

# IMAGINING CREATION

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## CHAPTER TWO

### MESOPOTAMIAN CREATION STORIES

W. G. Lambert

Creation as a concept requires some amplification. In modern western thought it is commonly used without clear definition, but in fact it is influenced by the usual translation of Genesis 1:1:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

This is not unlike an ancient version of modern scientists' "big bang": a great primeval event which started things off. But in fact this is a mistranslation, as first announced by the great Mediaeval scholar Rashi (1040–1105 C.E.). The correct translation can be taken from The Jewish Publication Society of America's *The Torah: The Five Books of Moses—A New Translation of The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text; First Section* (Philadelphia, 1962):

When God began to create the heaven and the earth—the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water—God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

That this is the correct translation can be seen from (among other things) the end of this narrative of six days of creation followed by one of rest:

And on the seventh day God finished the work which He had been doing...

Here, then, creation is not a "big bang" but a series of acts in sequence starting from earth and water ("the deep"), the origins of which are neither sought for nor explained. The traditional rendering of Genesis 1:1 invites the idea of *creatio ex nihilo* ("creation from nothing"), but that is later theological speculation, not the sense of the author of Genesis 1.

In this one respect Genesis conforms to its ancient Near Eastern background where creation (to use the modern term) is about the

processes by which the universe we know reached its present form, with no attempt to delve into the question of ultimate origins.

There are of course differences. Genesis with its monotheism has a technical term for God's creative acts (*bārā'*) not used of human activity, while Sumerians and Babylonians lacked a comparable term, using ordinary words with human applications such as "build" and "make". And the polytheistic accounts of creation often present narratives of the gods' follies and misdeeds which the modern world cannot take seriously as a basis for personal belief, while the dignity of Genesis 1 so struck an ancient pagan literary critic, Longinus, or Dionysius (or: Dionysius Longinus), c. 100 C.E., that he quoted it with high approval in his treatise *On the Sublime* 9, 9.

While the Hebrew accounts of creation have reached us through millennia of written tradition in a fixed form, ancient Mesopotamian literature with this content was mostly lost by the turn of the centuries. A little, sometimes garbled, survived in Greek writers that have been preserved into the modern world. But for ancient material we depend on cuneiform tablets which have been unearthed in Mesopotamia beginning in the 19th century C.E. Very little of this kind of literature has been recovered from Palestine, Syria, Anatolia and elsewhere in the ancient Near East. The relevant texts on clay come from Sumerians and Babylonians and vary in date from c. 2500–300 B.C.E. Almost nothing of this kind has come from the Assyrians, though their scribes c. 1300–600 B.C.E. were responsible for copying out Babylonian texts on tablets which have in part been recovered in the modern world. As recovered these tablets are rarely complete, mostly pieces only survive. However, at various periods, and especially after c. 1000 B.C.E., many of the texts were established classics in their respective worlds so that multiple copies existed, and cuneiform scholars busy themselves putting together complete texts from broken pieces, where possible.

It is of course a disadvantage to have only partly preserved texts in many cases, but as compared with texts which have come down to us complete by a long copying tradition there is one advantage. We have only the final form of the Hebrew Bible, and scholars speculate about its compilation and transmission before it reached that final form. With the cuneiform tradition we are in a position in some cases to tap the tradition at varying points over the centuries.

While creation in its ancient sense is a theme not infrequently alluded to in Sumerian and Babylonian texts, works specifically devoted to it are so far unknown. It appears incidentally to other interests. Thus to present their opinions about creation we have to gather material from

a wide range of texts, noting the purpose of each one so that we correctly grasp the context and function of the relevant matter. The most widely known text of this category has been called the Babylonian Epic of Creation, and it remains a major document of relevance. It has 1091 lines, most completely preserved, and is generally divided into seven tablets, though the author did not compose the work in seven sections: the division is no doubt purely scribal: to avoid one big and heavy tablet with all the 1091 lines. The story begins with a theogony: the descent of the primeval gods culminating quite quickly in Marduk, patron god of the town Babylon. This betrays the real aim of the work. Babylon was a small and unimportant place in the third millennium B.C.E., very rarely mentioned, and its patron god was very little known. Hammurabi, king of Babylon in the 18th century B.C.E., put Babylon on the map by making it the capital of an empire embracing the whole of southern Mesopotamia and some areas beyond. While his successors lost much of this territory the prestige of the town remained, and so did the prestige of its patron god. Marduk, thanks to Hammurabi, had been promoted to a top-ranking god, but not head of the pantheon.

Hammurabi's dynasty fell c. 1600 B.C.E., and Cassites migrating from Kurdistan took over Babylon, forming a dynasty which lasted until 1156 B.C.E., when they were ousted and a native Babylonian dynasty took over. The status of Marduk had remained unchanged under the Cassite kings, and very late in the dynasty the Elamites from south west Iran had raided Babylonia and in the course of that had taken off as booty the holy statue of Marduk from its shrine in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar I, a native Babylonian king 1126–1104 B.C.E., successfully campaigned in Elam and restored Babylonian morale by bringing back this statue amid rejoicing. Under this king Marduk was officially declared "king of the gods" for the first time, a position he enjoyed for the remainder of Babylonian civilization, though by the time of Nebuchadnezzar II (the Biblical Nebuchadnezzar, 605–562 B.C.E.), his divine son Nabû (Nebo) has risen in effect to equality with his father.

The so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation is a narrative myth composed to assert and justify the status of Marduk as head of the pantheon, when previously even his limited promotion under Hammurabi had not in any way undermined the status as head of the pantheon of such Sumerian gods as Enlil and An. Nothing is known of the author of the work, nor of its date of composition, though its literary character and ideological single-mindedness mark it as the product of a single author at one point of time, using of course whatever he wanted from existing mythological materials. Most likely it was composed either during

or shortly after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I as a manifesto of the theological revolution which demoted the old Sumerian Enlil to make way for Marduk. The text begins:

- I 1 When the heavens above did not exist,  
     And earth below had not come into being—  
     There was Apsû, the first in order, their begetter,  
     And demiurge Tiāmat, who gave birth to them all;  
 5 They had mingled their waters together  
     Before meadow-land had coalesced and reed-bed was to be found—  
     When not one of the gods had been formed  
     Or had come into being, when no destinies had been decreed,  
     The gods were created within them:  
 10 Laḫmu and Laḫamu were formed and came into being.  
     While they grew and increased in stature  
     Anšar and Kišar, who excelled them, were created.  
     They prolonged their days, they multiplied their years.  
     Anu, their son, could rival his fathers.  
 15 Anu, the son, equalled Anšar,  
     Nudimmud was the champion among his fathers:  
     And Anu begat Nudimmud, his own equal.  
     Profoundly discerning, wise, of robust strength;  
     Very much stronger than his father's begetter, Anšar,  
 20 He had no rival among the gods, his brothers.

The text starts with a theogony. The story begins before the present universe (as Sumerians and Babylonians conceived it) of heaven and earth existed, when only Apsû and Tiāmat existed. Apsû was the body of water conceived by the Sumerians and Babylonians to exist below the surface of the earth from which all springs drew their water and into which somehow the rivers eventually poured their water. Normally it is a common noun of masculine gender, but here it is conceived as having personality and being male. Tiāmat is a common noun in Babylonian, feminine, meaning "sea", but here it is a female being, a Goddess in Babylonian thought. So the cosmogony here begins with water, but since creation is conceived on the pattern of bisexual reproduction as known from humans, animals and some plants, the basic element has been rendered into a male-female pair to start off creation. The mingling of the waters is the required sexual copulation and "within them" means of course within these mingled waters. Note how here the *primaeval* elements are alive and have personality, unlike the earth and water (the deep) in Genesis, which are inert and are manipulated by God. This can also happen in Mesopotamia, but here it is different.

The results of this copulation are first two pairs of matching male-female gods. The character of the first pair, Laḫmu and Laḫamu, is not sure. In Sumero-Babylonian mythology there is a nude hero, save for belt, with much head and facial hair, called a Laḫmu, but no female partner is known. The second pair, Anšar and Kišar, bear Sumerian names meaning "Whole Heaven" and "Whole Earth" and in this mythologem Father Heaven sends down his rain into the bosom of Mother Earth so that plant life flourishes. However, our author chooses to ignore this aspect and appoints Anšar to be king of the junior gods, as is made clear later. Anu, his son, also bears as his name the Sumerian An "Heaven," but with Babylonian ending. In some traditions Anšar and Anu are two names of one god, but our author differs, and no spouse of Anu is anywhere named in this text. His son, Nudimmud occurs here also without spouse, but later she is named as Damkina.

While our author here is drawing on traditional theogonic material his real aim is to prepare the way for his hero Marduk. The details of the *primaeval* pairs do not concern him, instead he reaches Nudimmud and lavishes extreme praise on him. This god, usually called Enki in Sumerian and Ea in Babylonian, is everywhere Marduk's father.

The story now moves quickly. The younger gods disturb the older ones—specified as Apsû, Tiāmat and a vizier Mummu—by their jollification, preventing Tiāmat from sleeping. The elders discuss the problem and wiping out the youngsters is considered. Ea hears of this and strikes first, killing Apsû and setting up his abode on Apsû's dead body. In this particular the author has reached one end: in his time it was everywhere believed that Ea lived in the subterranean water, the Apsû. In this now dead Apsû Marduk was born, with even more praise than his father received (I 79–104).

The story now moves to a second battle. Unexplained gods appear from nowhere and advise Tiāmat, who now lacks the help of Apsû and the vizier Mummu, to take action to prevent her suffering the same fate as overtook Apsû. To this end she creates eleven monsters and puts them in charge of Qingu, her spouse, who likewise appears here from nowhere. Anšar, king of the junior gods, hears of these preparations and gets first Ea and then Anu to go out to defeat this monstrous horde, but each in turn falls back at the very sight. So the young Marduk is asked to take up the challenge. He agrees, but imposes the condition that should he return victorious he will be promoted to kingship of the gods. This condition is accepted by all the junior gods in assembly.

Marduk is equipped, goes forth and defeats Tiāmat in single combat, at which point Qingu and the monsters are easily overcome.

Battles with monsters or giants are common in cosmogonic traditions from the ancient Near East and beyond, for example Baal and Yam, Baal and Leviathan, the Titans, etc., but while they form episodes within accounts of creation, they are not strictly matters of creation themselves. So we shall not study this battle between Marduk and Tiāmat in detail, but pass on to the aftermath: how Marduk used his just-acquired authority to form the universe known to the Babylonians.

- IV 125 (After Marduk) had established victory for Anšar over all his foes,  
 Had fulfilled the desire of Nudimmud,  
 He strengthened his hold on the Bound Gods,  
 And returned to Tiāmat, whom he had bound.  
 Bēl (= Marduk) placed his feet on the lower parts of Tiāmat  
 130 And with his merciless club smashed her skull.  
 He severed her arteries  
 And let the north wind bear up (her blood) to give the news.  
 His fathers saw it and were glad and exulted;  
 They brought gifts and presents to him.  
 135 Bēl rested, surveying the corpse,  
 In order to divide the lump by a clever scheme.  
 He split her into two like a dried fish:  
 One half of her he set up and stretched out as the heavens.  
 He stretched a skin and appointed a watch  
 140 With the instruction not to let her water escape.  
 He crossed over the heavens, surveyed celestial parts,  
 And adjusted them to match the Apsû, Nudimmud's abode.  
 Bēl measured the shape of the Apsû  
 And set up Ešarra, a replica of Ešgalla.  
 145 In Ešgalla, Ešarra which he had built, and the heavens,  
 He settled in their shrines Anu, Enlil, and Ea.  
 V 1 He fashioned heavenly stations for the great gods,  
 And set up constellations, the patterns of the stars.  
 He appointed the year, marked off divisions,  
 And set up three stars each for the twelve months.  
 5 After he had organized the year,  
 He established the heavenly station of Nēberu to fix the stars'  
 intervals.  
 That none should transgress or be slothful  
 He fixed the heavenly stations of Enlil and Ea with it.  
 Gates he opened on both sides,  
 10 And put strong bolts at the left and the right.  
 He placed the heights (of heaven) in her (Tiāmat's) belly,  
 He created Nannar, entrusting to him the night.

