will dry up; there will be famine in the land'
46. '[If] the Foot was **dyed red** ⇒ the enemy will set fire to the fortresses of your land.'

This qualification may occasionally signal the intent for a deeper tone than is true otherwise,[19] with repercussions for the ensuing interpretation. This may be the case in ex. 5.7, l. 17 above, in which the dyed qualification relates to a calamity whose proportions may have been intended to surpass those of the mythological prediction in the preceding entry. How this shade was compared with the one described as *tarik* represents another difficulty, especially since omen entries describing a condition as *tarik* often appear juxtaposed to others depicting the same condition as red, as seen in the following examples:

5.9. *TIM* 9 78:4–7 (ll. 5–7 = ex. 4.69)

4. *šumma ina* ⌜ …⌝[20] *naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***tarik*** ⇒ Apodosis
5. *šumma ina rēš naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***sām*** ⇒ Apodosis
6. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***sām*** ⇒ Apodosis
7. *šumma ina išdī naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***sām*** ⇒ Apodosis

18 Landsberger 1967a: 150.

19 So Landsberger 1967a: 145–8.

20 Text: ⌜IGI? SU? ŠUM?⌝.

4. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's … and it was **dark**'
5. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's top and it was **red**'
6. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's middle and it was **red**'
7. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the View's base and it was **red**.'

5.10. *TIM* 9 78:12–14

12. [*šumma ina m*]*aškan naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***sām*** ⇒ *ḫurpa …*[21] *Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
13–14. [*šumma ina m*]*a*[*šk*]*an naplaštim ziḫḫu nadī-ma u* ***tarik*** ⇒ *še'am u šamaššammī* […] …[22] *iṣabbat*

12. '[If] *ziḫḫum* was situated [in] the place of the View and it was **red** ⇒ Adad will devastate the early crops of the …'
13–14. '[If] *ziḫḫum* was situated [in] the place of the View and it was **dark** ⇒ […] … will seize the barley and flax.'

5.11. *YOS* 10 35:30–31 (// AO 7033:16–17; l. 30 = ex. 2.125)[23]

30. *šumma ṣibtum* ***tarkat*** ⇒ *namtallû miqitti wedî*
31. *šumma ṣibtum* ***sūmam ṣarpat*** ⇒ *wilid būlim iššer*

30. 'If the Increase was **dark** ⇒ (it forecasts) an eclipse (or:) the defeat of a important person'
31. 'If the Increase was **dyed red** ⇒ the newborn livestock will thrive.'

5.12. *OBE* 1 r. 2–4

2. [*šumma ina … manzāzim lipû kīma kak*]*kkūtim* ***aruq u sām*** ⇒ Apodosis
3. [*šumma ina … manzāzim lipû kīm*]*a kakkūtim-ma* ***tarik*** *u tebi* ⇒ Apodosis
4. [*šumma ina … manzāzim lipû*] *kīma kakkūtim-ma* ***tarik*** *u tebi* ⇒ Apodosis

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21 Text: *ḫu-ur-pa an-*⌜*na*/*mu*?*šú*?⌝.

22 On account of *šamaššammum*, one might expect a reference of the *kursissu*-rodent here (see *CAD* K, 567; Wasserman 1999: 354; ex. 5.87, l. 29).

23 As quoted, this represents a composite text from both versions; for the individual versions, see Glassner 2009a: 56.

2. '[If in the Presence's … fatty tissue (shaped) like] a lentil was **green-yellow or red**'
3. '[If in the Presence's … fatty tissue (shaped)] like a lentil was **dark** and ascending'
4. '[If in the Presence's … fatty tissue] (shaped) like a lentil was **dark** and ascending.'

In terms of the interpretive meaning of *tarik*, things are equally problematic, as the following example makes clear:

5.13. *YOS* 10 39 ob. 24–26

24. *šumma ubān ḫašî qablītum pānūša* ***tirkam*** *maṭrū*[24] ⇒ *ekallam išātum ikkal*
25. *šumma ubān ḫašî qablītum* ***tirkam*** *edḫet* ⇒ *bussurat lumnin*
26. *šumma ubān ḫašî qablītum* ***wurqam*** *edḫet* ⇒ *riḫṣu ina mātim ibbašši*

24. 'If the lung's middle finger, its face was specked with **dark** patches ⇒ fire will consume the palace'
25. 'If the lung's middle finger was covered with **dark** patches ⇒ (it forecasts) bad news'
26. 'If the lung's middle finger was covered with **green-yellow** patches ⇒ there will be devastation in the land.'

In addition to the nondescript, generally inauspicious signification seen in l. 25, another, heralding fire, occurs in l. 24. It is curious whether this association with fire owes to a sense of this shade as proximate to red or dyed red; the latter tone's association with fire, which was already encountered (ex. 5.8, l. 46), finds additional support in the following examples:

5.14. *YOS* 10 36 i 25–28

25–26. [*šumma ḫašûm im*]*ittam u šumēlam* ***ṣarpat*** ⇒ *išātum illiam*
27–28. *šumma ḫašûm pānam u warkatam* ***pūṣī*** *maliat* ⇒ *Adad iraḫḫiṣma ḫušaḫḫum mātam iṣabbat*

24 With George 2013: 157, I favor reading an emphatic dental for the root (as in Semitic).

25–26. '[If the lung] was **dyed** (**red**) on the right and left ⇒ a fire is coming up'
27–28. 'If the lung was full of **white** (spots) on the front and back ⇒ Adad will devastate; or: a famine will seize the land.'

5.15. AO 7539:29–32 (ll. 29–31 // *CUSAS* 18 31 r. 46'–47' [protases only])

29. *šumma qerbū kasî* ***sāmūti*** *udduḫū ⇒ nakrum eli ummānīka kakkīšu kīma šamê ušaznan*
30–31. *šumma qerbū kasî* ***peṣûti*** *udduḫū ⇒ ūma rīqa rigmu ina bīt awīlim iššakkan tibût ākilti*
32. *šumma qerbū* ***sū***[***mam***] ***ṣarpū*** *⇒ urpa/āt ummānīya išātu ikkal*

29. 'If the intestines were thoroughly covered by **red** *kasû*-seeds ⇒ the enemy will shower his weapons over your army like rain'
30–31. 'If the intestines were thoroughly covered by **white** *kasû*-seeds ⇒ for an uncertain date: there will be lamentation in a man's house; (or: it forecasts) a plague of caterpillar(s)[25]'
32. 'If the intestines were **dyed red** ⇒ fire will consume the tent(s) of my army.'

Unfortunately no example is known that offers a glimpse at the relation among all three tones (i.e., red ↔ dyed, red ↔ dark, dark ↔ red), though some such relation probably existed and ostensibly mitigated against the limitations of the otherwise finite Mesopotamian color range.

5.1.2 *Color-based Generative Calculation*

Regardless of the challenges raised above, it is clear that colors and shades were used to mark certain conditions over against their unmarked counterparts, as in the following instance:

25 Additional attestations of *ākiltum*, a *nomen unitatis* of *ākilum*, appear in *YOS* 10 25:49–50; 44:57; *CUSAS* 18 24 ob. 10; for a discussion of this term's possible meaning(s), see George 2013: 164–5; also *CAD* D, 143; *CDA* 10; Hurowitz 2002: 329; George, Taniguchi, and Geller 2010: 81, 85.

5.16. AO 7539:27–28

27. *šumma qerbū qê ṣubbutū ⇒ ummān šarri dannatu iṣabbat*
28. *šumma qerbū qê* ***sāmūti*** *ṣubbutū ⇒ mešertu itebbâm-ma māta ikkal*

27. 'If the intestines were seized by filaments ⇒ hard times will seize the king's army'
28. 'If the intestines were seized by **red** filaments ⇒ *miširtu*-creatures will rise up and consume the land.'

More remarkable are findings in which the enumeration of colors in a particular sequence seem to link proportionally to the forecasts in their apodoses. What is perhaps most important to recognize in this regard is that the symmetrical relation between color on the one hand and forecast severity on the other does not merely point to an organization of data in an orderly manner; rather, it reveals a use of the organizational framework for generative purposes, such that certain colors were employed to calculate omen forecasts. Such reckoning suggests that within this organizational framework the associative meaning of any given color represented only one of several factors under consideration; indeed, as is demonstrated below, it appears as if the effect of the organizational framework at times outweighed what was predicated on associative relations for particular colors. In other words, color ordering was used theoretically in the organization of the omen collections in the same manner as that described by Veldhuis for later lexical traditions.

5.1.2.1 A Ø → Red → Dark/Black Scheme?

In at least five instances the color red is mentioned as part of a condition that repeats the data from the preceding entry, except that in the former no color (= Ø) is described. In four of these cases the same condition is repeated once more, with the color variable this time reported as *tarik*,[26] such that the full sequence in these examples runs Ø → red → *tarik*. The last leg of this sequence, red → *tarik*, appears in another instance (ex. 5.19, ll. 32–33) as well. Whether *tarik* in these passages is to be taken as dark (red [?]) or black is uncertain,[27] though its sense relative to the red entries preceding it is sufficiently clear in several examples (exx. 5.17–5.18; 5.19, ll. 32–33). Indeed, a clear pattern emerges for the color sequence Ø → red → dark/black in terms of its interpretation: in

26 In ex. 5.17, l. 60 *ṣalmu* appears in place of *tarik*.

27 The evidence from ex. 5.17 supports reading the term as closer to *ṣalim*, though whether one can extrapolate from this is impossible to say.

all these examples the respective interpretations of the dark/black entries are less favorable than those marked with red, while the entries marked with red prove to be less favorable than those unmarked by color. This interpretation pattern suggests that the Ø → red → dark/black sequence may have been recognized as fixed in OB extispicy, conveying a sense of increasing unfavorability.

The following passage represents the most ambitious expression employing this alleged scheme (summarized in Table 5.1a):[28]

5.17. AO 7539:58–60, 66–68, 71–73[29]

58. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* [*na*]*di* ⇒ *mīlu illaka*
59. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* ***sāmu*** *nadi* ⇒ *Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
60. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* ***ṣalmu*** *nadi* ⇒ *Adad amīlūta iraḫḫiṣ*

...

66. *šumma ina qabal qerbī ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ *zinnu ina šamê mīlu ina nagbi illaka*
67. *šumma ina qabal qerbī ziḫḫu* ***sāmu*** *nadi* ⇒ *Nergal ina mātīya ikkal*
68. *šumma ina qabal qerbī ziḫḫu nadī-ma* ***tarik*** ⇒ *ṣeḫḫerūtu ina nāri imtanuttū*

...

71. *šumma ina qutun qerbī ziḫḫu nadi* ⇒ *būla ḫušaḫḫu iṣabbat*
72. *šumma ina qutun qerbī ziḫḫu* ***sāmu*** *nadi* ⇒ *nuḫḫulu itebbâm-ma šeam samānu iṣabbat*
73. *šumma ina qutun qerbī ziḫḫu nadī-ma* ***tarik*** ⇒ *maḫīr šīpāti iššaqqil*

58. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the top of the intestines ⇒ (it means) a flood will come'
59. 'If **red** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the top of the intestines ⇒ Adad will devastate'
60. 'If **black** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the top of the intestines ⇒ Adad will devastate humanity

...

66. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the intestines' middle ⇒ (either) rains from the heavens (or) a flood from the spring will come'

28 Additional aspects of the unusually sophisticated paradigmatic expression of this text are discussed in Glassner 1984a: 35–8.

29 Lines 61–65 and 69–70 interrupt the shade sequence with further detail on the specific positioning of *ziḫḫum* with respect in the top and middle parts, respectively; see also ll. 74–76.

67. 'If **red** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the intestines' middle ⇒ Nergal will devour in my land'
68. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the intestines' middle and it was **dark** ⇒ youths will continuously die in the river'

...

71. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the thin (part) of the intestines ⇒ famine will seize the herd'
72. 'If **red** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the thin (part) of the intestines ⇒ the *nuḫḫulum*[30] will rise up or: *samānum* will seize the barley'
73. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the thin (part) of the intestines and it was **dark** ⇒ the (barter-)price (in barley) of wool will be weighed.'

Here one finds the Ø → red → dark/black sequence repeated three times, corresponding to the mention of *ziḫḫum* in the intestines' top, middle, and bottom (lit., small), respectively (see Table 5.1a). In every instance the interpretation is calamitous: the cases located at the top and middle of the intestines follow the interpretive line relating *ziḫḫum* and precipitation; those at the intestines' bottom corresponding to the unmarked and red *ziḫḫum* varieties seem to relate to other forms of natural disaster.

Thus, the evidence sketched above presents a coherent picture for the calculation of *ziḫḫum* in the intestines allowing for the variables of location and color. The latter factor operates not only in terms of its own value, syntagmatically according to structuralist reasoning, as in the transparent red ↔

30 CAD N/2, 318, which has this word as a *hapax legomenon*, wonders whether the term is a variant of *imḫullum*, the destructive wind thought to bring diseases. By contrast, *AHw*, 1580 understands this lexeme as a dangerous fly (< num.ḫul), possibly a biform of *nimmullu*. Additional evidence concerning the term's sense comes from an OB incantation against Wardat-Lilîm, which contains the following description of the fate of the demon and her husband:

"*iṣṣabtū-ma* / *mussa nuḫḫullu*[*m*] / *u šī ziqīqu*[*m*] / *irappudū ṣēra*[*m*] 'they grasped one another—her husband, a *nuḫḫulu*-..., and she herself, a *ziqīqu*-spirit—and they were roaming about in the steppe (*YOS* 11 92:21–24).' "

The parallel depictions of husband and wife as *nuḫḫullum* and *ziqīqum* and the reference to both as roaming about (*rapādum*) support the understanding of *nuḫḫullum* as a type of wind; so Farber 1989: 22 (with a parallel from a first-millennium *ardat-lilî* incantation). However, both possibilities have associative appeal in the Mesopotamian realia: the dusty siroccos in Iraq are notorious for the reddish dust they deposit everywhere, while a plague of flies may serve as a fitting interpretation for red *ziḫḫum*, in a manner akin to the prediction of locusts in *YOS* 10 9:26–27, which is anticipated by the occurrence of a lung full of red worms.

samānum association in l. 72, but also as part of a larger whole, or paradigmatically, whereby the inner-relations among the set members {Ø, red, dark/black} are used to mark degrees of severity corresponding to the respective apodoses. Naturally there is no telling whether some constituent entries met here existed outside the specific organizational framework of this passage.

A case in point is provided by the three dark/black omens in this passage (ll. 60, 68, 73): remarkably, all three of the corresponding apodoses in these entries feature a more general or abstract sense than what precedes them and seem to convey the extreme or even resultative scenario in the gradation. Particularly noteworthy in this respect are the references to *amīlūtam*, "humanity," in l. 60 and *ṣeḫḫerūtum*, probably "youths,"[31] along with the iterative and consequently vague sense of the Gtn verbal form in l. 68. To be sure, predictions of death are no strangers to omens describing a dark mark of one sort or another; still, in their extreme—indeed cataclysmic—manner, these forecasts find no parallel. Accordingly, one cannot but account for their qualitative differences on the basis of the organizational framework. Similarly, the oblique reference to economic collapse in l. 73 is not unique in the collections;[32] however, its relation to *ziḫḫum*, whether dark or otherwise, is both unknown and unexpected, hinting thus that a paradigmatically based generative calculation might explain its inclusion here.

A similar case presents itself in the following example (summarized in Table 5.1b):

5.18. *YOS* 10 46 iv 38–44 (cf. *CUSAS* 18 25 r. 5'-7'[33])

38–40. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki imitti ziḫḫum nadi ⇒ adirāt nakrim ina libbi ummānīya nadâ*
41–42. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki imitti ziḫḫum* ***sāmum*** *nadi ⇒ ašqulāl ummānīya*
43–44. *šumma ina muḫḫi kakki imitti ziḫḫum nadī-ma u* ***tarik*** *⇒ Adad ummānam iraḫḫiṣ*

38–40. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated atop the Weapon of the right ⇒ fears of the enemy will be in the heart of my army'

31 The option of "servants" here seems less likely. Is this a reference to recurrent accidental downing or a harbinger of a more dramatical imagination, in the sense of mass infanticide, akin to the ultimate biblical plague on Egypt?

32 See, e.g., *YOS* 10 24:32, 38; 25:39; 42 ii 10–11; *OBE* 10:21–22; *YOS* 10 35:11; VAT 4102:8; MAH 15994:8; *TIM* 9 80:7; *OBE* 10:60; 15 r. 5'.

33 On the comparison of these parallel traditions, see Winitzer forthcoming b.

41–42. 'If **red** *ziḫḫum* was situated atop the Weapon of the right ⇒ (it forecasts) an *ašqulālu* for my army'
43–44. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated atop the Weapon of the right and it was **dark** ⇒ Adad will devastate the army.'

Here too one notes that the increasing severity reported in the predictions corresponds to the color gradation, with the final case (*tarik*) offering a variation of the interpretive theme regarding an army's vicissitudes, though in a manner that elevates the scene to the mythological plane. Once more, then, it is evident that, according to the organizational framework of this gradation, a color maintains a level of meaning that transcends an inherent value. Thus, for example, while it may be that the red ↔ *ašqulālum* association in ll. 41–42 was recognized elsewhere, still it is probable that in this context the interpretation of red *ziḫḫum* owes to its place between the colorless and the dark/black varieties, with the corresponding atmospheric phenomenon[34] somewhere between the terrestrial and celestial origins of the army's woes in the other two entries.

TABLES 5.1A–C *Color gradations according to the sequence Ø → Red → Dark/Black*

a. Ex. 5.17

***Ziḫḫum* shade →** **Location** ↓	**Ø**	**Red**	**Dark/Black**
Intestines' top (ll. 58–60)	Flood is coming	Adad devastates	Adad devastates humanity
Intestines' middle (ll. 66–68)	Rain from the skies, or flood from the springs, is coming	Nergal consumes the land	Youths die continuously in river
Intestines' bottom (ll. 71–73)	Famine seizes the cattle	*nuḫḫullum* arises or *samānum* seizes crops	Economic collapse

34 Cf., however, George 2013: 175, who notes a different sense of *ašqulālum*, a malady of some sort, in two passages from two Sealand collections (*CUSAS* 18 24 r. 13'; 29 r. 35'–36'b [*izbu*]).

TABLES 5.1A–C *Color gradations according to the sequence Ø → Red → Dark/Black* (cont.)

b. Ex. 5.18

***Ziḫḫum* shade →** **Location** ↓	**Ø**	**Red**	**Dark/Black**
Atop Weapon of right side	Army fears enemy (ll. 38–40)	Army experiences *ašqulālum* (ll. 41–42)	Adad devastates army (ll. 43–44)

c. Ex. 5.19, ll. 32–33

Shade → **Location** ↓	**Ø**	**Red**	**Dark/Black**
Top of heart	*Not applicable*	Tidings (l. 32)	Fearful word (l. 33)

The same logic probably explains the forecasts corresponding to the red → dark shift in ll. 32–33 of the following example (summarized in Table 5.1c):

5.19. *OBE* 14 ob. 27–33

27. *šumma rēš libbim ziqtī* ***sāmūtim*** *saḫir ⇒ ummān rubêm māḫiram ul i*[*raš*]*ši*
28. *šumma rēš libbim* ***pūṣa*** *saḫir ⇒ rubûm nīš ilim iṣabbassu*
29. *šumma rēš libbim* ***pūṣa u urqa*** *saḫir ⇒ māmīt erṣetim awīlam ṣabtat*
30. *šumma rēš libbim qâ nadī-ma u* ***peṣi*** *⇒ nidin ilim ana rubêm*
31. *šumma rēš libbim qâ saḫir ⇒ nīš ilim šarra ṣabit*
32. *šumma rēš libbim mer'a nadī-ma u* ***sām*** *⇒ bussurātu ana rubêm iṭaḫḫeam*
33. *šumma rēš libbim mer'a nadī-ma u* ***tarik*** *⇒ awātum pirittu ana rubêm iṭaḫḫeam*

27. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by **red** sting marks ⇒ the army of the prince will have no rival'
28. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by **whiteness** ⇒ (concerning) the prince—a divinely sworn oath will seize him'
29. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by **white and green-yellow** ⇒ an earthly oath-*cum*-curse will seize the man'
30. 'If the heart's top has a filament and it was **white** ⇒ (it forecasts) a *gift*[35] *from the god* to the prince'
31. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by a filament ⇒ an oath sworn by the god will seize the king'
32. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by ergot[36] and it was **red** ⇒ tidings will reach the prince'
33. 'If the heart's top was surrounded by ergot and it was **dark** ⇒ a fearful word[37] will reach the prince.'

The sense of *bussurātum*, "tiding(s)," is often positive, though on occasion one encounters the term in neutral or even negative contexts; its precise nuance in l. 32 is thus unclear, though this is probably less dire than the report of fear in the following entry. It is tempting to suppose that the placement of these entries following l. 30 was intended to produce a Ø → red → dark/black sequence, even though the subjects of the protases differ; if so, this would reflect another instance of textual harmonization, whereby disparate traditions were made to fit into some unifying structure, in this case the color sequence Ø → red → dark/black. Whatever the case, in its red → dark/black sequence this passage does manifest a relation between color gradation and forecast favorability.

The recurrence of the Ø → red → dark/black sequence supports its interpretation as an established scheme in the OB collections, a scheme that was applied in different scenarios in the service of forecast calculation. Admittedly, this hypothesis rests on limited data. Moreover, part of the available evidence is compromised in one manner or another: in the case of ex. 5.19, ll. 32–33 only a segment of this sequence appears, while three of the four cases in which the entire sequence is fully manifest are part of one broader complex, namely,

35 Or "grant"? See *CAD* N/2, 208–9 for the occurrence of *nidnum* in constructs with a DN in personal names.

36 The translation of "ergot" (see *CAD* M/2, 106) for *mer'u* (*me-er-a*) in this line and the next is supported by the occurrence of the same finding in *OBE* 13 r. 11'–13' (= ex. 5.23), but with the spelling *me-er-ḫa-am*.

37 Lit., "a word, fear/terror."

ex. 5.17. Consequently, it may be argued that the case for understanding the Ø → red → dark/black sequence as paradigmatic does not meet the standards necessary for a clear verdict. On the other hand, the consistency witnessed in those interpretations aligned with the Ø → red → dark/black sequence cannot be dismissed. This point becomes more impressive when one realizes that elsewhere, where omen gradations framed around color sequences are encountered, nothing approximating this level of consistency can be pointed to.

Thus, for the moment we must be content with the provisional. Two main conclusions may be drawn from what we have seen: (1) the Ø → red → dark/black sequence provided a medium for the organization according to color for omens in gradations in the collections; (2) the interpretations of omens organized according to this sequence appear to follow a linear gradation that proceeds from bad to worse. On this basis, it may tentatively be said that the repeated occurrence of the Ø → red → dark/black sequence and the relative consistency witnessed in the corresponding interpretations reflects an understanding of the sequence as paradigmatic. Certainty in this matter, however, awaits future discovery.

5.1.2.2 More on Generative Calculation on the Basis of Color Sequence

As we have seen, forecast generation according to color-based interpretive associations occurs where colors are arranged in particular sequences. This is borne out by cases in which specific color sequences correspond linearly to omen interpretations. Another illustration of this is provided by the following example, a passage discussed earlier in connection to the manner by which its second entry refers implicitly to information reported in the first:

5.20. *YOS* 10 41:69–71 (= ex. 3.9)

69–70. *šumma kalītum ša imittim* ***īriq****-ma ina imittim ṭeḫiat ⇒ lā wālittum ullad*
70–71. *šumma ina imittim-ma ṭeḫiat-ma u* ***tarkat*** *⇒ ullad-ma* [*i*]*mât*

69–70. 'If the kidney of the right was **green-yellow** and it lay close in the right ⇒ the barren woman will give birth'
70–71. 'If (ditto [= the right kidney was **green-yellow**]) and it lay close in the right and it was **dark** ⇒ she will give birth but she/it (= the baby) will die.'

As noted earlier, the difficulties posed by the implied ditto in the second entry do not hinder a partial comprehension of the passage's sense: the interpretation

of birth and death in this omen demands that the condition reported in the previous entry be assumed to carry over; thus the color sequence that mediates this passage runs: green-yellow → green-yellow + dark. In terms of form, this passage exemplifies the classic agglutinative type of complex gradation, with the respective interpretations following suit. Consequently, even though the green-yellow → green-yellow + dark sequence evinced in this passage does not recur in the collections, there can be little doubt that its employment and the interpretation with which it is correlated represent the product of a generative-based calculation.

Further evidence of this same effort is afforded by a consideration of the associations between the colors and oath types in ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30 (see above). The findings from that passage are summarized in Table 5.2 below:

TABLE 5.2 *Color sequence and respective interpretation in Ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30*

Citation	**Color**	**Oath/*gift* type**
l. 28	White	*nīš ilim*
l. 29	White and Green-Yellow	*māmīt erṣetim*
l. 30	White	*nidin ilim*

The three omens comprising ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30 concern the occurrence of coloration—white and white with green-yellow—surrounding the heart's top. In the corresponding apodoses a contrast is articulated between forecasts describing either a celestially bestowed oath (*nīš ilim*) or *gift* (*nidin ilim*) on the one hand and an oath-*cum*-curse (*māmītum*), qualified here as terrestrial (*māmīt erṣetim*, lit., "oath-*cum*-curse of the earth"; see below) on the other. That color associations are responsible for these interpretive differences seems transparent, especially for ll. 28–29, in which no variable save the shift in color can account for the counterpart shift in oath types. In the case of l. 29, presumably by analogy to the fecundity motif, a connection was forged between the shade green-yellow and the earth of the *māmīt erṣetim*. In the case of ll. 28, 30, it seems reasonable to assume that the color white, probably by analogy to the interpretation of *nawārum* ("to be bright"), recalled the heavenly sphere in the celestially bestowed oath or gift (*nīš*/*nidin ilim*).

If this analysis stands, then the distinction drawn between *nīš ilim* and *māmīt erṣetim* in ll. 28–29 seems to revolve around the sphere with which each

oath type is here envisioned, namely, celestial in the case of the former and terrestrial in the latter. However, it is important to recognize that this dichotomy is essentially artificial: nothing known from Mesopotamian law can substantiate the suggestion that the *nīšum* oath had a fundamentally sacral character while the *māmītum* was earthly.[38] In fact, Falkenstein had believed just the opposite to be the case,[39] and though a revision of his analysis dismisses any such bifurcation, what is clear is that both oath types possessed an unmistakable religious dimension.[40]

Indeed, it is not unlikely that the reference of *nīšum* and *māmītum* in ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30, along with these terms' qualifications, reflect the diviner's poetic license. After all, the *nomen rectum* qualifying the *nīšum* oath is typically not the generic *ilum* but rather a specific DN or RN. The *erṣetum* in *māmīt erṣetim* is even more puzzling, since where it is mentioned, the term *māmītum* overwhelmingly appears unbound, and even in cases where it does occur in constructs, it is almost always bound to a specific DN or person;[41] this was presumably what motivated Jeyes to understand *māmīt erṣetim* in ex. 5.19, l. 29 as referring to the netherworld.[42] Still, in one way or another what seems unequivocal for ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30 is the manner by which color and the color sequence is employed for generative-based interpretation.

5.1.2.3 Limitations and Exceptions to Color-based Interpretation

The case of ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30 above is also instructive in another manner, since it is not the only place in which associations between colors and oath types are attested. A consideration of two additional passages relating these points demonstrates a lack of consistency in terms of their association. In contrast to the color-oath associations in ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30, in which whiteness predicts *nīš ilim* (l. 28) and *nidin ilim* (l. 30) oaths, in the following example whiteness is taken as a prediction of a king's seizure by a *māmītum*:

38 For an overview of the distinction between the *nīšum* and *māmītum* oaths, see Steinkeller 1989: 71–80.

39 Falkenstein 1956–1957, 1: 64–6.

40 See Steinkeller 1989: 77.

41 See *CAD* M/1, 189–95; but cf. the following.

42 Jeyes 1989: 161. A similar interpretation for this expression in the lecanomancy corpus appears in Pettinato, Ölwahrsagung 1: 189, concerning text I:29–30 see also *CAD* E, 310.

5.21. *YOS* 10 42 i 24–29 (ll. 24–25 = ex. 2.224)

24–25. [*šumma li*]*bbu uṭṭēti*⌜*m peṣâtim malī-ma*⌝ [*u*] *waṣiā* ⇒ *tazzimti ummānim*
26–27. [*šum*]*ma libbu uṭṭētim* ***sāmātim*** *mali* ⇒ *murṣānu ibbaššû*
28–29. *šumma libbu* ***pūṣam*** *saḫir* ⇒ *māmītum šarram ṣabtat*

24–25. '[If] the heart was full of **white** moles and they were protruding ⇒ (it forecasts) the complaint of the army'
26–27. 'If the heart was full of **red** moles ⇒ there will be illnesses'
28–29. 'If the heart was surrounded by **whiteness** ⇒ the oath-*cum*-curse will seize the king.'

In a slightly different context, the color green-yellow appears not in connection with a *māmītum* oath as in ex. 5.19, ll. 29, but with a *nīš ilim* oath:

5.22. *OBE* 14 ob. 15–17 (cf. // *OBE* 13 r. 15'–18'; l. 16' = ex. 2.93)

15. [*šumma rēš libbim…… kīma un*]*qi lamī-ma u rēš libbim uššur u* ***sām*** ⇒ *āl tillātīka nakrum ilammī-ma ul iṣabbat*
16. [*šumma rēš libbim* ***urqam***] *kīma unqi lawi* ⇒ *rubâ kišpū ṣabtū*
17. [*šumma rēš libbim* ***urqam***] *kīma unqi lawī-ma u qê itaddu* ⇒ *rubû ana tillatīšu nīš ilim izakkar*

15. '[If the heart's top……] was encircled [like] a ring but the heart's top was loose and **red** ⇒ the enemy will surround the city of your auxiliary troops but will not seize (it)'
16. '[If the heart's top] was encircled [by a **green-yellow** patch] like a ring ⇒ witchcraft will seize the prince'
17. '[If the heart's top] was encircled [by a **green-yellow** patch] like a ring and it was full of filaments ⇒ the prince will swear an oath with his auxiliary troops.'

It is difficult to account for the differences among these color-oath type associations. However, two important lessons may be drawn in any case concerning color-based interpretation and its place within the organizational framework. The first involves the signification of colors in the omen collections. Notwithstanding the presence of some obvious interpretive associations (e.g., dark ↔ bad; red ↔ fire, green-yellow ↔ fecundity), it nonetheless appears that the meaning of particular colors was not conceived of in absolute terms.

TABLE 5.3 *Comparison of color association with oath types: Exx. 5.19; 5.21–5.22*

Oath/Gift Type → **Color** ↓	***Nīš ilim***	***Māmītum/māmīt erṣetim***	***Nidin ilim***
White	Ex. 5.19, l. 28	Ex. 5.21, l. 29	Ex. 5.19, l. 30
White and Green-Yellow		Ex. 5.19, l. 29	
Green	Ex. 5.22, l. 17		

As is the case with other hermeneutic associations, those concerning color betray exceptions to purported rules. The second observation builds on the first. The finding of alternative color ↔ oath associations in exx. 5.19 and 5.21–5.22 only underscores the role of the organizational framework in cases where, as in exx. 5.18 or 5.19, ll. 28–30, these occur in the context of a specific order. On the basis of the alternatives in exx. 5.21–5.22, the role of the organizational framework may be better appreciated for ex. 5.19, ll. 28–30.

A similar lesson may be drawn from the consideration of the latter portion of ex. 5.19 as well. The consideration there of ergot in the heart's top according to the Ø → red → dark/black color sequence (ll. 32–33) finds a parallel in the following passage:

5.23. *OBE* 13 r. 11'–13'

11. [*šumma rēš lib*]*bim mer'am nadī-ma* ***ṣalim*** ⇒ *pirittum ana rubêm iṭeḫḫea*
12–13. [*šumma rēš libbim me*]*r'am nadī-ma ina pîm* ***pūṣum*** *nadi* ⇒ *mār šipri ša sarr*[*ātim dan*]*nātim iṭeḫḫea šanû* <*šumšu*> *ina* [*t*]*illatīka ālum ikkaššad*

11. '[If] the heart's [top] had ergot and it was **black** ⇒ fear will reach the prince'
12–13. '[If the heart's top] was cast with ergot and a **white** spot was situated in (its) tip ⇒ a messenger bearing serious lies will come here; <its> second <interpretation>: a city from your auxiliary troops will be conquered.'

In ex. 5.19, l. 33, one finds, in the context of a red → dark/black sequence, ergot in the heart's top, which predicts that "a fearful word will set upon the

prince" (*awātum pirittum ana rubêm iṭaḫḫiam*); ex. 5.23, l. 11, which likewise finds black ergot on the heart's top, shares this prediction almost verbatim. However, the latter passage, from *OBE* 13—a collection elsewhere parallel to *OBE* 14, from which ex. 5.19 is quoted—opted in its consideration of ergot for a different color sequence (black → white). Thus, once more it is evident that the organization of colors remained in part a matter of choice.

5.1.3 *The Employment of Variables of Colors: Conclusions*

In the case of color gradation, once more we learn that omen interpretation relied considerably on the organizational framework. Though only one color sequence was recognized as bearing paradigmatic characteristics, it is clear that the organizational framework provided an important avenue through which generative-based calculation could be undertaken, in this case concerning the effects of color in specific situations. Moreover, it is clear that the diviner made good use of this tool, applying it to a range of scenarios and deriving new possibilities from established realities.

In this respect it is noteworthy to consider the following example, met in part above, from the perspective of its broader setting:

5.24. AO 7539:57–60 (ll. 58–60 = ex. 5.17)

57. *šumma ina muḫḫi qerbī ziḫḫu nadi ⇒ šamūtum* ***ḫaruptu*** *izannun*
58. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* [*na*]*di ⇒ mīlu illaka*
59. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* ***sāmu*** *nadi ⇒ Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
60. *šumma ina rēš qerbī ziḫḫu* ***ṣalmu*** *nadi ⇒ Adad amīlūta iraḫḫiṣ*

57. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated atop the intestines ⇒ there will be an **early** rain'
58. 'If *ziḫḫum* was situated in the head of the intestines ⇒ (it means) a flood will come'
59. 'If **red** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the head of the intestines ⇒ Adad will devastate'
60. 'If **black** *ziḫḫum* was situated in the head of the intestines ⇒ Adad will devastate humanity

From a redactional perspective, it appears as if the forecast of an unusually early rain in this passages's first entry could have served as the trigger for the ensuing investigation, which strove for a comprehensive analysis of the effects of excess water.

It is tempting to imagine this process carrying on further. After all, at least in theory, somewhere between the predictions of an impending flood in l. 58

and humanity's liquidation in l. 60—in other words, in the range between the colorless and dark(est)—lay as many possibilities as the color spectrum would permit. In practice, however, the undertaking remained more modest in scope. As was observed above, the diviner worked within the parameters of the finite Mesopotamian color spectrum. As with other avenues using the organizational framework, the employment of color gradations had its limits.

5.2 The Employment of Visual Images

An important introduction to the role of visual imagery in divination literature, and more specifically extispicy, was offered some years ago by Nougayrol, who collected what was then an exhaustive list of all images presented as similes in omen protases, which he referred to as the "silhouettes de référence."[43] Nougayrol wondered about the place of these within the collections' hermeneutics. Toward this end he assembled the data, presented a typology of the various images, reported on the frequency of each type, and made important observations on the formal appearance of similes in omens, as well as their distribution among the various marks and zones.[44]

One issue that remained largely beyond the scope of Nougayrol's study was what he described as the "regroupements logiques" of entries bearing such similes.[45] In speaking about this phenomenon, Nougayrol seemed to have in mind the later omen texts.[46] But in fact, efforts at the (re)grouping of visual imagery in some logical arrangement—in short, of the organization of this material in the collections—is well-attested already in the OB collections. The effort to reassess some of these similes in the later traditions sprang from the desire to understand and bring into line what are frequently difficult and, from the perspective of the technical framework, unconventional lexemes. Yet, as the following makes clear, this is the precise motivation behind the active organizational effort of omens bearing such terms or images in the OB collections.

43 Nougayrol 1976.

44 Nougayrol 1976: 348–50.

45 But cf. ibid.: 350.

46 This seems to be the sense of his reference to "Recueils de Variantes Commentés" (ibid.), which may refer to those Orientation Tablets (see Koch 2005: 66–72, 480–534) first studied by him (Nougayrol 1968).

5.2.1 *Organization of Similes via Pointillistic Expression*

The following examples provide an introduction to similes and their groupings in the collections:

5.25. *YOS* 10 35:34–37 (ll. 36–37 = ex. 2.212)

34–35. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum kīma* ***naṣraptim*** *ana libbīša kapṣat* ⇒ […] *awīlum haliqtašu utta*
36–37. [(*šumma*) *ṣibtum*] ⌜*kīma a*⌝*ban* ***suluppim*** ⇒ *uluṣ libbi* [*aššat*] *awīlim zika<ra> ullad*

34–35. '(If) the Increase was concave like the **Crucible** toward its middle part ⇒ […] a man will find his missing item'
36–37. '[(If) the Increase] (was) like the **date's pit** ⇒ (it signals) joy: the man's [wife] shall bear a male.'

5.26. *OBE* 14 ob. 46–50 (ll. 48–50 = ex. 3.83)

46–47. *šumma rēš libbim lipia kīma* ***qaqqad pilakki*** *saḫir-ma u rēssu nawir* ⇒ *rubû … šalālīšu išappak*
48. *šumma ina rēš libbim lipû kīma* ***kakkūti*** *nadī-ma u tarik* ⇒ *ṣīt bārîm*
49–50. [*šumma ina rēš libbim lip*]*û kīma* ***k***[***akkūt***]***i*** *nadī-ma u nawir* ⇒ *bārû* [*šum*(*i*) *damiqti*[47] *i*]*leqqe*

46–47. 'If the heart's top was surrounded with fatty tissue like the **spindle whorl** and its head was bright ⇒ the prince will heap the … of his plundering'
48. 'If in the heart's top fatty tissue was situated like a **lentil** and it was dark ⇒ (it predicts) the defection of the diviner('s status ?)'
49–50. '[If in the heart's top] fatty tissue was situated like a **lentil** and it was bright ⇒ the diviner will acquire [*a good reputation*].'

Often, as in the following example, lexemes comprising the similes are not widely attested elsewhere in divination literature or even more broadly in Akkadian:

47 Restoration follows Jeyes 1989: 19, 158, which, in turn, is based on similar forecasts in *YOS* 10 42 i 20; 46 iv 18; and Scheil B:1.

5.27. *YOS* 10 31 ix 54–x 7

ix 54–x 3. *šumma mart*[*um*] *appa*[*ša*] *k*[*ī*]*ma* ***ḫumāšim*** [*ke*]*pât*[48] ⇒ ⌜*lem*⌝*ēn*[49] *rubêm*
x 4–x 7. *šumma martum a*[*p*]*paša kīma* ***ṣurīrītim*** ⇒ *kakki Šarrū-kīn*

ix 54–x 3. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—[its] tip was bent like a **wrestler's grappling hook** ⇒ (it predicts) misfortune for the prince'
x 4–x 7. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its tip (was) like a **lizard** ⇒ (it represents) the Weapon of Sargon.'

Other unusual shapes and terms appearing in this role include a kind of shellfish, a lyre's ear, esoteric stones, garden tools, ribbons (?) of a male puppet, a kid's ear, a headdress, and a part of a ball.[50]

Another subgroup among these similes involves three entries that liken some feature on the liver to the shape of a particular cuneiform sign—namely, *pappum, kaškaš*, and *ḫalûm*—actually spelling out the name of the sign described (see exx. 5.29; 5.32, l. 7).[51] These similes have generated considerable interest on account of their bearing on the still-unresolved question of the meaning of similar writings in OB sign lists.[52] However this matter may be settled, it remains the case that, outside the early lexical lists, these similes represent the only instances for these unusual renderings and thus provide testimony to their conceptual oddity, whether in divination literature or otherwise.

Certainly, for their native speakers, these terms did not pose the difficulties they present for us. Still, the sense seems inescapable that, by way of the clustering of these similes in the above-quoted passages, the diviners sought to convey something that broke from conventional technical or interpretive

48 With *CAD* K, 313, though [*ka*]*ppat* (< *kapāpum*, "to bend, curve") is also possible; see *YOS* 10 31 xi 19; 46 iii 30; 60:10, 12. For *kepûm* in extispicy omens, see *YOS* 10 46 v 32; BM 22694:72, 74. The tentative suggestion of [*eṣ*?]*-pa-at* (< *eṣēpum*, "to twine") in Riemschneider 1962: 68, 87 seems less likely.

49 Text: ⌜*le-me*?⌝*-in*; cf. *YOS* 10 31 vi 38: *le-me-in awīlim*.

50 See, respectively, exx. 5.34, l. 21; 5.33, l. 36; ex. 5.38, ll. 32–34; 5.35, ll. 14–15; 5.28, l. 1.

51 See Lieberman 1977, building on the initial observation for one such case in Nougayrol 1950: 113 n. 9; more recently discussed in Frahm 2010.

52 See Gong 2000: 6–7, 84–5, as well as his comprehensive list of all OB sign "names."

molds. A good indication of this point may be appreciated from the following example, which represents nearly all of *YOS* 10 28:[53]

5.28. *YOS* 10 28:1–8 (ll. 3–4 = ex. 2.217; ll. 5–7 = ex. 3.54)

1. *šumma martum kīma **ṭīḫ pukkim** igrur ⇒ mātum lawītum iṣṣabbat*
2. *šumma martum rēssa kīma **kubšim** ⇒ rubûm lamassam irašši*
3. *šumma martum rēssa kīma **qaqqad akkullim** ⇒ mīli irtim*
4. *šumma martum rēssa kīma **ṣillêm** iqtin ⇒ šarrum mātam nakartam upallaš*
5. *šumma martum rēssa ana imittim kīma **qaran iskurim** ⇒ šarra nakerka ina kipir kišādim ukannašūnikkum*
6–7. *šumma martum rēssa ana šumēlim kīma **qaran iskurim** ⇒ ana šarrim nakrīka ina kipir kišādim ukannašūka*
8. *šumma martum kīma **ziḫḫim** puḫḫurat ⇒ taqtīt palê*[*m*]

1. ‘If the gallbladder rolled over like the … **of a *ball***[54] ⇒ the encircled land will be conquered’
2. ‘If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head (was) like a ***kubšu*-turban** ⇒ the prince will find luck’
3. ‘If the gallbladder, its head (was) like the **head of an *akkullu*-hammer** ⇒ (if forecasts) pride’
4. ‘If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head was thin like **a pin** ⇒ the king will penetrate enemy land’
5. ‘If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the right (was) like a **crescent’s horn** ⇒ the king, your enemy, will be made to submit to you by the of the lopping off of neck(s)’
6–7. ‘If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the left (was) like a **crescent’s horn** ⇒ you will be made to submit to a king, your enemy, by the of the lopping off of neck(s).’
8. ‘If the gallbladder is bunched together like ***ziḫḫum*** ⇒ (it forecasts) the end of the dynasty.’

That this collection, even if conceived merely as an exercise text,[55] should be comprised almost entirely of entries predicated on similes is explicable only

53 Not included are ll. 9–12, which are broken.

54 My rendering follows *CAD* P, 502; for references to previous opinions on *pukkum*, see George 2003: 898–900. The sense of the previous lexeme remains unclear.

55 On the challenge in the categorization of this text, see Glassner 2009a: 12–3.

when one recognizes the unique place of such omens in the collections. The same holds for *YOS* 10 14 (ex. 5.30 below), in which every entry includes an explicit comparison to some unorthodox shape. Granted, as discussed earlier, it is possible that this text represents an excerpt from a larger *naplaštum* main series and is a quotation of (part of) the simile section from that text. Yet even if this is so, it is clear that the very existence of this short collection owes itself to the similes comprising its entries and the effort to group these together at some stage in the composition of the omen collections.

Thus, these groupings cannot be explained as mere coincidences. Rather, they provide further testimony of the organizational effort at work in the collections, which in this case sought to present entries bearing unusual images in some orderly manner and context. As with many other aspects of the collections' organizational framework, no detailed analysis of the similes' presentation manner has as yet been attempted. This is particularly unfortunate in this instance, since, as Nougayrol had begun to suspect, the study of their unique status within the standardized technical nomenclature is likely to yield important results for the understanding of the entire interpretive system.[56] Therefore, it is incumbent upon a study of the organization of the OB omen collections to put forth an initial effort in this direction. The following seeks to achieve this goal.

5.2.1.1 Paradigmatic-type Pointillistic Expression: Cuneiform-sign Similes

In his study of the names of certain cuneiform signs, Lieberman correctly observed that, rather than occurring in isolation in the collections, these are found grouped together in short sections.[57] Furthermore, he noted that in two such sections from the following examples, the succession of signs in the entries seems to parallel a sequence known from SB collections; namely, the progressions PAB → KASKAL and BAD → KASKAL recall a snippet of the

56 Nougayrol 1976: 350, and see the concluding words in § 5.2.3 below.

57 Lieberman 1977: 149–50. Lieberman wrongly took the frequent mention of *kakkum*, or Weapon, in the collections as a spelling of the sign GAG and thus saw its appearance in isolation from other signs as an exception to his observation. A potential exception to this point may come from *CUSAS* 18 24, one of the recently published Sealand collections, which includes six cuneiform-simile entries spread out in various places in the text (see George 2013: 159). Unfortunately the text is badly broken, including most entries preceding or following those with the cuneiform-sign similes, and as such cannot settle the matter.

AN → ḪAL → PAB → KASKAL sequence in Koch, *Multābiltu* 75:1–5[58] or the variant AN → ḪAL → BAD → ḪA in Koch, *Multābiltu* 2–3:1–3:[59]

5.29. *YOS* 10 17:47–48 (l. 48 = ex. 2.63)

47. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***pappim***[60] ⇒ *ugbabtam ilum irriš*
48. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***kaškaš*** ⇒ *Adad iraḫḫiṣ šanû šumšu* {[*Meslamt*]*aea …*} *ana ekallim irrub*

47. 'If the Path (was) like the **PAB** (sign) ⇒ the god will request an *ugbabtu*-priestess'
48. 'If the Path (was) like the **KASKAL** (sign) ⇒ Adad will devastate; its second interpretation: {Meslamtaea …} will enter into the palace.'

5.30. *YOS* 10 14:1–16

1–2. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***šer'im*** *gēšet-m*[*a ṣ*]*illam lā* <*ī*>*šu*[61] ⇒ *mātum sunqam da*[*nnam*] *immar*
3–4. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***naṣraptim*** *ana* ⌜*libbīša* (?) *ka*⌝*pṣat* ⇒ *ilum awīlam pīam lā kīnam ippaššu*[62]
5. *šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD** ⇒ *aššat awīlim innīak*
6–7. *šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD**-*ma u šīlum ina libbīša nadi* ⇒ *aššat awīlim innīak-ma mussa iṣabbassī-ma idâkši*
8–9. *šumma naplaštum kīma* **KASKAL** ⇒ *šarrum kabtūtīšu idâk-ma bīšāšunu u makkūršunu ana bītāt ilāni izâz*
10–11. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***kīsim*** *ḫurrurat* ⇒ *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqtim*
12–13. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***pasuttim ša eleppim*** ⇒ *māmīt abī-ma i*[*ṣabbat* (?)] *šanûm šumšu ēribum bīt* [*awīlim itabbal*]

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58 Koch 2005: 438–9. Koch's reading of the first two signs in the sequence as QA and KUD is incorrect.

59 Cited by Lieberman according to the then-available published texts, *CT* 20 43–48.

60 The normalization here reflects the Akkadian rendering of the sign name. In light of the interpretative problems for such writings (see below) and for the sake of easy differentiation, where rendered as Sumerograms in the original, these names are left as such in the transcription above.

61 Text: *la šu*; with *CAD* G, 64 (*la-šu*), is *laššu* to be preferred?

62 On the *lš* > *šš* assimilation in this form (< **ippalšu*), see *GAG* §34c.

14. *šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD** ⇒ *marṣam eršum ikallāšu*
15. [*šumma naplaš*]*tum kīma* [**BA**]**D** ⇒ *sapḫūt awīlim ipaḫḫu*[*rūnim*]
16. [*šumma nap*]*laštum* ⌜*kīma* ***bu***⌝***ginnim*** ⇒ *miqitti umm*[*ānim*/*ummānīya*/*ummānīka*]

1–2. 'If the View was gashed like a **furrow** and (thus) cast no shadow ⇒ the land will experience a severe famine'
3–4. If the View, was concave *at its midst* like a **crucible** ⇒ the god will answer the man unreliably'
5. 'If the View (was) like the **BAD** (sign) ⇒ a man's wife will commit adultery'
6–7. 'If the View (was) like the **BAD** (sign) and in its midst a hole is situated ⇒ a man's wife will commit adultery but her husband will seize and kill her'
8–9. 'If the View (was) like the **KASKAL** (sign) ⇒ the king will kill his nobles and distribute their property and moveable goods to the temples'
10–11. If the View was *folded up*[63] like a **bag** ⇒ (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction'
12–13. '[If] the View (was) like **boat's net** ⇒ the curse-oath of a father [will *seize*[64]]; its second interpretation: a *newcomer*[65] [will make off] (with) the estate of [the man]'
14. 'If the View (was) like the **BAD** (sign) ⇒ a bed will confine the sick man'
15. '[If] the View (was) like the **BAD** (sign) ⇒ the man's scattered (relatives[66]) will gather (together)'

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63 Owing to the likening of the described state to a bag in the following simile, the translation accords with the choice in *CAD* Ḫ, 91 for this occurrence, over against the more basic sense of the verb as "to have grooves." However, this option seems more fitting when the omen concerns organs that lend themselves to such an image (so George 2013: 42), as in the case of the gallbladder (*CUSAS* 18 10 i 19'-20' [cf. // *YOS* 10 31 iii 32–35]; *YOS* 10 31 vi 4–9?), spleen (BM 22694:16 [exx. = 5.36, l. 16; 5.94, l. 16]), or lung (*YOS* 10 36 i 13–14 [= ex. 5.97]), the latter two cases recalling the same bag simile. The case at hand is more difficult, since it is tough to understand how a View would be folded up, but this reservation is outweighed by the simile's presence; but cf. ex. 5.38, ll. 52–54 below.

64 George 2013: 238, restoring *i*-[*ma-at* (?)], renders this forecast as: "it is a father's curse; he will [die (?)]."

65 Following George ibid.; cf. "the one admitted" in *CAD* E, 293.

66 On account of the verb and verbal stem, it seems unlikely that what is meant is personal belongings, despite the common reference to lost and found items (see, e.g., *YOS* 10 35:35); cf. *CAD* S, 164.

16. 'If the View (was) like a ***buginnu*-bucket** ⇒ (it predicts) the defeat of [*the*/*my*/*your*] army.'

As already observed by Lieberman,[67] the order of the signs in the former sequence points to a systematic arrangement, according to which the second and third signs of the sequence lose one *Winkelhaken* from the preceding entry, whereas the fourth looks like a reduplication of its predecessor. From this perspective the variant tradition recording BAD in place of PAB as the third sign of the AN → ḪAL → PAB sequence is not hard to explain: the intersection of the wedges in the BAD sign occurs at the end of the horizontal, as opposed to its middle as in the PAB sign.[68]

With the evidence known at the time, Lieberman could not say whether the *AN → ḪAL → PAB/BAD → KASKAL sequence existed in the OB period. Yet given more recent evidence from the following passage, we are now closer to answering this question:

5.31. *OBE* 2:2'–13'

2–3. *šumma naplaštum kīma* ***qarṭuppim***[69] ⇒ Apodosis
4–5. *šumma naplaštum <kīma>* ***ḫasīs sammîm*** ⇒ Apodosis
6. [*šumma napl*]*aštum kīma* ***kibis tūltim*** ⇒ Apodosis
7. [*šumma napl*]*aštum kīma* **AN** ⇒ *palê* [……]
8–9. [*šumma*] *naplaštum kīma* **ḪAL** ⇒ *taqt*[*īt…… šumma*] *ana kakkim miqitti ummānī*[*ya …*]
10. [*šumma*] *naplaštum kīma* ***buginnim*** ⇒ *mātum dannatam i*[*mmar*]
11–12. [*šumma*] *naplaštum kīma* ***buginnim-ma ina libbīšunu šīlum*** *šel*[*i*] ⇒ [……] *bēl awātīšu izz*[*az*]
13. [*šumma n*]*aplaštum kīma* ***šibirrim*** ⇒ *kakki Šarrū-*[*kīn*]

67 Lieberman 1977: 147.

68 The findings in Steinkeller 1981–1982 regarding the early paleographic differences between the signs TIL and BAD provide an instructive comparison: before Ur-III the value til was represented by a sign distinguishable from BAD, namely TIL. Indeed, in some pre-Ur-III texts the appearance of the latter seems barely distinguishable from that of PAB. The leveling of these two previously independent signs was doubtlessly predicated on the similarities in their appearance. The alternative PAB/BAD traditions here must also stem from this factor.

69 Text: *qar-ṭu*$^{!}$(RI)*-pí-im*; the emendation follows Jeyes 1989: 113.

2–3. 'If the View (was) like a **reed stylus**'
4–5. 'If the View (was) <like> a **lyre's ear**'
6. '[If] the View (was) like the **track of a worm**'
7. '[If] the View (was) like the **AN** (sign) ⇒ the reign of [……]'
8–9. '[If] the View (was) like the **ḪAL** (sign) ⇒ (it forecasts) the end [of the……; if] for warfare: (it forecasts) the downfall of [my] army […].'[70]
10. '[If] the View (was) like a ***buginnu*-bucket** ⇒ the land [will experience] difficulty'
11–12. '[If] the View (was) like a ***buginnu*-bucket** and in its middle a hole was *pierced* ⇒ [……] will prevail over his adversary'
13. '[If] the View (was) like a **staff** ⇒ (it forecasts) the Weapon of Sargon.'

The entries appearing in ll. 7–9 in this passage attest the sequence's AN → ḪAL segment of the longer hypothesized sequence; thus with the exception of the *ḪAL → PAB/BAD segment(s), each leg of the larger whole is now attested in the OB collections.

Admittedly, the sequences AN → ḪAL and PAB → KASKAL also appear individually in lexical texts,[71] and thus their appearance here may reflect no more

TABLE 5.4 *Comparison of cuneiform-sign sequences in SB and OB divination collections*

Koch, *Multābiltu* 75:1–5	Koch, *Multābiltu* 2–3:1–3	Ex. 5.29	Ex. 5.30	Ex. 5.31
(AN) ↓	(AN) ↓			(AN) ↓
(ḪAL) ↓	(ḪAL) ↓			(ḪAL)
(PAB) ↓	(BAD)	(PAB) ↓	(BAD) ↓	
(KASKAL)		(KASKAL)	(KASKAL)	

70 So Jeyes 1989: 114.

71 Pointed out in Lieberman 1977: 148. For AN → ḪAL see Proto-Ea (Nippur) 134–137, 142–143 (*MSL* 14, 37); and cf. the reverse order ḪAL → AN in Ea II 266–274 (*MSL* 14, 258–9) and Aa II/6 i and ii (*MSL* 14, 290–1); for PAB → KASKAL see Ea 260–84 (*MSL* 14, 190–1).

than a common scholarly tradition about the arrangement of certain signs. And methodologically it is obvious that the appearance of individual links does not prove the existence of a longer chain. Still, since these OB groupings share with the longer sequence the systematic configuration described above, and since a grouping of signs that strays from this sequence has seemingly not been found,[72] the possibility must be raised that the authors of these examples operated with the longer sequence in mind. Of course, more evidence is needed before a final verdict can be rendered. However, it is clear that the recording of cuneiform-sign similes in omen protases took place in accordance with some prefigured arrangement, which at the very least parallels the logic of AN → ḪAL → PAB/BAD → KASKAL pattern(s) from the SB tradition.

Additional evidence of the drive to arrange cuneiform-sign similes in meaningful sequences may be found even where these intertwine with other images. These are summarized in the following table:

TABLE 5.5 *Other sequences incorporating cuneiform signs*

Ex. 5.31, ll. 6–12	Ex. 5.30, ll. 8–16	Ex. 5.32, ll. 1–16
	(KASKAL) ↓	(PA) ↓
? (*kibis tultim*) ↓	? (*kīsum*) ↓	…
(AN) ↓	? (*pasuttim ša eleppim*) ↓	(*ḫasīs sammîm*) ↓
(ḪAL) ↓	(BAD) ↓	(ḪAL) ↓
LAGAB × ḪAL (> *buginnum*) ↓ *buginnum* [LAGAB × ḪAL] + *šīlum* (U)	LAGAB × ḪAL (> *buginnum*)	

72 A possible exception may be found in a passage from an MB collection, *CUSAS* 18 33 ob. 1–6, which commences with a sequence PAB → ḪAL → [?]. On the basis of potential parallels, George 2013: 232, 38 suggests that the missing sign could be BAD. If so, this sequence would present one exception to that described above.