- He appointed him as the jewel of the night to fix the days,  
 And month by month without ceasing he elevated him with a  
 crown,  
 15 (Saying), "Shine over the land at the beginning of the month,  
 Resplendent with horns to fix six days.  
 On the seventh day the crown will be half size,  
 On the fifteenth day, halfway through each month, stand in  
 opposition.  
 When Šamaš sees you on the horizon  
 20 Diminish in proper stages and shine backwards.  
 On the 29th day, draw near to the path of Šamaš,  
 . [...] the 30th day, stand in conjunction and rival Šamaš.  
 I have [...] . the sign, follow its track.  
 Draw near...[....] give judgment.  
 25 . [...] . Šamaš, constrain [murder] and violence,  
 . [...] . me.  
 (Lines 27-32 too damaged for translation)  
 Let there not be... [...]  
 . [...] .  
 35 At the end of [...]  
 Let there be a 29th day [...]  
 After [he had...] the decrees [...]  
 The organization of front and . [...]  
 He made the day [...]  
 40 Let the year be equally [...]  
 At the new year [...]  
 The year.... [...]  
 Let there be regularly [  
 The projecting bolt [...]  
 45 After he had [...]  
 The watches of night and day [...]  
 The foam which Tiāmat [...]  
 Marduk fashioned [...]  
 He gathered it together and made it into clouds.  
 50 The raging of the winds, violent rainstorms.  
 The billowing of mist—accumulation of her spittle—  
 He appointed for himself and took them in his hand.  
 He put her head in position and poured out... [...].  
 He opened the abyss and it was sated with water.  
 55 From her two eyes he let the Euphrates and Tigris flow,  
 He blocked her nostrils, but left..  
 He heaped up the distant [mountains] on her breasts;  
 He bored wells to channel the springs.  
 He twisted her tail and wove it into the Durmaḥu,  
 60 [...] .. the Apsû beneath his feet.  
 [He set up] her crotch—it wedged up the heavens—

[The half of her] he stretched out and made it firm as the earth.

[After] he had finished his work inside Tiāmat,

[He spread] his net and let it right out.

65 He surveyed the heavens and the earth..[.] .

[..] their bonds. ....

It is unfortunate that this section contains the least well preserved part of the whole text, but overall the general sense is clear: Marduk is setting up the universe as known to the ancient Babylonians, using especially the body of the dead Tiāmat, and drawing in many motifs from existing mythologies. The Bound Gods who turn up first in IV 127 are comparable to the Titans: defeated and jailed for misdeeds. The motif of the wind bearing up the blood of the killed monster as a signal of victory from afar to the waiting, apprehensive friendly gods (IV 131–132) is borrowed from the then traditional Anzû Myth, and the splitting of Tiāmat's body into two parts is borrowed from the extremely widespread myth of the splitting of heaven and earth from an original single lump of matter. In these lines (IV 135–140) only the upper part—the newly made heavens—is dealt with. The lower part—earth—has to wait to V 62. The reason for this separation is that our author had two cosmologies he wished to incorporate: the first is the splitting of heaven and earth from an original single body of matter, the other a three-decker universe conceived as the home of a ruling trinity of three Sumerian gods: An, Enlil and Enki/Ea. Anu (“Heaven”) of course in heaven, Enlil in his main shrine in Nippur on earth, and Enki/Ea, as always, in the subterranean Apsû. Our author started from the two bodies: of Apsû and Tiāmat.

Marduk's father Ea had lived in the body of the dead Apsû for some time, and Marduk was born there, so this had to stay. The dead Tiāmat is split in IV 137–140 and her upper part becomes the sky: still a watery mass, as steps were taken to prevent the water from falling down. (Southern Iraq has extremely little rainfall.) The lower part of this body, as noted before, is kept over for V 62. So the author had little choice over heaven and Apsû: their residents were inevitably Anu and Ea. But what of Enlil? He was the god ousted from the top of the pantheon when Marduk took over that status. Lines IV 145–146 mention Enlil for the first time, in the traditional sequence for the Sumerian trinity. And their three abodes are given in chiasitic order since Anu goes in heaven. Thus Enlil is put in what is called Ešarra, while Ea is put in Ešgalla. These two names of parts of the universe are not

conventional Babylonian usage. Ešarra means “Temple of Totality” and Ešgalla “Large Shrine” but that does not explain anything. From the context Ešgalla is clearly used for the Apsû, and similarly from the context Ešarra must be a middle level of the Babylonian cosmos, but not earth. Another Babylonian cosmogony has three heavens, and that is drawn on here. The top heaven is that of Anu, the middle heaven is the residence of the Igigi, a group of major gods, and the lower heaven housed the stars, naturally since they can be seen from the surface of the earth. Our author takes up the stars at the beginning of Tablet V, so one is forced to the conclusion that by Ešarra he means a lower heaven, but not the lowest. In short he knows the concept of a three-decker heaven, but chooses not to use the normal terminology for it. The Apsû was the model on which the upper and middle heaven were trimmed or made, and the only item actually made by Marduk in this stage of the work was the middle heaven as expressly stated in IV 145.

Marduk's creativity is presented in downwards sequence. V 1–46 deal with the heavenly bodies: what goes on in the lower heaven, and V 47–58 deal with the surface of the earth: meteorological phenomena and geographical features, while V 59–66 detail finishing touches to the whole universe.

The setting up of heavenly bodies described in V 1–46 is very detailed compared with the previous account of organizing the levels of the universe, and the interest is not in astronomy as such, but rather in the calendar. To worship acceptably for Babylonians meant observing particular cultic festivals normally based on the lunar calendar. The first day of each month was cultically the most important, the 15th the second most important, and the 7th was third in ranking. Thus maintenance of a correct calendar was considered vitally important, and something of divine origin. When studied in detail V 1–46 deal systematically with the year, the month and the day. The year, consisting of a notional twelve months of thirty days each, was marked in the sky by 36 stars or constellations, three for each month, each one of the three being seen on the first day of each decad. To this end the sky was divided into three zones, and the movements were construed as files of gods marching across the sky, each zone with a commander like an officer over soldiers. And the commander of one zone was considered commander-in-chief. All this is very briefly alluded to in V 1–8, so briefly that it is almost impossible to understand the system without previous knowledge. The only change is that the previous commander-in-chief is displaced to make way for Marduk, whose star, Nēberu, fortunately

happened to be in the same zone as that of the erstwhile commander-in-chief. Thus in theory the year was fixed by 36 stars each starting a new ten-day period.

The month is detailed in V 11–26. Since the Babylonian month was lunar, the moon inevitably was in charge of showing humanity the month by its waxing and waning. It was believed that at the end of each month the sun and moon, being in conjunction, held a judgment session together, as alluded to in V 21–26. Our author is very coy in alluding to sun and moon. They were of course the visible form of two second-ranking gods in the Babylonian pantheon, but they are treated as impersonally as possible here. Marduk's supremacy in this text tolerates no rivals.

The day was of course regulated by the sun, and V 39–45 seems to explain this, but is too damaged to be fully clear. This is followed by meteorological phenomena in V 47–52, related to Tiāmat because, as explained expressly in V 62, the earth is the lower part of Tiāmat's body, but the creature has changed its form completely from IV 139–140, where the upper half is a body of water. Here the lower half is a monstrous quadruped with head, eyes, nostrils, udder and tail. The author is simply combining two originally separate conceptions but keeping one name for the two.

Later in Tablet V the gods in general, thankful for their deliverance from Tiāmat and the monsters under Qingu, express their gratitude by building Babylon, at Marduk's suggestion, the first city, to be the meeting place at the centre of the universe where gods coming down from heaven and up from the Apsû can meet in Marduk's shrine to take important decisions. This is taking over the previous orthodoxy by which Enlil in Nippur was at the centre of the universe, and the gods met under Enlil to make decisions.

Tablet VI begins with the final act of creation (in our understanding of that term) in the story. When the gods agreed to Marduk's terms should he come back victorious from fighting Tiāmat, they had inserted a small condition of their own: should he be victorious and become king of the gods, he was required to arrange that thereafter their food and drink be supplied gratis. This Marduk arranges:

- VI 1 When Marduk heard the gods' speech  
       He conceived a desire to accomplish clever things.  
       He opened his mouth, addressing Ea,  
       He counsels that which he had pondered in his heart,  
 5 "I will bring together blood and form bone,

- I will bring into being Lullû (Sumerian: 'man'), whose name shall be 'man'  
 I will create Lullû-man,  
       On whom the toil of the gods will be laid that they may rest.  
 I will skilfully alter the organization of the gods:  
 10 "Though they are honoured as one, they shall be divided into two."  
 Ea answered, as he addressed a word to him,  
       Expressing his comments on the resting of the gods,  
       "Let one brother of theirs be given up.  
       Let him perish that people may be fashioned.  
 15 Let the great gods assemble  
       And let the guilty one be given up that they may be confirmed."  
 Marduk assembled the great gods,  
       Using gracious direction as he gave his order,  
 As he spoke the gods heeded him:  
 20 The king addressed a word to the Anunnaki,  
       "Your former oath was true indeed,  
       (Now also) tell me the solemn truth:  
       Who is the one who instigated warfare,  
       Who made Tiāmat rebel and set battle in motion?  
 25 Let him who instigated warfare be given up  
       That I may lay his punishment on him, but you sit and rest."  
 The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,  
       That is, Lugaldimmeranki'a, the counsellor of the gods, their lord,  
       "Qingu is the one who instigated warfare,  
       Who made Tiāmat rebel and set battle in motion."  
 30 They bound him, holding him before Ea.  
       They inflicted the penalty on him and severed his blood-vessels.  
       From his blood he (Ea) created mankind,  
       On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free.  
 35 After the wise Ea had created mankind  
       And had imposed the service of the gods upon them—  
       That task is beyond comprehension  
       For Nudimmud performed the creation with the skill of Marduk...

Here again the author is combining different traditions. It was a general Babylonian opinion that the human race was created to supply the food and drink of the gods, and that happened in the provision of victuals to temples on a regular basis for consumption by the gods. But there were different traditions of how the subject race was made. In one tradition he simply grew out of the ground like plants. Another tradition



had Ea and the Mother Goddess make man by forming bodies from clay mixed with the blood of a miscreant god and performing magic over them. This is the tradition our author has preferred. However, the Mother Goddess has no place in his narrative, so his hero Marduk takes her place. Ea still plays the major role, but using only the blood of the executed prisoner, no clay. Marduk's part is not minimised in that the plan was his and he identified the criminal with the consent of the assembled gods. The blame heaped on Qingu is of course contrary to the narrative of this text, but such inconsistencies are not to be worried over. The author again is blending two separate traditions. The one is the tradition of "Bound Gods" and related groups. Like the Titans they were put in prison after their defeat, and in the Babylonian tradition the ringleader was executed while the others were freed from prison. But the "setting of the gods free" in line VI 34 subtly blends this freeing from prison with the required freeing of the gods from the hard labour of producing their own food and drink.

This exposition of the episodes of creation in this so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation illustrates, first, that only a small amount is really about creation, and, secondly, that there existed a vast amount of floating mythological material from which each author drew, selected, combined and gave the result his own particular emphasis. It is an extreme case, but it shows the background against which one must study the other often scattered and contextless material, to which we now turn.

The theogony at the beginning of the so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation could be set out in list form as:

Apsû—Tiāmat  
Laḫmu—Laḫamu  
Anšar—Kišar  
Anu  
Nudimmud—Damkina  
Marduk

Ambiguities and questions are raised. First, are Anšar—Kišar the third generation in turn, offspring of Laḫmu—Laḫamu, or a second pair born to Apsû—Tiāmat? The narrative is silent on this matter. Also nothing is written about Damkina's origin. Is this silence a reaction to the problem in any such theogony that after the first generation it implies brother and sister marriages that were taboo in Sumero-Babylonian society? The one clear conclusion that emerges from this text is that the universe began with water, and creation started from that.