For instance, in exx. 5.30, ll. 14–16 and 5.31, ll. 10–12, the simile of a *buginnum*, "bucket," appears in nearly the identical spot, following the ḪAL and BAD entries, respectively. It seems plausible that its placement in these passages owes something to one of the writings of its Sumerian equivalent, bunig, as LAGAB×ḪAL,[73] whose inner sign could either be identical or very close to the one appearing in the preceding entry. Support for this suggestion may be found in a similar passage, ex. 5.31, ll. 11–12, which refers to a *buginnum* in the first entry, but then presses further with the additional variable of a hole in the second. It is possible that the unusual combination of a simile such as *buginnum* with a standard ominous mark such as *šīlum* may actually reflect the desire to convey the written representation of what is described literally. If so, the combination of one writing of *buginnum* and that of *šīlum*, respectively LAGAB×A and U, would yield a compound sign such as LAGAB×U+A; notably, the latter recurs in lexical lists in the sequence LAGAB×A → LAGAB×U+A.[74]

Elsewhere the juxtaposition of cuneiform-sign similes with those evoking other shapes appears to be rooted in the visual similarities between the two types. Yet certainty in such matters is difficult to reach on account of the problem mentioned earlier: unlike the case for cuneiform signs, even in those instances in which the identity of a given image is understood reasonably well, almost invariably its specifics remain unknown. For example, the description of a worm's track(s) in ex. 5.31, l. 6 was likely meant to relate to the crisscrossing wedges of the AN sign in the following entry. However, one can only speculate as to the exact details of that image and thus its relation with the AN sign. The same holds for the progression in ex. 5.30, ll. 8–13 (i.e., KASKAL → *kīsum* → *pasuttum*): it seems that the intent here was to highlight a growing number of intersecting points. This is the impression one gets when recalling the basic logographic rendering of a net, (= the sign SA) vis-à-vis the KASKAL sign on the one hand and the latter's relation to the preceding BAD on the other. However, what specifically the *pasuttu*-net looked like[75] and how its image precisely related to that of a folded bag (*kīsum*) or the bag's relation to the crisscrossing of the KASKAL sign remains difficult. This same holds for the logic behind the sequence in the final example to be considered, which is

73 Specifically this is classified as $bunig_3$ in *PSD*. Another common representation of the word as bugin is rendered by LAGAB × A; see *PSD* B, 172–3.

74 E.g., Ea I 60–67, and cf. 68–73 (*MSL* 14, 179–180); Aa 203–27, and cf. 229–236 (*MSL* 14, 214).

75 In contrast to its qualification here as *ša eleppim*, "of a boat," the equation ^{giš}sa.sal(-sal) = *pasun*/*ttum* = *šētum ša ušandî* in Hg. B II 35 (*MSL* 6, 78) and Hh VI 176–177 (*MSL* 6, 68) suggests that this was a smaller net, intended for bird trapping.

compromised by our imprecise sense of the geometric shape described as a lyre's ear (*ḫasīs sammîm*):[76]

5.32. *YOS* 10 61:1, 5–7

1. [*šumm*]*a ina ma*[*š*]*ka*[*n š*]*ulmim* **PA** ⇒ [<……> *i*?]*dâkši*
…
5. [*š*]*umma šulmum kīma* ***ḫasīs sammîm*** *… emid*[77] ⇒ *šarrum mimmâšu waqram ušeṣṣe*
6. *šumma ina maškan šulmim* **ḪAL**[78] ⇒ *šar kiššati ina māti illiam*
7. *šumma ina maškan šulmim* [***ḫ***]***allum*** ⇒ *pali Akkadîm gamir*

1. 'If the **PA** (sign was) in the place of the Well-being ⇒ [<……> *he* w]ill kill *her*'
…
5. 'If the Well-being was … (*and*?) *standing* like a **lyre's ear** ⇒ the king will *lose* his expensive possessions'
6. 'If a **ḪAL** (sign was) in the place of the Well-being ⇒ a despot will arise in the land'
7. 'If a ***ḫallum*** (sign was) in the place of the Well-being ⇒ (it means) the rule of Akkad is finished.'

5.2.1.2 Paradigmatic-type Pointillistic Expression: Other Similes

The challenges noted above are not confined to passages containing cuneiform-sign similes. To the contrary, the arrangement of all similes within groupings overwhelmingly appears to follow some prefigured order. Yet, once again the specific logic of such sequences proves difficult to determine. A case in point appears in the following example:

76 See, however, Robson 1999: 50–4; 2007: 213–4.

77 *CAD* A/2, 208, understanding this word as *emīt* (sic), the bound form of *emētum*, "mother-in-law," translates it as part of the apodosis: "the king's mother-in-law will squander his precious property." However, this solution appears nowhere else and should be rejected, especially because it ignores the previous word, ⌜*ú*⌝-*ra*-ḪI-*am*-<*ma*?>, which, even if difficult, seems to be a verb, perhaps in hendiadys with *emēdum*.

78 Rendered as such (text: ḪAL) to differentiate from the spelling of the sign name ([*ḫ*]*a-lu-um*) in the next entry; see further n. 59 above.

5.33. *YOS* 10 24:36–39 (ll. 36–37, 39 = ex. 2.215 [apodoses only])

36. *šumma elēnu bāb ekallim šīrum kīma **išg**/**qarrurtim** garir ⇒ lumun libbim nikip ubānim*
37. *šumma elēnu bāb ekallim šīrum kīma **rimmatim** šakin ⇒ ubān šarrim ša qātīšu imarraṣ*
38. *šumma elēnu bāb ekallim šīrum kīma **nīdi**[79] **ziḫḫim** nasiḫ*[80] *⇒ kurrum iššaqqal*
39. *šumma elēnu bāb ekallim šīrum kīma **ḫallūrtim**[81] šakin-ma u tarik ⇒ ina nikip ubānim awīlum imât*

36. 'If at the top of the Palace Gate fleshy tissue was round like an ***išg***/***qarrurtu*-tool** ⇒ (it forecasts) sorrow: the *stubbing* of the toe'
37. 'If at the of top the Palace Gate fleshy tissue was situated like a ***rimmatu*-beetle**/***bead***[82] ⇒ a king's finger from his hand will go bad (from infection)'
38. 'If at the top of the Palace Gate fleshy tissue was torn out like the ***base* of the *ziḫḫum*** ⇒ (it forecasts that) the *kor*- (container) will be weighed'
39. 'If at the top of the Palace Gate fleshy tissue was situated like a **chickpea** and it was dark ⇒ from the *stubbing* of the toe the man will die.'

The general understanding of *išg*/*qarrurtum* as a rounded (< *garārum*, "to roll over") gardening tool, the emphasis on roundedness (or circularity) of this item in the context of this simile seems now confirmed by this term's probable occurrence in an omen protasis accompanying a diagram of intestinal coils;[83] this suggests that a connection with a *rimmatu*-beetle/bead and a chickpea

79 *CAD* N/2, 209, which takes the form as reflecting either *nidû* or *nīdu*, hesitates to translate it. For the possibility that this reflects a bottom part of what is described as *ziḫḫum* and is hence to be taken as *nīdu*, see the SB example quoted in Nougayrol 1976: 348 n. 60; cf. Glassner 2009a: 66: "chute de kyste."

80 Following the collation in Glassner 2009a: 64; already anticipated in Nougayrol 1976: 348 n. 60; Hecker 1986–1991: 76.

81 Text: *ḫa-lu-ur-tim*$^{\text{l}}$(TUM).

82 Whether this term represents a type of beetle or a bead, perhaps depicting the *rimmatum* beetle, has been the subject of debate. In favor of seeing this as an insect, see Durand 1990: 106–7; 1997b, 2: 491; *AHw*, 986 ("Made"?). On the other hand, *CAD* R, 358, while citing Durand 1990, still takes the term as a type of ornament or bead.

83 *CUSAS* 18 32 (Sealand), but spelled ⌜*in*⌝*-qá-rù-ur-ti*; see George 2013: 226.

in this passage is based on a common notion of curvature. However, this is of little help in terms of securing for the tool a precise shape, or that shape's relation to a *rimmatum* or *ziḫḫum*.[84]

A similar challenge arises from the convergence of curved items in the following example:

5.34. *ARM* 26/1 3:21–25

21. *šumma šulmum kīma* ***dādim*** ⇒ *šulum ša na*[*krim*[85]]
22–23. *šumma šulmum ištu maṣraḫ rēʾîm u šaplānu*[*m* ...] ⇒ *šamûn izannu*[*n*]
24. *šumma ana bāb ekallim ušamqit* ⇒ *zanān šamêm* ...[...] ...[86]
25. *šumma šulmum kīma* ***usqārim*** ⇒ *mazzāz* [...][87]

21. 'If the Well-being (was) like a ***dādu*-shellfish** ⇒ (it represents the) well being of the *enemy*'
22–23. 'If the Well-being [...] from the cystic duct and downward ⇒ it will rain'
24. 'If (ditto) descended all the way to the Palace Gate ⇒ the rainfall ... [...] ...'
25. 'If the Well-being (was) like a **crescent** ⇒ (it is) the presence of [...].'

The proximity of a crescent to a *dādu*-shellfish is known from another divination text,[88] and a mapping of the extensions of the *šulmum* described in ll. 22–23, 24 seems intended to convey curves of different sorts. But on the basis of this information a clear picture of the organizational logic of this passage is again impossible to make out.

5.2.2 *Creative Considerations*

As already noted, notwithstanding the difficulties they pose, it seems clear that similes in omen protases appear in accordance with organizational

84 Or the *šaššāru*-saw in ex. 5.36, ll. 10–11. For a detailed description of the tool, see *CAD* I, 260.

85 Following the restoration in Durand 1988: 66.

86 The reading of the text (x [o o] x) in ibid. could not be verified.

87 Ibid.: 66–7 reads the apodosis as: *ma-za-az* [*eš*$_4$]-[*tá*]*r*, translating tentatively as "présence d'Eštar?"

88 See ACh Supp. 2 6:9 (cited in *CAD* D, 20).

factors. The techniques relating cuneiform-sign similes to each other as well as to other images underscore this point, and there is no reason to assume otherwise for other such groupings. Still, if all else failed, there remained the possibility of appeal to wordplay for group cohesion. Instances of alliteration and assonance appear among similes in groupings, as in the following passage:

5.35. AO 7029:12–17

12–13. [*šumma ṣ*]*ibtum kīma* ***ušulti ša dami*** ⇒ Apodosis
14–15. *šumma ṣibtum* [*kīm*]*a* ***uzun lalê*** ⇒ Apodosis
16–17. *šumma ṣibtum kīma* ***ūṣim*** ⇒ Apodosis

12–13. '[If] the Increase (was) like a **vein of blood**'
14–15. 'If the Increase (was) like the **ear of a kid**'
16–17. 'If the Increase (was) like an **arrow**(**head**).'

It is difficult to explain the relations among the similes in these omens in any way save via that of wordplay (i.e., *ušultum* ↔ *uzun lalê* ↔ *ūṣum*). In fact, to the extent that it can be extricated from other factors, it is often difficult to tell whether paronomasia in such examples was merely intended to bolster the organization of the similes according to their images, or whether it was the drive for paronomastic association—an organizational technique in its own right (see § 5.5)—that brought these together in the first place. Whatever the case, the finding of wordplay as an additional avenue by which the organizational effort was conducted adds further credence to the very existence of a framework intended for this purpose, as well as to the intricacies of its mechanics.

Additional evidence of the creative effort of paradigm building within these groupings is not difficult to find. A comparison of BM 22694 and *YOS* 10 41, two collections sharing many omens concerning the spleen,[89] is instructive in this regard, particularly at one point in which these diverge in their handling of a common tradition:

89 The parallels between these collections are the following:

BM 22694:	1	6	9	13	14	22		24	27	32	45	46	67–68	69–70
YOS 10 41:	57	31	20	21	33	59–60		65	19	63	58	30	53	54

5.36. BM 22694:6–16

6–8. [*šumma ṭulīmim kīma*] ***šuttinnim*** *kappīn* [*šakin*] ⇒ Apodosis
9. [*šumma ṭulīmum kīma* ***išg***/***q***]***arrurtim*** *garir* ⇒ Apodosis
10–11. [*šum*]*ma ṭulīmum kīma* ***šaššārim*** *ītarik* ⇒ Apodosis
12. *šumma ṭulīmum kīma* ***li***[***pi***]***štim*** ⇒ Apodosis
13. *šumma ṭulīmum kīma* ***kib***[***altim***[90] *naw*]*ir* ⇒ Apodosis
14–15. *šumma ṭulīmum kīma* ***d***[***ūri***]***m si***[***ā***]***tim*** *šitakkun* ⇒ Apodosis
16. *šumma ṭul*[*īmum kīma* ***kīsim***[91] *ḫ*]*urrur* ⇒ Apodosis

6–8. '[If the spleen *had*] two wings [like] a **bat**'
9. '[If the spleen] was round [like] a ***išg***/***qarrurtu*-tool**'
10–11. 'If the spleen has been elongated like a ***šaššāru*-saw**'
12. 'If the spleen (was) like a ***lipištu*-sac**'[92]
13. 'If the spleen was bright like a ***kibaltu*-stone**'
14–15. 'If the spleen had **battlements** like a (**city**) **wall.**'[93]
16. 'If the spleen was folded up [like a (***kīsu*-)sac**].'

5.37. *YOS* 10 41:20–21, 31–34 (ll. 31–32 // *LOAS* 1, 51:4[94])

20. *šumma ṭulīmum garir* ⇒ Apodosis
21. [*šumma ṭulīmum n*]*awir* ⇒ Apodosis
...
31–32. *šumma ṭulīmum kīma* ***erîm*** *kappī šakin* ⇒ Apodosis
33–34. *šumma ṭul*[*īm*]*um kīma* ***dūrim siātim*** *šitakkun* ⇒ Apodosis

20. 'If the spleen was round'
21. '[If the spleen] was bright'
...

90 Following the tentative restoration by Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 42, 48.

91 Restoration follows Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 42, 48, even though other items are described as such in similes of omen protases; see, e.g., ex. 5.38, ll. 52–54.

92 Aro and Nougayrol 1973: 42, 48, who, like *AHw*, 554, translate the term as "scrotum," justify their decision by recalling euphemisms such as French "bourse" (also Nougayrol 1976: 346; cf. *CDA*, 182). However, *CAD* L, 199 does not offer this option, nor does one find native lexical equations relating the term to established designations for this body part, such as *iškū* or *kalīt birkim*.

93 Cf. *CAD* S, 336: "If the spleen is studded with crenellations (?) like a wall."

94 Only the apodoses of *LOAS* 1, 51 survive, but the additional parallel of *LOAS* 1, 51:5 // *YOS* 10 41:30 suggests that the two texts share a common tradition at this point.

31–32. 'If the spleen had two wings like an **eagle**'
33–34. 'If the spleen had **battlements** like a (**city**) **wall**.'[95]

Regardless of the reason for this divergence, a consideration of both passages makes it plain that these examples are to be understood as two possible organizational options for the section of the tradition describing the spleen in terms of similes. It is significant to note that ex. 5.37 is not only considerably shorter than its counterpart in ex. 5.36; it actually includes entries known from ex. 5.36, only without the flair of the similes in that version.

Indeed, in the case of exx. 5.36, l. 6 // 5.37, ll. 31–32, where the two texts do meet on both substance and form, the traditions still diverge about the image to which the spleen is likened (i.e., bat vs. eagle). It is likely that the reference to a bat in ex. 5.36, l. 6 owes itself to considerations extrinsic to the business of organization by shapes; more specifically, this may derive from the desire for alliteration and assonance described above. If so, we are afforded yet another facet of the creative act of paradigm building: as part of this effort, the diviner could equip certain omens with previously unrelated similes, or mold others to fit a particular arrangement in a larger group. In the case of ex. 5.36, this may have meant the dressing up of ll. 9, 13 with *kīma išg*/*qarrurtim*, "like an *išg*/*qarrurtu*-tool," and *kīma kibaltim*, "like a *kibaltu*-stone," respectively, and the replacement of eagle with bat in l. 6. The alternative scenario, whereby the author of ex. 5.37 stripped down entries of their embellished similes or substituted eagle for bat without apparent reason, seems less likely. Significantly, however, either possibility is equally telling as it regards the collections' creative undertaking.

Elsewhere, without the luxury of parallels, this sort of creativity is more difficult to detect, even if one senses its presence. For instance, in the case of ex. 5.38, wordplay may account for the breakup of a grouping of similes:

5.38. *YOS* 10 46 iv 30–34, 51–54

30–31. *šumma kakki imittim kīma* ***sikkatim*** *izziz* ⇒ *kabtum ša libbi bēlīšu uṭabbu ibbašši*
32–34. *šumma kakki imittim kīma* ***passim zikarim ṭurrī***[96] *īšu* ⇒ *iškarāt šarri*[*m*] *Adad iraḫḫiṣ*
…

95 See ex. 5.36, ll. 14–15 and n. 93.

96 *CAD* Ṭ, 164, which understands the term generally as "yarn, twine, wire," and the like, does not hazard a translation for it in the context of extispicy (ibid., 165). The term's rendering in *AHw*, 1397 as "Band, Knoten" may provide the connection to the phallic shape

51. *šumma kakki imittim garir* ⇒ *nakrum ina m*[*ātīka*] *dūra*[*m*] *i*[*rriš*][97]
52–54. *šumma kakki imittim kīma* ***qaqqad pilakkim*** *ḫarir* ⇒ *miqitti ummānīya*

30–31. 'If the Weapon of the right stood like **a peg** ⇒ there will be an important man who pleases his lord'
32–34. 'If the Weapon of the right had *knots* like **a male *puppet*** ⇒ Adad will devastate the king's *iškaru*-fields'
...
51. If the Weapon of the right was round ⇒ the enemy [will request] a fortress from [your] land'
52–54. 'If the Weapon of the right had grooves[98] like **a spindle whorl** ⇒ (it predicts) the defeat of my army.'

It is not unlikely that ll. 52–54 were brought down from the vicinity of ll. 30–34 for the purpose of alliteration and rhyme with l. 51 (i.e., *ḫarir* ↔ *garir*); the stylized image or idea of a spindle whorl in that entry seems at home among those of a peg (ll. 30–31) and a male *puppet* sporting *knots* (ll. 32–34). More difficult to explain is the lack of a simile in l. 51, since the mention elsewhere of this mark's rolling (< *garārum*) often evokes the *išg*/*qarrurtim* simile discussed above;[99] indeed, exactly that image is included in a parallel to this omen in the following example:

5.39. *šum*[*ma kakki*] *imit*[*tim ana w*]*ar*[*kat ...*] *kīma* [***išg***/***qarr***]***urtim*** *garir* ⇒ *nakerka ušerrebam-ma ina libbi mātīka dūram irriš*[100] 'If [the Weapon] of the right is rolled over [to] the back of [...] like an ***išg***/***qarrurtim*-tool** ⇒ your enemy will invade and request a fortress from the heart of your land' (AO 8894 [OB liver model]).[101]

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suggested for the term in Landsberger 1960: 126. Cf. also *CAD* Z, 111, which translates *ṭurrī* in extispicy as "ribbons."

97 Cf. the restoration of the apodosis in Glassner 2004: 69: lú.kúr-*rum i-na m*[*a-ti-ia*] *du-ra-a*[*m*] *i-*[*n*]*a-*[*qá-ar*]. My solution favors the idea witnessed in cases such as ex. 5.39.

98 Owing to the both the omen's subject and the item to which it is likened, the translation takes *ḫarārum* in the basic sense of "to have grooves"; so *CAD* Ḫ, 91; cf. the discussion of its other attestations in n. 63 above.

99 E.g., ex. 5.33, l. 36; ex. 5.36, l. 9.

100 Text: *i-ri*ˀ(ŠI)-*iš*; cf. AO 7028:16 (24–25) (= ex. 2.151).

101 Rutten 1935: 51, pl. 18; also Meyer 1984: 125; 1987a: 189, 234.

Why this image is omitted in ex. 5.38, l. 51 then may reflect the whim of a diviner, though a more certain word on this interpretation awaits the finding of a parallel tradition.

The preceding discussion should leave little doubt that, as elsewhere, the organizational effort evinced in these examples must be understood as both extensive in scope and creative in aspiration. Repeatedly, one senses the implicit attempts to qualify particular similes by the suggestion of relational dimensions with other images, whether these be fellow similes or more conventional technical terminology. Thus, no matter the origins of this eclectic array, one thing is clear: similes, where they are encountered in the collections, operate within the framework of the collections' organizational framework.

5.2.2.1 Challenges to a Generative-based Calculation?

On a couple of occasions, simile-bearing omens situated within broader organizational sequences appear to participate in generative calculation. One such case involves ex. 5.33 above, in which the correspondence between protasis and apodosis, whereby the reported simile sequence of *išg*/*qarrurtum* → *rimmatum* → *ḫallūrtum* matches a gradation in the forecasts—*stubbing* of finger → finger becomes diseased → death from *stubbing* of toe[102]—is noteworthy for its symmetry (see Table 5.6).

TABLE 5.6 *Generative-based calculation using similes in Ex. 5.33*

L. 36	*išg*/*qarrurtu*-tool (*išg*/*qarrurtum*)	*Blow* to finger (*nikip ubānim*)
L. 37	*rimmatu*-beetle/bead (*rimmatum*)	Finger becomes diseased (*ubānum marāṣum*)
L. 39[103]	Chick pea (dark) *ḫallūrtum* (+ *tarākum*)	Death from *blow* to finger (*ina nikip ubānim … mâtum*)

102 Skipping l. 38, whose apparent interruption of the sequence (see further, § 5.2.2) remains unclear.

103 On *ḫallūrtum*, see n. 81.

Yet in this respect a question that should be raised is why, among the passages surveyed, does ex. 5.33 stand almost alone? Indeed, it is curious that sequences of similes in adjacent protases do not typically find counterparts among their respective apodoses. This point holds true even in the case of sequences of cuneiform signs, the paradigmatic nature of which, it will be recalled, is often certain. Thus, for example, no relation can be deduced between the forecasts of those omens boasting the sequence PAB → KASKAL in ex. 5.29.[104] The same holds for the BAD → KASKAL sequence in the protases of ex. 5.30, ll. 5–7, which finds no sequential counterpart in this passage's respective apodoses. On the basis of this evidence, it would seem as if the appearance of similes in groupings of omen protases interrupts the paradigmatic sequence of the respective apodoses.

5.2.2.2 An Exception to the Problem

However, there is one sphere in which the correspondences between certain similes and their respective interpretations appears partly intelligible. In such cases one encounters protases based on similes juxtaposed to others operating according to conventional terminology. As elsewhere, the interpretive associations for similes in these groupings remain difficult to predict. Yet, in conjunction with some well-established marks or conditions, their sense becomes more intelligible.

The inner sequence of BAD → BAD + *šīlum* in the first two lines of the following passage, quoted from a broader passage discussed above, provides an instructive example of this phenomenon:

5.40. *YOS* 10 14:5–7 (= ex. 5.30, ll. 5–7, 14)

5.	*šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD** ⇒ *aššat awīlim innīak*
6–7.	*šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD**-*ma u šīlum ina libbīša nadi* ⇒ *aššat awīlim innīak-ma mussa iṣabbassī-ma idâkši*
	…
14.	*šumma naplaštum kīma* **BAD** ⇒ *marṣam eršum ikallāšu*

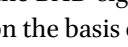
5.	'If the View (was) like the (sign) **BAD** ⇒ a man's wife will commit adultery'

104 Even despite the probable paronomastic associations within the individual entries, i.e., *pappum* → *ugbabtum*; *kaškaš* → Adad (≈ *kaškaššum*, "overpowering"), respectively. On this point and the implied relation between KASKAL and *kaškaššum*, an epithet of Adad, see Lieberman 1977: 148; Frahm 2010: 101.

6–7. 'If the View (was) like the (sign) **BAD** and a hole was situated in its midst ⇒ a man's wife will commit adultery but her husband will seize and kill her'

...

14. 'If the View (was) like the **BAD** (sign) ⇒ a bed will confine the sick man'

If one recalls that a hole frequently predicts death, then the difference between the protasis of the second entry and the first is clear: it is responsible for the second part of the prediction in ll. 6–7, which forecasts death for the adulteress wife. As for the BAD sign, a "sexual symbolism of the Freudian type"[105] seems reasonable on the basis of its context and shape (). Yet significantly, this cannot be taken as an established signification for the sign on par with those of the standard conditions or marks; elsewhere, indeed even in l. 14 from this very passage, its signification is entirely different. Thus, the paradigmatic relationship between the two entries in ll. 5 and 6–7 must be understood as dependent on the addition of a conventional mark to an unconventional simile.

A similar picture emerges from other passages that combine similes with additional conventional variables. Thus, for example, in the following two passages, associations such as the dark/bright and right/left oppositions offer a measure of predictability in what otherwise seems random:

5.41. *OBE* 14:48–50 (= ex. 5.26, ll. 48–50)

48. *šumma ina rēš libbim lipû kīma* ***kakkūti*** *nadī-ma u tarik ⇒ ṣīt bārîm*

49–50. [*šumma ina rēš libbim lip*]*û kīma* ***k***[***akkūt***]***i*** *nadī-ma u nawir ⇒ bārû* [*šum*(*i*) *damiqti i*]*leqqe*

48. 'If in the heart's top fatty tissue was situated like a **lentil** and it was dark ⇒ (it predicts) the defection of the diviner'

49–50. '[If in the heart's top] fatty tissue was situated like a **lentil** and it was bright ⇒ the diviner will acquire [*a good reputation*].'

5.42. *YOS* 10 28:5–7 (= ex. 5.28, ll. 5–7)

5. *šumma martum rēssa ana imittim kīma* ***qaran iskurim*** *⇒ šarra nakerka ina kipir kišādim ukannašūnikkum*

105 Frahm 2010: 100.

6–7. *šumma martum rēssa ana šumēlim kīma **qaran iskurim** ⇒ ana šarrim nakrīka ina kipir kišādim ukannašūka*

5. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the right (was) like a **crescent's horn** ⇒ the king, your enemy, will be made to submit to you by the of the lopping off of neck(s)'

6–7. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its head to the left (was) like a **crescent's horn** ⇒ you will be made to submit to a king, your enemy, by the of the lopping off of neck(s).'

It is clear that the good/bad outcomes in the apodoses of these omens owe to the standard associations described above; by contrast, the signification of a lentil or a cresent's horn is more difficult to explain.[106]

The same organizational relationship appears to hold for the following example as well, which employs holes, described as without or within a brick mold, to mark the destruction—and presumably death—predicted in rural regions versus the city, respectively:

5.43. *YOS* 10 9:1–6

1–3. *šumma naplaštum kīma **nalbattim**-ma*[107] *u šīlī lawiat ⇒ išrātum innaddiā mātum ḫarbūtam illak*

4–6. *šumma naplaštum kīma **nalbattim**-ma u šīlum ina libbīša ⇒ āl šarrim illawwi*[108] *iṣṣabbat-ma innaqqar*

1–3. 'If the View (was) like a **brick mold** and it was surrounded by holes ⇒ the rural districts[109] will be left fallow and the country will become a wasteland'

4–6. 'If the View (was) like a **brick mold** (and was surrounded by holes)[110] and a(nother) hole (was) in its midst ⇒ the royal city will be surrounded, seized, and destroyed.'

106 The possibility that the horns in ex. 5.42 were intended to recall headgear of deified kings, like that of Narām-Sîn on his famous Victory Stela, seems remote.

107 Text: *na-al-ba-tim-*<<l>>*-ma*; so Glassner 2004: 63 and n. 2.

108 Glassner 2004: 63, 65 reads: uru.ki lugal *i-la-wu* and translates: "la ville que le roi assiège."

109 With *CAD* I/J, 261; pace id. A/2, 437a.

110 That this entry refers implicitly to the preceding in the manner discussed above (§ 3.1.3) owes to its reference of a siege, which assumes a connection to the surroundedness

Again the appeal to an established interpretive association builds on another that is otherwise unknown, and once more it is this secondary characteristic that sets up the paradigmatic pairing of omen entries.

Finally, it should be noted that even ex. 5.33, which was earlier identified as perhaps the unique instance of paradigmatic elaboration among passages comprised of simile-based omens, resorts to conventional terminology and standard hermeneutics for this purpose. This much is apparent by the reference to *tarik*, "dark," in l. 39 of that passage, which seems to correlate with the exceptional outcome of death stemming from a toe's *stubbing*; the point is underscored when this forecast is compared to that of l. 36, which describes the same condition but without fatal results. Thus, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that, in its formulation, the apodosis of l. 39 reflects some effort of harmonization, perhaps even a makeover, for the conventional setting in which it appears.

5.2.3 *Conclusion*

Regarding the place of groupings of similes within the collections' interpretive structures, the foregoing discussion has pointed to a distinction between those examples that appeal to conventional technical terms and those that do not. By way of conclusion, we might consider the meaning of this basic distinction for our assessment of the collections' organizational assumptions. What are we to make of passages advanced according to sound organizational principles but nonetheless only partially integrated into a broader interpretive system? Have we, in taking up the case of the simile omens, uncovered one of the limits of the collections' generative-paradigmatic character? And if so, what might be the reasoning behind their incorporation in an otherwise standardized literature?

This cannot be the venue for a full exploration of all these questions, which in the first place would demand further analysis than that offered here. Thus, for the moment, a reconsideration of Nougayrol's opinion of these matters must suffice. According to Nougayrol, omens employing similes differ fundamentally from those predicated on the typical nomenclature of extispicy.[111] Similes, he reasoned, stood outside the realm of a given divinatory avenue's interpretive system and thus were not bound by its established semiotics. Indeed, it is likely that exactly this factor made the similes the attractive or even natural

described in the protasis of ll. 1–3. As such, the relationship between these omens is pointillistic, not oppositional, pace Glassner 2004c: 65.

111 Nougayrol 1976: 350.

choices in certain settings in which the diviner wished to maintain a conscious level of comparison, whether for the sake of concision, clarity, or otherwise.[112]

It should thus not be surprising to find among groupings of these omens a lesser degree of paradigmatic cohesion than that witnessed in their standardized counterparts. The hallmark of metaphor in post-Saussurian terminology has been described as "loosening of the natural bond between sign and referent or signifier and signified."[113] What one finds with the omen similes is a prime example of this point: the alleged breakdown of generative expression occurs precisely because the similes claim no part of the collections' interpretive framework. From this angle, what seems remarkable then is not the putative breakdown of the interpretive system spurred on by the simile omens; rather, it is the determination shown by the diviner, who, aware of the their inherent limitations, opted to order the similes according to familiar organizational principles nevertheless, bringing them into the larger framework of the collections where their juxtaposition with the remaining entries would render them in a new light.

5.3 The Employment of Grammatical (Verbal) Forms

Not infrequently the articulations of protases in gradations include a shift in terms of the employment of a certain verbal root from one stem or form to another. This "progression analogue"[114] has been observed sporadically, though no survey of its employment within the collections' organization has been attempted. The following, which strives to remedy this in part, uncovers evidence suggesting that in this arena too, conscious use of the organizational framework was made to generate new ominous possibilities and interpretations. Most common among these progressions are those involving predicative-adjective forms that shift from the G to the D stems (i.e., G → D) or in one case vice versa (i.e., D → G).[115] One passage exhibits a shift from three G preterites to a D predicative adjective.[116] Another features a G → D → N sequence that also varies in terms of the finite and non-finite verbal forms (G and D predicative

112 A similar point concerning the use of metaphor in celestial divination is made in Rochberg 1996: 476.

113 Band 2003: 290. The idea appears more extensively in Jakobson 1987: 95–114 and 511–2, in his analysis of the nature of metaphor over against metonymy.

114 Nougayrol 1971: 81.

115 Ex. 5.46.

116 Ex. 5.49.

adjectives and N durative).[117] Less common are cases involving infixed-t verbal forms, though these too are known on occasion (e.g., G → Gt; G → Gtn).[118] Finally, a sequence of a predicative adjective followed by a finite form in the same stem (e.g., G predicative adjective → G preterite) occurs[119] and seems to function in the manner of the G → D sequence described below. What follows describes two main uses of such gradations, for the expression of plurality and intensity.

5.3.1 *The Expression of Plurality*

The appearance of a D verbal form in a protasis comprising a part of a gradation usually coincides with a plurality of subject. This can be witnessed perhaps most clearly in the following example, in which an interchange between G and D verbal forms takes place in accordance with the number—singular or dual, respectively—of the protasis's subject:[120]

5.44. *YOS* 10 31 ix 1–27

1–6. *šumma* … […] *šakkanakkim takim-ma*[121] ***ṣarip*** ⇒ Apodosis
7–12. *šumma martum būdāša tukkupā-ma* ***ṣurrupā*** ⇒ Apodosis
13–18. *šumma martum muḫḫaša takim-ma* ***ṣarip*** ⇒ Apodosis
19–27. *šumma martum ina napšat martim tikiptān šittā-ma* ***ṣurrupā*** ⇒ Apodosis

1–6. 'If the *Šakkanakku*'s … […] was covered with dots and **dyed** red'
7–12. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its shoulders were covered with dots and **dyed** red'
13–18. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—its top was covered with dots and **dyed** red'
19–27. 'If (concerning) the gallbladder—in the throat[122] of the gallbladder (there were) two dots and they were **dyed** red.'

117 Ex. 5.60.

118 Respectively, e.g., CMAA030–C0001 ob. 31–32; ex. 5.37, ll. 31–34.

119 *OBE* 14 ob. 1–3 (= ex. 2.7).

120 So Kouwenberg 1997: 361.

121 Pace *CAD* Š/1, 175, which reads: *šakimma*; cf. the identical form in *YOS* 10 31 ix 15, cited in *CAD* T, 68.

122 *CAD* N/1, 304 translates the term as "opening," though the more literal sense suggested here is probably an alternate designation to the gallbladder's *qutnum*, taken as this organ's "neck" (e.g., *CAD* Q, 322–3; Jeyes 1989: 62), which discharges bile into the cystic duct (*maṣraḫum*).

As may be expected, the sense of plurality for a given subject or object can also be indicated explicitly by a cardinal number; however, the occasion of a progression in verbal forms did not necessarily trigger the enumeration of subjects or objects in omen protases.[123] This is clear from the fact that only a minority among those entries concerning a plural number of anomalies features verbal forms connoting a pluralic sense.[124] In other words, the report of plural ominous occurrences did not necessitate that the verb in the protasis be in the D or other derived stem to express plurality. It follows that, where it occurs, the progression from a G to a D verbal form in a verbal sequence was intended to mark certain depictions as meaningfully plural. A consideration of the following examples clarifies this distinction:

5.45. *YOS* 10 36 i 7–11

7. *šumma imitti ḫašîm* ***tarkat*** ⇒ Apodosis
8–11. *šumma imitti ḫašîm u šumēl ḫašîm* ***turruk***[***a***]***t*** ⇒ Apodosis

7. 'If the lung's right **was dark**'
8–11. 'If the lung's right and the lung's left **were dark**.'

Although it is clear that not every omen describing a zone's right and left employs a verbal form in a derived stem that was selected intentionally for its pluralic sense,[125] it seems all but certain that the shift from a G predicative adjective in the protasis of the first entry in this example to the D in the second correlates to the interest in the lung's right and left—in other words, both its sides.[126]

The same point is made with respect to the D and G predicative adjectives of the following passage:

123 This is not to say that the D form of certain verbs such as *paṭārum* lack an inherently plural sense, as Kouwenberg 1997: 363–4 notes.

124 Granted, as the following demonstrates, a significant portion of passages framed around numerical sequences contains no verbs at all.

125 See, e.g., *YOS* 10 36 i 22–23, 25–26.

126 Kouwenberg 1997: 362–3, citing this example, describes this as the "complete affectedness of the subject."

5.46. *YOS* 10 42 ii 33–37 (= ex. 4.42)

33. *šumma rēš libbi qê* ***ṣubbut*** ⇒ Apodosis
35. *šumma rēš libbi qûm*[127] ***ṣabit*** ⇒ Apodosis
36. *šumma rēš libbi qûm* [***ḫ***]***aniq*** ⇒ Apodosis

33. 'If the heart's top **was seized** by filaments'
35. 'If a filament **was seizing** the heart's top'
36. 'If a filament **was constricting** the heart's top.'

Although the supposition that every mention of filaments is accompanied by a derived-stem verbal form expressing plurality is also false,[128] in this example, the *qê* in l. 33 is the indefinite plural "filaments," which is especially notable when considering its juxtaposition with the singular form *qûm* in the following lines. What becomes clear is that the pluralic sense in both exx. 5.45, ll. 8–11 and 5.46, l. 33 does not merely reflect their mention of right and left or filaments respectively; rather, it is these entries' juxtaposition with and contrast to others specifying a singular anomalous condition that is at issue.[129] As the examples below illustrate further, the sense of plurality as conveyed by the G → D verbal sequence is mainly a function of the paradigmatic relationships between entries within complex gradations.

However, even where the role of the paradigmatic layout in establishing a pluralic sense seems obvious, still an additional conceptual factor appears to figure into the choice of representation of a particular case as plural. The following example provides an initial case in point:

5.47. *KAR* 150:16–18 (l. 18 = ex. 2.8)

16. *šumma šumēl martim adi šinā* ***paṭer*** ⇒ Apodosis
17. *šumma šumēl martim adi šalāš* ***paṭer*** ⇒ Apodosis
18. *šumma šumēl martim piṭrum erbet ḫamšat šeššet adi mādūti* ***puṭṭur*** ⇒ Apodosis

16. 'If the left of the gallbladder **was split** to two'
17. 'If the left of the gallbladder **was split** to three'
18. 'If (on) the left of the gallbladder a fissure **split up** (either) four, five, six (times), or up to many (more).'

127 Text: *qú-*⌜*um*⌝(⌜AM?⌝).

128 See, e.g., *YOS* 10 42 iii 23–24.

129 So Kouwenberg 1997: 361–4.

Here the condition of the gallbladder's splitting into two or three parts is conveyed in the G-stem, but when the final entry turns to higher numbers and, more importantly, an abstract sense of plurality (*ana mādūti*, "up to many [more]"; see § 5.4.1.3.2), the verbal form shifts to the D. As noted earlier (§ 2.1.2), this entry picks up on the ideas of the preceding omens, advancing via its unique formulation the previous data toward an indefinite end. And yet in some sense this entry conveys distance from its antecedents; the mention of four splits marked a new concept for the author of the passage (see §§ 5.4.1.3.1–5.4.1.3.2).

As the following example suggests, this distance represents a reflex of the Mesopotamian figuration that conceived of the idea of totality as constituent of four discrete parts:

5.48. AO 7539:7–10 (ll. 7–9 = ex. 4.71; l. 10 = ex. 4.19; cf. // *CUSAS* 18 31 ob. 9'–12')

7. [*šumma qerbū aš*]*ar mušēribti* ***dakšū*** ⇒ *mār šarri kussia iṣabba*[*t*]
8. [*šumma qe*]*rbū ina abunnatīšunu* ***dakšū*** ⇒ *lā ḫassu māta ibêl*
9. [*šumma q*]*erbū ina qutnīšunu* ***dakšū*** ⇒ *mār muškēni kussia iṣabbat*
10. *šumma qerbū kalûšunū-ma* ***dukkušū*** ⇒ *tibût ḫupši miqitti ummānīya lū tibût Elamti*

7. '[If the intestines] **were *bulging*** at the entrance duct ⇒ a king's son will seize the throne'
8. '[If] the intestines **were *bulging*** in their center part ⇒ an idiot will rule the land'
9. '[If] the intestines **were *bulging*** in their thin (part) ⇒ a commoner's son will seize the throne'
10. 'If the intestines—all of them—**were *bulging*** ⇒ (it forecasts either) an attack of the rabble (and) the defeat of my army, or: an attack of the Elamite (army).'

In this passage the shift in the final entry to a D predicative adjective surely owes to the protasis' interest in the totality of the intestines (*kalûšunu*, "all of them"), with the attachment of the non-coordinating particle *-ma* emphasizing this point further still. Initially it may be assumed that this description reflects all the possibilities of the preceding entries, that is, piercing in the three basic anatomical regions previously enumerated—in a manner akin to the "all of the above" statement of modern logic. However, more likely the intended sense of this fourth and final entry is more figurative and less exact (see § 5.4.1.3.2). The prediction of this final omen does not correspond arithmetically to the total of the previous three forecasts; rather, it is larger than its constituent parts,

describing in its forecasts more stereotypical scenes of what Mesopotamians probably qualified as total disarray (see further § 5.4.1.3.1).

The idea of an effective role for the fourth and final position of a particular omen entry within a gradation paradigm finds its greatest exposition in the OB collections in the following example:

5.49. AO 9066:35–53 (= ex. 3.12; ll. 35–39 = exx. 2.91; 2.145; ll. 47–53 = ex. 2.138)

35–39. *šumma rēš napla*[*štim zuqqur-ma k*]*akk*[*um ina muḫḫīša* (?)] *ušappil-ma* ***ipṭur*** ⇒ *taGriātum šanûm šumšu pisiltum*
40–43. *šumma ina qabliātīša* ***ipṭur*** ⇒ *ugbabtum uštaḫḫa ina kakki ḫimṣāt nakrīka takkal*
44–46. *šumma išissa* ***ipṭur*** ⇒ *šarrum ṣalmam ippuš šanûm ušerreb*
47–53. *šumma naplaštum ana erbe*(*t*) ***puṭṭurat*** ⇒ *ina bīt ilim asakkum innakkal ēnum uštaḫḫa šarrum ṣalma ippuš-ma šanûm ušerreb ana muškēnim imât-ma* [*b*]*īssu issappaḫ*

35–39. 'If the top of the View [was *protuberant* and] a Weapon [*in its top*] **was** situated low and was **split** ⇒ '(It forecasts) *hostilities*; its second interpretation: (it is) a disqualified (omen)'
40–43. 'If in its middle (ditto and [?]) it **was split** ⇒ an *ugbabtu*-priestess will be defiled; (or:) in warfare: you will consume your enemy's plunder'
44–46. 'If in its base (ditto and [?]) it **was split** ⇒ the king will fashion a statue, but another will introduce (it into the temple)'
47–53. 'If the View (**ditto and** [?]) **was split up** into four (parts) ⇒ a taboo will be infringed in a temple; (or:) an *ēn*(*t*)*u*-priestess will be defiled; (or:) the king will fashion a statue but someone else will introduce (it into the temple); (or) for a commoner: he will die and his household will be scattered.'

Here the presence of four predictions in the apodosis of the final entry surely relates to the quartered occurrence of the View. However, what is especially noteworthy about this example in the present context is the manner by which this last entry was conceived in the first place. With respect to the preceding three, the consideration of the View split four ways seems at least initially peculiar: why should a methodical examination of a single split in the View's top, middle, or base, turn to consider four splits whose positions the text does not see fit to offer? The answer lies in the manner in which four is understood here. Certainly it is the ordinal number that is meant, which, appropriately,

following the first (top), second (middle), and third (base) queries, constitutes a fourth scenario, and reconfigures its framework from that of the T → M → B scheme (on which, see § 4.2.1) to one in which the zone is conceived as comprised of four constituent parts.

In other words, the meaning of four in this passage is in essence identical to *kalûšunu* in ex. 5.48, l. 10 above, in which the pronominal suffix refers not to the three anatomical regions of the preceding entries but rather to the four constituent parts of the (plural) *qerbū*, "intestines."[130] And, as observed earlier, the understanding of the presence of four predictions in this omen's apodosis accords with this interpretation. Yet one can push the matter a step further, since this interpretive quartet includes elements from the previous entries along with the additional, fourth possibility applicable "for the commoner." Though again certainty in this matter is difficult to establish, it seems only reasonable to assume that the diviner made use here of the *ana* + Noun Phrase formulation (§ 2.1.3.3) to generate the fourth interpretive possibility, thus balancing a newly minted four-part interpretation against the hypothetical condition stipulating the same number of anomalous findings. The resulting apodosis, seems Janus-faced: while it recalls the previous T → M → B scheme of the preceding three entries, it also situates this tradition within an interpretive framework befitting the fourth and final one, which, modified slightly, has the View "split up (in)to (its) four (parts)"[131] and almost elevates this entry to the abstract level (see § 5.4.1.3.1).

5.3.2 *The Expression of Intensity*

The employment of gradations based on alternation in verbal forms is not exclusive to cases whose protases seek to convey a pluralic sense. In at least two instances the employment of D-stem forms appears intended to transmit an intensive sense for the ominous conditions described, which finds a commensurate interpretation in the counterpart apodoses.

In the following example, upon examining the meaning of a puncture in the right and left kidneys, the text turns to consider the scenario of this organ's thorough puncture:

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130 It is possible that an emendation to "its four"—i.e., *erbī*<*šu*> (4-<*šu*>)—is in order here, which, indeed, would simplify matters considerably. I have refrained from adopting this possibility in the citation of the line above, however, in order to underscore the connection of the cardinal number to the enumerated sense of the T → M → B scheme.

131 See previous note.

5.50. *OBE* 16 r. 15–17

15. *šumma kalīt imittim **palšat** ⇒ rubûm tillātūšu ibbalakka*[*tāšu*]
16. *šumma kalī<t> šumēlim **palšat** ⇒ kakkum kakki nakrīka ipallaš* [(…)]
17. *šumma kalītum imittam **pullušat** ⇒ mātum ḫarbūtam il*[*lak*]

15. 'If the right kidney **was punctured** ⇒ (concerning) the prince—his auxiliary forces will rebel [against him]'
16. 'If the left kidney **was punctured** ⇒ the weapon will puncture the enemy's weapon [(…)]'
17. 'If the kidney on the right (side) **was extensively punctured** ⇒ the country will become a wasteland.'

The last entry does not appear to concern the two kidneys together; the text seems to limit its inquiry to a(ny) kidney's right side. While the degree of puncture is left unspecified, the intent becomes clearer when one considers the entry from a paradigmatic perspective. The shift to the D predicative adjective (*pullušat*) in this entry seems to relate to the severity of its forecast, with the total devastation described as more extensive than the forecasts in the preceding entries. The G → D shift must thus be understood as intended to convey intensity, not the plurality of the subject,[132] with a translation of *pullušat* as "extensively punctured" being fitting.

A related case presents itself in the final entry from a text investigated earlier in connection with the complex nature of its formulation (§§ 4.1.1.1; 4.1.2.3):

5.51. *YOS* 10 24:33–35 (= exx. 4.21; 4.48, ll. 33–35)

33. *šumma bāb ekallim šīrum **ediḫ** ⇒ ālum ibbalakkat-ma bēlšu idâk*
34. *šumma bāb e<kallim> šīrum **ediḫ-ma** u aban suluppim īrub ⇒ ḫušaḫḫum ša šalmātum innandû ibbašši*
35. *šumma bāb ekallim šīram **udduḫ** ⇒ amūt Šulgi ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

33. 'If fleshy tissue **was covering** the Palace Gate ⇒ a city will rebel and kill its lord'
34. 'If fleshy tissue **was covering** the Palace Gate but a date pit entered (it) ⇒ there will be a famine in which corpses will remain lying (unburied)'
35. 'If the Palace Gate **was completely covered** by fleshy tissue ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

132 Pace Kouwenberg 1997: 363–4.

The gradation evident in this passage concerns the degree to which the Palace Gate is understood as blocked by fatty tissue. In the first two omens this tissue is said to cover the Palace Gate, with the partially penetrating date-pit in the second entry representing, to judge from the corresponding apodoses, a greater degree of blockage than that conveyed in the first. In the final entry, in which the D predicative adjective appears, the corresponding forecast shifts away from depictions of blockage in a city's gate and recalls a version of the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ historical tradition.

It will be recalled that the episode of Šulgi's arrest or, in one case, slaying of Tappa-daraḫ, appears in no fewer than four additional omens,[133] all from related traditions in Palace Gate collections and each involving a fleshy tissue's presence therein. Two among these appear in conjunction with D-stem verbs as the endpoints to paradigmatic gradations (discussed in greater detail below; § 5.4.1.3.1):

5.52. *YOS* 10 26 i 26–32 (= ex. 4.46, ll. 26–32)

26–27. *šumma <bāb> ekallim sunnuq* ⇒ Apodosis
28–29. *šumma <bāb> ekallim peḫi* ⇒ Apodosis
30. *šumma bāb ekallim šīram īpiq* ⇒ Apodosis
31–32. *šumma ina pāni bāb ekallim šīrum* ***kupput-ma šakin*** ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša Tappā-daraḫ ikmû*

26–27. 'If the Palace <Gate> was fastened'
28–29. 'If the Palace <Gate> was sealed'
30. 'If the Palace Gate was solid with a fleshy tissue'
31–32. 'If **compressed** fleshy tissue **was situated** in front of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

5.53. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim šīrum kupput-ma šakin* ⇒ *amūt Šulgi ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû* 'If compressed fleshy tissue was situated in the middle of the Palace Gate ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who captured Tappa-daraḫ' (*YOS* 10 24:40 [= ex. 4.48, l. 40]).

Thus, it is plain that the Šulgi—Tappa-daraḫ tradition in ex. 5.51, l. 35 was selected purposefully to mark that entry as the ultimate one in its respective gradation. As such, the condition described in this line must be understood as qualitatively more extensive[134] than what precedes it in ll. 33–34; for this, the

133 *YOS* 10 22:17; 24:40; 26 i 31–32, iv 10 (see the discussion of exx. 4.46–4.49 in § 4.1.2.3).
134 Pace Kouwenberg 1997: 151–2.

verbal choice of the D-stem was employed to connote an all-encompassing degree of coverage.

5.4 The Employment of Number

There is arguably no better-known example of generative expression in Mesopotamian divination literature than the employment of numbers in the omen collections. In this respect, Bottéro, describing the rejection of empiricism in Mesopotamian divination, states the following:

> It is very clear that at least in a certain number of cases not all of these hypotheses could have been observed in reality. There are even some that are entirely impossible. Thus in the liver of the sacrificial animal two gallbladders are foreseen, which is an imaginable though rare phenomenon … But then, driven by the wish to systematize, the author of the Treatise talks about *three, five,* and up to *seven* gallbladders, numbers that are entirely fantastic. In the same way, after the mention of twins delivered by a woman, the possibility of triplets is envisioned, then quadruplets, quintuplets, and then sextuplets, septuplets, octuplets, and finally nontuplets![135]

For Bottéro, as for others, what underlay this activity was the omen collections' drive to account for all theoretical possibilities.[136] One might thus expect to find some analysis in Assyriological writings of this important matter—yet this is not so. To the contrary, studies of collections in which an unusual numerical sequence appears are typically silent on this point, even in the case of the unique formulation *erbet ḫamšat šeššet adi mādūti*, "(either) four, five, six (times), or up to many (more parts)."[137] The following aims to fill this gap and, more specifically, to draw attention to some of the organizational structures underlying certain numerical sequences and the role of these sequences in creative and generative expression.

A few initial observations can be made in terms of the basic characteristics of passages framed around numerical sequences. A clear majority of these passages are comprised of two or three entries. A few list four omens, while fewer still contain a total greater than four. Two such instances come from the

135 Bottéro 1992: 134–5; emphasis in original.

136 Ibid.: 135.

137 E.g., Riemschneider 1965: 143. For this expression, see ex. 5.92 (§ 5.4.1.3.2).

Sealand collections and include five and six ominous findings.[138] In a third sequence, known in three related versions that follow below (exx. 5.54–5.56), the enumeration runs to nine or ten:[139]

5.54. *YOS* 10 50:1–9

1. *šumma* ***šittā*** *šepētum* ⇒ *nakrum tappâm i*[*rašši*]
2. *šumma* ***šalāš*** *šepētum* ⇒ *šēp rī*[*ṣi*][140]
3. *šumma* ***erbe*** *šepētum*[141] ⇒ *šēp Elamtî*[*m*]
4. *šumma* ***ḫamiš*** *šepētum* ⇒ *šarrum dūrānīšu inaqqa*[*r*]
5. *šumma* ****šediš*** *šepētum* ⇒ *āl dūrīka ḫarbūta*[*m illak*]
6. *šumma* ***sebe*** *šepētum* ⇒ *ummânka ana pâni umm*[*ān*] *nakrīka kakkīša itabbak*
7. *šumma* ***samāni*** *šepētum* ⇒ *ummân dūrīka ana pâni ummân nakrīka kakkīša itabbak*
8. *šumma* ***tiše*** *šepētum* ⇒ *atta u nakerka taṣṣabbatā-ma aḫum aḫ*[*a*]*m ušamqat*
9. *šumma* ***ešer*** *šepētum* ⇒ <*šēp*>[142] *s*[*al*]*īmim*

1. 'If (there were) **two** Feet ⇒ the enemy will acquire an associate'
2. 'If (there were) **three** Feet ⇒ (it represents) a foot-mark signifying help'
3. 'If (there were) **four** Feet ⇒ (it represents) the foot-mark signifying Elam'
4. 'If (there were) **five** Feet ⇒ the king will tear down his (own) fortresses'
5. 'If (there were) **six** Feet ⇒ your fortified city [will become] a wasteland'
6. 'If (there were) **seven** Feet ⇒ your army will drop its weapons in front of your enemy's army'

138 These are *CUSAS* 18 28 ob. 6–10 and 23:1'–16', respectively.

139 A fourth exemplar of this 10-part sequence appears in I_26 1660 ob. 1–8 but concerns fissures (*piṭrū*), not the foot-marks common to exx. 5.54–5.56. Still, as this text's most recent editor notes (Khait 2012: 42, 51), the tradition preserved in it clearly shares information with the examples discussed presently.

140 Restoration follows Glassner 2009a: 58; also Khait 2012: 51.

141 Text here and in each of the following five entries reads: *še*$_{20}$-*pe*^{i}(E)-*tum*.

142 Emendation follows Glassner 2009a: 58.

7. 'If (there were) **eight** Feet ⇒ the army of your fortified city will drop its weapons in front of your enemy's army'
8. 'If (there were) **nine** Feet ⇒ you and your enemy will quarrel with one another and one will bring down the other'
9. 'If (there were) **ten** Feet ⇒ (it represents) a <foot-mark> signifying peace.'

5.55. *YOS* 10 44:1–10 (= ex. 3.5)

1. *šumma ina šumēl tākaltim šēpum* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma **šittā** šēpān* ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma **šalāš** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
4. *šumma **erbe** šēpētu*⇒ Apodosis
5. *šumma **ḫamiš** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
6. *šumma ***šediš** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
7. *šumma **sebe** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
8. *šumma **samāni** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
9. *šumma **tiše** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis
10. *šumma **ešer** šēpētu* ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If **a** (= **one**) Foot (was) in the left of the *tākaltu*
2. 'If **two** Feet (ditto)'
3. 'If **three** Feet (ditto)'
4. 'If **four** Feet (ditto)'
5. 'If **five** Feet (ditto)'
6. 'If **six** Feet (ditto)'
7. 'If **seven** Feet (ditto)'
8. 'If **eight** Feet (ditto)'
9. 'If **nine** Feet (ditto)'
10. 'If **ten** Feet (ditto).'

5.56. *YOS* 10 44:63–71

63. *šumma ina šumēl tākaltim šēpum ⇒ pûm kīnum kiṣir libbi ilim paṭer⌜kum⌝*[143]
64. *šumma **šittā** šēpān ⇒ arbūt nakrim nakrum tillātūšu ipaḫḫurāšu*
65. *šumma **šalāš** šēpētu ⇒ rākib imēri iṭeḫḫeakkum*

143 Pace Nougayrol 1966a: 90 (*pa-ṭi-ir-š*[*um*]); text collated; cf. ll. 65, 69.

66. *šumma* ***erbe*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *girri nakrīka tertenedde narkabat nakrīka tut*[*ār*]
67. *šumma* ***ḫamiš*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *nipḫum*
68. *šumma* ***šediš*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *gipšū nakrim*
69. *šumma* ***sebe*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *rabûm kabtum ana mātīka iṭeḫḫeakkum*
70. *šumma* ***samāni*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *awīlum awīlūtam illak mār mārīšu immar*
71. *šumma* ***tiše*** *šēpētu* ⇒ *salīmu ina mātim iššakkan mātum aburrī uššša*[*b*]

63. 'If **a** (= **one**) Foot (was) in the left of the *tākaltu* ⇒ (it represents) a reliable omen (which means?) the god's anger will be eased against you'
64. 'If **two** Feet (ditto) ⇒ rout of the enemy; ([but] concerning) the enemy—his auxiliary forces will rally to him'
65. 'If **three** Feet (ditto) ⇒ a messenger will come up to you'
66. 'If **four** Feet (ditto) ⇒ you will keep pursuing the enemy's expedition (and [?]) you will bring back your enemy's chariot (as plunder)'
67. 'If **five** Feet (ditto) ⇒ (it represents) a *nipḫu*-forecast'
68. 'If **six** Feet (ditto) ⇒ (it forecasts) expanses of the enemy'
69. 'If **seven** Feet (ditto) ⇒ an important chief will come to your land (and) to you'
70. 'If **eight** Feet (ditto) ⇒ the man will reach old age; he will see his grandchild'
71. 'If **nine** Feet (ditto) ⇒ 'there will be peace in the land (or:) the country will dwell in the open areas.'

The first and second of these examples occasionally run parallel to one another in their apodoses,[144] while the second and third, representing the opening and closing of the same collection (*YOS* 10 44), are seemingly parallel only in their protases.[145] These partial matches actually underscore the priority of the numerical sequence in exx. 5.54–5.56, which seems to have served as the

144 The clear parallels are as follows: ex. 5.54, l. 3 // ex. 5.55, l. 4; ex. 5.54, l. 5 // ex. 5.55, l. 6; ex. 5.54, l. 7 // ex. 5.55, l. 8. Elsewhere, the *YOS* 10 44 passage is either too broken for analysis (ex. 5.55, ll. 1, 2, 3, 7) or (ex. 5.55, ll. 5, 8, 9, 10) indicative of divergent traditions from their would-be counterparts in ex. 5.54.

145 One is again set back in this regard by the breaks in ex. 5.55; see the previous note. For a further word on the relationships between these passages and the texts from which they are quoted, see Khait 2012: 43, 51.

framework for different interpretive possibilities in different settings—even within the same text.