Enlil, city god of the town Nippur, was usually the most important god of later third-millennium and succeeding second-millennium Babylonia. His status was related to that of his town, Nippur, which had high religious standing, but was never a political centre of power. Thus its god was everywhere accepted in Sumer, traditionally a land of city states. As noted before, by 2000 B.C.E. there was a generally accepted ranking of all the major Sumerian gods with a group of three at the top: An, Enlil and Enki/Ea, occasionally joined by a fourth, the Mother Goddess. Of these four Enlil was commonly supplied with a theogony. An occasionally had this honour, but not Enki or the Mother Goddess. Thus these two theogonies are major sources for concepts of creation. Enlil had a spouse Ninlil, though curiously scribes in the middle of the third millennium write slightly different signs for LÍL following En- as compared with LÍL following Nin-, but that is a scribal whim. En means "lord" and Nin "lady", and thus Enlil provided thinkers with a bisexual pair, and their divine ancestors connected them with the primaeval matching pair. This ancestry of Enlil in list form is frequently found in lists of gods' names and in liturgies and exorcistic texts where they are invoked to bring divine power into play. The earliest of these occur in lists of gods' names coming from two Sumerian sites: Fara (ancient Šuruppak) and Abu Šalābīkh, both dating to roughly the middle of the third millennium. The lists generally are very different, but the ancestry of Enlil is the same in both sources, and in each case it does not head the list.

It reads:

En-ki	Nin-ki
En-lil	Nin-lil
En-Uḫ	Nin-Uḫ
En-bulug	Nin-bulug
En-du-utu'a	Nin-du-utu'a
En-gukkal	Nin-gukkal
En-a	Nin-a

P. Mander, *Il Pantheon di Abu Šalābīkh*, Naples, 1986, pp. 29, 109

Understanding this list depends on study of all the different ones so far known in the light of such other knowledge that we have. The one just given is the only third-millennium example so far known, but there are many examples spread over the second millennium and the first half of the first, to which we shall soon turn, but our comments on the above result from study of all. In this earliest example alone Enlil and Ninlil occur second. Later they are always put last, or their position there is

otherwise indicated. But Enki—Ninki always come first. They are, then, like Apsû—Tiāmat in Marduk's theogony, the original matter of the universe. Study of meanings of the names is thus required, something which the ancient scholars occupied themselves with.

The Sumerian *lil* means "breath, vapour, nothingness," so not surprisingly the ancients do not involve themselves in the exposition of the name Enlil. It might allude to the gap in the universe between a solid heavens and the solid earth, where human activity takes place, and where Nippur was religiously supreme. The meaning of *ki* is "earth", and this Enki (—Ninki) is not to be confused with Enki/Ea, whose name has properly a final -g, usually dropped, and the meaning of this *kig* is unknown. Thus in this tradition the universe began with *ki* "earth", (perhaps to be given a capital: Earth) in two genders, from which all else eventually emerged. In Marduk's ancestry the pairs intervening between *primaeval* water and the hero do not supply a rational succession of stages in the development of the universe, as one might have expected from ancient Egyptian parallels, and the same holds for Enlil's ancestry. The Sumerian *uḫ* means "louse", but later versions replace it with *garaš* "leek", which suggests the Sumerian *giriš* "butterfly", which in early Sumerian script is written with a sign which could be confused or interchanged with the sign *uḫ*. The sign *bulug* has a variety of meanings ("great, malt, control"), none particularly apposite. But *du* is "hill", and *utu'a* "breeding ram" and *gukkal* "fat-tailed sheep". In the last a is "arm" or "strength". The result is clear: the names of these pairs, save for the first, are irrelevant for cosmology. This is confirmed by two pieces of evidence. The various lists vary enormously, indeed it is difficult to find two which exactly agree. They vary in length from three to twenty-two, though all begin with Enki—Ninki and end or presume Enlil—Ninlil. Also already in the third millennium they can be summed up as "the Enkis, the Ninkis" (Sumerian: Enki-(e)ne Ninki-(e)ne).

Of the many later examples two only will be given here, an Old Babylonian god list (c. 1700–1600 B.C.E.), and a first-millennium copy of an incantation of earlier origin, being their sources. We give the significant element in each name, omitting the Ens and Nins, and translating or giving comment when helpful. A detailed discussion would be very long and not helpful.

Old Babylonian god list	Incantation	
ki	ki	"earth"
ul	mul	"star" or "shining"
mul		
nun	lu	"lordly", "much"
kur		"mountain"
kingal		"president"?
šar	šar	"totality"
buluḫ		
bulug		(two variants?)
giriš		"butterfly"
dašurimma		"side of dung"
amaš		"sheep-pen"
dukuga	dukuga	"holy hill"
anna		"of heaven"
utila	utila	"living days"
mešarra	mešarra	"total decrees"
	H. de Genouillac, RA 20 (1923) 97	K 9417+, 6916, 9992

Some of these listings offer explanatory summaries at the end:

Old Babylonian:

Mother Ninlil, father Enlil (VAS 2 11 v 1–7)

Mother of Enlil, father of Enlil (PRAK II C 72 obv. 13–17)

Lord of mother-father of Enlil, lady of mother-father of Enlil (W. G. Lambert, in J.-M. Durand and J.-R. Kupper eds., *Miscellanea Babylonica* (Paris, 1985) p. 182)

First millennium incantations:

Lords of mother-father of Enlil (K 9417+, etc.)

Lord of mother-father of Enlil, lady of mother-father of Ninlil (CT 16 13 11–28, etc.)

The variety in these "explanations" of the lists of En- Nin- pairs shows that the lists were traditional, but the explanation was not fixed. And there seem to be two alternatives. Either each pair in the lists begat the following pair, with the implication of incest, or each male and each female of the pairs was conceived to be an evolved form of the previous one, that Enlil slowly evolved from Enki, and Ninlil from Ninki. The term "mother-father" is clearly a technical term for such pairs, but its order so blatantly contradicts that of the whole tradition of these lists that it must have been a distinct mythological motif in origin. We have unfortunately no other material from this "feminist" tradition.

Other differing traditions were from time to time inserted into the Enkis and Ninkis. In some texts an extra line is prefixed:

An (and) Urash; Earth, where barley sprouted

S.A. Smith, *Miscellaneous Assyrian Texts*, p. 12

Urash in Sumerian is "earth", and in this context a deity, female, so that this expresses the idea of origins as being in a male heaven and female earth mentioned above. The mention of barley, the typical Sumerian grain, is another small myth of origins: plant life in barley was first from the copulation of heaven and earth.

By chance there is one mid-third-millennium occurrence of this theology not in list-form, but in part of a literary text. It seems that only the introduction of the text was written on this tablet, and that is damaged, but the lines relevant here are complete:

At that time Enki and Nunki had not emerged,  
Enlil did not exist, Ninlil did not exist...

Nunki for Ninki is no problem: it occurs elsewhere, and in Hittite Enki Ninki appear as Minki Ammunki. The occurrence in this context is typical: Sumerian authors often begin their story with, in effect, "In the beginning" and then move on by appropriate stages to the main narrative.

The theology of Anu ("Heaven") is more relevant to that of Marduk because he was Marduk's grandfather, while Enlil was the god deposed to make way for Marduk at the head of the pantheon, so to be ignored or downgraded. While it is possible to consider Marduk's ancestry in the Epic of Creation as Anu's also, in fact the Epic has constructed its own theology uniquely, to our knowledge, headed by a male and female watery pair. Anu had a theology of his own which was entirely different save for one pair. The Old Babylonian list of gods' names from which we excerpted Enlil's theology above also gives one for Anu:

An ("Heaven")

Anšargal ("Great whole heaven")

En-uru-ulla ("Lord of the primaeval city")

Uraš ("Earth")

Bēlet-ili ("Lady of the gods")

Namma ("?")

Ama-tu-an-ki ("Mother who bore heaven and earth")

In this list all the names are put in single columns, and while there was no difficulty in noting that e.g. Enki, Ninki are a matching pair, there is no such self-evident explanation of Anu's ancestry. He comes first in accordance with the general style of the whole list, and Anšargal could be another name of his, or the name of his father. If the latter, then this short list is in reverse chronological order. The final name suggests a prime mover, and the present writer accepts this and the implication that for chronological sequence one must read upwards. But even that is not the end of the matter. The present writer proposes the following arrangement of the list for normal sequence:

Namma (= Ama-tu-an-ki)

Uraš (= Bēlet-ili)

En-uru-ulla

An (= Anšargal)

Namma is Enki's mother, commonly without any specified spouse, and since Enki/Ea was god of the subterranean waters, it may be suspected that his mother was similarly associated. Her name is written with the sign ENGUR, which is another name of the Apsû. Ama-tu-an-ki is certainly an epithet rather than a primary name, so no doubt it is a title of Namma. Uraš ("Earth") is no doubt described as "Lady of the gods" because that was a real name in common use referring to the Mother Goddess, who was associated with the earth. Little is known of En-uru-ulla.

Thus the pertinent result from this list is that cosmic water came first and was followed by Earth, on which cities were built, and finally by heaven. The sequence "earth-heaven" is supported by a few third-millennium examples in literary texts, contrary to the common "heaven-earth". Similarly Genesis 1 also begins with earth and water, while heaven is created later. Later versions of this theology of Anu turn it into a list of male-female pairs by creating matching pairs: Anšargal—Ninšargal; En-uru-ulla—Nin-uru-ulla, and by drawing on another, entirely different theology for Anu.

This alternative ancestry occurs in its least manipulated form in Babylonian incantations known to us from first-millennium copies, but certainly of older origin. Two examples only are given here:

Dūri—Dāri

Laḥamu—Laḥamu

Alala—Belili

KAR 22 obv. 23–25

Dūri—Dāri

Laḥmu—Laḥama

Engur—Gara

Alala—Belili

K 9417+, 6916, 9992

The first pair in both these lists have Semitic names meaning “ever and ever,” like the Hebrew *dôr wādôrî* and are not linguistically masculine and feminine, but are made into a male-female pair for the sake of the theogony. Laḥmu and Laḥamu have been incorporated into Marduk’s ancestry and commented on above. Alala occurs in a second-millennium Hurrian myth of origins but in Hittite language. According to this Alalu reigned first in heaven, for nine years, but was then deposed by Anu, who in turn lost to Kumarbi, and he in turn (apparently) to the storm god Teshub, but the text is very damaged and complicated at this point. The text does not state that Anu was son of Alalu, but the succession would allow ancient mythographers to draw that conclusion if they wished, even if the text did not imply that already. Thus we conclude that Alala—Belili were meant as parents of Anu, and so conclude this list, while Dūri—Dāri are chronologically the first. Here eternal time is the prime mover in creation, a rare and interesting concept since time is not a physical thing like earth and water.

There is in fact one second-millennium example Dūri—Dāri of interest. A short incantation in Elamite language but written in Babylonia and dated to the 26th year of Samsu-iluna of Babylon (c. 1724 B.C.E.) has two lines in dialectal Sumerian:

Dūri—Dāri, lord Enlil, Dāri—Dāri, lord Enlil

F. M. Th. Bohl, *Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeling Letterkunde*, Deel 78, Series B, no. 2, p. 8 (Amsterdam, 1934)

Most probably “lord Enlil” is abbreviated for “lords of mother-father of Enlil”, and here the motif of eternal time is made the ancestor of Enlil, a further example of variety in this material.