As for the range of the subjects framed around numerical sequences, things appear to break down more or less evenly in terms of passages describing multiple zones, reports of severed zones, and ominous marks. However, within each of these categories the range of topics considered differs. Seemingly any zone could occur in plurality, including those outside hepatoscopy proper, such as the diaphragm, or even among uncommon organs, such as the bladder, as is seen in the following example:

5.57. *OBE* 16:33–39

33. *šumma* ***šittā*** *ellabbuḫḫū* ⇒ Apodosis
…[146]
38. [*šumma*] *rēš ellabbuḫḫi šullušat-ma u* ⌜*šalāš*(*at*)⌝[…] ⇒ Apodosis
39. [*šumma r*]*ēš ellabbuḫḫi* ***šinā*** *šullušat-ma u* […] ⇒ Apodosis

33. 'If there were **two** bladders'
…
38. '[If] the bladder's head (was in **one** part and it) was divided into three and *the three* (*parts*) […]'
39. '[If] the **two** bladder's heads were tripled and […].'

Among the ominous marks, holes occur most frequently in the plural, though other marks occurring in multitudes include Feet, fissures, and Weapons. When it comes to other anomalous conditions, a plurality described for different zones is overwhelmingly the result of a condition of splitting (< *paṭārum*).

It is also notable that in virtually every instance, numerical sequences begin with two anomalies and progress onward.[147] In a few cases a given sequence sets out only after the anomalous condition enumerated is described for a singular case, though evidently this was not deemed mandatory for the diviner. Indeed, on a couple of occasions, if one considers examples of numerical sequences from a slightly broader contextual perspective, an interesting organizational technique is exposed. The following examples demonstrate how another known organizational unit and sequence, namely, the R → L → R+L scheme (see § 4.2.2.2.2), functioned as a springboard for the numerical one:

146 Four additional entries dealing with one bladder appear between ll. 33 and 38.

147 For one striking exception, see ex. 5.91 (§ 5.4.1.3.2) below: 6 → 10 → 20.

5.58. *YOS* 10 36 iv 10–16 (ll. 14–15 = ex. 2.161; ll. 10–15 = ex. 4.95)

10–11.	*šumma puGlum imittam tarik* ⇒ Apodosis
12–13.	*šumma puGlum šumēlam tarik* ⇒ Apodosis
14–15.	*šumma puGlum imittam u šumēlam tarik* ⇒ *pitruštum*
15[148]–16.	*šumma* ***šinā*** *puGlū* ⇒ *dikšum*[149] *ibbašši*
10–11.	'If the (= **one**) … was dark on the right'
12–13.	'If the (= **one**) … was dark on the left'
14–15.	'If the (= **one**) … was dark on the right and left ⇒ (it forecasts) *disengagement*'
15–16.	'If (there were) **two** … ⇒ there will be pain.'

5.59. *YOS* 10 26 iii 19–26 (= ex. 4.94)

19–20.	*šumma sippi bāb ekallim imittam u šumēlam paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
21–22.	*šumma sippi šumēl bāb ekallim ana* ***šinā*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
23–24.	*šumma sippi imitti bā*[*b ekall*]*im ana* ***šalāšīšu*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
25–26.	*šumma sippi šumēl bāb ekallim ana* ***erbīšu*** *paṭe*[*r*] ⇒ Apodosis
19–20.	'If the Palace Gate's doorjamb was split on the right and left'
21–22.	'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's left was split in **two**'
23–24.	'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's right was split in its **three** (places [?])'
25–26.	'If the doorjamb of the Palace Gate's left was split in its **four** (places [?]).'

In the case of ex. 5.58, upon consideration of the inauspicious factor of shade on the right, left, and simultaneously on the right and left of a region somewhere on the lung, the text turns to consider two parts of that same region, though without specifying sides. It is uncertain whether ex. 5.58, ll. 15–16 implicitly assumes the condition stipulated in the preceding lines, though this seems unlikely.[150] In the case of ex. 5.59, upon the contemplation in the initial entry of a split in the doorjamb's right and left sides, the text moves on to posit this condition for the same zonal region, though now described as split into two, three, and four (parts). However, the entries in ll. 21–26 stray from what preceded not

148 The entry begins after the preceding apodosis on the same line.

149 Text: *di-ik-*<<*šu*>>*-šum*.

150 In support of this proposal, see ex. 5.110 in § 5.5.

only in the numerical formulation but also in the variation of the precise zonal region under consideration, which fluctuates between right and left.

Yet notwithstanding these differences, a case can be made for generative expression in both exx. 5.58–5.59 on the basis of creative organization and according to numerical sequences. To be sure, certainty is, as ever, difficult to reach, with challenges presented by the unknown anatomical term in ex. 5.58 on the one hand and breaks in the apodoses of ex. 5.59 (especially in ll. 21–22) on the other. Still it must be said that the mingling of organizational structures in these passages appears unexpectedly seamless, such that it would seem that the shift from right and left to plural numbers (i.e., R+L → 2 …) figured to be a logical organizational sequence for the diviner.

Additional evidence of this type of interweaving of distinct organizational structures is attested elsewhere:

5.60. *YOS* 10 11 i 11–27 (ll. 14–21 = ex. 2.99; ll. 23–27 = ex. 2.9)

i 11–13. *šumma padānum an*[*a* ***šinā***] *ekim* ⇒ *ina mātim taqtī<t> palêm ūmū īṣūtum*[151]

i 14–21.[152] *šumma padānum adi* ***šalāšīšu*** *purrus* ⇒ *ālik ḫarrānim ḫarrānum ana ḫarrānim inaddīšu ūmūšu iriqqū ina ūmim rīqim nantallû*

i 23–27. *šumma ina amūtim* ***erbe*** *naplasātum ištēniš izzazzā* ⇒ *nakrum ana libbi ālīka itebbeam-ma ālānīka ikkim-ma itabbal*

i 11–13. 'If the Path was *bent* to [(*its*) ***two*** (parts)] ⇒ (it forecasts) a dynasty's end in the land (within) a short time'

i 14–21. 'If the Path was split up to its **three** (parts) ⇒ the expeditionary force will go from one campaign to another—its days will be idle; for an uncertain date: (it forecasts) an eclipse'

i 23–27. 'If in the liver **four** Views were present at the same time ⇒ the enemy will come up to the heart of your city, capture your towns and carry away (*plunder*[153])'

Though related according to the numerical sequence [2] → 3 → 4, one finds discrepancies in this passage in terms of the described zones (*padānum*

151 Text: *i-ṣu*$^{!}$(ṢE)-*tu-um*; see *CAD* I, 220.

152 Lines 18–20, 22 are uninscribed; see further below.

153 Or, as A. George suggests, one could read *ālānu* as "townsfolk" (as in *CUSAS* 18 no. III [Tigunānum]), with the enemy then capturing and taking away the city's population.

→ *naplaštum*), ominous conditions (*ekēmum* → *parāsum* → *izuzzum*), and even in the stems and forms of the employed verbs (G predicative adjective → D predicative adjective → N[154] durative). Little can explain all these inconsistencies,[155] save perhaps the will by a (novice) diviner to organize disparate entries in some coherent way. For this the numerical sequence was summoned, and its employment seems to have effected change in the actual composition of the previously autonomous parts.[156]

A similar case may involve the following example, in which the respective forecasts appear to follow a bad-to-worse sequence, but whose initial concern differs sufficiently so as to raise doubts about an alleged common ancestry:

5.61. *YOS* 10 33 v 11–15

v 11–13. *šumma <u>šēr māt</u> ubānim ana* ***šinā****-ma ipṭur* ⇒ *wāšib maḫrīka awātīka ana bēl immerim izabbil*
v 14–15. *šumma <u>šumēl</u> ubānim ana* ***šalāš***(***at***) *ipṭur* ⇒ *damum iššakkan*

v 11–13. 'If <u>the back region</u> of the Finger split into **two** ⇒ the one who sits before you will convey your information to the sheep's owner'
v 14–15. 'If <u>the left</u> of the Finger split into **three** ⇒ there will be blood(shed).'

It is not implausible that here too it was the numerical sequence that brought these entries together, which do not fully match in terms of zonal region, although the matter is admittedly difficult to ascertain.

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154 Following Huehnergard 2002: 165.

155 Not to mention the plethora of scribal errors and irregularities witnessed in this passage and in *YOS* 10 11 in general; see § 2.1.2.1 and, more broadly, Richter 1999.

156 This may explain the alternative interpretation for an uncertain date in ll. 14–21, which notably finds no parallel in CMAA030-C0001 r. 6–7, an omen related in formulation to this one:

"*šumma padānum ana šalāšīšu ana erbīšu kuppuṣ šumma šarrum ana ḫarrānim itebbe ḫarrānum ana ḫarrānim* [*inaddišu*] *ūmūšu iriqqū ina kakkim arbūt umm*[*ānim*/*ānīka*] 'If the Path was curved three or four times ⇒ if (for) a king going on a campaign: [he will wander] from one campaign to another (and) his days will be idle; for warfare: (it forecasts) a rout of [the/your] army.' "

It is not impossible that, along with the mention of the army's idle days (*ūmūšu iriqqū*) in this entry, the reference to the short time (*ūmū īṣūtum*) in the previous entry (ll. 11–13) acted as the impetus for the choice to label the alternative interpretation with the *ūmam rīqam* expression over against *ina kakkim* or the like.

It seems clear then that the employment of numerical sequences for the purposes of the organization of the omen collections took on varied forms and was pursued to various extents. And, as is elsewhere the case with respect to the organizational framework, it appears that in their application, numbers and numerical sequences effected change in the composition of certain omen entries and generated others in their entirety. Accordingly, the following strives to evaluate the manner by which these processes took place.

5.4.1 *Creative Harmonization and Generative Calculation*

Some of the most informative examples for the estimation of the effective nature of numerical sequences have in fact been encountered in various venues earlier in this study; yet, as is demonstrated below, their reconsideration is warranted as part of a systematic analysis of numerical sequences in the organizational framework. In what follows, the consideration of these passages is generally arranged by the sequences' respective lengths (i.e., $1 \rightarrow 2$, $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3$, $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$, etc.). The reason for this is not pedantic but rather pedagogic: it is apparent that, inherent either to a particular number or to the shift from one number to another, are certain paradigmatic values, the qualitative analysis of which demands the distinction of each.

However, more than once a particular passage bearing one numerical sequence nevertheless exhibits characteristics that accord with another such sequence or sequences. For instance, one example that is framed around a $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3$ numerical sequence displays behavior characteristic of the $1 \rightarrow 2$ shift in its first leg as well as that of $2 \rightarrow 3$ in its second (ex. 5.71; § 5.4.1.2). More problematic perhaps is the fact that these purported values are in fact less than steadfast. For example, one finds a passage which, though it describes only three Palace Gates, understands this figure as signifying finality, while elsewhere, in parallels to this very passage, this signification is, as expected, associated with numbers four or higher (ex. 5.77, ll. 21–22; § 5.4.1.3.1).

In short, the risk of the following presentation is that of oversimplification. As is the case elsewhere, exceptions abound. The picture borne by the evidence is complex and militates against any simple reconstruction along clear-cut lines. Still, to a remarkable degree, numerical sequences do convey some sense of preplanning in terms of the nexus between their organization and interpretation, such that the analysis of particular segments yields important information on the nature of the employment of numbers toward generative and paradigmatic ends. Accordingly, the following presentation focuses on three key characteristics associated with segments of numerical sequences: (1) doubling witnessed in the shift from one to two; (2) reversal noted from two to three; and (3) finality, totality, and perhaps infinity as encountered in the enumeration of four or more anomalous findings.

5.4.1.1 Doubling from One to Two

An appreciation of the meaning often associated with the 1 → 2 numerical sequence may be gained when one recalls those omens discussed earlier with respect to Starr's first paradigm of extispicy (§ 3.2.1). In that context the discussion began by highlighting possible vestiges in the omen collections of records from extispicy reports concerning a given zone's (normal) presence. In a couple of such cases, these omens appeared as part of contrastive pairings, coupled with entries investigating the meaning of zonal absence, the condition opposite to zonal presence.

Against this background, a consideration of some cases below exhibiting the employment of the 1 → 2 numerical sequence is especially revealing. In contrast to those entry pairings that move from zonal presence to its absence, in these cases, upon the report of one sound zone, the texts turn to consider the meaning of two such zones, which signify an amplification of the theme from the previous entry. This is the case in the following example:

5.62. AO 9066:1–4 (ll. 1–2 = exx. 3.8; 3.28)

1–2. [*šumma napl*]*aštam īšu* ⇒ [*ilum i*]*na niqi awīlim izziz*
3–4. *šumma* [***šittā***] *naplasātum* ⇒ *ana awīlim ilum zenûm iturram*

1–2. '[If] it has a (= **one**) View ⇒ [the god] has appeared in the man's sacrifice'
3–4. 'If (there were) [**two**] Views ⇒ the angry god will come back to the man.'

This passage may be compared with the following related example:

5.63. *YOS* 10 17:1–2, 9 (ll. 1–2 = ex. 3.7; 3.27)

1. [*šumma naplaštam īš*]*u* ⇒ *niqi awīlim itti ilim maḫir*
2. [*šumma naplaštam lā īšu*] ⇒ *ula izziz*
…
9. [*šumma naplasātum* ***šittā*** *i*]*ttaṭlū* ⇒ *ilū zenûtum ana mātim iturrūnim-ma šubtam nēḫtam* [*ušš*]*ab*

1. '[If] it has [a (= **one**) View] ⇒ the man's sacrifice is acceptable for the god'
2. '[If it did not have (= **one**) View] ⇒ (ditto) he has not appeared.'
…
9. '[If **two** Views] faced one another ⇒ the angry gods will return to the land and it will dwell peacefully.'

As discussed at the outset of this study (§ 1.2.2), the collections AO 9066 and *YOS* 10 17, the sources of exx. 5.62 and 5.63, relate to and parallel one another at numerous points; as such, despite their breaks, both ex. 5.62, ll. 3–4 and its parallel in ex. 5.63, l. 9 may be reconstructed with confidence.[157] Yet, equally revealing about these parallels is where they diverge. While *YOS* 10 17 turns to the possibility of an absent View for its counterpart to the initial statement of this zone's (normal) appearance, the author of AO 9066 opts for the listing of two Views. The interpretation of the latter occurrence, describing not merely divine presence but the return of a previously absent god, appears to be the product of generative reasoning, in this case on the basis of the meaning of zonal presence and the 1 → 2 numerical sequence. As noted, the tradition of two Views does occur in *YOS* 10 17, though notably only several entries after the initial concern with the zone's normal presence. Thus, regardless of the question of which text represents this material's original formulation, it is clear that the initial arrangement of AO 9066 reflects a deliberate choice to set out and configure things according to the 1 → 2 numerical sequence.

A similar case presents itself upon the comparison of the following two examples, which again concern *YOS* 10 17 and one of the shorter texts related to it, in this case MAH 15874:

5.64. *YOS* 10 17:54, 58–59 (= ex. 2.74, ll. 54, 58–59)

54. *šumma* [*in*]*a qabliat naplaštim ina libbim š*[*īlum nadi*] ⇒ [*lū*] *ēnu wedûm imât lū pašīšu w*[*ed*]*ûm imât šanû šumšu Ki-iš nārim*
…
58. *šumma ina libbi nap*[*la*]*štim šīlū* ***šinā*** ⇒ *mīlum nēḫum illaka*
59. *šumma ina libbi naplaštim šīlū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *petû šutebrû* ⇒ *mīlum illakam-ma biblum mātam ubbal*

54. 'If in the View's middle in the middle a (= **one**) hole [was situated] ⇒ [either] an important *ēnu*-priest or a important *pāšišu*-priest will die; its second interpretation: (it is) a … of the river'
…
58. 'If in the View's middle (were) **two** holes ⇒ a calm flood will come'
59. 'If in the View's middle (either) **two** (**or**) **three** holes were perforated all the way through ⇒ a flood will come and the devastating flood will sweep away the land.'

157 Note the pl. *naplasātum* in ex. 5.62, l. 4 and especially the (reflexive) Gt-stem form [*i*]*ṭṭatlū* in ex. 5.63, l. 9; and cf., e.g., *YOS* 10 46 iv 11–24.

5.65. MAH 15874:20–22 (= ex. 2.73, ll. 20–22)

20–21. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina l*[*ibbīš*]*a šīlum nadi ⇒ lū ēnum wedûm imât lū pašīšu wedûm imât šanûm šumšu Ki-iš nārim*
22. *šumma ina qabliat naplaštim ina* [*libbīš*]*a šīlū* ***šinā*** *nadû ⇒ mīlu ṭaḫdum illakam*

20–21. 'If in the View's middle in its middle part a (= **one**) hole was situated ⇒ either an important *ēnu*-priest or an important *pāšišu*-priest will die; its second interpretation: (it is) a … of the river'
22. 'If in the View's middle in its [middle] part **two** holes were situated ⇒ a huge (seasonal) flood will come.'

As observed earlier, though the differences in the organization of these two collections are substantial, in this case it is possible to say that it was likely the author of MAH 15874 who altered a received tradition to form the ordered structure of that collection. The numerical sequence observable in ex. 5.65 figures precisely in this context. The shift from one to two holes observed in the move from the first to second entry in this passage reflects a single leg of a broader sequence that spans all of MAH 15874, which has the number of holes alternating between one and two. By contrast, in the corresponding passage from *YOS* 10 17 (ll. 49–61), entries concerning one hole are grouped together followed by those omens in which two or more holes are mentioned.

One is left to wonder about what changes, if any, this reorganization in MAH 15874 spurred. One such instance, especially if the formulation in *YOS* 10 17 accurately reflects the language of the *Vorlage* for MAH 15874, may involve the change in the qualification of the seasonal flood from calm to huge (*nēḫum* → *ṭaḫdum*). If so, it is tempting to think that the signification of the 1 → 2 numerical sequence played an instrumental role in bringing about this amplification, though this cannot be said with certainty.

In some cases it is possible to speak with reasonable certainty about the use of numerical sequences for organizational and creative purposes even without the benefit of parallel traditions. Two such cases close this section. The first example represents the opening two entries in *YOS* 10 11, which consider and build on the notion of a normal zonal presence, in this instance the Path:

5.66. *YOS* 10 11 i 1–4 (ll. 1–2 = ex. 3.29)

1–2. *šumma padānum šakin ⇒ ilum kibis awīlim ušeššer*
3–4. *šumma padānū* ***šinā*** *⇒ ālik ḫarrā*[*ni*]*m ḫarrānšu* [*i*]*kaššad*

1–2. 'If a (= **one**) Path was situated (normally) ⇒ the god will set straight the man's route'
3–4. 'If (there were) **two** Paths ⇒ the expeditionary force will reach its goal.'

As expected, in the first entry a prediction of divine presence, indeed approbation, correlates with the statement about the normally situated zone in a manner that builds on the zone's metonymic signification (i.e., *padānum* ↔ *kibsum*). In the second entry, in which two Paths are taken up, the forecast turns to broader matters: the military and its expected success, again aided by a paronomastic association between the zonal designation and the related interpretation (i.e., *padānum* ↔ *ḫarrānum*). What is more, another shift in apodotic domain occurs here on the vertical plane, in this case from the personal (*awīlum*) to the national (*ālik ḫarrānim*). It will be recalled that this type of subject change has a commonly occurring counterpart on the horizontal level, especially in complex apodoses coordinated by the *ana* + Noun Phrase formulation (see § 2.1.3.3). In this respect the possibility that the two entries in this example can be explained on generative grounds is appealing.

The second and final case of a passage structured according to the 1 → 2 numerical sequence—and which calculates its interpretations accordingly—is the following:

5.67. Scheil B:28–30

28. *šumma ina rēš martim piṭrum ⇒ mukīl rēš lemuttim …*[158] *eli awīlim imaqqut*
29. *šumma ina rēš martim* ***piṭrum šinā*** *⇒ mukīl rēšim šarram idukkū*
30. *šumma ina rēš <martim> **piṭrum šalāšat** ⇒ ṭēmum u milkum išanni išītum aḫum aḫāšu idâk*

28. 'If in the gallbladder's top (is a [= **one**]) fissure ⇒ an evil demon … will befall the man'
29. 'If in the gallbladder's top the fissure was (in) **two** (parts) ⇒ attendants[159] will kill the king'

158 Collation necessary; text: TU [Š]A[?] RA. Riemschneider 1965: 143, who transcribes this as *tu-š[a][?]-ra*, rightly dismisses the suggestion in Scheil 1930: 153 to read "l'abattement" from *tūšarum* and posits emending to *te'-šu-ú'-um*, though this seems equally unlikely.

159 Reading *mukīl rēšim* as a collective; note the same sense for *ṭēmum u milkum* two entries below.

30. 'If in the <gallbladder>'s top the fissure was (in) **three** (parts) ⇒ mind and mood will change; confusion: one brother will kill another.'

Though textual problems complicate the precise sense of this example, the apparent attempt[160] at pluralizing the construct *mukīl rēšim* in l. 29, probably by analogy to the singular form in the previous entry, along with the change in the term's sense across the two entries (evil demon → [human] attendant) and perhaps another shift in apodotic domain (personal → national), all suggest that the development in these lines follows a logic not dissimilar from what was described for ex. 5.66, and which owes to the same hermeneutic of amplification. That with three fissures in l. 30 things turn chaotic hints at the understanding of this ultimate portion of the numerical sequence, signifying a sense of totality (for more on this signification, see § 5.4.1.3). Yet the two-to-three shift, which occurs in an even greater number of numerical sequences, has at least one other well-defined function and is the subject of what follows.

5.4.1.2 From Two to Three and Vice Versa

A numerical sequence of particular interest is the one that shifts from two to three (2 → 3). The unusual nature of this 2 → 3 scheme was noticed in part by Jeyes, who observed that, along with the amplification that occurs when a given ominous mark or zone is doubled, "for triplings special rules seem to have come into force."[161] By this Jeyes ostensibly meant the reversal of valence in SB extispicy cases in which a particular mark or zone, interpreted favorably for the occurrence of one and doubly so for two, prompts a negative forecast when it occurs three times—or vice versa. Her observation was based[162] on the following commentary on an entry from an SB *bārûtu* omen, in which this point is made explicitly and is even crystallized in the form of a rule:

5.68. Protasis ⇒ *ištēn piṭru lā damiq šinā piṭrū lā damiq šalāšat piṭrū damiq ina šalši* (*ina* 3-*ši*) *ittaker* (kúr-*er*) … *mimma ša damqu šalāš-ma lā damiq mimma ša lā damqu šalāš-ma damiq ina šalši* (*ina* 3-*ši*) *ittaker* (kúr-*er*) '(if there was) one Split it is not good; (if there were) two Splits it is not good; (if there were) three Splits it is good—at three it changes … Anything that is auspicious if (there are) three it is inauspicious; anything that is inauspicious if (there are) three is auspicious—at three it changes (BLO 19:25 [SB *Manzāzu* commentary]; cf. Koch, *Multābiltu* 33 r. 20–22 [LB *Rikis girri*]).

160 See previous note.

161 Jeyes 1980a: 23.

162 Jeyes 1980a: 31 n. 62.

Remarkably, the basis for this first-millennium hermeneutic appears already in the organization of the OB collections. This much is made plain from a number of passages, including those from non-extispicy collections.[163] Yet it is the extispicy collections that offer the most compelling testimony for understanding the signification of the 2 → 3 scheme in the OB collections and which most clearly parallel what is known from later on. And while one must exercise caution so as to avoid retrojecting the later understanding onto the earlier, the picture that inevitably emerges stresses this sort of continuity. This finding advances our appreciation of the paradigmatic understanding of numerical sequencing in the organization of the omen collections and also provides another perspective on the historical antiquity of later Babylonian hermeneutics. Unfortunately, a proper investigation of the latter is beyond the scope of this study; however, the former, concerning the employment of the 2 → 3 scheme by the interpretive framework of the omen collections, warrants our attention in the context of this study. Accordingly, we turn to the relevant data.[164]

The following passage presents a straightforward example of the paradigmatic aspect of the 2 → 3 scheme in the OB extispicy collections:

5.69. AO 7028:18–19 (27–28)

18. *šumma* ***šinā*** *danānū* ⇒ *ūmū arkū*
19. *šumma* ***šalāšat*** *danānū* ⇒ *ūmū īṣūtum*

18. 'If (there were) **two** Strengths ⇒ (it forecasts) many (remaining) days'
19. 'If (there were) **three** Strengths ⇒ (it forecasts) few (remaining) days.'

No variable appears in this passage's entries save the doubled and tripled occurrence of the Strength. As expected, the report of a double finding of this zone, for which one represents metonymically the idea of strength, appears to heighten this sense by referring to longevity, presumably for the ruler or the omen's client. But this logic does not continue linearly upon the report of a third Strength; rather, the passage declares that three such zones predict only a few remaining days. Since no additional variable appears in these entries, no reasonable explanation can be offered to account for this unexpected reversal

163 See, e.g., Pettinato, *Ölwahrsagung* I:49–51; II:34–37; cf. ex. 5.92, ll. 16–17 (§ 5.4.1.3.2).

164 In addition to those examples discussed here, see, e.g., ex. 5.85 below.

except the possibility that it reflects some hard-wired assumption of the 2 → 3 numerical scheme.

This interpretation is bolstered by an almost identical finding in a passage from a collection of both gallbladder and View omens, in this case concerning the View:

5.70. *CUSAS* 18 10 iii 21–24

21–22. *šumma napl*[*asātum* ***šittā***(*-ma*)] ⇒ *ūmū arkū*[*tu*]*m*
23–24. *šumma* ***šalāš*** *naplasā*[*tum*] ⇒ *ūmū īṣūtum*

21–22. If (there were) [**two**] Views ⇒ (it forecasts) many (remaining) days'
23–24. 'If (there were) **three** Views ⇒ (it forecasts) few (remaining) days.'

Again no variable other than the (reconstructed) shift from two to three Views in this passage's entries can account for the difference in the omens' interpretation, such that the reversal seen in the apodoses can only be correlated with the 2 → 3 numerical scheme in the corresponding protases. The same pattern in the following example, as well as its converse in yet another below, further bolsters this reading. In the first example things are compromised somewhat by the breaks in ll. 19–20, though its logic is sufficiently intelligible:

5.71. *ARM* 26/1 3:18–20 (l. 18 = ex. 3.31)

18. *šumma šulmum kayyān* ⇒ *ina niqi awīlim ilum iz*[*zaz*]
19. *šumma šulmum* ***šinā*** ⇒ *šulmum u* [……]
20. *šumma šulmum* ***šalāšat*** ⇒ *ilum itti awīlim lā* [……]

18. 'If the (= **one**) Well-being (appeared) normal ⇒ the god will appear in the man's sacrifice'
19. 'If (there were) **two** (sound) Well-beings ⇒ (it forecasts) well-being and [……]'
20. 'If (there were) **three** (sound) Well-beings ⇒ the god [will] not [……] with the man.'

The reasoning of first entry was already discussed in § 3.2.2 in the context of a discussion of omens with *īšu* statements and variants describing the intact status of a given zone. In the present case it is the Well-being whose normal status prompts the interpretation of the deity's presence in the manner described

above. The following entry concerns two Well-beings, which, in accordance with this zone's metonymic signification, anticipates an amplified level of contentment. One might assume therefore that the remainder of the apodosis specified the (divine) agent of this benevolence. However, things seem to turn for the worse when it comes to three Well-beings. On the basis of what survives, the forecast in l. 20 appears to reverse l. 18 or perhaps l. 19. The construction *ilum itti awīlim* recalls similar language in apodoses of omens with *išu* statements, such that its negation here suggests that the apodosis contained a statement of divine rejection or abandonment. Thus, once more the interpretation of the shift from two to three intact zones as prompting the reversal from the highly auspicious to the equally inauspicious seems all but inevitable.

Furthermore, it is clear that this hermeneutic operated in the OB collections in the reverse direction as well, in the manner expressed by the first-millennium commentary above (ex. 5.68). In the following passage, the change displayed in the valence of the forecasts of the first two entries in the unusual 2 → 3 → <4?> → 5 succession seems explicable if one reads it according to the 2 → 3 scheme:

5.72. *YOS* 10 42 ii 48–63

48. *šumma* ***šinā*** *tallū* ⇒ [***t***]***ašnintum***
…[165]
59–60. [*šumma*] ***šalāšat*** *tallū* ⇒ *rēṣī u tillāti* [*ta*]*rašši*
61. *šumma* ***ḫamšat*** *tallū* ⇒ *šarrum rubêšu urabba*
62–63. *šumma* ***šeššet*** *tallū ina ṣēlīšu<nu> purrukū* ⇒ *šarrum qarrādī irašši*

48. 'If (there were) **two** diaphragms ⇒ (it predicts:) **rivalry**'
…
59–60. '[If] (there were) **three** diaphragms ⇒ [*you*] will acquire helpers and auxiliary troops'
61. 'If (there were) **five** diaphragms ⇒ the king will elevate his princes (in rank)'
62–63. 'If **six** diaphragms *were lying crosswise on their sides*[166] ⇒ the king will acquire (enough [?]) warriors.'

It will be recalled that the term *tašnintum* in the first entry from this example appears as a short apodotic label in a number of omens whose interpretation

165 Four entries following l. 48 deal with variables atop the two diaphragms.

166 Cf. *CAD* Ṣ, 126 "are placed across beside each other."

follows the Lemma: Longer Interpretation form (§ 2.1.4.2.6); in that capacity it was seen to highlight the notion of rivalry that, in cases like this passage, was associated with the occurrence of two zones. Yet with the exception of a paronomastic association between *tašnintum* (√*šnn*) and *šinā*/*šanûm* (√*šny* [< Sem. *√*ϑny*]), "two/to do again, twice," nothing explains the apparent abandonment of the rivalry motif in the interpretations of the following entries from this example, which concern three or more diaphragms. However, the change in valence does seem explicable if one reads it in accordance with the organizational framework, with the shift from rivalry to assistance and strength hinging on the 2 → 3 numerical scheme.

The same explanation may possibly account for the following example as well, though not in the conventional manner described above:

5.73. *OBE* 14 r. 24–26

24. *šumma tal libbim* ***šinā*** ⇒ *rēṣū*
25. *šumma tal libbim* ***šalāš*** ⇒ *rīṣi ilim ana rubêm*
26. *šumma tal libbim* ***erbetti*** ⇒ *rubâm tillātūšu ana lemuttim itabbiāniššu*

24. 'If the heart's diaphragm was (in) **two** ⇒ (it forecasts) helpers'
25. 'If the heart's diaphragm was (in) **three** ⇒ (it forecasts) divine help for the prince'
26. 'If the heart's diaphragm was (in) **four** ⇒ concerning the prince—his auxiliary force will rise up (against) him for an evil intent.'

In this passage, it is not in the shift from two to three diaphragms in the passage but rather from three to four that one notes a change in terms of the corresponding forecasts, from the positive ones in ll. 24–25 to the negative in l. 26. Thus one could sensibly protest the suggestion that this example represents a case based on the 2 → 3 numerical scheme seen above. But it may be that this scheme was stretched to allow for more figurative applications; if so, then the meaning of the reversal-of-fortune forecast for the prince in l. 26 falls into the same interpretive line. This claim finds support if one takes the conditions in the three entries not according to the cardinals reported in each (i.e., 2, 3, 4), but rather according to the extent to which each is removed from the norm. Thus, if l. 24, in which one encounters two diaphragms, figures as the first anomalous case, then l. 25, with three diaphragms, represents the second and l. 26, with four diaphragms, the third. According to this configuration the change in course witnessed in l. 26, which refers to an auxiliary force (*tillatum*), the typical pairing to the helpers (*rēṣū*) witnessed in l. 24, becomes intelligible. Admittedly this suggestion is tentative, yet seemingly plausible, at

least in lieu of alternative explanations for the sudden turn manifest in the forecast events.[167]

5.4.1.3 Figurations for Finality and Totality—and Infinity?

In the discussion of ex. 5.67, it was briefly noted that the shift from the forecasts of the penultimate to ultimate entries seemed geared toward a climactic finish, with the final entry conveying a sense of abstraction and totality. This interpretation finds support elsewhere. The idea that in a considerable number of passages framed around numerical sequences one finds a push toward some notion of abstraction is not new. This is precisely the meaning of the above-cited quote from Bottéro, for whom examples such as the enumerations of ominous phenomena reflect attempts to think "*in abstracto*," which for him "is also one of the characteristics of scientific knowledge."[168]

Yet, once more no serious attempt at the collection of relevant data concerning this point has been conducted, let alone any systematic analysis. The following strives to redress this matter, at least provisionally and with respect to the OB extispicy collections. Two organizational structures are considered in particular: the first conveys a sense of finality or totality by way of numerical sequences whose final entry reports the occurrence of four items; the second pushes things further via either sequences whose final entry reaches higher numbers (> 4) or trope.

5.4.1.3.1 *The Number Four*

The metaphorical place of the number four in Mesopotamian thought needs little introduction. As a signifier of totality, the figure appears in the well-known title lugal an.ub.da limmú(.ba)/*šar kibrāt*(*im*) *arba'im*/*erbettim*, "king of the four regions," apparently introduced by Narām-Sîn and made essentially standard in the royal titulary thereafter.[169] Already in the OB period, this figuration seems well ensconced in literary contexts, if its employment in the prologue to Hammurabi's laws[170] or an elaborate hymn to Ištar,[171] not to mention the omen collections themselves, serves as any indication.

However, how or from where this metaphor for totality came to be is more difficult to address. Though this is not the place to enter into a lengthy study of

167 For an apparent logical parallel, see ex. 5.90 below.

168 Bottéro 1992: 135.

169 Hallo 1957: 49–56; Glassner 1984b; Horowitz 1998: 298–9.

170 CH ii 3; see Roth 1997: 77.

171 Line 50 in Thureau-Dangin 1925: 173. For more recent treatments, see Foster 2005: 85–8; Streck 2013.

this intriguing issue, it is significant to note that uncertainty remains about the (Sumerian or Akkadian) origin of the "king of the four regions" designation,[172] especially since evidence of its pervasiveness in ancient Semitic thought[173] may ultimately suggest that the title in Mesopotamia reflects a tradition from outside the cuneiform world. The omen collections provide an important perspective toward any future word on the topic: it is apparent that in diverse situations a gradation organized around a 1 → 2 → 3 → 4 numerical sequence was employed to articulate a sense of totality or finality for its final entry.

Examples of passages organized according to the 1 → 2 → 3 → 4 sequence include the following:[174]

5.74. *YOS* 10 26 iii 27–33 (cf. *CUSAS* 18 24 ob. 11–14)

27. *šumma rēš bāb ekallim paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
28–29. *šumma rēš bāb ekallim ana* ***š*[*in*]*īšu*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
30–31. *šumma rēš bāb ekallim ana* ***šalāšīšu*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis
32–33. *šumma* ***muḫḫi*** *bāb eka*[*llim ana* ***e***]***rbīšu*** *paṭer* ⇒ Apodosis

27. 'If the Palace Gate's head was split'
28–29. 'If the Palace Gate's head was split in its **two** (parts)'
30–31. 'If the Palace Gate's head was split in its **three** (parts)'
32–33. 'If the Palace Gate's top was split [in] its **four** (parts).'

5.75. *OBE* 14 ob. 1–3 (= exx. 2.7)

1. *šumma rēš libbi šatiq* ⇒ Apodosis
2. *šumma rēš libbi* ***šinā*** ⇒ Apodosis
3. *šumma rēš libbi* ***adi erbīšu*** *ištuq* ⇒ Apodosis

1. 'If the heart's top **was split** (in one place)'
2. 'If the heart's top (**was split** in) two (parts)'
3. 'If the heart's top **was split** up to its four (parts).'

172 See Hallo 1957: 49 (building on Falkenstein); more recently, Horowitz 1998: 298.

173 Notable in this regard is the extensive use of the 3 → 4 numerical pattern in biblical literature; see Zakovitch 1977. For an early appreciation of the symbolism of the number four in Semitic thought, see Farbridge 1923: 114–9.

174 See also exx. 5.59 and 5.73, along with exx. 5.48–5.49 (see n. 178).

5.76. *YOS* 10 33 v 18–41

18–19. *šumma ṣēr ubānim šalāštašunu ana*[175] ***šinā*** *ipṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
…[176]
22–23. [*šum*]*ma ṣēr ubānim* [*šal*]*āštašunu*[177] ***šulūšā*** *ipṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
24–25. [*šum*]*ma ṣēr ubānim šalāštašunu* ***rubū'ā*** *ipṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
26–27. [*šumma ṣ*]*ēr ubānim šalāštašunu* ***šinā*** *ipṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
28–30. [*šum*]*ma ṣēr ubānim šalāštašunu* ***šulūšā*** *puṭṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
31–33. [*šumma*] *ṣēr ubānim šalāštašunu* ***rubū'ā*** [*p*]*uṭṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
34–36. *šumm*[*a ṣ*]*ēr ubānim šalāšta*[*šunu* ***ši***]***nā*** *puṭṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
37–38. *šumma ṣēr ubānim šalā*[*št*]*aš*[*unu* ***š***]***ulūšā*** *puṭṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis
39–41. *šumma ṣēr ubānim šalā*[*šta*]*šunu* ***rubū'ā*** *puṭṭurū* ⇒ Apodosis

18–19. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them split into **two** (ways) each'
…
22–23. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them split **three** (ways) each'
24–25. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them split **four** (ways) each'
26–27. '[If] (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them split **two** (ways) each'
28–30. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them were split up **three** (ways) each'
31–33. '[If] (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them were split up **four** (ways) each'
34–36. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three [of them] were split up **two** (ways) each'

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175 Text: *ša-*⌜*la*⌝*-aš-ta*¹(TU)*-šu-nu a*¹*-na*¹(RI); see n. 177. On the attachment of pronominal suffixes on numbers, see *GAG* §139j.

176 One entry, partly damaged, adds here another variable atop the condition described in ll. 18–19.

177 The writing of this form in terms of the reading of the vowel between the number and pronominal suffix poses problems, compounded by the different spelling of the same word in the previous entry; see n. 175 above. I take the writing *ša-la-aš*-TAM-*šu-nu* here and in the following entries as *ša-la-aš-ta*$_5$*-šu-nu*, following Soden and Röllig 1967: 42 (text cited); also *CAD* R, 401 (*šalaštašunu*); cf. Š/1, 233 (*ša-la-aš*-TAM-*šu-nu*); pace Kouwenberg 1997: 363; cf. Jeyes 1989: 66 (*ša-la-aš-tú-šu-nu*). Happily all agree that the reference here must be the three plains of the Finger's pyramid.

37–38. 'If (concerning) Finger's plain(s)—all three of them were split up **three** (ways) each'
39–41. 'If (concerning) the Finger's plain(s)—all three of them were split up **four** (ways) each.'

It could be argued that the enumerations witnessed in the description of the different conditions in exx. 5.74–5.75, or even in the thrice-repeated case of ex. 5.76, do not necessarily prove that these sequences were employed to convey a sense of totality or finality via the reference to four in the respective final entries. Yet, several points suggest that this indeed was the intent. First, it is significant to note that, in terms of the given ominous conditions, each of these examples differs from the rest; the possibility that each of the regions described—namely, the Palace Gate's head/top (ex. 5.74), the heart's top (ex. 5.75), and the Finger's three plains (ex. 5.76)—should have four subdivisions that are otherwise unattested seems unlikely. Second, in the case of ex. 5.75, l. 3, it was noted earlier (§ 2.1.2) that the expression *adi erbīšu*, "to its four," as a reflex of more general formulations such as *adi* + X-*šu*, "to its X (parts)," likely refers to what was regarded conceptually as four constituent parts; furthermore, the possibility that this formulation was intended to convey a move toward an endpoint becomes more likely when it is compared to the related phrase *adi mādūti*, "up to many (more parts)" (see ex. 5.92 [§ 5.4.1.3.2]).[178]

Finally, a consideration of exx. 5.74–5.76 cannot be undertaken without turning to other cases with four-based numerical sequences, including those appearing below. With the benefit of the following examples, the hypothesis that a four-based numerical sequence was frequently employed to convey more abstract notions of finality and totality gains strength, since in one way or

178 Arguably the most convincing evidence in support of this point is not included here, since it is not framed around a numerical sequence per se. This involves exx. 5.48–5.49, discussed in § 5.3.1 above. Recall that in both these cases, upon the listing of three omens arranged according to a T → M → B sequence, the texts move to a fourth and seemingly conclusive entry. In the case of ex. 5.49 this involves the zone at issue split *ana erbi*, "to four"; with ex. 5.48 this seems to be the sense of *kalûšunū-ma*, "all of them." As noted above, nothing from the understanding of Mesopotamian anatomy suggests that the zones studied in these passages were conceived as comprised of four parts. Rather, it is clear that these passages move from the established T → M → B hierarchy to consider a more hypothetical possibility, which contemplates the condition mentioned in the previous entries, though for the totality of the respective zones. As observed above, in both cases this sense is secured by the shift in verbal forms (G → D) as well as the interpretations in the respective apodoses: in the case of ex. 5.48, a sense of political disarray like that of several examples discussed below; in the case of ex. 5.49, four separate predictions.

another the interpretation of the final entry in these examples appears to suggest as much. A consideration of these examples thus follows. Two devices will be demonstrated as having been preferred to mark the final scenario of a four-based numerical sequence: the quotation of a historical omen and the suggestion, via specific motif or language, of full-scale political or social disarray.

We begin with the first device, with a historical omen already met. The case involving the related traditions reflected in exx. 5.77–5.78 and 5.81 (the latter found below, in the discussion of scenes of political or social disarray) was considered earlier (§ 2.1.3.4) with respect to the occurrence of the *šanûm šumšu* formula in the apodoses of exx. 5.77, ll. 21–22 and 5.81, l. 10. In that context it was observed that, in terms of their forecasts, these complex apodoses preserved the same traditions as those witnessed in two consecutive but independent entries elsewhere, namely, in ex. 5.78, ll. 11 + 12. Furthermore, it was argued that the versions preserved in exx. 5.78 and 5.81 appear to have extended their consideration of Palace Gates to conclude their gradations with the case of four such zones. This terminal scenario was marked differently in each of these passages, but in accordance with the devices noted above: in the case of ex. 5.78, with a historical omen recalling a disaster associated with Ibbi-Sîn; in ex. 5.81, with a forecast recalling a motif concerning a usurper king. Thus, despite these differences in interpretive choices it is clear that both exx. 5.78 and 5.81 made use of established conventions to convey a sense of finality and totality for their entries concerning four Palace Gates.

In order to appreciate these matters, let us consider these traditions anew, from the perspective of the numerical sequences framing them:

5.77. *YOS* 10 26 i 1–22 (l. 1 = ex. 2.192; ll. 21–22 = ex. 2.69)

1.	[*šumma bāb*] *e*[*kallim* ***šinā***] ⇒ [*t*]*ašnintum kussûm kussiam išannan*
2–20.[179]	…
21–22.	*šumma* ⌜***šalāšat***⌝ *bāb ekallim* ⇒ *ili awīlim ekallam iredde šanûm šumšu amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqtim*

1.	'[If] (there were) **two** Palace [Gates] ⇒ (it forecasts) rivalry: one throne will rival another'
2–20.	…

179 Lines 2–20 consist of ten additional omens with variations on the condition of two Palace Gates; cf. exx. 5.78; 5.81.

21–22. 'If there were **three** Palace Gates ⇒ the man's god will have claim on the palace; its second interpretation: (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction.'

5.78. *YOS* 10 22:1–12 (l. 1 = ex. 2.192; ll. 11–12 = ex. 2.67)

1. *šumma bāb ekallim **šinā** ⇒ tašnintum kussûm kussia*[*m išannan*]
2–10.[180] ...
11. *šumma bāb ekallim **šalāšat** ⇒ ilū mātim ekallam iredd*[*û*]
12. *šumma bāb ekallim **erbet** ⇒ amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫlu*[*qtim*]

1. 'If there were **two** Palace Gates ⇒ (it forecasts) rivalry: one throne [will *rival*] the other'
2–10. ...
11. If there were **three** Palace Gates ⇒ the gods of the land will have claim on the palace'
12. If there were **four** Palace Gates ⇒ (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction.'

In the case of ex. 5.78, the historical omen recalling a disaster, or *šaḫluqtum*, associated with Ibbi-Sîn was solicited for the task. This episode is recalled in no less than three other OB omens from two genres.[181] Interestingly, however, elsewhere in OB extispicy a reference to a *šaḫluqtum* appears with respect to the fall of the Akkadian dynasty as well.[182] This recurrence has been interpreted as meaningful, reflecting the Mesopotamian perception of the cyclical nature of time; to wit, what is presumably a reflection on the broader collapse of the Ur-III state in ex. 5.78 resonates with another spectacular downfall—that of Akkad.[183]

Yet the significance of the reference to this tradition or to similar such statements in other historical omens is not ultimately tied to questions of historicity or even historiography. Additional examples of historical omens figuring

180 Lines 2–10 consist of six additional omens with variations on the condition of two Palace Gates; cf. exx. 5.77; 5.81.

181 *YOS* 10 13:1; 14:10–11; 56 i 40–41 // *CUSAS* 18 12:89 (OB *izbu*), not counting the parallel(s) from exx. 5.77, ll. 21–22; 5.81, l. 10. For additional references from OB liver models and also SB extispicy, see Goetze 1947a: 261–2; Glassner 1986: 67.

182 BM 22694:16; Mari liver 4 (see Meyer 1987a: 193 and passim).

183 Glassner 1986: 61–4.

as the final entries of respective gradations suggest that these had assumed a paradigmatic standing and as such were solicited and quoted in specific circumstances. A brief word about the evidence to this point was already met earlier in the initial discussion of complex gradation (§ 4.1.2.3). Specifically, in three related passages, an omen recalling a triumph of Šulgi over Tappa-daraḫ was encountered. In one of these passages, an abridged version of which appears here, the forecast actually occurs twice:

5.79. *YOS* 10 24:33–35, 40 (= ex. 4.48, ll. 33–35, 40)

33. *šumma bāb ekallim šīrum ediḫ* ⇒ Apodosis
34. *šumma bāb e<kallim> šīrum ediḫ-ma u aban suluppim īrub* ⇒ Apodosis
35. *šumma bāb ekallim šīram udduḫ* ⇒ ***amūt Šulgi*** *ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

…

40. *šumma ina libbi bāb ekallim šīrum kupput-ma šakin* ⇒ ***amūt Šulgi*** *ša Tappan-daraḫ ikmû*

33. 'If fleshy tissue was covering the Palace Gate'
34. 'If fleshy tissue was covering the Palace Gate but a date pit entered (it)'
35. 'If the Palace Gate was thoroughly covered by fleshy tissue ⇒ (**it is**) **the omen of Šulgi**, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

…

40. 'If compressed fleshy tissue was situated in the middle of the Palace Gate ⇒ (**it is**) **the omen of Šulgi**, who captured Tappa-daraḫ.'

Both entries in which this episode occurs represent the end of particular units: in l. 35 as the forecast of the final entry of a verbally based gradation (*ediḫ* → *ediḫ-ma* … → *udduḫ*; see ex. 5.51 [§ 5.3]); in l. 40 as the ultimate omen in an entire section devoted to the study of the blockage of the Palace Gate by fleshy tissue. And in another such case, apparent[184] reference to Šulgi figures in a numerical sequence (6 → 10 → 20) as the counterpart to the ultimate possibility *par excellence*—twenty (splits in the Increase):

184 See n. 207 below.

5.80. *šumma ṣibtum ana* ***ešrā*** *paṭrat* ⇒ *amūt* [*Šul*]*gi ša māt*[*am*] *iktuma* 'If the Increase was split into **twenty** (parts) ⇒ (it is) the omen of Šulgi, who overwhelmed the land' (AO 7029:10–11).[185]

A reconsideration of these examples thus affirms the suggestion that, along with other specialized purposes they served, historical omens were called upon not infrequently to mark the final scenario in particular gradations. One such function involved their appeal to a famous historical episode in the last case of a given gradation to offer it a sense of finality. Their occasion in four-based numerical sequences can be seen as a part of this practice.

The other device to be considered in connection to the delineation of the final entry of four-based numerical sequences involves the appearance of some statement describing future political or social disarray. One such statement involves a motif predicting the uprising of usurper kings, known in several minor variations. One such instance appears in the following example:

5.81. *YOS* 10 24:1–11 (l. 1 = ex. 2.193; ll. 10–11 = ex. 2.68)

1. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***šinā*** ⇒ *tašnintum kussûm kussiam išannan šanû šumšu lā meḫerka itebbeakkum-ma idâkka*
2–9.[186] …
10. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***šalāšat*** ⇒ *ilū mātim ekallam ireddû šanû šumšu amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqtim*
11. *šumma bāb ekallim* ***erbet*** ⇒ *tibût šar ḫammê šanû šumšu ḫišbū ana ekallim ul irrub*
1. If (there were) **two** Palace Gates ⇒ (it predicts) rivalry: one throne will rival another; its second interpretation: your unequal will come up to you and kill you'
2–9. …
10. 'If (there were) **three** Palace Gates ⇒ the gods of the land will have claim on the palace; its second interpretation: (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of destruction'
11. 'If (there were) **four** Palace Gates ⇒ (it forecasts) an uprising of a usurper king; its second interpretation: (the) products will not enter into the palace.'

185 This passage is discussed in greater detail as part of ex. 5.91 below.

186 Lines 2–9 consist of eight additional omens with variations on the condition of two Palace Gates; cf. exx. 5.77–5.78.

Although perhaps not obvious initially, the claim that the reference to a usurper king in the final entry above signifies totality may be appreciated anew if one recalls that the same motif appears in at least two additional numerical sequences, in both cases conveying the same notion. In the case of the one, once again the *šarrū ḫammê* are said to rise up, and once more this occurs in the ultimate entry of a numerical sequence, which here runs 2 → 3 → 5:

5.82. *YOS* 10 31 i 47–ii 15 (ll. ii 13–ii 15 = ex. 2.71)

i 47–i 50. *šumma marrā*[*tum*] ***šittā*** ⇒ *ana šarrim dikšum ibbašši*
i 51–i 57. [*šu*]*mma marrātum* ***šalāš*** ⇒ [*aḫ*]*ḫū*[187] [*a*]*na kussi* [*a*]*bīšunu* [*i*]*štannanū* […]
ii 1–ii 12.[188] …
ii 13–ii 15. *šumma marrātum* ***ḫamiš*** ⇒ *šarrū ḫammê itebbûnim*

i 47–i 50. 'If (there were) **two** gallbladders ⇒ there will be a piercing pain for the king'
i 51–i 57. 'If (there were) **three** gallbladders ⇒ brothers will rival each other for their father's throne'
ii 1–ii 12. …
ii 13–ii 15. 'If (there were) **five** gallbladders ⇒ usurper kings will rise up.'

The correlation of this motif with five zones and not four here is of no consequence, since it undoubtedly owes this to the author's preference for homophony (i.e., *ḫamiš* ↔ *ḫammê*).[189]

The other occurrence of the motif of a usurping king in a numerical sequence involves the following passage, which was studied above for the unusual manner in which it compiles unrelated omens into the framework of a numerical paradigm:

187 Glassner (p.c.) reads: [*a*]*t-ḫu-ú*.

188 A pair of unrelated entries concerning what presumably are two metonymic designations for the gallbladder interrupt the numerical sequence here.

189 So too Greaves 2000: 111. Whether an entry for four gallbladders was included in this collection in the break in the previous lines (i 56–58), as suggested by Römer 2004: 394 and 403, is uncertain.

5.83. *YOS* 10 11 i 11–ii 6 (i 11–27 = ex. 5.60)

i 11–13.	*šumma padānum an*[*a* ***šinā***] *ekim* ⇒ Apodosis
i 14–21.	*šumma padānum adi* ***šalāšīšu*** *purrus* ⇒ Apodosis
	…[190]
i 23–27.	*šumma ina amūtim* ***erbe*** *naplasātum ištēniš izzazzā* ⇒ Apodosis
	…[191]
ii 1–2.	*šumma* ***erbe*** *naplasātum* ⇒ *qablum ina libb*[*i*] *mātim i*[*bašši*]
ii 3–6.	*šumm*[*a ina amūtim*] ***erbe*** *naplasā*[*tu*]*m* ⇒ *šarrū ḫammê* <*ina*> *kibrāt mātim itebbûnim annûm imaqqut annûm itebbe*
i 11–13.	‘If the Path was *bent* to [*its* ***two*** (parts)]’
i 14–21.	‘If the Path was split up to its **three** (parts)’
	…
i 23–27.	‘If in the liver **four** Views were present at the same time’
	…
ii 1–2.	‘If (there were) **four** Views ⇒ there [will be] battle in the land’s midst’
ii 3–6.	‘If [in the liver] (there were) **four** Views ⇒ usurper kings will rise up <from> the (four) corners of the land: this one will rise; that one will fall.’

Of interest presently is the entry in col. ii 3–6. The interpretation of this omen includes a reference to the land’s (four) corners,[192] which is presumably triggered by the reference to four in the protasis but which nonetheless adds to the usurper-kings forecast a sense of totality, and perhaps also symmetry. The reciprocal sense of the secondary statement in this apodosis, “this one will rise; that one will fall,” seemingly meant as a commentary on the first, supports this reading. This leads to the consideration of the other manner by which a sense of political or social disarray is conveyed in the final entry of four-based numerical sequences, namely, reciprocity.

As has been discussed, a reciprocal sense appears to have been a virtual staple in the interpretation of those entries whose described ominous condi-

190 One line was left blank by this text’s scribe.

191 Col. i 28–35 break the sequence with one (?) badly damaged *amūtum*-omen (see § 2.1.2.1).

192 The apposition of this phrase to *šarrū ḫammê* is unexpected and taken to reflect an error. Recall the earlier discussion (§ 2.1.2.1) of the unusually high number of errors in *YOS* 10 11, the text from which this passage is quoted.

tion occurred in multiple locations. Not infrequently this sense was conveyed by way of verbal forms with the *ta*-infix; elsewhere this was signified by the technical terms *pitruštum, nanmurtum, nipḫum*, and *tešmûm* (see §§ 2.1.4.2.2–2.1.4.2.4). A third manner to express this sense may have been more literal, involving statements such as the *annûm—annûm* witnessed above, to which one may compare the phrase *aḫum aḫāšu idâk*, "one brother will kill another" from ex. 5.67, l. 30 (§ 5.4.1.1).[193]

Significantly, in at least two additional cases in which similar phraseology appears for the ultimate entry, in the numerical sequences one reads of four anomalous findings. In the final entry of the following example, the adverbial phrase *birīt birīt*, "each other, mutually," qualifies the engagement of armies, which the reciprocal sense of the Gt verbal form accentuates further:

5.84. *YOS* 10 46 iv 11–29 (ll. 11–15 = ex. 2.110)

11–15. *šumma kakki imittim* ***šinā****-ma it*[*taṭlū*] ⇒ *gabaraḫḫi ummānī*[*ya*] *rīqūssa nakrum ana salīmi*[*m*] *išapparakkum-ma issaḫḫar būlka iḫḫaz*
…[194]

19–22. *šumma kakki imittim* ***šalāšat*** *ittaṭlū* ⇒ *šarram ina libbi ekallīšu usarrūšū-ma*[195] *idukkūšu šanûm šumšu bārûm ašar illaku imaqqut*
…[196]

26–29. *šumma kakki imittim* ***erbet*** *u kakki š*[*umēlim*][197] ***erbet*** *šaknū-ma ittaṭlū* ⇒ *ummānī u ummān nakrim birīt birīt iṣṣabbatū*

11–15. 'If (there were) **two** Weapons of the right and [they] faced one another ⇒ (it forecasts) a rebellion of [my] army; its uncertain (interpretation): the enemy will ask you for a peace-agreement but turn away and seize your cattle'
…

193 Notably this prediction appears in this instance for the ultimate entry in a numerical sequence.

194 One entry in ll. 16–18 appears based on the right/left opposition.

195 On the text, see Chapter 2, n. 278 above.

196 Another entry in ll. 23–25 (= ex. 2.206) is partly broken but features three Weapons and other variables.

197 Reading courtesy J.-J. Glassner.

19–22. 'If (there were) **three** Weapons of the right (and) they faced one another ⇒ they will surround and kill the king in the midst of his palace; its second interpretation: the diviner will collapse wherever he goes'

...

26–29. 'If (there were) **four** Weapons of the right and **four** Weapons of the left (and) they were situated (there) and they faced one another ⇒ the enemy's army and my army will engage each other.

A similar formulation is that of *mātum itti mātim* + *atkulum*, "one land will ravage another," which occurs in l. 10 of the following passage:

5.85. AO 7033:7–10 (// *YOS* 10 35:24–26; cf. ex. 5.86)

7. (*šumma*) ***šittā*** *ṣibātum* ⇒ *awīlum nemēlam immar*
8–9. (*šumma*) ***šalāš*** *ṣibātum* ⇒ ⌜*šarrum*⌝[198] *ridût ayyîm-ma ireddē-ma ana šanîm inaddin*
10. (*šumma*) ***erbe*** *ṣibātum* ⇒ *mātum itti mātim ītakkal*

7. '(If there were) **two** Increases ⇒ the man will see profit'
8–9. '(If there were) **three** Increases ⇒ *the king* will confiscate someone's inheritance and give it to another'
10. '(If there were) **four** Increases ⇒ one land will ravage another.'

The reciprocity conveyed in the predictions of these examples seems to echo the political or social disarray met earlier in the context of the consideration of the usurper-king motif. Both appear to have provided the diviner with options with which a sense of totality could be imparted for omens deemed deserving of such interpretation. To judge by our findings, the case of the final entry of four-based numerical sequences, which elsewhere recalled famous historical episodes for related purposes, was particularly conducive to this line of reasoning.