The four main myths considered so far were to some extent central to their civilization. Enlil and Anu were heads of the pantheon until about 1100 B.C., and Marduk was head thereafter. But not one of these four theogonies has enough narrative to satisfy our curiosity about these lists of pairs, or single figures, as handed down. Thus we shall now take up a narrative myth of the same date narrating the main events about these bisexual pairs which lead on to the world as currently constituted. This text is known from a single copy, much damaged on the reverse, and somewhat damaged on the obverse. It is also difficult to read and to understand, and the following rendering is given on the basis of repeated collation. The tablet is Babylonian but the only information about the origin of the text, provided by the damaged colophon, is that it antedates the fall of the Assyrian town Ashur in 614 B.C.E.

The text is both an account of origins by giving a series of bisexual pairs leading on to the gods worshipped in the author’s time, but it is also a succession myth like the Hittite text described above. The male of each pair rules until his successor deposes him. The action takes place, at least at the beginning of the narrative, in a town called Dunnu. There are several different places of that name known to us, and this text provides no geographical information. However, all the gods whose names survive on the damaged reverse belong to the pantheon of Nippur, so our Dunnu was presumably not far from that town. A Late Babylonian economic text does refer to Dunnu “in the district of Nippur.”

Translation BM 74329

- 1 [...] in the beginning [...]
- 2 [...]..and . [...]....[.]
- 3 They protected [...] and [hitched on] their plough.
- 4 [With the] stroke of their plough they brought Sea into being.
- 5 [Second]ly, by themselves they bore Amakandu;
- 6 [Third]ly, they both built the city of Dunnu, the primaeval city.
- 7 Ha’in dedicated the overlordship in the city of Dunnu to himself.
- 8 [Earth] cast her eyes on Amakandu, her son,
- 9 “Come, let me make love to you,” she said to him.
- 10 Amakandu married Earth, his mother, and
- 11 Ha’in, his [father] he killed [and]
- 12 Laid [him] to rest in the city of Dunnu, which he loved.
- 13 Then Amakandu took the overlordship of his father, [and]
- 14 ..married Sea, his sister [.]
- 15 Laḥar, son of Amakandu, went [and]
- 16 Killed Amakandu, and in the city of Dunnu
- 17 He laid [him] to rest in the...of his father.
- 18 He married [Sea] his mother.
- 19 Then Sea murdered Earth, her mother.
- 20 In the month Chislev on the 16th day they took the overlordship and  
kingship.
- 21 [...] son of Laḥar, married River, his own sister, and
- 22 He killed [Laḥar] his father, and Sea, his mother, and
- 23 Laid them to rest [in] a tomb like (?) the netherworld.
- 24 [In the month...] on the first day [he] took the kingship and over-  
lordship for himself.
- 25 [..., son of]...married Ga’u, his sister, and
- 26 [...] earth...
- 27 [...].....[.]
- 28 [...]..[.] fathers and . [...]

- 29 ...]...for...of the gods . [...]  
 30 ...] he killed River, his mother, [and]  
 31 ...] he settled them.  
 32 [In the month...on the .th day] he [took] the overlordship and kingship  
 for himself.

- 33 [... , son of ...], married Ningeštinna, his sister, [and]  
 34 Killed [... , his father, and] Ga'u, his mother, [and]  
 35 Settled them [...  
 36 [In the month...]. on the 16th (variant: 29th) day, [he took] the kingship  
 and overlordship.

- 37 ...] the child/servant of Hamurnu [...  
 38 ...] married his own sister, [and]  
 39 ...] took the overlordship of his father, and [...  
 40 ...he] killed him and [...  
 41 ...] to the city of Šupat-...  
 42 ...] . life [...

## Reverse

- 5 This [...  
 6 And Ungal-[Nibru...  
 9 Ninurta [...  
 11 Enlil [...  
 12 Nusku [...  
 15 Enlil... [...  
 16 Ninurta... [...

The actors in this drama can be listed as follows:

Ha'in	Earth
Amakandu	Sea
Lahar	
[...]	River
[...]	Ga'u
[...]	Ningeštinna

after which our text breaks off. The first three females are nothing unexpected in such a context, but the males are. Ha'in occurs only here, and is twice written clearly Ha'in, but nothing at all is known about him. The deity we have rendered Amakandu could also be rendered Šakkandu due to the complications of Sumerian writing, but in either case he was a god of domestic quadrupeds, sometimes involved with wild ones as well. Laḥar is a Babylonian common noun for "ewe", but the god Laḥar can be identified with the Sumerian god Shara, and in this text he is certainly male, and no doubt carries a connection with domestic flocks. Ga'um is our emendation of what the tablet has: "U'a'um," which is a deified exclamation "Alas!" The

deity Ga'um is little known but has strong connections with domestic flocks. Ningeštinna is goddess of wine.

The narrative is a horror of incest and murder, the prize going to Amakandu who murdered his father and then married first his mother and then his sister. The author of this text not only accepted the implication of incest is these "mother-father" pairs, but positively revelled in it, and so far from being satisfied with heroic battles to gain the succession to power, males and females alike in his story glibly commit murder. One distinctive feature of this text is the cultic allusions before each ruling. It seems that each succession to power as the preceding generation was finally killed off was commemorated in a cultic performance, presumably in the town Dunnu.

The figure Hamurnu in line 37 is obscured by the damaged surface of the tablet, but one suspects that he continued the tradition of his elders. His name in fact is the Hurrian word "Heaven", which is appropriate since nothing preceding in this text explains the origin of that part of the universe.

All the texts so far considered have creation set in motion by what were considered the primaeval parts of the universe. A different attitude is shown in a bilingual Sumero-Babylonian incantation. The first 40 lines can be reconstructed, but the end is so far lost:

## Translation

- 1 A pure temple, a temple of the gods, had not been made in a pure  
 place,  
 2 A reed had not sprouted, a tree had not been created,  
 3 A brick had not been moulded, a brick-mould had not been created,  
 4 A temple had not been made, a city had not been created,  
 5 A city had not been made, a settlement had not been established,  
 6 Nippur had not been made, Ekur had not been created,  
 7 Uruk had not been made, Eanna had not been created,  
 8 The Apsû had not been made, Eridu had not been created,  
 9 A pure temple, a temple of the gods, for them to dwell in, had not been  
 made,  
 10 But all the lands were sea,  
 11 And the spring in the sea was a water-pipe.  
 12 Then Eridu was made, Esagil was created,  
 13 Esagil, which Lugaldukuga founded in the Apsû.  
 (or, Esagil, where Lugaldukuga resided in the Apsû.)  
 14 Babylon was made, Esagil was completed.  
 15 He made the Anunnaki gods, all of them,  
 16 And they gave an exalted name to the pure city in which they were  
 pleased to dwell.

- 17 Marduk constructed a raft on the surface of the waters,
- 18 He made earth and heaped it up on the raft.
- 19 That the gods should be settled in a dwelling of their pleasure
- 20 He created mankind.
- 21 Aruru with him created the seed of mankind.
- 22 He created animals, the creatures in the open country,
- 23 He created the Tigris and Euphrates and put them in place,
- 24 Benevolently he assigned names to them.
- 25 He created canes, sedges, marshes, reeds and canebrakes,
- 26 He created the vegetation of the open country,
- 27 But the lands were marshes and reed-beds.
- 28 There were cow, the calf, the bull; the ewe, the lamb, the breeding ram.
- 29 There were palm groves and forests.
- 30 The wild sheep and the antelope were standing at his service.
- 31 The lord Marduk made a terrace on the edge of the sea,
- 32 ...] he turned the reed-beds into dry land.
- 33 ...] he brought into being.
- 34 [He made the reed grow], he created the tree,
- 35 ...] he created in the place,
- 36 [He moulded the brick], he created the brick-mould,
- 37 [He made the temple], he created the city,
- 38 [He created the city], he established the settlement,
- 39 [He made Nippur], he created Ekur,
- 40 [He made Uruk], he created [Eanna],

\* \* \*

First, in good Sumerian literary style, what was originally lacking is listed, with emphasis on the cities of the triad of Sumerian gods: Uruk of Anu, Nippur of Enlil, and Eridu of Enki/Ea. At the time described there was only water (line 10), and some kind of primaevial water circulation (line 11). The creation necessary to bring into being the present world is confused as described. The author wanted to have Marduk as the creator, and his city Babylon and his temple in it, Esagil, as the first items to be made. But Lugaldukuga is a name of Enki/Ea, not of Marduk, and Esagil is Marduk's temple in Babylon, not a temple in Eridu, Enki/Ea's town. "He" in line 15 must be Marduk and the Anunnaki are all the great gods, so Marduk is suddenly the prime god. And it is he who makes the earth by placing a raft on the existing cosmic water and heaping up earth on it. Then he creates the rest of the then-known universe, including Nippur and Uruk. It may be suspected that an original story of Enki's creation has been edited to put Marduk in Enki's place, with appropriate town and temple. But even here there is no complete creatio ex nihilo. Cosmic water apparently always existed. And Marduk simply appears: nothing

is said or implied about his origin, though Babylonian tradition makes him son of Enki/Ea.

Creation in Sumer and Babylon was a topic teeming with traditions which each author used and moulded as he wished. And the traditions were not peculiar to these people, but were part of traditions spread far and wide in the ancient world, at least from the Indus to ancient Greece. But comparative work on them is not part of our task here.

### *Appendix* *The Babylonian Epic of Creation*

#### Tablet I

1. When the heavens above did not exist,
2. And earth beneath had not come into being—
3. There was Apsû, the first in order, their begetter,
4. And demiurge Tiāmat, who gave birth to them all;
5. They had mingled their waters together
6. Before meadow-land had coalesced and reed-bed was to be found—
7. When not one of the gods had been formed
8. Or had come into being, when no destinies had been decreed,
9. The gods were created within them:
10. Laḫmu and Laḫamu were formed and came into being.
11. While they grew and increased in stature
12. Anšar and Kišar, who excelled them, were created.
13. They prolonged their days, they multiplied their years.
14. Anu, their son, could rival his fathers.
15. Anu, the son, equalled Anšar,
16. And Anu begat Nudimmud, his own equal.
17. Nudimmud was the champion among his fathers:
18. Profoundly discerning, wise, of robust strength;
19. Very much stronger than his father's begetter, Anšar
20. He had no rival among the gods, his brothers.
21. The divine brothers came together,
22. Their clamour got loud, throwing Tiāmat into a turmoil.
23. They jarred the nerves of Tiāmat,
24. And by their dancing they spread alarm in Anduruna.
25. Apsû did not diminish their clamour,
26. And Tiāmat was silent when confronted with them.
27. Their conduct was displeasing to her,
28. Yet though their behaviour was not good, she wished to spare them.
29. Thereupon Apsû, the begetter of the great gods,
30. Called Mummu, his vizier, and addressed him,
31. "Vizier Mummu, who gratifies my pleasure,
32. Come, let us go to Tiāmat!"

33. They went and sat, facing Tiāmat,
34. As they conferred about the gods, their sons.
35. Apsû opened his mouth
36. And addressed Tiāmat
37. "Their behaviour has become displeasing to me
38. And I cannot rest in the day-time or sleep at night.
39. I will destroy and break up their way of life
40. That silence may reign and we may sleep."
41. When Tiāmat heard this
42. She raged and cried out to her spouse,
43. She cried in distress, fuming within herself,
44. She grieved over the (plotted) evil,
45. "How can we destroy what we have given birth to?
46. Though their behaviour causes distress, let us tighten discipline  
graciously."
47. Mummu spoke up with counsel for Apsû—
48. (As from) a rebellious vizier was the counsel of his Mummu—
49. "Destroy, my father, that lawless way of life,
50. That you may rest in the day-time and sleep by night!"
51. Apsû was pleased with him, his face beamed
52. Because he had plotted evil against the gods, his sons.
53. Mummu put his arms around Apsû's neck,
54. He sat on his knees kissing him.
55. What they plotted in their gathering
56. Was reported to the gods, their sons.
57. The gods heard it and were frantic.
58. They were overcome with silence and sat quietly.
59. The one who excels in knowledge, the skilled and learned,
60. Ea, who knows everything, perceived their tricks.
61. He fashioned it and made it to be all-embracing,
62. He executed it skilfully as supreme—his pure incantation.
63. He recited it and set it on the waters,
64. He poured sleep upon him as he was slumbering deeply.
65. He put Apsû to slumber as he poured out sleep,
66. And Mummu, the counsellor, was breathless with agitation.
67. He split (Apsû's) sinews, ripped off his crown,
68. Carried away his aura and put it on himself.
69. He bound Apsû and killed him;
70. Mummu he confined and handled roughly.
71. He set his dwelling upon Apsû,
72. And laid hold on Mummu, keeping the nose-rope in his hand.
73. After Ea had bound and slain his enemies,
74. Had achieved victory over his foes,
75. He rested quietly in his chamber,
76. He called it Apsû, whose shrines he appointed.
77. Then he founded his living-quarters within it,
78. And Ea and Damkina, his wife, sat in splendour.