5.4.1.3.2 *Five and Beyond*

The following example provides a good segue from numerical sequences, whose culmination in four was meant to convey a sense of totality, to those sequences intended for similar purposes but employing either numbers greater than four or another statement of abstraction:

198 Text restored on the basis of the *YOS* 10 35 parallel.

5.86. *OBE* 10:51–59[199]

51–52. [*šumma* ***šittā*** (?) *ṣib*]*ātum šaknā* ⇒ [*hiṣib māt*]*im ana ekallim irrub*
53–55. [*šumma* ***šalāš*** (?) *ṣi*]*bātum šaknā* ⇒ [*šarrum ridût ayyîm*]*-ma ireddē-ma* [*ana ekal*]*lim irrub*
56–57. [*šumma* ***erbe*** (?) *ṣib*]*ātum šaknā* ⇒ [*šinīt ṭ*]*ēmim*
58–59. [*šumma* ***ḫamiš*** (?) *ṣibātu*]*m šaknā* ⇒ [*mātum* (<*itti*>) *māt nakr*]*īka ītakkal*[200]

51–52. '[If ***two***] Increases were situated there ⇒ [*the produce*] of the land will enter into the palace'
53–55. '[If ***three***] Increases were situated there ⇒ [*the king*] will confiscate [*the inheritance of someone*] and it shall enter [(in)to] the palace'
56–57. '[If ***four***] Increases were situated there ⇒ [(it forecasts) a *change*] of mind'
58–59. '[If ***five***] Increases were situated there ⇒ [*the land*] will ravage [the *land of*] your *enemy*.'

It is not difficult to see that this passage represents a tradition that loosely parallels ex. 5.85, which was surveyed in the preceding section. Though the text is partly broken, the first two omens appear to follow the opening pair in ex. 5.85: in ex. 5.86, the first entry describes income from the land into the palace, and is thus a counterpart on the national level to the personal earnings ("the man will see profit") forecast in ex. 5.85, l. 7; the following entry (ll. 53–55), notwithstanding some discernible differences, appears to correspond to ex. 5.85, ll. 8–9 and its prediction concerning the confiscation (< *redûm*) of inheritance and its transfer to another party ("the king will confiscate the inheritance of someone and it shall enter into the palace").

However, things become more complicated in what follows. Whereas ex. 5.85 lists only one additional omen as part of its numerical sequence, ex. 5.86

199 Restorations follow Jeyes 1989: 138, 143 and ex. 5.85, ll. 8–9.

200 Jeyes 1989: 138, 140 restores [... *na-ak-ri*]-⌜*i-ka ta*⌞*-ak*⌝*-ka-al* and translates "you will ⌜consume⌝ [the ... of] your enemy." Yet collation establishes that the sign read *ta*⌞ by her is in fact IT. The related entry from ex. 5.85, l. 10 has *i-ta-ka-al* (both versions) and thus there can be little doubt that, regardless of the broken spelling (⌜*it-ak*⌝*-ka-al*) and some variation, the apodosis ex. 5.86, ll. 58–59 represents a third version of the tradition reflected in ex. 5.85, l. 10.

has two. Moreover, the apodosis of ex. 5.85, l. 10, an entry recording the occurrence of four Increases, finds its counterpart in ex. 5.86, ll. 58–59,[201] that is, an entry that may have considered five Increases and which at the very least is separated from the entry recording three Increases by ll. 56–57. It was presumably on these grounds[202] that Jeyes restored the numerical sequence in ex. 5.86 in the manner rendered above.

One is left to wonder about the meaning of ex. 5.86, ll. 56–57 as well as its absence from the parallel tradition in ex. 5.85. Indeed, it is tempting to read this entry as a "prelude"[203] to what appears in the following entry, perhaps even an intrusion into a sequence otherwise shared by the two passages. Yet, without further evidence it is equally likely that it was the author of ex. 5.85 who, wishing to present the Increase gradation along an established four-based numerical sequence, excised this original line.

Fortunately, a further parallel between AO 7033 // *YOS* 10 35[204] and *OBE* 10, the collections of Increase omens from which exx. 5.85 and 5.86 are respectively quoted, sheds considerable light on this matter and, by implication, on the larger issue at hand. The parallel appears in the following examples:

5.87. *YOS* 10 35:27–29 (// AO 7033:11–15) (= ex. 2.5)

27. (*šumma*) *ina muḫ*(*ḫi*) *ṣibtim šīlū* ***šinā šalāšat*** *nadû* ⇒ *kalbū iššeggû*
28. (*šumma*) *ina muḫ*(*ḫi*) *ṣibtim šīlū* ***ḫamšat šeššet*** *nadû* ⇒ *našpakātim bušṭītum ilappat*
29. (*šumma*) *ṣibtum* ***palšat*** ⇒ *šatammū ekallam imallalū kurusissū šamaššamī mātim ikkalū*

27. '(If) (either) **two or three** holes were situated atop the Increase ⇒ dogs will become rabid'
28. '(If) (either) **five or six** holes were situated atop the Increase ⇒ *beetle*(*s*) will infest the storage houses'
29. '(If) the Increase was **punctured** (with holes) ⇒ *šatammu*-officials will eat the palace clean; (or:) *kurusissu*-rodents will consume the flax of the land.'

201 See n. 200 above.

202 And also ex. 5.88 below.

203 Jeyes 1989: 143.

204 Specifically, the parallel material in these collections is as follows: *YOS* 10 35:21–31 // AO 7033:1–17; the less precise rendering above was opted for convenience's sake on account of what follows.

5.88. [*šu*]*mma ina pūt ṣibtim šīlū* ***sebet*** *šaknū* ⇒ [*t*]*ibût kurusissim* 'If seven holes were situated in the front of the Increase ⇒ (it forecasts) an onslaught of the *kurusissu*-rodent' (*OBE* 10:64–65 [= ex. 2.6]).

The case of ex. 5.87 was considered earlier, in the context of the study of omens with complex protases (§ 2.1.2). On that occasion it was the indefinite manner of the formulations in the first and second entries that was of interest. Of further note was the final entry, whose indefinite formulation, an Increase described merely as *palšat*, or "punctured (with a large number of holes)," was suggested to represent a move toward abstraction.

Compelling evidence in favor of this interpretation is found in *OBE* 10, in which a parallel to ex. 5.87, l. 29 remarkably records seven punctures in place of the indefinite counterpart.[205] As noted earlier, this passage represents the final entry from that collection, and as such its use of seven to communicate a move toward abstraction is a fitting final image indeed.

A consideration of exx. 5.85–5.86 together with exx. 5.87–5.88 enables an appreciation of the different presentations of a tradition common to *YOS* 10 35 // AO 7033 and *OBE* 10. In both cases the version recorded in the *OBE* 10 collection represents the longer rendition. Thus, whereas the *YOS* 10 35 // AO 7033 version moves away from the numerical sequence in order to express abstraction in ex. 5.87, the *OBE* 10 counterpart in ex. 5.88 makes use of a symbolic number for the same purpose. Similarly, while the *YOS* 10 35 // AO 7033 version in ex. 5.87 appears to stop at four as a way to convey a sense of totality in ex. 5.85, the *OBE* 10 parallel moves past that number for the same purpose in ex. 5.86.

Despite their differences, it is clear that in the cases of both exx. 5.85–5.86 and exx. 5.87–5.88, the versions aimed to express the ultimate scenario and, with the exception of ex. 5.88,[206] did so by way of complex gradation. Yet, toward this same end the two took different paths. The *OBE* 10 text opted to progress via higher numbers, describing five (?) holes (ex. 5.86) in place of four and seven (ex. 5.88) instead of verbally implying the idea of many. The case of *YOS* 10 35 // AO 7033 is harder to characterize, since in one instance (ex. 5.85)

205 Elsewhere in extispicy, the association between the number seven and the notion of totality appears in *YOS* 10 31 xiii 19–21, in which the occurrence of seven gallbladders is reported to anticipate the sense of totalitarianism conveyed by the well-known forecast of a *šar kiššatim* (see Bottéro 1974: 171). For recent appreciations of the number seven as a Mesopotamian figuration for either totality or perfection across vastly different literary genres, see, e.g., Høyrup 1993: 285–6; Moran 1993a: 119–20.

206 This certainly owes to the affixing of this entry to the numerical gradation in ex. 5.86, in essence conflating two separate subjects.

the tradition appears to opt for a conventional figuration to suggest totality, while in the other (ex. 5.87) a similar sense is achieved in a manner that is less clear-cut.

What becomes clear upon this comparison is that not only did the omen collections strive to express certain ideas *in abstracto*, but they did so in different ways. Along with the employment of four-based numerical sequences, the expression of abstraction in complex gradation was also achieved by way of a given sequence's resorting to either symbolic high numbers or non-numerical verbal formulations. To what extent these options reflect distinct abstract conceptions, such as finality as opposed to totality or infinity, cannot be stated at present. Nevertheless, further evidence of each bolsters their existence.

The following example provides another picture of the switch to a non-numerical formulation to express abstraction:

5.89. *YOS* 10 18:64–67 (= ex. 3.15, ll. 64–67)

64. [*šumma ina padā*]*nim šīlum nadi* ⇒ *ṣerrum ina ḫarrānim awīlam inaššak*
65. [*šumma ina padā*]*nim šīlū* ***šinā*** *nadû* ⇒ *tibût zuqaqīpim*
66. [*šumma ina padā*]*nim šīlū* ***šalāšat*** *nadû* ⇒ *kalbū iššeggû*
67. [*šumma ina pad*]*ānim šīlū* ***sadrū*** ⇒ *nakrum mê ubattaqam-ma mālak …*[*…… šanûm šu*]*mšu nakrum ummānam isser-ma idâk*

64. '[If] a (= **one**) hole was situated [in] the Path ⇒ a snake will bite the man in the road (/during a campaign)'
65. '[If] **two** holes were situated [in] the Path ⇒ (it forecasts) an attack of a scorpion'
66. '[If] **three** holes were situated [in] the Path ⇒ dogs will become rabid'
67. '[If] (**many**) holes **were aligned** [in] the Path ⇒ the enemy will breach the water (channels) and the watercourse …[…]; its [second] interpretation: the enemy will surround and defeat the army.'

Upon consideration of one, two, and three holes in the Path, this passage turns to an unspecified number of holes, which are only said to be aligned (< *sadārum*). Admittedly, to judge by the accompanying interpretations, l. 67 breaks with the preceding material, in that the animal sequence and localized/personal domains of ll. 64–66 shift to the national realm of the enemy's actions in l. 67. Thus, one might reasonably object to the suggestion that the ominous condition described in l. 67 is to be taken as organically linked with

the preceding material framed around the 1 → 2 → 3 sequence. Yet the tension manifest between these units is precisely what speaks to their mutual attraction: the juxtaposition of these unrelated traditions bears directly on the meaning of the (many) aligned holes in l. 67. Put differently, the numerical sequence in ll. 64–66 serves as the foundation upon which the more abstract but consequential supposition of l. 67 rests. Which of these, if any, represents a generative-based calculation is, of course, impossible to say. Nonetheless, in their incorporation one again finds the unmistakable testimony of a creative enterprise.

The same reasoning may account for the juxtaposition of the first two entries in the following example with its last:

5.90. *YOS* 10 31 x 45–55

45–47. *šumma marrātum* ***šittā*** ⇒ *dikšum*
48–52. *šumma marrātum* ***šalāš*** ⇒ *dikšān šinā itebbûšum*
53–55. *šumma martum* ***maliat*** ⇒ *marûm*

45–47. 'If (there were) **two** gallbladders ⇒ (it forecasts) an attack of pain'
48–52. 'If (there were) **three** gallbladders ⇒ two attacks of pain will come over him'
53–55. 'If the gallbladder was **full** ⇒ (if forecasts) fullness.'

Although paronomastic considerations may have factored in (i.e., *martum maliat* [< *malûm*] ↔ *marûm*; see further § 5.5), the 2 → 3 numerical sequence in the first two entries maintains a significant role in the formation of the broader passage. This sequence may well have supported and even conditioned the further exploration evinced in the passage's final entry.

The following example also concerns the Increase, in this case reportedly split into numerous parts:

5.91. AO 7029:6–11

6–7. *šumma ṣibtum ana* ***šeššet*** *paṭrat* ⇒ *ennet bīt awīlim ilum ipaṭṭar*
8–9. *šumma ṣibtum ana* ***ešret*** *paṭrat* ⇒ *tibût pirniqqim*
10–11. *šumma ṣibtum ana* ***ešrā*** *paṭrat* ⇒ *amūt* [*Šul*]*gi*[207] *ša māt*[*am*] *iktuma*

207 Collation necessary. *CAD* K, 300 posits the reading [...]-*zi* as an alternative, which was already considered by Nougayrol 1946: 84, who wondered whether the broken RN might be

6–7. 'If the Increase was split into **six** (parts) ⇒ the god will remove the (divine) punishment (inflicted upon) the man's household'
8–9. 'If the Increase was split into **ten** (parts) ⇒ (it forecasts) an attack of the *pirniqqu-Weapon*'[208]
10–11. 'If the Increase was split into **twenty** (parts) ⇒ (it represents) an omen of Šulgi who overwhelmed the land.'

Elsewhere in the OB collections no numerical sequence approximates the 6 → 10 → 20 manifest here; consequently, these numerical choices may seem senseless at first sight. Yet things become clearer upon reconsideration, or at least partially so. The numbers six and ten are well known in Mesopotamian mathematics and metrology: these are reciprocals of one another according to the sexagesimal system[209] and correspondingly prime factors within the metrological systems (e.g., 1 pi = 6 bán; 1 bán = 10 $sila_3$). How twenty fits into this scheme is uncertain. One reasonable explanation is that this was intended to signify twice the previous integer, although it is not out of the realm of possibility that this number, being the reciprocal of three, was simply selected for the third entry of this passage. Whatever the case, when considered alongside the counterpart apodosis and its referral to some moment of historic supremacy, the possibility that this number was intended as the supreme example seems plausible.

Finally, this last example was also discussed in the section dealing with omens with complex protases (§ 2.1.2):

5.92. *KAR* 150:16–18 (= ex. 5.47; l. 18 = ex. 2.8)

16. *šumma šumēl martim adi* ***šinā*** *paṭer* ⇒ *pûm kīnum*
17. *šumma šumēl martim adi* ***šalāš*** *paṭer* ⇒ *nipḫi*
18. *šumma šumēl martim piṭrum* ***erbet ḫamšat šeššet adi mādūti*** *puṭṭur* ⇒ *gipiš ummān nakrim*

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that of Dumuzi. Yet the choice of Šulgi, also considered by Nougayrol (ibid.), seems preferable, since this historical figure is well attested in the historical omens, while Dumuzi is otherwise unknown. That no other antediluvian and semi-divine figures appear in this context only buttresses this point. Finally, the choice of *katāmum* in this apodosis recalls by sound *kamûm*, the verb that appears in a few of the apodoses recalling Šulgi's encounter with Tappa-daraḫ (*YOS* 10 22:17; 24:35, 40), and it is not impossible that this omen represents a version of that tradition.

208 See *CAD* P, 409.

209 Is the appearance of *paṭārum*, the verb used to describe the calculation of reciprocals, in the apodoses of this passage coincidental?

16. 'If the left of the gallbladder was split to **two** (parts) ⇒ (it is) a reliable (omen) statement'
17. 'If the left of the gallbladder was split to **three** (parts) ⇒ (it represents) a *nipḫu*-prediction'
18. 'If (on) the left of the gallbladder a fissure split up (**either**) **four**, **five**, **six** (**parts or**), **up to many** (**more**) ⇒ (it represents) the mass of the enemy's army.'

In that context it was suggested that the expression *adi mādūti* ("up to many [more]") in l. 18, which follows the enumeration from two to six, represents an abstraction of the *adi* + x-*šu* ("up to its … [parts])" expression found elsewhere in the numerical sequences. It was stated earlier that the significance of l. 18 rests precisely in its explicit expression of abstraction via the *adi mādūti* formulation, which approaches the *ad infinitum* principle of later logical systems. It must be reiterated that the evidence from this passage is tainted by virtue of the collection *KAR* 150, from which this passage comes, being a first-millennium copy of an OB original, such that one must allow for the possibility that the unique formulation in l. 18 reflects later sensibilities. Yet it is not unreasonable to assume that in its OB *Vorlage* this passage already contained a version of what appears here. The evidence we have encountered makes a compelling case in this respect.

5.5 Paronomasia

With good reason, paronomasia is typically considered with respect to the interpretive dimension of Mesopotamian divination literature. But one finds evidence of its presence in the organizational side of this literature as well. This should not come as a great surprise: the same underlying pre-Saussurean assumption about words accounts for the presence of paronomasia along both the horizontal (hermeneutic) and the vertical (organizational) axes. Still, one needs to consider the vertical plane on its own terms, within the context of the organization of omen entries in larger units in the collections. This is the goal of the following.

In fact, on several occasions the preceding discussion has already referred to the effective role of paronomastic-based paradigm pressure in the creation of omen entries or passages. A case in point is the following example, treated earlier in the context of the discussion of apodotic effects on following protases (§ 3.1.4):

5.93. *YOS* 10 18:59–60 (= ex. 3.13)

59. [*šumma…… pad*]*ānim ina šumēlim šīlum pūṣam nadi* ⇒ ***zuqaqīpum*** *awīlam* ***izaqqa***[***t***]
60. [*šumma…… padā*]*nim ina šumēlim šīlum u kakkum* ***zuqqutum*** *šaknū* ⇒ *ina nikip alpim* [*awīlum imât* (?)]

59. '[If] a hole with whiteness was situated [in the … of] the Path in the left ⇒ a **scorpion will sting** the man'
60. '[If] a hole and a **pointed** Weapon were situated [in the … of] the Path in the left ⇒ [*the man will die*] from the gore of an ox.'

On that occasion this passage was singled out for its description of the Weapon-mark described as "pointed," *zuqqutum*, in the second entry. It was reasoned that the appearance of this adjective in this context is probably conditioned by the language of the protasis of the preceding entry (*zuqaqīpum … izaqqat*), since nowhere else among the OB collections is a Weapon described in this manner. It was also observed that the finding of a Weapon's pointedness was likely not the catalyst for the prediction about the goring ox. Thus, this description of the Weapon was judged to represent another example of the process of harmonization in pointillistic expression, since its appearance is likely a product of the environment in which it appears.

The presence of paronomasia was also detected in omen entries grouped according to various similes (§ 5.2). The possibility was raised that, owing to its prominent place among such passages, paronomasia may have served a special role in those instances that stood outside the domain of the standard interpretive associations. In one instance, our speculation was buttressed by the comparison of a tradition preserved in the following passage with its loose parallel below:

5.94. BM 22694:6–16 (= ex. 5.36)

6–8. [*šumma ṭulīmim kīma*] ***šuttinnim*** *kappīn* [*šakin*] ⇒ [*šarrum wardīšu*] *kīma* ***šuškallim*** *isaḫḫa*[*p*][210]
9. [*šumma ṭulīmim kīma* ***išg***/***q***]***arrurtim*** *garir* ⇒ Apodosis
10–11. [*šum*]*ma ṭulīmim kīma* ***šaššārim ītarik*** ⇒ Apodosis
12. *šumma ṭulīmim kīma li*[*piš*]*tim* ⇒ Apodosis

210 Restoration follows *CAD* S, 31; Š/3, 382.

13. *šumma ṭulīmim kīma kib*[*altim na*]*wir* ⇒ Apodosis
14–15. *šumma ṭulīmim kīma d*[*ūrim*] *siātim šitakkun* ⇒ Apodosis
16. *šumma ṭul*[*īmim kīma kīsim ḫ*]*urrur* ⇒ Apodosis

6–8. '[If the spleen *was situated with*] two wings [like] a **bat** [the king] will swoop [his enemies] like a ***šuškallu*-net**'
9. '[If the spleen] was rolled over [like] a ***išg*/*qarrurtu*-tool**'
10–11. 'If the spleen has been elongated like a ***šaššāru*-saw**'
12. 'If the spleen (was) like a *lipištu*-sac'
13. 'If the spleen was bright like a *kibaltu*-stone'
14–15. 'If the spleen had battlements like a (city) wall.'
16. 'If the spleen was folded up [like a bag].'

5.95. *YOS* 10 41:20–21, 31–34 (= ex. 5.37)

20. *šumma ṭulīmum **garir*** ⇒ Apodosis
21. [*šumma ṭulīmum **n***]***awir*** ⇒ Apodosis
...
31–32. *šumma ṭulīmum kīma erîm kappī šakin* ⇒Apodosis
33–34. *šumma ṭul*[*īm*]*um kīma dūrim siātim šitakkun* ⇒ Apodosis

20. 'If the spleen was **rolled over**'
21. '[If the spleen] was **bright**'
...
31–32. 'If the spleen was situated like an eagle with two wings'
33–34. 'If the spleen had battlements like a (city) wall.'

Specifically, it was suggested that the reference to a "bat," *šuttinum*, in ex. 5.94, l. 6 instead of an "eagle," *erûm*, in the parallel in ex. 5.95, l. 31–32 was to be understood on the grounds of paronomasia (*šuttinnim kappīn* [l. 6] ↔ *šuškallim* [ll. 7–8; apodosis] ↔ *išg*/*qarrurtim* [l. 9] ↔ *šaššārim ītarik* [ll. 10–11]). This proposal actually gains strength from the perspective of the parallel; for in ex. 5.95 too it seems that paronomasia figured in a formative role, as evinced by the *garir* ↔ *nawir* pairing in ll. 20 and 21. Significantly, a glance at ex. 5.94, ll. 9 and 13, the parallel entries to ex. 5.95, ll. 21–22, demonstrates that the juxtaposition of these terms in ex. 5.95 was not the only way in which the tradition underlying these passages could be tailored.

Another instance of the organization of entries around both visual similes and paronomasia involves the following example, which was also discussed above:

5.96. *YOS* 10 9:21–25 (ll. 21–23 = ex. 3.76)

21–23. *šumma libbum kīma* ***iškī immērim*** ⇒ *amūt Maništīšu ša ekallûšu* [*i*]*dūkūšu*
24–25. *šumma* [*ka*]*ršum*[211] *kīma* ***kīšim***[212] ⇒ *mātam ḫušaḫḫum dannum iṣabbassi*

21–23. 'If the heart (was) like a **sheep's testicles** ⇒ (it is) the omen of Maništušu, whose palace officials killed him'
24–25. 'If the *stomach* (was) like a **bag** ⇒ a great famine will seize the land.'

The idea must be entertained that the earlier-documented assonance and alliteration in this case (i.e., *iškī immērim* ↔ *kīšim*; /i-i-i-e-i/ ↔ /i-i/]) is not incidental. Rather, it is possible that this played an effective role in the passage's creation, perhaps even a determinive one in its current rendering. The omen collection *YOS* 10 9, from which this passage is cited, is something of a hodgepodge in terms of subject; consequently it is difficult to speak with certainty as to why a single entry regarding the heart should follow a section concerning various findings of a Weapon and be followed by another seemingly describing the stomach, which itself is part of a section on that organ.[213] Nevertheless, several outstanding factors support the contention that the composition of this example is not something that can be ascribed to chance. Among these, the role of paronomasia cannot be overlooked.

For starters, it is difficult to overlook the relationship between the meaning of the first simile[214] and what is likely the euphemistic sense of the second.[215] It is thus not unlikely that a reference to one of these similes triggered the

211 Tentatively following Glassner 2004c: 64, who reads here and two lines below (*YOS* 10 9:26): [*kà*]*r-šum*, over against the earlier reading of [*ḫa*]*šum* in *CAD* M/1, 177. Admittedly the putative word's spelling with an unusual CVC sign for OB raises concern, though no better would be the twofold spelling of *ḫašûm* with a ŠUM.

212 For a discussion of the reading and translation possibilities for this lexeme, see Glassner 2004c: 64 n. 7, who ultimately hesitates to choose from among the options presented. My choice, which builds on the proposal made in *CAD* Q, 271, finds support in the similes of exx. 5.97 and 5.98 below.

213 For one account of the organization of this collection, see Glassner 2004.

214 Recall the lexical equation between *išku*/*ū* (writ. *iš-ku*) and *kalīt birkim*, "scrotum" (Hg. B IV 20 [*MSL* 9, 34]).

215 See n. 212. From this angle, the suggestion by Nougayrol and *AHw* mentioned in n. 92 above concerning this same sense in ex. 5.94, l. 12 for *lipištum* gains strength.

other, though in which direction this process advanced is difficult to say. And it is a curious matter that on at least two occasions in which the tradition of the *kīsu*-simile is elsewhere attested, it is in the context of one of the historical omens:[216]

5.97. *šumma ḫašûm kīma kīsim ḫurrura*[*t*] ⇒ *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša mātum ipḫur*[*ūni*]*m* 'If the lung was folded up like a bag ⇒ (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, against whom the land rallied' (*YOS* 10 36 i 13–14).

5.98. *šumma naplaštum kīma kīsim ḫurrurat* ⇒ *amūt Ibbi-Sîn ša šaḫluqtim* 'If the View was *folded up* like a bag ⇒ (it is) the omen of Ibbi-Sîn, the one of disaster' (*YOS* 10 14:10–11 [= ex. 5.30, ll. 10–11]).

Though the tradition in these instances recalls an inauspicious episode in Ibbi-Sîn's time, and not Maništušu's as in ex. 5.96, ll. 21–23, when taken together with other factors, it is still hard to dismiss this resemblance as pure chance. And it is not out of the question that fate was sealed for the pairing of the similes in ex. 5.96 on the basis of the paronomasia noted earlier. Perhaps this may even explain the less common spelling of *ki-ši-im*, more commonly rendered with an /*s*/, as in ex. 5.98 (writ. *ki-sí-im*). In other words, it may be that, under the influence of *iškī immērim* in ll. 21–23, a sound change /*s*/ → /*š*/ took place in ll. 24–25. If so, even on this smallest phonemic level, one can point to yet another example of the effective role of paronomasia in the creation of omen literature.

Of course certainty in such matters is hard to come by. Moreover, even when a persuasive argument can be made in favor of the role of paronomasia in the constitution of a given passage, one still has to contend with the harder question concerning the qualification of this purported role. Thus, to offer an example from one of the passages just described, even if it can be agreed that paronomasia was a catalyst in the formation of ex. 5.96, little else can be said about the degree to which this factor, and not the others mentioned, proved decisive in the final outcome.

Despite these uncertainties, additional examples bolster the suggestion that paronomasia figured prominently in the ordering of information in complex gradation, which, as repeatedly stressed, typically bore creative results. This argument is most persuasive when it is possible to gauge such creativity. A few additional examples make this case.

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216 But cf. also ex. 5.94, l. 16 above.

One instance in which paronomasia almost certainly effected a creative change in the formulation of a specific omen appears in the following example:

5.99. MAH 15994:17–26 (ll. 17–20 = ex. 4.15; ll. 21–26 = ex. 4.7)

17–18. Protasis ⇒ [*t*]*ibût* ***kubrim***
19–20. Protasis ⇒ *miqitti* ***kubrim***
21–22. Protasis ⇒ ***rukūb*** *šarrim iṭebbu*
23–24. Protasis ⇒ *eleppāti ištānu iṣabbat*
25–26. Protasis ⇒ *elep Dilmun iṭebbu*

17–18. '(It represents) an uprising of the (**army's main**) **force**'
19–20. '(It represents) a defeat of the (**army's main**) **force**'
21–22. 'The king's **barge**(-**boat**) will sink'
23–24. 'The north wind will seize the boats'
25–26. 'A Dilmunite boat will sink.'

Following two entries whose predictions concern the respective rise and fall of the army's main force, *kubrum*, three entries appear, with interpretations concerning the sinking of boats. As with other instances in the collections in which boats are mentioned,[217] the latter two omens of this triad employ the basic word for boat, *eleppum*; this is true even in ll. 25–26, in which a particular boat variety is noted. But this is not so in the first entry; here, curiously, it is a cargo-boat, *rukūbum*, that appears.

How is this word choice to be explained? There is nothing unusual about the term per se; it is attested across a wide generic spectrum and in various historical periods.[218] Yet its appearance in ex. 5.99, ll. 21–22 represents a unique instance in the OB extispicy omen collections. The possibility that this discrepancy is fortuitous seems remote. Rather, it appears to reflect the willful manipulation of a tradition according to paronomastic considerations. In other words, it seems likely that this omen originally made mention of a generic boat, but was subsequently altered in favor of the broader passage (i.e., **eleppum* → *rukūbum* ↔ *kubrum*).

A second instance in which paronomasia appears to exert pressure on its surroundings may account at least in part for the declaration of *kabartum*, "thickness," in the first entry from the following example:

217 E.g., *YOS* 10 24:7 // 26 i 17–18; 24:41 (= ex. 2.113, l. 41); 25:29–30 (= ex. 3.80); 26 i 34–35 (= ex. 2.112); *OBE* 1 ob. 6 (= ex. 2.22).

218 *CAD* R, 409–11.