79. In the chamber of the destinies, the room of the archetypes,
80. The wisest of the wise, the sage of the gods, Bēl was conceived.
81. In Apsû was Marduk born,
82. In pure Apsû was Marduk born.
83. Ea his father begat him,
84. Damkina his mother bore him.
85. He sucked the breasts of goddesses,
86. A nurse reared him and filled him with terror.
87. His figure was well developed, the glance of his eyes was dazzling,
88. His growth was manly, he was mighty from the beginning.
89. Anu, his father's begetter, saw him,
90. He exulted and smiled; his heart filled with joy.
91. Anu rendered him perfect: his divinity was remarkable,
92. And he became very lofty, excelling them in his attributes.
93. His members were incomprehensibly wonderful,
94. Incapable of being grasped with the mind, hard even to look on.
95. Four were his eyes, four his ears,
96. Flame shot forth as he moved his lips.
97. His four ears grew large,
98. And his eyes likewise took in everything.
99. His figure was lofty and superior in comparison with the gods,
100. His limbs were surpassing, his nature was superior:
101. 'Mari-utu, Mari-utu,
102. The Son, the Sun-god, the Sun-god of the gods.'
103. He was clothed with the aura of the Ten Gods, so exalted was his  
strength,
104. The Fifty Dreads were loaded upon him.
105. Anu formed and gave birth to the four winds,
106. He delivered them to him, "My son, let them whirl!"
107. He formed dust and set a hurricane to drive it,
108. He made a wave to bring consternation on Tiāmat.
109. Tiāmat was confounded; day and night she was frantic.
110. The gods took no rest, they.....
111. In their minds they plotted evil,
112. And addressed their mother Tiāmat,
113. "When Apsû, your spouse, was killed,
114. You did not go at his side, but sat quietly.
115. The four dreadful winds have been fashioned
116. To throw you into confusion, and we cannot sleep.
117. You gave no thought to Apsû, your spouse,
118. Nor to Mummu, who is a prisoner. Now you sit alone.
119. Henceforth you will be in frantic consternation!
120. And as for us, who cannot rest, you do not love us!
121. Consider our burden, our eyes are hollow.
122. Break the immovable yoke that we may sleep.
123. Make battle, avenge them!
124. [...]....reduce to nothingness!

125. Tiāmat heard, the speech pleased her,
126. (She said,) "Let us make demons, [as you] have advised."
127. The gods assembled within her.
128. They conceived [evil] against the gods their begetters.
129. They.....and took the side of Tiāmat,
130. Fiercely plotting, unresting by night and day,
131. Lusting for battle, raging, storming,
132. They set up a host to bring about conflict.
133. Mother Hubur, who forms everything,
134. Supplied irresistible weapons, and gave birth to giant serpents.
135. They had sharp teeth, they were merciless....
136. With poison instead of blood she filled their bodies.
137. She clothed the fearful monsters with dread,
138. She loaded them with an aura and made them godlike.
139. (She said,) "Let their onlooker feebly perish,
140. May they constantly leap forward and never retire."
141. She created the Hydra, the Dragon, the Hairy Hero
142. The Great Demon, the Savage Dog, and the Scorpion-man,
143. Fierce demons, the Fish-man, and the Bull-man,
144. Carriers of merciless weapons, fearless in the face of battle.
145. Her commands were tremendous, not to be resisted.
146. Altogether she made eleven of that kind.
147. Among the gods, her sons, whom she constituted her host,
148. She exalted Qingu, and magnified him among them.
149. The leadership of the army, the direction of the host,
150. The bearing of weapons, campaigning, the mobilization of conflict,
151. The chief executive power of battle, supreme command,
152. She entrusted to him and set him on a throne,
153. "I have cast the spell for you and exalted you in the host of the gods,
154. I have delivered to you the rule of all the gods.
155. You are indeed exalted, my spouse, you are renowned,
156. Let your commands prevail over all the Anunnaki."
157. She gave him the Tablet of Destinies and fastened it to his breast,
158. (Saying) "Your order may not be changed; let the utterance of your  
mouth he firm."
159. After Qingu was elevated and had acquired the power of Anuship,
160. He decreed the destinies for the gods, her sons:
161. "May the utterance of your mouths subdue the fire-god,
162. May your poison by its accumulation put down aggression."

## Tablet II

1. Tiāmat gathered together her creation
2. And organised battle against the gods, her offspring.
3. Henceforth Tiāmat plotted evil because of Apsū.
4. It became known to Ea that she had arranged the conflict.
5. Ea heard this matter,
6. He lapsed into silence in his chamber and sat motionless.

7. After he had reflected and his anger had subsided
8. He directed his steps to Anšar his father.
9. He entered the presence of the father of his begetter, Anšar,
10. And related to him all of Tiāmat's plotting.
11. "My father, Tiāmat our mother has conceived a hatred for us,
12. She has established a host in her savage fury.
13. All the gods have turned to her,
14. Even those you (pl.) begat also take her side
15. They.....and took the side of Tiāmat,
16. Fiercely plotting, unresting by night and day,
17. Lusting for battle, raging, storming,
18. They set up a host to bring about conflict.
19. Mother Hubur, who forms everything,
20. Supplied irresistible weapons, and gave birth to giant serpents.
21. They had sharp teeth, they were merciless.
22. With poison instead of blood she filled their bodies.
23. She clothed the fearful monsters with dread,
24. She loaded them with an aura and made them godlike.
25. (She said,) "Let their onlooker feebly perish,
26. May they constantly leap forward and never retire."
27. She created the Hydra, the Dragon, the Hairy Hero,
28. The Great Demon, the Savage Dog, and the Scorpion-man,
29. Fierce demons, the Fish-man, and the Bull-man,
30. Carriers of merciless weapons, fearless in the face of battle.
31. Her commands were tremendous, not to be resisted.
32. Altogether she made eleven of that kind.
33. Among the gods, her sons, whom she constituted her host,
34. She exalted Qingu and magnified him among them.
35. The leadership of the army, the direction of the host,
36. The bearing of weapons, campaigning, the mobilization of conflict,
37. The chief executive power of battle, supreme command,
38. She entrusted to him and set him on a throne.
39. "I have cast the spell for you and exalted you in the host of the gods,
40. I have delivered to you the rule of all the gods.
41. You are indeed exalted, my spouse, you are renowned,
42. Let your commands prevail over all the Anunnaki."
43. She gave him the tablet of Destinies and fastened it to his breast,
44. (Saying) "Your order may not be changed; let the utterance of your  
mouth be firm."
45. After Qingu was elevated and had acquired the power of Anuship
46. He decreed the destinies for the gods, her sons:
47. "May the utterance of your mouths subdue the fire-god,
48. May your poison by its accumulation put down aggression."
49. Anšar heard; the matter was profoundly disturbing.
50. He cried "Woe!" and bit his lip.
51. His heart was in fury, his mind could not be calmed.
52. Over Ea his son his cry was faltering.



53. "My son, you who provoked the war,
54. Take responsibility for whatever you alone have done!
55. You set out and killed Apsû,
56. And as for Tiāmat, whom you made furious, where is her equal?"
57. The gatherer of counsel, the learned prince,
58. The creator of wisdom, the god Nudimmud
59. With soothing words and calming utterance
60. Gently answered [his] father Anšar.
61. "My father, deep mind, who decrees destiny,
62. Who has the power to bring into being and destroy,
63. Anšar, deep mind, who decrees destiny,
64. Who has the power to bring into being and to destroy,
65. I want to say something to you, calm down for me for a moment
66. And consider that I performed a helpful deed.
67. Before I killed Apsû
68. Who could have seen the present situation?
69. Before I quickly made an end of him
70. What were the circumstances were I to destroy him?"
71. Anšar heard, the words pleased him.
72. His heart relaxed to speak to Ea,
73. "My son, your deeds are fitting for a god,
74. You are capable of a fierce, unequalled blow... [...]
75. Ea, your deeds are fitting for a god,
76. You are capable of a fierce, unequalled blow... [...]
77. Go before Tiāmat and appease her attack,
78. ... [...]. . . her fury with [your] incantation."
79. He heard the speech of Anšar his father,
80. He took the road to her, proceeded on the route to her.
81. He went, he perceived the tricks of Tiāmat,
82. [He stopped], fell silent, and turned back.
83. [He] entered the presence of august Anšar
84. Penitently addressing him,
85. "[My father], Tiāmat's deeds are too much for me.
86. I perceived her planning, and [my] incantation was not equal (to it).
87. Her strength is mighty, she is full of dread,
88. She is altogether very strong, none can go against her.
89. Her very loud cry did not diminish,
90. [I became afraid] of her cry and turned back.
91. [My father], do not lose hope, send a second person against her.
92. Though a woman's strength is very great, it is not equal to a man's.
93. Disband her cohorts, break up her plans
94. Before she lays her hands on us."
95. Anšar cried out in intense fury,
96. Addressing Anu his son,
97. "Honoured son, hero, warrior,
98. Whose strength is mighty, whose attack is irresistible

99. Hasten and stand before Tiāmat,
100. Appease her rage that her heart may relax
101. If she does not harken to your words,
102. Address to her words of petition that she may be appeased."
103. He heard the speech of Anšar his father,
104. He took the road to her, proceeded on the route to her.
105. Anu went, he perceived the tricks of Tiāmat,
106. He stopped, fell silent, and turned back.
107. He entered the presence of Anšar the father who begat him,
108. Penitently addressing him.
109. "My father, Tiāmat's [deeds] are too much for me.
110. I perceived her planning, but my [incantation] was not [equal] (to it).
111. Her strength is mighty, she is [full] of dread,
112. She is altogether very strong, no one [can go against her].
113. Her very loud noise does not diminish,
114. I became afraid of her cry and turned back.
115. My father, do not lose hope, send another person against her.
116. Though a woman's strength is very great, it is not equal to a man's.
117. Disband her cohorts, break up her plans,
118. Before she lays her hands on us."
119. Anšar lapsed into silence, staring at the ground,
120. He nodded to Ea, shaking his head.
121. The Igigi and all the Anunnaki had assembled,
122. They sat in tight-lipped silence.
123. No god would go to face... [...]
124. Would go out against Tiāmat... [...]
125. Yet the lord Anšar, the father of the great gods,
126. Was angry in his heart, and did not summon any one.
127. A mighty son, the avenger of his father,
128. He who hastens to war, the warrior Marduk,
129. Ea summoned (him) to his private chamber
130. To explain to him his plans.
131. "Marduk, give counsel, listen to your father.
132. You are my son, who gives me pleasure,
133. Go reverently before Anšar,
134. Speak, take your stand, appease him with your glance."
135. Bēl rejoiced at his father's words,
136. He drew near and stood in the presence of Anšar.
137. Anšar saw him, his heart filled with satisfaction,
138. He kissed his lips and removed his fear.
139. "My [father] do not hold your peace, but speak forth,
140. I will go and fulfil your desires!
141. [Anšar,] do not hold your peace, but speak forth,
142. I will go and fulfil your desires!
143. Which man has drawn up his battle array against you?
144. And will Tiāmat, who is a woman, attack you with (her) weapons?

145. ["My father], begetter, rejoice and he glad,
146. Soon you will tread on the neck of Tiāmat!
147. [Anšar], begetter, rejoice and be glad,
148. Soon you will tread on the neck of Tiāmat!
149. ["Go,] my son, conversant with all knowledge,
150. Appease Tiāmat with your pure spell.
151. Drive the storm chariot without delay,
152. And with a [...] which cannot be repelled turn her back."
153. Bēl rejoiced at his father's words,
154. With glad heart he addressed his father,
155. "Lord of the gods, Destiny of the great gods,
156. If I should become your avenger,
157. If I should bind Tiāmat and preserve you,
158. Convene an assembly and proclaim for me an exalted destiny.
159. Sit, all of you, in Upšukkinakku with gladness.
160. And let me, with my utterance, decree destinies instead of you.
161. Whatever I instigate must not be changed.
162. Nor may my command be nullified or altered."

## Tablet III

1. Anšar opened his mouth
2. And addressed Kaka, his vizier,
3. "Vizier Kaka, who gratifies my pleasure,
4. I will send you to Laḥmu and Laḥamu.
5. You are skilled in making inquiry, learned in address.
6. Have the gods, my fathers, brought to my presence.
7. Let all the gods be brought,
8. Let them confer as they sit at table.
9. Let them eat grain, let them drink ale,
10. Let them decree the destiny for Marduk their avenger.
11. Go, be gone, Kaka, stand before them,
12. And repeat to them all that I tell you:
13. "Anšar, your son, has sent me,
14. And I am to explain his plans.

15-52. = II, 11\*-48 (\* instead of "My father," put "Thus,")

53. I sent Anu, but he could not face her.
54. Nudimmud took fright and retired.
55. Marduk, the sage of the gods, your son, has come forward,
56. He has determined to meet Tiāmat.
57. He has spoken to me and said,

58-64. = II, 156\*-162 (\* begin with quotation marks: "If)

65. Quickly, now, decree your destiny for him without delay,
66. That he may go and face your powerful enemy."
67. Kaka went. He directed his steps

68. To Laḥmu and Laḥamu, the gods his fathers.
69. He prostrated himself, he kissed the ground before them,
70. He got up, saying to them as he stood,

71-124. = II, 13-66

125. When Laḥḥa and Laḥamu heard, they cried aloud.
126. All the Igigi moaned in distress,
127. "What has gone wrong that she took this decision about us?"
128. We did not know what Tiāmat was doing."
129. All the great gods who decree destinies
130. Gathered as they went,
131. They entered the presence of Anšar and became filled with [joy],
132. They kissed one another as they [...] in the assembly.
133. They conferred as they sat at table,
134. They ate grain, they drank ale.
135. They strained the sweet liquor through their straws,
136. As they drank beer and felt good,
137. They became quite carefree, their mood was merry,
138. And they decreed the fate for Marduk, their avenger.

## Tablet IV

1. They set a lordly dais for him
2. And he took his seat before his fathers to receive kingship.
3. (They said,) "You are the most honoured among the great gods,
4. Your destiny is unequalled, your command is like Anu's.
5. Marduk, you are the most honoured among the great gods,
6. Your destiny is unequalled, your command is like Anu's.
7. Henceforth your order will not be annulled,
8. It is in your power to exalt and abase.
9. Your utterance is sure, your command cannot be rebelled against,
10. None of the gods will transgress the line you draw.
11. Shrines for all the gods needs provisioning,
12. That you may be established where their sanctuaries are.
13. You are Marduk, our avenger,
14. We have given you kingship over the sum of the whole universe.
15. Take your seat in the assembly, let your word be exalted,
16. Let your weapons not miss the mark, but may they slay your enemies.
17. Bēl, spare him who trusts in you,
18. But destroy the god who set his mind on evil."
19. They set a constellation in the middle
20. And addressed Marduk, their son,
21. "Your destiny, Bēl, is superior to that of all the gods,
22. Command and bring about annihilation and re-creation.
23. Let the constellation disappear at your utterance,
24. With a second command let the constellation reappear."
25. He gave the command and the constellation disappeared,

26. With a second command the constellation came into being again.
27. When the gods, his fathers, saw (the effect of) his utterance,
28. They rejoiced and offered congratulation: "Marduk is the king!"
29. They added to him a mace, a throne, and a rod,
30. They gave him an irresistible weapon that overwhelms the foe:
31. (They said,) "Go, cut Tiāmat's throat,
32. And let the winds bear up her blood to give the news."
33. The gods, his fathers, decreed the destiny of Bēl.
34. And set him on the road, the way of prosperity and success.
35. He fashioned a bow and made it his weapon,
36. He set an arrow in place, put the bow string on.
37. He took up his club and held it in his right hand,
38. His bow and quiver he hung at his side.
39. He placed lightning before him,
40. And filled his body with tongues of flame.
41. He made a net to enmesh the entrails of Tiāmat,
42. And stationed the four winds that no part of her escape.
43. The South Wind, the North Wind, the East Wind, the West Wind,
44. He put beside his net, winds given by his father, Anu.
45. He fashioned the Evil Wind, the Dust Storm, Tempest.
46. The Four-fold Wind, the Seven-fold Wind, the Chaos-spreading  
Wind, the.... Wind.
47. He sent out the seven winds that he had fashioned,
48. And they took their stand behind him to harass Tiāmat's entrails.
49. Bēl took up the Storm-flood, his great weapon,
50. He rode the fearful chariot of the irresistible storm.
51. Four steeds he yoked to it and harnessed them to it,
52. The Destroyer, The Merciless, The Trampler, The Fleet.
53. Their lips were parted, their teeth bore venom,
54. They were strangers to weariness, trained to sweep forward.
55. At his right hand he stationed raging battle and strife,
56. On the left, conflict that overwhelms a united battle array.
57. He was clad in a tunic, a fearful coat of mail,
58. And on his head he wore an aura of terror.
59. Bēl proceeded and set out on his way,
60. He set his face toward the raging Tiāmat.
61. In his lips he held a spell,
62. He grasped a plant to counter poison in his hand,
63. Thereupon they milled around him, the gods milled around him,
64. The gods, his fathers, milled around him, the gods milled around him.
65. Bēl drew near, surveying the maw of Tiāmat,
66. He observed the tricks of Qingu, her spouse.
67. As he looked, he lost his nerve,
68. His determination went and he faltered.
69. His divine aides, who were marching at his side,
70. Saw the warrior, the foremost, and their vision became dim.
71. Tiāmat cast her spell without turning her neck,

72. In her lips she held untruth and lies,
73. "[ . ] .....
74. In their [ . ] . they have assembled by you."
75. Bēl [lifted up] the Storm-flood, his great weapon,
76. And with these words threw it at the raging Tiāmat,
77. "Why are you aggressive and arrogant,
78. And strive to provoke battle?"
79. The younger generation have shouted, outraging their elders,
80. But you, their mother, hold pity in contempt.
81. Qingu you have named to be your spouse,
82. And you have improperly appointed him to the rank of Anuship.
83. Against Anšar, king of the gods, you have stirred up trouble,
84. And against the gods, my fathers, your trouble is established.
85. Deploy your troops, gird on your weapons,
86. You and I will take our stand and do battle."
87. When Tiāmat heard this
88. She went insane and lost her reason.
89. Tiāmat cried aloud and fiercely,
90. All her lower members trembled beneath her.
91. She was reciting an incantation, kept reciting her spell,
92. While the (battle-)gods were sharpening their weapons of war.
93. Tiāmat and Marduk, the sage of the gods, came together,
94. Joining in strife, drawing near to battle.
95. Bēl spread out his net and enmeshed her;
96. He let loose the Evil Wind, the rear guard, in her face.
97. Tiāmat opened her mouth to swallow it,
98. She let the Evil Wind in so that she could not close her lips.
99. The fierce winds weighed down her belly.
100. Her inwards were distended and she opened her mouth wide.
101. He let fly an arrow and pierced her belly,
102. He tore open her entrails and slit her inwards,
103. He bound her and extinguished her life.
104. He threw down her corpse and stood on it.
105. After he had killed Tiāmat, the leader,
106. Her assembly dispersed, her host scattered.
107. Her divine aides, who went beside her,
108. In trembling and fear beat a retreat.
109. .... to save their lives,
110. But they were completely surrounded, unable to escape.
111. He bound them and broke their weapons,
112. And they lay enmeshed, sitting in a snare,
113. Hiding in corners, filled with grief,
114. Bearing his punishment, held in a prison.
115. The eleven creatures who were laden with fearfulness,
116. The throng of devils who went as grooms at her right hand,
117. He put ropes upon them and bound their arms,
118. Together with their warfare he trampled them beneath him.

119. Now Qingu, who had risen to power among them,
120. He bound and reckoned with the Dead Gods.
121. He took from him the Tablet of Destinies, which was not properly his,
122. Sealed it with a seal and fastened it to his own breast.
123. After the warrior Marduk had bound and slain his enemies,
124. Had.... the arrogant enemy....,
125. Had established victory for Anšar over all his foes,
126. Had fulfilled the desire of Nudimmud.
127. He strengthened his hold on the Bound Gods,
128. And returned to Tiāmat, whom he had bound.
129. Bēl placed his feet on the lower parts of Tiāmat
130. And with his merciless club smashed her skull.
131. He severed her arteries
132. And let the North Wind bear up (her blood) to give the news.
133. His fathers saw it and were glad and exulted;
134. They brought gifts and presents to him.
135. Bēl rested, surveying the corpse,
136. In order to divide the lump by a clever scheme.
137. He split her into two like a dried fish:
138. One half of her he set up and stretched out as the heavens.
139. He stretched the skin and appointed a watch
140. With the instruction not to let her waters escape.
141. He crossed over the heavens, surveyed the celestial parts,
142. And adjusted them to match the Apsū, Nudimmud's abode.
143. Bēl measured the shape of the Apsū
144. And set up Ešarra, a replica of Ešgalla.
145. In Ešgalla, Ešarra which he had built, and the heavens.
146. He settled in their shrines Anu, Enlil, and Ea.

## Tablet V

1. He fashioned heavenly stations for the great gods,
2. And set up constellations, the patterns of the stars.
3. He appointed the year, marked off divisions,
4. And set up three stars each for the twelve months.
5. After he had organized the year,
6. He established the heavenly station of Nēberu to fix the stars' intervals.
7. That none should transgress or be slothful
8. He fixed the heavenly stations of Enlil and Ea with it.
9. Gates he opened on both sides,
10. And put strong bolts at the left and the right.
11. He placed the heights (of heaven) in her (Tiāmat's) belly,
12. He created Nannar, entrusting to him the night.
13. He appointed him as the jewel of the night to fix the days,
14. And month by month without ceasing he elevated him with a crown,
15. (Saying,) "Shine over the land at the beginning of the month,
16. Resplendent with horns to fix six days.

17. On the seventh day the crown will be half size,
18. On the fifteenth day, halfway through each month, stand in opposition.
19. When Šamaš [sees] you on the horizon,
20. Diminish in the proper stages and shine backwards.
21. On the 29th day, draw near to the path of Šamaš,
22. [...] the 30th day, stand in conjunction and rival Šamaš.
23. I have (....) . the sign, follow its track,
24. Draw near..(.....) give judgment.
25. .[...] . Šamaš, constrain [murder] and violence,
26. .[.....].me.