5.100. Scheil A:33–35

33–34. Protasis ⇒ ***kabartum***[219] *šanû šumšu nakrum alkakātīka iptanarras*
35. Protasis ⇒ ***gabaraḫ*** *nakrim* [...]*er*

33–34. '(It forecasts) ***thickness***; its second interpretation: the enemy will continuously block your roads'
35. 'The ***rebellion*** in the enemy (army?) ...[...].'

A relation between the notion of thickness and the depiction of endless roadblocks in the following forecast is not difficult to posit. Yet it cannot be held that this semantic sense for *kabartum* is well established or, for that matter, even evident. The idea of thickness is typically rendered in extispicy apodoses by terms such as *kubrum* or, less frequently, *gipšum*, referring to the size and strength of an army.[220] It is not unlikely that the form of the word here, though certainly related to *kubrum*/*kabārum*, represents a scribe's whim for assonance and alliteration with the apodosis of the following entry (i.e., *kabartum* ↔ *gabaraḫḫum*). If one accepts this interpretation, then previous suggestions to emend this admittedly unusual lemma[221] become unnecessary.

Despite these examples of paronomasia playing an effective role along the vertical axis in the wording of specific omens, more frequently this proves difficult to ascertain. Yet this does not mean that one cannot say something for such instances. Indeed, the existence of paronomasia in certain passages may be pointed to even when nothing certain can be said about its specific effects. A case in point is the following example:

5.101. *YOS* 10 40:1–14 (cf. id., ll. 15–18)

1–2. [*šumma u*]*bān ḫašî qablītum ana imittim* ***išḫiṭ****-ma u ṣēr ḫašî imittam ekim* ⇒ Apodosis
3–4. [*šumma ub*]*ān ḫašî qablītum itti ša pāni ur'udim* ***tiṣbutat*** ⇒ Apodosis
5–6. [*šumma ubā*]*n ḫašî qablītum imittaša* ***šamiṭ****-ma u šumēlum imittam īkim* ⇒ Apodosis
7–8. [*šumma ubān ḫ*]*ašî qablītum šumēlša* ***šamiṭ****-ma u imittum šumēlam īkim*[222] ⇒ Apodosis

219 Text: *ka-ba-ar-tim*.

220 See, e.g., exx. 5.92 and 5.99 above and further *CAD* K, 484; *CAD* G, 85.

221 E.g., *CAD* K, 4, which posits an emendation to *kabaraḫḫum* (*gabaraḫḫum*) owing to the following line.

222 Text: *i+ki-im*.

9–12.[223] [*šumma ubān*] *ḫašî qablītum warkātūša*[224] ***sūmam ṣarpā*** ⇒ Apodosis

13–14. [*šumma ubān*] *ḫašî qablītum ana karšīša* ***kapṣat****-ma ana warkīša* [*nap*]*arqudat* ⇒ Apodosis

1–2. '[If the] lung's middle finger **jumped** to the right so that the back of the lung on the right was concealed'

3–4. '[If the] lung's middle finger was **joined** with the front of the trachea'

5–6. '[If (concerning) the] lung's middle finger—its right (side) was **torn** so that the left concealed the right'

7–8. '[If] (concerning) the lung's middle [finger]—its left (side) was **torn** so that the right concealed the left'

9–12. '[If] (concerning) the lung's middle [finger]—its rear sides were **dyed red**'

13–14. '[If] the lung's middle [finger] was **concave** (as) to its underside and convex (as) to its back.'

This passage represents the entire obverse of *YOS* 10 40 and some from the reverse to boot. With the exception of the two entries in ll. 5–8, which are ordered according to a right/left pairing, little can be said for the passage in terms of any clear organizational structure. To the contrary, the entries in it are striking for their conspicuous lack of organization. Note, for instance, the unpaired entry concerning the finger's rightward jump (ll. 1–2), a single omen concerning relation to the trachea (ll. 3–4), and a lone reference to coloration (ll. 9–12). However, where one does detect a measure of orchestration is at the level of paronomasia. Be it the sibilants (*iš̲ḫiṭ* ↔ *tiṣ̲butat* ↔ *š̲amiṭ* ↔ *s̲ūmam s̲arpā* ↔ *kapṣ̲at*), labials (*tiṣb̲utat* ↔ *šam̲iṭ* ↔ *sūm̲am ṣarp̲a* ↔ *kap̲ṣat*), or dentals (*išḫi̲ṭ* ↔ *ti̲ṣbu̲ta̲t* ↔ *šamiṭ* ↔ *kapṣa̲t*), this exceptional measure of alliteration leaves little room for doubt about the role of paronomasia in the composition of this short collection. Indeed it is tempting to imagine that this was the reigning factor behind the creation of this short text.[225] And while little can be pointed to in terms of clear examples of generative-based calculation, one can scarcely doubt that in its very organization this composition broke into creative ground.

The following example provides another clear instance of the role of assonance in the formation of the passage:

223 Line 12 appears to be a case of dittography of l. 11, realized by the scribe and erased.

224 Text: *wa-ar-ka-tu*^{1}(TA)-*ša*; so *CAD* A/2, 276.

225 On its characterization as a school text, see Glassner 2009a: 12–3.

5.102. AO 7539:45–47, 49 (ll. 45–46 = ex. 3.85; ll. 45–47 // *CUSAS* 18 31 r. 61'–62'; l. 49 // id. r. 64')

45. *šumma qerbū* ***kurrû*** ⇒ Apodosis
46. [*šumma qe*]*rbū* ***arrakū*** ⇒ Apodosis
47. [*šumm*]*a qerbū* ***rīqū*** ⇒ Apodosis
    ...
49. *šumma qerbū* ***arqū*** ⇒ Apodosis

45. 'If the intestines were **short**'
46. '[If the] intestines were **long**'
47. 'If the intestines were **empty**'
    ...
49. 'If the intestines were **green-yellow**.'

With the exception of the pairing of the contrastive conditions of short (*kurrû*) and long (*arrakū*) in ll. 45–46, little can explain the clustering of the phonemes /r/ and one of two velars, /k/ or /q/. Once more, without the benefit of additional evidence, it is unwise to speculate about which entry or entries may have engendered which other(s), though again our ignorance in this regard should not take away from an appreciation of the creative aspect of this organization.

A few additional cases where paronomastic considerations possibly factored in the organization of entries in their respective collections appear below:

5.103. AO 7539:41–42 (= ex. 3.85)

41. *šumma qerbū* ***iṣarraḫū*** ⇒ Apodosis
42. *šumma qerbū* ***iṣarrurū*** ⇒ Apodosis

41. 'If the intestines were **hot**'[226]
42. 'If the intestines were **flashing**.'

226 With *AHw,* 1083, s.v. *ṣarāḫu* III (*a-u*), "erhitzen" (text cited); pace Nougayrol 1971: 76, who translates "scintillent," apparently taking the verb as the homophonous *ṣarāḫum* (*ṣarāḫu* C [*CAD* Ṣ, 100]; *ṣarāḫu* II [*AHw*, 1083] "aufleuchten"), though that verb's theme vowels are either *u-u* or *i-u*. Yet justification for relating the verb to *ṣarāḫu* C can be found in the considerable semantic overlap between this verb and *ṣarāru* B of the next entry, as well as the logographic writing, sur, common to both. The matter demands reexamination.

5.104. *CT* 44 37 ob. 13–14

13. *šumma ina rēš ubānim ziḫḫum ṣalim u šīrum akil* ⇒ *ilum* ***ikkal***
14. [*šumma*] *ina rēš ubānim ziḫḫum warqum nadi* ⇒ *ummānī mû* ***ikallû***

13. 'If *ziḫḫum* was black in the Finger's head and the flesh was irritated ⇒ (it means) the god **will consume** (i.e., pestilence)'
14. '[If] green-yellow *ziḫḫum* was situated in the Finger's head ⇒ the (flood) waters **will detain** my army.'

5.105. *OBE* 14 r. 10–11

10. *šumma tal libbim* ***kabar*** ⇒ Apodosis
11. *šumma tal libbim ubān* ***ikbir***[227] ⇒ Apodosis
12. *šumma tal libbim rapaš* ⇒ Apodosis

10. 'If the diaphragm **was thick**'
11. 'If the diaphragm **was** one finger **thick**'
12. 'If the diaphragm was wide.'

5.106. *YOS* 10 35:17–18

17. *šumma ṣibtum* ***ruššukat*** ⇒ Apodosis
18. *šumma ṣibtim* ***irtaqqiq*** ⇒ Apodosis

17. 'If the Increase **was dried up**'
18. 'If the Increase **has thinned out**.'

5.107. *YOS* 10 42 ii 42–45

42–43. *šumma rēš libbi* ***kaṣiṣ*** ⇒ Apodosis
44–45. *šumma rēš libbi lipi*[*am*] ***kus***[***su***] ⇒ Apodosis

42–43. 'If the heart's top was **trimmed**'
44–45. 'If the heart's top was **tied** by fatty tissue.'

227 Pace Jeyes 1989: 159, 169 who reads the verb as *iqbir* and suggests that this describes the finger of the liver's hiding by the diaphragm. The solution here, offered to me by A. Wilent and A. George, concerns those measurements reported elsewhere using *ubān* in extispicy; see *CUSAS* 18 25 ob. 4–9 and the parallels from *YOS* 10 46 i 12–36.

5.108. *YOS* 10 31 i 9–17

9–11. *šumma martum* ***naḫsat*** ⇒ ***<u>na'dat</u>***
12–17. *šumma martum* ***nasḫat****-ma* [*in*]*a bāb ekallim* [***<u>nad</u>***]***<u>iat</u>*** ⇒ Apodosis

9–11. 'If the gallbladder **was turned back** ⇒ (**<u>it is</u>**) **<u>reason to worry</u>**'
12–17. 'If the gallbladder **was torn out** and **<u>cast</u>** in the Palace Gate.'

5.109. *YOS* 10 46 iv 51–54 (= ex. 5.38, 51–54)

51. *šumma kakki imittim* ***garir*** ⇒ Apodosis
52–54. *šumma kakki imittim kīma qaqqad pilakkim* ***ḫarir*** ⇒ Apodosis

51. 'If the right Weapon **was rolled over**'
52–54. 'If the right Weapon **was grooved** like a spindle whorl.'

As was true earlier, the specific purpose of paronomasia in each of these examples remains elusive. It is possible that future discovery of a parallel to a given tradition would shed light on said tradition, revealing some facet to its compositional history and a diviner's decision to mold it in one way over another. Yet, one must also exercise caution against the overestimation of such a sense of purpose. The possibility that on occasion paronomasia may have provided the Mesopotamian diviner with the same pleasure afforded by "the rustle of language"[228] to authors in later centuries cannot be ruled out.

The final case in our study may speak to this point:

5.110. *YOS* 10 31 i 41–50

41–46. *šumma ina birīt martim šīlum šakin* ⇒ *šarram ina pāni p*[*il*]*šim* ***idukkūšu***
47–50. *šumma marrā*[*tum*] *<u>šittā</u>* ⇒ *ana šarrim* ***dikšum*** *ibbašši*

41–46. 'If a hole was situated in between the (zone [?]) of the gallbladder ⇒ as for the king—**they will kill him** before the breach'
47–50. 'If there were <u>two</u> gallbladders ⇒ there will be a **piercing pain** for the king.'

228 To quote Barthes (originally: "le bruissement de la langue").

At first sight, it seems reasonable to assume that the paronomastic association evident in this example (*dâkum* + *šu* ↔ *dikšum*) explains the change in the composition of the second entry. After all, why should two holes bring mere pain onto a king where one earns him death? Yet evidence from elsewhere points to an unmistakable if enigmatic association between the number two and the prediction of *dikšum*, "pain":

5.111. *YOS* 10 31 x 45–52 (= ex. 5.90, ll. 45–52)

45–47. *šumma marrātum šittā* ⇒ ***dikšum***
48–52. *šumma marrātum šalāš* ⇒ ***dikšān šinā itebbûšum***

45–47. 'If (there were) two gallbladders ⇒ (it forecasts) **pain**'
48–52. 'If (there were) three gallbladders ⇒ **two attacks of pain** will come over him'

5.112. *šumma šinā puGlū* ⇒ ***dikšum*** *ibbašši* 'If (there were) two ... ⇒ there will be **pain**' (*YOS* 10 36 iv 15–16 = ex. 5.58, ll. 15–16).

Thus, while alliteration and assonance may well have played a decisive role in the juxtaposition of the two entries in ex. 5.110, in this instance one would be hard-pressed to argue that one entry generated the other. As with other organizational techniques surveyed, paronomasia appears to have had its limitations.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

6.1 Summary

This study has sought to shed light on the meaning of Mesopotamian divination literature, specifically the early extispicy collections, within the intellectual framework of that civilization. If indeed, as many have claimed, divination represents "a well-nigh universal phenomenon,"[1] this work has nonetheless tried to demonstrate that one Mesopotamian reflex of this form of human expression may justly be viewed as unique in terms of the revolution brought about by its early reconfiguration. From an empirical stage, Mesopotamian divination soon entered the orbit of Mesopotamian learning, specifically the learning associated with the Mesopotamian written "stream of tradition"[2] and the "textual community"[3] that fostered it. Within that context Mesopotamian divination became the focus of diviners for whom the enterprise of rendering a new form of divination literature offered a seemingly boundless intellectual challenge and, one must assume, reward. In the long run, the composition and, in due course, transmission of these texts would become the dominant—and arguably the defining—form of divinatory expression in this civilization.

As it is encountered in the omen collections from the OB period, divination represents an effort based overwhelmingly on deductive reasoning. On the basis of recorded omens and a variety of interpretive assumptions, the Mesopotamian diviner set out to generate new, hypothetical possibilities, along with their respective interpretations. This study has suggested that individual omen entries in the collections typically represent this creative and generative undertaking, such that it is only appropriate to speak of the collections as indicative of a fundamentally new understanding of the very meaning of divination in Mesopotamia. Simply put, as we meet it in the collections, the underlying goal of divination seems to have been a system for the creation and generation of information that would—or at least theoretically could—be

1 E.g., Koch-Westenholz 1995: 9.

2 Oppenheim 1977: 13. This metaphor is, I believe, still highly valuable for an understanding of just this sort of development in the Mesopotamian version of a canon, pace Robson 2011; see Van de Mieroop 2016: 30, 229 n. 63.

3 Veldhuis 1997: 147, after Cooper 1993.

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all-encompassing.[4] Building on the work of Kuhn and Chomsky and appropriating their language, this study proposed to view the undertaking of this intellectual enterprise as characterized by an organizational framework with generative and paradigmatic characteristics, and set out to describe these matters further.

As outlined in the introduction, the omen collections are mediated by three different frameworks: one technical, the second hermeneutic, and the third, encompassing major aspects of the previous two, the organizational framework mentioned above. In practical terms, therefore, it was the goal of this study to articulate the organizational framework of the collections and its defining characteristics. The articulation of the organizational framework proceeded in two main parts, corresponding to the horizontal (inner-omen) and vertical (inter-omen) axes of the collections. The first part, comprised of Chapter 2, considered the horizontal axis of the collections; in the second and larger part, Chapters 3–5, the vertical axis became the focus.

In Chapter 2 the analysis turned to the organization apparent across constituent parts of individual omen entries. This investigation of inner-omen organization focused on certain protases and especially apodoses, described as complex, that featured alternative possibilities (in the protases) or interpretations (in the apodoses). The discussion of omens with complex protases and apodoses was intended as a first step toward highlighting the array of techniques at the disposal of the diviner for the organization of information within individual complex protases and apodoses.

Yet, it was also demonstrated that, in concrete ways, organizational concerns played an effective role in the generation of information even within individual omens. Whether for the sake of the harmonization of disparate traditions, the exploration of interpretive possibilities, or both, the organizational techniques employed were shown to have creative and generative effects. One place where this was apparent was in the diviner's appeal to different formulae to mark alternative interpretations. In certain cases, interpretations were qualified by one formula type (*ana* + Noun Phrase) according to their alleged applicant; elsewhere, other formulae (*šanûm šumšu, ūmam rīqam*/*rīqūssu*) were employed for purposes such as the qualification of a given forecast's spatial or temporal ranges. Another broad example of the organizational framework's generative character along the horizontal axis was yielded by the isolation of a number of short apodotic expressions (e.g., *erištum, nanmurtum, pitruštum nipḫum, tešmûm, millatum, tašnintum, kišittum*) preceding the longer, regularly formed interpretations of particular omens. It was argued that these

4 For a word on the concrete limitations of this activity, see Chapter 1, n. 85.

expressions were used as organizational markers by diviners in a shorthand manner, becoming in turn lemmata that generated their own definitions in the form of the following longer interpretations. In short, it was demonstrated that the ordering of information bred new information within individual omens. Even on the seemingly straightforward horizontal plane, the organizational framework in the omen collections generated new material.

Chapters 3 through 5 turned to the vertical plane of the collections and analyzed the manner in which individual omen entries relate to one another. The basic claim in this study of inter-omen organization was that the organization of individual omen entries in the collections reflected an orchestrated effort to systematize data according to generative and paradigmatic factors. In this respect, notwithstanding challenges posed by the recognition of certain paradigmatic units, the process of the organization of knowledge on the vertical plane was demonstrated to have been more affective than reflective. On the basis of various organizational units of omens, diviners created and generated the bulk of the material in each of the collections. Hence, it was necessary to break down the collections into constituent parts so as to discern how they were composed.

In Chapter 3 this examination of constituent parts entailed the study of the simplest form of gradation: opposition. It was argued that the origin of contrastive pairings of omens in the collections was an implied but fundamental contrast between every omen and the theoretical sound state (*šalim* or the like) of the zonal region that omen describes. A close analysis of the collections demonstrated that this binary opposition, described as the first paradigm of divination, was not merely a theoretical notion in the background of the collections. Rather, vestiges of this first paradigm in the collections—simple statements regarding the sound state of certain zones and their generated counterparts—shed light on how this structure accounted for a basic level of omen generation, and, more broadly, how it figured in anchoring the generative enterprise in its entirety.

Indeed, this first paradigm was not the only example of binary opposition in the collections. Other arenas in which this organizational structure was noted included those concerning spatial positioning and zonal properties. However, regardless of the specifics, the generative and paradigmatic characteristics of the organizational framework were recognizable throughout. Unmistakable evidence of creative and generative efforts by the diviner was uncovered: creativity in the organization of contrastive pairings whose spatial reference points or zonal properties are not, technically speaking, opposites; generativity in the calculation of omens out of whole cloth on the basis of principles such as the right/left opposition or according to the logic of other contrastive pairings.

With Chapter 4 the investigation of inter-omen organization shifted to complex gradation, which is not based on opposition. The manner in which individual entries relate to one another in complex gradation was described as pointillistic, according to its basic syntactic characteristic. Pointillistic expression of complex gradation occurs in two main types, agglutinative and paradigmatic, reflecting the manner by which an individual entry in a gradation refers to variables that distinguish it from its counterparts. In both types of pointillistic expression, unambiguous evidence of generative calculation was uncovered. In the case of the agglutinative type, a certain creativity was also demonstrated in the manner by which the diviner made use of a wide array of materials for generative purposes.

However, the greatest diversity in the generative enterprise appeared in the paradigmatic type of pointillistic expression; indeed, the explication of the main paradigmatic forms of complex gradation continued into the following chapter (Chapter 5). Questions concerning the spatial positioning of ominous occurrences proved to be among those most frequently raised by way of the paradigmatic type of complex gradation. It was demonstrated that the diviner expanded on oppositional pairings including top/bottom and right/left to construct complex schemes such as Top → Middle → Bottom, Right → Middle → Left, and Right → Left→ Right + Left. All these sequences, but in particular Top → Middle → Bottom, enabled an exploration of a variety of interpretive themes (e.g., space, time, social hierarchy); in all such cases, it became clear that organizational structures fostered an impressive array of generative expression, according to which new ominous possibilities were calculated on the basis of prefigured sequences and their variables. Also of considerable interest was the case of the Right → Left → Right + Left sequence and its corresponding calculations, particularly for the Right + Left entry, which was shown to operate without exception in terms of meaning.

The investigation of the paradigmatic type of complex gradation continued in Chapter 5, with the analysis of several additional and recurring concerns of the collections. All these exhibited signs of creative or generative manipulation. For example, paronomastic considerations were demonstrated to have effected changes in the wording of particular entries, whereas the articulation of the factors of color or number appears to have taken place in accordance with prescribed sequences and their significations. The case of paradigmatic expression by way of visual images also proved to be of interest, owing to the partial breakdown in generative and paradigmatic expression on such occasions. Yet here too creative efforts were observed in terms of these omens' compilation and interpretation.

To be sure, this study did not succeed in elevating our literary competence with respect to the collections to anything approaching what might be labeled

mastery. To the contrary, even after considerable strain the omen collections and the enterprise to which they attest remain elusive in several basic ways. Substantial questions remain, for example, concerning the unevenness of our findings (why are certain interpretive possibilities explored to a greater degree than others?) or the extent to which future discovery will demand revisions of both the quantitative and qualitative sort. And of course when one turns from the omen literature to divination itself, matters are even less settled. Little, for instance, was gained in terms of our knowledge of the *Sitz im Leben* of the composition of the omen collections or our understanding of their later development. The latter issue, and especially the continued articulation of generative and paradigmatic forms of expression within the collections' organizational frameworks, is of particular importance, since one might expect—if this process of articulation has been captured here with any measure of accuracy—that the omen collections would have developed within the cuneiform stream of tradition in a manner akin to other scholarly cuneiform genres.

Nevertheless, a certain proficiency vis-à-vis the omen collections has been reached, such that it is possible to revisit some of the basic questions raised at the outset of this investigation. The following offers some tentative reflections by way of a conclusion to this study.

6.2 Conclusion

Have we, on the basis of all we have investigated, sufficient grounds for claiming that the intellectual effort undertaken in the OB divination literature reflects the incipience of scientific inquiry? Ultimately no single question that might be posed concerning the collections better encapsulates the central issue raised by our delineation of their organizational structure and generative and paradigmatic characteristics. Naturally, an answer to this question depends on how scientific inquiry, and for that matter science, are defined. As observed in the introduction to this study (Chapter 1), conceptions of just what constitutes science abound, certainly within the broader disciplines of philosophy and the history of science, but even within the modest sphere of Assyriology. If we are to obtain a meaningful answer to our question, what definition of science should we adopt?

Naturally, if one demands that a body of knowledge must rest on an experimental foundation in order to qualify as science, then no claim concerning the scientific nature of Mesopotamian divination literature can be made. Yet this criterion, especially in the wake of Kuhn's influential discussion, can no longer be considered the *sine qua non* of scientific activity. Scientific reasoning

must also be measured in historical perspective if the history of science is to mean something other than the history of *our* science. This, in essence, is the position espoused by G. E. R. Lloyd, who argues that Aristotle's zoological taxonomy constitutes a form of scientific knowledge, albeit distinct from "strict" or "strong" science:

> [w]hatever the Greeks themselves thought on the subject … we are not dealing with anything that can be called scientific in any strict or strong sense. We are certainly not dealing with experimental science, nor even with the formulation of general laws applicable in practice or in principle to empirically testable situations. Taxonomy was, in the ancient world, and to some extent remains today, descriptive, not explanatory or predictive—descriptive, though not autonomous, as if it could be pure or totally disconnected. Yet it would be a mistake to rule that, for that reason, it falls outside the domain of science.[5]

Within Assyriology, taxonomy as evinced in the lexical-list tradition was the basis of a once-consequential formulation concerning a Mesopotamian mode of scientific inquiry, the so-called *Listenwissenschaft*.[6] As many have noted, this notion was laden with problems of different sorts,[7] and Assyriology has been well served by revisiting some of its basic tenets. Still, one must concur with an earlier opinion by Veldhuis that it cannot be jettisoned completely, even if this means that its scope must be limited so as to encompass only a "science of writing."[8] If only through the prism of written language, the lexical lists nonetheless display an unmistakable theoretical effort to achieve an encyclopedic ordering of Mesopotamian realia.[9] In this respect, the lexical lists' inclination to incorporate terms wholly invented[10] for the sake of filling in gaps of an implicit structure is especially instructive for our purposes.

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5 Lloyd 1983: 13.

6 The basic statement is that in von Soden 1936.

7 See, e.g., Oppenheim 1977: 248; Veldhuis 1997: 141–3; 2004: 82; 2014a: 22; Hilgert 2009: 278–83; Van de Mieroop 2016: 65, 233 n. 17 (with additional bibliography).

8 Veldhuis 1997: 143–6; cf., however, id. 2014a: 22, 427; also Van de Mieroop 2016: 65, 233 n. 18.

9 So, e.g., Edzard 1999: 258. The limitations imposed by actual paradigmatic structures in the collections (described in Chapter 1) do not challenge this claim, since similar constraints can be found in any effort to present a comprehensive account of information.

10 Veldhuis 2004: 83; also 2014a: 427. One is reminded of attempts to analyze the writing system in Han China, which, as Boltz 1994: 145–6, 151 suggests, originated from the drive

After all, as has been argued, precisely this generative impulse is also apparent in the omen collections—though on a far more ambitious scale. With divination literature the generation of information became the central concern of diviners. In the very formulation of omens in the omen collections, Mesopotamian divination cut the cord which had previously tethered it to its empirical roots, adopted the casuistic list form, and proceeded to formulate paradigmatic structures not only for the accruing of knowledge, but, more importantly, for its generation. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is the drive toward compilation and systematization—and not the presence or absence of any empirical data—that forms the basis of the most compelling case for understanding the collections as bearing a hallmark of scientific inquiry. To quote Bottéro once again:

> [l]a mise en traités, à mesure qu'elle éloigne progressivement la divination de son empirisme originel, la rapproche d'autant de l'état de connaissance *a priori*, universelle et rationelle, que nous appelons 'science.'[11]

Mesopotamian divination, as met in the early omen collections, reflects the realization of a new way to conceptualize knowledge, or, indeed, a new attitude toward what the very meaning of knowledge is or could be.[12]

It is important to recognize, however, that this intellectual revolution was still in its infancy in the OB period. One does not find in the OB omen collections anything like an explicitly stated theory or even the level of abstraction that characterizes the divination literature from later periods of Mesopotamia, with its rich and varied commentaries on standardized omen series.[13] No formal declaration of an *ad infinitum* principle can be pointed to, for instance, according to which diviners set out to calculate the significance of multiple occurrences of a given ominous phenomenon. To be sure, the collections exhibit a keen interest in just this idea, but the diviner articulates it indirectly by employing stereotypical numbers (4, 5+), or by stock phrases or tropes, as when describing systematic destruction (e.g., red → black :: *Adad iraḫḫiṣ* → *Adad amēlūta iraḫḫiṣ*), or when resorting to one of the historical omens. Only on one

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for the "categorization of all perceptible phenomena" and may well have been as prescriptive as it was descriptive.

11 Bottéro 1974: 171–2; see more broadly Bottéro 1992: 125–37.

12 For recent reflections on the possible social forces behind this development, see Veldhuis 2014a: 224–5, 427; id. 2014b: 30–1; but cf. Van de Mieroop 2016: 100–1, 195 (with bibliography).

13 See Frahm 2011: 128–218.

occasion does one find an OB diviner contemplating explicitly the abstraction of a numerical sequence, *ana mādūti*, "up to many (more)"; as has been suggested, this may reflect a later contamination, but in any case it is the exception that proves the rule. Similarly, only once do we encounter an explicit ditto mark in the collections' repetitive sea of information, a stark contrast from the whole array of such signs that would flower in the periods to come.

However, it is critical to realize that this lack of abstraction does not imply a lack of perception. To the contrary, our analysis has unearthed evidence of the unmistakable contours of some of the very principles that would bloom in the periods ahead. For example, the occurrence of ominous findings on the right and left is consistently described, implicitly and even explicitly, as essentially untenable in terms of interpretation, anticipating the later categorical formulation of this rule. Likewise, in the shift from two to three ominous findings one encounters the same sort of interpretive twists that in the first-millennium commentaries are described explicitly as reversals.

From this perspective it must be concluded that, if the generative and paradigmatic characteristics of the organization of OB divination literature are in fact to be treated as a form of scientific reasoning, we are nonetheless only on the cusp of science, even by the standards of Mesopotamian divination itself. With the divination literature of the OB period, which marks the diviner's realization of a revolutionary new way through which Mesopotamian literary, religious, and scientific impulses could be expressed, we stand at the threshold of what in due time would become a genuine mode of scientific inquiry. In connection to the lexical-list tradition and its offshoots, Velduis, writing about the nexus of what we would designate as Mesopotamian literature, religion, and science, has made a compelling case for the need to understand these seemingly distinct modes as inextricably intertwined, "not by any conscious effort, but because they were never separated."[14] With the discovery of the organizational framework described here, OB diviners succeeded in introducing the practice of Mesopotamian divination into this nexus, and into this civilization's stream of tradition. In this new setting Mesopotamian divination literature took shape, and in turn offered further definition to Mesopotamian civilization.

14 Veldhuis 2004: 106.

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