\* \* \* \* \*

35. At the end [...]
36. Let there [be] the 29th day [...]"
37. After [he had....] the decrees [...]
38. The organization of front and . [...]
39. He made the day [...]
40. Let the year be equally [...]
41. At the new year [...]
42. The year..... [...]
43. Let there be regularly [...]
44. The projecting bolt [...]
45. After he had [...]
46. The watches of night and day [...]
47. The foam which Tiāmat [...]
48. Marduk fashioned [...]
49. He gathered it together and made it into clouds.
50. The raging of the winds, violent rainstorms.
51. The billowing of mist—the accumulation of her spittle—
52. He appointed for himself and took them in his hand.
53. He put her head in position and poured out..[.] .
54. He opened the abyss and it was sated with water.
55. From her two eyes he let the Euphrates and Tigris flow,
56. He blocked her nostrils, but left ..
57. He heaped up the distant [mountains] on her breasts,
58. He bored wells to channel the springs.
59. He twisted her tail and wove it into the Durmahu,
60. [...]..the Apsū beneath his feet.
61. [He set up] her crotch—it wedged up the heavens—
62. [(Thus) the half of her] he stretched out and made it firm as the earth.
63. [After] he had finished his work inside Tiāmat,
64. [He spread] his net and let it right out.
65. He surveyed the heavens and the earth..[.] .
66. [...] their bonds.....
67. After he had formulated his regulations and composed [his] decrees,
68. He attached guide-ropes and put them in Ea's hands.

69. [The Tablet] of Destinies which Qingu had taken and carried,  
 70. He took charge of it as a trophy (?) and presented it to Anu.  
 71. [The.] of battle, which he had tied on or had put on his head,  
 72. [.] he brought before his fathers.  
 73. [Now] the eleven creatures to which Tīāmat had given birth and...,  
 74. He broke their weapons and bound them (the creatures) to his feet.  
 75. He made images of them and stationed them at the [Gate] of the Apsû,  
 76. To be a sign never to be forgotten.  
 77. [The gods] saw it and were jubilantly happy,  
 78. (That is,) Laḥmu, Laḥamu and all his fathers.  
 79. Anšar [embraced] him and published abroad his title, "Victorious King."  
 80. Anu, Enlil and Ea gave him gifts.  
 81. Mother Damkina, who bore him, hailed him,  
 82. With a clean festal robe she made his face shine.  
 83. To Usmû, who held her present to give the news,  
 84. [He entrusted] the vizierate of the Apsû and the care of the holy places.
85. The Igigi assembled and all did obeisance to him,  
 86. Every one of the Anunnaki was kissing his feet.  
 87. They all [gathered] to show their submission,  
 88. [...] they stood, they bowed down, "Behold the king!"  
 89. His fathers [...] and took their fill of his beauty,  
 90. Bel listened to their utterance, being girded with the dust of battle.  
 91. [...].....  
 92. Anointing his body with [...] cedar perfume.  
 93. He clothed himself in [his] lordly robe,  
 94. With a crown of terror as a royal aura.  
 95. He took up his club and held it in his right hand,  
 96. [...] he grasped in his left.  
 97. [...]  
 98. [...] he set his feet.  
 99. He put upon [...] .  
 100. The sceptre of prosperity and success [he hung] at his side.  
 101. After [he had...] the aura [  
 102. He adorned(?) his sack, the Apsû, with a fearful [...]  
 103. Was settled like. [...  
 104. In [his] throne room [...  
 105. In his cella [...  
 106. Every one of the gods [...  
 107. Laḥmu and Laḥamu. [...].  
 108. Opened their mouths and [addressed] the Igigi gods,  
 109. "Previously Marduk was our beloved son,  
 110. Now he is your king, heed his command!"  
 111. Next, they all spoke up together,  
 112. "His name is Lugaldimmerankia, trust in him!"  
 113. When they had given kingship to Marduk,  
 114. They addressed to him a benediction for prosperity and success,

115. "Henceforth you are the caretaker of our shrine,  
 116. Whatever you command, we will do!"  
 117. Marduk opened his mouth to speak  
 118. And addressed the gods his fathers,  
 119. "Above the Apsû, the emerald (?) abode,  
 120. Opposite Ešarra, which I built for you,  
 121. Beneath the celestial parts, whose floor I made firm,  
 122. I will build a house to be my luxurious abode.  
 123. Within it I will establish its shrine,  
 124. I will found my chamber and establish my kingship.  
 125. When you come up from the Apsû to make a decision  
 126. This will be your resting place before the assembly.  
 127. When you descend from heaven to make a decision  
 128. This will be your resting place before the assembly.  
 129. I shall call its name 'Babylon', "The Homes of the Great Gods",  
 130. Within it we will hold a festival: that will be the evening festival.  
 131. [The gods], his fathers, [heard] this speech of his,  
 132. [...] they said,  
 133. "With regard to all that your hands have made,  
 134. Who has your [...]?  
 135. With regard to the earth that your hands have made,  
 136. Who has your [...]?  
 137. In Babylon, as you have named it,  
 138. Put our [resting place] for ever.  
 139. [...] let them our bring regular offerings  
 140. [...]..  
 141. Whoever [...] our tasks which we [...]..  
 142. Therein [...] itstail [...]..  
 143. [...]  
 144. They rejoiced [...]..  
 145. The gods [...]..  
 146. He who knows [...] them  
 147. He opened [his mouth showing] them light,  
 148. [...] his speech [...]..  
 149. He made wide [...] them [...  
 150. And [...]..  
 151. The gods bowed down, speaking to him,  
 152. They addressed Lugaldimmerankia, their lord,  
 153. "Formerly, lord, [you were our beloved] son,  
 154. Now you are our king, [...]..  
 155. He who [...] preserved [us]  
 156. [...] the aura of club and sceptre.  
 157. Let him conceive plans [...]..  
 158. [...] that] we [..."

## Tablet VI

1. When Marduk heard the gods' speech
2. He conceived a desire to accomplish clever things.
3. He opened his mouth addressing Ea,
4. He counsels that which he had pondered in his heart,
5. "I will bring together blood and form bone,
6. I will bring into being Lullû, whose name shall be 'man'.
7. I will create Lullû—man
8. On whom the toil of the gods will be laid that they may rest.
9. I will skilfully alter the organization of the gods:
10. Though they are honoured as one, they shall be divided into two."
11. Ea answered, as he addressed a word to him,
12. Expressing his comments on the resting of the gods,
13. "Let one brother of theirs be given up.
14. Let him perish that people may be fashioned.
15. Let the great gods assemble
16. And let the guilty one be given up that they may be confirmed."
17. Marduk assembled the great gods,
18. Using gracious direction as he gave his order,
19. As he spoke the gods heeded him:
20. The king addressed a word to the Anunnaki,
21. "Your former oath was true indeed,
22. (Now also) tell me the solemn truth:
23. Who is the one who instigated warfare,
24. Who made Tiāmat rebel, and set battle in motion?
25. Let him who instigated warfare be given up
26. That I may lay his punishment on him; but you sit and rest."
27. The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,
28. That is, Lugaldimmerankia, the counsellor of the gods, their lord,
29. "Qingu is the one who instigated warfare.
30. Who made Tiāmat rebel and set battle in motion."
31. They bound him, holding him before Ea,
32. They inflicted the penalty on him and severed his blood-vessels.
33. From his blood he (Ea) created mankind,
34. On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free.
35. After the wise Ea had created mankind
36. And had imposed the service of the gods upon them—
37. That task is beyond comprehension
38. For Nudimmud performed the creation with the skill of Marduk—
39. King Marduk divided the gods,
40. All the Anunnaki into upper and lower groups.
41. He assigned 300 in the heavens to guard the decrees of Anu,
42. And appointed them as a guard.
43. Next he arranged the organization of the netherworld.
44. In heaven and netherworld he stationed 600 gods.
45. After he had arranged all the decrees,

46. And had distributed incomes among the Anunnaki of heaven and  
netherworld,
47. The Anunnaki opened their mouths
48. And addressed their lord Marduk,
49. "Now, lord, seeing you have established our freedom
50. What favour can we do for you?
51. Let us make a shrine of great renown:
52. Your chamber will be our resting place wherein we may repose.
53. Let us erect a shrine to house a pedestal
54. Wherein we may repose when we finish (the work)."
55. When Marduk heard this,
56. He beamed as brightly as the light of day,
57. "Build Babylon, the task you have sought.
58. Let bricks for it be moulded, and raise the shrine!"
59. The Anunnaki wielded the pick.
60. For one year they made the needed bricks.
61. When the second year arrived,
62. They raised the peak of Esagil, a replica of the Apsû.
63. They built the lofty temple tower of the Apsû
64. And for Anu, Enlil, and Ea they established its... as a dwelling.
65. He sat in splendour before them,
66. Suveying its horns, which were level with the base of Ešarra.
67. After they had completed the work on Esagil
68. All the Anunnaki constructed their own shrines.
69. {300 Igigi of heaven and 600 of the Apsû, all of them, had  
assembled.}
70. Bēl seated the gods, his fathers, at the banquet
71. In the lofty shrine which they had built for his dwelling.
72. (Saying,) "This is Babylon, your fixed dwelling,
73. Take your pleasure here! Sit down in joy!"
74. The great gods sat down,
75. Beer-mugs were set out and they sat at the banquet.
76. After they had enjoyed themselves inside
77. They held a service in awesome Esagil.
78. The regulations and all the rules were confirmed:
79. All the gods divided the stations of heaven and netherworld.
80. The college of the Fifty great gods took their seats.
81. The Seven gods of destinies were appointed to give decisions.
82. Bēl received his weapon, the bow, and laid it before them:
83. His divine fathers saw the net which he had made.
84. His fathers saw how skilfully wrought was the structure of the bow
85. As they praised what he had made.
86. Anu lifted it up in the divine assembly.
87. He kissed the bow, saying, "It is my daughter!"
88. Thus he called the names of the bow:
89. "Long Stick" was the first; the second was, "May it hit the mark."
90. With the third name, "Bow Star", he made it to shine in the sky,

91. He fixed its heavenly position along with its divine brothers.  
 92. After Anu had decreed the destiny of the bow,  
 93. He set down a royal throne, a lofty one even for a god,  
 94. Anu set it there in the assembly of the gods.  
 95. The great gods assembled,  
 96. They exalted the destiny of Marduk and did obeisance.  
 97. They invoked a curse on themselves  
 98. And took an oath with water and oil, and put their hands to their throats.  
 99. They granted him the right to exercise kingship over the gods,  
 100. They confirmed him as lord of the gods of heaven and netherworld.  
 101. Anšar gave him his exalted name, Asalluhi:  
 102. "At the mention of his name, let us show submission!  
 103. When he speaks, let the gods heed him,  
 104. Let his command be superior in upper and lower regions.  
 105. May the son, our avenger, be exalted,  
 106. Let his lordship be superior and himself without rival.  
 107. Let him shepherd the black-heads, his creatures,  
 108. Let them tell of his character to future days without forgetting.  
 109. Let him establish lavish food offerings for his fathers,  
 110. Let him provide for their maintenance and be caretaker of their sanctuaries.  
 111. Let him burn incense to rejoice their sanctums.  
 112. Let him do on earth the same as he has done in heaven:  
 113. Let him appoint the black-heads to worship him.  
 114. The subject humans should take note and call on their gods,  
 115. Since he commands they should heed their goddesses,  
 116. Let food offerings be brought [for] (?) their gods and goddesses,  
 117. May they (?) not be forgotten, may they remember their gods,  
 118. May they...their..., may they...their shrines.  
 119. Though the black-heads worship some one, some another god,  
 120. He is the god of each and every one of us!  
 121. Come, let us call the fifty names  
 122. Of him whose character is resplendent, whose achievement is the same."  
 123. (1) MARDUK  
 As he was named by his father Anu from his birth,  
 124. Who supplies pasturage and watering, making the stables flourish.  
 125. Who bound the boastful with his weapon, the storm flood,  
 126. And saved the gods, his fathers, from distress.  
 127. He is the son, the sun-god of the gods, he is dazzling,  
 128. Let them ever walk in his bright light.  
 129. On the peoples that he created, the living beings,  
 130. He imposed the service of the gods and they took rest.  
 131. Creation and annihilation, forgiveness and exacting the penalty  
 132. Occur at his command, so let them fix their eyes on him.  
 133. (2) Marukka: he is the god who created them

134. Who put the Anunnaki at ease, the Igigi at rest.  
 135. (3) Marutukku: he is the support of land, city, and its peoples,  
 136. Henceforth let the peoples ever heed him.  
 137. (4) Meršakušu: fierce yet deliberating, angry yet relenting,  
 138. His mind is wide, his heart is all-embracing.  
 139. (5) Lugaldimmerankia is the name by which we all called him,  
 140. Whose command we have exalted above that of the gods his fathers.  
 141. He is the lord of all the gods of heaven and netherworld,  
 142. The king at whose injunctions the gods in upper and lower regions shudder.  
 143. (6) Narilugaldimmerankia is the name we gave him, the mentor of every god,  
 144. Who established our dwellings in heaven and netherworld in time of trouble,  
 145. Who distributed the heavenly stations between Igigi and Anunnaki,  
 146. Let the gods tremble at his name and quake on their seats.  
 147. (7) Asalluhi is the name by which his father Anu called him,  
 148. He is the light of the gods, a mighty hero,  
 149. Who, as his name says, is a protecting angel for god and land,  
 150. Who by a terrible combat saved our dwelling in time of trouble.  
 151. (8) Asalluhi-Namtilla they called him secondly, the life-giving god,  
 152. Who, in accordance with the form (of) his (name), restored all the ruined gods,  
 153. The lord, who brought to life the dead gods by his pure incantation,  
 154. Let us praise him as the destroyer of the crooked enemies.  
 155. (9) Asalluhi-Namru, as his name is called thirdly,  
 156. The pure god, who cleanses our character.  
 157. Anšar, Laḥmu, and Laḥamu (each) called him by three of his names,  
 158. Then they addressed the gods, their sons,  
 159. "We have each called him by three of his names,  
 160. Now you call his names, like us."  
 161. The gods rejoiced as they heard their speech,  
 162. In Upšukkinaki they held a conference,  
 163. "Of the warrior son, our avenger,  
 164. Of the provisioner, let us extol the name."  
 165. They sat down in their assembly, summoning the destinies,  
 166. And with all due rites they called his name:

## Tablet VII

1. (10) Asarre, the giver of arable land who established plough-land,  
 2. The creator of barley and flax, who made plant life grow.  
 3. (11) Asaralim, who is revered in the counsel chamber, whose counsel excels,  
 4. The gods heed it and grasp fear of him.  
 5. (12) Asaralimnunna, the noble, the light of the father, his beggetter,  
 6. Who directs the decrees of Anu, Enlil, and Ea, that is Ninšiku.

7. He is their provisioner, who assigns their incomes,
8. Whose turban multiplies abundance for the land.
9. (13) Tutu is he, who accomplishes their renovation,
10. Let him purify their sanctuaries that they may repose.
11. Let him fashion an incantation that the gods may rest,
12. Though they rise up in fury, let them withdraw.
13. He is indeed exalted in the assembly of the gods, his [fathers],
14. No one among the gods can [equal] him.
15. (14) Tutu-Ziukkinna, the life of [his] host,
16. Who established, the pure heavens for the gods,
17. Who took charge of their courses, who appointed [their stations],
18. May he not be forgotten among mortals, but [let them remember]  
his deeds.
19. (15) Tutu-Ziku they called him thirdly, the establisher of purification,
20. The god of the pleasant breeze, lord of success and obedience,
21. Who produces bounty and wealth, who establishes abundance.
22. Who turns everything scant that we have into profusion,
23. Whose pleasant breeze we sniffed in time of terrible trouble,
24. Let men command that his praises be constantly uttered, let them  
offer worship to him.
25. As (16) Tutu-Agaku, fourthly, let humans extol him,
26. Lord of the pure incantation, who brought the dead back to life,
27. Who showed mercy on the Bound Gods,
28. Who threw the imposed yoke on the gods, his enemies,
29. And to spare them created mankind.
30. The merciful, in whose power it is to restore to life,
31. Let his words be sure and not forgotten
32. From the mouths of the black-heads, his creatures.
33. As (17) Tutu-Tuku, fifthly, let their mouth give expression to his pure  
spell,
34. Who extirpated all the wicked by his pure incantation.
35. (18) Šazu, who knew the heart of the gods, who saw the reins,
36. Who did not let an evil-doer escape from him,
37. Who established the assembly of the gods, who rejoiced their hearts,
38. Who subjugated the disobedient, he is the gods' encompassing  
protection.
39. He made truth to prosper, he uprooted perverse speech,
40. He separated falsehood from truth.
41. As (19) Šazu-Zisi, secondly, let them continually praise him, the  
subduer of aggressors,
42. Who ousted consternation from the bodies of the gods, his fathers.
43. (20) Šazu-Suḫrim, thirdly, who extirpated every foe with his weapons,
44. Who confounded their plans and turned them into wind.
45. He snuffed out all the wicked who came against him,
46. Let the gods ever shout acclamations in the assembly.
47. (21) Šazu-Suḫgurim, fourthly, who established success for the gods, his  
fathers,

48. Who extirpated foes and destroyed their offspring,
49. Who scattered their achievements, leaving no part of them,
50. Let his name be spoken and proclaimed in the land.
51. As (22) Šazu-Zaḫrim, fifthly, let future generations discuss him,
52. The destroyer of every rebel, of all the disobedient,
53. Who brought all the fugitive gods into the shrines,
54. Let this name of his be established.
55. As (23) Šazu-Zaḫgurim, sixthly, let them altogether and everywhere  
worship him,
56. Who himself destroyed all the foes in battle.
57. (24) Enbilulu is he, the lord who supplies them abundantly,
58. Their great chosen one, who provides cereal offerings,
59. Who keeps pasturage and watering in good condition and established  
it for the land.
60. Who opened watercourses and distributed plentiful water.
61. (25) Enbilulu-Epadun, lord of common land and..., let them [call him]  
secondly,
62. Canal supervisor of heaven and netherworld, who sets the furrow,  
Who establishes clean arable land in the open country.
63. Who directs irrigation ditch and canal, and marks out the furrow.
64. As (26) Enbilulu-Gugal, canal supervisor of the water courses of the  
gods, let them praise him thirdly.
65. Lord of abundance, profusion, and huge stores (of grain),
66. Who provides bounty, who enriches human habitations,
67. Who gives wheat, and brings grain into being.
68. (27) Enbilulu-Ḫegal, who accumulates abundance for the peoples....
69. Who rains down riches on the broad earth, and supplies abundant  
vegetation.
70. (28) Sirsir, who heaped up a mountain on top of Tiāmat,
71. Who plundered the corpse of Tiāmat with [his] weapons,
72. The guardian of the land, their trustworthy shepherd,
73. Whose hair is a growing crop, whose turban is a furrow,
74. Who kept crossing the broad Sea in his fury,
75. And kept crossing over the place of her battle as though it were a  
bridge.
76. (29) Sirsir-Malaḫ they named him secondly—so be it—
77. Tiāmat was his boat, he was her sailor.
78. (30) Gil, who ever heaps up piles of barley, massive mounds,
79. The creator of grain and flocks, who gives seed for the land.
80. (31) Gilima, who made the bond of the gods firm, who created  
stability,
81. A snare that overwhelmed them, who yet extended favours.
82. (32) Agilima, the lofty, who snatches off the crown, who takes charge  
of snow,
83. Who created the earth on the water and made firm the height of  
heaven.



84. (33) Zulum, who assigns meadows for the gods and divides up what  
he has created,  
85. Who gives incomes and food-offerings, who administers shrines.  
86. (34) Mummu, creator of heaven and netherworld, who protects  
refugees,  
87. The god who purifies heaven and underworld, secondly Zulummu,  
88. In respect of whose strength none other among the gods can equal  
him.  
89. (35) Gišnumunab, creator of all the peoples, who made the world  
regions,  
90. Who destroyed Tiāmat's gods, and made peoples from part of them.  
91. (36) Lugalabdubur, the king who scattered the works of Tiāmat, who  
uprooted her weapons,  
92. Whose foundation is secure on the "Fore and Aft".  
93. (37) Pagalguenna, foremost of all lords, whose strength is exalted,  
94. Who is the greatest among the gods, his brothers, the most noble of  
them all.  
95. (38) Lugalduṛmaḥ, king of the bond of the gods, lord of Durmaḥu,  
96. Who is the greatest in the royal abode. infinitely more lofty than the  
other gods.  
97. (39) Aranunna, counsellor of Ea, creator of the gods, his fathers,  
98. Whom no god can equal in respect of his lordly walk.  
99. (40) Dumuduku, who renews for himself his pure abode in Duku,  
100. Dumuduku, without whom Lugalduku does not make a decision.  
101. (41) Lugalšuanu, the king whose strength is exalted among the  
gods,  
102. The lord, the strength of Anu, he who is supreme, chosen of Anšar.  
103. (42) Irugga, who plundered them all in the Sea,  
104. Who grasps all wisdom, is comprehensive in understanding.  
105. (43) Irqingu, who plundered Qingu in... battle,  
106. Who directs all decrees and establishes lordship.  
107. (44) Kinma, the director of all the gods, who gives counsel,  
108. At whose name the gods bend down in reverence as before a  
hurricane.  
109. (45) Dingir-Esiskur—let him take his lofty seat in the House of  
Benediction,  
110. Let the gods bring their presents before him  
111. Until he receives their offerings.  
112. No one but he accomplishes clever things  
113. The four (regions) of black-heads are his creation,  
114. Apart from him no god knows the measure of their days.  
115. (46) Girru, who makes weapons hard (?),  
116. Who accomplished clever things in the battle with Tiāmat,  
117. Comprehensive in wisdom, skilled in understanding,  
118. A deep mind, that all the gods combined do not understand.  
119. Let (47) Addu be his name, let him cover the whole span of heaven,  
120. Let him thunder with his pleasant voice upon the earth,

121. May the rumble fill (?) the clouds  
And give sustenance to the peoples below.  
122. (48) Ašaru, who, as his name says, mustered the Divine Fates  
123. He indeed is the warden of absolutely all peoples.  
124. As (49) Nēberu let him hold the crossing place of heaven and  
netherworld,  
125. They should not cross above or below, but should wait for him.  
126. Nēberu is his star, which he caused to shine in the sky,  
127. Let him take his stand on the heavenly staircase that they may look  
at him.  
128. Yes, he who constantly crosses the Sea without resting,  
129. Let his name be Nēberu, who grasps her middle,  
130. Let him fix the paths of the stars of heaven,  
131. Let him shepherd all the gods like sheep,  
132. Let him bind Tiāmat and put her life in mortal danger,  
133. To generations yet unborn, to distant future days,  
134. May he continue unchecked, may he persist into eternity.  
135. Since he created the heavens and fashioned the earth,  
136. Enlil, the father, called him by his own name, (50) 'Lord of the  
Lands'.  
137. Ea heard the names which all the Igigi called  
138. And his spirit became radiant.  
139. "Why! He whose name was extolled by his fathers  
140. Let him, like me, be called (51) 'Ea'.  
141. Let him control the sum of all my rites,  
142. Let him administer all my decrees."  
143. With the word "Fifty" the great gods  
144. Called his fifty names and assigned him an outstanding position.  
145. They should be remembered; a leading figure should expound them,  
146. The wise and learned should confer about them,  
147. A father should repeat them and teach them to his son,  
148. One should explain them to shepherd and herdsman.  
149. If one is not negligent to Marduk, the Enlil of the gods,  
150. May one's land flourish, and oneself prosper,  
151. (For) his word is reliable, his command unchanged,  
152. No god can alter the utterance of his mouth.  
153. When he looks in fury, he does not relent,  
154. When his anger is ablaze, no god can face him.  
155. His mind is deep, his spirit is all-embracing,  
156. Before whom sin and transgression are sought out.  
157. Instruction which a leading figure repeated before him (Marduk):  
158. He wrote it down and stored it so that generations to come might  
hear it.  
159. [...] Marduk, who created the Igigi gods,  
160. Though they diminish... let them call on his name.  
161. .... the song of Marduk,  
162. Who defeated Tiāmat and took kingship.